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Jacques-Louis David and Republican culture in France after Thermidor, 1794–1795. (Volumes I and II)

Lajer-Burcharth, Ewa, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1992

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Jacques-Louis David and Republican Culture in France after Thermidor, 1794-1795

by

Ewa Lajer-Burcharth

Volume I

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1992

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Table of Content:

Acknowledgements.....iv

Table of content.....ix

List of abbreviations.....xi

List of illustrations.....xii

VOLUME I

PART I: DAVID AND THE IMAGE OF THE TERROR IN THE FIRST STAGE OF THE THERMIDORIAN REACTION

Introduction.....2

Chapter 1:

i. The subject on trial.....12

ii. After the coup.....29

Notes to introduction and chapter 1:.....81

Chapter 2:

i. David's defense.....100

ii. The Louvre Self-portrait.....115

iii. The vandal, the cannibal.....131

iv. The Homer drawings.....150

v. The Psyché Abandonnée.....184

Notes to chapter 2:.....197

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PART II: THE SABINE WOMEN AS WORK-IN-PROGRESS

An interchapter.....223

Notes to interchapter:.....298

VOLUME II

PART III: DAVID AND THE CRISIS OF REPUBLICAN CULTURE IN THE SECOND STAGE OF THE THERMIDORIAN REACTION

Chapter 3:

i. The war of signs and symbols.....313

ii. The symbolic effect of Germinal and Prairial.....337

Notes to chapter 3:.....360

Chapter 4:

i. David accused again.....371

ii. "The painter of blood".....394

iii. The Last Montagnards.....402

iv. The subject and the code.....435

Conclusion:.....444

Notes to chapter 4:.....451

Illustrations.....475

Bibliography.....571

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List of abbreviations:

CSP	Comité de Salut Public
CSG	Comité de Sécurité Générale
CIP	Comité d'Instruction Publique
Jules	David, J.L. Jules. Le Peintre Louis David. Paris, 1880.
Wild.	Wildenstein, D. and Wildenstein, G. Louis David. Receuil de documents complémentaires au catalogue complet de l'oeuvre de l'artiste. Paris: Fondation Wildenstein, 1973.
David, 1989	Schnapper, Antoine, and Arlette Serrulaz. David. Exhibition catalogue. Musée du Louvre. Paris: Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1989.

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List of illustrations:

1. Self-portrait. 1794. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre. (p. 12)

2. [Poisson], Horrible conspiration de Robespierre dévoilé par le Comité de Salut Public le nonodi Thermidor l'an 2 de la République Française une et indivisible, engraving, the year II (1794); Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes. (p. 42)

3. Viller (after drawing by), Acte de Justice du 9 au 10 thermidor, etching; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection de Vinck 6544, Fol.43. (p. 45)

4. Anonymous, Maximilien Robespierre, engraving; Musée Carnavalet, Est. portrait 274. (p. 49)

5. Anonymous, M.M.I.Robespierre, etching; Musée Carnavalet. Est. portrait 274. (p. 50)

6. Anonymous, Robespierre guillotinant le bourreau après avoir guillotiné tous les Français, line engraving; Musée Carnavalet, Est. PC Histoire 22c. (p. 53)

7. Anonymous, Député à la Convention Nationale, engraving; Biobliothèque Nationale. Cabinet des Estampes, Collection de Vinck 6552. (p. 69)

8. Anonymous, L'Ami de la Justice et de l'Humanité où le Jacobin déguisé, engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection Hennin, [Hennin T 141, no. 12 425, p.38], B.N., Qb 1797. (p. 70)

9. Anonymous, Un sans-culotte instrument de crimes dansant au milieu des horreurs, engraving; Musée de la Révolution, Vizille. (p. 73)

10. Anonymous drawing for the frontispis of L.M. Prudhomme, Histoire générale et impartiale des erreurs, des fautes, et des crimes commis pendant la révolution française, sous le quatre législatures, et particulièrement sous le règne de la Convention, Paris, 1796-7; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Collection Soulavie. (p. 74)

11. [P.P. Prudhon?], Allégorie au 9 thermidor, drawing; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, resèrve, Hennin 11925. (p. 76)

12. Hubert Robert, L'Artiste dans le prison de

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St.Pélagie, drawing, ca. 1794; Musée Carnavalet. (p. 116)

13. Jacques-Louis David, Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, oil on canvas, 1817; Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachussetts. (p. 118)

14. J.L. David, Self-Portrait, oil on canvas, n.d. [1791/2]; Uffizi Gallery, Florence. (p. 119)

15. Angélique Briceau, J.P. Marat, acquatint engraving, ca. 1793; Musée Carnavalet, Rés.GC.G4233. (p. 122)

16. Georges Rouget, David, oil on canvas, 1814; Chester Dale Collection, National Gallery, Washington D.C. (p. 124)

17. Attributed to Pierre Revoil, Caricature of David, drawing; Bibliothèque Nationale, manuscrits, n.a.f. 24 023. (p. 126)

18. Pierre-Charles Coqueret, after G.G. Lethière, Le Neuf Thermidor, engraving, 1798; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection de Vinck, 6551, Grand Format, T.I, fol.22. (p. 135)

19. Pierre-Etienne Le Sueur Vandaliste, destructeur des productions des Arts, drawing cut and pasted on board; Musée Carnavalet. (p. 138)

20. Normand and Louis Laffite, after M. Poirier, Les Formes acèrbes, etching, 1795; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection de Vinck 6143. (p. 144)

21. J.L.David, Prison album, RF 9137, folio 1; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 154)

22. Ibid., f.1v. (p. 155)

23. Ibid., f.2. (p. 155)

24. J.L. David, Homère endormi, pen and ink drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 155)

25. J.L. David, Homère recitant ses verses, pen and ink drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 155)

26. David, Bélisaire demandant l'aumône, oil on canvas, 1781; Musée du Louvre. (p. 158)

27. David, Le vieil Horace défendant son fils, drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 159)

28. Jean-Baptiste Débret, after J.L. David, study for

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Homère endormi, lithograph, 1841; Musée de Beaux-Arts, Rennes. (p. 162)

29. Philippe-Auguste Hennequin, Homère fait à des nymphes et à bergèrs le récit des malheurs de Troie, pen and ink drawing, 28 Vendémiaire an 5e [17 October 1796]; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 216, n.114)

30. David, Les Combats de Diomède, drawing, 1776; Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna. (p. 175)

31. David, Les Funérailles de Patrocle, oil on canvas; 1779; National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. (p. 175)

32. David, Vue du Luxembourg, oil on canvas; Musée du Louvre. (p. 177)

33. David, Psyché abandonnée, oil on canvas; private collection. (p. 184)

34. David, La Vestale, oil on canvas; private collection. (p. 184)

35. David, Henriette de Verninac, oil on canvas, 1799; Musée du Louvre. (p. 185)

36. David, Emilie Sériziat, panel, 1795; Musée du Louvre. (p. 187)

37. David, Pierre Seriziat, panel, 1795, Musée du Louvre. (p. 187)

38. François Gérard (after drawing by), Psyché abandonnée, engraving for Lafontaine, Fables, Pierre Didot, ed., Paris, 1797. (p. 220, n. 141)

39. David, Brutus, oil on canvas, 1789; Musée du Louvre. (p. 192)

40. David, Les Sabines oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre. (p. 223)

41. David, Première pensée pour "Les Sabines", pen and ink drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 226)

42. David, Etude d'ensemble pour "Les Sabines", pen and ink drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 226)

43. David, Album, RF 36942, folio 6, drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 229)

44. David, Prison album, RF 9137, f.20; Musée du Louvre,

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Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 230)

45. David, Album, RF 36942, f.47; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet de Dessins. (p. 230)

46. David, Prison album, RF 9137, f.17.; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 244)

47. Enea Vico (after Raphael?), Suicide of Lucrezia, engraving; Bartsch XV, 288, 16. (p. 244)

48. Annibale Carracci (after fresco by) Battle of Perseus and Phineus, Galleria di Palazzo Farnese, engraving. (p. 259)

49. David, Prison album, f.7. (p. 269)

50. Ibid., f.21. (p. 269)

51. Ibid., f.9. (p. 269)

52. Ibid., f.6. (p. 270)

53. Ibid, f.14. (p. 271)

54. Anonimo Veneziano (after Raphael), Cristo cade sotto il peso della Croce, engraving, Bartsch XIV, vol.26, 44. (p. 307, n.73)

55. David, ibid., f.59v. (p. 272)

56. Ibid., f.15. (p. 272)

57. Ibid., f.58v. (p. 272)

58. Ibid., f.2v. (p. 272)

59. Ibid., f.27v. (p. 272)

60. Ibid., f.62v. (p. 272)

61. Ibid., f.25v. (p. 273)

62. Ibid., f.16, (p. 274)

63. David, etude pour "Les Sabines", squared drawing (mine de plomb), Lyon, Musée des Arts Decoratifs, inv. 5746. (p. 275)

64. David, Prison album, f.11. (p. 276)

65. Agostino Veneziano, Bataille au coutelas ou au

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cimetière, engraving; Bartsch, XIV, 172, no.212. (p. 308, n.82)

66. David, Study for the "Sabine Women", drawing; Bibliothèque Nationale, manuscrits. (p. 277)

67. David, Andromache with the Body of Hector, oil on canvas, 1783; Musée du Louvre. (p. 308, n.84)

68. David, verso of the "Première pensée" for the "Sabines", drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 278)

69. Anatole Devosge after David, Lepelletier, drawing; Musée de Beaux-Arts, Dijon. (p. 278)

70. François-André Vincent, Le Combat des Romains et des Sabins, oil on canvas; Musée de Beaux Arts, Angers. (p. 284)

71. Anonymous, Le Peuple français, ou le Régime de Robespierre, etching, [ca 1793/4]; Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection Hennin, 11915. (p. 290)

72. Anonymous, Les Pouvoirs de la liberté ou l'Effroi des Egoïstes et des Aristocrates, dédiés aux Héroïnes Françaises, engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, série Qb.1793. (p. 294)

73. Rollandson [sic], after P.W. Tomkins, "Tien bien ton Bonnet! Et toi, defend ta queue!", drypoint engraving, 1797; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, série Qb1 1797, janvier-mai. (p. 319)

74. David, Marat, oil on canvas, 1793; Musées Royaux des Beaux Arts, Brussels. (p. 323)

75. Anon., L'auteur échappant au massacre que marat prêche sur des cadavres, frontispiece to Maton de Lavarenne, Crimes de Marat, Bibliothèque de la Ville de Lyon. [J.-C. Bonnet, ill.21.] (p. 331)

76. Anon., Le Triomphe de Marat dans les enfers, etching; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes. (p. 332)

77. Anon., Anarchie, engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes. (p. 334)

78. Anonymous, Les Abominables ou le Jacobin et la Discorde semant le Crime et la Terreur sur leur pas, engraving, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection de Vinck 6556. (p. 349)

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79. Anonymous, La République, engraving, 1797; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, série Qb1 1797. (p. 351)

80. Simon Petit, L'anarchiste, où le Nouveau Janus Français, engraving, 1797; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Coll. de Vinck, V, 6958. (p. 352)

81. Pierre-Gabriel Berthault after P.-G. Duplessi-Bertaux, Assassinat du député Ferraud dans la Convention nationale, engraving for Les Tableaux historiques de la Révolution (1791-1796). (p. 354)

82. Isidor-Stanislas Helman after C. Monnier, Journée du 1er Prairial de l'an III, engraving for the Principales Journées de la Révolution, Paris, 1798. (p. 354)

83. Unknown (attributed to Taunay), Allégorie satyrique révolutionnaire (Le Triomphe de Marat aux Enfers), oil on canvas; Musée Carnavalet. A study for the painting in the Hermitage, Leningrad. (p. 394)

84. David, Triomphe du Peuple Français, drawing, 1794; Musée Carnavalet. (p. 400)

85. David, Jeanbon St. André, pen and ink drawing; Art Institute, Chicago. (p. 406)

86. David, Bernard de Saintes, pen and ink drawing; private collection, (p. 406)

87. David, Barbeau-Dubarran, pen and ink drawing; auction in Strasbourg, Groupe Gersaint, 17 November 1989. (p. 406)

88. David, Thirus de Pautrizel, pen and ink drawing; National Gallery, Washington, D.C. (p. 406)

89. David, Unknown deputy, pen and ink drawing; private collection. (p. 406)

90. David, Jeanne-Suzanne Sedaine, drawing; Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. (p. 413)

91. Fiésinger after Guérin, Sieyès, engraving, ca. 1782; Bibliothèque Assemblée Nationale, Paris. (p. 415)

92. Anonymous, J.B. Carrier, frontispiece for Grachus Babeuf, Du système de dépopulation ou la vie et les crimes de Carrier, Paris, An 3e de la République. (p. 428)

93. David, Femme au Turban, pen and ink drawing; private collection. (p. 429)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

94. David, Tête de Marat mort, pen and ink drawing; Musée National du Château, Versaille. (p. 430)

95. François-André Vincent, Mme Boyer, oil on canvas, 1796, Musée du Louvre. (p. 438)

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Part I:

David and the image of the Terror in the first stage of the Thermidorian reaction

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Introduction

The fall of Robespierre in July 1794 (Thermidor, year II) caused a major but thus far unexamined shift in the career of J.L. David as a Revolutionary artist. Removed from the position of political and cultural prominence he held during the Jacobin republic, David became a "subject on trial": he spent most of the Thermidorian period in prison and was under constant attack regarding his past involvement with the fallen regime. Defending himself, David emphasized the continuity of his commitment to, and his usefulness for, the Revolution. His texts and images from prison seek to prove this. Yet, they also offer evidence of the serious difficulties that faced a republican artist who tried to maintain cultural continuity after Thermidor.

For David's individual crisis inscribed itself within a broader crisis of republican culture at a turning point in Revolutionary history: the end of the Terror. As revelations about the abuses of the Terror were becoming public in the course of the Thermidorian reaction, there emerged in the press and in the printed imagery hawked on the streets an image of Jacobin rule as a sanguinary, barbaric parenthesis in the Revolution. This image had a distintegrating effect on the heroic cultural codes of the year II, in the formation of which David had participated so prominently.

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My thesis examines the relation between two overlapping processes: one of erosion of the republican Imaginary linked to the collective need for marking a rupture with the Terror; and another, David's individual process of adjusting and transforming visual codes in order to keep the position of a public artist after the Terror.

Neither of these two processes, nor the relation between them, have thus far been examined. The Thermidorian moment in David's career has not yet been an object of a separate study, although it was discussed on other occasions,[1] as were some of David's individual works produced in this period. For example, the two Homer drawings served Michael Fried as a basis for extending and elaborating his argument about the interplay of the two master categories of the 18th-century art criticism -- absorption and theatricality -- under which the scholar organized his account of the century's artistic output.[2] Although, as will become clear from this discussion, I would agree with Fried that the drawings were the site of elaboration of a new relation between the audience and the artist, this was, in my view, related more to the way in which the Revolution altered the understanding of these two notions (the artist and the audience) than to the mode in which 18th-century criticism defined them. I believe that the rhetoric of the Homer drawings -- and its detailed analysis will be offered here -- was shaped in a fundamental way by the effect of Thermidor

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on David's self-understanding as an artist.

Other works, such as the Self-portrait and the Vue de Luxembourg, both produced during the artist's first imprisonment, have been discussed before: the first one, in Jacques Wilhelm's article on the portraits of the artist by himself and others; the second, in the study by J.A.Schmoll who has seen the landscape as a metaphor for the artist's confinement.[3] However, no intepretation of the meaning of David's prison output as an ensemble has thus far been offered.

Recently, some works by David from this period, which were either unknown or thought to have been lost, have re-emerged, thus making the need for understanding the sense of the artist's prison production more urgent than ever. The two unknown medallion portraits of the deputies with whom David was imprisoned, and a painted study of the Psyché abandonnée, long thought to have been lost, are discussed here for the first time and their meaning within the artist's prison opus is established. For example, I propose to consider the new medallions to have been a part of a larger series of portraits produced by David during his confinement in the Collège des Quatre Nations, through which the artist sought to give form and meaning to the notion of the "last Montagnard." As such, the medallions constitute an important testimony to the politics of David as an artist after Thermidor.

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The Thermidorian reaction has recently become an object of new scholarly attention. In addition to Mona Ozouf's fundamental article on the notion of the Revolution in post-Thermidorian political discourse, new work has been produced that interrogates the place of this period within the Revolutionary decade.[4] Both Françoise Brunel's essay on Thermidor and Bronislaw Baczko's book Comment sortir de la Terreur were most important for the present study in that they consider the post-Thermidorian period as a political process. Baczko's study was particularly useful because it problematized the structuring function of the memory of the Terror in the processes of reaction which were triggered by the fall of Robespierre. My own contribution aims at foregrounding the importance of the cultural and, specifically, visual forms in which the memory of the Terror was constructed, including a consideration of many images discussed here for the first time. In addition to analyzing these images per se -- most of them engravings and prints -- I am also attending to the ways in which the semiotic processes discernable in these works radically re-configured the collective republican Imaginary. An example of this was the formation of the new negative tropes, such as the "Jacobin-buveur de sang," the "sans-culotte-cannibal" and, in regard to female revolutionaries, the "tricoteuse de Robespierre" and the "Furie de guillotine," in the imagery produced in this period. Subsequently, these figures have

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become such fixtures in French republican discourse that the distinction between them and the real Revolutionary experience they represent became blurred. My analysis aims at illuminating the post-Thermidorian origins of these visual tropes by reconstructing the political and cultural circumstances of their formation and their original political uses.[5]

In addition to discussing objects and issues that have not been researched until now, this thesis proposes a new methodological perspective for understanding them. My question is, how exactly does an individual creative process inscribe itself in its historical circumstances? First of all, I am operating with a notion of artistic process which stresses its heterogeneity, discontinuity and often contradictory or at least non-linear nature. Secondly, in situating it within a larger fabric of cultural process, I want to avoid the deterministic scheme of influence which implies a kind of hierarchy (i.e., context is first, the artist follows). In the revolutionary situation especially, such a model did not work: artists did not fit the pre-existing republican culture; they were engaged in inventing it. The necessity of adopting a circular model of reciprocity for relating the artist's output to its context is even more evident in David's case, with the artist seeking to redefine his identity at the very moment when the Symbolic grounds of republicanism were in a constant process

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of shifting. The context itself needs then to be regarded as a kind of **semiosis**, a process of production of meaning rather than a stable structure within which the works of art could merely be lodged in order to be understood.[6]

In defining the relation between the output of the individual artist and the context as an interaction between two historically specific semiotic processes, my study seeks above all to elucidate the role of the Revolution: not as it was done in the Davidian literature until now, i.e., as an accompanying, if important, circumstance or background for the artist's production, but rather as a **signifying force** within it.[7] (An expanded discussion of the methodology behind this position is offered below, in chapter 1, section i.)

In discussing the search of both David and the Thermidorians for a new political and cultural identity, I have focused specifically on gender. I am interested in examininig how the changing relation between the masculine and the feminine operates in a visual text and cultural text as a kind of pattern that structures its meanings. But, in examining David's output, I am also interested in tracing a change in the relation of the author, as a subject of enunciation, to the positions articulated by gender structure. This is to say, that I wish to explore the movement or play of David's desire for identification with masculine and feminine positions as defined in his writings

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and images. Psychoanalysis maintains that this kind of play is the very matrix of the subject's acquisition of sexual and social identity.[8] Consequently, if we are to examine how Thermidor affected David's identity as an artist, we cannot ignore what could be termed the **erotics** of his creative process, that is, the movement of desire articulated in it. My particular interest was to map out the sites where the movement of individual desire crosses paths with the trajectory of collective republican desire given form in post-Thermidorian political discourse and culture. The role of gender and the play of desire in the (male) artistic process (as opposed to product), have been little studied, but work exists that offers a methodological point of departure for such an inquiry.[9]

My study is divided into three parts, subdivided into chapters and sections. Part one examines David's prison efforts to construct a new image of himself as an artist against a broader discursive effort of the Thermidorians -- an impromptu, nebulous, and ideologically incoherent coalition of the revolutionaries -- to give themselves a stable political and cultural identity. Two kinds of evidence are interwoven: on the one hand, David's textual and visual self-representations from the period of his first imprisonment, and, on the other, the figures through which the political and cultural image of the Terror was being constructed in republican discourse and imagery during the

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first phase of the Thermidorian reaction (from the fall of Robespierre in late July through the Nantes trials in December 1794). I seek to establish correlations between the symbolic adjustments necessitated by Thermidor on these individual and collective levels.

Part three deals with the second stage of this political and cultural process. More than a time of symbolic adjustments, the winter and spring of 1795 is seen as a period of violent political confrontations and symbolic wars between the increasingly aggressive forces of the reaction, the jeunesse dorée, and the militants of the popular classes, notably women. While the first force attacks the most cherished Jacobin figures and symbols, the popular movement re-aligns itself with them, using the rhetoric of the year II to express its discontent with the post-Thermidorian status quo. As the jeunesse gets the upper hand in the war of symbols, some radical reshufflings within the republican image-repertoire take place. Marat and Lepelletier are among the excised. Moreover, in the wake of the Germinal/Prairial uprising, for which female sans-culotte militants were responsible, the entire class of the revolutionaries, the Jacobins, are symbolically "excised" from the political scene. Moreover, what also ensues is the ultimate and complete exclusion of women from the public and political sphere. Against this background, I consider David's output from his second imprisonment, notably the

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hitherto unexamined series of portrait medallions of his fellow prisoners, as well as the drawing of the Femme au turban, which foreshadows certain crucial aspects of Davidian style under the Directory.

Between these two parts, an interchapter or part two was inserted to examine the extended corpus of the preparatory drawings for David's major painting, the Sabine Women. This was a project conceived by David in the first phase of the reaction but significantly altered by the artist's experience of its second phase. The format of interchapter was adopted to emphasize a degree of autonomy of the artistic process as articulated through this body of work, but also to represent its interrelation with the two distinct phases of the Thermidorian reaction as discussed in the two other "neighboring" parts of the thesis. Thus, these drawings are analyzed as traces of both aesthetically and historically specific process. For example, the elaboration of female figures as a signifying core of the image in the drawings is related to important changes which took place in the way women and femininity functioned in republican rhetoric after Thermidor. One of my central arguments is that in David's work from prison there occurs a major aesthetic shift, whose effects can be discerned, as I have suggested elsewhere, in the finished canvas of the Sabine Women.[10] Certainly, I do not wish to imply any linear causality in relating the finished form of the

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Sabines to the prison origins of this canvas. Various filters of context interposed themselves and complicated David's unusually long creative process that spanned the years of 1794-99. Yet, the effect of Thermidor on the Davidian aesthetics was, in my view, very important and needs to be examined. The approximate consensus of the Davidian literature is that after the end of the Terror, the artist returned to the enclave of pure aesthetics. I believe that we need to historicize our notion of "the aesthetic."[11] While it is true that David's political career came to an end with the dissolution of the Convention and the advent of the Directory, it is also clear that he did not in any way wish to resign from his status as a prominent producer of public art of political and social relevance. Nor did David renege on his commitment to the Revolution. His problem was one of re-adjustment to both the new meaning that the Revolution acquired after Thermidor and to a major shift in the language of republicanism. It is this process of re-adjustment, complicated, non-linear and at times contradictory, that I want to trace here.

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Chapter 1

i. The subject on trial

Perched on the edge of an armchair, a blank wall behind him, a painter's palette in one hand, a brush in the other, David seems to be fixing the viewer with his stare (Fig.1).[12] It is almost as if we were summoned, by the directness of his look, to witness the artist's definition of himself here: a painter. But insofar as this image, as most self-portraits, was done with the use of a mirror, it is also in front of and for himself that David here rehearses his identity: a painter?

When this self-identification through métier was taking place, in late summer 1794, David's public image could hardly be contained within the boundaries of definition of any single profession, and he was referred to as just about everything else but a painter. "This despicable character," "the accomplice of Catilina," "the fanatic of Robespierre," "the man of blood," "usurper," "traitor," "the tyrant of the arts," "this villain" and -- the ultimate in name-calling at this stage of the Revolution, especially in regard to someone who was a regicide -- "the king," are the terms in which David was spoken of at the National Convention during the heated debates after the fall of Robespierre on 27 July

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1794 (9 Thermidor year II).[13] A few days after Robespierre's defeat, on August 2, the Convention ordered David arrested. He was placed in the makeshift prison of the Hôtel des Fermes, and it is there, sometime in August or early September, that he painted the self-portrait, now in the Louvre.[14]

If David was in trouble after Thermidor it was precisely because he had expanded the terms of his political engagement in the Revolution beyond the narrow precincts of what was understood, before 1789, to constitute the artistic profession. Several aspects of David's Revolutionary career turned him into a target of attacks. First of all, it was his status as a member of the Revolutionary government of the year II, specifically as a functionary of the Comité de Sûreté Générale, a police organ that secured the day-to-day operation of the Terror. Secondly, it was his role at the Comité d'Instruction Publique, the Revolutionary form of the culture ministry, and, beyond that, his unequaled prominence in the organization and control of the entire cultural apparatus of the Jacobin Republic. Thirdly, it was his position as the Montagnard deputy to the National Convention and his membership and even prominence at the Jacobin club. And, last but not least, it was what the Thermidorians perceived to be his close alliance and even intimate friendship with Robespierre.

To begin shedding more light on the David of the Louvre

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self-portrait, let us align it for a moment with two other images. These are descriptions through which his pupil, Etienne Delécluze, sought to account for the radical transformation of David's public persona effected by Thermidor. In his memoirs published in 1855, Delécluze presents two vivid scenes that seem to have etched themselves in his mind when he was still a child in Paris in mid-1790s. At the height of Robespierre's rule, on June 8 1794, Etienne, then a boy of 13, experiences the Festival of the Supreme Being as an encounter with the dominant figure of the artist-Father (in a literal and symbolic sense of the word), who controls the official image of the republic:

> [..] au même instant l'attention fut détournée par la voix d'un homme qui criait en marchant très vite: "Place au commissaire de la Convention!" La haie de curieux, qui bordait la grande allée des Tuileries, s'ouvrit, et l'on vit un représentant du peuple en costume, tenant ses deux fils par la main, et s'avançant avec vivacité vers le milieu du cortège pour faire presser la marche au groupe des juges de tribunal révolutionaire, qui précédait celui des membres de la Convention. C'était David, chargé de la disposition de toute la fête, qui agitait son chapeau surmonté d'un grand panache tricolore, pour faire maintenir les distances entre les différents corps des fonctionnaires de la république formant le cortège.[15]

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Less than two months later, quite a different spectacle presented itself to the young Etienne when, during a walk in the Tuileries, he persuaded his (real) father to enter the hall of the Convention with him. It was the 13th of Thermidor year II, four days after the fall of Robespierre and the session was stormy:

> Le représentant du peuple, le peintre David, était à la tribune, où il balbutiait quelques paroles sourdes, qu'il cherchait, mais en vain, à opposer à la fureur de plusieurs de ses collègues acharnés à le faire décréter d'accusation. Il était pâle, et le sueur qui tombait de son front roulait de ses vêtements jusqu'à terre, où elle imprimait de large taches.[16]

Delécluze's dramatic juxtaposition of the two Davids -- one, the master of Revolutionary meanings of the year II, in the full decorum of his costume, making his own and others' bodies "speak" the Republic; the other, a Fallen Father who could no longer control even his own appearance as he struggles with his speech defect and the hostility of his peers -- puts us immediately in touch with the extreme volatility of the meaning and status of David as a subject in the Revolution. The central place of the body in Delécluze's description of crisis alerts us also to the fact that the David of the Louvre canvas is a corporeal articulation of <u>meaning</u>, rather than merely a product of a mimetic exercise in securing likeness. The <u>Self-portrait</u>

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could be seen as an image of crisis. At the same time, Delécluze's text, bringing to the fore the reductive logic of David's Thermidorian experience, the sense of a tremendous loss -- of power, of status, of meaning -- that would become a space from within which his self-portrait emerged, gives us some idea of the urgency of its purpose. It thus allows us to regard the Self-portrait also as a kind of gesture made by the artist in the context of crisis.[17]

The brutally reductive logic of David's Thermidorian experience was already being evoked at the time it was taking place. "Nous sommes au moment où les hommes, quelque talent qu'ils aient, ne sont plus rien..." declared deputy Tallien attacking David on 13 Thermidor, during the same stormy session to which Delécluze referred. We are actually in a position to know more or less exactly what was said at the Convention on that day, as the transcripts of the sessions were published in the papers almost immediately. That day's debate merits our attention because it was on the basis of its arguments that the decision to arrest David was taken two days later.[18]

What happens at the Convention's afternoon session on 13 Thermidor is one installment of the series of power shake-ups that followed Robespierre's fall. At stake are the posts at the Comité de Securité Générale (hereafter, the CSG), one of the three major organs constituting the Revolutionary government. Some of its members have to be eliminated so

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that those who supported the coup could replace them. The session starts with the deputy André Dumont's attack on David as one of those who have been part of the court of "this Cromwell" (Robespierre), men who have "crime written on their faces." Dumont swears to pursue and unmask all of them, but in the meanwhile he limits himself to the request that "the traitor David" be expelled from the Committee of General Security and that his replacement be arranged.[19] The denunciations of the two other members of the Committee, Jagot and Lavicomterie, follow. All three deputies are denounced as "robespierristes" on no other grounds than that of absence from the Convention on the day of the coup. One has the impression that no specific charges need to be formulated at all -- the "denunciation" consisting mainly of an outpouring of vitriolic epithets, such as "scélérat," "usurpateur," etc. -- for the Convention to vote for the replacement of all three accused members of the Committee. (David, it must be added, was the object of the most epithets.)

It is when this decree is being enthusiastically adopted, that David, absent until then, enters the hall of the Convention and is allowed to speak. He defends himself by declaring he had been deceived by Robespierre and his "hypocritical" comportment. He pleads with his colleagues to believe that death is preferable to the way he feels at the moment. And he promises: "Dorénavant, j'en fais le serment,

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et j'ai cru le remplir encore dans cette malheureuse circonstance, je ne m'attacherai plus aux hommes, mais seulement aux principes."[20]

But the effect of David's speech unleashes only more accusations, the designation "robespierriste" adhering ever more tightly to his name. Some deputies remember David the day before the coup, at the Convention, embracing Robespierre and making a spontaneous declaration of complicity with him after his controversial speech, and repeating it later the same day at the Jacobins club: "Si tu bois la ciguë, je le boirai avec toi!" This gesture -- whose self-sacrificial heroic rhetoric of which was hardly surprising coming from the mouth of the painter of Socrates -- was being interpreted by his opponents as evidence of David's intimacy with the defeated "tyrant."

David responds that he came up to the speaker's stand not to embrace Robespierre but to demand that the fête in honor of Bara and Viala, which he was in charge of organizing, begin earlier. He says he did not embrace Robespierre, nor even touch him, because he repelled everyone. But he does not deny that when Robespierre, disappointed by the reception of his speech, declared he would drink hemlock, David told him "I will drink it with you." He emphasizes, however, that he was led astray by the appearance of virtue in Robespierre in the same way as the public at large was. In other words, David seeks to prove that there was nothing

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exceptional in his act of solidarity with someone who was known as "the Incorruptible."

After his speech, Thibaudeau, David's colleague at the Comité d'Instruction Publique (hereafter, the CIP), demands that his case be sent to the Committees, the Convention's elected bodies, for further consideration. This constitutes, at least partly, a preventive measure against taking any hasty decision. Yet, Tallien, one of the principal engineers of the Thermidorian coup, rises from the tribunes to oppose such a move and launches a new attack on David, "Robespierre's friend," for being absent on the day of the latter's fall. He declares: "[i]l ne doit siéger dans cette enceinte que des hommes purs; aucune réputation ne doit nous aveugler. Nous sommes au moment où les hommes, quelque talent qu'ils aient, ne sont plus rien, la vertu et la liberté sont tout." Tallien demands that no deputy should sit next to David before he is proven innocent.

David, in turn, explains that he had been ill for eight days, that he took a medication (an emetic) that had side effects which made it impossible for him to leave home all day on the 9th of Thermidor. He was able to appear in public again only the following day.

Yet new accusations continue to shower down from the tribunes. Someone claims that he saw David at the Convention on the morning of the 9th. Someone else seeks to link him directly with the plot Robespierre was believed to have been

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preparing against the Convention. Rumors had been spread that the festival in honour of Bara and Viala, prepared and organized by David, and intended to take place on 10 Thermidor, was to have been the arena of a Robespierrist coup. The fact that this fête, unlike others, which began in the morning, was to start in the afternoon was seen as part of a scheme that would end with the Convention being taken by surprise at dark.[21] (This is what the voice referred to when challenging David on the issue of the fête's scheduled hours.)

David explains that he originally planned the ceremony in honor of Bara and Viala to begin at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in response to the objections that the festivals he had organized before lasted too long. When it was pointed out to him at the CSP that such late timing could be dangerous, he proposed to move the beginning of the fête back to 9 o'clock in the morning.

No understanding or acceptance of his explanation is, however, registered. Instead, deputy Lecointre requests that a decree be issued prohibiting David from being a member of any of the government committees. The accused responds by trying to place the responsibility for his election to the CSG entirely on Robespierre and stressing how utterly unexpected the latter's decision in this regard had been to him. He adds that he thought it was a joke when he first saw his name on the list of the new nominees for the police

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Committee. "Enfin, citoyens, je vous assure qu'il me faisait plutôt la cour qu'on ne peut dire que je la lui aie faite" -- David thus sums up his relation to Robespierre.

But the unfortunate phrase of complicity with "the tyrant" -- "Si tu bois la ciguë, je le boirai avec toi" -- is cited again, this time by deputy Goupilleau. If David had only been deluded or confused by Robespierre, why did he repeat the phrase twice, at the Convention and later at the Jacobins? The whole discussion risks coming back to the point of departure. It is only when one of David's accusers suggests that Billaud, an opponent of Robespierre at the CSP, is thought to have even more evidence against David, that his case is finally referred to the Committees and the session ends. But two days later, on 15 Thermidor, when the Convention orders the arrest of Joseph Lebon, the Terrorist deputy on mission in Arras and Caen, who is accused of instituting the most violent repressions in these cities, another deputy observes that "the king David" had also been accused the other day, yet he did not end up in prison. After some deliberation, the order to arrest David provisionally as well is voted in.[22]

I have gone into this debate in detail to give some idea of the degree to which David was implicated in the political discourse after Thermidor and to raise the issue of its consequences. His implication meant that his personal situation was, in a most immediate way, a function of how he

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had been publicly discussed after Thermidor, rather than what he had actually done during the period of the Terror, although, certainly, the latter was not unimportant. Thus, we have heard David being accused and, ultimately, sent to prison not really on the basis of any proven or documented fact, but solely on the evidence of words, some of it hearsay, pronounced by men in the heat of the battle for power after the fall of Robespierre. One could not have missed the important role of language in this Revolutionary ritual of accusation that we witnessed. It seems that more than any proof of possible factual abuses on the part of David as the functionary of the Terror, it was the sheer rhetorical strength of epithets -- the shower of such invectives as "scélérat," "usurpateur," "lache," "trâitre" and other terms used in conjunction with or instead of his proper name -- that sufficed to call for David's removal from the CSG. Similarly, his status as a "robespierriste" was established during the debate not in relation to, say, any consistent pattern of David's previous political behaviour as deputy (his support for certain decrees, his opposition to others, and his own legislative initiative), but on the basis of a single phrase that he blurted out once after Robespierre's speech. One could wonder at the flimsiness of the little factual nuggets -- a phrase blurted out; the hour for the beginning of a festival set later than usual; the absence at a session during which Robespierre was

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ousted -- around which David's guilt was being defined. As things that actually happened, these events seem of little importance; but, of course, it was as arguments in the debate (i.e., as speech acts within a discourse) that they mattered, their function being above all a quick and convincing association of David's name with that of Robespierre, the latter being no longer the real person but a symbolic figure whose (negative) meaning has been established overnight in the post-Thermidorian Imaginary after his fall. The designation "robespierriste" was evidently the most dangerous term -- in fact, more of a verdict -- in the political vocabulary of the moment. Certainly, there was nothing new in the way a mere designation had the power to send people to the guillotine. It was Robespierre himself who introduced such fluid distinctions as "the friend" vs. "the enemy of the Revolution" as terms of political discourse through which unwanted opponents could be eliminated. The point is that now David was experiencing this phenomenon from a different position -- not that of the Jacobin master of political discourse, one of those who had power to decide who was, as Robespierre would put it, the "friend" or the "enemy" of the Revolution, but from the position of complete vulnerability: the position of the subject on trial.

The transcript of the debate epitomized David's new status and some of its implications. On the one hand, the

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transcript captured the process of coagulation of "David" into a (negative) term of the post-Thermidorian political discourse, a term whose meaning of which was established primarily in relation to other notions within the debate's textual fabric, rather than to its own referent, David as "a real person." In a different way, it registered David's attempt to remain within this discourse on his own terms and negotiate his meaning with his new enemies.[23] What are the implications of David's status, as demonstrated by this public debate, for our inquiry? How can the debate help us analyze David as a political subject and as an artist after the fall of Robespierre?

Now the problem of method arises. David's status as an important term in the post-Thermidorian Revolutionary discourse forces us to examine this discourse more closely but not as a source of mere information about David. It would be missing the point to try to examine, for example, whether David was indeed, as some deputies implied, involved in the plot allegedly prepared by Robespierre. The plot belonged to the same level of reality as the rumor that Robespierre wanted to marry a daughter of Louis XVI and become a King.[24] That is, it was primarily a discursive invention, but an important one -- not in its truth value but in its capacity to produce a wide anti-Robespierre consensus in public opinion that could support and legitimize the power of the new, more or less impromptu,

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coalition that otherwise had problems in defining its identity. Similarly, I would not be interested in looking for, as has been attempted, David's prescription for emetic in order to find out if indeed he was telling the truth when he tried to justify his absence at the Convention on 9 Thermidor.[25] Aside from the fact that such a piece of evidence could prove nothing more than David's capacity to procure such a prescription for himself (rather than proving that he was really sick, or that being sick was indeed the only reason for his absence), the argument about taking medication matters more as David's response to the charges against him, as a rhetorical gesture on his behalf. This unsuccesful gesture, if we do want to dwell on it at all, needs to be seen in the context of the exchange of arguments in which it participates, less than in the factual reality to which it refers.[26] What mattered then was that the argument about a deputy's presence at the Convention on the day of the coup circulated in the space of official political representation (and this without the possibility of immediate verification) as a kind of litmus test of who did and who did not belong with the Thermidorians: by differentiating between those who were present at the Convention's hall on the 9th Thermidor and those who were not, an immediate political distinction could be made between an opponent of "the tyrant" and a member of what came to be known as the "queue de Robespierre."

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What we need, to come to terms with, therefore, is the David as he was understood by his contemporaries: not so much as an empirically constructed subject, not just as a biographical fact, but also as a **meaning**, a figure in a field of politically relevant signification. We need to get some sense of his relation to other figures of the post-Thermidorian discourse, of the uses to which he was put, and of the limits of his meaning.

Note that David's status as a figure in a field of signification was historically effective, that is, it had very "real" consequences. For one thing, it was what precipitated David's imprisonment. The way in which the decision about his arrest was made during the session on 15 Thermidor epitomizes the effect of his status: two <u>persons</u>, David and Lebon, were associated with one another on the basis of their similar <u>position</u> within the discourse, and not because of any factual relation between them. Having thus become ciphers for a certain idea of the Terror, they were treated in the same way. Thus, an arbitrary linguistic association served as a basis for action.[27]

Another facet of David's function as a term of political debate after the fall of Robespierre is how it helped establish and maintain the very distinctions on the basis of which power in the Real was held immediately after the coup, such as the distinction between a Thermidorian and a non-Thermidorian, a difficult distinction to make due to a lack

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of any common ideological or symbolic platform among the main actors of the coup, a factor which will be explained here later in some detail. David was thus from the start among those paradigmatic figures through which the identity of his post-Thermidorian opponents was established. And later, when the process of political reaction gains pace, his meaning will evolve with it, and his function as a major component of the negative political and cultural image of the Terror will be reinforced.

In aligning these two particular kinds of historical evidence -- Delécluze's memoirs and the transcript of the Convention debate -- with David's Self-portrait, I wish to bring forth the category that seems to me best suited for examining this painting and David's output from prison with which it belongs: the notion already once mentioned here: the "subject on trial." This term should be understood in multiple senses. One level on which the term "subject on trial" applies here is more or less straightforward, in the sense that David needs to be recognized as a Robespierrist/Jacobin subject put on a continuous trial, that is, accused, imprisoned and kept under ceaseless fire of different charges throughout the entire period of the Thermidorian reaction (from the end of July 1794 to the end of October 1795). But I would also like to use this term here in its more specific theoretical sense, that is to think of David as a subject of enunciation.

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The semiotic concept of the subject of enunciation was introduced by Emile Benveniste to distinguish the voice with which a given text speaks from its author as a "real person" or a transcendental ego, as implied by the traditional biographical approach.[28] I am particularly interested in the further elaboration of this concept by Julia Kristeva, in what she calls a subject-in-process (and/or on trial; the French expression "en procès" having a double meaning). With this notion Kristeva proposes to consider the condition of the creative subject as one of permanent crisis: a clash or friction between the subject's identity and the symbolic codes through which this identity has to articulate itself.[29]

We can apply Kristeva's concept, with necessary modifications, to David as a post-Thermidorian subject. Going somewhat beyond the Kristevan parameters of this notion insofar as it refers exclusively to the subject of literary practice, we could first of all understand David's inscription in the political discourse as a condition of being a subject-in-process: articulated and rearticulated by the discourse that puts David's identity in question for specific historical and not only general linguistic reasons -- for it is a discourse of his enemies. Secondly, we could follow Kristeva somewhat more faithfully in applying her notion to David's prison output and see him thrown into crisis by his own creative practice (responding as this

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practice did to the external condition of crisis in which David found himself after Robespierre's fall). However, even on this level, I am interested in placing more emphasis on outside political and symbolic pressures or constraints than is found in Kristeva's own work in order to account for David as a creative subject put in crisis by a concrete revolutionary situation. Thus, I would like to explore the possibility of aligning the effect of the subject's unconscious (specifically the unconscious drives), recognized by Kristeva as the subversive signifying function within a text, with the effect of the Revolution operating as a kind of semiotic force -- one that produces but also disrupts meanings -- in the artist's texts and images from prison. I would like, that is, to historicize the Symbolic and consider David's prison output as an arena in which the subject struggles to fit within codes, not just in a sense of the general rules of the (visual) language, but in terms of the constraints and pressures specific to the political and cultural situation in France after Thermidor.[30] David of his prison works interest me, then, not so much as an author of a group of objects, but as a subject of a historically determined process of semiosis that one can trace across them.

ii. After the coup

The Revolutionary moment that put David "on trial" has

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recently been described by the historian Bronislaw Baczko as "an event in search of its own meaning."[31] By such a description Baczko intended to emphasize the semantic uncertainty and instability as the most salient feature of both Thermidor as an event and of the political process that this event triggered -- the fifteen months known in Revolutionary historiography as the "Thermidorian reaction."

Indeterminacy and mobility of meaning were inscribed in the coup against Robespierre from the start, inasmuch as the coup was due to a largely improvised, politically heterogenous, and thus unpredictable alliance of forces. The deputies who engineered Robespierre's fall -- most of them his own colleagues in the Montagnard government and some even his former allies -- had not previously developed any common political or ideological platform from which to act and on the basis of which to keep power after the coup. From the outset, they agreed on little more than the need to oust "the tyrant" from their ranks, and their common effort in this regard was fuelled by different individual reasons. "The tyrant" defeated, there arose, however, a fundamental problem of the Thermidorians' own political identity. Since the coup took place on the grounds that Robespierre had plotted to strike the Convention with what was feared to become yet another purge aimed at his enemies, it became necessary to justify the Thermidorians' own plot to oust him

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and his followers as different from these earlier arbitrary "purifications" of the Convention. But such an effort to distinguish the present from the past inevitably raised the issue of the new protagonists' own history of involvement in the previous factional struggles and of their complicity or connivance with Robespierre's regime in general. And in addition to the problem of personal responsibility for the past, there emerged a much broader and more difficult political question of the system responsible for the former status quo, the question of -- to borrow François Furet's phrase -- how to (politically) interpret the Terror.[32]

This was not just a question of how to arrange the stock of the immediate past on the shelves of the nation's collective memory for future use. Far more immediately and urgently, it was an issue to which the legitimacy and power of the Thermidorian government were bound. In principle, the structure and functioning of the government did not change after Robespierre's fall. It retained its Revolutionary character by continuing to operate through the Convention's committees, whose organization and powers were only slightly adjusted after Thermidor.[33] The CSP lost its predominance to the two other Committees. There were new people who replaced those perceived of as Robespierre's acolytes, and the rotation of the political personnel was hence to be assured. But these reshufflings within the ruling bodies only highlighted the increasing need for an account of the

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past that would allow for the separation of the new government from the regime of Robespierre. Thus, the political identity of the Thermidorians was irrevocably caught up with the image of the Terror. With no major revision of the institutional power set-up, a considerable political and, broadly speaking, cultural effort was to be made in order to construct such an image, that is, to construct a version of one stage within their own immediate Revolutionary experience that would allow the Thermidorians to say: "We are not it."

This effort, however, triggered a long-term process whose nature and scope went far beyond the anti-Robespierrist agenda of the coup's original protagonists and largely beyond their control. Some of the protagonists of Thermidor turned into political scapegoats in the course of what became an escalating anti-Jacobin reaction. Another major problem was inherent in the very idea of isolating for critical inspection a single moment within the Revolutionary continuum. By having thus admitted to errors in the past, the Revolution was, in a sense, putting itself on trial. Literally this was so, when the important functionaries of the Terror, such as Carrier and Lebon, were brought to court. And symbolically, this was done by bringing the Revolution's heritage into question in an outpouring of texts and images, although this, far from being separate from the much publicized juridical process, was instead one

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of its circumstances and consequences.

The status of Thermidor and the period of reaction that ensued has always been problematic in the Revolutionary historiography. In addition to the guilt-ridden memoirs of those Montagnards who, sighing as did Levasseur, "Nous étions tous thermidoriens," deplored the end of the heroic phase of the Revolution to which their own turning against Robespierre contributed,[34] the longest and most established French tradition of interpretation -- a Jacobin, more than truly orthodox-Marxist one, as it has been pointed out[35] -- reinforced the sense of Thermidor as a closure of the most important period of the French Revolution. The fall of Robespierre became the pristine threshold beyond which there spread the mire of the "reaction" and the Directory: the regimes of the corrupt, of the "turncoat revolutionaries" and the nouveaux riches.[36] The early work of Furet challenged this tradition by introducing some new conceptual tools for understanding Thermidor. In Furet's account, the fall of Robespierre still marks the end of an era, but this is because it constitutes a fundamental rupture in the mode of functioning of the political discourse inaugurated by the Revolution and mastered by the Jacobins. It was from actions onto words that the power was displaced in the course of the Revolutionary process. The Jacobins ruled as the masters of discourse through which they succeded in establishing a semiotic circuit of

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equivalence between themselves and the People via Rousseau's notion of the general will. The Terror functioned as a system for maintaining transparency between these terms, for keeping alive the fantasy of direct democracy which allowed the Jacobins to maintain power. In other words, the Jacobins ruled, to a greater degree than anyone else before them, thanks to their capacity to maintain themselves in the symbolic position of the unmediated and unique representatives of the people. Putting Robespierre to death, marking a breach in the symbolic unity of the Jacobins, Furet argues, broke this semiotic circuit of equivalences and thus paved the way for the departure of the Jacobins from the political scene, and subsequently for the disappearance of the unitary political culture in favour of the pluralist one typical of representative democracies.[37]

Furet's insistence on the fundamental importance of analyzing how political discourse operates in a revolutionary situation inspired the direction of new research on the Thermidorian period. Mona Ozouf and, most recently, Françoise Brunel and Bronislaw Baczko also focus on the political debates rather than economic or social aspects of the Revolutionary process. However, this new attention results in a radical departure from the notion of Robespierre's fall as a turning point in the Revolution. Rather, it is the process of discursive elaboration of this event and its consequences that is now recognized as much

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more important and worthy of further inquiry. As Françoise Brunel put it, taking issue not only with the orthodox historiographic tradition but also, to a degree, with Furet: "[...] le 9 thermidor ne signe ni la fin de la Montagne, ni celle du Gouvernement révolutionaire: un an encore la Révolution continue..."[38] She stresses the importance of restoring the political specificity of the year III which followed Thermidor but which the episode of the coup, in and of itself, does not allow us to understand. As a matter of fact, the fall of Robespierre does not, for Brunel, mark any threshold in the political process. She offers analysis of the debates preceding it, from winter 1793 throughout summer 1794, to demonstrate continuity of a certain pattern of meanings before and immediately after the coup. Instead, it is developments triggered by the longer process of reaction to the coup that mark, according to Brunel, a radical rupture with the year II: first, the shift in the official policy from forgetting the past towards revenge on the former political personnel that occurs at the outset of the year III (November-December 1794) and sets its political tone; and then the Germinal/Prairial insurrection (winter/spring 1795) and its consequences, due to which there takes place a major institutional redefinition of the republic.[39]

Bronislaw Baczko also emphasizes the importance of the process of elaboration of political meanings across the

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official debates that ensued from Thermidor. Offering the most expanded reconstruction thus far of the different configurations of discourse formed gradually in the course of the fifteen months of the Thermidorian reaction, the scholar demonstrates the non-linear, discontinuous and contradictory character of this process. What became the single most urgent issue in these debates -- how to leave the Terror behind -- proved also to be the most tricky and problem-ridden, an issue that, rather than creating a new united political space, tore the existing one asunder. And it is this character of a post-Thermidorian space riven by political cleavages and disjunctions that Baczko brings to the foreground, defining the period as "almost a laboratory of the process of disintegration of the political, institutional and symbolic heritage of the Terror."[40]

I am interested in tracing this process on the level of visual language. In this section, I am dealing with the first stage of the Thermidorian period, i.e., from the fall of Robespierre in July to the Nantes trials and their immediate consequences in November-December 1794 (one of the most important being the closing of the Jacobin club). This period roughly coincides with the length of David's first imprisonment (2 August-28 December 1794).

My material consists of mostly anonymous engravings and drawings meant for public circulation. This was the only medium apt to register and/or articulate quickly enough the

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almost day-to-day transformations of the political discourse in this period. This does not imply, however, that the images will be treated here as reflections of the political process taking place elsewhere. On the contrary, I am concerned with them as the sites where political arguments were being formulated or hinted at sometimes even before they acquired verbal (and/or official) articulation. There was a strongly reciprocal semantic dynamic between the debates in the Convention and the language of public spaces as exemplified by the imagery and pamphlets that the new freedom of the press allowed to appear most abundantly. In the rapidly changing constellations of factual and discursive factors that constituted the context of the images discussed in this section, there are two major circumstances in relation to which these images had to situate themselves: first, the Thermidorian coup and second, the Terror. What my discussion focuses on here is what struck me as a dialectic mode in which earlier Revolutionary visual codes are put to work for the representation of a new and unprecedented political situation. In the early representations of Thermidor, the stakes were both to secure a political continuity and mark a rupture. The legitimacy of the coup depended on both: continuity, because there was a need to inscribe the coup in republican history as one of its thresholds -- an heureuse Revolution comparable to the previous grand journées of the

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Revolution, and rupture, because a line had to be drawn between the victors and the defeated Robespierre and his regime. Very soon, as the notion of the Terror acquired more and more materiality, the entire phase of immediate Revolutionary history had to be distinguished from the post-Thermidorian present. To a degree, such were the stakes of all Revolutionary events whose meaning was never "given" but had to be elaborated through a complex process, in debates and representations. Many of them called for establishing a degree of continuity as well as a break with the past. Yet, Thermidor was unprecedented in that this process of meaning-elaboration revealed a sort of a compromising skeleton in the Republic's own closet: the Terror. It is the impact of this discovery on the exisiting visual language of republicanism that will be traced here.

I should add that this section, a first installment of a three-part inquiry into the transformation of republican visual language after the Terror, focuses on the problem of construction of a new political identity across images. In the the next chapter, where this discussion will continue, the problem of cultural identity in the images of the Terror will also be raised.

To bring this material into the discussion of David after Thermidor seems to me important on two accounts. First, the process of construction of meaning of the Thermidorian coup and, subsequently, of the Terror implicated David

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immediately as a political actor -- as a member of the former government and a Jacobin. Secondly, this process mobilized and transformed the Revolutionary visual language that David had been instrumental in forming. The transformation -- or, to borrow Baczko's term, disintegration -- of the codes and symbols of the year II, radically altered the frame of reference within which David, as republican artist had to position himself. We need to get a sense of the precise nature and scope of these alterations if we are to understand David's own prison output.

*

It is not possible to thoroughly reconstruct here the complex historical circumstances that led to the Convention's revolt against Robespierre and assured its success on 27 July 1794. But some factual information is necessary to understand the issues around which the battle for the meaning of the event became engaged almost immediately after it happened. It was the conflict of forces within the principal governing bodies, the CSP and, to a lesser degree, the CSG, exacerbated by Robespierre's increasingly dictatorial behaviour in the summer of 1794, that prepared the political ground for the coup.[41] This conflict came as the accumulated result of factional struggles dating back to winter 1793-1794. It has also been seen by some historians as the inevitable effect of the politically heterogeneous nature of the ruling Montagnard

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majority that the leadership of Robespierre was keeping precariously united.[42] Robespierre was not formally a leader of the government; yet, his position as its principal spokesman, enforced by his overwhelming influence at the Jacobin club, the primary site of government control over public opinion, gave him the upper hand over his colleagues. The regime that, as Furet demonstrated, operated through displacement of power onto words, found, so to speak, a crystallization of this principle in the person of Robespierre, the master of Revolutionary speech, Jacobin discourse, and, by extension, the order of things in the year II. Yet, paradoxically, it was, as the historian R.R. Palmer put it, "the gigantic blunder" of his speech delivered on 8 Thermidor that brought about Robespierre's end.[43] In it, the Incorruptible, already besieged by the opposition, launched an attack on some members of the two Committees, the CSP and the CSG, without, however, giving their names. This gesture, joining Robespierre's earlier critiques of abuses of certain deputies delegated on mission, fed the already circulating rumour, that he, helped by his closest allies at the CSP, Saint-Just and Couthon, was preparing yet another <u>épuration</u> of the Convention which would allow him to get rid of his personal enemies in the same summary way used before to dispense of the deputies with the Gironde, the <u>dantonistes</u> and the <u>hébertistes</u>. The knots of provisional alliances of people who had reason to

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fear the purge tightened overnight. When Robespierre arrived at the Convention on the 9th, he was not allowed to speak. Saint-Just's address was also interrupted. In the course of the animated and confused debate, in which the former deputies on mission criticized by Robespierre, such as Tallien and Fréron, and his opponents at the CSG (Vadier), and at the CSP (Collot, Billaud, Barère), held sway -- the Convention moved to outlaw the three "triumvirs": Robespierre, Saint-Just, and Couthon. The pace of events quickened in the course of the day: Robespierre was first imprisoned on the orders from the Convention and then released by the intervention of the supportive Parisian Commune. He and his immediate followers sought shelter at the seat of the Commune, in the Hôtel de Ville. The Commune's leader, Henriot, came to their support with arms. Led by deputy Barras, the "Thermidorians" -- if one can introduce such a designation for a barely coherent group of deputies -- and the armed support they mustered from the sections, besieged the Hôtel de Ville. The rebellious Commune lost, Robespierre and his immediate followers, some of whom tried suicide, were captured and quickly led to the guillotine the next day. Aside from the narrow group of Robespierre's allies at the Convention, who lost their heads together with him, the majority of the Commune, which participated in the insurrection in his support, was also executed in the two days that followed. Altogether 108

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persons were beheaded in connection with 9 Thermidor.[44]

The first group of images that I want to discuss consists of the early representations of the coup: a) the images of the event itself, and b) examples from a much larger corpus of imagery that focused on the person of Robespierre in order to fix the meaning of his fall.

The engraving Horrible conspiration de Robespierre dévoilé par le Comité de Salut Public (Fig.2) must have been published soon after 9 Thermidor as the interpretation it conveys of the event closely matches the one coined in the official discourse: it represents the coup as the Convention's successful unmasking of the conspiracy against it.[45] And it conveys this meaning by mobilizing the existing visual tropes of republican triumph, by way of appropriation and subtle inversion of sense within the older visual language, rather than by invention of a radically new one.[46] In the medallion on the left, showing a winged Genius of Republican France stamping over the bodies of the conspirators, it is the allegorical formula developed under Robespierre to represent the People's triumph over forces hostile to the Revolution (fanaticism, aristocracy, factions, etc.) is now mobilized to represent his fall. In the medallion on the right, we are looking at "the armed people of Paris coming massively in defense of the National Convention and for the punishment of the conspirators," as the inscription surrounding the scene tells us. Such verbal

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description reinforces a rather arbitrary parallel conveyed visually by the iconography -- a crowd gathered in front of the Tuileries Palace -- with the past Revolutionary journées, specifically the storming of the Convention on 10 August 1792.[47] The print enacts here a wishful symbolic comparison of the Thermidor with the symbolic moment of overthrowing the monarchy. For the Parisian sections' attitude toward the anti-Robespierrist coup was ambiguous, and whatever support there was for Barras, it could not be compared to the character and scope of the collective action against the King in 1792.[48] The wishfulness of this symbolic comparison is underscored by the very structure of the print. Its recourse to two different orders of representation for the same event in each of the two medallions -- the one on the left, allegorical, the one on the right, narrative, and both set within an already dense semiotic field presided over by the tablet with the inscription of the print's title (which in and of itself already contains an interpretation of the event) and the red bonnet sending down to the snakes of treason what was called in the language of official reactions to the coup the "foudres de la vengeance nationale"[49] -- indicates that the meaning of the coup that this image tried so hard to secure was far from evident.

But the author of the print was not alone in articulating this kind of wishful comparison. The symbolic collapsing of

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the 9 Thermidor 1794 as the day of triumph over Robespierre onto the 10 August 1792 as the date of triumph over the King appeared in speeches made soon after the coup, as in Barère's famous dictum: "On the 10th of August, the People made their Revolution; on the 9 Thermidor, the Convention made its own."[50] And later this equation was manifested in festivals commemorating the great Revolutionary journées during which -- again, appropriating the very rhetoric of the Terrorist festivals designed by David -- two thrones were being burnt, one of Louis XVI and one of the "tyrannie triumvirale" of Robespierre, Saint Juste and Couthon.[51]

This emphasis on republican continuity in which Thermidor needed to be inscribed could also be perceived in the treatment given in the Horrible Conspiration to the primary result of the coup, the execution of Robespierre and his group. It too is fitted into an earlier iconographic formula of the King's beheading, with the crowd cheering the severed head held triumphantly by the executioner, as in so many images of the event produced after 21 January 1793. Such iconographic evocations sought to catch the memory of Robespierre in the network of negative connotations that belonged with the King and thus helped to construct a reshuffling of political factions as a necessary defense of republican institutions.

However, the scene of beheading does not figure in the Horrible Conspiration prominently but is instead tucked in

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the background of the allegorical medallion. In the Acte de Justice du 9 au 10 thermidor (Fig.3), another early representation of the coup, it is precisely through symbolic elaboration of Robespierre's execution that the meaning of Thermidor is being shaped. This caricature, engraved after Viller, is most interesting in the way it allows some of the contradictions and problems inherent in the process of assigning meaning to the coup to take form.[52] Older codes are mobilized here, as they were in the previous image, and there is a similar effect of semiotic overcharge stemming from multiplication of redundant figures and symbols, one of which would be enough to convey the message. However, the issue of continuity and rupture raised by this mobilization of earlier republican repertory is much more problematic here.

Viller resorts to the existing Revolutionary iconography of the descent to hell -- deployed earlier in the political caricatures targetting nobility and clergy and later, in the period around his execution, also the King[53] -- in order to cast the meaning of the anti-Robespierrist coup in the mold of just punishment meted out to the forces threatening the Revolution. Within a cave-like infernal space, with stone debris and human body fragments scattered on the ground, two androgynous Furies are shown holding by the hair the decapitated heads of Robespierre (the one with spectacles, in a crown of skulls and daggers), Saint-Just, Couthon and

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Henriot, the president of the Parisian Commune.[54] The Furies are making their way to a throne built of skulls representing "the crimes of the tyrant" and guarded by a three-headed dog (Cerberus).[55] Behind it, high flames of the infernal fire rise. In front of it, the severed heads of Marat and, possibly, Lepelletier, set on columns as if they were remnants of castrated busts, emerge from the clouds of smoke. What prompts the descent of the Furies is a winged genius who blows hot air into their backs, holding the thunders of vengeance in one hand, and a basket marked "panier municipal" in the other. From the latter, a cascade of decapitated heads of the members of the rebellious Parisian Commune rolls down on the ground. A disembodied hand holding the scales of justice, covered by the medallion images of an eye and an ear of justice, hovers above the whole spectacle.

Representing the Thermidorian coup as a descent to hell, the print thus brings forth the imaginary space to which Robespierre's regime is hence to be assigned. This poses a problem. For, unlike earlier Revolutionary caricatures, infernal space here does not represent a territory to which the counter-revolutionary forces, or the idea of monarchy, could be relegated. Rather, it is a space through which the Revolution begins to imagine one of its own phases. It was one thing to represent the death of "the tyrant" as a death of the King. It is another to take a part of one's own

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republican history and define it as a story of the damned and outlawed.

Some dangers of such definition could also be perceived in the way the motifs of decapitated head and fragmented limb are used here as the most prominent characterization of both the coup against Robespierre (the heads of the triumvirs and the ones rolling from the "panier municipal"; the disembodied hand holding the ear and the eye of justice) and his regime (his skull-throne, the heads of the Revolutionary martyrs side by side the body fragments of the Terror's victims spread on the ground). In thus registering the reciprocity of the "tyrant's" means with that of his vindicators, the image gives form to a kind of continuity about which the Thermidorians could not but feel uneasy; not, as in the earlier print, with the grand founding acts of the republican past, but with its horrors.

The rhetoric of this image articulates a contradiction insofar as it inscribes the Thermidorian act of justice within the very logic -- what might be called the Terror's logic of the severed head -- that this act wants to punish. This contradiction could be seen as the law -- one of the laws, according to Freud -- that defines the kind of space to which the Terror is being assigned: the unconscious. This is what is most interesting about this engraving: it offers an early and a quite developed form to the idea of the Terror as the political unconscious, a sort of a permanent

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and problematic pocket in the Revolutionary memory, which, although produced by the post-Thermidorian discourse, escapes its total control. Both the infernal topography and the rhetoric of the severed limb are signs for the splitting effect of post-Thermidorian attempts to fit the Terror within the memory of the Revolution. The Terror's effect on the "body" of republican codes seems thus to be one of fragmentation, or castration.

A space of the unconscious -- a space of the Other: the fragmented bodies, the three-headed dogs and the Furies, were to be joined in the course of the Thermidorian reaction by the cannibal, the blood drinker and the vandal, the three privileged figures for a revolutionary of the year II in this period. We could say that what is given form here, then, is a sort of -- for the lack of the proper English word -- <u>défoulement</u> of the repressed material. Yet, we should not think of it in terms of a mere unearthing of the meanings that were simply dormant during the Terror, pushed aside by the figure of Hercules with his club as the heroic image of the People. This process of <u>défoulement</u> was in fact a process of a politically invested, increasingly anti-Jacobin construction of the immediate past. And on the level of codes, we will witness the effect of the unconscious casting itself like a shadow on the imagery of the year II. Post-Thermidorian portraits of Robespierre are good examples of this.

