

Valerie Mainz  
University College London

HISTORY, HISTORY PAINTING AND CONCEPTS OF *GLOIRE*  
IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID

Submitted for the degree of Ph.D  
University of London  
1992

## ABSTRACT

This thesis shows how Jacques-Louis David successfully manipulated the art of history painting so as to establish his own *gloire*. The works of David are evidence of the success of this artist's aspirations as they demonstrate that he understood processes of figurative invention and of communication. When referring to the art of Poussin, the most eminent example of a painter as *grand homme* in late eighteenth-century France, David did not merely copy or plagiarise motif. Qualities of open-endedness, active provocation and perpetual dynamic continue to distinguish his own history paintings.

This study seeks to re-integrate recent art historical writings on theories of reception with an examination of artists' processes of production and with speculation concerning possible intention. Alongside the writers of tragedy, history painters knowingly treated the variability of history as a spur to inventions, which sought to move by presenting complex motive and problematic cause and effect. By examining the ways in which stories have been translated into different forms of art, the particular conventions and boundaries of a range of media are revealed.

The first sections deal with past perceptions of history, of how it was to be written and of how it was to be depicted. David's formation as a history painter is placed within a humanist tradition that valued formulations of the *grand homme* and notions of *gloire*. Further chapters locate this artist's works within the changing

cultural contexts to which they belonged and of which they were a part. The study concludes with an examination of how new conditions, created by the upheavals of the Revolution, affected David and irrevocably altered the art of history painting.

## CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	5
Acknowledgements	11
INTRODUCTION	12
HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER	28
TRAINING IN HIGH ART	66
INVENTION	130
DAVID AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION	202
Footnotes	264
Bibliography	318



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1 Pierre Julien, Nicolas Poussin. 1804. Sculpture, marble. Louvre, Paris.
- 2 Nicolas Poussin, La Mort de Germanicus. 1627-28. Oil on canvas, 146 x 195. Institute of Arts, Minneapolis.
- 3 Nicolas Poussin, Le Testament d'Eudamidas. c. 1655. Oil on canvas, 110.5 x 138.5. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.
- 4 Jacques-Louis David, La Mort de Sénèque. 1773. Oil on canvas, 123 x 160. Musée de Petit Palais, Paris.
- 5 Noël Hallé, La Mort de Sénèque. 1750 Salon. Oil on canvas, 153 x 122. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
- 6 Pierre Peyron, La Mort de Sénèque. n.d. Etching. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.
- 7 Nicolas Poussin, Les Israélites recueillant la Manne dans le Désert. 1639. Oil on canvas, 147 x 200. Louvre, Paris.
- 8 Jacques-Louis David, Tête d'Expression: la douleur. 1773. Pastel, 53.5 x 41. Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.
- 9 Jacques-Louis David, La Douleur d'Andromaque. 1783. Oil on canvas, 275 x 203. Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.
- 10 Jacques-Louis David, Study for the head of Saint Michel after Guido Reni. c. 1788. Drawing, black chalk, 16 x 12. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
- 11 Jacques-Louis David, Le Médecin Erisistrate découvre la cause de la maladie d'Antiochus. 1774. Oil on canvas, 120 x 155. Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.
- 12 "Dessein: Des Passions," Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers, Paris 1762-1772, XX, Recueil de Planches sur les sciences, les arts libéraux, et les arts mécaniques, avec leur explication, 2 Part 2, Plate 24. Fig 1: Admiration simple, fig 2: Admiration avec étonnement, fig 3: La vénération, fig 4: Le ravissement.
- 13 Michel-François Dandré Bardon, Costume des Anciens Peuples, Paris, 1772, I, Book 5, Plate 43. Scene from a Meleager Sarcophagus above scene derived from Nicolas Poussin, L'Extrême Onction see Plate 51 below.
- 14 Michel-François Dandré Bardon, Costume des Anciens Peuples, Paris, 1772, I, Book 6, Plate 57. Details taken from Nicolas Poussin, La Mort de Germanicus, see Plate 2 above.

15 Michel-François Dandré Bardon, Costume des Anciens Peuples, Paris, 1772, I, Book 6, Plate 58. Details taken from Nicolas Poussin, La Testament d'Eudamidas, see Plate 3 above.

16 Jacques-Louis David, Scène antique. c. 1774. Drawing, black chalk, 24.3 x 28.7. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

17 Jacques-Louis David, Study for La Douleur d'Andromaque. 1782. Drawing, black chalk, pen and black ink with grey wash, 29 x 24.6. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

18 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Le Serment des Horaces. c. 1784. Drawing, black chalk, pen and black ink, 22.9 x 33.3. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

19 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Les Amours de Paris et Hélène. c. 1786. Drawing, pen and black ink with grey wash, 21.5 x 28.1. Private Collection.

20 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Alexandre le Grand au lit de mort de la femme de Darius. 1779. Drawing, pen and brown ink, grey wash, graphite, 30.3 x 42.2. Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.

21 Jacques-Louis David, Frise dans le genre antique: combat de deux guerriers. 1780. Drawing, pen and black ink, grey wash with white highlights, 26.3 x 74.6. Musée de Peinture et de Sculpture, Grenoble.

22 Jacques-Louis David, Frise dans le genre antique: funérailles d'un héros. 1780. Drawing, pen and black ink, grey wash with white highlights, with black chalk underdrawing, 26 x 153. E B Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento.

23 Jacques-Louis David, Bélisaire demandant l'aumône. 1781. Oil on canvas, 288 x 312. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

24 Jacques-Louis David, Bélisaire demandant l'aumône. 1784. Oil on canvas, 101 x 115. Louvre, Paris.

25 François-André Vincent, Bélisaire réduit à la mendicité. 1777 Salon. Oil on canvas, 98 x 129. Musée Fabre, Montpellier.

26 Pierre Peyron, Bélisaire recevant l'hospitalité d'un paysan qui avait servi sous lui. 1779. Oil on canvas, 93 x 132. Musée des Augustins, Toulouse.

27 Nicolas Poussin, Les Aveugles de Jéricho. 1650. Oil on canvas, 119 x 176. Louvre, Paris.

28 Nicolas Poussin, La Femme Adultère. 1653. Oil on canvas, 121 x 195. Louvre, Paris.

29 Nicolas Poussin, L'Enlèvement des Sabines. c. 1635. Oil on canvas, 159 x 206. Louvre, Paris.

- 30 Jacques-Louis David, Le Serment des Horaces. 1784. Oil on canvas, 330 x 425. Louvre, Paris.
- 31 Jacques-Louis David, Horace vainqueur rentrant dans Rome. 1781. Drawing, black chalk with pen and black ink, grey wash, 27.5 x 38.7. Albertina, Vienna.
- 32 Jacques-Louis David, Le vieil Horace défendant son fils. c. 1782. Drawing, black chalk with pen and black ink, grey wash, 21.6 x 28.9. Louvre, Paris.
- 33 Johannes Joachim Engel, Idées sur le geste et l'action théâtrale, Paris, Strasbourg, The Hague, 1788, II, facing page 42, Plate 26.
- 34 Johannes Joachim Engel, Idées sur le geste et l'action théâtrale, Paris, Strasbourg, The Hague, 1788, II, facing page 52, Plate 27.
- 35 Levacher de Charnois, "Jean Baptiste Brisard: Rôle de Vieil Horace," Costumes et Annales des Grands Théâtres de Paris, Paris 1786-1790, I, 5, facing page 1.
- 36 Jean-Michel Moreau, Couronnement de Voltaire. 1778. Engraving, 17.7 x 23.7. Louvre, Paris.
- 37 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Le Serment des Horaces. c. 1784. Drawing, black chalk, 25.9 x 35.4. Louvre, Paris.
- 38 Noël Hallé, Study after Scilirus. 1769 Salon. Drawing, black and red chalk with white highlights. Private Collection.
- 39 Jean-Simon Berthélemy, Manlius Torquatus condamnant son fils à mort. 1785. Oil on canvas, 328 x 266. Musée des Beaux-arts, Tours.
- 40 Jacques-Louis David, Les Licteurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils. 1789. Oil on canvas, 323 x 422. Louvre, Paris.
- 41 Jacques-Louis David, Brutus assistant à l'exécution de ses fils. c. 1786. Drawing, black lead with pen and black ink, grey wash, 61 x 77.5. Collection Mr and Mrs Eugène V Thaw, New York.
- 42 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Brutus. 1787. Drawing, pen and black ink, grey wash, 32.7 x 42.1. J Paul Getty Museum, Malibu.
- 43 Jean-Baptiste Wicar, Brutus condamnant ses fils à mort. 1788. Drawing, pen and grey wash, 30 x 62. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.
- 44 Jacques-Louis David, Régulus et sa fille. c. 1786. Drawing, pen and black ink, brown and grey wash with white highlights over black chalk on grey paper, 31.5 x 41.6. The Art Institute, Chicago.
- 45 Jacques-Louis David, Socrate au moment de prendre la ciguë. 1787. Oil on canvas, 129.5 x 196.2. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

- 46 Jean-Michel Moreau, "Socrate Act III, Scene 3, 'Il est beau d'être la victime de la Divinité,' Voltaire: Oeuvres Complètes, Paris 1877, IV, facing page 394.
- 47 Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, Study of Socrate au moment de boire la ciguë after Charles-Michel-Ange Challes, Livret du Salon de 1761, p. 14, Bibliothèque nationale (Cabinet des Estampes), Paris.
- 48 Jean Gaspard Lavater, La Physiognomie ou l'Art de Connaitre les Hommes d'après les traits de leur physionomie, Paris, n.d., Plate 25.
- 49 Jacques-Louis David, Les Amours de Paris et Hélène. 1788. Oil on canvas, 147 x 180. Louvre, Paris.
- 50 Nicolas Poussin, Le Sacrement d'Ordination. 1647. Oil on canvas, 117 x 178. Collection of the Duke of Sutherland, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.
- 51 Nicolas Poussin, Le Sacrement d'Extrême Onction. 1644. Oil on canvas, 117 x 178. Collection of the Duke of Sutherland, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.
- 52 Pietro Antonio Martini, Vue du Salon de 1787. Etching. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.
- 53 Jacques-Louis David, Marat à son dernier soupir. 1793. Oil on canvas, 165 x 128. Musée royal des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.
- 54 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Le Serment du Jeu de Paume. 1791. Drawing, pen and brown ink with black ink, brown wash, white highlights and chalk marks, 66 x 101. Musée national du château, Versailles.
- 55 Jacques-Louis David, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume. 1791-2. Oil on canvas with black and white chalk and bistre wash, c. 358 x 648.
- 56 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Le Triomphe du Peuple français. 1794. Drawing, graphite with grey wash, 38.6 x 71. Musée Carnavalet, Paris.
- 57 Jacques-Louis David, Les Sabines. 1799. Oil on canvas, 385 x 522. Louvre, Paris.
- 58 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Les Sabines. 1794. Drawing, black crayon with pen and black ink, grey wash and white highlights, 25.6 x 35.9. Louvre, Paris.
- 59 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Les Sabines. c. 1796. Drawing, pen and brown and black ink, black crayon, grey wash with white highlights, 47.6 x 63.6. Louvre, Paris.
- 60 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Les Sabines. c. 1795. Drawing black chalk. From Album RF 9137, Louvre, Paris.

61 Jacques-Louis David, La Mort de Bara. 1794. Oil on canvas, 119 x 156, Musée Calvet, Avignon.

62 Guillaume Guillon Lethière, La Patrie en danger. 1799. Oil on canvas, 59 x 99.5. Musée de la Révolution, Vizille.

63 Nicolas Poussin, Coriolan. c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 112 x 198.5. Musée Nicolas Poussin, Les Andelys.

64 James Gilray, Sin, Death and the Devil. Vide Milton. Etching, 29.5 x 50. Appeared on 9th June 1792.

65 Claude Paradin, "Omnis caro foenum," Devises Heroiques, 1557, facsimile Menston 1971, p. 229.

66 Jacques-Louis David, Bonaparte franchissant les Alpes au Grand Saint-Bernard. 1800. Oil on canvas, 260 x 221. Musée national, Malmaison.

67 François Gérard and Jacques-Louis David, Enée s'enfuyant de Troie avec son fils Ascagne et son père Anchise, from Publius Virgilius Maro, Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis, Paris, 1798, p. 52.

68 Jean-Baptiste Regnault, La Liberté ou la Mort. 1795. Oil on canvas, 60 x 49. Kunsthalle, Hamburg.

69 After Philippe-Auguste Hennequin, La Liberté de l'Italie dédiée aux hommes libres. c. 1798. Etching and Mezzotint, 45 x 32.9. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

70 Jacques-Louis David, Léonidas aux Thermopyles. 1814. Oil on canvas, 395 x 531. Louvre, Paris.

71 Anon, Les Pouvoirs de la Liberté ou l'Effroi des Egoïstes et des Aristocrates. c. 1793. Etching. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

72 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1796-1813. Drawing, black chalk, 40.6 x 55. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

73 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. 1813. Drawing, pen and black ink, grey wash, highlights in white gouache over chalk marks, 21 x 28, Louvre, Paris.

74 Detail of Plate 70.

75 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1796. Drawing, graphite, 15 x 12. Musée Fabre, Montpellier.

76 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1796. Drawing, black chalk. From Album RF 9137, Louvre, Paris.

77 Jacques-Louis David, Le Serment de l'armée fait à l'Empereur après la distribution des Aigles au Champ-de-Mars le 5 décembre 1804. 1810. Oil on canvas, 610 x 970. Musée national du château, Versailles.

78 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1811. Drawing, graphite, squared up with red chalk. From Album RF 9136, Louvre, Paris.

79 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1811. Drawing, black chalk and graphite. From Album RF 9136, Louvre, Paris.

80 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1811. Drawing, black chalk and graphite. From Album RF 9136, Louvre, Paris.

81 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1811. Drawing, black chalk and graphite. Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai.

82 Jacques-Louis David, Studies for Le Départ d'Hector and for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. c. 1812. Drawing, graphite, 11.1 x 16.3. Musée des Arts décoratifs, Lyon.

83 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Le Départ d'Hector. 1812. Drawing, pen and black ink over black chalk, grey wash and white gouache highlights. Louvre, Paris.

84 Jacques-Louis David, Study for Léonidas aux Thermopyles. 1813. Drawing, black chalk, 10 x 10.4. Private Collection.

85 Detail of Plate 70.

86 Jacques-Louis David, Apelle peignant Campaspe devant Alexandre. c. 1813-16. Oil on wood, 96 x 136. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

87 Michel-François Dandré Bardon, Costume des Anciens Peuples, Paris, 1772, I, Book 6, Plate 56.

88 Jacques-Louis David, Homère récitant ses vers aux Grecs. 1794. Drawing, graphite with sanguine, pen and black ink and grey wash, 27.2 x 34.5. Louvre, Paris.

All sizes are in centimetres.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Central Research Fund of the University of London for providing a grant for me to visit many of the major French provincial museums. I am indebted to the staffs of the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, Musée Fabre, Montpellier, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, Musée des Augustins, Toulouse, The Prints and Drawings Room at the British Museum, the Department of Designs, Prints and Drawings, Victoria and Albert Museum, Royal Collection at Windsor Castle, the Warburg Institute, the Courtauld Institute and the Witt Library for help and assistance with my research.

In particular, I have benefitted greatly from the wit and wisdom of Francis Ames-Lewis, Philippe Bordes, Diana Douglas, Michael Douglas-Scott, Peter Draper, Charles Ford, Marc Fumaroli, Josette Guillaumet, Nancy Jachec, Annette Lavers, Elizabeth McGrath, Thomas Puttfarken, Katie Scott, Jacqueline Simar, Richard Spencer, John Steer, Anne Thackray, Will Vaughan and my supervisor, Helen Weston.

## INTRODUCTION

The area of research I have covered deals with visual images that derive from a literary source of either classical or biblical history. My account will, therefore, exclude mythological subjects. The problems of writing history have to be explored with reference to the genre of history painting and to individual productions within that genre. From the classical historians of Antiquity onwards, there have always been discussions about what was understood by history and what its methodology should be.

An early contributor to the debate was Duris of Samos, who became Tyrant of Samos probably after the battle of Ipsos in 301 B.C.<sup>1</sup> One of the extant fragments of Duris criticises Ephorus and Theopompus for their failure to give pleasure and to achieve mimesis or the representation of reality, as these other historians had been more concerned with written record.<sup>2</sup> The fragment has been linked to Duris' own approach to the writing of history, which emphasized the dramatic narrative of an individual's words, actions and conduct.<sup>3</sup> Duris presented a series of scenic *tableaux* in which event was linked causally to the will of extraordinary heroes rather than considered as the outcome of a combination of collective forces. This approach has been allied to the principles and inventions of tragic composition as advocated by Aristotle, although it has also been pointed out that Aristotle considered the poet should be concerned with the general and the universal, the what might happen, as distinct from what did happen in the particular character and event of the historian.<sup>4</sup>



Classical history writing and classical drama do nevertheless derive from common origins: the subject matter and oral tradition of panhellenic legend. Polybius in the second century B.C. reacted against the dramatic narratives of Duris by advocating factual truth and authentic record in the writing of a utilitarian history: experience in political and military conduct was to be derived from the lessons of the past.<sup>5</sup> The French scholar Pédech is, however, certain that Duris was a source for Plutarch.<sup>6</sup> Colin Macleod has, furthermore, noted the influence on Thucydides of the tragic history of Herodotus and that both writers were in turn influenced by Homer.<sup>7</sup> According to Macleod, Book 7 of Thucydides' history is an account of a reversal of fortune and it encompasses themes of suffering on a grand scale. The conscious intervention and judgement of the historian brought out the significance of the event for posterity and in order to move and impress the reader.<sup>8</sup>

Tension between the writing of history as tragic narrative and as distinct from the work of bald record also existed in eighteenth-century France. Methods of history writing advocated by the Abbé de Mably will be shown to oppose those promulgated by Voltaire. The formal definition given for *Histoire* in the *Encyclopédie* is succinct: "HISTOIRE, c'est le récit des faits donnés pour vrais; au contraire de la fable, qui est le récit des faits donnés pour faux."<sup>9</sup> Contrast and juxtaposition aided the classification here, in that a given historical truth was defined as in opposition to a given fictitious fable. The definition is subtly worded to include an element of implied intentionality on the part of the writer: an account could be given as either true history or as false fable. I shall maintain that

the two forms of creativity, the writing of history and the inventions of dramatic tragedy, were closely linked in eighteenth-century French culture and act as contrasting and at times conflicting spurs for the inventions of the history painter.

A range of media treated themes in which the conflicts of the tragic hero or heroine and attendant problematic notions of *gloire* were explored. Issues to do with the passions, degrees of free will, notions of wise and considered judgement, the effects of reason as opposed to sentiment, the demands of public duty in relation to a morality of a more private, familiar nature made up this discourse, which shall be examined as part of an evolving tradition stretching back to the classical writers of antiquity. Painters and tragedians interpreted texts derived from the same or related classical sources. These sources tended to stir because they were not compilations of simple fact, record or chronicle, but contained more animated *récit* and account, in which a given predicament was allied to moral qualities, often of some complexity. Just as relatedness between media is being posited, however, so will practical differences between the ways in which the forms of art actually occurred become more obvious. The conventions of the painting are not the same as those of the dramatic and by analysing relationships which cross conventional boundaries, the effectiveness of those boundaries will also be highlighted.

The terms of reference as to what constituted history painting have never remained static. This problem is also a part of the present study. The preface to the Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture pendant l'année 1667 gave one of the first

coherent statements in French presenting a hierarchy of genres. Here, the depictions of great historical actions were not considered as elevated as the mysteries of Christianity.<sup>10</sup> The use of allegory allowed the painter more freedom to create and to invent signifiers for the highest mysteries and for the *virtus* of the greatest men. The comments dealt with subject matter taken from historical accounts and did not yet classify the painting of historical subjects as a separate category or commodity. In 1708 Roger De Piles undermined distinctions between the painter of history and the painter of other genres. For him, the process of historical invention was simply to do with the representation of a selection or choice of objects.<sup>11</sup> In 1769 however, Michel-François Dandré Bardon, David's teacher of history at the Académie, considered the treatment of history to be the most noble and the most difficult task for the painter; knowledge of all the other genres was required in addition to grandeur in drawing, the beautiful style of the Antique, an understanding of expression and the science of *costume*.<sup>12</sup> Watelet and Lévêque's Dictionnaire des Arts de peinture, sculpture et gravure of 1792 acknowledged that the painting of history was the first and greatest genre and then included within this category, the depiction of subjects from mythology, ancient fables, ancient and modern epics, in the tradition of the *istoria* defined by Alberti in Italy during the Renaissance.<sup>13</sup> In 1810, the *Prix décennaux* were to be awarded for the separate categories of *Tableau d'histoire* and *Tableaux représentant un sujet honorable pour le caractère national*. Girodet's Le Déluge (Paris, Louvre) won the first prize in the history painting category, but the decision of the jury of the Institut was criticized by the Minister of the Interior,

Montalivet, who made the erroneous complaint that, in contrast to David's Les Sabines (Plate 57), Girodet's painting was of an invented subject.<sup>14</sup>

My purpose is not, however, to trace the evolution of theory concerning the practice of history painting. I shall, instead, focus on ways in which history paintings work: the processes in their production and invention, as well as the ways in which they can be perceived and interpreted. That painters paint, writers write and that the two distinct activities are not the same are hackneyed truisms. What I shall develop further are the discourses, which seem to have been provoked deliberately by David, about the nature of what he had depicted. These discussions developed from within certain specific historical contexts, codes and traditions. David was perfectly aware, of course, that the products of his labour were mute and literally did not speak, in spite of the body of academic theory, derived from Horace's *Ut pictura poesis*, that was being discussed and written about.<sup>15</sup> I shall show that this artist manipulated his history paintings so as to offer multiple layers of meaning, which were never meant to be conclusively resolved, in any one direction. The target of his productions was debate, not answer, simple recipe or chronicle.

As Rudolf Wittkower has acknowledged, the signs of language have, on the whole, an arbitrariness in relation to their representational value.<sup>16</sup> A skilful manipulation of the representational values of visual imagery can, on the other hand, load seemingly stripped and static figurative denotation with far greater amounts of ambiguous connotation. Painters can consult written texts, yet the work they do

need not be limited by authorised account and carefully coded dictionary. They interfere at many levels with what they read to influence what they show and how we see. At the same time, clues from a given context and tradition actively interpose meanings for the viewer. I would argue that access to a range of meanings is just what is built into and can be derived from the history paintings to be discussed here. These images are not bibles for the illiterate, nor are they straightforward translations of words, as they have been taken to be. Their effectiveness in provoking debate relies on vital differences between the properties of the visual and the verbal sign.

This contention subverts general observations which have been made about the history paintings of late eighteenth-century France: that these works showed and illustrated examples of virtue based on antique precedent in a didactic way.<sup>17</sup> I shall oppose this argument by indicating that the greatest artists of this period absorbed and were influenced by the models of Poussin because his works were taken to present complex ethical dilemmas, which were difficult to resolve.

The history painter David aspired, furthermore, to the status of *grand homme*, a status which, by the end of the eighteenth century, the painter Poussin had acquired. By acknowledging the achievements of Poussin, which posterity had sanctioned, and because of the nobility of his own contributions, David was able to promote his own *gloire* as a creative artist of the highest order. In attaining this goal, David emulated his predecessor's processes of invention. A figurative vocabulary was adapted not merely to communicate form but also by extending meaning, to stimulate the viewer's response.

The primary signifier of history gave meaning to history painting in the first instance. I shall show that an overt reference to chronicle allowed astute practitioners of the medium the freedom to conceal or to intimate secondary layers of signification. Pictorial compositions, originating from an historical text, can incorporate latent and potentially available meanings that are not manifestly a part of the initial subject matter, enabling an element of fiction or fable to emerge out of or be submerged into the myth of historical accuracy. This contrasts with paintings of overt allegory, which depend on a reception that has to acknowledge the existence of metaphor and of what the metaphor stands for; the veil that requires lifting for the subject matter to have any coherent meaning. During the French Revolution, allegory was deliberately incorporated into various forms of political engagement and propaganda. David was to learn from this experience. Before the Revolution, history had generally been considered to be a mediated process. During the Revolution, the mediated nature of history was openly manipulated in a polemical way in the public sphere. After the Revolution, David used historical subject matter to conceal political opinion. His Les Sabines (Plate 57) uses the veil of history to hide allegorical denotation. The painting of history had acquired the status of an alternative to the painting of contemporary event, within a cultural system that had undergone irrevocable changes.

Three principal semiotic levels will be considered. First, written texts and sources will be related to visual images; secondly, different reactions to and interpretations of a work of art will be explored; thirdly, the factors of tradition and adaptation will be

taken into account.

The visual representation of a written text is a form of expression that will be central to my analyses. A historical problem exists in relation to this approach though, for it is impossible to be specific about which sources were used by any one artist. Even when a documented source has been acknowledged, access to other sources, whether written or by word of mouth, can never be conclusively excluded. In addition, the problems of translation, not only from the conventions of one medium into another, but also from the analogies of one language into the interpretations of another, are concerns that cannot be resolved. As R W Ladbrough has shown, there was an ongoing debate in France as to the amount of inventive freedom a translator of a classical text could be allowed.<sup>18</sup> He allies this freedom in the seventeenth century to the requirements of *bienséances* and refinement of classical literature; in the eighteenth century to ideas of progress. The specific edition of a classical text, which may have been consulted, is rarely identifiable. Usually it is also impossible to know whether the text was read in the vernacular and/or in Latin or Greek.

The specific textual sources I have chosen to use have not been satisfactorily circumstantiated here, though I have tried to trace as many accounts of a particular narrative as possible and only then focussed in on what seem to be the ones of some relevance. For some texts, as for instance with the work of Valerius Maximus, I have only been able to consult the closest available edition in date to the paintings under consideration.<sup>19</sup> The other translations have generally been selected as in advance of the paintings to which they

refer. I have not attempted to privilege any one translation over another, though I am well aware of the limitations of my observations in this respect. I shall, indeed, develop the argument that sources, whether of verbal or visual derivation, are precisely not mutually exclusive.

By detailing some of the working procedures used by David it is, however, possible to suggest with a certain amount of plausibility which sources seem to have been used and to speculate why a particular author or type of account should have been preferred. The terms of the artist's commissioned history paintings indicate that a story from Valerius Maximus was frequently selected in the first instance but that the painter then consulted the richer narratives of Livy or Plutarch for further details. The consciously didactic writings of Valerius Maximus may have been rejected, the dramatic stories of Livy favoured. A close attention to artistic process can indicate some of the options which a painter rejects or selects to provide the bases for fresh compositions.

The second semiotic level concerns the context of a work's commission, reception and the affections or emotions that are aroused by that particular work. The amount of freedom or licence given to a particular painter to invent subject matter, cannot on the whole be specified with any degree of rigour. The terms and conditions of a commission were dominant factors in most of the creative endeavour throughout this period and cannot be neglected. For David however, history painting was increasingly to be allied to the communication of ideas, complicating further the particular terms, conditions and principles of patronage. Although artists exercised their own powers



of invention in how subject matter was to be treated before the time of David, patrons often decided what the subject matter was to be. David was to break with this tradition; it will be shown that he came more and more to choose his own iconography as well as the treatment of that iconography. I shall, for instance, demonstrate that titles such as David's Socrate au moment de prendre la ciguë (Plate 45) had, by 1787, come to play their own parts in the ways in which history paintings were being formulated, exhibited and received.

Contemporary criticism, such as extracts from eighteenth-century Salon reviews will be used, but to impute meaning to a work of art is not to imply that such meaning is static. It grows and varies over time because of the different circumstances and contexts in which an object exists and is perceived. By examining response at given dates, it is possible to trace some of the alterations in meaning that occur and to indicate reasons for this. At a time of revolution for instance, changes in perception can become particularly rapid and forced alongside the mutating political imperatives. Academic institutions may, in contrast and in the interests of self-preservation, foster observations that tend towards hallowed dogma and ossified precept.

Thirdly, there is the factor of tradition and adaptation; that is the way in which specific signs, symbols and gestures arise out of changing but enduring cultural contexts. David developed existing motifs, sanctioned by time, but which were to function with new but related meanings. The consequent creative challenges to expectation must be understood to have been directed to specific, if ultimately elusive, ends for the viewer. They functioned as key strategies

within the processes of invention. David's extant compositional drawings for some of his major history paintings offer the art historian the opportunity of reaching an understanding of how these creative challenges evolved over time and out of existing conventions.<sup>20</sup> The artist was able to adapt and further invent afresh in a conceptually active way, because of an ability to empathise with and absorb from the customs and representations of the past.

For the purposes of my argument, I am concerned with the sight of meaning as a conjunction between an artist's intention, a work of art and a beholder's share. The work of art exists in its own right and it is also a construction of the artist's and of the critics' and these separate elements can be quite independent of each other. The approach I am adopting, which is not a fashionable one and is wholly rejected by some art historians, considers works of art to be expressions of inner purpose. By studying the links or dissonances that exist between texts, drawings and paintings, the different interpretations of painters, as well as of critics and theoreticians, will be examined. Although it will only be possible to infer what were the artist's probable intentions by analysing the figurative and the formal properties of given works of art, much circumstantial evidence will be provided to buttress and reinforce such assumptions. My method is thus partly to examine processes of drawing so that the stages by which an artist's conceptual ideas evolve can be studied closely. Processes of drawing rather than those of colour have also been chosen for pragmatic reasons. Changes of figurative design are easier to define linguistically than are those of colour. Relationships between colours are also more susceptible to

deterioration and alteration over time and their equivalences are harder to reproduce with any degree of accuracy.

The bibliography that deals with this major artist is vast. Apart from a continuous stream of monographic literature, there has in recent years been a resurgence of interest in the arts of the period preceding and during the French Revolution. The starting point of my research was the specific influence of Poussin on David. Although the phenomenon of Neo-Poussinisme has been identified by several writers, the various ways through which the works of Poussin influenced the artistic vocabulary of French painters of the late eighteenth century or were absorbed by it, have not been adequately dealt with elsewhere.<sup>21</sup> In a pioneering work of 1912, Jean Locquin associated the revival of regard for Poussin with a renewal of interest in the art of history painting as a whole.<sup>22</sup> Both the exercise and the perception of the genre were being considered as ennobling. Leopold Ettlinger, Hugh Honour and Anita Brookner further situated the history paintings of David within a programme of State patronage in which classical example and moralising subject matter were being used to promote virtue.<sup>23</sup>

Subsequent scholarship has focussed on the extent of David's political engagement before the Revolution and the extent to which such a commitment is evident in the works of his maturity. Thomas Crow placed the call to revive the art of history painting within a general Marxist analysis of class struggle and used responses to the Salons to back up his arguments.<sup>24</sup> Crow considered that David took on the role of anti-academic persecuted virtuous radical during the 1780s in response to the more mixed urban public of the Salon and not in

compliance with the public servants, who were devoted to an ideal of state service, and who had commissioned these works in emulation of Poussin's small circle of French patrons. Although Crow attempted to support his argument by using much Salon criticism, I am fundamentally opposed to his general conclusions with regard to David's self-perception at the time. The painter's antagonism to the Académie before the Revolution was, in my opinion, not that of a radical political activist. I shall show that the artist was at odds with this institution because he found it to be out-dated; in practice it prevented the emergence of genius and the cultivation of the *grand homme*. By the end of the eighteenth-century, Poussin had acquired just such an exceptional status and it was to this status that the history painter David also aspired. After the Revolution, David was careful to use the medium of history painting to re-assert his credentials as a painter rather than as a politician. This was a return to a genre for which the artist had initially received acclaim because of his abilities as a painter and not because of his abilities as a politician; a period before he had made any official pronouncements on art in the service of and for government. Intermediary texts, not used by Crow, between the pamphleteers and the theorists on high art, will examine concepts of *gloire*, its problematic and David's own position within such a continuing discourse.

A formal and historical analysis of the Serment du Jeu de Paume project has enabled Philippe Bordes to trace the evolution of David's increasingly radical commitment to the Revolution.<sup>25</sup> Using extensive archival material and the evidence of the artist's drawing notebooks,

Bordes showed that David was not a political activist before 1789 but that the project itself served to add momentum to the artist's personal engagement with contemporary history. The momentous event was to move, control and be controlled by David in an intended fusion of the political with the aesthetic. Although I support Bordes' conclusions, I shall be dealing with the paintings on subjects which derive from pre-existent historical texts in order to show how they successfully contributed to an established tradition. The work of the Revolutionary years serves as a contrast to what was produced before and then, differently, after that decisive period.

Warren Roberts saw David's artistic production as essentially dualistic, reflecting the nature of the painter's psyche: one side combative, zealous and strident, the other side lenient and sympathetic.<sup>25</sup> According to Roberts, the works can therefore be divided up between a Roman and Grecian style; between an engaged, patriotic, martial and heroic masculinity and a refined, exquisite, meditative and graceful femininity. These assumptions do not, however, account for the moral predicaments presented by these works, which shall be shown to be fundamental to an understanding of the art of history painting at that time and intervene between aesthetic practice and personal statement. The narratives and narrative structures from which the history paintings derive provide us with far greater insight into the circumstances of their production.

I shall isolate the painting of the passions as a dominant concern of the genre. John Montgomery Wilson's thesis, The Painting of the Passions in Theory, Practice and Criticism in later eighteenth-century France, would, superficially, appear to cover the same

ground.<sup>27</sup> Although much of the source material does, indeed, overlap, his interpretation of this material is again directly at odds with mine. The author rightly considered that, as the language of criticism became more refined, greater interpretative variety was possible. Wilson suggested that there was a desire to involve the spectator more directly and imaginatively in the work of art and that it was necessary to make the depiction of expression in painting more legible to the wider, less literate, public who were going to see the paintings of the Salons in increasing numbers. According to Wilson, the violent passions that came to be depicted, can be linked to pre-Revolutionary heroism and the romantic horror of Hennequin. The author produced no evidence to substantiate his claims as to the illiteracy of the Salon-going public or as to its greater social mix. The widely proliferated Salon reviews of the 1780s may still have been read by the same group of the cultured élite and would, in any case, tend to undermine the supposition that the Salon audience was becoming more illiterate. Wilson also equated the spectator's ability to decipher a painting directly with the ability to read words. This fundamental solecism was another starting point for my own research.

Norman Bryson did acknowledge that David's history paintings of the 1780s present an ambiguity that demands interpretation, not mere reading, though the influence of Poussin is rejected as being too unified for David's rhetoric of transcriptive realism and assaulting compositional conflicts.<sup>28</sup> Following on from Jennifer Montagu's pioneering thesis,<sup>29</sup> Bryson formulated Le Brun's programmatic studies of physiognomy as essentially discursive vehicles of bureaucratic control; he linked them to D'Angiviller's attempts of a century later

to commission didactic paintings for public instruction but contrasted them with David's history paintings which deal with the moral difficulties and decisions of individuals.

The continuing debates about what ought to be considered major works of art would appear to support the argument that certain types of visual imagery were never meant to be definitively accounted for by any verbal analysis. The success of the visual medium of history painting in these terms ultimately mitigates against a programmatic definition of what the depicted image is actually about, offering as it does the potential for perpetually open-ended observation. In addition, the creation of particular conditions by David in his manufacture of history paintings, meant that an attempt at discursive response would be intentionally solicited and would never be brought to a close.

Thus, I first want to bring together certain visual images with a variety of texts, which inspired rather than limited, and furthered a compulsion to invention. Secondly, I want to bring together the artist's methods of proceeding via drawings and studies, with the eventual critical reception of the final products. In the course of interpreting and translating texts, properties and conventions that are peculiar to the medium of history painting, and as distinct from those of the medium of tragic drama, will be analysed.

David's creative challenges to expectation produced history paintings which have achieved distinction because of an open-endedness, an active provocation and a perpetual dynamic. In addition, the history painter's expressed concern with posterity indicates a desire for a continuing dynamic in the annals of history.

## HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER

This chapter will deal with perceptions of history, *gloire* and constructions of the *grand homme*, which contributed to the formation of the history painter David. It is divided into three main parts. The first part will examine approaches to the writing of history by some of the classical authors of antiquity and by French writers of the eighteenth century. The next section will develop concepts of *gloire* that became linked to the nature of being an exceptional hero or great individual. The ways in which David's predecessors and contemporaries recognized, developed and adapted classical writings that dealt with *gloire* will similarly be addressed. Finally the artist's own position within these discourses will be considered with special reference back to Poussin whose status, at the time of David, was increasingly be that of the *grand homme* as the first *peintre philosophe* of the French school.

### The art of history writing

The debates on history, unlike the debates on history painting, evolved directly from precedents set by the writers of antiquity; their words were readily available and open to further re-evaluation. Livy's introduction to the *Ab Urbe Condita* in the version of a French translation of 1770 made clear, for instance, that the purpose of his work was to provide models for the present:

...ce que chacun doit principalement se proposer ici, c'est d'étudier à fond le génie et la conduite de ce Peuple, de



connoître les grands hommes qu'il a donnés, et les ressources qu'il a trouvées, soit dans la politique, soit dans les armes, pour établir ou pour étendre sa domination...

L'avantage le plus solide que l'on puisse tirer de l'histoire, c'est d'y voir au grand jour des exemples instructifs de toute espece, d'y puiser des regles de conduite pour soi-même, et des maximes pour gouverner un Etat; d'y apprendre à éviter ce qui peut ternir la gloire d'une entreprise dans son principe, ou en déshonorer le succes.<sup>1</sup>

The exemplary nature of history writing, as a moral exercise for the living in which virtue was to be distinguished from vice, was one that was to be stressed by most of the eighteenth-century French writers on history although, as will be shown, other considerations which treated the subject as a form of art also intervened.

R. M. Ogilvie has noted how Livy constructed a series of episodes around a moral theme using formal devices associated with the art of tragic drama. For instance, the account of the conspiracy of Brutus's sons given by Livy to show that *disciplina* was a necessary virtue, minimized scene changes and omitted incidental characters in order to adhere to the Aristotelian principles of unities of time and place.<sup>2</sup> Since the time of ancient Greece, the unexpected interception of a letter, revealing surprising contents, was also a device frequently used by dramatists to bring about a change or a reversal of fortune. Other episodes would culminate in some climactic utterance or dialogue as in the confrontation between Coriolanus and his mother.<sup>3</sup> As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, the development of history as a form of tragic drama can be traced back to the Greek historian Duris of Samos in the second century B.C.

A. J. Woodman has more recently demonstrated that classical historiography was consciously formulated according to the rhetorical principles of *inventio*.<sup>4</sup> Quintilian had noted the exemplary nature

of history which provided posterity with memorable example and could, thus, be of use to the orator."<sup>6</sup> The writer on rhetoric compared the art of the historian with that of the poet: "Car ils ont beaucoup de ressemblance avec les poètes, et l'histoire est une espèce de poésie libre, et affranchie des regles de la versification. Elle se propose de narer, non de prouver."<sup>6</sup> From the French translation of 1752 for the Latin "et scribitur ad narrandum non ad probandum," it can be understood that Quintilian had implied the burden of proof was more important for the orator than for the historian who provided narrative rather than chronicle. The literary qualities of a given narrative were to be recommended and further advanced by the historians and theorists of the eighteenth century.

Charles Rollin, in his influential history of ancient Rome of 1738, defended the speeches of Livy for they communicated the reasons and motives behind events, laws and wars, even though the speeches may not, in fact, have been made by the people to whom they had been attributed: "Il suffit qu'elles presentent ce qu'ils ont dû dire."<sup>7</sup>

Rollin praised Livy as if he were a dramatist:

Il rend présente l'action qu'il décrit, il la met sous les yeux, il ne la raconte pas, il la montre. Il peint d'après nature le génie et le caractère des personnages qu'il fait paroître sur la scène, et leur met dans la bouche les paroles toujours les plus conformes à leurs sentimens et à leurs différentes situations. Sur tout, il a l'art merveilleux de tenir tellement les Lecteurs en suspens par la variété des événemens, et d'intéresser si vivement leur curiosité, qu'ils ne peuvent quitter le récit d'une Histoire, avant qu'elle soit entièrement terminée.<sup>8</sup>

As if watching a performance in a theatre, the reader/spectator was held right up to the final word by the presentation of events in which characters on stage acted with appropriate decorum and variety.

In the treatise De La Maniere d'Enseigner et d'Etudier les Belles-Lettres, Rollin recommended Livy for being able to embellish historical account with "pensées naturelles et ingénieuses." The episode of the Horatii was used as an example of how the narrative of history should move:

Ces trois freres étoient de part et d'autre comme des armées entières, et en avoient le courage: insensibles à leur propre péril, ils ne s'occupaient que de la destinée publique, confiée uniquement à leurs bras. Deux pensées magnifiques, et puisées dans le vrai. Mais peut-on lire ce qui suit, sans se sentir encore saisi d'horreur, et de frissonnement, aussi bien que les spectateurs du combat?...Je dois seulement avertir que ce qui fait la principale beauté de cette narration, aussi bien que de l'histoire en général, selon la judicieuse remarque de Cicéron, c'est la merveilleuse variété qui y règne partout, et les divers mouvements de crainte, d'inquiétude, d'espérance, de joie, de désespoir, de douleur, causés par des changemens subits et des vicissitudes inopinées, qui réveillent l'attention par une agréable surprise, qui tiennent jusqu'à la fin l'esprit du lecteur comme en suspens, et qui par cette incertitude même lui procurent un plaisir incroyable, sur-tout quand le récit se termine par un événement intéressant et singulier.<sup>9</sup>

According to Rollin, Livy had presented an action which had complicated implications and which would therefore arouse similarly complicated reactions in the reader/spectator. The effective value of the account was again being praised because of aesthetic criteria appropriated from the arts of rhetoric and tragedy and not simply because a didactic example as to virtuous behaviour had been provided. In the chapter on INVENTION, it will be shown that David's Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) was to offer the spectator a range of different and conflicting emotions because of the moral implications and complications of the story or history from which it was derived.

A distinctly literary approach to the writing of history was to continue throughout the century even though Voltaire had tried to bring about a reform of history writing towards more convincing

exploration of relevant social detail For Voltaire, the fantasy and prejudice of the past were to be replaced by useful objects of knowledge:

...Je voudrais apprendre quelles étaient les forces d'un pays avant une guerre, et si cette guerre les a augmentées ou diminuées. L'Espagne a-t-elle été plus riche avant la conquête du nouveau monde qu'aujourd'hui? De combien était-elle plus peuplée du temps de Charles-Quint que sous Philippe IV?...Il faudrait donc, me semble, incorporer avec art ces connaissances utiles dans le tissu des événements. Je crois que c'est la seule manière d'écrire l'histoire moderne en vrai politique et en vrai philosophe. Traiter l'histoire ancienne, c'est compiler, me semble, quelques vérités avec mille mensonges. Cette histoire n'est peut-être utile que de la même manière dont l'est la fable: par de grands événements qui font le sujet perpétuel de nos tableaux, de nos poèmes, de nos conversations, et dont on tire des traits de morale.<sup>10</sup>

Abbé de Mably, brother of the philosopher Condillac, redressed the balance away from historical account of modern sociological, political and philosophical importance towards what he considered to be the more creative processes of judgement and of invention present in and available from the classical historians of Antiquity. An edition of his De la manière d'écrire l'histoire was published in 1784; the Mercure de France had already given a fairly favourable review of the treatise in January 1783.<sup>11</sup>

Mably's aim was to relate the theory of history to the theories of dramatic poetry and of history painting and, in so doing, he also strongly criticised Voltaire's approach. The review in the newspaper defended Voltaire in equally staunch terms, noting that Mably had not been specific enough on how a writer should make historically accurate detail believable: "Il auroit été à désirer qu'il s'étendit un peu davantage sur cette partie de la critique qui enseigne à balancer l'autorité du témoignage des Historiens, et l'invraisemblance des

événemens."<sup>12</sup> This criticism struck at the heart of Mably's theories for history writing.

For Mably, a historian should be like a poet in being able to reproduce passions without grimace.<sup>13</sup> A writer should first meditate for a long time on the causes that link events before commencing a piece of history.<sup>14</sup> As the work progressed, analogies with qualities more usually applied to those of history painting became obvious:

...Un historien veut-il qu'on le lise, et qu'on le relise éternellement, et toujours avec l'attrait de la nouveauté, qu'il apprenne à être un grand peintre de ces passions qui gouvernent le monde, que la philosophie nous instruit à diriger, mais dont elle ne nous délivre jamais. C'est par cette peinture qu'une histoire est animée. Je ne suis plus un lecteur qui lis, je suis un spectateur qui vois ce qui se passe sous mes yeux. Mon cœur échauffé communique à mon esprit une sorte de chaleur qui l'éclaire. A travers les formes et les voiles différens sous lesquels les passions se déguisent, je les vois se reproduire toujours les mêmes et toujours nouvelles; et jeter une prodigieuse diversité entre des événemens qui ont été, qui sont et qui seront éternellement les mêmes et éternellement variés... Je compare l'historien à un peintre qui ne paraît point sur la toile qui s'anime sous sa main, mais qui doit m'y présenter des personnages dont les traits et les attitudes me découvrent les pensées et toute l'agitation de leur âme. Je le compare encore à un poète dramatique qui ne monte pas lui-même sur la scène, mais qui y porte la confusion, le trouble et le désordre réglé des passions.

C'est par cette peinture du cœur humain que *Tite-Live*, *Salluste* et *Tacite* sont admirables. Tout s'anime sous leur plume, et si je suis capable de penser, mon esprit est toujours occupé. Dès le moment que l'indignation publique a détruit la tyrannie de *Tarquin*, j'en vois naître une foule de passions qui, en se heurtant et se choquant, vont donner à la république ce caractère de grandeur, de force et de courage qui doit la conduire à sa ruine, après l'avoir rendue la maîtresse du monde. C'est de l'art avec lequel un historien développe les progrès des passions, peint leurs caprices et tour-à-tour leur calme et leur emportement, que résulte cet intérêt qui ennoblit les événemens les plus communs, et diversifie ceux qui m'auraient peut-être paru trop semblables.<sup>15</sup>

Mably furthered the literary approach recommended by his predecessor Rollin by making analogies with the art of painting and the *Ut pictura poesis* theoretical tradition: by their variety and vividness, animated

descriptions of the passions were to move the reader/spectator. Livy was held up as the classical historian who was best at depicting the passions of the human heart and the painting of the story of Germanicus was envisioned in the manner of Poussin's painting of the subject.<sup>16</sup> Livy's description of the fight between the Horatii and Curiatii was praised because, again, its drama produced and stirred emotion in the spectator:

...*Tite-Livy*...Toujours il m'intéresse et m'attache, jamais il ne me fatigue à sa lecture. Pourquoi? c'est que jamais historien n'a mieux su animer sa narration par l'art de peindre les passions de ses personnages et de remuer les miennes. Il est toujours sûr de réussir, parce qu'il saisit dans chaque événement les circonstances les plus propres à me rendre attentif ou à me toucher. Je ne suis point tranquille spectateur du combat des *Horaces* et des *Curiaques*, et je partage les craintes et les espérances de l'armée romaine.<sup>17</sup>

This treatise, by its very nature, was in part didactic. However, the historiographer Mably stressed in a favourable way the meditative possibilities for the reader and spectator afforded by the examples that were presented to him.<sup>18</sup> The approach was summarised thus:

...Pour moi, j'aime qu'un historien, en me frappant vivement, m'oblige quelquefois à suspendre ma lecture. Je ferme mon livre, j'admire, je réfléchis pendant une demi-heure, et je reviens avec un nouveau plaisir à une histoire qui me fait méditer.<sup>19</sup>

Montesquieu and Voltaire provide us with notable exceptions to a predominantly aesthetic approach to the writing of history in France during the eighteenth century. The classical historians of antiquity were avidly read, translated and proposed as models for they presented worthy examples in ways that continued to give pleasure as well as to instruct. It was considered that such aims were achieved when the emotions of the reader/spectator were moved and aroused by the contemplation of convincing, though not necessarily accurate,

presentations of event and of character. The aesthetic connected the art of history writing to the arts of rhetoric, poetry, drama and latterly, history painting.

#### History and the exceptional individual

A history constructed out of the lives and careers of exceptional individuals will now be examined. This discourse is important because it will be shown that David's history paintings of before the Revolution had for focus episodes from the lives of famous men and the moral dilemmas with which these well-known men were associated. Classical histories generally provided accounts of dramatic conflicts in which heroes or exceptional individuals participated. Dionysius of Halicarnassus stressed, for instance, the importance of choice of subject in the introduction to his Antiquitates Romanae. This choice should communicate wisdom and conduct in a useful way and also transmit the glory of heroes to their descendants and for posterity.<sup>20</sup> In particular, The Vitae Parallelae of Plutarch provided the eighteenth century with a repertoire of great men, for they offered both animated biographical detail of interest and insight into the moral predicaments that might underlie conduct and behaviour. Plutarch described and, in some cases, compared the lives of a series of outstanding men, all of whom had actively contributed in some decisive way to a sequence of important historical events. The introduction to the Life of Alexander made the author's biographical approach clear: "Je n'écris pas une histoire, mais des vies."<sup>21</sup> Comparing his work to precisely that of the portrait painter, Plutarch

stated his aim was to animate the natures of great men rather than chronicle factual details:

...rechercher dans l'ame les principaux traits, les traits les plus marqués, afin qu'en les rassemblant je fasse de la vie de ces grands hommes un portrait vivant et animé, et qui leur ressemble, laissant à d'autres le détail des sièges, des batailles, et de toutes ces autres grandes actions.<sup>22</sup>

The preface to André Dacier's popular translation of the *Vitae Parallelae* cited here praised the exemplary quality of Plutarch's work but, above all, marked the writer out for his ability to humanise: "Tout est vivant de même dans Plutarque; ce ne sont pas des histoires qu'on lit, ce sont ces grands hommes même qu'on voit et qui parlent."<sup>23</sup>

Rollin similarly recommended the writers of antiquity for the living portraits of great men they offered. This enabled men of his own day to enter into a discussion with dead heroes so that more abstract qualities of disinterestedness, hate of injustice and love of the commonweal could be absorbed.<sup>24</sup> The private nature of the lives of Plutarch's *grands hommes* was particularly worthy of praise:

Il ne faut pas croire non plus que ce soit principalement par les actions d'éclat qu'on les puisse connoître. Quand ils se donnent en spectacle au public, ils peuvent se contrefaire et se contraindre, en prenant pour un tems le visage et le masque qui convient au personnage, qu'ils ont à soutenir. C'est dans le particulier, dans l'intérieur, dans le cabinet, dans le domestique, qu'ils se montrent tels qu'ils sont, sans déguisement et sans apprêt. C'est là qu'ils agissent et qu'ils parlent d'après nature. Aussi c'est sur-tout par ces endroits qu'il faut étudier les grands hommes, pour en porter un jugement certain: et c'est l'avantage inestimable qu'on trouve dans Plutarque, et par où l'on peut dire qu'il l'emporte infiniment sur tous les autres Historiens. Dans les vies qu'il nous a laissées des grands hommes célèbres parmi les Grecs et les Romains, il descend dans un détail qui fait un plaisir infini. Il ne se contente pas de montrer le capitaine, le conquérant, le politique, le magistrat, l'orateur: il ouvre à ses lecteurs l'intérieur de la maison, ou plutôt le fond du coeur de ceux dont il parle, et il leur y fait voir le pere, le mari, le maître, l'ami. On croit vivre et



s'entretenir avec eux, être de leurs parties et de leur promenades, assister à leurs repas et à leurs conversations...<sup>25</sup>

According to Rollin, great men should be studied in intimate circumstances without the mask required by public office. Plutarch had shown the hearts of men as fathers, husbands, masters and friends in domestic interiors and thereby revealed their true natures and characters for readers to converse with and judge.

Rousseau in Emile praised Plutarch in a similar way to Rollin and, indeed, Montaigne: interior qualities of personality and of the heart revealed more than the outward appearance, costumes and postures of public actions.<sup>26</sup> Man's true nature was not revealed by great actions but in small, little things; a word, smile or gesture should be sufficient to reveal the character of a hero.<sup>27</sup> Historians were criticized for concentrating too much on vice rather than virtue, in order to philosophize and create maxims. The effects of natural, sentimental feeling and of the human heart were, instead, of value and should be studied. Augustus had been so pre-occupied with governing the world that he neglected to govern his own home and thus, all his true heirs perished and he was succeeded by a monster.<sup>28</sup> It will be shown that such relationships also underpin David's history paintings of before the Revolution. Les Licteurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils (Plate 40), for instance, shows a father in the private, domestic sphere of his home after he has ordered the execution of his sons in fulfilment of his duties as Consul in a public arena.

It was clear to Rousseau that history, like fiction, was a highly selective and interpretative process:

De plus, il s'en faut bien que les faits décrits dans l'histoire soient la peinture exacte des mêmes faits tels qu'ils sont arrivés: ils changent de forme dans la tête de l'historien,

ils se moulent sur ses intérêts, ils prennent la teinte de ses préjugés. Qui est-ce qui sait mettre exactement le lecteur au lieu de la scène pour voir un événement tel qu'il s'est passé? L'ignorance ou la partialité déguise tout. Sans altérer même un trait historique, en étendant ou resserrant des circonstances qui s'y rapportent, que des faces différentes on peut lui donner! Mettez un même objet à divers point de vue, à peine paraîtra-t-il le même, et pourtant rien n'aura changé que l'oeil du spectateur.<sup>29</sup>

That the historian/spectator intervened and coloured fact did not, however, prevent Rousseau from making extensive use of historical example in his philosophical writings. When relevant to the arguments he was making, examples of life in Sparta, Rome, Geneva or Poland were introduced to strengthen the substance of his polemic. The examples served as contrasts or points of comparison with sets of circumstances being identified and defined by the writer.

Rousseau took history to be an irreversible process. The Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité considered the origins of man in his primitive state and then in a later, unhappy and unbalanced social state.<sup>30</sup> Human nature was, however, perfectible and capable of evolution, so that a happier, more fulfilled state could be brought about by social acts of will, reason and faith. A further revolution, a form of rationalized redemption, was to be explored in the Contrat Social.<sup>31</sup> The evil in human affairs was curable by laws which were products of the social use of reason and will and which the Legislator, a man of extraordinary ability such as Lycurgus, would regulate.<sup>32</sup> Neither divine providence nor the fickleness of fate or of fortune were now a part of the historical processes of human affairs.

That David was personally familiar with the political and moral philosophy of Rousseau can safely be assumed. The philosopher's ideas

were a matter of common debate in the social circles in which David mixed. In his first unfinished autobiography the painter had noted that he had studied rhetoric at the Collège des Quatre Nations as a boy and that later, an initial condition of entry to his studio was a knowledge of Latin.<sup>33</sup> Such an artist knew that the art of history writing was a mediated one and that the authors of antiquity had also participated knowingly in this process. The literary nature and aesthetic of so much history writing in eighteenth-century France and the debates about its methodology provide a context for the formation of the history painter. A consideration of the history paintings of David will also show that these works had for basis a causation which interlinked reason with sentiment, the affairs of State with those of the heart, in problematic and acute ways, and that it was via the depiction of the dilemmas and predicaments of key individuals that such effects could be explored.

Even though Voltaire had advocated a history that should concern itself with the social conditions and circumstances of nations, this writer still approached the writing of his own histories by constructing the lives of a series of great men. The Siècle de Louis XIV was, for instance, a compilation of exemplary heroes and talented men; the period had earned a special distinction because of its encouragement of the arts.<sup>34</sup> Academies were, however, criticized for preventing the emergence of genius and great talent:

...Il y a une fatalité sur les académies: aucun ouvrage qu'on appelle académique n'a été encore, en aucun genre, un ouvrage de génie. Donnez-moi un artiste tout occupé de la crainte de ne pas saisir la manière de ses confrères, ses productions seront compassées et contraintes. Donnez-moi un homme d'un esprit libre, plein de la nature qu'il copie, il réussira. Presque tous les artistes sublimes, ou ont fleuri avant les établissements des

académies, ou ont travaillé dans un goût différent de celui qui régnait dans ces sociétés.

Corneille, Racine, Despréaux, Lesueur, Lemoine, non-seulement prirent une route différente de leurs confrères, mais ils les avaient presque tous pour ennemis.<sup>36</sup>

Here the influence of the academic system was considered to be limiting and constraining. Instead, the freedom of the artist as non-conformist was of value. The statement is a remarkably assertion that the true artist was a man of free spirit. It will be shown that more than forty years later David was to criticize the academies in much the same way. During the intervening period, an active discourse on the problematic notion of *gloire* had, however, evolved further. Alongside this debate, the role and status of the artist in society were also being re-evaluated.

#### Changing concepts of *gloire*

Increasingly, the exceptional man was considered to have acquired glory, not because of selfish ambition, but because of the public service he had rendered to others; a service which might also involve an element of personal sacrifice and/or hardship. *Gloire* required recognition and public acclaim. It should also be noted that public did not mean open to scrutiny in its modern sense, but denoted the community or body politic in the sense of the shared interests of those belonging to a nation or a community beyond the confines of one's family and circle of close friends. The origins of such constructions can, once again, be traced back to models offered by the writers of antiquity, whose authority could be subtly regulated to meet the stipulations of later commentators. Such written commentary,

fulfilling a standard tenet of neo-classical theory, imitated without plagiarising in ways that may be considered analogous to David's adaptations of classical sculpture for the configurations of his paintings.

In the prologue to his Bellum Catilinae, Sallust considered that spiritual rather than physical qualities were more likely to achieve the fame of posterity. The glory acquired because of wealth and beauty was fragile and of short duration, in contrast to that acquired because of virtue, which was brilliant and immortal.<sup>36</sup> The preface to the later Bellum Jugurthinum linked an appreciation of portraits of past heroes to a wish to emulate their glory because of worthy actions and not because of mere chance or fortune.<sup>37</sup> This Roman concept of *gloria* resided in an intended execution of great, courageous and virtuous deeds acclaimed by posterity.

Cicero's De Officiis linked *gloria* to the execution of duties for the *Res publica*, the political community.<sup>38</sup> Selfish courage was a vice and contrasted with courage in the service of the welfare of the nation.<sup>39</sup> True glory had roots and multiplied, whilst everything that was false was of short duration.<sup>40</sup> A high merit not a high position should be sought, as the search for fame could easily lead to injustice.<sup>41</sup>

Rollin cited Cicero in support of his observation that true *gloire* could never be separated from justice.<sup>42</sup> This true *gloire* was contrasted with a vainglory that seems to have acquired the values of another aristocratic and chivalric past, in which brilliant feats of arms enabled heroic individuals, with little social conscience and not bound to a social yolk, to triumph over adversity:

...Un Prince, un Général, qui marche à la tête d'une nombreuse armée dont tous les yeux sont tournés vers lui; qui d'un seul signal fait remuer ce vaste corps dont il est l'ame, et met en mouvement cent mille bras; qui porte partout le terreur et l'effroi; qui voit tomber devant lui les plus forts remparts et les plus hautes tours; devant qu'en un mot tout l'univers étonné et tremblant garde le silence: un tel homme paroît quelque chose de bien grand, et semble approcher beaucoup de la divinité.

Cependant, quand on examine de sang froid, sans préjugés, et avec des yeux éclairés par la raison, ces fameux Héros de l'antiquité, ces illustres Conquérans, on trouve souvent que cet éclat si brillant des actions guerrières n'est qu'un vain phantôme, qui peut imposer de loin, mais qui disparaît et s'évanouit à mesure qu'on s'en approche; et que toute cette prétendue gloire n'a souvent pour principe et pour fondement que l'ambition, l'avarice, l'injustice, la cruauté.<sup>43</sup>

The glory of a victory did not derive from the cupidity of a conqueror but because of its public utility and the wisdom of the victor. A clear definition of what constituted the *grand homme* was given:

Etre bon, libéral, bienfaisant, généreux; ne faire cas des richesses que pour les distribuer, des dignités que pour servir sa patrie, de la puissance et du crédit que pour être en état de réprimer le vice, et de mettre en honneur la vertu; être véritablement homme de bien, sans chercher à le paroître; supporter la pauvreté avec noblesse, les affronts et les injures avec patience, étouffer ses ressentimens, et rendre toute sorte de bons offices à un ennemi dont on peut se venger; préférer le bien public à tout; lui sacrifier ses biens, son repos, sa vie, sa réputation même s'il le faut: voilà ce qui rend l'homme grand, et véritablement digne d'estime.<sup>44</sup>

Success was not to be measured by personal wealth or power but in terms of the amount of virtuous service that could be rendered to others even if this involved a personal sacrifice of fame, fortune and life. The Romans had, above all, been motivated by a desire for just this kind of *gloire* and it was because patriotism and devotion to public welfare was rewarded by *gloire*, that Rome became great.<sup>45</sup> The Romans had used a simple laurel wreath to signify such *gloire* as a reward for some military action of distinction, courage and virtue.<sup>46</sup>

Other writers were, however, to consider the desire for *gloire* associated with the Roman temperament as problematic. Montesquieu's "Dialogue de Sylla et d'Eucrate" was first published in the Mercur de France of February 1745.<sup>47</sup> Sulla was presented as the heroic quintessence of the Roman character, motivated by *gloire* to acts of immoderation and bloodthirsty audacity:

...Le desir insatiable de dominer, que vous avez trouvé dans le coeur de quelques citoyens, vous a fait prendre la résolution d'être un homme extraordinaire: l'amour de votre liberté vous a fait prendre celle d'être terrible et cruel. Qui diroit qu'un héroïsme de principe eût été plus funeste qu'un héroïsme d'impétuosité?

...Sylla a donné à chaque famille de Rome un exemple domestique et terrible: "chaque Romain m'aura toujours devant les yeux; et, dans ses songes même, je lui apparaitrai couvert de sang; il croira voir les funestes tables, et lire son nom à la tête des proscrits. On murmure en secret contre mes loix; mais elles ne seront pas effacées par des flots même de sang romain."<sup>48</sup>

In the Encyclopédie, Voltaire had defined *gloire* as a reputation mixed with esteem, but it was Marmontel's additional article which tackled what had become a generally more ambivalent approach to the concept.<sup>49</sup> Marmontel made the by now familiar distinction between true *gloire*, which lasted and had utility, honesty and justice for its ends and the false or vainglory of the warrior hero, whose ambition and short-term desire for booty and glory led to bloodshed and evil. For this writer, a useful and virtuous participation with the good of the community was a necessary concomitant of the establishment of *gloire*. The action of Virginius sacrificing his daughter was not considered to be as glorious as that of Brutus' sacrifice of his sons, for Brutus was saving the honour of the law and of the *patrie*. The action of Virginius was honest, courageous and just for his family, but that of Brutus, although it was filled with pride, was done just

for Rome: "...et Rome, qui n'a regardé l'action de Virginius que comme celle d'un honnête homme et d'un bon pere, a consacré l'action de Brutus comme celle d'un héros. Rien n'est plus juste que ce retour."<sup>50</sup> D'Alembert's "Discours Préliminaire" to the Encyclopédie had stressed the useful and exemplary nature of history but also intimated that difficulties could arise when the interests of an individual conflicted with those of the State and the artificial political structures that had been created.<sup>51</sup>

Another article in the Encyclopédie, that on "Vertu," used the example of Brutus in order to explore distinctions of what could be considered true as opposed to false virtue. The example was used to demonstrate that such issues were often not clear-cut. The question was posed as to whether the father and the consul, in condemning his rebel children, was making a virtuous sacrifice. It was acknowledged that this issue had not been decided conclusively for: "les devoirs de l'homme en société sont quelquefois assez compliqués et entremêlés les uns dans les autres, pour ne pas s'offrir aussi tôt dans leur vrai jour..."<sup>52</sup> Virtue was more interesting, beautiful and acquired more *gloire* if it was allied to misfortune. The veneration accorded to the dying Socrates was used as an example of how interest in virtue could be inspired.<sup>53</sup> The article ended with an exhortation to contemplate and imitate models of virtue presented by history, society and by painters such as Michelangelo and Raphael. Marmontel's article on *gloire* had stated that it was up to the *gens de Lettres* to be arbiters of *gloire* and to transmit it to posterity.<sup>54</sup> In depicting such famous figures from the past as Belisarius, Socrates and Brutus, it will be shown for the first time that David was also deliberately engaging



with these important discourses on *gloire*, which were a matter of common currency at the time.

As has been briefly indicated already, the problems of the role of the individual in society concerned Rousseau a great deal. In the Contrat Social, the writer envisaged a form of general will, constituted by and for all which would supersede the selfish interests of the individual. The intervention of an exceptional individual was not totally excluded however, for the Legislator was conceived of as a kind of prophet who, through superior intelligence and intuition, would grasp future conditions from present factors, in order to suggest institutions and draw up positive laws to ensure the smooth functioning and survival of the State.<sup>55</sup> In the earlier Discours sur les sciences et les arts such a role had not yet been fully formulated. Here, even though the arts were generally considered to have had a corrupting influence, a few exceptional "savans du premier ordre" were to "élever des monumens à la gloire de l'esprit humain."<sup>56</sup>

The notion of *gloire* had thus been allied to constructions of the *grand homme* by many writers in a variety of texts and in diverse and non-uniform ways. In general however, a true *gloire* of lasting esteem was contrasted with a vainglory of short-term interest and ambition. The attributes of military heroism also increasingly came under attack, whilst those of the wise and considered thinker, philosopher or magistrate were to find more favour. Actual military defeat in the Seven Years' War did little to promote the heroism of soldiers, whilst an ideology of neo-stoic, civic virtue was gaining ground.<sup>57</sup> Altruistic service to the community, which might involve some personal sacrifice, found favour and replaced blind obedience to a single

prince or monarch. At the same time, constructions of great and exceptional individuals, who were to be recognized by posterity, provided an alternative ideology to a Roman Catholic belief in the immortality of the soul. Human agency had consciously come to direct and control the celebration of virtue, talent and genius, openly and as reward in itself. This more pragmatic approach to public service was increasingly allied to a sense of nationhood. The achievements of an individual or of groups of individuals came to be considered as of benefit to the French nation as a whole. The arts could, in particular, be enlisted into the service of such a nationalistic cause. By commemorating exceptional achievement, they could also provide the State with monuments as to its own greatness.

#### The arts in the service of French *gloire*

James Leith has examined the different ways in which the arts were used as a vehicle for political propaganda in late eighteenth-century France.<sup>50</sup> David's history paintings were precisely not the instruments of political propaganda, but the context of ennoblement to which they belonged requires some elaboration.

Jean Locquin was the first of many art historians to note the call in mid-century for a return to the high art of history painting in France.<sup>51</sup> La Font de Saint Yenne had, for instance, stated the case with much eloquence:

Un Peintre attaché aujourd'hui obstinément à l'Histoire par l'élévation de ses pensées, et par la noblesse de ses expressions, se verra réduit à quelques ouvrages pour les Eglises, les Gobelins, ou à un très-petit nombre de Tableaux de chevalet que l'on a presque entièrement proscrits des ameublements, parce qu'ils gâtent, dit-on, les tapisseries de

soie, dont on préfère à présent le lustre et l'uniformité aux savantes variétés du Pinceau, et à toutes les productions de l'esprit. Quelle sera la ressource du Peintre Historien s'il n'est pas en état de nourrir sa famille de mets plus solides que ceux de la gloire?<sup>60</sup>

The history painter was valued as he painted for the soul and not merely for the eyes and the products of his labours gave *gloire* but insufficient pecuniary reward. Despite La Font's recommendations and despite his own considerable success as a history painter, David was in practice to earn far more as a painter of portraits than of history. As a liberal, sister art to that of poetry, the ideas that history painting communicated went beyond its commercial value as a mere commodity, the product of a trade, of precious materials and of skilled craftsmanship.

The conceptual value of the *istoria*, as the noblest form of painting which was unsullied by commerce, had been recognized since the time of Alberti. In the eighteenth century this value was to be harnessed to the promotion of a French national school. La Font was to defend himself from his own critics by affirming that his zeal "n'a d'autre but que l'honneur de l'Ecole Française et de sa patrie," and that his only interest was to contribute to the *gloire* of the Nation.<sup>61</sup> Writing anonymously in response to La Font, the Abbé le Blanc praised the royal sponsorship of the Salon d'Apollon competition of 1747 as it gave painters the opportunity to work for *gloire*:

...Tranquilles du côté du salaire, puisque le Roi prend les onze Tableaux, et n'ayant point à craindre des différences dans la manière d'être récompensés, toujours humiliantes pour les gens à talent, (le Roi paie mille écus chacun de ces Tableaux). Ils n'ont tous travaillé que pour la gloire, et chacun d'eux a fait de nouveaux efforts pour ajouter à sa réputation, et surpasser ou du moins égaler celle de ses Rivaux.<sup>62</sup>

The State had provided the means whereby painters could divest themselves of the baser concerns of financial reward; the products of their labours were to promote their own *gloire* and also that of the nation.

Andrew McClellan has examined the close links that existed later in the century between a revival of interest in the academic eulogy and the Comte d'Angiviller's patronage, as Director General of Royal Buildings, of a series of statues of great French men.<sup>63</sup> Sculptural effigy can obviously commemorate and proclaim the existence of exceptional individuals as great Frenchmen of the past in the present and for the future. In his Lettres Philosophiques Voltaire had, for instance, noted the posthumous honours accorded to such as Sophocles and Plato by the Athenians and to Newton by the English. The statues, not royal tombs, in Westminster Abbey were glorious monuments which excited the soul and moulded further great men.<sup>64</sup> This idea was taken up by a contributor to the Mercure de France of January 1765 who called for a Christian Elysium, a pantheon of recognition in the capital city, which would honour the remains of thinkers of profundity, poets, orators and famous artists.<sup>65</sup> In the same year, the Abbé Laugier recommended the erection of durable monuments to commemorate, immortalise and transmit to posterity the authors of the nation's happiness and *gloire*. Triumphal arches with sculpted bas reliefs, trophies and inscriptions, fountains, statues and portraits were to serve as reward, encouragement and example for great souls of the past, present and future.<sup>66</sup> Fifteen years later, the antiquarian Séroux d'Agincourt commissioned a bust of Poussin from André Segla, a pensionnaire at the Académie in Rome where David had also been a

student; the bust with the inscription "*Pictori Gallo*" was to be placed in the Pantheon there.<sup>67</sup> As in the classical past, the institution of greatness had come to be honoured in a tangible, visible way, open to general view. At the same time debates, on who should be entitled to such stature and what were the qualities it required, grew. More value was to be placed on the qualities of great men as great Frenchmen and Poussin, although he had worked mostly in Rome, was to be claimed for this Pantheon as a history painter and as the foremost painter of the French school.

The tradition of representing Frenchmen as *hommes illustres* will now be briefly considered. In the sixteenth century A. Thevet had sought to reconstruct the portraits of great men of the past in a collection of engravings and in the seventeenth century there followed several series of histories in the form of portrait galleries: at the château de Beauregard, Richelieu's Palais Cardinal, the château d'Eu and the château de Bourgogne.<sup>68</sup> Unlike collections in Italy, these series were entirely of court, political and military figures and, apart from the portrait of Rabelais at Beauregard, writers, philosophers and artists were excluded.

The second volume of Charles Perrault's Les Hommes Illustres, which first appeared in 1700 four years after the first volume, had had to justify the inclusion of artisans with princes:

On me reproche d'avoir meslé des Artisans avec des Princes et des Cardinaux. Il est vray que dans le mesme livre il y a des Eloges de Princes, de Cardinaux et d'Artisans, mais il n'est point vray que je les aye meslez ensemble, et ils sont dans les classes toutes séparées les unes des autres. Comme mon intention principale a esté de faire honneur à notre siecle, j'ay crû que le Genie et la capacité extraordinaire des Ouvriers qu'il a produits estoit un avantage que je ne devois point negliger, et que ces excellens hommes ne contribuoiert gueres moins en leur maniere à la gloire du siecle où ils ont vescu, que les grands

hommes d'Etat et les grandes Capitaines. Il est certain que les noms de Phidias et d'Apelle, mis après celuy d'Alexandre mesme, ne font point de honte ny à Alexandre ny à son siecle; on trouve au contraire qu'ils y ajoutent un nouvel éclat, par le concours des differens dons precieux que le Ciel a répandus sur toutes sortes d'hommes en mesme-temps.<sup>69</sup>

Of the fifty men of the first volume, the only so-called artisans that had been included were the architect, François Mansart, the painters Poussin, Le Brun and Le Sueur, the engravers Jacques Callot and Robert Nanteuil and the goldsmith, Claude Ballin. The preface to the twenty-seven volumes of Du Castre d'Auvigny's Les Vies des Hommes Illustres, published between 1739 and 1768, acknowledged instead that history permitted men of talent to enjoy high rank of a similar nature, regardless of birth and wealth; the sculptor Praxiteles was, for instance, on a par with the Emperor Alexander.<sup>70</sup> There were many of these modern versions of Plutarch and they contained significant differences, in what was chosen to be recorded for posterity. Qualities of talent, even of genius, came to be regarded more and more highly in France. The Abbé Saint Pierre's "Discours sur les differences du Grand Homme et de l'Homme Illustre" had even considered Alexander not to be a great man because he had been ambitious only for himself and had not served the *bien public* virtuously.<sup>71</sup> In Honoré Lacombe de Prezel's Dictionnaire des portraits historiques, anecdotes et traits remarquables des Hommes Illustres of 1773 the ambition of Alexander was further considered to have led him to vice and vainglory, to him not being a hero and never knowing true happiness nor true *gloire*.<sup>72</sup> The three volumes of this work mixed the lives of men with women, those who had died recently with figures from the classical past and again, not high birth nor great wealth, but a

perceived talent was the principle guiding selection. Thus, in alphabetical order, Seneca could rub shoulders with the Marquise de Sévigné and Socrates.<sup>73</sup> The approach now focussed on character and *traits d'esprit*; it was more important to consider Alexander in the tent of Darius than on the battlefield.<sup>74</sup> It is interesting to note that David failed to complete a history painting which had for subject an episode from the life of Alexander, although he produced a compositional drawing and a wood panel depicting different scenes from the life of this hero, which will be discussed in later chapters.

The academic *éloge* or eulogy provided a further context for discussions on what should be the criteria for selection to a modern pantheon. Voltaire had called for the form's revival in his Eloge Funèbre des Officiers qui sont morts dans la Guerre de 1741, although this eulogy, which was first published in 1748, seems principally to have been a veiled attack on the sybaritic existence of the citizens of Paris.<sup>75</sup> Antoine-Léonard Thomas was to receive the first prize awarded by the Académie Française for a eulogy in 1759;<sup>76</sup> the writer went on to win acclaim as the best exponent of this art form. His Essai sur les Eloges was published in a collection of his eulogies in 1773; it contains valuable comment about the form.<sup>77</sup>

Thomas proclaimed that only a few individuals were worthy of such celebration, although examples were provided by the history of the arts as well as that of empires.<sup>78</sup> In the imaginary world created by the eulogy, genius or *vertu*, liable to oppression, was to be celebrated:

...Là Socrate est vengé, Galilée est absous, Bacon reste un grand homme; là Cicéron ne craint plus le fer des assassins, ni Démosthène le poison; là Virgile est au-dessus d'Auguste et Corneille près de Condé. Chacun, par l'ascendant de son génie ou

de ses vertus, monte et va prendre son rang; les âmes opprimées se relèvent et recouvrent leur dignité. Ceux qui ont été outragés pendant la vie, trouvent du moins la gloire à l'entrée du mausolée qui doit couvrir leurs cendres: l'envie disparaît et l'immortalité commence.<sup>79</sup>

At the entrance to a mausoleum, the ashes of philosophers, scientists, writers and orators were, again, to be endowed with immortality and with *gloire*. Only a few men of exceptional sensibility could convey great things and it was up to them to celebrate virtue and honour genius.<sup>80</sup> Just as a painter first conceived his figures before taking up his pencil, so should a eulogist first meditate on the genius to be praised and on the ensuing ideas, which would accrue, become more complex and engage the mind.<sup>81</sup> It was not, however, necessary to write whole volumes but to communicate feeling with strength and warmth.<sup>82</sup> Thus, the promotion of the secular eulogy created further opportunities, whereby history of an exemplary and aesthetic nature was to be communicated by men of sensibility. The process was to immortalise the *gloire* of a few exceptionally worthy French talents in ways that moved and stirred the emotions in French and for Frenchmen.

David's history paintings were not the pictorial equivalents of the academic eulogy, but the discourse on great men and as to what constituted their true *gloire* was a part of their context. The honouring of talent and genius, often of specifically artistic genius and ability, was furthermore directly pertinent to the position of David and his aspirations as a history painter. If David could see himself as a successor to Poussin, the first *Premier Peintre* of the French school, then he, too, would acquire the *gloire*, immortality and status of a *grand homme* for posterity.



David, *gloire* and the history painter, Poussin

The critical revival of interest in Poussin at the end of the eighteenth century has been analysed by Richard Verdi.<sup>83</sup> There were academic eulogies to the painter, such as that by Nicolas Guibal, which received much praise in its own right when it was read at a séance of the Académie on 4th October 1783.<sup>84</sup> Poussin was the only painter to be commemorated by a statue in the series of sculptures commissioned by d'Angiviller on behalf of the State.<sup>85</sup> These monuments were models of great French men of the past; their figures were being honoured by the nation, but they also had the potential of honouring and ennobling the nation in the present and for the future. Julien's plaster model of Poussin was exhibited at the Salon of 1789; the description that accompanied it in the Salon catalogue of that year endowed the model with its own narrative: "ce célèbre Peintre sortant de son lit pour tracer une composition qu'il a méditée toute la nuit."<sup>86</sup> The final sculpture (Plate 1) shows Poussin in a cloak draped like a toga with a half-finished drawing of the Le Testament d'Endamidas (Plate 3) before him. This painting had for theme the nature of true *gloire* and its influence will be more closely examined in later chapters, but here it is important to note that the figure of the seventeenth-century painter was being appropriated as part of the nation's cultural heritage, with his life commemorated less as an artisan, more as a thinker of some stature, who participated in a process of creation, composition and invention in active and independent ways. In Cambry's Essai sur la Vie et sur les Tableaux de Poussin first published in 1783 and reprinted in 1799, Poussin's

Normandy origins were apportioned their own share of *gloire*: "La Normandie peut se glorifier d'avoir fait naître le Poussin, comme elle se vante d'avoir enfanté le Corneille. Elle a donné des rivaux à Sophocle, et des égaux à Raphaël."<sup>87</sup> Poussin was placed as on a par with Corneille and both men, which Normandy had given birth to, could rival the greatest artists of other cultures and nations.

David was well aware of Poussin's standing as one of the first and greatest history painters in the pantheon of the French school. Training in France and in Rome was directed to the emulation and revival of the art of history painting in which it was considered that Poussin had excelled.<sup>88</sup> One of the first parallels made between the art of Poussin and the art of David was, significantly, made in Rome. An article in some Memorie per le belle arti of September 1785 compared the recent success David had had in that city with Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) to the success the immortal Poussin had enjoyed as a man of Paris but a painter of Rome.<sup>89</sup> David, in turn, paid tribute to Poussin's status as a *grand homme* of lasting reputation.

Philippe Bordes has published the correspondence between King Stanislas-Augustus of Poland and his agent in Paris, Filippo Mazzei, which contains details of the King's commission of a series of portraits of illustrious men in 1789-90.<sup>90</sup> The King was not impressed with the quality of the portrait copies he had ordered, even though David was supposed to have supervised the work of the copyists, his students.<sup>91</sup> In a letter of 21st May 1790, Mazzei reported on a meeting he had had with the artist to discuss the commission. David had apparently suggested that the portraits of Poussin and of Le Sueur should be included along with that of Le Brun. The meeting had ended

with the painter saying he had the "*malattia di Poussin*" and that once his parents-in-law had died, he intended to live and die in Rome.<sup>92</sup>

A letter from Marmontel to David of 30th May 1790 was cited by the artist's biographer grandson, Jules David. It communicated the consent of the Académie Française to the loan of their portraits of former members, so that they could be copied for the King of Poland. It also proclaimed that David, too, would find his own place in such a collection: "*Lorsque les Souverains voudront avoir une collection complète des portraits des hommes qui, dans les arts comme dans les lettres, auront illustré notre siècle, le vôtre ne sera point oublié.*"<sup>93</sup> The second despatch of portrait copies to the King, which was sent from Paris on 4th September 1791, contained those of four women and fifteen men including those of Mirabeau, Catinat, Poussin, Le Sueur, l'abbé Barthélemy, Franklin, Buffon, Necker, La Fayette, Washington and "*David en profil*".<sup>94</sup> David's participation in this pantheon of illustrious men was as an artist. He seems to have been upset that the first batch of portraits had not found favour with the King, even though he had received a small box as a token of the aristocrat's esteem.<sup>95</sup>

The major verbal tributes given to Poussin by David begin only at the time of the Revolution and concern the role of the arts and the status of the artist. David's speech to the Convention of 15th November 1793 announced the principles on which the republican Jury des Arts was to be chosen in order to judge the works of young painters, sculptors and architects, as an alternative to the system of prizes that had been awarded by the Académie:

...Il faut donc que l'artiste ait étudié tous les ressorts du genre humain; il faut qu'il ait une grande connaissance de la

nature; il faut en un mot qu'il soit philosophe. Socrate, habile sculpteur; Jean-Jacques, bon musicien; l'immortel Poussin traçant sur la toile les plus sublimes leçons de philosophe, sont autant de témoins, qui prouvent que le génie des arts ne doit avoir d'autre guide que le flambeau de la raison. Si l'artiste doit être pénétré de ces sentiments, le juge doit l'être encore davantage.<sup>96</sup>

The models to be emulated were praised not for their expertise in their chosen specialisations, but for their rational understanding and knowledge of the human heart. The skilful sculptor Socrates, the good musician Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the immortal Poussin, whose tracings on canvas conveyed sublime lessons in philosophy, had all somehow been welded together without overt reference to artistic persecution.

David's criticism of the Museum's Commission again used the work of Poussin to make wider claims for the role of the arts: in educating the public, in providing models to be commemorated by history and by posterity, and in ultimately benefitting the welfare and *gloire* of the *patrie*:

Vous chercherez le Moïse foulant aux pieds la couronne de Pharaon, très beau tableau du peintre philosophe, du Poussin, et vous ne retrouverez plus qu'une toile abîmée de rouge et de noir, perdue de restauration.

C'est ainsi qu'on accable les Poussin, les Dominiquin, Raphaël même, de quantité de productions qui ne méritent pas de voir le jour, et ne servent qu'à propager le mauvais goût et l'erreur.

Pour prévenir ces funestes abus, pour placer tout sous l'oeil vivifiant du peuple et éclairer chaque objet de la publicité et de la portion de gloire qu'il peut réclamer; pour établir enfin dans le Muséum un ordre digne des choses qu'il renferme, ne négligeons rien, citoyens Collègues, et n'oublions pas que la culture des arts est un moyen de plus d'en imposer à nos ennemis.<sup>97</sup>

The rhetoric developed expansively:

...écrivons, à la manière des anciens, notre histoire dans les monuments; qu'ils soient grands et immortels comme la République que nous avons fondée; et que le génie des arts, conservateur des

ouvrages sublimes que nous possédons, soit en même temps un génie créateur, et enfante de nouveaux chefs d'oeuvre.<sup>98</sup>

In a letter from prison of 18th November 1794 to Boissy d'Anglas, David defended his vocation as a painter:

La peinture ne rougira pas de me compter au nombre de ses enfants et le choix de mes sujets prouvera aux artistes qui viendront après moi combien j'ai l'âme sensible. Je n'ai jamais cherché autre chose dans mes ouvrages que d'inspirer l'amour des vertus; jamais je n'ai aimé à représenter sur la toile des scènes de fureur ou de trahison et de vengeance. Les seules passions sublimes de l'âme ont eu des attraites pour moi. On ne m'appellera pas un peintre ami du sang.<sup>99</sup>

At this time, it was clearly politically expedient for the writer to state that his choice of subjects expressed states of sublime passion, of soul and of sensibility and not the more actively political acts of treason and of vengeance - this point will be further explored in the last chapter. The letter did, though, continue with a defence of one of the active contributions to the Revolution the painter turned politician had made: the campaign to suppress the Académie:

...Quand Colbert, par l'instigation de Lebrun, institua l'Académie de Peinture, Lebrun était déjà un grand homme. Il ne fut pas élevé sous une Académie ainsi que les Lesueur et les Poussin. Depuis la fondation des Académies, nous n'avons pas eu, à proprement parler, un véritable grand homme; le génie étant entravé de tous côtés, il ne peut prendre essor. Pour avoir accès à cette Académie, il était obligé de suivre une routine reçue. Les Académies n'ont pu tout au plus produire que des habiles gens, et je répéterai qu'elles font beaucoup de peintres, mais pas un grand homme.<sup>100</sup>

David was not being evasive here, nor showing regret; it is clear that for him the Académie represented a force that prohibited the emergence not of painters, but of great men. The criticism echoed Voltaire's complaints of over forty years earlier. The report to the Convention on the suppression of the academies, which David had delivered on 8th August 1793, singled out what he considered to be the "équilibre des

talents" fostered by the Académie, as being particularly reprehensible.<sup>101</sup>

Poussin was a model to emulate consciously for ideological reasons. To imitate without copying or plagiarism had become a commonplace of academic theory.<sup>102</sup> This precept was re-interpreted by David whose statements about Poussin show that he was concerned to imitate ambition and not merely the traditions of a craft. Indeed, he was said to have repudiated the craft of the Académie quite explicitly in 1789 with the words:

L'Académie est comme la boutique d'un perruquier, on ne peut en sortir sans avoir du blanc à son habit. Que de temps vous perdrez à oublier ces attitudes, ces mouvements de convention dont ses professeurs tendent, comme une carcasse de poulet, la poitrine du modèle? Ce dernier lui-même, avec leurs ficelles, n'est pas à l'abri de leur manière. Ils vous apprendront sans doute à faire votre torse, le métier enfin; car ils font métier de la peinture; quant à moi, le métier, je le méprise comme la boue.<sup>103</sup>

The criticism here was for the practices of the Académie, rather than for what the institution stood for.

David did not refer to Poussin as an overt source of formal or stylistic inspiration. The omission of Poussin from the list of formative influences in the unfinished autobiography of after 1808 underlines the fact that the seventeenth-century predecessor was not acknowledged as a pictorial source in any extant statement that can be attributed to David with certainty.<sup>104</sup> There is a reference to Poussin in the *Livret* to the exhibition of Les Sabines (Plate 57) of 1799, but it comes in a footnote:

Remarquons ici, en passant, que l'instant de cet enlèvement a été traité par le pinceau touchant et sévère du Poussin, à qui les Romains modernes ont déferé le nom de divin. J'ai osé traiter la suite du même sujet, au moment où les Sabines viennent séparer les armées des Sabins et des Romains.<sup>105</sup>

The footnote acknowledged Poussin's treatment of the abduction of the Sabine women, but also served to stress David's boldness in choosing a different, later incident: a moment not of violence but of reconciliation. It was a token acknowledgement which will be shown in the last chapter to refer to David's need to be seen to revert to the high art of history painting after the Revolution, but even in this footnote, the overt reversion could be interpreted as double-edged. Poussin's brush was both touching and severe, while it was the modern Romans, not the modern Parisians, whom David considered to have bestowed divinity onto the painter. Exactly who the modern Romans were, or what David had derived from Poussin, was definitely not made clear.

There is one final revealing reference to Poussin, made by David. It is in a letter of 27th December 1819 from Brussels to Gros in Paris. Near the beginning of the letter, there is an expression of paternal interest and an exhortation for Gros to do a history painting:

Mon ami, oui vous avez bien raison de comparer un maître que vous avez connu et aimé depuis votre enfance à un second père. Je ne sais si mes enfants physiques, recevant les mêmes récompenses dont vous êtes l'objet pourraient me causer un plus sensible plaisir. Vous voilà l'égal en dignité de vos rivaux... Surpassez-les en talent, vous le pouvez; faites un tableau d'histoire.<sup>106</sup>

There were some pointed comparisons between David's situation in exile, having survived most conditions that life could throw up and preparing himself for posterity, and the need for Gros to make his own marks for *gloire* and for posterity. The name of Poussin was, once again, evoked in precisely this cause:

...Vous êtes sage, le faste vous touche peu, vous aimez votre talent. Ayez toujours présent à l'esprit que les places, les

honneurs et les richesses sont nuls pour la postérité. Il n'y a que le talent qu'on considère. Poussin, Dominiquin et tant d'autres n'étaient pas riches et leurs ouvrages sont immortels.<sup>107</sup>

The works of Poussin and the name of Poussin were of stated value to David because they had survived as part of the annals of history and still continued to provide food for thought and because, in defiance of academic practice, David had emerged not as a dutiful craftsman, but as a great man of lasting fame and of nobility of enterprise.

Miette de Villars, one of David's first biographers, reported a discussion between Fabre d'Eglantine and the artist when he had first been put in prison after 9th Thermidor. David had apparently agreed that he would only be open to corruption if promised "les honneurs du Panthéon de ton vivant."<sup>108</sup> The transformation of the Church of St Geneviève into a Pantheon with "La Patrie Reconnaisante" on the pediment of its façade had given concrete form to the concept and made access to it readily attainable for David and his contemporaries.<sup>109</sup> The artist had been personally involved in the pantheonisation of various heroes during the Revolution.<sup>110</sup> Many of his speeches as Deputy to the Convention had advocated that the arts should be used to promote the *gloire* of the nation. The upheavals of the Revolution were, however, also producing radical re-evaluations of just what constituted the nation and the *bien public*, but before these upheavals and before his own period of public service, David's desire for a *gloire* that would last was of a personal nature, for himself, although his personal success would also, in the manner of Poussin, contribute to the *gloire* of the nation as a whole. In addition, as long as the



institution of the monarchy existed, the State also participated in its own right as an active corporation of some substance.

The institutional framework for the *gloire* of the history painter

At the David Contre David Colloque in 1789, Ugo van de Sandt noted the unusual shape and large size of the first version of Bélisaire demandant l'aumône (Plate 23).<sup>11</sup> Approximately 10' square, the confines of the canvas were peculiar to the official royal commissions awarded by D'Angiviller. The shape posed difficult compositional problems for the exposition of narrative, which tends to a more horizontal left to right reading. David's choice of this unusual framework for his *Agrément* to the Académie may well testify as to his desire for commissions and recognition as a history painter of the highest order. The well-known correspondence between the Marquis de Bièvre and David of 1785 certainly made this explicit. Writing from Rome, the painter was keen to gain a favourable position for his new work, Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) in the Salon hang of that year. The 10 x 10 format was now abandoned by the artist as the royal commission had given him the opportunity of making a personal statement of even greater grandeur for himself:

...Pour la grandeur de mon tableau que vous me demandez, j'ai outrepassé la mesure que l'on m'avait donnée pour le Roi. Elle ne fut donnée de 10 sur 10, mais ayant tourné ma composition de toutes les manières, voyant qu'elle perdait son énergie, j'ai abandonné de faire un tableau pour le Roi, et je l'ai fait pour moi. Jamais on ne me fera rien faire au détriment de ma gloire, et je l'ai fait de 13 pieds sur 10 pieds. Vous ne doutez pas que je serais flatté qu'il fût pour le Roi, ne sachant pas si j'en ferai jamais un pareil.<sup>12</sup>

The painting was for the King, but the painter who had made it was just as aware that his own reputation depended on a favourable reception at the Salon.

Exposure of such a work in the Salon provided the conditions in which a painter and member of the Académie could establish and assert his own *gloire*. As the many extant Salon reviews testify, the exhibitions had become highly competitive arenas, even though they were exclusive and hierarchical. David's letter to Wicar of 17th September 1789, that is two months after the Storming of the Bastille and three months after the Tennis Court Oath, reported the favourable critical reception that had been awarded to Les Licteurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils (Plate 40). The painter urged his pupil to paint, for this was the only way *solide gloire* could be attained: "La peinture ne veut pas qu'on la néglige. Pensez que l'on a de solide gloire que par elle et que le reste n'est qu'accessoire."<sup>13</sup> Poussin had won just such a long-lasting and valid acclaim because of the favourable critical reception being given to his works retrospectively. At this time, David aspired to a similarly long-lasting reputation because of the outstanding qualities of his own painting and, especially, his own history paintings which, rather than serve as didactic example in the short term were, instead, to communicate ideas over time.

Miette de Villars criticized the facile comparisons that had been made between the art of David and that of Poussin.<sup>14</sup> The writer did, nevertheless, admit that there was truth in the aphorism that: "David et Poussin ont senti que les arts dépendent du dessein; qu'il faut émouvoir l'âme des hommes sensibles et captiver l'esprit des hommes

instruits."<sup>15</sup> Poussin's history paintings had often been praised for their qualities of design, expression and invention, in the body of academic theory that promoted history painting as the noblest occupation for the visual artist.<sup>16</sup>

Members of the Académie had all along promoted an ennobled status for themselves by emphasizing their art of ideas as a liberal and sister art to those of poetry and music. Félibien's introduction to the series of Conferences delivered to the Académie in 1667 and published in 1669 considered, for instance, that nothing could contribute so much to the glory of a Prince as the immortal works of painters and sculptors.<sup>17</sup> Although practical skills were necessary for the painter, these could be of value only if they were allied to imagination and the judicious use of reason. Poussin was singled out for particular praise, because these conceptual qualities were evidently present in his work.<sup>18</sup>

Early in the eighteenth century, the Abbé Dubos, in his popular Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture, praised Poussin specifically for his powers of invention. The La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2) presented the viewer with a particularly moving and varied range of passions and incorporated a decorum that was fitting and appropriate, even though a painter could not express all the complexities articulated by the "Qu'il mourût" of the Old Horace in Corneille's play.<sup>19</sup> Later in this work Dubos separated painters without genius who concentrated on mechanical execution, on compass and rule, from the able who conveyed superior beauties in a poetic way. The former could not be good judges of painting: "Peuvent-ils être bons juges du tout, quand ils sont mauvais juges de la partie de

l'invention, qui fait le principal mérite des ouvrages, et qui distingue le grand Homme du simple Artisan."<sup>120</sup> Powers of invention, not merely those of imitation, distinguished the *grand homme* from the simple artisan.

The next chapters will show that David's teacher of history at the Académie, Michel-François Dandré-Bardon, furthered both the praise of Poussin's powers of invention and the ennobling profession of the history painter. A recently published manuscript by Joseph-Marie Vien, who was named Premier Peintre in 1789 and whose studio David had entered as a pupil in 1764,<sup>121</sup> also shows just how much value was increasingly to be placed on the artist as a creator of genius and sensibility. Here the artist was endowed with wisdom, imagination and profound thought and he had the potential *gloire* of heroes:

...Mais que la différence est grande, entre le simple *imitateur* et le véritable *Artiste*! J'appelle véritable *Artiste*, le *Créateur*; et j'entends par *Créateur* celui que Minerve a doué tout à la fois de sagesse et d'imagination, et qui, Peintre ou Sculpteur, brûle dans son âme, du désir d'exprimer sur la toile ou le marbre tout ce que la Nature offre à ses regards. Rien n'est caché pour son oeil pénétrant. A chaque pas qu'il fait, il médite sur ce qu'il voit. L'attitude et l'annonce du malheur l'affligent; l'épanchement extérieur de la joye l'égaye; la gloire qui environne les héros, l'enflamme. Il veut arriver lui-même à la gloire.<sup>122</sup>

Writing specifically about the formation of history painters, Vien recommended the models of past masters whose names, engraved in the temple of immortality, could be joined by latter-day hero-artists.<sup>123</sup> The model of Poussin served as the artist who, born for the *gloire* of the nation, had been endowed with rare genius. This was evident in the profundity of his thoughts and the appropriateness of the varied expressions he depicted:

...Examinez la plupart des tableaux du Poussin, la *Femme adultère*, le *Déluge*, le *Jugement de Salomon*, les *Sept Sacrements*

etc., vous y reconnoîtrez le penseur profond, le philosophe. Dans ces Compositions, rien ne vous distrait du sujet principal, tout vous y attache ou vous y ramène; vous êtes transporté dans le lieu même où le scène s'est passée; les expressions, variées suivant l'état des personnages, sont toutes parfaitement justes. Ce sont là des ouvrages d'un de ces hommes, dont, malheureusement pour les Arts, la Nature est avare, ou qu'elle ne produit pas sans difficulté; car enfin, combien en peut-on mettre au même rang que le Poussin, peintre véritablement né pour la gloire de notre Nation?'<sup>24</sup>

Wisdom, reason and judgement were necessary, but they had become allied to natural talent and innate genius rather than just to *Principes positifs*.<sup>125</sup>

In December 1781, the Premier Peintre Pierre communicated his hopes for the future to Lagrenée, director of the French Académie in Rome:

...Nous n'avons plus de Le Sueur, de Bourdon, ny de Jouvenet, mais grace a la grandeur du Roy et au zele du Superieur, notre Ecole conserve les bons principes, le bon goût. Et si la Nature se dispoit à faire l'un des efforts qui produisent les grands hommes, elle trouveroit tout préparé pour la seconder.<sup>126</sup>

Although the actual practices of the Académie may well have been preventing the emergence of great men of talent, in theory at least existing structures in France sought to celebrate the *gloire* of the history painter as a *grand homme*. It was just to this position that David laid claim. His history paintings of before the Revolution will now be examined; they arose out of and belonged to an existing *grande manière* tradition, in which the processes of invention, of history painting and of the *grand homme* were highly valued.

### TRAINING IN HIGH ART

This chapter will examine the early history paintings of David, up to and including both versions of Bélisaire demandant l'aumône (Plates 23,24). The first version of this work was submitted to the Académie for approval as the painter's *agrément* on 24th August 1781.<sup>1</sup> David had been listed as taking lessons at the Académie from 1766 on; that is from the age of seventeen.<sup>2</sup> The painter's training with the Académie was to continue for the next seventeen years, that is until he was received on 22nd August 1783, as a full academician in his own right with the *morceau de réception* of La Douleur d'Andromaque (Plate 9).<sup>3</sup> The chapter will focus on the three history paintings produced by David in order to gain the approval of, and his own personal acceptance by, his masters at the Académie: La Mort de Sénèque (Plate 4), Le Médecin Erisistrate découvre la cause de la maladie d'Antiochus (Plate 11) and the Bélisaire (Plate 23).

#### The written word and the formation of history painters

The treatises of the academician, Michel-François Dandré Bardon will, in particular, be analysed with reference to David's early adherence to, rather than rejection of, the works of his masters. This adherence then conditioned the repudiation of the craft tradition, into which David considered his training to have sunk. In a letter of 1811, Suau, a pupil in David's studio reported David's

dislike of Dandré Bardon, one of the leading theorists of the Académie and who had succeeded Lépicié as Professor of History there.<sup>4</sup> David had apparently said to Suau that when he had been a pupil at the Académie, he had called his teacher M. d'Andron Bardès. An examination of the treatises and doctrines this academician left for posterity will, however, reveal important correspondences with many of David's early history paintings and show just how much the painter was first immersed within existing theory and practice. This will, in turn, throw new light on David's subsequent suppression of the Académie and on his own artistic evolution, in which a conflict, between the need to conform to and a need to depart from tradition, has already been noted by Norman Bryson.<sup>5</sup> The corruption of the academician's name is a preliminary linguistic example of just such tendencies.

Dandré Bardon's Traité de Peinture of 1765 contained much pertinent advice for an aspiring history painter:

...L'attention de lire, non-seulement dans les meilleurs Auteurs, mais encore dans divers Historiens le sujet qu'on doit peindre, contribue infiniment à la fécondité et à la justesse des pensées. Par la lecture réitérée on en grave profondément l'image dans la mémoire, et les différentes tournures que les Ecrivains prêtent à un événement, les divers aspects sous lesquels ils le présentent sont autant de flambeaux qui éclairent, qui vivifient, qui animent le génie. La combinaison de leurs différentes lueurs produit des jours, qui donnent au sujet une clarté nouvelle.<sup>6</sup>

and: "C'est souvent du beaux choix du trait d'Histoire que dépend la fortune d'un Tableau."<sup>7</sup> David's ways of choosing subject will be shown to be crucial to an understanding of his later history paintings in that he was to employ processes which involved an inordinate care in selecting and rejecting themes. Ideas were to be sketched out via a series of drawings that focused on complex moments from a history or

story; moments which had special potential for loading meaning by the artist and for extrapolation of meaning by the spectator. The subjects of his early history paintings were, however, prescribed by his teachers and masters at the Académie.

In his unfinished autobiography of after 1808, David accounted for his failure to win the Grand Prix de Rome of 1772 in great detail. The account begins with a description of how the artist ran to read his Ovid as soon as he had heard what the set subject was to be:

...Plein d'ardeur, j'écoute la lecture du sujet, c'était Diane et Apollon perçant de leurs flèches les enfants de Niobé. Assitôt mon Ovide se retrace à mes yeux, je fais ma composition, le professeur y met son cachet. Rentré chez moi, je cours aux *métamorphoses*, j'explique celle qui traite mon sujet, je commençais à m'applaudir de m'en être assez bien ressouvenu, je fais mon tableau. Ovide m'avais tellement monté la tête que tout ce que je faisais ne me satisfaisais pas complètement, je recommençais, sans penser que refaire sur de la peinture qui n'avais plus assez de temps pour sécher, la couleur nouvelle pourrait changer, c'est ce qui arriva dans les trois mois d'attente avant le jugement.<sup>2</sup>

David ascribed part of his failure in this competition to the corrections he had made in still wet paint, for they had caused the colours to darken before the judging took place. They were made because the writings of Ovid were working on the budding artist's feelings to such an extent, that he became dissatisfied with what he was in the process of producing in paint: the pictorial imagery was not matching up sufficiently to the evocations of the written word and the poetry of the classical author. More than 30 years after this competition, the painter recalled the vivid impact of a particular literary text and the extent to which it had affected his approach to a painting. The words had served not to limit his imagination, but to inspire the painter's creativity and ambition.



The autobiography went on to record that Jombert had been the eventual winner that year and that, although this artist's colour had been praised, :

on ne peut pas non plus repousser un tableau qui renferme des beautés qui sont plus de l'essence de la peinture historique, que le tableau offre plus de compositions le dessin d'expression, parties essentielles de l'art.<sup>9</sup>

History painters had to translate word into image in ways that were convincing, and learning to do this took up much of the Académie's training programme for the aspiring history painter.

#### The dying philosopher as a subject for history painters

This section will show why members of the Académie, in charge of the training of history painters, valued the story of a dying philosopher as a subject for their Grand Prix de Rome competition. Dandré Bardon's own sketch for a painting of the death of Socrates had been exhibited at the Salon of 1753. In the Salon *livret* of that year, it appeared under the title:

49. La mort de Socrate; grande Esquisse de six pieds sur quatre. Socrate condamné par les Athéniens à boire le jus de Ciguë, employe les derniers instans de sa vie à entretenir ses amis sur l'immortalité de l'ame et à les consoler.<sup>10</sup>

Gabriele Oberreuter-Kronabel has discussed the contemporary critical reception afforded this sketch; the tranquil firmness and sang-froid of Socrates in contrast to the emotional reactions of his disciples. was considered to be particularly worthy of praise.<sup>11</sup>

Dandré Bardon's treatise on painting contained a catalogue of the most famous painters, sculptors and engravers of the French School. The catalogue claimed that Poussin was the undisputed Raphael of

France and that artists would ensure this judgement would last for posterity.<sup>12</sup> Above all else, it was Poussin's ability to reproduce nuanced expression that marked him out as at the head of a list of great French masters.<sup>13</sup> The treatise made a direct analogy between the subject of the dying Socrates and Poussin's Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3):

Une passion bien maniée qui relevera par degrés, autant qu'on peut le faire en peinture, les nuances d'un sentiment de manière qu'un trait enchérisse sur l'autre sera marquée au coin du Sublime. Ainsi la grandeur d'ame de Socrate mourant sera sensiblement exprimée, non-seulement par la tranquillité qu'il conserve après avoir avalé le poison, mais encore par les larmes de ses amis qu'il console lui-même de sa mort, par la consternation de ses Disciples, et par le désespoir de ses femmes et de ses enfans.

Il y a plus; un seul geste, un air de tête, une expression combinée peut être sublime. Tel est le geste que Le Poussin a prêté au Médecin d'Eudamidas dans le Tableau où ce Philosophe dicte son testament.<sup>14</sup>

A sense of the sublime could be conveyed by depicting the subject of the death of Socrates in a painting; the representation of the grandeur of the philosopher's soul could be contrasted by representations of consternation and despair of those surrounding him. The prospect of a noble death, and reactions to that impending death by those who would live on after it, were further linked to the way Poussin, a century earlier, had represented the last moments of another hero. These comparisons are, of course, vital to David's own Socrate au moment de prendre la ciguë (Plate 45) of 1787 and they will be returned to in the next chapter, but the analogy is also of consequence to his Sénèque (Plate 4) of 1773, when, for the third time, he failed to win the Grand Prix de Rome competition.

The theme of the death of Socrates was perceived to have much in common with the theme of the death of Seneca. An examination of this

theme will show why it was considered an appropriate subject for the Grand Prix de Rome competition in 1773; the death of Socrates had been the set subject for the same competition in 1762.<sup>15</sup> Alizard's entry that year, La Mort de Socrate (Paris, Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts) has a foreground scribe and a naked, seated Socrates in a similar, though reversed, pose to that of David's Seneca. This is one of many works that can be posited as a plausible source but influence can, of course, only be accounted for in part, and sources are not mutually exclusive.

Both subjects allowed for a prominent display of the *Académie*. The heroic, male nude torso was at the heart of the Académie's teaching programme for history painters and served to distinguish the institution and its training programme as privileged, apart from and above other training programmes. Entry to the drawing classes from the live model was restricted and carefully controlled. The minutes of a meeting of academicians held on 9th November 1743 gave strict instructions as to who was to be allowed to attend: only academicians, the sons of academicians and those approved by the officers of the Académie were to be allowed in.<sup>16</sup> The specialised profession of history painting was, in practice, not open to all; it was restricted by gender, by heredity and to those who had already been selected as worthy of the noble and elevated calling. Socrates and Seneca were, above all, remembered as having been famous moral philosophers and it is their moral philosophy which links them to history painting. The generation of such ideas was, at least in theory, considered to be just what distinguished history painters as above and apart from the painters of other genres.

Both Socrates and Seneca had, furthermore, been sentenced to death and, even though the sentences were unjust, they both died out of obedience to the law. In 1770, Charles Sablier published a new translation of extracts from Seneca's epistles.<sup>17</sup> Sablier's preface advised that the work would appeal to male souls, who favoured reason and morality in preference to the dominating frivolity of his century.<sup>18</sup> Most of Seneca's epistles to his younger friend Lucilius were included in this translation. These epistles give advice on morality, on correct conduct and on proper behaviour in life and when facing death. Some propose suicide to be a positive moral option: "Or bien mourir, c'est mourir librement."<sup>19</sup> Socrates' own freedom in choosing the moment of his death will be shown to be fundamental to an understanding of David's later history painting. In addition, this philosopher had also been a noted teacher and was, on his deathbed, surrounded by his disciples. In the same vein, the writings of Seneca were being valued for the lessons and examples he had set for posterity. Epistle VIII explicitly acknowledged such a purpose: "...je travaille maintenant pour la posterité...Je trace, je mets par écrit des remèdes salutaires."<sup>20</sup>

A new translation of Tacitus was also published in 1770. Tacitus had described the death of Seneca in detail and the account of this classical historian was the source for later versions of the event. Tacitus recorded that Seneca, just before dying, had called on some secretaries and dictated several things:

...dans ce fatal moment son éloquence luy fournissant toujours quelque nouveau sujet de parler, il fit appeller des Secretaires, et dicta plusieurs choses que je ne rediray point, puis qu'on les a publiez en ses propres termes.<sup>21</sup>

The inclusion of a scribe in a scene of the death of Seneca was not new however. Rubens' version of the subject (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) had, for instance, included a younger companion in the act of both looking up at the philosopher and, at the same time, writing in a book; further books lie at his feet, near the basin of water. P.F. Basan recorded two prints of this painting in a catalogue of prints of 1767.<sup>22</sup> The general disposition of the figures was not, however, repeated by David. His scribe has been side-lined as a spectator, craning to see the main action. Although Seneca appears to look towards the scribe, the philosopher is shown primarily in relation to his wife, Paulina, who has been given much prominence in David's setting of the scene. The parting of husband and wife was also a part of Tacitus' account of the moments leading up to Seneca's death, but before demonstrating the importance of this part of the narrative to David's painting, further links between the stories of Seneca and Socrates will be considered; they show why such subjects appealed to the academicians judges of their own competition.

Seneca's Epistle XIII suggests that setbacks, like those David had experienced in the Grand Prix de Rome competitions, were necessary for success and for the acquisition of true virtue:

Un Athlète qui n'a jamais reçu de blessures, n'est pas en état de se présenter au combat avec toute l'ardeur qui lui est nécessaire: c'est bien plutôt celui qui a vû couler son sang, qui, après s'être battu corps à corps, et s'être vû renversé par son ennemi, s'est relevé avec plus de courage, prêt à recommencer un nouveau combat.

Pour suivre ma comparaison: la fortune mon cher Lucilius, vous a souvent persécuté, elle a cru vous abatre; vous vous êtes relevé plus fort.

Avouez que la vertu, pour acquérir plus de force, a besoin d'être exercée.<sup>23</sup>

In his unfinished autobiography David reported that his master Vien had stepped in to prevent him winning the competition at his first attempt in 1771 and that the prize was, instead, awarded to Suvée, competing apparently for the sixth time.<sup>24</sup> David respected Vien a great deal; after his master's funeral in 1809, he acknowledged him as a father.<sup>25</sup> In the autobiographical fragment, David attributed Vien's intervention in 1771 to have been in his own interests, as a young and untried pupil.<sup>26</sup> Whether this was indeed the case or not, the training prospective history painters underwent was a deliberately long and protracted one. Before a Grand Prix de Rome competition could even be entered, a painter had to be successful in one of the lesser, Prix de Quartier competitions. The *gloire* and status, which the profession could provide, were not to be acquired with ease, even though certain candidates may have enjoyed special protection and been specially advantaged.

Seneca's Epistle XLIV consoles Lucilius for not being of privileged birth. Seneca had, himself, been of high birth, but the philosopher recalled the background of Socrates, who had not been a patrician and that Plato was a philosopher, not because he was noble, but because he had been ennobled and made virtuous by philosophy.<sup>27</sup> The ennobling qualities given to history painters from within the Académie has been noted in the previous chapter. Dandré Bardon's Histoire universelle traitée relativement aux arts de peindre et de sculpter ou tableaux de l'histoire of 1769 reiterated this view; here, the writer defined history as: "objet de la Peinture le plus noble et le plus difficile à traiter."<sup>28</sup>

The stoical moral philosophy of Seneca's Epistles, as a whole, does not yet, however, appear to have been of concern to David in 1773. Preoccupations with nobility when dying and the recording of a noble death for posterity are fundamental concerns of the later history paintings of Socrate (Plate 45) and Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) and Seneca's Epistles, notably numbers LXXXII and CII, will be returned to again in connection with these works. In 1779 the history of Seneca came under renewed scrutiny in Diderot's Essai sur la vie de Sénèque, le philosophe, sur ses écrits, et sur les regnes de Claude et de Néron.<sup>29</sup> In this essay, the *philosophe* of the eighteenth century attempted to reconcile the moral philosophy of the classical author with the political realities of his life and his actual participation as an important official in the government of the Emperor Nero. The attempt provoked much critical debate in the press and, in 1782, Diderot published a revised version of the work with fierce repudiations of the criticisms that had been levelled against his own defense of Seneca.<sup>30</sup> David's history painting of 1773 does not posit a dominant, central opposition between public duty and the ties of a personal, private life, although the theme is suggested in the way the figures have been situated in relation to each other. The centurion, who has delivered Nero's official sentence of death, because of Seneca's supposed participation in the failed conspiracy of Piso, has been placed behind, but between, husband and wife. The construction of the composition is, however, to be understood far more in relation to the *ut pictura poesis* tradition and not because the painter had understood the stoical implications of the story.

David's *La mort de Sénèque* and the *ut pictura poesis* tradition

I shall now show that David's *La mort de Sénèque* (Plate 4) was based on a narrative supplied in the first instance by Tacitus, but that it is also a consciously artificial and constructed work in its own right. Its composition is theatrical in that it conformed to the *ut pictura poesis* tradition and it is this theory and aesthetic that is fundamental to an understanding of how the work was to function as a painting.

Antoine Schnapper has identified a section of Diderot's *Traité de la Poésie dramatique* of 1758 as of relevance to David's *Socrate* (Plate 45).<sup>31</sup> This passage provides us with the key towards understanding the mechanisms of David's earlier *Sénèque* (Plate 4). Diderot had compared the spectator in the theatre to the spectator of a succession of *tableaux* on canvas:

Si le spectateur est au théâtre comme devant une toile, où des tableaux divers se succéderaient par enchantement, pourquoi le philosophe qui s'assied sur les pieds du lit de Socrate, et qui craint de le voir mourir, ne serait-il pas aussi pathétique sur la scène, que la femme et la fille d'Eudamidas dans le tableau de Poussin?

Appliquez les lois de la composition pittoresque à la pantomime, et vous verrez que ce sont les mêmes.<sup>32</sup>

Diderot's description stresses the pathos of the scene: its ability to move by evoking feelings of pity and fear and it is the wife and daughter of Eudamidas in Poussin's painting (Plate 3), who provoke such responses in Diderot. The writer extended the analogy he had made between emotional responses provoked by a live performance and those provoked by a piece of painted canvas, by linking the construction of a dramatic *tableau* to that of a painting:



Dans une action réelle, à laquelle plusieurs personnes concourent, toutes se disposeront d'elles-mêmes de la manière la plus vraie; mais cette manière n'est pas toujours la plus avantageuse pour celui qui peint, ni la plus frappante pour celui qui regarde. De là, la nécessité pour le peintre d'altérer l'état naturel et de le réduire à un état artificiel: et n'en sera-t-il pas de même sur la scène?

Si cela est, quel art que celui de la déclamation! Lorsque chacun est maître de son rôle, il n'y a presque rien de fait. Il faut mettre les figures ensemble, les rapprocher ou les disperser, les isoler ou les grouper, et en tirer une succession de tableaux, tous composés d'une manière grande et vraie.

De quel secours le peintre ne serait-il pas à l'acteur, et l'acteur au peintre?<sup>33</sup>

The *ut pictura poesis* tradition had in the past, of course, primarily worked only one way. Painting theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries adapted to the art of painting, precepts for dramatic composition given by such classical writers as Aristotle and Horace.<sup>34</sup> The theories of Dandré Bardon also conformed to this tradition. Following on from, in particular, the Abbé Dubos, the preface to Dandré Bardon's treatise of 1765 contained the emphatic and clear statement:

L'excellence des Arts, qui ont pour objet le beau-visuel et l'imitation de la Nature, consiste à toucher et à plaire, à remuer le cœur et à faire naître les sentimens convenables, que tout Artiste se propose d'exciter. A cet égard un Tableau ne diffère en rien d'un Poème: *Ut Pictura Poesis*.<sup>35</sup>

Tacitus described how Paulina resolved to die with her husband and that Seneca had consented to this:

...Elle répondit qu'elle avait résolu de mourir aussi bien que lui, et demanda à périr d'une même main. Alors Senèque ne voulant pas s'opposer à sa gloire, et craignant de la laisser exposée aux injures après sa mort: Je t'avois, dit-il, montré les moyens de vivre, mais je ne t'envieray pas l'honneur de mourir: Que notre constance soit égale, la tienne certes sera toujours plus glorieuse. Après ils se firent couper les veines des bras en même temps; mais parce que le sang couloit plus lentement à Senèque, à cause de sa vieillesse et de ses austérités, il se fit couper aussi celles des jarrets et des jambes.<sup>36</sup>

Paulina, who had not been condemned to die, would achieve a greater glory than her husband, because the action of her suicide would be a sign of ultimate constancy and fidelity to him. According to Tacitus, Paulina did not, however, commit suicide. Seneca, on beginning to feel pain, wanted her to be transported to another room so that he would be prevented from seeing her suffer and so that her courage would not weaken: "Cependant comme il sentoit de cruelles douleurs, de peur d'affoiblir le courage de Pauline par sa presence, ou de n'en avoir pas assez luy-mesme pour la voir souffrir, il luy conseilla de se faire porter en une autre chambre."<sup>37</sup> This is just the moment that is at the heart of David's exposition of narrative, for the husband and wife are set apart, each with one arm and hand extended, but with head back as they both reach towards and are held back from each other. One of Paulina's attendants can be seen to mop blood from a vein in her arm that has been cut. Both husband and wife are depicted essentially as victims of circumstances beyond their control; they sink back as they lose their strength, power and lives. Tacitus went on to record that Nero prevented Paulina dying, for he did not want to be accused of her death, and that his soldiers ordered her servants to stop the flow of blood from her veins.<sup>38</sup> She lived for some years with her pallor, showing how much blood she had lost, as a glorious sign of conjugal affection.<sup>39</sup>

After this digression, the historian returned to the plight of Seneca who then asked his doctor, Statius Annaeus, for the poison he had kept, in order to speed up his own death. This poison was not sufficiently effective, as the blood had already drained out of the philosopher's veins and his limbs had gone cold. It was only

subsequent to this attempt, that Seneca was placed in a hot bath and finally suffocated.<sup>40</sup> David depicts Seneca with his feet in a basin; the artist has thus contracted the sequence of events. Such a diachronic contraction of narrative into synchronic event became a feature of David's handling of narrative, which he manipulated with increasing sophistication. The approach had, however, been expressly sanctioned by Dandré Bardon, for he considered that more new ideas could be communicated in this way:

Il est d'autres moyens de produire des idées nouvelles, c'est de traiter épisodiquement l'essentiel du fait historique, en ramenant sur le site principal ce qui n'est qu'épisodique; ou d'indiquer par un seul groupe les sujets les plus étendus.<sup>41</sup>

A few paragraphs later, Dandré Bardon suggested the episode of Paulina as one that might provide a fitting, additional idea as part of the main subject: "Enfin idées convenables à la nature du sujet; tels seroient les traits suivans. Des Officiers de *Neron* accourent pour enlever *Pauline* d'auprès de *Séneque* expirant..."<sup>42</sup> Implicit in such a recommendation was the replacement of the *vrai* by the *vraisemblable* of dramatic composition. Facts could be added to, suppressed or altered, providing this was done appropriately and to make the composition more convincing.<sup>43</sup>

Pictorial precedents for the death of Seneca were also available for adaptation by David. The quite small basin into which one of Seneca's feet has been dipped derives from just such a pictorial or sculptural precedent, rather than because it is a dramatic device. Rubens' own version of the subject had itself been based on an antique prototype of a sculpture, thought to represent the Dying Seneca (Paris, Louvre).<sup>44</sup> Noël Hallé's La Mort de Sénèque (Plate 5)

provided David with a further pictorial precedent for the additional, sentimental moment of the parting of husband from wife.

Noël Hallé had been made a professor at the Académie in 1755; he was appointed a rector in 1781 and was sent to Rome as an interim Director of the French Académie there in 1775; he received letters of ennoblement in 1777.<sup>45</sup> There is no documentation as to the patronage of this early history painting, but it conforms to the artist's handling of other subjects taken from Greek and Roman history, which were treated in a picturesque and sentimental way, rather than as heroically profound. Cornélie, Mère des Gracques (Montpellier, Musée Fabre) is another, more well-known example of his work. These paintings are also not, though, of an intimate, personal nature, along the lines for the writing of history, which I have shown Rollin and Rousseau advocated. The interiors are still elegant and the arenas are still gracious.

Hallé's reclining Seneca is in a reverse pose to that of David's version, but both figures have heads tilted back, looking across at Paulina. In neither case is Seneca shown as heroic or of stern resolve. Strong moral oppositions between the principal male and female protagonists, themes which were to dominate most of David's later history paintings, are not yet evident. Both works focus on the hands of husband and wife, which do not touch but reach towards and away. The pose of the left hand of David's Seneca matches the limp pose of the left hand of Hallé's Paulina. In both paintings, Paulina displays one bare breast hanging out of her drapery, as she graciously swoons back. The *contrapposto* pose of David's Paulina is more complicated though; indeed, the whole of his scene is of a more

conscious bravura. The monumental columns, the incense burner and the swag of voluminous drapery eclipse the less grandiose elegance of Hallé. In the attempted virtuosity of its display, the student's work was in practice far closer to Fragonard's successful *morceau de réception* for the Académie of 1765, Le Grand-Prêtre Coréus se sacrifie pour sauver Callirhoé (Paris, Louvre) and it is highly appropriate that such parallels should exist, for David was hoping to gain his own academic success and acclaim with his competition piece.

Both David and Hallé, in their paintings of Sénèque (Plates 4 and 5), used a chorus of onlookers to surround the parting of husband and wife. These spectators react emotionally to the central action, according to the particular dramatic role they have been assigned: some evoke the pathos of the scene, some provide a contrast to it. Hallé represented Nero's soldiers at the back, not sharing the grief of Seneca's three male companions. David placed the centurion behind, but in-between husband and wife: his intervention, bringing Nero's orders, is the immediate cause for the separation between husband and wife and his pose appears confident, even disdainful. Next to him, can be seen two attendants, looking on in a more humble way. One, with a sad expression, carries a salver with, presumably, the phials of Seneca's poison. The details of the historical narrative have been translated into a pictorial drama, in which the spectator also participates, both emotionally and rationally. Parallels with Fragonard's reception piece are again obvious, but this was also something which had been recommended by Dandré Bardon and with reference to the theatre:

Cette unité ne doit cependant point tenir de la monotonie. Elle doit être réveillée par quelque ingénieux épisode, par quelque

diversion adroitement ménagée, qui ne distraie de la catastrophe que pour la faire mieux sentir. Dans une pièce de théâtre, les dissipations d'un *Prodigue* relèvent la sordide oeconomie d'un *Avare*; les ruses d'un *Traître* font briller les sentimens délicats d'un *honnête Confident*. Heureux contrastes dont un homme d'esprit peut ménager l'équivalent dans une ordonnance pittoresque par l'opposition raisonnée des caracteres, des situations, des groupes, et des effets!"<sup>46</sup>

Devices of contrast, comparison and juxtaposition can also be linked to rhetorical theory, but they have here specifically been attributed to dramatic exposition. The unity of a composition, that all parts should fit into a whole in a harmonious way, was also a standard of this aesthetic.<sup>47</sup> Dandré Bardon wanted this unity to be combined with the various characters of a drama; these roles would strengthen the communication of a main action or catastrophe.

Although many of the compositional principles underlying David's working processes can be connected to a painting theory, which was itself derived from a dramatic theory, it is, however, important to note that the arts of the theatre and of painting were in practice very different. The notion of *bienséance* operated more actively on stage in a live performance than on canvas, in which representation was fixed in potentially less naturalistic ways. The suspension of disbelief had a different priority in something that was static, two dimensional and mute. The *Académie* was a distinguished part of the *Académie's* own training programme for history painters and, while Salon critics may have complained about the nudity on display at these exhibitions, there was no such nudity at the Comédie Française or at the Opéra and no character could appear to die on stage. In Tristan L'Hermite's seventeenth-century drama, *La Mort de Senèque*, Seneca died off stage and the centurion reported the event to Nero in the final

scene of the play.<sup>48</sup> This play also gave a major role to Paulina but, interestingly, the philosopher here refused to allow his wife to die with him; this was the decision more of a tragic hero than that of a helpless victim. David's painting presents Seneca as a helpless victim; he is not shown as in control of the parting of his wife. In this sense the stoic's attitude to death has been misunderstood and misrepresented.<sup>49</sup>

Seneca had, of course, written his own tragedies, but these were not performed on the French stage in the eighteenth century and they were much less well known in France than his works of moral philosophy. M L Coupé published a French translation of these tragedies in 1795. The translator stated that he felt that Seneca never really meant to have his plays performed on stage, even though this had been done up to the time of Louis XIV.<sup>50</sup> The cruelty of Hercules and the inhumane torturing of Andromache by Ulysses were, for instance, unacceptable on the French stage, even though some of the plays had influenced Shakespeare.<sup>51</sup> G Hess has associated Rubens' painting of the subject with a revival of interest in the theme by German dramatists of the eighteenth century; they presented Seneca either as Christian martyr or as patriotic, tragic hero.<sup>52</sup> The convention that a death should not be seen on stage meant, however, that in 1769 the scene of Seneca's death was removed from the 1754 edition of the tragedy, *Seneca*, by Freiherr von Creutz.<sup>53</sup> Such conventions were controlled to a far greater degree in France where the Comédie Française held the monopoly of the spoken word on the French stage, at least officially.<sup>54</sup>

Jean-François-Pierre Peyron won the Grand Prix de Rome of 1773. His La Mort de Sénèque is lost but its composition is known from a print, etched by the artist (Plate 6). Norman Bryson has traced its compositional source back to Poussin's La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2) rather than to Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3), referred to by both Diderot and Dandré Bardon in connection with the theme of Socrates.<sup>55</sup> Tacitus provided a textual source for the story of Germanicus as well as that of Seneca,<sup>56</sup> and the architecture of Peyron's setting of his scene together with the rear view stance of the centurion certainly appear to derive from the earlier work by Poussin and could well have been consciously included as signifiers, for the status and pretension of this work as high art. Peyron also combined the episode of Paulina with that of the bath. Whilst Poussin's painting presents an opposition between the reactions of Germanicus' family and those of some of his military colleagues, the poses and expressions of the figures delineated in Peyron's etching indicate, however, that the sentimental aspects of this scene were the dominant ones here too, and that a neo-stoic heroism was of lesser importance. Training in the use of appropriate and convincing expression was a further, vital part in the process of the formation of history painters at the Académie.

#### The depiction of the passions in history painting

Theories of expression in painting were, again, closely linked to similar theories for dramatic composition, but the pictorial tradition also evolved using other sources. Unlike the transient gestures and expressions of a theatre performance, the practice of physiognomy used



the more permanent traits of outward appearance to explore inner character. The practice can be traced back to antiquity, but it became codified and adapted to the art of painting in the seventeenth century. I shall now maintain that David's next attempt at the Grand Prix de Rome competition was successful partly because it included obvious adaptations of preceding, affective, pictorial formulae, which had been tried, tested and approved. The next chapter will show, furthermore, that this tradition was again explicitly exploited by David in his Socrate (Plate 45), although here motive, purpose and presentation were more complex and independent.

The report of Charles Le Brun's discourse of 5th November 1667 to the Académie contains a detailed analysis of each of the figures in Poussin's Les Israélites recueillant la Manne dans le Désert (Plate 7). The appearance of each person is considered to be the expression of an inner emotion or passion. The following quotation is a short extract, taken from a much longer description, of the motives and mechanisms attributed to just one figure on the extreme left of Poussin's composition:

Comme ce grand Peintre ne disposoit pas ses figures pour remplir seulement l'espace de son Tableau, mais qu'il faisoit si bien qu'elles sembloient toutes se mouvoir, soit par des actions du corps, soit par des mouvements de l'ame. Il montra que cét homme represente bien une personne étonnée & surprise d'admiration: L'on voit qu'il a les bras retirez & posez contre le corps, parce que dans les grandes surprises tous les membres se retirent d'ordinaire les uns auprès des autres, lors principalement que l'objet qui nous surprend n'imprime dans nostre esprit qu'une image qui nous fait admirer ce qui se passe, & que l'action ne nous cause aucune crainte ny aucune frayeur qui puisse troubler nos sens, & de se deffendre contre ce qui les menace.<sup>57</sup>

Jennifer Montagu has shown how much Le Brun's theories of expression were dependent on the mechanistic philosophy of Descartes.<sup>58</sup> Dandré

Bardon's treatise on painting also contained a long analysis of the Laocoon (Rome, Musei Vaticani), which used exactly the same principles of expression, expounded by Le Brun over a century earlier:

La douleur mortelle que ressent le Prêtre de Neptune à l'aspect du danger où sont ses enfans, l'horreur que lui inspire son propre péril et les tourmens corporels qu'il souffre, font une révolution extraordinaire dans tous les muscles. Les contours en sont néanmoins coulans, quoique très-prononcés. Les renflemens en sont soumis à ces méplats, qui concourent à l'expression et au caractère, en faisant paroître le muscle plus large sans l'altérer. Les tendons et les nerfs, les fibres même, ces petits filamens dont les chairs et les muscles sont tissus, la tension de la peau, le gonflement des veines dans les parties où le sang se porte avec rapidité, le tous, le sentiment de la tête, les articulations vivement prononcées dans toutes les extrémités, comme le sont les principaux détails et les divers travaux des bras, des jambes et du torse, tout peint les douleurs excessives de l'infortuné Laocoon.<sup>59</sup>

Winckelmann's Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhaukunst may already have been known to Dandré Bardon,<sup>60</sup> who included his own intimations that the high praise awarded to the expressive potential of this particular piece of sculpture, could have damaging effects. Exaggerated expression or grimace was a danger to be avoided:

...Est-il de Tableau qui peigne une Expression plus vivement que le marbre du Laocoon.

Mais en travaillant à l'Expression, craignons de tomber dans le vice des grimaces qui ne sont que des exagérations maniérées...Tel l'habile Déclamateur, pour donner à son rôle l'ame et le sentiment, jette dans ses accens et dans son geste les nuances convenables à sa situation et au caractère du Héros qu'il représente.<sup>61</sup>

It is notable that the model chosen for emulation was that of the skilful actor, assuming the role and character of a hero.

In a Conférence to the Académie of 2nd September 1747 entitled Sur la manière et les moyens de l'éviter, the Comte de Caylus suggested that the practice of sketching *têtes d'expression* after the

fashion of Leonardo would be a method to help painters from becoming mannered. The citation makes a comparison with the practice of the historian:

...Léonard dessinait donc sans cesse les traits de l'âme, du sentiment et du caractère, mais toujours avec une égale exactitude; il les prononçait pour les retenir ou les retrouver plus aisément. Cet usage si recommandable et auquel j'ose vous exhorter (car si l'historien fait des notes, le peintre doit faire des esquisses ou des traits), cet usage, dis-je, est devenu un abus dans la suite, et, de ce qui n'était qu'une étude sérieuse pour arriver à l'expression des passions, on s'en est servi pour la critique et pour la plaisanterie.<sup>62</sup>

The sketching of expressive heads was compared to the processes of an historian, who first makes notes and then uses these notes to write up the fuller work to be published. David was awarded the Prix Caylus for a study in expression, La Douleur (Plate 8), of 1773.<sup>63</sup> It is a formulaic, orthodox expression of grief derived from Le Brun and similar to many of the sentimental images evoked by Greuze and was to be adapted once more for the features of Andromaque in the *morceau de réception* (Plate 9) of 1783.

David's interest in the expressive head as a visual means of exploring mental states was to remain till the end of his life, although later examples of this aspect of his *oeuvre* again show that he departed from what was expected by the orthodox tradition, which had ruled his years of training. During the period of exile in Brussels, for instance, he produced several studies of tormented and spiritually isolated people; these figures have been carefully worked up in heavy black chalk.<sup>64</sup> These private studies were done for the artist's own, personal interest. As a painter David had, of course, also produced very fine portraits throughout his career; these were always a steady source of income for him. Significantly, they are

remarkably restrained in terms of facial expression and quite different from the marked features in the drawings of expressive heads.

As a student of the Académie in Rome and before his career had been fully established, David included copies of earlier masterpieces as exercises in expression, as part of his own training as a history painter. Three of these exercises are annotated with what the artist considered to be the appropriate verbal definition of the passion depicted. A head of St Michael after Guido Reni's St Michael defeating the dragon (Rome, S. Maria della Consolazione), (Plate 10) has the inscription: "Colere noble et Elevee;" there are two female heads after figures from Daniele da Volterra's Descent of the Cross (Rome, SS.Trinità dei Monti), one (London, Victoria and Albert Museum,) is annotated: "La Douleur empressée a Secourir," the other (Lyons, Musée des Arts Décoratifs,) has the words: "La douleur mêlée d'attendrissement." It was through the intermediary of academic discourse, particularly the Conférences given by Le Brun and his treatises on the passions attributed to him, that these exercises in description were encouraged. Descartes had, however, been well aware of the difficulties involved in attempting to present precise, formulaic manifestations of different emotional states:

Il n'y a aucune Passion que quelque particuliere action des yeux ne declare: et cela est si manifeste en quelques unes, que mesme les valets les plus stupides peuvent remarquer à l'oeil de leur maistre, s'il est fasché contre eux, ou s'il ne l'est pas. Mais encore qu'on aperçoive aysement ces actions des yeux, et qu'on sçache ce qu'elles signifient, il n'est pas aysé pour cela de les descrire, à cause que chacune est composée de plusieurs changemens qui arrivent au mouvement et en la figure de l'oeil, lesquels sont si particuliers et si petits, que chacun d'eux ne peut estre aperçu separement, bien que ce qui resulte de leur conjonction soit fort aysé à remarquer. On peut dire quasi le mesme des actions du visage, qui accompagnent aussi les passions:

car bien qu'elles soient plus grandes que celles des yeux, il est toutefois malaisé de les distinguer.<sup>65</sup>

There are some extant manuscript proposals by the Comte de Caylus in advance of the Académie's legislation for the Prix Caylus in 1759/60. The proposals contain revealing aspects of what was to become an official dogma, and for the suppression of which David would later campaign. Caylus considered that women models should be chosen as the history painter could work up a heroic character for himself, but needed help for the more feeling feminine temperament:

je crois que les têtes de femmes devroient etre toujours preferées comme les plus difficiles a rencontrer, et celles dont un Eleve est moins a portée de faire des Etudes convenables; car on peut dire en general qu'un artiste est obligé de penser les caracteres heroïques, de s'en affecter et de s'en echauffer, et que par consequent c'est l'Esprit qui les Exprime, et qu'on a été jusques ici rarement aidé et souligné par la nature dans une opération si délicate. En consequence de l'objet de cette Etude je donnerois l'Exclusion à toutes les barbes et à toutes les vieillesses de l'un et de l'autre sexe; ces sortes de modèles sont non seulement faciles à trouver; mais tout ce qui est charge ne convient point au projet dont il est question, il y convient d'autant moins, que la jeunesse et la beauté degagées même de toutes passions, sont toujours très difficiles à rendre, et qu'elles conduisent a une legereté d'outil plus intimement liée a l'Esprit, a la justesse et a la pression.<sup>66</sup>

The plan suggested was that the teacher who had chosen the expression to be studied, should give a preliminary verbal explanation and that this description should be specifically related to the model of a written text.<sup>67</sup> The proposal that one of the models should be a beautiful shaven head would confirm that the prize was conceived with the aim of encouraging an ennobling history painting and discouraging grimace or caricature:

...Cette etude pourroit se faire avec succès si l'on posoit dans l'Ecole une très belle tête rasée; alors les Eleves sentiroient la necessité des proportions, et ne s'exposeroient plus à presenter des têtes trop courtes, ou privées de dessus et de derriere de têtes; cette même etude les conduiroit a sentir l'importance de l'Encolement d'où partent toutes les positions de

la tête, et la plus grande elegance de la figure. Ces mouvemens du col sont les plus simples de la nature, c'est a dire les plus sensibles à l'exterieur, cependant ils sont autant négligés pour les modernes; qu'ils ont été sentés et exprimés par les grecs.<sup>68</sup>

The Greek example was held up as a model in contrast to modern practice. Even for the Comte de Caylus, figurative expression involved a consideration of the real in relation to the ideal. In the processes of David, the balance between the real and the ideal was to lead to a shift away from grimace but also, as will be shown, to a more condensed, abstracted clarity, that suggested an underlying complexity of meaning.