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In the flurry of images and pamphlets that entered that contest over Thermidor's meaning in the summer and fall of 1794, Robespierre was at the outset the most dominant figure. Constructed as a figure of threat to the republican institutions, a "tyrant," even a "King," he became post mortem the symbolic center of a formidable consensus in the first reactions to the coup. It was as if on 10 Thermidor the entirety fo France woke up anti-Robespierrist.[56] Congratulatory addresses from different parts of the country poured into the Convention denouncing "Robespierre, l'infâme Robespierre, dont le nom désormais rappellera l'assemblage de toutes les scélératresses, dont le nom vaudra en horreur, celui de Catinilas [sic], des Céthegus, des Cromvels [sic]...."[57] No one dared to defend him.[58]

It has been pointed out that this immediate unanimity of opinion was a result of the uniformization of the political language and behaviour that still lingered after the Terror.[59] But on the level of visual language, the grafting of the entirely new semantic constructions onto the inherited ones also began to appear. Such was the notion of Robespierre-buveur de sang. This new rhetorical figure appears on an anonymous engraving preserved at the Musée Carnavalet in Paris (Fig.4).[60] It is a half-figure medallion portrait of Robespierre shown squeezing blood from a human heart into a chalice he is about to drink. A slight disjunction between the sitter's head, with its grave and

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somewhat vacant facial expression, characteristic of a certain kind of serial portraiture done for official purposes, and the monstrosity of the gesture allows us to suppose that we are looking at a composite image. Robespierre's figure must have been lifted from an earlier source -- it is reasonably close to, for example, his likeness by J. Guérin, engraved by Fiésinger, which was part of the well known collection of medallion portraits of the deputies to the National Convention[61] -- and combined with a cannibalistic gesture that belongs to the post-Thermidorian stock of political metaphors. As in the Horrible Conspiration..., here, too, older codes were mobilized for the representation of a new idea. But unlike the print discussed earlier, the medallion image does not testify to a mere appropriation but rather to an erosion of an older code. A form of official commemorative representation of a deputy to the National Convention (a medallion bust) -- which may be viewed as a code for inscribing a revolutionary in history -- is being here re-inscribed and subverted from within by cannibalistic trope.[62]

The steps in this process of erosion from within are spelled out by another post-Thermidorian portrait of Robespierre, an anonymous print also in the collection of the Musée Carnavalet (Fig.5).[63] For this image puts together, without merging, the elements that went into the figure of Robespierre-buveur de sang: Robespierre's person

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(via his medallion bust borrowed here without alteration from the Guérin/Fiésinger collection) and the Terror (represented synecdochically as a guillotine, rather than, as earlier, being metaphorized by the cannibalistic trope of blood drinking). The separateness of these two notions could still be perceived here due to this unmerged juxtaposition of two different modes of representation underscored by the disproportion in size -- with the medallion clearly functioning as an insert within the space occupied by the scaffolding of the guillotine (probably lifted from the type of representation of this instrument often produced in year II, such as Louvion's Le poignard de Patriotes est la Hache de Loi![64]). While in the Robespierre-buveur de sang the two different codes (commemorative portrait/cannibalistic metaphor) were merged seamlessly, here the meaning-production is triggered by the play of a back-and-forth oscillation between the two codes.[65] But if the old "innocent" Robespierre lingers on, via unmerged portrait code, the erosive conjunction with, or rather disarticulation by, the guillotine is imminent. Both figures of the Terror, guillotine and Robespierre, become after Thermidor attributes for one another.

The symbolic inscription of Robespierre's body by the guillotine was also manifested in an outpouring of what could be called politico-medical literature in which Robespierre's physiognomy was being examined as a pseudo-

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scientific proof of his excessive, sanguinary character. In J.M. Plane's Physiologie ou l'art de connaître les hommes sur leur physionomie, a compilatory treatise largely based on Lavater, the engraved portrait of Robespierre (it seems after Guérin/Fiésenger) appeared as illustration of the following physiognomic diagnosis:

> Ces lèvres pincées et pressées l'une contre l'autre annoncent dans le visage de Robespierre [...] une cruauté inexorable. La pointe très aigue du nez et son enfoncement à la chute du front, indiquent une colère relféchie et capable des plus grands excès. La voûte du front est le signe d'une certaine faiblesse qui est toujours le partage des âmes sanguinaires.[66]

Published in 1797 and containing the physiognomic portraits of some other leading revolutionary figures, such as Danton and Marat, Plane's study proves that this kind of political inscription of the body was not only a product of a short-term ephemeral literature but continued under the Directory. It indicates, too, that the process of taking symbolic stock of the Terror gave new political function to earlier physiognomic tradition deriving from Le Brun and Lavater -- an issue that deserves more study than the format of the present discussion allows.[67]

It was also in this Robespierre-related imagery through which the sense of Thermidor was initially constructed, that we can perceive the gradual drift of political argument

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beyond his person and towards the notion of the Terror as a system. (To an extent, this was already signaled by the Acte de Justice.) This is made clear in the caricature La marmite épuratoire des jacobins, where Robespierre becomes a cannibal cooking up his enemies in a large cauldron.[68] Through the title, it is Jacobinism, denounced as a barbaric system of elimination of political enemies, that is being targetted. Another, rather exquisite example is the anonymous engraving titled Robespierre guillotinant le bourreau après avoir guillotiné tous les Français (Fig.6).[69] Robespierre in the splendor of his official costume with a tricolor plumed hat designed by David for the Fête de l'Etre Suprême pulls the string of the blade that is to fall on the executioner's neck. He is shown sitting on a tombstone against a funerary pyramid and surrounded by a forest of guillotines, each of them representing a different batch of victims of his policies: government functionaries, political factions, social classes, civil groups, etc.[70] "Here lies all of France," announces the inscription on the pyramid; and below, the books representing the constitutions of 1791 and 1793 are trampled under Robespierre's feet.

The sophisticated form of this image produced, no doubt, by a highly trained engraver articulates a no less sophisticated political argument: Robespierre becomes here the embodiment of the Terror understood as a combination of two contradictory notions: the systematic (the multiplied

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guillotine as a tool of serial extermination) and the arbitrary (the violated constitutional legality). Similar argument could be found in a cruder caricature titled Gouvernement de Robespierre, published as frontispiece to the Almanach des prisons sous la Terreur, in which the heads of victims arranged in systematic heaps, topped with inscriptions identifying them as "clergy," "deputies," "the people," etc. perform the semantic function of the forest of guillotines. In this print, the executioner guillotining his own head off while a statue of Liberty watches on is the ironic equivalent of Robespierre's action in the former image -- both representing the absurd as the limit of this contradictory combination of the systematic with the arbitrary.[71]

Thus, the images that partook in the political project of castigating Robespierre and his faction became a laboratory for developing a language in which a visual conception of a broader issue -- the Terror as a systematic and arbitrary fragmentation of the social body -- began to take form. The rolling heads of the "panier municipal", the forest of the guillotines, the heaps of neatly arranged remnants of mass decapitations -- were the new figures of this language. Yet, they were not the products of invention but rather of manipulation -- a disfiguration -- of the older codes: i.e., incision, fragmentation and multiplication of such earlier motifs as a medallion portrait, a single severed head, a

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guillotine, etc.

As such, the engravings helped articulate the next stage of elaboration of the meaning of Thermidor, one that begins, as Baczko pointed out, sometime towards the end of August 1794.[72] It is then that the necessity to conceive of the Terror as a multiform phenomenon which goes beyond the person and power of Robespierre himself becomes increasingly obvious.[73] The notion of the Terror as a system of power based on fear has already been used the day after the coup by Barère, Robespierre's former colleague at CSP, but it is the deputy Tallien, who first develops this idea in his speech on 28 August (11 fructidor). The introduction of this notion into political discourse raised issues no one yet knew how to deal with.[74] The most immediate problem that posed itself was the individual political responsibility for the "system". This problem was exacerbated by the rapid surge of pamphlet literature directed against the former political personnel (some of whom was still in power), made possible by the newly gained liberty of the press.[75] Perhaps the single most important brochure published first in Paris in late August 1794 and soon reprinted in some seventy thousand copies distributed all over France was La Queue de Robespierre by Jean-Claude Mehée de la Touche.[76] In it, several Montagnards who were still in power, among them Barère, Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varenne of the CSP, were denounced as associates of the "tyrant" and the notion

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of "robespierrisme" entered into circulation. Immediately, there followed a flood of pamphlets exploiting the idea of "Robespierre's tail" to attack the Jacobins in general, who were denounced as the Revolutionary aristocracy which monopolized power through oppression.[77] A collective passion for revenge found an outlet in and was fed by the violence of such slogans as "Il faut exterminer les Jacobins si on veut pas que nos fils viennent cracher sur nos tombes" or "Pendez les Jacobins, ce sont des scélérats!"[78]

The issue of individual responsibility for the Terror is one that concerned David directly. On 29 August, a few days after the notion of "Robespierre's tail" enters public discourse, deputy Lecointre, most probably set up by the bigger actors in the Thermidorian drama, presents at the Convention a formal accusation of the members of the old governing Committees: Barère, Billaud, and Collot of the CSP; and Amar, David, Vadier and Voulland of the CSG. A most stormy debate ensues, extending well into the next day.[79]

Lecointre accuses the seven members of the Committees of being Robespierre's accomplices of in engineering the Terror as a system of "tyranny and oppression" of both the Convention and the social body at large. He also charges them with obstructing opposition to "the tyrant" before as well as during the coup. Lastly, he presents several specific charges of smaller abuses concerning the government committees, especially CSG control over the revolutionary

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tribunal (David's name is mentioned specifically in an account of the behind-the-scenes pressures that the CSG is said to have exerted during the Dantonists' trial.)[80]

Lecointre's act was not well prepared. Of the twenty six charges he presented, none was supported by evidence. Neither order nor distinction was made between hearsay and fact. Nor could anyone ever expected to have it proved that the seven accused helped "cover France with a thousand Bastilles." Most of the deputies voiced strong protest at having the immunity of the Convention thus violated. Yet, although the accusations were finally rejected as calumnious -- with the Convention feeling threatened that its own legitimacy would otherwise be put into question[81] --the impact of Lecointre's act was most important because of the debate it stirred.

First of all, the problem of the broader responsibility for the Terror, once posed, could not be easily dismissed.[82] Lecointre's speech for the first time grouped together the names of the seven members of the committees, David among them (the only one of them already in prison), on whom the blame for the past could be unloaded and thus disassociated from the names of the other former functionaries of the Terror still in power after Thermidor. Although at first absolved, all seven deputies were soon to be accused again.[83] Within the ever-shifting sands of the political discourse after Thermidor, the names of the seven were

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being offered as a kind of signpost that could orient, and channel, the more and more difficult and problem-ridden debate about how to leave behind the period of the Terror.[84]

The national representation needed such signposts. For another consequence of Lecointre's act was that it raised the problem of the entire Convention's complicity with the "system of oppression" in the past and, concomittantly, the problem of its political identity in the present. The three fundamental questions posed by deputy Merlin (de Thionville) on 24 fructidor (10 September): "D'où venons-nous?, Où sommes-nous?, Où allons-nous?" epitomized the major problem of self-definition with which the official political discourse had to grope in the fall of 1794 (at the end of the year II).[85]

Finally, Lecointre's denunciation of the prominent Jacobins fed into the crisis in which the Jacobins as such found themselves in the wake of Thermidor. Politically, Baczko argues, the Jacobins were getting into a kind of dead end. They, too, had to acknowledge Thermidor as the end of tyranny, yet they could not simply dismiss their past because their collective identity depended on it. At the same time, they could not construct this past as a political alternative to the present and could not constitute themselves into an opposition party because this was against the principles of Jacobinism, based as it was on the idea of unity of the people and, consequently, their own

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indivisibility. The "faction", in Jacobin discourse, always meant "the others," the enemies of the republic "one and indivisible." So the Jacobins had to remain within the frame of legality and support the policies of the Convention.

In the war of pamphlets and symbolic representations, the Jacobins launched a counter-offensive, pitting the good patriot against the "moderate." Many presented themselves as victims of Robespierre.[86] Throughout September, the Jacobins could be said to have held their ground: in addition to the fact that it ended up rejecting Lecointre's accusations, the Convention adopted a policy of continuity according to the political and economic program outlined by Robert Lindet in his report summarizing the year II. And it ordered the transfer of Marat's remains to the Pantheon in a fête that took place on 21 September.[87]

For the purposes of our inquiry into David as a man of the year II after Thermidor, Lindet's report needs more attention. Its author had been, like David, a Jacobin and a member of the Robespierrist government, although unlike David he survived in his functions after the Thermidorian coup and continued at the CSP until October. It is in the name of this Committee that Lindet delivered on the 4th sans-cullotide day (20 September) a summary of the Convention's achievements in the year II, which was ending, and proposed an outline for its future. It was an important report that was to symbolically sum up a moment of

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republican history. Although Lindet was careful to avoid any explicit references to the Mountain, the unitary rhetoric of his address, as well as its principal arguments, have to be recognized as an essentially Jacobin proposal for the official policy on the Terror, and as such deserve our attention.

"C'est un compte que nous rendons à la Nation. Nous nous rappelons à nous-mêmes ce que nous avons été, ce que nous sommes; nous nous prononçons ce que nous devons être. La France nous entend et nous juge," announces Lindet addressing the three fundamental problems formulated earlier by Merlin.[88] Following this lead, Lindet seeks to position the Terror vis-à-vis the present and to outline the strategies for the future. He recognizes the Terror as a "génie destructeur" that floated above France for a year, causing its ruin in the political, economic and cultural sense. He offers a severe and detailed critique of the abuses in this period.[89] Thermidor marks, however, a radical separation from this epoch. With Thermidor, the French nation completed the cycle of its Revolutionary experiences. What it needs now is to recognize the Terror as a painful moment of the past, necessitated to a large degree by historical circumstances. But in the name of the present national unity, it needs to forget it. "Faisons oublier à nos concitoyens les malheurs inséparables d'une grande révolution; disons-leur que le passé n'est plus à nous,

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qu'il appartient à la posterité."[90]

In an open allusion to Lecointre's accusations, Lindet also warns against the danger of turning the process of leaving the Terror behind into a violent setting of accounts. He acknowleges that the perpetrators of past crimes have to be justly punished, but he encourages that a distinction be made between those who committed crimes and those who erred in the name of liberty, such as the patriots employed as functionaries of the state during the Terror and merely seeking to do their job: "Ils ont déféndu la cause sacrée de la liberté, et dans des temps d'orage, ils ont usé d'un grand pouvoir que la necessité avait crée. La Nation ne veut pas que ceux qui ont dirigé et lancé la foudre contre ces ennemis en soient atteints et consumés."[91] This was an important discursive adjustment for the project of settling accounts with the past. One that, potentially, created grounds for accommodating, rather than discarding altogether, part of the former political personnel to which David belonged.

Lindet's report was at first received by the deputies with great enthusiasm and unanimously adopted.[92] Perhaps the Convention recognized the arguments in the report as an effective shield against the mounting social passion for revenge. In adopting Lindet's solution, the Convention envisaged, at least for a while, the possibility of forgetting and forgiving in regard to certain Terrorists.

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But such exit from the Terror without revenge proved too difficult. Within 24 days, on 18 vendémiaire (9 October), the Convention reneged on its previous resolutions -- an indication of how the political field was at this time riven with detours and contradictions -- and espoused revenge as the official policy vis-à-vis the former Terrorists and all the "patriotes exclusifs," a code name for Jacobins.[93]

Espousing the policy of revenge, the Convention gave a boost to collective passions that were assuming the more and more distinct contours of massive social reaction against the year II. Baczko described the situation suggestively:

> La renvanche devint personnelle et collective, sociale et culturelle, à l'encontre de tous ces "scélérats", "égorgeurs", "chevaliers de la guillotine", "massacreurs", pilleurs et voleurs, ignorants et insolents, qui avaient accaparé toutes les "places" et qui avaient eu un temps le dessus sur les "honnêtes gens".[94]

One of the most important consequences of the Convention embarking on the policy of legal revenge were the so-called Nantes trials. They were a series of court cases concerning the functioning of the Terror in the Vendéean city amidst civil war, which got transformed into a trial of the Terror itself as a system. Having started in Paris in the beginning of September and ending in mid-December 1794, the trials constituted, as Baczko put it, "the death certificate" of the Jacobins and were perhaps the single most important

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factor in restructuring the social imaginary of the Terror.[95]

All begun on 10 September (22 fructidor), with the case of the ninety-four notables of Nantes who had been accused of conspiracy against the Republic during the Terror and subsequently brought to Paris but who after Thermidor still awaited indictment in prison. From the start, the case was bound to serve the goal of a much needed practical demonstration that the post-Terrorist regime indeed differed from its predecessors. In this context, the court proceedings became an arena of revelations which proved extremely embarrassing for the notables' original accusers, the Comité révolutionnaire of the year II. The extent of repressions in Nantes was coming to light, ranging from arbitrary imprisonments, executions without trial and, the most notorious case, the mass drowning of suspects in the Loire river. Within six days the Tribunal issued a verdict acquitting the major part of the accused. One consequence of the verdict was that it transformed the original accusers themselves into the accused. Thus, on 14 October (23 vendémiaire) the second trial, that of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes, opened. It came in the wake of new revelations that reinforced the ones that came out during the first trial: deputy Merlin (de Thionville) reported at the Convention that innocent mothers and children were among the suspects drowned en masse in the Loire. He demanded

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punishment for the "cannibals" responsible for such acts.[96] The official act of accusation seems more like a literary description of a descent to hell or to the darkness of pre-civilization than a legal document. It is worth quoting, for at the time when it was issued it was given extraordinary publicity: not only was it published widely in the press, but it also appeared in the form of a separate brochure that the Convention distribited in thousands of copies and posted all over France. Its language stands in contrast to the unitary, conciliatory rhetoric of Lindet. And it served as material for the image through which not only the Nantes Committee, but also the Terror as a historical period was to be understood:

> Tout ce que la cruauté a de plus barbare; tous ce que le crime a de plus perfide, tout ce que l'autorité a de plus arbitraire; tout ce que la concussion a de plus affreux, et tous ce que l'immoralité a de plus révoltant, compose l'act d'accusation des memberes et commissaires du Comité révolutionnaire de Nantes. Dans le fastes les plus reculés du monde, dans toutes les pages de l'histoire, même des siècles barbares, on trouverait à peine des traits qui puissent se rapprocher des horreurs commises par les accusés. [...] La Loire roulera toujours des eaux ensanglantés, et le marin étranger n'abordera qu'en tremblant, sur le côtes couvertes des ossements des victimes égorgés par la

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> barbarie, et que les flots indignés auront vomis sur ses bordes... Des victimes innocents, des enfant sortant à peine des mains de la nature, étaient désignés par ces nouveaux Caligula... Les baignades, c'est ainsi qu'ils qualifiaient un crime que Néron rougit d'avoir commis une seule fois sur une seule personne, et qu'eux, plus cruels et plus scélérats, ont commis plusieurs fois et sur des milliers des malheureux.[97]

From the start, the campaign against the Nantes Committee, leading to its trial, implicated Carrier, the former government's deputy on mission in Nantes. Throughout fall 1794, Carrier remained an active figure on the political scene and notably at the Jacobin club, where he launched verbal counter-attacks against the accusers of the political personnel of year II.[98] When the official discourse begins to link his name with the atrocities committed in Nantes at the very end of September, he publishes a brochure in which he offers his own version of events.[99] Yet, on 30 October (9 Brumaire) an impeachment procedure against him is triggered at the Convention; on 11 November (21 Brumaire) the committees examine his case and announce the existence of grounds for accusations. On 24 November the deputies vote to put forth Carrier's accusation. On 21 November he begins to testify at the Convention. He is formally arrested on 27 November and put in front of the Tribunal. The trial ends on

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16 December with Carrier's execution voted for unanimously.[100]

In a multiple sense the Nantes trials constituted a turning point in the Thermidorian reaction. It was the first political trial of the Terrorists, since Robespierre and his followers had been executed without having their case brought to court. What is most pertinent to our inquiry is the trials impact on the way a) the Terror and b) the Jacobins were being thought about and imaged. As the result of the trials, for more than two months the whole of France was exposed to horrifying accounts and details of massacres that leaked from the rooms of the revolutionary Tribunal and were intercepted by the press and the pamphleteers. The image of the Terror that emerged as a Dantean scene of mass massacre could not, from then on, be easily excised from even the Jacobins' own accounts of the Revolutionary process. On the canvas of this image, there were embroidered other collective fears and fantasies engendered by the experience of the Terror that were seeking a form they had not found within the heroic Revolutionary image-repertoire, inherited from the year II. Baczko's analysis of this symbolic effect of the trials is fundamentally important. For in his discussion, the emphasis is put not on historical truth (i.e., if and to what extent Carrier was guilty, how his personal responsibility for the noyades tallied with the Convention's role in condoning them, etc.) but on the

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symbolic and political resonance and impact of the imagery unleashed by the trials on the political culture after Thermidor. Baczko observes that the press and other public reports of the trials generated two types of images that both incited and gave shape to social fears. First, the image of the Grande Terreur, as in the above cited original act of accusation: the Loire river scarlet with the blood of a mass of victims, some of whose arms were being cut off as they resisted the forced drowning; prisons bursting with innocent citizens; arbitrary killings and mass executions of the prisoners of the Vendée insurgence. But, secondly, also the image of the Petite Terreur, that is, of the day-to-day intimidation of the honnête gens of the cities in the hands of a small group of militants. Between these two images of the Terror existed, as Baczko put it, a kind of play of mirror reflections, which meant that all those peoples who were objects of even the smallest chicanery during the Terror identified themselves with the victims of the noyades in Nantes.[101]

Secondly, on the level of political impact, the Nantes trials compromised the Jacobins as a political force and Jacobinism as a mode of political action. The same day as Carrier's accusation was decreed, on 11 November, the Jacobin club was attacked by the jeunesse dorée. On the 12th, the Convention officially suspended its activities in response to the mounting attacks. Of course, the Nantes

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trials were not the unique reason but rather a catalyst for the closure of the club that had to be seen as the accumulated result of the public campaign against the Jacobins, escalating in the course of October and the beginning of November. As a consequence of the Nantes trials, public opinion was won over by the anti-Jacobin tide. But the trials inscribed themselves in this campaign most significantly not only because they exacerbated it, but also because they bestowed a legal sanction to punishment and revenge on the former political and administrative personnel.[102] The trials paved the way for the legal elimination of the Jacobins from political life. Another event that took place in the beginning of December, the reintegration of the Girondist deputies (eliminated by the Jacobins in June 1793) with the national representation, effectively helped that happen.[103]

With the closure of the club, the symbolic site of the people's control over the Revolutionary process and the institution which, as Furet argued, had allowed the Jacobins to maintain power, disappeared. The Jacobins no longer had any institutional basis for their collective political identity or as a point of resistance to the progressive erosion of their language and symbolism. Their ideological impasse was exploited in a stream of publications and imagery. Satirical brochures were published which referred to the closure of the Jacobin club, such as La Grande

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Détresse des Jacobins qui n'ont plus le sol. A highly popular theatre piece denounced their meeting place as a Club infernal.[104]

In regard to visual culture, the dislocation of the Jacobins from the place they had occupied in the collective Imaginary of the year II was conveyed in two types of images: a) one showing a stereotypical Jacobin; and b) another, representing the Terror as his doing.

Two engravings illustrate the poles between which the representation of the Jacobin as a political figure oscillated in this period of discursive transformation -- from Lecointre's accusation to the time after the Nantes trials. An anonymous print representing a Député à la Convention Nationale could be identified as an image of Jacobin penitence at a time of mounting revelations about the Terror (i.e., September-November 1794) (Fig.7).[105] A figure of a représentant du peuple, his hands crossed on his chest in a gesture of repentance, is shown here wandering in a barren landscape, among dried-out, leafless trees and snakes crawling on the ground. Looking down, his eyebrows knitted to reinforce a sense of troubled introspection, he pronounces the words inscribed in both Latin and French below the image: "Je reconnois ma faute; et mon crime odieux/ a chaque instant du jour est present à mes yeux."[106]

In order to acknowledge Jacobin guilt for the "odious crimes" of the Terrorist past but, at the same time, to

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exonerate it, the iconography of the expulsion from paradise is adopted here (the deputy's figure is reasonably close to the pose of Eve from Michelangelo's Expulsion in the Sistine Chapel). "Yes, I have erred and perhaps I have fallen, but not beyond redemption" the message seems to be here, joining the discourse of forgiveness and forgetting launched, albeit unsuccesfully, by Lindet's report. On another level, a deputy wandering in a barren, hostile landscape cannot but convey a sense of disorientation and (political) impasse. The universalizing, enobling iconographic parallel to expulsion from paradise cannot but help also intimate the Jacobin's loss of political territory -- if perhaps not yet the factual closure of the club, it is at least in a figurative sense a loss or drastic reduction in the available language of political self-definition. A leafless tree, a snake of treason -- there is not much left of the triumphant Jacobin attributes of the year II.

The drastic effect of the Thermidorian process on Jacobinism's symbolic scenery is illustrated by an engraving produced under the Directory and titled L'Ami de la Justice et de l'Humanité où le Jacobin déguisé (Fig.8).[107] This is an image of a Jacobin-Terrorist, with the terror literally inscribed in his face as he stares at the viewer, marching forward with a clenched fist and a dagger in hand, and stamping on the text of the Constitution. No dandy disguise (top hat, high cravat, short breeches, pointed shoes) could

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hide the perniciousness of his intentions. While the stamped-on Consitution spells out his adherence to the arbitrary as a principle of political behaviour, random beatings of the civil population carried out by his look-alikes in the background leave no doubt about the violence and abuse implied by the Jacobins return to power -- feared as it was in the context of the approaching elections of spring 1797. Revelations about the Terror in the provinces unveiled in the course of the Nantes trials left an indelible mark on the image of a Jacobin, inscribing it with the notion of arbitrary violence that could always be mobilized for the purpose of political discreditation, as it often was under the Directory.[108]

This brings us to the second group of images. The most tangible symbolic effect of the Nantes trials that emerged in the period of fall and early winter 1794, is that the image of the Terror was tied to the notion of mass massacre. This was done in the flow of texts and images produced in the period of the trials. In combining the ironic and the violent, these pamphlets, on some level, point to a collective need for comic relief from the still very real fears of the Terror that Baczko has described. But the comic also served the specific political function of constructing the image of the Other. For example, Carrier-related brochures testify to the preponderance of a mocking inversion: in Le Testament de Carrier he appears as a grand

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administrator of patriotic baths; as a commissary for the celebration of republican marriages (during the noyades, couples were said to have been bound by rope together before being thrown into the river, a practice allegedly referred to by the perpetrators of these acts as "republican marriages"); and as a professor of hydrography.[109] Another brochure, referring to the former Terrorists, some of them deputies on mission in other cities, announced a great dinner to take place on the day of Carrier's execution, where Barère would cook a "gibelotte à la nantaise avec sauce acerbe", Collot d'Herbois would prepare an "hachis à la lyonnaise" while Billaud-Varennes would serve "étouffades, assomades et capitolades à la septembrise (reference to the September massacres).[110] The badge of the "cannibal" (first developed, as we have seen, in the portraits of Robespierre), and with it the status of the Other, was thus being attached ever more firmly to the lapels of the Jacobin deputy's coat. And through the well known names, such as Carrier and Barère, the entire personnel of the year II was being targetted in this broad discursive association of the Terror with the image of the mass massacre and the cannibalistic feast.

We witness this association interestingly given form in an anonymous print titled Un sans-culotte instrument des crimes dansant au milieu des horreurs and produced sometime around the Nantes trials (as indicated by brochures inscribed with

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references to the fusillades and the noyades, tramped on by the image's protagonist) (Fig.9).[111] Here, the Terror appears in the background, outlined in the language of classicism that combines the iconographies of the massacre of innocents and the rape of the Sabine women (see especially the Poussin-like woman being abducted in the center). The caricature was royalist -- its regicide protagonist is shown here "eaten by remorse" in the form of the King's profile cutting into his throat -- and, as such, is symptomatic of the time in which the counter-Revolutionary imagery reappeared due to the regained freedom of the press. But it is also symptomatic of a broader phenomenon of inversion of the Davidian classicist rhetoric that had been used to extoll the year II and now was being mobilized to convey its debacle.

Indeed, in the period around the Nantes trials, there originates a visual form that could be called, borrowing a term from the political discourse at the time, the peinture de maux which privileged different forms of mass massacre -- executions, drownings and other atrocities -- as the means of depicting the Terror.[112] This repertoire will later be of crucial formative importance for the Romantic artists. In 1794-95, however, rarely did it find its way to painting, remaining instead within the precincts -- fairly broad as these were due to public circulation -- of engraved imagery. An example of a systematic effort to document through

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description and image all the abuses and crimes committed during the Revolution but especially during the Terror, in addition to a detailed description of the Terrorist prisons, is the six volume work of a known republican journalist, L.M. Prudhomme. Published only in 1796-7, it was a product of a longer preparatory effort that must have originated in the climate of the Thermidorian reaction.[113] A drawing preserved at the Louvre, done for the frontispiece engraving of the first volume of this work, illustrates well some of the issues at stake in Prudhomme's project (Fig.10).[114]

The drawing consists of seventeen scenes of mass killings and destruction arranged loosely in tiers, so that some scenes merge with the other. Although there are few representations of the atrocities committed before and after the Terror (such as the so-called "iceboxes' massacre" in Avignon in October 1791; and the mass killing in Lyon prisons after Thermidor), it is predominantly and most prominently the Terror that figures in this image, with the Nantes' noyades as the biggest scene sprawling in the center. The visual language is descriptive, with no attempt at allegorization, and unsophisticated, at times crude, in its effort to convey the specific details of each scene of violence: the nude couples bound together by rope before being thrown to drown in the Loire river -- reference to the so-called marriages républicaines in Nantes; the fragmented limbs of the seventy-three inhabitants of the town of

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Brotteaux flying in the air as the victims are being shot at by the canons in December 1793; eight carts packed full with suspects being led in June 1794 to the guillotine at the Place de la Révolution in Paris, followed by mothers throwing their children in the air with the identical, stencil print-like gesture of both farewell and despair; and others.[115] The inscriptions published on a separate page allow the viewer/reader to identify the scenes.

And the text in all of the six sparsely illustrated volumes, fills in, in the most minute details, all the facts and rumours about the functioning of the Terrorist machine. What the image comes short of, a metaphorical condensation of meaning, Prudhomme's writing supplies to excess: "la guillotine fumante de cadavres" (5: 153); "les voyages sanguinaires" of the Terrorist deputies on mission (5: 260) "le traffic atroce" at the CSG at the hight of its power (5: 114-5) are some of the staple figures in the sanguinary poetics of this text. Rhetorical parallels serve here to enhance the personal accusations for which no factual grounds are presented. For example, having depicted the daily atmosphere at the CSG during the Terror, complete with families in tears trying to break through the "durete et l'impolitesse des tyrans subalternes" of the guards to reach the Committee's members, Prudhomme states:

> Le peintre David aurait pu nous envoyer de bons matériaux pour composer l'histoire des crimes du CSG.

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> Richelieu, dans un de plus beaux jours de sa tyrannie, ne fit pas trembler la France entière comme un seul des membres de ce Comité.[116]

The evocation of the dictatorship of the famous monarchic functionary gives a mythic dimension to the Terror and, as we can see, David has become a prominent part of that myth.

The effort of this multi-volume text that merges factual description with poetic license is similar to the effort of the frontispiece drawing that seeks an almost seamless consolidation of different scenes within one image. The work produces an illusion of coherence for an interpretation of the past, implying that there was nothing else to a certain period of the Revolution than destruction and bloodshed. One result of this visual and textual strategy is the fastening of a semantic association of the Terror to the idea of fratricidal excess. Another, is an image of the Revolution as a whole that emerges from the Prudhomme publication, just as it does from its frontispiece drawing, as a revolution that has been reduced to the notion of crime and massacre.

A drawing from the Hennin collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale titled Allégorie au 9 thermidor (attribution uncertain) conveys a similar idea (Fig.11).[117] Sitting on a decrepit postument, a sturdy figure of a woman wearing a headband inscribed "La Révolution," engages ruthlessly with a circuit of male bodies. With her right hand, she pulls up by the hair a tormented figure personifying Robespierre, in

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his republican costume designed by David, holding a scroll inscribed "Fête de l'Etre Suprême" and a dagger. With her left, she fumbles with the entrails of a male body lying contorted on her robust lap -- a kind of mock-mannerist revision of Michelangelo's Vatican Pièta -- and identified by a scroll wrapped around his arm as the "Convention nationale". A heap of nude corpses, male and female, some in fragments, rises high up the worn-out postument, reaching the demiurgic woman's feet as a pell-mell mass. One of the corpses, a male figure distinct in its wholeness and its rendition that, by its anatomical accuracy, suggests the hand of a well trained history painter,[118] is being pulled up by the hair by the figure personifying the Convention. Thus, the Revolution here takes a form of a vicious circle of complicity in violence with the woman as its point of transfer: Robespierre grips the body of the "National Convention" who in turn pulls at the corpse of the "martyr," that is, according to the Revolutionary rhetoric established by David, the body of the People. (That corpse harks back specifically to David's Le Pelletier). This Revolution is a process that went awry, and one that threatens to never end. The fact that it was personified here by a figure resembling the statue of Liberty that stood on a similar postument on the Place de la Révolution (visible here in the background) reinforces that sense of the Revolution as an inverted process. It is as if the

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figure of the ideal that was used to cement the fraternal reciprocity among the revolutionaries of the year II, became, it too, eroded and turned into an allegory of the fratricidal fights. With her face speaking horror -- mouth open, eyes looking up, brows knitted -- and topped by the snake-like crown of hair, this Revolution is the maternal figure that turned into a Bad Mother par excellence: an amalgam of a Gorgon and a Medea, she combines the most threatening aspects of the phobic male vision of femininity.[119]

It has been observed that the multiform process of putting the Terror on trial after Thermidor resulted in putting the Revolution itself on trial -- the Revolution not as an experienced historical reality, but as a demiurgic figure constructed in the course of the year II to give this reality a meaning.[120] It is precisely this incriminating metamorphosis of the Revolution as a central figure of the Revolutionary symbolic repertoire that is being captured in this drawing. Yet, the drawing demonstrates that this was not, as has been suggested, a question of the Revolution loosing its vigor with age, nor a question of the process wearing out, but rather a question of a willful re-configuration of the Revolution, via a castrating, cannibalistic woman, as a threat. There was nothing natural or self-evident about such re-configuration. In other words this was not a kind of "natural" wearing down of a symbol

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after long use, that might parallel a collective fatigue with the long Revolutionary process in whose service the symbol was put, but rather the effect of politically motivated practices of deconstruction that transformed the body of this Revolution into a castrating monster.[121]

We have witnessed in this section some moments in the process of formation of the image of the Terror and some of its consequences. It was precisely in the period of the Thermidorian reaction that the origin of the idea of the Terror as a discrete phase in Revolutionary history is located, and images had a great part in forming this idea. In the summer of 1794, when David was imprisoned, no one knew what the Terror, in this sense, was. But throughout the fall and by early winter of that year, when the artist-deputy was released, there emerged a fairly developed, collectively shared and thoroughly negative image of Jacobin rule. It was not, clearly, an historically objective image but one formed of the tissue of political arguments. And it was an important image. The circumstances of its formation -- in public debates, around public events such as the Terrorist trials, rather than, as it was in the year II, ex cathedra of the unique (Jacobin) club, within the space of the unique (Jacobin) political discourse -- produced an illusion of a collectively and thoroughly shared vision of the common social experience. It seemed to have been the Terror "as lived by everyone." This is the first important

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thing to keep in mind.

The second major point is that in the course of formation of the Terror's image, a new language of political denunciation directed against an entire political class of revolutionaries was put in place, while visually, a kind of a counter-Imaginary in relation to the stock of heroic figures and symbols of the year II was developed.[122] The system of the older heroic rhetoric was being broken and disintegrated, as a new space was being opened up within the official republican discourse to accommodate the post-Thermidorian idea of the Terror -- a space of irreducible Otherness articulated through the figures of cannibal, blood drinker and a castrating female monster.

François Furet was one of the first to urge that we begin to consider the Revolution not so much as an economic or social process but as a political and symbolic one, in which the Imaginary of a society becomes the very tissue of its history.[123] The images discussed here, then, have to be recognized as the very stuff that came to shape people's idea of their history and their identity after Thermidor. And this was the same fabric from which David, too -- reading papers, seeing images and listening to the accounts of his visitors in prison -- had to tailor his own.

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Notes to introduction and chapter 1:

1. For example, in the artist's monographs, among which the most recent are Régis Michel David, L'Art et le politique, and Philippe Bordes, David. See also Warren Roberts' David and the French Revolution. However, the reliability of the latter as a scholarly source is seriously undermined by its almost exclusive use of secondary sources, and by mistakes. The author states, for example, that David is shown in the 1794 Self-portrait with an easel while, as a matter of fact, what he holds is a palette.

Morever, two articles adressed David's prison output. David Wisner's "David en prison," 2065-75, mobilizes the sources from the period to present a more or less empirical study of David's situation after Thermidor. Useful factual evidence is presented here, albeit not without some fundamental errors, such as giving the date of David's release from Luxembourg prison as April 1795 while in reality David was released on 28 December 1794. Moreover, no analysis of the visual level of the material is offered beyond a rudimentary description of iconography. Wisner's main point is that the ensemble of prison images failed to offer an image of the revolution but produced instead a "mere propaganda for the artist himself." (2069) I would argue that, precisely, the prison ensemble served the artist's redefinition by situating him vis-à-vis the revolution. Clearly this body of work sought to produce a new image of the artist, but what image, and what meaning was at stake remains unexamined.

I have addressed some of the problems of meaning in my "Les oeuvres de David en prison," whose main point was to raise the issue of the political nature of David's post-thermidorian self-definition. I have tried to situate the texts and the visual material produced by David in the context of the parliamentary and press debates and in relation to the redefinition of the artist that emerged from them. David's corpus of work is seen here as the site of production of a position for an artist vis-à-vis the Revolution, and particular attention is payed to the visual rhetoric of such works as the Self-portrait, the Homer, and the Sabines drawings.

2. See Michael Fried, Absorption and Theatricality, 175-8.

3. See J. Wilhelm, "David et ses portraits "; and J.A. Schmoll "J.L. David's Vue du Jardin du Luxembourg von 1794 als Parabel der Gefangenschaft des Malers."

T.J. Clark has offered a very interesting reading of the 1794 Self-portrait during the colloquium David contre David, organized by the Louvre in December 1989 in Paris, but which remains, alas, unpublished. Clark located David's image within

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the broad framework of the 18th-century episteme of the self as defined in the works of Rousseau, Hume, Diderot (i.e., the problematic of the self as duality). Although I do not, in essence, disagree with such contextualization, I am more interested in how the revolution -- as experience, as discourse, as a new Imaginary -- inflected, not to say shattered, this episteme.

4. Mona Ozouf, "De Thermidor â Brumaire: de discours de la Révolution sur elle-même.; Bronislaw Baczko, Comment sortir de la Terreur, and his Thermidoriens in François Furet and Mona Ozouf, Dictionnaire de la Revolution Française, 425-39; and Françoise Brunel, Thermidor.

5. New work has also been done recently on the issue of gender in the Revolutionary discourse and culture, drawing our attention notably to the homosocial nature of its forms. Although it does not pertain directly to the Thermidorian period, this work was indispensable for my study, as a source of information and as a methodological model. See Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution as well as her forthcoming The Family Romance in the French revolution. See also Joan B. Landes, Women in public sphere; Darleen Levey and Harriet Applewhite, Women of Revolutonary Paris; and Domonique Godineau, Les Citoyennes Tricoteuses.

6. For the most recent discussion of the methodologies of relating work to its context, see Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, "Art History and Semiotics."

7. For the essential model for examining the impact of the 1848 revolution, not just on the iconography but also on what could be defined as the rhetoric of the image (formal structure and its visual strategies), see Linda Nochlin, Gustave Courbet: A Study of Style and Society. See also her article on the discursive construction of Courbet in October. As a methodological model of contextualizing the artist's output in the revolutionary process, most important is also T.J. Clark's The Absolute Bourgeois.

8. The thesis that the sexual, and consequently social, identity of the subject is first established in the process of identificatory oscillation with the parent of each gender is one of Freud's fundamental arguments. Thus, all of us have to pass through a homosexual phase in this process. For the discussion of Freud's argument in a way that is pertinent to this study, see

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Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Between men, esp. 21-7.

9. In regard to the work of desire in the artist's preparatory process as exemplified across a body of drawings, see Rosalind Krauss, Terminal Iron Works, The Sculpture of David Smith.

10. See my article "David's Sabine Women: Body Gender and Republican Culture under the Directory."

11. For the pioneering work on the development of the revolutionary aesthetic of the 1789-99 period, see Diane Kelder Aspects of "official painting". In regard to the pre-revolutionary aesthetics of David, Thomas Crow's work has offered the methodological model for the kind of historicization that I am postulating here. See his "The Oath of the Horatii in 1785," and Painters and Public Life in Paris, chap. VII.

12. Self-portrait. 1794. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

13. See, for example, André Dumont's denunciation at the session of 13 Thermidor, in Moniteur Universel, T.21, no 315, le 15 thermidor an II, (2 August 1794), 366-7. "Le roi" was used by the deputy of Montmayaut who urged that David be arrested together with Le Bon, the proconsul of Arras, as he was on Thermidor 15th; see J.L.J.David, Le Peintre Louis David, 221; hereafter cited in abbreviated form as Jules, followed by page number.

14. See P.M. Delafontaine, Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M.J.-L. David, 5-7. The painting was never shown at the Salon, but was treated by the artist, as was another self-portrait now at the Uffizi, as the object of "between men" exchanges. David gave the prison self-portrait to Isabey. The Uffizi one went to another student of his, Gérard, in exchange for the portrait of Canova that Gérard offered David in 1809. See Régis Michel in David et Roma, 172; and David, 1989, no.98, 238.

15. "[...] at that moment a voice of a man shouting as he was pressing quickly through the crowd drew everyone's attention: 'Make way for the commissary of the Convention!' The ranks of the curious observers who stood alongside the grand alley of the Tuileries opened and one saw the representative of the people in costume, holding his two sons by the hand and moving briskly toward the procession in order to hurry up the marching group of judges of the revolutionary tribunal, followed by the deputies of the Convention. It was David, put in charge of the organization

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of the entire festival, who waved his hat adorned with a huge tricolor plume in order to make the different bodies of the republic's officials keep their distances." E.J. Delécluze, Louis David, 8. Translations throughout this text are mine, unless stated otherwise.

16. "The representative of the people, the painter David, was on the tribune, where he was stammering out some muffled words that he sought, but in vain, to oppose to the rage of many of his colleagues, determined to indict him. He was pale, and the huge drops of sweat dripping from his forehead rolled down his clothes to the floor, where they formed large spots." Delécluze, ibid., 9-10. For the the exact words that David stammered at the described session, see Moniteur Universel, T. 21, 367-68.

17. The notion of the image as both a representation of a given context and a gesture made by the artist in this context is Aby Warburg's. See Michael Podro, The Critical Historians of Art, 176.

18. My reconstruction of the session and its meaning here is based on the transcript published in the Moniteur, T. 21, 366-9. See also A. Mathiez, (La Reazione thermidoriana, 30,) who directly explains the vitriolic attack of Dumont on David by his desire to replace David at his post at the CSG. Long excerpts of this debate are also reprinted in Jules, 218-20.

19. See Moniteur, T. 21, 367, which remains the main source for the debate referred to below.

20. Ibid., 367.

21. This idea of Robespierre's coup, for which no evidence was ever found, must have been one of those fantasies which, like the rumor that Robespierre was to marry Louis XVI's daughter and crown himself, served, as Baczko suggested (Comment sortir de la Terreur, 17-34), as an instrument for shaping pro-Thermidorian opinion. The source of the rumor on Robespierre-roi was probably Vadier. It was quickly picked up by papers and pamphlets.

22. See Jules, 221.

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23. The other notions were the proper names with a particular symbolic/political resonance, such as, first and foremost, Robespierre, but also Lebon, the principal figure around which the post-Thermidorian sanguinary vision of the Terror was constructed. There were also specific themes, such as that of Robespierre's alleged conspiracy against the Convention.

24. For the role of this rumor in the public Imaginary, see Baczko, Comment, 17-34.

25. See Schnapper in David, 1989, 222, referring to the "new evidence" found by D. Wisner -- the drugstore owner's certificate for having sold an emetic to David -- as a basis for a new understanding of David's situation at the time of the coup.

26. In other words, not only is it naive to assume that a written proof of David's purchase of a medecine could explain the artist-deputy's comportment, but it is a larger question of empiricist method that simply does not suffice in regard to a situation defined predominantly by discursive rather than factual circumstances. This is to say that whether David did or did not take the emetic on 9 Thermidor, whether his absence was caused only by his upset stomach or rather by several other reasons that, given the circumstances, it would be fairly easy to understand, was neither what mattered in the debate nor what put him in prison.

27. Of course, this is not to say that there was no reality behind such thinking. There was. David was a functionary of the Terror as was Le Bon, although his way of performing this function differed radically from that of Lebon. The point is that this reality has a status of referent, to which the figure of David-the Terrorist is a signifier, that is an element largely independent in its movement, in the way it produces meaning from the referent, in favor of association with other signifiers, laterally, so to speak, on the plane of language. That is, we cannot take this discourse at its face value but as a field of signification, which has to be contextualized and intepreted. Moreover David's meaning will be from then on defined by it, -- and Delécluze image of David outdone by this discourse comes again to mind -- his post-Thermidorian persona was to be woven of this discursive fabric, the sample of which we heard here.

28. See Emile Benveniste, "Subjectivity in Language," Problems in General Linguistics, Miami Linguistic Series, no.8, trans. Mary Elisabeth Meek, Coral Gables, Fla., University of Miami Press, 1971. Benveniste's position is more complicated but this

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is how it could be summed up for the purpose of this discussion. For the notion of "subject of enunciation", see also Julia Kristeva, Revolution in poetic Language, 22-24.

29. See Kristeva, Revolution, esp. 19-106; and idem, "From one identity to another," chap. in Desire in language, 125-47. On Kristeva's method, see the sections on the Self-portrait and the Homer drawings in chap. 2 below. As will become clear, I am departing from the strict Kristevan theory on two counts at least: I think of the crisis of the subject as a function of its being the subject of the discourse of others, rather than only of his own creative practice (an object, rather than only the subject, of enunciation). And, second, I am more interested than Kristeva seems to be in the historical specificity of constraints that a subject confronts within his own process of semiosis, his own discourse as an artist.

30. Cf. F. Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan."

31. Baczko, Comment, 46-56. The author also stressed the unprecedented character of the Thermidorian reaction as a political experience.

32. François Furet, Penser la Révolution française, 83.

33. There were three governing bodies: the CSP, CSG, and the Committee of Legislation. The number of members of the CSP was reduced and the principle of rotation of deputies nominated to it was to be strictly observed. Moreover, the CSP lost some influence to the CSG. But these were minor adjustments, not a change of principle. See J. Godechot Les Institutions de France, 314-6.

34. Levasseur, Memoires, as quoted in Brunel, Thermidor, 113.

35. See Furet, Penser la Révolution.

36. The phrase "turncoat revolutionaries" is Lefebvre's; see his The Thermidorians, passim.

37. See Furet, Penser la Révolution, esp. "La révolution est terminée," 11-109.

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38. Brunel, Thermidor, 8.

39. Ibid., passim, and esp. 127-8.

40. Baczko, Thermidoriens, 427.

41. For the circumstances of Robespierre's fall, and especially for Robespierre's alienating behaviour and the conflict between the Committees, see Palmer, Twelve who ruled, 361-87. See also Brunel, Thermidor, 94-110; Baczko, Comment, esp. 19-29.

42. For factional struggles as the background of the coup and the duality within the Montagnard group, see Brunel, Thermidor, 10-4.

43. Palmer, Twelve who ruled, 372.

44. Brunel, Thermidor, 106-109.

45. [Poisson], Horrible conspiration de Robespierre dévoilé par le Comité de Salut Public le nonodi Thermidor l'an 2 de la République Française une et indivisible. Engraving. Year II. Bibliothèque nationale. The print was mentioned by J. Renouvier, Histoire de l'art pendant la Révolution, 488. On the first intepretation of the coup as a reaction to conspiracy, see Baczko, Comment, 46-56.

46. For the visual rhetoric of the Jacobin triumph, see, e.g., Pierre Lelu's Triomphe de la Montagne. (Repr. in French Caricature and the French Revolution, no. 148, 241-2. Formally, more pertinent for the print under discussion is perhaps the engraving French people overwhelming the hydra of federalism, August 1793, Musée Carnavalet. (Repr. in Hunt, Politics, Culture and Class, fig. 13, 97.) The iconography of the triumph of the people was the privileged Jacobin figure in the Terrorist rhetoric. See, for example David's Triumph of the People, the design for a theatre curtain, discussed below, chap. 4, section ii.

47. In the wake of Louis XVI compromising escape, on the 10th of August 1792 the people stormed the Tuileries Palace and penetrated the hall of the Convention to demand the deposition of the King, and a constitution of national representation based on universal suffrage. This date was subsequently adopted and fêted

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as the symbolic moment of the abolition of the monarchy, thus of the Republic's origins. For a succinct acccunt of this journée, see Furet and Richet, La Révolution française, 156-7.

48. See Palmer, Twelve who ruled; and Brunel, Thermidor, 106-9.

49. L'adresse de la société populaire et régéneré de Liberville à la Convention Nationale read at the Convention on 21 Thermidor, as cited in Brunel, Thermidor, 123.

50. Barère as cited by Brunel, ibid., 111.

51. Baczko, (Comment, 31) refers to these festivals, stating also that the Convention considered fusing the two holidays of 9 Thermidor and 10 of August, thus celebrating the triumph of the Republic over the "two thrones". It may be noted that a similar device was used by David in the Fête de l'Etre Suprême.

52. To say it is a caricature of the coup might be confusing: it uses the language of caricatures but it is not an image directed against the coup. Clearly, the target here is the regime of Robespierre against whom "justice" is being meted out.

53. For examples of such iconography, see, L'Art de l'Estampe, Musée Carnavalet, no. 225, 46, (ill.); and La Guillotine dans la Révolution, nos. 47-49, 52-53. For Villeneuve's Descent of Louis Capet to Hell, engraving, ca. 1793, see also French Caricature and the French revolution, no.92, 195-7.

54. This image circulated also in other versions, such as the crude Epinal-like woodcut reproducing the central part of Viller's print and titled C'est ainsi qu'on puni les traitres. It was perhaps the provincial artist copy of the Villers. The heads of Robespierre and Saint-Just were identified in it by inscritpion. (Repr. in La Guillotine dans la Révolution, no. 190, 157.

55. This is how the throne is referred to in the old explanatory note handwritten on the margin of the print.

56. For the anti-Robespierrist consensus immediately after the coup, see Baczko Comment, 61.

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57. The address sent on Thermidor 16 from the popular society of Libreville (Charleville) in Ardennes, read at the Convention on 21 Thermidor. Cited in Brunel, Thermidor, 123.

58. In addition to these forms, other means were being mobilized to catch the memory of Robespierre in the network of negative connotations that belonged with the King. Rumcrs were being spread that he had planned to marry into the Bourbon family and re-establish monarchy. The utterly fantastic quality of such an idea should not prevent us from appreciating its symbolic relevance. For, as Bronislaw Baczko pointed out, it was exactly such rumors and (mis-)constructions that established and fed into the post-Thermidorian consensus about the coup's meaning. (See Baczko, Comment, 17-34.) The representations of the coup were being focused on the single person of Robespierre who, likened to a King, thus made it possible to construct the reshuffling of political factions as a defense of republican institutions.

59. Ibid., 61. Indeed, aside from the passages vituperating the person known until then as Incorruptible, the texts of the addresses did not differ much from what was being sent to the Convention during the rule of the Jacobins. For example, the popular society of Libreville the text of which was mentioned above, addressing the victorious Thermidorian Convention still intones in a perfect Jacobinese: "Du sein de la Montagne que vous occupez, lancez sur tous les comploteurs les foudres de la vengeance nationale, et le peuple, heureux par vos soins et par la grandeur de son caractère, anéantira tous vos ennemis et jouira du fruit de vos travaux." Cited after Brunel, Thermidor, 123-4.

60. Anonymous, Maximilien Robespierre, stipple engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection de Vinck, t. 48, no. 6527. A version of the print is also at the collection of the Musée Carnavalet (repr. in Guillotine et la Révolution, no. 186, 156). The nature of transformation of the medallion format in this engraving is important for my arguments about David's output -- a series of medallion portraits -- from his second imprisonment. See chap. 4, section iii below.

61. For the Fiésenger series, see L'art de l'estampe, 19-22. David P.Jordan reproduces another version of this image, titled Le triumvir Robespierre, also from the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale. Jordan's caption suggests that it was Bonneville's portrait of Robespierre that was used for the post-Thermidorian sanguinary version by Fassart (The revolutionary

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career of Maximilien Robespierre, 133 and 255). The Bonneville series, it has to be noted, was another example of the kind of medallion portrait series produced during the revolution to circulate the likness of the deputies. See L'Art de l'estampe, ibid.

62. For the medallion bust as a code of national representation, see also chap. 4, section iii below.

63. Anonymous, M.M.I.Robespierre, etching; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection Hennin, no. 11932. This is, no doubt, a version of the French print destined for dissemination in Germany, thus with inscriptions in German. The medallion is lifted from the earlier Guérin/Fiésenger series.

64. Some images of this kind are reproduced in Guillotine et la Révolution, as is the Louvion (no. 142, 125).

65. The medallion's shape teases with the possibility of Robespierre's head rolling any time under the guillotine's blade. This effect of the image was noticed by Daniel Arasse (see his entry in Guillotine et la Révolution, no. 187, 156). And the string and lever connection between the medallion and the guillotine offers an alternative representation of Robespierre's death as an endless repetition -- with the blade down, the medallion goes up in the air like a ball and comes down to rebound again -- offering thus indirectly a commentary on the Terror's machine.

66. J.M. Plane, Physiologie ou l'art de connaître les hommes sur leur physionomie, 2: 310.

67. For the physiognomies of other revolutionaries, see ibid., 2: 300-33. On Plane's work, see also Antoine de Baecque, "Le sang des héros," 577.

68. Engraving, Bibliothèque Nationale, series N2 Robespierre, t. 164. Robespierre is shown here inspecting his victims through a large magnifying glass as he lifts them on a sieve from the steaming cauldron. Reference to Robespierre's myopia acts as a figure of his political shortsightedness as well. See also de Baecque, ibid.

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69. Anonymous line engraving, Musée Carnavalet, Est. PC Histoire 22c (with inscriptions on the pyramide and the books); and Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection Hennin, no 11742 (without inscription). For interesting observations about this image, see Linda Nochlin, "Fragments of a Revolution," 161-2 and 167.

70. For the legend that explains each letter that accompanies guillotines, see La Guillotine dans la Révolution, no. 188, 157.

71. Anonymous etching, Musée Carnavalet, Est. PC. Histoire 22D. Repr. in Guillotine et la Révolution, no. 189, 157. The Almanach, was reprinted four times during the year III (1794-1795).

The notion of the Terror as the arbitrary was elaborated theoretically under the Directory. See Furet, "Une politique sur la Terreur." One may add, that this visual conception of the Terror as a systematic and arbitrary fragmentation of the social body will retain its power throughout and well beyond the Thermidorian reaction and will continue to be used in the power struggles in the Directorial republic. One example of this is the rather striking engraving by Louvion, Tableau d'histoire naturelle du Diable. Avis aux intrigants of 1797 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, series Qb 1 1797), where a mass of severed heads (with emphasis on physiognomical differentiation that intends to indicate the wide social range of victims, suggested through other means in the earlier images) is arranged decoratively on a board that, with its gaping whole in a center, is clearly a part of a guillotine. "Ce mélange est affreux, mais il est nécessaire. Mort terrible aux tirans, périsse l'arbitraire": this inscription below the image leaves no doubt as to the immediate political purpose of the print, which was to compromise the Jacobins in the context of approaching elections.

72. See Baczko, Thermidoriens, 427.

73. Ibid. My understanding of this stage of transformation of the political discourse is indebted to Baczko's discussion of it here as well as in his Comment.

74. For, as Baczko observed (Comment, esp. 57-190) to denounce the Terror as a system entails the necessity to dismantle it and the stakes of such operations are complex: which institutions should be dismantled and which should remain; how to proceed with such a project; who of the new class of the functionaries of the revolution should be targetted, who should remain in power and, even more important, on what basis is power to be retained in a post-Terrorist republic.

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75. The battle for the liberty of the press was initiated at the Convention by Fréron on 9 fructidor. He proposed no limits to the press freedom. First adopted as such by the Convention, this motion was rejected on the grounds that it threatened to make royalist propaganda legal. The latter was a real issue given the unsystematic and little controlled mode in which political the prisoners were being released after Robespierre's fall. The next day after the fall, the slogan is proposed to replace the Terrorist one, "La justice à l'ordre du jour!" and it is acted upon. But behind the rhetoric of justice there hide, again serious controversies: what to do with the enormous amount of prisoners, who to release, who to put into prison, how to punish the old personnel, and what to do with the symbolic heritage of the Terror etc. There was no amnesty but the law of 22 prairial were abolished on 1 August (on the 5th, large numbers of prisoners were released).

Despite contradictory developments, typical of Thermidor, regarding press laws, there was de facto a considerably unlimited press. This constituted an important factor in the awakening of public opinion. From the first weeks after the 9th on, liberty of speech unleashes most violent language and an intensification of overstatement characteristic of all revolutionary language. This amplification of the extremely violent language of the attacks on the Jacobins -- as if the speech repressed by the discourse of Terrorism was resurfacing in a massive way -- is surprising given the actually weak position of the Jacobins then. See Baczko, Comment, 177. Baczko's points could be applied also to the imagery.

76. It was published first on 26 August under the anagramic pseudonym Felhémési. Méhée was Tallien's collaborator and an author of several violent anti-terrorist tracts published after Thermidor. Baczko (Comment, 83ff and n.1) offers the hypothesis that Méhée wrote Tallien's speeches, for example, the one of 11 fructidor. For Mehée's pamphlet, see also François Gendron, La Jeunesse dorée, 36.

77. Mehée's brochure as the source of their inspiration is announced already in their titles: Les Anneaux de la Queue, Coupez-moi la queue, La Tête à la queue ou première lettre de Robespierre à ses continuateurs, etc. See Maurice Tourneaux, Bibliographie de l'histoire de Paris, 2: 425-6. And Gendron, ibid.

78. The first slogan is from a brochure by the leading pamphleteer of the jeunesse dorée, Richer-Sérizy, titled Aux Jacobins. The second is a title of a brochure authored by J.M.

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Bouverot. See Gendron, La Jeunesse, 36-37.

79. For the debate, see Moniteur, T. XXI, 620-43. Baczko also offers a discussion of this, as he calls it, "debate-monster," (Comment, 85-92.) He suggests that Tallien and Fréron were behind Lecointre's action. My discussion of the meaning of Lecointre's act is indebted to Baczko's analysis of it. The debate is also quoted extensively in Jules, 222-5.

80. See Laurent Lecointre, Les crimes de sept membres des anciennes Comité de Salut Public et Comité de Sûreté Générale ou denonciation formelle à la Convention Nationale contre Billaud-Varenne, Barère, Collot-d'Herbos, Vadier, Voulland, Amar et David, Paris, l'an III. See also detailed citation of the item of accusation concerning David in Jules. And the discussion of the accusation in Baczko, Comment, 85-92.

I am not going to enter into details here. This was done by Jules. Moreover, David D. Dowd ("J.L. David, Artist Member of the CSG") based on the CSG archives, has clarified the extent of David's implication in the work of the Committee. (E.g., David worked as a committed police functionary. However, he did not sign any arrest warrants in the trial of the Dantonists, whatever his was influence on its course.) What seems to me more important, is to situate Lecointre's act in the political discourse of which it was a product and with the pattern of interests to which it belonged. The importance of the accusation was in David's implication in this pattern.

81. This was Thibaudeau's point; see his Memoirs, as cited by Baczko.

82. Baczko, "Thermidoriens," 428.

83. Lecointre was to strike again, repeating his accusations in 5 December (15 frimaire). Later, Barère, Billaud, Collot and Vadier became the four "grand coupables" indicted in the context of popular unrest of winter/spring 1795.

84. On how the rejection of his proposal by the Convention signals the scope of the difficulty -- procedural, political and ideological -- with which the project of dismantling the Terror was laced, see Baczko, Comment, 85-92.

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85. The fall 1794 marks, literally, the end of the calendar year II, as it does, symbolically, mark the end of the Jacobin era in the Revolution. For the discussion of Merlin's discourse and its implications, see Baczko, Comment, 57ff.

86. For the Jacobin impasse, see ibid., 161-4. One very concrete effect of Lecointre on the Jacobins' position could be cited. The CSP was renewed on 15 fructidor (1 September), following Lecointre's accusations on 12-13 fructidor. Billaud, Collot and Barère were replaced. But, aside from their dismissal, the problem of the responsibility of the former members of the old committees for the Terror was not solved. See J. Godechot, Les Institutions, 314-5.

87. For information on the Jacobins holding ground and even taking the offensive in September 1794, see D. Woronoff, La République bourgeois, 13. For the fête for the Pantheonization of Marat, see Gendron, Jeunesse, 90-3; and Mona Ozouf, "Thermidor, ou le travail de l'oubli." On Marat's fortune, which was about to change radically, see chap. 3, section i. below.

88. Baczko, Comment, 164. For the discussion of Lindet's report and its reception, see ibid., 164-179.

89. See Baczko, ibid., 166-7. Lindet focuses on the cultural and economic aspects but also talks about arbitrary persecutions. In regard to the former, Lindet mobilizes the terms introduced by Grégoire's reports on the Terrorist vandalism, about which see chapt. 2, section iii. below. In order to leave the Terror behind, Lindet finds it necessary to "prononcer solennellement que tout citoyen qui emploie ses jours utilement aux travaux de l'agriculture, aux sciences, aux arts, aux commerce, qui élève ou soutient des fabriques, des manufactures, ne peut être inquiété ni traité comme suspect." Ibid., 166. This policy was what David hoped for.

90. Ibid., 169.

91. Ibid., 168.

92. For this reception, see ibid., 164.

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93. See the National Convention's official address to the people, issued in Vendémiaire, year III, quoted extensively in Baczko, Comment, 179. The anti-Jacobin language and message of the Convention's Vendémiaire address, and the shift in its policy that the address conveyed, were products of the volatile political situation at the beginning of year III (end of September/beginning of October). The so-called guerre aux addresses (i.e., conflicting messages sent to the national representation in Paris from the disoriented popular societies in the provinces), the eruption of the anti-Jacobin violence in Marseille, the change in the CSP personnel, and the ongoing trials of the Terrorist functionaries from Nantes were the factual punctures around which the nation-wide anti-Terrorist and anti-Jacobin reaction swelled.The provincial clubs were disoriented by the messages of forgetting and forgiveness with which the persecutions of the Jacobins did not fit. In Marseille, a Jacobin insurrection eruptes on 16 vendemiaire and is supressed three days later. The violence of these events signalled that what has to be called "reaction" was getting the upper hand. The Convention learned about the unrest in Marseille only i the beginnning of October. On 15 vendemiaire (October 6) Lindet and Carnot, both Jacobins, left the CSP as result of rotation of a personnel. The Nantes trials began also in October. These developments could not be contained within Lindet's unanimist political project, and, moreover, Lindet himself had to leave his post in the government in the beginning of October. Baczko discusses these factors extensively, see ibid., 179-190.

94. Ibid., 177.

95. The most recent, extensive and probing analysis of the Nantes trials in the context of the complex political situation after Thermidor, has been offered by Baczko. See ibid., 191-254.

96. Ibid., 201.

97. Acte d'accusation... AN, serie W 493 no. 479, cited after Baczko, Comment, 202. On the publicity given to this act, see ibid., 203.

98. Notably, he attacked Lecointre at the Jacobins for establishing David's and his colleagues' guilt by association. See Jules.

99. Carrier, Rapport.

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100. For Carrier, see Lallié, J.-B.Carrier, représentant du Cantal à la Convention, Paris, 1901. see also, Gendron, La jeunesse, 40-2; and Baczko, Comment, 194-9.

101. Baczko, "Thermidorians," 430.

102. It was a time when brochures such as Les Jacobins hors la loi or the theatre piece titled Club infernal in reference to the Jacobin club appeared. And they continue to appear after the closure of the club, e.g., see Boisrue, La Grande Détresse des jacobins qui n'ont plus le sol, (Paris, l'an III). Gendron (Jeunesse, 37, n.247) cites many of them. See also A. Martin and G. Walter, Catalogue de l'histoire de la Révolution; and M. Tourneux, Bibliographie de l'histoire de Paris.

103. See Furet and Richet, La Révolution, 257-218.

104. For these and other publications, see Gendron, Jeunesse, 37.

105. Engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Coll. de Vinck, no. 6552.

106. The figure of the deputy wandering in a barren landscape could be seen to have articulated a broader collective need for signposts in the search for political identity that engaged the body of the national representation as a whole in early fall 1794, that is, at the end of the year II according to the Republican calendar. Indeed, what seems to ring, like an echo, around this image is the voice of the deputy Merlin (de Thionville) asking, as he did at the Convention on 24 fructidor (10 September), the three fundamental questions that epitomized the problems that confronted the principal political actors at the end of the year II: "D'où venons-nous?, Où sommes-nous?, Où allons-nous?" Yet, the reference to "crime odieux" in the inscription makes it clear we are looking at a Terrorist acknowledging his complicity with the past.

107. Stipple engraving. Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Collection Hennin, no. 12425.

108. The print could be said to have been making a more specific political argument at the time when it circulated, namely that the the Jacobins paraded as muscadins so that the latter could be blamed for the violence. The image aims thus at whitewashing the

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muscadins' own actions.

109. See Gendron, Jeunesse, 41.

110. Ibid. Gendron also refers to Babeuf's brochure Du système de dépopulation ou la vie et les crimes de Carrier published at the time, where the author suggested that Carrier's activity was part of a concerted effort, indeed a system, of the Robespierrists to depopulate France in order to meet demographic standards.

111. Anonymous engraving. See Premières collections, Vizille, no. 69, 48. See also Renouvier, Histoire de l'art, 488.

112. For the Nantes trials also triggered reports, written and imaged, of other abuses, crimes and atrocities committed under the Terror. It seems that the appeal made by one of the newly released prisoners of the Luxembourg, Réal (who was also one of the actors in the Nantes trials) was heard. Réal postulated that "[p]our bien détester le régime qui vient de finir, je crois qu'il est nécessaire d'en faire voir ses dégoûtants effets. C'est dans la peinture de maux que l'on faisait souffrir dans les prisons que l'indignation de bons citoyens doit trouver son aliment." Cited after Baczko, Comment, 192-3, underline mine.

One and perhaps the best known example at the time of the verbal peinture de maux as Réal understood, it was the Almanach des prisons published in year III (probably in the fall 1794, in any case before prairial and almost entirely referring to the pre-Thermidorian prisons), consisting of descriptions of different Parisian prisons studded with anecdotes, some amusing, some terrifying, about their functioning and their inhabitants during the Terror. [See [Coissin], Almanach des Prisons, ou Anecdotes sur le régime intérieur de la Conciergerie, du Luxembourg, etc., et sur différents prisonniers qui ont habité ces maisons sous la tyrannie de Robespierre, avec le chanson et couplets qui y ont été faits, Paris, an III. D. Arasse, (La Guillotine dans la Révolution, 157), mentions four editions of the Almanach that appeared in the course of the year III.

C.A. Dauban, Les prisons de Paris sous la révolution, Paris, 1870, is a reprint of the Almanach with the author's added commmentaries. Not-acknowledged as such, yet generously quoting to the point of being in part a reprint of the Almanach's material is also Olivier Blanc's La dernière lettre. Les prisons à Paris sous la Terreur. The engraving Gouvernement de Robespierre mentioned earlier here served as the frontispiece for this work.

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113. L.M. Prudhomme, Histoire générale et impartiale des erreurs, des fautes, et des crimes commis pendant la révolution française. No exact date for the origins of this project is known, but the Thermidorian reaction must have offerred the most fecund grounds for its conception. The issue of the Terror as a period of the arbitrary and the excessive continued to be politically relevant under the Directory, thus the late publication of this project.

Prudhomme was throughout the revolution the editor of the journal Les révolutions de Paris, where, for example, (one of) the first images of the September massacres appeared. For these, see the collection Soulavie reproduced in Un collectionneur pendant la Révolution: Jean Louis Soulavie, nos. 61-64, 60-62.

114. The drawing was reproduced in Un collectionneur..., no. 128, 107. The engraving was attached to the first volume of Histoire générale et impartiale.

115. The visual precedence for this language could have been found in Jacques Callot's well known series Misères de la Guerre (the large edition published first in Paris in 1633). See H. Diane Russel Jacques Callot. Prints and Related Drawings, 155-72 and 246ff.

116. Prudhomme, Histoire générale, 5: 114-5. Referring elswhere to David's pupil François Gérard, who served as a member of the jury at the Revolutionary Tribunal, the author states that he "s'attachait avec un acharnement inconcevable contre ceux dont il avait juré la parte" (ibid, 5: 363-4), like the others relying on the persuasive power of his language rather than any factual evidence.

117. Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, resèrve, (Colection Hennin 11925). A note by Hennin attributes it, not improbably, to P. Prudhon. Another note, added in another hand, attributes it to G. Lethière, the author of the engraving Le Neuf Thermidor. Stylistically, given the execution of the body that indicated the high training of a history painter, both artists could be authors. The drawing was identified as Prudhon's when it was published as frontispiece to Charles-Aimé Dauban, Paris en 1794 et en 1795. Histoire de la rue, du club, de la famine, composé d'après des documents inédits, Paris, 1869.

Another problem with dating is raised by the figure of Napoleon marching with a scroll inscribed "Depart pour Egypte" in the background. This suggests the image was produced under the Directory (more probable than Hennin's suggestion of the Consulate). Yet, the image was originally classed by the collector in the Thermidorian period, and its rhetoric does belong with it. Perhaps, as it was suggested, the figure of

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Napoleon was added later. Unfortunately, we do not know the destination of the image. Most probably it was to be engraved to join other prints involved in the battle for the meaning of the Thermidorian coup which characterized the period of the reaction.

118. Perhaps a distant echo of David's Le Pelletier.

119. This is a figure of castration and infanticide. There is also a suggestion of cannibalism implied here in the way the personification of the Revolution fumbles with the male body of the "Convention." In addition to being a Medusa and a Medea, she is also like a female Saturn of sorts.

120. Baczko, Comment, 253.

121. For the discursive notion of the revolution after Thermidor becoming a figure of old age, see ibid., 352-3.

122. The term counter-Imaginary, in relation to political discourse, is Baczko's (Comment, passim).

123. See Furet, Penser la révolution, 42. See also Lynn Hunt, Politics, Class and Culture in the French Revolution, for further development of this argument. Hunt goes beyond the narrow scope of the political debate, which was what Furet predominantly had in mind, and engages the notion of culture at large.

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Chapter II

i. David's defense

The National Convention's order for David's provisional arrest on 2 August stipulated that his conduct be examined by its two committees: the CSG (from which David has been expelled on 31 July) and the Committee of Legislation. He was supposed to be interrogated by them.[1] But, in the volatile and fluctuating political context described above, David waited in prison for almost five months before he was called to testify, sometime in mid-December.[2] It was then that he read his defenseto the committees' members.[3] There is no date on the manuscript of this defense preserved at the Archives Nationales in Paris, and the existing scholarship did not attempt to time it with a precision greater than the span of the (almost) five months during which the artist was imprisoned. I would like to propose dating its main body of arguments at the very end of August to the beginning of September. I am convinced by the analysis of the text itself (its focus on Lecointre's charges and the structuring presence of Robespierre in it) and by the fact that if in the letter to the Convention written on 31 August David asks to be admitted to the bar to defend himself against Lecointre's accusations, he must

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have had at least a draft of the text ready by then.[4]

As was already stated, Lecointre's accusations were ultimately rejected as calumnies by the Convention. Yet, their importance could not be underestimated, for not only were these charges to be repeated, by the same deputy, on 5 December, but also the issues they raised thickened the stock of anti-Terrorist opinion around concrete figures. For David, the charges were decisive in that they soldered his name to those of the four other Jacobin deputies, who became in the course of events the "grand coupables" of the Terror around whom the post-Thermidorian anti-Jacobin discourse was organized: Collot and Billaud (of the CSP), and Amar and Vadier (of the CSG). Secondly, the accusations raised the issue of David's concrete responsiblity as a former police functionary under the Terror, although what Lecointre was imputing -- that David was instrumental in the Dantonists' trial, putting pressure on the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal -- was not necessarily true. (Whatever his role was in the process, David did not sign Danton's arrest warrant, as did other members of the CSG.[5]) Yet, these were dangerous connections to flaunt in the charged discursive atmosphere of late August. No wonder that when writing to the Convention immediately after it rejected the accusations, David still urges to be admitted to the bar to defend himself, while expressing his pride in sharing "la gloire de figurer à côté des athlètes de la Revolution" whom the

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Convention rescued from Lecointre's slander.[6]

The text of the defense David must have had ready for the occasion is an interesting document both for how and what it says. Since it has rarely been mentioned, let alone interpreted, in the Davidian literature, we would do examine it more closely. There are three major issues around which the defense is organized: a) David's closeness to, or even, as some imputed, intimacy with Robespierre (including participation in the plot the latter was said to have been preparing against the Convention); b) his responsibility as a functionary in the Terrorist power apparatus; and c) his alleged "tyranny over the arts." The document testifies beyond any doubt that, while in prison, David was still well informed about the ongoing political debate.[7]

David admits to his previous attachment to Robespierre but specifies that it was due to his commitment to an idea -- that of liberty -- of which Robespierre seemed to him, as he did to many others, a perfect incarnation. For no one can deny, he argues, that until his mask was taken off, Robespierre stood as a paragon of patriotism. Thus, David presents himself as a victim of delusion:

> Moi, qui, témoin d'austérité factice de ses moeurs, admirateur de bonne foy de son saint dévouement à la cause du peuple, de son amour de la patrie, de son horreur pour les tirans et les oppresseurs, et de ce désinteressement d'ostentation auquel il devoit le titre si peu mérité de

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> patriote incorruptible, croyois, trompé par tant d'artifices, avoir trouvé dans un contemporain ces traits genereux et ces formes severs qui characterisent la vertu mâle et sublime des grands hommmes de l'antiquité que l'histoire a consacré à la vénération des siècles.[8]

Robespierre is then, literally, the embodiment of the highest values of both Antiquity and the Revolution. But David declares in his defense that he was never close to him, was never his friend, was not even in frequent contact with him as a deputy, except on these occasions due to his organization of the Revolutionary festivals. The episode at the Jacobins on the 8 Thermidor, when the artist offered to drink hemlock with Robespierre was but a gesture of human solidarity with someone trying to, or seeming to try to, defend a threatened liberty. Certainly, David admits, he must have been misled by the content of Robespierre's speech; yet, this did not prevent him from voting at this same session against the speaker's motion, supported by Couthon, to send the speech to the communes. He was able to foresee the dangers of such a motion. As for Robespierre's coup d'état, which, some maintain, was to take place during the festival in honor of Bara and Viala on the 10 Thermidor, David points to the absurdity of the imputation that its participants, 11 to 13-year-old children, could be engaged in such a task and, furthermore, suggests that his collaborators in the organization of the festival -- the

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patriot artists Thibault, Durand, Méhul, Gardel, Darvigny and Sarrete, thus far not tarnished by any accusations -- be asked to attest to the innocence of the entire enterprise. Finally, responding to the objection that he deliberately hid when "the tyrant" was being overthrown, David offers to present medical proofs of his illness that prevented him from being present at the Convention on 9 thermidor. (He actually says he had already deposited these proofs at the CSG; f.5).[9]

As far as his contribution to the functioning of the Terrorist government is concerned, David insistently plays it down or denies its importance. He states that he was a "nullité" at the CSG due to his incompetence in police matters, and offered even to resign on many occasions, although as long as it was possible he tried to do his best to prevent and punish abuses. (f.14) Yet, he does not bracket himself off from other members of the CSG with whom he is willing to share repsonsibility. Unlike his colleague Vadier, who in response to Lecointre's denunciation tried to isolate his case and put the blame for certain acts on David, the latter stresses his full solidarity with others and challenges Vadier to specify the acts in regard to which he wishes to disassociate himself from the artist. (David refers here to the debate at the Convention reprinted in the Moniteur, which proves to what degree he followed the ongoing discourse.) Furthermore, there are several minor

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accusations regarding David's police work that he tries to explain and/or refute.[10]

The third important issue is the accusers' argument that David abused his power in the domain of the arts. The artist responds by reminding his interlocutors of his unflinching commitment to the project of revolutionizing the arts by seeking to transform the discursive and institutional conditions of art production so that it serves talent rather than privilege and helps those whom the Revolution ought to help most, the young.

> Moi le tiran des arts! aurois-je mérité ce titre odieux pour avoir sans cesse combattu les institutions monarchiques qui avilissoient les artistes depuis l'Etablissement des Académies, pour avoir voulu rendre au seul talent souvent caché dans l'obscurité de l'indigence la considération usurpée par médiocrité, pour avoir voué au mépris public le vain appareil des formes inventées par le Gens en place et sauvé le génie de l'inexprimable humiliation de courber le front devant les stupides enfans de la fortune et des préjugés? (f.11-12)

Further, David points out that he always tried to catalyze the influence of Liberty on Genius and, far from being a partisan of the arbitrary, insisted instead on different democratic forms in the administration of the arts, such as competitions with juries. This topic awakens David's personal professional topos developed, as Thomas Crow

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pointed out, long before the Revolution: the artist's persecution by the Academy.[11] Thus, he ascribes the accusations to the intriguing "peintres de boudoir," the jealous remnants of another epoch. He goes into some detail, too, in proving how certain accusations were misleading, such as the one about the list of artist to be guillotined that he was said to have prepared and which was instead a list of jurors presented by him to the CIP and subsequently accepted. And he points out that those who could be seen as his rivals were never prosecuted by him.[12]

In his final plea, David makes an interesting statement, a kind of intimate, if no doubt overdetermined, confession about his understanding of the relation between the artist and his work:

> Un écrivain, un poète, un artiste se peignent dans leurs ouvrages. Le choix de leurs sujets, la manière dont ils les traitent expriment le charactère de leur génie, et la nature de leur sensations. Leur âme respire, pour ainsi dire, dans leurs différentes productions, et ils y déposent cette partie d'eux-mêmes qu'aucun art ne saurait déguiser. C'est en quelque sorte l'histoire de leur vie qu'ils donnent à étudier à leurs contemporains. (f.17)

Thus, what can better testify to David's commitment to Revolutionary values, even long before the Revolution, than the Socrates, the Horatii, the Brutus, the Le Pelletier and the Marat? They are invoked as undeniable proof of the

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artist's innocence. Innocence and, we may add, his usefulness in the service of the Revolution as someone who can still give it form and meaning.

Unlike his later defense, written in response to the accusations that resulted in the artist's second imprisonment in the spring 1795 and published for everyone to read, this text is in manuscript, a draft of a speech addressed to David's colleague deputies. At the outset, it announces its status as a kind of confession aimed to restore the author's tarnished public image:

> Flétri d'un soupçon odieux depuis l'événement qui a délivré la France des crimes d'un perfide je viens vous exposer ma conduite, mes principes, ma vie toute entière, et pour ainsy dire mes plus secrettes [sic] pensées, autant pour obéir à votre décret que pour prouver aux patriotes, que je n'ai jamais cessé de mériter leur estime, rassurer mes amis sur les craintes qu'on s'attache à leur inspirer, éclairer les esprits exempts d'injustes préventions et prouver à mes ennemis, qu'ils se sont trompés dans leur calculs homicides en me comptant d'avance au nombre de coupables dévoués au supplice. (f.1)

In its fairly defiant tone, this introduction could be said to follow the tropes of Rousseau's Confessions, written, these too, in response to what their author understood as unjust calumnies. The Confessions cannot be denied their role as a model for a certain kind of self-

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justifying autobiography conceived as a narrative unfolding of the self from childhood on.[13] But despite what could be recognized, in addition to the form of introduction, as dispersed local Rousseauian accents -- such as, the insistence on candor and sincerity, the deployment of the rhetoric of transparency, due, perhaps, more immediately to David's prolonged apprenticeship in Rousseau-inspired Jacobin rhetoric, -- the Justification could not be seen as an autobiography. Despite his initial promise, David does not give an account of his entire life, not even that of an adult, let alone his childhood. It is the Revolution, not life, that seems to frame the Justification. More specifically, it is the accusations against its author that structure this text, so that one advances through its body as if through a disjunct conglomerate of fragments.[14] Obviously, this was not intended as a serious literary effort for a big public, as was Rousseau's Confessions. It was to be a speech to a narrow group of colleagues. But even as a speech, it was not a good one, that is, neither one that captures the listener with its arguments' ebb and flow nor one that builds up its argumentative momentum gradually and logically.

The single most recurring disrupting factor within the text is Robespierre. References to him are dispersed throughout; one thinks that David has finished with him already after the first four pages (the text is 18 pages

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long), but there he goes again, explaining (away) yet another facet of his attachment to the Incorruptible, on pages 7 and 8, and again on page 15 and 16. Robespierre's prominence in the text parallels his central role as a figure through which the meaning of Thermidor was being developed in the political discourse early on after the coup, at the time when David must have written his defense. To depart from the anti-Robespierrist consensus then would have been suicidal. Moreover, David's vulnerable political status at this time was due specifically to what was being constructed as his close personal alliance with Robespierre. The text of the defense had to undo this construction. What is interesting is how it went about doing it.

For David makes a considerable rhetorical effort to describe the Robespierre that, so to speak, seduced him -- the perfect embodiment of the "vertu mâle et sublime de grands hommes de l'antiquité" -- only to then discard him as a delusion. He seems compelled to restage this Robespierre textually, and unable to deny that, as such, he was the object of his "attachement sans bornes" in the past. (f.16) For through the attachment to him, David claims to have been able to enact his identification with "the cause" that overshadowed, to the extent of abnegation, all other -- private, affective -- dimensions of his life: the Revolution.

Je me suis fait une Loi -- pénible mais que j'ai crû

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> nécessaire, d'oublier amis, parens [sic], fortune, considerations de toute espece pour ne m'occuper que de la liberté et de la Patrie, et fidèle à ce plan de conduite et à cette sorte d'abnégation religieuse de tout objet étranger à la révolution, je n'ai vû, je n'ai voulu voir que la cause du Peuple dont j'ai ambitionné d'être un de plus zelés deffenseurs [sic] pour m'embrasser et m'unir avec plus de force à tout ce que pouroit concourrir à d'affermissement de la République. (f.2)

There are two important aspect in this. First, it is not difficult to notice that, as a figure in the text, David's Robespierre resembles the one being constructed in early fall in public discourse: though the text tends to linger on the older, heroic codes of representation (the "patriote incorruptible"; the incarnation of the "virtu mâle et sublime" etc.), the unresolved coexistence of these terms with such epithets as "hypocrite" and "tyrant" could be compared to the way in which the portraits of the Incorruptible as a buveur de sang disarticulated his image from within using a cannibalistic trope. (Certainly David is not as violently deconstructive as these caricatures but the principle remains the same.)

But what has to be recognized as a specific feature of this text is that Robespierre functions in it as an object of transference, the logic of which constitutes the single most important textual force in David's defense. Freud

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understood transference in two ways: as a dynamic that the psychoanalytic process triggers between the patient and the analyst; and as a trope, a mode of expression for the transfer of affect from the unconscious to the preconscious idea.[15] The logic of transference is mobilized several times in the text to describe the nature of David's political commitment (to the idea of liberty, via attachment to the people onto which this idea is projected, who are said to incarnate it). And it is the primary excuse in his defense: he is innocent, because a victim of a transferential delusion projected onto Robespierre. The confessional rhetoric of the text reinforces its function as a kind of playground of transference.

What are the implication of this? In describing the mechanism of transference as displacement of the patient's conscious as well as repressed feelings onto the analyst, Freud stressed its therapeutic usefulness in that it "does us the inestimable service of making the patient's hidden and forgotten erotic impulses immediate and manifest."[16] The analytic session thus becomes a site for re-enactment of the repressed past, its repetition, but in a different form than in real life in that, by working through a situation with the analyst, it can be brought to a new, less troublesome relationship with the present, and thus, at least to a degree, be mastered.[17]

In writing about Robespierre, David first of all accounts

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for his transferential projection onto him in the past, which needs to be recognized as enactment of a politically and libidinally motivated identification. (To be sure, we are talking about the unconscious erotic impulses here.) The field of political commitment was for David, and probably not only for him in these times of fraternal complicity, traversed by desires for which the Revolutionary situation provided new cultural forms of articulation. But, secondly, David, as a subject of enunciation, is caught by his defense in a relation of transference with Robespierre, who stands as a figure through which the repetition and working through of the problematic past could be enacted. Textually, that is, Robespierre is there to excuse David's involvement in the Terror and thus to allow this fragment of the problematic past to be integrated with David's present without harm.

Yet, even if the text evokes the "virtuous" Robespierre who could justify a past commitment to him (i.e., to the cause incarnated by him), he has become too problematic a figure on which to rest one's identity. We have witnessed here some manifestations of the work of erosion to which the image of Robespierre was submitted after Thermidor. David's text, as it thus tries to construct a stage for the political identification of its author, can neither have Robespierre exit from nor stay on it without articulating the effects of this erosion.

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The other objects of transferential identification are, however, mobilized towards the end of the text: the figures from David's own painting -- Brutus, Socrates, Le Pelletier and Marat (the latter two still firm in their venerable position within the republican imaginary Pantheon, albeit not for long, as we will see). These are the objects invoked as variants of this Imaginary male "body" through which David's identity could be reconstituted. "I am what I painted," he says quite literally, articulating a double wish: one of regaining what performed until now the cohering function and what gave the subject his meaning -- the Revolution, the Jacobin culture, the status of <u>representant du peuple</u>, now lost or modified to his disadvantage, in other words all that in the text is displaced onto and condensed into the figure of Robespierre; another, a wish that his addressees, the deputies of the Comittees put in charge of examining his conduct, will recognize him as <u>only</u> or predominantly a painter, rather than anything else he also happened to be.[18]

There is, then, what might be called a transferential oscillation in the text between two kinds of fictive objects of identification -- on the one hand, Robespierre, i.e., what he wishes as his past; on the other, the figures from his paintings, which he wishes as his present. The message David wants to convey is one of the solidity of his revolutionary commitment and of his identity as a patriot

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devoted to the idea of liberty. But the rhetoric of his text betrays some cracks in the ground on which this identification is based, and to which the oscillating, fragmentary rhetoric of his text testifies. To put it in other words, as a subject of enunciation, David is split between two poles: he clings to the figure of Robespierre (the "athlete of the Revolution") and, while this figure was being eroded in public discourse, he resuscitates some of the older heroic characterizations of him; at the same time, he seeks to transfer this investment onto those figures of "virtu mâle et sublime" from his own art whose place within the republican Imaginary remains unquestioned. The David of the Justification is as if suspended between two different idioms of self-definition. And this effect of his text must have been, it seems to me, to a large degree produced by the process of deconstruction performed on the social Imaginary after Thermidor, as described earlier.

Some of these problems of self-identification are also at work in David's Self-portrait, painted sometime between 2 August and 15 September, that is, roughly at the same time as the draft of self-defense was written.[19] I am not proposing that the painting illustrates the defense, nor do I want to imply any kind of unproblematic equivalence between these two -- one verbal, the other visual -- texts. There are certain obvious differences of purpose between them.[20] But both, the text and the image, served David as

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what could be called a **technique of the self**: an instruments for producing knowledge about himself, but also for (re)constructing his identity in time of a crisis.[21]

ii. The Louvre Self-portrait

It was David's young pupil, Delafontaine who, after the artist's arrest, accompanied him to the makeshift prison in the hôtel des Fermes and left us his account of their arrival.[22] As they mounted the stairs of prison, David and Delafontaine met the seventy-two Girondist deputies who had been ousted from the Convention by the Jacobins and imprisoned in June 1793. They lined up the stairs and saluted David derisively. The painter would explain to his young pupil that the Girondists mocked him because they expected now to leave prison, while those like him, who were once behind their arrest, were to come in their place. As if this personalized experience of instability of all the positions in the Revolutionary situation weren't enough, when David entered his makeshift cell, he discovered that it had once belonged to another student of his, Léger, who was now in the army. "Quel fatalité," -- David was to observe -- "me voilà en prison dans l'atelier d'un des mes élèves! Ce que c'est la révolution!"[23]

David was to remain in the the Hôtel des Fermes for one and a half months before he was transferred to another

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prison. It was in this span of time, between August 2 and September 15 that, according to Delafontaine, the artist painted his self-portrait. "Un chevalet, une boîte de couleur, deux ou trois toiles, quelque livres, du papier, des crayons" and a mirror was what he had at his disposal at that time.[24]

David's decision to paint a self-portrait (Fig.1) as a type of image through which to document one's stay in prison (and/or to make sense of oneself while there) was not a natural choice for every artist incarcerated during the Revolution. Hubert Robert, during his imprisonment at Sainte-Pélagie and Saint-Lazare in 1793 chose a genre scene to represent himself (Fig.12).[25] Among the four preserved drawings of the artist in his cell, the one in the Musée Carnavalet shows Robert receiving a young boy -- his student? -- who brings him bread and drink. The rendering of the figures has a certain naivete, and a slightly stiff, as if constrained, simplicity. The artist was reading before the boy came in, and he still holds an open book in his hand. The cell, with its table, bed, bookshelf, few personal belongings, complete with a Roman view -- a print? Robert's own work? -- above the bed and a chamber pot underneath it, gives us an idea of the simple comforts of prison life during the Revolution.[26] It is through the Latin inscriptions on the table and above the entrance, added no doubt by Robert himself -- a kind of a coded message, a wink

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to the educated onlooker, circumventing the sans-culotte prison guard -- that the artist invests the scene with his meaning: heroic (via reference to Socrates) and self-consolatory ("dum spiro spero..." [As long as I breath, I hope...]). Placed in the space between these two inscriptions -- as if caught in a network of wishful identities -- the body of the artist seems to depend on them in the image as much as it depends on the food brought to him by his help.

To choose to paint a self-portrait in similar circumstances, on the other hand, is to avow interest not only in the circumstances per se, but, much more pronouncedly than Robert seems to have done, in the effect of these circumstances on the subject's identity, specifically as it could be perceived through and on the body. It is in the way David paints his body, in the visual codes as well as the material specificity of the signifiers deployed to give it form, that we have to look for the answers to our question: how exactly did the portrait as a form of representation participate in the crisis in which David found himself after Thermidor?

We are looking at a body of a painter, a palette in one hand, a brush in the other. But the proposition "I am a painter" -- offered also at the end of the defense written at the time -- is delivered here with what could be seen as a surprising visual uncertainty for the experienced and most

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highly skilled portraitist that David was known to have been at the time. First of all, it is as if the artist had fundamental problems in making his body image fit the format through which he had chosen to represent it. For the frame seems here to have caught him in a movement to the left and out of it: his body seems to be sliding off the armchair -- which is itself cropped and, as Schnapper observed "assez bizarrement dessiné"[27] -- and his palette and brushes are having problems fitting completely into the picture as a result. (It does not seem that the painting was ever cropped or re-canvassed. There is no mention of it in the literature, nor did I find any evidence for it upon inspection of the object.) Though in his portraits David sometimes placed the sitters slightly off their chairs -- a device to secure the illusion of spatiality, as in the Comtesse de Sorcy of 1790 and the Sieyes of 1817 (Fig.13) -- here the degree of dislocation, and the cropping by the frame that results from it, is such that it conveys an instability of position rather than a three-dimensional space.[28]

The Self-portrait also departs from David's usual portrait technique in its use of the frottis. Usually, when he introduces it, David sets the highly elaborated figure of the sitter against the tentative frottis -- the light, scumbled brushstrokes -- of the background, as in the portraits of Philippe-Laurent Joubert, Louise Pastoret,

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Louise Trudaine, and, most notably, in the Marat. Here, it is the other way around: the background is smooth and highly finished, whereas the body, especially the coat, remains unfinished.[29] The effect of unfinishedness combined with the spatial dislocation suggests a provisional and unstable nature of the visual (re)invention of the self that David attempts here. And the narrowed down color scheme -- the range of brown, greyish brown, ochre to creamy whites -- reinforces this effect.

David painted a self-portrait only once before, at another turning point of his career, that, too, was brought about by the Revolution, though at its early stage. This Self-portrait, now at the Uffizi Gallery (Fig.14), was, like the one at the Louvre, neither signed nor exhibited by the artist.[30] It seems that the type of image that artists often used to present themselves to others served David primarily as an instrument of introspection, of self-knowledge in probing moments.[31] In May 1791, when David produced his first self-image, he had just completed and exhibited in his studio the preparatory sketch for the Tennis Court Oath, the ambitious canvas depicting the symbolic origins of the Revolution and commissioned by the Jacobin club of which he was, for quite some time already, a member. Moreover, at this time David was heading the movement of reform against the Academy which ended with its abolition in September 1792, and thus was most actively involved in redefining the

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institutional status of the artist. Finally, in May 1791, David might have been already thinking about running as a _représentant du peuple_, which he would do, at first unsuccesfully, in September of that year. The person, then, whom we see in the Uffizi portrait is a painter on the crossroads between the older type of professional commitments and entirely new ones; an artist who actively seeks to expand his public image beyond the institutional confines within which he functioned under the Old Regime; and a man who has entered the world of Revolutionary politics and is about to take his place at its very core.

Without venturing into expanded analysis of the image, we can say that such pictorial decisions as the choice of the bust format, the elimination of professional attributes, the dramatized focus through light on the face (especially the left temple), the special attention paid to certain details of costume -- the repeated doubling of collars of the _redingote_, the inside/outside playful flipping of the stripped lapels of his red vest, the demonstratively bulging spread of the white _jabot_ and tie -- all rendered in a quick sketchy manner, serve to convey a sense of a self in the process of being altered by the Revolution, of having its external, tangible parameters redefined.[32]

The differences between the 1791 image and the Louvre _Self-portrait_ allow us some insight into another stage of this process; they should be seen as **signs** for the

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specificity of David's situation in 1794, at least as he understood it. The prison image is bigger (81x64 as opposed to Uffizi's 64x53cm) and presents the sitter in half-figure, rather than bust, which allows for a more elaborate relation of the body to objects and space. The strategy of emphasizing the face through light falling on its left side is the same as in the Uffizi portrait, and it has, here too, the advantage of casting the right cheek, with its anatomical distortion, into a shadow. (David had a benign tumor on the left jaw, resulting in a swollen cheek that appears on the right in his self-portraits, due to mirror inversion.) Yet, the slight disfiguration of the cheek is far more pronounced in the prison image and has, moreover, a subtly disarticulating effect on the proportions of the entire face, which appears to be much more asymmetrical than in the Uffizi image. (There is more to this, in the way David visually both declares his swollen cheek and hides or disavows it, that will be discussed here later.) The treatment of the hair differs: in the 1791 image David's hair was, according to fashion, powdered and frisé; in 1794 it is a natural, even disordered hairstyle, with two locks falling onto his forehead.

The redingote of 1791 is replaced in 1794 by an houppelande, a type of large double-breasted coat with a high collar and broad lapels, the latter usually in contrasting color. This replacement is most significant,

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regardless of whether David appears in the self-portrait in the houppelande by necessity or by choice. What matters is that this particular piece of clothing ended up as a part of the circuit of signs on which David's identity reposed in late summer 1794. (Parenthetically, I may add that it is doubtful that the eloquence of clothes was lost on the artist who designed the official Revolutionary costumes.) For the houppelande, a fashionable garment among the Parisian sans-culottes, became the characteristic attire of the radical deputies in year II (1793/4). Marat, most flamboyantly, wore one with the lapels tigré, visible in many of his portraits, for example, the one painted by Boze, and the one engraved by Angélique Briceau (Fig.15).[33] In the Louvre Self-portrait, the houppelande could be seen, then, as the material sign of David's political evolution since 1791 and, whether intended as such or not, a reminder of his deputy status.[34]

Yet, on the surface of things, David defines himself not as a deputy but as a painter. This is the paramount function of the palette and brushes he holds in his hands, thoudh both objects cropped, rather abruptly at the edge of the canvas. We see the artist with his palette but none of his work in view. There is no reference, nor the slightest allusion to the kind of images he produces: what is he a painter of?[35] Certainly, he is a painter of his own self-image -- "I am what I paint" was the message of the defense.

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In fact, aside from its eloquence as the traditional attribute of the painter's métier, the palette seems also to be spelling out its more immediate function in the production of the Louvre image: one cannot fail to notice that the pigment displayed on it, the muted red and creamy touches on its brown surface, constitute the colors used to give form to David's body in this painting that has a curiously reduced, almost monochromatic tonality. This tonal resonance seems to convey a kind of a dialogue between the two functions of the pigment: the one on the palette being an indexical sign of the painter's proper material, the second one, deployed elsewhere in brushstrokes, being an instance of this sign put to work, engaged in producing an illusion of presence, in giving the body its tangible form by and in paint. The sketchy Self-portrait of 1794 seems, then, to be producing, aside from likeness, a sort of provisional demonstration of (or inquiry into) the nature of painting as procedure, of the tenuous, tentative, yet persuasive powers of the painted image.

The swollen cheek, the houppelande, the painter's palette and brush, the language of internal disjunctions and cropping (within the body and in its relation to space and objects), the reduced tonality -- these most salient features, which differentiate the 1794 self-portrait from the one of 1791, should be approached as the means by which David, consciously or not, chose to respond to the situation

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of crisis in which he found himself after Thermidor. They are sites where the Revolution and the artist intersect, sites where David negotiates his position with the Revolution as circumstances and codes.

To approach the "irreparable yet insistent" subject of this portrait,[36] the issue of his appearance has to be addressed. Here is David's former colleague at the CIP, Thibaudeau, whom Thermidor put on the other side of the barricade, remembering in 1824: "La diformité [sic] de ses traits et une certaine rudesse des manières ne prévenaient pas en sa faveur; mais dans l'intimité, il avait de la simplicité et de bonhommie..."[37] The swollen cheek, with a higher or lower degree of articulation, appears on all portraits of David, like the one done most probably before the Revolution, attributed to Fragonard, an almost Romantic representation of an Inspired Artist in the intensity of the act of creation,[38] or a much later one by his student Georges Rouget (Fig.16), or the one by J.M. Langlois done during the artist's exile in Brussels in the year of his death, where the deformity is perhaps most pronounced (it is said to have increased with age). We know, though, through Navez that David was uneasy about its visibility in the portraits, sometimes insisting it be hidden.[39] Yet, it always shows; even in J.H. Cless' multifigured drawing L'Atelier de David, the master, shown from the back, cuts a bulging profile against the drawing of the student he is

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correcting.

There are also some exaggerated, negative images of David, verbal and visual, with the swollen cheek as the privileged target. Thus a British traveller in France, imprisoned during the Terror, reports upon meeting David around 1800:

> A person who is conversant in the science of physiognomy would pronounce the character of this monster at first sight. With a hideous wen upon his lip, which shows his teeth and for ever marks him with the snarling grin of a tiger -- with features and eyes which denote a lust for massacre, he is a savage by instinct and an assassin by rule. He is an atheist in faith and practice, and a murderer by choice.[40]

Obviously, Yorke's description is shaped entirely by the anti-Terrorist rhetoric developed after Thermidor, echoing similar "physiognomical" characterizations of Robespierre mentioned here earlier. What it proves is the degree to which the post-Thermidorian language of prints and pamphlets influenced public opinion and that the perception of David formed by it persisted well beyond the period of reaction.[41]

A later visual example -- this one targetting David's status as a master artist -- is a caricature attributed to Revoil, done probably under the Empire, now at the BN, where the artist's cheek seen in left profile swells almost as much as his jabot. The image, inscribed "De tant de beautés il fut père/ qu'un ne peut plus le trouvez laid!",

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establishes equivalence between David's looks and his art that puts the latter's perfection in question. (Fig.17)

Such exaggerations help us appreciate the subtlety with which the facial deformation is put into play in the Louvre Self-portrait. It is only suggested here -- by the slight distention of the lips on one side, and by something of a cut-like, thin brushstroke that prolongs the effect of the distention onto the cheek -- but almost as soon denied, or sheltered from view by the scumbled dark area of the shadow. Yet, if there are few actual material marks for it, there are other modes in which the deformation can be seen to make itself present in the image. The extraordinary care with which the bow of David's cravat is rendered -- the soft, rounded, creamy impastos of knots placed right below the slightly swelling shadow -- seem to speak for it, in more flattering terms. Flattering, but not entirely under control, for, as if despite themselves, these knots give way to the sad tumescence of the jabot -- nothing like the erect fan of the jabot in the Uffizi image -- which in turn leads to the dark, gaping hole framed by the soft folds of the houppelande, then to the finger dismembered by the palette and to the palette itself, it too cropped. A cascade of signs of castration seem to traverse David's body, spelling out (as they visually displace) the high stakes involved in the disavowal of the swollen cheek.

If, in comparison to the Self-portrait of 1791, David

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seems to have more problems in visually dealing with his cheek growth in the summer/fall of 1794, it is perhaps because it was the very part of his body that condensed for him the meaning, the impact of Thermidor on his career. Delécluze's memory of David stammering in front of the Convention during the crucial seance of 13 Thermidor comes to mind. But the artist's speech impediment must have represented to him not only his physical inability, but the trouble into which his ambition to control words had put him. We need to recall that words were the very immediate pretext for his condition of disgrace, the element around which his "robespierrisme" was being constructed. This was the central question of the debate on 13 Thermidor: did he or did he not, and if so why, say he would drink hemlock together with Robespierre. Did he not, we may add, voluntarily expand his stakes in the Revolution from images to words, by deciding to become a deputy, to speak in the name of the people, to usurp, as the Jacobin discourse succeded in doing for one year, the symbolic position of the general will of the People, which was, Furet tells us, the very means of maintaining power -- precisely, by speech? In the Louvre Self-portrait, the area of the body between the shadowed cheek and the cropped palette could be said then to carry forth a doubt of sorts, a question: am I a man of words or a man of images?

A man of words. A deputy. It is interesting that it is the

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houppelande that refuses most emphatically to achieve the solid materiality of an object, with its daubed at sleeve surfaces and washed-off color, especially on the lapels. A more or less tangible body is being suggested, but as if it were perforated by the inner spacings, with the ground lurking from underneath the thin coat of paint. And why not, exactly, finish the redness of the lapels that teases the spectator at one corner, and in the folds, but is never really substantaited? Was it that such red lapels would seem too much like the body they stand for, like, say, some of its intimate organs? Or because to place so much red around one's neck, when one might go under the guillotine any moment, would really be, to say the least, in bad taste? Or perhaps it is because to finish the houppelande, the body as houppelande, would mean to define it as a body of a radical deputy of the year II. And because it would make it prevail visually, with its outstanding redness, over the attributes that seek to tie David's identity to the much safer territory of the artistic profession.

But it could not be said that these attributes of the artistic profession are visually privileged here either, with both the palette and brushes cropped by the frame. And, moreover, it is as if the cropping of the palette were enacted, literalized on the level of technical procedure too, as a tonal reduction of the painting's color scheme.

It seems, then, that what we look at in the Louvre Self-

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portrait is neither a man of words, nor a man of images but a subject suspended between identities and between codes, defining himself simultaneously in relation to his political career and to his artistic profession, and facing a loss of control and mastery over both. We are looking, that is, at a deputy-painter, with the hyphen between the two words having not just a bridging, but also a dis-connecting, cutting-through function.

Thus, it seems that even in his own hands, as a subject of representation David could not escape the unsettling effects, triggered by Thermidor, of the process of erosion and dislocation of the Terrorist subject within the existing aesthetic codes of representation. We should recall the portrait prints of Robespierre from this period in which, by merging two different codes, the official likeness of the représentant du peuple was turned into an image of a blood drinker. Couldn't we suggest that in David's case, too, the other -- not necessarily desired -- definitions of who he was found their way, albeit indirectly, into his image, to do the work of subtle sabotage -- dislocation, interruption and a kind of color-bleaching -- on the pictorial means that were engaged to secure the identity of the deputy-painter? Couldn't we say, perhaps, that the designations that were part of David's public image in late summer 1794, such as "man of blood," "fanatic of Robespierre," "tyrant of the arts," although not literally articulated in the self-

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portrait, were nevertheless registered in it, taking the form of slight dissonances within a code and undermining the message that the painting seems to have most wanted to convey: "What I am is a painter." This could mean "I am a painter, not, or rather than, anything else" -- rather than the functionary of the police, rather than the Montagnard deputy, rather than the master of Robespierre's pageant, etc. Far from being a mere representation of occupational skill, the Self-portrait could at first be seen to be registering David's desire to trim his public image (and his self-image) down to "innocent" professional essentials. But if so, the likeness also seems to have slipped out of its author's wish and to have insubordinately reported on David's problems in fitting this wishful identity. The confessional declaration "I am what I paint" of his Justification was given a strangely reductive, discontinuous, and hesitant materiality in paint. We might say that, like the text of his defense, the Self-portrait presents David oscillating between codes. But it also gives form to what the Justification does not make so manifest: visually, and thus more tangibly, through the image of the dislocated and incomplete body, it reveals the costs (dislocation as a loss of position and the undoing of the subject as a result of having no place in representation, or being in interstice between codes) of transfer from one site of identification to another, from the territory of "virtu

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mâle et sublime" to another that could be called "being an artist." But were these areas ever separate for David and to what extent could they be maintained as such in the fall of 1794? What did it mean to be an artist in France after Thermidor?

iii. The vandal, the cannibal

David's effort to (re)define himself as artist parallels the efforts of his new enemies -- the nebulous, politically disparate and fluctuating group of the Thermidorians -- to give themselves a cultural identity. These who came to power as a result of the Thermidorian coup had originally little more in common than being against Robespierre: no common political platform, shared doctrine, or ideology. For that reason their gradually elaborated imago depended solely on differentiation from the past -- first, from Robespierre, and subsequently, from the Terror constructed for this purpose -- and this was also a gradual process -- into a system. Culture played a crucial role in defining that system, by specifying who was a Terrorist and, in contradistinction, what the men of the new regime stood for.

Three interconnected issues are of utmost importance for understanding the process of formation of the Thermidorian cultural image: 1. the elaboration of the discourse of vandalism; 2. the transformation of the image of the artist

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in the thermidorian cultural discourse; and 3. the crisis of the Revolutionary or republican language linked to attacks on and progressive de-legitimization of the Jacobin rhetoric. Each of the three issues implicated David as a person who had been most actively involved in constructing what was now being massively disavowed, the Terrorist culture.

It was Grégoire, a former ally of David and author of the decree on suppression of the academies, who was responsible for the introduction of the neologism vandalisme into the Revolutionary discourse and for defining its meaning. As a matter of fact, the word appeared already in Grégoire's vocabulary in January 1793, but it was only after the 9 Thermidor that it was developed and became the official term of cultural distinction used in the Convention debates, in the press, and in the broader discursive circuit.[42] This was due to the three Rapports sur le Vandalisme, read by Grégoire at the Convention on 14 fructidor (31 August), 8 brumaire (29 October), and 24 frimaire (14 December).[43] The reports contained not only long lists of examples of Revolutionary cultural destruction but also a conceptual elaboration of the notion of vandalism as a systematic cultural comportment characteristic of the period of the Terror. Grégoire's vandalism became the cultural equivalent of the political term "Robespierrism" and was to perform the same function, fuelling the Thermidorian discourse of

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revenge (in the domain of the arts). Thus, these reports proceeded from presenting Robespierre as a vandal to defining his government's rule as destructive to patrimony, barbaric in the broadest sense, and systematically oppressive and persecuting in the domain of the arts -- "le système désorganisateur qui repoussait tous les talens."[44] Side by side with the lists of destroyed monuments, Grégoire cited the names of scientists, writers, and artists who had been mistreated under the Terror, dwelling on cases of violations that involved the Revolution's most cherished referent, Antiquity (among the persecuted figured the name of Homer's translator Bitaubé). Thus, the Rapports created a matrix for denunciation of both the vandalist acts and the persons who either performed them (e.g., the dechristianizing iconoclasts) or who sought to profit from vandalism as both a cultural and political project. An equation was being established between a Terrorist and a Vandal.[45]

Predictably, real facts were accompanied in the Rapports by rumors and fantasies (e.g., one that the Terrorists planned to burn the Bibliothèque Nationale) as well as a solid dose of cultural forgetting, regarding, for example, the fact that it was the year II that marked the origins of the efforts to preserve the patrimony. Rather than talking about the system of encouragement for arts and sciences that the Jacobins had begun to put in place, the author of the

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Rapports referred instead to someone like the deputy Chabot who equated all savants with aristocrats, or to another deputy Dumas who was to say "qu'il fallait guillotiner tous les hommes d'esprit."[46] But, of course, Grégoire's was an ideological project, not an innocent plea of a disinterested amateur of things pure and beautiful. It served the Thermidorian project of producing a self-image of the regime as a civilizing power and of separating it from the compromising past of the Terror. And it was to this end that the Rapports mobilized the earlier Enlightenment's belief that all tyranny is by definition accompanied by ignorance and the degeneration of art and sciences.[47] Thus Grégoire looks for the confirmation of this a priori point of view, rather than seeking to offer a balanced summary of Revolutionary cultural heritage, with its pluses and minuses -- clearly, the time wasn't right for such assessments. The discourse of vandalism bound together for quite some time the notion of cultural barbarism and Jacobin rule as if the two actually stood for one another, rather than having been made to coincide by the post-Thermidorian break with the past. This discourse also reassured the position of some of the political "survivors" of the Terror, the moderates of the Revolutionary cultural elite (such as Grégoire himself), and to create new elite to replace the (thus) increasingly compromised Jacobins.[48] This was explicit when Grégoire declared: "Heureusement le peuple français est si las

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d'ignorants et fripons, qu'enfin les hommes éclairés et probes sont à l'ordre du jour."[49]

The terms of Grégoire's discourse, adopted by the Convention, served as the basis for preventive actions targetting endangered monuments, but also for the protection and ecouragement of artists, writers, people of culture, etc. There was need for a new system or rather for putting into practice the existing system of state sponsorship of the arts, for which Grégoire, together with the other CIP members, was responsible.

The visual articulation of the critique of Jacobin culture, matching the attacks against "Robespierre-vandale" initiated by Grégoire's Rapports, could be found in the engraving of Coqueret after Lethière, Le Neuf Thermidor (Fig.18). The print was exhibited at the Salon in 1798, but it was probably already publicly available in spring 1795, as was certainly Lethière's drawing, shown in May in the artist's studio.[50] Endowed with an inscription below to assure the correct reading, the image is an allegory of the salutary impact of the Thermidorian coup on culture. A female "génie tutelaire" coming from the Convention, a flaming sword in hand, chases away the brutal forces of destruction that were allowed to attack the sciences and arts during the reign of the Terror. Deploying a sophisticated pictorial language, of no doubt a highly trained former academic artist,[51] the print, with its

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curious elongated format seem to be unfurling in front of us a Bayeux-like tapestry of barbaric spectacle with a kind of perverse visual delight. On the right, the muscled, hairy, dark and violent men drag the pale female figures by the hair, as their bodies, swathed in elaborated folds of antique dresses, languish on the floor. The men represent, according to the inscription, the forces of "la tirannie [sic], farouche et toujours inquiète, [qui] tourmente les lettres et les beaux-arts; elle assasine la Chimie et la Phisique à leurs utiles travaux, elle traine la Peinture dans des cachots....". In the center, the most elaborate male nude, bulging with a somewhat excessive proliferation of muscles acts as an incarnation of the blind force of vandalism.[52]

One interesting aspect of this visualization of Thermidorian cultural discourse is the work of inversion that it performs on the republican visual language inherited from year II. Specifically, what has to be noticed is the way Lethière adopts, and modifies the meaning of, the figure of Hercules who, established by David as a heroic representation of the power of the people and adopted as the emblem of the Jacobin republic, becomes here the embodiment of a destructive force of vandalism as defined ideologically by Grégoire.[53] This reveals what the discourse of vandalism disavowed: the importance of the old culture on which the Thermidorian moment marked itself as a graft, proceeding by

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inversions, displacements and appropriations, rather than by invention, or creation of the radically new. That is not to say that such procedure was unusual per se -- all Revolutionary language developed more or less in this manner -- but that the rhetoric of the print, involuntarily no doubt, contradicts the Thermidorians claim to cultural invention, inasmuch as it signals the visual dependence of the discourse of vandalism on the existing language of Jacobinism.

Another important aspect of Lethière's image is the curious centrality of its Hercules à rebours personifying the blind force of destruction that seems to be almost "outdoing" the positive feminine tutelary force in soliciting a libidinally charged, voyeristic inspection of the viewer. The bulging muscles of his nude body shown from behind seem to compete with the equally proliferating folds of the tunic which swathes the female incarnation of Thermidor. With the effect gender further exploited in the juxtaposition of the female figures of the violated arts with their dark, muscled and bearded oppressors, the image makes a great effort to put forth the brutal destructive male as the cultural signifier of the Terror.

Other examples of the visual deployment of this figure can be found in the iconography of Alexandre Lenoir defending French patrimony, which originates in this period. The contribution of such imagery, exemplified by a drawing in

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the Soulavie collection showing Lenoir intervening against the destructive "fureur des terroristes", was to specify the vandal socially as a sans-culotte (through costume).[54] As such, he appears also in the well known series of Le Sueur depicting different Revolutionary actors, where he becomes almost an allegorical figure with his attributes -- the pickax and a dismembered sculpture (Fig.19). Thus, the image of a fragmented cultural body joins the earlier discussed motif of severed human limbs as the principal figures in the Thermidorian repertory of signs for the Terror.[55]

The concept of vandalism introduced into the discursive circuits by Grégoire's Rapports and disseminated through such imagery also significantly helped reshape the post-Thermidorian image of the artist. From the end of September the National Convention became the arena for a series of cultural debates undoubtly triggerred by the need to match the image, first sketched by Grégoire, of an Enlighted regime following the "dark ages" of the Terror. The debates specifically addressed the problem of reorganizing the Revolutionary festivals and of defining the system of State support for republican culture in general. Mobilizing the rhetorical dynamic, as well as the aggressive terms of the discourse of vandalism, the principal engineers of the post-Thermidorian cultural discourse defined who they were prevalently by going into a detailed description of who they were not. The language of cultural critique elaborated

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in the debates deployed the entire arsenal of suggestive negative visions of the immediate Revolutionary past. Thus, Marie-Joseph Chénier speaking in the name of the CIP on 28 September unfolds his scrolls of vituperative imagery equivalent to the visual rhetoric of Lethière's image in order to mobilize the Convention's interest and support:

> "[...] en faveur des arts froissés longtemps par des amour-propres tyranniques, en faveur des sciences persécutées et avilies par l'ignorance dominiatrice [...], [en faveur] des talens rebutés par un long dédain [...] Dans les arts de peinture, de sculpture et d'architecture tous les talents distingués se cachaient au fond de leurs ateliers; quelques-uns languissaient dans les cachots; une poignée d'intrigants les calomniait avec bassesse et consumait en de miserables essais et de futiles décorations les sommes qui auraient dû servir à élever des monuments immortels.[...].[56]

The vision articulated here of the artist as the persecuted victim of Jacobin cultural tyranny epitomizes the post-Thermidorian shift from the notion of the artist as the "slave of the Ancien Régime" to the notion of artist as a victim of Jacobin cultural tyranny. This shift was of great importance to David's public image for it directly involved the issue of the artist's cultural complicity with the Terror. Chénier, who became one of the most prominent exponents of Thermidorian cultural discourse, picked David

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as the privileged point of reference for his critiques. Motivated by the experience of humiliation in the hands of the Jacobins who forced him in 1793 to burn his play Timoléon, Chénier constructed David, and through him, the system of culture under the Terror, through the image of a jealous cultural despot ("rival bassement jaloux") who constrained the talent of other artists with a "despotisme capricieux et puéril," while not being able to produce, for example in the domain of the festivals, anything but "des plans bizarres sans originalité, durs sans énergie, fastueux sans véritable richesse, monotones sans unité, des fêtes en un mot colossal dans leur objet, pétites dans leur execution..."[57]

Thus David who had formerly incarnated the emancipated, anti-academic artist was now cast in the role of oppressor. In the time between September and December, his image, as as the chief representative of what was construed as a barbaric dictatorship that had enslaved the arts under the Jacobin Republic, acquired distinct contours. While Marie-Joseph Chénier denounced David's artistic despotism at the Convention and emphasized his incompetence and the high costs run up by the artist in organizing the Revolutionary fêtes, Thibaudeau, the artist's former colleaugue at the CIP, criticized the monopolistic aspects of Jacobin cultural rule. In December 1794 the deputy alluded to David when he recommended revamping the organization of the juries of the

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state-sponsored art competitions:

> Les idées ne sont point encore fixées sur le meilleur mode d'organisation des jurys destinés à juger les ouvrages d'art. Le dernier jury fut nommé par la Convention nationale; mais tout le monde sait que ce fut un seul homme qui fournit la liste des citoyens qui le composait.[58]

At the same time, in contradistinction to David, an alternative image of the artist-patriot emerged, and here, again, Chénier's contribution was important. Harboring a grudge due to his personal experience as a politically committed artist during the Terror (the Terrorist's censorship of his play), he offered an apologetic vision of the artist steering clear from the tumult of Revolutionary events, enclosed in the space of his studio to ponder high moral and cultural issues. Chénier urged that in treating those who were once accused by Robespierre's regime of counter-Revolutionary intentions, the new republic make a distinction between the royalists and those who simply didn't serve the Terrorist Revolution, that is:

> [...] des littérateurs, des artistes estimables, qui, dans le silence du cabinet, accoutumés, pour ainsi dire, à converser avec Aristide et Caton d'Utique, avec Démosthènes et Cicéron, n'ont pas admiré homicide austérité de Couthon, ou l'éloquence meurtière de Saint-Juste, et qui non pu reconnaître le char de la liberté

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dans ce tombereau sanglant où Robespierre faisait traîner ces victimes.[59]

These are then, the type of artists on whom the Thermidorian project of cultural reconstruction should rely. On another occasion, Chénier -- himself already firmly en place as the new member of the CIP put in charge of the organization of national festivals and, after Grégoire leaves the Committee, also responsible for the reports on state patronage of the arts -- proceeds to propose new names of those who managed to escape "le glaive meurtier du vandal" and should help getting the country out of what he sees as cultural lethargy; in painting these are, for example, Vincent, Regnault, Vien..... "Il est temps" -- he declares -- "que dans la Republique on puisse avoir du génie impunément."[60]

The success of the fall 1794 cultural debates in entrenching the negative image of the Jacobin republic is evident in the interventions of Daunou, who was to be put in charge of formulating the constitution of the year III, and thus would help shape the Directorial republic. For example, presenting his report on the encouragement of the arts in Germinal year III (16 April 1795), Daunou wheeled in a Chénier-like picture of the "oppressive system" responsible for cultural decadence in year II.[61]

Yet, if an alternative definition of a republican artist began to emerge that emphasized his autonomy[62] at the

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expense of involvement in the immediacy of political events, and if David served as a term of negative reference in the elaboration of this definition, some voices were also raised in the artist's defense. In the beginning of December 1794, a delegation of his students was admitted to the Convention to plead for his quick release:

> [...] à sa famille, à l'instruction de ses élèves, et aux travaux d'un art qu'il a toujours consacré à la propagation des vertus républicaines, auquelles il a voué ses pinceaux bien avant la révolution.[63]

This was an important intervention, for although it did not bring the expected immediate effect, that is, David's release, it helped a certain discursive adjustment in his image. Unexpectedly, it was the same Chénier who first articulated it.[64] Coming in support of the students' plea for David's transfer home, to be placed under house arrest where he could await the results of an investigation into his conduct, Chénier proposes a distinction be made between David's undeniable artistic talent and his condemnable cultural politics. He also warned against confusing the political functions of the artist with the crimes of such Jacobins as Le Bon, with whom the artist was arrested and whose conduct, like David's, still awaited examination.[65]

The distinction Chénier proposed was important. The danger of being considered on the same level as the other Terrorist functionaries becomes clear when we keep in mind that Le

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Bon's trial, like that of Carrier, ended with his execution.[66] But the association of David's name with Le Bon which Chénier protests, once made, could also have broader cultural ramifications. We can better understand this if we realize how Le Bon functioned in the post-Thermidorian discourse.

Joseph Le Bon, the mayor of Arras delegated to Cambray as a deputy on mission and largely responsible for the particularly acute form of the Terror in these two towns, became, besides Carrier, one of the principal symbolic figures through which the image of Robespierre's regime was constructed after its fall as the period of arbitrary violence and sanguinary excesses. The allegorical engraving titled Les Formes acèrbes is a telling testimony to this construction (Fig.20). It was designed by Louis Lafitte after a certain Poirier of Dunquerque, a lawyer and author of a series of pamphlets which were part of the whole public campaign he engineered against Le Bon.[67] The print tells us, in an indirect way, something important about David's position as an artist after Thermidor.

The macabre image features the "bloodthirsty" Le Bon standing in the center, in between two guillotines representing the two cities, on top of a heap of decapitated or mutilated bodies, drinking steaming hot blood springing alternatively from the corpses still under the guillotines, with one cup at his mouth, while refilling the other. The

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inscription below helps us discern on the right the two female furies who, sitting on the rock accompanied by ferocious beasts, incite them to help the "Cannibal" Le Bon devour the cadavres. Bones and skulls scattered around them spell out the progress of their feast. On the left, gathered on the edge of another rock, are the freed prisoners, men holding each other in fraternal embrace, women clutching their children, all gesturing hopefully towards the sky where the artist placed a multifigured allegory of 9 Thermidor. Here, on the cloud separating the allegorical register from the "real" below, Justice unveils the naked Truth, holding Poirier's denunciatory pamphlets, to the National Convention, all three personified by female figures. Above them, an eye of Vigilance; to the side -- a winged genius who heralds the salutary advent of Thermidor to the prisoners below. Other victims of Le Bon appear on the extreme left through the now opened gates of the prison.

What is most interesting for us in this engraving is its visual language, inscribed as it is by the rhetoric of the post-Thermidorian <u>défoulement</u>. The principal figure of this <u>défoulement</u>, the Jacobin-Cannibal on heaps of mutilated cadavers assisted by female Furies, entered the French collective Imaginary first with the Nantes trials in the fall and early winter 1794.[68] It constituted an interesting aesthetic novelty. For while the post-Thermidorian cultural debates were positing the need to construct a new cultural

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language of a "régime éclairé," inaugurated by suppression of what was constructed as the barbaric times of the Terror, it was in the descriptions of this barbarism -- Dante-like infernal images, bloody scenes of mass massacres, and mutilated bodies -- that new cultural codes were being forged, although their palpable impact on high art was not to be seen until later.

New codes have to be understood, nevertheless, in the Barthesian sense, as partially a rehersal of the old, a perspective of quotations, the wake of the "already": the already experienced, already seen, already written.[69] Lafitte's print makes this very clear as it does not hide its quotations from the heroic body language of David's Revolutionary canvases, the Brutus in the figure of the mother with her daughter, the Tennis Court Oath in the arrangement of the male prisoners, quotations that it mobilizes for its own purposes. These visual citations testify to how widely the Davidian language was established, and disseminated, as the predominant, in fact the Revolutionary language up until Thermidor. David's earlier works became a sort of mold in which collective Revolutionary passions were cast. But the print also makes it clear -- and even literalizes it by a discontinuous structure that establishes an unbridgable rift between two rocky zones of the image, one of the "Terror" and one contained by the salutary rays sent by the Thermidorian Eye

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of Vigilance -- that the fall of Robespierre and the discursive dismantling of his system cracked the molds of the Jacobin heroic language releasing some if its repressed aspects and giving them form. These monstrous and sanguinary figures, once stated, were difficult to contain, because they entered the stock of the "already-said," became new codes. And, thus, they put into question the stock figures through which the Revolution was given meaning visually until then. For could the gesture of fraternal male bonding continue to signify, or retain its heroic eloquence, when it is placed next to other male bodies whose arms were altogether severed? (And this being stated at the time it was revealed that the Jacobins who generated the representations of such collective transports of Revolutionary emotion as the Tennis Court Oath were also responsible for organizing mass massacres?) And could a female body continue to unproblematically signify maternal affection when it was being juxtaposed within the same image with a rhetorical figure transgressive of family codes and all fundamental prohibitions on which society is based -- that of a cannibal? The graphic literalness of truncation and mutilation went, as in this engraving, far beyond such idealized images of mutilated heroes as that of the revoltionary martyrs, Le Pelletier and Marat. In fact, the rhetoric of the Formes acerbes declares a loss of cultural confidence in this kind of Revolutionary corps glorieux, the

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privileged Davidian signifier of the psychic, social and political coherence. This process paralleled the broader discursive transformation after Thermidor, marking the end of the Jacobins' unitary ideology based on the notion of transparency between the People and its direct representation in the body of the Convention.[70] When shown at the Salon of 1791, David's Tennis Court Oath, the image of a perfect corporeal unison of the national representation, articulated this ideology of political transparency most eloquently, thus reinforcing the Jacobin bid for power. If, with the end of Robespierre, the symbolic circuit that kept these notions together was broken, this in turn was due, at least to a significant extent, to images like Lafitte's.

This rhetoric of violent fragmentation could also be recognized as language typical of the early stage of the processes of (here political and social) identification. Julia Kristeva, building on the work of Melanie Klein on the infantile fantasies of violent fragmentation, introduced the concept of "the abject" to discern the earliest effort of the future subject to separate itself from the (pre-Oedipal) mother.[71] The abject, that is a sort of pre-object, or a fallen object, is an image of anything that provokes revulsion, horror, distaste, and more specifically refers to the partly formed or dismembered objects, through which the subject makes its first attempts at separation from the

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(archaic) maternal. Kristeva stresses this to be not just a thing, but a process of creating the first fragile space for the subject's identification. Lafitte's image could be seen as an example of such a process through which the Thermidorian regime sought to distinguish itself from the first "maternal" republic, thus defined as the abject Other.

The consequences of the political-cultural process sketched here have to be understood on two levels. First, this kind of imagery, deploying the older heroic codes but, at the same time, giving form to a space of rift and contradiction -- a place of political unconscious -- within them, illustrates the crisis of Jacobin language. Lafitte's image reached a point of no return in the rhetoric of republicanism. On another level, particularly relevant for our analysis, this cultural crisis implied a personal crisis for David as an artist, inasmuch as he was largely responsible for coining the Revolutionary, and especially the Jacobin, rhetoric. Whether the case of David as a political persona was or wasn't succesfully separated from the case of Le Bon is just as important as the fact that the symbolic elaboration of Le Bon's meaning involved or referred to the Davidian language. The entire heroic corporal vocabulary from the Horatii, via Brutus, to the Marat, through which a generation of French men and women gained their sense of the Revolutionary experience, was, as Lafitte's engraving demonstrates, interspersed with visual

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neologisms that dangerously suggested its reversibility, its status as one of the codes, not the code as seemed to be the case in the year II. For David, then, Thermidor also marked a cultural and aesthetic point of "no return." And this was the issue he had began to grope with while in prison. For not only had the defnition and cultural image of the republican artist -- his place in society and his relation to the Revolution -- begun to alter (as it had in the debates that David must have read in the press), but so was also the aesthetic language of civic virtue, which he helped invent and on which his identity as a republican artist depended, put into crisis. After Thermidor, it was no longer enough to say, even, and perhaps especially, for someone like David, that one was an artist committed to the Revolution. One had to also define exactly what one meant by that. What kind of work could a republican artist then offer?

iv. The Homer Drawings

Caught in the web of the politics of revenge unleashed against Robespierre's adherents, David repeatedly petitioned the authorities for his release, claiming his essential innocence and pointing to the fact that he shared his admiration for that "hypocrite" with other deputies and the general public opinion.[72] It is in the context of the

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political debates and imagery discussed earlier, in relation to denunciations against individuals, as well as acts discrediting Jacobin culture as a whole, that we need to situate David's letters, petitions, the art made in prison, and his attempt, manifest in all these forms, to recast his identity as an artist.

In David's prison correspondence, the status of artist, rather than legislator, is first referred to on 15 September, i.e., one and a half month after his imprisonment.[73] In the end of August, he still presents himself as a deputy, and is honored by having found himself side by side with colleagues (Collot, Billaud, Amar, Vadier) who the Convention pronounced to have been slandered by Lecointre. Although he is aware of his right to demand his immediate release from prison in the context of this decision, he chooses only to ask to be admitted to the bar so that he can defend himself. All he wants at this stage is, as he puts it, "la gloire de figurer à côté des athlètes de la Revolution."[74] But, at the same time, in the Justification that, as I argued earlier, must have been ready for this purpose, he begins to play down his political responsibilities (without completely disavowing them) in favor of his plea to be seen as an artist identified with his own work. In mid-September, having been moved from the hôtel des Fermes to the Luxembourg prison, where the conditions were stricter, David began to circulate the new

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argument that he needed to cultivate his art and to have models let into his cell, reminding his colleagues that he was always an artist entirely devoted to the Republic.[75] With no correspondence, it seems, throughout October, it is only in November that a fuller image of David as an artist, as he wants to be seen, emerges from his letters to the authorities and to friends.[76] This new persona, remolding his public image of "the fanatic of Robespierre," is one of an artist-patriot who might have erred in his political allegiances as far as attachment to people was concerned, but who remained throughout the Revolution a devoted republican committed to "la patrie" and to Revolutionary ideals. Whatever were his past mistakes, he now blames them on the exalted imagination of the artist which "l'entraine presque toujours au-delà du bout."[77] Yet, nowhere does David denounce his Jacobinism or renounce the political commitment of his art. Instead, he vows to attach himself to principles, rather than people.

Although in writing to his former prison mate, a Cuban by the name of de Mainbourg, since freed, David states:

> 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,[78]

nowhere does he claim that being an artist implies interest in aesthetics for aesthetics' sake. Far from proposing that

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art could depend on itself for meaning, he places it unequivocally at the service of the Revolution and the Republic, reiterating his civic usefulness as an artist in every petition and letter he writes from prison.[79] Yet, what the quoted fragment (written in November) also articulates is David's increased awareness of the tension within his hyphenated identity of the artist-deputy: its terms had entered into an uneasy coexistence, if not a complete opposition, as had already been signalled in the Self-portrait.