#### A suitable and fitting academic success

In 1774 David's winning entry in the Grand Prix de Rome, Le médecin Erisistrate découvre la cause de la maladie d'Antiochus (Plate 11), was still firmly within the academic tradition of the *tête d'expression*. I shall now demonstrate the extent to which the following of appropriately sanctioned models, such as the *tête d'expression* and the correct observation of *convenance* conditioned this academic success. The subject of the painting incorporated the theme of an unmasking of the passions: a theme wholly appropriate for the practice of just these types of exercise. The story chosen by the academicians was: "Antiochus, fils de Séleucus, Roy de Syrie, malade de l'amour qu'il avoit conçu pour Stratonice, sa belle-mère."<sup>69</sup> The history of the event revolves, however, crucially around the role of the doctor, Erasistratus, and his participation in the narrative offered opportunities for the inclusion of another Académie as

patient. The long tradition of medical diagnosis based on physiognomic observation provided a further suitably appropriate context for this examination of the external effects of the internal, human passions.<sup>70</sup>

Plutarch and Valerius Maximus give accounts of the story.<sup>71</sup> Valerius Maximus did not report events with any degree of objective record in mind. He conceived and compiled his accounts with the aim of encouraging his readers to form opinions as to what might be the appropriate modes of behaviour under given conditions, illustrating by example. The Prologue to the Emperor Tiberius of his text provides the justification for such a consciously didactic programme:

Les actions et les paroles mémorables, que présentent les annales du peuple romain et des différentes nations, étant éparses dans un trop grand nombre de volumes pour qu'on puisse s'en procurer la connoissance en peu de tems: je me suis proposé d'en faire un choix d'après les écrivains célèbres, afin d'épargner de longues recherches à ceux qui voudront s'en instruire.<sup>72</sup>

It will be shown that this particular writer may have been an important textual source for the initial commissions of David's history paintings from the State, but from which David then departed in the interests of his own inventions and in order to present to the spectator more complex and more moving dramas. At this early date, however, the pupil David followed the account given by Valerius Maximus more closely than the one given by Plutarch, although it will also be shown that he did not conform to this programmatic source in an entirely orthodox way either. In Plutarch, Erasistratus tells the King of his son's love for his stepmother in private. Seleucus then goes before a public assembly both to declare his wish to give his wife to Antiochus and to make his son King of all of Upper Asia in his

stead. This would be conducive to the public welfare and thus honorable and just.<sup>73</sup> This was just the sort of predicament that David explored in later history paintings, where affairs of the family and of the heart exist uneasily with those of the State, but at this point in the artist's career, such issues do not seem to have been of predominant concern to him.

Valerius Maximus used the story of Antiochus to demonstrate the example of paternal love, a theme that could well have appealed to the judges and jury who had set the subject for their pupils:

Passons à des récits plus agréables. Antiochus, fils de Séleuchus, roi de Syrie, devint éperdument amoureux de Stratonice, sa belle-mère. Sentant néanmoins tout ce qu'une telle passion avoit de criminel, il renfermoit dans un secret profond cette fatale blessure, que désavouoit sa vertu. Deux affections contraires, l'amour et l'honneur, que se combattoient dans son coeur avec violence, allumèrent son sang, brûlèrent ses entrailles, et le réduisirent au dernier degré de langueur. Il étoit mourant dans son lit; toute sa famille étoit dans les larmes. Son père, accablé de douleur, avoit sans cesse devant les yeux la mort prochaine d'un fils unique, qui laissoit sa malheureuse vieillesse sans appui. Le palais avoit plus l'air d'un tombeau, que de la cour d'un roi. Mais ce nuage de tristesse fut heureusement dissipé par la prudence de l'astrologue Leptine, ou, selon d'autres, du médecin Erasistrate. Assis près du lit d'Antiochus, il s'aperçut que, quand elle sortoit, son visage redevenoit pâle et sa respiration plus libre. A force d'observer ces symptômes, il parvint à découvrir la vérité. Chaque fois que Stratonice entroit ou sortoit, il prenoit sans affectation le bras du malade; et au battement du pouls, qui étoit tantôt plus fort et tantôt plus foible, il devina la maladie. Aussitôt il fit part à Séleucus de sa découverte. Quoique ce prince aimât beaucoup son épouse, il n'hésita pas à la céder à son fils; n'imputant qu'à la fortune la passion qui s'étoit emparée de son coeur; et attribuant à sa vertu le courage qu'il avoit eu de la dissimuler au péril de sa vie. Qu'on se figure un roi, vieux et amoureux, et l'on jugera de combien d'obstacles la tendresse paternelle triompha dans cette occasion.<sup>74</sup>

In David's painting, the king's face is in shadow despite the expression of the passions being central to the story. It contrasts with three of the other, more prominent, facial expressions David



used, which have been culled directly from engravings after Le Brun for the passions. These engravings had, by this date, become incorporated as illustrations into an article on 'Dessein' in the Encyclopédie (Plate 12). The onlooker who points conforms to "Admiration avec étonnement," Antiochus expresses "Le ravissement," and Stratonice's face is adapted from "La vénération."<sup>75</sup> The introduction to the collection of exemplary plates in the Encyclopédie attributed the selection of examples to Cochin, who had been appointed secretary to the Académie in 1755.<sup>76</sup> In line with the training programme of the Académie, the article stressed the importance of figure drawing; it was more noble and more difficult than the other genres and it connected parts of the body to the expression of human passions, character and action:

Le plus noble de tous ces genres est sans contredit celui-ci, par toutes les beautés qu'il présente. Que l'on considère les rapports et l'analogie, par exemple, les passions des hommes, leur caractère, leurs actions, leur état, leur âge, leur force, etc. on conviendra facilement de ce que nous avançons, et que les difficultés des autres genres n'approchent pas de celles qu'il offre à chaque trait.<sup>77</sup>

Le Brun's engravings had explored the effects of divine love. David, on the other hand, adapted what had become formulae in order to expose earthly love and attraction. This adaptation was not a rejection of Le Brun's figurative vocabulary; far from it. It was, instead, an overt acceptance, a noble emulation of existing convention, but adapted for new and different purposes. To imitate as distinct from copying or plagiarisation, had become a commonplace of academic painting theory. Dandré Bardon's Histoire Universelle of 1769 had recommended specific examples including those of Le Brun rather than those of Poussin, when propounding this precept:

C'est avec de pareils détails, que, dans diverses circonstances, nous rappelions aux jeunes Artistes les objets d'imitation, que les grands Maîtres nous ont laissés dans leurs chefs-d'oeuvres. Exposer ainsi ces rares productions, les analyser, les peindre dans une description historique, les indiquer, quand on ne peut pas les offrir, n'est-ce pas, M M, insinuer à l'élève la manière dont il doit traiter les sujets qui leur sont relatif? Ne peut-on pas espérer qu'il sera vivement affecté de l'étude raisonnée qu'on lui en propose? Son génie, s'il est sensible au beau (eh! pourroit-il y être insensible?) ne l'élèvera-t-il pas au-dessus des idées communes, pour en enfanter, qui seront, peut-être, dignes d'occuper un rang parmi celles que nous lui présentons? La noble émulation fut toujours la source du progrès des Arts. Une laborieuse application, une étude réfléchie d'après les productions des habiles Maîtres, est une prière naturelle, qui peut obtenir l'avantage de participer à leurs Talens. Celui qui forme le cerveau et la main des *Le Brun*, des *le Sueur*, des *Jouvenet*, des *Puget*, des *Girardon*, des *Coyzevox*, ne peut-il pas les faire revivre dans nos élèves, et pour tout dire en un mot, vous donner à vous-mêmes, M M, des successeurs dignes de vous?"<sup>28</sup>

The talented pupil, sensible to beauty, had not merely been given a license to depart from accepted models, but rather had been exhorted to do so, in order to present new ideas and thereby join the ranks of his illustrious predecessors. The models that they had provided were to provide the foundations for such a licensed departure by the pupil of sensibility and of reason.

In David's prize-winning entry, a painting about communication via the senses, languages of glance and of gesture have been manipulated very carefully. The subject incorporated a revelation about a physical condition which, because of the revelation, underwent a change. The communication of nuanced degrees of blindness, sight and insight was to become a major theme of many of David's later history paintings, which emerged explicitly in his handling of the Belisarius story. Such concerns were wholly appropriate for the painter, whose work relied on pictorial conventions to mediate via vision.

As in Poussin's Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3), David represents a doctor using his sense of touch to feel the pulse of a bed-ridden figure, unable to use the weapons displayed behind the bed. David places these weapons in direct alignment above the position of the doctor's head, which is actively engaged in a professional capacity as part of the narrative of diagnosis. The doctor's other hand both points to Stratonice, the cause of the young man's lovesickness and is also juxtaposed directly over the languishing youth's heart, connecting cause to effect. Stratonice's hand has, in turn, been placed over her own heart in a reciprocal acknowledgement of sentiment, while her husband's open hand emphasizes his act of generosity in the manner of Greuze's La Dame de charité (Lyons, Musée des Beaux-Arts). The sequence between discovery, revelation and expansive gesture again collapses the diachronic narrative into a synchronic event but the eye of the spectator is led by the hands of the doctor to move from the diagnosis across the horizontal space of the canvas, in order to take in subsequent cause and effect. Many of David's devices in this work derive directly from an engraving adapted from Pietro da Cortona's fresco of the subject in the Sala di Venere of the Pitti Palace in Florence.<sup>79</sup> This image also compressed the period between diagnosis and the King's donation of his wife; the French painter used exactly the same gesture of giving for the left hand of Seleucus. There is, however, no obvious explanation for why David has placed the king's face in shadow. The father's mixed emotions were the reason why Valerius Maximus had chosen to cite the story and in most other respects, David follows the classical author.

Dandré Bardon had proposed that not everything should be supplied by the artist, for the spectator would derive real pleasure from being able to exercise his own imagination:

C'est un grand art que de ménager aux Spectateurs le moyen de laisser agir leur imagination. L'amour-propre sçait gré à l'Artiste qui leur fait accroire qu'ils sont en partie les auteurs de ce que leur imagination ajoute au Tableau, et ils jouissent réellement du plaisir d'avoir part à l'ouvrage.<sup>90</sup>

The Abbé Dubos had praised the veiling of Agrippina's face in Poussin's La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2) because, in line with the precedent of Timanthes' lost painting of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, a person experiencing an overwhelming emotion could be marked out using this device:

C'est un chef-d'oeuvre du Poussin que de nous avoir fait reconnoître Agrippine dans son tableau de la mort de Germanicus avec autant d'esprit qu'il l'a fait. Après avoir traité les différens genres de l'affliction des autres personnages du tableau comme des passions qui pouvoient s'exprimer, il place à côté du lit de Germanicus une femme noble par sa taille et par ses vêtemens, qui se cache le visage avec les mains, et dont l'attitude entière marque encore la douleur la plus profonde. On conçoit sans peine que l'affliction de ce personnage doit surpasser celle des autres, puisque ce grand Maître désespérant de la représenter, s'est tiré d'affaire par un trait d'esprit. ...Si le Poussin n'est pas l'inventeur de ce trait de Poésie, qu'il peut bien avoir emprunté du Grec qui peignit Agamemnon la tête voilée au sacrifice d'Iphigénie sa fille; ce trait est toujours un chef-d'oeuvre de la Peinture.<sup>91</sup>

The draping of the servant's face in Les Licteurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils (Plate 40) may well derive from an authority such as this, although here the grief of the wife and mother and sisters and daughters matches or even surpasses the seated figure who veils her face. In La Maladie d'Antiochus (Plate 11) this *topos* may well not have been intended at all for the king's emotion was difficult to depict because it was mixed rather than because it was overwhelming and tragic.

The way in which David showed Seleucus may also have been more subversive. By visually effacing the father, the painter obliterated him as the positive role model of paternal love, presented by Valerius Maximus. The focus has, instead, been placed on the son, as lover and future husband of Stratonice. A study for the painting (Private Collection) also has the face of Seleucus darkly shaded, in contrast to the lightness in which both Antiochus and Stratonice are set. The fact that the painter's father had died when he was nine, reportedly in a duel, may have given the student problems in understanding and then reproducing the father's dilemma.<sup>92</sup> David's interest in and treatment of the themes of Belisarius, the Horatii and Lucius Junius Brutus may well stem from his difficulties with a figure of paternal authority. An analysis of the implications and motives behind the artist's deliberate rejection of the role of the father in this early painting must, however, remain impossible. The Académie sanctioned the success of the work, but the sanction of this same authority would itself become the object of David's rejection in 1793. Here David had, in most respects, followed both accepted academic theory and its practice. The subversion of a story about paternal authority may, though, have been an early manifestation of a wilful unorthodoxy; a covert rejection from within.<sup>93</sup>

After his treatise on painting, Dandré Bardon published, in 1772, another work for the instruction of prospective history painters: a Costume des Anciens Peuples. The primary function of this work was to provide a visual repertory or dictionary of suitable motifs for history painters to draw on. One plate juxtaposed a scene from a Meleager sarcophagus (adapted from Bernard de Montfaucon's L'Antiquité

expliquée) with a print that was derived from Poussin's L'Extrême Onction (Plate 13).<sup>84</sup> The accompanying text in the handbook warns painters not to plagiarise, but to treat the example of Poussin as a spur to invention, in line with what the writer had advocated in his Histoire Universelle.<sup>85</sup> The bold, outline illustrations with carefully annotated references, would however, tend to undermine this admonition.

The handbook contains, for instance, two illustrations (Plate 14), culled from the composition of Poussin's La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2). This painting was still in the Barberini Collection in Rome; the subject had been set for sculptors in the Grand Prix de Rome competition of 1762. A print of the painting first appeared in 1663 and Sané, as a student at the French Academy in Rome, had copied the work - the copy still hangs in the library of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.<sup>86</sup> Dandré Bardon used the extracts to debate questions of *convenance*:

...La coëffure du soldat, formée d'une dépouille de lion c, est connue de tout le monde; mais l'ajustement du jeune fils de Germanicus d paroitra peut-être étranger, même à bien des gens érudits, quoiqu'il soit autorisé par l'antique. Il est possible que le Poussin n'auroit pas hasardé sans raison une pareille licence: en tout cas il mérite de faire autorité. Le pied du lit et les marche pieds f, g, h, sont extraits du même tableau. Ils ont un air d'antiquité et de richesse très-convenable au sujet. Quant aux armes i artistement jettées au pied du lit, elles annoncent qu'elles deviendront bientôt inutiles au Héros moribond.<sup>87</sup>

Costume in the title of this book was to incorporate far more than archaeological accuracy of detail; it was to provide orthodox justification for the depiction of ennobling subjects. In the sense of *bienséance*, it sanctioned behaviour and was not merely a matter of dress. The example of the naked child in the La Mort de Germanicus

(Plate 2) seemed for the compiler to contravene normal *convenance*, yet the compiler still managed to assume rational motivation on Poussin's part.

Another example from Dandré Bardon's manual is worthy of note

(Plate 15):

Nous donnons ici un second exemple de l'usage où étoient les Anciens de suspendre leurs armes a auprès du lit; sans doute pour être plus à portée de les prendre en tout tems, au premier signal. C'est le Poussin qui nous fournit encore cette particularité de Costume, dans son tableau sous le nom du testament d'Eudamidas. La table b, le grabat c, le tabouret d, et sur-tout les expressions qu'il a introduites dans cette scene pathétique, prouvent l'attention de ce grand Peintre, à circonscier avec exactitude, non-seulement les moyens, l'état, le caractere de son Héros, mais encore les dispositions et les sentimens de tous les personnages qui l'environnent: belle leçon pour les jeunes Artistes, qui, dans leurs compositions, se contentent souvent d'arranger des figures quelconques, sans leur donner une expression particulière, et sans les accompagner d'accessoires qui caractérisent le sujet.<sup>82</sup>

David incorporated a sword and shield motif in several preliminary drawings for history paintings to denote warrior status and also to indicate the status of the sketch as a draft for a history painting, not that of a lesser genre. There is an early preliminary drawing for an antique scene (Plate 16) in which drapery, accessories and furniture denote classical panoply. The staffage of, for instance, a bedridden figure being tended by the nurture of a woman, are in line with the domestic perceptions of Greuze. The accessories alone elevate the sketch from the status of a genre scene to that of a history subject. The sword and shield motif are also included in more highly worked drawings for La Douleur d'Andromaque (Plate 17), Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 18) and Les Amours de Paris et d'Hélène (Plate 19). In each case this detail was suppressed for the final painting, though David's contemporaries often used the orthodoxy of

this signifier to promote the nobility of their own claims as history painters in their finished works.<sup>89</sup>

David does, however, display a warrior's abandoned military accoutrements prominently and elegantly in three finished history paintings; significantly, all three paintings belonged to the period of the painter's academic training. The choice of subject of each of these paintings was not made by the artist, but was dictated to him by the requirements of the academic system. In La Douleur d'Andromaque (Plate 9), the dead warrior's abandoned military equipment of helmet and sword would have been entirely appropriate for the painter's own *morceau de réception*; the artist's formal testimony that he had gained entrance to the highest, most noble, rank of his own chosen profession. The *morceau de réception* belonged to the Académie and was shown off on their premises. The two other applications were the Combat de Minerve contre Mars (Paris, Louvre), David's first attempt at the Grand Prix de Rome and the winning entry of 1774, the La maladie d'Antiochus (Plate 11). The adaptation of a motif associated with his illustrious predecessor, Poussin, was, again, an explicit acknowledgement of the lessons of his teachers. Yet another motif had been absorbed by the aspiring history painter to service a different narrative. Dandré Bardon had praised Poussin's use of the sword and shield in Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3) because it was a detail that was archaeologically correct, and because it was an appropriate reminder of a former heroism, which contrasted with the pathos provoked by the warrior hero's present condition. David, similarly, used the props of sword and shield on his bedstead because it was a suitably elaborate decoration for an entry to the Grand Prix de Rome



competition and also because it provides a contrast between the present condition of the lovesick prince, and his future status as the son who will be made a King, because of the discovery of his lovesickness.

### The treatment of the hero in history painting

David's early treatment of an episode from the life of Alexander will now be shown to break with the authority of his teacher, who had strongly recommended to history painters that their work should commemorate acts of military engagement with force and conviction. Dandré Bardon's Histoire universelle traitée relativement aux arts de peindre et de sculpter ou tableaux de l'histoire was published in Paris in 1769. The history reported a speech the teacher had given to the Académie on 4th September 1756, on the occasion of the annual prize-giving. The speech began by categorically stating that it would not be a long dissertation or harangue, although it then proceeded to propose lengthy models and precepts for history painters of the present and future. One particular example is of special interest to a wider discourse on history painting; it dictated how the declaration of war, which the Romans made on the Carthaginians at the capture of Saguntum which decided the Second Punic War, should be depicted:

Nous essayons de suggérer la manière de les rendre, en indiquant les traits dont l'Antique et les habiles Modernes ont fait usage pour exprimer dans un style vrai et énergique les différentes passions. Les physionomies et les yeux, ces miroirs où l'ame se peint si bien elle-même, seront dans cette circonstance le siège du sentiment. Des sourcils élevés, des prunelles étincellantes, des narines élargies, des bouches entr'ouvertes, et quarrément formées dans les coins, des lèvres pâles, des visages enflammés dans une portion du masque, et

livides dans l'autre, exprimeront la hauteur, le dépit, le ressentiment, la colere de ces différens Acteurs.

Quoique les autres parties du corps paroissent moins propres que celles de la physionomie à peindre les mouvemens de l'ame, elles doivent concourir à la parfaite expression. Que le geste animé de ce Romain, qui déploie son manteau, est déjà bien caractéristique! Si l'on y joint une attitude de détermination pleine d'animosité; celle d'un homme qui prêt à se retirer; descend les marches de l'Aréopage, auquel il tient encore par des regards foudroyans; si l'on groupe avec cette Figure celle des autres Ambassadeurs qui ne font leurs adieux au Sénat de Carthage que par des gestes menaçans, on présentera une juste idée du caractère et des expressions qui conviennent aux premiers Héros de cette scene.

L'effet intéressant des caractères dépend de leurs contrastes; aussi donnons-nous à une partie des Sénateurs Carthaginois cette tranquillité apparente, mais forcée, qu'affectent les personnes retenues par les décences...

Mais ces sentimens ne doivent-ils pas, Messieurs, être rendus avec toute la noblesse dont ce sujet est susceptible? A quoi serviroient ici les têtes de goût, les caractères de fantaisie, les physionomies simplement spirituelles, les coëfures ingénieuses? Elles trouveront place ailleurs. Il faut ici des expressions qui frappent, des yeux qui respirent l'audace, des bouches qui parlent avec fierté, des attitudes caractérisées sans grimaces, animées avec décence; des gestes qui soient les interprètes du sentiment. Il faut enfin que chaque figure dise à sa maniere, mais noblement: c'est la guerre que nous voulons.<sup>90</sup>

Le Brun's Les Batailles d'Alexandre series (Paris, Louvre) had shown that history painting could be considered as contingent to wider issues of public and political morality. Dandré Bardon's speech was delivered in the year that marks the start of the Seven Years War. The text of the speech that was printed in 1769 called for open support to Louis XV:

Puissent vos arriere-petits-neveux être, MESSIEURS, encore eux-mêmes témoins oculaires des hauts-faits, des vertus de LOUIS XV; jouir du bonheur que nous goûtons de vivre sous ses loix; et célébrer sur vos traces les merveilles de son Histoire, par des ouvrages dignes, ainsi que les vôtres, de l'immortalité!<sup>91</sup>

In Dandré Bardon's opinion, history painting was here to be used in the first instance to immortalise the head of state openly and overtly. It was to be used to support a nationalistic cause and was

a part of this context, not merely contingent to it. Pointed analogies to contemporary events and personalities were made in this discourse, that also advocated the right and proper modes of conduct.

The drawing of Alexander the Great at the bed of the deceased wife of Darius (Plate 20) appears to date to 1779, just after David arrived in Rome. Jean-Baptiste Debret published a lithograph of the drawing with the printed inscription: "à Rome 1779."<sup>92</sup> It provides an early indication of how the artist rejected a notion of history painting as a tool of government, preferring instead to focus on moral quality and inner motive, which can be associated with some of the writings of Rousseau. It also shows that the postulations of the former teacher of history, Dandré Bardon were now beginning to be rejected as well. The compositional drawing has been quite fully worked up; it is squared for transfer onto canvas as a history painting, although this was never done. The marked influence of Le Brun, notably his predecessor's famous La Famille de Darius aux pieds d'Alexandre (Versailles, Musée national du Château) is still very clear. The setting of the scene within a tent, the tree and view of other tents behind and to the side and the positioning of Alexander and that of the other participants have all been carefully adhered to by David, especially if the drawing is considered in relation to the reversed version, offered by an engraving of Le Brun's composition. The subject treated in David's drawing is, nonetheless, different from the one depicted by Le Brun, although it is a sequel to the episode, which had been a commission from Louis XIV. Pigler lists only two other painted versions of the subject of David's drawing: one by Guiseppe Bazzani is in Mantua and the other, by Louis Lagrenée was a

later French Royal commission, exhibited at the Salon of 1785.<sup>93</sup> The subject was, therefore, an unusual one and it was also one that was quite different from what Dandré Bardon had advocated for history painters and for history painting. Yet the legacy of Le Brun still dominated David's figurative vocabulary in terms of style. The lavish and extravagant setting is complimented by the large, histrionic gestures of the figures.

Plutarch's Life of Alexander briefly mentions the visit of Alexander to see the wife of Darius just after she had died in the tent of her mother-in-law, Sisigambis.<sup>94</sup> Alexander had been on his way to fight Darius, but had been warned by a eunuch that his prisoner, Darius' wife, was dying in childbirth and so retraced his steps in order to pay her a visit. A much fuller account of the story is given by Charles Rollin, who based his narrative on the one attributed to Curtius Rufus.<sup>95</sup> The details of these accounts accord with the details of David's drawing better: both mention the distress of Sisigambis, in tears on the ground next to the princess daughters of Darius; they are all inconsolable at the loss of the daughter / mother. The writers also mention that the son of Darius was less perturbed than the others for he was too young to understand the full magnitude of grief. Darius' wife had been very beautiful, but Alexander had not taken advantage of her and had resisted seeing her, after she had first been captured. Now he, too, is overcome with sadness at her death: "On eût dit qu'Alexandre pleuroit au milieu des siens, et qu'il étoit là plutôt pour chercher de la consolation, que pour consoler les autres."<sup>96</sup> Rollin attributed even more generous sentiments to the character of Alexander here: "Alexandre les consola

avec une bonté et une tendresse, qui marquoient assez qu'il étoit lui-même pénétré d'une vive et sincère douleur."<sup>97</sup> The episode demonstrates the humanity of Alexander, not his achievements as a conqueror or as a warrior. He was to provide the queen with a magnificent funeral.

Rollin and, later, Rousseau advocated a history that would deal with the inner emotions of heroes and the effects of the human heart in more private and domestic circumstances. Alexander, in this story, had delayed going to war in order to share, instead, the grief of a family who mourn the death of a woman in childbirth; she is remembered as a daughter, a mother and a wife. Le Brun's painting had celebrated the courtesy of Alexander in putting Sisigambis at her ease after she had failed to recognise him; this was still an essentially courtly notion of *gloire*: the munificence of an exceptional and successful hero, even though the recognition had originated in a case of mistaken identity. David's drawing, on the other hand, shows Alexander behaving according to a different sort of *gloire*. The hero's dignity is not yet considered in relation to some public service, but it also does not reside in some astonishing or brilliant feat. As if watching a tragedy, the spectator has been invited to assess different reactions to the loss of a loved one, by an admirer, by a mother, by daughters and by a son. Similar ties and degrees of emotional involvement about a change of fortune were to be incorporated into the rest of David's history paintings.

The scene also does not fit within the moralising series of subjects drawn up by the secretary to the Académie, Cochin, in October 1764 for a programme of history painting at the Château de Choisy.

These paintings of Imperial Roman history were to provide models of munificence and compassion in line with concepts of *gloire* in the service of the *bien public*, that were evolving at the time and which were examined in the previous chapter. In his correspondence with the Directeur-général des bâtiments Marigny, Cochin clearly indicated what the programme was to represent:

On a tant célébré les actions guerrières qui ne vont qu'à la destruction du genre humain; n'est-il pas raisonnable de représenter, quelquefois, les actions généreuses et pleines d'humanité qui chez les bons rois, ont fait le bonheur de leurs peuples... Marc Aurèle prit un soin extrême pour soulager son peuple dans un temps de famine et de peste, scène touchante qui fournit beaucoup à l'artiste ingénieux et expressif et qui a de plus l'avantage de peindre l'âme des rois vraiment dignes d'être adorés de leurs sujets...<sup>99</sup>

Diderot was criticised Vien's Marc-Aurèle fait distribuer au peuple des alimens et des médicamens dans un tems de famine et de peste (Amiens, musée de Picardie), one of the works commissioned in the series, because it did not affect the intelligent viewer sufficiently: it was two dimensional, flat and hard.<sup>99</sup> The choice of subject matter here precluded the possibility that a moral dilemma could be presented in a convincing and thought-provoking way by the painter.

### The Catalyst of Rome

The experience of coming to Rome was crucial for David. Contact with so much original material, that had remained from the classical as well as from the Renaissance/post Renaissance past, produced major changes in his art. Drawings based on Antique prototypes were to provide continuing source material and inspiration. In addition, David's interest in narrative exposition continued to evolve during

the years of this first period in Rome from 1775 to 1780. Dorothy Johnson has noted that the drawing of a frieze after the antique (Plates 21 and 22) marked a decisive step for David towards "a succinct, laconic corporeal language."<sup>100</sup> In this case, I would not reject this observation but the exercise was also one of synthesis and composition, based on an understanding of the models of sculptured reliefs from classical sarcophagi and of other examples from the Antique.

The major importance of this exercise, for an understanding of the way narrative works in David's later history paintings, lies in the way the episodes progress logically across the horizontal sheet of paper. On the left, a warrior dies in combat, then he is borne away in mourning, till on the right his sacrificial ashes are offered up as part of a religious ceremony. The violence and movement gradually give way to a more static, hieratic moment. The format of the frieze scene enables the separate elements of the story to be isolated out and convincingly emphasizes narration in a linear way. The problems of compressing chronological account into visual imagery had been discussed in the Académie in relation to Poussin's La Manne (Plate 7) and with reference to the art of the painter as poet.<sup>101</sup> Even though the composition of the seventeenth-century painting projects an impression of depth, its narrative also proceeds coherently and logically in successive stages from the left to the right hand side of the canvas; proceeding from those in need on the left, to those who pray and are the cause of the miracle in the centre, to those on the right, who gather in the resulting manna. By the accumulation of separate incident and motif into the visually coherent format of a

frieze, David's drawing exercise reformulated the precepts of the Académie creatively.

In Rome, the artist was to explore areas, which led away from the traditions of his French training and the disciplines of his teachers. The seeds of David's struggle with various forms of authority had, however, been provoked from within the Académie, before the Rome experience.

Delafontaine, a friend of the artist, noted that the painter had felt as if he had undergone an operation for a cataract on his eyes, after he had arrived in Rome:

Il me sembla qu'on venait de me faire l'opération de la cataracte. Je compris que je ne pouvais pas améliorer ma manière dont le principe était faux et qu'il fallait divorcer avec tout ce que j'avais cru d'abord être le beau et le vrai. Je sentis que copier la nature sans choix, c'est faire un métier vulgaire avec plus ou moins d'habilité, mais que procéder comme les anciens et comme Raphaël, c'est vraiment être artiste...<sup>102</sup>

Apparently, David had suddenly realised the need to change his style of painting for, in order to be a true artist and so as not to practice a vulgar craft in a slavish way, it was necessary to reject the methods he had used in the past, in favour of those of the ancients and of Raphael. Could there have been more than mere irony in the fact that he chose to put forward for approval by the academicians and thus earn his own title of academician, a painting which dealt with blindness, sight and the giving of charity to the blind? Unlike the academicians in Paris, his contact with Antiquity had enabled him to see not just superficially, but more profoundly; the spectators of his paintings were to be similarly enlightened.



The subversiveness of the Belisarius theme

In contrast to many of David's later history paintings, Bélisaire demandant l'aumône (Plates 23, 24) still had for focus a common enough subject. There had been painted versions by Jollain in 1767, Durameau in 1775 and Vincent in 1776 and Marmontel's novel Bélisaire of 1767 was well known.<sup>103</sup> Crow and others have linked the choice of subject to the Lally-Tollendal affair, which had been brewing since 1766 when the soldier, a hero of the battle of Fontenoy, had been executed because of the loss of Pondicherry in the Seven Years' War; the general had been Commander-in-Chief of the French expeditionary force there.<sup>104</sup> Whilst such a sub-text may well have made the subject a popular one, I shall consider the subversiveness of the work in relation to existing concepts of *gloire*, particularly those associated with the military hero. The critical theories and aesthetic of Diderot will also shed light on the formation of such imagery and on how it was to be perceived. In addition, the influence of Poussin will be examined. Peyron's version of the Belisarius story (Plate 26) will help to demonstrate how David established his own personal authority as a successful and creative artist of some independence.

The academician and theorist the Abbé Laugier, in his Observations sur l'Architecture of 1765, advocated the erection of public monuments for the suitable commemoration of the memory of famous men and of their achievements:

L'admiration et la reconnoissance ont inspiré la pensée d'immortaliser par des monumens durables, la mémoire des hommes illustres, que la Nation regarde comme les Auteurs de sa félicité ou de sa gloire. Il est utile en effet que leur nom transmis à la postérité, présente à ceux qui viendront après nous l'encouragement et l'exemple, et que la certitude de vivre dans

les siècles à venir, serve d'attrait et de récompense aux grandes ames. Les belles actions trouvent une immortalité réelle dans les fastes de l'histoire. Mais rien n'est comparable en ce genre aux monumens publics que l'on érige pour les consacrer avec l'éclat le plus authentique; et l'usage le plus noble que l'on puisse faire des Arts, c'est d'emprunter leurs secours pour rendre un hommage solennel, à la vertu, à la bienfaisance, au mérite.<sup>105</sup>

The nation should honour those men who had contributed to its glory or happiness and the arts, by setting up appropriate models, should be used for this purpose. These models, exemplifying qualities of virtue, charity and merit, would serve both as acknowledgement and as incentive for centuries to come. Recalling antique precedent, Laugier recommended that the actions of the hero should be commemorated and immortalised by the creation of triumphal arches, bas-reliefs, trophies and appropriate inscriptions, rather than merely by simple statues on pedestals. To this end, great artists were to think as poets, but to work as painters: "Qu'ils pensent en Poètes, qu'ils exécutent en Peintres et je leur répons du succès."<sup>106</sup>

David's Bélisaire (Plate 23) does not, however, present the viewer with the model of an exemplary military hero. Belisarius had been a famous and successful general, but the painter shows him as blind and helpless: seated before a triumphal arch, but weak and dependent on a child to help him beg. This action is, therefore, in contrast with a former, heroic past in the service of the Emperor Justinian. Falsely convicted of conspiracy, the fallen hero was badly mistreated and is here presented as pathetic. In the shocked recognition of the soldier who has served under the general, the painter has further accentuated the change of fortune undergone by the fallen hero and has also provided another contrasting reminder of the

past . In addition, the positive act of charity has been given to an anonymous woman. Roles have been radically re-assessed, not merely inverted.

As was shown in the previous chapter, a military vainglory came under increasing attack in eighteenth-century France, for this came to be considered as a false kind of *gloire*, which caused much suffering and hardship by those who strove to acquire it. Even the eulogies, being produced in praise of past military heroes, gave only cautious praise to qualities traditionally associated with the warrior soldier. These heroes were, instead, endowed with characteristics and attributes which had, in the past, been more associated with statesmen and philosophers.

J.A.H. Guibert published a treatise on military conduct, Essai général de Tactique, in 1772.<sup>107</sup> His Eloge du Maréchal de Catinat was published three years later; it presented the portrait of a soldier as stoic philosopher: "Il va nous offrir le spectacle du Sage aux prises de l'adversité."<sup>108</sup> After a setback in some campaign, the soldiers who served under Catinat, would run to show their attachment to him and call him father.<sup>109</sup> Guibert, following on from the recommendations of Rollin and of Rousseau, made much of the Marshall's private life:

"Qu'il est doux, quand les vertus, d'un grand homme répondent à sa gloire, de le suivre dans les détails de sa vie privée, et de l'aimer après l'avoir admiré! Qu'il est doux de se transporter aux lieux où il a vécu, de parcourir sa demeure, d'y chercher l'empreinte de sa présence!"<sup>110</sup>

The soldier's action on the battlefield for the welfare of the Nation was placed in opposition to his wise and judicious cultivation of his own country property at Saint-Gratien:

"Je te salue Vallée délicieuse! Tu consolais Catinat des revers du sort et de l'injustice des hommes! Je te salue, Château antique! le luxe de nos jours n'a point encore défiguré ta simplicité."

Là, il s'occupait de l'économie de sa terre, et, par-dessus tout, du bonheur de ceux qui l'habitoient. Il étoit le conseil, l'arbitre, le juge de tous ses paysans.<sup>111</sup>

According to Guibert and in line with good physiocratic practice, Catinat had served the public good and was disinterested in luxury and excessive wealth; he was, thus, to serve as a model of virtue for contemporary Frenchmen to follow.<sup>112</sup> The eulogy ended by recommending a life of retirement in the countryside

"Ah! si le sort vous a donné un asyle champêtre, aimez cet asyle comme lui; sachez vous y retirer dans les temps d'inaction, et quand l'injustice vous opprime, n'allez pas montrer à la Cour un visage mécontent ou une vieillesse inutile; vivez à la campagne; là, les dégoûts s'adoucissent, les ressentimens se calment, l'ambition n'a plus d'alimens, les événemens des Cours ne paroissent plus que les songes de l'Histoire, et le nom des Rois est à peine entendu."<sup>113</sup>

A comparison between David's two versions of Bélisaire (Plates 23, 24) will follow shortly; it will demonstrate that the theme of the unjustly disgraced soldier came to be addressed in a more philosophical, neo-stoic way in the second, smaller version of the painting, commissioned by the former soldier, turned statesman, D'Angiviller.<sup>114</sup> David's history paintings were not treatises on military conduct, nor were they laudatory of military virtue in a simple and didactic way, but Guibert's eulogy does provide insight into just how far the role model of an all-conquering warrior hero had been supplanted and replaced by alternative models of virtue and of merit. Qualities of consideration and of caring were being proposed and allied to a wise, useful and judicious public duty.

Thomas' eulogy of Marshal Catinat also stressed the hero's rejection of vainglory and espousal of the public good: "Il ne donnoit rien à la vaine gloire; tout à l'utilité..."<sup>116</sup> This eulogy ended with a homily in praise of "les esprits justes et les coeurs vertueux."<sup>116</sup> Great genius and outstanding talent were, in contrast, liable to dominate, humiliate and corrupt.<sup>117</sup> Notions of what constituted true grandeur were being closely examined and traditional assumptions of, particularly, military heroism were being altered, even rejected.

It is, thus, possible to associate the choice of cast in David's visual dramatisation of the plight of Belisarius with changing perceptions of what constituted true military *gloire*. These paintings postulate much more than this, however. The substitution of a woman giving charity from that given by another soldier in Vincent's Bélisaire réduit à la mendicité (Plate 25) for instance, transfers the focus of the scene away from a purely martial environment, to one in which the world of the soldier contrasts with more intimate areas, controlled by the heart and the emotions, which rule, are touched and are moved to charity at the sight of a blind, old man being assisted by a young boy. The arena is precisely not that of Cochin's 1764 programme of subjects taken from Imperial Roman history which had resulted in the commission to the academician Vien, David's former master, for a history painting showing the Emperor Marcus Aurelius distributing largesse to the people.

The constructions of painting perceived as mediation

Links between dramatic theory and the practice of history painting again provide further frameworks in which to view the varied emotional responses, provoked by David's presentation of the status and condition of Belisarius. Diderot's Salon of 1767 had included one of La Rochefoucauld's *maxims* adapted from the *philosophe's* reading of Burke: "*La Rochefoucauld a dit que dans les plus grands malheurs des personnes qui nous sont le plus chères, il y a toujours quelque chose qui ne nous déplaît pas*"<sup>118</sup> The critic was contemplating a landscape by Vernet, but digressed in order to contrast the experiences of real life with those of the theatre and of painting: "*Nous aimons mieux voir sur la scène l'homme de bien souffrant que le méchant puni, et sur le théâtre du monde, au contraire, le méchant puni que l'homme de bien souffrant.*"<sup>119</sup> The poet, painter, sculptor, actor were charlatans who, by their artifice, were able to sell the firmness of the elder Horace, the patriotism of the elder Cato, cheaply.<sup>120</sup> Diderot then cited the Latin author Horace in support of his observation that the spectator had to be able to experience the emotion that was being represented, in order to derive pleasure from the imitation, but there still had to be a balance. The spectator was to be both aware that the work of art was a work of art and an imitation, and be convinced by the imitation. Only then would delicious tears of pleasure be shed.<sup>121</sup> The tears were harmless, even delicious, because they acknowledged the difference that existed between life and art. Diderot continued with the contrast:

On prétend que la présence de la chose frappe plus que son imitation; cependant on quittera Caton expirant sur la scène,

pour courir au supplice de Lally. Affaire de curiosité; si Lally était décapité tous les jours, on resterait à Caton; le théâtre est le mont Tarpéien, le parterre est le quai Pelletier des honnêtes gens.<sup>122</sup>

In David's paintings of Bélisaire (Plates 23,24) the raised arms and startled expression of the soldier seeing his general reduced to a state of beggary, convey a sense of shock to the spectator, which impinges without terrifying or really producing pain. The plight of Belisarius may well have recalled the plight of Lally-Tollandal, but there was still an essential difference between the acknowledged fictions of a play or of a painting and the events of daily life. The proper way for *honnêtes gens* to experience pity and fear was via the consciously constructed, artificial vehicles and media of artistic representation and not through direct action.

Diderot ended this particular digression by stressing the importance of choice of subject matter in the arts of imitation: "Celui donc qui se négligera sur le choix du sujet se privera de la meilleure partie de son avantage; c'est un magicien maladroit qui casse en deux sa baguette."<sup>123</sup> Invention was here considered not merely as a choice of subject but also as a choice of means for the convincing representation of visual motif. The actual creation of a picture was associated with the art of a magician and the production of fictional illusion. David's history paintings fused the narratives of history with those of drama in ways that were to convince, but not overtly and directly exhort; to attain these ends and the maintenance of the illusion, figurative representation required careful and skilful manipulation. A versifier of 1785 composed lines in honour of the smaller version of the Bélisaire (Plate 24):

Une affreuse indigence accable Bélisaire;

Pour un si grand Héros, c'est un terrible coup:  
 Je le plains d'autant plus, que j'estime beaucoup  
 Son air noble dans sa misère.<sup>124</sup>

The lines record, above all else, a reaction to the drama of the scene. A reversal of fortune has reduced a great and noble hero to misery and this is what has provoked the versifier's pity and admiration. The rhetoric was of the image, not of the political repercussions, that the choice of subject matter only implied.

David's first autobiography made clear his debt to the master mason turned playwright, Sedaine, with whom the painter had lodged in 1772,<sup>125</sup> and Sedaine was in close contact with both Grimm and Diderot. Diderot's last Salon of 1781, began his criticism of David's Bélisaire (Plate 23) with an adaptation of a famous quotation from Racine's Bérénice: "Tous les jours je le vois et crois toujours le voir pour la première fois."<sup>126</sup> In Racine's play, Titus testifies as to the constancy of his love for the queen.<sup>127</sup> Diderot's tribute, not plagiarising but consciously adapting a given linguistic device to be recognised or seen by discerning readers, is similar to the way theorists such as Dandré Bardon were advocating the adaptation of existing gestures afresh, according to specific and new contexts.<sup>128</sup> Diderot's studied praise also evoked David's own careful adaptations of motif incorporated into the painting from a range of possible sources: the boy holding up the upturned helmet adapted from Vincent's Bélisaire réduit à la mendicité (Plate 25), the charity given by a woman from Greuze's La Dame de Charité, the implication of unjust exile beyond the city walls from Poussin's treatment of the Phocion theme as in Les Cendres de Phocion (Liverpool, Walker City Art Gallery).



Diderot's comments in 1781 about the larger Bélisaire (Plate 23) continue after the first sentence:

...Ce jeune homme montre de la grande manière dans la conduite de son ouvrage, il a de l'âme, ses têtes ont de l'expression sans affectation, ses attitudes sont nobles et naturelles, il dessine, il sait jeter une draperie et faire de beaux plis, sa couleur est belle sans être brillante.<sup>129</sup>

The elegance of the tribute becomes even finer as there is a deliberate ambiguity: the reader is now not sure whether the first sentence refers to the painting of the general or to the painter, David, whose success at this Salon was heralded by other critics.<sup>130</sup> Diderot's use of this literary conceit was wholly consistent with the writer's constant intermingling of different layers of representation in his Salon commentaries. Dream sequences, visions, imaginary dialogues, rhetorical questions were consciously manipulated for the the reader who was to be both deceived and convinced by the author's clever allusions and witty illusions and, in awareness of these effects, also gain constant delight. Diderot's short appraisal of the painting does, though, contain some criticism and advice for the painter: "Est-ce que tu ne trouves pas Bélisaire assez humilié de recevoir l'aumône? fallait-il encore la lui faire demander. Passe ce bras élevé autour de l'enfant ou lève-le vers le ciel qu'il accusera de sa rigueur."<sup>131</sup> The appeal made by Belisarius to the emotions had become almost too strident and sentimental for the sophisticated Salon reviewer to bear. The delicate balance between conviction and disbelief was being strained.

In the Essais sur la peinture that were a part of Grimm's Correspondance littéraire of 1766,<sup>132</sup> Diderot addressed the profession of painter and his works: "Tes personnages sont muets, si

tu veux; mais ils font que je ne parle, et que je m'entretiens avec moi-même."<sup>33</sup> From this nutshell, it is possible to understand just why there was to be a rhetorical invocation to the painter of the Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3) in the 1767 Salon. Diderot's prolific writings are often concerned with how we communicate. His approach to painting required meaning to be available, but at the same time the meaning should also allow the spectator to make a personal contribution, a beholder's share; something which the history paintings of Poussin invited, and something which the critic, Diderot, admired unreservedly.

Some of Diderot's 1767 Salon comments about Jollain's lost painting reveal just how important the communication of meaning and feeling was to the critic:

...Qu'est-ce que M. Jollain? C'est...un mauvais peintre; c'est un sot qui ne sait pas que celui qui tente la scène de Bélisaire s'impose la loi d'être sublime. Il faut que la chose dise plus que l'inscription, 'Date obolum Belisario,' et cela n'est pas aisé...Le Bélisaire est roide, ignoble et froid. La fille n'est pas mal de position et de caractère; mais et cette fille et la mère qui tourne le dos à la scène sont prises du Testament d'Eudamidas, où elles sont sublimes, on n'a fait que les séparer. Toutes ces figures dispersées à droite ne disent rien, mais rien du tout...Quelle comparaison de l'étonnement de ce soldat et du morne silence du soldat de Van Dyck, qui, la tête penchée, les mains posées sur le pommeau de son épée, regarde et pense.'<sup>34</sup>

The explicit assumption was that modern artists were not able to compete with their more effective seventeenth-century predecessors in communicating meaning via visual sensation, in ways that moved and were sublime. The sublime was something that was to be felt by the spectator from the contemplation of an image, which should prompt and provoke such feelings. In the case of Jollain's Bélisaire, the writer considered that visual imagery should not be read in the same way as

the simple inscription; the painting should have communicated the greater subtleties of the situation as a whole.

As Richard Verdi has noted, Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3) had been sent to Copenhagen in 1759 and it was most probably the print, first produced by Marcenay de Ghuy in 1757 that had inspired Diderot's eulogies of 1767.<sup>135</sup> David, too, had owned a print of the composition.<sup>136</sup> Commenting on Pajou's sketch for La Mort de Pélopidas, Diderot again held Poussin's image up as a model: "Quelle comparaison entre votre composition et celle du Testament d'Eudamidas! Cependant vous ne persuaderez à personne que votre sujet ne fût ni aussi grand, ni aussi pathétique, ni aussi fécond que celui du Poussin."<sup>137</sup> The print of 1757 had the text of the story of Eudamidas written out beneath the image. In Vatelet's Dictionnaire des arts du peinture, sculpture et gravure of 1792, the model of Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3) was used as an example of an image that required an inscription, in order to be fully intelligible.<sup>138</sup> Diderot had exhorted painters to provide opportunities for fruitful interpretation and extrapolation and it is ironic that his observations were extrapolated from the words and imagery of a print of a painting. It will, however, also be shown that the use of words and inscriptions in David's history paintings becomes increasingly sophisticated, alongside the artist's growing awareness that the meanings of his history paintings could also be carefully manipulated.<sup>139</sup>

Diderot's Lettre sur les sourds et muets à l'usage de ceux qui entendent et qui parlent was a discussion about language, yet in the best of rhetorical traditions, the writer contrived to bring in contrasting examples to elaborate his central theme. Thus, an

exercise in appreciating paintings, as if the viewer were deaf and dumb, primarily served to reinforce the validity of unmediated sense impressions. It also revealed the way in which Diderot could actually look at and see paintings, which was at odds with the way the Salon reviews chatted about them:

Cette sagacité vous surprendra moins peut-être, si vous considérez que celui qui se promène dans une galerie de peintures fait, sans y penser, le rôle d'un sourd qui s'amuserait à examiner des muets qui s'entretiennent sur des sujets qui lui sont connus. Ce point de vue est un de ceux sous lesquels j'ai toujours regardé les tableaux qui m'ont été présentés; et j'ai trouvé que c'était un moyen sûr d'en connaître les actions amphibologiques et les mouvements équivoques; d'être promptement affecté de la froideur ou du tumulte d'un fait mal ordonné ou d'une conversation mal instituée; et de saisir dans une scène mise en couleurs, tous les vices d'un jeu languissant ou forcé.<sup>140</sup>

Such a passage was not perceived as unmediated by either the eighteenth-century writer or his potential readers. There is, indeed, a conscious use of metaphor:

Je jouais un jour aux échecs, et le muet me regardait jouer: mon adversaire me réduisit dans une position embarrassante; le muet s'en aperçut à merveille, et croyant la partie perdue, il ferma les yeux, inclina la tête, et laissa tomber ses bras, signes par lesquels il m'annonçait qu'il me tenait pour mat ou mort. Remarquez en passant combien la langue des gestes est métaphorique.<sup>141</sup>

Many of Diderot's writings inform us of how central languages of gesture and of pantomime were to the urban culture of eighteenth-century Paris. This is fully demonstrated in the essay De la poésie dramatique of 1758, where the *tableau* of Socrates was envisaged as a mime and where there was another reference to Poussin's Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3).<sup>142</sup> Diderot's compulsive returns to this painting links the writer's interest in communication via the senses

with his appreciation of painting in which the interpretation of meaning was a vital part of the beholder's share.

As early as 1719, Dubos' popular Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture had compared the natural signs of painting to the artificial signs of poetry:

...Je crois que le pouvoir de la Peinture est plus grand sur les hommes, que celui de la Poésie, et j'appuie mon sentiment sur deux raisons. La première est que la Peinture agit sur nous par le moyen du sens de la vue. La seconde est que la Peinture n'emploie pas ces signes artificiels, ainsi que le fait la Poésie, mais bien des signes naturels. C'est avec des signes naturels que la Peinture fait ses imitations.<sup>143</sup>

For David too, gesture and glance, issues of sight, insight, feeling and vision, became primary vehicles for the elaboration of his vocation as an artist. Relationships between what was perceived as innate, and what was considered to be due to the external environment, were central to philosophical discourse of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Causal links between affect and effect were closely examined and a matter of frequent debate. It is impossible to know the exact arguments with which David was familiar, but certain images in his paintings and drawings indicate that he was well aware of such discourse and, indeed, had his own important contribution to make to it. In particular, the paintings of Bélisaire (Plates 23, 24) convey emotion because of the artist's creative use of visual sign and concomitant recognition of the powerful value of communication, insight and the faculty of sight.

Diderot's initial comment about the first version of the painting also refers to the sense of sight, a central theme that is addressed in the image. The blindness of the general was not an invention of David's; it was in Marmontel's novel Bélisaire, and had been

envisioned by the painter, Vincent. David offers the spectator of his painting the reading of an inscription: 'Date Obulum Belisario,' which the blind general cannot read. In the first version of the painting, Belisarius' staff, a prop probably adapted from Poussin's Les Aveugles de Jéricho (Plate 27), partially obscures this inscription on the block of stone. Poussin's use of the staff has been inverted by David; here it evokes the cause of begging alms and the helplessness of the general's condition, not any positive change of circumstance which is about to occur. The play of light from the left serves a similar inversion of purpose, illuminating the hopelessness of Belisarius' blindness, whereas the sunlight over the blind men in Poussin's painting is about to be a revelation for them. The central focus given to the interplay of hands, and in addition here to the feet, recall Poussin's careful depictions of touch and how each part of the whole, via a variety of appropriate characteristics, contributes to the communication of the story. In David's painting, the incapacity of the blind general can be contrasted with the shocked recognition of a working soldier and the considerate charity of a woman. The sight of the child also adds emotional poignancy to the helplessness of the old general turned beggar.

A comparison between the first version of David's Bélisaire (Plate 23) that had been required as his *Agrément* to the Académie in 1781 and the second version (Plate 24), commissioned by D'Angiviller, is instructive for understanding the processes of the artist's visual engagement. As has already been suggested in the previous chapter, the size of this *Agrément* could well be allied to the painter's desire for commissions and recognition as a history painter of the

highest order.<sup>144</sup> The second Bélisaire (Plate 24) is much closer in size and shape to Poussin's *tableaux de chevalet*. There are important alterations between the first and second versions of these paintings which imply that the artist was imitating the principles of Poussin more consciously in the later version, in line with what his patron, a former soldier but now a public servant, making a commission in a private capacity here, would have appreciated.

Whether David actually painted the second version of Bélisaire (Plate 24) or gave the task to one of his pupils, Fabre, as was intimated by an annotated Salon livret of 1785,<sup>145</sup> is of less importance to this discussion, than the changes in composition which were approved by David. The painting is signed: 'L David faciebat' and was included in the painter's list of his own autograph works.<sup>146</sup> On a formal level, critics have pointed out that the awkward perspective of the serving soldier's foot, in too close a proximity to the woman, has been resolved in the second version.<sup>147</sup> A large circular amphitheatre has been added to the townscape, but the background landscape and other scenic details have otherwise been toned down, becoming less ostentatious and obtrusive. The branches of a tree have, for instance, been omitted, so that the triumphal arch stands alone as a powerful man-made reminder of the pomp and success from which the general has been excluded. The inscription on the stone block is more legible, but the shadow of the general's crutch on the stone has also become stronger. A woman holding a baby as she climbs up the city walls is an important addition, which is certainly Poussinesque in perception, as in the similar pairing of La Femme Adultère (Plate 28). They are not just gratuitous ornament, but

provide a further layer of contrast and of resonance to the themes of exile and of feminine support. The two figures discoursing with each other, dressed as sages or philosophers, are placed right over to one side of the composition in the first version. They are more fully elaborated and more centrally placed between the shocked soldier and the woman giving charity, in the painting for D'Angiviller's private perusal. This may well have been in part a compositional necessity, because of the horizontal format and the resolution of the awkward lines of perspective of the later version, but there is an additional important change in the way these two figures interrelate. In the first version, the figure with his back to the spectator points something out to the listener opposite. In the second version, it is the other figure who appears to be speaking; the lower half of his face is in shadow, but his eyes and forehead are now fully illuminated. He touches his companion's shoulder as if to direct attention to the soldier's shocked reaction with his pointed index finger. A discourse on civic duty has become much more central to an understanding of the implications of the subject; a theme that was to dominate the rest of David's output as history painter. The stoic virtue of Phocion had been subtly but deliberately recalled.

#### The triumph of the artist

A different kind of patronage and a return to certain Poussinesque principles had helped David make a further contribution to the story of Belisarius. The artist, David, had also been able to further his own claims to greatness, by twice depicting this story



with its problematic notions of *gloire*, in ways that were convincing and moving. However, Pierre Peyron is to be considered, in many ways, as the most Poussinesque of the new wave of French painters.<sup>147</sup> In 1780, for instance, D'Angiviller ordered two pendant paintings from Peyron of *chevalet* size: one was the lost Socrate détachant Alcibiade des charmes de la Volupté and the other was to be a death of Socrates, although Peyron chose to do Les Funérailles de Miltiade (Paris, Louvre) instead.<sup>148</sup> An examination of Peyron's version of the Belisarius theme will help to show why the Salon of 1781 marked David's emergence as the most spectacular of the artists of his own generation and in preference to Peyron, one of his closest rivals for a position of preeminence.

Peyron's Bélisaire recevant l'hospitalité d'un paysan qui avait servi sous lui (Plate 26), along with a pendant Cornélie, mère des Gracques (Toulouse, Musée des Augustins) had been a commission of 1778 from Cardinal de Bernis, the French ambassador in Rome.<sup>149</sup> The evidence for this commission in Rome to Peyron rather than to David suggests that Peyron had a higher standing and more prestige than David at the time of the commission. Even though the Cornélie was only completed two years after the Bélisaire (Plate 26) of 1779,<sup>150</sup> the two subjects have themes of similar connotation. Unlike David who reverted to previous visual representations of the blind Belisarius begging for charity, the moment of Peyron's painting follows a passage from Chapter IV of Marmontel's novel closely.<sup>151</sup> The episode deals with the welcome that is given to the old general when he is presented to the family of a peasant, whose son had been a soldier in the service of Belisarius. The subject of the pendant is mentioned in the

introduction to Book IV Chapter IV of Valerius Maximus; it deals with the honourableness of poverty:

Les plus riches ornemens dont les femmes puissent se parer, ce sont leurs enfans. Voici ce qu'on trouve à ce sujet dans le recueil de Pomponius Rufus. Une dame de Capoue étant à Rome chez Cornélie, mère des Gracques, lui faisoit un grand étalage de ses bijoux, qui étoient très-beaux pour le tems. Cornélie fit durer la conversation jusqu'au retour de ses enfans, qui étoient à l'école. Quand ils furent arrivés: 'Voici, dit-elle, mes bijoux.' Cornélie ne vouloit point d'autre parure et n'en avoit pas besoin. En effet, qui ne désire rien, a tout, et même plus sûrement que celui qui possède tout. Les autres propriétés peuvent nous être enlevées; mais la jouissance qui consiste dans la sagesse est à l'abri de tous les coups de la fortune. A quel titre pourrions-nous donc regarder les richesses, comme le comble du bonheur; et la pauvreté, comme une misère profonde? La gaieté répandue sur le front du riche, ne couvre-t-elle pas souvent mille amertumes secrètes; tandis que, sous un extérieur rebutant, la pauvreté possède en abondance des biens solides et certains. C'est ce qu'on verra mieux dans des exemples que dans des discours.<sup>152</sup>

The modesty of a virtuous domesticity, hearth, home, family and children are thus crucial to a thematic resolution and understanding of both pendants.

It has rightfully been noted that the position and arrangement of arms on the wall behind the homely scene of welcome in this Bélisaire (Plate 26) is a deliberate homage to Poussin's Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3).<sup>153</sup> What has not been noted however, is that the homage is about the affective value of the drama as much as it is about formal and stylistic parallels. The charity of those who give others the opportunity to be charitable is illuminated in these moments of spiritual wealth, which exist in spite of material scarcity and the physical deprivation of soldiers who can no longer bear weapons or use armour. Eudamidas' relatives will be looked after by his friends just as the old soldier Belisarius is respectfully being welcomed and acknowledged by the peasant's family. What constitutes true wealth

and as opposed to material riches is a part of Marmontel's description:

On servit un repas champêtre: Bélisaire y répandit la joie, en faisant sentir à ces bonnes gens le prix de leur obscurité tranquille. C'est, disoit-il, l'état le plus heureux, et pourtant le moins envié, tant les vrais biens sont peu connus des hommes.<sup>154</sup>

The value of comparatively abstract notions of friendship, love and respect within families and to friends is the overt theme in Peyron's interpretation of this subject. Each member of the peasant's family reacts to the situation according to an appropriately functional characterisation of type: the boy's embrace of the old man can be contrasted to the kneeling respect of the peasant's wife and again to the squirming of the babe in arms, who is too young to acknowledge what is going on and participate in the welcome. This accumulation of diverse effects, even affectations, evident in Peyron's painting serves to make Poussin's concise and condensed emotion more sentimentally explicit.

Peyron may well have been unable to react convincingly and appropriately to the increasingly demonstrative context of large-scale history painting in terms of the public display of history painting in the Salons of late eighteenth-century France. The scenes from history he presented were also less demonstrably dramatic as *tableaux*. These factors would, in turn, have undermined his position in relation to David who, throughout his career, showed consummate skill in manipulating and promoting the arenas of history painting. The monumental triumphal arch against which David's Belisarius is propped is far removed from the intimacy of Peyron's scale. At the Salon of 1787 both artists exhibited paintings depicting Socrates surrounded by

his followers astride a bed, in prison and about to drink hemlock. As the next chapter will show, David came to triumph over Peyron by establishing his superior talent and stature as an artist.

In 1781 David had not, yet, established such an overwhelming superiority, but he had already begun to manipulate the arena of what had become the biannual Salon exhibition, in order to promote his own claims to fame. The long list of his exhibits at this, his first Salon, is attached to the outside back cover of the official *livret* of that year, published by the Académie.<sup>155</sup> David's exhibits that year included the S. Roch intercédant la Vierge par la guérison des Pestiférés (Marseille, Musée des Beaux Arts), an altarpiece measuring 260 by 195 centimetres, the even larger Portrait de M. Le Comte de Potocki à cheval (Warsaw, Musée national), three Académies and Les Funérailles de Patrocle (Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland), which is also over 2 metres long. These works must, physically, have covered much of the available exhibition space. In addition, David's *supplément* to the main catalogue transformed the pamphlet into a brochure, advertising the works of one of the Académie's newest aggregated members. It will be shown that the titles of David's works in these official *livrets* become more and more laconic, alongside the evolution of his processes of pictorial invention. His first entry to the Salon, however, presented history painting as an active and dramatic action: "Bélisaire, reconnu par un soldat qui avoit servi sous lui, au moment qu'une femme lui fait l'aumône."<sup>156</sup> This was not a passive exposure of a particular condition, but an instant of recognition and a prompted moment of effective response.

The critics that year acknowledged David's recent achievements; one in particular noted that the artist had been accepted by what were now his fellow academicians:

Enfin M. David, en arrivant de Rome, est entré d'emblée dans l'Académie; il venoit soumettre ses tableaux aux lumieres des Académiciens; ses juges l'ont reçu parmi eux. Mutine s'est écriée: 'Il peut dire comme César, veni, vidi, vici;' Je suis venu, j'ai vu, j'ai réussi; car j'ai vaincu seroit trop fort.'<sup>57</sup>

The anonymous critic suggested that, in imitation of Julius Caesar, the emperor's own words could be altered and adapted to the manner of David's own triumph. "I conquered" was too strong a word to describe this triumph. David had not, yet, fought the academicians as enemies and beaten them, rather he had successfully won through their training system to gain their favour and esteem. The artist and his works had received official sanction; he could now go on to practice his chosen profession, not as a slavish copyist, but creatively and with honour.

## INVENTION

David acquired his licence to practice the art of history painting from the Académie. Members of that institution pursued the art form because, at least in theory, it provided the profession of painter with opportunities for flights of genius, imagination and enthusiasm, which could communicate emotion and be judged with reason and with intellect. This chapter will show that David's subsequent history paintings of the 1780s, Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30), Les Lictateurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils (Plate 40) and Socrate au moment de boire la ciguë (Plate 45) successfully established the artist's exploitation of such opportunities. It will indicate the ways in which the painter sought *gloire* via the processes of his invention and by drawing on the sources of ancient history, French classical tragedy, philosophy and debates on physiognomy. At the same time, the specific qualities of the medium of history painting were manipulated with great care and discipline in the emulation of the achievements of the distinguished predecessor, Poussin.

Following on from the principles for *inventio* formulated by classical writers on rhetoric and adapted to painting theory in the Renaissance by Alberti, Dandré Bardon in his Traité de Peinture defined *invention* as the collection of thoughts and the choice of subject, which came to be assembled into a composition.' In addition, the exceptional distinction of genius required qualities of imagination. A slavish following of rules by measurement and compass

was contrasted with the creativity of genius, which enabled the artist to commune with the gods:

Plutôt esclaves que disciples des règles de l'Ecole, ils se dirigent toujours par la gênante exactitude de la toise et du compas. Il faut que l'homme de génie, s'élevant à propos au-dessus des règles, qu'il sçait respecter à propos, hasarde des traits qui décèlent l'enthousiasme, et que loin de donner des entraves à son imagination, il élève son vol jusqu'à l'Olimpe, et se mette, s'il le faut, en commerce avec les Dieux.<sup>2</sup>

The keeping of good company, the reading of good authors and tragedies fostered an elevation of mind that was linked to the sublime: "cette élévation d'esprit, qui est en même-tems et l'image de la grandeur d'ame, et la source des idées nobles et sublimes."<sup>3</sup> Although rules could not be ignored, the communication of ennobling, conceptual ideas served to distinguish and separate the works of a man of genius from those of the less gifted.

In his Histoire Universelle Dandré Bardon further connected the sublime in painting to the *gloire* of invention: "En leur développant le sublime d'une Peinture, nous leur dévoilons la méthode qu'ils doivent suivre, pour traiter le même sujet d'une manière nouvelle, qui puisse leur mériter la gloire de l'invention."<sup>4</sup> In his history paintings David did not create entirely new stories, but he frequently invented new episodes in stories which were very familiar. These inventions offered the spectator then, as now, fruitful moments for contemplation, speculation and emotional involvement.

#### The invention of the oath scene in the story of the Horatii

As has already been noted, Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) marked a decisive shift in the painter's own bid for *gloire*. David's

letters to the Marquis de Bièvre acknowledged that in deciding to produce a larger, wider painting than the original commission, the work was to serve the artist's own ends as well as that of his illustrious patron.<sup>5</sup> The larger size would most obviously have more impact in the context of the Salon hang. The clear, stripped nature of the work's formal composition can, indeed, in part be accounted for by the artist's wish to eclipse the attractions of so many competing and rival works so as to impress his own talents in the public arena of the exhibition space. Even though the painting was destined to be hung high up above eye level in this arena, the separate elements of the composition could still be clearly seen from below. In tandem with the decision to change the size of the canvas, the painter also now felt empowered to experiment with the invention of subject matter as well as with the treatment of that subject matter.

As Edgar Wind and Robert Rosenblum have pointed out, there is no known precedent for this moment of oath-taking in the story of the Horatii. It is David's invention though a variety of sources may have been influential.<sup>6</sup> One source, as yet unidentified, can be traced back to the writer *philosophe* Diderot. In response to the publication of Régulus, a tragedy in three acts by Charles Dorat, Diderot had given his own proposals for how he would go about his own version of the play in the Correspondance littéraire of 15th March 1765. First he would steep himself in classical history and in the mentality of the early Roman Republic; then he would imagine himself to be in Rome, not in the wings or on the set of a theatre. He would have to invent the character of Régulus' father-in-law as a dominant force:

...Je ne pourrais, je crois, me passer du père de Martia. J'en ferais un des plus féroces Romains de l'histoire. Je le vois;



car il faut toujours avoir vu son personnage avant de le faire parler. Il est vieux. Une barbe touffue couvre son menton. Il a le sourcil épais, l'oeil couvert, ardent et farouche, le dos courbé. C'est un homme qui nourrit depuis quarante ans dans son ame le fanatisme républicain, la liberté indomptable, et le mépris de la vie et de la mort. Ce serait, si je pouvais, le pendant du vieil Horace de notre Corneille. C'est dans cette ame que Régulus irait déposer son projet, l'objet de son retour à Rome, et le sort qui l'attend à Carthage si l'échange des prisonniers ne se fait pas.<sup>7</sup>

The reference by Diderot to the personality of the Elder Horace in Corneille's play Horace is central to the inventions of this history painting. The title given to the painting in the Salon Livret of 1785 is: "Serment des Horaces, entre les mains de leur Pere."<sup>8</sup> The title links the making of the oath to the hands of the father, which most obviously forms the central dramatic event of the figurative composition. Diderot's description of his invented character fits the pictorial description of David's character both in physical form and in fanatical temperament. One hand of David's Elder Horace openly invokes his sons to swear their oath; the other hand grasps the shiny metal of their swords in a clenched grip of vice-like intensity that, for someone of more feeling sentiment and less fanatical severity, would hurt. That David is likely to have been familiar with this description of Diderot's is supported by the presence of another of Diderot's inventions - an oath of patriotic sacrifice:

On appelle les senateurs des deux familles. Ils viennent, sans savoir ce qu'on attend d'eux. Les voilà assemblés. C'est Régulus qui leur parle, et qui leur demande si la patrie leur est chère? Ils répondent..S'ils se sentiraient le courage de s'immoler pour elle? Ils répondent..Et s'il y avait un citoyen sollicité par son sort de s'immoler lui-même, aimeriez-vous assez la patrie et ce citoyen pour envier son sort et seconder son dessein?..Ils répondent..Mais cela ne suffit pas. Jurez-le..Ils jurent. Serment court et grand..C'est alors que Régulus dit: 'Eh bien, mes amis, ce citoyen, c'est moi!'<sup>9</sup>

The description culminates with Régulus leaving for Carthage, after having kissed his wife, who has fainted in the arms of her father. The father had just threatened to silence his daughter with a dagger, after she had reproached her fellow citizens for cowardice. There is here a further similarity with the subject of the Horatii.<sup>10</sup>

Before examining David's treatment of the oath scene in his painting in detail, it is also worth noting that, in order to confirm his own election as academician, the artist had himself recently made an oath between the hands of the Premier Peintre Pierre. The formula is recorded in the minutes of the Académie of 6th September 1783:

En ouvrant la séance le Secrétaire a fait lecture d'une lettre de Versailles, écrite à M. Pierre, Directeur, par M. le Comte d'Angiviller, dans laquelle il annonce que le Roy a confirmé l'élection que la Compagnie a faite, dans son assemblée du 3 Aoust dernier, du Sieur Jacques Louis David en qualité d'Académicien, pour avoir séance dans ses assemblées et jouir des privilèges, prérogatives et honneurs attribués à cette qualité, à la charge par lui d'observer les Statuts et Règlements de l'Académie, ce qu'il a promis en prêtant serment entre les mains de M. Pierre, Premier Peintre du Roy, président l'assemblée, conformément au Règlement fait le 4 Mai 1782, et le nouvel Académicien a pris séance.<sup>11</sup>

It is unlikely that this oath would have involved the raising of a sword in the manner envisioned by David for his painting, but the repetition of the wording in the Salon *livret* is significant. It shows David had carefully rethought existing tradition and ritual for the purposes of his own inventions. The recording of the academic oath of admission also provides evidence of the artist submitting to the privileges, honours and rules of an authority which he would later break.