It is the image of the artist as producer of public art, specifically of history painting, that David implicates in his defense and efforts to obtain release from prison. His previously mentioned letter to the Comité de Sûreté Générale of September 15, 1794, protesting his treatment, notably his transfer from the Hôtel des Fermes to the prison of Palais du Luxembourg, contains the earliest datable evidence for David's prison project for a history painting.[80] The CSG's October decree to liberate him having no effect, David wrote to the Convention again on November 4, demanding to be freed and producing an elaborate explanation of his situation as resulting from an excess of patriotism and a love of liberty. Here, the history painting is again mentioned in conjunction with a self-description that portrays hims as as a victim of delusion about Robespierre. David also indicts the sterility of the practice of art estranged from reality

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due to imprisonment.[81] Failing liberation, he asks at least to be granted house arrest where he can work on his painting and recover. The painting to which he refers is on the subject of Homer; the letter to de Mainbourg written four days later makes this clear. And it is in this letter that David articulates a wishful definition of himself as a pensive artist more than a legislator, putting into words what he has already visually formulated through the figure of Homer.[82]

Two loose sheet drawings and three pages in the prison sketchbook is all we have today as evidence of the process of elaboration of the Homer project.[83] There were other drawings, to which only textual references have survived, though we can form some visual idea of one of them through a lithograph of David's student, Jean-Baptiste Debret.[84] All the work that has been preserved was most probably done in the Luxembourg prison, and I would like to propose dating it between September 15 and early November 1794. The very first page of the sketching album that Delafontaine brought for the artist in prison seems to testify to the very beginning of the process, with the figure of a seated Homer, his lyre in his hands, chanting, drawn below the list of visual sources David wanted his student to bring him from the Bibliothèque nationale (Fig.21).[85] Delafontaine declares that he started bringing David prints only after his transfer from des Fermes to the Luxembourg, where there was

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more space for the artist to work, which also suggests the Luxembourg prison as the site of the Homer's origins.[86] The two following pages of the album are taken up by the summary sketch of women bringing gifts to Homer (folio 1 verso; Fig.22), and, next, the figure of Homer himself, a repetition, with slight variations, of the first-page drawing, its contours retraced in pen and ink. Above it, there is a remnant, perhaps, of another train of visual thoughts, drawn to be looked at horizontally -- a figure of a winged boy with a torch, a symbol of eternal life. (folio 2 recto; Fig.23).

If these early visual research notes can only be dated tentatively, the two elaborate drawings, Homer endormi (Fig.24) and Homer recitant ses verses (Fig.25), were done, Delafontaine assures us beyond doubt, at the Luxembourg, where David was transfered on 15 September. It is reasonable, then, to suppose, that the main body of work on the project dates from the period between mid-September and the very beginning of November, when David writes to de Mainbourg:

> Je m'ennui 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 le fers. On m'empêche de retourner à mon atelier dont, hélas, je n'aurais jamais dû sortir.[87]

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The meaning of the Homer project has to be considered on three interrelated levels. First, what needs to be (re)examined is the function of the ancient bard as a wishful figure for David himself. We are encouraged to begin with such understanding of this figure by David's own pronouncement dating from this time: "A writer, a poet, an artist paint themselves in their works."[88] I am specifically interested in viewing this prison image of the painter as Homer as a representation of a position David wished to occupy vis-à-vis the Revolution, rather than, as it was done before, as a proto-romantic representation of the artist as outcast genius.[89] Secondly, the drawings have to be analyzed as images of the creative process. (The issue of reception, of the artist's relation to his audience, as envisaged in the drawings, has to be part of this level of inquiry.) The Homère recitant ses verses, and, less obviously, the Homère endormi refer to it iconographically (the Homeric iconography of artistic creation is largely David's invention[90]). But these images of the artist at work also involved the problem of David's own creative procedure in prison. The first sheet of David's prison sketchbook, where the list of his work tools -- the collections of prints the painter wanted to get from the Bibliothèque Nationale to look at -- is scribbled around a lightly sketched figure of Homer playing his lyre, registers, intentionally or not, the closeness of this interrelation. I want to take this sheet

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as an invitation to an approach: in addition to seeing the corpus of drawings as a site of thematization of the creative process from the point of view of an imprisoned artist, I would also like to look at it as a formally and technically specific testimony to David's visual practice at this time. Also, I would like to see if, and in what way, the Revolution left its trace in it. Thirdly, I think we should provisionally accept David's statement about Homer from the letter to de Mainbourg and try to understand how exactly this group of works could constitute a site of a major aesthetic shift, how it was to make "un pas de plus à l'art" that David expected it to do.

Although it has been previously observed that Homer could be seen to stand for David, the implications of such self-representation (unprecedented for a painter) in the context of its production remains to be examined.[91] Why did he chose Homer, to begin with? What did it mean to return to antique subject matter after having embraced themes from contemporary history, in the Tennis Court Oath, in the icons of the Revolutionary martyrs? And if only Antiquity were to be the area of reference, why choose Homer and not, say, Apelles?[92] Why would a painter want to think himself as an epic poet?

Let us see how the drawings actually make David's bid for a new artistic identity. In the first drawing Homer is represented literally as the "pensive artist" from David's

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letter, his body reclining against a massive pillar, his head supported by his hand.[93] The bard's lyre rests beside him, on top of a scroll of the Iliad; next to it, gifts are placed by two women coming from the side. Barely distinct figures, hesitantly drawn in pencil, take shape in front of Homer: a silhouette of a dog seen from behind and an old man walking with a stick, the latter perhaps another version, a sort of afterimage, of the figure of Homer himself, or else -- as in Debret's lithograph of David's lost drawing of the same subject -- a member of his audience. While the architecture of the courtyard in this drawing is, as was noticed before,[94] almost exactly that of David's prison, the Palais du Luxembourg, the sketchy figures that hover in it also give it the status of a fictive space of the artistic process (where things begin to acquire their form and meaning).

In the second drawing, Homer reciting his verses[95], it is blindness, rather than thoughtfulness or dream, that connotes the artist's distance from immediate reality. He retains his place from the earlier sketch, against the massive pier, in between two distinct spaces -- the shaded site of the gift-bringing women as one, and the courtyard with his public as the other. He belongs to none. Yet, if removed from the public square, the declaiming bard, posed almost exactly like David's earlier Belisaire, extends his arm towards the crowd in a gesture that claims it as his

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audience (Fig.26).[96] The gesture itself echoes that of the old Horatio defending his son after the latter murdered his sister Camilla in the preparatory drawing for the Oath of Horatii (Fig.27).[97]

In reprocessing the figures from his work of the 1780s, David, it could be argued, builds into Homer some of the meanings that pertain to his own present status of the accused. He mobilizes the iconography of ingratitude and injustice in regard to a faithful state servant from his canvas of 1781 in order to refute his accusers at the Convention, in other words, to define himself as a sort of a Belisarius of the Thermidorian reaction.[98] And by amalgamating the figure of the Byzantine general with the father Horatio (although the effect of adding the latter could not have been the same since the drawing, unlike the 1781 canvas, was not, or certainly not to the same extent, publicly known), David leaves for us, at least, a trace of a wish to have his Homer also connote an appeal for clemency for mistakes and even crimes committed in the name of a higher cause -- an apology for himself as a former Terrorist? Such a level of intepretation could be further reinforced if we agree to understand Homer's blindness quasi-literally, as accommodating David's defensive argument in front of the authorities that he had been led astray, as though blind, by Robespierre.[99] The obliviousness of the bard could have served to articulate a wishful

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position for David vis-à-vis the Revolution, which, speaking schematically, had the following implications: being an artist could excuse erring in the matters of day-to-day reality (including politics) inasmuch as the artist is endowed with the capacity to turn this reality, through his art, into history. As the author of the Iliad -- for this is how the inscription on the scroll of the Homère endormi defines him -- the poet was a convincing vehicle for such argument: he carried the promise of an epic dimension (and a narrative resolution) to be given to the Revolutionary conflicts.

But one cannot help believing that, in adopting Homer for his self-image, David must have also been attracted in a more specific way by the positicn of narrative mastery associated with the poet. Delécluze's image of him as a deputy stammering his defense in vain in front of angry colleagues a few days after the Thermidorian coup comes immediately to mind when we look at David's Homer commanding the attention of his listeners as he recites his verses. And even if we choose to ascribe Delécluze's image entirely to the author's poetic licence, we cannot deny that for someone like David who had to speak in his defense -- on 13 Thermidor as well as after his arrest, in front of the government's Committees -- the issue of control over words must have been of utmost importance.

Finally, Homer was for David and his contemporaries a

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figure of cultural authority. This meaning was established by the author of the most popular and widely read translation of the Iliad and Odyssey in the eighteenth century, done by Mme Dacier, who also wrote Homer's short biography.[100] Editions of her translations continued to appear throughout the Revolution and, in all probability, hers was the Homer that David read and which shaped his understanding of the poet. In addition to narrative mastery, Mme Dacier's Homer was a figure incarnating uncorrupted civilization; he was a paragon of Greek culture, and as such he was involved in the beginning of the eighteenth century in the well-known polemic around the issue of cultural decadence.[101] It could not have been accidental that a figure charged with such high cultural voltage was chosen to voice a plea by one of those whom the Thermidorian reaction designated as vandals, and through whom the image of cultural ruin under the Terror was being constructed.[102]

To summarize: David's adoption of Homer for a prison self-image in early fall 1794 placed the artist in a defensive but also a strongly compensatory position. It created grounds for both, justifying the past and defining the future by introducing the notion of distance inherent in the artist's relation to reality and to his audience -- Homer's pensiveness, (more ambiguously) his blindness, and his removal from the public square were tropes conveying this distance, as was the drawing's thematic return to Antiquity.

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However, distance did not signify a total isolation in some kind of entirely autonomous aesthetic enclave (if Debret's version of the Homère endormi (Fig.28) testifies to some problems in the visualization of the audience, the Homère recitant states it more pronouncedly); rather it signaled a redefinition of what remained an artistic engagement in the service of the Revolution and, as David put it in one of his prison letters, "la gloire de mon pays." For this was the guarantee of the artist's own "glory."[103] And thus Homer served also as a vehicle for (wishfully) asserting the mythic power of the artist -- the narrative mastery and cultural authority -- compensating for the experience of loss to which David, as the Terrorist subject on trial, was exposed and which he otherwise documented (as in the Self-portrait) at this time. Lastly, if it presents an enclosure, it is not one of the privacy of the studio, as celebrated by Chénier -- Homer is removed to a shaded, but still public space.

Yet, to what extent could the artist's intention control the complex network of connotations in these drawings? Was this set of more or less convenient political and cultural implications of David's choice of Homer all there was to the rather unusual field of representation constructed in these drawings? Certainly not.

The peculiar spatiality in the two loose sheet drawings has been noticed before. Michael Fried commented on David's

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defiance of the classical rule of making the picture plane parallel with the position of beholder -- confounded here by both the de-centered and skewed perspectival structure and further complicated by the handling of light and shade -- as being testimony to the artist's formal concern with the Diderotian principle of absorption.[104] I believe that the nature of David's concerns at the time these images were made was quite far from the critical agenda that might have shaped a sector of the art production in France some thirty years earlier (and I will try to point out how the drawings demonstrate this), but Fried's observations on the strangeness of the spatial relations in the drawings are a useful point of departure. Indeed, it is difficult to establish where the drawings position us as viewers, especially in the most spatially elaborate Homère recitant ces verses. We seem to be looking at Homer and the women from the position right in front of the reciting bard, in the center of the image. Yet, at the same time, the perspectival system with the vanishing point in the back of the courtyard places us rather to the right, in front of the women. The shaded area of the foreground, which also embraces the male couple leaning against the pier on the left (an older man there explains something to the younger one, whom he draws affectionately towards him) further complicates the spatial relations. It is as if the original plane of representation, parallel to the surface of the

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drawing, was pivoted or slightly pushed backward on the right, letting in a wedge of vision that includes the women into the scene. Such spatial evolution seems to be confirmed by Debret's lithograph, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Rennes, of another, I believe earlier, version of the subject, now lost.[105] Debret might have cropped the image and simplified David's spatiality, as his lithograph, done after the Homère endormi that we know, indicates.[106] Yet, he retained its essential structure. And in his image, which I take to have registered David's earliest known version of the whole composition (at least in relation to the other two drawings in the Louvre), the plane of the image is almost parallel to the surface of the drawing. Although the view is slightly skewed as we look from the left to the right, the depth of this slant is far from the later Louvre versions, and instead of two competing thrusts of vision (or trajectories for our gaze), we have only one going back and forth between two poles (left & right), two groups of figures. Homer rests here with his dog and his few belongings next to the pillar on the right, while on the left, his audience stands, facing him: a young man, an older woman with a child, and three women embracing. These women, facing Homer, are in the same position as the female figures on the second page of David's prison sketchbook, that is, at the earliest stage of the project's development. The figure of Homer and three women bringing him gifts were the two

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very first elements around which he begun constructing his image, as documented by the first three pages of his prison sketchbook (and the only ones devoted to the Homer; the remainder is of the Sabines). As already mentioned, on the first page there is a light sketch of the figure of the singing bard interlocked with the list that registered David's preparatory tools, the prints from the Bibliothèque Nationale; on the second, there are three women coming from the left as they deposit their gifts; on the third, the sketch of Homer from the first page is repeated, larger and retraced in ink. Thus, from the point of view of the relation between what seem to be the two primary elements in the structure of David's image, the second and the third page of the album register the same disposition as the one used in the drawing engraved by Debret: Homer on the right; women, facing him, on the left. In the Homère endormi of the Louvre, the drawing that I believe followed both the album pages and the version engraved by Debret, it is thus precisely the decision to move the figures of the women to the right, behind Homer, that necessitated the spatial adjustment and was responsible for a wedge of vision between the surface of the drawing and the original plane of representation. This wedge, once introduced, began to compete with the older perspectival structure -- both the one with the vanishing point in the back of the courtyard and the one centered on the figure of Homer -- confusing our

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position vis-à-vis the image. It is easiest to perceive this operation in the Homère endormi because the poet and the women are the only figures outlined in ink, with pronounced contours, and the space in front of Homer is almost empty, except for the two lightly sketched silhouettes of a dog and a man. It seems that the space drawn from nature, after the Luxembourg courtyard (and quite literally so, while in the Homère recitant the architecture will be simplified down to the rudimentary classical forms) just begins to turn into the stage for David's story. In the second Louvre drawing, the spatiality is further complicated by the addition of more figures -- more women and the audience -- and the work of light and shade.

It is, then, the process of relating Homer to the women that should be recognized as the principal force behind the development of the complex structure of the image. Femininity thus appears as the first element that needs to be positioned and as one through which the place of the poet is defined. It is the transfer of the female figures from the left to the right and the plastic elaboration of their space in the image that allow Homer's position to be defined as being in between two different areas, with the shadow enhancing this unstable structural disposition. And it is what created the strange effect, recognized by Fried as voyeuristic: we are able to see both the arena and the backstage, so to speak, of Homer's performance. Perhaps we

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are also peering into the arena and backstage of David's own artistic process, for which the poet's recitation is here a trope. Let us put this last observation provisionally on hold.

This splicing of the field of representation due to the extra wedge of space introduced by pushing back the right pillar and thus establishing an additional, skewed trajectory of vision -- from the left to the right and slightly backwards --is further complicated by the quite extraordinary play of light and shadow in both Louvre drawings, but especially in the Homère recitant. This play was due to the deployment of the technique, unusual for David, of the lavis, or ink wash.[107] The lavis was responsible for the indirect, almost stalling manner with which the composition leads the spectator's gaze into the image first through the dark area, as if by way of the coulisses. Already in the Homère endormi, the deep, dark shadow placed on the left pier and, even darker, in the wedge of foreground, underscores the essential heterogeneity of the two spaces between which the figure of Homer is fitted. However, the two areas are tentatively connected by a narrow bar of light originating in his body and traversing the dark foreground. On it, the two gift-bringing women are placed.

The situation is more complex in the Homère recitant, where the spatial heterogeneity is at once stated and

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undermined by the play of shadows. In addition to defining the space of the feminine in the image (from which the women are shown emerging, one of them still in the shadow while the rest are set off against the dark pillar), the shadowed foreground here also claimed parts of the audience, including the embracing male couple on the left. The dark wedge of the "backstage," is, however, interrupted by a broader strip of light coming from the courtyard and traversing the body of Homer to reach the figures of the women. The figure of Homer has become more pronouncedly the site of transit between the bright courtyard and the shaded arcades, with the strong light contrasts both giving a more plastic form to his body and, simultaneously, undermining or at least competing with its linear articulation. It is as if this play of light and shade confused the spatial disposition to such an extent that it made an exclusive bodily commitment of Homer to any of the two spaces impossible.

We could then say that, in addition to the spatial tension due to two different structures of viewing with which this drawing tempts the beholder, there are also two different modes of representation put to work in competition: the linear (drawing) and the painterly (wash). Rather than being complementary, they seem to be subtly eroding their mutual effects. And it is specifically the use of ink wash that, as shadow, seems to challenge the work of denotation performed

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by the linear design -- confusing or obfuscating the positions of viewing set by the the linear structure (already complex) of the image or subtly disarticulating the bodies.

Let us follow for a moment Kristeva's distinction between the two signifying functions in a (poetic or visual) text: the symbolic and the semiotic.[108] Kristeva discerned as semiotic the level on which the text can be said to operate "against itself," that is, the level of those aspects of a text's organization that challenge, disrupt or subvert the traditional symbolic rules of the poetic language in which it speaks. All kinds of irregularities, confusions or ruptures of syntax; all excesses or elisions of meaning; in particular rhythm and color that exceed denotative function; and, on the thematic level, all kinds of what she calls "de-semanticizing" procedures, such as stretching or defying the rules of family/societal organization: these are what Kristeva recognizes as the work of the semiotic in the text.[109]

Although it counters or unsettles the symbolic function, the semiotic never abolishes it. It is, however, the mode in which the radical otherness <u>within</u> the subject is voiced: the territory of instinctual drives repressed at the moment of the subject entry into language and, with it, into the symbolic laws that govern societies. For Kristeva, it is thus the unconscious that speaks through the semiotic: it is

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a material articulation of this maternal, pre-symbolic area that threatens the coherence of the Law and the unity of the subject that the Father's Law posits.

Yet, not all poems or images can be seen as open arenas of interaction between these two signifying functions of which one corrupts the other. Those in which it can be discerned -- for Kristeva these are principally the works of the major Modernists writers, such as Mallarmé and Céline[110] -- have to be recognized as manifestations of the crisis into which the creative process throws the subject. And she acknowledges that such a crisis is not generated solely by the individual symbolic act but is rather "a symptom of a broader crisis in relation of man to meaning" due to the crisis of social institutions (although this dimension never interests her too much in its historical specificity).[111]

Borrowing the term from Kristeva, we could say that it is the semiotic that operates in the Homer drawings in all the confusing and spatially ambiguous compositional aspects. The central figure of Homer, as the image of the artist, embodies and thematizes the paternal function that, stated as it is with a considerable rhetorical force, seems nevertheless to falter under the series of subtle visual and thematic assaults on its centrality.[112] We do see the effort to secure it: Homer is placed in the middle of the picture plane; he is supported by the massive pier; we have

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witnessed from the start of the process of his elaboration a major concern with the place of the feminine in relation to him (in the end result the place is behind him and thus outside the major arena of action) and an effort to define this place as the maternal in a Symbolic mode, i.e., contained within the nourishing, even, literally, alimentary function (the feminine should not float around unbound if the text is to speak the Law).[113] Thus, if the ancient bard is thematically the figure of cultural authority par excellence, this centrality and authority is at the same time perhaps not denied but put into question by the spatial ambiguities that we have discerned earlier: the implication of the viewer in two different positions and the work of shadows enhancing this effect. There is an emphasized in-betweennes to the poet's place: not only between two different spaces but also as if it were a site of two strangely uncooperative, if not irreconciliable, modes of representation. And there is his blindness that problematizes, to say the least, the position of mastery that he embodies: a master of words, but at a cost -- that of vision.

It is the shadow of the lavis on the eye socket that signifies blindness. The same dark ink was deployed for the rather intense play of light on Homer's figure. Notice an interesting circuit of signs established through this play of light on his body: an angular, almost aggressive patch on

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his left cheek (the area about which David was particularly sensitive in his self-representations); the empty eye sockets; his hand holding the lyre, as if "stained" by the shadow, and the one extended to the audience, with its palm almost disembodied by the dark area on the wrist; the darkness that interrupts his body mid-way, below his bent elbow. There is also a large shadow cast by his frame on the pillar against which he leans, which gives a certain fluidity to the outlines of his back -- yet another device to mark discontinuity within Homer's position. This is to say that the shadowed areas, besides and perhaps even against their denotative functions, form an alternative -- semiotic -- pattern of meaning, one that throws into confusion the distinctions established by its first level. Yet, if this alternative territory articulates a play of unconscious drives, it also establishes a circuit of symbolically legible values. For it aligns the sign of blindness, i.e., symbolic castration, with those shadows that disarticulate the body of the artist and his tools of creation.

We have already seen a similar work of internal disarticulation of the artist's body -- in David's prison Self-portrait. The shadowed left cheek, the torso cut by the gaping hole formed by the folds of the houppelande, the instruments of self-articulation (both the mouth, the site of speech, and the lyre-playing/palette-holding hands)

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shaded or otherwise disembodied --, these features link the two works. Even Homer's manuscript, a scroll inscribed "chant vingt-quatre" lying at his feet is -- like David's palette in the Self-portrait -- sliced off, in this case by a shaft of light. What both the Self-portrait and the Homère recitant offer us is a parallel articulation of the artist's position as uncertain in a specific way, as if eroded, split from within. It may be, as Kristeva argues, that this is a position that maps the fate of all creative individuals who take risks, a position, articulated most pronouncedly by her subjects-in-process, the Modernist poets. Yet, I think that the corrosive effects of the semiotic here were a matter of historically specific, if perhaps not altogether conscious or controlled, pressures and constraints.

What I want to suggest is that the figure of Homer testifies to some of the major diffuculties that David was experiencing in his attempt to install himself as an artist within the Homeric, paternal code of cultural authority. That the subject-in-process of this drawing is a subject on a historically specific trial: one of a Jacobin artist after Thermidor.[114] It seems that, consciously, the Homer project was to defend and reassert David's position as an artist. Yet, on the semiotic level that was not entirely under his control, it seems to testify to the impossibility that he could unproblematically occupy such a position in the fall of 1794. The unconscious of the Jacobin language, given form

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in the anti-Terrorist imagery, had also found its way into this image.

Homer is placed on a bar of light that extends laterally from the left -- the shadowed part of the audience -- to the right, with the women standing at its end. It is as though, in order to create a space for the poet (the illusion of depth), some things have to go into shadow, be repressed while others are allowed the light. This applies, for example, to the quasi-homoerotic couple on the left -- a figure of male affection that seems like a quote from Leonidas avant la lettre. It is interesting, though, that the young man is shown with only his arms being covered by drapery, while the lower part of his body is naked, his genitals exposed to our view in a strangely gratuitous manner. While the male couple is thrown into darkness, the light picks up the women on the other side of Homer.

This bar of light traverses Homer's script in the foreground. We have reasons to suppose that the "chant vingt-quatre" spelled out on it for our eyes (certainly not for Homer's) refers to the Iliad: this is how the scroll is identified by David in the Homère endormi.[115] Such a choice is very interesting.

The twenty-fourth song of the Iliad is about Priam's mission for the return of the his son Hector's body to the Trojans. Achilles, grieving over the death of his dear friend Patrocles, had treated the corpse of his Trojan

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adversary with a barbaric cruelty that offended even the gods. They interevene, therefore, with Achilles in support of Priam's plea to have Hector's remains given back to Troy. Achilles himself is moved by the old father's humility, and agrees for the body to be released, granting Priam the eleven days he had requested for the funeral. Upon Priam's return to Troy, greeted by all the Trojans, Hector's body is displayed in the courtyard of the royal palace on a bed. Andromache, his wife, together with Hecuba and Helen "font leur regrets auprès le lit." The proper funeral follows.[116]

This is a part of the Iliad David knows well -- for one, he had painted his Andromache with the body of Hector after it, citing his source, in Greek, on the candelabrum.[117] This was an important painting for David -- his morceau de réception to the Academy. But the Iliad was also used by David before, and was in fact the very thematic territory through which he sought to define his early identity as an artist. What we have to recall is that at the very outset of his career, during his first stay in Rome, it was precisely the Homeric conception of history painting that David embraced. The ambitious, highly elaborate drawing Les combats de Diomède, a subject taken from the Iliad (song V), now at the Albertina in Vienna (Fig.30), and a painting Les Funérailles de Patrocle (Fig.31), another work that the young David sent back to Paris to report on his artistic progress, (along with the entire set of its preparatory

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drawings), as well as such academies as the (so-called) Hector and Patrocle done in Rome, constitute ample testimony to David's desire to define himself professionallly, take up his (Symbolic) position in society, and, perhaps, even more ambitiously, redefine the Le Brunesque tradition of the heroic large-scale painting through Homer.

Both Les combats and les Funérailles seem to suggest that such redefinition, or such experiment, was being attempted not only through the choice of Homeric subjects but also in the attempt to work out a new format and style of painting suitable for conveying the epic narrativity (elongated format), its complexity (the multiplicity and density of the depicted episodes) and, above all, the ethos of the male hero (the focus on the male nude as a privileged signifier). And this was done through David's study of visual idioms of the Italian masters of the High Renaissance, such as Raphael and Giulio Romano, and of the Baroque, such as the Carracci, with whom David was impressed when in Italy.[118]

We know well that this was not exactly the direction David ended up pursuing. Rather, his painting departing from Homeric iconography, evolved stylistically towards increased evacuation or condensation of the narrative down to an almost allegorical, format and towards rupture instead of the frieze-like spatialization of the narrative and temporal continuity, as in his earlier works. The male hero remained, of course, in focus, but femininity was introduced, and with

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it, the Otherness, gendered binarism, as the privileged structure of meaning. In certain Revolutionary works, notably the martyrs' icons, the problematic of the male nude with which David groped in the early Roman period resurfaced, but by this time he had other intermediary elaborations, such as his own Andromache, on which to base this new work commissioned by Robespierre. It was not until the Homer and the Sabine Women, both conceived in prison, that the issue of developing a style to match the epic narratives from Antiquity come up again, but, obviously, in different circumstances and for different reasons than those shaping David's productions in Rome in the late 1770s.

What corroborates the idea that David revisited his own artistic origins in his prison work is a puzzling landscape, one of two done by David in the Luxembourg prison that survived (Fig.32).[119] It has been stated before how unusual this type of work is for David, the history painter -- in fact, because the Vue du Luxembourg is the only landscape that we know by David, its attribution and dating have been the object of some doubts.[120] Yet, if unusual, landscape is a type of work David did quite often earlier, during his stay in Rome. His Roman sketchbooks are filled with drawings of city views and landscapes.[121] In addition to visualizing wishful exteriority, to make a landscape for David must have meant then to rehearse the type of primary notation in which he trained himself at the outset of his career, to repeat

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and work through the steps of aquisition of artistic identity.

The work done in the Luxembourg, and the Homer drawings in particular, signal, then, David's wish to return to his artistic origins, perhaps a certain compulsion to repeat and work through -- an act often fuelled by the need to circumvent, or to master, some kind of trauma. I am not suggesting we rest our understanding of David's enterprise on any psycho-biographical reduction. Yet, it seems necessary to address the meaning of this repetition, this desire to return to one's own beginnings as an artist that seems to be manifested in the prison work, and the psychoanalytical perspective on repetition as a strategy for dealing with trauma seems useful.[122] What trauma is involved, though, and how exactly are we to see its impact on the work?

Obviously, the post-Thermidorian imprisonment must have constituted, on many levels, a trauma for David. The only contact we have with it, though, is not David's psyche but his written and visual texts. What is interesting in his defense (as well as in the letters written from prison in this period) is that the Academy, long abolished, resurfaces in the text as the malevolent force through which David represents, for himself, his post-Thermidorian calamity. It is the scheming "peintres de boudoir," angry to have the structure of their support vanish with the abolition of the

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academies that he sees behind the accusations against him.[123] Such imaginary collapsing of the cause of his original professional trauma (let us recall that David tried suicide after his three subsequent unsuccessful attempts to get the Prix de Rome, the entryway into an academic career[124]) onto the forces responsible for his post-Thermidorian situation is important. It allows us to understand that it is to address his present status as the accused that David revisits and reworks the earlier Homeric codes through which he first ambitiously sought to carve out an autonomous niche for himself in the hostile academic milieu.[125]

David revisits and reworks -- to what ends? We now get to the problem of this "un pas de plus" that David declared his Homer would cause art to make. For if we are not sure of the status and destiny of the prison self-portrait -- was it a private "technique of the self" or a public image? -- the Homer was not only meant from the start as a public painting, but there was a degree of self-consciousness about it as a site of aesthetic invention on behalf of David. What new language was then elaborated in the Homer drawings and for whom? If we agree that Homer, the figure of the artist, is indeed shown reciting the XXIVth song of the Iliad, we should be able to hear resonate through him, and through the visual rhetoric that serves to embody him, the voice of Priam reclaiming the body abused and profanated by Achilles'

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savage desire for revenge. The language in which this voice speaks is the heroic, elevated rhetoric in which historical male conflicts had been narratively staged and resolved in the past. It evokes an aesthetic territory centered around the type of corps meurtrie that David had deployed in his Revolutionary icons and that was increasingly put into question in September-November 1794 by the deconstructive rhetoric of the anti-Terrorist reaction -- the severed limbs of the Actes de Justice, the disemboweled male nudes of the Allegory of 9 Thermidor or the cannibalized corpses of the Formes acerbes.[126] As such, in the context of its making, the Homer project was an act of Jacobin cultural resistance to the symbolic practices of revenge against the Terrorists, in the net of which David, as a political person and as an artist (more: as the producer of the republican master codes up until then) was caught. However obliquely, the drawings insist on the heroic if challenged unity of the body as a privileged aesthetic signifier for these "athletes of the Revolution" with whom David was still so proud to belong at the very end of August 1794, when he began his Homer project.[127] And, on the more personal level, they served to disassociate the artist -- specifically, to put a cultural distance -- from his post-Thermidorian designation as a "painter of blood." That David was aware of the necessity of such disassociation is proven by his letter to Boissy d'Anglas written on 16 November, when the Homère

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recitant was completed:

> 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 seuls passions sublimes de l'âme ont eu des attraits pour moi. On ne m'appellera pas un peintre ami du sang.[128]

The Homer project was thus an act of resistance and disassociation but it was also a cultural offer, so to speak, vis-à-vis authorities. Notice the figure with the laurel wreath on his head seated imperially in the center of the audience -- a figure of power, no doubt -- whom Homer seems to be principally addressing. For the Homeric aesthetics with which David was aligning himself (or rather, which he was visually inventing) as an artist, was offering a language that would permit him to speak of both sides, Jacobins and Thermidorians, in heroic-epic terms, as the Hectors and the Achilleses of the Revolution. (We will witness his attempts to develop this Homeric language exactly for this exact purpose in the Sabines.) But at the time when it was being made, an offer of such a language was, and was becoming increasingly so, problematic. A few days after David announced that his preparations for the Homer were completed (8 November), on 12 November, the rampant anti-Jacobin reaction was given an official, institutional sanction: the Jacobin club was closed. The

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political and cultural site from which the "athletes of the Revolution" had operated was thus erased. Moreover, Carrier was indicted and his trial begun, opening up yet another gory Pandora box of images of the Terrorist abuse. An offer of a language implying Revolutionary continuity with the Jacobin period at this moment was difficult or impossible not only to accept, but also to articulate.

In my view, the rhetoric of the drawings amply testifies to this difficulty. The precariousness and ambiguity of the position that the artist occupies in the Homère recitant articulates, whether David intended it or not, some contradictions in such self-definition. It problematizes the wishful continuity, and signals some costs -- the artist castrated, the vision lost -- of the public commitment for an artist who wants to be seen as the Homer, the cultural authority, both of the Revolutionary past and of the post-Thermidorian present. It also points to the aesthetic crisis triggered by the need to find codes marking a rupture, rather than a continuity, with the Terror. The Iliad, and through it Greece, is presented as an aesthetic model, but just as soon placed "under erasure" (i.e., as an oblique scribbled reference and one that is moreover cut through by the light). It was once the language of the Terror -- e.g., think of the concatenation Hector, Lepelletier, Marat -- could it continue to operate as the language of the Revolution after Thermidor? And if so, at

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what costs, what adjustments? The costs articulated by Homer seem pretty high. In addition to the structural-spatial ambiguities, the artist is blind. The scene of fraternal affection is cast into shadow. And, in another testimony to the faltering paternal voice in the rhetoric of this image, the position of the feminine is rendered dangerously ambiguous. Women are (largely) "outside" the courtyard, where those whom Homer appeals to and needs to convince are grouped; they are behind and supportive of the artist as the fallen father. Yet, it was to situate them thus that the vision was spliced here and they are aligned with the disarticulating play of light contrasts that undermine the artist's position.

But this aesthetic crisis was not only David's personal problem (although, given his former cultural prominence, he was struck particularly hard). Rather, his situation epitomized a broader cultural status quo. The Homer of the first Louvre drawing, meditating in front of the empty courtyard, in which only the pencilled specters timidly hover, gives us some insight into the creative impasse that was part and parcel of the development of David's project. But this crisis also, more generally, characterized republican culture at large, whose major codes were being convulsed by the symbolic assaults of the anti-Terorist reaction. In that sense, one could not essentially disagree with Michael Fried's intuition that "a drastic loss of

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conviction in action and expression as resources for ambitious painting" is manifested in David's drawings.[129] Yet, the causes, context and consequences of this sense of loss, rooted as these were in the Revolutionary process, were something that Fried's Diderot could not have even dreamt about (eloquent dreamer that he was) more than thirty years earlier.

v. The Psyché abandonnée

> Psyché assise dans un lieu désert et abandonnée de son amant, déplore les rigeurs de Vénus et l'inconstance de son fils. Cette figure, qui est nue et vue jusqu'à mi-jambe, n'as pas été terminée. Elle fut peinte au Luxembourg.[130]

Long thought to have been lost, David's unfinished painting of the Psyché (Fig.33) has only recently reappeared in private hands. We have known of its existence from the inventories of the artist's works prepared by David himself and from references made to it in the Davidian literature (mostly in the early nineteenth-century sources).[131] We have no conclusive evidence, however, as to when exactly this work was produced and its unfinished state does not make the dating easy. David's own lists, where the Psyché abandonnée is consistently paired with another painting, the half-figure of Vestale (Fig.34), could not, alas, serve as a

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reliable basis for dating since David grouped his works there not in a proper chronological order but often merely according to the type of image (i.e., portraits; half-figure studies, etc.).[132] In the literature, the Psyché has been placed in the different moments of the artist's career, from before to after the Revolution. Most recently, Antoine Schnapper, in the first published commentary on the painting after it had reappeared, suggested that the work should be seen together with what he takes to be the Vestale (referred to by the earlier authors) and dated before the Revolution, ca. 1787.[133] I disagree. The Psyché abandonnée seems to me to have little to do with the painting Schnapper identifies as David's Vestale.[134] Aside from both being half-figure images of a woman, the canvases seem to me to differ in just about everything else: in iconography (although we could imagine it being so, the Vestal virgin was never, to my knowledge, used as a thematic pendant to Psyche); in body language; in facial expression; in color scheme (the cool whites and pinks of the Vestale vs. the earthy tones of the Psyche) and finally, in the technique (the thick shiny glazes of the Vestale vs. the opaque muteness of the scumbled, unfinished surfaces of our painting). Rather, the pose, body and facial type is stylistically much closer to the statuary figure of David's Mme Verninac of 1799 (Fig.35).

Having resurfaced as this thesis was being completed this

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summer, the Psyché abandonné will have to be examined more thoroughly than possible at the present time. However, I would like to present here some preliminary observations about the importance of this painting in David's post-Thermidorian process of self-definition.

First of all, I would like to suggest that we take more seriously into consideration the tradition, tenuous as it is, of dating the Psyché at the period of David's post-Thermidorian crisis. I would like to argue that -- in the Luxembourg, as J.J. Dubois asserted, or out of it -- the canvas was produced by David **before** his second imprisonment, that is before his profcundly disruptive personal experience of the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction. For I believe that this experience radically changed the signifying function of femininity in the artist's post-Thermidorian oeuvre.[135]

To be sure, there is no conclusive proof, but there are several indications that, put together, seem to me to suggest that the Psyché was done before David was imprisoned at the Quatre Nations. First of all, for reasons that will become clearer in the second part of this study, it is highly doubtful that David painted anything in the Quatre Nation.[136] But we know that the work existed when he was released, for his wife referred to it in her letter to David dated roughly ten days after his transfer from the Quatre Nations to his in-laws' country estate.[137] In this letter,

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the artist's wife reports that rumours are circulating in Paris, where she was, that David lost his talent. Concerned with her husband's reputation as well as his well-being -- I may add that it was largely due to her efforts that David was provisionally released on the grounds of poor health -- she encourages the artist to demonstrate publicly that such claims were ungrounded by sending some of his recent work to the forthcoming Salon. Advised by David's pupil, Sérangeli, and a friend (Mme Huin), she suggests putting together for that purpose the portrait of her sister Emilie Sériziat (Fig.36), which the artist had just completed, the Psyché, and the landscape painted by the artist at the Luxembourg. Regarding the latter, she proposes: "[...] nous énoncerons dans l'exposé qu'il a été fait dans le fers..." -- she seems to have been very much aware of the potential publicity effect of David's prison work.[138] The implication of the Psyché in this project indicates that the canvas was recent: it was only around the work done recently that the argument could be made that David had not lost his talent since Thermidor.

Yet, the artist accepted his wife's advice only partly: rather than finishing the Psyché, he choose to paint Emilie's husband, Pierre Sériziat (Fig.37), and it is these two portraits that were shown at the Salon in the fall of 1795.[139] Thus, if the artist chose to produce a new painting, rather than finishing the older one, we may

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presume that he felt the Psyché no longer represented him, in the way, perhaps, his wife and his student thought it might have. The Psyché remained unfinished in David's studio until at least the 1820s.[140] The only way in which this painting helped define the artist's public image after Thermidor was in the form of residual traces in his works produced around the same period.[141] Thus, the body of David's Psyche resonates, to some degree, in the figure of Mme Sériziat (especially the position of the head, neck and the upper part of her body) and, more so, that of Mme Verninac of 1799, who was painted with the similar statuesque finish that we can observe already taking form in the face and the hands of the Psyché. In a way, Mme Verninac looks like the Psyche who recovered from distress and straightened up (notice the striking similarity of the way in which the hair falls down on both figures' arms). Moreover, the fact that David had a psyché mirror placed in front of his Sabine Women as part of the public display he organized for this painting in 1799 suggests that the meaning of the unfinished canvas, if not the canvas itself, had some lasting (and pressing?) relevance for the artist.[142] The question is, what meaning?

Iconographically, the work is an articulation of the theme of a self in crisis. Moreover, David picked the most critical moment in the turbulent story of Psyche, or one of the two most critical ones for we are not entirely sure

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which abandonment is being referred to here. According to Apuleius' fairy tale, Psyche was a beautiful young woman, the youngest of three sisters, who was so admired for her beauty as to arouse the envy of Venus. The goddess sent her son Cupid to punish Psyche by making her fall in love with some unworthy character but he had fallen in love with her instead. Thus, when Psyche was abandoned on a desolate mountain by her parents who were thus fulfilling the oracle that their daughter was meant to marry a monster serpent, Cupid arranged for her to be transported to his palace. She became his lover but on condition that she may not see him: he visited her only in the night. But Psyche, urged by her two sisters who, after having visited her, became jealous of her wealth and happiness, resolved to learn the identity of her beloved and tried to look at him when he was asleep in their bed. Unfortunately, a drop of oil fell from her lamp on his body, waking him up and making him escape in anger. Psyche was left alone again, in despair, for now she was pregnant, and in addition to suffering the loss of her beloved, she had to confront the rage of Venus, Cupid's mother. She wandered helplessly around in search of her lost partner. She tried in vain to find shelter and protection from Ceres and Juno against the rage of Venus who was pursuing her. The goddess found her and, after having tortured her for a while, assigned Psyche a series of tasks, dangerous and impossible to fulfill, which the young woman

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managed to complete with some help from other gods. Finally, Jupiter, moved by Cupid's pleas, put an end to Psyche's trials, by reuniting her with her lover and granting her immortality. The couple was married in heaven, with a festive banquet in which even Venus, now reconciled, participated.

Traditionally, at least since Renaissance humanism, the story of Psyche was perceived as an allegory of the union of the Soul (Psyche) and Desire (Cupid) aimed at producing Pleasure (the name of their offspring).[143] The Neo-platonic/Christian inflection of the theme served to articulate the conception of salvation: in this conception Psyché personified the human soul that has to undergo many tribulations before attaining Divine Love and immortality. As such, it was a subject of some well known cycles of fresco decoration in high and late Renaissance, such as, notably, the ones designed by Raphael in Villa Farnesina in Rome, by Perrino del Vaga in Castel San Angelo in Rome, and by Giulio Romano in Palazzo del Té in Mantua.[144] David could have seen all three cycles, either when he was in Italy or through engravings. However, the moment he chose to depict has not been represented in any of them.

What we look at in David's painting is either the moment when "poor Psyche was being left alone weeping and trembling on the highest top of the rock" to await her fate as a wife-to-be of a monster serpent, or the moment when, having lost

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her lover Cupid, she wandered in the mountains and was about to kill herself when she was stopped by a simple herdsman. "I perceive by your uncertain and trembling gait, your pale hue, your sobbing sighs, aye your watery eyes, that you are greatly in love," he said, but discouraged her from committing suicide.[145] Both descriptions seem to fit David's image.

To construct this critical moment visually, the artist seems to have relied on other iconograhies. The most useful for him seem to have been: 1. the toilet of Venus (closest source here is a Hellenistic bronze statue of the Crouching Venus at the British Museum in London[146]); 2. the iconography of Susanna and the Elders (for the pose of a surprised and/or anxious nude woman in Nature; the Bolognese circle of painters -- Guido Reni, Domenichino, the Carracci, seems to have been crucial here for David's rendition of the female nude)[147]; 3. Mary Magdalen on the Desert, as an alternative to Susanna, for the iconography of female grief, often in landscape setting, conveyed through the image of the female body, usually with sexual overtones, at times even nude. But David also drew on his own past oeuvre in constructing the Psyche. This regards specifically the figure's relation to the viewer. The directness with which the Psyché addresses you is rather extraordinary. One is reminded of the "problems" with audience articulated in David's Homer: the complex, stated and yet deferred

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configuration of the artist with his audience, there, is so different from the immediacy with which the woman claims your attention, and empathy, here. In this regard, David deploys the strategy he elaborated in his pre-Revolutionary oeuvre, notably in the Andromache with the body of Hector of 1783, where it was through the female figure that the viewer was inserted into the image and its meaning. But in relation to David's own pictorial past, the figure of Psyche seems to be actually closer to another work: her pose strikes one as a merging of the Brutus of 1789, interrupted in his meditation, with the figure of his wife, in the emotional pitch of her reaction to crisis (Fig.39).

This particular duality on the level of visual sources is most interesting for it could be said to subtend another, semantic duality inherent in the story of Psyche. The story could be seen as a thematization of the loss of plenitude -- e.g., of contact, since touching is permitted only without viewing -- and as such could be recognized as a figure of the unbridgeable distance, the duality between the two selves, in short, of a subject forever split.[148] The Davidian Psyche could be understood in this context as a representation of otherness, but one that evokes and even visually harbors within itself the duality of which it is a term: of Brutus as his wife, of the self as Other. As such, this painted study seems to be mapping out the problematic

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raised also by David's Self-portrait from the Luxembourg, with which it might very well have belonged chronologically. But the Psyché does so in a much more reassuring way, because it seems to re-stage this problematic precisely in order to assuage it with the promise of a narrative resolution. For the image of Psyche in crisis is pregnant, so to speak, with the end of her own story, her reconciliation with Cupid, and the merging of the two "selves", while the Louvre portrait leaves its subject dangling, unredeemed, between its codes.

Whether we want to see the Psyché abandonnée as the representation of David's personal crisis (thus as a figure of self-identification that is alternative to Homer),[149] or as a figure, more generally, of the Jacobin subject in crisis (and one cannot help noticing the similarity between the barren landscape in David's study and the desolate setting of the wandering, perplexed Jacobin, his arms crossed too, in the print Deputé à la Convention Nationale discussed here earlier), three interesting aspects of the image should be briefly attended to. First, its deployment of femininity for the purpose of representing the idea of male crisis. Second, the nudity of the female protagonist. And third, the choice of the tale of love for the representation of crisis.

To begin with the last, David's resorting to the love theme in order to talk about crisis -- be it his own

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personal and aesthetic, or the collective politico-cultural one -- is rather striking. The erotic overtones of the textual and visual rhetoric of David's process of self-reinvention, notably his Justification, have already been addressed here earlier. The choice of the Psyche story seems to confirm the libidinal charge of David's political commitment. (And let us notice that inasmuch as Psyche represents a self -- David's, the collective Jacobin one -- in crisis, its object of desire, like hers, is male: Cupid.)

As a (study for a) history painting, the Psyche is a rare image in David's repertory: until then the artist never painted an image revolving around a single female figure. Rare is also the nudity of the woman. Nudity, with Quatremère de Quincy as its prime theorist, was until then (and after), for David primarily a marker of male heroism.[150] However, the Revolution problematized its use and David himself experienced this problem acutely in regard to the Tennis Court Oath painting.[151] When the artist decided to deploy male nudity in the Sabines, it became an instant controversy, partly because of the provocative way in which it functioned within the rhetoric of the image and partly because of its resonance with the ways in which the body came to function as a source of pleasure in the public sphere under the Directory.[152] That it was a woman's body that served as grounds for aesthetic experimentation and

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innovation for David in prison is significant. And that it was a non-motherly body, around which identificatory processes are usually expected to revolve, makes it even more interesting. Yet, David did not pursue this path of aesthetic inquiry or rather shifted it back onto the male body.

Which brings us to the last aspect: David's choice of the woman in high emotional distress, unaccompanied by any male figure, not even a child, could be viewd as a trace of a -- if only momentary -- dis-investment in the male figure as the site of self-identification.[153] While not wanting merely to celebrate this alignment of the male artist with the female signifier in the process of creation (nothing new as such), I think we do have to register the affective, and emphatic, effect of the Psyche on the viewer as radically different from the work performed by the Femme au turban, produced by David, I believe, during David's second imprisonment, but also different from the emphatic plea of the female figures in the Sabines, where this plea did not claim to speak for the women's own cause. These two works will be treated at length in the next two parts of my discussion. Suffice it to observe here that the position bodied forth in the Psyche, was one that David could not hold for long. For femininity will become a quite problematic and risky signifier in the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction. The emergence of the strongly

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negative female figures in the Republican Imaginary will make it difficult for the artist, and for the Jacobin male subject as well, to shelter himself symbolically in the image of a woman's body.

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Notes to chapter 2:

1. See M.J. Guiffrey, "Louis David," 421. Also, seals are put on his papers, Jules, 221.

2. J.L. Jules David found in the CSG papers an order for David's release on October 16, unexecuted and not recorded or commented anywhere else. The situation was highly confused and violatile.

3. David mentions having done this in a letter to the president of the Convention of 28 March 1795 (8 germinal), where he even cites a passage from the defense regarding Collot. The letter was reprinted in D. et G. Wildenstein, Louis David. Receuil de documents, no 1177 (hereafter cited as Wildenstein, followed by the number of the entry.) David also restates in his second defense that he read his first defense in front of the three committees; see Réponse de David de Paris, 4.

4. "Justification de David. Discours de David représentant du Peuple en réponse de Calomnies répandues contre lui." Manuscript. AN, serie AA45, dossier 1352*A, plq.6, piece 295. Such dating is confirmed by David's references to particular issues that were part of the debates following Lecointre's accusation presented at the Convention, such as David's comment on Vadier's behaviour at the Convention on the first day of this debate. Another such issue is the reference to Auzat, an accusation of minor value, made in August, to which David would have had no reason for referring in December. Above all, there are multiple references to Robespierre, the dynamic of the text being fuelled predominantly by David's attempts to dissociate himself from him. Summoned in front of the Convention's committees, David could have worked more on his draft produced in August, but its principal frame of argument remained, down to small details long outdated by then, such as the comment on Vadier.

5. See David L. Dowd, "J.L. David, Artist Member of the CSG."

6. On 31 August (14 fructidor) David sends a letter to the Convention asking to be admitted to the bar to be able to defend himself. He states that "...il est glorieux pour lui de se trouver au nombre des membres que la Convention à declarés calomniés par Lecointre." He could demand, after this decree [about calumny] to be actually liberated, but the glory of being mentioned side by side with the "athletes of the revolution" is

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enough for him. See Wild., 1136; and Jules, 225-6. Underline mine.

7. David refers to a specific issue of the Moniteur where the debates were reprinted. He also mentions a pamphlet against him that he had heard circulated in Paris then (no trace of it at the Bibliothèque Nationale).

8. Jusitifcation de David, f.3. Underline mine.

9. A. Schnapper reports the pharmacist's certificate found recently in the CSG files at the Archives Nationales. See David, 1989, 222.

10. Such was the case of the papers of a certain Auzat that david was supposed to have had removed from the CSG files (the charge brought by the delegation from the departement of Isssoire); and the accusation of David's involvement in the fabrication of arms for the students of Ecole de Mars.

11. See Thomas Crow, Painters and Public Life in Paris, chap. VII.

12. David also states "I never had any artist arrested," a statement that in his Réponse, written during his second imprisonment, he modified significantly, writing that those who were anti-revolutionaries, be it artists or not, deserved punishment. D.L. Dowd, ("J.L. David, Artist Member of the CSG") who proves that David did sign several arrest warrants for the artist, insists, however, that none of these could be used to prove David's persecuting any artist unjustly or out of jealousy.

Certainly, other evidence documenting how David as deputy exercised power on the arts would have to be examined if we were to assess his role in the cultural apparatus of year II, a task still to be undertaken. One such evidence is, for example, David's report for the abolition of the Commission of the Museum, proposed and adopted by the Convention on 28 Frimaire an II [18 December 1793], where David, acting on behalf of the CIP, suggested that the entire team of the museum administration be replaced by a group of alternative candidates proposed by him. In this speech David, in order to prove the inadequacy of the original members of the Commission (among them his former rival Vincent), stated, for example that their patriotism was "sans couleur," a statement that could have been dangerous in the charged revolutionary climate when patriotism was a highly politicized notion. (Convention Nationale. Rapport sur la suppression de la commission du Muséum par le citoyen David,

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repr. in B. Deloche and J.-M. Leniaud, La culture des sans-culottes, 113-118.) Clearly, David of the year II was conducting political, not only aesthetic battles in the domain of the arts.

13. See Beatrice Didier, "Mme Roland et autobiographie," Ecrire la Révolution. 1789-1799 (Paris, 1989), 245-74.

T.J. Clark brought Rousseau in as a frame of reference for David's Self-portrait, although he did not mentioned any of David's texts from prison as relevant for his analysis. His wonderful and important talk remains, alas, unpublished. My own emphasis will be on the revolution as a major shaping force -- of the Rousseauian heritage as much as David's identity. The Revolution was a kind of prism through which the 18th century codes were refracted. As B. Didier observed, whatever the menace under which the pre-revolutionary author of confessions wrote, there emerged with the revolution one circumstance that no 18th-century subject, including Rousseau, could know: the guillotine. Ibid., 256.

14. Rousseau's Confessions, to be sure, are not a continous whole either but one divided into short segments. Yet, the divisions are deployed self-consciously by the author of the Confessions, each sectioned off by a number, and within these sections they constitute little narratives. The text is not a flow but instead a kind of narrative construction built of consecutive block-like images. In David, on the other hand, there are capsules of arguments that fail to constitute a narrative continuity, there is no consecutiveness, even if spaced from within by interstices, that would embrace the entire text. See J.-J. Rousseau, Les Confessions, 2 vols., Paris: Flammarion, 1968.

15. See J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, The Language of Psychoanalysis, 1973, 457; and Cynthia Chase "`Transference' as trope and persuasion." Most useful for me were also Peter Brooks, "Narrative Transaction and transference," chap. in Reading for the Plot, and Toril Moi, "Intentions and effects: Rhetoric of Identification in Simone de Beauvoir's The Woman Destroyed," Feminist Theory and Simone de Beauvoir, 61-93.

16. Freud, "The Dynamics of Transference," 108.

17. See ibid.; and Freud, "Repetition and working through", 145-56. On this point most usefully, see also Brooks, "Narrative transaction and transference," 226.

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18. Certainly, David's paintings served him before, to an extent, as an arena of self-identification. At the Salon of 1791, for example, David self-consciously re-exhibited together some of his pre-revolutionary paintings mentioned here, thus making a statement about the continuity of his commitment to the public issues embraced by the Revolution and defining through these works his identity as a proto-revolutionary artist. But it was also David himself who decided to expand his commitment to the revolution and run in 1792 as a representative of the people, and he persisted in this decision despite his initial failure to get elected, a failure that must have been particularly hard to sustain for someone who once took so hard his earlier lack of success in proceeding smoothly through the steps of the academic career. Thus, this desire to be again at one with his paintings, to have his identity charted and contained by his art rather than a broader public activity, has to be recognized as a new, post-Thermidorian one.

19. P.M. Delafontaine assures us that the Self-portrait was painted in the Hôtel des Fermes, where David remained until his transfer, on 15 September, to the Hôtel du Luxembourg. In "Notes sur Louis David," 7. This dating has been widely accepted in literature.

20. One was to be read in public, whereas the availability of the other to even be seen by anyone else than David and his close associates, is utterly uncertain. But even if the painted self-image were meant for David's own gaze, his technique was of the self, a fairly intimate visual investigation of who he was, where he stood, who was he to become, in other words, if it were not to be sent to the Salon for other people to look at, there was a potential in it for another intended addressee beside David himself, one to which a drawing stranded on one page of his prison album -- a human skull, with no apparent connection to any of the other drawings there -- seems to point, albeit indirectly, as a possibility: posteriority. For the Self-portrait could have easily become the last thing David painted, and he seems to have been aware of it. There were 108 persons who, accused of robespierrisme, went under guillotine within days after 9 Thermidor. So although not meant for immediate public reception, the painting could not be seen exclusively as a private notation. (The fact that David, once out of prison or some time later, gave it to his former student Isabey, as he gave another self-portrait to Gérard, upon whose death another David's student, Delafontaine, bought it, seems to confirm this.)

21. I borrow the term from Foucault (Resumé des cours, 1970-1982, Paris, 1989, 133), albeit not entirely his meaning.

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22. Delafontaine entered David's studio in 1790 and was 18-years-old in 1794. See his "Notes." For a brief outline of Delafontaine's career, see also French Painting on the Age of Revolution, 384-5.

23. Delafontaine, "Notes," 5-6.

24. Ibid., 6. David asked Delafontaine to bring him these objects so that he can pass his time in prison working. This is what David considers then as the essential professional tools, the sine qua non of artistic profession. And these, together with the mirror which the painter also asked his student to bring, are the instruments of production of the self-portrait.

According to his "Notes," Delafontaine was with David every day, from morning to evening, constituting his only contact with the external world. Delafontaine mentions visits of David's family members and his few friends, e.g., "M.Lethière, peintre d'histoire, qu'il embrassa affectueusement." (Wild., 1131) This was an interesting visit, given that Lethière will later testify against David, contributing to the accusations that brought about the artist's second imprisonment.

25. For Hubert Robert's prison works, see Hubert Robert et la Révolution, 80-9; and 1789: French Art During the Revolution, 273-80.

26. For some accounts of prison life, see C.-A. Dauban, Les prisons de Paris sous la Révolution; H. Williams, Letters; and Olivier Blanc, La dernière lettre.

27. A. Schnapper in David, 1989, no. 135, 304.

28. Portrait d'Anne-Marie-Louise Thélusson, comtesse de Sorcy, 1790, Alte Pinakothek, Munich, repr. in David, 1989, no.94, 233.

29. A. Schnapper (ibid.) has also noticed this surprising reversal of David's usual deployments of frottis.

30. See J. Wilhelm "David et ses portraits," 166-8, fig.8; Régis Michel, David et Roma, no. 47, 172; and David, 1989, no. 93, 231. The North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh has a copy of this image, which, despite suggestions to the contrary, is evidently

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not by the artist's hand, as was ascertained recently; see 1789: French Art During the revolution, no. 10, 119-23.

31. The way in which David situates himself in both his self-portraits within the tradition of artistic self-representation requires more attention. Although this is a long and very rich tradition -- and the long walk one has to take across the Uffizi's infinite Vasari corridor, with its collection of the artist's self-images from different epochs, in order to reach David's painting of 1791, makes this richness clear even on the level of physical experience -- for the purpose of this discussion we could narrow down David's frame of reference to three types of artistic self-portrait as exemplified in French art by: a) Simon Vouet, Self portrait, ca. 1626-7; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon, (see Vouet, exhibition catalogue, Jacques Thuillier, ed., Roma: Carte Segrete, 1991, 149-51, fig. 15): an introspective examination of the self, focused on the face and with its psychological dimension enhanced by the strong chiaroscuro effect; most likely a private self-representation; b) Nicolas Poussin, Self-portrait, 1650, Musée du Louvre: the artistic self on display for the others, a sort of professional statement and an aesthetic manifesto); c) Jean-Baptiste Chardin, Self-portrait, pastel: an extraordinarily immediate registration of the artist's appearance at work -- the spectacles, the cyclist-like light shade, the kerchief wrapped around the head serve as the attributes of the artist amidst his process. Immediacy, at the cost of decorum, is what this self-image conveys.

David's Uffizi self-portrait takes up, largely, Vouet's tradition: although the artist gives more account of his body than his predecessor, the introspective, intensely psychologized effect of the image is similar. David's Louvre Self-portrait, on the other hand, engages all the three types of images. At first glance, it is a combination of the artist at work (Chardin) with the psychologically introspective format of the Vouet. But there is also a degree of declarativeness about the way in which David sets himself up as a professional in this portrait, which brings the image close to the manifesto-like Poussin which David must have known. K. Holma has found the "régard concentré et volontaire" of the David in the Louvre analogous to that of Poussin in his self-portrait. In David, 66.

32. Documenting one's appearance in a redingote was already a meaningful decision, given that this particular type of overcoat, as Nicole Pellegrin observed, was not just a symptom of Anglomania in the 18th-century fashion but also, with the revolution, became a manifestation of egalitarian sympathies. Thus, one aristocrat émigrée distressed by the rumors she had heard, interrogated Chateaubriand "Mais, cher monsieur, est-il vrai que le pauvre roi était vêtu d'une redingote quand on lui

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coupa la tête?" See N. Pellegrin, Les Vêtements de la Liberté, 151.

33. J.P. Marat, L'Ami du Peuple..., [ca. 1794], colored engraving; Musée Carnavalet, Rés. GC.G4233. See L'art de l'estampe, no. 98, 23. Marat appears in a houppelande also in his portrait of 1793 engraved by Tourcaty after Simon Petit (ibid., no. 99, 23); and in Louis-Léopold Boilly's Le triomphe de Marat, 1794, preserved in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

34. Aside from defining David for the revolutionary viewer as a deputy, the houppelande is also -- as T.J. Clark suggested in his talk in Paris during the colloquium David contre David -- what conveys the materiality of the painter's body. Although the way it was painted will be analyzed later in detail, what strikes one immediately is the asymmetrical arrangement of its lapels, echoing somewhat, and reinforcing the split and dissonance of the facial features.

35. Cf. the use of the palette as attribute in Vigée-Lebrun's Hubert Robert l'artiste, (1788, Musée du Louvre), where there is no work in view either, but the palette is not cropped and the artist's gaze -- out and slightly up -- signifies inspired creativity.

36. To borrow Roland Barthes' words, in Leçon, 20.

37. A.-C. Thibaudeau, Mémoirs, 75.

38. See J. Wilhelm, "David et ses portraits," 160-3, ill.

39. Cited by Wilhelm, ibid.

40. Henry Redhead Yorke, France in Eighteen Hundred and Two described in a series of contemporary letters, 127.

41. There were also royalist pamphlets which continued the rhetoric of threats and denunciations against David long after Thermidor. In one such pamphlet published sometime towards the end of 1797 David is referred to in the typically post-Thermidorian language of politicized physiognomics as "[l]e monstre hideux, la grosse joue [qui] ne devait pas plus cette fois échapper au glaive de la justice." See Wild., 1277. See also Jules, 334.

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42. See Baczko, Comment, 278; and idem, "Vandalisme," in F. Furet and M. Ozouf, eds., Dictionaire critique de la Révolution, 903-12.

43. The reports were published soon after having been read at the Convention in the Moniteur (e.g., see "Rapport sur les déstructions opérées par le vandalisme, et sur les moyens de le réprimer; fait par Grégoire, au nom du comité d'instruction publique. Séance du 14 fructidor," Moniteur Universel, T. 22, 9 Vendémiaire, l'an 3 (30 September 1794), 85-92). They were recently reprinted in extenso in B. Deloche and J.M. Leniaud, La culture des sans-culottes, 295-303 (the first report); 330-9 (the second); 340-51 (the third).

44. Henri Grégoire, "Troisième rapport sur le vandalisme," in Deloche and Leniaud, eds., La Culture des sans-culottes, 341.

45. See Baczko, Vandalisme, in Furet and Ozouf, Dictionnaire Critique de la Révolution, 904. Early on it was just the figure of Robespierre-the vandal; later, Jacobinism and vandalism became synonymous.

46. Grégoire, "Rapport sur les déstructions...," in Deloche and Leniaud, 285. On the Jacobin system of state support for the arts see F. Benoit, L'Art française sous la Révoution, 148-54; W. Olander, Pour transmettre à la posterité; U. Van de Sandt, "Institutions et Concours," in P. Bordes and R. Michel, Aux Armes et aux arts.

47. For this point, see Baczko, "Vandalisme," 904-5.

48. The Directory will also face a great need for the new cultural elite and will respond to it by creating new educational and cultural institutions (notably Institut National). For the importance of the cultural argument on the formation of the new elites, see Baczko, "Thermidoriens," 436-7.

49. Gregoire "Second rapport sur le vandalisme, in Deloche and Leniaud, 338.

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50. In May 1795 the Journal de la Société républicaine des arts announced that interested connoisseurs could see the drawing in Lethiére's studio and that the engraving of it would be ready on sale within eight days. See L'Art d'estampe pendant la Révolution, no. 274, 55. The livret of the Salon of 1798 lists both the drawing and the engraving. (L'Explications par ordre..., nos 282 and 712.) In 1798 a version of the engraving was published with a short poem of Ducis inscribed below, in order to serve a concrete political purpose, highlighted by its dedication to La Réveillière Lepaux, that is, to reassure the power of the Directorial Republicans by discrediting both the Jacobins and the royalists in the upcoming elections.

51. Guillaume Guillon, called Lethière, was a student of J.-F. Doyen. He was in Rome from 1784 to 1790, exhibited at the Salons since 1791 and was recipient of state awards during the Revolution. See French Painting, 1774-1840, 537. Lethière's relation to David is particularly interesting. E.g., he adopts the thematic format of the latter's Brutus to turn it into a fairly explicit critique of the Terror, complete with elements that the pre-revolutionary David carefully eschewed, such as the severed heads of Brutus' sons displayed prominently at the center. This sanguinary spectacle of excessive patriotism was first exhibited as a drawing at the first Salon after Thermidor, in 1795, but the painting, for which, understandably, Lethière received support in that year, wasn't finished until 1828. See La Révolution et l'Europe, no. 1120B. Lethière denounced David in 1795, testifying about David's alleged pressure on him and his jealous persecution. Bloom's notion of "anxiety of influence" comes to mind.

52. "le force terrible, mais aveugle qui/ brisoit les plus belles productions du Génie..." For his Hercules "à rebours" Lethière actually borrows the figure of the devil in the center foreground of Luca Signorelli's fresco The Damned Cast into Hell in Orvieto cathedral.

53. Hercules as the image of the French People was adopted as the official representation of the Jacobin republic. See the most interesting discussion in Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture and Class, chap. 3.

54. Alexandre Lenoir déféndant les monuments de l'abbaye de Saint-Denis contre la fureur des terroristes. Anonymous pen and ink drawing [most probably to be engraved]. In Un collectioneur pendant la Révolution, no. 103, 89. An interesting drawing of

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[De]Lafontaine in the Musée Carnavalet, dated 1793, shows, however, distinct representatives of the bourgeoisie, with their top hats, who participate in the destruction. Repr. in P. Bordes and Michel, Aux armes..., 167.

55. Pierre-Etienne Le Sueur, Vandaliste, destructeur des productions des Arts, se moquant des Costumes de mode avant la Révolution. L'abé [sic] portant le petit chien le fait bien rire..., gouache drawing cut and pasted on board, Musée Carnavalet. See La Révolution française, le Priemière Empire, no. 78, 91.

56. "...for the arts that were crushed for a long time by tyrannical ambitions, for the sciences persecuted and debased by the domineering ingnorance [...], [for] the talents discouraged by a long disdain [...] In the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture -- continues Chénier -- all the distinguished talents hid themselves in the back of their studios; some of them languished in the dungeons; a handful of intrigants slandered them meanly and consumed, in miserable attempts and futile decorations, the sums of money that should have been used for erecting immortal monuments." See Chenier, Moniteur, 84. He is obviously referring directly to David.

For the shift in the image of the artist see also Udolpho van de Sandt, "Les institutions et les concours," in Bordes and Michel, Aux armes, 138-165.

57. Quotes are from Chénier's speeches on 28 September and 18 October, as reprinted in the Moniteur, T. 22, no. 8 (8 Vendémiaire l'an III [29 September 1794]) 83-84; and ibid., no. 31 (1 Brumaire, l'an III [22 October 1794]) 282-3. See also J. Guillaume, Les procès-verbaux du CIP, 5: 92-5. Chénier was particularly motivated in his attack on David: having had replaced David in the organization of festivals, he uses a strategy typical of the Thermidorian discourse on the Terror of dismissing the value of and even denouncing his predecessor's achievements in order to situate himself.

58. "The ideas about the best way of organizing the juries for judging the works of art are still not established. The last jury was nominated by the National Convention; but everybody knows that it was a single man who furnished the list of citizens that composed it." Moniteur, 632-633.

In his memoirs, Thibaudeau, who worked with David in the Comité d'Instruction Publique until the summer of 1794, sketched a somewhat softer image of the artist: while stating that "il avait la dictature des arts" [during the Jacobin rule], Thibaudeau admits that no one, as far as artistic talent was

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concerned, was better fitted for the job. He also counters the accusations against David as a jealous persecutor threatened by the talent of other artists. A.C. Thibaudeau, Mémoires sur la Convention et le Directoire, I: 74-75.

59. Chénier's speech at the Convention during the session of 14 nivôse (3 January 1795), see Moniteur, t. 23, no. 106, (16 nivôse an III [5 January 1795]), 128.

60. Chénier, Moniteur, T.22, 83-84;

61. Daunou's speech at the Convention during the session of 27 germinal year III (16 April 1795), Moniteur, t. 24, no. 209, (29 Germinal l'an III [18 April 1795]), 231.

62. One should add that the woman artist was excluded from such a definition already in 1793, when the Société républicaine des arts decided to exclude female artists from its ranks, thus helping a broader exclusion of the issue of female creativity from the republican discourse.

63. "[..] back to his family, to the instruction of his students, and to work on art which he always devoted to the propagation of Republican virtues, to which he dedicated his brushes long before the Revolution." Moniteur, t.22, no. 72, (12 Frimaire l'an 3 [2 Dec. 1794]), 635. Seventeen students were admited to the bar: Mulard, Gautherot, Godefroy, Dubois, Gérard, Taunay, Laneuville, Topino-Lebrun, Harriet, Sérangeli, Genty, Boduin, Lafontaine, Lemaire, Léger, Berthon and Devillers. See also Wild. 1152.

64. Not for the first time, Chénier had to amend his rhetoric, as in the case of his attack on the Ccommissions des arts, which he first called "imbécile et conspiratrice" and then having to withdraw the invective, found himself forced to make a distinction (cf. Louis Tuetey, Procès verbaux de la Commission témporaire des arts, 1912, 1: XXX-XXXI.) Whether this was, as Jules maintains, because of the pleas of David's wife with Chénier, or because of broader ongoing redefinition of the artist's role in society, Chénier was the one to put this distinction to work.

65. David, Chénier says, cannot be accused of more than a certain rigidity in his functions as the member of CSG, especially against artists by whom he felt threatened. But these

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are not crimes. Lebon, on the contrary, is being accused of atrocious crimes against entire community, crimes that stained the good name of the Convention. It is true that David was a fanatic of Robespierre, but so were a lot of people who committed more crimes in the name of Robespierre and they remained free.

David's talent could not be contested; his art attests to his love of liberty, and the deputies still have in the room the twc examples of his patriotism. (He refers to Le Pelletier and Marat still hanging at the Convention's hall.) His patriotism was "sans doute plus ardent qu'éclairé." But his fate now should be enough of a lesson for him not to persecute colleagues anymore. His case should be examined while he remains at home, guarded. Moniteur, t. 22, no. 72, (12 frimaire l'an 3 [2 Dec. 1794]), 635. Chénier addressed here the collusion between David and Le Bon evoked recently by the deputy Raffron who said that the cases of David and Le Bon are the same.

66. Le Bon was tried and executed in October 1795.

67. Etching, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, coll. de Vinck, no. 6143. The Bibliothèque Nationale has several versions of the image (de Vinck, nos. 6144-5). One version is also at the Musée Caranvalet, Est. GC Allég. According to the inscription on it, the etching was published on 13 May 1795 (on most proofs the date 1796 -- the printers' error, no doubt -- is corrected to 1795. (The dating for 1795 is confirmed by the fact that the brochure Le dernier gémissement published in messidor year III presents its author, Poirier de Dunquerque, as also the author of the print entitled Formes acerbe.

In French Caricature and the French Revolution the etching is attributed to Jean-Baptiste-Marie Louvion because Louvion engraved another image based on Poirier de Dunquerque, an allegory Le Neuf Thermidor ou la Surprise Angloise. However, even a brief stylistic analysis exclude such attribution: Louvion's language has little to do with the refined neo-classicism that is much more probable as coming from the hand of Rome-trained Lafitte. Attributing the print to Laffite, I follow the tradition established by Jules Renouvier who first suggested the print was engraved by Norman after Laffitte, (Histoire de l'art pendant la Révolution, 128-9). See also L'Art d'Estampe, no. 283, 57; and La Guillotine dans la Révolution, no. 173, 144. The title of the etching is an ironic reference to the words of the deputy Barère, who in July 1794 (on 21 Messidor, year III), not long before the Thermidorian coup, at the National Convention defended Le Bon's controversial conduct at the Revolutionary Tribunal of Arras saying: "Des formes un peu acerbes ont été érigés en accusation mais ces formes ont détruit les pièges de l'aristocratie...". La Guillotine, 144.

Stressing the importance of painting "un grand tableau que l'histoire nous doit de ce monstre...," Poirier de Dunquerque

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organized a veritable campaign against Joseph Le Bon, gathering testimonies of various witnesses and victims in two brochures published in the course of the Thermidorian reaction. See his Les Angoisses de la Mort, ou idées des horreurs des prisons d'Arras, (published in Paris on 15 thermidor and 29 fructidor an II [2 August and 15 September 1794]) and Atrocités commises envers les citoyennes ci-devants détenues dans la maison d'arrêt dite la Providence à Arras, Paris, 7 nivôse an III, [27 December 1794], reprinted several times, with the last edition dated for 12 messidor an III [30 June 1795]. Proirier also proposed in 1800 a Tableau général de la Revolution français terminé par celui de la Paix, an allegory inscribing itself in the ideology of the accomplished revolution. See Landon.

68. The Furies could be seen to refer to the two female collaborators of Le Bon, responsible for the functioning of the prison in Arras: "femme Lemaire" and Catherine Lallart, the director and the vice-director of la Providence prison, respectively. See the notice in the catalogue of coll. de Vinck, no. 6143.

69. See Barthes S/Z, 20-21.

70. For this understanding of Jacobinism, see Furet, Penser..., as discussed in chap. 1 above.

71. See Kristeva, Powers of horror; and Toril Moi in her Kristeva's Reader, 238-9.

72. "[..] ma conscience est pure et mon coeur fut toujours exempt d'ambition. Je n'ai jamais formé de voeux que pour le triomphe de la liberté; je ne me suis jamais attaché aux hommes qu'à cause de l'ardeur que je leur ai supposée pour cette belle cause à laquelle je suis dévoué tout entier; et si j'ai été trompé par eux, mon erreur est excusable, puisque ce fut une erreur de l'opinion publique." David, Letter to the National Convention, 17 November 1794. See Wild., 1146.

73. David, Letter to the CSG, 15 September 1794. See Wild., 1138.

74. Jules, p. 225.

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75. David was moved to the Luxembourg together with Joseph Le Bon. See A.N., F7 4444, plaq.1, nos. 81-84. See also Wild. 1138, Jules, 226-7. Here David asks also to see his family -- his mother, his children and his brother-in-law. He demands to know the specific complaints against him that the CSG had so that he could answer each of them one by one, before the Committee makes its report. See A.N., F7 4444, plaq.1, no. 74, "Resumé des Reclamations des deputés detenus, reçues par les représentants du peuple Clauzet et le Sage Senault....en execution de l'arrête du CSG de fructidor l'an III."

76. We have no single letter from prison from the period of second half of September through October. And the text of the Défense, although written out, wasn't presented to the Committees until late December.

77. "leads [the artist] almost always beyond the original goals." David, Letter to Boissy d'Anglas, November 16, 1794. Wild. 1145.

78. "One tends to confuse the figure of the ever pensive artist with the hideous mask of a conspirator. One wants to see in me a legislator; one refuses to recognize the artist ceaslessly occupied by his art." Wild. 1143. The very rhetoric used here, juxtaposing the pensive artist with the mask of conspirator reveals that David read debates at the Convention, that he was aware of the language used there. The motif of the mask, first used in Revolutionary imagery to represent the Ancien Regime was subsequently mobilized by the Thermidorians to denounce, both verbally and visually, the system of Terror and its effects on culture, e.g. see the mask in the central part of Lethière's engraving Le Neuf Thermidor, discussed earlier, where it functions as the attribute of the revolutionary tribunal. The explanation below makes it clear: "Un Genie tutelaire sort du Sénat, armé d'un glaive flamboyant, il extermine les oppresseurs de la France. L'affreux Tribunal révolutionnaire, renversé dans la poussière, laisse entrevoir sa figure sous le masque de la Justice; ses satellites suivent, le poignard à la main, et s'empressent d'emporter le fruits de leur rapins...".

79. For example, on the 15 of September 1794, upon his transfer from Maison de fermes (where the Self-portrait was painted) to Palais du Luxembourg, he demands permission "...de me livrer ici à la culture d'un art dont je n'ai jamais si bien senti le prix que lorsque j'ai pu le faire concourir à l'affermissement d'une Révolution au succès de laquelle jamais personne n'est plus dévoué." Wildenstein, no 1138. In the letter to the Convention, relayed to the Comité de Sûreté Générale and the Comité de Salut

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Public (Wild., 1142) he stresses again that he needs to return to art that he devotes to the glory of his country and which has become sterile since his imprisonment.

His statement that he should not have ever left his studio needs to be recognized as a regret about of having become a deputy, a man of words and politics, but not -- as it is often assumed in the literature -- as a regret about having engaged his art politically.

80. "L'achèvement d'un tableau nécessite que je me serve de modèles. Je demande en conséquence que vous autorisiez le concierge à les laisser entrer [...]" David, Letter to the C.N., Wild., 1138.

81. Jules found in the CSG papers an order to release David, dated in October, but unexecuted. In the letter of November 4, David wrote: "Livré depuis ma détention aux travaux de l'art que je professe, j'ai entrepris un tableau d'une composition étendue et pleine de difficultés. Je suis dans l'impuissance de le continuer par l'impossibilité de me procurer mes modèles, et cet art consolateur que j'ai consacré à la gloire de mon pays est devenue sterile dans le triste séjour qui le retient captif." Wild., 1142.

82. This desire to modify his image explains better than anything else the urgency of David's need to get to work on the Homer painting: "Je m'ennui 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 le fers. On m'empêche de retourner à mon atelier dont, hélas, je n'aurais jamais dû sortir." David, Letter to de Mainbourg, Wild., 1143.

83. David, Prison album, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des dessins, RF 9137, folios 1-3.

84. Bruun Neegard reports on a drawing on the subject given to Chénard with the inscription "Fait au Luxembourg l'an 3 de la R.F. J.L.David". As Arlette Serullaz noticed, this drawing does not seem to be the one in the Louvre because of the inscription (which does not figure on any of the two loose sheet drawings in the Louvre) and because the dimensions are different. Further, Serullaz observes that there was David's drawing on the subject that was part of the legacy of Aristide Dumont of Ecole de Beaux-Arts which the Louvre refused in 1855. See Serullaz in David 1989, no.139, p.310.

There are four Homer drawings listed in the catalogue of

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David's sale in 1826, see Le catalogue des tableaux, dessins, etudes, livres et croquis de J.-L.David, Paris 17 Avril 1826, nos. 30, 34, 37, 47. Two studies of David's Homer endormi, one after a version now lost, were lithographed by J.-B. Debret and are now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Rennes. For Debret, see Bordes, "Dessins perdus de David," 179-184. Finally, I would like to propose that the elaborate drawing of the female head belonged perhaps either with the elaboration of the Homer theme or served as site of transition to the SW, although it was done later, during the artist's second imprisonment and will be discussed here in chap. 4.

85. There exists a register of prints loaned from the BN during the revolutionary period but there are no references to David's loans from the period of his imprisonment there. (See G. Duplessis. "Le Departement des estampes de al Bibliothèque nationale pendant la periode révolutionnaire, 1789-1804," Le Bibliophile français, gazette illustré des amateurs, 6 (1872), 175-89, and 209-13 [esp. 178]. For the titles of the most of the sources, inasmuch as they could be deciphered from David's handwriting, see my "Les oeuvres de David en prison," 320-1, n.30.

86. In Notes, 6-7.

87. David, Letter to De Mainbourg, 8 November 1794, Wild. 1134.

88. "Un écrivain, un poète, un artiste se peignent dans leurs ouvrages. Le choix de leurs sujets, la manière dont ils les traitent expriment le charactère de leur génie, et la nature de leur sensations. Leur âme respire, pour ainsi dire, dans leurs différentes productions, et ils y déposent cette partie d'eux-mêmes qu'aucun art ne saurait déguiser. **C'est en quelque sorte l'histoire de leur vie qu'ils donnent à étudier à leurs contemporains.**" Justification de David, f. 9 r-v.

89. The proto-romanticism of David's iconographic invention is stressed by Jon Whiteley in his "Homer Abandoned: A French Neoclassical Theme."

90. For the iconography of Homer, and David's inventiveness in that regard, see Jon Whiteley, ibid.

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91. For an understanding of Homer as David see P. Bordes, David, 1988, 73 (stressing an independent and uncompromising artist); R. Michel, David, 1988, 93-4 (stressing the post-Thermidorian solitude of the artist); Wisner, "David en prison"; and my "Les Oeuvres de David en prison," 314-15.

92. David was then compared once to Apelles and he mentioned this specifically in reference to his persecution when writing to one of his few supporters, the deputy Boissy d'Anglas. Although this was later, in the end of November, after the major Homer drawing must have been already done. For David's letter to Boissy with reference to Apelles, written 22 November 1794, see Wild, 1149; and Jules, 234-5. It was someone else who compared him to Appelles and David refers to it to work out his representation of his persecution by the former members of the Academy.

It has to be specified that Homer -- at least, not as far as Mme Dacier's biography which David must have been reading is concerned -- was not exactly a figure of a persecuted artist, although it could have appeared as such to David via Chénier's poem, L'Aveugle. As Micheal Fried argued, this was an example of the possible amalgamation of Homer and Belisarius for David's contemporaries. See Fried, Absorption and Theatricality, 176.

David was not alone in his defense; his wife, with whom he had reconciled after his imprisonment, secured support of influential people at the Convention such as Boissy d'Anglas. While careful not to put in danger his own position of a moderate, Boissy intervened at the Convention on behalf of David several times, arguing for his release from prison on the grounds that until no formal indictment was made, and the accusations against the artist were still being verified by the Committees, the incarceration was illegal. When David was finally released from prison, it was the liberation of the artist that Boissy greeted in a letter with enthusiasm: "How nice it is, for a friend of art, to imagine that the immortal David is no longer separated from his brushes. [I hope] he would give us some new masterpieces produced by them..." ["Il est doux, pour un ami des arts, de songer que l'immortel David n'est plus séparé de ses pinceaux. Puisse-t-il nous donner par eux de nouveaux chefs-d'oeuvre et être toujours persuadé que personne ne jouira plus que moi de ses succès et de sa gloire." (Boissy's letter to David quoted in Jules, 242.) In the context of accusations against David-politician and culture-broker, Boissy's insistence here on this narrow, if glamorous, definition of him as painter seems almost to be politely prescriptive, as if Boissy were warning David against wanting to be anything else (and in fact David still was a deputy of the Convention).

For Boissy d'Anglas' interventions at the National Convention, see Moniteur universel, t. 22, no 61, (1 frimaire l'an III [29 November, 1794]), et no 72, (12 frimaire l'an III [December 1794]).

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93. Homer endormi. Crayon noir, répris à la plume et encre noir, lavis gris. H. 0,267; L. 0,375. Paris. Musée du Louvre. Cabinet de dessins. Inv.26079. See A. Serullaz, Les dessins français. Le Néo-classicisme, no.53, 23; and in David, 1989.

94. See Jules; A. Serullaz, Les Dessins, 23; and A. Schnapper, David, témoin de son temps, 172.

95. Sanguine, plume et encre noire, lavis gris sur traits à la mine de plomb. H. 0,272; L. 0,345. Paris. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des dessins. RF 789. See A. Serullaz, Les dessins, no. 52, 23; and in David, 1989, no. 139, 310.

96. See M. Fried, Absorption, 176-7. And my "Les Oeuvres de David."

97. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins.

98. For the interpretation of David's 1781 canvas in the context of a broader iconographic trend addressing the controversial political issues of the 1780s, see Thomas Crow, Painters and Public Life in Paris, 198-209.

99. "For three months I languish under the weight of suspicion, most distressing in that it originated in nothing else but my excessive love for the motherland and for liberty, for if the false virtues of Robespierre led me astray in my patriotism, this mistake, by which I got carried away, was less a result of personal feelings that attached me to him than of the universal esteem which I saw him always surrounded by." Wild. 1142, (underline mine).

100. The Homer this audience knew was relayed by the biography of Mme Dacier, itself based on the biography of Pseudo-Herodotus. See A. Dacier, L'Iliade d'Homère, traduite en français avec des rémarques.

101. This idealized view, as Kirsti Simonsouri observed (Homer's original genius, 52ff), was linked to the 18th century belief in cultural progress. Homer was the representation of the ideal of an early, uncorrupted state of culture on which one should form onself.

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102. Homer was very much a part of the image of violated, devastated culture in the hands of Jacobins that was constructed in the discourse of vandalism. In Grégoire's first report on vandalism the Terrorists were specifically accused of having had imprisoned another famous translator of Homer, Bitaubé. "Rapport sur les destructions," 286.

103. "...sans oublier la gloire" as David put it in a letter to Mme Huin writing about his plans as an artist after liberation from prison. See "David à Madame Huin, 1 Vendémiaire au 4ème," ms. letter at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

104. "One's sense that the beholder is present but concealed is reinforced by David's use of a perspective structure which, being both de-centered and skewed relative to the plane of the sheet, "places" the beholder toward the right of the composition -- directly in front of the young women -- and at the same time makes that location anything but obvious. The obscurity in which the beholder's position is thereby cloaked is compounded rather than dissipated by David's counter-assertion of classical parallelism to the picture-plane via the handling of light and shade." Fried, Absorption and Theatricality, n. 8, 242. For the argument about Homer and absorption, see ibid., esp. 177-8.

105. See Debret after David, Homère endormi, 1842 (as opposed to his 1841 lithograph which was done after the Louvre drawing of the same title that we know), Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes, repr. in Bordes, "Dessins perdus de David," ill.4, 181.

106. See ibid., ill.3.

107. "Rares en effet sont les dessins réalisés à cette époque par David où l'on observe autant de rigeur et de nuances à la fois, dans l'emplois de lavis," observes Arlette Serrulaz in David e Roma; also reprinted in her entry on Homer in David, 1989.

108. See J. Kristeva, "The Semiotic and the Symbolic," in Revolution in Poetic Language, 19-106, extensively; and idem, "From one identity to another," in Desire in Language, 124-147.

109. Kristeva, "From one identity," 135.

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110. Although she also discusses such figures of other historical transitions as Giotto and Bellini. See Kristeva, "Giotto's Joy;" and "Motherhood according to Bellini," chaps. in Desire in language.

111. Idem, "From one identity," 140-1.

112. Kristeva on the subject-in process: "Fearing its rule but sufficiently aware of the legislation of language not to be able to turn away from this sacrificial-paternal function, he takes it by storm and from the flank." (ibid., 138) Oscillation between positions, maternal and paternal.

113. Not belonging to the same space, standing "behind" in the literal and metaphorical sense, of Homer, the women "mean" differently than other elements in the picture. Perhaps their function is, like that of Mme Lavoisier in David's pre-Revolutionary portrait, one of support, the Muse, of her scientist husband, but endowed with an ambiguous presence as a dominating element in the structure of the image.

114. David was not the only one who used Homer to metaphorize his condition. It is interesting that his pupil Hennequin, a Jacobin artist like David, similarly chose the figure of Homer as an image of the artist in the drawing done in prison in October 1796. As does David's, Hennequin's Homer reciting the misfortune of Troy to shepherds and nymphs (Fig.29) thematizes the artist's dependence on the audience as well as his position "in between": he is represented on the outskirts of the city. And, similarly to David, the drawing of this exponent of dry, linear neoclassicism in painting resorts here to a rather unusual deployment of wash and extended plays of shadows that traverse the upper part of Homer's body, as if to double the signifiers of blindness. It seems that Homer became the privileged figure of the crisis in which the Jacobin artists found themselves in the wake of the Thermidorian coup, confronted by the disarticulation of the symbolic codes of Jacobin republicanism. See A. Serullaz, Les dessins, no. 74, 30. And Régis Michel, Le beau idéal, 111-112, where an interesting and a politically specific intepretation of the Hennequin has been offered: Homer, the "poète maudit," as a babouviste metaphor.

115. That it is the 24th song is more or less accepted in the Davidian literature. A Th..., (who is thought by Schnapper, among others to be Thibaudeau) writes in 18.. that Homer recites "le vingt-quatrième chant d'Iliade au peuple attendri. Le peuple lui offre de partager avec lui sa modeste nourriture, pendant que les grandes cherchent à l'accabler de leurs dédains." A.Th..., Vie de

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David, 148-9. (Th... seems to me to refer actually to the Louvre Homère recitant, but he projects into the image his political expectations, e.g., taking the audience members' poses of attentive listening -- a finger supporting the jaw, a head held between hands -- for signs of their refusal to listen.)

116. See A. Dacier, L'Iliade d'Homère, 321-73.

117. There is a preparatory drawing for it, in private hands, showing all three female figures who "font leur regrets auprès le lit." See David, 1989, no.58, 150.

118. For example, Giulio Romano's design for the Homeric frescoes in Sala di Troja in Palazzo Ducale in Mantua. The Carraccis (Annibale with assistance) frescoes in Palazzo Farnese that David looked at in Rome and, via prints, in prison, come to mind. For David's interest in these Italian artists, see interchapter below.

119. Delafontaine is the source: he says it is one of the two landscapes David executed at the Luxembourg. In Notes, 6-7.

120. For doubts about attribution and dating, see David, 1989, no. 136, 306, and Schnapper ("Après l'exposition David," 61) who maintains that recent findings (of Cuzin) indicate this was impossible view to paint in 1794 from Luxembourg. He cites an Italian art historian, Anna Cavani (oral comunication) who attributes the view to Guiffrey (on unclear grounds). J.A. Schmoll, ("J.L.David's Vue du Jardin du Luxembourg von 1794 als Parabel der Gefangenschaft des Malers") inteprets the landscape as a metaphor of the artists's imprisonment, basing his view on the recognition of the figures in the background as referring to the story of Archimedes.For and interesting recent reading of the View as not a landscape but an "erasure" (of David's Jacobin past), see Bryson, Tradition and Desire, 97-9.

121. See Stockholm sketchbook most emphatically, but also one in the Louvre and Rouen. See, for example, David, 1989, nos. 22-26, 82-84.

122. See Freud, "Beyond the pleasure principle."

123. See Justification de David, f. 11. Also, see David's letter to Boissy d'Anglas, written 22 November (2 frimaire) 1794, where he mentions that he was compared to Apelles. In Jules, 234-5;

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also Wild., 1149.

124. For the suicide attempt, see David's Autobiograpie, repr. in Wild. 1368. See also Thomas Crom, Painters and Public Life, most usefully for the analysis of David's attitude towards the Academy before the Revolution. For complex reasons of which the history of the Academy's resistance to the young David is only one factor, the artist's attitude was to reach beyond and above the status of an academic artist.

125. Let us remember how David talked about the effect of his Italian experience as the removal of shells from his eyes, blinded by the academic modes. About this, see also the interchapter below.

126. The prints referred to were discussed earlier in section V. For the corps meurtrie of David's revolutionary icons, see Antoine de Baecque, "Le Corps meurtrie de la Révolution."

127. This is according to his own expression in the letter to the Convention following Lecointre accusations, cited above.

128. Boissy d'Anglas was a deputy who, solicited by Mme David and careful not to endanger his status as a "moderate," took David's side at the Convention asking for his release etc. The quoted fragment is from David's letter of 16 November to him, where he also declared: "La peinture ne rougira pas de me compter au nombre des ses enfants et le choix de mes sujets prouvera aux artistes qui viendront après moi combien j'ai l'âme sensible." Wild. 1144; Jules, 231-2. Underline mine. David certainly "forgets" here his curtain project Triomphe du Peuple Français.

129. Fried, Absorption, 176.

130. J.J. Dubois, Description des tableaux faisant partie des collections de M. le comte de Pourtalès-Gorgier, 1841, 59-60. He refers to it as oil on canvas 0.65 x 0.54m. Quoted in A. Schnapper, "Après l'exposition David. La Psyché retrouvée," 64.

131. The title Psyché abandonnée is the artist's own. The work is cited in all three lists that David compiled at different stages of his career. All three lists were reprinted recently in David, 1989, 19-21. It is referred to as "figure à "mi-corps" or half-figure. In list C it is defined as a painted study.

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References to the Psyché were made in the following works: Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M.J.-L. David, 1824, 43 (associated with the Vestale); P.A. Coupin, Essai, 1827 (seen as pre-revolutionary painting associated with the Vestale); Miette de Villars, Mémoirs, 155, (mentions Psyché as painted study); Jules, 637; Wild., 1187 (Psyché is situated in between two imprisonments, ca. April 1795, alas without source for such dating -- based on Jules?); and A. Schnapper, David, témoin de son temps, 172. For other references, see also Schnapper, "Après l'exposition," 64-7.

132. E.g., in list B, the Psyché abandonné is placed before Belisaire of 1781, while in list C our work is listed after the portraits of the Rilliet sisters (comtesse de Sorcy and MMe d'Orvilliers), both of 1790. See David, 1989, 19 and 20.

133. See Schnapper, "Après l'exposition," 64.

134. And the latter seems to me, moreover, a very improbable attribution, with just about everything about that looks like nothing else David ever produced: beginning with iconography, style, especially body language with its improbable anatomy, the non-Davidian facial type, and finally, the improbably low artistic quality of the work for the date Schnapper gives it.

135. What I mean is that either it was done in the Luxembourg prison, or soon after the artist's (first) release, possibly in the country estate of his in-laws at Saint-Ouen.

136. Sick, weak, with no assistance as David was. He never mentioned working on anything. There was no Delafontaine to bring him materials. And the regime in the Quatre Nations regarding what prisoners could have at their disposal was very strict. See Dauban, Les prisons de Paris sous la Révolution; and chap. 4 below.

137. See Caroline Pecoul à David, 27 Thermidor an III (14 August 1795), ms. letter, Ecole des Beax-Arts. Also repr. in Jules, 294-5. David was released provisionally on 3 August 1795.

138. "Nous avons pensé à l'avantage que tu remporterais sur tes ennemis, si tu pouvais exposer quelque chose au salon dont l'ouverture sera le 4 du mois prochain [Vendémiaire].
Sérangeli pense que le portrait de ma soeur et de son enfant et ta Psyché seraient assez marquants pour qu'on parle de toi et, lorsque tu veux, tu a bientôt terminé un ouvrage. Ainsi, mon doux

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ami, ne les laisse point jouir de la place sans combattre..." Later he also mentions adding the Luxembourg landscape. Ibid.

139. Although only Mme Sériaziat was listed in the livret, both works were mentioned by the critics. It is generally accepted in literature to think that David must have sent Pierre Sériziat after the Salon had opened and thus, as was often the case, this portrait missed the livret. See Explications, 1795.

140. Not all his life, because, as Schnapper observes, ibid., p.64, the work does not appear in the inventory après décès, but long enough to be thought of as important -- it appears as late as the 1820s on the list of works in David's studio made by the artist (list C repr. in David, 1989, 20). Although he could have by then destroyed or overpainted it, as artists often did with the works they no longer valued, he did not do it.

141. And in the work of others. For the closest echo, see David's student Gérard's illustration of the Lafontaine version of Apuleius fable published by Pierre Didot in 1797 (Fig.38). And Gérard's well known canvas exhibited at the Salon of 1798. There was, moreover, a veritable fashion for the iconography of Psyché under the Directory and Consulat -- see the drawing of Fragonard; Lemonnier's canvas, etc. For Gérard's work for Didot, see C.M. Osborne, Pierre Didot the Elder, 79-103.

142. For the importance and meaning of the mirror in this display, see my "David's Sabine Women."

143. James Hall, Dictionary od Subjects and Symbols, 1974, 88. See also R. Schneider, "Le Mythe de Psyché dans l'art français depuis la Révolution," La Revue de l'Art, XXXII, 241-378, for Psyché as iconography of neoplatonicist aesthetics in the early 19th century art.

144. An important earlier source that, moreover, David looked at, as some pages in his album indicate, was Master B of Dado, active 1530-50, whose cycle was engraved by Anonimo Veneziano, after Michel Coxie, active in Rome 1531-39. See The Illustrated Bartsch, 1982, 29, part 2, nos. 42-66. (It is Veneziano that David used in prison.) Perrino del Vaga and Romano's drawings with the Psyche theme were exhibited at the Louvre in 1797. See L'An V. Dessins des grands maîtres.

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145. See Apuleius, The Golden Ass, Books IV and V, transl. by W. Adlington (1556), Harry C. Schnur, ed., New York and London, 1965. Quotes after ibid, 113 and 129.

146. Boter and Rubinstein, Rennaissance artists and antique sculpture, fig. 18.

147. No single image could be said to have inspired the pose of David's Psyche, but Annibale Carracci's etching of Susanna and the Elders, ca 1590, Washington, National Gallery of Art, is reasonably close. The Carracci was reproduced in Mary D. Garrard, "Artemisia and Susanna," in N. Broude and M.D. Garrard, eds., Feminism and Art History, 149.

148. See Jacques Derrida, glossing over Paul de Man's Blindness and Insight, in his Psyché où l'invention de l'autre, esp. 30-35.

149. The theme of jealousy around the notion of beauty in Psyche's story -- an artistic topos par excellence -- could be seen here as an articulation of David's sense of persecution in the hands of the former academic artists, persecution which he associated with his present critical situation.

150. See H.W. Janson, W. "Observations on Nudity in Neoclassical Art."

151. See P. Bordes, Le Serment de Jeu de Pomme, 55-67.

152. For some of this problematic, see my "David's Sabine Women." I have been working on a study on David and the Directorial culture.

153. What helps understand its "momentariness" is the deployment of the feminine in the second stage of the reaction, as exemplified by the drawing executed, I believe, in the Quatre Nations: the Femme au turban. For there the empathy has been foreclosed, the woman's body petrified, the gaze erased -- she turned into an empty cipher, so to speak, of David's threatened mastery. For an expanded discussion see chap. 4 below.

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Part II:

The Sabine Women as work-in-progress: an interchapter

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Despite the fact that by early November 1794 David declared himself ready and impatient to put his Homer on canvas as soon as possible, this history painting never materialized. What did materialize instead was another subject that he had begun to develop in the Luxembourg prison: the intervention of the Sabine women. Elaborated in the course of the Thermidorian reaction and the Directory, the Sabine Women became the very image through which David sought to position himself as the major republican artist of the late 1790s (Fig.40). It would be interesting to know exactly when the shift from the Homeric to the women-oriented iconography took place and/or when the Sabines became the priority project for the artist. And, in the context of our inquiry, the question arises as to how much of the preparatory work for the project was actually done in prison and what the role of the artist's imprisonment was in the conception and meaning of the Sabines.

The only "first hand" account of the preparatory process for the Sabine women is Delafontaine's.[1] His story implies that the decision at least to privilege, if not exclusively invest in, the subject was made by David as early as fall/winter 1794: Delafontaine suggests that it was on the Sabines, rather than on the Homer, that David was spending most of his time at the Luxembourg.[2] What seems to confirm this account is the content of David's prison sketchbook where the relatively few drawings for the Homer (3) are

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clearly outnumbered by the Sabines-related pages (35 of 62 in all).[3]

But Delafontaine's suggestion does not find confirmation in David's own statements from prison where not only the Homer figures more prominently but where the Sabines are never explicitly mentioned.[4] Moreover, we cannot exclude the possibility that at the Luxembourg, the artist considered and rehearsed other iconographies as well, such as, for example, the theme of Leonidas, given that a large number of pages in the prison album is devoted to it.[5] Further, we have to remember that when David was finally liberated by the Directorial amnesty in the fall of 1795, it was the idea of finishing the Tennis Court Oath that seemed to have been as much on the artist's agenda as the task of putting the Sabines on canvas. The Tennis Court Oath, originally a Jacobin commission, was then re-proposed by David as the major image of revolutionary history for whose the completion the artist urged the new government's support.[6] Yet, this attempt proved unsuccessful. Was it only then that the Sabines became the principal work through which David sought to (re)define his position as the painter of the Revolution? Or, rather, was it that the Sabine Women, with its immediate political resonance (as an image proposing unity in response to the post-Thermidorian factional struggles), was under way in any case, but that David was anxious to mark the continuity of his commitment to the

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revolutionary cause for which the Tennis Court Oath, another consensual image and one emphasizing unity at the very origins of national representation, was most appropriate? For had the government supported the completion of the Tennis Court Oath and had the artist managed to finish the canvas, it would have formed a set together with the Sabines that could have smoothed the "ripples" of the Terror as the unwanted episode on the calm surface of David's revolutionary career, a career to which these paintings would -- again, on some level -- wishfully attest.[7]

What these uncertainties amount to is a realization that we cannot simply think of the Sabines production as did Delafontaine, as an isolated, uninterrupted, linear development that originated in prison and, absorbing all the artist's attention, progressed unhampered in the months and years that followed until the work's public display.[8] For one, it might well be that Delafontaine, in hindsight, projected back onto David's prison output the role the Sabines got to play later, when the canvas was nearing completion and/or after it received public acclaim, that is, when it became clear that it was a major accomplishment, in fact, the very post-Thermidorian oeuvre of David.[9] But the evidence of David's other thematic considerations for history painting during his stay at the Luxembourg should discourage us from such a teleological view, inviting us instead to address the issue of intermittence and

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discontinuity in the making of the Sabines.

The issue of discontinuity as a chronological and as a structural problem is also posed most emphatically by the body of David's preparatory drawings for the Sabine Women. The large number of the Sabines-related sketches, in varying degrees of elaboration, constitutes, after the Tennis Court Oath, perhaps the biggest corpus of preparatory works preserved for any single painting by David. The very fact that the vizualization of the subject required such an extended process of preparation needs more attention, as does the specific character of the corpus as a whole. That is, however, a difficult task. The dispersal of the drawings in the collections of various museums in France and elsewhere is one obstacle, which, moreover, immediately puts us in touch with (as it also further enhances the sense of) fragmentariness as the major quality of this corpus. To facilitate the initial stage of inquiry, the existing body of work could be organized according to format, within four groups: I. the **whole composition:** two pencil, pen and ink drawings, among them the so-called première pensée, both in the Louvre (Fig.41 & 42)[10]; II. four **sketchbooks** containing pages that pertain to the Sabine Women, among them the album recognized as the one that was used by David at the Luxembourg, which contains the largest number of the Sabines-related pages[11]; III. **loose sheet drawings of the fragments** of the composition, such as, notably, the central

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female group of the sketch at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lille[12]; IV. **the final stage drawings:** the highly elaborate, squared, loose sheet drawings of single figures, which belong to the last stage of the project's development, i.e., when most of the pictorial decisions had already been made and it remained for the artist to determine the details of execution. The sheets with female figures in the Musée de la Chartreuse in Douai and one of Hersilia in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow best illustrate the last group.[13]

The second most important problem posed by this body of work is dating. Which drawings were done during the Thermidorian reaction and which date from the Directory? How much of it was actually done in prison? Did the artist work on the Sabine Women also at the Quatre Nations, during his second imprisonment, or only at the Luxembourg? We have very little information about all this. Of all the drawings only the so-called première pensée of the compositional ensemble and one sketchbook could be attributed without much doubt to the prison period.[14] The tradition of thus dating the premère pensée is based on the account of Delafontaine confirmed, it seems, by the inscription placed below the drawing, on its mount.[15] The same source mentions another drawing of the whole composition as being done by David in his studio, after the Directorial amnesty. This could be the sketch very close to the final image, now at the Louvre. Yet, Delafontaine mentions that the warriors were

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represented in it in the nude, whereas the Louvre drawing still has them in armor. We also know that the Louvre sketchbook, with the first three pages devoted to Homer and the prevalent part of the rest referring to the Sabines, was used by David at the Luxembourg. But we could not be certain about which of its pages were actually drawn in prison and which were used later, after his release.[16] As for the other sketchbooks, two of them, for example, were used by David continously for different projects in the period from ca. 1790-1805.[17]

These uncertainties about chronology are exacerbated by a specific quality of David's work on the Sabines: it seemed not to have progressed in the strict sense of the term at all but rather to proceed through detours, repetitions and negations. Partly, this is in the nature of any creative process. Thus, most of the artists' sketchbooks are, by definition, the site of the fragmentary and the incomplete. The Davidian notebooks could be said to set a trap for the onlooker that is not very different from other artists' albums: by their form as a little booklet, they tempt us to a sequential reading of what could only have been a more or less haphazard series of notations. But the notebooks in question seem also to be suggesting a not-so-usual, at least not for David, degree of intermittence and negation as part of the creative process, as if the Sabines were being continuously done and undone over a considerably long

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stretch of time.

For example, in the album which is largely devoted to the Tennis Court Oath, and which is accepted in the literature as having been used since the early 1790s, we find a strikingly quick and summary notation of a female figure with a baby (Fig.43). She is caught running to the right but she really is not so much a running figure as a movement itself conveyed by a pattern of nervously knotted lines, from which a form of the body seems to gradually emerge, still hesitant, at the very threshold of representation.[18] Now, both in the extraordinarily sketchy quality of this notation as well as in the positioning of the woman and the direction of her movement, this seems to be a drawing that belongs to the very early stages of the Sabine Women elaboration, done sometime around the première pensée. (She seems to be a condensation of a configuration which, in the première pensée, David broke up into two female figures, right behind the central Hersilia, on the right.) Yet, it is found in the sketchbook that David, in all probability, could not have had with him at the Luxembourg. It was a sketchbook that he already worked on earlier, during his preparations for the Tennis Court Oath (1791), thus he must have had it at home at the time of his arrest in August 1794. Due to his arrest, seals were put on his household and all the belongings in it, thus he neither could have taken it with him to prison, nor could Delafontaine bring it to

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him later.[19] Therefore, if it was most probably done after David's release, the drawing is a fairly obvious detour in relation to the prison work -- that is clear when we look at some of other pages of the Luxembourg album where much greater definition of the figures, as well as the resolution of their movement, has already been achieved. Certainly, the prison album is not an easy site for any argument about chronology, for it too was used discontinuously. There are pages in it that date obviously from the later, post-prison phase: on the folio 20r (Fig.44), for example, the female figure running straight on towards the spectator, a squared drawing very close to the final version, was evidently done later than the drawing of the same figure done in the sketchbook containing the work for the Tennis Court Oath that was used after the artist's release from prison (Fig.45).[20] But the latter two drawings both belong to the later stage of development, when David had already introduced elements of Raphael's Massacre of the Innocents into his composition. It is possible to think that they were both done after David's (first) release. Meanwhile, the woman-as-movement of the folio 6r (RF 36 942) mentioned earlier looks like one of the very first notations -- the position of her body ignoring the layout elaborated in the 1ère pensée sheet and the quickness of the execution enhancing the sense of it being one of the very first visual thoughts -- thus making it difficult to understand

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why David would go that far back, to the origins, as it were, at the time when his work was already at its later stage.[21]

What this lack of progress in the body of drawings forces us to recognize is that not only would it be difficult, if not impossible, to date any of the loose sheets or the individual pages of the prison sketchbook with exactitude, but that such an attempt would not necessarily be useful. With what seems to be a thoroughly non-linear, discontinuous mode of conceptual and visual elaboration of this work, should we not renounce the traditional art-historical procedure in regard to preparatory drawings which seeks to disengage from such material a single, or at least progressive trajectory of development that moves towards the whole composition? Should we not instead accept its fragmentatry structure (e.g., the sheets and the sketchbook's pages with fragments of the compositions; no clear progress or succession from page to page) as a trace of something interesting and important in and of itself: a process that needs to be examined as such? We could thus retain the specificity of the sketchbook notation as a rehearsal, with its weaving and unweaving of visual lexias mobilized from different sources, since borrowings from multiple sources was another interesting feature of this corpus. To think of the Sabines as a work-in-progress would thus imply thinking of this corpus of preparatory drawings

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as an open, heterogenous structure instead of one organized by the notion of progress sensu stricto.

Yet, the refusal to organize it by a linear chronology raises the question of the mode in which this corpus of drawings could be, first, understood in and of itself, and, second, related to context -- both the narrowly understood circumstances of its production, i.e., David's status as the subject on trial, and the broader cultural conditions within which we need to place the artist's work.

First of all, I found it necessary to bracket my discussion of the Sabines drawings by adopting a format of interchapter. This format is meant to function in two ways: as an enclave and as an interstice. I propose the notion of an enclave, for if this corpus was, as I want to argue, shaped by, as well as attempting to give form to, a historically specific constellation of issues, refracted as these were by David's personal situation, then we cannot succesfully weave this dispersed ensemble of fragments into a larger diachronic continuity of our narrative on "David after Thermidor." It is necessary, rather, to consider this ensemble synchronically, as a body of work whose the internal logic(s) needs to be first understood (a task made particularly difficult by our uncertainties about dating and the unlinear character of the corpus) before it is related to the broader cultural circumstances. In other words, while I do not believe that the corpus of drawings could be seen

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as oblivious to the context in which it was made, I see the necessity of emphasizing the aesthetic specificity of this material as governed by its own rules, which, paradoxically, given the aestheticizing drift of the literature on the Sabine Women, was never examined as such.

But what could be defined as the aesthetic specificity of a "work in progress"? Rather than tracing a linear trajectory of development, I would like to focus on the artist's strategies, a pattern of both thematic and formal choices exemplified by this ensemble of drawings.[22] To facilitate such an inquiry on the level of procedure, the two drawings of the whole composition could be seen as two poles in the process of the Sabines' preparation. There is a neat difference in the degree of elaboration between them, with the second one, as was already noted, very close to the final stage of composition. The first drawing, as also noted, was identified by Delafontaine as done in the Luxembourg prison. The second was mentioned by the same source as a work produced in David's studio after his liberation. Representing two different moments of the process and its two different locations, these drawings could serve as signposts within the heterogenous and fragmented field (rather than a linear teleology) that we adopted as a model for understanding the preparatory corpus. As such, they can help disengage some of the trajectories, or series, in David's process.

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Within the enclave as format for discussing the discrete and non-teleological process of the Sabines' development, it is the heterogeneity and fragmentariness of this process that needs our attention. We could try to understand these qualities in terms of Kristeva's semiotic theory in which heterogeneity is seen as the very nature of what she calls the poetic language.[23] According to this theory, the poetic text is a sort of arena of combat between two distinct signifying dispositions that undermine one another. The semiotic disposition, which Kristeva aligns with the maternal (the pre-Oedipal) operates as a disorganizing force in relation to the symbolic function of the text (aligned with the father and the Law). Its disorganizing (de-semanticizing) effect could be discerned on both thematic and syntaxical levels of the text (respectively: a stress on relations of force and violence within the family; intentional structural discontinuities and irregularities of utterance). What such understanding of the poetic language posits is, on the one hand, a non-transcendental, dis-unified subject as author of such enunciation, and, on the other, a disruptive potential of the textual practice -- the site where the "social code is destroyed and renewed" -- thus being capable of generating a kind of Revolution.

The corpus of the Sabines drawings, more than anything else among David's work from prison, seems to constitute a trace of a subject-in-process. That is partly so because of

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the nature of its purpose as preparation, rather than final product. But I think we also need to recognize that these drawings articulate a subject put on trial by the real Revolution and thus challenged in his symbolic unity, allowing the semiotic disposition to get the upper hand in his creative process, which then became "revolutionary" in the Kristevan sense of the term. The thematic and structural centrality of women in this image -- unusual for David -- could be seen as one symptom of the semiotic sway in David's creative process, though it needs to be further examined. Yet, there is also a difference of purpose between, say, the disruptive structure of Céline's novel, intended as final, and David's struggle for visual coherence across the preparatory rehearsals for his painting.[24] Risking schematization, we can say that what the first, as a Modernist author, strove <u>for</u>, the other tried to fight <u>against</u>. We are witnessing two different kinds of approaches to crisis in these works.

In its fragmented, heterogenous and chronologically open-ended character, the body of the preparatory work for the <u>Sabine Women</u> offers us not only a glance into the meanderings of David's creative thought, but also an insight into the search for a new visual idiom of publicly relevant art in a historically specific context. More tangibly than Kristeva's Modernist heroes, David was personally implicated in the Revolution as a broader, collective process of

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destruction and renewal of social codes. We need to better understand how the specific character of his de- and constructive operation with codes across the body of the Sabines' drawings related to the circumstances of both his individual and the collective cultural crisis after the end of the Terror. The prison origins of the Sabines bind it with the purpose to which David declared himself committed in all his prison petitions and letters: to continue serving the Revolution as an artist. Yet, the very continuity of such a commitment became problematic for any artist, and especially for David, after the Thermidorian rupture in French republican culture. We need to examine the ways in which the Sabine Women as a project for a public work addressed itself, on the level of its intention as well as on the level of what might be termed "the unconscious" of the image, to the challenge of maintaining a degree of (legitimizing) continuity within the existing republican codes and, simultaneously, of articulating a rupture within it.[25] But, again, how can we examine these connections to the post-Thermidorian context, itself volatile and difficult to pin down, if we are not sure when exactly each drawing was done?

I see the need, thus, to situate this group of drawings in context as a body (discontinuous and fragmented as it is) rather than as a series of individual works that can be mapped chronologically on the political and cultural

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topography of France (specifically Paris) after Thermidor. And, in this regard, this interchapter is meant to locate the Sabines material in an interstice -- a space that intervenes in between two different (textual and contextual) realms, and thus is related yet separate from them. (Moreover, I like the resonance of the meaning of the word "interstice" as intervention as an echo of the Sabine Women's theme.) As such, it well represents the nature of this corpus' relation to David's individual dilemma and the broader historical context, as well as to my discussion of these issues in the two parts contiguous to this part of my study. It is first of all to mark this dialectical, rather than deterministic, relation to the context (i.e., its relative autonomy as an aesthetic process governed by its own rules and, simultaneously, as a process inscribed in the broader cultural and political transformation) that the interchapter is adopted here: the Sabine Women are separate from, yet connected to the context.

Secondly, such placement in between the two parts of this study is also meant to underscore the engagement of the Sabines as process in the two distinct stages of the Thermidorian reaction -- the first one that was triggered by Robespierre's fall and culminated in the Nantes trials; the second, articulated by the women-led popular unrest which culminated in the Germinal/Prairial insurrection (spring 1795) and its consequences. This duality also defined

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David's own experience of the reaction: his two imprisonments (if one was caused by Robespierre's fall, the other was due to the journées of spring 1795). The Sabine Women originated in the first phase, but its subsequent elaboration points to a major concern with the place of the feminine that parallels a broader discursive concern with the Woman in republican rhetoric in the wake of the Germinal/Prairial insurrection. Thus, the interchapter marks the status of the Sabine Women as a work that straddles two phases of a political process, as well as David's experience of it as described in each of the two parts of my study.[26]

Finally, I wish to emphasize that among the issues raised by the development of the Sabines project, the central one concerns the iconographic as well as structural centrality of women. In addressing it, I would like to consider here three major levels or aspects: 1. the meaning of David's thematic choice: the switch from the Homeric male-oriented to the (Plutarchian) female-oriented iconography of intervention and its aesthetic and political implications; 2. what could be termed the lexia of the visual process of elaboration in the sketchbook and the drawings pertaining to the parts of the composition (by lexia I mean here fragments of the different already existing visual codes that the artist rehearsed or mobilized for his project); and 3. the structure (syntax) of the image as a whole and the role of gender in it.

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One of the most interesting aspects (and perhaps also one of the traces of the conflicted and unresolved encounter of the symbolic and the semiotic in the preparatory process) of the Sabine iconography -- and, as we will see, of its visual syntax as well -- is the way in which it engages the notions of both continuity and rupture. It is also the level on which the Sabine Women announces perhaps most readily its links with the Thermidorian context-in-process (rather than being only a trace of David as a subject-in-process).

The episode selected by David -- posterior to, if still rooted in, the rape of the Sabine women -- specifically conveyed the idea of forgetting the traumatic past as a base for reconciliation. Assuming the viewer's familiarity with the preceding episode of the Sabines' rape, the theme of women's intervention allowed one to make an argument that a lawless, arbitrary act, if in and of itself condemnable, could in certain circumstances be instrumental for a good cause (the rape of the Sabine women having been constructed in the ancient sources as necessary for the survival of the Roman tribe).[27] Using the idea of women's rape, the argument was being made here that a transgression or violation of societal Law could, in a specific historical situation, be necessary and pardonable. As such, the theme legitimized the notion of a status quo based on anterior crimes that, however, need to be forgotten in the name of the new tribal

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(societal) unity. (We will examine the gender assumptions behind this argument at a later point.)

As a vehicle of such an argument, David's thematic choice situated itself within a broader debate that was gaining urgency towards the end of the year II on how to understand and place the Terror in republican history. Specifically, the Sabine women's plea for a unity based on forgetting the past aligned itself with the central idea of the bilan (the closing report) of the year II presented by the Jacobin Robert Lindet in the name of the CSP on 20 September 1794. Let us recall that this report offered a response to the single most vexing question that weighed on the collective, public life after Thermidor, how to leave behind the Robespierrist past.[28] While raising the issue of the Terror as a kind of destructive specter that once floated above the Republic destroying its culture, arts, economy, industry etc., Lindet urged against revenge as a means of dismantling the vestiges of the past. He urged that attempts to mark a rupture with the Terror should not turn into arbitrary settling of accounts that could easily end up in a vicious circle of violence. Instead, he advanced the idea of national unity as paramount to the interests of the Republic, and suggested that this idea be based, precisely, on forgetting. Thus, alluding specifically to Lecointre's accusations (that implicated David among others) Lindet encouraged burying the memory the Terror by declaring it

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history.[29]

At the time of its inception -- and the very argument that I am making below indicates it as the fall/winter 1794, which is also within the timeframe suggested by Delafontaine -- the Sabine Women seems to have aligned itself thematically with the Jacobin discourse, specifically with the Jacobin position on how to deal with the memory of the Terror, exemplified by Lindet's bilan. This alignment could be discerned on several levels.

If the important aspect of the bilan as a form of discourse was to give a sense of coherence to what in reality was a series of heterogenous and contradictory policies initiated by the National Convention in a search for the ways to deal with its immediate past, the narrative format of David's première pensée potentially worked in a similar way.[30] The Antique iconography of tribal struggles could function as a framework that bestowed a sense of reassuring continuity and a heroic dimension to the heated debates that went on at the Convention and in the public sphere in early fall 1794, and proposed an imaginary, wishful resolution to them.[31] Proposing through the notion of tribal unity, a narrative closure for the fluctuating, heterogenous, contradictory political reality after Thermidor, the thematic logic of the first drawing was profoundly Jacobin, if we understand by Jacobin what Furet defined as a certain pattern of political behavior that

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imposed unitary ideology as the revolutionary ideology tout court.[32] It was Jacobin, in other words, inasmuch as it proposed a unitary, rather than pluralistic, conception of revolutionary heritage. It is not surprising that David and Lindet, both importantly engaged in the political process of the year II, kept on resorting to the same argumentative logic.

But it was particularly a post-Terrorist version of this logic that operated in the Sabines, thus linking it with the Jacobin project at a concrete historical moment. In its very choice of Antique narrative for the representation of the revolutionary conflict (as Chaussard and others were to tell later, the artist himself thus understood his subject), David, whatever the degree of his self-consciousness about it, was joining Lindet's postulate for adopting a (forgiving) historical distance from the immediate past. More specifically, the theme of the Sabine women's intervention constituted a Jacobin parti pris in the debate on how to think of the of Terror in that it argued in favor of forgetting what was a collective act (or period) of transgression in the past, in the name of the present. It was the women's action that aimed at getting across this message that fighting over the past, no matter how disputable or condemnable, has no sense and could be endangering a much more important idea that the women embodied, that of the family, of tribal (and by extension

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national) unity. David was thus developing an iconography of historical denial, raising, through allusion, the specter of the Terror and, at the same time, putting it to rest. Like Lindet's bilan, such iconography was geared to perform a subtle job of apology for the Terror, allowing it to be inscribed in (rather than being literally forgotten, erased or discarded from) revolutionary history, as an episode that "n'appartient plus à nous mais à la posterité."[33] (And as such, it offered a place in history to people like Lindet and David who were implicated in the Terror.

If by situating the Terror within revolutionary history Lindet sought to shift the gears of political discourse to prevent its uncontrollable sliding towards the idea of revenge, the Sabine project could be seen to seek a similar kind of reversal specifically within the visual language used to image this episode after Thermidor. For the Davidian iconography addressed itself to those who presented the Terror through the images of rape and arbitrary violence, as did the imagery produced in relation to or around the time of the Nantes trials. One example of such imagery (discussed here earlier) was the engraving titled Le Sans-culotte instrument des crimes (Fig.9), where a mixture of two iconographies -- the massacre of the innocents and the rape of the Sabines -- was used as a setting depicting the revolutionary violence of the year II. David's drawing, on the other hand, allowed allusion to the Robespierrist past

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by evoking the Sabine women's rape anterior to the intervention, while positing it at the same time as a sort of necessary evil, a historical necessity. Yes, the Romans did abduct the Sabine women by a ruse exploiting the trust of a friendly tribe and this not without violence, but if this act was condemnable in and of itself, it was also what allowed the foundation of the new tribe and state, and as such was justified and would have to be forgiven. (The idea of rape was also introduced on a subliminal level through the figure of Hersilia herself, based as she was on Eneas Vico's engraving of Lucrezia's Suicide (Fig.46 & 47). As in the case of the Sabine iconography, such a mode of alluding to the Terror elevated it to the heroic realm of these ancient topoi that, nota bene, made their argument always somehow at a cost to the woman.) The theme chosen by David was thus a kind of thematic rampart against the anti-Terrorist as well as the increasingly anti-Jacobin slant of political imagery in the fall/winter of 1794.

Yet, while manifesting ideological continuity with Jacobinism on the level of political argument, the Sabine iconography also seems to have been marking an important rupture in the Jacobin visual rhetoric in that it focused thematically on women.[34] Such iconographic (as well as compositional) centrality of women was, moreover, unusual within David's own oeuvre. From the semantic margins (crucial as such zones are for the production of meaning),

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as in the Horatii and the Brutus, where women were placed to articulate the affective resonance of the heroic action performed by the men, the women were now being moved to occupy the very core of the signifying structure. We need to better understand the function of this displacement. First, how much of a rupture did it really constitute?

The theme of female intervention in male conflict in the name of kinship bonds engaged the potential public's familiarity with such earlier Davidian iconographies as the Horatii and the Brutus and solicited recognition of the new image as a kind of thematic sequel. Looking at it, the viewer could exclaim, (to echo Norman Bryson), "women were after all right!"[35] In that sense, the Sabines illustrated a mere reversal of gender roles and civic emphasis -- away from the masculine public virtues towards the feminine domestic-familial ones. (Women were not repositioned within the social structure; it is only that the place traditionally alloted to them by the patriarchal logic of social relations was now being highlighted as valuable.)

But the theme chosen by David was also hedged with certain ambiguities that potentially threatened its function as an instrument of a smooth non-subversive reversal of gender roles. The intervention of the Sabine women could be seen, in fact, to have offered fertile grounds for the interplay of the two signifying dispositions as discerned by Julia Kristeva. The women's plea in the name of family unity

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voiced the fatherly letter of the Symbolic law on which the coherence of all patriarchal societies has been based. Yet, at the same time, the allusion to the rape as the founding act at the origins of this family revealed it as a construct based on the kind of violence that constitutes a transgression of the very Law it invokes to justify itself: the abduction of the Sabine women by the Romans was a violation, not only of women themselves, but also of the original bonds of kinship of which they were a part. Tatius's tribal claim in the name of his family introduces an element of unresolved, semiotic, tension within the Symbolic code conveyed by the position of the Romans.

Similarly, there is potential ambiguity in the signifying function of femininity inasmuch as the theme aligns itself with the law of the Father yet its structuring position of thematic centrality is articulated (taken) by the Mother(s). The theme thus plays a risky game with the figure(s) through which the subversive work of the semiotic-maternal could leak into the sealed chambers of paternal authority. In anticipation of my argument in the later part of this section, it could be observed that David's somewhat excessive compositional preoccupation with the place of the women in this image testifies precisely to the risks and dangers that needed to be forestalled if a theme centered (ostensibly) on women were to remain Symbolically coherent. Kristeva's observations on the way in which the Woman in the

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traditional patriarchal text occupies a place that testifies her powerful position in the male unconscious and to the male desire (fear and thus necessity) to contain it, come to mind here.[36]

There existed a well-established pictorial tradition of handling the potential ambiguities inherent in this theme so that it could be, and indeed was, used symbolically to affirm male individual power or the societal structure based on it. Both scenes of the Sabine women's rape and their intervention were frequently painted in the Baroque period. The rape was especially popular and often commissioned by the late sixteenth and seventeenth-century male rulers as a fitting representation of their claims to absolute sovereignty, couched as these claims were in the newly valorized notions of force and violence.[37] Thus Francesco de' Medici adopts Giambologna's Rape of the Sabines -- a sculpture group recognized by contemporary commentators as the unrivalled representation of the artist's virtù (the gendered definition of artistic virtuosity as maleness should itself be noted) -- as a form of his public self-image and places it in the highly visible Loggia dei Lanzi on the Piazza della Signoria in Florence.[38] The woman presented as a trophy in a contest between men served here to convey male aspiration to political power. The assumption reinforced by this image is that women are the exchangeable property of men.

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The same assumption structured most Baroque representations of the Sabine women's intervention. Guercino's painting on the subject, where the female figures act like compositional patches that mend the strained or riven fabric woven of men, best foregrounds the corollary of this assumption: that the struggle over and exchange of women is what guarantees male social bonding.[39]

This homosocial resonance of the Baroque iconographic heritage must have reverberated in David's decision to choose this specific theme for representing his, identifiably Jacobin, position in the public debate on the Terror. Thus, the plea for national unity as articulated by his subject was a plea for male unity, for that specifically Jacobin revolutionary ideal of social bonding: the fraternité. Although ostensibly a rupture with the Herculean rhetoric of political power, the Sabine women thus offered a thematic platform of continuity with the Jacobin revolutionary project, whose exclusive logic initiated the suppression or subordination of the feminine within republican symbolic sphere (and real women's removal from the political scene).[40] The Sabine women, their intervening and thus potentially disruptive function notwithstanding, were in fact the very signifier of the wishful continuity to which David's project was committed on two levels: the continuity within his oeuvre as the painter of the Revolution; and the continuity in the symbolic tapestry of

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the revolutionary history that David's paintings, among other cultural forms, helped weave. Now, both continuities were historically specific constructs, wishful fantasies of sorts, formed -- on the individual and collective level, respectively -- in response to what could be termed the political and symbolic burden of the Terror after Thermidor. The Terror became a symbolically problematic territory that had to be glossed over or otherwise masked, excised or repressed if this desired continuity was to be maintained. In other words, there were historical reasons -- both collective and personal -- for which David's public work of art had to address the perilous issue of the Terror, possibly in such a way as to contain its memory and/or to render it politically and culturally benign. And this was the signifying job of women in his image: to place (and contain) the Terror as the disruptive factor in the fabric of David's career and in the historical tissue of the French Revolution.

The preparatory work for the Sabines offers evidence of the high stakes (political and personal, entwined as these registers were for David, at least throughout the year II) inherent in this project. The sheer number of sketches that David produced while rehearsing the theme points to the difficulties in the process of its elaboration. It signals, too, the impossibility of a mere continuity with the revolutionary culture before Thermidor. The very première

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pensée, with its visible traces of the cut-and-paste process of figure adjustment, these marks of numerous revisions (second thoughts, as it were), could be seen as an allegory of David's oeuvre as forever fractured by the end of the Terror.

But if we are to fully understand how the idea of the Terror was being woven by the signifying threads of femininity into the narrative fabric of republican history, we need to pay much closer attention to the visual specificity of David's preparatory process: its procedures, vocabulary and syntax. Only then could we examine the issue of the Sabines relation to (with) a broader cultural context.

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That the aesthetic issues of continuity and rupture were very much on David's mind as he worked on the Sabines in prison is proven by the testimony of this work's daily witness: Delafontaine. David's faithful assistant at the Hôtel des Fermes and at the Luxembourg, Delafontaine leaves us a most interesting account of the artist's specific procedures in developing the Sabines theme. Precedures that are well worth examining.

Delafontaine's report makes it clear that the Sabine Women's conception was a question of a long and elaborate process based on the study of the work of other artists. The author reports that he regularly brought David prints of the

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work of old masters from the Bibliothèque Nationale. The artist studied them carefully and gradually he "composa ainsi un véritable ouvrage de pièces de rapport."[41] Despite all the appropriations from past art, Delafontaine is quick to assert, his style acquired such a degree of homogeneity in the end that it was difficult to discern his borrowings even for the most erudite artists. David was obliged to point out exactly what he culled for his image and from where. For, his pupil declares, David's good-naturedness prevented him from ever claiming absolute originality by trying to hide his sources, as other artists often did.

This composite character of David's procedure to which Delafontaine refers is well illustrated by the <u>première pensée</u> drawing, with its multiple scars from the cut-and-paste procedure of figure adjustment, which must have been caused at least partly by these figures' different provenances. The structure and content of the prison album also confirms David's pupil's insistence on the multiplicity of sources from which his master borrowed and on fragmentariness (and repetition) as an important feature of his creative process. But before moving to examine these in detail, let us pause for a moment over Delafontaine's text. What is interesting about it is the subliminal defensiveness with which it describes David's procedure: it emphasizes the borrowings and the resulting patchwork-like quality of the image and process, yet hurries to add that

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these features were resolved by the final homogeneity of style. And it stresses that if David used many sources, he was honest enough to acknowledge it. Thus, on the level of denotation, it seems correct enough to work as David did, but there is also a negative connotation to his procedure that ripples the surface of the text's account of it. This discreet ambiguity in the way the text deals with David's borrowings signals that the issue of sources in the preparation of the Sabines's image was not only an important one, but also somehow a problematic one: for the author of the text and -- given the extent to which the text insists on its status as a report of the artist's own observations -- for David as well. We need to give this issue more attention.

It is specifically Italian art that Delafontaine cites as David's major source of inspiration during his work on the Sabines. But what structures his account of the painting's prison origins is more a binary opposition between, on the one hand, the impact of the Academy on the artist and, on the other, Italian art as an alternative aesthetic model. As a matter of fact, the theme of Italy's importance as a cultural site of forgetting burdensome academic luggage is what opens Delafontaine's memoirs. He then goes on at length to report on what he presents as David's own account of, first, his problematic relation to the education he had received at the Parisian Academy and, second, the impact of

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his Italian experience. It is quite interesting how the report was phrased, for as the reported speech it insists on being, it could thus give us at least some idea of the language through which David himself articulated his experiences.