Diderot's text is of lesser relevance to painter's ink and wash compositional drawing of the Young Horace returning in triumph to Rome

(Plate 31). The subject here is closer to Livy where the victor, returning triumphant with the spoils of war meets his sister outside the Capena gate, than it is to Corneille, where their meeting and Camille's body are not seen in a public place.<sup>12</sup> The armour that is borne aloft is similar to the models described and illustrated in Dandré Bardon's manual, Costume des Anciens Peuples (Plate 87). A cloak, outlined on one of the suits of armour refers to the cloak Camille recognises that she has made for her lover, who is now dead; the detail is in Livy, but not in Corneille, where the arm of the young Horace testifies to his victory - a further significant detail of David's imagery.<sup>13</sup> The drawing has the bull motif of the right edge of the antique frieze (Plate 22) and there are certain formal similarities to Poussin's L'Enlèvement des Sabines (Plate 29) now in New York: the townscape and the way the figures have been grouped within the architectural framework, but the closest analogies are with the first version of David's Bélisaire (Plate 23). The shocked pose of surprise of the elderly bearded man is similar to the shock of the professional soldier. In neither case are the complications of military duty, in which devotion to *patrie* conflicts with family ties, presented in an equivocal way. The Young Horace brandishes his sword and points without regret at his murdered sister. She is depicted in a poignant and helpless pose, stretched out along the foreground with her mouth open in anguish. Others look on in shock, horror and fear. In the drawing, the drama of the event is conveyed without, as yet, an exploration of the moral consequences of the action, which will emerge in the final painting. As a *pensionnaire* of the Académie in Rome, Louis Lagrenée had painted this episode in 1753.<sup>14</sup> The work, Horace

chargé des dépouilles des Curiaces tuant sa soeur qui lui reproche la mort de son amant (Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts) was kept in the painter's Paris studio till his death in 1805; the same episode was also to be the set subject for the Grand Prix de Rome of 1785.<sup>15</sup>

A different subject had been marked down in a list of 1782 for paintings to be presented at the Salon of 1783:

Horace vainqueur des trois Curiaces, condamné à mort pour le meurtre de Camille sa soeur, défendu par son Père, au moment où les Licteurs l'entraînent au Supplice, et absous par le Peuple touché de ce Spectacle, et du grand service qu'il venoit de rendre à sa Patrie,<sup>16</sup>

This subject and another drawing by David of the Elder Horace defending his son (Plate 32) connect to an extract from Valerius Maximus on severity:

Telle est la sévérité qui s'est exercée sur les hommes. Elle n'a pas été moins rigoureuse envers les femmes. Horace venoit de vaincre lui seul les armes à la main les trois Curiaces, et, en vertu du traité, tous les Albains. Lorsqu'il rentra dans la maison paternelle, après cet exploit mémorable, il rencontra sa jeune soeur, pleurant plus amèrement, qu'il ne convenoit à son âge, la mort de l'un des Curiaces, qui devoit être son époux. Il la tua de la même épée avec laquelle il avoit fait triompher sa patrie; ne trouvant pas assez chastes, des larmes que faisoit couler une tendresse prématurée. Accusé devant le peuple, pour cette action, il fut défendu par son père. Ainsi, un peu trop d'attachement dans une jeune fille pour la mémoire de l'époux qui lui étoit destiné, fut puni de mort par un frère impitoyable; et cette punition trouva dans un père un approbateur non moins rigoureux.<sup>17</sup>

The description highlights the use of the sword that had also been used to gain victory for the nation. In this drawing by David, the returning, stern conquering hero is shown still brandishing this sword as the central action of the composition and, with his other outstretched arm, he points to his sister with some severity.

In Livy, Old Horace is said to have made a statement in his son's defence, with the observation that he considered his daughter had

deserved her death.<sup>18</sup> Livy then recorded the father's impassioned address to the people:

*'Quoi, disoit-il, vous feriez donc expirer au milieu des supplices et sur un infâme gibet celui que vous venez de conduire en triomphe chargé de ces glorieuses dépouilles? O l'affreux spectacle! les Albans eux-mêmes en auroient horreur. Approche l'licteur, lie ces mains victorieuses qui viennent d'assurer à Rome l'indépendance et l'empire: voile la tête du libérateur de la patrie; hâte-toi de l'attacher au gibet; fais-le expirer sous les coups dans l'enceinte de Rome, au milieu de ces trophées et des dépouilles des Curiaces; ou si l'on veut hors de nos remparts, au milieu de leurs tombeaux, car enfin, en quel endroit pouvez-vous conduire ce jeune vainqueur où les monumens de sa gloire ne vous reprochent l'infamie de son supplice.'*<sup>19</sup>

In this speech the glory of the son's victory is contrasted with the ignominy of his proposed punishment. According to Livy the moving appeal by the father and the young man's courage in the face of such a fate obtained the killer's acquittal. The classical historian recorded a moral dilemma in which what was right was distinguished from what was wrong because of a judgement that valued *gloire*. In the final work, David was also to give expression to such ideas, although they are not documented as record in the painting. The compositional drawing of the Elder Horace defending his son (Plate 32) is, indeed, closer to the conflicts and predicaments of Corneille's play than it is to the text from Livy.

In Act V, Scene III of Corneille's Horace the king decides to allow the Young Horace to live, after hearing the arguments of Valère, Sabine, the Elder Horace and the Young Horace himself.<sup>20</sup> The famous "Qu'il mourût" of the Elder Horace in Act III, Scene VI gives this character its own problematic, as the duty to die for one's country is firmly placed above the ties of family.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, in this drawing, the delineated facial features of the older man and his open hand

imply fervent appeal. The boldly aggressive appeal on behalf of a son was to be finely inverted by David for the figure of Brutus' wife, whose open hand is in a parallel pose, but the later painted gesture was to evoke despair at the legitimate loss of the mother's sons. Here, David's drawing presents the young Horace in an essentially unsympathetic way with a firm scowl and seemingly arrogant hand-on-hip stance. His lust for military glory is not tempered by any other moral or familial considerations. In contrast below, his dead sister is being mourned by his wife, Sabine; she sits with face covered and bent in grief. Her burden is even more heavily tragic, when we recall that she is not just mourning her dead sister-in-law but also her own, dead brothers. David's inclusion of Sabine in the drawing and indeed in his history painting enables further, crucial connections back to Corneille's seventeenth-century drama to be made.

The central, irreconcilable conflicts of Horace deal with ties of love and of duty to the State in opposition to ties of love and duty to one's family. The play opens with a speech by Sabine in which the rival state of Alba is acknowledged as having been the parent of Rome:

Albe est ton origine: arrête, et considère  
 Que tu portes le fer dans le sein de ta mère,  
 Tourne ailleurs les efforts de tes bras triomphants;  
 Sa joie éclatera dans l'heure de ses enfants;  
 Et se laissant ravir à l'amour maternelle,  
 Ses vœux seront pour toi, si tu n'es plus contre elle.<sup>22</sup>

This imagery presents the war in terms of a family conflict.

According to the words of Sabine, a mother's joy would reconcile her offspring, provided the conquering arm of one of her sons does not plunge iron into her breast. Horace, returning in triumph after killing Curiace, his sister's lover, condemns his sister's anger:

Suis moins ta passion, règle mieux tes désirs,

Ne me fais plus rougir d'entendre tes soupirs;  
Tes flammes désormais doivent être étouffées;<sup>23</sup>

Camille does not restrain her anger and is in turn killed by her brother. The morality of the play is ambiguous and this ambiguity is likewise revealed in David's painting. Though Horace is not punished by the State for the murder of his sister, the play ends with the king's wish, after giving judgement against sentencing Horace, that Camille should be honoured in death and laid to rest next to her dead lover, Curiace.<sup>24</sup> Horace's patriotism had earlier been contrasted with that of Curiace:

Quoi! vous me pleureriez mourant pour mon pays!  
Pour un coeur généreux ce trépas a des charmes;  
La gloire qui le suit ne souffre point de larmes,  
Et je le recevrais en bénissant mon sort,  
Si Rome et tout l'Etat perdaient en ma mort.<sup>25</sup>

For Horace, all other considerations, including the loss of Rome are superseded by an implacable lust for *gloire*. The control or lack of control of this passion is thus at the core of Corneille's drama, just as it is in David's history painting and in both cases more negatively than in the account given in Livy.

In his Examen to Horace, Corneille defended the play in the light of contemporary French dramatic theory and criticism. The death of Camille on stage was supported despite the recommendations of the classical theorist on poetry, Horace:

Horace ne veut pas que nous y hasardions les événements trop dénaturés, comme Médée qui tue ses enfants; mais je ne vois pas qu'il en fasse une règle générale pour toutes sortes de morts, ni que l'emportement d'un homme passionné pour sa patrie, contre une soeur qui la maudit en sa présence avec des imprécations horribles, soit de même nature que la cruauté de cette mere.<sup>26</sup>

The argument used here is that the delineation of a conflict arising out of opposing passions and interests justifies the breaking of a

stated convention. Whilst the playwright admits that the sudden anger of Camille was not consistent with the personality which had been presented up to that point, and also that the double peril, first of Camille, then over the trial of her murderer, does not conform to the single, unified action in tragedy which Aristotle had recommended, he does nevertheless defend and praise his own invention of the character of Sabine, even though she had not as yet been a part of any historical account of the story:

Le personnage de Sabine est assez heureusement inventé, et trouve sa vraisemblance aisée dans le rapport à l'histoire, qui marque assez d'amitié et d'égalité entre les deux familles pour avoir pu faire cette double alliance.<sup>27</sup>

The writer admitted to inconsistency in the delineation of the character of Camille but praised his own inconsistency in inventing the character of Sabine. The embellishment of the story by this additional personality made the ties between the two families more intricate. The inter-mingling of duties to family and as opposed to those of the State had been inextricably intermeshed to a greater degree and in ways which were also to be incorporated into David's Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30). The character of Sabine acts almost as a metaphor of the friendship and emotional interdependency between the two countries, for she embodies the closeness of their familial bonds.

Further links between the art of history painting and the arts of performance in the late eighteenth century will now be considered. These links will show that different conventions governed the practice of different media, but also that themes and processes of invention intersected across the consciously cultural milieux of the day. Some



years ago, Edgar Wind noted, for instance, that the dance master and choreographer Noverre had produced a tragic ballet, Les Horaces, in 1777 in which the story of the Horatii was acted out in pantomime, in accordance with the reform of ballet the choreographer was advocating.<sup>28</sup> Noverre's Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets first appeared in 1760; it had a second edition in 1783.<sup>29</sup> More convincing, less mannered forms of expression, gesture and action were advocated in these letters in an aesthetic which was to be sparer, but truer to nature.<sup>30</sup> Noverre was adapting the painting theory of the Académie, which to a large extent had itself evolved out of dramatic theory, for the purposes of his own pantomime ballet-dramas.

His report on Garrick's ability to express appropriate passions eloquently through facial expression and physical gesture made a direct analogy with the art of the painter:

...il savoit distribuer à propos et suivant que les caractères l'exigient, quelques coups de pinceau sur les endroits où la physionomie doit se *grouper* et faire tableau: l'âge, la situation, le caractère, l'emploi et le rang du personnage qu'il devoit représenter, déterminoient ses couleurs et ses pinceaux. Ne pensez pas que ce grand Acteur fût bas, trivial et grimacier: fidèle imitateur de la nature, il en sut faire le plus beau choix...<sup>31</sup>

This quotation includes key theoretical precepts, which had been applied to history painting by the academicians of the Académie of painting: the need to select the most appropriate and fruitful moment, to conform to the *convenance* of a given situation and to arrange compositional groupings correctly. Noverre even adapted the concept of *vraisemblance*, as a licensed departure from strict accuracy of detail, for his own cause of ballet, which he felt should above all be able to communicate subject matter and emotion effectively and

intensely.<sup>32</sup> Again, history paintings were to provide appropriate models:

Les tableaux exigent une action, des détails, un certain nombre de personnages, dont les caractères, les attitudes et les gestes doivent être aussi vrais et aussi naturels qu'expressifs. Si le spectateur éclairé ne démêle point, au premier coup d'oeil, l'idée du peintre; si le trait d'histoire dont il a fait choix, ne se retrace pas à l'imagination du spectateur avec promptitude, la distribution est défectueuse, l'instant mal choisi, et la composition obscure et de mauvais goût.<sup>33</sup>

The Correspondance littéraire of January 1777 reported on Noverre's attempt to stage Corneille's Horace as a pantomime. This report was evidently the source for Wind's article and discernment that the ballet had contained the invention of an oath. Wind does not, however, record that the review was extremely negative about Noverre's enterprise:

...Les difficultés qu'il a vaincues n'ont été senties que par les artistes et celles où il a eu le malheur d'échouer l'ont été par tout le monde...Comment M Noverre n'a-t-il pas encore prévu qu'un coup de pied et une grimace du sieur Gardel ne pourraient jamais produire l'effet du sublime qu'il mourût...?<sup>34</sup>

Noverre had also been criticised in Germany. J J Engel's Ideen zu einen Mimik first appeared in 1785 and was published in a French translation in 1788. This writer made clear that it was impossible for gestures to conform to language, which he considered was better at expressing abstract concepts.<sup>35</sup> Lessing's Lacoon was only translated into French in 1802, but the influence of an earlier edition of this work on Engel is evident.<sup>36</sup> The French edition of Engel's treatise on gesture was illustrated with scenes adapted from Noverre's pantomime Horace to show how ridiculous the attempt had been. One illustration depicting Camille's curse on Rome from Act IV, Scene 5 of Corneille's play, showed how the actress was literally forced to mime eating its

earth (Plate 33). Another figure (Plate 34), ostensibly adapted from the pose of the swearing warriors in David's painting, was used to illustrate how equivocal the meanings of gesture could be, since this gesture did not necessarily illustrate the swearing of an oath.

After the success of David's painting, Corneille's play was revived with Jean Baptiste Brisard in the role of the Elder Horace in a performance of 15th April 1786.<sup>37</sup> Levacher de Charnois' Costumes et Annales des Grands Théâtres de Paris, a right-wing journal that ran for four years from 1786 and supported the reform of theatre costume, included a comparison between Brisard's interpretation of the role and David's depiction of the character:

...Flattés de saisir l'occasion de rendre hommage à ce grand Peintre, nous croyons être en droit d'assurer que c'est un des meilleurs tableaux de l'Ecole Française; c'est-là que les Héros, animés par le génie de Corneille, sont dans leur véritable Costume; mais le vieil Horace n'est pas mieux représenté sur la toile que sur le front de M. Brisard, et le beau idéal ne pouvait surpasser la nature.<sup>38</sup>

The critic does compare the actor's interpretation of the part with David's interpretation of the story. The comparison however, also highlights the realities of the theatre in relation to the idealising potential that painting incorporated. The plate accompanying this text still gives added weight to this observation (Plate 35).

Although the reform of theatre costume had been proposed by the actor Lekain and his contemporaries, it seems that only with the advent of Talma was this reform put into practice;<sup>39</sup> the requirement of archaeological accuracy of detail had, in contrast, been a standard for history painting at least since the days of Poussin.<sup>40</sup> In 1825, A. Baron recalled the extravagant costumes of Noverre's own pantomime, despite the choreographer's attempts at reform:

On voyait paraître Camille, la soeur des Horaces, avec deux monstrueux paniers de chaque côté; sur la tête, une coiffure de deux ou trois pieds de haut, farcie d'une prodigieuse quantité de fleurs et de rubans. Les six frères n'étaient pas en reste avec leur soeur; ils s'avançaient avec leurs tonnelets sur les hanches; les Horaces en habit de drap d'or et les Curiaces en habit de drap d'argent; tous ayant d'ailleurs de chaque côté de la tête cinq boucles de cheveux poudrés à blanc, et un toupet prodigieusement exhaussé, qu'on appelait alors *toupet à la greque*.<sup>41</sup>

A general movement of reform towards barer, more stripped forms of representation on stage did nevertheless gather momentum during the second half of the eighteenth century in France. Gluck was to bring about similar amendments to the recitative and staging of opera. The engraving of a *décor* by Brunetti (Plate 36) used for a performance of *Irène* in 1778, when the bust of Voltaire was honoured, shows a backcloth in which the perspectival vistas of the seventeenth century have been rejected in favour of a frontal, symmetrical division of three arcades, somewhat in the manner of *Le Serment des Horaces* (Plate 30). Yet it is evident that the stage is also still being illuminated by footlights. Lavoisier delivered a discourse to the Académie des Sciences in 1781 entitled *Mémoire sur la manière d'éclairer les salles des spectacles* in which he criticised the poor illumination of existing arrangements.<sup>42</sup> Improvements in oil lamps were to be effected in the years 1780 to 1784 by Argand, though the conservative actors of the Comédie Française resisted the introduction of such lamps in their new building of 1782.<sup>43</sup>

The focussed illumination from the left in David's *Le Serment des Horaces* (Plate 30) did not conform to theatre practice; it is to be understood far more in relation to the painter's ability to highlight a particularly intense moment, in the manner of the Caravaggisti. The

eyes of the Elder Horace look up to a light which falls boldly from the left as if the father has been illuminated in a belief in the rightness of his demands, yet the grieving women on the right are also in highlight. David has again creatively transformed themes of sight and insight. The illumination reinforces the spectator's awareness of the tragic consequences of this critical moment thus making the meaning of the painting, when considered as a whole, equivocal. A knowledge of these tragic consequences would have been as familiar to an eighteenth century French observer as Hamlet's fate is to an English speaking audience of today. The analogy between the text of Corneille's play and David's painting was clear to a versifier of 1785:

Les voilà...ce sont eux...ces sublimes Horaces  
 heros qui pouvaient seuls vaincre les cuirasses!  
 cette male vigueur et ce hardi maintien;  
 tout en eux m'est garent de triomphe de rome  
 (*Illegible*).....on te reconnait bien,  
 O pere guerrier, coeur au dessous de l'homme!  
 la nature a parlé...tu n'entend que sa voix...  
 pour toi, pour les tiens que de gloire!  
 mais que de pleurs, hélas! suivrent cette victoire!  
 je gémiss sur son sort, et t'envie à la fois...  
 Oui, maintenant je puis comprendre  
 tout ce que le génie a sur vous de pouvoir:  
 ce heros que Corneille a su me faire entendre  
 non moins grand dans son art, David me les fait voir  
 par un amateur des arts.<sup>44</sup>

The rules of dramatic theory for the elevated genre of tragedy dictated that acts of violence should take place away from public view. David eventually places the action of his painting where there is no bloodshed and within a private context. Through a process of purification at odds with traditional drawing practices and with David's training from the Académie, superfluous detail is suppressed in favour of an invention that crystallizes and heightens the

emotional complexities and ambiguities of the chosen, isolated moment. The language of French classical tragedy relies equally on a vocabulary that has been restricted, selected and purified into the conscious conventions of alexandrine verse. A notable parallel exists therefore between the formal structure of David's history painting and the dramatic constructions of French tragedy. Nonetheless, the artistic inventions of the painting Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) exploited an awareness of the differences between the more or less permanent state of a mute canvas and the transient moments of the arts of performance.

Antoine Schnapper gives a vivid description of Mme. Vigée-Lebrun's Greek supper of 1788 in which guests dressed up as ancient Greeks and the Odes of Anacreon were recited; he also reports that David had arranged the children of the Duc d'Orléans into "ephemeral tableaux."<sup>45</sup> Although the extent of David's personal participation in such amateur theatricals cannot be defined, it is worth noting that the desire to perform was a craze that was simultaneously invading a variety of public and private arenas. The Chroniques des petits Théâtres de Paris evoked the craze vividly:

Les compagnons serruriers, les étaliers bouchers, les ferblantiers, les boisseliers, quittaient leurs forges, leurs étales, leurs marteaux, pour courir chez le directeur ou le costumier; ils perdaient souvent un ou deux jours de la semaine, sans compter l'argent qu'ils dépensaient pour avoir le triste plaisir d'amuser à leurs dépens. Que j'ai vu de choses bouffonnes dans ces malheureux endroits... J'ai vu des Agamemmons aux mains calleuses, des Iphigénies avec des engelures aux doigts, des Célimènes en bas troués; j'ai vu jouer l'Abbé de L'Epée par un jeune homme de quinze ans, et le Jeune Sourd-muet par une portière qui en avait au moins cinquante; j'ai vu jouer le Séducteur par un homme qui avait deux pieds-bots, le Glorieux par un malheureux dont la taille avait à peu près quatre pieds et demi, et le Babillard par un bégue...<sup>46</sup>

The Mémoires secrets included two accounts of the private theatrical enterprises of Mlle. Guimard. In 1768 there was a description of how proverbs by Carmontelle were acted out by groups of off-duty actors and actresses at Mlle. Guimard's country residence of Pantin.<sup>47</sup> The second account recorded the opening, on 8th December 1772, of a private 500 seat theatre in Mlle. Guimard's town house on the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin.<sup>48</sup> In 1773, David was to replace Fragonard on the painted decoration of the ceiling and salon of this new building.<sup>49</sup> Even though the separate disciplines of theatre and of painting involve different technical requirements, there were evident links between these two media in the cultural milieux of eighteenth-century Paris. The Correspondance littéraire of March 1771 had a report of a painter named Touzet, who was making the rounds miming the physiognomies of a whole convent of nuns behind a folding-screen.<sup>50</sup> Having presumably failed at painting, this artiste was achieving notoreity as a mimic.

It is possible to conclude that the practice of theatre was very different from that of painting at this time. Some of the difference can be accounted for by the distinct characteristics and conventions of these two separate art forms. It is interesting to note however, that the choreographer Noverre borrowed from the maxims of painting theory, when he required some authority for the promotion of his own profession. The need to communicate story convincingly, by stirring the emotions, evoking and eliciting pathos was central to cultural discourse of the period. In addition, certain themes were being developed by both dramatists and history painters using similar processes of invention.

David's choice of an oath for Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) concentrated the action into a dramatically momentous *péripétie*. It also recalled the oath and military commitment to public as opposed to private duty of Poussin's La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2). The Abbé Dubos had drawn on the examples of Poussin's painting and Corneille's "Qu'il mourût" of the elder Horace to demonstrate that painters could not express as complicated actions as poets:

Il n'est pas d'expression pittoresque qui puisse articuler, pour ainsi dire, les paroles du vieil Horace, quand il répond à celui qui lui demandoit ce que son fils pouvoit faire seul contre trois combattans: *Qu'il mourût*. Un Peintre peut bien faire voir qu'un homme est ému d'une certaine passion, quand même il ne le dépeint pas dans l'action, parce qu'il n'est pas de passion de l'ame qui ne soit en même-tems une passion du corps. Mais ce que la colere fait penser de singulier, suivant le caractere propre de chacun, et suivant les circonstances où il se rencontre, ce qu'elle fait dire de sublime, par rapport à la situation du personnage qui parle, il est très-rare que le Peintre puisse l'exprimer assez intelligiblement pour être entendu.

Par exemple, le Poussin a bien pû dans son tableau de la mort de Germanius, exprimer toutes les especes d'affliction dont sa famille et ses amis furent pénétrés, quand il mourut empoisonné entre leurs bras: mais il ne lui étoit pas possible de nous rendre compte des derniers sentimens de ce Prince si propres à nous attendrir. Un Poète le peut faire...<sup>41</sup>

It was just this sort of challenge, with which David's invention of the oath in the story of the Horatii engaged. The painter took on a well-known story, but invested it with a new moment; a moment of great emotion, power and intensity and a moment that gave more prominence and potency to the potential complexities of the story's moral dilemmas and predicaments. By choosing the oath theme, the artist was also able to transmute an essentially oral element into an essentially visual one, but one which also involved the receptive, listening facility, an activity which was to be further highlighted in the painting.



It is noticeable that the left ears of the two foremost brothers and the right ear of Camilla are particularly well illuminated in David's painting. It is an awareness of the possible consequences of the oath, of what she is hearing, that causes Camilla to grieve and to lean touchingly against her sister-in-law. Camilla hears, feels and understands with her eyes closed. Both the sense of sound and the notion of insight have been depicted, but this was only possible because David knew that whilst history painting was drawing on history and drama for subject matter, the same conventions could not be used. The boundaries of the pictorial medium were such that he had to use means that were different from those of history, drama and sign language, whilst nevertheless seeking to convey similar theme and effect.

Robert Rosenblum has provided a series of possible visual sources for the scene of oath taking.<sup>52</sup> A closer consideration of antique accounts of the history will shed further light on the importance of David's own invention and contribution to this narrative which, as has already been noted, may have also been influenced by Diderot's inventions for a drama on the theme of Regulus. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for instance, noted that the Horatii brothers gained their father's approval for their challenge fight with their cousins. The case, put by the eldest brother, balanced the pursuit of *gloire* and points of honour against ties of blood and of family:

Ravi de les trouver dans ces dispositions, leur pere leva les mains au ciel, il rendit graces aux dieux de lui avoir donné des enfans si courageux et si braves; puis les aiant embrassés l'un après l'autre avec beaucoup de joie et de tendresse; je vous donne mon consentement, leur dit-il, généreux enfans; et je suis de votre sentiment. Allez rendre réponse à Tullus, mais une réponse digne de votre pieté et de votre courage.<sup>53</sup>

With arms raised to the heavens, the father's response here, apart from the embrace, is equivalent to the father's action in David's painting, where the father appears to be speaking, but the sons have their mouths closed and are silent. In this historical account, the father gave to his sons the qualities of bravery and piety, because of their decision; in a similar manner David has acknowledged such recognition and response in his depicted confrontation between the sons and their father.

Livy contrasted the peaceful reign of Numa, with the lust for action of his successor, Tullus Hostilius, who declared war on the Albans and thereby prompted the fight between the Horatii and the Curatii. Numa had promoted the observance of much new religious ritual and ceremony and the significance of oath-taking had acquired new meaning and sanctity for the Romans: "...que la foi seule du serment contenoit dans le devoir autant que la crainte des loix et des peines."<sup>54</sup> The significance of an oath, as a ceremonial act invested with much mythic power, had been established.

Livy invoked the act of oath-taking again, a few paragraphs further on, in conjunction with the decision to send the Horatii, on behalf of the Roman people, to settle the conflict with the Curatii, who were to represent the Alban enemy. Both tribes took a solemn oath to adhere to the terms of the treaty and part of this ritual, which the Romans performed, is described in Livy:

...Le Fecial se nommoit Marcus Valerius: il constitua Spurius Furius *Pere Patrat*, en lui touchant la tête et les cheveux avec de la verveine. Ce *Pere Patrat* étoit principalement établi pour prêter le serment au nom de la nation et ratifier par bien des paroles et de longues formules...<sup>55</sup>

The Roman historian clearly marked out the authority and importance of the role of *pater patratus* as a representative of the State and on behalf of the State, in the making of the symbolic vow. The oath had been absorbed into a ritual enactment of patriotic duty, just as a similar ritualistic act of empowerment to patriotic duty is marked out in David's painting. David's representation of this *rite de passage* preserves for posterity the mythic, totemic power of such a crucial action, which was furthermore present in one of the classical narrative sources for the painting.

The dramatic moment of taking an oath inevitably involves consideration of past, present and future actions. Just as in Poussin's La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2), from a study of which David tries out the pose of Agrippina for another preliminary drawing for the Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 37), so here there is a similar structural division with the grief of the women in opposition to the military decision and oath-taking of the men. In Poussin's history painting, a boy in the foreground, possibly Caligula, is clothed only in a cloak; he seems to be about to leave the domestic context of his siblings, mother and nurse for the contrasting martial sphere of the hero's comrades. The eldest child, instead, comprehends weepingly the implications of what is unfolding before him. In David's painting, between the women on the right and the men in the centre and on the left of the composition, two children are being shielded by an older woman. One smaller child has his back to what is happening, but the other child gazes out at what his elders are doing, in wonderment. In both paintings, the figure of a child bridges the separate masculine and feminine spheres, suggesting and widening implied cause and

effect.<sup>56</sup> Parallels between these two paintings are on both a formal and an affective level; David adapted similar devices for similar effect from his predecessor and it was with this work that he came to be proclaimed as Poussin's successor and can be seen to be deviating from earlier eighteenth-century painting practice.<sup>57</sup>

In Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30), the three soldiers in the action of their oath-taking are united in their resolve; their stances and gestures mirror each other as one. Such unifying tripartite strength is also an inversion of the story of Scilurus as presented by Noel Hallé. Hallé had exhibited a painting (Warsaw, National Museum) on this theme at the Salon of 1767 and a large drawing (Plate 38) after the painting at the Salon of 1769.<sup>58</sup> Hallé showed a younger son holding up a broken arrow with opposite three of his elder brothers who, in unison, are unable to break a bundle of fasces apart. Diderot had criticized the flacidity of Hallé's figures: "...aussi ignobles, aussi infâmes, aussi hideux...si au lieu d'un faisceau à rompre, il eût mis sous la main de ces trois indignes figures une longue rame à mouvoir."<sup>59</sup>

David brought to this theme of unity through strength qualities of a formal, military discipline. At the same time as the Horatii brothers are being empowered by their father however, they can also be contrasted with the incapacitating grief of the women's insight. It was just this sort of subtlety of interpretation that the greatest French tragedies demanded and from which painters could take example. A reviewer in the Correspondence Littéraire of 1785 valued the painting in terms of the emotion of the narrative and the consequences of the action:

Que le contraste entre ce groupe guerrier et celui de ces femmes dans l'accablement de la plus profonde douleur est simple et sublime! J'y reconnais sans peine la maîtresse de Curiace, cette infortunée Camille au sein de laquelle son frère furieux va bientôt plonger une épée encore fumante du sang de son amant. Sa beauté est dans sa première fleur; son désespoir est plus concentré, il en sera plus sombre et plus terrible. Il y a plus d'abandon, plus de mollesse dans la douleur de Sabine. Tandis qu'une bonne vieille s'efforce de cacher à ses petits enfants cette scène de douleur, le plus fort des deux détourne la main qui veut l'empêcher de voir une action dont il paraît déjà plus curieux qu'effrayé. Ce dernier groupe dans l'enfoncement, du tableau, faiblement éclairé, ne tient précisément que la place qu'il doit occuper, et, sans distraire du sujet principal, ajoute encore à l'intérêt domestique qui rend cette situation si vive et attendrissante.<sup>60</sup>

The reviewer interpreted the painting in terms of the story of Corneille's play and the conventions of tragedy: the domestic context, the main action and its consequences, the affective value of the sublime and of contrast.

#### History painting as theatrical and unsuccessful

The author of Le Frondeur ou Dialogues sur le Salon of 1785, whom Thomas Crow has taken to be Carmontelle,<sup>61</sup> criticized Berthélemy's Manlius Torquatus condamnant son fils à mort (Plate 39) by making pertinent allusions to the theatrical tradition:

...Un père qui condamne à la mort son fils victorieux, et cela pour maintenir la subordination militaire, doit conserver sur sa physionomie presque autant de calme que s'il étoit résolu de mourir lui même pour le salut de sa patrie. La plupart de ceux qui l'environnent participeront plus ou moins d'un tel caractère; il ne faut donner qu'à des femmes l'emploi de blâmer cette justice sévère par les mouvemens de crainte ou d'horreur. Cette pitié que chaque personnage témoigne ici, tient lieu d'une improbation générale que le dernier effort du patriotisme ne mérite pas d'essuyer, et à laquelle il ne voudroit pas se soumettre. Il eût été beau de suivre ici l'exemple du grand Corneille, qui fait trouver au jeune Horace un défenseur dans le vieillard le plus respectable qu'il pût choisir, dans son père, le père même de la victime qu'il vient d'immoler. Le Peintre doit bien juger qu'avant d'ordonner cet acte terrible, deux

sentimens fort opposés ont déchiré le coeur du vertueux Manlius; la nature plaidoit pour son fils; mais l'amour de son pays lui crioit: 'Si le bonheur excuse une infraction, tu ne sais plus ce qu'un hasard malheureux va t'en réserver à punir; si le bras du Guerrier brise la chaîne du devoir, tu ne sais plus où s'arrêteront ses excès; la défaite de tes armées, le pillage de tes villes, le massacre de tes concitoyens, peut tenir à cette première insubordination; tu ne voudrois pas qu'on reprochât un jour à ton fils d'avoir occasionné tant de maux; enfin, ton indulgence terniroit ton honneur, au lieu que ta sévérité conserve ta gloire, et rétablit pour jamais la sienne.' Le père qui cède à de si grands intérêts, n'a l'air ni furieux ni tendre; il a dans les traits cette grandeur de formes qui fait présumer la grandeur des sentimens; ce n'est point une passion du moment qu'il y faut peindre, mais une passion qui n'ait jamais cessé d'exister au fond de son ame. Tourmenter ses yeux, sa bouche et ses bras, comme fait un mauvais Acteur durant une ritournelle, ce seroit blesser la vérité, cacher la moitié de sa figure et lui prêter un geste emporté, c'est manquer de noblesse et dénaturer le sujet.<sup>62</sup>

The critic considered that the complexity of the father's feelings had not been adequately represented in the painting; conflicts between patriotic duty and familial love were again at issue, but the character of Corneille's father of Horace should have been emulated, rather than the grimaced contortions of a bad actor's posing. This implied that the artist should have used the dramatic principles adapted by David for Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) and to which the painting of Les Licteurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils (Plate 40) will again refer. The subject of this painting was also to present a conflict between ties of paternity and duty to the State. Before discussing this work, however, the treatment of narrative in Berthélemy's Salon exhibit of 1785 will be considered; it is another story in which a consul father condemned his offspring to death for disobedience to the law. The work was also a D'Angiviller commission on behalf of the State and it was to serve as the basis for a Gobelins tapestry.<sup>63</sup>

The story of Manlius Torquatus is recounted by Livy and is used as an exemplum of military discipline by Valerius Maximus.<sup>64</sup> The consul Manlius Torquatus condemned his son to death because he had broken the order not to attack, even though in this attack the son had been victorious. Berthélemy's painting represents Manlius the father in the act of condemnation; one thrusting out, pointing hand gives a strong gesture of command. At the same time, the seated father turns away unable to bear the sight of the son he is in the act of condemning. Roman power and martial authority are signposted by the military ensigns, much as modern-day stage design might use such props. The bundle of fasces and the helmet, posed in the right hand foreground of the scene are not, however, adequately integrated into the tragic confrontation between public morality and private duty, and which have become here inextricably intermixed. The props act as an obvious *repoussoir* to emphasize, in a formal manner, the system of diagonals on which the composition has been built up. They symbolically evoke the conflict between the rule of law and the rule of war, which is at the centre of the story, but the self-conscious bravura of these motifs is at odds with the stern moral and emotional predicament of the consul.

David's history paintings for D'Angiviller have a comparatively small cast of figures. Berthélemy's painting, in contrast, has a chorus of onlookers, who incorporate a range of response to the judicial decision, in accordance with painting theory and its requirements of *variété*. Berthélemy's presentation of these spectators is, however, at odds with the flaccid and neutral reaction of the son. The expressive emphasis has been somewhat illogically

inverted for it is the son, whose fortune will directly change as a result of his father's command, who should perhaps bear a greater emotional loading, if only as a fallen hero. For the consul's action to have meaning, the reaction of the son needed to be differentiated from the reactions of the crowd. To do this, Berthélemy hit upon a remaining resource of ideal beauty, rather than a more obviously heroic or tragic pose. In David's Brutus (Plate 40) there are no spectators who are subsidiary or subordinate to the main action. In this painting, each figure actively participates as an individual and contributes to the narrative exposition of the scene, by acting in an appropriate way.

Part of Berthélemy's difficulty in achieving a satisfactory balance between communicating convincing narrative and presenting a significant action on canvas may well have been due to a perceived negativity, in what was supposed to have been an act of exemplary military discipline. Livy reported that the comrades of the younger Manlius gave him a hero's funeral and that subsequently, there was greater discipline but that the orders of Manlius were thereafter heard with horror.<sup>55</sup> In line with Valerius Maximus, Charles Rollin's account of the story expressed greater consternation at the severity of Manlius' judgement:

L'action de Manlius, quelque nom qu'on veuille lui donner, (car je n'entre point ici dans cet examen) soit qu'on la qualifie de juste sévérité, ou de cruauté barbare, produisit dans les esprits un double effet. D'un côté, elle rendit le soldat plus exact et plus soumis: de l'autre, elle rendit le Consul odieux à jamais; et les ordres de Manlius, *Manliana imperia*, passèrent en proverbe pour exprimer l'excès le plus redoutable et le plus outré de sévérité.<sup>56</sup>



The writer professed that he was not going to examine the action of Manlius but he, nevertheless, posited a rather negative comparison: between a just severity and a cruel barbarity. In addition, the eighteenth-century historian recorded that the name of Manlius was associated with odium, dangerous excess and an immoderate severity. Given such contradictory assessments of the consul's behaviour, it is not surprising that a painter of less inventive freedom and ability than David was unable to present a nuanced balance of interests successfully.

The selection of a subject for the pendant to *Le Serment des Horaces*

The proposals rejected by the artist for the work commissioned by the State as a pendant to *Le Serment des Horaces* (Plate 30) must now be examined as part of the study of David's use of invention in his history paintings of the 1780s. An undated list contains two suggestions for paintings by David to be presented at the Salon of 1787:

- 1) Coriolan, après s'être réfugié chez les Volques et avoir trouvé d'eux du secours, est décidé à se venger de sa patrie; au moment de son départ pour aller combattre, il en est empêché par sa Mère, sa femme et ses enfants. 2) Départ d'Attilius Régulus qui aime mieux s'exposer aux plus affreux supplices et à la mort qui l'attendent à Carthage que de consentir aux négociations proposées par les afriquains; Sa mère, sa femme, ses enfans. Personne enfin ne peut le détourner de son projet.<sup>67</sup>

A drawing (Plate 44) relates to the second proposal; it depicts Régulus' daughter actively restraining her father from departing by holding on to his arm. As has often been remarked, there is a constant tension in David's imagery between the motives,

characteristics and reactions of women as opposed to those of men. The drawing no more resolves this conflict than does the painting of Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30). Indeed, this is the essence of the drawing as it gives to the daughter a more vigorously tragic part than is given to the suspended resignation of Camilla and Sabine. There are no extant drawings by David for the first proposal concerning the story of Coriolanus, although its iconography had been popular for some time. Louis Lagrenée, for example, had despatched his painting of the subject (Toulouse, Musée des Augustins) to Toulouse in 1764 and there is a wash drawing of the moment by Vien of circa 1771 in the Louvre.<sup>68</sup> Jean-Jacques-François Le Barbier exhibited a fully worked up sketch of this moment in the story at the Salon of 1789.<sup>69</sup>

A textual source for the story of Coriolanus, which may well have appealed to D'Angiviller and his advisers is again to be found in Valerius Maximus. The classical author used the story to demonstrate the example of filial love:

...Celui qui devoit être le sauveur de ses concitoyens à la tête de leurs légions, devient leur fléau à la tête de leurs ennemis. Après avoir défait nos armées en plusieurs rencontres, il conduit les Volsques de victoire en victoire jusqu'au pied de nos murailles. Ce peuple fier, qui n'avoit pas daigné prêter l'oreille à la défense de l'accusé est réduit à demander grâce aux genoux de l'exilé. Ses envoyés supplient, en habits sacerdotaux, et reviennent sans avoir rien fait. Le sénat reste interdit; le peuple est dans l'alarme; hommes, femmes tous déplorent également leur perte qui semble inévitable. Alors Véturie, mère de cet implacable ennemi, suivie de Volumnie, son épouse, et de ses enfants, se rend au camp de Volsques. Dès que son fils l'aperçoit: 'Tu l'emportes,' s'écrie-t-il, 'ô ma patrie; tu triomphes de ma colère avec de telles armes. Quelqu'odieuse que tu sois à mes yeux, les prières d'une mère t'arrachent de mes mains.' Et sur-le-champ il ordonne à l'ennemi d'évacuer le territoire de Rome. Ainsi le ressentiment d'une injustice cruelle, l'espérance d'une victoire prochaine, la honte de manquer à des engagements, la crainte même de la mort, tout fait place dans son coeur à la piété filiale; et le seul aspect

d'une mère fait succéder les douceurs de la paix aux horreurs de la guerre.<sup>70</sup>

The example does not include the subsequent death of Coriolanus at the hands of the Volscians, nor the reasons for the original exile of Coriolanus from Rome.

Plutarch reported that as a Patrician, Coriolanus had vehemently spoken out against the populace, who had wanted a low market price for grain and even a free share of some grain that had been sent to Rome as a gift.<sup>71</sup> This had led to civil unrest and the accusation that the Patrician had tried to usurp power from the government. Coriolanus agreed to defend himself against this accusation in public.

Plutarch's narrative continued:

Le peuple étant assemblé, la première chose que firent les tribuns, ce fut d'extorquer par force qu'on donneroit les suffrages par tribus et non pas par centuries, et cela afin que les suffrages des pauvres et de la populace la plus séditieuse, et qui n'avoit aucun égard pour la justice et pour l'honnêteté, l'emportassent sur ceux des nobles et des gens de guerre.<sup>72</sup>

Coriolanus was given a sentence of perpetual banishment; Plutarch's prose seems to resonate with proto-revolutionary implications for the success of the populace had usurped power from the Senate:

La sentence, ayant été prononcée, le peuple en eut plus de joie et en conçut plus de fierté et d'orgueil que de toutes les batailles qu'il avoit déjà gagnées; mais le sénat en fut si affligé et si confus, qu'il osoit à peine lever les yeux, très-fâché et très-repentant de n'avoir pas poussé les choses à la dernière extrémité, plutôt que de souffrir cette insolence du peuple, et que de les laisser usurper un pouvoir si absolu. Alors les différens habits et les autres marques extérieures de tristesse et de joie étoient peu nécessaires pour juger des différentes passions, dont les uns et les autres étoient animés; car il étoit aisé de voir que ceux qui se réjouissoient étoient du parti de la populace, et que ceux qui s'affligoient étoient du côté des patriciens.<sup>73</sup>

Coriolan, a tragedy by De la Harpe, was first performed at the Comédie Française on 2nd March 1784; it was repeated on 11th March in

front of the King and Queen at Versailles.<sup>74</sup> It was also published in 1784 with a preface that emphasized the misuse of power, liable to occur under Republican government:

Les Historiens qui lui accordent toutes les vertus, ne lui reprochent que ce seul défaut, presque inséparable de la supériorité, sur-tout dans une République, un trop grand sentiment de ses propres forces; et c'est précisément dans une République que ce défaut a moins d'excuse et plus de danger, parce que l'égalité est jalouse et la liberté altière et soupçonneuse.<sup>75</sup>

The playwright seems to have sympathised with the plight of Finance Ministers such as Necker and Calonne, who, to general disapproval, were trying to grapple with the realities of France's economic crisis:

...Il est certain que le seul tort qu'on pût lui reprocher, c'était d'avoir opiné au Sénat, dans l'affaire des bleds, avec toute l'aigreur qu'avait laissée dans son ame le refus du Consulat, et d'avoir dit aux Tribuns des vérités dures. Ils surent en profiter pour le rendre tellement odieux, que s'ils ne l'eussent pas ajourné devant le Peuple, il courait risque d'être mis en pieces, et que les Sénateurs eurent beaucoup de peine à l'arracher des mains d'une populace furieuse.<sup>76</sup>

In the play, greatest emphasis is placed on the confrontations between mother and son. Act I Scene III contains a speech by Veturie about how a Patrician should behave, given the liberties the new Republicans had now acquired. Coriolan responds to this in a haughty way, condemning the people as not being responsible enough for self-government.<sup>77</sup> The scene ends with Coriolanus agreeing to be tried by the people and the Senate, but solely out of filial duty. The climax of the drama comes in Act V, Scene III, and is again a confrontation between mother and son; this scene was traditionally the one chosen for depiction in paintings and it was the moment marked down to David in the list in advance of the Salon of 1787. Here, issues of patriotism, duty, loyalty and honour are raised. Coriolanus is not

shown as unjustified in wanting to avenge what he perceives as being a wrongful punishment of exile.<sup>79</sup> Véturie considered an oath of vengeance was something evil. At the end of the tragedy, Coriolanus dies in his mother's arms, blaming his assassination not on the Volscians, but on the Roman populace who had first sentenced him to banishment. Duty to his family had caused his death, but his mother's patriotic appeal had saved Rome.

There was lively debate about the play in the press. B. Imbert, in the Mercure de France of 27th March 1784, considered that the disregard of the requirements of the unity of time made the change of fortune that the Romans underwent, unbelievable. The transference from a position of power to one of being under threat came too quickly.<sup>80</sup> This enabled the critic to reproach La Harpe for implying that Coriolanus was a deserter and not someone of noble character, who had been oppressed and who had saved an entire nation. Imbert ended his remarks with the suggestion that the Romans, not the Volscians, should kill Coriolanus since Coriolanus' desire to punish the Romans was what the play was about. M. de Tournelles responded to such attacks in verse, comparing the unjust fate of Coriolanus to the injustice La Harpe was receiving from the critics.<sup>81</sup>

We know that David was still in Paris in March 1784, only leaving for Rome in order to paint Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) in September.<sup>82</sup> From his early association with Sedaine onwards, David maintained his interest in and close contact with the theatre, throughout his life.<sup>83</sup> The decision not to continue with a painting on the theme of Coriolanus at some point after 1787 was not an unmediated one. At the time, the story was being examined with some

thoroughness. This thoroughness may have inhibited David and limited his exploitation of his own powers of invention. The position of aristocratic patrician polarised from and as opposed to Republican government, around which the story of Coriolanus had evolved, had been identified with too great a clarity and with too great a degree of entrenchment.

In Paris in 1784, the subject of Coriolanus had been linked to a patrician cause. However, as Robert Herbert has shown, it was only after 1789 that the subject of Lucius Junius Brutus was openly identified in France with the cause of republican government.<sup>83</sup> In Voltaire's tragedy Brutus of 1730 for instance, far greater prominence is given to the love plot between Tarquin's daughter Tullie and Brutus's son Titus, than to conflicts of duty to the State;<sup>84</sup> this love affair is no part of David's painting. Many of the issues raised by De la Harpe's play, Coriolan, can though be linked to the way David treated the theme of Brutus. In his painting of 1789 (Plate 40), subtle and sophisticated reversals have, however, occurred again. It is the father, Brutus, who enforces the law of republican government in condemning treacherous and unpatriotic sons, while the mother's helpless gesture of grief directly out towards the bodies of her dead offspring occurs from within the private, not the public, domain of the family.

The story of Lucius Junius Brutus had already been depicted by other eighteenth-century painters. An engraving by Cunego of Gavin Hamilton's Brutus swearing to avenge the death of Lucretia (London, Drury Lane Theatre) had been widely disseminated; Robert Rosenblum has also proposed Beaufort's Brutus (Nevers, Musée Frédéric Blandin)

of 1771 as a source for David's treatment of the story of the Horatii.<sup>85</sup> The suggestion is pertinent in that David's selection of a pendant to Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30), which was to be of the same size and was a further D'Angiviller commission on behalf of the King, used another moment from the story of Brutus to explore, once again, a conflict between legal obligations to the State and the emotional bonds within a family. Here, the *gloire* of a magistrate rather than that of a military hero, was at stake; the concern was raised to new heights of problematic and tragic intensity.

Valerius Maximus had used the story as an example of parental severity, in contrast to the immediately preceding example of parental indulgence in the story of Seleucus with which, as was shown in the previous chapter, David is likely to have been familiar:

La gloire de L. Brutus a égalé celle de Romulus. Si l'un a fondé la ville de Rome, l'autre a fondé sa liberté. Il apprend que ses deux fils conspirent pour ramener la tyrannie des Tarquins, dont il vient de délivrer la patrie. Chargé des fonctions du pouvoir suprême, il les fait arrêter et amener à son tribunal. Là, il ordonne qu'ils soient attachés au poteau, battus des verges et frappés de la hache. Il fait céder les sentimens de père aux devoirs de consul, et se condamne à vivre sans enfans, plutôt que de laisser la république sans vengeance.<sup>86</sup>

This text is close to David's drawing of Brutus at his sons' execution (Plate 41). Brutus is within a public arena and is seen with negative comment on his authoritarian stance, prepared to watch the killing of his own son, which he has just ordered. His fellow Consul, seated in isolation with him on a podium, looks out towards the spectator with fingers over his face, as if unable to bear the direct vision of the execution. Significantly, along with the subject of Horace killing his sister which had been chosen for the Grand Prix de Rome

competition for painters in 1785, the subject of Brutus was set by the academicians for the sculptors' own Grand Prix de Rome of that year; the moment was to be: "celui où les fils sont exécutés en présence du père."<sup>97</sup>

Dionysius of Halicarnassus gave a detailed account of the public execution of Brutus' sons: the consul implacably applied the letter of the law with astonishing rigour and exactitude and refused to be softened by the pleas of his children, nor those of the general assembly. To everyone's surprise he chose to participate in the public spectacle of the execution of his sons:

Davantage, il regarda leur punition avec des yeux attentifs sans en paroître touché: et, ce qui surpasse toute créance, les spectateurs fondant en larmes il fut le seul qui n'en versa point sur le sort de ses enfans. D'une constance inébranlable au milieu des malheurs de sa famille, à l'épreuve de toutes les rigueurs de la fortune, il ne lui échapa aucune plainte, il ne poussa pas un soupir...<sup>98</sup>

Dionysius contrasts the tears of the spectators with the firm resolution and self-control of the consul. The description of the consul's resolve is akin to the resolution of David's preliminary drawing. The painting is of a more equivocal, private moment however. The exact moment is not in any textual source, but it is nevertheless closer to other preceding histories of the story. Livy, for instance, used harsh words to criticize the sons' plight:

...tout le monde avoit les yeux attachés sur les enfans de Brutus, et paroissoit moins touché de les voir punir, que de les trouver coupables du plus horrible attentat, d'avoir formé l'infame projet d'asservir leur patrie l'année même de sa délivrance, d'avoir conspiré contre leur pere le libérateur de cette même patrie, et contre la dignité du Consulat, née dans leur propre maison, d'avoir voulu livrer le Sénat et le peuple, Rome, ses citoyens et ses Dieux à Tarquin, ce monstre d'orgueil, ce tyran devenu depuis son exil l'ennemi déclaré de l'Etat.<sup>99</sup>



For Livy, the potential treachery was a crime against the Senate, the Roman people, the citizens and their gods. The decision to have the criminals whipped and executed was not given to Brutus alone who, forced to watch the capital punishment, could not hide the tenderness of a father. This interpretation of the event presented the moral dilemma of the father, rather than the severity of his legal judgement.

The discrepancy in the interpretation of this episode by the historians of Antiquity was commented on by Charles Rollin in his treatise, De la Maniere d'enseigner et d'Etudier les Belles-Lettres:

On donne à ces derniers mots *animo patrio*, deux sens tout opposé. Les uns prétendent qu'ils signifient que dans cette occasion la qualité de Consul l'emporta sur celle de pere, et que l'amour de la patrie étouffa dans Brutus tout sentiment de tendresse pour son fils. Ce vers de Virgile *vincet amor patriae*, et le caractère d'insensibilité et de dureté que Plutarque donne à Brutus, semblent appuyer ce premier sens. D'autres au contraire soutiennent, et leur sentiment paroît bien plus raisonnable et plus fondé dans la nature, que ces mots signifient qu'à travers ce triste ministère que la qualité de Consul imposoit à Brutus quelque effort qu'il fit pour supprimer sa douleur, la tendresse de pere éclatoit malgré lui. Et le vers de Virgile emporte nécessairement ce sens, puisqu'il marque qu'il y auroit un combat entre les sentimens de la nature et l'amour de la patrie, et qu'enfin ce dernier l'emporteroit: *vincet amor patriae*.<sup>90</sup>

Virgil had, however, used the example of Brutus to commemorate a too zealous patriotism and lust for glory.<sup>91</sup> Rollin was to return to this point in his defence of the speeches of Livy in the introduction to his Histoire Romaine.<sup>92</sup> This history gave a succinct account of the dilemma of the consul as both father and magistrate: "qui malgré sa triste fermeté, laissoit entrevoir les sentimens de la nature qu'il sacrifioit à la necessité de son ministère, mais qu'il ne pouvoit étoufer."<sup>93</sup> The French historian had perceived that the story presented a conflict between public office and private life, but at

the same time he had also attributed to Brutus the love of a father rather than that of a patriot because the former motive was more reasonable and more natural.

Plutarch gave to Brutus a stern demeanour; he did not shed tears in public. The Greek historian then evaluated his behaviour:

...ce fut, ou l'excès de la vertu qui éleva son ame au-dessus des passions, ou l'excès de la passion qui y produisit l'insensibilité; et ni l'un ni l'autre n'est médiocre, ni proportionné aux forces de l'homme, mais ou d'une bête, ou d'un dieu.<sup>94</sup>

This historian resolved the matter by placing value on the *gloire* of Brutus' achievement: the Romans had considered Brutus' success in establishing the republic on the debris of royalty to have been greater than Romulus' achievement in founding Rome, and so Brutus was to be considered more like a god because of this virtue.

The 1762 edition of André Dacier's translation of the *Vitae* incorporated a supplement with additional lives, which had been composed by Thomas Rowe and translated from the English into French by the Abbé Bellanger and in this supplement, a fuller "Life of Brutus" was given.<sup>95</sup> The discussion of the character of Brutus here contained an even longer digression as to the nobility and virtue of the legislator which, though, provided the historian and the reader of history with less agreeable, charming and astonishing material than the life of a conqueror

Un Thrasybule exilé et errant de tous côtés, un Brutus qui sous une folie apparente cache le plus grand rôle et les plus nobles desseins, sont dans leur humiliation même infiniment au dessus d'un Philippe ou d'un César, lorsque par mille actions mémorables ils cherchent à détruire la liberté que les autres ont acquise à leur patrie.<sup>95</sup>

The story of Brutus had, again, been linked to discourses about what constituted true *gloire*, in line with Marmontel's article on *gloire* in the *Encyclopédie*, which had allied the *gloire* of Brutus to the *bien public*, rather than to the more private, familial sacrifice by Virginus of his daughter.<sup>97</sup> Thomas Rowe's discussion had, however, contrasted the apparent folly and long-term nobility of purpose of the magistrate with the numerous memorable short-term actions and vainglory of the warrior-hero.

Antoine-Leonard Thomas' eulogy to Henri-François Daguesseau, which won the prize for eulogy at the Académie Française in 1760, further confirmed the important role of the legislator in society:

Sans les armes, l'état deviendrait la proie de l'étranger. Sans les loix, il s'écrouleroit sur lui-même...  
 ...Je peindrai dans Daguesseau le magistrat, le savant profond, l'homme juste. Cet éloge ne peut être étranger à aucun pays, ni à aucun siècle. Mais si parmi nous il se trouvoit quelqu'un qui fût insensible au charme des vertus, et qui n'aimât que le récit des sièges, et des batailles, la nature s'est trompée en le faisant naître dans ces climats, et parmi des hommes instruits. Il y a des pays encore barbares, où l'industrie et le talent se bornent à l'art de se détruire; qu'il aille vivre parmi les sauvages et les tigres de ces déserts: je parle à des citoyens et à des hommes.<sup>98</sup>

This comparison also contrasted the morality of the magistrate with that of the man of arms; the destruction and barbarity of the latter compared unfavourably with the humanity, intelligence and *vertus* of the magistrate's contribution to society. Such comparisons provide an appropriate context for the cultural discourse of David's painting and its earlier pendent. Rousseau had attributed to the Legislator, as a man of extraordinary foresight, an exceptional role in formulating rules for society. Brutus is not presented by David as an exceptional

hero, but his position as legislator has been endowed with some authority, weight and depth.

Rousseau, following on from Rollin, had also advocated that the private affairs of the heart rather than the great affairs of State were to be of concern to historians.<sup>99</sup> Once again, part of David's invention of subject matter in the story of Brutus is to shift the scene away from the public violence of the killings to the private emotions contained in the home. In David's painting, the need for a violent sentence has been evoked by the testimony of the traitors' letter to Tarquin, which Brutus clutches in his own hand. The consul's twisted pose, crossed-over feet and shaded face, as he looks out at the spectator, not at his sons, whose bodies have been juxtaposed and placed behind his head, present the dilemma of the legislator in his home. Beside him is the statue of Roma, on top of a pedestal that has a bas-relief emblem of the Etruscan She Wolf suckling the twin founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus. The monument is an implacable reminder of the consul's public position, duty and achievements, which Plutarch had compared favourably to those of Romulus. The opposite side of David's composition has, however, been given over to the female members of Brutus' household.

The extreme distress of these women, within their own domestic setting, transforms the tears of the public assembly in the account of the story given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus into a familial tragedy of power and emotion. The highlighting of the bowl of sewing on the table in the centre of the painting brings to the fore private details of the everyday rather than the grand affairs of State, from which at the time of Brutus and at the time of David, women were excluded. The

distress of the bereaved women culminates in the centrally splayed out, empty hand of the mother, who witnesses the bodies of her sons being brought home and who has not had power to intervene to stop the tragedy, which now invades her space too. The act of violence has, again, taken place off stage in accordance with the Latin writer Horace's famous dictum that Medea should not butcher her children in the presence of the audience.<sup>100</sup> The viewer of David's painting has, however, also been made aware that by his isolation from the rest of the family, the father's decision has destroyed his family. The thread of life, suggested by the sewing on the table, has been cut and, as a father and husband, Brutus has failed for now he has no male offspring. In Livy, the elder Horace had successfully pleaded for his son's life by using the argument that the dishonour of the place of execution would put to shame the glory of his son's triumphs and conquests. Such a notion of *gloire* has here, once again, been inverted by David for the painting shows how the consul's judicial decision has cut him off from the favour of posterity in a tragic way. The dilemma of Brutus arises out of the ignominy of his sons; it cannot be resolved by a consideration of *gloire* in its purest sense and with absolute finality, but it is rather a tragic history about both the personal and social implications of *gloire*.

The first contemporary reviews of the painting highlighted the dramatic elements of its composition. The Journal de Paris of 8th November 1789 noted:

julius brutus. L'idée de ce tableau me paraît sublime; aussi est-il du plus grand intérêt. L'histoire appartient de la même manière au peintre comme au poète. tous deux ont le droit de créer les circonstances qui les conviennent. m. David a créé l'action qu'il représente et, selon moi, c'est un mérite de plus. mais si cet artiste éclairé et réfléchi sait jusqu'où il peut

s'étendre, il sait aussi où il doit s'arrêter. cette science est difficile et n'appartiendra jamais qu'au petit nombre.<sup>101</sup>

David had been praised here for his powers of invention, in the manner of a poet's. The action, as a licensed departure, had been presented without superfluous detail, yet the idea it presented was of great interest because it appeared to the writer as sublime. Another anonymous critic noted:

...En effet cette production est plus d'un grand Poète que d'un Peintre: et le reproche que j'ai entendu faire *de voir deux Tableaux dans ce sujet*, il est justement la cause de mon admiration. Je crois appercevoir J. Brutus, s'éloignant de sa famille, mais ne se reprochant pas encore sa sévérité; je crois le voir balancer entre la nature et l'ambition. Ainsi j'admire ce Tableau. Mais, comme mon enthousiasme ne m'aveugle jamais, je crois le voir faire remarquer au célèbre David, que l'incertitude de la lumière de ce Tableau pourrait servir de moyens de critique à l'envieuse et malicieuse médiocrité.<sup>102</sup>

In this extract, however, a preliminary indication of the more overtly political readings of the painting, that were to occur in the years that followed, can be detected. The uncertain light mentioned by the critic suggests that the writer felt that the severity of the Republican's pride may have been covered up too much. David's celebrity was, nonetheless, contrasted with the envious and malicious mediocrity of his critics.

It is not my purpose here to trace the subsequent critical reception of the painting. David's own perception of the work in 1789 is, however, pertinent. Wicar, one of David's pupils, had produced a drawing of Brutus condemning his sons to death (Plate 43) in 1788, which reverted again to the severity of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and of Valerius Maximus, and it was to Wicar that David wrote on 14th June 1789:

...Donc je voulais vous dire que je fais un tableau de ma pure invention. C'est Brutus, homme et père, qui s'est privé de ses

enfants, et qui, rentré dans ses foyers, on lui rapporte ses deux fils pour leur donner la sépulture. Il est distrait de son chagrin, au pied de la statue de Rome, par les cris de sa femme, la peur et l'évanouissement de la plus grande fille. C'est bien beau à la description, mais pour le tableau, je n'ose encore rien dire. Il paraît à ne vous pas mentir, qu'on est content de la composition; mais moi, je n'ose encore rien prononcer...<sup>103</sup>

The use of the words *pure invention* indicate how much the artistic process was not a matter of mere illustration for the painter. The poetic licence of *vraisemblance* was used to flout the historicity of custom and practice deliberately, for David would have known, as his early drawing of a frieze in the manner of the antique indicates (Plates 21 and 22), that dead bodies were not brought home for burial at that early period of Republican Rome. The flouting of recognized convention here and in the later nudity of the Roman soldiers in *Les Sabines* (Plate 57) indicates that antique sources were not merely being illustrated and used as exemplary, but that they were consciously being adapted with licence for a purpose. In the case of the story of Brutus, a dramatic situation had been presented, as moving and tragic; it could also be addressed in ways that were immediate and present.

The statue of Roma juxtaposed above the relief motif of the she-wolf emblem nurturing the founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus, provides, for instance, further layers of interpretative possibility in relation to the *dramatis personae* of the *tableau* and the complexity of their motives. These constructs are not mere embellishments, but are meant to work actively to stimulate the observer towards making his or her own deductions about the moral and political difficulties and choices that have been set out. David's letter to Vicar intimates

that it was having an initial idea, or good conceptual invention, which dominated the processes of producing a painting:

...Enfin, vous voilà à Florence, Florence, pensez-y bien, la patrie de Michel-Ange. Souvenez-vous combien peu de temps il a été apprendre à peindre. Le sentiment et le dessein, voilà les vrais maîtres pour apprendre à remuer le pinceau. Qu'importe que l'on fasse ses hachures à droite, à gauche, de haut en bas, de long en large; pourvu que les lumières soient à leur place, on peindra toujours bien. Malheur à celui qui dit qu'il ne sait pas peindre, en voulant dire qu'il ne sait pas fondre; celui-là ne peindra jamais même quand il saura bien fondre. Il ne dirait pas cela s'il avait ce que nous entendons 'le sentiment.' '104

This states that it was the exploration of *sentiment*, rather than the knowledge of niceties of good shading that made a good painter.

Another compositional drawing (Plate 42), close to the painting of Brutus (Plate 40), is illustrative of David's method of proceeding. These methods are also reminiscent of the way Poussin altered some of the features of his drawings in order to load his paintings with greater, more concise emotional pathos. David's study is centred on a vision of absence, with a central observer staring at the empty chair. One daughter slides against her mother. This function is developed further in the painting where the girl has fallen into a limp, blind dead faint, the figure staring at the empty chair has also been removed. In the drawing, the other daughter frontally shields her eyes and face, as if unwilling to acknowledge the absence of her brothers from her sight; her pose is also developed for the painting in line with a clearer, more thought out narrative communication. In the painting, her legs are twisted away from the biers on which the decapitated bodies of her brothers are being carried, yet through raised hands, she looks in the direction of the lictors who bear the corpses. Compared to her mother's emotively isolated splayed out hand



and outstretched arm, this daughter appears to reject the totality of what she is seeing in a more restrained, more considered way. A more concise, economical language is finally decided upon.

These State commissions on Roman republican subjects presented issues that were a part of an acknowledged cultural tradition; at the same time David had explored ways of flouting existing convention for his own purposes. These purposes had not yet, however, been allied to any one patriotic cause in contemporary France.

The transmission of ideas as ennobling and for posterity

Philippe Bordes has demonstrated that during the period immediately prior to the Revolution, David mixed socially with an educated, liberal cultured élite, rather than with, say, radical politicians and activists.<sup>105</sup> David's Socrate au moment de prendre la ciguë (Plate 45) has not, as yet, been adequately set against the cultural context of history painting before the Revolution.<sup>106</sup> Such a study will now show that, at that time in the production and reception of history painting, the concerns of an individual's personal ambition took precedence over identifiable sectarian and political faction. The inventiveness resulting from the creative artist's endeavour was meant to link past action to present achievement for the sake of posthumous fame, in as impressive and dramatic a way as possible.

The painting of Socrate (Plate 45) was commissioned by Charles-Michel Trudaine de la Sablière, who was a youthful member of a distinguished aristocratic family; his father, Jean-Charles Philibert Trudaine had been an Intendant des Finances and his grandfather had

organised the network of French roads.<sup>107</sup> The Trudaines had a magnificent town house in the Place Royale where members of the liberal aristocracy and of the talented bourgeoisie, including David, would meet regularly to exchange enlightened opinion. Both the Trudaine brothers, as well as the poet André Chénier, who was also a member of their circle, were to be guillotined as reactionaries during the Reign of Terror.<sup>108</sup>

Philippe Bordes has put forward the suggestion that André Chénier was the author of some verses commemorating the patron's *bienfaisance* for having commissioned the painting from David.<sup>109</sup> The verses ended neatly with a celebration of the patron, his patronage and the painter for their gifts to posterity:

Mais que tu dois l'aimer, ce chef d'oeuvre, O Trudaine  
Toi, qui sus lui prédire une gloire certaine.  
Ainsi, guide toujours les arts consolateurs.  
Eux seuls peuvent donner ces plaisirs en hauteur,  
Qu'un esprit élevé cherche et goûte, sans cesse;  
Et nos neveux diront, en louant ta sagesse;  
'C'est pour lui, sous les yeux des Muses, qu'il servit,  
'Qu'avoit chanté Delille, et que peignoit David.<sup>110</sup>

This verse openly associates David's name with endeavour that ennobled and elevated and also with posterity's gratitude. As has been shown, contemporary notions of what the writing of history ought to be, encouraged the artist to aspire to a fame that would last and be immortal. Due to the noble attributes of his *oeuvre*, the painter actively sought to achieve what posterity would consider to be a position of distinction, a position which, before the Revolution, was acknowledged to have been in his grasp.

Another stanza of Chénier's poem described the figure of Plato whom the writer had wrongly, but understandably, identified as Cebès:

Plus loin, le seul Cebès, abattu, consterné,

Reste assis sur la pierre et s'y tient incliné.  
 Sa crainte, sa pitié, ses douleurs sont muettes.  
 Il a laissé tomber son crayon, ses Tablettes.  
 Il écoute, il médite, il cherche à retenir,  
 Ce qu'il doit raconter aux siècles à venir,  
 Et qu'a tracé Platon, dans ses pages fidelles:  
 De Socrate mourant les leçons immortelles!'''

Valerius Maximus had used the example of the philosopher Socrates to show how those of mean birth advanced to great honours and the specific honour the Roman writer attributed to Socrates was that of teaching the best rules for life.<sup>112</sup>

Unlike the works of Seneca however, no writings by Socrates have survived from Antiquity and it is only through other authors, notably the disciple Plato, that the philosophy of Socrates has endured. This fact was commented on in the dictionary of famous men by Honoré de Lacombe.<sup>113</sup> The advice given to David by the Oratorian, Brother Adry also pointed this out. An extant draft of a letter to David from the erudite historian contained explicit and thorough advice to the artist on how to proceed with his painting on the subject of Socrates:

Oui, Platon doit figurer dans le groupe des disciples. N'est-ce pas lui qui a recueilli et nous a transmis les dernières paroles de Socrate? L'évidence et les convenances, sinon la vérité historique, vous y autorisent. Il semble qu'il manquerait à cette scène sublime...

La douleur de ce disciple chéri ne pourrait être mieux exprimée qu'en le représentant assis au pied du lit, immobile et comme abîmé dans les réflexions accablantes que font naître la mort prochaine de son digne Maître, la fureur de ses ennemis et l'ingratitude des Athéniens. Vous emprunterez, du reste, cette attitude et cette douleur tout à la fois muette et éloquente d'une pierre antique que vous trouverez gravée, soit dans le Père de Montfaucon, soit à la tête du IXe livre de la traduction de l'*Illiade* par M. de Rochefort, et qui représente la mort de Méléagre. L'artiste grec a bien senti qu'une faible douleur permet des mouvements et des démonstrations extérieures, mais qu'une grande douleur absorbe, pour ainsi dire, et anéantit toutes les facultés: CURAE LEVES LOQUUNTUR, INGENTES STUPENT. Et ce sera tout à fait 'à l'antique,' comme on le répète si volontiers maintenant.<sup>114</sup>

Before dying, the writer and philosopher Seneca had ensured that his beliefs would be transmitted to posterity by his disciples.