According to Delafontaine, the memory of Academic education continuously obsessed the artist; as the artist put it, it took him over twenty years to liberate himself from it. His Parisian manner was like a "yawning precipice into which he was always afraid to fall back."[42] It was his trip to Rome that first made David realize the limitations of his training. Direct contact with Italian art and Antiquity, the latter especially during the artist's trip to Naples, changed David's conception of what constitutes true beauty: "It was as if a cataract was removed from my eyes."[43] He realized that mere copying of nature would not do, that "in order really to be an artist one has to proceed through selection, as did Raphael and the ancients."[44] From then on, all David's thoughts focused on one goal, artistic perfection, that the Greeks had achieved and that Raphael had approached the most closely of all the artists.[45]

What Delafontaine suggests is that David understood the Sabines as the very first canvas in which he could finally unburden himself of the unwanted academic legacy and achieve the Antique/Italian artistic perfection for which he strove. The subject was to offer him an opportunity to develop the

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aesthetic ideas he had held ever since his Italian experience but whose realization, Delafontaine reports, was postponed by his political engagement in the Revolution -- an event that "did not fit [the artist's] timid and naively credulous nature."[46] It was this credulity that "blinded" David in regard to his choice of friends such as Marat and Robespierre. Delafontaine argues that this ill-fitting revolutionary engagement tore the artist away from his studio and almost cost him his life. But fortunately it ended well, with the Sabines, the aesthetic breakthrough finalized at last.

I find it a striking coincidence that the Sabine Women which, in the political context of its inception, could be seen to have provided the iconography of a specific kind of historical forgetting (of the Terror) was at the same time constructed by Delafontaine as a site of another kind of forgetting as well -- the aesthetic forgetting of David's own academic heritage, of "les mauvaises formes françaises," as the artist himself put it in his own later account of the Italian breakthrough in his career.[47] Moreover, what is striking in Delafontaine's account is the way in which it brackets out the entire Revolution from David's career as an artist and, specifically, how it effectively removes it away from the Sabines' sphere of reference. Rather than a form of response to David's Thermidorian accusers, the Sabine Women is presented instead as the very site of a long-due final

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artistic liberation from the Academy.[48] This account is itself, obviously, a rather forgetful construction of David's career. For one thing, no mention is made of the fact that the Revolution was instrumental for David in putting his anti-academism into practice and allowing him to elaborate an alternative institutional framework for the arts. The Revolution is seen instead as an interruption in, rather than the period of enactment and development of, the anti-academic stance and artistic liberation. Italian art, and via it Greek Antiquity, the original catalyzer of David's anti-academism and a decisive force behind the conception of the Sabine Women, is thus established in Delafontaine's text as a signifier of the arbitrary (highly selective), and no doubt wishful, continuity of David's oeuvre.

That the wish this text seeks to fulfill was the artist's own as much as that of its author could be reasonably suspected: given the age and the position of Delafontaine, David's young pupil, in regard to his master at that time, his account must have been strongly influenced, if not entirely shaped, by the artist's own understanding of his working process.[49] And, sure enough, there are certain similarities between this account and the arguments presented in David's draft of the defense and in some of his correspondence from prison, although David never goes as far as to disavow the entire Revolution and his engagement in

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it. What is similar is the mode in which the notion of the Academy operates in the text, the meanings it conveys, and the way it is related to David's revolutionary experience.

Notice, for example, a rather striking textual play with the latent motif of castrative threat introduced in Delafontaine's account through such images as the black hole of the precipice that threatens to swallow up David; a cataract on his eye; and, most literally, his blindness, with the first two representing the artist's relation to the Academy, while the third refers to the Revolution. These are rather strong body-related, mutilation fantasies to use in order to account for one's professional origins and vicissitudes. (They make us think of David's Homer.) What they suggest is something like this: the Revolution, that until summer 1794 was for David a liberating, positive experience, has also acquired some negative connotations after Thermidor and in the course of his imprisonment. (One phase of the Revolution was being then culturally constructed in thoroughly negative terms, as the Terror, and David's own revolutionary past was also lacerated by this notion, and thus in need of re-construction or re-figuration.) These connotations were being accommodated by being collapsed onto another figure of threat from his personal Symbolic repertory, the Academy.[50] We have witnessed this in the artist's Justification, where the figure of his hostile academic colleagues functioned as a

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textual representation of what David believed was the major force behind his post-Thermidorian accusers. In this light, we have to understand David's willful re-immersion in Italian art as a major source for the new pictorial language he was elaborating in prison as a re-enactment of the strategy that had originally allowed him to sever his links with what the Academy taught him and thus establish his own style, so highly succesful at one time. It was, in other words, a defensive procedure of, as Freud would put it, "repeating and working through" one's own artistic past in the search of means to gain control over the present post-Thermidorian situation that thus appears to have been experienced by David, on one level at least, as a threat to his artistic mastery. Most importantly, it was precisely what constituted the most active moment of David's revolutionary commitment as artist (and as politician as well) -- the Terror -- that Thermidor rendered (symbolically) threatening to David's artistic mastery. We could say that to leave the Terror behind, David tried to use the same methods that had served him to leave the Academy behind.

Moreover, it seems -- we have some textual evidence of this -- that David understood this amalgamated threat (Academy/the revolution-as-Terror) in psychosexual terms, as the menace of castration. That is, both appeared profoundly threatening to him not only as a professional but

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(specifically) as a male subject tout court. This is at least how David articulated it then to others -- to the authorities he petitioned, and, it seems, to Delafontaine who assisted him in prison.

This observation is not, however, to encourage us to move on to diagnose David as a subject outside of his text, but, on the contrary, to remain on the level of signification and, using one textual articulation of the artist (of David as a subject of the text), to illuminate the meaning of another. Thus it seems that, as defined in the prison account of the process of its conception, the Sabines has to be recognized as a visual field where some of these psychosexually charged, professional and political fears of David after Thermidor would have to be played out in an attempt to resolve or contain them. The aesthetic ambitiousness of the project -- the self-conscious pursuit of perfection embodied in the Italian models, as described by Delafontaine -- as well as the novelty of its iconographic and compositional focus on women -- have to be considered in this light. And this is where a closer look at the visual specificity of the body of preparatory drawings becomes indispensable.

One thing we are immediately obliged to notice is that in his search for visual models through which to body forth the intervention of the Sabine women, David did not look much at other painters' intepretations of the subject in the past.

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He searched instead in other iconographies. And it is interesting to give his choice some thought.

To begin with, it is Annibale Carracci's Battle of Perseus and Phineus (Fig.48) that seems to me to have been the master source, so to speak, behind David's "première pensée" for the Sabines. Not only, as has been observed, did David literally lift the poses of his Romulus, of the body of the soldier underneath, and of another male figure besides him, from it,[51] he also structured the première pensée similarly to Carracci's image, within a frieze-like, elongated format where two groups of figures are divided by the central and thematically crucial one (Hersilia in the first, Perseus with the head of the Medusa in the second). Carracci's renowned fresco in the Galleria of Palazzo Farnese must have been familiar to David from his sojourn in Rome, especially given the artist's admiration for the Bolognese school in general and the Carracci in particular.[52] Moreover, his memory could have also been refreshed by one of its numerous engravings brought to prison no doubt by Delafontaine, from the Bibliothèque Nationale. What interests me, though, is not so much to ascertain whether Carracci was as David's source, but rather to raise the issue of its meaning as such. For the Battle of Perseus with Phineus seems to me a striking visualization of the similar psychosexual terms or metaphors that David used, if we are to trust Delafontaine, to account for the origins of the

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Sabines.

Carracci's episode is based on Ovid.[53] Perseus has just rescued Andromeda, who had been chained to a rock by a sea monster, and was offered her hand by the grateful parents. This, however, stirred the anger of Phineus, Andromeda's uncle, to whom she had been previously promised. Thus Phineus and his companions break into the wedding feast and attack the groom and the guests. "I have come [...] to claim my stolen queen..." declares Phineus before unleashing a violent battle in which human limbs fly in the air and blood gushes in profuse streams from the lacerated bodies. Besieged and increasingly on the defensive, Perseus is obliged to use the Gorgon's head which petrifies his attackers on the spot.

This is the very moment Carracci depicts, with a painterly virtuosity, focused on rendering the bodies of the attackers caught in the process of transformation into stone, such as the nude male figure on the left, half flesh, half grey matter; and Phineus' companion Thescelus, whose body arrested by the Gorgon's gaze hardens into a statue raising, forever, a spear against Perseus. This is the very figure that David adopts for his Romulus.

In using Carracci's image as his major source, David went beyond the strict limits of his own subject. One could ponder the unpredictability of the creative process illustrated here by the fact that although there existed

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Annibale Carracci's version of the Sabine women's intervention,[54] in elaborating his theme David curiously looks instead at the Bolognese painter's depiction of the theme of male intervention. Yet, it could also be observed that the artist remained still within the broader thematic parameters within which his iconography belonged: the topos of male struggles over the ownership of women. After all, the conflict between Tatius and Romulus over the Sabine women was not in essence so far away from the battle of Perseus and Phineus over Andromeda (with Phineus' claim almost echoing that of Tatius). Surely, the way the women in question reacted to these conflicts differentiates the two themes. But, whether because of the Medusa's effect or due to the Sabine mothers' intervention, the riven societal fabric was repaired and, specifically, the male bonds were restored, with the latter seeming to be the most important dimension of both themes.[55]

The most important difference, however, was in Carracci's theme's much more emphatic declaration of, if not an outright focus on, the psychosexual stakes of these male skirmishes over women. (And the effects of petrification, on which the Bolognese painter focused in demonstrating his painterly bravura, most emphatically underscored the psychosexual resonance of the theme.) It could be said that David's use of the Carracci as the master source for the première pensée reveals to us the traces of his --

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unconscious? -- associative process in the construction of his image, and also reveals the nature of some of the hidden assumptions behind his choice of women's intervention for the subject.[56] For example, in relation to the structure of the Carracci on which it is based, the women in the David inherit as their place a dubious territory of semantic oscillation between the positions of the triumphant virtuous Perseus and that of the Medusa's head which he holds up in his hand. We need to realize that Perseus' position in the image (as in the story) is victorious in a double sense: he wins over his male opponents but also, in brandishing the horrific head, he restages his victory over the castrating woman. For the Sabine women, to inherit this position is to inherit a winning position in conflict, but one lined with the semantic residue of threat inherent in female intervention (some of the petrifying force of the Medusa's head intervention lingers there). I am not saying that the signifying function of the female figures in the Sabines was exhausted by the semantic legacy of the Carracci's source. If important, this was not the only source David used. And the meaning of a work certainly does not depend entirely on the sources on which it is based. What I want to signal is that in privileging the Carracci as a model behind his early conception of the whole image, David leaves for us a telling trace of the associative territory within which he operated at that time and which shaped the development of the

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Sabines. Consequently, some of the difficulty in David's strenuous efforts to position the women within the structure of the image, which we will discuss later in detail, can be seen as due to this ambiguous (oscillatory) semantic heritage of his master source.

This associative territory -- as a cultural rather than a merely personal one, and, specifically, as typical of the revolutionary situation -- has been examined before. In the context of Neil Herz's most stimulating study of what he called "male hysteria under political pressure," David's chain of associations discernible in Delafontaine's text as well as in the master source of his image, should not surprise us.[57] Analyzing examples of counter-revolutionary imagery as well as some textual male (and phobic) responses to social and political upheavals throughout the nineteenth century, Herz discerned a close cultural interrelation of "what is politically dangerous to feelings of sexual horror and fascination."[58] He saw this connection as responsible for the frequent nineteenth-century use of figures of castrating femininity as negative representations of the Revolution itself. However, as Catherine Gallagher was quick to point out, such imagery could be understood to refer symbolically not only to men's fear of woman's lack and their own loss, but also to another primal male anxiety which has specific social ramifications, being more immediately connected to property -- namely, female

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generativity. Thus, women as (potential) mothers need to be properly constrained, for otherwise "semiotic riot is the result."[59] This strikes me as a most pertinent observation in relation to the story of the Sabine mothers who are made to intervene in order to defend their own circumscription within patriarchal family. (Think of it: one consequence of the Sabine men's victory over the Roman impostors would be that the women would become single mothers, i.e., there would be no possibility of a smooth re-absorption within the older Sabine bonds of kinship, that of sisters and daughters, with the mothers thus acquiring a dangerous status of unconstrained, "unfathered," generativity that would potentially give them, in Gallagher's words, "authority to call men's authorship in question."[60]) But this observation should also be kept in mind in the context of the imagery it originally addressed, that is, the Medusa's head which, according to Gallagher, should be seen not only as a means of (re-staging and) assuaging male castration, but also a way to restrain female sexual power and its potential threat to all forms of property and status quo.

David's symbolic phrasing of what was appearing dangerous to him in the fall/winter 1793 -- the revolution-as-the Terror; the Thermidorians-as-the Academicians -- fits within the broader psycho-sexual-cultural tendency described by Herz. We could thus see the Sabine Women as a site perused

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by and emitting the Medusa's gaze, i.e., as at once a defensive shield against David's accusers and the threats arose from his status as the accused, and as a pad from which to launch his attack on those whom he constructed as his enemies: former members of the Academy and Thermidorians.[61] It is both a site of re-living and re-presenting such threats and a site of liberation from them. The figure, or given the residual nature of this construction in the première pensée, the specter of the castrating yet controlled woman was thus deployed in the drawing to work through and master the threatening aspects of the Revolution, the Terror, and the Academy, which were aligned with this threat within David's associative repertory.

Yet, some of what Gallagher was talking about should allow us to discern another dimension of the ambiguity that David inherited from his master source but which was also enhanced by his thematic choice of mothers (i.e., women inscribed by her Symbolic function) for the protagonist of his image. This choice resonated within a broader political and cultural process of positioning the Terror in the revolutionary continuum, a process in which the signifying function of femininity was radically changing -- as we will see -- in the course of the Thermidorian reaction. This aspect will have to be brought to bear on David's elaboration of the image. But in this section we will first

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examine how David's process articulated and was in turn structured by some of the preoccupations that we discussed thus far.

*

The first thing that is striking about the section of the prison sketchbook devoted to the Sabines is the large quantity of drawings done for the female figures, far outnumbering the male figure studies. The search for codes through which to represent women's intervention seemed to have been of paramount importance for the artist. On page after page there multiply what we may call lexical exercises around the female body, with different hands, faces, gestures and grimaces, in addition to the full-figure studies, borrowed from past works of art. One has an impression of confronting the Barthesian ideal of a plural text, with different lexias extracted from their original codes floating unbound on the surface of each sheet -- the sketchbook as an open work.[62] As an open work, it is also a work that is scattered, stubbornly chaotic, refusing structure, as if traversed by the Kristevan semiotic current -- a work that allows the subject a "jubilant (self-)recognition," but only as a fragmented body.[63]

David looked for his codes primarily in the works of the Italian masters of the High Renaissance, particularily Raphael and his circle, which he was able to study after prints were brought to him in prison by Delafontaine.[64] A

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few sketches are based on Antique sculpture (e.g., f.7r & 60r) but they did not seem, at this stage of preparation, to have had an immediate impact on the way in which women's action was depicted. Of course, Antiquity as an ideal was hovering above the project from the start since, as we know, Italian painting was for David the epitome, the most perfect conveyor of Antique artistic supremacy. But aside from the empirical project of finding the source for each page, the problem of meaning of this procedure needs to be addressed. What are we to make of David's borrowing in general, as a strategy? What was the role of the sources in his preparatory process?

As it was stated before, Italian art was charged for David with important personal significance because his first stay in Rome allowed the artist to break away from Parisian academic training. We began to understand the location of his visual research among the Italian painters as a re-enactment of the trajectory by which he made his first steps to sever himself from Parisian models, and through which he marked his individuality as an artist and soon after obtained his first succes (with the Horatii). What we see then "acted out" in the album's rehearsal of the Italian Renaissance codes, is a sort of defensive procedure of repetition and working through geared to deal with the issues that came to appear to him, in prison, as unmastered and even threatening. And the importance of the signifying

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function of femininity, indicated by the very number of sketches in the album, would have to be considered part of the project of regaining this threatened mastery, returning to women as signifiers of the affective (as in the Horatii), but reworking both the way the feelings are conveyed and the position they occupy in the signifying economy of the image.

But the structural specificity of the album brings another dimension of David's process to our attention: if his project was to be an exercise in control, in practice its rehearsal seems to have been more of an aimless or ambiguous wandering within codes, among the artist's own past identities and the new ones tried on from the visual wardrobe of the Italian masters. The thematic focus on the feminine, or, more specifically, on the maternal, combined as it was with the discontinuous, "semiotic" structure of the album, can be seen as a sign of the artist's exploratory dips into this "instinctual territory before prohibition" and before signification (i.e., before the coherence of the Symbolic), that, whether conscious or not, signals a profound crisis in the subject's relation to meaning.[65] Thus the sketchbook could be seen to reveal the process of elaboration of the image as not only a constructive search and rehearsal of codes but also a threatening one, one that both articulates and puts its subject on trial. As we leaf through the album's pages, we seem to be catching a glimpse of David in between the different idioms, in interstices as

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it were, oscillating between meanings. On folio 7r (Fig.49), for example, the Sleeping bacchante, an antique gem relief from the so-called Portland Vase (also adopted by Raphael for his Cleopatra) cohabits with a moving scene of a mother bidding farewell to her young son in a short tunic and a Phrygian bonnet, while two sketchily adumbrated arms raised in joyous transport or despair hover below -- a fragmented topography of a resolute heterogeneity.[66] On another page (21r), Michelangelo's Judith from the spandrel in the Sistine Chapel walks away from the scene of Holofernes' beheading -- in and of itself a strange code to rehearse for the Sabine women -- pushed to the side by a rider in Roman armor on a rearing horse (Fig.50).[67] And, on one of the most surprising pages, the human skull dominating the sheet (the source here is difficult to establish) is drawn in firm lines over three lightly sketched (or traced) Horatii-like soldiers turned upside down (Fig.51). Lacan's reading of Holbein's French Ambassadors comes to mind, with his notion of the visual field being incised by death -- so is David's sketchbook, it seems, traversed by a smudge of such threat, confirming the point made here earlier about the menacing aspect of the preparatory process.[68] (Even if one were reluctant to accept the Kristevan model -- celebratory of the semiotic, and thus applicable to our context only with certain methodological precaution -- and think in, say, Jamesonian-Lacanian terms, the album does strike one as a

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remarkably hesitant rehearsal of the subject's insertion into Symbolic codes, one that points to a situation of crisis.[69])

Since the sketchbook's tissue seems itself to be constantly woven and unwoven, let us pull out and examine some of its threads. We may begin with what, in my view, constitutes a much more probable première pensée, if indeed there was any such thing, than the sheet thus called today. Folio 6r (Fig.52) in the prison album offers us undoubtly a very early formulation of the theme where a single man (his figure echoed or doubled in a weaker pencil contour behind him) and a single woman with a child confront one another, he, in combattive stance (it is Tatius's pose), a sword ready to pierce the enemy in one hand, a shield raised to protect himself in the other; she, walking towards him, extending the baby to him in a pleading and/or reconciliatory gesture. What seems to have been registered on this page was the gist of the Sabines as it appeared to the artist at the very beginning of his work, the subject boiling down for him to a confrontation between values of two different orders distilled into the antithetical pairing of man and woman. It tells us that it was gender dichotomy rather than male confrontation that seemed a more eloquent signifying relation for David from the beginning of his project. His sword, her baby -- the confrontational value of the juxtaposition seems to be more pronounced here than in

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the Brutus (what to choose?), except that it is his figure that gets doubled. This doubling gives the drawing the ambiguity that its antithetical structure (one equals, as it opposes, another) does not prepare us for. The relation of doubling to castration fear comes to mind. A degree of "unevenness" is also conveyed by body language. It is only he who has the body, actually; she is dressed, instead. Despite its sketchiness, his fight-ready pose is rendered with a considerable anatomical specificity; her corporality is all draperies. This brings me to the point that what is interesting about the prison sketchbook is not that it deploys gender dichotomy to work out meanings -- this is what David has always done[70] -- but how it does it.

It is curious, for example, how female and male figures are being rather systematically fitted across the album in two separate iconographic compartments, not only different from one another but also in a specific relation to one another. It is the codes of femininity in distress that are mobilized as visual sources for the Sabine women and David looks predominantly among images of female reaction to male suffering and sacrifice, such as the Deposition.[71] For men, on the other hand, it is the iconography of combat and/or heroic death that is being deployed here.[72] The combination cf the two is epitomized by folio 14r (Fig.53) which, despite its structural discontinuity, whith lexical fragments of different codes placed side by side, seems to

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be inviting us to look at it also as a coherent image that purposefully juxtaposes the display of a dying male youth carried by an older warrior with a series of female heads conveying pity, empathy and distress. In other words, even if we know that the radically discontinuous (almost post-modern) composition of this page stems from its status as a working visual note rather than a final image, the page seem to offer a kind of condensation of a gender relation that is being established in a more dispersed fashion throughout the album.[73]

Within this neat thematic topography of gender, one is struck by the agitated, at times violent, rhetoric of the drawings depicting women. The women's bodies are thrown on the ground, prostrated (f.59v; Fig.55), their hands gesticulating or tearing at their hair in despair (f.15r; Fig.56; and 58v; Fig.57), the draperies unfurling as if against gusts of violent wind (2v; Fig.58; and 3v), all this rendered with the laconic, condensed energy of a sketch. A nude woman -- her body slightly bent, one hand at her forehead, the other raised as if to fend off a blow coming from behind -- seems to be chased from the scene of representation (f.27r; Fig.59).[74] A clump of disorderly women is jotted down on one page (62v; Fig.60). On another, the aggressive angularity of lines seems almost to tear the sheet apart as a woman's attempt at intervention is being visually edited -- she looks as if she were being actually

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stalled, more than edited, by Romulus' shield which partially conceals her body from our view (25v; Fig.61). Obviously, this visual poetics of distress was a far cry from the much more contained, idealized forms of the finished painting. And its violence -- associated with? released by? the female signifier -- demands more attention.[75]

The last page mentioned here (f.25v; Fig.61) is most interesting because its structure reveals violence to be part of the process of relating female and male figures to one another, rather than being merely due to the high pitch of the women's emotion or a trace of the artist's creative élan. The figure of the running woman on this sheet is, in fact, one of the two female figures that received the most attention in the prison sketchbook (and, for that matter, outside it, in the other sketchbooks too), the other being the woman who in the Louvre première pensée (as well as in the final painting) kneels with her baby and embraces the lower leg of Tatius (folios: 6r, Fig.52; 15r, Fig.56; f.59v, Fig.55; f.62v, Fig.60). The woman on folio 25v (Fig.61) will be considerably reformulated in the process of David's visual research, to end up fragmented into a head, a piece of tunic over a thigh and a foot behind Romulus's shield and body in the finished canvas.[76]

The woman at Tatius's feet evolved from a figure marching calmly towards him with the baby in hand (Fig.52),[77] and

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ended up dramatically prostrated -- her body thrown on the ground, a baby placed by her side -- at his feet, (in 15r, Fig.56; and Figs.55; and 60).[78]

The second most worked on figure is one that, like the first, also coveys the woman's distress in a most dramatic fashion, with both of her arms raised up in the air, hair floating in a disarray (see especially 14r, Fig.53; 15r, Fig.56; 16r, Fig.62; 25v; Fig.61) or being torn at by her hands (e.g. 58r; Fig.55).[79]

What comes across in these two groups of drawings, then, is a need to posit the feminine as affective excess and, at the same time, to contain it, by positional subordination to the male figure. Folio 25v (Fig.61) epitomizes this, as it visualizes the running woman's distress, only to then effectively mask it with the looming fragment of a male body -- the latter, a remarkable cut of a thigh, a buttock and a shield, its fragmentariness appearing as if taken from a close-up film frame. This page seems to visualize with quite extraordinary literalness the <u>principle</u> under which the feminine came to operate as the signifier in David's project. If one were to choose just two pages from the entire sketchbook that would represent the most important trajectory of the project's development, my choice would be to look first at the folio 6r and then at the page of the woman seen <u>through</u> Romulus's body. This is hardly a progressive development, if we see it from the point of view

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of the woman's movement (the mobility of the female signifier is restrained rather than developed). What is interesting about it is the difficulty with which David appears to be moving on this trajectory, and the effort he has to put into mapping it out, signalled as this is by the amount of almost gratuitous force in his image: the violence of the woman's encounter with the shield, enhanced by the sheer strain of the artist's pencil stroke. Meanwhile, the drawings of a woman near Tatius's feet constitute another evidence of David's interest in rehearsing the submissive female position in the image.

Speaking of submission, one is obliged to notice the curious obsession with the image of a languid male body that traverses the corpus of the preparatory drawings, inside and outside the prison sketchbook. It is the male victim, rather than the combative Tatius or Romulus, that seems to have received the preponderance of the artist's attention in the process of the Sabines' elaboration. Within the composition of the whole, as exemplified by the Louvre première pensée, I am referring to the groaning corpse at the feet of Romulus. A drawing now in Lyon -- most probably a page torn out of another sketchbook (Fig.63.)[80] -- structured by an almost melodramatic display of a warrior's body expiring at the feet of a row of soldiers hedged with arms, gives us some insight into the positioning process. There is some ambiguity to this display: it could be a fallen corpse that

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was once part of this human wall of soldiers who now stand besides it; but there is a modicum of confrontation or subordination in laying the corpse thus, at the feet of figures with whom it does not perhaps belong, who, by such placement of the body, become the "them" of this image. Compared to folio 6r of the prison album, this sheet defines the male corpse's position as similar to that of the woman confronting the armed warrior. Are these positions interchangeable within the signifying economy of the preparatory process?

What the Lyon drawing also suggests is that the corps gémissant (as the French call it), although in the final painting rather marginal -- and not only spread defenselessly on the ground, but also, curiously, displaced or "blinded" by the shining leg of the triumphant Romulus -- must have been of particular importance for the artist (Fig.40). Perhaps this was because it could function as a mark of continuity with the early Homeric conception of painting to which David had once been committed and which revolved exclusively around the (victimized or suffering or dying) male body. In any event, variants of that heroic corpse cast in forms culled from Italian Renaissance masters, notably Raphael who based it on the antique reclining statue of Niobe's stricken son,[81] appear throughout the prison album (folios 4r; 11r, Fig.64; and 14r, Fig.53) the latter distinct from the others in that the

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body is that of a youth and is carried by an older soldier in armor).[82] It is as if a distinct voice -- Achilles's moan over the body of Patrocles? Priam's plea for Hector's corpse? -- resonated as a leitmotif of sorts into the visual polyphony of the album. But again, it appears puzzling that so many sheets contain this motif, so marginal within the whole composition.

But perhaps David planned to place the corpse differently. Folio 11r, where the warrior's body is spread languidly on the ground and surrounded by the emblematic elements that ended up in the very foreground of the final composition, seems to suggest that originally a much more exposed foreground location was assigned to that body than the place given to it in the finished canvas. If the emblematic resonance of the broken objects scattered around the body -- a fragment of a crushed lance, a piece of a hatchet's blade, a sword, a helmet rolling on the ground loosing its plumes[83] -- was aimed quite obviously at foregrounding the notions of rupture, scission, and loss, the body itself was, perhaps, also addressing a threat of some kind of fragmentation (as opposed to the desired social, psychosexual, and artistic wholeness.)

More could be said of this body from viewing an extraordinary squared loose sheet drawing of it at the Bibliothèque Nationale that clearly belongs to a much later stage of the subject's development (Fig.66).[84] What is quite

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extraordinary is its attentive elaboration of a most unusually vulnerable position for a male nude, one rarely seen in Western art,[85] with its head and torso continuing the pose of the languorous, quasi-erotic abandon of the earlier album versions while the legs, spread akimbo, not only fully reveal the genitals but seem to be opening up the entire body to a kind of penetrating, almost sado-masochistic gaze of the viewer: a body propped thus, it seems, for loving as much as for hurting. Only the torso of this figure, with a change in position of the right hand, made it to the final painted version.

Finally, on another level, some light seems to be thrown on the meaning of the male victims's body as deployed in the Sabines by the enigmatic men's head drawn on the verso side of the Louvre première pensée (Fig.68).[86] It resembles the head of David's Le Pelletier (Fig.69). The meaning of its appearance on this sheet is, however, unclear. Was it a face to be given to the body languishing at Romulus's feet? The Marat-like face in the center of the finished painting was just this kind of gesture of grafting one's own oeuvre onto the new image.[87] Or was it a mere passing note, perhaps an involuntary rehearsal, a repetition of these steps in one's own visual/political past that became problematic after Thermidor, and a working-through of material over which one seems to be losing control? Or, yet another option, was the sketch of the head perhaps linked to the project of

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engraving Le Pelletier?[88] Or, finally, was it a drawing done at the time when David's painting of Lepelletier was being removed from the Convention, in February 1795?

If the exact purpose of this head remains unclear, its placement on the verso of the Sabines drawing allows us to think it was somewhat linked with the project, perhaps at some early stage of its elaboration, given that by 1797 the première pensée was no longer in the artist's posession. Possibly, more exactly, it was done in late winter of 1795, given that Lepelletier's portrait became something of a problem at that time.[89] We could thus reasonably think of this residual trace of David's revolutionary icon in connection with the artist's rehearsals of a new formula for the image of male victim. For if, in and of itself, this trace is too flimsy to be the sole basis for an argument, it reinforces the impression we have as we look at these different variants of the male body, especially at the nude from the Bibliothèque Nationale, that it is the Revolution that presses its way through the signifying crust of the Italian masters and Homeric Antiquity -- the Revolution, not as some kind of raw force of the Real (this might be, but we have no way of knowing), but as a historically specific visual code. Look at the drawing of the nude from the Bibliothèque Nationale: it seems a combined body of David's Patrocles by the funeral pyre from the canvas of 1778 (the position of legs); his Hector of the 1783 (especially the

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tilted head); his Lepelletier (the position of the uppermost torso) and the Marat (the arm hanging down), both of 1793; and, finally, of the warrior based on the reclining figure of Niobe's son, transmitted via Raimondi, that appears in the prison album and on the Lyon preparatory sheet for the Sabines (specifically the arm flung across the torso). To be sure, this composite figure points, first of all, to the process of visual research in which different solutions are tried, some put together, some rejected before the final decision is made -- it is a sign of this fluid process. But it also suggests that one phase of the Revolution, specifically as a site of David's politically committed aesthetic invention, was far more on the artist's mind, far more a part of the Sabines process, than David himself, say, through Delafontaine's lips, was willing to admit. This corporeal amalgam of the Homeric heroes and the revolutionary martyrs -- a sort of trans-historical, trans-cultural condensation of male vulnerability -- could be seen, I think, as a signifier of a historically specific position from which it was drawn: that of David, a subject/artist on trial after Thermidor. In the artist's obsessive returning to this marginal motif within the final image, in the extraordinary visual attention paid to it throughout the preparatory process we can recognize a kind of pressure of the Marat and the Lepelletier, and via them, of a period in the artist's personal/political history, to

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find, or to be given a place in the new image. The corps gemissant could thus be seen not only as a mark of the desired continuity with the early Homeric conception of history painting, rehearsed again in prison, as in the Homer project, but also as a kind of involuntary (and partly self-incriminating) self-quotation, that brings to the surface of the Sabines the Revolution that was being bracketed out from it by the construction of wishful aesthetic bridges with the pre-revolutionary past.

This pressure of a code trying to find a place in the new visual system was paralleled by (or on some level articulating) the collective political need to have the Terror placed in the revolutionary history, a need that David, in his ambition to remain a public artist, was recognizing by the very choice of his theme. At this point, however, this need was difficult to fulfill: no forgetting, as postulated by the post-Thermidorian Jacobin discourse, was yet possible throughout the Thermidorian reaction. On the contrary, we were able to witness here (in chap. 1) the escalation of cultural articulations of revenge on the past. Thus, David's corpse must have been washed up on the shores of the Sabines project from the recesses of David's past oeuvre, not just by the ebb and flow of sheer creative effort but by the torrents of radical transformation in the republican Imaginary after the end of the Terror. In the mode of its presence within the preparatory corpus and in

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its rhetoric, the body of the male victim seems to be addressing itself to the new political imagery, to these bodies that swarmed under the feet of the monstrous Revolution in the Allégorie du 9 Thermidor; and to those beheaded corpses that filled the unbridgeable rift between the symbolic territories of the Terror and Thermidor in the Formes acerbes. David's male nude was a body image that sought in its own ambiguous and oscillatory way to oppose that kind of fragmentation by its persistent heroic wholeness, both anatomical and cultural. But in doing so, David's nude was also exposing its own vulnerability: it was a body of a victim, surrounded, as on f.11r, by emblems of fragmentation and loss. Thus it was a sign of wishful uninterrupted cultural continuity at a site of its actual loss, one that belonged to a visual code that was striving to keep its place in Republican language, a code in severe crisis. And it uttered its speaking/drawing subject as one under threat, yet not, as in Kristeva, threat as a universal condition of all subjects of the creative language, but a far more specific, historical threat under which a Republican artist with David's past tried to work, in prison, after the end of the Terror.

Perhaps these are rather substantial claims to make on the basis of so sketchily signifying evidence. Yet, I think it is important to recognize the preparatory process, with its visual lexias dispersed on the pages of the prison album and

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on the loose sheets, as a process of mapping out certain positions, fluid, oscillatory and inconclusive as these positions and the process itselfmay be. What acted as an anchor to these mobile position was the structure of the image as a whole, as rehearsed in the two Louvre drawings, of which we now need a better grasp.

The degree to which the positions and co-ordination between the figures was an important and difficult process is suggested by the large number of still visible traces of adjustments made in the positions of the main figures, which were cut out and pasted by David onto the surface of the Louvre première pensée. The positional coordination between Hersilia, Tatius and Romulus appears to have been the most difficult for the artist. The problem seemed to rest in how to relate the central female figure to both male protagonists so that while her irrupting force is clearly spelled out, the connecting, unifying function of the idea she represents would also get conveyed. The symbolic legacy, or burden, of Carracci's image -- the ambiguity of Hersilia's position as one of Perseus and the Medusa at the same time -- could be felt here. This was partly obtained by the figures of women who accompany the intervening Hersilia and act as compositional and thematic liasions between Tatius and Romulus, as well as between the latter two and Hersilia. The body language of these women was determined by their specific semantic function as conveyors of the

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affective and integrating meaning of the intervention. Their placement also helped to mend the rifts of male scission and to unfurl in front of the spectator a more or less uninterrupted fabric, a frieze-like tapestry of desired tribal unity. This function of composition as a structural reinforcement of the theme of reconciliation is particularly clear when we compare the "first" drawing to Vincent's earlier rendition of the same theme (Fig.70), which, as Robert Rosenblum suggested, David could have had on his mind when working on the Sabine Women.[90] Yet, it seems that the thought of his former academic colleague's work caused David to accentuate the difference between his conception and Vincent's, for if the setting slightly resembles Vincent's, the figure arrangement is entirely different. David reduced the cast of figures and sought clarification of the relations between the protagonists. Where several episodes of violent armed conflict are held together in the Vincent by a typically academic, pyramidal composition, David flattens the disposition, condenses the scene to one moment, locates it centrally, and makes a single woman, Hersilia, the focal point of the frieze-like image. Violence is played down (or rather, displaced onto the women themselves, as the sketchbook demonstrated) compared to the Vincent. There's less emphasis in the David on the quasi-erotic frisson triggered by Vincent's juxtaposition of ferocious armed men mutilating each others bodies and semi-exposed figures of

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women carrying babies and olive branches, as their tunics indiscreetely slide off their bodies in a movement revealing a nude breast here, the white skin of a plump arm there -- in fact, the entire register of latent sado-masochistic meaning on which the Vincent seems to thrive is somewhat deferred by David's rendition. In the David, anecdotical episodes of individual male and female confrontations are reduced and all the women are placed in the center, between the men; thus the crypto-erotic eloquence of the male-female body interaction is subordinated in favor of women's direct (not necessarily un-erotic) appeal to the viewer. This structure of the Sabines drawing thus formally enacts what the second Homer sketch thematized and the Psyché abandonnée foreshadowed, that is, the artist's refocusing on the audience (see the frontal, direct mode of addressing the viewer by the circle of mothers) and his particular dependence on women, the thematic and structural focus of the Sabines).

But the problem of how to make Hersilia an agent of interruption rather than disruption and how to link her to both principal warriors remained, a problem intensified by the above mentioned desire to also make her into a figure of appeal to the viewer. The provisional solution to this problem offered by the première pensée drawing is the central female figure that strides toward Tatius but addresses Romulus (with her head and the windblown hair

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spelling out the direction of this address beyond doubt). This was an arbitrary formal decision on David's part, given that the Antique sources (both Plutarch and Livy) and David's own text in the exhibition booklet have Hersilia address the attacking party, that is, the Sabine men led by Tatius rather than the Romans ("Sabines, what are you doing in front of the walls of Rome...."). This arbitrary privileging of Romulus's party is also carried out on the level of technique, inasmuch as this group is given much more elaboration, more lavis contrast and a gouache finish. The body, dress, helmet and shield of the Roman leader are rendered with much more articulation than in the sketchy handling of Tatius's accesories. It is at the feet of Romulus that the body of the groaning dying soldier, whose importance we established earlier, was placed, and the Romans and horses on his side of the image are given far more elaboration than the figures on the Tatius side of the image. Romulus's was, clearly, the part of the drawing invested with prioritary meaning. And this figure, through the shield it carries, got to play an important structuring role, as indicated by the second sketch.

In comparing the two large sketches, one is struck by a particular strategy used by the artist to inscribe irrupting femininity, the conveyor of affective extremes in the prison album, into the structure of the image. In the première pensée drawing David weaves the women together with the men

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into a figural frieze spread horizontally across the sheet.[91] The choice of the frieze format spatializes the temporal, narrative structure of the episode as it invites the viewer to scan the image laterally from one edge of the sheet to the other. That men and women here belong to the same narrative space is emphasized by the fact that all figures wear costumes and stand on the same ground strewn with corpses. The visible traces of the cut-and-paste procedure of figure adjustment (notably in the attempts to co-ordinate the figures of Hersilia, Tatius and Romulus), signal the importance of positioning in the process of constructing the image. But it is predominantly through the gestures and poses, rather than the women's place in the structure of the image that the theme of female intervention is visually conveyed here: disheveled women, some carrying babies, push through the fighting men as they address them with their bodies, pleading, supplicant, in distress.

In the more advanced drawing, it is no longer only the gestures but also the women's placement that articulate the meaning of their intervention both within and beyond the narrative.[92] For the narrative continuity, conveyed in the earlier sketch by the frieze of loosely woven figures, is disrupted in this drawing by a particular arrangement of female bodies gathered into a circular nugget around the central figure of the striding Hersilia. On her left, the women are placed one above the other in a kind of descending

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curved sequence, which, passing through the bodies of the children below, picks up on the right in the figure at the feet of Tatius, to end, as if released, in the body of a woman springing up from the ground, a child raised in her arms high above the pikes. The emblematic eloquence of this arrangement was further enhanced in the final painting, where the different ages of the women mark off their positions as if they were stages of a revolving movement. The curvilinear agitated sweeps of the women's tunics added in the upper part of the circle to the left and right of Hersilia's head, as well as the group of children now more fluently intertwined at her feet, further enhance the circularity of this strikingly planar arrangment.

Through this interesting formal manoeuvre of polarization or condensation according to gender, the women gain here a kind of symbolic or allegorical resonance. In other words, if we take the frieze as a kind of visual syntax, it is as if the narrative flow of its sentences had suddenly buckled and come to a denser swirl of metaphor, the sense of which is primarily indicated by its formal liasons with other elements within the painting's structure.

Here, the role of the figure of Romulus becomes important. Compared to the earlier sketch, his pose was steadied and his shield replaced by a larger and rounded one, of insistent frontality. Placed in the very foreground and parallel to the picture plane, the shield arrests our gaze

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by its prominence, while its conspicuous formal rhyme with the circle of women spells out, via the plaque with the she-wolf placed at its centre, the symbolic connection between mothering and the origins of the state, the connection that this visual metaphor tries to make is both "natural" as well as -- through the reference to Antiquity -- culturally legitimate. In other words, it suggests that like the legendary she-wolf utilized to represent the idea of the state, women, as mothers, are here harnessed to perform a similar metaphorical function. Thus, motherhood and femininity do not stand here for themselves but are bound arbitrarily with other notions and values, while the structure of the image "naturalizes" these culturally specific connections. Further, through the formal rhyme with Romulus' shield, the (male) defensive function of this construction of femininity is pronounced.

The sense of this allegorizing arrangement of women could be further specified through its formal links with outside references to the revolutionary image repertoire. For inasmuch as the arrangement of women suggests an image of a process, their rotating structure could be compared to those emblems of the Revolution used in popular imagery to impose a naturalizing reading of the political process, as in the anonymous engraving The New French Star or the tricolor Cockade following the course of Zodiac,[93] where the Revolution is likened, positively, to the movement of the

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planets (the signs of the Zodiac on top) or, to cite a negative intepretation, as in the caricature The French People or the Regime of Robespierre (Fig.71), where a circle of female figures, Death among them, satirizes the chance character of the Terror.[94] This is not to say that these prints were sources for David, but they help us establish a horizon of common references for eighteenth-century viewers, surrounded as they were by prints exhibited at the Salon, in shop windows and on the streets. These references could undoubtly quicken the potential viewers' recognition of the rotating figural structure as an image of the Revolution.

That the white-clad figure of Hersilia in the centre of David's painting was meant as an allegorical representation of "la patrie" is confirmed, as one critic tells us, by the artist himself.[95] Visually, this connection must have been easy to make for the Revolutionary viewer, accustomed as he or she was to the multiple feminine personifications of the new Republic, such as the one in the Jacobin vignette of the Comité de Salut Publique engraved by Queverdo, particularly close in her pose to Hersilia.[96]

Thus, in the second sketch, Romulus foregrounds and enhances the positioning function of the image's structure and, specifically, the function of holding in check the signifiers of the Terror. It is, predominantly, the signifying mission of women to stand for the Revolution, and their coordination with Romulus was therefore crucial. But

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notice also how Romulus's newly affirmed position puts the corpse lying at his feet "under erasure," so to speak: Romulus' bulging calf runs across the face of the victim, covering most of it -- and his eyes -- from our view. This effect is most interesting, given the reading of the corpse as a sort of signifying amalgam of David's past and present/wishful positions in regard to the Revolution, offered here earlier.

*

Mixing narrative and allegorical modes of representation, the Sabines drawing was not offering a new kind of structure per se. It was similar to earlier examples of David's post-1789 production, such as the Triumph of the people, it too being a kind of allegorico-narrative frieze.[97] More generally, the hybrid visual structure could be seen as typical of the revolutionary situation. In his analysis of the historical roots of fairy tales, the Russian theorist Vladimir Propp explained structural tensions within narratives, and the hybrid formations and figures resulting from them, as symptomatic of periods of transition or unrest, when different social orders coexist without merging.[98] Recently, Klaus Herding, examining prints, recognized the coexistence of different codes, sometimes contradictory ones, within one image as typical of revolutionary imagery.[99] The Sabines drawings, in that sense, could be seen as products of the Revolution par

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excellence. Yet, the distribution in the Sabines of these different representational modes according to gender, the alignment of one mode that addresses the viewer with male and another that does this with female figures gives this structure a specificity that begs for more explanation. We also need to further investigate the combination of (and the tension between) the women's compositional centrality with a willful structuring of their place that seems to signal a much more pronounced need for a positional constraint of Woman than is usually called for in representation.

If the Sabine women do not intervene for their own sake as women but as mothers defined by Republican discourse (the master code that here dictates the eloquent rhyme between the cluster of women and the shield with the she-wolf), this is to say that they intercede in the name of a certain social contract metaphorized here as family. Their particular structuring could thus be seen to spatialize the specific correlations of what the feminist theorist Theresa de Lauretis calls the "Oedipal contract."[100] This contract is what could be said to stipulate the thematic centrality of women in their social function as mothers. And, on the level of narrative/visual structure, it is what defines their function as one of limit, boundary or obstacle, for this is how the woman is usually positioned in relation to the course of the (traditionaly male) mobile hero, as all theories of narrative structure tell us.[101] In fact these

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theories present the very mechanism generating texts as a movement of male desire away from and towards feminine position. We might say that the drawing's arrangement literally represents the work of the narrative described by de Lauretis as the "mapping of differences, and specifically, first and foremost, of sexual difference into each text" which "projects these spatial positions of (male)subject and (female) obstacle" (the movement that generates text) onto the space of the image.[102] It is important to raise the issue of spatiality in the case of the Sabines because the particular structure of this drawing will be further enhanced in the painting and given extra emphasis by the innovative installation designed for it by David, an installation that will revolve around the interaction between the spectators' bodies and those painted by the artist.[103] Thus, although it might seem to threaten to subvert the narrative flow, the emblematic arrangement of women as obstacles only reaffirms its logic. In fact their positionning could be seen precisely as seeking to guarantee the narrative, and, by extension, political/social coherence.

Yet, why place so much emphasis on this visual structuring of what is a standard narrative situation? Why expend so much effort in placing the women? The strains and tensions in the composition of the drawing which are both a symptom and a result of this effort cannot be fully understood

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without an inquiry into the place of woman as signifier in Republican language. For that place was neither something given nor stable during the Revolutionary decade.

The emergence of real French women as political agents in the public sphere during the Revolution was in itself an intervention that caused considerable tensions and cracks in the bedrock of patriarchal order. And it caused some symbolic adjustments, too. One of them was the appearance of a new iconography of women, mainly exemplified by popular imagery, although the adjustment of the high-cultural codes need still to be examined.[104] One could think of the representations of women's actual participation in the Revolution that focused on their militancy, such as the march of women to Versailles on October 5, 1789.[105] Or of the images that documented women's capacity to irrupt into the space where laws were made, such as the engravings depicting women intervening at the National Convention. There exist visual reports of women's ambition to produce their own patriotic discourse and the projects of their own laws, as in Le Sueur's well known Club des citoyennes républicaines (Musée Carnavalet). Rarer are positive images of female political intervention involving violence against men. One such example, iconographically most pertinent in regard to the Sabines, is the anonymous engraving entitled Les Pouvoirs de la liberté ou l'Effroi des Egoïstes et des Aristocrates, dédiés aux Héroïnes Françaises (Fig.72),

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produced around 1793. In it, a woman strikingly similar in her pose to David's Hersilia, leads other female patriots in their counter-attack against "aristocrats", as the inscription underneath defines the men besieging a Republican fortress. Mixed together with men in the thick of the action, some of them armed, others not hesitating to use their own bodies as weapons, the women are fighting here not as mothers and/or wives but as autonomous and aggressive agents of Revolutionary history, seeking to prove that their commitment to the defence of liberty equals that of men. The inscription below makes this goal clear in the aggressive language of the militants of the year II: "Hé! bien tats d'Etres viles et infames, avez vous oubliez [sic] ce que firent les Lacédémoniennes, les Spartiates et les Beauvoisiennes. Croyez vous que les Républicaines Françaises soient moins insensibles [sic] pour leur liberté? Jugez nous mieux, et si nos hommes trahissent, fuient où perissent, nous vous feront danser la Carmagniole au son de Canon."[106]

All the above examples date from before October 1793. What happened in Ocober 1793 was that the Jacobin government, despite its original support for women as an organized political force, initiated their exclusion from the public scene, banning all female clubs and, in justification, positing women's incapacity for all political action on biological, psychological and moral grounds.[107] Lynn Hunt has demonstrated some of the immediate symbolic consequences

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of this exclusion, such as the gender switch in the official representations of the state from female Liberty to virile Hercules.[108] Another consequence was a drastic diminution of positive representations of female revolutionary interventions. In stating this loss, I do not mean to celebrate the pre-1793 imagery in any easy fashion. I do not want to imply that this imagery was transparent to the actual female experience, rather than shaping the meaning of this experience according to certain codes, most of which were still controlled by men. (Female authorship would not quarantee an automatic escape from the patriarchal codes, either.) While we cannot afford an expanded discussion of this imagery here, I evoke it to make a point about the effect of the closure of women's clubs in October 1793 on the Republican Imaginary: the beginning of the end of the use of "woman" as an active and positive signifier of political action after October 1793. What needs more detailed attention here is what happened to the image of woman during the Thermidorian reaction, for the transformation that occurred in political imagery after the end of the Terror was crucial to the position of femininity in Republican language for at least a century to come. It is in the course of the Thermidorian reaction, and specifically during and after the women-led popular insurrections of Germinal and Prairial, that there occurred a drastic shrinkage of positive representations of politically

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engaged or intervening women. From winter/spring 1795, and due to the laws that followed the suppression of the Prairial insurrection when all public forms of female collective action were definitely banned, such images as Les pouvoirs de la Liberté were rare, if not altogether impossible to find. Instead, there appeared a plethora of negative images. We have already witnessed some of them in the section II, e.g., the Allegorie du 9 Thermidor, which excellently illustrates the post-Terrorist appearance of the castrative woman through which the image of the Revolution was negatively re-configured into an image of threat. In addition to this new kind of feminine personification of the Revolution, there emerged, in the wake of Prairial, new negative figures representing women's militancy. There are thus two levels on which the change in the signifying function of femininity occurred. This major transformation needs, however, much more contextualized attention, that goes beyond the goals of interchapter -- it is discussed in the next part of this study. What I wanted to do here was simply to point to the next territory that the Sabines project straddles. For David's experience of the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction significantly altered the image of the Sabines .

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Notes to interchapter:

1. P.M. Delafontaine, Notes, 1-23; and idem, Rectification des quelques erreurs, 1-8.

2. Delafontaine, Notes, passim.

3. As well as the sketches for Leonidas. See RF 9237, Cabinet des dessins, Louvre.

4. While the Sabines are not mentioned, the Homer, as was observed here earlier, was referred to explicitly. But only once. Otherwise, in his letters to the authorities the artist -- as it was stated already -- mentions only generally a history painting that he undertook, or a canvas of "great difficulty necessitating models."

5. The structure of the notebook invites us to reconsider the chronology of Leonidas. Its origins could have been much earlier than Delécluze's date of 1798, when David finished the Sabines. Should we not suggest that Leonidas was already considered by David in the Luxembourg? Or at least in the wake of the imprisonment and, especially, after the Jacobins' defeat after Germinal/Prairial events? The iconography of Spartan suicide corresponded to the way the "derniers Montagnards" understood themselves at a time. See also Crow's suggestion to that effect in his "Gros David with Swoln Cheek."

6. The re-proposal included his offer to change the cast of characters. This does not mean that David abandoned the project of executing the Sabines, but it indicated that the latter was not the only important canvas he had in mind. However, David failed to get government support and abandoned the project. For his petitions to the government to obtain support for finishing the Tennis Court Oath, see see Ph. Bordes, Le Serment, 86-7.

7. This argument cannot be developed here without addressing the issues that belong with David's Directorial career and thus go beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, what is important, i.e., the problem of continuity and rupture in the mode in which the Sabines referred to the Terror, will be discussed below. I should also say that the Directorial period, and specifically David in this period, has been the object of my

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research and the issue that I raise here is part of the discussion I hope to complete soon after the completion of this study.

8. There is even there a gap that needs to be attended to: the canvas was finished in the fall of 1798 yet it was not shown to the public until December 1799. This delay in public presentation has not been addressed in the literature. My own research convinces me it was a deliberate decision on behalf of the artist which had to do with the combination of two factors: 1) the political situation: the crackdown on the Jacobins; 2) David's negotiations with the government concerning the format and site of the display he envisaged for his canvas. I addressed some of these issues in a talk at the CAA meeting in Houston, 1988.

9. That is, when it became clear that this is David's major work of the period. Delafontaine assumes that it was understood as such already at the Luxembourg. But we have nothing to prove that. See Delafontaine, Notes, 1-23.

10. The first, in black pencil, pen and ink, grey wash and white highlights, Musée du Louvre, cabinet des dessins, RF 5200; the second, more elaborate, similar technique, inv. 26.183. For both, see A.Serullaz in David, exh. cat. nos. 147 and 152.

11. The provenance of this album is ascertained by its one-time owner, Paul Chennevières, who bought it from Thibaudeau, and who wrote about this transaction and identified the album in pencil on its inside cover. The Homer pages and especially the first one, with the references to the sources David asked Delafontaine to bring him from the Bibliothèque Nationale, confirms the album's prison origins.

The second in importance, although containing far fewer Sabines-related sketches (five pages in each), are two drawing albums used for the Tennis Court Oath preparations: one at the Louvre, Cabinet des dessins, RF 36942; another at the Musée national du Château de Versailles, MV 7800. Virginia Lee ("Jacques-Louis David: the Versailles Sketchbook,") first signalled the existence of the Sabine-related sketches. All of them are catalogued and reproduced in Philippe Bordes, Serment, nos. 26-7, 204-34. In the Versaille sketchbook (MV 7800), the following folios are related to the Sabines: 2v; 3r; 4v; 49r; 54r. In the Louvre Tennis Court Oath sketchbook (RF 36942) these are: 6r; 12r; 13r; 47r; 48r; 49r.

Finally, there are few Sabines-related pages (notably f.27) in the album devoted largely to the work for the Distribution of the Eagles, now in the Art Institute in Chicago (Joseph and Helen Regenstein Collection, sketchbook 1961-393).

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12. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, inv. W 3494. There is also one drawing in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm (inv. NM 111-1969); one in Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen; one in Smith College Museum of Art in Northampton, 1956.46; one in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Lyon, inv.5746, (perhaps a sheet from a carnet now lost, see P. Rosenberg, "Un ensemble"; also reproduced by Serrulaz in David, 1989, no. 149, 345; one in private hands, repr. in ibid, no. 151, 346; and one recently discovered in the Musée Ingres in Montauban (see A. Serrulaz "Un dessin de David retrouvé.")

13. Three drawings in Douai, inv. 460; a drawing in Moscow, the Pushkin Museum, inv.4462. For the reason of its obvious lateness, this group will receive least attention in this section.

14. The drawing is in the Cabinet des dessins, Louvre.

15. Delafontaine, Notes, 7. Delafontaine stated that the work on the Sabines began only with the transfer to Luxembourg where David had bigger atelier. This is where, states Delafontaine, the first drawing later given by David to another student of his, Espercieux, was executed. This provenance appears -- inscribed by Espercieux himself? -- under the drawing thus identified as the 1ère pensée and preserved now in the Louvre. See also David's letter from 3 January 1799 to Espercieux in which he makes the gift, see Wild., 1299.

Delafontaine also states the existence of another large scale drawing with the figures in the nude, which came into the possession of Le Breton and later Ingres. Could it be that Delafontaine confuses it with the second drawing, now in the Louvre, where figures are not in the nude? Or is it the rather small drawing recently published by Serullaz, ("Un dessin de David retrouvé") from Ingres' collection in Montauban, where men are shown in the nude. Yet, the latter are background figures and it is not a drawing comparable in status to the 1ère pensée. Does there exist another drawing, yet undiscovered, perhaps still?

16. Some of them belong, as I will argue here, with the later stages of the project's development, linked as they seem to be with the second drawing of the whole composition that Delafontaine situates after David's release from prison. (The closeness of this composition to the final version confirms his account, although we still don't know when exactly this drawing was produced.)

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17. For the Tennis Court Oath-related sketchbooks, see Virginia Lee, "Jacques-Louis David: the Versailles Sketchbook," and Philippe Bordes, Le Serment, 204-34.

18. Folio 6 recto in album 36 942, Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre.

19. On the seals being imposed and David asking the authorities to have them removed, see J.L. David' correspondence with the CSG, Archives nationales, F7 6711, plaq.7, nos 581-6 and 593-5. David asks the CSG for the return of his arms and other personal effects kept under the seals and he also wants to be relieved from having to pay for the guard who was put in charge of his sealed house during David's second imprisonment. In one petition David refers to the fact that his belongings were already sealed once before, during his first imprisonment, and that all his things as well as his behaviour was examined, and he was found innocent. Ibid., no. 593. See also brief reference to this in Wild., 1202.

20. Folio 47 recto in the Louvre album, RF 36 942.

21. I am not discussing here the most obvious aspect of this corpus, i.e., its incompleteness due to loss or other circumstances that prevent us now from having access to all preparatory drawings that David produced. But this needs to be taken into account, too.

22. The model for such approach is offered in Rosalind Krauss, Terminal Iron Works: The Scultpure of David Smith.

23. By this she does not mean poetry in general, as a certain kind of rhetorical literary text, but rather the ambitious experiments with language exemplified by both prose and poetry of certain Modernist French authors. See Kristeva, Révolution, 19-106 and "From one identity to another," Desire in language.

24. See ibid., ("From one identity to another," Desire in language), 132-3.

25. For the notion of the political unconscious in textual forms of representation, see F. Jameson, The Political Unconscious, esp. 17-102. For some discussion of the unconscious of the SW as image, in its final form, see my "David's Sabine Women."

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26. What has to be said is that, while there are works, like the Antique head and the medallions that, I believe, were done during the second imprisonment, we do not have any evidence that David worked on the Sabines there. The conditions at the Quatre Nations were stricter. There was no Delafontaine or any other assistant for securing David's connection with the outer world, except family visits. And David was ill. It is reasonable to suppose he worked on the Sabine at the Luxembourg, in between prisons and after.

27. See Plutarch, Lives (Life of Romulus), 2: 14-19, (David mentions this as his source in the booklet produced for the Sabines exhibition); Livy, History of Rome, 1: 9-13; and Ovid, Fasti, 3: 180-232.

28. See Baczko, Comment, 164-190. And chap. 1, section ii. above.

29. "Faison oublier à nos concitoyens les malheurs inséparables d'une grande révolution; disons-leur que le passé n'est plus à nous, qu'il appartient à la posterité." Cited in Baczko, Comment, 169. See also chap. 1 above.

30. For the cohering aspect of the bilan's effect, see Baczko, Comment, 167.

31. It has to be said that the album sketches testify to other solutions David was playing with at the time, other iconographies of political conflict: the drawings of Sabine figures are interspersed in it with the figures that David will use later in Leonidas. Thus the theme of reconcilation must have been considered by the artist as alternative to the images of a defeat of the leader of Sparta. Given the fact that Sparta was the privileged rhetorical figure of the Jacobins it is not unreasonable to assume that David was playing here with the theme of Leonidas as an hommage to Robespierre, a painting, however, needless to say, impossible to paint in the political context of 1794, when no one dared to defend Robespierre.

32. See Furet, Penser la Révolution, esp. 70-87.

33. Lindet, as cited in Baczko, Comment, 169. David's former colleague's speech was certainly available to him in prison, for example as a reprint in the Moniteur that the artist seem to have read.

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34. For the masculinization of the Jacobin rhetoric, see Lynn Hunt, Politics, class and culture, esp. 87-119, and, more recently, Joan Landes, Women in Public Sphere.

35. Cf. N. Bryson, Word and Image, 246.

36. On the Phallic Mother, see Kristeva "Motherhood according to Bellini," chap. in Desire in Language.

37. See Margaret D. Carroll, "The Erotics of Absolutism," 5ff.

38. Ibid., 7.

39. The Guercino is in the Musée du Louvre. For the function of male struggle over women as a thematic vehicle of male bonding, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire. See also useful discussion of this issue in M. Carroll, "Erotics," esp. 10-11.

40. For the image of Hercules as the Jacobin representation of power exclusive of women, see Lynn Hunt, Politics, Class and Culture in the French Revolution, 87-119. For further development of her argument, see also "Caricatures and Revolutionary Psychology," in French Caricature and the French Revolution, 33-40.

41. Delafontaine, Notes, 7-9. I am largely paraphrasing his account below.

42. "[...] une précipice où il craignait de retomber." Ibid, 2.

43. "Il me semblait à mon retour que je venais d'être opéré de la cataracte..." Ibid, 2-3. In equally strong terms, David himself accounted some time later, in his Autobiographie, (1808), for what could be called the shock of Italy: "...à peine fus-je à Parme que vouyant les ouvrages de Corrège je me trouvais déjà ébranlé; à Bologne je commençais à faire des tristes réflexions, à Florence je fus convaincu, mais à Rome je fus honteux de mon ignorance. Etourdi de toutes les beautés qui m'environnaient je ne savais auxquelles me fixer." Wild., 1368. This confirms the reliability of Delafontaine as a reporter of David's own observations. See also Régis Michel, in David e Roma and, most

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recently, his David. L'Art et le politique, 20-9 and 133-5.

44. Delafontaine, Notes, 1-3.

45. Cf. "Raphael, homme divine! c'est toi qui par dégré m'éleva jusqu'à l'antique! C'est toi peintre sublime!...". David, Autobiographie, in WIld., 1368, 157. Raphael becomes here a sort of Jupiter elevating David-Ganimedes to the aesthetic heavens and pleasures of Antiquity. Note the erotic connotations in David's way of phrasing his account of his artistic career throughout the text of the Autobiographie.

46. Delafontaine, Notes, 4.

47. "Je commençai alors à savoir diriger mes études, j'oubliai peu à peu les mauvaises formes françaises qui se présentaient sans cesse sous ma main, ce que je faisait commençait à prendre un charactère antique...." said David about his studies in Rome. Wild., 1368.

48. Thus we witness here one of the early formulations of the myth of the Sabines as a "purely" aesthetic enterprise, which will serve for the generations of art historians as the instrument of recuperation of David as an essentially a-political artist whose "credulous" nature made him wander into the alien territory of revolutionary politics.

49. Imagine a student in his early twenties visiting his imprisoned master daily, his only regular listener in these days, and one surely making an effort to register whatever was being said, given the precarious political status of David who could be tried and executed at any point. Large chunks of conversation must have etched themselves in Delafonataine's mind in this context. This is not to say that we should take his account unself-consciously, as source of some "truth" on David. But its language, especially given the coincidence of some of its rhetorical figures to David's own, could be seen as close to the artist's way of putting his undertstanding of his situation into words.

50. On the trauma around David's access to the Academy, see R. Michel, David, l'art et le politique, 15-19. On David's relationship with the Academy in broader sense, see most usefully Crow, Painters and Public Life, 229-32.

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51. Arlette Serullaz (in David, 1989, no. 148, 342-4) mentions Carracci as the source.

52. See Régis Michel in David e Roma, for the importance of the Caracci and the Bolognese school on David.

53. Ovid, The Metamorphoses, IV, 668-764; V, 1-235. See also John Rupert Martin, The Farnese Gallery, Princeton, N.J., 1965, 129-32.

54. La Battaglia tra i Romani e Sabini, fresco, Palazzo Magnani in Bologna.

55. Even before he gets petrified, Phineus begs for reconciliation which, although he does not survive to appreciate it, is what ensued from the battle.

56. Let us register another important implication of David's borrowing. For Annibale Caracci was not only a brilliant 16th-century continuer of the classicizing tradition in the Italian art epitomized by the output of such High Renaissance masters. He was also the founder of the first art academy in Bologna and, as such, an ambiguous figure of reference for David. On the one hand, he stood for what David detested and opposed even before 1789 and what only his engagement in the revolution enabled him to combat and suppress: the Academy as an institution of privilege and exclusion that had affected him personally early on and with which he found himself in conflict throughout his pre-revolutionary career. To borrow from Caracci and to surpass him symbolically equaled for David to surpass the Academy, or to re-enact mastery over what became an amalgamated threat of the Academy/revolution as the Terror. On the other hand, it was a figure of the artist as the Academy, that is, as its origins and as the model for all subsequent attempts of the artistic institutional self-definition. Let us recall that David, certainly not accidentally, chose the premises of the former academy of architecture as the site for his independent exhibition of the Sabines that opened in December 1799: it was a gesture of a painter at the end of the revolution as the autonomous artist rising from the Academy's ruins.

57. "Medusa's Head: Male Hysteria under Political Pressure."

58. Ibid., 32.

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59. Gallagher, Fineman, Hertz, "More about 'Medusa's Head'", a response to Hertz's article, ibid., 56.

60. Ibid.

61. Similar understanding of the SW as a field traversed by the petrifying gaze of the Gorgon but deployed for different interpretive purposes, has been offered by Norman Bryson, in his Tradition and Desire, 87-101.

62. See Barthes, S/Z, esp. 13-15.

63. See Kristeva, "From one identity..", 140-1.

64. See my "David's Sabine Women," 400.

65. See Kristeva, ibid., esp. 135. She stresses how the semiotic is articulated by the centrality of the speaker's relation to the mother on both thematic and structural levels.

66. RF 9137, f.7r. Portland Vase was engraved by Montfaucon. See Serullaz in David, 1989, 343.

67. RF 9137, f.21r. The former, most probably after Enea Vico's engraving after Michelangelo, see Bartsch, XV, p.281, no.1. The latter perhaps based on Domenichino's Meeting of St.Nile and Otto III.

68. See Jacques Lacan, "Anamorphosis," esp. 88-9.

69. See Jameson, "The Imaginary and the Symbolic in Lacan,".

70. On David's use of gender in the Oath of the Horatii, see Linda Nochlin "Women, Art and Power."

71. For the iconography of female reaction to male suffering, see, for example, the female figures on folios 4r, 14r (source: Anonimo Veneziano's engr. aft. Raphael's Carrying the Cross, See Bartsch, XIV, p,34, no.28); 15r (source: Andrea Mantegna's Deposition, for engraving see Bartsch, XIII, p.230, no. 296) 16r,

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58v, 59v (possible source: Fra Bartolomeo's Deposition, in Palazzo Pitti in Florence. This was one of David's favourite painters during his sojourn in Italy).