Similarly, the inclusion of Plato in the scene of Socrates' last moments in this life shows how the chain of ideas emanating from the elder philosopher was transmitted to future generations. Besides the figure of Plato in David's painting of Socrate (Plate 45) lie scroll, pen and ink; the tools which will be used to record the scene for posterity and the material source of the inspirational link forward to David's own work. Adry's draft letter ended:

Voilà, monsieur, quelques notes qui vous aideront, je l'espère à réaliser non seulement le chef-d'oeuvre qu'attendent M. de Trudaine et tous vos amis; mais encore un tableau en tous points conforme à la vérité historique, comme vous le désirez.<sup>115</sup>

The historian was suggesting here that the patron and the painter's friends were expecting a masterpiece; he also noted that the painter had wanted to make the painting historically truthful.

In 1798, this draft letter was annotated by the author with hindsight:

J'avais autrefois recommandé au peintre de représenter Platon jeune, âgé de 25 ans au plus. Or, je demande si ce n'est pas un véritable anachronisme et une espèce de caricature de donner à un jeune homme de cet âge la tête d'un vieillard?<sup>116</sup>

The annotation further suggested that the reason why Plato should have been represented as old was that no models of the young Plato existed. This is the argument of an antiquarian, rather than that of a creative artist. David deliberately flouted the suggestions of Adry's draft letter, not because of his limitations as an artist, but because the painting establishes crucial links between the two Greek philosophers, links which provide us to this day with a major part of the hagiography of the disciple's teacher. The painting translates these

links in obviously visual ways: both the elderly philosopher Socrates and the elderly philosopher Plato are draped in creamy white and have large balding foreheads; in addition, both figures are strongly illuminated in the prison cellar from the left and from above. The ahistorical inclusion of an elderly Plato in this way makes plain that the communication of philosophical idea was also a purpose of David's picture. Despite the evident grief of Socrates' other disciples, the negative implications of his impending death have been counteracted: the disciples would not be left without a mentor of similar stature to the one they were about to lose. The successful transmission of the teacher's learning had been secured for posterity by Plato. In David's own representation of the teacher with this disciple, the teacher's learning was to continue to be thought-provoking at the end of the eighteenth century and beyond. The initials L D are engraved on the block on which Plato sits. There is thus a chain upwards from the writing implements to the philosopher disciple and his thoughts via the mediation of the painter's own inscription. Both Plato and David could be seen, therefore, to have contributed to the subject of the teacher's life and manner of facing death, so as to provide the basis and the material for further contemplation.

Themes of nobility of behaviour in life and when facing death are central to the way Plato wrote about Socrates. Plato's Apology is Socrates' defence at his trial by the Democrats who ruled Athens, against charges of impiety and corruption of youth. In this work, Socrates is shown as preferring to die by the truth, than to live by corruption.<sup>17</sup> In the Crito, one of his disciples, in fact Crito himself, offers Socrates the chance to escape before sentence is

carried out, but the philosopher refuses the opportunity in order to show the necessity of obeying the laws of the State. The Phaedo is a dialogue on the immortality of the soul and ends with the scene of the philosopher's death in prison, surrounded by his disciples. One of the central gestures of David's painting is that of Socrates' upwardly pointing index finger, in emulation of Plato's gesture in Raphael's La Scuola d'Atene (Vatican, Stanza della Segnatura), which also indicates a belief in a higher reality. David's ahistorical inclusion of an elderly Plato at the foot of the bed and deep in thought, serves in part as a visual tribute to the continuing endurance and importance of abstract ideas.

According to Thomas, in his Essai sur les Eloges, Plato achieved greatness primarily because he celebrated the greatness of Socrates.<sup>118</sup> In this essay, Thomas visualised the scene of Socrates' death as a graphic tableau:

On ose dire que nul éloge ni ancien, ni moderne, n'offre un tableau si grand. La mort d'un homme juste est un objet sublime par lui-même; mais si ce juste est opprimé, si l'erreur traîne la vérité au supplice, si la vertu souffre la peine du crime; si, en mourant, elle n'a pour elle-même que Dieu et quelques amis qui l'entourent, si cependant elle pardonne à la haine, si de l'enceinte obscure de la prison où elle meurt, ses regards se tournent avec tranquillité vers le ciel; si, prête à abandonner les hommes, elle emploie encore ses derniers momens à les instruire; si enfin, au moment où elle n'est plus, ce soit le crime qui l'a condamnée qui paroisse malheureux et non pas elle, alors je ne connois point d'objet plus grand dans la nature: et tel est le spectacle que nous présente Platon, en décrivant la mort de Socrate; il y joint tous ces détails qui donnent de l'intérêt à une mort célèbre, et qui en reçoivent à leur tour.<sup>119</sup>

Prison scenes were very popular in the literature, plays, operas and paintings of the eighteenth century for they offered opportunities for the experience of a sense of sublime enslavement. In 1754, La Font de Saint-Yenne had explicitly recommended the subject of Socrates as

suitable for history painting. In this recommendation, the sage's belief in the immortality of the soul and the lessons he passed on to his disciples were emphasized:

Parcourons la vie de Socrate reconnu pour l'oracle et le plus sage de tous les Grecs, révééré par ses concitoyens comme un Dieu, et forcé ensuite par eux-mêmes à prendre du poison. Quelle image de l'instabilité des choses humaines! mais en même-tems quel exemple de fermeté et de piété dans ce vrai philosophe! Loin de murmurer contre la cruauté du chimérique destin dans ses derniers momens, il adore la Providence, et les ordres d'un être supérieur et tout-puissant. La méchanceté et l'injustice des hommes ne servent qu'à l'affermir dans sa croyance de l'immortalité de l'ame, et de la nécessité d'une autre vie. Il assemble ses amis et meurt en leur prêchant la soumission à la Divinité et la pratique indispensable de la vertu pour être heureux.<sup>120</sup>

Charles Rollin's long account of the life and death of Socrates, had also stressed the philosopher's belief in the immortality of his soul, in a specifically pre-Christian era. This historian acknowledged the authorities of Plato and Xenophon as Socrates had left no writings of his own and had added that the lowliness of his origins as the son of a sculptor and stone mason had not been an obstacle to true merit, which alone made "solide gloire et la véritable noblesse."<sup>121</sup> Rollin went to some lengths to make clear that the pagan philosopher had chosen to die out of his own volition and that this act served therefore to secure the posthumous *gloire* accorded to the *grand homme*:

Ce grand homme, pleinement convaincu de ce principe qu'il avoit si souvent inculqué à ses disciples, que le crime est le seul mal que doive craindre le sage, aima mieux être privé de quelques années qui lui restoient peut-être encore à vivre, que de se voir enlever en un moment la gloire de toute sa vie passée, en se deshonorant pour toujours par la démarche honteuse qu'on lui conseilloit de faire auprès des Juges. Voiant que les hommes de son siècle le connoissoient peu et lui rendoient peu de justice, il s'en remit au jugement de la postérité, et par le sacrifice généreux qu'il fit des restes d'une vieillesse déjà fort avancée,

il acquit et s'assura l'estime et l'admiration de tous les siècles.<sup>121</sup>

Jean Seznec has also shown, however, how the theme of Socrates came to be interpreted in a variety of different ways at this time.<sup>123</sup> Aspects of Moreau Le Jeune's engraving of 1783, which illustrated an edition of Voltaire's play, Socrate, suggest that this image was one of the many pictorial sources adapted by David for his version of the scene (Plate 46). Voltaire's play was, however, a satirical comedy in which Socrates was portrayed as a ridiculously naive character, because of his blind obedience to given laws. This is the implication of the line cited from the play placed beneath Moreau's prison scene. David's history painting was not, however, a cynical or seditious pastiche. The moment depicted by David was, though, crucially not the moment of Socrates' death - this event had been painted by Dandré Bardon in 1753 and was the set subject for the Grand Prix of 1762.<sup>124</sup>

A precedent for the moment of David's painting seems to have been a lost work by Challe. This was described in the Salon Livret of 1761 by the title: "Socrate condamné par les Athéniens à boire la ciguë la reçoit avec indifférence, tandis que ses Amis et ses Disciples cèdent à la plus vive douleur."<sup>125</sup> Gabriel de Saint-Aubin's annotated edition of this Livret gives a rough outline of the composition (Plate 47). Diderot's Salon in 1761 praised this work highly:

On dirait que c'est une copie d'après quelque bas-relief antique. Il y règne une simplicité, une tranquillité surtout dans la figure principale, qui n'est guère de notre temps. Socrate est nu; il a les jambes croisées. Il tient la coupe; il parle; il n'est pas plus ému que s'il faisait une leçon de philosophie; c'est le plus sublime sang-froid. Il n'y avait qu'un homme d'un goût exquis qui pût remarquer ce morceau. *Non est omnium*. Il faut être à la sagesse de l'art antique; il faut avoir vu beaucoup de bas-reliefs, beaucoup de médailles, beaucoup de pierres gravées. Socrate est la seule figure très-apparente. Les philosophes qui se désolent sont enfoncés et comme perdus dans un



fond obscur et noir. Cela veut être vu de plus près. L'enfant qui recueille sur des tablettes les dernières paroles de Socrate me paraît très-beau, et de caractère, et de couleur, et de simplicité, et de lumière. Cependant il faut attendre que ce morceau soit décroché et mis sur le chevalet pour confirmer ou rétracter ce jugement. S'il se soutient de près, nous nous écrierons tous: Comment est-il arrivé à Challe de faire une belle chose?'<sup>25</sup>

This criticism ascribed to an earlier work many of the features of David's later history painting. Socrates had been depicted in the act of giving a lesson in philosophy to the *philosophes* around him. Diderot's comments analyse the work as the rare product of an artist and a man of learning and knowledge of the antique: a status which did not seem to match the attribution to Challe, although such qualities can, with hindsight, be applied to perceptions of David. The extract also shows how important a good position in the Salon hang had become, for a work to be properly visible to the Salon audience and its critics. The end of this chapter will show that David, once again, manipulated the first showing of his Socrate au moment de prendre la ciguë (Plate 45) with some care and with concern, therefore, for his reputation.

The moment when Socrates decides to take the hemlock was selected for the focus of David's painting. The *Phaedo* described how Socrates preferred not to wait until the very last moment before having to die:

Mais je pense, Socrate, lui dit Criton, que le soleil est encore sur les montagnes, et qu'il n'est pas couché, et je sçais que beaucoup d'autres à votre place n'ont bu le poison que longtemps après que l'ordre leur en a été donné, qu'ils ont fort bien soupé, et qu'ils ont même jouï de toutes les choses dont ils ont en envie; c'est pourquoi, ne vous pressez pas, je vous en conjure, vous avez encore du temps.

Ceux qui font ce que vous dites, Criton, répondit Socrate, ont leurs raisons, ils croient que c'est autant de gagné; et moi, j'ai aussi les miennes pour ne pas le faire; car la seule chose que je crois gagner en buvant un peu plus tard, c'est de me rendre ridicule à moi-même, en me trouvant si sottement amoureux

de la vie, que je veux l'épargner à ce dernier moment, lorsqu'il n'y en a plus.<sup>127</sup>

The passage stressed the philosopher's decision to die in a dignified manner, in contrast to the way other condemned men enjoyed more material comforts in their last moments of life. Accordingly, David did not depict the philosopher as martyr, but as in command of an action, in control of his will and of himself and in the process of communicating the nobility of his behaviour and beliefs to his disciples. He just does not touch the centrally placed cup of fatal hemlock, yet. David has, once again, contracted a diachronic narrative into a single, more weighted moment. In Plato, the gaoler weeps before a slave brings Socrates the cup of poison and it is only after having drunk the hemlock that Socrates addresses his grieving disciples.<sup>128</sup> It was the manner in which Socrates had deliberately chosen to die that helped to achieve his immortality and which the creative inventions of David's painting were also celebrating. The philosopher's eyes are wide open, whilst the gaoler's fingers press on his own closed eyes, in grief.

Seneca had also stressed the importance of a good moment of death, which would be a moment of liberation.<sup>129</sup> His epistle number CII considered the positive gains of death:

Enfin ce jour fatal que vous craignez, que vous regardez comme le dernier de votre existence, sera le jour d'une naissance nouvelle, le jour de l'éternité.

Alors tous les secrets de la nature vous seront découverts; l'obscurité disparaîtra, vous serez frappé d'une lumière vive et pure.<sup>130</sup>

Seneca contrasted the physical trappings of this world with the higher, purer, immaterial light of eternity and of the soul. David endowed his representation of the last moments of Socrates' life with

similar values: unchained from the shackles that had bound him to his prison cell, the philosopher points up to a liberating light and space above.

#### A chef d'oeuvre of expression

I shall now discuss how David's painting can also be related in a more specific way to contemporary sensibility and curiosity in the exploration of the effects of the passions on the soul; concerns which have not been examined in the modern critical literature about the work. The painting fused separate traditions to explore the temporary effects of the passions, when they were combined with the permanent traits of physiognomy. Seneca's next epistle, number CIII, dealt with the problematic nature of physiognomy: "Vous vous trompez si vous vous arrêtez à la phisionomie. C'est souvent le visage d'un homme et l'ame d'une bête feroce."<sup>13</sup> Since Antiquity, treatises on physiognomy had, in fact, commented on the inverse predicament the figure of Socrates posed: the apparent disparity between the philosopher's outward appearance and the nobility of his inner soul and character.

Xenophon's Memorabilia included a dialogue which the philosopher reputedly had with the painter, Parrhasius. Most of this dialogue needs to be cited here, for it elaborated one of the central dilemmas that faced the painter of the passions; versimilitude in relation to idealising beauty and as opposed to degrees of deformity or grimace. Socrates' reported argument matched the inner with the outward for the purposes of a painter; a disparity between the two was not the issue

here. The extract is taken from a fine edition of the dialogues, published by Didôt l'aîné in 1782; in a footnote, the translator Levesque also suggested that it was possible to assume that Socrates, as a former sculptor, had brought the depiction of the passions to the attention of the Greeks:

La peinture, lui dit-il, n'est-elle pas une représentation des objets visibles? Vous imitez avec des couleurs les enfoncements et les saillies, le clair et l'obscur, la mollesse, la dureté, le poli: il n'y a pas jusqu'à la fraîcheur de l'âge et sa décrépitude qui ne soient exprimées dans vos ouvrages. - Cela est vrai. - Et si vous voulez représenter une beauté parfaite, comme il est difficile de trouver des hommes qui n'aient dans les formes aucune imperfection, vous rassemblez les beautés de plusieurs modeles pour en faire un tout accompli. - Tel est notre procédé. - Mais quoi! ce qu'il y a de plus aimable dans le modele, ce qui lui gagne la confiance et les coeurs; ce qui le fait desirer, le caractere de l'ame enfin, parvenez-vous à l'imiter, ou faut-il le regarder comme inimitable? - Eh! comment le représenter, puisqu'il ne dépend ni de la proportion, ni de la couleur, ni d'aucune des choses que vous avez détaillées; puisqu'enfin il ne tombe pas sous le sens de la vue? - Mais ne remarque-t-on pas dans les regards tantôt la douceur de l'amitié, tantôt l'indignation de la haine? - Cela est vrai. - Il n'est donc pas impossible de rendre ces expressions dans les yeux. - J'en conviens. - Trouvez-vous le même caractere de physionomie dans ceux qui prennent part au bonheur, au malheur de leurs amis, et dans ceux qui n'en sont pas touchés? - Non assurément. Dans le bonheur de nos amis, la joie se peint sur notre visage; et la tristesse dans leur infortune. - Voilà donc encore des passions qu'on peut représenter. La noble fierté, l'orgueil, l'humilité, la modestie, la prudence, la rusticité, la pétulance, la bassesse, tout cela se fait remarquer sur le visage et dans le geste; tout cela se reconnoît dans l'action et même dans le repos. - Vous avez raison. - Nouveaux caracteres que l'art peut exprimer. - Je l'avoue. - Et qui croyez-vous qu'on aime le plus à voir? Sont-ce les hommes qui se font remarquer par un caractere doux, heureux, aimable, ou ceux qui n'offrent que des inclinations haïssables, méchantes et honteuses? - Il y a bien de la différence.<sup>132</sup>

Cicero attributed to Socrates the maxim: "Soyez ce que vous voulez parôître;"<sup>133</sup> for Cicero this was the shortest and most direct way of achieving *gloire* in contrast to the false mask of hypocrisy, which would not acquire a lasting fame. In the sixteenth century,

Montaigne's essay De la Phisionomie dealt mostly with ethical conduct not just in life, but also in the face of death. Socrates was given as an example for mortals to emulate as his conduct was considered by Montaigne, both in life and when facing death, to be almost perfect. This writer did encounter a problem to do with the philosopher's physiomy though:

Socrates, qui a esté un exemplaire parfaict en toutes grandes qualitez, j'ai despit qu'il eust rencontré un corps et un visage si vilain, comme ils disent, et disconvenable à la beauté de son ame, luy si amoureux et si affolé de la beauté. Nature luy fit injustice. Il n'est rien plus vraysemblable que la conformité et relation du corps à l'esprit...<sup>134</sup>

Montaigne resolved this dilemma by making a distinction between superficial beauty and ugliness and a more profound deformity linked to personality. In the end though, his attitude to the value to be placed on relationships between outward mien and inner character remains somewhat contradictory.<sup>135</sup> Honoré de Lacombe's eighteenth-century dictionary of famous men raised the same problem with reference to Socrates:

Ses médailles le représentent ayant la tête chauve, le front avancé, les sourcils épais, les yeux enfoncés. On lui trouvoit quelque chose de rude et même de désagréable dans la physionomie. Quel homme cependant fit paroître une plus belle ame?<sup>136</sup>

Another important linking figure between these theories of Socrates and David's depiction of him was Jean Gaspard Lavater. The problem of the ugly physical appearance of Socrates was addressed in the first volume of the 1783 French publication of Lavater's fragments on physiognomy; the work included a series of illustrations showing the head of Socrates in different profiles (Plate 48). For Lavater too Socrates' face presented a problem as the way he was customarily depicted indicated a rough and ugly mien, even though he

had been the wisest of men. Lavater tried to solve this problem by introducing eleven different points into the argument.<sup>137</sup> These points develop the theory that children are born innocent, that the pleasures of the senses lead to vice, but that someone of extraordinary energy would be able to triumph over such vicissitudes and become virtuous. Lavater felt that painters, sculptors and illustrators had not yet done justice to such a nobility of soul and made an overt plea:

Qu'on me permette ici une courte digression, une plainte adressée aux Artistes.

Les Peintres, les Sculpteurs, les Dessinateurs, chargent d'ordinaire ce qui est déjà naturellement laid. Pour rendre leur modèle ils semblent choisir de préférence l'instant fatal où il s'abandonne à l'assoupissement et à l'ennui; ils s'empressent à saisir ce moment, parce qu'il est plus facile alors d'attraper la ressemblance, et qu'on prépare au spectateur de quoi rire et se récrier. Ces copies sont presque toujours reconnoissables, mais elles ne sont jamais ressemblantes. Ainsi que les Ecrits satyriques elles trouvent des admirateurs superficiels, mais ce n'est point pour eux que l'Artiste devoit travailler. L'imitation de la belle nature, voilà le but immédiate qu'il doit se proposer, et il sera toujours sûr de l'admiration des vrais connoisseurs. Ces moments heureux de la vraie existence de l'ame, où semblable au soleil levant, elle déploie sur le visage l'éclat d'une sérénité céleste, quel est le Peintre qui se donne la peine de les chercher, de les attendre? qui veille, ou qui puisse les rendre?

Revenons à *Socrate*. Il déclara 'que la méditation et des efforts soutenus, avoient corrigé son caractere,' et je pense qu'on devoit s'en appercevoir sur son visage. Mais de quelle manière ce changement s'y exprimoit-il? - Imperceptible dans les parties solides, il devenoit plus sensible dans les parties molles, mais il étoit sur-tout remarquable dans l'action des parties molles, et dans l'esprit de la physionomie, auquel le pinceau, et moins encore le burin, ne sauroit atteindre.<sup>138</sup>

Lavater's illustrations show variations on ancient busts of Socrates indicating varying degrees of nobility through distinctions in physiognomic detail. The challenge for a convincing pictorial representation of the noble Socrates had been made and David tackled this head on.

Turning to the question of the critical discourse concerning this picture, that the depiction of expression and the passions was a major concern of the painting is borne out by contemporary critical response. Count Stanislas Potocki, whose portrait David had so ennobled in 1781 and who was to publish a Polish translation of Winckelmann's Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums in 1815, gave an effusive description in the Lettre d'un Etranger sur le Salon de 1787:

Socrate au milieu d'une prison, dont on n'a pas cherché d'augmenter l'horreur pour produire un effet qui doit se trouver dans le sujet même; Socrate, dis-je, au milieu de ses amis, est prêt à avaler la coupe mortelle qui doit le séparer à jamais d'eux. La tristesse, l'accablement, la désolation est peinte sur leurs visages; le bourreau même, attendri jusqu'aux larmes, lui présente la coupe en détournant les yeux. Socrate la prend d'un air indifférent: lui seul calme et tranquille, occupé d'une plus grande idée, les yeux et la main levés vers le ciel, il semble, par un discours sublime sur l'immortalité de l'ame, consoler ses amis, et leur reprocher doucement leur faiblesse; son ame paroît déjà avoir quitté sa dépouille terrestre; c'est cependant dans sa figure, dans son maintien, dans tous ses traits, qu'elle se peint d'une manière vraiment sublime. Socrate, dont l'air patibulaire contrastoit avec son génie vraiment divin, bien que rendu dans toute sa ressemblance, paroît un Dieu, un génie bienfaisant, que la vertu élève au dessus des autres hommes, et qu'elle embellit de tous ses charmes. Voyez ce groupe d'amis, de disciples désolés, placés au chevet de son lit. Ce que la nature, ce que le choix de l'antique nous offre de plus beau, est réuni sur leurs figures; leur expression est vraie, variée et touchante. Par quel contraste puissant, par quel charme, Socrate, le difforme Socrate, écrase tant de beauté, de grace et de sentiment réunis? C'est le triomphe de la vertu, qu'un courage héroïque, qu'une ame divine élève au dessus de tout. Mais ce sentiment qui nous paroît naturel dans sa sublime simplicité, n'est pas aisé à concevoir et à rendre. Mille peintres l'essayeront, mais il faut un grand homme pour y réussir. Remarquez, admirez, la douleur simple et profonde de ce philosophe assis aux pieds du lit de Socrate; la vive inquiétude de l'ami placé à ses côtés; le désespoir du jeune homme qu'on voit dans le lointain; enfin la démarche douloureuse et pénible de ce groupe qui sort de la prison.

This passage emphasizes the sublime nature and nobility of Socrates previously referred to and praises David for being among the few able

to convey this. The review commented on the passions that did not disfigure:

...Enfin, si nous en venons à l'expression, partie sublime de l'art, qui tient nécessairement au goût, mais qui résulte de concours de toutes les autres, nous la trouverons ici dans son plus grand caractère, c'est-à-dire, vraie, simple, noble et touchante. Car le sentiment ne tient pas à la charge, qui trompe le vulgaire des spectateurs, et qu'on lui substitute si souvent; mais puisé dans la nature, il saisit ses plus belles expressions qui rendent les passions, mais que les passions ne défigurent pas.<sup>139</sup>

Another critic took up the same theme, recalling Montaigne's description of extreme sadness, that was embodied in Poussin's Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3) and to which David overtly refers in the posture of Plato:

...La phisionnomie de Socrate, sous des traits si peu favorables, décele le grand caractere de ce Philosophe; son ame, dont il sent si vivement les impressions, dont il prêche avec véhémence l'immortalité, se peint dans tous ses mouvements, anime toutes les parties de son corps. Chaque spectateur exprime avec une autre énergie, sa douleur et sa consternation. L'esclave qui présente la cigüe, se cache la figure, parce que son courage ne va pas jusqu'à contempler son maître mourant. On remarque surtout le vieillard assis au pied du lit; sa douleur profonde qui semble l'avoir plongé dans l'oubli de lui-même, et les replis de sa draperie sont dignes du pinceau des plus grands Maîtres...<sup>140</sup>

A final example from another review criticises the figures for their excess of expression. The extract also raises an essential quality of signification: the importance of the whole narrative context in being able to clarify, or make equivocal, relationships:

D'abord, quant à la composition, j'en louerai l'ensemble avec tous les Artistes; mais cependant, en examinant en détail, on apercevra de la recherche dans toutes les poses, une afféterie marquée dans les moyens que l'auteur a employés pour varier l'expression de ses figures. Assurément, je ne crois pas me tromper sur l'intention de M. David, en représentant avec un pied levé le jeune homme qui présente la coupe à Socrate. Cependant ce n'est que la réflexion qui m'a indiqué ce que cela signifioit. C'est pour le coup que l'on peut dire, ces gens-ci ont de l'esprit jusqu'au bout des ongles. Pourquoi offrir des énigmes? Ce n'est sûrement pas avec des moyens aussi petits que Raphaël et Poussin nous élèvent l'ame dans leurs sublimes



compositions, où tout est naturel, et où rien ne sent le bel esprit de la Capitale. Autre énigme: que signifie l'action de ce personnage qui a une main appuyée sur la muraille, tandis que de l'autre il semble, non pas arracher quelque chose de ses yeux, mais bien y poser quelque chose.

Un plaisant soutenoit dernièrement que ce Disciple de Socrate étoit dans l'action de coiffer son nez d'une paire de lunettes. Je me garderai bien de le contredire; car, en effet, la main renversée indique parfaitement cette action.<sup>141</sup>

Not all believed in the science of physiognomy however. The naturalist Buffon, in his article De L'Homme in the Histoire naturelle générale et particulière, for instance, denigrated its diagnostic value. For him, it was plainly absurd to associate the soul with the size of a person's limbs:

Les anciens étoient cependant fort attachés à cette espèce de préjugé, et, dans tous les temps il y a eu des hommes qui ont voulu faire une science divinatoire de leurs prétendues connaissances en physiognomie; mais il est bien évident qu'elles ne peuvent s'étendre qu'à deviner les mouvemens de l'ame par ceux des yeux, du visage et du corps, et que la forme du nez, de la bouche et des autres traits, ne fait pas plus à la forme de l'ame, au naturel de la personne, que la grandeur ou la grosseur des membres ne fait à la pensée. Un homme en sera-t-il plus spirituel parce qu'il aura le nez bien fait? En sera-t-il moins sage parce qu'il aura les yeux petits et la bouche grande? Il faut donc avouer que tout ce que nous ont dit les physionomistes est dénué de tout fondement, et que rien n'est plus chimérique que les inductions qu'ils ont voulu tirer de leurs prétendues observations métoposcopiques.<sup>142</sup>

The craze continued in spite of such criticism and developed further links with studies in anatomy. A member of the Académie Royale de Chirurgie, J J Suë published Elémens d'anatomie à l'usage des peintres, des sculptures et des amateurs in 1788 which relied heavily on Lebrun, while in 1801/2 François Cabuchet was to present a thesis entitled Essai sur l'expression de la face dans l'état de santé et de malade. The thesis, in the manner of past medical treatises, was conceived primarily for diagnostic purposes, but the doctor had acquired information from Prud'hon on the best works for the

expression of the passions in painting. Domenichino's St Jerome offered hope aligned to desire and several figures from Poussin's La femme adultère (Plate 28) were of use: the adulterous woman expressed sadness, dejection and confusion, one of the accusers showed the hatred that had motivated him, while a man behind Christ had been excited to anger.<sup>143</sup> Cabuchet was well aware of the problem of grimace; he separated expression into involuntary effects of feeling and an opposing conscious simulation that could lead to theatrical excess:

...De même l'orateur qui élève ou baisse trop le ton de sa voix, fait rire ses auditeurs. Peu de tableaux se font remarquer par l'expression vraie et bien rendue des passions: si elle distingue les ouvrages de Raphaël et du Poussin, elle est quelquefois forcée dans ceux de Michel-Ange et de Rubens. L'expression naturelle de la face dans les passions, ne diffère des grimaces que par une légère nuance qu'il est difficile de déterminer, et que le sentiment seul peut apprécier. On peut dire avec le cit. Bichat que les grimaces sont à l'expression naturelle des passions, ce que la déclamation parodiée est au jeu naturel de l'acteur. Elles ressemblent aux masques de Thalie et de Melpomène, qui ne sont que l'image exagérée et, par là, même ridicule des sentimens que la comédie et la tragédie expriment, et qu'elles doivent inspirer.<sup>144</sup>

David employed a traditional classical *contrapposto* pose for his figure of Socrates. The half naked torso gives status to the painting as a whole and mitigates against a perception of the physiognomy of the philosopher as mannered caricature or theatrical grimace. The academic torso of Seneca had acquired a new layer of signification: the figure of Socrates had become a part of the discourse on the aesthetics of ideal beauty and its corollary, the control of the passions. Rollin had stressed the philosopher's self-control, even though he was, by nature, irascible:

Une des qualités les plus marquées de Socrate, étoit une tranquillité d'ame que nul accident, nul perte, nulle injure, nul mauvais traitement ne pouvoit altérer. Quelques-uns ont cru

qu'il étoit naturellement fougueux et emporté, et que la modération à laquelle il étoit parvenu, étoit l'effet de ses réflexions, et des efforts qu'il avoit faits pour se vaincre lui-même et se corriger, ce qui en augmenteroit encore le mérite.<sup>145</sup>

Martin Kemp has already demonstrated how important the writings of Winckelmann are, to an understanding of David's Les Amours de Pâris et Hélène (Plate 49), where the smooth surface water of the foreground acts as a metaphor for purity, cleanliness and Platonic spirituality as well as providing more explicitly erotic connotations.<sup>146</sup> The subject is taken from Greek myth, not Greek history, and is of interest here, because the painting also acts decisively as a companion piece to the passions of the Socrate (Plate 45). A critic of the 1787 Salon had noted:

...une longue maladie de ce grand Artist, l'a empêché de finir un autre Tableau, dont la composition gracieuse et galante auroit contrasté avec la sévérité de celui de Socrate; c'est Pâris et Hélène. Déjà cependant il semble nous rappeler les beaux jours de la Grece. Célébrons les talents comme autrefois on célébroit les Grands Hommes, sur les pas de qu'il marche.<sup>147</sup>

The beginning of Winckelmann's treatise Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhaukunst links Antiquity to the Lacoon, to the Helen painted by Zeuxis, and to the eyes of Poussin in one short extract.<sup>148</sup> As Régis Michel has pointed out, the theme of Zeuxis selecting the best parts of different models to paint the complete, ideal beauty of Helen of Troy, had become part of the theory of the *beau idéal* and had already been painted by Angelika Kaufmann (Providence, R.I., Annmary Brown Memorial).<sup>149</sup> David's Les Amours de Pâris et Hélène (Plate 49), commissioned by the Comte d'Artois, younger brother to Louis XVI, is an elaboration on the aesthetics of ideal beauty; it also serves as a counterpoint to a painting which offers an alternative control of the passions.

The invention of the almost naked Paris looking up to the seductively clothed Helen, who has her eyes closed, fits perfectly into the contrivances of David's creative troping. The artist shows Socrates as having abandoned playing his lyre in order to indicate to his disciples, a higher reality for his soul; he does not yet touch the cup of fatal hemlock. The same artist shows Paris as having abandoned playing his lyre in order to gaze and physically hold on to the tangible object of his own desires. His lyre is decorated with a relief plaque of his earlier judgement; a judgement that was about selecting the fairest from amongst a choice of three goddesses, Juno, Minerva and Venus. Venus had won this beauty contest by promising Paris the reward of the beautiful Helen. The bribe was corrupt and would lead to the Trojan war, but the contest and indeed the bribe itself were all about selecting the most physically beautiful woman. The mythological story is thus of a completely contrasting theme to the noble depiction of Socrates, whose external physiognomy had traditionally been regarded as ugly.

The Comte de Caylus' Tableaux tirés d'Homere et de Virgile had recommended that Helen should be admired by King Priam along with a group of old men:

Hélène couverte d'un voile blanc, paroît au milieu de plusieurs vieillards, du nombre desquels est Priam, distingué par les marques de la Royauté. L'Artiste doit s'attacher à faire sentir le triomphe de la beauté par l'avidité des regards, et par tous les témoignages d'admiration marqués sur le visage de ces hommes glacés par l'âge...Hélène assise aux côtés de Priam, lui nomme les principaux de l'armée des Grecs...Hélène parle en montrant du doigt, et que Priam écoute.<sup>150</sup>

David's painting was not for the King, but for the King's younger brother. He has not depicted Priam admiring Helen, but the King's

younger son, Paris. Whether David was being overtly subversive in referring to the liaison the foreign princess, Queen Marie-Antoinette, was rumoured to be having with the patron, must remain open to question,<sup>151</sup> but the painter was certainly not following Caylus' precepts about how the character and beauty of Helen should be conveyed:

La Peinture ne peut rendre la finesse des discours convenables aux caracteres qu'il leur fait tenir, mais elle peut représenter Hélène et Paris assis à côté l'un de l'autre, indiquer que Vénus fait prendre cette place à la femme de Ménélas, mettre tous les desirs possibles dans les yeux de Paris, et l'indignation dans ceux qui les font naître, remplir la chambre de vases fumans et répandant des parfums, et sur-tout ne pas oublier que la chambre où la scène se passe, communique encore à une autre dont la porte ouverte permet de voir un lit nécessaire au raccommodement.<sup>152</sup>

An extract from Winckelmann's Histoire de l'Art de l'Antiquité, first published in French in 1781, was used as a source in a more traditional, less subversive, way by David. The text comes from Book IV, which deals with Greek art, Chapter II is entitled De l'Essence de l'Art:

...Le Laocoon est sans contredit un ouvrage plus savant que l'Apollon. Agésandre, le Maître de la figure principale du Laocoon, a pu être un Artiste plus profond que l'Auteur de l'Apollon. Mais ce dernier devoit être doué d'un esprit plus élevé, d'une ame plus tendre: l'Apollon porte l'empreinte d'un sublime qui ne pouvoit pas avoir lieu dans le Laocoon.

Le naturel a ses défauts, le plus beau corps est rarement sans défaut: il a souvent des parties qu'on peut trouver ou supposer plus parfaites dans d'autres corps. Conformément à cette expérience l'Artiste intelligent procédoit comme un Jardinier industrieux qui ente sur une tige des greffes d'une meilleure qualité. L'abeille forme son miel du suc de plusieurs fleurs. L'idée de la beauté des Maîtres Grecs n'étoit pas restreinte au seul beau individuel, comme l'est quelquefois chez les Poètes tant anciens que modernes, et chez la plupart des Artistes de nos jours. Les Grecs cherchèrent à réunir le beau de plusieurs beaux corps, ainsi que nous le voyons par l'entretien de Socrate avec le célèbre Peintre Parrhasius. Ils surent épurer leurs figures de toutes les affections personnelles qui détournent notre esprit du vrai beau.

Ce choix des belles parties et leurs rapports harmonieux dans une figure, produisirent la beauté idéale, qui par conséquent n'est pas une idée métaphysique. Nous observerons seulement que l'idéal ne peut pas avoir lieu dans toutes les parties du corps humain séparément, que cela ne peut se dire que du tout-ensemble de la figure. Car pour les détails nous serons obligés de convenir, qu'il se trouve dans la nature d'aussi hautes beautés que l'Art en puisse produire, mais pour le tout nous avouerons que l'art l'emporte sur la nature.<sup>153</sup>

The contrived postures of Paris and of Helen, a companion piece to the passionate physiognomic diversity of Socrate (Plate 45) worked actively to provoke the possibility of further interpretations. The space between these two paintings is open, but the ambiguity of this open space has been harnessed to provide options for added layers of interpretation. The approach is confirmed by some of Diderot's earlier musings on painting:

Falconet s'est bien moqué du *Pâris* d'Euphranor, où l'on reconnaissait l'arbitre de trois déesses, l'amant d'Hélène et le meurtrier d'Achille. Quoi donc! est-ce que cette figure ne pouvait pas réunir la finesse dans le regard, la volupté dans l'attitude, et quelques traits caractéristiques de la perfidie?...Le point important de l'artiste, c'est de me montrer la passion dominante si fortement rendue, que je n'aie pas la tentation d'y en démêler d'autres qui y sont pourtant. Les yeux disent une chose, la bouche en dit une autre, et l'ensemble de la physionomie une troisième...Et puis, l'artiste n'a-t-il aucun droit à compter sur mon imagination? Et lorsqu'on nous a prononcé le nom d'un homme connu par ses bonnes ou ses mauvaises mœurs, ne lisons-nous pas tout courant sur son visage l'histoire de sa vie?<sup>154</sup>

Using the example of Paris, the writer acknowledged the difficulty of fitting the complexity of a character's behaviour over time to an appropriate external appearance. The spectator's imagination would, however, supply the rest of the narrative account. Relying on associations that can be made between images, David did not manipulate these devices in an overtly didactic, dogmatic way but, instead,

extended out the boundaries of his figurative imagery towards more creative and fruitful ends.

In both size and scope David's Socrate (Plate 45) is one of the most Poussinesque of David's history paintings; it is a conscious tribute to the most famous *peintre philosophe* of the French school in so far as it refers clearly to many of the seventeenth-century painter's own works. In David's painting, the rear view pose of the slave handing Socrates the fatal hemlock has been reversed from the pose of one of the grieving soldiers on the extreme left in the La Mort de Germanicus (Plate 2). Germanicus had already been poisoned by the wiles of Piso, the governor of Syria, so that David's invention has been to add an extra degree of motivation to complicate the model of Poussin's postured grief. The slave's mixed emotion at having to carry out his orders and at the same time grieving for the result those orders will entail, implies a collapse of two of Plato's narrative sequences in the Phaedo into one and a development of the processes of Poussin, noted by Le Frondeur of 1785:

Cependant ceux qui voudront essayer de réunir ces rapports heureux, doivent, après avoir longtemps étudié la nature dans ces détails, l'examiner de nouveau dans les instans où son spectacle les frappe; ensuite ils analyseront ce spectacle, et ils rechercheront la cause principale de leur émotion. Cette étude répétée, a fait éclore dans l'esprit du Poussin des règles non écrites qui ont produit les Tableaux d'Eudamidas et les obsèques de Phocion.<sup>155</sup>

The finger of another soldier in Poussin's painting, which is raised in the oath of vengeance, is also reversed for Socrates' gesture of confidence in a higher reality. The ahistorical barrel vaulted setting of the prison pays further tribute to the architectural principles of the setting used by Poussin. These references do not

negate the additional source of Poussin's Le Testament d'Eudamidas (Plate 3) for that too is a work about the *rite de passage* from life to death. In these paintings the central characters have not yet died, but are crucially still alive and about to confront a uniquely equivocal moment or peak: that of the transition between life and death. It is possible to see in David's Socrates surrounded by his disciples a pagan type for Christ and His disciples, as intimations of the Passion and of the Eucharist can easily be inferred from the image. Thomas had, indeed, envisioned the cell of Socrates as a sacred memorial:

Pour moi je voudrais qu'au lieu des ruines du temple de Minerve, le temps eût conservé la prison où est mort Socrate. Je voudrais que sur la pierre noire et brute on eût gravé: "Ici il prit la coupe; là il bénit l'esclave qui la lui portoit; voici le lieu où il expira." On iroit en foule visiter ce monument sacré; on n'y entreroit pas sans une sorte de respect religieux, et toute âme courageuse et forte, à ce spectacle, se sentiroit encore plus élevée.<sup>158</sup>

David's painting can be associated with yet further works by Poussin: his sets of Sacraments. In the second version of Le Sacrament d'Ordination (Plate 55) for instance, the transmission of divine authority has been incorporated into a gestural arrangement of pointing index fingers. Christ points to the heavens with one key in one hand and with another key in the other hand, He points to the ground. One apostle points to the heavens with one finger and out to the spectator with the index finger of his other hand. The overt visual homage to several of Poussin's history paintings thus indicates that David was very concerned to make his own marks for posterity in the manner of what had become a hagiography of the painter, Poussin and thus secure his own *gloire*.



It should be noted however that Poussin's *tableaux de chevalet* were never intended to be seen in a public space. Indeed, writing to the patron of the second set of Sacraments, Paul Fréart de Chantelou, in 1639 the painter recommended a plain, dull gold framework for Les Israélites recueillant la Manne dans le Désert (Plate 7), which he felt should be seen in isolation, without other objects nearby which could distract.<sup>157</sup> His paintings were not to be a part of an overall interior decorative scheme, but were to float freely as independent works of art, in their own right. They existed and were to be judged separately from the context in which they were placed.<sup>158</sup> By the time of David, the forum of biannual Salon exhibitions had become crucial arenas for the appraisal of contemporary and new works of art. Within that forum, a *tableau de chevalet* modelled in the manner of Poussin's history paintings, existed independently of the other exhibits on display there, but was also available for comparison with other such works of high art. David, as has already been indicated, was fully aware of the opportunities for display the forum of the Salon provided before the Revolution. His participation in the Salon of 1787 demonstrated his complete mastery of this situation. In eclipsing the work of his former, potential rival Peyron, he furthered his claims to the status of a *peintre philosophe* of the highest order.

Martini's engraving of the Salon of 1787 (Plate 52) indicates the placement of David's Socrate (Plate 45) in the Salon hang. It was placed near the entrance to the exhibition at eye level, an optimum height and position and just beneath Adélaïde Labille-Guiard's large portrait of the King's aunt, Madame Adélaïde (Versailles, Musée national du château). Nearby, also at eye level, is a blank space.

Above this empty space, Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun's equally large portrait of Marie-Antoinette et ses enfants (Versailles, Musée national du château) was hung. It is possible to assume that the blank space was for a sketch by Peyron of La Mort de Socrate (Copenhagen, Statens Museum). The painting after this sketch was another of D'Angiviller's State commissions on behalf of the King; the preparatory sketch was sent to the Salon of 1787 late and thus could not be compared by most of the critics and by many of those who attended the Salon with David's version of the subject.<sup>159</sup> The strategy was, however, noted by Bachaumont in the Mercure de France, who reported that Peyron had, himself, admitted that he had not dared to compete with David at this time: "...il s'avoue lui-même vaincu en quelque sorte par M. David."<sup>160</sup> When Peyron's full-size painting of La Mort de Socrate (Paris, Assemblée Nationale) was exhibited at the Salon of 1789, reviewers compared the work unfavourably with David's earlier treatment of the theme.

According to the Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. J-L David of 1824, probably compiled by David, the artist had been promised 6,000 livres by M. Trudaine for his painting, but the patron actually paid 10,000 livres to mark his esteem for the painter's achievement.<sup>161</sup> Peyron had also been promised 6,000 livres for the royal commission;<sup>162</sup> this sum was the fixed amount for the largest history paintings, which D'Angiviller commissioned on behalf of the State; the series to which David's Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30) and Brutus (Plate 40) also belonged. The allocation of such sums to these history paintings testifies to more personal rivalries that were taking place from within the public context of State commissions and

Salon exhibitions. David was able to exploit these public circumstances to promote his own *gloire*, because he was able to manipulate the opportunities for creative invention, which the medium of history painting offered, with a great deal of skill.

Another way David manipulated the Salon arena was through the titles he ascribed to his works in the Salon Livret. They are often of an astonishing succinctness considering the amount of subject matter he invented, even though the subjects were frequently taken from familiar and popular stories. In 1787, the official description in the Salon Livret for his painting of Socrate (Plate 45) read:

"DAVID: 'Par M. David, Académicien. No 119. Socrate au moment de prendre la ciguë. Ce Tableau, de 6 pieds de large, sur 4 de haut, appartient à M. de Trudaine.'<sup>163</sup> Only the dramatic moment of a meaningful action was outlined in writing. The 1787 livret description for Peyron's Mort de Socrate (Copenhagen, Statens Museum) was, in contrast, of an over-emphatic rhetoric, elaborating on Plato's Phaedo:

PEYRON: 'No 154. Mort de Socrate. Socrate prêt à boire la ciguë, et après avoir fait un sublime discours sur l'immortalité de l'âme, reproche à ses amis leurs gémissements: que faites-vous, leur dit-il? quoi, des hommes si admirables, s'abandonnent à la douleur! où donc est la vertu? n'étoit-ce pas pour cela que j'avois renvoyé ces femmes, de peur qu'elles ne tombassent dans de pareilles foiblesses? J'ai toujours oui dire qu'il faut mourir tranquillement, et en bénissant l'être suprême; tenez-vous donc en repos, et témoignez plus de force et de fermeté. Ce tableau, de 4 pieds 2 pouces et demi de large, sur 3 pieds et demi de haut, appartient à Monsieur le Comte d'Angivillier; il est l'esquisse de celui qui doit être exécuté pour le Roi, de 13 pieds sur 10.'<sup>164</sup>

Writing, inscriptions, the titles to his paintings, the placements of his own signature and types of dating become more and more carefully manipulated by David. They culminate in the prominent signature set

amongst the clouds of Mars désarmé par Vénus et les Grâces (Brussels, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts), testifying, as the painter had intended, to his own apotheosis as a painter.

Philippe Bordes has published an early autobiographical fragment, which Jean-Joseph Sue read to a meeting of the Lycée des Arts on 5th May 1793.<sup>165</sup> This fragment has to be situated at a time when David was not working on a history painting in the traditional sense. The fragment nevertheless proposed that the Socrate (Plate 45) was perhaps "son chef-d'œuvre d'expression."<sup>166</sup> When the fragment was first published by Sue, it omitted a passage on the Brutus (Plate 40), which stated that D'Angiviller had attempted to prevent this history painting from being exhibited at the Salon of 1789 because it presented analogies to Louis XVI and his brothers.<sup>167</sup> There is some documentary evidence to suggest that in D'Angiviller's department, there was, indeed, some concern about the works David was to display at that Salon. It was not a history painting, but a portrait, that of Antoine Lavoisier et sa femme (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), which was not exhibited.<sup>168</sup> The analogies to Louis XVI and his brothers had by 1793 accrued with hindsight. Even then David had still considered the Brutus (Plate 40) to be: "dans son genre naturel, au style tragique et historique."<sup>169</sup> The description of the painting did not refer to recent French history or politics:

Ce tableau est peut-être le plus profondément et le plus philosophiquement pensé. Il a eu l'art de mêler le terrible et l'agréable dans l'attitude de Brutus, dans la douleur concentrée et la sensibilité de la mère et de ses jeunes petites filles qui viennent se réfugier dans son sein, et qui ne peuvent supporter l'horreur qu'elles éprouvent à l'aspect du corps de leurs frères morts et que les licteurs rapportent sur leurs épaules.<sup>170</sup>

The terminology and approach here match the type of constructions which, I have suggested, lie behind the functioning and production of David's history paintings dating from the years immediately preceding the Revolution.

During these years, the painter had mixed the terrible with the agreeable; he had presented convincing and moving effects of emotion, sadness, sensibility and horror on canvas; he had thought profoundly and philosophically and had developed ways of expressing complex moral predicaments with extraordinary immediacy after elaborate processes of working up. He had not, yet, used his art to service any cause of revolution, nor had he promoted any overtly political cause in any one single direction, other than his own cause and for his own personal ambitions - to be a history painter of the first order within the institutional framework of the Ancien Régime.

### DAVID AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION

Between the painting of Brutus (Plate 40) and the first public exhibition of Les Sabines (Plate 57) in 1799, David did not complete any new history painting derived from an already acknowledged source of classical or of Christian history. During a time of intense and polarised political activity, there was no space for the creative inventions of the history painter because these inventions, as the previous chapter has shown, relied on the offer of complex and highly sophisticated equivocation, to be fully effective.

I shall now show how the artist's two history paintings completed after the Reign of Terror, Les Sabines (Plate 57) and Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70), contrast with the works both before and during David's period of active political engagement. There could be no turning back to the *status quo* of the Ancien Régime, but nor could the ideals of the revolutionary years continue to be embraced with complete and frank commitment, once the political régime which espoused those ideals and to which David had been openly and fully committed, had also changed. I shall maintain that the return to history painting during and after a period in prison was a deliberate decision by the painter, serving in part to mask his other, more recent activities. A complete divorce between the art of high culture and contemporary event or confrontation was not, however, possible for this man who, throughout his life, was concerned that posterity should remember his own achievements as well as those he was keen to explore

on canvas. In addition, the irrevocably changed cultural contexts of post-revolutionary France had to be, and still need to be, addressed.

The break with the past and the dawn of a new era

I have shown the extent to which notions of *gloire* determined the production of David's history paintings of the 1780s. They evolved out of existing traditions and from within officially authorised and sanctioned institutions. Even in 1789 David was anxious to gain the sanction of the particular arena of privilege to which he had been admitted on behalf of a former, highly favoured pupil, Jean-Germain Drouais. The memoirs of J. G. Wille recorded that David was very angry with Vien, the then Premier Peintre and Directeur of the Académie and with its secretary, Renou, when Drouais was refused posthumous admission to the Académie as an Agrée member on 3rd October 1789.<sup>1</sup> Drouais had been a favoured pupil and close friend, but it is still remarkable that posthumous recognition by the Académie, in the form of an award of Agrée status, should have been of concern to David at this time.<sup>2</sup> The right of aggregated members to exhibit at the Salon could clearly not benefit Drouais in terms of personal financial gain; the younger artist had, in any case, only completed a handful of paintings. The wish for such an award to be granted posthumously must, instead, have stemmed from a desire for recognition of a more abstract nature, in which notions of *gloire* played their part. The life of David's most favoured protégé and most promising potential successor had been cut down tragically early and David wanted a formal recognition of the dead artist's potential from the ruling authorities

and from within existing hierarchical structures. This incident, though, could well have marked in a decisive way David's increasing sense of alienation from the institution, under whose auspices his professional career had hitherto developed. After attempts to reform the Académie from within failed, the artist's alienation developed into open antagonism, culminating in the successful campaign for its abolition of the institution.<sup>3</sup> Yet the evidence of the final, terse break with the Académie - a scribbled response on the formal invitation to take up his duty roster as teacher there in May 1793: "Je fus autrefois de l'Académie" - was an unequivocal recognition that he had once, in times past, belonged there.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly when, in the same year, David changed the date on his painting Marat à son dernier soupir (Plate 53) from 1793 to L'AN DEUX beneath the prominent dedicatory signature, the artist was consciously recording for posterity the dawn of a new era. In this representation of a martyr of the Revolution, he was also and at the same time marking a further, decisive break with the past. The role and value of history painting, as the most valued genre within a given hierarchy of genres promoted in the past by the Académie and its members was, furthermore, being broken up. The painting of Marat was neither a portrait nor a history painting. It elevated to the level and status of sacrificial martyr for the viewers of posterity, a recent political assassination.

Three days after Marat's death, David presented his proposals for the writer's funeral to the National Convention using rhetoric that was simple and direct:

La sépulture aura la simplicité convenable à un républicain incorruptible, mort dans une honorable indigence. C'est du fond



d'un souterrain qu'il désignait au peuple ses amis et ses ennemis: que mort il y retourne et que sa vie serve d'exemple. Caton, Aristide, Socrate, Timoléon, Fabricius et Phocion, vous dont j'admire la respectable vie, je n'ai pas vécu avec vous, mais j'ai connu Marat, je l'ai admiré comme vous, la postérité lui rendra justice.<sup>5</sup>

The artist had here associated the figure of Socrates with other victims of high moral principle and fortitude, but it was the immediacy of Marat's life and death which was to serve for his own painting of political martyrdom. When the canvas of Marat à son dernier soupir (Plate 53) was presented to the Convention on 15th November, David gave to the image an influence, force and power, which had never been accorded to a history painting before: "C'est à vous, mes collègues, que j'offre l'hommage de mes pinceaux; vos regards, en parcourant les traits livides et ensanglantés de Marat, vous rappelleront ses vertus, qui ne doivent jamais cesser d'être les vôtres."<sup>6</sup> In the manner of an earlier homage in March, when the canvas of Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau was presented to the Convention, a work of art had come to serve a powerful weapon for good, commemorating and communicating the past, in the present and for the future. The martyr portrait used references to both the Christian and classical past, yet it represented neither a Christian nor a classical event.<sup>7</sup> The politician/philosopher, Seneca, had indeed died in his bath, having left written testimony of his beliefs, but the painting of Marat à son dernier soupir (Plate 53) was no longer a history painting in the sense that the earlier La Mort de Sénèque (Plate 4) had been. The artist, using the medium of paint on canvas, was now participating in the actual making of history and was to be seen to be so doing in radical and new ways.

Ugo Van de Sandt has detailed the discourses which openly questioned the role of history painting during the Revolution.<sup>24</sup> Philippe Bordes has further noted that David's projects for the Revolution, such as the designs for the Serment du Jeu de Paume (Plate 54), are provocative reassessments of what constituted history painting: "L'intérêt croissant pour l'histoire nationale contribue à faire tomber les barrières entre le sujet antique et le sujet contemporain."<sup>25</sup> Bordes published a letter of 5th February 1792, written by David to the President of the National Assembly, which was applauded when it was read to the Assembly two days later. Accepting the charge of educating the young twins Pierre and Joseph Franque, the artist simultaneously embraced the task of recording the Tennis Court Oath with fervour:

O ma patrie! O ma chère patrie! nous ne serons donc plus obligés d'aller chercher dans l'histoire des peuples anciens, de quoi exercer nos pinceaux. Les sujets manquaient aux artistes, obligés de se répéter, et maintenant les artistes manquaient aux sujets. Non, l'histoire d'aucun peuple ne m'offre rien de si grand, de si sublime que ce serment du Jeu de Paume, que je dois peindre. Non, je n'aurai pas besoin d'invoquer les dieux de la fable pour échauffer mon génie. Nation française! C'est ta gloire que je veux propager. Peuples de l'univers, présents et futurs, c'est une grande leçon que je veux vous donner. Sainte humanité, je veux rappeler tes droits, par un exemple unique dans les fastes de l'histoire.<sup>26</sup>

In this letter, David firmly rejected the painting of subjects from classical history. French national subjects were, instead, to be the subjects for representation. Humanity was to be provided with exemplary records of recent events which the artist considered to be great, sublime and historically momentous. The work of the artist was thenceforward to promote the *gloire* of the whole French nation and it was the painting of contemporary event, which was to be the vehicle

for the attainment of such a purpose. Crowd scenes were to replace the views of a few, carefully selected individuals in their homes. Such scenes were universal in that they indicated the collective aims of groups and of whole nations, rather than the private dilemma and moral concerns of a particular being. Yet the very contemporaneity of the Tennis Court Oath project may well have prevented its completion. The heroes of 1789 were not the same as those of 1793 and a draft memorandum by David probably of around 1798 and intended for the Minister of the Interior, François de Neufchâteau, suggested replacing some members of the legislature commemorated in the completed drawing for the project (Plate 54), with other, more illustrious successors, who had not participated in the oath, but who were more significant for posterity.''

Other artistic projects were also undertaken by David during his membership of the National Convention. Designs for fêtes, for new national costumes (Paris, Musée Carnavalet and Versailles, Musée national du château), for small-size, unsigned propaganda prints commissioned by the Committee of Public Safety: Le Gouvernement anglais and L'Armée des Cruches (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale), for an opera curtain: Le Triomphe du Peuple français (Plate 56) all show that the painter now considered his role and task in the making of history as radically different and separate from his previous career as a history painter of the first order. Similarly, the concept of *gloire* for the artist and for his associates had now also acquired radically altered associations and connotations. Increasingly, it came to be allied to the *Patrie* and to the collective achievements and causes of that *Patrie*. The artist's plans for the fête of Bara and

Viala, scheduled for the 10th thermidor but which never took place, present an ultimate, fanatical finality: a father should point out to his son that: "les seuls titres à l'immortalité sont d'avoir bien mérité de la patrie et d'avoir versé son sang pour elle."<sup>12</sup> It was ordered that this report be printed and sent to primary schools and other public bodies throughout the Republic. The public sphere as body politic was now actively present in the artist's work, which had also come to represent and incorporate alternative and, in some cases, new forms of expression.

It is clear that an explosion in the production of popular imagery took place at this time.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the traditional patrons of history painting, the State allied to the Royal household and wealthy aristocrats, were now also the enemies of the causes that David was openly promoting. There were attempts to replace these traditional forms of patronage with proposals for alternative competitions and prizes and David's involvement in these forms of encouragement has already been discussed elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> Many of the commissions were never completed and the payments that were promised were often difficult to obtain. There does, however, seem to have been a decisive move towards commissioning and producing allegory and away from history painting. Régis Michel has noted, for instance, that the Salon of 1799 had less than half the numbers of history painting than that of 1791, but that there were many more paintings of overt allegory.<sup>15</sup>

The Jury elected after the Salon of 1791 for the distribution of *Prix d'Encouragement* had, on 20th March 1792, declared:

...les artistes peintres d'histoire chargés des travaux  
d'encouragement seront entièrement libres sur la grandeur des

tableaux, celles de leurs figures et sur le choix des sujets qu'ils traiteront pourvu qu'ils soient historiques.<sup>16</sup>

Dufourny's report on behalf of the Committee of Public Instruction of 9th June 1795 specified that the choice of subject for painters had to be: "dans le recueil des événements glorieux et des faits héroïques de la Révolution..."<sup>17</sup> In 1792, competitors had been free to choose any subject provided that it was historical. In 1795 however, the subject had to be of an heroic act or of a glorious event in commemoration of the Revolution. The Committee of Public Instruction had appropriated historical record for its own purposes of promotion.

#### The return to history painting

In 1795, David was put in prison in the Collège des Quatre Nations, having been re-arrested on 29th May after a first release from prison in December 1794.<sup>18</sup> During his first period in prison, he produced two sketches for a history painting on the theme of the blind Homer (Plate 88), in which the blind poet is depicted outside a monumental civic building, reminiscent of the exile of the misused general Belisarius, that David had painted over a decade earlier. In a private letter of 8th November 1794 from prison to a M. de Mainbourg, the artist protested:

...Je m'ennuie actuellement parce que mon sujet d'*Homère* est totalement composé. Je brûle de le mettre sur la toile, parce que je sens intérieurement qu'il fera faire un pas de plus à l'art. Cette idée m'enflamme, et l'on me retient dans les fers. On m'empêche de retourner à mon atelier dont, hélas, je n'aurais jamais dû sortir.<sup>19</sup>

The complexities of revelation, sight, insight, intention, openness, masking and nuance are brought together in the following short paragraph:

Il me paraît que les yeux ont bien de la peine à se desillir sur mon compte. On m'appelle un homme dur et féroce. Ils ne me connaissent pas comme vous, à qui je parlais à coeur ouvert. On aura confondu la figure toujours pensive de l'artiste avec le masque hideux du conspirateur. On veut voir en moi le législateur; on ne veut pas voir l'artiste sans cesse occupé de son art. Cette nuance échappe à bien des hommes, même à ceux qui sont les mieux intentionnés.<sup>20</sup>

In another letter of 23rd September 1795 to a Mme. Huin, David lamented that he was unable to do a history painting, which was his true vocation:

...J'aurais voulu faire un tableau d'histoire, vraiment c'était bien par là qu'il aurait fallu leur riposter [his enemies], mais le temps, mais la tête m'auraient manqué; malgré cela on verra que je n'ai pas perdu mon temps et on jugera encore de ce que je sais faire...Je ne veux plus désormais m'occuper que de mon salut et si le ciel m'a doué de quelques dispositions je veux en tirer parti, et penser un peu aussi à faire le bien de mes enfants sans cependant oublier la gloire...<sup>21</sup>

After Thermidor, David needed to revert to his profession of classical history painter, as his own life was in danger because of his overtly political engagement during the years of the Terror that had preceded his imprisonment.

On 7th February 1800, Bonaparte named David "peintre du gouvernement." The painter promptly rejected this honour, telling Bonaparte later:

Les temps et les événements m'ont appris que ma place était dans mon atelier. J'ai toujours un grand amour de mon art, je m'en occupe avec passion, je veux m'y livrer entièrement. D'ailleurs les places passent: j'espère que mes oeuvres resteront.<sup>22</sup>

By 1800, the subject of Homer, as a poor and wronged outcast, dependent on the charity of women, had become less appropriate to David's own situation. It was not as an outcast, misunderstood isolated figure that David now saw himself, but as an artist in a long line of great figures sanctioned by tradition.

The subject of the intervention of the Sabine women, when they stopped the fighting between the Roman men and the Sabine men, had not been treated by painters as often as the earlier abduction episode, although important precedents existed. Robert Rosenblum has, for instance, traced David's inspiration for the episode back to Vincent's Combat des Romains et des Sabins interrompu par les femmes Sabines (Angers, Musée des Beaux-Arts), a royal commission and exhibit at the Salon of 1781.<sup>23</sup> In addition, David may well have seen a sketch by Rubens on the theme (Antwerp, Osterrieth House) on one of his visits to Flanders in 1781 and 1788. The sketch was in the private cabinet of the Brussels banker, M. Danoot and was highly praised by Joshua Reynolds in his A Journey to Flanders and Holland in the Year of 1781.<sup>24</sup> A Henri Sintzenich engraving of a painting after Rubens, and Guercino's version of the subject, which was confiscated from the Duc de Penthièvre in 1793 and then entered the Louvre, may also have provided David with further pictorial precedents of the event.<sup>25</sup> Even though the artist had not received a commission for this work, the painter was nevertheless reverting to type in that he now chose a subject, which had been treated by recognised and authorised history painters in the past and which derived from a story that was backed-up by the credentials of recognised texts. The story is a part of the period of the founding of Rome and was included in most of the major

classical and modern histories and accounts available at this time, including Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Livy, Ovid in the Fasti and the Histoire Romaine of Charles Rollin.<sup>26</sup>

Indeed, what is remarkable about the painting of Les Sabines (Plate 57), for which a compositional sketch exists that David worked on while he was in prison (Plate 58), is not the overt reference to any one history painting, but precisely the element of synthesis from numerous images that both Robert Rosenblum and Norman Bryson have detected.<sup>27</sup> The drawing (Plate 58) is literally an assembly or collage of separate motifs on different pieces of paper that have been stuck together. High art references derived from Raphael, Rubens, Domenichino, Annibale Carracci, the colossal Gladiator (Rome, Quirinale) of Antiquity and to Poussin have all been positively identified in the painting. Another primary aesthetic signifier was the nudity of the warriors, deliberately ahistorical and inappropriate. An overtly elevated status was being loudly proclaimed by the obvious appropriation into one large image of so many illustrious motifs that had been sanctioned by posterity. David's newest work could be seen to relocate him as a history painter in an authorised tradition; it could thus also serve to divorce him from the specific connotations of his immediately preceding work in the government of the Revolution.

The completed drawing for the Serment du Jeu de Paume commission (Plate 54) shows the participants fully dressed, yet the incomplete canvas (Plate 55) has outlines for figures, who are all still completely naked. For Les Sabines (Plate 57), this process was reversed. A late drawing (Plate 59) for this composition depicts the



warriors in armour; in the painting, these warriors have acquired the pure, idealising nudity of their Greek ancestors, rather than their Roman counterparts. David's earlier studies of Trajan's column would have made him fully aware that Roman soldiers did not go to war in the nude.<sup>28</sup> The catalogue or *livret*, which accompanied the compulsory admission charge to the initial public exhibition of the painting, justified the nudity on aesthetic grounds.<sup>29</sup> It will be shown that such an obvious assertion extended the neutralising effects of ideal beauty for more subversive ends.

Even for unsophisticated observers, the academic credentials of the history painting were obvious. The entry in Joseph Farington's diary for 3rd September 1802 criticized the painting for its strained, artificial academicism:

The Composition is laboured and Artificial...The principal characters are not appropriate and are without dignity. Romulus is a light, Youthful, unimpressive figure: and that of Tatius is little, if at all, above a Common Academy figure. The expressions of both are tame, unfeeling, and without energy. - I never saw a Composition in which the art of arranging was less concealed; every figure seems placed in its situation...<sup>30</sup>

At 385 x 522 cm, this was by far the largest painting that David had, as yet, completed. The critic Landon was also to emphasize the elevated pretensions of the enterprise:

Ce reproche n'a pu etre fait que par des hommes qui ne sentent pas que Romulus, fils d'un Dieu, ne devait pas etre representé comme un heros vulgaire, et que le but essentiel d'un artiste est de donner de la grandeur et de la dignité a ses personnages. on pourrait observer a ces critiques severes, que le Poussin, cet homme sage autant que savant dans le choix des convenances, a pris de plus grandes licences encore dans son tableau de l'enlèvement des Sabines...<sup>31</sup>

Ewa Lajer-Burcharth is right to point out the importance of David's use of the first paying public exhibition for a work of art in

France.<sup>32</sup> Profits from the exhibition, which ran for five years, meant that the painter could invest in a farm in the Seine-et-Marne.<sup>33</sup> No longer dependent on opportunities for display afforded by the Salon exhibitions, the artist had now become his own entrepreneur. The painting was to be judged on its own merits, separately from the Salon, where exhibits by some of his former pupils, notably Gérard, Girodet and Gros, could compete for accolades amongst themselves. Crucially too, David was now in control of the way in which his major work was to be viewed. Every visitor who paid to see the show now also received a "compulsory" explanatory *livret*. An examination of this *livret* will indicate just how carefully the artist manipulated the conditions of his own exhibition space.

The high art reference to Poussin in the *livret* presented something of an ambiguity.<sup>34</sup> Poussin was acknowledged as having treated the moment of the abduction of the Sabine women, although the author of the *livret* was now dealing with another, subsequent moment of the story. David's treatment of the narrative sources of this story will now be considered; this has not been addressed by Lajer-Burcharth, which could partly account for the selected perspective and slant of her recent work on the painting.<sup>35</sup>

The Sabine women had, in the first place, been abducted because there was a shortage of women in the rapidly growing new city that was Rome. Plutarch considered that these circumstances mitigated Romulus' decision to effect the abduction of the women of a neighbouring tribe.<sup>36</sup> In Ovid's *Fasti*, the subsequent intervention of the Sabine women with their infants, who reach out with pitiful cries between the warring menfolk, celebrates the month of March, as a time of beginning

again, of rebirth and of renewal; a temple in honour of the goddess of marriage and childbirth, Juno, was erected to commemorate the event.<sup>37</sup> The story is thus essentially about procreation and the saving of life in the face of death.

If the preliminary drawings for the composition (Plates 58 and 59) are compared to the final painting (Plate 57), it is evident that greater emphasis comes to be placed on the active contribution of the children in the unfolding of the drama. In the first drawing (Plate 58), one of the three clearly visible children is being lifted above the *mêlée*; the reason why the fighting should stop is made clear. The more fully worked up version (Plate 59) has six naked children each now functioning in a clear and separate way in the exposition of the narrative. The final painting has at least nine naked children. Part of the reason for this increase is to reinforce the sense that the killing must stop for the sake of future generations. This position was, however, a complete reversal from the painter's own statements of just before Thermidor when the death of Bara was to serve as example to the citizens and children of the Revolution. The portrait of Bara (Plate 61) remained in the artist's studio; the finality of such self-sacrifice may, in the years after Thermidor, have become self-evident.

The emotional appeals out to the spectator of three of the children in the foreground of *Les Sabines* (Plate 57) and of the child who is being held aloft, do not adequately account, however, for the intertwined and struggling duo, placed between the legs of Hersilia in the painting. One looks out at the spectator, the other reaches up towards the women in an effort to survive. Just behind, a kneeling woman with full breast exposed seems both to protect this duo and to

lament their plight, which has been brought about by the example of the men who surround them. The spectator has been invited to observe, analyse and then judge the effects of aggression, just as the children observe, have observed and react according to the external signs to which they relate.

Children who observe, were also prominent in David's earlier works such as the Bélisaire (Plate 23), La Douleur d'Andromache (Plate 9) and Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30). The events of the Revolution gave new meaning to their participation in an adult world. There had not only been an explosion of visual imagery, but also a fully utilised consciousness that the power of signs and their contexts could polarise meanings. A complete edition of the works of the sensationist philosopher Condillac, brother to the Abbé de Mably, was published in 1798.<sup>38</sup> During the Reign of Terror, the potential meaning of signs was heightened to a point of intense sensitivity: the colour of costume and of dress could, for instance, condemn a person to death. An awareness that the next generation of vulnerable and impressionable children could become the innocent targets of strong polemics had also entered David's vocabulary. His speech to the National Convention on 29th March 1793, when he presented his portrait of Lepelletier to the nation, stressed the importance of such imagery for the children of the future: "...j'aurai rempli ma tâche, si je fais dire un jour au vieux père entouré de sa nombreuse famille: Venez, mes enfants, venez voir celui de vos représentants qui le premier, est mort pour vous donner la liberté."<sup>39</sup> David had four children of his own: the eldest son was born on 15th February 1783, the second boy on 27th April 1784 and then twin girls on 26th October

1786,<sup>40</sup> and it is worth noting that when presenting both the portrait of Lepelletier and that of Marat to the Convention, he should have had in mind a father pointing out the painting to his children. For a painter concerned with posterity and who knew that he was living at a time of great historical moment and importance, children, functioning as representatives of future generations, had become increasingly vital. It was vital to produce works which would continue in the future to have relevance for subsequent generations. It was also vital to include children in his address to the spectator and in the appeal to his audience.

The *livret* to the Les Sabines exhibition gave an account of the origins of Rome from the time of the birth of Romulus; the account was prefaced with a remark on history:

Ce qui n'est que fiction pour l'historien est une vérité incontestable pour le peintre et le poète: à leurs yeux, Romulus, et Rémus, son frère, sont les enfants jumeaux de Mars et de Rhée, prêtresse consacrée au culte de Vesta.<sup>41</sup>

The fiction of the twins' semi-divine parentage was fact for the painter and poet. The comment is remarkable because it shows that the artist was here fully aware of the fiction of history, but that at the same time the written words of the poet and the visual imagery of the painter were able to represent the same fiction in alternative ways and with a degree of truth that defied doubt. The truth of a painting resided not in its verisimilitude, but in the fact of its existence and it was up to the painter or the poet to fabricate such an existence convincingly.

The *livret* then gave a brief account of the Sabines story, including a transcription of Hersilia's speech made in the midst of

battle; the source of this speech was acknowledged as Plutarch's Life of Romulus. The account culminated with a vivid, present-tense description of the end of hostilities:

...elle s'écrie: 'Sabins, que venez-vous faire sous les murs de Rome? Ce ne sont point des filles que vous voulez rendre à leurs parents, ni des ravisseurs que vous voulez punir; il falloit nous tirer de leurs mains lorsque nous leur étions encore étrangères; mais maintenant que nous sommes liées à eux par les chaînes les plus sacrées, vous venez enlever des femmes à leurs époux et des mères à leurs enfants. Le secours que vous voulez nous donner à présent nous est mille fois plus douloureux que l'abandon où vous nous laissâtes lorsque nous fûmes enlevées. Si vous faisiez la guerre pour quelque cause qui ne fût pas la nôtre, encore aurions-nous des droits à votre pitié, puisque c'est par nous que vous avez été faits aïeux, beaux-pères, beaux-frères et alliés de ceux que vous combattez. Mais si cette guerre n'a été entreprise que pour nous, nous vous supplions de nous rendre, parmi vous, nos pères et nos frères, sans nous priver, parmi les Romains, de nos maris et de nos petits enfants.' Ces paroles d'Hersilie, accompagnées de ses larmes, retentissent dans tous les coeurs. Parmi les femmes qui l'accompagnent, les unes mettent leurs enfants aux pieds des soldats, qui laissent tomber de leurs mains leurs épées sanglantes; d'autres lèvent en l'air leurs nourrissons, et les opposent comme des boucliers aux forêts de piques, qui se baissent à leur aspect. Romulus suspend le javelot qu'il est prêt à lancer contre Tatius. Le général de la cavalerie remet son épée dans le fourreau. Des soldats élèvent leurs casques en signe de paix. Les sentiments de l'amour conjugal, paternel, et fraternel, se propagent de rang en rang dans les deux armées. Bientôt les Romains et les Sabins s'embrassent, et ne forment plus qu'un peuple.<sup>42</sup>

The artist was now manipulating the textual sources of his history painting to service his own ends. These written details, so different from the laconic catalogue entries for his works in the official *livrets* of the Académie in the 1780s, could serve to direct attention to issues that the painter wanted to be noticed and also direct attention away from other issues, which the painter might wish only to imply or even to cover up. The written explanation makes clear that the story is to do with the founding of Rome, its mythical origins, its growth and procreation through ties of family, love and feelings

of fraternity and the halting of a battle. The fact that it is not a battle painting is clear from this description, despite the fact that the inversion of a battle theme has not been acknowledged. Yet the cessation of battle is at the very heart of David's composition. Compared to the preliminary compositional drawings (Plates 58, 59), the final work incorporates a distinct lack of movement. Romulus is shown no longer holding his lance as if about to throw it, but balances it on the end of his fingers. The battle has been brought to a halt by the successful intervention of the women and the action by the artist's successful manipulation of his visual imagery.

Comparisons with the Brutus (Plate 40), the preceding completed history painting, also produce fruitful findings about Les Sabines (Plate 57). The inclusion of a bulls-eye motif on Romulus' shield in which, above the inscription ROMA, the Etruscan she-wolf suckles the twins Romulus and Remus is in pointed contrast to the way the same hieroglyphic emblem had been used in the painting of 1789 beneath the sculpture of Roma. Renewed reference to the founding of the new Republic was not arbitrary. Another drawing (Plate 60) for Les Sabines shows the she-wolf of the bulls-eye motif of the painting frowning and with bared fangs: the animal appears to react aggressively towards the twins she is suckling. The pose of these children is taken up again in the fighting duo of the foreground of the painting; the she-wolf embossed on Romulus' shield is, however, much more figuratively neutral, although the viewer of the canvas can still be reminded of the origins of Romulus and can contrast those origins with those of the children who lie at his feet.

Robert Herbert has demonstrated just how important the figure of Brutus was to become during the course of the Revolution for the new Republic.<sup>43</sup> Compared to David's painting of Brutus (Plate 40) however, the rhetoric of the women and children in Les Sabines (Plate 57) as opposed to that of the men, has become more forceful and insistent; they now actively dominate the public sphere and the central space of the image. The open palm of Brutus' wife has been replaced by Hersilia's pale, delicate, but provocatively fragile hands which can, in turn, be contrasted to the muscles and clenched fist of Tattius. The power of Hersilia's hands can be compared to the powerlessness of the muscles of Tattius. The successful intervention of the women and children resolves the problematic moral conflict of the Brutus (Plate 40), where public duty to the State was placed in opposition to the private ties of family loyalty, although like the Brutus (Plate 40), it also does not illustrate *gloire* in its purest sense. Les Sabines (Plate 57) celebrates a victory in the sense of a reconciliation; it does not celebrate a victory in the sense of a conquering hero, such as could be depicted by, for instance, the triumphs of Alexander. I shall now demonstrate just how the emphasis given to this choice of subject in David's painting was out of kilter with the increasing militarisation of the Directoire government and its patronage of the arts.

#### The inverted battle theme as subversive

On 21st June 1798, the journal the Decade Philosophique announced that the exhibition of Les Sabines would open the following year in



December.<sup>44</sup> The official Salon of 1799 ran from 18th August to 23rd October.<sup>45</sup> General Bonaparte's coup d'état of 18th Brumaire, when the Council of Five Hundred had literally been driven out from their Council Chamber at bayonet point and which allowed the soldier to declare himself First Consul, took place on 9th/10th November that year. On 20th November 1799, the Minister of War, Berthier announced a call to arms to defend the Patrie, as France appeared to be threatened with invasion.<sup>46</sup> Earlier in the year, the Second Coalition had united Britain with Russia and Turkey, then with Austria: there had been French defeats in Italy and on the Rhine; the army was shut up in Egypt. The rule of the Directoire government was being taken over by a general and the military had begun to dominate events within the Republic. David's public exhibition of Les Sabines did nevertheless open on 21st December 1799, the day that had been specified the previous January.

Since the first levée en masse of 1793, a professional, praetorian army following its own generals had gradually emerged in France. As terms of service lengthened, soldiers established loyalties within their own units; Bonaparte's cash payments to the forces under his command in Italy being a notable example of how a military élite based on patronal gifts to the faithful was gradually being built up.<sup>47</sup> Only about a quarter of the profits from the Italian campaign were sent back to the Directoire administration in Paris; the rest of the money went to pay the army, its contractors and to finance expeditions to Egypt, Corsica and the Ionian islands.<sup>48</sup> In 1799 however, General Bonaparte did not, yet, control the whole country. On the 12th July, relatives of émigrés and ex-nobles had

been threatened with detention as hostages in areas of internal subversion.<sup>49</sup> On 13th August, the Jacobin Club in Paris, which had re-opened under the name of Réunion des Amis de la Liberté et de l'Egalité was closed down.<sup>50</sup> On 20th August, a Royalist insurrection was routed by Republicans at Toulouse.<sup>51</sup> The country was far from unified. On one level, the transcription of Hersilia's speech in David's *livret*, pertinently recalling the traumas of civil war, could be taken as a plea for unity of some topicality, but one which was also at variance with a situation where factions were competing for government and for power.

Back in 1796, painters were officially exhorted to depict nationalistic subjects. Part of the introduction to the Salon *livret* of 1796 contained a letter from the then Minister of the Interior, Bénézech, to artists of the French school. It urged the depiction of heroic and glorious French subjects, so that such actions could be passed on to the generations of posterity. History was to be commemorated by representations of remarkable contemporary events and not by subjects culled from past, antique sources.<sup>52</sup> A competition had been organized in December 1798, to encourage government subsidy for the arts. In a letter to the jury which included David, the Minister François de Neufchâteau, stated government policy towards the arts and, in particular, to history painting and sculpture which would glorify France and its military exploits:

...ne peuvent fleurir que par la protection spéciale du gouvernement, ce sont les arts du luxe public...les batailles sont aujourd'hui les plus belles pages de l'histoire de la gloire française...le gouvernement doit et veut en fixer la mémoire.<sup>53</sup>

With the pretext that his health was not up to it and that he would only fight the English, David refused Bonaparte's offer of 4th April 1798, requesting his company as a painter on the Egyptian campaign. Bonaparte had apparently responded: "Le Poussin ne veut donc point être aussi Parrocel."<sup>54</sup>

Lethière's La Patrie en danger (Plate 62), a late entry to the Salon of 1799, recalled the call to arms of 11th July 1792, when the unity of the French nation was threatened by enemies both from within and from outside the country. This painting contains particularly striking references to and divergencies from David's work: the women do not intervene to promote peace, but bring arms to urge their menfolk to war. Raising their swords to the sculpted female personification of the Republic, soldiers swear an oath of loyalty in imitation of Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30). Children can be seen to imitate this swearing of an oath, which was a common phenomenon of the *petit patriote*; they add to the patriotic message. Prompting passionate farewell messages, they are visions of the future and bring to mind the urgent need to protect the nation's future. The central figure taking leave of his family wears the consular costume that David had designed for the Convention in 1794 (Paris, Musée Carnavalet). The architecture of the port behind is an amalgam of physical defences of the Republic. The critic, Chaussard, in the Décade Philosophique of 2nd October 1799, heralded the French patriotism that the image embodied; the actively functional contribution of the women received particular praise:

Comme les bras et l'âme de cette femme sont bien suspendus autour de ce jeune guerrier, comme il est plein d'amour et de courage! Que l'action de celles qui apportent des armes est énergique et vraie! C'est à la fois leur rappeler leurs plus

beaux titres à l'amour et à la gloire, ces deux passions vraiment françaises.<sup>55</sup>

During the years of the Directoire government, the press had been increasingly harassed and censored. After the coup d'état of 18 fructidor V (4th September 1797), 32 editors were arrested. When the election of Jacobin deputies was annulled on 22 floréal VI (11th May 1798), their journal, Le Journal des Hommes Libres was suppressed.<sup>56</sup> In the first week of September 1799, 65 journalists were deported to the island of Oléron and 11 papers were banned.<sup>57</sup> It is not surprising therefore that the painter of Marat during the Reign of Terror should be careful to veil obvious reference to contemporary events throughout and immediately after the government of the Directoire. Just as Marat's remains were to be removed from the Pantheon, so was his portrait removed from the Council Chamber of the National Convention where it had been placed in perpetuity; on 26th October 1795, David's request for its return, along with that of the canvas of Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau, was granted.<sup>58</sup> The political realities which confronted the artist after Thermidor required careful handling, even if the events of the past could not be entirely effaced.

It is worth speculating on the possibility that the textual reference to Poussin's Enlèvement des Sabines (Plate 29) in the Les Sabines livret may well have been a subtle veil to hide a visual reference to another painting by Poussin that was thematically closer to David's Les Sabines (Plate 57). Poussin's Coriolan (Plate 63) had been confiscated from the emigré Simon Charles Boutin in 1794. In 1800 a plan was mooted to send it to Les Andelys, where it was finally

despatched in 1802.<sup>59</sup> It may well have been politically expedient to banish this particular work at this particular time. La Harpe's play of 1784 and the discourse that ensued on the equivocal nature of family ties in relation to the aristocratic patriotism of a returning emigré had fresh significance to returning emigrés, as the success of Guérin's Le Retour de Marcus Sextus (Paris, Louvre) demonstrated.<sup>60</sup> Coriolan (Plate 63) is one of the few paintings by Poussin to have a prominent inscription identifying the hero of the story. Both this painting and Les Sabines (Plate 57) have soldiers in the act of resheathing swords in response to the pleas of women and children, who implore relatives to stop killing for the sake of Rome and of future generations.

I shall now maintain that the overt plea for a ceasefire in the painting of high art had a specifically subversive message in 1799, which had to be articulated via an allegory, that had itself to be hidden, given the political circumstances in France of the painter and of his audience. The message was to be contemplated by the spectators of posterity who had hindsight, but was not to be recognized as an overt allegory of the current political situation in a way that was too clear. By using for source a subject from antique history, David was able to revert to his profession of history painter, which was how he had found fame before the Revolution. Yet the artist's participation in the events and ideas of the Revolution could not be entirely effaced. The painter was to manipulate his composition of Les Sabines (Plate 57) very carefully in order to suggest in a covert way that he still sympathised with the causes of the Revolution.

Firstly, elements from the lower culture of caricature were inserted into this high art: Gillray's own troping from Milton and Hogarth in the damning cartoon of 1792 of Sin, Death and The Devil (Plate 64) was invested with more shades of possible meaning and divested of too overt a critical target in terms of current politics. The potential for commentary on contemporary affairs was now, though, forcefully present in history painting and in the irrevocably changed arena of its public exhibition in France. Karen Domenici has noted the formal parallels between David's painting and Gillray's print, which presents an episode from Milton's Paradise Lost.<sup>61</sup> The print shows the Queen as Sin intervening between Thurlow as Satan and Pitt as Death. In Milton, Satan was the father of Sin and also of Death, who was the son of both Satan and Sin. Thus the female figure intervenes here too as both daughter and mother. In the painting of high art, however, the Medusa effect of the woman's intervention has, once again, been divested of an overtly pejorative association. A caustic and negative sexual satire has been neutralised: the genitals of Tattius are covered by his empty scabbard and not by the hand of Hersilia, in contrast to the way the hand of Sin has been carefully juxtaposed in Gillray's print. Reference to contemporary event has, thus, been veiled.

Secondly, the shape of the Capitol, perched on top of the Tarpeian rock, in the background of David's painting brings to mind images of the Bastille that flooded onto the market during and after its demolition.<sup>62</sup> According to Plutarch, the rock got its name because of the treachery of Tarpeia, who had been the daughter of the commander of the capitol guard. She had opened the gates to Tattius

because of promise of reward in the form of golden bracelets. After gaining access, Tattius threw his shield as well as his armlet onto her and his companions then followed suit, so that she was smothered by the weight of the circles of gold and shields.<sup>63</sup> The treacherous, self-interest and avariciousness of this Roman woman can, therefore, be contrasted with the successful intervention of the Sabine women, whom David has foregrounded. The fortress being fought over is not the Bastille, but the visual reference allows the story of antiquity to resonate with the events and causes of a specific, recent and momentous struggle in France.

Thirdly, one of the largest, most obvious and isolated signifying elements in the painting is the large bundle of straw attached to a pike, held aloft on the opposite side of the composition to the Tarpeian rock. This element was added at a late stage of the working-up process; it replaced billowing standards and another Etruscan wolf ensign in the most fully complete compositional drawing (Plate 59) which also, of course, still has the warriors clad in armour. Ovid called the painted military ensign a *manipulus* and described it as a bundle of straw on a pike.<sup>64</sup> According to a sixteenth-century French book of heroic devices, the device is to be specifically associated with Romulus and the loss of Empire he had founded, as a symbol of mortality (Plate 65): Romulus' standard of hay, dead flowers and grasses should have reminded the Roman nation and its people of the fragility of all material things.<sup>65</sup> In David's painting, the pejorative connotations of the emblematic device are not necessarily present, although it is in addition to the ensign more usually associated with Romulus; this alternative motif is, of course, also

prominently displayed on the large, gold circular shield the painter has given to the founder of Rome.

David's disapproval of the appropriation of works of art from the conquered territories is significant and could well indicate that the artist was aware of the negative implications of the standard as well as of the Tarpeian rock, but did not want the availability of such implications to be too obvious for contemporary spectators of the painting. On 27th July 1798, on the fourth anniversary of Thermidor and Robespierre's downfall, a large amount of artistic booty was paraded through the streets of Paris; the booty included the Capitoline Brutus (Rome, Palazzo dei Conservatori) which had served as a model for David's painting of 1789, the Apollo Belvedere (Rome, Musei Vaticani) and Raphael's Trasfigurazione (Rome, Musei Vaticani).<sup>66</sup> David's working method had always relied on the adaptation of existing models to new purposes and much of his training period in Rome had been devoted to drawing and sketching from the models that were available to him there.<sup>67</sup> Yet he had also openly signed a petition, which was published in the Journal de Paris of 17th August 1796, against the seizure of such works of art from Italy.<sup>67</sup> According to Delécluze, one of the painter's first biographers and a pupil in his studio at the time, David believed that such works should be considered in their proper contexts and original locations.<sup>68</sup> It could also have been that seeing Paris as a new Rome was problematic for David at this time.

On 21st January 1801, two large equestrian portraits of Bonaparte franchissant les Alpes au Grand-Saint-Bernard (Plate 66), one for the King of Spain and one for the First Consul (Berlin, Schloss



Charlottenburg), had joined the exhibition of Les Sabines (Plate 57) in the Louvre.<sup>69</sup> Such works are representative of the new demand for imagery glorifying the military hero and Les Sabines (Plate 57) can be seen in sharp contrast to them. These portraits show the soldier crossing the Alps in May 1800, a month before the decisive Battle of Marengo. Adapting an Imperial gesture of salute and acknowledgement, the General indicates the way forward; on the rocks in the foreground are inscribed the names BONAPARTE, HANNIBAL and KAROLUS MAGNUS. All three military leaders had crossed the alps successfully. The pronounced expression on the face of the rearing horse is, however, in marked contrast to the equally windswept but much more neutral features of the soldier's physiognomy. According to Delécluze, Bonaparte had apparently wanted to be shown: "calme sur un cheval fougueux."<sup>70</sup> Whether this was indeed the case or not, the portraits incorporate the imagery of a self-willed, dominating conqueror and hero, who is boldly huge in comparison with the small figures of the troops under his command in the background.

In Les Sabines (Plate 57), a young warrior clad only in a cloak and grey phrygian bonnet appears to be leading a shying horse out to the right, away from the conflict. Anxiously and in a pose of twisting *contrapposto*, he glances back. The expression of the figure can be interpreted as one of fear or of concern for the women. The action incorporates an alternative conduct to that of the contemporary, historicising portrait of the self-willed leader. The figure of the youth can be compared to that of Aeneas fleeing from Troy, in one of the illustrations to Didot's 1798 edition of Virgil (Plate 67). A proof of this design is attributed to David and it is

probable that the artist worked on the illustration with Gérard.<sup>71</sup> The nakedness of the youth in the history painting can also be compared to the nakedness of Bara in the incomplete martyr portrait (Plate 61), which remained in the artist's studio. The figure can be further contrasted with the action and pose of Gros' Napoléon à Arcoli (Versailles, Musée nationale du château); this painting was well received at the Salon of 1801 after a preliminary print of the image had been produced in 1798.<sup>72</sup> Here, the hatless young army officer is caught moving and striding forward, with sword in hand in order to attack the enemy who is out of sight. His other hand holds a billowing flag, not a shying horse, as he looks back at the troops under his command behind him, who are also unseen. The single, heroic figure of one specific individual had come to incorporate a whole battle victory: General Augereau was, for instance, not included in the image, even though he had also made a decisive contribution to the victory.

The critical response to Les Sabines (Plate 57) dealt with the aesthetic issue of the nudity of the warriors in great detail. David had outwardly conformed in a most candid, exaggerated, way to the requirements of history painting. For his own survival, the painter had to denounce the innovative mixture of genres that the Marat à son dernier soupir (Plate 53) had promulgated. Yet a hidden layer of allegory of some contemporary import was not missed by some of the painter's contemporaries. On one level, it was seen to be an allegory of friendship and of reconciliation. On another level it could have been considered to criticise the conduct of military engagement and the profession of soldier, but no-one chose to do so. Indeed, it

would almost certainly not have been acceptable to do so. The critic Chaussard reported a typically cryptic and ambiguous retort by the artist, when confronted with the suggestion that it was the French rather than the Romans who were being implicated in the painting:

Ces scènes exaltant mon imagination, je crus voir alors les Français des différens partis prêts à s'égorger de leurs propres mains, et la mère-patrie se levant, se précipitant entre eux, et criant: Arrêtez...

Ce rapprochement, que je hasardais, je le communiquai à l'artiste; il me répondit: 'Telle était ma pensée lorsque je saisis les pinceaux; puissé-je être entendu!'<sup>73</sup>

The painting was not to be heard, nor were the artist's thoughts to be fully understood. A more scurrilous versifier of December 1799 was also to use the ambiguity of metaphor:

En habillant, in naturalibus,  
Et Tatiùs et Romulus  
Et de jeunes beautés, sans fichus ni sans cottes  
David ne nous apprend que ce que l'on savait,  
Depuis longtemps Paris le proclamait  
Le Raphaël des sans-culottes.<sup>74</sup>

For an overt allegory to have meaning, there has to be an awareness of a juxtaposition of meaning. In the transmission of a historical narrative, on the other hand, processes of concealing and of revealing are hidden and not overtly demanded of the spectator. The artist's careful manipulation of this painting's denotative representation in conjunction with its expressive discursiveness has ensured the work's own survival. Jean Baptiste Regnault's La Liberté ou la Mort (Plate 68) exists, in contrast, only in a small-size version. As a large canvas of over 3 metres by 3 metres, now lost, it had hung in the Conseil des Cinq Cents from 1799 to 1804, after having been exhibited at the Salons of 1795 and 1798.<sup>75</sup> There are formal links or inversions with Les Sabines (Plate 57): a male nude with palms towards the observer hovers over the planet between the symbols

of death and of the Republic. The allegory had originally been interpreted as a call to patriotic death so that the values of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity embodied by the image of the Republic, could be preserved; death holds the laurel wreath of the martyr. Even in 1795 however, the allegory was to have been interpreted negatively by some Salon critics, for it came to symbolise a choice that had to be made: sooner death than the liberty of the Terror.<sup>76</sup> The meaning of this overt allegory had been interpreted differently but the interpretation did not derive from a potential for open-endedness offered up by the image.

Lethière's La Patrie en danger (Plate 62), depicts soldiers swearing an oath, in the manner of David's *Horatii*, to an allegorical sculptural personification of the Republic. David's *Hersilia* is a figure overtly taken from history, not allegory, but her contribution goes beyond the primary signifiers of both history and allegory. As Lynn Hunt has noted in connection with the political caricature of the Revolution: "Women could be representative of abstract qualities and collective dreams because women were not about to vote or govern."<sup>77</sup> *Hersilia* gives to David's composition its principal dynamic, in contrast to the women of the artist's other major history paintings. There was precisely no correlation between this role and the role of women in France at the time. Similarly, the painter's own political sympathies cannot be directly allied to his work at this time, although both a deliberate evocation and a deliberate evasion of such issues can be surmised. The ways in which figurative imagery had been used during the Revolution could not be entirely renounced, nor could

a message of peace for posterity by David be allowed to resonate too loudly at a time of a national call to arms.

The heroic, naked, male, nude figure of Hercules had, in the recent past, often been used to symbolise the French nation, as in David's own design for an opera curtain (Plate 56). Philippe-Auguste Hennequin, one of the artist's former students, used the figure of Hercules in this way in designs for two prints.<sup>78</sup> The Allégorie de la Constitution (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale) of 1795 uses, as the model for Hercules, the heroic nude sculpture of the colossal Gladiator (Rome, Quirinale). The figure is shown successfully shielding the clothed, female personification of the Constitution from the daggers and arrows of blind fanaticism, pride and fierce ignorance, personified as Furies. The later La Liberté de l'Italie dédiée aux hommes libres (Plate 69) uses the same Herculean motif for the French people in conjunction with a female personification and allegorical meaning. This print celebrated the Treaty of Campoformio of October 1797 and has General Bonaparte in contemporary uniform being crowned by Victory, heralded by the trumpet of fame and embracing Hercules and Minerva, goddess of wisdom. The club of Hercules and the two-headed eagle of the defeated Austrian Empire lie on the ground in front.

In David's history painting, Tattius is modelled on the same heroic, male, nude figure, but he does not denote the French nation in any overt way, just as the female figure of Hersilia represents in the first instance only a Sabine woman. An allegory did not have to be interpreted first for the painting to have any meaning. Yet, as David's *livret* had suggested, the veils and guises of history could

still be implied. The *livret* had also amply, even with some verbosity, justified the nudity of the heroes on aesthetic grounds. The issue of the nudity of the warriors was, indeed, precisely the one which received most of the critical comment at the time. The artist had successfully orchestrated his own exhibition to divert attention away from any too pointed and too political interpretations.

On seeing David's painting, Bonaparte complained that it did not adequately resemble true fighting in battle; he then demonstrated the art of soldiery by imitating a bayonet charge.<sup>79</sup> David's oblique reply was that he had not wanted to paint French soldiers, but the heroes of Antiquity.<sup>80</sup> When the First Consul had left, David is then reputed to have remarked: "Ces généraux n'entendent rien à la peinture."<sup>81</sup> Though the artist did subsequently complete some famous Napoleonic images and portraits, the narrative evolution of this history painting made him a far from simple convert either to the Napoleonic ideal or to the Emperor's new clothes. With the words: "Je ne veux pas de pareilles saloperies," the First Consul was to have the phrygian bonnets on the walls of the Tuileries covered over.<sup>82</sup> Despite the overt inclusion of at least two phrygian caps in his painting, David's high art of history painting escaped such treatment and has survived for the commentators of posterity to continue to discuss. A classical pedigree had been carefully reclaimed and at the same time the connotations of *sans-culotisme* had not been entirely rejected. The artist's signature can still be seen prominently displayed on a carefully and specially inscribed block between the naked legs of Tatius, beneath his empty scabbard and more specifically beneath the feet of a soldier who, reaching up with his hand, gives

the order to those around to cease fighting, thus signalling in an academic but indirect way, the import of the painting.

The pendant to Les Sabines and the opinions of an early biographer

If we now turn to the painting of Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) we shall find similar contrasts with David's work of the revolutionary period and, despite the return to the status of history painting, we also find certain deviations from his work done under the Ancien Régime. Delécluze's major publication, Louis David, son Ecole et son Temps provides us with some evidence for these observations. This book has been an invaluable source of information for later biographers, particularly as regards the artist's social and working relationships during the Directoire and Empire periods. As the title of the book suggests, the work was not conceived as a monograph. First published in 1855, it is an account of a neoclassical school and aesthetic, just as much as it is a collection of souvenirs and a fictionalised biography. Delécluze had entered David's studio as a pupil in 1796 and in the book narrates the story of his participation there by using the third person, semi-fictional guise of the student Etienne.<sup>83</sup> This writer felt that David's decision to paint the Greek subject of Leonidas was due to a climate of opinion which valued the principles of Greek art: the subject would allow for the painting of figures in the nude in an historically correct way.<sup>84</sup> Martin Kemp has, indeed, convincingly linked the painting of Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) to the writings of Winckelmann.<sup>85</sup> I shall demonstrate that, in addition to these observations, the artist's

decision to abandon the work some time around 1802 and then his completion of the painting in the period 1811 to 1814 has also to be considered in relation to the changing political realities of his life and times.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, changing concepts of *gloire* can still be shown to underpin much of the meaning of this history painting, but in an inverted, subversive way as a fitting pendant to Les Sabines (Plate 57).

Delécluze recalled the artist's defence of the mythological and heroic treatment of his history subjects:

Plus d'une fois aussi on lui objecta le choix de ses sujets tirés de l'histoire proprement dite, tels que ceux des *Sabines* et du *Léonidas*, tandis qu'il les traitait poétiquement comme des scènes héroïques, mythologiques. A cette critique, dont il ne pouvait détruire toute la force, il répondait: 'Je sais que pour être conséquent aux principes que j'ai adoptés, je ne devrais tirer mes sujets que des poèmes d'Homère ou de ses successeurs; mais j'ai cru remarquer que les ouvrages des artistes de notre temps qui en ont agi ainsi sont toujours restés, dans l'opinion du public, fort au-dessous de l'idée qu'ils devaient exprimer et des personnages qu'on s'était proposé de rendre. Quant à moi, j'ai cru montrer plus de prudence qu'eux, en adoptant un fait historique dont je restais maître, et que je *poétisais* à ma façon, au lieu de peindre un sujet de poésie pure, pris dans Homère ou Sophocle, par exemple, sujet auprès duquel, malgré tous mes efforts, je paraîtrais toujours inférieur et prosaïque.'<sup>67</sup>

As a painter, David felt unable to compete with the works of the poets. The defence clearly alludes to the *ut pictura poesis* tradition and could well be connected to Lessing's Laocöon, which was published in French in 1802.<sup>68</sup> The artist did not, however, feel the need to compete with historians; indeed, according to Delécluze's account, he favoured subjects taken from history because he could remain in charge of them as master and could thus fashion narrative for his own purposes and to his own ends.



Harold T. Parker and, more recently, Claude Mossé have shown how Antiquity was used to further contemporary political causes, with little regard for factual accuracy.<sup>89</sup> Parker cited the speech, rejecting the validity of elections, made by the right-winger Cazales, where the examples of Socrates, Lycurgus, Coriolanus and the Gracchi were used to show the injustices of popular government.<sup>90</sup> Elizabeth Rawson has also shown how Sparta was admired for its political system and military values in late eighteenth-century France, but by a range of different commentators and for a variety of ends.<sup>91</sup> A particular association between the Jacobin cause and that of Sparta does, however, seem to have been more generally and widely recognised around the time and immediately after Thermidor.

Earlier in 1791, Charles Hector d'Estaing had published Les Thermopyles: Tragédie de Circonstance, but the introduction to the tragic verse made it clear that the play was not meant to be performed.<sup>92</sup> The patriotic reader was, instead, to make connections between the circumstances of France and those of the beleaguered Spartans at Thermopylae:

Si trois cents Spartiates, soutenus par l'amour de la Liberté, ont aux Thermopyles annoncé le sort de l'empire de Cyrus en combattant contre dix-sept cent mille hommes de pied, et contre quatre-vingt mille chevaux; que ferait la France, animée du même esprit que les Spartiates, si elle était jamais attaquée? C'est à cette comparaison, très-geométrique, qu'il appartient de vous faire adopter *Les Thermopyles* comme une tragédie de circonstance; vous en seriez au besoin les acteurs: elle est, sous tous les rapports, une pièce nationale; c'est vous que nous allons tâcher d'imiter.<sup>93</sup>

The verse quickly establishes that the work is, in fact, a plea for constitutional monarchy. Act I Scene I opens with a ballot in which

the citizens elect Leonidas as their leader.<sup>94</sup> As a true Spartan, Leonidas accepts the results of the ballot and as King is determined to respect and defend the citizens who have elected him. The King dies amongst his loyal and virtuous friends, grateful in the knowledge that he has been able to serve his country:

J'ai servi ma patrie, et voilà ce que j'aime.  
 Amis, grace à vos soins, je goûte un bien suprême.  
 Jusqu'au dernier soupir, je serai donc heureux!  
 Tous mes braves amis ont été vertueux.<sup>95</sup>

Henri Grégoire used the story of Leonidas and his defence alongside 300 Spartan warrior companions of the pass at Thermopylae, for an entirely different purpose. He reported on the need to have clearly legible inscriptions on public monuments to the National Convention in January 1794. The report called for concise, rapidly intelligible, laconic inscriptions so that the principles and founders of the Republic could be commemorated and fixed for perpetuity.<sup>96</sup> Inscriptions were to be in French and not Latin because Latin was no longer intelligible to all. In a somewhat confused way, the Greek example of the inscription at Thermopylae was used to demonstrate the power of written inscriptions for posterity:

Aux Termopyles, on lisoit celle qu'avoit composée Simonide:  
*'passant, vas dire à Sparte que nous sommes morts pour ses  
 saintes lois;'* et si l'on avoit commis la faute de l'écrire en  
 langue étrangère, auroit-on vu les Grecs affluer dans ce lieu  
 célèbre, et fondre en larmes en la lisant?<sup>97</sup>

Such examples show how events, characters, details, even moral attributes taken from the classical past could be used for often quite conflicting reasons during a time of much polemic and momentous political debate. Robespierre, indeed, made memorable use of the Spartan example, which may well, however, also have produced a more

widespread identification between the Jacobin cause and that of Sparta, at least for a time. In a major speech to the National Convention on the Cult of the Supreme Being on 7th May 1794, Robespierre compared and contrasted virtuous and wicked figures in the present and from the past. Whilst the virtue of Brutus existed in the past and: "Sparte brille comme un éclair dans une nuit éternelle," much had changed between the tracings of Dibutades and the paintings of David.<sup>99</sup> Both Socrates and Leonidas, before dying, expressed a positive belief in the immortality of the soul:

Socrate mourant entretient ses amis de l'immortalité de l'ame. Léonidas aux Thermopyles, soupant avec ses compagnons d'armes, au moment d'exécuter le dessein le plus héroïque que la vertu humaine ait jamais conçu les invite pour le lendemain à un autre banquet dans une vie nouvelle. Il y a loin de Socrate à Chaumette et de Léonidas au Pere Duchesne! (On applaudit) Un grand homme, un véritable héros s'estime trop lui-même pour se complaire dans l'idée de son anéantissement. Un scélérat, méprisable à ses propres yeux, horrible à ceux d'autrui, sent que la Nature ne peut lui faire de plus beau présent que le néant.<sup>99</sup>

By associating Socrates with Leonidas and with the notion of the *grand homme*, the politician was able to present an after-life both as non-Christian and as positive. At the same time, the patriotic sacrifice of such as Bara and, by implication, Leonidas would ensure both a certain immortality and the *gloire* of the Nation:

Nous célébrons aussi tous les grands hommes de quelques tems et de quelque pays que ce soit, qui ont affranchi leur patrie du joug des tyrans, ou qui ont fondé la liberté par de sages lois. Vous ne serez point oubliés, illustres martyrs de la République Française! Vous ne serez point oubliés, héros morts en combattant pour elle: qui pourrait oublier les héros de ma Patrie! la France leur doit sa liberté, l'Univers leur devra la sienne! Que l'Univers célèbre bientôt leur gloire en jouissant de leurs bienfaits!... Jeunes Français entendez-vous l'immortel Bara qui, du sein du Panthéon, vous appelle à la gloire; venez répandre des fleurs sur sa tombe sacrée.<sup>100</sup>

The specific episode of Leonidas at Thermopylae was of use to Robespierre as an example of both a *grand homme* and a military hero who, in the manner of his death, had willed and chosen a patriotic martyrdom. Classical and Christian martyrs were mixed together in a way that was similar to David's drawing of Le Triomphe du Peuple français (Plate 56).

Loaisel de Tréogat's Le Combat des Thermopyles ou l'Ecole des Guerriers was first performed on 5th thermidor II, four days before the downfall of Robespierre; it was staged again in March 1798.<sup>101</sup> Just as David's martyr portraits were not history paintings in the traditional sense, so this play too was not in verse, nor was it described as a classical tragedy but as a: "Fait historique en Trois Actes et en Prose."<sup>102</sup> The play presents Leonidas as a fully-fledged public and Jacobin hero; he is not a king, but a republican general of implacable, neo-stoic resolution in contrast to the despotic ruler Xerxes:

Leonidas: Nous lui opposerons, ce qui vaut mieux que le nombre, cette valeur républicaine qui entraîne tout, à qui tout est soumis dans la nature, et devant qui les armées et les peuples seront éternellement prosternés.<sup>103</sup>

The Spartan exhorts his companions in arms to embrace each other before they all confront certain death as they loyally defend the republican Patrie.<sup>104</sup> There is admiration for Lycurgus as a great legislator who taught how to contemplate death with equanimity:

Alphée: A la vérité, c'est une chose de si peu de valeur que la vie.  
 Dienecès: Le sacrifice en est si facile!  
 Leonidas: Et si doux quand on le fait pour son pays!  
 Dienecès: Lycurgue, notre législateur, eut une idée bien morale, lorsqu'il plaça dans nos temples, la statue de la mort à côté de celle du sommeil.  
 Alphée: Oui, cela nous accoutume à les regarder avec la même

indifférence.  
 Leonidas: Bien mieux, cela nous apprend à contempler le sommeil  
 et la mort comme deux bienfaits de la nature.  
 Alphée: Combien nous devons bénir la mémoire de ce grand  
 législateur qui imprima dans nos âmes le mépris  
 généreux de tout ce qui est un objet de terreur pour  
 les autres hommes.<sup>105</sup>

Although there is no fighting in front of the audience, as in French classical tragedy, the wounded Leonidas is brought back to die on stage after hearing a report that the Persians had fled and after the approach of *gloire* has been announced: "la gloire tenant dans ses mains des lauriers immortels, plane déjà sur vos têtes."<sup>106</sup>

An earlier episode in the play had been a processional ceremony of remembrance for three dead warrior heroes.<sup>107</sup> The scene seems to emulate the programmes for Revolutionary fêtes, which David had helped organise. It takes place at dawn when an old man blesses the warriors' tomb, girls throw flowers and garland it, women kneel and stretch out their arms to an altar.<sup>108</sup> Before going into battle, Leonidas exhorts his comrades to suspend their trophies on a tree of liberty.<sup>109</sup> In both form and content, the play resonates with the fervour, rhetoric, public service and self-sacrifice of the faction to which David, before Thermidor, belonged and made an active contribution.

Lajer-Burcharth has published a print, Le Pouvoir de la Liberté (Plate 71) from this period in connection with the representation of Hersilia in Les Sabines (Plate 57).<sup>110</sup> The print depicts a female patriot, in a similar pose to that of David's Hersilia, leading a counter-attack against returning, fighting aristocrats. It has an inscription which compares the fight for liberty of the French Republican women to the past actions of Spartan women. Further

associations between David, Sparta and the Jacobin movement have been made by Philippe Bordes and James Rubin in connection with the works, trial and execution of François-Jean-Baptiste Topino-Lebrun.<sup>111</sup> In January 1801, David's former student was found guilty of conspiracy in a plot to assassinate Bonaparte and was sent to the guillotine.

Topino-Lebrun's La Mort de Caius Gracchus (Marseille, musée des Beaux-Arts) had been fulsomely celebrated at the Salon of 1798 and can be considered to be a posthumous tribute to the radical Gracchus Babeuf, whose coup d'état of 1796 had failed, ending in the perpetrator's death. A few weeks before his own arrest in 1800, this painter had shown a large sketch of Le siège de Lacédémone par Pyrrhus (Vizille, musée de la Révolution Française) to David.<sup>112</sup> The sketch, on a subject taken from Plutarch, shows the inhabitants of Sparta being slaughtered and desperately fighting to their deaths as they attempt to repel the besieging enemy. At Topino-Lebrun's trial, however, David was very careful to disassociate himself from too close a personal involvement with his former student: his recent contact had purely been about artistic issues.<sup>113</sup>

Delécluze's comments on David's early period of work on his own painting of a Spartan subject and on his decision to abandon this work are still revealing. The writer, as a pupil in the master's studio at this time produced a drawing on the subject of Leonidas and his comrades preparing to fight at Thermopyles. The master judged this drawing favourably, but announced that his own choice of scene would be of a different, more reflective moment:

'Je veux peindre un général et ses soldats se préparant au combat comme de véritables Lacédémoniens, sachant bien qu'ils n'en échapperont pas; les uns absolument calmes, les autres tressant des fleurs pour assister au banquet qu'ils vont faire chez

*Pluton. Je ne veux ni mouvement ni expression passionnés, excepté sur les figures qui accompagneront le personnage inscrivant sur le rocher: Passant, va dire à Sparte que ses enfants sont morts pour elle.*<sup>114</sup>

A passage from one of Seneca's epistles to do with the need to face death in a noble way, virtuously and with equanimity, matches this description:

Les Lacédémoniens étoient enfermés au détroit des Thermopyles: ils n'avoient espérance, ni de vaincre ni de retourner dans leur maison; Leonidas, avant de les mener au combat ou plutôt à la mort, leur dit, mes amis, dînez à présent comme si vous deviez souper ce soir aux enfers.<sup>115</sup>

In David's final painting however, only Leonidas and to a certain extent his brother-in-law Agis, seated beside him and awaiting his orders, express calm neo-stoic resolve. They provide a contrast with the impassioned preparations going on around them. The motionless pose and upwardly focussing eyes of Leonidas, acknowledging the imminence of death and after-life, together with the various farewells and battle preliminaries that are taking place all around him, also allow the work as a whole to act as a pendant in a positive way to Les Sabines (Plate 57), where the female figure of Hersilia decisively intervenes to stop a battle in order to preserve life on earth, in the presence of death on the ground near her feet.

Delécluze, after giving David's motivation for choosing the moment of his painting, then makes a digression to elaborate a basic neoclassic aesthetic: the need to avoid grimace and to work up a few carefully selected ideas into a finely elaborated and fruitful moment.<sup>116</sup> Significantly, the writer returns to a discussion of the work with reference to David's reaction to the political situation of the coup d'état of Brumaire:

David ne tarda pas à faire acte de soumission entre les mains du nouveau chef de l'état. Cependant, pour ne laisser ignorer aucune des oscillations qui agitaient continuellement l'esprit de cet artiste, il faut dire que dans la solitude de son atelier, et l'imagination échauffée par le dévouement des trois cents Spartiates dont il retraçait l'histoire, ses vieilles idées républicaines reprenaient souvent le dessus. 'Je veux au moins, disait-il quand il était content de son ouvrage, montrer mon *patriotisme sur la toile*.' C'était à peu près la disposition d'esprit où il se trouvait, lorsque la révolution du 18 brumaire s'accomplit.

Ce fut précisément Étienne qui vint lui raconter comment les choses s'étaient passées à Saint-Cloud, la fuite des deux conseils et la réussite du nouveau César. 'Allons, dit David, j'avais toujours bien pensé que nous n'étions pas assez vertueux pour être républicains... *Causa... diis placuit*... Comment donc est la fin, Étienne? - *Victrix causa diis placuit sed victa Catoni*. - C'est ça même, mon bon ami. *Sed victa Catoni*, répéta-t-il plusieurs fois...'<sup>17</sup>

At this date and in this case, where there is no reason to disbelieve Delécluze, proper conduct in defeat and Cato's reading of the Phaedo before his suicide were closer to the heart of David, than the victory of the gods. The writer went on to record how the painter had been summoned for an interview with the First Consul and the then Minister of the Interior, his brother Lucien. Bonaparte had, apparently, not approved of David's project of painting those in defeat, to which the artist had replied:

- Mais, citoyen consul, ces vaincus sont autant de héros qui meurent pour la patrie, et, malgré leur défaite, ils ont repoussé pendant plus de cent ans les Perses de la Grèce.

- N'importe, le seul nom de Léonidas est venu jusqu'à nous. Tout le reste est perdu pour l'histoire.

- Tout, interrompit David...excepté cette noble résistance à une armée innombrable. Tout!...excepté leur dévouement, auquel leur nom ne saurait ajouter. Tout!...excepté les usages, les mœurs austères des Lacédémoniens, dont il est utile de rappeler le souvenir à des soldats.'<sup>18</sup>

The focus of Delécluze's book as a whole is precisely not David's political engagement during and after the Revolution. However the way this writer accounted for the decision to stop painting Léonidas aux



Thermopyles (Plate 70) strongly implies, nevertheless, that political motives were at the heart of the issue:

On sait à quel point il était préoccupé de la composition et de l'exécution de son *Léonidas*, tableau qui lui tenait au coeur, non-seulement comme ouvrage d'art, mais aussi comme expression des sentiments patriotiques et républicains qu'il ne voulait plus exprimer qu'avec son pinceau; et cependant quelques réflexions hasardées par le premier consul, l'envie de peindre le moderne Annibal traversant les Alpes, lui firent abandonner, au moins pour longtemps, *Léonidas* et ses compagnons...

Étienne se trouva dans l'atelier où David avait commencé le *Léonidas*, lorsque l'artiste, cédant aux observations du vainqueur de Marengo sur les illustres vaincus des Thermopyles, interrompit brusquement son travail commencé pour entreprendre le portrait du héros du jour.<sup>119</sup>

The hero of the day was not painted naked but in contemporary costume of a heroic nature. Indeed, for his own wear, David was also to adopt Napoleonic costume at this date, which was considered by Delécluze to be a return to the costume and dress of the Ancien Régime.<sup>120</sup> The artist's own cover-up had been achieved, but his principles were still not entirely those of the new régime.

By examining a series of preliminary compositional drawings for the painting, it is possible to identify some changes in the iconography of the work, that took place during the processes of its production. These changes support the observation that the artist disengaged from the events of the Revolution and the Jacobin associations of his own work over a period of time.

It has been noted that a drawing in New York (Plate 72) has been superimposed onto earlier outlines.<sup>121</sup> In the middle distance of the scene, some figures from the earlier underdrawing can still be seen: helmeted soldiers with swords salute upwards; a bearded man with arm raised appears to look up and to the side; behind a tree is garlanded with trophies. This call to arms is consonant with the call to arms

around a tree of liberty to be found in Loaisel de Tréogat's play. The drawing also has a figure of Hercules with club inserted just behind the shield of Leonidas. J. Bean and D. von Bothmer have traced the connection between Leonidas and the mythical hero back to the textual source of Herodotus.<sup>122</sup> In a fully worked up drawing in the Louvre (Plate 73) dated in David's own hand 1813, this figure which had once symbolised the French nation, was then turned into the priest Megistias who, as one devoted to the cult of Hercules with head covered by a shawl, has his arms flung up in prophecy. According to Herodotus, Megistias had been the first to prophecy the death of the Greeks at Thermopylae before the impending battle.<sup>123</sup> The cult of Hercules, not his personification as an allegory of the power and strength of the French nation, was now being commemorated. This is made explicit by the inscription on the altar and in the Explication du tableau des Thermopyles, which David published in 1814:

Plus loin, *un des chefs*, dévoué au culte d'Hercule, dont il porte les armes et le costume, s'empresse de ranger sa troupe en bataille; le grand-prêtre le suit, il invoque Hercule pour le succès de leurs armes; du doigt il montre le ciel.<sup>124</sup>

In the painting, the priest, pointing to the sky in the manner of the artist's earlier representation of Socrates, indicates to the spectator that this is a work about the outcome of an action yet to take place and that it presents, via the physical death of those about to fight in defence of their country, further levels of communication and commemoration. Similarly in the painting, a garlanded lyre on the tree has replaced the trophies of arms of the drawings.

The Explication further added that Leonidas had sent the soldier's luggage back to Sparta - it can be seen being led up and

away in the background of the painting - for these trappings were now useless to the soldiers as they were going to dine with Pluto.<sup>126</sup> Just as before dying Seneca made a sacrifice to Jupiter Liberator, so here too David has represented dedication at an altar before certain death.<sup>126</sup> In addition, Socrates' willed choice of the moment of his death has been translated into the soldiers' determination not to flee, but to fight to their deaths and, in the case of Leonidas, to accept the task with calmness.

The unfinished Serment du Jeu de Paume project provides further points of comparison and contrast with this painting. The fact that a subject taken from the history of Antiquity was eventually completed and that the event of French history was never brought to fruition indicates that the history of the classical past could be manipulated for changing subtleties of meaning more successfully than the history of the too recent past. Distance gave a universality that, carefully handled, could be both specific and neutral. In the painting of Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) and akin to the earlier representation of Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30), young Spartans rush to make a patriotic oath and dedicate their lives to the Nation as they clasp each other in a fraternal embrace. Leonidas is posed centrally, in front and frontally facing - he is modelled on a cameo figure for Ajax from Winckelmann's Monumenti antichi inediti.<sup>127</sup> Bailly in the completed drawing for the Serment du Jeu de Paume commission (Plate 54) also stands frontally and motionless, confronting the spectator with the open palm of one raised hand, whilst those around him rush to join in the communal, fraternal oath. Philippe Bordes has noted the influence of freemasonry in both works and for

the *Serment du Jeu de Paume* concludes that this influence is more a method of expression than a key to interpretation.<sup>120</sup> This could well be the case for the later history painting too. The relationship between these two works has, though, an intrinsic importance of its own. Leonidas' knowledge of certain, impending defeat in battle takes on additional meaning, when set against the earlier project where some of those depicted, including Bailly, were actually executed because of their political participation in the Revolution. In this, his last major history painting, David represented an oath, but it is significantly not made between hands but to an altar and with laurel wreaths.

David's *Explication* gave the translation of what the soldier was meant to be inscribing on the rock, in line with what Simonides had purportedly recorded and in line with the artist's earliest interpretation of the subject as noted by Delécluze. The lettering in the painting was changed at a late stage from the French of the drawing dated 1813 (Plate 73) to imitation Greek epigraphy which, as Elizabeth McGrath has kindly pointed out to me, hardly conforms at all to orthodox Greek lettering. Grégoire had recommended to the National Convention that inscriptions on public monuments should be in French, intelligible to all in perpetuity; twenty years later David's Greek lettering for his Greek subject did not conform to the requirement for authentic and accurate archaeological detail in history painting, but nor did it place the work in an immediately recognisable modern context. A version of the name Herodotus can be seen on the bottom of the altar pedestal (Plate 74). The textual source was acknowledged, but at the same time the written explanation of the painting ensured

that David's own version of the lost past was also a testament to the *gloire* that posterity could give. The painting is derived from an inscription and also commemorates an inscription in the present and for the future, but it is much more than an inscription. For by 1814, the cult of the hero had further connotations and a distinct topicality which, once again, could not be ignored by the artist, but about which he may well have had strong reservations.

Neither Les Sabines (Plate 57) nor Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) show the degree of invention in the choice of moment created by the artist for his history paintings of the 1780s. These paintings are, instead, crowded with figures and with anecdotal incident representing episodes which can easily be located and with some accuracy from within a range of pre-existing narrative accounts. They are linked as pendants in that they have for centre a woman and a man not in a domestic space, but in a public arena of mass participation. The woman's resolution commemorates a battle that has been stopped; the man's resolution a military defeat. The subjects of both paintings deal more with the implications and consequences of collective action in the public sphere than with the moral dilemma of particular individuals.

#### Concepts of *gloire* and the Napoleonic ideal

The sources of Herodotus and Xenophon for Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) have already been quite fully explored by Martin Kemp.<sup>129</sup> Two widely known and available eighteenth-century accounts of the event do, however, require some comment for they

provide us with insight into how the story was used to examine the problematic of *gloire* as a part of David's own culture but before the rise of Napoleon

For Rollin, the prophecy of defeat meant that the location became a tomb metaphor and a symbol of patriotic and willed self-sacrifice:

...Léonide, voyant qu'il étoit impossible de résister aux ennemis, obligea le reste des alliés de se retirer, et demeura avec ses trois cens Lacédémoniens, résolu de mourir tous à l'exemple de leur Chef, qui ayant appris de l'oracle, qu'il falloit que Lacédémone ou son Roi pérît, n'hésita pas à se sacrifier pour sa patrie. Ils étoient donc sans espérance de vaincre, ni de se sauver, ils regardoient les Thermopyles comme leur tombeau. Le Roi les ayant exhortés à prendre de la nourriture, en ajoutant qu'ils souperoient ensemble chez Pluton, ils jetterent tous des cris de joie, comme si on les eût invités à un festin.<sup>130</sup>

Some pages later, this historian felt it necessary to give an explanation of this heroism: the action of Leonidas was not a desperate act but one that was wise and generous. The small number of Greek forces compared to the vast numbers of Persians could never have gained a victory fighting one to one, yet the Greeks had nevertheless managed to gain and not lose by the defeat:

Qu'il étoit donc nécessaire d'ouvrir à la Grèce allarmée une autre voie de salut. Qu'il falloit montrer à tout l'univers attentif, ce que peut la grandeur d'ame contre la force du corps, le véritable courage contre une impétuosité aveugle, l'amour de la liberté contre une oppression tyrannique, une troupe aguerrie et disciplinée contre une multitude confuse.<sup>131</sup>

The defeat was further considered as positive because it deterred the Persians from making any more attacks on Greece.<sup>132</sup> The model of courage also convinced the Greeks that they could conquer the Persians and destroy their vast monarchy and this was, indeed, achieved by Alexander:

Il ne douta jamais, non plus que les Macédoniens qui le suivoient, ni que toute la Grèce qui l'avoit nommé son Chef pour cette expédition, qu'il ne pût avec trente mille hommes renverser

l'empire des Perses, après que trois cens Spartiates avoient suffi pour en arrêter toutes les forces réunies.<sup>133</sup>

This historian thus transformed the defeat into the cause of subsequent victories. In this context, military courage, heroism and *gloire* could be admired with impunity! By the early nineteenth-century such contexts had changed a great deal, but the Explication of 1814 did, nevertheless, end with an observation that was similar to Rollin's summation of the event's effectiveness:

Ce dévouement de Léonidas et de ses compagnons produisit plus d'effet que la victoire la plus brillante: il apprit aux Grecs le secret de leurs forces, aux Perses celui de leur faiblesse. Le nombre des Spartiates était de trois cents hommes; les Perses en comptaient plus de six cent mille.<sup>134</sup>

Two of David's drawings of Spartan warriors (Plates 75, 76) are annotated in the artist's own hand with extracts from the Abbé Barthélemy's Le Voyage du jeune Anarcharsis en Grèce, dans le milieu du quatrième siècle avant l'ère vulgaire, first published in 1788. One drawing (Plate 75) is an early study for the pose of Leonidas and has written details about military service in Sparta and the page number where these details are to be found.<sup>135</sup> The other drawing (Plate 76) is in an album that has studies for both Les Sabines (Plate 57) and Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70). The pose of this fleeing warrior is similar to the frozen stance of Tattius and also to the forward movement of the blind Eurytas in the later painting. It is clear that David consulted the volumes of Abbé Barthélemy's work closely and over a period of time. The Abbé's account, probably in its turn influenced by Rollin, further translated the defeat at Thermopylae into the model of a patriotic victory. By remaining calm, the Spartans had shown themselves to be superior in *gloire* to that of

the Thespiens, who had made a dash for bravery.<sup>136</sup> In David's painting, the marked contrast between the tense but calm resolution of Leonidas and the frenzied rush and preparations of those around him show that the glory of the Spartans was not to be commemorated in a simple, one dimensional way. Indeed, when the artist decided to complete the work, the problematic of *gloire* had again become dominant in both personal and wider, more public spheres. By 1811, he had become Premier Peintre in an Empire, founded on the military but which was also beginning to face military defeat.

Both David's twin daughters had married soldiers: in 1805 Emilie married Colonel Meunier of the Light Infantry and in 1806 Pauline married Lieutenant General Jeanin.<sup>137</sup> His eldest son Jules was a government administrator and was to be given a Prefecture by Napoléon during the 100 Days.<sup>138</sup> His younger son Eugene had entered the dragons in 1804 and, as a captain in the 2nd Regiment of Cuirassiers, was injured at the Battle of Leipzig; during the 100 Days he was also put in command of a squadron by Napoléon.<sup>139</sup> In 1808 David was made a hereditary Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur with the arms and livery:

D'or à la palette de peintre de sable, chargée de deux bras de carnation mouvant à dextre d'un manteau de gueule. La main dextre appaumée, et le senestre tenant trois sabres de fer poli, le tout soutenu d'un champagne de gueule au signe des chevaliers. Livrée bleu, jaune, rouge, blanc et noir.<sup>140</sup>

Thanks to Napoléon, David had finally achieved nobility of status in practice as well as in theory. How much the artist valued this status must remain, to a certain extent, open to question, but the fact of its receipt has to be placed within the context of Napoléon's own cult of *gloire*.



During the Empire, the actual condition of serving soldiers was miserable, dirty and cheap. Motivation for the increasingly professional army came from awards of merit for outstanding acts of physical bravery, of disregard of danger and of patriotic fervour. Losses in the field meant that advancement to officer status was often swift and no longer solely dependent on a dynastic lineage of nobility. Elites within the army such as the Imperial Guard, who always fought in full dress uniform, flourished. There was no corporal punishment; men were to be inspired to fight rather than driven to it.<sup>141</sup>

Some of the top officers were well paid, but material reward was only one factor in an often intense, short-lived life. General Count Charles Lasalle, who died at the age of 34, is reputed to have remarked:

...c'est déjà un plaisir assez grand que de faire la guerre; on est dans le bruit, dans la fumée, dans le mouvement; et puis quand on s'est fait un nom, eh bien! on a joui du plaisir de se le faire; quand on a fait sa fortune, on est sûr que sa femme, que ses enfants ne manqueront de rien: tout cela, c'est assez. Moi, je puis mourir demain.<sup>142</sup>

The press was, in addition, heavily censored. Military bulletins from the front supervised by the Emperor in person informed the citizens of Paris of the victories and feats of valour on the battlefield on a day-to-day basis.<sup>143</sup>

The honours of posterity were soon harnessed to act as spurs to motivation. On his return to Paris, after signing the Treaty of Tilsit in 1807, the Emperor requested from his architect, Pierre Percier, a report on the building works commissioned in the capital; the architect was careful to reply appropriately:

L'Empereur veut que sa capitale, devenue la première capitale de l'univers, réponde par son aspect à une si glorieuse destination.

A l'une des extrémités de Paris, déclare le ministre de l'Intérieur, un pont est achevé, le pont d'Austerlitz; à l'autre, un pont est commencé: il sera le pont d'Iéna, noms à jamais célèbres dans les annales.

Des fontaines ont été construites; les anciennes ont reçu plus d'eau.

Le Louvre avance avec rapidité.

La colonne de la Grande Armée s'élève au milieu de la place Vendôme; le monument de Desaix, au milieu de celle des Victoires; la statue de Hautpoul ornera la place des Vosges.

Le palais dans lequel vous résidez, s'orne, d'après vos vœux d'un péristyle, dont la majesté annonce le sanctuaire des Lois.

Vis-à-vis du Temple des Lois, sera le Temple de la Victoire.

Deux arcs de triomphe sont érigés ou fondés, l'un, près de ce palais habité par le génie de la Victoire; l'autre, à la plus belle avenue de la plus belle ville du monde. Il annonce de loin à l'étranger que cette ville est la patrie des héros; il rappellera à la postérité l'époque des plus mémorables faits d'armes qu'offrent nos annales et les annales d'aucun empire.

Les travaux du Panthéon s'avancent; ceux de Saint-Denis sont à peu près terminés.<sup>144</sup>

Many of these projects were never completed, but the cult of the hero was clearly now a public, military cult of grandeur, magnificence, victory and conquest.

The major painting commissions David received from Napoléon for vast canvasses of Imperial ceremonies are a part of such official patronage. Indeed, the painting of Le Serment de l'Armée fait à l'Empereur après la Distribution des Aigles au Champ-de-Mars le 5 décembre 1804 (Plate 77) is a work testifying to the loyalty of the military. In the manner of Roman armies, much value was placed on the eagle standards, even though they were materially worth very little. From 1808 a Porte Aigle ranked as an ensign in the establishment of an infantry regiment; on the retreat from Moscow orders were issued to break the eagles and bury them.<sup>145</sup> In this painting, soldiers have also been represented taking a fraternal oath of loyalty. Antoine

Schnapper, amongst others, have noted obvious formal affinities with Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70).<sup>146</sup> Yet between the Salon of 1810, where La Distribution des Aigles (Plate 77) was first exhibited, and the exhibition of Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) in 1814, much change had occurred: the fortunes of the military had been reversed.

The student Suau informed his father on 23rd April 1811 that David had started work on his history painting again. In another letter of 28th June 1812, Suau stated that the artist had abandoned this work again, but then on 28th July of that year he reported that there was further progress on the canvas.<sup>147</sup> Just when Napoléon's military campaigns had begun to go seriously wrong, the painting suddenly assumed a new importance for the artist. In the spring of 1812, 614,000 men including reserves and rearguard troops were called up for the invasion of Russia. On 24th June 1812, without a formal declaration of war, the Grande Armée crossed the Niemen with 449,000 men. On 19th October only 100,000 men from that crossing remained to start the retreat back from Moscow; in December about 60,000 straggled into Poland and East Prussia. In the winter of 1813-14 a further 963,000 conscripts were called up, but many did not come forward. Half a million men were involved in the Battle of Leipzig on 13th-16th October 1813 and some 140,000 reported killed, wounded or missing (including, as has been mentioned already, David's younger son).<sup>148</sup> At the end of March 1814, the allies were in Paris.

Delécluze, once again, noted David's own apprehensions about the military and political situation during the completion of the painting:

Pendant que David achevait cet ouvrage (1812-13), les événements politiques commençaient à faire naître de vives inquiétudes dans tous les esprits. Quoique habituellement très-réservé sur ces matières, il en parlait franchement lorsque l'occasion s'en présentait et qu'il pouvait s'exprimer en toute confiance. Sans que son attachement et sa reconnaissance pour Napoléon fussent le moins du monde altérés, il trouvait cependant que son héros avait l'humeur un peu trop guerrière, et que le chef de la nouvelle dynastie était au moins aussi absolu dans ses volontés que ceux de l'ancienne. Parfois même, lorsqu'il reportait ses souvenirs aux années d'espérances de 1789, il lui arrivait de dire en soupirant: 'Ah! Ah! ce n'est pas là ce que l'on désirait précisément.'<sup>49</sup>

According to this writer, David had reservations about the Emperor's bellicosity.<sup>150</sup> The report of the artist's reservations is also significant for an understanding of Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70) and the processes of its pictorial modifications.

The figure of the blind Eurytas, in particular, evolves from a weak, enfeebled old man requiring support, into a zealous, blind warrior hero, indicating a desire for *gloire* that is impassioned and unreasoned. In one of the earliest studies for the work (Montpellier, Musée Fabre), it is not possible to identify this figure. A sketchbook in the Louvre contains a squared-up compositional drawing (Plate 78) with the motif of a soldier with face upturned and raised sword, who is being supported by a companion. The notebook has many studies of separate groups and individual figures. One group (Plate 79) shows the blind Eurytas groping forward, his arms supported by a young companion with open mouth as if expressing horror. Some pages later, the figure of Eurytas (Plate 80) appears to be much closer to the conception of the role he is to assume in the final painting: with the torso and élan of the warrior hero, he has no shield for protection but holds a stick in one hand not as a support, but as a potential weapon. Another drawing (Plate 81) was annotated by David:

"le père aveugle avec ses deux fils qui veulent mourir à ses côtés." Here the old soldier requires the full support of both his sons just to be able to stand up and there is a striking contrast between the youthful heroism of the sons and the aged infirmity of their father; it is a frontal, frankly emotional appeal that is not a part of the final work. Further studies for the figure are on some sheets from a dismembered notebook in Lyons. One double page from this same notebook (Plate 82) has a drawing showing the departure of Hector. This is likely to have been for a decorative project in the Louvre, the artist was working on in 1812.<sup>151</sup> The same sheet also has the figure of Eurytas, now quite fully evolved in terms of conceptual implication: the naked warrior stands ready to fight: a spear, not a stick, is held high in one hand. The figure is being guided from behind, but his front foot is planted firmly on a small mound. The drawing also develops the form and position of the warrior's cloak.

Three decades earlier, David's *morceau de réception* (Plate 9) for the Académie had dealt with the tragedy of the death of Hector in terms of the sadness of the hero's wife, Andromache and the troubled incomprehension of the hero's son, Astyanax. A fully worked-up compositional drawing (Plate 83) for the earlier episode of the departure of Hector in connection with the artist's work for the Louvre in 1812 again explores the theme of family loss because of the conflicting duties of the warrior hero. In this drawing, Hector is shown standing frontally in a pose that is not dissimilar to the one given to Leonidas, although Hector's face is in profile as he looks towards his grieving wife. He is being helped on with his armour by a phrygian bonneted youth, whose face is hidden.

A fine drawing of the head of Eurytas (Plate 84) was exhibited at the 1989 David exhibition for the first time;<sup>152</sup> here the eyes of Eurytas are still bound. In the painting (Plate 70), the soldier's blindness is denoted mainly by the profile of one closed eye, by its juxtaposition against the upwardly turned eye of the man who supports him from behind and also by a forward foot which grips over the edge of a stone support. The toes of this foot have been deliberately elongated with muscles that bulge. The blind rush forward has been abruptly terminated. One of the hands of Eurytas no longer holds a shield but is held open, palm outwards, in a gesture that can be interpreted as a welcoming, wanting to join, but also as a denial of the need for self-preservation. The form of this hand echoes, in an inverted way, the isolated, splayed out palm of the wife of Brutus for the spectator knows that this warrior's death is impending, patriotic and willed. Around this hand are juxtaposed flower wreaths being dedicated at the altar, other Spartans awaiting the enemy and the enemy camp in the distance.

There are many more studies for the figure of Eurytas, who clearly had important meaning for David, just as the themes of blindness, sight and insight have profound significance in all of the artist's history paintings. The pictorial evolution of the figure of Eurytas can, however, no longer be located within the discourses of the Enlightenment and the insight endowed to the spectator by, say, the blind Belisarius and the reading of a French inscription in that painting (Plate 23). The blindness of the self-sacrifice of Eurytas contrasts in a negative way with the central, knowing calmness of Leonidas. David placed his signature and the date 1814 just by the

ankle of Leonidas and above a scroll with imitation Greek letters, identifying the farewell of the king (Plate 85). Here, these details have to be deciphered as well as interpreted. Les Sabines (Plate 57) contains many motifs derived from the sanctioned works of other artists. Its pendant contains an astonishing amount of figurative references to David's own past oeuvre. They may well indicate that the work was to have a special resonance for posterity, in the form of quite a personal, pictorial testament, to the painter's work as a painter of history. According to Delécluze, David died in the midst of correcting a proof for a print of the painting:

'Trop noir...Trop clair...La dégradation de la lumière n'est pas assez bien exprimée...Cet endroit *papillote*...Cependant...c'est bien là une tête de Léonidas...' dit-il, ne pouvant presque plus se faire entendre. Bientôt sa voix s'éteignit entièrement, la canne tomba de sa main et il rendit le dernier soupir.<sup>153</sup>

Earlier in the book, Delécluze had reported Napoléon's visit to David's studio to see the painting during the 100 Days. Once again, Napoléon was disconcerted at not being able to see a battle, but the moment before battle, although according to the writer he left with the words:

...'Continuez, David, à illustrer la France par vos travaux. J'espère que des copies de ce tableau ne tarderont pas à être placées dans les écoles militaires; elles rappelleront aux jeunes élèves les vertus de leur état.'<sup>154</sup>

The Countess Lenoir-Laroche, in a quickly published brochure of 1815 which was to have been part of a larger work, praised the painting for its feelings of religion, patriotism, family and friendship; the brochure ended with the words:

...les guerriers devant ce tableau viendront apprendre à mourir pour la patrie et la loi.  
Et les législateurs à faire des lois pour que les guerriers veuillent mourir.<sup>155</sup>

Such comment has to be located from within the context of the 100 Days. Whether this is precisely what David had intended the painting to convey either then or for future generations has to remain open to question, although I have shown that the artist's own particular awareness and remarkable preoccupation with history make the communication of such a message highly unlikely at this date.