72. See especially male figures on folios: 4r, 5r (source for the nude warrior: vase Sacrifice of Iphigenie, Montfaucon, II, 1st part, pl.XXXIV, also cited by David; see Serullaz) 6r; 11r (source: Marcantonio Raimond, Agostino Veneziano, Combattimento tra Romani e Carthaginesi, Bartsch, XIV, p.172, no.212; this figure in turn was based on the Roman copy after sculpture depicting Niobe's son, see Haskell & Penny, p.278-9, ill.147); 14r, (male group is a variant of the famous Pasquino sculpture group, sometimes interpreted as Menelaos with the body of Patrocles (relevant iconography for David, as we will see. For Pasquino, see Haskell & Penny, Taste and the Antique, 291-6.

73. Women are drawn after Anonimo Veneziano (after Raphael) Carrying the Cross (Fig.54); see Bartsch, XIV, p.34, no.28. Men are drawn after Pasquino group (see note 72).

74. No source known but she strikes me as a figure borrowed from the iconography of the Expulsion from Paradise (Eve).

75. Another register of this association of the feminine with violence is thematic: see the image of Judith after the beheading of Holofernes (based on Michelangelo's Sistine fresco) that got "stranded" on one page of the album (21r). Is it not an interesting iconography -- male beheading by a woman -- to be explored for the subject of the Sabines?

76. For the process that led to it, see folios: 14r, 15r, 16r, 25v, 27r, 58r.

77. This female figure on f.6r was subsequently "split up" into three different ones: the one kneeling and embracing Tatius' leg; the one handing him a baby (see also the highly finished studies for her on f.2v & 3r) and the third one who jumps up holding high her baby, absent from the 1ère pensée but elaborated on folios 4r; 10r of the prison album and f.6r of another Louvre album (RF 36942).

78. The prostrated woman was, as I suggested earlier, culled from Fra Bartolomeo's Deposition.

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79. Aside from Mantegna, Anonimo Veneziano's engraving after Raphael's Carrying of the Cross served as a reference in the elaboration of this figure, both already mentioned above.

80. Squared drawing, Lyon, Musée des Arts Decoratifs, inv. 5746. See P. Rosenberg, "Un ensemble des dessins," 427-8, and A. Serullaz, in David, 1989, 345.

81. For this figure, originally of Niobe's sculptural group, see Haskell & Penny, 291-6.

82. The source identified for folio 11r is Agostino Veneziano, a pupil and collaborator of Raimondi, Raphael's engraver, Bataille au coutelas ou au cimetière, after Bartsch, XIV, 172, no.212. (Fig.65).

83. Most of them appear in the final composition; others, like the helmet, present also in the 1ère pensée, were ultimately left out.

84. This drawing was most recently published by François Fossier in the exhibition catalogue Da David a Bonnard. Disegni francesi del XIX secolo dalla Bublioteca Nationale di Parigi, no. 2, 20, where it is identified, eraneously I think, as a preparatory sketch for David's Funérailles de Patrocle, now in Dublin. The body is much closer to the corpse laying at the feet of Romulus. The position of the upper part of the body, with its tilted head, chin up, clearly a post-Hector from Andromache body, is similar to this corpse. The position of the legs, it is true, could be seen as similar to Patrocles, but the upper part is completely different and follows instead the paintings done after Patrocles funeral, such as Andromache (Fig.67) and Marat. Fossier's mistake is interesting in that it confirms, though unintentionally, that the connection we were establishing here between the prison oeuvre and David's early work is apparent also to others, to the point of confusion. (Fossier is also mistaken in announcing the drawing as until now unpublished: it has been reproduced before in Werner Hoffmann, Goya and the revolution, exhibition catalogue, Hamburg, Kunsthalle.)

85. In Depositions, Christ rarely is rendered as sexually vulnerable. His body could be erotically charged, like the almost dying Adonis-like Christ in Rosso's painting in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston but this is far from the spread legs of the Davidian body here.

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86. The verso is reproduced in David 1989, no. 147, 340.

87. For the effect of this grafting in the final painting, see my "David's Sabine Women," 405.

88. This was an issue that came up when David was first released from prison, and when the engravers demanded money he owed them for the Marat and the Lepelletier prints. For the correspondence on in this issue between the engravers, David and the authorities, see Wild., 1222.

89. The "first thought" was given by the artist to Espercieux in January 1799. See the inscription on the drawing itself and David's letter to Espercieux in Wild., 1299. For more on the fortune of the Lepelletier in winter 1795, see chap. 3 below.

90. Robert Rosenblum, "A New Source for David's Sabines." If this was so, David must have remembered the Vincent especially at the early stage of his preparation elaboration, when he was deciding the general layout.

91. RF 5200. Cabinet des dessins, Musée du Louvre.

92. 26183 (GF). Cabinet des dessins, Musée du Louvre.

93. Le Nouvel Astre français où la Cocarde tricolore suivant le cour du zodiaque, anonymous engraving, 1793, coll. Hennin, 11338, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris. For an interesting discussion of this engraving as a representation of the revolution see Klaus Herding, "Visual Codes in the Graphic Art of the French Revolution," 83-90.

94. Le Peuple français, ou le Régime de Robespierre, anonymous engraving, [ca 1793/4], coll. Hennin, 11915. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

95. Chaussard, Le Tableau de Sabines, Paris, an VIII, (1799), 4.

96. Queverdo, République française, une et indivisible. Comité de salut public. Section de la querre, vignette engraved after F. Garneray, ca 1792, coll. Hennin 123, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

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97. For the mixture of modes in the Triumph, see Philippe Bordes, "Le recours à l'allégorie sous la Révolution Française."

98. Vladimir Propp, "Edip v svete fol'klora." Cited in T. de Lauretis, "Desire in narrative," 113-4 and n. 16, 202.

99. Herding, "Visual Codes."

100. A term which brings together the semiotic homology of several conceptual frameworks: "Saussure's notion of language as social contract; Rousseau's social contract, with its gender distinction; Freud's Oedipus complex as the structuring psychic mechanism responsible for the orientation of human desire and the psychosocial construction of gender; and what could be named reformulating Mulvey and de Lauretis, a "visual contract" which determines the conditions of vision by fixing the specific relations of image to the meaning and subjectivity of spectator. Teresa de Lauretis, "The female body and heterosexual presumption." 260.

101. For a useful overview of these, see Teresa de Lauretis, "Desire in Narrative," in Alice doesn't. Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema, 103-157.

102. Ibid., p.121.

103. See my "David's Sabine Women," 406-11.

104. Cf. Vivian Cameron Woman as image and image-maker in Paris during the Revolution. Ph.d. diss., Yale 1983.

105. One also should mention David's own homage to the heroines of October in the Festival of Unity in which one station, at the Fabourg St. Denis, was defined by the arch of triumph with reliefs representing the women's October march onto Versailles.

106. Anonymous engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, series Qb. 1793. Linda Nochlin has discussed the meaning of the intervening woman in the imagery related to the women's defense of Beauvais, to which this print also refers, in her talk at the Courtauld Institute in London in 1989.

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107. These are the terms in which, in late October 1793, the deputy André Amar opened the debate on women as a political force which ended with the adoption of the laws of 9 brumaire year II (30 October 1793), prohibiting all female political association. See Darline G. Levey and Harriet B. Applewhite, "Women and Political Revolution in Paris," 298-9.

108. Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class, 87-119.

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Jacques-Louis David and Republican Culture in France after Thermidor, 1794-1795

by

Ewa Lajer-Burcharth

Volume II

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Part III:
David and the crisis of Republican culture
in the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction

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Chapter 3

i. The war of signs and symbols

Given the iconography of the Sabines which the artist began to develop during his first imprisonment, it might strike one as an odd coincidence that David's second imprisonment would be triggered by (real) women's political intervention. And yet that is exactly what happened. The artist was arrested in the wake of the women-led insurrection of Prairial, which was itself a point of culmination of a series of popular riots and feminine protest due to political and economic crisis in the winter of 1795 in Paris. David's imprisonment belonged to the high tide of the anti-Jacobin repressions brought about by the popular unrest for which the Jacobins were being held responsible. The connection between the insurrection and Jacobinism was, as existing scholarship maintains, entirely arbitrary (if politically motivated, about which more will be said later).[1] Neither David nor his colleagues swept by the wave of post-Prairial arrests had anything to do with the insurrection per se. Yet, the imaginary identification, forged in Thermidorian political discourse, of the Jacobins with the last popular revolt was very effective. As its result, these arrests epitomize the single most important feature of the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction to which this chapter is devoted, namely, the increased

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political power of certain symbolic connections coined across the discourse and visual representations.

In order to understand David's position in the context of the second stage of the reaction, we need to examine the nature of these symbolic connections. And we also need to have some sense of the political and cultural circumstances in which they were made. If the first stage of the Thermidorian period -- from the fall of Robespierre through the Nantes trials -- could be largely understood as an effort to construct the image of the Terror, the second stage was marked by political, cultural and, importantly, social reaction to that image. Schematically, one could say that this political/cultural reaction operated on two social levels. One was that of the jeunesse dorée, the anti-Jacobin militia of petit bourgeois males whose urban interventions in winter 1795 wrought havoc in the symbolic space of the city, which was until then inscribed and largely controlled by the emblems and representations of the year II. Another, although not unrelated, was that of women of the popular classes who from January 1795 on, acting upon a combination of their political discontent with the status quo and their difficulties in maintaining households in the harshest economic conditions in years, took to the streets in a series of demonstrations that culminated in two mass rebellions in the spring -- the so-called journées of Germinal and Prairial. Schematic as it is, this duality of

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the social reaction was -- as we will see -- roughly how it was perceived at the time it was taking place. I want to argue that both social phenomena, which I would like to understand as forms articulating, on the one hand, male hysteria under political pressure (to borrow a term from Neil Herz) and, on the other, female politico-economic anger, caused most important symbolic adjustments in the cultural, specifically visual, repertory of Republicanism, namely, negative feminization of the symbolic figures of the year II.[2] And, in a way that was distinct from the first stage of the reaction, these adjustments came about not through a gradual erosion of codes, but rather, as we will see, through an open war of codes and symbols. The symbolic conflict between the year II and the year III was now being acted out as a violent clash, socially and bodily, by real persons in the physical space of the city which had been thoroughly politicized (politically configured) by the revolution; the symbolic conflict was given, in other words, a gender-specific social location, with the male jeunesse often engaging in street skirmishes with the female sans-culotte militants.[3] David was caught, so to speak, in the midst of this symbolic havoc, and this had some tangible effects on him as a political person, as an artist, and as a discursive identity. We will do well, then, to first try to grasp these two important aspects of the reaction, before moving on to examine David's own situation in the second

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stage of the reaction and his textual and visual response to it.

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If it would be incorrect to say that in their second stage the post-Thermidorian power struggles shifted onto the domain of symbols and other cultural representations (this having been the domain in which the processes of reaction operated in their first stage as well), it needs to be recognized that the symbolic dimension of the political struggles intensified or was exacerbated from mid-winter 1795. This was due to the accumulated effect of the first stage of the reaction. But in winter 1795 the intensified conflict over representations of the values of the year II was also fed by a combination of several immediate factors, three of which perhaps mattered the most: the political and symbolic effect of the Nantes trials (as discussed in chapter I); also in December 1794, the triumphant reintegration of the Girondist deputies ousted from the Convention by the Jacobins in June 1793; and a growing popular discontent due to the critical economic situation aggravated by the unusually cold winter.

But the immediate executive force behind what was rapidly becoming a symbolic revolution was, as François Gendron amply demonstrated, the jeunesse dorée, the urban militia of young men of the petite and moyenne bourgeosie, controlled by the prominent "reactionary," that is, anti-Terrorist,

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deputy Fréron through his journal, Orateur du peuple.[4] The jeunesse dorée constructed its identity in contradistinction to the Parisian sans-culotterie and functioned as its most aggressive political and social opponent on the public scene after Thermidor. In the period from Pluviôse to Ventôse year III (end of January to late March 1795), the jeunes gens conducted an unending series of campaigns against both sans-culotte and Jacobin culture in the theatres, on the streets, in cafés and other public spaces. All forms of civic life in the city, from monuments to fashion, became vulnerable to their -- often violent -- interventions. Through the logic of symbolic condensation and displacement which their actions could be said to have followed, they were largely responsible, I will argue, for the semantic amalgamation of the popular movement with Jacobinism, an amalgamation that was far from being a reflection of the actual alliance between these forces -- seriously strained, if not altogether broken -- after the fall of Robespierre. And the jeune gens also significantly contributed to what could be termed the negative "feminization" of the symbols of the year II.

The "golden Youth" began by instigating the "war of theatres" -- a practice of interrupting theatre performances and challenging their rhetoric by alternative Republican slogans and songs.[5] The war ended with proscription of Jacobin actors and Terrorist plays. The jeunesse moved on to

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more encompassing actions that sought to attack and discredit those revolutionary codes and symbols of the year II that had become part of everyday life. Thinking itself Republican, the jeunesse engaged in the practice of so-called promenades civiques -- a kind of inversion of the processions civiques of the year II -- to harass and insult Jacobins in public. A gang of the "young men" would burst into a café or a theatre lobby shouting invectives such as scélérat, assassin or buveur de sang at whomever they could identify as Jacobin. They also pushed for and were largely responsible for the abandoning of the practice of tutoiement -- that is, of the informal mode of address adopted during the revolution as result of the definition of an individual as a citizen -- in favour of the traditional Monsieur and Madame.

One of the most notorious of the campaigns orchestrated by the "golden Youth" was la chasse au bonnet rouge. It consisted of systematic assaults on all persons wearing the red bonnet in public and often resulted in violent street fights with the offended sans-culottes who countered the jeunesse action with their own practices called la chasse aux collets noirs and la chasse aux cadennetes, referring to their opponents' costume and hairstyle, respectively.[6] In addition to being acted out on the streets on a daily basis, these confrontations over the language of costume were also represented in prints. One most interesting, if perhaps

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somewhat distanced, echo of these images is an engraving inscribed "Tien bien ton Bonnet! Et toi, defend ta queue!" (Fig.73) where a jeune homme is grabbing at a sans-culotte's red bonnet, while the latter pulls at his long braid.[7] What is striking is the Davidian body language in which this politicized "fashion war" was staged here: the two opponents in the conflict are interlocked in the Horatii-like poses. With the self-consciousness of an image of wide circulation that seeks to mobilize the shared visual knowledge of the audience it targets, the print signals the extent to which Davidian rhetoric, as an easily recognizable Republican code of the year II, was part and parcel of these symbolic skirmishes.

In focusing its interventions on the red bonnet, the jeunesse was acting according to the symbolic logic of condensation and displacement, which could be said to have been instrumental earlier in the elaboration of all revolutionary symbols. But in winter 1795, this logic served specifically to restructure the Republican repertory of signs by forging new symbolic connections while negatively investing the older ones. One example of creating a new semantic amalgamation by bestowing negative political meaning onto the existing symbols and figures was the jeunes gens' habit of associating the red bonnet not just with the sans-culottes but with the Jacobins and Jacobinism as well. For example, they intervened at the National Convention

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where, when one of the deputies mounted the speaker's tribune with a red bonnet on his head, he was greeted with their cries A bas le bonnet! A bas ce signe des Jacobins! Revealing a kind of metonymical slippage through which the negative meaning of the bonnet was reinforced, the cry A bas le buveurs de sang, les bonnets rouges, la Montagne et la Crête resonated in the Parisian cafés and on the streets.[8]

Another example of a negative amalgamation should be seen in the jeunesse dorée attacks on female militants of the popular classes, whose street presence and efforts to organize different forms of the anti-government protest increased from January 1795 on. In their confrontations with them, the "young men" would frequently stage public whippings of women to punish them for, for example, wearing medallions with an image of a man wearing a red bonnet. What they described as women's "incendiary actions," their sharp tongues in street clashes and, generally, their opposition to these bourgeois males' anti-Jacobin stance were all cited to justify the whippings.[9] As Dominique Godineau points out, basing her research on police records, these whippings of female sans-culottes often took on an explicitly sexual tone: the younger women were beaten with "beaucoup d' indécence," their bonnets were violently torn off their heads, their corsets ripped open. Godineau cites a case of the widow Dupertois, who upon leaving the tribunes of the National Convention with her young daughter, was

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accosted by a group of twelve "young men" who showered the mother with invectives such as "mégère, furie et jacobine," beating her up with fists while they passed their hands under the blouse and skirts of her daughter. The widow then took her knife out to defend the "honor of her daughter."[10] This account gives us some idea of gender and sexual specificity of the politico-symbolic wars that went on in Paris at a time: women were still active and armed participants of the political process (despite the closure of their own clubs, they continued assisting the political debate at the Convention); the jeunes gens used politics as a pretext for sexual harassment; and the interventions of the male jeunesee who sought to counteract women's militancy also helped forge the connection in the Imaginary between female political activism and Jacobinism. (This point will be further developed below.) The red bonnet functioned as a site of displacement and condensation of the jeunesse dorée's hostility towards different registers of public life where the "monster" of the year II was seen to have raised its head: in the forms of popular reaction to the Thermidorian regime; in female militancy in particular; and in Jacobinism, which, despite the closure of the club, was lingering on in different forms of representation, including the national one -- the Jacobin deputies were still vocal at the Convention.

While different public forms of appearance of the civic

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body were thus under continuous siege, the city itself was also being politically re-written as a symbolic space. For example, the jeunesse dorée organized mass effacements of patriotic Terrorist inscriptions, such as La fraternité ou la mort, from the walls of buildings and from public spaces in general. Despite occassional official protests against its violence, the "symbolic revolution" animated by the jeunesse dorée was largely supported or accepted by the authorities. Moreover, the Thermidorian Convention came up with some measures of its own which paralleled or reinforced the anti-Terrorist cultural reaction, and thus legitimized the ongoing excision of Jacobinism from the Republican sphere of symbolic reference. Thus, on 20 February 1795 it decreed (under the pressure from the section of la Halle-au-bleu) the destruction of all monuments in the form of a mountain.[11] But there was one specific case where the cultural pressure of the jeunesse dorée had a singularly powerful and immediate effect on official cultural policy. This was the case of Marat. For, more than any other figure of the year II, Marat became the object of the systematic iconoclastic campaign organized by the jeunesse dorée. They instigated attacks on all types of representations of Marat, destroying his busts in public spaces and inciting other acts of vandalism to erase the traces or compromise the memory of the most resonant and cherished symbolic figure of the popular Imaginary. These acts, combined with

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an outpouring of pamphlets and prints encouraged by and supportive of them, led to the official decision to withdraw Marat's remains from the Pantheon and to remove his representations -- his bust and David's renowned painting of 1793 (Fig.74) -- from the hall of the Convention. This particular aspect of the cultural reaction had a significant impact on David's (political and cultural) position and needs closer attention. For, politically, Marat came to represent all that the reaction wanted to blame the Jacobins for, but he also came to be constructed, specifically, as the figure of Terrorist culture, and this directly engaged the issue of David's original contribution to or intermediary role in this construction.

The symbolic trajectory of the official image of Marat after Thermidor was vertiginous: from the Pantheon to the gutter. Rather surprisingly, it was precisely the ceremony of transfer of Marat's remains to the space of the highest Republican honor that marked the cultural initiation of the Thermidorians' rule on 21 September 1794. It was the first fête organized after the fall of Robespierre.[12] But only four months later, on 8 February 1795, the Convention reneged on its decision and decreed Marat's de-Pantheonization. Already, in September '94, when the decision was made that Marat's remains be transferred to the Pantheon and that an official fête take place on this occasion, some voices raised more or less disguised

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objections. For example the major "reactionary" Fréron, who at this time presented himself in his journal as a "disciple chéri" of Marat, nevertheless circulated rumors, picked by the press, that the Jacobins were preparing a massacre on the occasion of the fête.[13] Not by accident, the immediate force behind this reversal of Marat's official fortune was the pressure from Fréron's own jeunesse dorée, who from late January '95 on turned Marat -- as a concept and as a representation -- into an object of systematic attacks. Their aggressive iconoclastic actions found support in, as much as they encouraged, a defamatory campaign in the "moderate" press, as well as a host of vitriolic pamphlets and imagery produced long after the achievement of the immediate goal of the campaign, the de-Pantheonization of the Ami du peuple. Through the rhetoric of these actions and texts, a semiotic elaboration of the figure of Marat as a phantasmatic conglomerate of all horrors was effectuated. As the author of the pamphlet entitled Le Robespierrisme. Poème suivi du maratisme... put it:

> Ne pouvant pas trouver d'assez noires couleurs,
> Pour peindre dignement Marat l'anthropophage
> Je mettrai simplement dessus son sarcophage...
> Ci-git le composé de toutes les horreurs.[14]

What fed such a construction of Marat as a figure condensing all the horrors of the revolutionary past was his association with popular violence, the association inherited

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rather than invented by the Thermidorians. Specifically, it was Marat's reputation as the instigator and/or apologist of the September massacres. Without entering into a discussion of the truth value of this reputation,[15] we should observe that it was a fecund ground for the metonymical transformation of Marat into a sign of the whole Terror in that, since the Nantes trials, the Terror was being conceived of through the image of mass massacre. In fact, as his association with violence was being phantasmically elaborated through text and image, Marat became precisely one of those most effective tropes that made it possible for the Terror to be considered a coherent sanguinary whole.

Before analyzing this elaboration of Marat into the figure of the Terror par excellence, it is useful to recall that it was happening after, and to a degree as a result of, the reintegration of the Girondist deputies ousted from the Convention and imprisoned by the Jacobin government on 2 June 1793. The Girondists' regained position within the body of the national representation in December 1794 was one of the factors that intensified the anti-Jacobin reaction on both political and cultural levels. It was the lobby and support of Girondist deputies for the anti-Marat trend in a sector of the public opinion controlled by the jeunesse doréé that must have been responsible for such a quick yielding of the Convention to the latter's pressures (the anti-Marat campaign starting in the end of January and the

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de-Pantheonization decreed already on 8 February). Certainly, as a revolutionary figure of controversial reputation Marat was an understandable choice for the Girondists' political revenge on the Jacobins. It was under the auspices of the Jacobins that the construction of Marat as the martyr of liberty and a Republican hero was introduced -- beginning with David's cultural orchestration of his funeral and the execution of his icon, placed above the speaker's tribune in the Convention -- while the popular cult of this figure flourished. The Girondists, on the other hand, were Marat's first accusers (although unsuccesful ones, since their case against him ended with his acquittal at the revolutionary tribunal in April 1793). As a matter of fact, they were the first to come up with Marat's image as homme du sang even before Thermidor.[16] The Girondists political animosity towards Marat as an uncontrollable, excessive radical -- "un cerveau brûlé, un monstre sanguinaire" as they called him[17] -- had been obviously reinforced by his instrumental role in their exclusion from the Convention on 2 June '93, when, making political use of a self-sacrificing compensatory formula for which he was to become known, Marat offered his own suspension in exchange for the arrest of these "counter-revolutionary" deputies.[18]

Which leads us to the third factor in the post-Thermidorian symbolic fortune of Marat, namely the ambiguous resonance of Marat's self-image produced in his own public

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discourse. Most relevant in that regard is Philippe Roger's interesting analysis of Marat's rhetorical elaboration of the concept of purity through the inscription of his personal myth of sacrifice within a historical and ritual principle of devotio.[19] It is the compensatory logic of devotio in the archaic Roman sense of the term, as a pact with infernal gods which involves a tribal leader's offer to sacrifice himself in exchange for the annihilation of the enemy in order to save his people, that governs the most important interventions of Marat in the Convention, becoming, according to Roger, the very formula of maratisme as political discourse. What the use of this formula helped produce was the image of its author as a pure Republican, yet -- far from the essentially Jacobin notion of Rousseau-like purity of nature as exploited by Robespierre, the Incorruptible -- pure through a symbolic commerce with death, through a pact with the subterranean powers exerting bloody sacrifice.[20] It is this symbolic resonance of Marat's self-constructed political persona that must have, no doubt, also influenced the choice of him for the master-figure of the infernal and sanguinary space in the post-Thermidorian images of the Terror -- or made this choice effective and resonant.

So the semiotic elaboration of Marat unfolded in actions, texts and images. It started with the jeunes gens' iconoclastic assaults on Marat's busts, first in the

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theatres, and then in shops, cafés and other public places in Paris.[21] They threatened to attack and destroy the mausoleum and the site of the cult of the Ami du Peuple on the Place du Carrousel. On 4 February, 600 "young people," having made a tour of the limonadiers to break the busts displayed in their shops, ended up at the National Convention where they interrupted its evening session with cries: "A bas les sacrés buveurs de sang! A bas les sacrés scélérats! A bas les sacrés avaleurs d'hommes! A bas tous ces sacrés coquins! Nous les f... tous dans l'égout!".[22] As if echoing these cries, a large part of the sectional authorities voted for the removal of Marat's busts from their premises, while on some streets, even children were seen throwing small effigies of Marat into the gutter shouting "Voilà ton Panthéon!"[23]

The escalation of the jeunesse's acts of iconoclastic rage was accompanied by the appearance of anti-Marat literature, where the same rhetorical connection was being made between Marat as homme du sang and the Jacobins, as, for example, in a brochure entitled La Dépanthéonization de J.P.Marat, patron des hommes de sang et des terroristes fondée sur les crimes et les forfaits des Jacobins.[24] There also appeared defensive pro-Marat publications, but the alternative image they proposed was almost as violent, if exonerating and celebratory, as the one of his detractors.[25]

The extent to which this flood of publications worked on

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the collective Imaginary can be gauged by the fact that individual people were acting out some of the sanguinary fantasies from the pamphlets. One butcher in les Halles covered Marat's bust with blood, "pour le montrer avec l'attribut qui lui convenait." Others talked about putting crowns made of Terrorists' guts on the busts' heads. Still others burnt papers on the empty pedestals that were thought to had been "defiled" or "soiled" by the presence of Marat's effigies on them.[26] In these sacriligeous acts mocking the near-religious cult with which Marat's memory was celebrated by his followers, the principle of inversion characteristic of the entire campaign was put into practice, an issue to which I will return later.[27]

Across these actions and texts the image of Marat, once the Republican hero par excellence, was re-woven into what one newspaper termed "a tissue of crimes." As the representation of everything the Thermidorian Republic did not want to be, he could not remain within its official political spaces nor be part of the endorsed image-repertoire. On 6 February 1795, the CSG ordered that all Marat busts be removed from the theatres and replaced by the busts of Rousseau.[28] These decisions about changes in the domain of cultural politics were accompanied by police measures. Popular societies propagating the cult of Marat were to be closed and his militant followers were as arrested. (To get in touch with the ways in which the latter

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were being distinguished, we should know that one member was arrested "pour avoir ri.")[29] In addition, Marat's mausoleum on the Place du Carrousel was ordered demolished.

On 8 February, a decree was adopted according to which no citizen dead for less than ten years could be awarded the honors of the Pantheon and have his portrait bust placed at the hall of the Convention or any other public site. Thus, Marat, (along with other revolutionary heroes) was de-Pantheonized by the very people who orchestrated the transfer of his remains to the Pantheon in the first place.[30] At the same time, his bust and David's icon of 1793, together with the pendant image of Le Pelletier, were ordered removed from the Convention. They were replaced by the bust of Brutus. As figures of the Enlightenment and of Antiquity (the Rousseaus and the Brutuses) took the place of Marat as much safer points of cultural reference -- a process parallel to the re-institution of the distancing form of address (the Mesdames and Messieurs) on the level of everyday life -- the Republic was clearly beginning to take its distance from the symbolic actuality of its own revolutionary past. And David as an artist risked sharing the fate of exclusion with his Marat, unless he too transferred his area of cultural reference into the past. Which is exactly what he did, in his Homer, and in his Sabines. But, as we have already seen and will see further, this was neither a linear nor an easy process for him.[31]

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Coming back, however, to the broader cultural tableau, it needs to be said that although almost every single wish with which the jeunesse dorée started its campaign for Marat's erasure from the Republican sphere had already been fulfilled by the shift of official policies, this did not much diminish the publications of anti-Marat literature and imagery, some of which, for example, a brochure entitled Le Crimes de Marat et des autres égorgeurs, were being sold at the former site of Marat's mausoleum on the Place du Carrousel.[32] This instance of inversion of the meaning of Republican cult site, the most commonly deployed strategy in the anti-Marat campaign, brings us to the broader problem of meaning that has to be raised by a closer look at the rhetoric of the texts and images.

For what was the meaning of the anti-Marat campaign that went on despite Marat's demotion from a privileged space in the Republican Imaginary? What other purposes did the texts involved in this campaign seek to fulfill? And what were the consequences for the Republican culture of the stock of figures and images that the campaign brought about? For it did bring about an unprecedented flood of sanguinary imagery and cannibalistic scenes fleshed, out with a most minute textual and visual detail.

In Le Crimes de Marat et des autres égorgeurs (Fig.75) both text and image were being deployed to body forth the sanguinary figure of Marat, standing on a heap of freshly

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massacred bodies and preaching violence to the sans-culottes in action. The author, presenting himself as a survivor of the September massacres, gives a detailed account of its bloody course, depicting scenes of cannibalism in excruciating detail, sounds included. The participants are described as the buveurs de sang filling their cups with the blood of their victims, while others were allegedly seen soaking a quarter loaf of bread in the blood of the massacred before eating it. Through such texts, the credibility of an eyewitness was being bestowed onto the fantasy of Marat's actual presence and his symbolic role during the massacres.

It has been observed that Marat's iconography privileged allegory as a mode of representation.[33] We can also discern ironic inversion as the central strategy of the imagery discussed here. For example, in the three images illustrating the pamphlet entitled Vie criminelle et politique de Marat..., his "crimes" were represented as mock-stations of the Passion.[34] Both the radical revolutionary himself and the quasi-religious form of his cult were being thus derided. Similarly, a satirical allegory entitled Le Triomphe de Marat dans les enfers (Fig.76) appropriates the earlier celebratory format of the popular hero's triumph to transpose it within infernal space.[35] The effect of this transposition on the viewer relied on his/her familiarity with the original celebratory

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format. To a certain extent, it also depended on the aspect of Marat's reputation that resulted from his own rhetorical self-inscription in the domain of death, which he had constantly evoked in his speeches and around which his political formula of devotio had revolved. Marat is thus shown being carried by a group of female Furies towards the throne presided over by Death who extend her (his?) skeletal arm to crown him. Other female figures emerge from darkness: on the right, a woman in armor, helmet and a long dress, a sword raised militantly in one hand, a broken chain in the other, perhaps a personification of Liberty; but right behind her there is another female figure, in a short tunic, a quasi-Roman armor with prominent breast, clearly a woman-warrior, rather than a personification of an idea. On the left, a female cannibal marching forward over the disemboweled corpse of a child while gnawing a severed limb, catches the viewer's attention. Such prominent deployment of female figures for the semantic purpose of inversion here needs explanation.

The prominence of negative feminine signifiers, such as the frightful Furies, and, more generally the semiotic association of Marat with femininity was, as a matter of fact, perhaps the most salient feature of anti-Marat imagery. Similar Furies with sagging breasts and serpents wrapped around their bodies drag Marat to hell in an engraving titled Rousseau chassant Marat de Champs-

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Elysées.[36] A caricature entitled La Grande colère du Diable, features most prominently a horrific She-Devil giving birth to the progeny of her extra-marital affair with Marat, the little sans-culottes, while her husband exclaims in a fit: "O rage! ô fureur! je suis donc cocufié par un Jacobin!"[37] The negative, politically discrediting construction of Jacobinism depends here on the resonance of semantic concatenation of the figures of Marat, the sans-culotte and the woman, all three deployed as sexualized signifiers of infernal otherness.[38]

Femininity as the major component of the trope "Marat" was not, however, invented after Thermidor, but rather inherited from the earlier phase of the revolution. This can be proved by the popular imagery. In an earlier anonymous engraving, Marat's own body became the site of oscillation alongside the axis masculine/feminine so as to serve as a -- traditionally female -- personification of Anarchy (Fig.77).[39] For in this figure, cloaked in the soft, female dress-like folds of what seems a nightgown but could also be an houppelande (together with the turban, a notorious part of Marat's public image), with its effeminate face features and a Medusa's crown of serpents on its head, the gender distinction seems to have become most porous, if not altogether collapsed. What secures the identification of the figure as Marat is the journalist's pen in his hand and the paper he holds with the inscription that became a sort of

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emblematic device by which his pre-Thermidorian enemies referred to him: "Il faut couper encore 270 000 têtes, piller les marchandes et les pendre à leur portes; c'est mon opinion." The sentence is supposed to encapsulate the radical journalist's position in and his contribution to revolutionary process. In the background women are shown to act out Marat's incendiary messages by pillaging.

While it would not be productive to attempt any sort of deterministic collapsing of the signifying register onto the Real, it is helpful perhaps to recall that Marat's alignment with the feminine in such images was certainly helped by the fact that real women had been among the journalist's most ardent political followers before Thermidor. After his death, it was the female sans-culottes who were the chief organizers of the different spontaneous forms of his mourning, such as numerous funerary processions in the city, and of his cult, which centered around the monument at the Place du Carrousel.[40] The pronounced emotionalism as well as as the erotics of women's reaction to his death -- some grieving militants were said to have offered to be inseminated by his body so as to be able to breed new little Marats (we cannot help noticing the similarity of this declaration to its later caricatural articulation in the Grand Colère du Diable mentioned earlier) -- were being specifically recognized as aspects of the lower class female's revolutionary ethos.[41]

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The femininity of Marat as a sign was then inherited as something already inscribed by (i.e., as, to a degree, a trace of) concrete practices of his militant female followers in year II. But his post-Thermidorian representations suggest that this trace of femininity was also re-elaborated or, to be more specific, re-invested negatively in relation to what was happening in Paris in winter-spring 1795. Militant women re-emerged then in public space, brandishing symbols and slogans of the year II and thus posing a threat to the Thermidorian regime in its Jacobinophobia as well as in its maleness. I want to argue that the figures caricaturizing female militancy in the derisive imagery cited above, and specifically the extreme example of the Fury, the aggressive woman-warrior and the female cannibal of the Triomphe de Marat aux Enfers, were new figures that did not belong with the repertory of the year II. Rather, they targetted the real political threat presented by the female-led popular unrest. This is what partly explains the production of this kind of imagery long after its original goal -- Marat's de-Pantheonization and, more generally, his excision from the official Republican Imaginary -- had been accomplished. In the images produced throughout the period of the Germinal and Prairial insurrections, Marat was then rendering a semiotic service to a broader issue. He was helping to chart a new cultural space where Revolutionary militants, radicals, and above

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all, women, were constructed as an unassimilable political Other. The past fortune of the "Ami du peuple" as the "feminine" figure of the pre-Thermidorian Republican Imaginary in turn reinforced the "feminization" of the meaning of the year II. In the post-Thermidorian caricatures of Marat, the semantic connection between the Terror, affective excess, and the feminine, was being reworked so as to address new issues: through this kind of imagery, the Thermidorian "moderates" situated themselves vis-à-vis the female political threat as posited by the events of winter/spring 1795. In other words, the Fury, the agitated female warrior, the female cannibal were figures of male hysteria under the pressure of political activism of women in the second stage of the reaction. We now need to get a closer look at the forms and other representations of this activism.[42]

ii. The symbolic effect of Germinal and Prairial

The female cannibal from the Triomphe de Marat aux Enfers needs then to be situated in relation to a broader repertory of rhetorical figures through which male moderates sought to deal with the onslaught of female radical activism in winter 1795.

The figure of a woman intervening in a public space -- often a mother with a child in her arms or at her side --

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gained a strong political resonance in Paris in the course of winter and spring 1795. From early January, police reports register an increasing presence of women as agents of popular unrest in the city where they engage in conflicts with the authorities on both political and economic grounds.[43] Behind their actions is strong disappointment due to a combination of factors: the post-Thermidorian Republic's withdrawal from the values of year II, especially the abandonment of the state's commitment to secure the minimum welfare of its citizens; the aggressiveness of such forces of the "reaction" as the jeunesse dorée, which, aside from turning the Parisian public spaces into an arena of the war of symbols, resulted in episodes of street violence; a very hard winter with record low temperatures (e.g. the Seine was frozen, thus no supply of provisions was possible), and food scarcity by the end of the winter turning into famine; the economic crisis triggered by the abandonment of the maximum (government-imposed limit on prices) and the sudden visibility of social and economic contrasts in the city. All these factors contributed to what was becoming perhaps the most critical situation since the beginning of the Revolution. Yet, if the general popular discontent grew, it was women, more specifically the female sans-culotterie, who took to acting out this discontent. Different reasons are cited for women's prominence, one being, for example, that,

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as persons in charge of getting provisions, of queuing for food, especially as the mères nourricières, they were hardest hit by the crisis; another being that, having been earlier deprived of their own institutional basis of Revolutionary action (the closure of female clubs in October 1793) and excluded or marginalized from other power structures in the city, they had little to risk.[44] But what recent research foregrounds, notably the work of Dominique Godineau, is the degree of political self-consciousness and not merely the central role of women in action during what turned out to be the last instance of the Revolutionary popular movement.[45] Women were being seen intervening in local civil committees, protesting the decreasing daily rations of bread; attacking food supply carts and engaging in the taxation forcée, but also agitating on the streets, inciting other women and men to riots, circulating pro-Jacobin slogans and, on the tribunes of the Convention, disrupting the debates with mockeries directed at the moderate deputies and rallying cries for the Montagnards.[46] An increased number of reports of street conflicts between female sans-culottes and male members of the reactionary jeunesse dorée, in which the latter often resort to sexually charged attacks, is produced in this period. And there are arrests made upon reports that documented female participation in a "pro-Terrorist" conspiracy.[47]

If in the period from January through March, the women

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figure in the police reports side by side the male militants, in early April and through mid-May, they come to dominate these reports completely as their actions on the Parisian streets turn into a veritable female mass movement -- reflecting, according to Godineau, both the highest point and the last instance of this Revolutionary phenomenon. This movement gains momentum in a situation when food scarcity turns into famine. People are reported to regularly faint or die of hunger on the streets in numbers unprecendented by the earlier stages of the Revolution. (The situation is exacerbated by a new visibility of wealth: while there is a drastic shortage of bread, brioches are available in the shopwindows of exclusive bakers who, no longer bound by the maximum, sell their products for the exorbitant price a certain class of citizens is willing to pay.) The rate of suicides is observed to reach uncommon heights. Women throwing themselves into water, a baby in their arms, is a familiar image in police accounts from this period.[48]

But police observers also signal that, because of their anger, mothers of the family have become dangerous for public order.[49] They report angry women inciting riots in public spaces. On 17 March (27 Ventôse), in the face of a drastic reduction of bread rations, women mobilize workers to march with them to the National Convention to protest the measures. They try to persade police commissaries to sound the tocsin to help them gather people. Two civil

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commissaries are delegated, by force, to represent the rebels in front of the national representation and they read the petition prepared at the sections, assisted by the cries of women who sat on the Convention's tribunes. The Constitution of the year II is evoked. The deputies are said to complain about the large number of women inciting men to revolt.[50]

On 27 March (7 Germinal) women again organize a demonstration at the National Convention. They are largely behind the insurrection of the section of Gravilliers early that day. Later, around 600 women march to the hall of the Convention headed by a group with a placard of the Rights of Man [sic]. Economic demands are interlaced with political ones, which center on the claim for the return of the values of the year II.

The situation of a more or less permanent unrest continues throughout the spring. On 27 April (7 Floréal), for example, a police investigator reporting on the mood on the Parisian streets asserts that "women, above all, seemed to be playing the principal role there; they were taunting the men, treating them as cowards and seemed unwilling to be satisfied with the portion [the ration of bread distributed] that was offered to them. A large number of them wanted to rush into insurrection; even the majority appeared to be determined to attack the constituted authorities and notably the government committees, which would have happened were it

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not for the prudence and firmness of the armed troops."[51]

It is this anger of the meur-de-faim mothers that the female militants intercept on 1 Prairial to turn into an insurrection. The day before "on ne voyait que des groupes presque tous composés de femmes qui promettaient pour le lendemain une insurrection."[52] And on the first day of the insurrection, it was women who led a crowd of the angry population of the fabourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint Marcel into the Convention to protest the government food policy. But they demand both bread and the Constitution of the year II. Some women have children with them as they storm the doors of the Convention.

Before long, the intervention becomes bloody. One deputy, Ferraud, gets killed, his head severed and held up on a pike to taunt the president of the Convention. The situation slips out of control. The insurgents wreak havoc in the space of national representation. Some deputies try to speak; they offer reconciliatory measures, to the mixed reaction of the crowd. The national representation no longer enjoys the confidence of the fabourgs' people. Only at the end of the day does the crowd recede. The Convention moves then to revoke all the measures it had just taken under the pressure of the crowd and, moreover, orders the deputies who spoke, most of them Montagnards, arrested. The insurrection continues, though, and it lasts three more days. It ends with defeat of the people in the hands of a pre-selected

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army mobilized especially to suppress the revolt. Repressions ensue. The tide of anti-terrorist reaction, which had gradually been rising since the Nantes trials, reaches its peak. Under what is said to be the pressure of opinion, repressive measures are extended to people who were not in any way thought to be linked with the rebellion but who represented the political personnel of the Jacobin Republic, such as former members of the committees and deputies on mission during year II. This is how David, the former functionary of the CSG, gets arrested, for the second time, on 29 May (10 prairial) 1795.

Before examining what the events of Germinal and Prairial represented for David individually, we have to get some idea of the collective or shared meanings that this event acquired as it happened, that is, of the discursive molds in which it was cast by and for David's contemporaries.[53] I am particularly interested in the gender dynamic of the process of elaboration of the political meaning of these events. On the one hand, there emerged, in discursive response to the uprisings (meant here in the broad sense, from police reports through Convention debates to imagery), some new rhetorical female figures, all of them pejorative, with the tricoteuse de Robespierre and the Furie de guillotine as the two most important ones. On the other, particularly in the Jacobin response to the event, the most cherished male figures of the martyr de Prairial and the dernier

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Montagnard were forged. Let us examine this more closely.

That Prairial marked a most serious crisis for Jacobinism became clear to both interested parties quickly, after the first day the insurrection. On the one hand, the government, under the pressures of the forces of the reaction, and with whose interests it came to identify, seized the occasion of the popular insurrection to wipe out what remained of the prominent Montagnards of the political scene, specifically the so-called crête -- a name reserved for those Montagnard deputies who might have originally supported the Thermidorian coup but who grew disaffected with the increasingly anti-Jacobin status quo and gradually turned into an opposition to the forces of the reaction -- by putting on them (arbitrarily, as the historiography stresses) the blame for the unrest.[54] In addition to a part of Revolutionary political personnel, the entire set of Republican values lost legitimacy. And the expansion of the purge onto whomever came in handy among the former members of the Terrorist apparatus thus became inevitable. On the other hand, in the Jacobin discourse Prairial came to be linked to the notion of martyrdom, as the last heroic moment of the derniers Montagnards, a term coined in the Revolutionary Jacobin historiography almost immediately after the insurrection.

What needs to be emphasized here is that this discursive channelling of the meaning of the popular insurrection into

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the groove of Jacobinism -- be it with the positive or the negative connotation -- was, at best, based on only a tangential connection with the reality of the insurrection. For, despite the fact that the insurgents invoked the Constitution of the year II, reclaimed the release of the imprisoned "patriotes," which was in 1795 largely a code name for the Jacobins, and in a more general way referred to the Terror as an alternative to the reactionary policies of the post-Thermidorian government, in no way has it been possible to establish a causal or organizational link between them and any Jacobin group, and least of all the Montagnard elite of the crête -- the name itself connoting the perceived superiority of this group -- which the authorities accused of complicity with the insurgents.[55] I do not want to go here into too much detail of the legal set-up through which the Thermidorians succeeded in getting rid of the crête and -- in a less drastic manner, via imprisonment rather than the guillotine -- of the entire Terrorist personnel, but it should be stressed that the deputies were arrested and tried on the basis of what could hardly be called evidence.[56]

Briefly, then, how and in what circumstances were the tropes of the "martyrs of Prairial" and the "last Montagnards" formed? The first refers to these deputies of the crête who were arrested for having spoken at the Convention on 1 Prairial in what was perceived as support of

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the insurgents. As Gilbert Romme, the most prominent figure among them maintained, these deputies had merely tried to channel the anger and violence of the crowd by suggesting the adoption of some of the measures proposed by the insurgents.[57] Neither this explanation nor any other argument of the accused was accepted. The military commission formed especially to judge all the deputies who were believed to have been implicated in the uprising sentenced Romme's entire group to death. However, in a gesture of Socratic resolve, all of them refused to accept the verdict and tried suicide instead. Three of them succeeded (Romme, Goujon, Dusquesnoy), three others, (Soubrany, Duroy, Bourbotte) were led half-alive to die under the guillotine's blade.[58] These were, then, the men whom the (scarce) pro-Jacobin press and public opinion at the time called the "martyrs of Prairial," and who were thus referred to by the subsequent historiographic tradition.[59]

Although in some historiographic sources it is confused with the term "martyrs," the "last Montagnards" encompassed a broader group within the Jacobins. As Françoise Brunel demonstrated in her scrupulous analysis, the term should be seen as referring to about 100 Jacobin deputies who "face à la réaction, eurent une attitude, incohérente peut-être, mais courageuse, excluant ceux qui se turent prudement, sans suivre pour autant les réacteurs."[60] In other words, it was those Montagnards who spoke up at the Convention throughout

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the period of popular unrest, aligning themselves with some of the postulates of the popular movement in their opposition to the Thermidorians and/or who were arrested in consequence of the uprising.[61] (Brunel by no means implies that these deputies led or had any other direct links with the insurgents.)

Although no explicit visual representation of any of the two figures from the period could be found, both terms were tremendously important in the political discourse of the time and in the historiographic tradition of the Revolution that followed.[62] What interests me most here is the effect of this construction of the male Jacobin "crest" into tropes that obfuscate the identity of the insurgents, predominantly women, and their oppression, which was the price the women paid for the insurrection. Unlike the Jacobins, who managed to rebound politically under the Directory, (although not always succesfully and never back to the position of power of year II), women paid the price of complete legal exclusion not only from the political, but also the public sphere: after the suppression of the Prairial uprising, women as a collectivity were banned from all public spaces, from the Convention tribunes to the street (not more than four women could gather or talk together on the street without risking arrest for militant or political activity, both made illegal for them by these laws.) The "martyrs of Prairial," the "half-gods," the "last Montagnards," and

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other terms used in the immediate commentaries and the subsequent Jacobin historiography in order to erect the deputies of the Crest into grand majestic figures embodying the heroic ideals of year II seem a rather curious construction in the light of the image of inaction, dispersal, discouragement and depression that these same writers, the Levasseurs, the Baudots, convey to describe the Jacobin comportment after the closure of their club, throughout the winter and spring of 1795.[63] Levasseur, for example, admits that, although Jacobins expected the insurrection and were ready to take over its leadership, they by no means prepared it.[64] And modern historiography is in agreement with this diagnosis. Gleaned from the sources and memoirs of the epoch, the image of a depressed, passive Jacobin incapable of intercepting the popular riots but ready to embrace the Socratic ideal to become a heroic martyr of the missed cause, stands in sharp contrast to the tropes through which female insurrectional heroism was (not) perceived.[65]

For the only way in which the female militant of the Germinal and Prairial risings entered the collective memory of the Revolution is through figures that are thoroughly negative, and threatening to male subjectivity. Having first appeared in Parisian police reports in January 1795, the term femmes des tribunes was just as soon followed by its two more clearly pejorative variants, furies de guillotine

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and tricoteuse de Robespierre, designating women of popular classes politically active in public spaces in winter/spring 1795. These became the two predominant forms in which femininity was deployed as a signifier in the political representations produced in the second stage of the reaction. There is ample visual evidence to this, some of we already saw in the Marat-related engravings. For example, the Fury from the Marat image has become the most frequent attribute of the dominant representations of Jacobinism and/or the Terror produced in this period.

In an anonymous engraving, Les Abominables (Fig.78) the figure of a Jacobin is paired with a personification of Discord as a nude female Fury wearing a crown of snakes, and holding her attributes, a dagger and a torch, in her hands.[66] The Jacobin is presented here as a sans-culotte, with a scroll inscribed "gouvernement révolutionnaire" and the Hercules club as attributes. Besides him stands a cat, an ironic version of the designation of the Jacobins as "tigres sanguinaires." In the background, there spreads a landscape of destruction and death, with skulls and bones, bodies scattered on the ground, and houses set on fire. From behind, a crowd of cheering villagers emerge, to whom the inscription below the image should clearly be attributed; ""Ah! Méchante Canaille, grace aux Dieux, votre Régne est passé."

The heroic image of the most cherished symbolic and

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political equivalences of the year II -- the Jacobins as the People as Hercules -- is thus being disarticulated here through and ironic inversion of sense of the older attributes and the addition of new detrimental ones. The Jacobin's wishful discursive identification with "the People" is turned against him as he is given the body of a sans-culotte with caricatural facial features, crude hairstyle and clothing, and a club as instrument of crime and destruction rather than Force. In addition to destruction and massacre which became the standard tropes in the images of the Terror produced after the Nantes trials, the castrating woman (the Medusa-like figure of Discord) is a new element in the corrosive repertory of signs through which the assault on heroic virility of the visual language of the year II is performed here.

My argument is this: although the female Fury belonged with a long established iconological tradition, its sudden and repeated appearance in the rhetoric of texts and images that sought to politically discredit Jacobinism in winter and spring 1795 had something to do with the outburst of female militancy in Paris in this period. The deployment of the Fury as a personification of Discord in the images of Jacobin rule or as an infernal assistant of the post-Thermidorian Marat paralleled the use of this figure in the more specific trope, "la Furie de guillotine," that was then being used in the political discourse -- from police records

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to Convention debates -- in reference to the female insurgents. Yet, the relation of this figure to the reality of feminine political behaviour in winter/spring 1795 was highly oblique in that, rather than being produced by that behaviour as such, it was produced by the Thermidorians' attitude towards it, specifically by male political and psychosexual fears about the consequences of female militant irruption into the public sphere. As such, the female Fury was a figure of male hysteria under the political pressure of specific historical circumstances: the winter and spring events in Paris. Across these kind of representations, the Fury's effect was to feminize the negative tropes of the year II, enhancing their discrediting function through castrative connotations.

One consequence of the introduction of this trope of castrative femininity into Republican codes was that it established a paradigm for potential use in the hostile representations of the Republic. An example of such deployment of the Fury is La République (Fig.79) produced under the Directory (possibly within royalist discourse).[67] The figure of Discord brandishing a torch and a dagger was transformed here into a Medusa-Republic, a wreath of snakes on her head, a tunic imprinted with death emblems swathing her body, who tramps the insignia of monarchy and the church under her feet. In the background, her attributes appear: a temple set on fire and a guillotine at work. Whenever the

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need arose to deride the Republic as a political idea or as a historical period, the Fury (of the guillotine) was there ready to be used, a part of the deconstructive repertory assembled in the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction and kept ever since in cultural storage.[68]

Another interesting consequence of the introduction of this trope was its disarticulating effect on the image of the Jacobin. This is eloquently conveyed by a popular engraving titled L'anarchiste, où le Nouveau Janus Français.[69] (Fig. 80) What this print seeks to construct is the notion of the political duplicity of the Jacobin discourse and it does so through the image of a body that gets split as it tries to embrace two irreconciliable positions. Sitting on a chair, the Anarchist-Jacobin is shown here trying to cater to both the jeunes gens, represented by a man in a typically elaborate muscadin costume and a top hat, on his right, and, on the left, the "people", represented by a female sans-culotte, a bonnet on her head, a simple scarf on her shoulders, with the prominent knitting instruments in her hand. The Jacobin's attempt is spelled out by his composite body: half-muscadin dandy, with long locks (and a cadenette no doubt), short breeches and a sack of gold coins under his lap; half-sans-culotte, with crudely cropped hair, a mustache and a club, in addition to the typical costume.

The choice of a woman as a synecdoche of the popular

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classes here is interesting. If this image was indeed produced in 1797 -- and the rise of neo-Jacobinism and the Directors' election fears at that time could certainly explain its circulation in this period -- it is a remarkable document of the continuous political actuality of another feminine figure produced in response to the 1795 risings -- the tricoteuse. To realize the symbolic weight of this figure in this image -- and it is interesting to note that her femininity is conveyed by costume rather than the body itself, while the male body is much more pronounced in the muscadin -- one has to know that she is not an ordinary knitting woman but one of those tricoteuses de Robespierre who supposedly assisted the spectacle of beheadings during the Terror with their knitting work in their hands. This castrative fantasy about women's participation in the Revolutionary process not only lacked any equivalent in practice during the Terror, it was also produced long after it, as a term of a political discourse seeking to situate itself in regard to the female movement in winter/spring 1795 in Paris.[70] The choice of this figure here, together with a muscadin, to discredit Jacobinism, proves that the political process of the second stage of the Termidorian reaction was understood in gendered terms. The print allows us to glimpse the symbolic impact of the women-led insurrection on the perception of Jacobinism and, specifically, on the Jacobin place outside or rather between

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Revolutionary codes. It demonstrates how Jacobin identity sufferred a permanent threat from its symbolic connection with femininity first forged in the wake of the Prairial uprisings.

If the militants participating in Prairial insurrection were imagined through the figures of the Fury and the tricoteuse, how the event of the insurrection was itself visually represented at the time? The answer to this question is that it was not at all. Its effect was, rather, a radical shrinkage, if not entire disappearance, of the iconography of female political intervention. And when it was depicted, later on, when an attempt at completing the state-sponsored visual narrative of the Revolution was made under the Directory, the images only confirmed the associative drift that began to pull through the Republican discourse after spring 1795, a drift that tied the notions of arbitrary violence, a return of the Terror, and sexual threat to the idea of female political intervention. For example, similar associations could be found conveyed, albeit more subtly, according to the codes of high art engraving, in the official Directorial iconography of the last Revolutionary journées established by Jean Duplessi-Bertaux's The Assasination of the deputy Ferraud at the National Convention and by Charles Monnet's The journée of Prairial 1, year III (Fig.81 & 82).[71] For in both engravings the "pregnant moment" chosen to condense the

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meaning of the three-day-long insurrrection that marked the highest point of female Revolutionary militancy, is the beheading of deputy Ferraud.[72] Not that Ferraud wasn't actually killed and his body dismembered by the crowd of insurgents towards the end of the first day of the revolt. Nor that the women didn't distinguish themselves by the ferocity of their language and action, especially during the first day of the uprising, when they had a predominant impact on its course. But, still, the choice of this single episode as the official representation of the women-led revolt (which remained so fixed for a century to come: all subsequent renderings, such as the paintings submitted for the state-sponsored concours of 1830, will follow suit) is significant.

The significance of the thematic choice is reinforced by the formal characteristics of the two engravings. Both are structured by a strong spatial pull, diagonal in the Monnet, lateral in the Duplessi-Bertaux, towards the president's tribune, where Boissy d'Anglas is confronted with his colleague's head held high on a pike by insurgents. In Monnet's design, such devices as abrupt cropping of the frame of vision and the placement of the foreground figures with their back to the viewer, enhance the participatory effect of the composition's diagonal thrust, drawing our gaze quickly to the beheading as the core of conflict. In the second print, the lateral movement of the crowd pulled

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towards the beheading emphasizes the sense of conflict by creating a spatial tension within the box-like interior, the symbolic legal space of the Convention, thus torn by the "castrating" thrust of the insurgents' intervention. While both images, and especially the Monnet, borrow their body language from earlier heroic iconography of collective Revolutionary action, such as David's Tennis Court Oath and, more pertinently, Gérard's 10th of August, they differ from these works in their pronounced articulation of the active participation of women in the insurrection. (In Duplessi-Bertaux's version some of the women are even armed.) And it is the presence of women on the tribunes, combined with the centrality of the scene of beheading, that makes this image of the Revolutionary crowd signify a threat to, rather than, as in the earlier iconographies, a formative impetus behind the new Republic. The subliminal logic of these images is that the Revolutionary activity of women cannot but entail a dis-membering of Republican institutions, epitomized here by the male body of a deputy. This confirms what amounts to a principle in the language of Republicanism after 1795: if women intervene as autonomous agents of history, male castration is in the air.[73]

The scope of repressions after Prairial wiped out, as one contemporary commentator put it, the "entire class of revolutionaries and the whole system of Republican values."[74] But Prairial became also a kind of imaginary

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matrix according to which symbolic positions vis-à-vis not only the present but also the Revolutionary past and future were distributed or reinforced. It not only allowed the Thermidorians to eliminate the inconvenient, though weakened, political opponent, but also served as a pretext for the broader discursive maneouver of collapsing the notion of a feminine-popular threat to Republican institutions onto Jacobinism, so that for quite some time, arbitrary as such collapsing was, it could be mobilized (as it was to be under the Directory), whenever the Jacobins seemed threateningly close to recuperating their lost position. The Jacobins's social and political alienation was almost accomplished. And it helped the Convention aspire to an image of a strong government at a time when pressure was being mounted from the Parisian sections, where some said that what precipitated Prairial was the lax and ineffective attitude of the Convention vis-à-vis the Terrorists after the fall of Robespierre.[75]

Through the concerted efforts of both the jeunesse's iconoclastic actions and post-Prairial texts and imagery, there took place a major transformation in the Republican culture of the 1790s, a repositioning vis-à-vis the Revolution. For the first time this culture negatively articulated part of its immediate historical heritage, a certain period of the Revolutionary history from which it grew. Surely, there existed monstrous representation of

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Republican figures and values before, but they were mainly produced by the royalists. The representations of infra-Republican skirmishes, such as the Girondists' attacks on Marat in 1792, who was then a figure of marginal radical discourse, could not be compared with the scope and nature of the post-Thermidorian challenge to the Republican doxa. With its former Revolutionary heroes turned into these figures of unassimilable Otherness -- the blood-thirsty monster, the cannibal, the Fury -- and with all its hitherto cherished meanings being susceptible to inversion, the post-Thermidorian Republic opened up a new kind of cultural space for itself, one which, precisely because it was inhabited by contradiction and Otherness, was radically different from the repressive Republican unanimity of the Jacobin period. My point is that Prairial resulted in an increased prominence of the figures of femininine threat -- the Fury of the guillotine and the tricoteuse -- in the definition of this new space of the Republican unconscious. If the Thermidorian period could be identified as the origins of a long lasting myth of the plebeian in revolt as monster, a myth that will traverse the entire French nineteenth-century culture,[76] it was also the origin of the castrative construction of a female revolutionary, one of equally lasting cultural effect.

This is what we have to realize in order to understand the development of the Sabine project. David's increased concern

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with circumscribing the position of women in his image, as documented by some pages in the prison album (e.g., Fig.61) and especially by the second Louvre drawing of the whole composition, cannot be separated from the broader circumscription of the feminine in Republican imagery after Prairial, as exemplified by the figures of the Fury and the tricoteuse. The Sabines project, as we asserted before, was iconographically caught up with the individual (David's own) and collective desire to fit the memory of the Terror into Revolutionary history. The symbolic effect of Prairial was in anchoring this desire to the problem of fitting, or redefining the women's place in Republican representation.

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Notes to chapter 3:

1. This is the position maintained in the historiography of the insurrection, from Tarlé (Germinale e Pratile) and Tönneson (La Défaite) to, most recently, Godineau, Citoyennes tricoteuses.

2. For the term "male hysteria under political pressure," see Neil Herz, "Medusa's head."

3. Dominique Godineau cites several reports on the jeunes gens verbally abusing -- and sexually taunting -- the sans-culotte women engaged in political action on the streets. In Citoyennes tricoteuses, 292-4.

4. See Gendron, La Jeunesse, passim; and for the symbolic reaction, specifically 90-127. This was the most helpful source for my discussion of this issue. See also, J.-C. Bonnet, "Les Images négatifs;" P. Roger, "L'Homme du sang;" and M. Ozouf, "Thermidor."

5. Such was, for example, the battle of hymns: the Reveil du Peuple of the defenders of the values of year II versus La Marseillaise launched by the jeunesse. See Gendron, La Jeunesse, 111-2.

6. In addition to Gendron, (ibid., 120-7), for the chasse aux collets noirs; et cadenettes, see also Pellegrin, Les Vêtements de la Révolution, 40 and 49-50.

7. P.W. Tomkins, after Rollandson [sic], Tien bien ton bonnet! Et toi defend ta queue, drypoint, 1797; Bibliothèque Nationale, series Qb1 1797, janvier-mai. Although dated for 1797, this is an iamge clearly referring to the "fashion wars" during the Thermidorian reaction. A copy of this print is also preserved at the Musée Carnavalet (see L'art de l'estampe, no 113, 25). There exists also its somewhat cruder version, unsigned and undated, preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale (ibid.). Could this be the French source of the (later) refined British drypoint version? The Davidian language of the image points, in my view, to a French artist, at least as the author of the source.

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8. The crête (the crest) refers to the most prominent Jacobin deputies who occupied the uppermost Mountain benches at the Convention. For more about the crête, see section ii. of this chapter. For the detailed description of some of the acts referred to here, see Gendron, La Jeunesse, 90-127.

9. See Godineau, Citoyennes tricoteuses, esp. 293.

10. Archives de Police de Paris, AA251, 20 pluviôse an III, cited in ibid., 293 and 405, n. 9.

11. Ibid., 120.

12. Mona Ozouf (in "Thermidor" 94-5) stresses the paradox of this decision. She sees this fête as an involuntary representation of the "link between the purge and the commemoration" (while Marat entered the Pantheon, Mirabeau was being carried out) that marked Marat's subsequent fate as a symbol. Gendron (in La Jeunesse, 90) explains the fête as a trick to win sagging public opinion and as the Convention's act of recompensation for a decision taken in Brumaire, year II but not executed because of "Robespierre's jealousy."

13. Ibid., 92.

14. Félix Faulcon, l'an 3. Cited by J.-C.Bonnet, "Les images négatives," 171. Underline mine.

15. Factually speaking, it was not exactly motivated: Marat's journal was closed at the time of the September events, and, as Furet & Richet observe, if any journalist was to be blamed for instigating the massacres, it was certainly Frércn. Marat did sign a statement disseminated after the massacres that invited the provinces to follow the Parisian example. He had later disavowed knowing what he had signed ex officio. And he was exonerated in the trial the Girondists orchestrated against him in April 1793, where, however, the accusers did not dare to make this association explicit. See Furet and Richet, La Révolution, 172-4. Violence, nevertheless, was indeed a mode of political action that Marat generally endorsed and one that informed his radical revolutionary discourse. See Roger, "L'homme de sang;" J.-C. Bonnet's, "Les images négatives;" and Gendron, La jeunesse. 90.

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16. J.-C. Bonnet, "Les images négatives," and J. Guilhaumou, La Mort de Marat, 16.

17. Cited after Gendron, La jeunesse, 99.

18. Cited by Roger, "L'homme du sang," 161.

19. See ibid., esp. 160ff.

20. Ibid., 164-5.

21. The first attack, in the Théâtre Feydeau, took place on 31 January. Gendron, La Jeunesse, 95.

22. Ibid., 96, citing after Messager du Soir, 17 pluviôse an III.

23. Cited by J.-C. Bonnet ("Les images négatives," 181) after Maton de la Varenne. The image of the children dragging Marat's busts into the gutter constitutes also a part of the frontispiece of Vie criminelle et politique de Marat se disant l'Ami du Peuple, adoré, porté en triomphe comme tel et après sa mort, projeté Saint par la Jacobinaille ou l'homme aux 200 000 têtes, le vampire le plus remarquable de la République française, published in Paris in 1795. See Les trois époques de la vie de J.-P. Marat projeté saint par la jacobinerie, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, coll. de Vinck, no. 5333. See also Bonnet, ibid., 172.

24. Henriquez, cited in Gendron, La jeunesse, 97, n. 261.

25. E.g., in L'Ombre de Marat aux Parisiens, where the attackers of l'Ami di Peuple were designated as counter-revolutionaries whose heads needed to fall. Another pro-Marat pamphlet referred to Fréron's "rage populicide." See Gendron, La jeunesse, 97-8; and Roger, "L'homme du sang," 155.

26. See Gendron, La jeunesse, 101, citing after Aulard and after the Moniteur, and the Courrier républicain.

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27. It was the exaggerated, quasi-religious quality of the cult that now became the object of mock-profanation, the practices of turning Marat's sweaty, bloodied shirt, as well as his bathtub, into a saint's relics; the treating of his journal as if it were the Gospel. See ibid., 102. Since the cult was specifically strong among female sans-culotterie, they were being derided as "les harpies" who went daily to his mausoleum on the Place du Carrousel to touch his relics, his bathtub and his writing board. (Ibid., 100). See also the anecdote of the man depositing excrement under the bust of Marat, cited in ibid., 101.