### Conclusion

I have shown how important a skilled handling of invention and a careful choice of subject matter were for David. The successful manipulation of idea has helped to establish for posterity the artist's own *gloire* as a history painter of greatness and stature. There can be no doubt that this is what the artist intended. His paintings do not, however, present antique virtue as simple example and didactic message. The works are highly sophisticated and carefully mediated constructions which offer the viewer interpretations that are not dogmatic, but open-ended.

The painter took with him into exile a work that remained unfinished: Apelle peignant Campaspe devant Alexandre (Plate 86). Once again, he was working on a well-known subject, frequently treated by earlier history painters.<sup>156</sup> The story, of how an Emperor gave his favourite, beautiful mistress to his court painter, originated in Pliny.<sup>157</sup> It was popular because it is a tribute to both the generosity of the patron and to the skill of the painter. It also elevated the status of court painter to that of courtier. The panel presents an almost naked Alexander, whose torso, stance, helmet and



facial profile are remarkably similar to the blind Eurytas. The work was to remain, incomplete, in the artist's studio. In Rollin's account of the Leonidas story, the chivalrous victories of Alexander succeeded the defeat of the 300 Spartans. In early nineteenth-century France, however, the different chivalric values of the Troubadour genre were to replace the *gloire* of Imperial splendour.<sup>158</sup> The glory did not exactly end in vainglory, but in defeat. Géricault's Cuirassier blessé quittant le feu (Paris, Louvre) was exhibited at the Salon of 1814;<sup>159</sup> yet another changed vision was heralded by this alternative.

A verse tribute sent to David on 9th December 1819 by Delavault associated the artist not with a politician, nor with the *peintre philosophe* Poussin, but with Leonidas, Rubens, Voltaire and Rousseau. Anti-monarchic, the lines presage subsequent honour from future generations for the artist after a period of scorn and hatred:

Tes immortels pinceaux, à la postérité  
Transmettront d'âge en âge et ton nom et ta gloire.  
Mourant pour sa patrie et pour la liberté,  
Avec Léonidas, tu vivras dans l'Histoire.  
Du Tigre couronné qui déchire la France,  
De ses lâches valets, de ses vils courtisans,  
Brave dans ton exil la rage et la vengeance,  
Les Français tôt ou tard chasseront leurs tyrans.  
Malgré vos parchemins flatteurs de toute espèce,  
La haine et le mépris vous suivront au tombeau,  
Tandis que nos neveux honoreront sans cesse  
Et Rubens et David et Voltaire et Rousseau.<sup>160</sup>

That such a tribute should appear six years before the artist died is indicative of both the veneration and the opprobrium in which he had lived. From painter for the aristocracy, to radical politician, to imprisoned artist, to Imperial courtier, David survived successive reversals of fortune in a public life at a time of particular conflict

and confrontation. His history paintings have also survived the vagaries of taste over two centuries to ensure the painter's own, personal *gloire* in the annals of history and of posterity. The potential for open-ended interpretation these works offer continue to leaves room for ample debate, something which the artist, in his awareness of the fact that painting outlives the context of its production, had deliberately sought.

In the Voyage du Jeune Anarcharsis en Grèce, the Abbé Berthelemy included a discussion on history. After Theopompus and Ephorus have talked about their work, Euclid responded:

'Un historien ordinaire, me répondit-on, se contente d'exposer les faits; un historien philosophe remonte à leurs causes. Pour moi, je hais le crime, et je veux connoître le coupable, pour l'accabler de ma haine. Mais il faut du moins, lui dis-je, qu'il soit convaincu. Il est coupable, répondit mon adversaire, s'il avoit intérêt de l'être. Qu'on me donne un ambitieux, je dois reconnoître dans toutes ses démarches, non ce qu'il a fait, mais ce qu'il a voulu faire, et je saurai gré à l'historien de me révéler les odieux mystères de cette passion. Comment, lui dis-je! de simples présomptions qu'on ne risque devant les juges, que pour étayer des preuves plus fortes et qu'en les exposant à la contradiction, suffiront dans l'histoire pour imprimer, sur la mémoire d'un homme un opprobre éternel!''<sup>16</sup>

A philosophical history was presented here as an ethical study to do with human morality and motive. With no factual basis, such a study could, however, unjustly cast eternal opprobrium onto the memory of an individual. The fact of David's paintings, which still exist for us to look at today, preclude the possibility of such a judgement from being made about this artist. The Abbé's discussion on history ended:

L'histoire est un théâtre où la politique et la morale sont mises en action; les jeunes gens y reçoivent ces premières impressions, qui décident quelquefois de leur destinée; il faut donc qu'on leur présente de beaux modèles à suivre, et qu'on ne leur inspire que de l'horreur pour le faux héroïsme. Les souverains et les nations peuvent y puiser des leçons importantes; il faut donc que l'historien soit impassible comme la justice dont il doit soutenir les droits, et sincère comme la

vérité dont il prétend être l'organe. Ses fonctions sont si augustes, qu'elles devroient être exercées par des hommes d'une probité reconnue, et sous les yeux d'un tribunal aussi sévère que celui de l'Aréopage. En un mot, dit Euclide en finissant, l'utilité de l'histoire, n'est affoiblie que par ceux qui ne savent pas l'écrire, et n'est méconnue que de ceux qui ne savent pas la lire.<sup>162</sup>

The high calling of the historian to be a man of virtue must be set within the context of late eighteenth-century France. History does, however, still require careful judgement: its truth is not self-evident, but has to be claimed for the reader by the mediation and intervention of a particular individual or individuals. The recognition of such specific intervention has to be acknowledged. This thesis has shown that the utility of history painting, too, is weakened only by those who do not know how to produce it and misconstrued only by those who do not know how to look at it.

# FOOTNOTES

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 P. Pédech, Trois Historiens Méconnus (Paris, 1989), p. 264. I would like to thank Helen Weston for directing me to the tragic history of Duris.
- 2 Pédech, Ibid., p. 368. I am grateful to John North for this rough translation from the Greek of Duris: "Ephorus and Theopompus failed to a great extent to describe reality, for they neither achieved mimesis nor pleasure in the expression, but only took care about the writing itself."
- 3 Pédech, Ibid., pp. 372-382.
- 4 F. Walbank, Polybius (Los Angeles and London, 1972), pp. 34-38.
- 5 Walbank, Ibid., p. 28.
- 6 Pédech, Trois Historiens Méconnus, p. 377
- 7 C. Macleod, "Thucydides and Tragedy", The Collected Essays (Oxford, 1983), pp. 140-158.
- 8 Ibid.,
- 9 "Histoire", Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers (Neufchastel, 1763), VIII, p. 220.
- 10 Conférences de l'Académie Royale de peinture et de sculpture pendant l'année 1667 (Paris, 1769; facsimile William Clowes & Sons Ltd., 1972), preface:  
 ..il faut traiter l'histoire et la fable; il faut représenter de grandes actions comme les Poètes; Et montant encore plus haut, il faut par des compositions allegoriques, sçavoir couvrir sous la voile de la fable les vertus des grands hommes, et les mysteres les plus relevez.

11 R. de Piles, Cours de Peinture par principes (Paris, 1708), pp.

53-54:

Les Peintres se servent avec raison du mot d'Histoire, pour signifier le genre de Peinture le plus considerable, et qui consiste à mettre plusieurs figures ensemble; et l'on dit: Ce Peintre fait l'Histoire, cet autre fait des Animaux, celui-cy du Païsage; celui-là des Fleurs, et ainsi du reste. Mais il y a de la difference entre la division des genres de Peinture et la division de l'Invention. Je me sers icy du mot d'Histoire dans un sens plus étendu: j'y comprends tout ce qui peut fixer l'idée du Peintre, ou instruire le Spectateur, et je dis que l'Invention simplement Historique est un choix d'objets, qui simplement par eux-mêmes representent le sujet.

12 M-F. Dandré Bardon, Histoire universelle, traitée relativement aux arts de peindre et de sculpter ou tableaux de l'histoire (Paris,

1769), I, pp. 75-76:

HISTOIRE: objet de la Peinture le plus noble et le plus difficile à traiter. Elle exige beaucoup de génie, un esprit éclairé, un jugement solide et délicat. Le grand caractere de Dessein, les belles formes d'Antique, l'intelligence des expressions, la science du Costume; ces connoissances ajoutées à celles qui sont particulières aux autres genres de l'Art, et pour le dire en un mot, toutes les merveilles de la Nature sont les objets d'étude, dont un Peintre d'Histoire doit s'occuper.

13 C. Watelet et P. Lévêque, Dictionnaire des arts de peinture, sculpture et gravure (Paris, 1792), III, p. 23.

14 M. F. Boyer, "Napoléon et l'Attribution des Grands Prix décennaux", Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire d'Art Français, 1947-48, pp. 66-72. In this article an extract from Archives Nationales AF.iv 1050, Montalivet's letter to Napoleon of 17th November 1810, is cited:

Le tableau dit du *Déluge* est sans doute très beau; mais ne pourrait-on lui contester sa dénomination de tableau d'histoire? Il ne présente qu'un épisode de pure invention dont la pensée et l'exécution, malgré de grandes beautés, ne sont pas à l'abri de bien des critiques. Le tableau des *Sabines* est vraiment un tableau d'histoire; on lui reproche trop peu de mouvement dans les figures, le nu des héros, leur pose académique, mais personne n'a dit que ce ne soit une belle composition, que le dessein et la couleur ne

soient admirables. C'est un des ouvrages capitaux du chef de notre école.

- 15 For this theory, see R. W. Lee, Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting (New York, 1967).
- 16 R. Wittkower, Allegory and the Migration of Symbols (London, 1977)), p. 174.
- 17 See for instance G. Vigne, "De La Vertu avant toute chose...", La Révolution Française à l'école de la Vertu antique (Montauban, 1989), pp. 15-26. Also R. Rosenblum, Transformations in Late-Eighteenth Century Art (Princeton, 1967), pp. 50-107.
- 18 R. W. Ladborough, "Translation from the Ancients in 17th Century France", Journal of the Warburg Institute (London, 1938-39), II, pp. 85-104.
- 19 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia (Paris, an IV; translated by R. Binet).
- 20 At the David contre David Colloque (Paris, 1989; proceedings to be published), Philippe Bordes pointed out that little attention had so far been paid to the study of the evolution of David's work as revealed by the processes of his drawings; this provides further justification for the approach of this thesis.
- 21 See for instance R. Verdi, "'Poussin's Critical Fortunes' The Study of the artist and the criticism of his works from c.1690 to c.1830 with particular reference to France and England", (Unpublished Ph.d Thesis, University of London, 1976), p. 4. Richard Verdi stated here that his thesis does not attempt to deal with the question of the influence of Poussin's art on later generations, but that his work could be a useful preliminary to such a separate study.

- 22 J. Locquin, La Peinture d'Histoire en France de 1747 à 1785 (Paris, 1912).
- 23 L. D. Ettlinger, "Jacques-Louis David and Roman Virtue", Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, CXV, 1967, pp. 105-123.  
     H. Honour, Neo-classicism (Harmondsworth, 1968)  
     A. Brookner, Jacques-Louis David (London, 1980).
- 24 T. Crow, Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris (New Haven and London, 1985), ch. VI and VII.
- 25 P. Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David. Le peintre, le milieu et son temps, de 1789 à 1792 (Paris, 1983).
- 26 W. Roberts, Jacques-Louis David: Revolutionary Artist (The University of North Carolina and London, 1989).
- 27 J. M. Wilson, The Painting of the Passions in Theory, Practice and Criticism in later Eighteenth-Century France (Garland Publishing Inc., 1981).
- 28 N. Bryson, Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime (Cambridge, 1981, reprinted 1987).
- 29 J. Montagu, "Le Brun's 'Conférence Sur L'Expression Générale et Particulière'", (Unpublished Ph.d Thesis, University of London, 1959).

#### HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER

- 1 T. Livius, Ab Urbe Condita, I, 26, (Paris, 1770; translated by F. Guérin), p. 4.
- 2 R. M. Ogilvie, A Commentary on Livy (Oxford, 1965), p. 18.
- 3 Ibid., p. 20.

- 4 A. J. Woodman, Rhetoric in Classical Historiography (Portland, Orgeon, 1988).
- 5 Quintilianus, Institutio Oratoria, X, 1, 31, (Paris, 1752; translated by L'Abbé Gedoyn), IV, p. 17.
- 6 Ibid., (edition Paris, 1752), IV, p. 15.
- 7 C. Rollin, Histoire Romaine depuis la Fondation de Rome jusqu'à la Bataille d'Actium (Paris, 1738; edition of 1752), p. lxxxvij.
- 8 Ibid., p. xcj.
- 9 C. Rollin, De la Maniere d'Enseigner et d'Etudier les Belles-Lettres (Paris, 1726-1728; edition of 1755), II, p. 168.
- 10 F-M. Arouet de Voltaire, "Nouvelles Considérations Sur L'Histoire", Mérope (Paris, 1744; in edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1877-1879), XVI, pp. 134-141.
- 11 Le Mercure de France, 1783, January, pp. 16-26.
- 12 Ibid., p. 18
- 13 G. Bonnot de Mably, De la maniere d'ecrire l'histoire (Paris, 1784), p. 42.
- 14 Ibid., pp. 138-139.
- 15 Ibid., pp. 263-266.
- 16 Ibid., p. 271.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 274-275.
- 18 Ibid., p. 171.
- 19 Ibid., pp. 183-184.
- 20 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Antiquitates Romanae, Preface II, X, (Paris, 1723; translated by C. Bellanger), pp. 2-11.
- 21 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Alexander, (Paris, 1694-1721; edition of 1762; translated by A. Dacier), X, p. 1.



22 Ibid., p. 1.

23 Ibid., I, p. 11j.

24 Rollin, De la Maniere d'Enseigner et d'Etudier les Belles-

Lettres, I, p. xlj:

...C'est-là le fruit que l'on doit principalement tirer de la lecture des Auteurs. Elle nous met, pour ainsi dire, en liaison avec tout ce que l'antiquité a eu de plus grands hommes. Nous conversons, nous voyageons, nous vivons avec eux. Nous entendons leurs discours: nous sommes témoins de leurs actions. Nous entrons insensiblement dans leurs sentimens et dans leurs maximes. Nous prenons d'eux cette noblesse, cette grandeur d'ame, ce désintéressement, cette haine de l'injustice, cet amour du bien public, qui éclatent de toutes parts dans leur vie.

25 Ibid., III, pp. 186-187.

26 J-J. Rousseau, Emile ou de l'Education (The Hague, 1762; edition

of Oeuvres Complètes, Dijon, 1961-1969) IV, pp. 241-868, IV, p. 530:

Ajoutez à toutes ces réflexions que l'histoire montre bien plus les actions que les hommes, parce qu'elle ne saisit ceux-ci que dans certains moments choisis, dans leurs vêtements de parade; elle n'expose que l'homme public qui s'est arrangé pour être vu: elle ne le suit point dans sa maison, dans son cabinet, dans sa famille, au milieu de ses amis; elle ne le peint que quand il représente: c'est bien plus son habit que sa personne qu'elle peint.

J'aimerais mieux la lecture des vies particulières pour commencer l'étude du coeur humain; car alors l'homme a beau se dérober, l'historien le poursuit partout; il ne lui laisse aucun moment de relâche, aucun recoin pour éviter l'oeil perçant du spectateur; et c'est quand l'un croit mieux se cacher, que l'autre le fait le mieux connaître. Ceux, dit Montaigne, qui écrivent les vies, d'autant qu'ils s'amusent plus aux conseils qu'aux événements, plus à ce qui part du dedans qu'à ce qui arrive au dehors, ceux-là me sont plus propres: voilà pourquoi, en toutes sortes, c'est mon homme que Plutarque.

27 Ibid., IV, p. 531:

Plutarque excelle par ces mêmes détails dans lesquels nous n'osons plus entrer. Il a une grâce inimitable à peindre les grands hommes dans les petites choses; et il est si heureux dans le choix de ses traits, que souvent un mot, un sourire, un geste lui suffit pour caractériser son héros...Alexandre avale une médecine et ne dit pas un seul mot: c'est le plus beau moment de sa vie; Aristide écrit son propre nom sur une coquille, et justifie ainsi son surnom; Philopoemen, le manteau bas, coupe du bois dans la cuisine de son hôte. Voilà le véritable art de peindre. La

physionomie ne se montre pas dans les grandes actions; c'est dans les bagatelles que le naturel se découvre. Les choses publiques sont ou trop communes ou trop apprêtées, et c'est presque uniquement à celles-ci que la dignité moderne permet à nos auteurs de s'arrêter.

28 *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 526-531.

29 *Ibid.*, IV, p. 527.

30 J.-J. Rousseau, Discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes (Amsterdam, 1755; edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Dijon, 1961-1969), III, pp. 111-223).

31 J.-J. Rousseau, Du Contrat Social (Amsterdam, 1762; edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Dijon, 1961-1969), III, pp. 349-472.

32 *Ibid.*, (edition Dijon, 1961-1969), III, Book II, 7, pp. 380-384.

33 D. and G. Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires au catalogue de l'oeuvre de Louis David (Paris, 1973), No. 1368, pp. 155-158.

34 F.-M. Arouet de Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV (Paris, 1752; edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1878-1879), XIV, pp. 155-156.

35 *Ibid.*, (edition Paris, 1878-1879), p. 147.

36 C. Sallustius Crispus, Bellum Catilinae (Paris, 1769; translated by J. H. Dotteville), I, p. 5.

...Il me paroît donc selon l'ordre, de tâcher de nous illustrer par les qualités de l'esprit, plutôt que par celles du corps, et de nous procurer la renommée la plus durable dans la Postérité, parce que la vie dont nous jouissons est courte, et que la gloire qui vient des richesses, et de la beauté est fragile et périssable, au lieu que celle de la Vertu est éclatante et immortelle.

37 C. Sallustius Crispus, Bellum Jugurthinum (Paris, 1769;

translated by J. H. Dotteville), I, p. 135:

...Fabius, Scipion et d'autres grands hommes de cette Ville, disoient qu'ils se sentoient enflammés d'une nouvelle ardeur pour la Vertu, toutes les fois qu'ils regardoient les portraits de leurs Ancêtres. Or, la représentation de ces Héros n'avoit aucune force par elle-même; mais elle rappelloit le souvenir de leurs belles actions. Elle allumoit, par-là, dans ces coeurs généreux, une soif pour la

gloire, qui ne faisoit que s'accroître, jusqu'à ce qu'ils les eussent égalés.

- 38 M. T. Cicero, De Officiis (Paris, 1768; translated by M. de Barrett).
- 39 Ibid., XIX, 62, (edition Paris 1768), I, p. 76: "Mais ce courage, qui se montre dans les périls et dans les travaux, est un vice, si la justice ne l'accompagne, si l'intérêt particulier, et non le salut de la patrie, est le motif qui le fait agir."
- 40 Ibid., XII, 43, (edition Paris 1768), II, p. 238.
- 41 Ibid., XIX, 65, (edition Paris 1768), I, p. 78.
- 42 Rollin, De la Maniere d'Enseigner et d'Etudier les Belles-Lettres, III, p. 89.
- 43 Ibid., III, pp. 83-84.
- 44 Ibid., III, pp. 120-121.
- 45 Rollin, Histoire Romaine, p. xxxvij.
- 46 Ibid., p. lvj. See Plate 36 which shows the crowning of the bust of Voltaire with laurel wreaths after a performance of his play Irène at the Comédie Française in 1778. See also the chapter DAVID AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION for a discussion of the Léonidas aux Thermopyles (Plate 70), where Spartan soldiers are depicted using laurel wreaths to make a dedication to fight to the death in the defense of their country.
- 47 C. L. de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, "Dialogue de Sylla et d'Eucrate", Mercure de France, 1745, February, pp. 61-72.
- 48 Ibid.,
- 49 "Gloire", Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné, VII, pp. 716-721.

- 50 Ibid.,
- 51 "Discours Préliminaire", Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné, I, p. xj.
- 52 "Vertu", Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné, XVII, pp. 176-182.
- 53 Ibid.,
- 54 "Gloire", Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné, VII, pp. 716-721.
- 55 Rousseau, Du Contrat Social, Book II, 7, pp. 380-384.
- 56 J.-J. Rousseau, Discours sur les sciences et les arts (Paris, 1750; edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Dijon, 1961-1969), III, pp. 1-30.
- 57 Crow, Painters and Public Life, p. 200, noted the importance of the Lally-Tollandal affair for the proliferation of paintings on the themes of Belisarius and Socrates in the 1770s and 1780s. The chapter TRAINING IN HIGH ART, using extracts from academic eulogies, will show that the type of military hero being promoted had changed.
- 58 Locquin, La Peinture d'Histoire en France.
- 59 La Font de Saint-Yenne, Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France (La Haye, 1747), p. 21
- 60 La Font de Saint-Yenne, Sentimens sur quelques ouvrages de peinture, sculpture et gravure écrits à un particulier en province (n.p., 1754), p. 8.
- 61 La Font de Saint-Yenne, Lettre de l'auteur des Réflexions sur la peinture (n.p., n.d.,) p. 17.
- 62 L'abbé Leblanc, Lettre sur l'exposition des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, etc., de l'année 1747, et en général sur l'utilité de ces sortes d'expositions. À monsieur R.D.R... (n.p., 1747), p. 30.

- 63 A McClellan, "D'Angivillier's 'Great Men' of France and the Politics of the Parlements", Art History XIII, 1990, 2, pp. 175-192.
- 64 F-M. Arouet de Voltaire, "Sur la considération qu'on doit aux gens de Lettres", Lettres Philosophiques (Amsterdam, 1734; edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1877-1879), XXII, pp. 179-182.
- 65 Mercur de France, 1765, January, pp. 17-20.
- 66 M-A. Laugier, Observations sur l'Architecture (The Hague, 1765) pp. 226-250.
- 67 Archives de l'Art Français, I, 1951-1952, pp. 141-148. The project was announced in Anthologie romaine, IX, iv, 1782, July and in Journal de Paris, 1782, September, 10.
- 68 See P. Ariès, Le Temps de l'Histoire (Monaco, 1954; edition of 1986), pp. 160-172.
- 69 C Perrault, Les Hommes Illustres (Paris, 1696-1700), II, Avertissement.
- 70 J. Du Castre d'Auvigny, Les Vies des Hommes Illustres, (Paris, 1739-1768), I, pp. iv-v.
- 71 C. I. Castel de Saint Pierre, "Discours sur les differences du Grand Homme et de l'Homme Illustre", Histoire d'Epaminondas pour servir de suite aux Hommes Illustres de Plutarque (Paris, 1739), pp. xxv-lxviiij.
- 72 H. Lacombe de Prezel, Dictionnaire des portraits historiques, anecdotes et traits remarquables des Hommes Illustres (Paris, 1773), I, pp. 30-31.
- 73 Ibid., III, pp. 371-411.
- 74 Ibid., I, p. 11j.

- 75 F-M. Arouet de Voltaire, "Eloge funèbre des Officiers qui sont morts dans la Guerre de 1741", La Tragédie de Sémiramis, et quelques autres pièces de littérature (1749; edition of Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1877-1879), XXII, pp. 249-262.
- 76 A-L. Thomas, Oeuvres, (Paris, 1773), III, pp. 1-58.
- 77 Ibid., I, pp. 1-307.
- 78 Ibid., I, p. 7.
- 79 Ibid., I, p. 12.
- 80 Ibid., I, p. 288.
- 81 Ibid., I, pp. 296-298:  
 Le peintre, avant de manier le crayon, conçoit ses figures, étudie leurs attitudes. Méditez donc sur l'âme et le génie de celui que vous voulez louer; saisissez les idées qui lui sont propres; trouvez la chaîne qui lie ensemble ou ses actions ou ses pensées; distinguez le point d'où il est parti, et celui où il est arrivé; voyez ce qu'il a reçu de son siècle, et ce qu'il y a ajouté; marquez ou les obstacles ou les causes de ses progrès, et devinez l'éducation de son génie... Cette connoissance, cette méditation profonde, vous donnera le plan et le dessein de votre ouvrage; alors il en est temps, prenez la plume. Faites agir ou penser les grands hommes; vous verrez naître vos idées en foule... Croit-on, en effet, que dans toutes les beautés, ou de la nature ou de l'art, ce soit l'idée d'un seul et même objet, ou une sensation simple qui nous attache? Nos plaisirs, comme nos peines, sont composés; l'idée principale en attire à elle une foule d'autres qui s'y mêlent, et en augmentent l'impression. Celui qui, sans s'écarter, et en remplissant toujours son but, saura donc le plus semer d'idées accessoires sur sa route, sera celui qui attachera l'esprit plus fortement: c'est là le secret de l'orateur, du poète, du statuaire et du peintre. Consultez les hommes du génie en tout genre, voyez les grandes compositions dans les arts.
- 82 Ibid., I, p. 300.
- 83 Verdi, "'Poussin's Critical Fortunes'".
- 84 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture 1648-1793 (Paris, 1875-1892; edited by A. de Montaiglon), IX, p. 172.

- 85 See F. Dowley, "D'Angiviller's *Grands Hommes* and the Significant Moment", Art Bulletin, XXXIX, 1957, pp. 259-278.
- 86 J. J. Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1798", Collection des livrets des anciennes expositions depuis 1673 jusqu'en 1800 (Paris, 1869-1871), IV, XIII, No. 228, pp. 45-46.
- 87 C. Cambry, Essai sur la Vie et Sur les Tableaux du Poussin (Paris, 1783; edition of Paris, 1799), p. 15.
- 88 Verdi, "'Poussin's Critical Fortunes'", pp. 101-103.
- 89 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires au catalogue de l'oeuvre de Louis David (Paris, 1973), No. 155, pp. 20-21.
- 90 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, pp. 137-147.
- 91 Ibid., p. 144.
- 92 Ibid., pp. 139-140.
- 93 David, Le peintre Louis David, pp. 91-92.
- 94 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, p. 146.
- 95 Ibid., p. 145.
- 96 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 677, p. 72 from Procès Verbaux du Comité d'Instruction Publique de la Convention Nationale (Paris, 1891-1907), 11, pp. 830-832.
- 97 Cited in Ibid., No. 783, p. 83 from Procès-verbal de la Convention Nationale imprimé par son ordre, XXIX, p. 278.
- 98 Ibid., No. 783, p. 83.
- 99 Cited in Ibid., No. 1145, p. 116 from Bibliothèque nationale MSS. 6605, pièce 328.
- 100 Ibid., No. 1145, p. 116.

101 Cited in Ibid., No. 477, pp. 56-57 from Procès-Verbaux du Comité d'Instruction Publique, 11, pp. 288-289.

102 See for instance J-B. Dubos, Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture (Paris, 1719; edition of 1755), I, pp. 212-217. Also the chapter on TRAINING IN HIGH ART below.

103 David, Le peintre Louis David, p. 57.

104 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1368, pp. 155-158.

In 1939, Alexandre Péron reported that David had apparently said of Le Serment des Horaces: "Si c'est à Corneille que je dois mon sujet, c'est à Poussin que je dois mon tableau." The statement is ambiguous though, for Corneille's play does not include this scene of the oath. Cited in F. Hamilton Hazlehurst, "The Artistic Evolution of David's 'Oath'", Art Bulletin, XLII, 1960, pp. 56-63 from A. Péron, "Examen du tableau de Serment des Horaces peint par David, suivi d'une notice historique du tableau, lus à la Société libre des Beaux-Arts", Annales de la Société libre des Beaux-Arts (Paris, 1839), VIII, p. 31.

105 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1326, p. 149.

106 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1864, p. 217, from Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts MSS. 316, No. 38.

107 Ibid., No. 1864, p. 217.

108 Miette de Villars, Mémoires de David: peintre et député à la Convention (Paris, 1850), p. 154.

109 See Le Pantheon: Symbole des Révolutions - De l'Eglise de la Nation au Temple des Grands Hommes (Paris, 1989), pp. 103-108.

110 See, for instance, D. L. Dowd, Jacques-Louis David, Pageant-master of the Republic (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1948). See also the chapter DAVID AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION below.



- 111 U. van de Sandt, "Jamais on ne me fera rien faire au détriment de ma gloire", David contre David Colloque (Paris, Louvre, 1989).
- 112 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 152, p. 19 from Bibliothèque nationale, MSS. 6604, pièce 116..
- 113 Cited in Ibid., No. 216, p. 29 from Nouvelles archives de l'art français, 1874-75, pp. 401-402.
- 114 Miette de Villars, Mémoires de David, p. 229.
- 115 Ibid., p.230.
- 116 See Verdi, "'Poussin's Critical Fortunes'", especially Chapter II; also chapter TRAINING IN HIGH ART below.
- 117 Conférences de l'Académie Royale, Preface (no pagination).
- 118 Ibid.,
- 119 Dubos, Réflexions critiques, I, pp. 79-88.
- 120 Ibid., II, pp. 353-354.
- 121 T. Gaetgens and J. Lugand, Joseph-Marie Vien 1716-1809 (Paris, 1988), pp. 321-324.
- 122 Ibid., p. 321.
- 123 Ibid., p. 322.
- 124 Ibid., p. 324.
- 125 Ibid., p. 321.
- 126 Van de Sandt, "Correspondance de Pierre avec les directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome", Archives de l'Art français, XXVIII, 1986, pp. 99-113. Cited from Archives Nationales 392 AP3.

#### TRAINING IN HIGH ART

- 1 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture, IX, p. 76.
- 2 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 13, p. 4.

- 3 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture, IX, p. 164.
- 4 P. Mesplé, "David et ses élèves toulousains", Archives de l'Art Français, Nouvelle période, XXIV, 1969, pp. 91-102.
- 5 N. Bryson, Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix (Cambridge, 1984, reprinted 1987), pp. 32-62.
- 6 M-F. Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture suivi d'un Essai sur la Sculpture (Paris, 1765), p. 89-90.
- 7 Ibid., p. 96.
- 8 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1368, p. 156 from Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, MSS. 316, 51-54..
- 9 Ibid., p. 156.
- 10 J. J. Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1753", Collection des Livrets des Anciennes Expositions depuis 1673 jusqu'en 1800 (Paris, 1870), No. 40, p. 17.
- 11 G. Oberreuter-Kronabel, Der Tod der Philosophen (Munich, 1986), pp. 41-42.
- 12 Dandré Bardon, Traité de peinture, p. 125.
- 13 Ibid., p. 75.
- 14 Ibid., pp. 154-155. For more about the influence of Le Testament d'Eudamidas in France, see below pp. 118-120 and footnote 135.
- 15 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture, VII, p. 200.
- 16 Ibid., V, p. 354.
- 17 L. A. Seneca, Epistulae Morales ad Luculium (Paris, 1770; extracts translated by C. Sablier). I would like to thank Elizabeth McGrath for pointing out the importance of Seneca's Epistles to my research.
- 18 Ibid., (edition Paris, 1770), p. 1.

- 19 Ibid., LXI, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 141.
- 20 Ibid., VIII, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 43.
- 21 C. Tacitus, Annales XV, 54, (Paris, 1770, translated by N. Perrot, Sieur d'Ablancourt as part of Les Oeuvres de Tacite), p. 331.
- 22 P. F. Basan, Dictionnaire des graveurs anciens et modernes depuis l'origine de gravure (Paris, 1767), III, Nos. 19 and 20, pp. 109-110.
- 23 Seneca, Epistulae Moraliae, XIII, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 52.
- 24 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1368, p. 156.
- 25 Journal de Paris, 27 March 1809, p. 667:  
 ...Vien n'est plus! Notre père a cessé de vivre. Eh! quel nom, Messieurs, convient mieux à celui qui guida nos premiers pas dans la carrière pénible des arts? Qui de nous, ayant eu le bonheur de recevoir ses précieuses leçons, n'aura pas sans cesse présentes à la mémoire la bonté paternelle avec laquelle il souriait à nos premiers essais...  
 Mon cher maître, mon père, recevez nos derniers adieux; nous nous éloignons à regret de vos restes chéris, mais votre image, votre bonté, vos soins paternels vivront à jamais dans nos coeurs reconnaissants.
- 26 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1368, p. 156.
- 27 Seneca, Epistulae Moraliae, XLIV, (edition Paris, 1770), pp. 98-99.
- 28 M-F. Dandré Bardon, Histoire universelle traitée relativement aux arts de peindre et de sculpter ou tableaux de l'histoire (Paris, 1769), I, p. 75. For more about this text, see below pp. 103-104.
- 29 D. Diderot, Essai sur la vie de Seneque, le philosophe, sur ses ecrits, et sur les regnes de Claude et de Néron (1779).
- 30 See D. Diderot, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris, 1875; edited by J. Assézat), III, p. 4.

- 31 A. Schnapper, David témoin de son temps (Fribourg, 1980; translated by H. Harrison, New York, 1982), pp. 80-81.
- 32 D. Diderot, "De la poésie dramatique", Oeuvres esthétiques (Paris, 1968, edited by P. Vernière), pp. 276-277.
- 33 Ibid., p. 277.
- 34 See for instance Lee, Vt Pictura Poesis. Also H. T. Barnwell, "Some Notes on Poussin, Corneille and Racine", Australian Journal of French Studies, IV, 2, pp. 123-132. This article deals with links that exist between aspects of French dramatic theory as it evolved in the seventeenth century and theories of painting that have been attributed to Poussin.
- 35 Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture, p. 1j.
- 36 Tacitus, Annales, XV, 54, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 331.
- 37 Ibid., XV, 54, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 331.
- 38 Ibid., XV, 54, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 332.
- 39 Ibid., XV, 54, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 332.
- 40 Ibid., XV, 54, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 333.
- 41 Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture, p. 85.
- 42 Ibid., p. 87.
- 43 See Ibid., p. 130 for a section of this treatise which suggested that the subjects of history could be treated in a poetical way, in order to make the representation of events clearer and for an interesting and ingenious variety. The spectator would also be agreeably pleased by the true being united with the symbolic. Here, however, the writer had the introduction of allegorical subject matter in mind, such as that of the figure of sensual pleasure in a Judgement of Paris.

- 44 F. Haskell and W. Penny, Taste and the Antique (Yale, 1981; edition of 1982), p. 303.
- 45 See Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, VI, p. 419; IX, p. 53. Also Correspondance des Directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome avec les Surintendants des Bâtiments (Paris, 1887-1908; edited by A. de Montaiglon and J. Guiffrey), XIII, No. 6601, p. 72 and No. 6813, p. 263.
- 46 Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture, p. 123.
- 47 Rollin, for instance, compares the Roman Empire to a building in Histoire Romaine, p. lxxvii: "Chaque partie, quand on l'examine séparément, paroît un chef-d'oeuvre de l'art, auquel il semble qu'on ne puisse rien ajouter."
- 48 Tristan L'Hermite, La Mort de Seneque, V, 4, (Paris, 1645), pp. 118-119.
- 49 Ibid., V, 1, (edition Paris, 1645), p. 105.
- 50 M. L. Coupé, Théâtre de Sénèque (Paris, 1795), I, pp. 51-57.
- 51 Ibid., I, pp. 56-57.
- 52 G. Hess, "Der Tod des Seneca. Ikonographie. Biographie. Tragödentheorie", Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft, 25, 1968, pp. 196-228.
- 53 Ibid.,
- 54 See Crow, Painters and Public Life, pp. 49-51.
- 55 Bryson, Tradition and Desire, p. 41.
- 56 Tacitus, Annales, II, lxxi and lxxii.
- 57 Conférences de l'Académie Royale, pp. 91-92.
- 58 Montagu, "Le Brun's 'Conférence Sur L'Expression'".
- 59 Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture, pp. 50-51.

- 60 J. J. Winckelmann, Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhaukunst (Friedrichstadt, 1755).
- 61 Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture, pp. 72-73.
- 62 A-C. Comte de Caylus, Discours sur la Peinture et la Sculpture (Paris, 1910; edited with notes by A. Fontaine), p. 181.
- 63 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, VIII, pp. 133-135.
- 64 See the catalogue Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825 (Paris, 1989), Nos 239-249, pp. 547-557.
- 65 R. Descartes, Passions de l'Ame (Amsterdam and Paris, 1649; reprinted Paris, 1970), CXIII, p. 147.
- 66 A-C. Comte de Caylus, "Pièces Originales du Comte de Caylus quoique toutes inédites ou corrigées de son nom", Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, MSS. 522.
- 67 Ibid.,
- 68 Ibid.,
- 69 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, VIII, p. 146.
- 70 See for instance J. Lebon, La Phisionomie d'Adamant Sophiste Interpretée (Paris, 1556). Lebon had been doctor to the Cardinal de Guise and then to Charles IX; he was noted as an expert in the treatment of women and for advocating a return to Hippocratic practice as opposed to the principles of Galen. Admantius' Greek treatise was itself an adaptation of an earlier work by Polemon. Other classical treatises on the subject include those by Pseudo Aristotle and Pseudo Apullius. See also Anonyme Latin: Traité de Physiognomie (Paris, 1981; translated and annotated by J. André).
- 71 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Demetrius, XXXVIII, (edition Paris, 1762), XI, pp. 219-222. Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia,

V, 7, De Patrum Amore et Indulgentiâ in Liberos, (edition Paris, an IV), I, pp. 469-470. The section also includes the story of the Consul Brutus; his severity with his children serves, for Valerius Maximus, as a contrast to the indulgence of Seleucus; see the chapter on INVENTION below.

72 Ibid., (edition Paris, an IV), I, p. 1.

73 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Demetrius, XXXVIII, (edition Paris, 1762), XI, pp. 212-222.

74 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, V, 7, De Patrum Amore et Indulgentiâ in Liberos, (edition Paris, an IV), I, pp. 469-470.

75 "Dessein", Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné, XX, Planches II, 2, No. 25.

76 Ibid., XX, Planches II, p. 1. Cochin was appointed secretary of the Académie on 25th January 1755, Procès Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, VI, p. 406.

77 Ibid., XX, Planches II, p. 1.

78 Dandré Bardon, Histoire universelle, I, pp. 172-173.

79 P. da Cortona, Heroicae Virtutis Imagines (Rome, 1691). The engraving is by L. Visscher. See W. Stechow, "The Love of Antiochus with faire Stratonice", Art Bulletin, XXVII, 1945, pp. 221-237.

80 Dandré Bardon, Traité de Peinture, p. 108.

81 Dubos, Réflexions critiques, I, p. 82.

82 J. David, Le peintre Louis David, p. 2. See C. Duncan, "Fallen Fathers: Images of Authority in Pre-Revolutionary French Art", Art History, IV, 1981, pp. 186-202. The article considers that the

proliferation of such imagery before the Revolution was symptomatic of the overthrow of authority, which was to occur.

83 I am grateful to Thomas Puttfarken for this suggestion.

84 M-F. Dandré Bardon, Costume des Anciens Peuples (Paris, 1772), I, 5, plate 43. See plate 50; also B. de Montfaucon, L'Antiquité expliquée (Paris, 1719), I, Part 1, Admiranda Rom. Ant. XCVII, Méléagre, Planche 162.

85 Ibid., I, pp. 33-34:

"En comparant ce bas-relief antique avec un ouvrage connu sous le nom de l'extrême-onction du Poussin f, nous n'avons pu nous refuser à une reflexion importante pour les artistes. De fameux peintres, Poussin, Le Brun, Le Sueur, Raphaël lui-même, ont souvent emprunté de l'antique des idées qu'ils ont embellies en se les appropriant. Le rapport bien sensible des deux figures c b et g h, qui dominant dans les compositions dont nous faisons l'examen en est une preuve convaincante; elle nous donne occasion de louer les vues justes et profondes du Peintre françois qui a si ingénieusement mis à profit cette heureuse licence. Mais ce qui est louable dans les grands maîtres, ce qui prouve l'étendue de leur connoissance, la justesse de leur discernement et leur soin à faire la richesse de l'art, pourroit dégénérer dans de jeunes artistes, en abus, qui flattent leur indolence à inventer, les conduiroit à devenir plagiaires, sous prétexte de se rendre imitateurs. Qu'ils étudient l'antique pour acquérir la connoissance des belles formes et se faire un bon goût de dessein: c'est ce qu'on ne sauroit trop leur recommander; mais qu'ils soient bien persuadés que la pensée faisant la principale valeur d'une ordonnance pittoresque, ils doivent s'occuper sans cesse à se former un génie créateur, à exercer continuellement leur imagination et à éviter avec soin de penser d'après les autres. Quelle honte en effet pour eux de s'exposer au reproche de n'être qu'inventeurs en second, dans les productions dont le premier mérite est de les avoir imaginées!"

86 For the history of this painting, see P. Rosenberg, "La Mort de Germanicus" de Poussin du Musée de Minneapolis (Paris, 1973), pp. 26-46.

87 Dandré Bardon, Costume, pp. 50-51.

88 Ibid., p. 52.



- 89 See for instance, Pierre-Narcisse Guérin's winning Grand Prix de Rome entry of 1797, La Mort de Caton d'Utique (Paris, Ecole National Supérieure des Beaux-Arts).
- 90 Dandre Bardon, Histoire universelle, I, pp. 160-162.
- 91 Ibid., I, pp. 187-188.
- 92 Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, p. 98. One copy of this lithograph is to be found in Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts.
- 93 A Figler, Barockthemen (Budapest, 1956), II, p. 359.
- 94 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Alexander, XXXIII, (edition Paris, 1762), IX, p. 63.
- 95 C. Rollin, Histoire Ancienne des Egyptiens, des Carthaginois, des Assyriens, des Babyloniens, des Medes et des Perses, des Macedoniens, des Grecs (Paris, 1730-1738), VI, pp. 388-389. Q. Curtius Rufus, Gesta Alexandri (La Haye, 1727; translated by M. de Vaugelas), pp. 497-501.
- 96 Ibid., p. 499.
- 97 Rollin, Histoire Ancienne, VI, p. 388.
- 98 M. Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de M. de Marigny avec Coypel, Lépicié et Cochin (Paris, 1904), pp. 324-325.
- 99 D. Diderot, Salons (Oxford, 1957; edited by J. Seznec and J. Adhémar), II, pp. 87-88:  
 ...Il y a de la couleur, de l'expression, des caractères et de la sagesse; mais cela ne m'empêche pas de m'écrier: Quel tableau pour un spectateur instruit, pour un homme sensible, pour une âme élevée, pour un oeil harmonieux! Tout est dur, sec et plat, rien ne se détache...
- 100 D. Johnson, "Corporality and Communication: The Gestural Revolution of Diderot, David and 'The Oath of the Horatii'", Art Bulletin, LXXXI, 1989, pp. 92-114. For a catalogue of possible

sources for the frieze, see S. Howard, Sacrifice of the Hero: the Roman Years, a Classical Frieze by Jacques-Louis David (Sacramento, 1975).

101 Conférences de l'Académie Royale, pp. 206-207:

Pour ce qui est d'avoir représenté des personnes, dont les unes sont dans la misère pendant que les autres reçoivent du soulagement; C'est enquoy ce sçavant Peintre a montré qu'il estoit un véritable Poète, ayant composé son Ouvrage dans les règles que l'Art de la Poésie veut qu'on observe aux pièces de Theatre. Car pour représenter parfaitement l'Histoire qu'il traite, il avoit besoin des parties nécessaires à un Poème, afin de passer de l'infortune au bonheur. C'est pourquoy l'on voit que ces groupes de figures qui font diverses actions, sont comme autant d'Episodes qui servent à ce que l'on nomme Peripeties, & de moyens pour faire connoître le changement arrivé aux Israélites quand ils sortent d'une extrême misère, & qu'ils rentrent dans un état plus heureux. Ainsi leur infortune est représentée par ces personnes languissantes & abatuës; le changement qui s'en fait est figuré par la chute de la manne, & leur bon-heur se remarque dans la possession d'une nourriture qu'on leur voit amasser avec une joye extrême.

102 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 58, p. 9 from Bibliothèque de l'Institut, MSS. 3783.

103 Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, pp. 130-132.

104 Crow, Painters and Public Life, p. 197-202. See also A. Boime, "Marmontel's *Bélisaire* and the Pre-Revolutionary Progressivism of David", Art History, III, I, 1980, pp. 81-101.

105 M-A. Laugier, Observations sur l'Architecture (La Haye, 1765), p. 226.

106 Ibid., p. 230 and p. 250.

107 J. A. H. Guibert, Essai général de Tactique (Londres, 1772).

108 J. A. H. Guibert, Eloge du Maréchal de Catinat (Edimbourg, 1775), p. 63.

109 Ibid., p. 74

- 110 Ibid., p. 76
- 111 Ibid., pp. 76-77.
- 112 Ibid., p. 82.
- 113 Ibid., p. 85.
- 114 Correspondence des Directeurs, XIV, p. 30.
- 115 Thomas, Oeuvres, IV, p. 301.
- 116 Ibid., p. 340.
- 117 Ibid., pp. 340-341.
- 118 Diderot, Salons (Oxford, 1957-1967; edited by J. Sezneec and J. Adhémar), III, p. 142.
- 119 Ibid., III, p. 143.
- 120 Ibid., III, p. 143.
- 121 Ibid., III, p. 144. Connections between Diderot's dramatic theories and painting theory are explored in M. Fried, Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot (Chicago and London, 1980).
- 122 Diderot, Salons, III, pp. 144-145.
- 123 Ibid., III, p. 145.
- 124 "Inscriptions pour mettre au bas de différens tableaux exposés au Sallon du Louvre en 1785", Collection Deloynes (Collection de 63 volumes de pièces sur les Beaux-Arts et les critiques de Salons conservés au cabinet des Estampes de la Bibliothèque Nationale), XIV, No. 343, p. 8.
- 125 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1368, p. 156.
- 126 Diderot, Salons, IV, p. 377.
- 127 J. Racine, "Bérénice", II, 4, Oeuvres Complètes (Gallimard, 1950; edited by R. Picard), I, p. 486.

- 128 See above p. 94 and footnote 85.
- 129 Diderot, Salons, IV, p. 377.
- 130 For the critical acclaim David received at the Salon, see below p. 129.
- 131 Diderot, Salons, IV, p. 377.
- 132 Diderot, "Essais sur la Peinture", Oeuvres esthétiques, pp. 659-740.
- 133 Ibid., p. 719.
- 134 Diderot, Salons, III, pp. 285-286.
- 135 Verdi, "Poussin's Eudamidas: 18th Century Criticism and Copies", Burlington Magazine, CXIII, 1971, pp. 513-524.
- 136 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 2040, p. 237. It is item No. 65 in the artist's *inventaire* of 22 February 1826.
- 137 Diderot, Salons, III, p. 325.
- 138 Watelet and Lévesque, Dictionnaire des Arts de Peinture, Sculpture, et Gravure, III, p. 161.
- 139 See the chapter below DAVID AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION.
- 140 D. Diderot, "Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets à l'usage de ceux qui entendent et qui parlent", Oeuvres complètes (Paris 1975-; edited by H. Dieckmann, J. Proust and J. Varloot), IV, pp. 147-147.
- 141 Ibid., IV, p. 144.
- 142 See above p. 76.
- 143 J-B. Dubos, Réflexions critiques, I, p. 377.
- 144 See above p. 61.
- 145 See Collection Deloynes, XIV, No. 324.

- 146 J. David, Notice sur le Marat de Louis David suivie de la liste de ses tableaux dressée par lui-même (Paris, 1867), pp. 31-43, No. 25.
- 147 See P. Rosenberg and U. van de Sandt, Pierre Peyron 1744-1814 (Neuilly, 1983), p. 13.
- 148 Correspondence des Directeurs, XIV, p. 14.
- 149 Ibid., XIII, p. 478
- 150 Ibid., XIV, p. 119.
- 151 J-F. Marmontel, Bélisaire (Paris, 1767), Ch. 4, pp. 34-37.
- 152 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, IV, 4, De Paupertate, (edition Paris, an IV), I, pp. 333-334.
- 153 Crow, Painters and Public Life, p. 201.
- 154 Marmontel, Bélisaire, Ch. 4, pp. 38-39.
- 155 Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1781", Collection de livrets, Nos. 311-318, p. 56.
- 156 Ibid., No. 311, p. 56.
- 157 "La Muette qui parle au Sallon de 1781", Collection Deloynes, XII, No. 257.

#### INVENTION

- 1 Dandré Bardon, Traité de peinture, p. 80: "L'invention est l'assemblage des pensées qui concourent à la composition d'un sujet; c'est le choix des objets qui doivent y entrer."
- 2 Ibid., p. 146.
- 3 Ibid., p. 166.
- 4 Dandré Bardon, Histoire universelle, I, p. 174.
- 5 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 152, p. 19. See above chapter HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER p. 61.

- 6 E. Wind, "The Sources of David's Horaces", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, IV, 1940/41, pp. 124-138. Rosenblum, Transformations, p. 69.
- 7 Correspondance Littéraire. Philosophique et Critique depuis 1753 jusqu'en 1790 (Paris 1829, edited by J. Taschereau), IV, pp. 204-205.
- 8 J. J. Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1785", Collection de livrets No. 103, p. 30.
- 9 Correspondance Littéraire (ed. J. Taschereau), IV, p. 207.
- 10 Ibid., IV, p. 210.
- 11 Procès Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, IX, p. 166. See p. 248 below for further comment on David's representations of oath scenes.
- 12 Livius, Ab Urbe Condita, I, 1, xxvi, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 68.
- 13 P. Corneille, "Horace", IV, 5, Oeuvres complètes (Tours, 1980; edited by G. Couton), I, p. 885:  

Horace Ma soeur, voici le bras qui venge nos deux frères  
 Le bras qui rompt le cours de nos destins contraires,  
 Qui nous rend maîtres d'Albe; enfin voici le bras  
 Qui seul fait aujourd'hui le sort de deux Etats;
- 13 M. Sandoz, Les Lagrenée, (Paris, 1983), No. 8. p. 162.
- 14 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, IX, p. 233.
- 16 Cited in Jacques-Louis David, p. 566 from Archives Nationales O' 1921A:  

...Le Comité a choisi celui d'Horace qui après avoir vaincu les trois Curiaces, en rentrant dans Rome tue sa soeur, qui l'injurait pour avoir donné la mort à l'un des Curiaces à qui elle étoit promise en mariage. L'instant choisi est celui où, après l'avoir tuée, il dit "Ainsi périsse toute Romaine ennemie de sa Patrie.
- 17 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia VI, 3, De Severitate, (edition Paris, an IV), II, pp. 38-39.

- 18 Livius, Ab Urbe Condita, I, 1, xxvi, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 69.
- 19 Ibid., I, 1, xxvi, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 69.
- 20 Corneille, "Horace", V, 3, (edition Tours, 1980), I, pp. 896-901.
- 21 Ibid., III, 6, (edition Tours, 1980), I, p. 878.
- 22 Ibid., I, 1, (edition Tours, 1980), I, pp. 846-847.
- 23 Ibid., IV, 4, (edition Tours, 1980), I, p. 886.
- 24 Ibid., V, 3, (edition Tours, 1980), I, p. 900.
- 25 Ibid., II, 2, (edition Tours, 1980), I, p. 857.
- 26 Ibid., (edition Tours, 1980), I, p. 839.
- 27 Ibid., (edition Tours, 1980), I, pp. 841.
- 28 Wind, "The Sources of David's Horaces".
- 29 J. G. Noverre, Lettres sur la Danse et sur les Ballets (Paris, 1760; 2nd edition Paris, 1783).
- 30 For a more detailed analysis of the negative connotations of grimace in the perjorative sense of the theatrical, see Fried, Absorption and Theatricality, pp. 71-105.
- 31 Noverre, Lettres sur la Danse, p. 160.
- 32 Ibid., p. 328:  

En s'attachant scrupuleusement à peindre le caractère, les mœurs et les usages de certaines nations, les tableaux seroient souvent d'une composition pauvre et monotone: ainsi y auroit-il de l'injustice à condamner un Peintre sur les licences ingénieuses qu'il auroit prises, si ces mêmes licences contribuoient à la perfection, à la variété et à l'élégance de ces tableaux.
- 33 Ibid., p. 35.
- 34 Correspondance Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister etc (Paris, 1877-1882; edited by M. Tourneux), XI, pp. 411-412.

35 J. J. Engel, Ideen zu einer Mimik (Berlin, 1785-6; Idées sur le Geste et l'Action Théâtrale, Paris, Strasbourg, La Haye, 1788-9;

translated into French by H. Jansen), I, pp. 6-7:

...La difficulté de concevoir un langage pantomime, qui mieux, ou du moins aussi-bien que les langues parlées, exprimât par des signes méthodiques et susceptibles de combinaisons variées, non-seulement les objets visibles, mais aussi les intellectuels; cette difficulté, dis-je, n'en exclut pas rigoureusement la possibilité: cependant si l'on réfléchit que malgré l'étonnante richesse de plusieurs langues anciennes et modernes en termes abstraits, il n'en est peut-être aucune qui puisse fournir des mots propres pour exprimer d'une manière claire et précise toutes les nuances que l'esprit est capable de saisir dans ses opérations et dans les affections de l'ame, on conviendra sans peine qu'un langage pantomime, qui, par l'abondance de ses élémens et la variété de leurs combinaisons, auroit à cet égard l'avantage sur les langues parlées, doit être relégué dans le pays des chimères.

36 For the tradition of *Ut pictura poesis* in France, see Lee, Ut Pictura Poesis. Also the discussion of Dandré Bardon's Traité de Peinture in the chapter TRAINING IN HIGH ART above and La Font de Saint Yenne, Sentimens, pp. 18-20.

37 Levacher de Charnois, Costumes et Annales des Grands Théâtres de Paris (Paris, 1786-90), I, p. 4.

38 Ibid., I, p. 2.

39 See F. Talma, Mémoires de Lekain précédés de réflexions sur cet amateur et sur l'art théâtral (Paris, 1825). Also R. Herbert, David, Voltaire, Brutus and the French Revolution (London, 1972), p. 78.

40 Poussin's letter to Chantelou of 25th November 1658 had, for instance, explained why he had included details of a procession of priests in a painting of the Virgin in Egypt, C Jouanny, Correspondance de Nicolas Poussin (Paris, 1911; reprinted 1968), pp. 448-449.:

Une procession de prebtres testes rases couronnées de verdure à leur mode avec tabourins flustes trompettes et espuruier sur des bâtons...tout cela nest point fait aisi



pour me l'estre imaginé mais le tout est tiré de ce fameux temple de la fortune de palestrine le pavé duquel estoit fait de fine Mosaïque et en icelui dépeinte au vrai l'histoire naturelle et morale d'Egipte et d'Etio pie et de bonne main.

- 41 A. Baron, Entretiens sur les Danses ancienne, moderne, religieuse, civile et théâtrale (Paris, 1825), pp. 233-234.
- 42 G. Bergman, Lighting in the Theatre (Stockholm, 1977), p. 151.
- 43 Ibid., p. 193. Experiments with artificial lighting fantasies started to occur during the 1790s and would lead to Daguerre's dioramas in the nineteenth century. Such effects may have influenced later painters, but the use of colour and highlight in David's history paintings did not correspond to the lighting effects available on the French stage at the time.
- 44 Anon. versifier, "Des vers sur le tableau représentant les Horaces", Collection Deloynes, XIV, No. 324.
- 45 Schnapper, David, p. 88.
- 46 Cited in M. Aghion, Le Théâtre à Paris au XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Paris, 1926), pp. 396-397 from Chroniques des Petits Théâtres de Paris.
- 47 Mémoires Secrets pour servir à l'Histoire de la République des Lettres en France depuis 1762 jusqu'à nos jours: ou Journal d'un Observateur (London, 1780), IV, pp. 165-166.
- 48 Ibid., VI, p. 235.
- 49 Correspondance Littéraire (edited by M. Tourneux), X, pp. 210-211.
- 50 Correspondance Littéraire (edited by J. Taschereau), VII, p. 204.
- 51 Dubos, Réflexions critiques, I, pp. 79-80.
- 52 Rosenblum, Transformations, p. 69.

- 53 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Antiquitates Romanae III, 4, (edition Paris, 1723), pp. 264-265.
- 54 Livius, Ab urbe condita I, 1, xxi, (edition Paris, 1770), pp. 56-57. I am grateful to Helen Weston for pointing out to me the importance of this oath in Livy.
- 55 Ibid., I, 1, xxiv, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 65
- 56 In La Douleur d'Andromaque (Plate 9), Astyanax is shown reaching towards his mother, away from the armour and large helmet set on the other side of the composition. This further inversion of the theme of the child in relation to adult worlds of war and of grief can here, however, be associated with the narrative requirements of the story: earlier, Astyanax had taken fright at his father's helmet, when Hector had departed on the eve of battle with the Greeks (Homer, Iliad, 6).
- 57 See the chapter HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER above, p. 54.
- 58 Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1767," Collection des livrets, No. 14, p. 13; "Exposition de 1769", No. 12, p. 13.
- 59 Diderot, Salons, IV, p. 73.
- 60 Correspondance Littéraire (edited by M. Tourneux), XIV, p. 290.
- 61 Crow, Painters and Public Life, p. 279.
- 62 "Le Frondeur ou Dialogues sur le Sallon par l'auteur de Coup-de-patte et du Triumvirat", Collection Deloynes, XIV, No. 329.
- 63 F. Engerand, Inventaire des tableaux commandés et achetés par la Direction des bâtiments du Roi (1702-1792) (Paris, 1901), pp. 36-37.
- 64 Livius, Ab urbe condita, III, 8, vii, (edition Paris, 1770), pp. 21-23. Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, II, 6, De Disciplina Militari, (edition Paris, l'an IV), I, pp. 149-150.

- 65 Livius, Ab urbe condita, III, 8, vii, (edition Paris, 1770), p.23.
- 66 Rollin, Histoire Romaine, II, p. 208. See also Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, IX, 3, De Ira et odio.
- 67 Cited in Jacques-Louis David, p. 571 from Archives Nationales O' 1925B.
- 68 For a series of eighteenth-century French works on the theme of Coriolanus, see La Révolution Française À l'école de la Vertu antique pp. 65-70. For earlier examples see Pigler, Barockthemen, II, pp. 380-382.
- 69 Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1789", Collection des livrets, No. 100, p. 26.
- 70 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, V, 4, De Pietate in Parentes, (edition Paris, l'an IV), I, pp. 437-438.
- 71 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Coriolanus, (edition Paris, 1762), III, pp. 257-328.
- 72 Ibid., (edition Paris, 1762), III, p. 290.
- 73 Ibid., (edition Paris, 1762), III, p. 292.
- 74 J. F. de la Harpe, Coriolan: Tragédie en Cinq Actes et en vers (Paris, 1784, 2nd edition), Titlepage and p. 55.
- 75 Ibid., p. iv.
- 76 Ibid., p. v.
- 77 Ibid., pp. 10-11
- 78 Ibid., pp. 49-51:  
     Véturie    Tu n'as pas dit toi-même à ton cœur attendri:  
                 C'est là que je suis né, là que je fus nourri!  
                 De mes fils, de ma femme on y garde la cendre!  
                 C'est là que vit pour moi la mère la plus tendre!  
                 Tu la forces, barbare, en sa calamité,  
                 A maudire l'hymen et sa fécondité,  
                 A pleurer ta naissance, hélas! jadis si chère!

Pour le malheur de Rome ai-je donc été mère?  
 J'ai produit le plus grand de tous ses ennemis!  
 Rome ne craindrait rien, si je n'avais un fils!  
 Ah! cette horrible idée accable mon courage.

Coriolan Vous plaignez les Romains! n'accusez que leur rage  
 Vous me montrez ces murs! là sont mes oppresseurs:  
 Là sont mes ennemis: ici mes défenseurs.  
 Ce camp qui vous irrite est mon unique asyle:  
 Dois-je lui préférer, Rome, d'où l'on m'exile?  
 Qui doit m'être plus cher du Volsque ou du Romain?  
 L'un pour qui j'ai tout fait, est injuste, inhumain,  
 Par un bannissement a payé mon service;  
 L'autre à son ennemi tend un main propice  
 Dois-je donc l'oublier, et faut-il désormais  
 Récompenser l'outrage et punir les bienfaits  
 Et n'ont-ils pas joui de ta reconnaissance?  
 N'as-tu donc pas assez relevé leur puissance?...  
 ...Vous n'étiez pas témoin de ces affreux Comices,  
 Où d'arrogans Tribuns, arbitres de mon sort,  
 Me présentaient les fers, et la honte et la mort;  
 Où j'entendais, au gré des plus vils adversaires,  
 Rugir autour de moi les fureurs populaires.  
 Assailli de leurs cris, de leur rage entouré,  
 Au milieu de l'opprobre où je parus livré,  
 Je rassemblais en moi ma force et ma constance,  
 Et dans ce coeur souffrant j'amassais la vengeance.  
 Je jurais à ce coeur, que cet instant passé,  
 Rome en vain pleurerait de m'avoir offensé.  
 Non, je n'aurai point fait un menace vaine.  
 Eh! doit-on accomplir les sermens de la haine?...

79 B. Imbert, "Nouvelles Littéraires", Mercur de France, 27 mars, 1784, pp. 153-173:

...En effet, dans l'intervalle d'un Acte, (ce qui dans la proportion de la durée d'une action dramatique peut être évalué à cinq heures environ) est-il vraisemblable qu'un peuple, tel que le peuple Romain, soit assez changé, non par ses remords, mais par ses malheurs, pour tomber aux pieds d'un Citoyen qu'il vient de bannir?

80 de Tournelles, "Sur les Critiques absurdes et de mauvaise foi que l'on fait de Coriolan", Coriolan, p. 16.

81 Wildenstein, Oeuvres complémentaires, No. 125.

82 See J. Guiffrey, "David et le théâtre pendant son séjour à Bruxelles", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1903, pp. 201-208. Also D. L.

Dowd, "Art and the Theater during the French Revolution: the Role of Louis David", The Art Quarterly, XXIII, 1960, pp. 2-22.

83 Herbert, David, Voltaire, Brutus, especially p. 16, p. 53.

84 Arouet de Voltaire, "Brutus", Oeuvres Complètes, I, pp. 300-389.

The audience in the pit of the Comédie Française was a much more volatile body of people than the groups of spectators at the Salon exhibitions. Charles Collé, for instance, recorded the disturbances at the theatre during the third performance of Voltaire's play Nanine. Laughter had broken out in the pit at which Voltaire had then shouted back loudly: "arrêtez, barbares, arrêtez." C. Collé, Journal et Mémoires (Paris, 1868), I, p. 83. There are no reports of similarly direct confrontations between spectators or between artists and audience in the Salon Carré.

85 R. Rosenblum, "Gavin Hamilton's 'Brutus' and its Aftermath", Burlington Magazine, CIII, 1961, pp. 8-16. See also Rosenblum, Transformations, p. 69.

86 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, V, 8, De severitate, (edition Paris, l'an IV), I, p. 472.

87 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale, IX, p. 245.

88 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Antiquitates Romanae, V, 2, (Paris, 1723), p. 478.

89 Livius, Ab urbe condita, I, 2, v, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 174.

90 Rollin, De la Maniere, I, p. 237.

91 M. Virgilius Publius, "Aeneid", VI, 816-824, Les Oeuvres de Virgile, (edition Paris, 1743; translated by the Abbé des Fontaines), III, p. 165.

92 Rollin, Histoire Romaine, I, p. xcij.

93 Ibid., I, 2, p. 195.

94 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Publicola, (edition Paris, 1762), II, p. 88.

95 T. Rowe "Supplément aux vies des hommes illustres de Plutarque", Vitae Parallelae (Paris, 1762; translated by the Abbé Bellanger), XIV.

96 Ibid., XIV, p. 180.

97 See chapter HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER above, pp. 43-44.

98 Thomas, Oeuvres, III, pp. 62-63.

99 See chapter HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER above, p. 37.

100 See Corneille's defence of Horace above p. 140.

101 "Journal de Paris 8 novembre 1789", Collection Deloynes, XVI, No. 421.

102 "Supplément Aux Remarques sur les Ouvrages exposés au Salon, par le C. de M. M. de plusieurs Académies", Collection Deloynes, XVI, No. 414.

103 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 207, pp. 27-28 from Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, MSS. 318, No. 22.

104 Ibid.,

105 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, pp. 17-23.

106 After completing a preliminary draft of this chapter, Oberreuter-Kronabel, Der Tod der Philosophen came to my attention. This book contains a detailed analysis of David's painting and demonstrates, as I have done, that Socrates' decision to drink the hemlock, in obedience to the law of Athens and in conjunction with his belief in the immortality of the soul and the teaching of his disciples, is central to an understanding of the painting. The writer does not, however, fully explore the importance of the artist's decision to

include Plato in the scene, nor is there any discussion of the use of expression and physiognomy.

107 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, pp. 20-21.

108 For David's association with André Chénier and the Trudaines, see also D. Wisner, "Jacques-Louis David and André Chénier: The Death of Socrates, The Tennis Court Oath, and the quest for artistic liberty (1787-1792)", Consortium on Revolutionary Europe Proceedings, (Athens, 1986), pp. 529-544.

109 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, pp. 129-130.

110 Ibid., p. 130.

111 Ibid., p. 130.

112 Valerius Maximus, Dicta et facta memorabilia, III, 4, De humili loco natis, qui clari evaserunt, (edition Paris, l'an IV), I, p. 243.

113 Lacombe de Prezel, Dictionnaire des portraits historiques, p. 404.

114 E Bonnardet, "Comment un Oratorien vient en aide à un grand peintre", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, XIX, 6ème période, 1938, pp. 311-315.

115 Ibid.,

116 Ibid.,

117 See Plato, Portrait of Socrates: The Apology, Crito and Phaedo (Oxford, 1938, reprinted 1966; translation by R. W. Livingstone).

118 Thomas, Oeuvres, I, pp. 83-84:

...il (Plato) voulut aussi contribuer à la gloire de son maître, en l'éternisant, et il consacra presque tous ses ouvrages à son éloge.

...On peut donc regarder tous les dialogues de Platon ensemble, comme une espèce de drame composé en l'honneur de son maître. Socrate, dans chaque scène, prêche la morale; et le dénouement, c'est la ciguë.

- 119 Ibid., I, p. 91-92.
- 120 La Font de Saint-Yenne, Sentimens, p. 78.
- 121 C. Rollin, Histoire Ancienne des Egyptiens, des Carthaginiens, des Assyriens, des Bablylonians, des Medes et des Perses, des Macedoniens, des Grecs (Paris, 1730-1737), IV, p. 348.
- 122 Ibid., IV, p. 418.
- 123 J. Seznec, Essais sur Diderot et l'Antiquité (Oxford, 1957), pp. 1-20.
- 124 Oberreuter-Kronabel, Der Tod der Philosophen, p. 27 considers Voltaire's play to have been an attack on the enemies of the intellectuals. This may well have been the case although this was not how contemporaries, such as Diderot, reacted to it. Moreau's illustration for Voltaire's text was exhibited at the 1785 Salon. See also chapter TRAINING IN HIGH ART above pp. 69-75.
- 125 Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1761", Collection de livrets, No. 40, p. 17.
17. Oberreuter-Kronabel, Der Tod der Philosophen, p. 79 points out that Charles-Alphonse Du Fresnoy's La Mort de Socrate (Florence, Uffizi) was also in Paris until 1786.
- 126 Diderot, Salons, I, pp. 124-125.
- 127 Plato, Phaedo ("Le Phedon ou De L'Immortalité de l'Ame", Les Oeuvres de Platon, Paris 1771; translated by A. Dacier) IV, pp. 521-522.
- 128 Ibid., IV, pp. 520-524.
- 129 Seneca, Epistulae Morales, LXI, (edition Paris, 1770), p.144: "Or, bien mourir, c'est mourir librement...Disposons donc notre esprit à vouloir ce que la nature exige de nous, et principalement à attendre notre fin sans tristesse et sans désespoir."



- 130 *Ibid.*, CII, (edition Paris, 1770), pp. 270-271.
- 131 *Ibid.*, CIII, (edition Paris, 1770), p. 272.
- 132 Xenophon, Memorabilia, II, iii, 17, (Les Entretiens Memorables de Socrate, Paris, 1782; translated by P-C. Levesque), pp. 86-89.
- 133 Cicero, De Officiis II, 12, (edition Paris, 1768), p. 238.
- 134 M. de Montaigne, "De la phisionomie", Essais 1588-1595 (Paris, 1965; edited by P. Villey and K. L. Saulnier), pp. 1036-1059.
- 135 *Ibid.*, :  
 C'est une foible garantie que la mine; toutesfois elle a quelque consideration...Et si j'avois à les foyter, ce seroit plus rudement les meschans qui dementent et trahissent les promesses que nature leur avoit plantées au front: je punirois plus aigrement la malice en une apparence debonnaire. Et crois qu'il y a quelque art à distinguer les visages debonnaires des nyais, les severes des rudes, les malicieux des chagrins, les desdaigneux des melancholiques, et telles autres qualitez voisines...
- 136 Lacombe de Prezel, Dictionnaire des portraits historiques, I, p. 404.
- 137 J. G. Lavater, Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe, (Leipzig and Winterthur, 1775-1778; Essai sur la physiognomie, destiné à faire connoître l'homme et à le faire aimer La Haye, 1783, translated by E. de la Fite Caillard and H. Renfer), I, pp. 167-182.
- 138 *Ibid.*, (edition La Haye, 1783), I, pp. 178-179.
- 139 M. E. Zóltowska, "Stanislas Kostka Potocki, David, Denon et le Salon de 1787 ou la première critique d'art écrite par un polonais", Antemurale, XXIV, 1980, pp. 9-84.
- 140 A. R., "L'Ami des Artistes au Sallon", Collection Deloynes XV, No. 379.
- 141 "Merlin au Salon en 1787", Collection Deloynes, XV, No. 385.

- 142 Comte de Buffon, "L'Homme", Oeuvres Complètes (Paris, 1842; 3rd edition), III, pp. 221-427.
- 143 F. Cabuchet, Essai Sur l'Expression de la Face dans l'Etat de Santé et de Malade (Paris, an X), pp. 40-47.
- 144 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
- 145 Rollin, Histoire Ancienne, IV, p. 355.
- 146 M. Kemp, "Some Reflections on Watery Metaphors in Winckelmann, David and Ingres", Burlington Magazine, CX, 1968, pp. 266-270.
- 147 A. R., "L'Ami des Artistes au Sallon".
- 148 Winckelmann, Gedanken, p. 8.
- 149 R. Michel, "L'art des Salons", Aux Armes et Aux Arts (Paris, 1988; edited by P. Bordes and R. Michel), pp. 9-101.
- 150 Comte de Caylus, Tableaux Tirés de l'Illiade et de l'Odyssée d'Homere et de l'Eneide de Virgile avec des Observations sur le Costume (Paris, 1757), pp. 28-29.
- 151 For a discussion of this point see Y. Korshak, "'Paris and Helen' by J-L. David: Choice and Judgement on the Eve of the French Revolution", Art Bulletin, LXIX, 1987, pp. 102-116.
- 152 Comte de Caylus, Tableaux tirés, p. 30.
- 153 J. J. Winckelmann, Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (Dresden, 1764; Histoire de l'Art de l'Antiquité, Leipzig, 1781, translated by M. Huber), II, pp. 44-45.
- 154 Diderot, "Pensées détachées sur la peinture", Oeuvres esthétiques, pp. 818-819.
- 155 "Le Frondeur ou Dialogues sur le Sallon par l'auteur du Coup-de-patte et du Triumvirat", Collection Deloynes, XIV, No. 329.
- 156 Thomas, Oeuvres, I, p. 93.

157 Jouanny, Correspondance, pp. 20-21:

Quand vous aurés repceu le vostre, je vous suplie, si vous le trouués bon, de l'orner d'un peu de corniche, car il en a besoin, affin que en le considérans en toute ses parties les rayons de l'oeil soient retenus et non point espars au dehors en recepuant les espèses des autres obiects voisins qui venant peslemesle, avec les choses dépeintes confondent le jour.

Il seroit fort à propos que laditte corniche fut dorée d'or mat tout simplement, car il s'unit très-doucement avec les couleurs sans les offenser.

158 I am grateful to Alex Figgis-Walker for pointing this out to me and also for our helpful, general discussions of the issues raised in this thesis.

159 Rosenberg and Van de Sandt, Pierre Peyron, pp. 125-126.

160 Ibid., p. 125. Cited from Le Mercure de France, No. 38, 22 septembre, 1787, p. 180.

161 Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. J-L. David (Paris, 1824), p. 33.

162 Rosenberg and Van de Sandt, Pierre Peyron, p. 127, from Archives Nationales O' 1922<sup>er</sup>.

163 Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1787", Collection des livrets, No. 119, p. 28.

164 Ibid., No. 154, p. 33.

165 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, pp. 174-175. This fragment was first published in the Lycée des Arts, 3, 13 mai 1793, then in L'Esprit des Journaux, VIII, août 1793, pp. 275-280. It was also reprinted in J.G. Wille Mémoires de Wille (Paris 1857; edited by G. Duplessis), II, pp. 377-380 from Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, MSS. 323, d.3.

166 Ibid., p. 174.

167 Ibid., p. 175.

168 Ibid., pp. 134-136. See also Herbert, David, Voltaire, Brutus, pp. 55-63, 124-125.

169 Ibid., p. 175.

170 Ibid., p. 175.

#### DAVID AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION

1 Wille, Mémoires et Journal, II, pp. 222-223.

2 For the relationship between Drouais and David see Jean-Germain Drouais 1763-1788 (Rennes, 1985), pp. 30-32, also David e Roma (Rome, 1981), pp. 194-212. David, Le peintre Louis David, p. 53 noted that David erected a memorial to his pupil in the garden of his lodgings at the Louvre and later at the Rue d'Enfer, where he kept the dead artist's letters.

3 For a summary of the campaign, see Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, pp. 208-216. Also David, Le peintre Louis David, pp. 64-68, 120-129.

4 Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture, X, p. 209.

5 Cited in David, Le peintre Louis David, p. 143 from Procès-verbal de la Convention Nationale, imprimé par son ordre, XVI, p. 206.

6 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 677, p. 71 from Procès-Verbal de la Convention Nationale, XXV, p. 221.

7 For the association with Deposition imagery, see Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, p. 285.

8 U. van de Sandt, "'Grandissima opera del pittore sarà l'istoria,'" Notes sur la hiérarchie des genres sous la Révolution", Revue de l'Art, 83, 1989, pp. 71-76.

- 9 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, p. 38.
- 10 Cited in Ibid., pp. 164-165 from Archives parlementaires, XXXVIII, pp. 247-248.
- 11 Cited in Ibid., pp. 177-178 from Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts, Mss. 316, d. 9.
- 12 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1096, p. 109 from Procès-Verbal de la Convention Nationale, XLI, p. 191.
- 13 See for instance M. Vovelle, Les Images de la Révolution Française (Paris, 1988).
- 14 See for instance B. Gallini, "Concours et Prix d'Encouragement", La Révolution Française et l'Europe, III, pp. 830-851.
- 15 R. Michel, "L'art des Salons".
- 16 Cited in B. Gallini, "Concours et Prix d'Encouragement", from Procès-verbaux des assemblées du Jury élu par les artistes exposant au Salon de 1791 pour la distribution des Prix d'Encouragement (Paris, 1906, published by M. Furcy-Raynaud).
- 17 Cited in Ibid., from Rapport fait au nom du Comité d'Instruction publique sur les Concours de Sculpture, Peinture et Architecture, ouverts par les décrets de la Convention nationale, par Portiez (de l'Oise), représentant du peuple (Archives nationales F<sup>17</sup> 1057, d. 3).
- 18 See Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, Nos. 1157, 1158, 1159, p. 118 and No. 1196, p. 123.
- 19 Cited in Ibid., No. 1143, p. 116 from Bibliothèque nationale, Mss. 6605, pièce 326.
- 20 Ibid.,

21 Cited in Ibid., No. 1215, p. 134 from R. Peyre, "Quelques lettres inédites de Louis David et de Madame David", La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité, 1900, No. 11-12, pp. 97-98, 109-111.

22 E. J. Delécluze, Louis David son école et son temps (Paris, 1855; reprinted Paris, 1983), pp. 230-231.

23 R. Rosenblum, "A New Source for David's 'Sabines'", Burlington Magazine, CIII, 1961, pp. 8-16.

24 Sir Joshua Reynolds, The Literary Works, (London, 1852), II, pp. 148-149:

Mr. Danoot's

Among the private cabinets at Brussels, that of Mr Danoot, the banker, claims particular attention. He has appropriated little more than one room of his house for pictures, and has therefore been very attentive in the choice of what he has admitted.

RUBENS.-To mention only a few of the most striking:-Two sketches by Rubens: the Rape of the Sabines, and the women endeavouring to prevent the Roman and Sabine soldiers from joining battle; this last has more novelty, and is the most interesting of the two. The women are here placed between the two armies, some hanging on the soldiers' arms, others pressing the horses backwards, and others holding up their infants at arms' length, and showing them to the soldiers, to excite compassion. The whole composition is full of animation, to which the air of the horses, thus pressed backwards, does not a little contribute. Both these sketches are admirably composed, and in every respect excellent; few pictures of Rubens, even of his most finished works, give a higher idea of his genius.

25 See Rosenblum, "A New Source for David's 'Sabines'".

26 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Antiquitates Romanae, II, 14; T.

Livius, Ab urbe condita, I, 13; Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Romulus, 19; P. Ovidius Naso, Fasti, III, l. 167-258; Rollin, Histoire Romaine, I, p. 44.

27 Bryson, Tradition and Desire, p. 89 and Rosenblum, "A New Source for David's 'Sabines'".

28 In the unfinished autobiography of after 1808, David recalled the importance of Trajan's column to his studies in Rome:

...mes courses dans les musées, dans les galeries  
m'ouvrirent les yeux lorsque la divine colonne trajane fixa  
totalement mes irrésolutions; je fis monter dans mon atelier  
plusieurs de ces bas-reliefs. Je passai six mois à les  
copier.

Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1368, p.157 from Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts, Mss. 316, No. 51-51.

29 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1326, p. 150, "NOTE SUR LA NUDITE DE MES HEROS".

30 J. Farington, The Diary of Joseph Farington (New Haven and London, 1979; edited by K. Garlick and A. Macintyre), V, p. 1825. Entry for 3rd September 1802. See also INTRODUCTION footnote 14 above.

31 "Reflexions sur ce tableau par Landon", Collection Deloynes, XXI, No. 593.

32 E. Lajer-Burcharth, "David's *Sabine Women*: Body, Gender and Republican Culture under the Directory", Art History, 14, 3, pp. 397-430.

33 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1377. from Archives Nationales, minutier central, CVIII, 1012.

34 See chapter HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PAINTER above.

35 Lajer-Burcharth, "David's *Sabine Women*." The writer, in addition, applies latter-day psycho-analytic theory to the work.

36 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Theseus and Romulus, 3.

37 Ovidius Naso, Fasti, l. 167-258.

38 Oeuvres de Condillac (Paris, 1798).

- 39 Cited in Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 427, p. 50 from Archives Parlementaires, LX, pp. 695-696.
- 40 Ibid., Nos. 109, 118, 174.
- 41 Cited in Ibid., No. 1326, p. 149.
- 42 Cited in Ibid., No. 1326, pp. 149-150.
- 43 Herbert, David, Voltaire, Brutus.
- 44 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1291, p. 143 from Le Décade philosophique, 30 vendémiaire, an VII.
- 45 R. Michel, "L'art des Salons".
- 46 Cited in Premiers Collections: Musée de la Révolution Française (Vizille, 1985) from a decree of 20 November 1799 printed in Angoulême, inv. 84.497.
- 47 M. Lyons, France under the Directory (Cambridge, 1975), p. 156.
- 48 Ibid., pp. 212-213.
- 49 Ibid., pp. 226-227.
- 50 Ibid., p. 227.
- 51 Ibid., pp. 228-229.
- 52 Guiffrey, "Exposition de 1796", Collection des livrets, p. 13:  
 La Liberté vous invite à retracer ses triomphes.  
 Transmettez à la postérité les actions qui doivent honorer  
 votre pays. Quel Artiste français ne sent pas le besoin de  
 célébrer la grandeur et l'énergie que la nation a déployées,  
 la puissance avec laquelle elle a commandé aux événements,  
 et créé ses destinées? Les sujets que vous prenez dans  
 l'histoire des peuples anciens se sont multipliés autour de  
 vous. Ayez un orgueil, un caractère national; peignez notre  
 héroïsme, et que les générations qui vous succéderont ne  
 puissent point vous reprocher de n'avoir pas paru Français  
 dans l'époque la plus remarquable de notre histoire.
- 53 Cited in U. van de Sandt, "Institutions et Concours", Aux Armes  
 et aux Arts!, pp. 137-165 from Recueil de différentes pièces des  
 procès-verbaux du jury qui a été nommé pour le jugement des ouvrages



exposés aux Salons qui ont eu lieu depuis l'an II jusques et y compris l'an VI (Paris, an VIII), pp. 12-18.

54 Cited in Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, p. 359 from "La Clef du Cabinet", 3 floréal an VI in A. Aulard, Paris pendant la réaction thermidorienne et sous le Directoire (Paris, 1898-1902), IV, p. 596.

55 Cited in P. Bordes, "La Patrie en danger par Lethière et l'esprit militaire", La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France, 1986, 4/5, pp. 301-6 from P. Chaussard, La Decade Philosophique of 2 October 1799.

56 Lyons, France under the Directory, p. 143.

57 Van de Sandt, "Institutions et Concours".

58 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1211, p. 119 from Archives nationales, C.360, A. No. 135.

59 J Thuillier, Tout l'oeuvre peint de Poussin (Flammarion, 1974), p. 108. For the reference in David's Les Sabines text, see above p. 59.

60 See R. Michel, "L'art des Salons".

61 K. Domenici, "James Gillray: An English Source for David's Les Sabines", Art Bulletin, LXV, 1983, pp. 493-495.

62 See M. Menard, "Le Château, la Forteresse, dans l'Imagerie Révolutionnaire", Les Images de la Révolution Française, pp. 291-298.

63 Plutarch, Vitae Parallelae, Romulus, 17-18.

64 Ovidius Naso, Fasti, l. 117-118.

65 C. Paradin, Devises Heroïques (1557; Facsimile Scholar Press Menston, 1971), pp. 229-230:

OMNIS CARO FOENUM

Si la nation et le Peuple, lequel (en vain) ha plus tourmenté le monde, que point d'autre, (se cuidant tousiours agrandir, et immortaliser en icelui) ust peu faire tant de son proufit, que de contempler en l'enseigne de Romulus, son auteur et fondateur, ce qu'elle pouuoit représenter, pour estre d'un Manipule, ou boteau de Foin, sus une Lance, il ne

se fust tant rompu le corps, ny passionné l'esprit:  
connoissant la mutacion et fragilité de toutes choses, estre  
si brieue et si soudeine. Et principalement des corps  
charnelz: desquels la generale et tant hative mortalité, est  
acomparée par le Profete, au Foin, de verd en sec tombant:  
et fleur des chams tantôt fanee.

- 66 See M. Rosenberg, "Raphael's Transfiguration and Napoleon's Cultural Politics", Eighteenth-Century Studies, 1985/6, XIX, pp. 180-205.
- 67 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1232, p. 135 from Archives nationales, F<sup>17</sup> 1279, d. 1. See also Journal de Paris, 30 thermidor an IV.
- 68 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 209.
- 69 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1375, p. 159.
- 70 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 233.
- 71 See C. M. Osborne, Pierre Didot The Elder and French Book Illustration 1789-1822 (New York and London, 1985), especially pp. 91-95.
- 72 See Triomphe et Mort du Héros (Venice, 1988), pp. 413-414.
- 73 P. Chaussard, Sur le tableau des Sabines par David (Paris, 1800), p. 4.
- 74 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1329, p. 150.
- 75 R. Michel, "L'art des Salons".
- 76 Ibid., and "Seconde lettre de Polyscope", Collection Deloynes, XVIII, No. 479.
- 77 L. Hunt, "The Political Psychology of Revolutionary Caricatures", French Caricature and the French Revolution 1789-1799, (Chicago, 1988), pp. 33-40.

- 78 French Caricature and the French Revolution, No. 160, p. 252 and No. 173, pp. 259-260. See also La Révolution Française et l'Europe 1789-1799 (Paris, 1989), No. 945, p. 719.
- 79 David, Le peintre Louis David, p. 363.
- 80 Ibid., p. 363.
- 81 Ibid., p. 363.
- 82 Cited in P. Bordes, "Les Arts après la Terreur: Topino-Lebrun, Hennequin et la peinture politique sous le Directoire", Revue du Louvre et du Musées de France, XXIX, 1979, pp. 199-212 from H. Bourienne, Mémoires (Paris, 1829), III, p. 327.
- 83 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, pp. 3-44.
- 84 Ibid., p. 218.
- 85 M. Kemp, "J-L David and the Prelude to a Moral Victory for Sparta", Art Bulletin, 1969, LI, pp. 178-183.
- 86 For discussions about the dates when David may have been working on the painting, see Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, pp. 490-497 and A. St. Nash "The Compositional Evolution of David's Léonidas at Thermopylae", Metropolitan Museum Journal, 1978, 13, pp. 101-112.
- 87 E. J. Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 338.
- 88 G. E. Lessing, Laokoon: oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie (Berlin, 1766; translated by C. Vanderbourg, Paris, 1802).
- 89 H. T. Parker, The Cult of Antiquity and the French Revolutionaries (Chicago, 1937); C. Mossé, L'Antiquité dans la Révolution française (Paris, 1989).
- 90 Parker, The Cult of Antiquity, p. 81 from P. Dupont, Archives Parlementaires de 1787 à 1860. Vol XV: recueil complet des débats

législatifs et politiques des chambres françaises (Paris, 1862-1913), p. 419.

91 E. Rawson, The Spartan Tradition in European Thought (Oxford, 1969), especially pp. 231-294.

92 C. H. d'Estaing, Les Thermopyles; Tragédie de Circonstance (Paris, 1791), p. 5:

Le dévouement sublime de Spartiates serait le nôtre: le cadre est si beau, qu'il fera peut-être oublier l'incapacité du peintre. Un dialogue lent, trop de maximes et trop peu d'action, des situations qui ne sont pas nouvelles, des longueurs dans certains endroits, point de développement dans d'autres, une gazette faiblement rimée, voilà l'esquisse véridique de cet ouvrage; son unique attrait, sa seule excuse, ne peuvent exister que dans le cœur de ceux qui le liront.

93 Ibid., pp. 19-20.

94 Ibid., Act I, Scene 1, p. 23.

95 Ibid., Act V, Scene 8, p. 118.

96 H. Grégoire, Rapport Sur les Inscriptions des Monumens publics - suivi du décret de la Convention nationale. Séance du 22 Nivôse, l'an 2 de la République une et indivisible (Paris, 1794), p. 5, p. 9:

Sous le despotisme, le peuple étoit compté pour rien; actuellement il est ce qu'il doit être, c'est-à-dire tout. Les monumens publics doivent donc lui rappeler son courage, ses triomphes, ses droits, sa dignité; ils doivent parler un langage intelligible pour tous, et qui soit le véhicule du patriotisme et de la vertu, dont le citoyen doit se pénétrer par tous les sens...

...La liberté que nous avons conquise sera son héritage; en bénissant les fondateurs de la République, sans doute elle transmettra ce dépôt inaltérable aux générations suivantes, et notre langue durera plus que la pierre et les métaux sur lesquels elle sera gravée.

97 Ibid., p. 4.

98 The whole speech is cited in La Mort de Bara (Avignon, 1989) pp. 143-154 from the Moniteur Universel du 19 floréal an II (7-8 May 1794), pp. 928-932.

- 99 *Ibid.*,
- 100 *Ibid.*,
- 101 L. de Tréogate, Le Combat des Thermopyles ou l'Ecole des Guerriers (Paris, An III). See also J. H. Rubin, "Painting and Politics II. J-L David's Patriotism, or the Conspiracy of Gracchus Babeuf and the Legacy of Topino-Lebrun", Art Bulletin, 1976, LVIII, pp. 547-568.
- 102 de Tréogate, Le Combat des Thermopyles, Titlepage.
- 103 *Ibid.*, I, 3, p. 9.
- 104 *Ibid.*, II, 6, p. 39:  
 Nous sommes en petit nombre, mais tous armés de cette union redoutable qui distingue par toute la terre, les guerriers républicains. Avant d'entreprendre le coup hardi que je vous propose, resserons, s'il se peut encore, fortifions dans le sein de l'amitié cette confiance sans bornes qui nous est nécessaire pour ne former tous ensemble, qu'un seul bras indomptable, qu'une seule âme pénétrée de sa grandeur, et capable d'en calculer les effets prodigeux... (Tendant les bras aux Spartiates) Chers amis, avant de partir, embrassons-nous.
- 105 *Ibid.*, II, 13, pp. 36-37.
- 106 *Ibid.*, III, 6, p. 49.
- 107 *Ibid.*, I, 7, pp. 12-16.
- 108 *Ibid.*, I, 7, pp. 12-13.
- 109 *Ibid.*, III, 4, p. 46:  
 Compagnons, vous voyez ce jeune chêne; cet arbre plaît à la liberté, parce qu'il est le symbole de la force: en reconnaissance de notre victoire, il faut le lui consacrer, et y suspendre nos trophées.
- 110 Lajer-Burcharth, "David's Sabine Women".
- 111 P. Bordes, "Les Arts après la Terreur: Topino-Lebrun, Hennequin et la peinture politique sous le Directoire", La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France, 1979, XXIX, pp. 199-212; Rubin, "Painting and Politics II. J-L. David's Patriotism".

- 112 See Bordes, "Les arts après la Terreur".
- 113 See Rubin, "Painting and Politics II. J-L. David's Patriotism".
- 114 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 225.
- 115 Seneca, Epistulae Morales, LXXXII, (edition of Paris, 1770), p. 195.
- 116 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, pp. 225-228.
- 117 Ibid., pp. 229-230.
- 118 Ibid., p. 231.
- 119 Ibid., p. 233.
- 120 Ibid., pp. 234-235.
- 121 St. Nash, "The Compositional Evolution of David's Léonidas at Thermopylae".
- 122 J. Bean and D. von Bothmer, "Les Sources Classiques de l'Oeuvre: A Propos du Léonidas aux Thermopyles de David II", Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France, 1964, pp. 330-332.
- 123 Herodotus, Historiarum Libri 9, VII, 219, (Paris, 1786; translated by M. Larcher), V, p. 150.
- 124 Explication du Tableau des Thermopyles, de M. David (Paris, 1814), no pagination.
- 125 Ibid.,: "les Spartiates ne doivent plus désormais avoir aucun rapport avec les mortels: ils vont souper chez Pluton.
- 126 Tacitus, Annales, XV, 54.
- 127 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 337.
- 128 Bordes, Le Serment du Jeu de Paume, p. 61.
- 129 Kemp, "J-L. David and the Prelude to a Moral Victory for Sparta".
- 130 Rollin, Histoire Ancienne, III, pp. 230-231.
- 131 Ibid., III, pp. 235-236.

132 Ibid., III, p. 237: "le premier germe des victoires suivantes, qui firent perdre aux Perses pour toujours la pensée de venir attaquer la Grèce."

133 Ibid., III, p. 237.

134 Explication du Tableau des Thermopyles.

135 Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, p. 500 noted that these annotations are specifically taken from Abbé Barthélemy, Le Voyage du jeune Anarcharsis en Grèce, dans le milieu du quatrième siècle avant l'ère vulgaire (Paris, 1788; edition of 1789), III, 50, pp.245-246.

136 Barthélemy, Le Voyage du jeune Anarcharsis en Grèce (1788), I, p. 134.

137 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, Nos. 1436, 1468, pp. 166, 170.

138 Ibid., No. 1710, p. 197.

139 Ibid., Nos. 1414, 1520, 1683, 1710, pp. 164, 177, 194, 197.

140 Ibid., No. 1536, p. 179.

141 Information about the Grande Armée has principally been taken from G. E. Rothenburg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon (London, 1977), especially pp. 54-150.

142 Cited in A. Poitrineau, "'Fonctionnarisme militaire ou Catharsis Guerrière?' - Les facettes de la gloire au temps de la Grande Nation d'après les actes et les écrits des soldats de l'Empire", L'Armée La Gloire 1745-1871 (Clermont-Ferrand), I, pp. 209-219 from F-G.

Hourtoulle, Le général comte Charles Lasalle 1775-1809 (Paris, 1979, p. 16.

143 These bulletins have been collected in A. Goujon, Bulletins Officiels de la Grande Armée dictés par l'Empereur Napoléon (Paris,

1824). A short extract from p. 156 of a report just after the Battle of Weissenfels of 1 May 1813, which was published in the Moniteur of 8

May 1813, is sufficient to indicate the type of rhetoric used:

Devenu plus prudent par le combat de Weissenfels, et étonné du bel ordre, et du sang-froid de notre marche, l'ennemi n'a osé aborder d'aucune part l'infanterie, et il a été écrasé par notre mitraille. Notre perte se monte à 33 hommes tués et 55 blessés, dont un chef de bataillon. Cette perte pourrait être considérée comme extrêmement légère, en comparaison de celle de l'ennemi qui a eu 3 colonels, 30 officiers et 400 hommes tués ou blessés, outre un grand nombre de chevaux; mais par une de ces fatalités dont l'histoire de la guerre est pleine, le premier coup de canon qui fut tiré dans cette journée, coupa le poignet au duc d'Istrie, lui perça la poitrine, et le jeta roide mort. Il s'était avancé à 500 pas du côté des tirailleurs pour bien reconnaître la plaine. Ce maréchal qu'on peut à juste titre nommer brave et juste, était recommandable autant par son coup d'oeil militaire, par sa grande expérience de l'arme de la cavalerie, que par ses qualités civiles et son attachement à l'Empereur. Sa mort sur le champ d'honneur est la plus digne d'envie; elle a été si rapide qu'elle a dû être sans douleur.

144 Cited in M-L. Biver, Le Paris de Napoléon (Paris, 1963) pp. 37-38 from Correspondance de Napoléon I<sup>er</sup>, publiée par l'ordre de L'Empereur Napoléon III (Paris, 1858-1869), No. 13,063.

145 Rothenburg, The Art of Warfare, p. 138.

146 Schnapper, David témoin de son temps, pp. 137-138.

147 Letters published by P. Mesplé "David et ses élèves toulousains", Archives de l'Art Français, nouvelle période, 1969, XXIV, pp. 91-102.

148 Rothenburg, The Art of Warfare, pp. 54-57.

149 Delécluze, Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 340.

150 Such a perception accords badly with, for instance, Linda Nochlin's observations on Le Serment des Horaces (Plate 30): that there is here a simple binary division between female resignation, flaccidity, relaxation, weakness and passivity and masculine strength, energy, tension and concentration which is "not something that needs



to be thought about." L. Nochlin, Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays (U.S.A., 1988; edition of London, 1989), pp. 3-4.

151 Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, pp. 482-483, 509. See also Archives Nationales O<sup>2</sup> 836.

152 Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, No. 226. p. 512.

153 Delécluze, Jacques-Louis David, son école et son temps, p. 376.

154 Ibid., p. 356.

155 Cited in Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, p. 488 from La Grèce et la France, ou réflexions sur le tableau de Léonidas de M. David, adressées aux défenseurs de la Patrie, par une Française (Paris, 1815), p. 42.

156 See Pigler, Barockthemen, II, pp. 366-368.

157 G. Plinius Secundus, Historia Naturalis, XXXV, 10.

158 See M-C. Chaudonneret, "Historicism and 'Heritage' in the Louvre, 1820-40: From the Musée Charles X to the Galerie d'Apollon", Art History, 1991, 14, pp. 488-520 for a discussion of the new types of history and of painting in early nineteenth-century France.

159 H. W. Janson, "Salon de 1814", Catalogues of the Paris Salon 1673-1881 (New York and London, 1977), No. 435, p. 44.

160 Wildenstein, Documents complémentaires, No. 1860, p. 216 from Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts, Mss. 323, 9.

161 Barthélemy, Le Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis (1788), III, pp. 470-471.

162 Ibid., III, pp. 473-474.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Académie de France à Rome. David e Roma, Rome, 1981.
- Académie de France à Rome. Bégnine Gagneraux (1756-1795), Rome, 1983.
- Aghion, M. Le Théâtre à Paris au XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, Paris, 1926.
- Allardyce Nicoll, G. C. The Development of the Theatre, London, 1927.
- Allevy, M-A. La Mise en scène en France dans la première moitié du dix-neuvième siècle, Paris, 1938.
- Anonyme Latin: Traité de Physiognomie, Translated by J. André. Paris, 1981.
- L'Année Littéraire, Paris, 1754-1790.
- Ariès, P. Le Temps de l'Histoire, Monaco, 1954.
- Arikha, A. Nicolas Poussin: 'The Rape of the Sabines', Houston, 1983.
- Arts Council of Great Britain. The Age of Neo-Classicism, London, 1972.
- Aulard, F. Paris sous le Premier Empire, Paris, 1912.
- Aux Armes et Aux Arts! Les Arts de la Révolution 1789-1799, Edited by P. Bordes and R. Michel. Paris, 1988.
- Avignon, Musée Calvet, 'La Mort de Bara' De L'évènement au mythe: autour du tableau de Jacques-Louis David, Avignon, 1989.
- Baltrusaitis, J. "Phisiognomonie Animale" Aberrations: Quatre Essais sur La Légende des Formes, Paris, 1957, pp. 8-46.
- Barasch, M. Giotto and the Language of Gesture, Cambridge, 1987.
- Bardon, H. "Poussin et la Littérature Latine", Nicolas Poussin, Edited by A. Chastel. Paris, 1960, I, pp. 123-132.
- Barnwell, H. T. "Some Notes on Poussin, Corneille and Racine", Australian Journal of French Studies, IV, 2, pp. 149-161.
- Baron, A. Lettres à Sophie sur la danse, Paris, 1825.
- Barthélemy, J-J. Le Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce, Paris, 1788.

- Bätschmann, O. Dialektik der Malerei von Nicolas Poussin, Munich, 1982.
- Batteux, C. Les Beaux-Arts réduits à un même principe, Paris, 1746.
- Baxandall, M. Patterns of intention on the historical explanation of pictures, New Haven and London, 1985.
- Bean, J. and Bothmer, Dietrich von. "Les Sources Classiques de l'Oeuvre: A Propos du Léonidas aux Thermopyles de David", Revue du Louvre, 1964, pp. 330-332.
- Becq, A. "Expositions, peintres et critiques: vers l'image moderne de l'artiste", Dix-huitième siècle, 1982, XIV, pp. 131-149.
- Bellori, G. P. Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori e Architetti Moderni, Turin, 1976.
- Bergman, G M. Lighting in the Theatre, Stockholm, 1977.
- Bialostocki, J. "Poussin et le TRAITÉ DE PEINTURE de Leonard Nicolas Poussin, Edited by A. Chastel. Paris, 1960, I, pp. 133-140.
- Biver, M-L. Le Paris de Napoléon, Paris, 1963.
- Blunt, A. Art and Architecture in France. 1500 to 1700, Harmondsworth, 1953.
- Blunt, A. "Newly Identified Drawings by Poussin and his Followers", Master Drawings, 1974, XII, pp. 239-248.
- Blunt, A. Nicolas Poussin, Washington, 1958.
- Blunt, A. The Paintings of Nicolas Poussin: A Critical Catalogue, London, 1966.
- Blunt, A. "Poussin and his Roman Patrons", Walter Friedländer zum 90 Geburtstag - Eine Festgabe seiner europäischen Schüler, Freunde und Verehrer, Berlin, 1965, pp. 58-75.
- Boileau-Despréaux, N. Oeuvres Complètes, Edited by F. Escal. Bruges, 1966.
- Boime, A. "Marmontel's BELISAIRE and the pre-revolutionary progressivism of David", Art History, 3, 1980, pp. 81-101.
- Bonnardet, E. "Comment un Oratorien vint en aide à un grand peintre", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 19, 6ème période, 1938, pp. 311-315.
- Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts. Les Arts du Théâtre de Watteau à Fragonard, Paris, 1980.

Bordes, P. "Les Arts après la Terreur: Topino-Lebrun, Hennequin et la peinture politique sous la Directoire", La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France, 1979, pp. 199-212.

Bordes, P. "L'Art et Le Politique", Aux Armes et Aux Arts! Les Arts de la Révolution 1789-1799, Edited by P. Bordes and R. Michel, Paris, 1988.

Bordes, P. David, Paris, 1988.

Bordes, P. "François-Xavier Fabre, 'Peintre d'Histoire'", Burlington Magazine, CXVII, 1975, pp. 91-98 and pp. 155-162.

Bordes, P. "Girodet et Fabre: Camarades d'Atelier", La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France, 1974, 1, pp. 393-399.

Bordes, P. "'La Patrie en danger' par Lethière et l'esprit militaire", La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France, 1986, 4-5, pp. 301-306.

Bordes, P. Le Serment du Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David. Le peintre, le milieu et son temps, de 1789 à 1792, Paris, 1983.

Bossuet, J. Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle à Monseigneur le Dauphin, Paris, 1681.

Boyer, M. F. "Napoléon et l'Attribution des Grands Prix décennaux", Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français, 1947-8, pp. 66-72.

Brookner, A. Jacques-Louis David, London, 1980.

Brookner, A. Greuze: The Rise and Fall of an Eighteenth-Century Phenomenon, London, 1972.

Brookner, A. "Aspects of Neo-Classicism in French Painting", Apollo, LXVIII, 1958, pp. 67-73.

Broome, J. Rousseau: A Study of his Thought, London, 1963.

Bryson, N. "Centres and Margins in David", Word and Image, 4, 1988, pp. 43-50.

Bryson, N. Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix, Cambridge, 1984.

Bryson, N. Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime, Cambridge, 1981.

Buffon, Comte de. Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1842.

Bulwer, J. Chrologia: or the Naturall Language of the Hand. Composed of the Speaking Motions and Discoursing Gestures thereof..., London, 1644.

Cabuchet, F. Essai sur l'Expression de la Face dans l'Etat de Santé et de Malade, Paris, an X.

Calvet-Sérullaz, A. "Unpublished Studies for 'The Oath of the Horatii' by Jacques-Louis David", Master Drawings, VI, 1968, pp. 37-42.

Cambry, C. Essai sur la Vie et sur les tableaux du Poussin, Paris, 1783.

Carlson, M. The Theatre of the French Revolution, New York, 1966.

Cassou, J. "David, auteur tragique", Revue des Arts, 1, 1951, pp. 37-43.

Castel de Saint Pierre, Abbé de C. I. "Discours sur les differences du Grand Homme et de l'Homme Illustre", Histoire d'Epaminondas pour servir de suite aux Hommes Illustres de Plutarque, Paris, 1739, pp. xxv-lxviij.

Caylus, Comte de. Papiers divers du Comte de Caylus Paris, Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts, MSS. 522-523.

Caylus, Comte de. Tableaux Tirés de l'ILIADÉ de l'ODYSSÉE d'Homere et de l'ENEIDE de Virgile avec des Observations sur le Costume, Paris, 1757.

Caylus, Comte de. Discours sur la Peinture et la Sculpture, Edited by A. Fontaine. Paris, 1910.

Chaussard, P. Sur le tableau des Sabines par David, Paris, 1800.

Chaussard, P. Le Pausanias Français, Paris, 1806.

Cicero, M. T. De Officiis. Translated by M. de Barrett, Paris, 1768.

Classical Literary Criticism: Aristotle, Horace, Longinus. Translated by T. S. Dorsch, Harmondsworth, 1965.

Cochin, C. M. Lettres sur l'Opéra, Paris, 1781.

Cochin, C. M. Projet d'une Salle de Spectacle pour un théâtre de Comédie, Paris, 1765.

Coëffeteau, N. Tableau des Passions humaines, de leurs causes et de leurs effets, Paris, 1620.

Collé, C. Journal et Memoires, Edited by H. Bonhomme. Paris, 1868.

Collection Deloynes, Collection de 63 volumes de pièces sur les Beaux-Arts et les critiques de Salons conservés au cabinet des Estampes de la Bibliothèque Nationale.

Condillac, E. Bonnot de. Oeuvres Philosophiques, Paris, 1947.

Conférences de l'Académie Royale de peinture et de sculpture pendant l'année 1667, Paris, 1669.

Corneille, P. Oeuvres complètes, edited by G. Couton, Tours, 1980.

Correspondance des Directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome avec les Surintendants des Bâtiments, Edited by A. de Montaiglon and J. Guiffrey, Paris, 1887-1908.

Correspondance littéraire philosophique et critique depuis 1753 jusqu'en 1790, Edited by J. Taschereau. Paris, 1829.

Correspondance littéraire, philosophique, et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister etc, Edited by M. Tourneux. Paris, 1877-1882.

Costello, J. "'The Rape of the Sabine Women' by Nicolas Poussin", Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, V, 1947, 8, pp. 197-204.

Coupé, M. L. Théâtre de Sénèque, Paris, 1795.

Crow, T. "'The Oath of the Horatii' in 1785. Painting and pre-revolutionary radicalism in France", Art History, 1, 1978, pp. 424-471.

Crow, T. Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris, London and New Haven, 1985.

Cureau de la Chambre, M. Les Caracteres des Passions, Paris, 1640.

Cureau de la Chambre, M. Discours sur les Principes de la Chiromance, Paris, 1653.

Curtius Rufus, Q. Gesta Alexandri. Translated by M. de Vaugelas, La Haye, 1727.

Dandré Bardon, M-F. Costume des Anciens Peuples, Paris, 1772.

Dandré Bardon, M-F. Histoire Universelle traitée relativement aux arts de Peindre et de Sculpter ou Tableaux de l'Histoire, Paris, 1769.

Dandré Bardon, M-F. Traité de Peinture, Paris, 1765.

Darnton, R. The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History, London and New York, 1984.

David, J. L. Le Peintre Louis David, Paris, 1880.

De Caso, J. "Jacques-Louis David and the Style 'All'antica'", Burlington Magazine, CXIV, 1972, pp. 686-690.

Decugis, N. and Reymond, S. Le Décor de Théâtre en France du Moyen Age à 1925, Paris, 1953.

- Delacroix, E. Oeuvres Littéraires, Paris, 1923.
- Delécluze, E. Louis David, Son école et Son Temps, Paris, 1855.
- Descartes, R. Passions de l'Ame, Paris and Amsterdam, 1649.
- Desjardins, P. La Méthode des Classiques Français, Paris, 1904.
- Diderot, D. Oeuvres Complètes, Edited by J. Assézat, Paris, 1875.
- Diderot, D. Oeuvres Complètes, édition critique et annotée, Edited by H. Dieckmann, J. Proust and J. Varloot. Paris, 1975-.
- Diderot, D. Oeuvres Esthétiques, Paris, 1968.
- Diderot, D. Salons, Edited by J. Seznec and J. Adhémar. Oxford, 1957-1967.
- Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Antiquitates Romanae. Translated by C. Bellanger, Paris, 1723.
- Dorat, C. J. La Déclamation Théâtrale, Paris, 1766.
- Dowd, D. "Art and the Theater during the French Revolution: The Role of Louis David", Art Quarterly, XXIII, 1960, pp. 2-22.
- Dowd, D. Jacques-Louis David, Pageant-master of the Republic, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1948.
- Dowley, F. "D'Angiviller's Grands Hommes and the Significant Moment", Art Bulletin, XXXIX, 1957, pp. 259-277.
- Dowley, F. and Korshak, Y. "An Exchange on J L David's 'Paris and Helen'", Art Bulletin, LXX, 1988, pp. 504-520.
- Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. Le Classicisme Français, Dublin, 1985.
- Dubos, J-B. Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture, Paris, 1719.
- Du Castre d'Auvigny, J. Les Vies des Hommes Illustres, Paris, 1739-1768.
- Du Fresnoy, C-A. and Piles, R. de. "L'Art de Peindre" Traduit en François Enrichy de Remarques, et augmenté d'un Dialogue sur le Coloris, Paris, 1673.
- Duncan, C. "Fallen Fathers: images of authority in pre-revolutionary French Art", Art History, 4, 1981, pp. 186-202.
- Elias, N. The Court Society, Translated by E. Jephcott. Oxford, 1983.

Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers, Paris/Neuchâtel, 1751-1765.

Engel, J. J. Ideen zu einer mimik, Berlin, 1785-86. Translated by H. Jansen. Strasbourg and The Hague, 1788.

Engerand, F. Inventaire des tableaux commandés et acheté par la Direction des bâtiments du Roi (1702-1792), Paris, 1900-1901.

Erffa, H. von. and Stanley, A. The Paintings of Benjamin West, New Haven and London, 1986.

Estaing, C. H. d'. Les Thermopyles, Paris, 1791.

Ettlinger, L. D. "Jacques-Louis David and Roman Virtue", Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, CXV, 1967, pp. 105-123.

Explication du Tableau des Thermopyles de M. David, Paris, 1814.

Farington, J. The Diary of Joseph Farington, Edited by K. Garlick and A. Macintyre. New Haven and London, 1978-1984.

Félibien, A. Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes, Paris, 1685-1688.

Fenaille, M. état général des tapisseries de la manufacture des Gobelins 1600-1900, Paris, 1903-1933.

Folkierski, W. "Entre le Classicisme et le Romantisme" étude sur l'esthétique et les Esthéticiens du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris, 1925.

Fontaine, A. Les doctrines d'art en France de Poussin à Diderot, Paris, 1909,

Fontaine, P-F-L. Journal 1799-1853, Paris, 1987.

Fréart de Chambray, R. Idée de la Perfection de la Peinture, Paris, 1662.

Fréart de Chambray, R. Traité de la peinture de Léonard da Vinci donné au public et traduit en françois, Paris, 1651.

Fréart de Chantelou, P. Journal du Voyage en France du Cavalier Bernin, Paris, 1930.

Fried, M. Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot, Chicago and London, 1980.

Friedländer, W. and Blunt, A. The Drawings of Nicolas Poussin, London, 1939-1972.

Fumaroli, M. "Muta Eloquentia: La représentation de l'éloquence dans l'oeuvre de Nicolas Poussin", Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français, 1984, pp. 29-48.



- Gaehtgens, T. W. "Jacques-Louis David: 'Leonidas bei den Thermopylen'" Ideal und Wirklichkeit der bildenden Kunst im späten 18. Jahrhundert, Berlin, 1984, pp. 211-251.
- Gaehtgens, T. W. and Lugand, J. Joseph-Marie Vien 1716-1809, Paris, 1988.
- Germer, S. and Kohle, H. "From The Theatrical to The Aesthetic Hero: On the Privatization of the Idea of Virtue in David's Brutus and Sabines", Art History, 9, 1986, pp. 168-184.
- Gombrich, E. H. "Icones Symbolicae", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 1948, pp. 163-192.
- Gombrich, E. H. Art and Illusion, London, 1960.
- Gombrich, E. H. The Image and the Eye, Oxford, 1982.
- Goodden, A. Actio and Persuasion: Dramatic Performance in Eighteenth-Century France, Oxford, 1986.
- Goujon, M-A. Bulletins Officiels de la Grande Armée, Paris, 1824.
- Grégoire, H. B. Rapport sur les Inscriptions des Monumens publics suivi du décret de la Convention nationale, Paris, 1794.
- Guibert, J-A-H. Eloge du Maréchal de Catinat, Edimbourg, 1775.
- Guiffrey, J. J. Collection des livrets des anciennes expositions depuis 1673 jusqu'en 1800, Paris, 1869-1871.
- Guiffrey, J. J. "David et le théâtre pendant son séjour à Bruxelles", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1903, pp. 201-208.
- Guizot, F. De l'Etat des Beaux-arts en France, Paris, 1810.
- Hamiche, D. Le Théâtre et la Révolution, Paris, 1973.
- Hamilton Hazlehurst, F. "The Artistic Evolution of David's 'Oath'", Art Bulletin, XLII, 1960, pp. 59-63.
- Haskell, F. Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque, London, 1963.
- Haskell, F. Rediscoveries in Art, Oxford, 1976.
- Haskell, F. and Penny, N. Taste and the Antique: The Love of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900, New Haven and London, 1981.
- Hauteceur, L. Rome et la Renaissance de l'Antiquité a la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris, 1912.
- Hedgcock, F. A. David Garrick and his French Friends, Paris, 1912.

- Herbert, R. David, Voltaire, Brutus and The French Revolution, London, 1972.
- Herodotus, Historiarum Libri 9. Translated by M. Larcher, Paris, 1786.
- Hess, G. "Der Tod des Seneca. Ikonographie. Biographie. Tragödentheorie", Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft, 25, 1968, pp. 196-228.
- Holma, K. David: Son Evolution et son Style, Paris, 1940.
- Honour, H. Neo-classicism, Harmondsworth, 1968.
- Hourticq, L. "De Poussin à Watteau" ou des Origines de l'école Parisienne de Peinture, Paris, 1921.
- Howard, S. Sacrifice of the Hero: The Roman Years, a Classical Frieze by Jacques-Louis David, Sacramento, 1975.
- Hunt, L. Politics, Culture and Class in The French Revolution, Berkeley and London, 1984.
- Les Images de la Révolution Française, Edited by M. Vovelle. Paris, 1988.
- Irwin, D. English Neoclassical Art, London, 1966.
- Janelle, P. The Catholic Reformation, Milwaukee, 1975.
- Jobert, B. "The Travaux d'Encouragement: An Aspect of Official Arts Policy in France under Louis XVI", Oxford Art Journal, 10, 1987, pp.3-14.
- Johnson, D. "Corporality and Communication: The Gestural Revolution of Diderot, David and 'The Oath of the Horatii'", Art Bulletin, LXXI, 1989, pp. 92-114.
- Johnson, D. "Desire Demythologized: David's 'L'Amour quittant Psyché', Art History, 9, 1986, pp. 450-470.
- Johnson, D. "Some works of noble note: David's 'La Colère d'Achille' revisited" Gazette des Beaux-Arts, CIV, 6ème période, 1984, pp. 223-230.
- Jouanny, C. Correspondance de Nicolas Poussin, Paris, 1911.
- Jouin, H. Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, Paris, 1893.
- Journal de Paris, 1777-1827.

Jullien, A. "Les Spectateurs sur le Théâtre." Etablissement et Suppression des Bancs sur les Scènes de la Comédie Française et de l'Opéra, Paris, 1875.

Junius, F. The Painting of the Ancients in 3 Bookes, London, 1638.

Kalnein, W. G. and Levey, M. Art and Architecture of the Eighteenth Century in France, Harmondsworth, 1972.

Kemp, M. "J-L David and the Prelude to a Moral Victory for Sparta", Art Bulletin, LI, 1969, pp. 178-183.

Kemp, M. "Some Reflections on Watery Metaphors in Winckelmann, David and Ingres", Burlington Magazine, CX, 1968, pp. 266-270.

Kemp Smith, N. New Studies in the Philosophy of Descartes, London, 1966.

Kernodle, G. R. From Art to Theatre, Chicago, 1943.

Korshak, Y. "Paris and Helen by J L David: Choice and Judgement on the Eve of the French Revolution", Art Bulletin, LXIX, 1987, pp.102-116.

Ladborough, R. W. "Translation from the Ancients in seventeenth-century France", Journal of the Warburg Institute, 2, 1938-1939, pp.85-104.

La Harpe, J-F. de. Coriolan, Paris, 1784.

La Font de Saint-Yenne, de. Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France, La Haye, 1747.

La Font de Saint-Yenne, de. Lettre de l'auteur des Réflexions sur la peinture, n.p., n.d.,

La Font de Saint-Yenne, de. Sentimens sur quelques ouvrages de peinture, sculpture et gravure écrits à un particulier en province, n.p., 1754.

Lajer-Burchardt, E. "Les Oeuvres de David en prison: art engagé après Thermidor", Revue du Louvre, 1989, pp. 310-321.

Lajer-Burchardt, E. "David's Sabine Women: Body, Gender and Republican Culture under the Directory", Art History, 1991, pp. 397-430.

Laugier, M-A. Observations sur l'Architecture, La Haye, 1765.

Laugier, M-A. Maniere de bien juger des ouvrages de peinture, Paris, 1771.

Lavallée, J. and Filhol, A. M. Galerie du Musée Napoléon, Paris, 1804-1828.

Lavater, J. G. Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe, Leipzig and Winterthur, 1775-1778. Translated by E. de La Fite Caillard and H. Renfer, La Haye, 1783-1803.

Lawrenson, T. E. The French Stage in the Seventeenth Century, Manchester, 1957.

Leblanc, l'Abbé, Lettre sur l'exposition des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture etc., de l'année 1747, et en général sur l'utilité de ces sortes d'expositions, à monsieur R. D. R., n.p., 1747.

Lebon, I. La Phisionomie d'Adamant Sophiste Interpretée, Paris, 1556.

Le Brun, C. Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière, Amsterdam and Paris, 1698.

Lee, S. "Jacques-Louis David and the Prix de Rome", Unpublished Ph.d. University of Reading, 1984.

Lee, S. "Jean-Germain Drouais and the 1784 Prix de Rome", Burlington Magazine, CXXX, 1988, pp. 361-365.

Lee, V. "Jacques-Louis David: The Versailles Sketchbook", Burlington Magazine, 1969, pp. 197-208 and 360-369.

Leith, J. A. The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France 1750-1799 Toronto, 1969.

Le Faucheur, M. Traicte de l'Action de l'Orateur ou de la Prononciation et du Geste, Paris, 1676.

Leonardo on Painting, Translated by M. Kemp and M. Walker. London, 1989.

L'Epée, C. M de. Institution des Sourds et Muets par la voie des Signes Methodiques, Paris, 1776.

Lessing, G. E. Laokoon: oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie, Berlin, 1766.

Levacher de Charnois, J. C. Costumes et Annales des Grands Théâtres de Paris, Paris, 1786-1790.

Levey, M. National Gallery Catalogues: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century: Italian Schools, London, 1971.

Levi, A. French Moralists: The Theory of the Passions 1585-1642, Oxford, 1964.

Levitine, G. Girodet-Trionson: An Iconographical Study, New York and London, 1978.

Levitine, G. "The Influence of Lavater and Girodet's 'Des Sentiments

de l'Ame'', Art Bulletin, 1954, pp. 33-44.

Livius, T. Ab Urbe Condita. Translated by F. Guérin, Paris, 1770.

Locquin, J. La Peinture d'Histoire en France de 1747 à 1785, Paris, 1912.

Lomazzo, G. P. Trattato Dell'arte de la Pittura, Milan, 1584.

Los Angeles, University of California, French Caricature and the French Revolution 1789-1799, Chicago, 1988.

Lough, J. Paris Theatre Audiences in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, London, 1957.

Lyon, Musée des Beaux-arts, Triomphe et Mort du Héros, Vence, 1988.

Lyons, M. France Under The Directory, Cambridge, 1975.

Mably, G. Bonnot de. De la maniere d'ecrire l'histoire, Paris, 1784.

MacGregor, R. N. "Diderot and the Salon of 1769", Unpublished M.A. University of London, 1975.

Macleod, C. "Thucydides and Tragedy", The Collected Essays, Oxford, 1983.

Mahon, D. Studies in Seicento Art and Theory, London, 1947.

Marmontel, J-F. Belisaire, Paris, 1767.

McClellan, A. "D'Angivillier's 'Great Men' of France and the Politics of the Parlements", Art History, 13, 1990, pp. 175-192.

Meaux Musée de Beaux-Arts. De Nicolò dell'Abate à Nicolas Poussin: aux sources du Classicisme 1550-1650, Ponthierry, 1988.

Le mémoire de Mabelot, Laurent et d'autres décorateurs de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne et de la Comédie Française au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Edited by H. C. Lancaster. Paris, 1920.

Mémoires Secrets pour servir à l'Histoire de la République des Lettres en France depuis 1762 jusqu'à nos jours, London, 1780.

Mercur de France, 1724-1791.

Mesplé, P. "David et ses élèves toulousains", Archives de l'Art Français XXIV, 1969, pp. 91-102.

Michel, R. "L'art des Salons", Aux Armes et Aux Arts! Les Arts de la Révolution 1789-1799, Paris, 1988, pp. 9-101

Michel, R. le beau idéal ou l'art du concept, Paris, 1989.

Miel, M. "Essai Physiognomonique sur le Poussin", Annales de la Société Libre des Beaux-Arts, VII, 1837, pp. 72-84.

Miette de Villars. Mémoires de David: Peintre et Député à la Convention, Paris, 1850.

Mildner-Flesch, U. Das Decorum: Herkunft, Wesen und Wirkung d. Sujetstils am Beispiel Nicolas Poussins, St. Augustin, 1983.

Mitchell, W. J. T. Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology, Chicago and London, 1986.

Mitchell, W. J. T. The Language of Images, Chicago and London, 1980.

Montagu, J. "Le Brun Animalier", Art de France, IV, 1964, pp. 310-314.

Montagu, J. "Le Brun's 'Conférence Sur L'Expression Générale et Particulière'", Unpublished Ph.d. University of London, 1959.

Montagu, J. "The Painted Enigma and French Seventeenth-Century Art", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 31, 1968, pp. 307-335.

Montaigne, M de. Essais. Edited by P. Villey and K. L. Saulnier, Paris, 1965.

Montauban, Musée Ingres. La Révolution Française à l'école de la Vertu antique, Montauban, 1989.

Montesquieu, C-L. de Secondat, Oeuvres complètes. Edited by A. Masson, Paris, 1950.

Montfaucon, B. de, L'Antiquité expliquée, Paris, 1719.

Mossé, C. L'Antiquité dans la Révolution française, Paris, 1989.

Mortier, R. Diderot and the Grand Goût: The Prestige of History Painting in the Eighteenth Century, Oxford, 1982.

Nativel, C. "Franciscus Junius et le 'De Pictura Veterum'", Dix-Septième Siècle, 35, 1983, pp. 7-30.

Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. J-L David, Paris, 1824.

Noverre, J. G. Lettres sur la Danse et sur les Ballets, Paris, 1760.

Oberreuter-Kronabel, G. Der Tod der Philosophen, Munich, 1986.

Observations en réponse à celles de M Cochin relativement au prix d'Expression, Paris, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, MSS. 46.

Ogilvie, R. M. A Commentary on Livy, Oxford, 1965.

Olander, W. "Pour Transmettre à la Posterité: French Painting and the Revolution 1774-1795", Unpublished Ph.d. University of NewYork, 1983.

Osborne, C. M. Pierre Didot the Elder and French Book Illustration, New York and London, 1985.

Ovidius Naso, P. Fasti. Translated by M. Bayeux, Rouen and Paris, n.d.,

Ozouf, M. "Le Panthéon - L'Ecole normale des morts", Les Lieux de Mémoire, 1984, I, pp. 139-166.

Pace, C. Félibien's Life of Poussin, London, 1981.

Panofsky, E. "Idea" A Concept in Art History, Translated by J. S. Peake, Columbia, 1968.

Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais. De David à Delacroix: la peinture française de 1774 à 1830, Paris, 1974.

Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais. La Révolution Française et L'Europe, Paris, 1989.

Paris, Hôtel de la Monnaie. Diderot et l'Art de Boucher à David, Paris, 1984.

Paris, Hôtel de Sully, Le Panthéon: Symbole des révolutions - De l'Eglise de la Nation au Temple des grands hommes, Paris, 1989.

Paris, Musée du Louvre. Exposition Nicolas Poussin, Paris, 1960.

Paris, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. Le Brun à Versailles, Paris, 1985.

Paris, Musée du Louvre, Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825, Paris, 1989.

Parker, H. T. The Cult of Antiquity and the French Revolutionaries, Chicago, 1937.

Pédech, P. Trois Historiens Méconnus, Paris, 1989.

Pernetti, J. Lettres philosophiques sur les Phisionomies, The Hague, 1748.

Perrault, C. Les Hommes Illustres, Paris, 1697-1700.

Pevsner, N. Academies of Art: Past and Present, Cambridge, 1940.

Peyronnet, P. La Mise en Scène au XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, Paris, 1974.

Pierre, C. Les Anciennes écoles de Déclamation Dramatique, Paris, 1895.

Pigler, A. Barockthemen, Budapest, 1956.

- Piles, R. de. Abregé de la vie des Peintres, Paris, 1699.
- Piles, R. de. Cours de peinture par principes, Paris, 1708.
- Plato. Phaedo. Translated by A. Dacier, Paris, 1771.
- Plutarch. Vitae Parallelae. Translated by A. Dacier, Paris, 1762.
- Poitrineau, A. "Fonctionnarisme militaire ou Catharsis Guerriere? - Les facettes de la gloire au temps de la Grande Nation d'après les actes et les écrits des soldats de l'Empire", Bataille, L'Armée, La Gloire 1745-1871, Clermont Ferrand, 1985.
- Porta, G. B. della. Della Fisonomia Dell'Uomo, Padua, 1623.
- Posner, D. Annibale Carracci, London, 1971.
- Potts, A. "Political attitudes and the rise of historicism in art theory", Art History, 1, 1978, pp. 191-213.
- Potts, A. "Winckelmann's construction of history", 5, 1982, pp. 377-407.
- Procès-verbaux de l'Academie royale de peinture et de sculpture 1648-1793, Edited by A. de Montaiglon, Paris, 1875-1876.
- Proust, J. "Diderot et la Physiognomonie", Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études françaises, XIII, 1969, pp. 283-297.
- Puttfarken, T. "David's Brutus and theories of pictorial unity", Art History, 4, 1981, pp. 291-304.
- Puttfarken, T. "Perspective and Composition in Seventeenth-Century French Art Theory", Essays in Honour of John White, 1990, pp. 167-173.
- Puttfarken, T. Roger de Piles' Theory of Art, New Haven and London, 1985.
- Quintilian. Institutio Oratio. Translated by l'Abbé Gedoyn, Paris, 1752.
- O. Ranum, Artisans of Glory, Chapel Hill, 1980.
- Rawson, E. The Spartan Tradition in European Thought, Oxford, 1969.
- The Renaissance Stage: Documents of Serlio, Sabbattini and Furttenbach, Translated by Allardyce Nicoll, J. H. McDowell and G. R. Kernodle, Florida, 1958.
- Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts. Jean-Germain Drouais 1763-1788, Rennes, 1985.
- Rensselaer Lee, W. Ut Pictura Poesis: the Humanistic Theory of Painting, New York, 1967.



Reynolds, J. Discourses on Art, Edited by R. R. Wark. New Haven and London, 1975.

Roberts, W. Jacques-Louis David, Revolutionary Artist, Chapel Hill and London, 1989.

Rollin, C. De la Maniere d'Enseigner et d'Etudier les Belles-Lettres, Paris, 1726-28.

Rollin, C. Histoire ancienne des Egyptiens, des Carthaginiens, des Assyriens, des Babyloniens, des Medes et des Perses, des Macedoniens, des Grecs, Paris, 1730-1738.

Rollin, C. Histoire Romaine depuis la Fondation de Rome jusqu'à la Bataille d'Actium, Paris, 1738.

M. Rosenberg, "Raphael's Transfiguration and Napoleon's Cultural Politics", Eighteenth-century Studies, 1985/6, XIX, pp. 180-205.

Rosenberg, P. 'La Mort de Germanicus' de Poussin du Musée de Minneapolis, Paris, 1973.

Rosenberg, P. and Van de Sandt, U. Pierre Peyron 1744-1814, Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1983.

Rosenblum, R. "David's 'Funeral of Patroclus'", Burlington Magazine, CXV, 1973, pp. 567-576.

Rosenblum, R. "Gavin Hamilton's 'Brutus' and its Aftermath", Burlington Magazine, CIII, 1961, pp. 8-16.

Rosenblum, R. "A New Source for David's 'Sabines'", Burlington Magazine, CIV, 1962, pp. 158-162.

Rosenblum, R. Transformations in Late Eighteenth-Century Art, Princeton, 1967.

Rosenthal, D. La Grande Manière: Historical and Religious Painting in France 1700-1800, Rochester, New York, 1987.

Rothenburg, G. The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, London, 1777.

Rousseau, J-J. Oeuvres Complètes, Edited by B. Gaguebin and M. Raymond, Dijon, 1961-1969.

Rubin, J. H. "Oedipus, Antigone and Exiles in Post-Revolutionary French Painting", Art Quarterly, 36, 1973, pp. 141-171.

Rubin, J. H. "Painting and Politics: J-L David's patriotism or the conspiracy of Gracchus Babeuf and the legacy of Topino-Lebrun", Art Bulletin, LVIII, 1976, pp. 547-568.

- Rubin, J. H. "'Ut Pictura Theatrum' Painting as Theatre: An Approach to Painting in France 1791-1810", Unpublished Ph.d Thesis. University of Harvard, 1972.
- St. Nash, A. "The Compositional Evolution of David's *Léonidas at Thermopylae*", Metropolitan Museum Journal, 1978, 13, pp. 101-112.
- Saisselin, R. G. "Neo-Classicism: Images of Public Virtue and Realities of Private Luxury", Art History, 4, 1981, pp. 14-36.
- Saisselin, R. G. Taste in Eighteenth-Century France, Syracuse, New York, 1965.
- Sallustius Crispus, C. Bellum Catilinae/Bellum Jugurthinum. Translated by J. H. Dotteville, Paris, 1769.
- Sandoz, M. "La peinture de l'histoire comme trait marquant du siècle des lumières finissant", Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 199, 1981, pp. 263-285.
- Sandoz, M. Les Lagrenée, Paris, 1983.
- Schapiro, M. "Style", Anthropology Today, 1953, pp. 287-312.
- Schapiro, M. Words and Pictures: Approaches to Semiotics, Paris, 1973.
- Schnapper, A. David, Fribourg, 1980.
- Sedaine, M. Le Philosophe sans le Savoir, Paris, 1765.
- Seneca, L. A. Epistulae Morales ad Luculium. Translated by C. Sablier, Paris, 1770.
- Seznec, J. "Diderot and 'The Justice of Trajan'", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XI, 1957, pp. 106-111.
- Seznec, J. Essais sur Diderot et l'Antiquité, Oxford, 1957.
- Spear, R. E. Domenichino, New Haven and London, 1982.
- Spencer, J. R. "'Ut Rhetorica Pictura' A Study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting" Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 20, 1957, pp. 26-44.
- Stafford, B. M. "Beauty of the Invisible: Winckelmann and the Aesthetics of Imperceptibility" Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte, 43, 1980, pp. 65-78.
- Stafford, B. M. "'Peculiar Marks' Lavater and the Countenance of the Blemished Thought", Art Journal, 46, pp. 185-192.
- Stechow, W. "The Love of Antiochus with faire Stratonice", Art Bulletin, XXVII, 1945, pp. 221-237.

- Stolpe, E. Klassizismus und Krieg, Frankfurt and New York, 1985.
- Suë, J. J. éléments d'anatomie à l'usage des peintres, des sculpteurs et des amateurs, Paris, 1788.
- Suë, J. J. Essai sur la physiognomonie des corps vivans, Paris, 1797.
- Tacitus, C. Annales. Translated by N. Perrot, Sieur d'Ablancourt, Paris, 1770.
- Talma, F. Mémoires de Lekain précédés de réflexions sur cet auteur et sur l'art théâtral, Paris, 1825.
- Testelin, H. Sentimens des plus habiles peintres sur la Pratique de la Peinture, mis en table des preceptes, avec plusieurs discours académiques, Paris, 1696.
- Thomas, A-E. Oeuvres, Paris, 1773.
- Thuillier, J. "L'Image au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: de l'allégorie à la rhétorique des passions", Word and Image, 4, 1988, pp. 88-98.
- Thuillier, J. Nicolas Poussin, Poitiers, 1988.
- Thuillier, J. "Collectionneur et Peintre au XVII<sup>e</sup>: Pointel et Poussin", Revue de l'Art, 39, 1978, pp. 39-58.
- Thuillier, J. "Pour un Corpus Pussinianum", Nicolas Poussin, Edited by A. Chastel. Paris, 1960, II, pp. 49-238.
- Thuillier, J. Tout l'Oeuvre peint par Poussin, 1974.
- Tristan l'Hermite, La Mort de Sénèque, Paris, 1645.
- Turpin, F. R. La France Illustre ou le Plutarque Français, Paris, 1780.
- Valerius Maximus. Dicta et facta memorabilia. Translated by R. Binet, Paris, an IV.
- Van de Sandt, U. "Correspondance de Pierre avec les directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome", Archives de l'Art Français, XXVIII, 1986, pp. 99-113.
- Van de Sandt, U. "'Grandissima opera del pittore sarà l'istoria.'" Notes sur la hiérarchie des genres sous la Révolution", Revue de l'Art, 83, 1989, pp. 71-76.
- Vecchi, P. de. The Complete Paintings of Raphael, Harmondsworth, 1987.

Verdi, R. F. "'Poussin's Critical Fortunes.' The Study of the artist and the criticism of his works from c. 1690 to c. 1830 with particular reference to France and England", Unpublished Ph. D. University of London, 1976.

Verdi, R. "Poussin's 'Eudamidas': Eighteenth-Century Criticism and Copies", Burlington Magazine, CXIII, 1971, pp. 513-524.

Verdi, R. "Poussin's 'Deluge': The Aftermath", Burlington Magazine, CXXIII, 1981, pp. 389-400.

Virgilius Publius, M. Bucolica, Georgica et Aeneis, Paris, 1798.

Vizille, Musée de la Révolution Française. Premières Collections, Isère, 1985.

Voltaire, F-M. Arouet de. Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1877-79.

Walbank, F. Polybius, Los Angeles and London, 1972.

Watelet, C. and Lévêque, P. Dictionnaire des arts de peinture, sculpture et gravure, Paris, 1792.

Wellerby, D. E. Lessing's Laocöon: Semiotics and Aesthetics in The Age of Reason, Cambridge, 1984.

Whiteley, J. "Homer abandoned: a French Neo-Classical Revue", The Artist and the Writer in France. Essays in honour of Jean Seznec, Oxford, 1974, pp. 40-51.

Wiebenson, D. "Subjects from Homer's ILLIAD in Neo-Classical Art", Art Bulletin, XLVI, 1964, pp. 23-37.

Wild, D. Nicolas Poussin: Leben, Werk, Exkurse, Zurich, 1980.

Wildenstein, G. and Wildenstein, D. Documents complémentaires au catalogue de l'oeuvre de Louis David, Paris, 1973.

Wildenstein, G. "Les Graveurs de Poussin au VII<sup>e</sup> Siècle", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 46, 1955, pp. 73-371.

Wildenstein, G. "Talma et les Peintres", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 55, 1960, pp. 169-176.

Wilson, J M. The Painting of the Passions in Theory, Practice and Criticism in later Eighteenth-Century France, New York, 1981.

Winckelmann, J. J. Abhandlung von der Fähigkeit der Empfindung des Schönen in der Kunst und dem Unterrichte in derselben, Dresden, 1763.

Winckelmann, J. J. Geschichte des Kunst des Alterthums, Dresden, 1764. Translated by M. Huber, Leipzig, 1781.

Winckelmann, J. J. Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerey und Bildhauerkunst, Dresden, 1755.

Winckelmann, J. J. Writings on Art, Selected and edited by D. Irwin. London, 1972.

Wind, E. "The Sources of David's 'Horaces'", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, IV, 1940-41, pp. 124-138.

Wisner, D. "Jacques-Louis David and André Chénier - The Death of Socrates, The Tennis Court Oath and the Quest for Artistic Liberty", Consortium on Revolutionary Europe Proceedings, Athens, 1986.

Wittkower, R. Art and Architecture in Italy, Harmondsworth, 1958.

Wittkower, R. Allegory and the Migration of Symbols, London, 1977.

Woodman, A. J. Rhetoric in Classical Historiography, Portland, Oregon, 1988.

Wolheim, R. Art and Its Objects: An Introduction to Aesthetics, New York, 1968.

Wolheim, R. Painting as an Art, London, 1987.

Wright, C. Poussin Paintings: A Catalogue Raisonné, London, 1985.

Wrigley, R. "Censorship and Anonymity in Eighteenth-Century French Art", Oxford Art Journal, 6, 1983, pp. 17-28.

Xenophon, Memorabilia. Translated by P-C. Levesque, Paris, 1782.

Young, R. Untying The Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader, London, 1981.

Zeitler, R. Klassizismus und Utopia. Interpretationen zu Werken von David, Canova, Carstens, Thorvaldsen, Uppsala, 1954.

Zóltowska, M. E. "Stanislas Kostka Potocki, David, Denon et le Salon de 1787 ou la première critique d'art écrite par un polonais", Antemurale, XXIV, 1980, pp. 9-84.