28. Germani, "Les métamorphoses de Marat," 127.

29. Gendron, La Jeunesse, 103-4.

30. The other martyrs were: Le Pelletier, Dampierre, Bara and Viala.

31. With the decision of de-Pantheonization, not only did the remains of the republican heroes leave the Panthéon, but the meaning of the revolution was being transformed towards eradication or forgetting of its radical components.

32. P.A.L. Maton de la Varenne, Le Crimes de Marat et des autres égorgeurs, Paris, an III, 1795. See Roger, "L'homme du sang," n. 12, 145; J.-C.Bonnet, "les images négatives," 172, with ill.; and Gendron, La Jeunesse, 108 and n. 343.

33. Lise Andries asserts this, in J.-C. Bonnet, ed., La Carmagnole des Muses, 201.

34. See note 23 above. One part of this image was reproduced in J.-C.Bonnet, "Les Images négatifs," ill. 17.

35. Etching, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, coll. de Vinck, no. 5331. For the iconography of Marat's triumph after his acquittal at the Revolutionary Tribunal, see, for example, Boilly's painting depicting Marat carried on the shoulders of the enthusiastic crowd, (Musée des Beaux Arts, Lille; the preparatory drawing is preserved in Musée Lambinet, Versailles). The rhetoric of this triumph was re-enacted after Marat's death in the processions (called the triumphs), organized in his honor by his followers.

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36. Anonymous engraving; department of prints and drawings. British Museum. Reproduced in Germani, "Les métamorphoses," pl.12. Rousseau busts were ordered to replace that of Marat in the Parisian theatres and the print inscribes itself in that symbolic context of replacement. See ibid., 127.

37. The print was dated by Germani, (ibid.), for the post-Thermidorian period. In French Caricature and the French Revolution (no. 117, 221-2) the date is given as 1793, following the dating of the Bibliothèque Nationale, where the print is preserved (series Qb 13 juillet 1793).

38. On frequent deployment of such amalgamations or oversignification in the Revolutionary imagery, see Herding, "Visual codes and the Graphic Art of the French Revolution," esp. 86-97.

39. Anonymous engraving, BN, Estampes, Coll. de Vinck, no. 2901. [ca. 1793?]. The print is reproduced in Germani, "Les métamorphoses," 121, where it is placed in the context of pillages of 23 February 1793. See moreover Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Révolution française, who discusses also another version of the image, by Villeneuve.

40. See J.-C. Bonnet, "Les formes de célébration;" and J. Guilhaumou, La Mort de Marat, 95-107.

41. For women's offers to get inseminated by Marat, see E. Roudinesco, Theroigne de Méricourt, 140.

42. Is is important to emphasize that it was the particular nature of Marat's cult, during and beyond the Terror, as a kind of political religion with its liturgy, its fetish-like relics, its symbols but also with women as its principal agents, that was targetted in the attacks. This had a long-lasting effect on Republican culture. For example, in 1797, when Lareveillère-Lepaux wanted to reform the festivals, he evoked the image the fêtes maratiques as a negative example of a certain kind of emotionalism that the true republican culture should avoid. He recommended avoiding exaltation and rites but to strive, instead, towards the protestant-like "pure and simple" values and pleasures. (See Lareveillère-Lepaux, Essai sur les moynes de faire participer l'universalité des spectateurs à tout ce qui se pratique dans le fêtes nationales, Paris, an 6 [1797], 8.) This emphasis coincided with the circumscription of women as mothers

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within the fêtes morales introduced under the Directory.

43. See D. Godineau, Citoyennes tricoteuses, 287-304. Godineau's work is fundamental for the appreciation of women's role in this stage of the Thermidorian reaction and it was the most important source for my own account of the effect of Germinal/Prairial on representation. See also, most usefully, Darline G. Levey and Harriet Applewhite, "Women in Political Revolution in Paris." On women in Republican discourse, see Joan Landes, Women in the Public Sphere.

44. See Godineau, Citoyennes tricoteuses, 305-7.

45. This is the central argument in Godineau, ibid. She stresses the politicization of women against these intepretations of female militancy that present it as a function of exclusively economic needs. Godineau discerns a pattern of action developed in the winter-spring 1795, in which militants mobilized the non-politicized but economically exasperated women.

46. Godineau describes these actions at length basing her descriptions on Parisian police archives. See ibid, 287-332, passim. For example, on 16 January, thus long after the closure of the Jacobin club "[l]es tribunes de la Convention étaient remplies d'ouvriers maçons et des femmes qui allaient habituellement aux Jacobins, qui se désignaient Montagne...". During January and February these women are seen shouting invectives at the modéré deputies, mimicking and deriding the reactions from the tribune of their supporters, obstreporously rallying for the Montagnard deputies and in other ways disrupting parliamentary debate. Ibid, 292.

47. Ibid, 293-4.

48. Ibid., 305 ff.

49. Ibid., 306-7. The facts described below are also based on Godineau's account, which is itself based on Parisian police records.

50. Ibid., 299.

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51. Aulard, Paris pendant la réaction thermidorienne, 683-5. As quoted by Levy and Applewhite, "Women and political revolution," 27.

52. Cited from police archives in Paule-Marie Duhet, Les femmes de la Révolution, 164.

53. For the Real, as it was happening, was shared through its immediate elaboration in the Symbolic.

54. The crête ostensibly referred to the most outspoken Jacobin deputies who sat highest on the left tribune at the Convention after Thermidor. See Tarlé, Germinale et Pratile, 85.

55. All historiographers of the Prairial insurrection agree on that. Tarlé (Germinale e Pratile, 89-93) goes out of his way to point out the impossibility of any connection and even an outright incompatibility between the inhabitants of the fabourgs St. Marcel and St. Antoine and the crête. Tönneson (La Défaite) launched a thesis that the prisoners of the Plessis were the Prairial insurrection's think tank, a hypothesis not yet confirmed. The mystery in which the organizers of the insurrection have been shrouded seem to suggest the historians unease with two things: the idea that the people can organize itself independently of the bourgeoisie, and, especially, that an insurrection could be conceived by female militants on their own, or in collaboration with male sans-culottes and without recourse to the conceptual framework produced by upper class, educated politicians such as the Jacobins.

56. Most deputies were arrested on mere verbal denunciation by their reactionary colleagues at the Convention, the Bourdons, the Frérons and the like. See Tarlé, Germinale e Pratile, 210. Also, see chap. 4 below for the arbitrariness of the entire judiciary process.

57. In the trial against the deputies of the crête who spoke, as it was perceived, in support of the insurgents during Prairial, the principal witness was a single person, a journalist by the name of Jourdan, who claimed he had sat and taken notes of the entire session of the 1st of Prairial, a claim contradicted by the lacunae and contradictions he came up with. As Romme stressed in his defense, all the deputies spoke after having been granted to do so by the president of the Convention. There was thus nothing illegal about what they were doing. The crowd, far

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from being complicitous with the crête deputies, showed impatience and hostility, etc, etc. See Tönnesson, La défaite de des sans-culottes, 324-44; and Baczko, Comment, 325, for the claim of the crête deputies that they merely tried to channel the anger and violence of the crowd by suggesting to adopt some of the measures proposed by it.

58. A military commission was created to judge the accused and it operated until 9 thermidor (27 July -- a symbolic date). The commission issued 76 sentences, of which 36 called for the guillotine. On 29 prairial (17 June), six deputies attempted suicide before mounting the guillotine; three succeeded, and the rest were executed. What happened was: Goujon smuggled a single dagger with which he, Romme and Duquesnoy all managed to kill themselves, passing it on from one another. Soubrany, Bourbotte and Duroy tried the same with a pair of scissors and only partially succeeded; they were dragged half-alive to the guillotine and beheaded. The spectacle of the just punishment of the coupables was thus compromised if not entirely spoiled for the Thermidorians by the Montagnard's stubborn refusal to accept the verdict. See Furet and Richet, La révolution, 302; and Tarlé, Germinale e Pratile, 223-7.

59. This tradition was first established in the numerous memoirs of the Jacobin deputies, (see e.g., R. Levasseur, Mémoirs; M.-A. Baudot, Notes historiques sur la Convention Nationale), and continued in such studies as J. Claretie, Les Derniers Montagnards, which, although commemorative, rather than scholarly, in nature, contributed to the survival of the term.

60. Françoise Brunel, "Les Derniers Montagnards et l'unité révolutionnaire," 392. In her selection of who was and who was not the last Montagnard, Brunel uses two criteria: the appel nominal of germinal III and the arrests after the Germinal/Prairial uprisings. Her article was announced as the beginning of what she promised in 1977 to be a larger study, which remains, alas, to be done.

61. Aside from the scrupulousness of her study, obviously this is a rather fluid definition. There is some weakness in Brunel's double criteria (appel nominal and/or arrest after Germinal/Prairial). David, for example, both does and does not fit into the thus defined "last Montagnards": for if he did get arrested in consequence of the uprising (and, we may add, did not renege on his Jacobinism), he could not be said to have aligned himself in any way with the postulates of the insurgents and with any postulates for that matter, since, despite having remained a deputy, David stayed at home and did not show up once

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at the Convention in between his imprisonments. For more on this, see chap. 4, section i. below.

62. There are many reasons for this lack of visual material. The Jacobins were in dispersal, as all sources stress. The Jacobinophobia of the governement, moreover, was taking forms of rather deterring repressions -- executions and imprisonments. In that climate, with the pro-Jacobin press in retreat and the public opinion turned against them, it must have been difficult for the Jacobins to launch or circulate the "martyrological" imagery. For more on the difficulties see chapt. 4 below. There exist, however, 19th-century representations, such as the painting of the Romme group's suicide in prison at the Musée de la Révolution in Vizille, proving the power of the Jacobin "martyr's" myth.

63. On the attitude and the morale of the Jacobins gleaned from their memoirs, see Tarlé, Germinale e Pratile, 85-90.

64. Levasseur, Memoirs, IV: 15.

65. Romme, formerly David's friend and colleague, used to support women's political rights (17 April 1793). Could this have been (it has never been suggested) a contribution to the focus on him in the persecution process?

66. Les Abominables ou le Jacobin et la Discorde semant le Crime et la Terreur sur leur pas, drypoint engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, coll. de Vinck no. 6556. The inscription below adds: "Ah! Méchante Canaille, grace aux Dieux, votre Régne est passé."

67. Anonymous engraving; Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, serie Qb1 1797.

68. Of course, such powerful narrative elaborations of this figure as in Jules Michelet's account of the revolution significantly reinforced the power of this cliché. (In Histoire de la Révolution Française, Paris 1849, repr. by Laffont, 1986.) What I am stressing here are its Thermidorian origins.

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69. Drypoint engraving by Simon Petit, 1797; Bibliothèque Nationale; Cabinet des Estampes, coll. de Vinck, no. 6958. The context of the elections and neo-Jacobinism on the rise in this period could explain its anti-Jacobin edge. For the neo-Jacobinism under the Directory, see I. Woloch, The Jacobin Legacy.

70. The term tricoteuse was revived again in the 19th-century historiography, notably in Michelet's Histoire de la Révolution française, becoming one of those stock figures whose origins were no longer clear. For the first appearance of the tricoteuse as a negative term, see D. Godineau, "La Tricoteuse: la formation d'un mythe révoutionnaire," in M. Vovelle, ed., Les Images de la Révolution, 1989, 2278-85. I develop this argument in my "David's Sabine Women." The assignat that the Jacobin is shown holding was abolished on 19 February 1796.

71. Assassinat du député Ferraud dans la Convention nationale, engraved after Duplessi-Bertaux by Pierre-Gabriel Berthault for the Tableaux historiques de la Révolution (1791-1796). See Maurice Tourneux, "Les Tableaux Historiques de la Révolution et leurs transformations," 123-61.

Journée du 1er Prairial de l'an III. Engraved after C. Monnier by Isidor-Stanislas Helman, it became a part of the collection of prints, Principales Journées de la Révolution, published as such in 1798. See Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Révolution française, 89 and 303. Both prints were part of officially aproved and/or sponsored publications.

72. The episode of beheading happened at the end of the first day of the revolt which, according to Dominique Godineau, had been provoked principally by the female militants leading the meurt-de-faim women of the Parisian sections to the hall of the Convention. Their intervention on the 1st of Prairial marked both the highest point of the women's massive irruption onto the political scene, dating from March 1795, and the last manifestation of female political engagement during the revolution. In the two days that followed, the male sans-culottes personnel took over the leadership of the revolt from women, but the latter were still active participants. See Godineau, Citoyennes, esp. 319-32.

73. See my "David's Sabine Women," 420-24.

74. The quotation is from the Babouviste Buonarotti, as cited in Tönnesson, La défaite, cit., 97. For the anti-Terrorist passion, see Levasseur's Memoirs.

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75. "Noubliez-pas que c'est le peu d'énergie du gouvernement qui a creusé le précipice sous nos pas, que s'il eût puni sur-le-champ les complices de Robespierre au 9 thermidor, les journées du 12 prairial, de 1 et 4 prairial, ne fussent point arrivées." Section des Amis de la Patrie addressing the National Convention, quoted in Tarlé, Germinale e Pratile, 312, n. 12.

76. For the "plebeian in revolt" in 19th-century literature, see Peter Brooks, "The Novel and the Guillotine, or the Fathers and Sons in Le Rouge et le Noir," in Reading for the Plot, 62-89.

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Chapter 4

i. David accused again

How does David's case fit into the post-Prairial framework of renewed and reinforced anti-Jacobin persecution?[1] Although he was neither involved nor even present at the Convention during the insurrectional journées, the artist was caught in the web of what one deputy insisted on calling "the great act of justice"[2] of the National Representation reacting to the Prairial uprising. As a a matter of fact, since his release from the Luxembourg prison (28 December 1794), he had not been able to perform his duties as a deputy at all, due to illness.[3] David from the end of December to the end of May, as described by himself, seems to fit the profile of a passive, discouraged and depressed Jacobin sketched out in the memoirs of his colleague Levasseur. Passivity and caution -- both causing depression -- seemed to the author of the memoirs to be the only condition available to those Jacobins who neither pass over to the enemy camp nor openly reneged after Thermidor.[4]

"J'ai mis dans ma conduite une réserve et une circonscription poussées jusqu'à la timidité," wrote David describing his comportment in this period.[5] In his own words, he mistrusted people, even the good patriots, and took care

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not to employ or receive anyone, carefully avoiding even correspondence. He also broke off all contacts with those whom he used to see before his detention. Instead, he enclosed himself at home, concentrating on recovery since his health had apparently been seriously altered by the circumstances.[6]

At the end of April, after the journées of Germinal, as the political and social tensions in the city intensified, the artist, perhaps following the advice of Boissy d'Anglas,[7] writes to the Convention to request a leave on the grounds of needing to recover from illness in the countryside, and quits Paris for the estate of his brother-in-law in Saint-Omer.[8] "[...] j'y vivais solitaire, paisible, étranger aux manoeuvres et aux complots qui ont, un instant troublé l'ordre public..."[9] This is where, a month later, he was arrested.

If on 29 May David shared the fate of all former members of the government Committees preventively arrested in the wake of Prairial,[10] his case was potentially aggravated by the accusations presented publicly against him at an earlier time by the delegation from his section, that is, the district assembly of Muséum (formerly the district of the Louvre), that appeared at the Convention. It seems that, despite his caution and self-conscious withdrawal from public life, David as a former functionary of the Terror could not cease to be, throughout the Thermidorian period, the subject

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on trial. From the end of March, despite the fact that his conduct had just been officially examined and David was cleared of any accusation, the section authorities opened their own inquiry into the artist's comportment as a man in power during the Terror. A special commission was put in charge of gathering new evidence against David by inviting those of its members who knew or had ever had any contact with him to submit testimonies. By early April eight testimonies coaxed, it seems, from different individuals who could be expected to have grievances with the former regime, or who could be otherwise manipulated into it, served the section's commission as a basis to formulate seventeen pièces d'accusations against David.[11] But it was not until the end of the month, when David left Paris, that the section decided to present its case at the Convention, which it did on 2 May.[12] The legal grounds for such a procedure were uncertain (although the procedure as such became quite frequently employed in this particular period -- later more about this) and some deputies voiced their opposition to the idea of having anyone from their ranks denounced by mere district authorities, seeing it as an infringement upon the Convention's own authority and competence. In the debate that ensued, however, the newly reintegrated Girondists argued, not surprisingly, in support of the section's action.[13]

The list of all the points of accusation is an interesting document to study -- one that allows us a glance into the

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section's motives and the procedures it used. In it David is being accused of: 1. hypocritical behaviour on the 9th of Thermidor; 2. having, on the orders of Robespierre, "created, chosen and nominated" the mayor of Paris and the commune; 3. of organizing and participating in sumptuous meals and orgies [in honour of Marat], igniting "the rage of the factious" against the Convention and "the good citizens" and of preparing lists of proscriptions of the citizens of the section; 4. having created a popular commission that was meant to help liberate the prisoners but whose functions he abused; 5. depriving a certain individual (by the name of Chemelat) of his job at the CIP; 6. of preparing lists of proscriptions of the artists; 7. talking badly and in threatening terms about them; 8. telling a citizen whose sister was imprisoned and since sentenced to death that the decision of the tribunal was correct; 9. having caused the elimination of one citizen (the artist Boze) from the Jacobin club; 10. **being often seen among the women on the tribunes agitating during the section assemblies** (bold print mine); 11.-15. having insisted at the CSG that no citizen of his section be granted liberty without his consent and yet refusing to help get a shopkeeper out of prison when solicited by his wife; 16. persecuting an artist (Lethièrs) for a subject he chose, telling him he would get guillotined for it; finally, 17. being "un terroriste, un désorganisateur et meneur de section."[14]

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This is a rather peculiar combination of charges, where an expression of opinion as much as a form of sociability of the accused are put on the same level as his political activity and qualified as a crime. Clearly, we are looking at a document of the Revolution which politicized all areas of life and which introduced practices of popular justice that made the notion of what is legal rather fluid. One is struck by a curious mixture of facts and, with a lack of hierarchy between them, resulting in the unintended grotesqueness of some claims (e.g., participated in sumptuous meals and wrote lists of people to be sent to the guillotine, a glutton and a "man of blood"[15]) and the blatant absurdity of others (e.g.,it was well known that the mayor's nomination was under the auspices of the CSP and not the CSG of which David was a part, let alone the impossibility of any member of a Committee deciding anything single-handedly.[16] The older accusations, that could not be confirmed during the first investigation of the artist's conduct (e.g., David's duplicitous comportment on the 9th of Thermidor; his alleged persecution of other artists) are mobilized again although little new or no evidence is offered. Moreover, the accusations were formulated in disregard of the rules established for such procedures (even the rather fluid ones of the revolutionary period), in that they presented as evidence what even the witnesses themselves admitted were rumors rather than facts (pushed to the extreme in the

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deposition about Chemelat) and by puffing-up the material of a single testimony, and sometimes a single fact mentioned by the witness, into several points of accusations.[17] And one has to keep in mind that testimonies resulted from active solicitations from the section authorities, some not without blackmailing connotations. Yet, it seems it was difficult for them to construct a convincing portrait of the David they needed: a corrupt, callous, duplicitous Terrorist persecutor.[18]

The way the charges are formulated is as interesting as the accusations themselves. In formulations such as "d'avoir organisé la horde d'assassins appelée commission populaire..." (4) or "d'avoir fait chasser d'un des bureaux de l'instruction publique un père de famille honnêtte et respectable... d'avoir dit à cet citoyen mille horreurs et d'avoir imprimé la terreur dans son âme" (5), the language shapes the judgment of the listening deputies beforehand. It is almost on the language itself that the accusations hinge: unless it is due to "la horde d'assasins," there would be hardly anything wrong in having organized a popular commissions; were he not an "honest father of the family", the dismissal of a citizen from the CIP (and this too sounds better when said to be "chased away") could have been perhaps justifiable. Arbitrary, judgmental, based on the use of violent language, the accusations were formulated to indict almost without trial. And when one reads the original

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transcripts of the witnesses' testimonies, the impression that there is nothing in the charge but delirious language is even stronger.[19]

The language also testifies to the time in which the denunciations were being made, after the Germinal journées, during Floréal when the activity of women became, in the language of the reaction, synonymous with sedition. It was in relation to the newly acquired signifying function of women that the charge of being often seen together with the women of the tribunes was formulated.[20] And -- another marker of the time in which the evidence was being gathered -- the reference to Marat has to be understood in the context of de-Pantheonization of the radical revolutionary, whom the war of symbols waged by the jeunesse dorée made synonymous with the year II.[21]

The section's action against David should not be seen as an isolated case but rather as a manifestation of a broader phenomenon of sectional persecution directed against the institutions, people and values of the year II, which gained momentum in Pluviôse and Ventôse of year III.[22] In addition to the accumulated effect of the processes of reaction since the fall of Robespierre, this phenomenon was triggered by the power shift in the personnel of the sections where, as was the case in the district of Muséum, the "moderates" or réacteurs took over the sans-culotte positions. In his analysis of the phenomenon of sectional persecution, Kare

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Tönnesson stressed its massive character -- in the period from the end of January to the end of March, 37 of the existing 48 sections undertook the same action of anti-Terrorist épuration -- as well as the logic of gratuitous vengeance that governed it. He pointed to the fact that the most detested Terrorist commissaries were eliminated immediately after the Thermidorian coup, in late summer 1794. The increased intensity of the en bloc reaction against all former commissaries in the winter of 1795 had a broader social and political target: the sans-culottes and Jacobins.

Tönnesson also draws attention to the total arbitrariness of procedures through which evidence was gathered. The goal of the procedure was the disarmament of a given section member (only citizens could carry arms; disarmament implied loss of the right to perform any political and civic function, including the loss of one's passport and thus one's right to travel even outside Paris) and his ultimate arrest. In order to do that, the section had to announce that its member lost the section's confidence, or that he/she never had it, and to present evidence of his/her incriminating conduct to the government (i.e., CSG). As in David's case, a special commission (Commission de Douze) was formed to examine the suspected member's past. However, Tönnesson points out that in many cases the section announced its withdrawal of confidence before it ordered a commission to be formed, thus expecting the evidence to be furnished for a

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decision already taken. Moreover, in gathering evidence, not only were no distinctions made between rumour and proven fact, there also seems to have been no interest in facts as such. It was enough to say that a suspected person was a buveur de sang -- the most often employed term -- or, like David, a meneur de section to quasi-indict this person.[23] And such a case could count on the support of the réacteur deputies, the Frérons, the Talliens, the Bourdons d'Oise and most of the newly reintegrated Girondists, when it was being presented at the CSG. Thus, sanguinary phantasms were increasingly evoked on the premises of the national representation, putting pressure on the deputies and on the decision-making process. For example, in presenting its report on 18 February (30 Pluviôse), Lepelletier section thus depicted the accused Terrorists:

> Vous verrez ces scélérats, ivres de vin et de sang, bondissant de joie en voyant palpiter des membres ensanglantés de leurs victimes; vous frémires, et, comme nous, vous aurez peine à concevoir que la nature ait décoré de formes humaines ces monstres, dont on n'oserait pas même imputer le charactère épuvantable aux animaux les plus féroces.[24]

And on 29 February (11 Ventôse), the section of Montreuil asked the Convention: "Qu'attendez-vous pour purger la terre de la liberté de ces anthropophages?"[25]

Thus, a new language was installed and endowed with an

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extraordinary power through the phenomenon of sectional persecution. Certainly, such use of language, revolutionary par excellence, was not entirely new. The Terrorists were the ones who first introduced the vocabulary of non-political distinctions, such as ami/ennemi, as deadly instrument of political struggle. But in 1795 the question was not just of who was a friend or an enemy of the People, but of making a distinction (much more difficult to erase) of who belongs with humanity and who does not (the "blood drinkers," "cannibals" and niveleurs certainly did not). In this way, the practice of sectional persecution redeveloped and reinforced the passionate language of vengeance that had begun to emerge after the Nantes trials, a discourse of sanguinary delirium, of formes acerbes, in which a segment of the revolutionary past was to be thought about and its main actors (the sans-culottes, the female militants, mixed as they were in this discourse with the Jacobins) positioned: condemned and de-legitimized.[26]

With the massive outburst of sectional persecution in the winter of 1795 as the context for the Muséum district's action, we can better understand why, of all revolutionary institutions, it was the section that became the site of renewal of the accusations against the artist. It also allows us to better understand its highly arbitrary procedures and use of language (invectives presented as evidence). It must have been no accident that the section's initiative to

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incriminate David at the end of March also coincided with the Germinal insurrection. Although, as explained above, the Jacobins had little to do with this action, prepared and executed by the sans-culotte militants with a strong presence of women among them, the Germinal journées proved a "brutal acceleration" of the investigation against the former members of the committees, Barère, Billaud, Collot and Vadier.[27] These journées must have also given a push to the Museum section's initiative, as they did to the broader process of eradication of the Terrorist personnel. Thus, it was the events of spring, via the section's accusations, that threw on David's public persona the sinister shadow of both a sans-culotte and of a militant woman (with whom in reality, need it be stressed, he had little to do at this point).[28]

But how did David himself understand what was happening to him? It is worth our while to examine more closely his reaction, including its textual specificity. What strikes one first is the active and even aggressive mode in which David handled the section's initiative once he was informed about it. He immediately sought to pre-empt its effect by trying to obtain some information from the section on the nature of the charges being formulated against him in order to refute them and, failing that, to confront his accusers personally, before they appeared at the CSG.[29] Neither of these attempts was successful.

In the meanwhile, following the journée of 12 Germinal (1

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April), marked by a popular intervention in the hall of the Convention, the four "grand coupables," the Terrorists Billaud, Collot, Barère and Vadier, are sentenced to deportation and eight other deputies, among them Cambon, Amar and David's accuser Lecointre, are ordered arrested. In this volatile situation, with his health declining, David decides to quit Paris for the country estate of his in-laws. He makes sure, however, to request a deputy's leave and to assure his colleagues of his readiness to immediately appear at the Convention if he is summoned.[30]

When, profiting from his absence, the section's delegation went ahead with presenting their case at the Convention on 2 May, David did not hesitate to write an open letter to the section the next day and to have it published and posted in public spaces in Paris. In the letter, he defines the section's accusation as the product of "délire de la haine ou le fureurs de la vengeance", aimed not only at him personally but at the national representation and even at the Revolution itself. He describes his earlier vain attempts to respond to the charges in a "fraternal" way, and threatens his "calomniateurs" with a promise to pursue them in order to prove the illegality and public dangerousness of their action. There is much self-assurance to the voice with which the text speaks. David reminds his accusers about his recent exoneration. And he seems convinced that behind the denunciation there hide former academicians nostalgic for the

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times of the Ancien Regime.[31]

The section was infuriated, as the transcripts from its meeting on 9 May (20 Floréal) indicate. It responded by having its own affiche attacking David posted all over in the city.[32]

Having thus entered into a public war of words with the section's authorities, David seems determined to persist and during the month of May, while in Saint Ouen, he writes a long and thorough refutation of all the seventeen charges against him, which he intends to publish. If we are to believe the artist -- and there are no reasons we shouldn't, in this particular matter -- he has the text finished and ready to be given to the printers when, in the night during 29 to 30 May, he is arrested. His Réponse... thus ends up being published later, while David is already in prison at the Quatre Nations.[33] There, he certainly writes the preliminary observations, which appear in the beginning of the published text, and, possibly, makes some revisions and other additions to the main body of the text.

Three parts should be distinguished, in the published text. In the first, written after arrest, David offers a concise analysis of the circumstances responsible for his present situation and outlines the main arguments of his defense. He understands his problem to be one of the collapsed distinction between the Terrorists, guilty of criminal excesses, and people like himself, whose patrotism

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and adherence to Republican values were not compromised by any "fonction terrible" (2). Since the post-Thermidorian public opinion seems incapable of making this distinction, David seeks to re-establish it around two arguments. First, he claims that as a member of the Jacobin government he was much more involved in the administration of the arts and culture than in police work. Second, that his case, which had already been examined, resulting in his complete exoneration, was being now unjustly reopened due to sheer activité de la haine (6).[34] He wants to prove that the offic ial justification for his arrest -- security measures -- is, in his case, unfounded.

In the second part, David addresses, one by one, all the charges in order to demonstrate that they are slanderous, not only in that they are untrue but also because they have little connection to, and at times outright contradict, the witnesses' testimonies on which they announce they were based. To prove the arbitrary manner in which the points of accusation were formulated, David compares them to the original witnesses' statements (whose transcripts were published by the section authorities), pointing out specific examples of manipulation, discrepancies and distortions. His own explanations follow. In the third part, a rather long finale, David concludes by recapitulating the gist of his refutations and offering a somewhat repetitious but at times striking political/artistic self-portrait.

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In comparison to the Discours of defense produced during the first imprisonment, the text of Réponse is not only longer, much better organized, and -- in the parts addressing the charges directly -- even systematic, but it is also written with what seems to be a greater control and self-consciousness about how things are being said, both by David and by his enemies. The greater degree of the author's control obviously stems from the fact that the major part of the text was produced over a period of more than one month, during David's stay in the country estate, far from the volatile political context of Paris, and, possibly, with some help or advice (on legal matters in particular?) from his brother-in-law, Pierre Sériziat.[35] Moreover, in the prison of the College des Quatre Nations, all the other deputies, among them Jeanbon de Saint André, Bernard de Saintes, Dubarran and Pautrizel, whom the artist portrayed and thus must have been in contact with, also wrote their defenses, and one can presume that there was a degree of exchange and feedback going on between them.

But clearly, in the spring of 1795, David also writes from a different position than in late summer/fall of 1794: the accusations against him had already been considered and rejected once; he is still a deputy. He could believe his position stronger than before. Yet, the political situation in the spring of 1795 was also extraordinarily volatile in general and particularly so for a Jacobin deputy, so that his

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degree of control over the text inasmuch as it articulates this own position, has to be seen as largely wishful. The fate of the group of the "last Montagnard" deputies who were summarily tried and sentenced to death for merely exercising their functions on the day of the insurrectional intervention of the people at the Convention, and who all demonstrated their innocence in the texts of defense written in prison, already gives us some idea of the measures the réacteurs were ready to adopt, rivalling their Terrorist predecessors, in the struggle to maintain power. Scapegoats were in high demand.

David seems to be aware of this. He declares having seen through what he terms the "mechanism of persecution" deployed by the section, and seeks to expose it by demonstrating not just the groundlessness of the charges but the abusive and falsifying manner in which they were formulated, including: evidence based on hearsay; distortion of facts; strategic omissions and contradictions in relation to original testimonies. Moreover, he highlights the exploitation of rhetorical effects and the generally manipulative use of language by his accusers (18). But as David insists on a certain rhetorical excess in the language of his enemies, his own text displays also a high degree of oratorical flourish. And, at times, his facts too are "stretched" a bit, some areas of his past activities glossed over or disavowed in an effort to counteract the image of David as "un tyran, un

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oppresseur, un persécuteur" with the picture of an innocent Republican always marching "sans trouble et sans crainte dans la ligne du patriotisme..." (22). If David reproaches his accusers for the exploitation of the rhetorical principle of anti-thesis (18) he himself engages it for his own purpose. Thus, he states: "[ce] David qu'on presente à l'opinion publique comme un terroriste, un persécuteur, un homme livré à l'envie, et altéré du sang des ses rivaux, David qu'on dit avoir été toute puisance, N'A JAMAIS FAIT ARRETER UN SEUL HOMME; et la preuve, il l'indique dans les registres du comité de sûreté générale..... " (block letters in the text; 44).

D.L. Dowd's archival research brings up a somewhat different account of David-the CSG member, who seems to have performed his police functions with as much sense of professional responsibility as did his colleagues.[36] He just as regularly signed arrest warrants. Yet, according to Dowd, if David could be seen enforcing or even initiating measures to protect the interests of the revolutionary government with severity -- e.g., proposing that the death punishment handed down to the writers and printers who produced counterrevolutionary material be extended to artists as well -- there are no proofs whatsoever that he used his position to engage in vindictive persecution of any single social or professional group. Which goes to prove that if David's self-image in the Réponse was not entirely accurate, the one put

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forward by his accusers was not either.[37]

Clearly, it is necessary to keep in mind that David's text was shaped by its purpose to legally exonerate the author. But, in any case, our interest in it could not be subsumed by analysis of the truth value of its assertions. It is equally important and useful to look at it precisely as a sort of image of David and to give more attention to its textual rhetoric. As a matter of fact, David indicated in the Réponse that he understood himself to have become a kind of canvas that could be inscribed with strokes of different arguments. Having listed the many aspects of his career that make him vulnerable in the present situation -- his participation in the Montagnard government, his membership in the Jacobin club, his friendship with the principal men of year II now seen as criminals, etc. -- David exclaimed: "quel surface immense je présente aux traits de passion qui grondent autour de moi!" (44).[38]

But, certainly, David's conscious purpose in the text is not to relativize or pluralize his meaning and identity, but rather to anchor it safely in the harbor of Republican irreproachability. In that regard, he continues the line of his earlier defense developing the image of himself as one of the most ardent revolutionaries, a friend of liberty, a pure and disinterested patriote. If he attached himself to the revolutionary cause, it was for committment "à la cause de l'humanité" and for "la gloire qui donnent les beaux-arts"

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(46). And he insists on not being confused with those whom the "passions funestes" led astray from patriotism and discredited as revolutionaries even if these were the people with whom he used to share political beliefs.

In the intense desire of this text to separate David's identity from, on the one hand, the notion of the Terror, but, on the other, from what his réacteurs enemies represent, one is struck by the choice of metaphors. Repeatedly, throughout the text, references to affective excess -- "des plus furieuses passions," "mélange odieux des passions," "passions funestes qui ont presque déshonoré la nature humaine," "passions déchainées," "impulsions de ressentiment," etc. -- serve as figures through which David represents both the action of his denunciators and the comportment of the people with whom he once shared the political path in his past career but from whom his image now needs to be separated. David thus sees himself as exempte de passions (44).

At the same time, especially in the long quasi-confessional conclusion of his text peppered with Rousseauian accents, David lets the reader into his Republican "heart." An exemplary citizen, irreproachable son, good father, devout friend, helper of the indigent, and even, due to his recent misfortunes, a reconciled husband. Nothing was ever done against nature. He is a perfect moral subject of his century. Feelings? Yes, he has them, but only within this moral

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framework and especially as occasioned by "la plus douce fraternité," the utopian reciprocity of truly Republican (male) hearts that can understand each other without any effort at communication, by dint of a quasi-osmotic communion between their transparent souls (49).

This "confession" is followed by an interesting paragraph on the importance David attached to his students (49-50). They seem to be the privileged site onto which his feelings of "la plus douce fraternité" are now displaced. David's studio is described as an ideal community of men linked "par de chaînes aussi fortes que le liens du sang," and structured by the familial hierarchy (it is "pieté filiale" that links a student to his master). Wanting to return there, David expresses his desire to regain his lost fatherly authority, but one cannot help thinking that the studio was also a kind of substitute for the forms of sociability that hitherto allowed him to enjoy the pleasures of fraternity, notably the Jacobin club, now doubly inaccessible to him (the club closed; David in prison).

It is interesting to observe how David's image of the Revolution gets caught in this textual play of metaphors, and how it is split by it. For if the author is at pains to prove his commitment to the Revolution, the motor of all his activities as an artist, there also appears in the text, with a rather curious frequency, an image of the Revolution as the uncontrolled force that unleashes precisely these "most

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furious passions" that David wants to be separated from, the (castrative) force, moreover, that blinds people and breeds hatred and a desire for vengeance. As a kind of subcurrent (in David's own words, a "tourbillon") that erodes the positive image of the Revolution in the text, this trope is also what subsumes the references to both David's former Terrorist colleagues and his post-Thermidorian enemies under the same rubric of the politico-affective excess that we mentioned here earlier. And it is what reduces David himself to a mere toy tossed on its waves. As he himself put it, he sees himself having become "un jouet infortuné des vicissitudes d'une Révolution pour laquelle je n'ai plus que des voeux à faire."[39]

In this curiously chivalrous rhetoric, where political allegiances are articulated as affective commitments, David situates himself vis-à-vis the Revolution as a kind of disappointed lover. In French, David's statements are, of course, more obviously gendered: he made vows to her ("la révolution") while she merely tosses him around. He was bound to her, and she has rejected him. What is more, "she" marks a rupture in David's politico-affective pleasure on an important level, preventing him from continuing to enjoy what "she" had first created grounds for: the sweet pleasures of male bonding ("fraternité"). On the stage of this text's unconscious, different scenarios are thus being rehearsed around the motif of loss: loss of the Imaginary plenitude of

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the link with the Mother-Revolution; loss of -- Symbolic? Imaginary? -- homosocial revolutionary bonds; loss of David's own Symbolic position as a Father, which now only professional (students/his studio) rather than political (Jacobins/the club) bonding can recuperate, and, last but not least, loss of the (pre-Thermidorian as pre-Oedipal) unitary self, now a "vast surface" open to the slashes of "passions" unleashed by the "bad" Revolution. (Parenthetically, we may note here similarities with Delafontaine's phrasing of David's account of the origins of the Sabine Women, with the Revolution as castrating force, which confirms our assumption that the report of David's pupil was largely a reported speech.)

These tropes could be recognized as the rhetoric of an identity crisis. Indeed, one author recently analysing the mémoire of self-defense as a form used by the prisoners during the Revolutionary decade suggested that accusations and imprisonment were commonly experienced by the authors of these texts as a loss of identity.[40] David's self-defense joins these texts in its preoccupation with the issues of merging with and separation from political entities, articulated in Oedipalized terms that spell out the identificatory oscillations of a "subject on trial." But David's specifically gendered account of his individual (if to a degree also collective Jacobin) loss of identity also parallels the cultural gender logic of his enemies: matching

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post-Prairial Thermidorian discourse, David's text feminizes everything in the Revolution from which he wanted to separate himself.[41] His metaphorizing of the Revolution as the uncontrollable, affectively excessive and ultimately blinding/castrating force makes us think of the female Fury around which the post-Prairial Imaginary was organized to account for, and accommodate, the threatening aspects of the most recent Revolutionary process.

What I want to emphasize in this rhetorical coincidence is not so much the very fact of it but rather its consequences. I do feel it is essential to reveal the psychosexual logic of David's text as a "mapping fantasy" that allows its subject to sort out meanings and re-insert himself into the Symbolic from which the "tourbillon révolutionnaire" tossed him out.[42] Yet, what is even more important, in my view, is that this individual rhetoric of male crisis acquired cultural legitimacy inasmuch as it coincided with the rhetoric of the collective Republican crisis in the wake of the Germinal/Prairial journées. So even if David's politics were on the other side of the spectrum from the réacteurs, the parallelism in the gender logic of their reactions to the Revolution was, shall we say, generative. For the individual "mapping fantasy" was thus culturally encouraged to structure the future output of the public artist that David wished to remain.[43]

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ii. "The painter of blood"

Let us then act upon the above suggestions and place the text of the Réponse for a moment side by side with a visual response to the revolutionary process produced by David's opponents. A satirical allegory of the Terror preserved in Leningrad's Hermitage, unusual in both its technique (oil on canvas) and large format, offers an interesting configuration of similar motifs, as it, too, seeks to position the artist -- and I believe it refers to David himself -- in relation to the uncontrollable "tourbillon révolutionnaire." (Fig.83)[44]

To be sure, it is an image produced by David's enemies: it could be seen as an example of a broader cultural effort to inscribe David-the artist in the imaginary landscape of horrors through which the Terror was being imaged at the time. With an easel in one hand and a palette in the other, the figure of a painter in an houppelande and red bonnet is shown leading an enthusiastic group of other people in the arts -- a writer, a composer and an architect among them -- who are about to descend into hell, here a space of the revolutionary process, in order to put their talents in its service.[45] Below them, looking like a phantasmatic landscape of horror, is a satirico-allegorical reworking of episodes from the immediate revolutionary past, which, though presented outside their real chronological sequence, are spatially united here by the subterranean rocky landscape,

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typical of representations of hell in the iconography of the Last Judgment. These episodes are recognizable as the most notorious tropes for the Terror in the symbolic repertory of the Thermidorian reaction, notably the noyades of Nantes, seen in the left background; the arbitrary fusillades for which the Terrorist representatives on mission in the provinces became known[46], above them; the Septembre massacres of prisoners by the angry mob of the sans-culottes amidst gushing streams of blood, on the right, and completed by a group of cannibals feasting on the massacred corpses in the foreground; a mock session of the revolutionary tribunal held on the rock, on the verge of a precipice, on far right; and, finally, in the center, on top of a mountain -- the Jacobin emblem par excellence -- the triumphant guillotine.

While its scaffold and blade are dramatically set off by the fiery background, the symbolic eloquence of the guillotine is enhanced also by the two stock figures of the Thermidorian Imaginary placed next to it: a tricoteuse (the woman dancing with a freshly cropped head in her hand), and a buveur de sang (literally, a figure in a bonnet seated right next to the scaffold, and drinking from a chalice filled with the victim's blood; another buveur is shown placing his cup so as to catch the fresh blood gushing from the corpse). This is a rare instance of the rhetoric of the formes acerbes, that we know from engravings, put into paint.

From behind the hill, a terrifying procession of the sans-

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culottes, with corpses of babies and cropped heads speared on their pikes, advances while the monstrous denizens of hell retreat in horror. The message is clear: the monstrosity of a sans-culottes outdoes even that of the Devil. The procession brings onto stage the three privileged actors of this version of the Terror: Marat (dragged in his bathtub), Robespierre and Fouquier-Tinville, the public accuser at the revolutionary tribunal (both carried on a litter). Next to them, held on another litter, the heads of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette appear on a heap of papers identified by inscription as Hébert's radical journal, the Père Duchesne. A winged female personification of vengeance, with exposed breasts and a sword in hand, floats above.

If we now find it rather strenuous to recognize all these figures and to understand their exact meaning here, it was not so difficult for a French viewer in mid-1790s. For such a viewer, these figures and episodes of gory violence and persecution coagulated into an image of the reign of Terror that he or she would have been familiar with from through pamphlet literature, massively produced at the time. In these publications, some of which were discussed here earlier, similar litanies of horrors, true and imaginary, perpetrated by the hommes de sang were offered for consumption. In fact, some of these texts were first read aloud collectively, during meetings of the popular societies, which would then have them printed, as was the case of Le Robespierrisme.

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Poème suivi du maratisme et de quelques épitaphes révolutionnaires, where details of all the "massacres of innocents" were revealed, such as, as in our picture, the noyades of Nantes, or the practice of having small children "lancés en l'air au bout des baionnets," as they are held here on pikes.[47]

Thus, if it is hard to establish the exact circumstances of the painting's creation and reception, including the artist (Taunay?) and the possible patron, it is less difficult to date and situate it in the political and cultural context that had determined its conception and execution. Rather than being done, as it was suggested, under the Directory, I am convinced that the image was produced in the earlier period of winter-spring 1795, specifically in connection to the anti-Marat campaign.[48] This means that it has to be understood as part of the intensified political and cultural effort to discredit Jacobinism as a form of political behavior by identifying it with the Terror and by presenting the latter's image as a Dantean scene of horrors.[49] Our painting is most interesting as an example of just such an attempt to construct the Terror as a coherent whole out of the chronologically and topographically discontinuous episodes.[50] But it is also particularly important as an articulation of the symbolic place that the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction was assigning to David as an artist.

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This was done here literally, through the figure of the artist hovering above this landscape of horrors.[51] But it was also enacted less directly, through the strategy of inversion that here targets David's revolutionary output. For the cortege that traverses the length of the canvas looks like a mocking re-enactment of a revolutionary festival, not unlike the Davidian fête of Supreme Being which was staged on an artificial hill, the symbol of the Mountain, topped with a tree of Liberty, at the peak of the Terror.[52] And with Marat, dead in his bathtub, as perhaps its most prominent figure, the painting drags out onto surface the problematic issue of David's major contribution to the construction of this violent radical into a revolutionary hero.

On this level, the allegory illustrates the newly prominent element in the campaign against David during the second stage of the reaction, that is, the issue of his contribution to Terrorist culture. While David remained imprisoned, the attacks on him did not cease, and they strove to develop his image as a Terrorist artist, rather than only as a member of the Jacobin government.[53] Thus, in his important report on the events of 9 Thermidor read at the Convention on the eve of the coup's first anniversary, the deputy Courtois describes David as a painter of massacres, blood drinker and vandal, in addition to repeating the charges about his role in the Dantonists' trial, made once before (and rejected for lack of grounds) by Lecointre.[54]

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Courtois cites an account of another deputy, Reboul, who allegedly saw the artist at the September massacres in la Force prison, drawing from life, unperturbed, the bodies of the victims.[55] He also sketches an image of David enjoying the sight of his former friends Camille Desmoulins and Danton being led to the guillotine while he sat in a Parisian café drawing their caricatures "les plus indécents."[56] Courtois' phantasmatic report of David witnessing the massacres with a drawing pad and pencil in hand is what the Leningrad allegory represents almost literally. Both were symptoms of cultural assimilation of the associative chain produced by the imagery of the anti-Marat campaign that we discussed above, into which David was now being inserted. What propelled this insertion was a collective memory of David's contribution to the cultural orchestration of Marat's official meaning in 1793, revived by the controversy around the Pantheonization and the presence of David's icon at the Convention hall.[57] For example, we know that the explicit caricatures of David's Marat of 1793 were in public circulation in winter-spring 1795.[58] This kind of imagery and the cultural actions which it accompanied created a vast new cultural field in which David was being inscribed, just as he had been literally inscribed in the Hermitage painting, a field in which the repressed material of the Terror's cultural unconscious was given form to enter the new collective Imaginary. Hovering above the maudit trio of the

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Terror, David was being presented as the chief producer of the Terrorist aesthetic of delectation in massacres. He became thus associated with this unassimilable Other -- the tricoteuse, the buveur de sang -- not only as a political subject (remember the section's accusations implying his complicity with the militant women) but also as an artist. He was dangerously bound to this territory of the cultural unconscious that was being repeatedly given form across the varied instances of the discourse of the reaction. And this construction of David as the "painter of blood" will have, in turn, reciprocal consequences for David as an individual artist, and for Republican culture under the Directory, whose major figure he will seek to become: it will be the association that David's art in the late 1790s would have to make sure not to evoke.

For what further complicated David's situation was that this association with the "aesthetics of blood" and of sans-culotte violence could easily be made on the basis of his own work. The effect of such images as the Leningrad allegory must have been all the more threatening to him inasmuch as it resonated not only with his Marat of 1793, but also with a much more explicit image of the Terror which sought to extol and thus justify its violence: his Triomphe du Peuple Français. (Fig. 84) This project for the Opera curtain executed sometime between 16 April--11 July 1794, that is, in the period immediately preceding the fall of Robespierre,

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offers a Terrorist version of a triumph. Since he satirically inverts this formula, the author of the Hermitage painting must have seen or known about.[59]

David's image is a Terrorist vision of the revolutionary process par excellence, mixing allegorical and narrative formats to body forth a clear political message: it is the King's blood that has to pay the price for the blood of the Revolutionary martyrs.[60] The triumph of the People, represented as a Hercules with his club sitting on a cart surrounded not only by the female personifications of Liberty and Equality but also by the nine Muses, seems to be also a triumph of the arts that serve the People, thus a triumph of David. But after Thermidor this closely woven connection between the arts and the People aquired a rather risky resonance.

This was, first of all, because in the more elaborate version of his Triumph, David singled out Marat as the most prominent figure in the crowd of martyrs, and the only one who addresses the viewer directly. This figure could be seen as a visual proof of David's political identification with the Ami du peuple -- and more directly so than the 1793 icon. For this figure enacts the very words around which Marat's sacrificial rhetoric of devotio revolved, and which David himself once appropriated when he avowed his own revolutionary commitment: "Je demande que vous m'assassiniez!"[61]

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And while the Triomphe du Peuple visually tightens the connection to Marat, it also spells out David's political alignment with sans-culotte regicide violence. As a matter of fact, taken by themselves, the figures of the sans-culottes seem to be like a heroic version of what the Hermitage painting caricatures, the fury of sans-culotte vengeance. (Of course, in the David this vengeance is justified by the procession of the Revolutionary martyrs.) Clearly, this was not a work David would want to be found in the drawers of his sealed house, as he remained imprisoned, no more so than his earlier sketches for the portrait of the King, compromising for precisely the opposite reasons. Thus, the processes of the second stage of the reaction turned even David's own work into a threat to him as Republican artist. Norman Bryson has talked about the petrifying force of visual tradition at work in David's oeuvre.[62] One could say that, in the wake of events of winter and spring 1795, some of David's own past work became the site of Medusa's gaze for the artist.

iii. The Last Montagnards

Neither the silence of the authorities nor the renewed attacks of his opponents deterred David from continuing to plead for his release. The image he implicates in these pleas is that of the artist who could be useful to the Republic yet whose talent is being wasted as he is sentenced to the

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sterility of the prison situation. This is most strongly conveyed in a letter sent to the Convention on 15 July (27 messidor):

> [...] ma santé s'altère, mes forces dépérissent, je sens s'évanouir dans la douleur cette faible portion de talent que j'ai reçu du ciel et que je voulus consacrer à la gloire de mon pays; ne me condamnez pas à cette perte cruelle, ou ne me forcez pas de survivre moi-même.[63]

David's wife, again, engages in a campaign among the deputies to have David liberated at least provisionally.[64] Her efforts are the more intense in that David's health seems to be deteriorating rapidly. And it is as a body in crisis that David makes his last appearance in the discourse of the Thermidorian bureaucracy. On 28 July the prison janitor at the Quatre Nations sends a report to CSG about David's illness exacerbated by the humidity of the cell.[65] The next day, David is in such bad condition that a doctor is called for.

> The illness of cit. David is making progress from yesterday. The night was violent, he had deliriums; the nature of the fever is such that it might cause very serious illness. Our opinion is that his state requires home care and a calmer, more reassuring situation.[66]

David's wife intervenes again.[67] A few days afterwards, on 3 August (16 thermidor) the CSG orders David to be temporarily released and transported to the house of the

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"citoyenne Pecoul," (as his wife, still divorced from him, is referred to), until he could be moved to Saint-Ouen, to his brother-in-law's estate, to recover.[68] A guard is to accompany him: David remains under house arrest. Only on 24 September (2 vendémiaire) does the CSG decree his provisional liberty.[69]

Although he does not mention it in his correspondence with the authorities, during the period of his imprisonment at the Quatre Nations, between the end of May and the beginning of August 1795, David did use "cette faible portion de talent" that he felt he still had as an artist. What I propose to consider as his prison opus II (as opposed to the prison opus I, produced at the Hôtel des Fermes and at the Luxembourg) consists of a series of pen & ink medallion portraits of the deputies imprisoned with the artist, and a highly finished drawing, also in pen & ink, of a female head. The deputies' portraits have not yet been examined and, as a matter of fact, some of them resurfaced only very recently on the art market.[70] My proposal to consider them as (part of) a series rests on several arguments that will be discussed below, but I want to stress from the outset that the idea of the series implies meanings beyond the notion of the a casual "gift of friendship" under which the best known of these medallions, the Jeanbon Saint André, has been thus far considered. I want to argue that the series offers a striking commentary on (the

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position of) the "Last Montagnards" vis-à-vis Republican codes: they document an attempt to secure their sitters' place in the public Imaginary but at the same time they testify, and this perhaps quite independently of their author's intention, to some major problems that such an attempt encounters. Thus they offer a concrete and most interesting evidence of the difficulties with which the work of David as a committed public artist was fraught in the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction.

This is not necessarily to say that David embarked systematically on this project as a series from the start. It may have indeed started with a casual gift to a colleague from the former Terrorist government, now sharing the artist's prison fate. But, as more of them were produced, the medallions gradually formed a series across which important aesthetic, and Symbolic, phenomena came to be articulated, without their author necessarily having had control over this.

Nor do I mean that the series, as we know it now, is what it originally was. Other medallions might have been produced which are now either lost or remain unattributed.[71]

As for the Femme au turban, no attempts were made thus far to either situate it in David's post-Thermidorian oeuvre with any precision, nor to intepret it.[72] This will be my double goal here.

The series of medallions consists of five portraits, all

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signed L. David. Four of the deputies are identifiable: André Jeanbon called Jeanbon Saint-André (Fig.85); André-Antoine Bernard [des Jeuzines], called Bernard de Saintes (Fig.86); Joseph Nicolas Barbeau-Dubarran (Fig.87); and Louis-Jean-Baptiste-Cyrus [Thirius de] Pautrizel (Fig.88).[73] The fifth has been said to represent David himself (Fig.89). I do not believe, however, that it is possible at this stage to establish the identity of the sitter.[74] However, in the way in which this unknown sitter is represented -- in its format, the body language, as well as in some aspects of its execution, -- there is evidence, in my view, for the medallion's belonging with the prison series, rather than having been produced, as was suggested, in 1792.[75]

What does, to my mind, define this group of portraits as a series, what all the medallions display to a greater or lesser degree, is a quite extraordinary tension, at times even an outright lack of fit, between the format of the portrait and its subject. To be more specific, there is, to the greatest degree in the Jeanbon Saint André and the Bernard des Saintes, something of an unresolved contrast between the specific regime of form dictated by a commemorative medallion and the physical and psychological immediacy of the sitter. It is true, that a certain amount of immediacy -- or verisimilitude -- in conveying the sitter's likeness could only enhance the decorum of a medallion portrait. However, in our group, the concreteness of the

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model seems to run against the grain of the adopted format, as if life resisted commemoration. Certainly, the question here is not one of an opposition between real life vs. the representation of it; rather, the described effect stems from a clash of two different codes within representation: one, the "master" code of the medallion with its heavy decorum built on the legacy of Roman coins; the other, the naturalistic code of resemblance which refuses to be subsumed in these portraits by the first. This unresolved quality or tension is very different from David's earlier revolutionary work where the deployment of past codes for the present was also at stake. For example, the painted sketches of the deputies for the Tennis Court Oath -- the Prieur de la Marne and the Rabaut-Saint-Etienne -- seem to merge this heroic portrait rhetoric much more succesfully, almost seamlessly, with the codes of the real.[76] I am curious about the meaning of this unresolved tension between codes within the medallion as a field of representation. But first we need to look at these works in greater detail -- and at their subjects, too, in and out of codes.

All the four identifiable sitters belong to the category of the "last Montagnards." Arrested due to the security measures undertaken after the Germinal/Prairial insurrections against the political personnel of the year II, all of them were imprisoned at the College de Quatre Nations where they remained until the general amnesty that marked the advent of

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the Directory in October 1795.[77] Jeanbon Saint-André, Bernard de Saintes and Barbeau-Dubarran were part of the batch of deputies arrested on the same day as David.[78] The first two were almost the same age as he, in their mid-forties. Dubarran was in his mid-thirties, Pautrizel was 41.[79] The latter was a much less prominent figure in the political process before Thermidor.[80] It is the careers of the other three, all of them David's colleagues in the Terrorist government, and especially that of Jeanbon and Bernard, that left a mark in the revolutionary historiography.

When they were arrested, the "last Montagnards" had a long revolutionary experience behind them in the course of which they became staunch Republicans. Like David, they all voted for the death of the King.[81] Active in the Jacobin club, they became members of the bodies that constituted the Terrorist government: in October 1792 Bernard became part of the newly formed CSG, to which he was twice re-elected. Dubarran, was also David's colleague at the CSG to which he was elected in 1793 and where he remained until Robespierre's fall. Jeanbon entered the CSP in June 1793 and remained in it until Thermidor. Both Bernard and Jeanbon spent most of the year II in the provinces where they were sent as deputies on mission, that is, as government representatives with extraordinary prerogatives to implement the policies of the Terror.[82] Yet, their contribution to the functioning of the Terror and their particular political alliances within the network of Jacobin

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power in this period were not exactly the same.

As a revolutionary, Jeanbon Saint-André was known as what we might call a moderate Terrorist.[83] A protestant pastor from Montauban, with some experience in commerce and with the sea (he was a sea captain), he was elected a deputy to the Convention in 1792, after having run unsuccessfully the year before (as did David). First a Girondist, he switched early on to the Mountain and became an active member and prominent speaker at the Jacobin club, of which he was elected president in November 1792. Opposing the search for the instigators of the September massacres, he was supposed to have said: "Une grande revolution ne peut s'opérer que par des événements de toute nature."[84]

Not only did Jeanbon vote a the death sentence for the King, but he also contributed to setting the terms of discourse around this highly charged political issue, publishing two brochures about procedure in the King's judgment.[85] At the CSP, Jeanbon was sent on several missions to Normandy, Brittany and the South to set up or regulate matters chiefly concerning the army and navy. He was responsible for the organization of the French fleet in Brest and fought himself in a sea battle against the British. In implementing other aspects of the Terrorist policy in the provinces, notably in matters concerning the functioning of justice and religious institutions, he was known as a moderate. (For example, he opposed the setting up of the

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revolutionary tribunal in Brest and tried to mitigate the violence in the process of de-Christianization.[86]) Keeping order and avoiding extremes seems to have been his priority.

Although mostly absent from Paris in the course of the year II, Jeanbon's position at the CSP was important. He was most probably responsible for introducing Robespierre to the CSP to replace another member of the Committee who had to resign on 27 July 1793.[87] He was, in any case, Robespierre's firm supporter, part of his power "circle" within the Committee, together with Saint-Just, Couthon, and Prieur de la Marne, against the "extreme left" of Collot and Billaud and the "right" of Lindet Carnot, and Prieur de Côte-d'Or.[88]

After Thermidor, Jeanbon continued his mission in the South but upon return to Paris in March 1795, at the time when his former colleagues from CSP were being put on trial, he was denounced as "conspirateur dangereux" against whom there allegedly existed an act of accusation signed by 500 persons.[89] Arrested in the charged insurrectional climate of the end of May, he wrote his defense refuting the accusations in the prison of the Quatre Nations and had it published.[90] He also repeatedly asked for a provisional release to recover his health in the countryside, as did David. But unlike the latter, he did not leave prison until the amnesty of October '95.

If Jeanbon was known as a moderate Terrorist, Bernard de Saintes had the reputation of an extremist. Sent on mission

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in Charente-Inférieure from March till July 1793, he was to display a great of zeal in arresting the suspects.[91] Again on mission in different departments of the Franche-Comté and Burgundy from August 1793 till Germinal year II (March/April 1794), Bernard was charged with the difficult task of securing the borders and combatting the influence of the Church in the region. He proceded by introducing a system of severe repressions, setting up the revolutionary tribunal, which in one department he made travel together with the guillotine from one city to another.[92] He repeatedly petitioned the CSP to get more guillotines to combat fanaticism and signed his orders in the Jura as Pioche-Fer (Iron Pickax). The scale of repressions against refractory priests gained Bernard a reputation of a revengeful Hébertiste. He got into conflict with Robespierre's faction, and, after his fall, joined his enemies. He re-entered the CSG and, in September 1794, he presided over the Convention (15 Fructidor--1 Véndemiaire). Yet, like some other Thermidorians with a Terrorist past, he did not avoid arrest after Prairial. And like Jeanbon and David, he wrote his defense pleading innocence.[93] Yet, his position was potentially much more vulnerable than that of Jeanbon or David. If put on trial, he could easily have become another Carrier in the discoursive and political circumstances of the spring of 1795.

Both the portrait of Jeanbon Saint-André and the one of

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Bernard de Saintes stand out of from the group by their similarity of treatment. In addition to being signed, both also happen to be dated: Jeanbon Saint-André's medallion is inscribed on the border by David's hand: Donum amititiae. amoris solatium. David faciebat in vinculis anno R.p. 3 (1795) messidoris 20 [8 July]. Bernard des Saintes, done in the same month as the Jeanbon, is signed in front but dated on the back -- 6 Thermidor an III de la République (24 July 1795).[94]

Donum amititiae. amoris solatium -- Gift of friendship, solace of affection. David's gesture inscribes itself within an already established tradition of commemorative prison portraiture. Hubert Robert produced many watercolor portraits of his fellow prisoners at Saint-Pélagie and Saint-Lazare.[95] In his cell Joseph-Benoît Suvée executed a series of oil paintings portraying those victims of the Terror with whom he too was imprisoned in 1794 in Saint-Lazare.[96] And there exists a plethora of anonymous portraits in drawing, usually busts, done during the Terror at the request of and/or out of friendship for those prisoners who, fearing a death sentence, wished to leave their likeness to their family, relatives or friends.[97] With the exception of Robert, who favored a genre format, the portrait formula that prevails in these works presents the sitter in a bust, frontally, looking straight out at the viewer, thus creating ample grounds for empathy.

The mode chosen by David to portray his fellow prisoners -

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- medallion with a bust in profile -- was one that David knew quite well. Inspired by Roman coins and medals, it was introduced and made fashionable in the mid-eighteen century by Charles-Nicolas Cochin. Done in 1783, David's medallion drawing of Jeanne-Suzanne Sedaine (Fig.90), the daughter of the most important figure in the beginning of the artist's career, illustrates well the pre-revolutionary use of this format for a certain genre of elegant society portrait.[98] The invention of a special technique permitting mechanical tracing of the sitter's profile, called physionotrace, in 1784 gave a boost to the already established fashion for medallion portraits.[99]

But it is with the Revolution that this format came to be used in a way which not only increased its popularity but redefined its function and meaning. For the profile medallion was adopted as early as 1789 for the engraved portraits of the representatives of the newly elected body, the National Assembly, that were published serially to form a collection.[100] As such, it appeared continuously throughout the revolutionary decade in the numerous other collections of political portraits -- deputies and principal actors of the Revolution -- that were then being published.[101] One might say that this type of image was consecrated as the official format for portraits of the most prominent actors of the Revolution when under the Directory Duplessi-Bertaux executed a series of 66 medallion portraits of the revolutionaries,

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although not all in profile, for the third volume of the Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française.[102] Thus, through Revolutionary use what we call the Cochin medallion format was established as a visual code for the official Republican representation. It became the privileged type of image through which public circulation of the likeness of a représentant du peuple was secured.[103] The medallion was, to put it differently, the preferred means for inscribing the deputy's body in history.

David had employed the medallion format in this particular function at least once before, ca. 1792, in a pen and ink portrait of Dubois-Crancé, a crucial figure in the artist's early revolutionary career.[104] Yet, mobilizing it in 1795 for the prison portraits of his colleagues, former functionaries of the Terror like himself, David could not help, it seems, articulating the irreversible change in his own and his sitters' relation to that code. For the two prison medallions seem not just to deploy the code but also to register the process of the subject's fitting into it. And they spell out, too, a kind of gap, or a lack of fit, between the two, the code and the subject. There is in the medallions so much of what we might call subject-specificity and immediacy injected within the hieratic commemorative format as to seem to subvert its historicizing decorum borrowed from Antique coins, or at least to introduce tension between the code's eternalizing connotations (History as past) and the

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historical specificity of the self on view (History as the ongoing present).[105]

This lack of fit could be better explained if we compare David's medallions with one of the renowned Fiesinger series of the deputies' portraits. Engraved after Guérin, the likeness of Sieyès (Fig.91) epitomizes the earlier revolutionary deployment of the medallion: body shown in a rigorous profile, lined up with the head; torso cropped at ca. one third of its length to fit the classic understanding of the bust format, i.e., no arms or hands visible that would introduce a gesture and with it, an unwanted element of the narrative; a clean, shaved face, well and evenly lit; gaze -- very important -- stable, looking out, but not at anything specific, a gaze with just a sufficient degree of intensity to mark the presence of the sitter, his status as subject, but one that seems not to be tied with an object, for this gaze needs to be as decontextualized as possible, lest it threaten to disrupt the impression this format wants above all to create: we are looking at a subject in History, not in any specific environment. Finally, the hair: frisé and poudré according to the the early revolutionary fashion, with a considerable degree of artifice, yet fitting perfectly, naturally, the shape of the head.[106]

Now, in David's prison medallions, a series of departures from this standard were articulated, on both the level of representation and the technique of execution. What I earlier

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called subject-specificity manifests itself through such features as, for example, the sitter's rather curious pose, with arms folded on the chest, which belongs neither with the rhetoric of Roman medals nor with that of the deputy's portraits.[107] In the Jeanbon and the Unknown Deputy it almost becomes a gesture of defiance -- furtive in one, dignified in the other. In the Bernard and the Dubarran, the pose is both so insistent and gratuitous as to make us wonder why it is there to begin with. In all four, the gesture seems, above all, an obtrusive signifier of the sitters' inaction.

Another problematic feature is the ostentation of contemporary clothing, with a somewhat distracting account of its details, its buttons and folds (Dubarran; Pautrizel; the unknown deputy), and the particular prominence of the hat, the shape of which creates a jarring disonnance within the smooth oval of the medallion (Bernard; Jeanbon). Further, there is a curiously attentive registration of contrast between the frisé stylishness of hairstyle and the texture of the sitter's "real" hair (especially in Dubarran). And, last but not least, the insistent, directed, even object-related gaze, perhaps the most important signifier of subjectivity: the Dubarran staring up; the furtive glances of the Bernard and the Jeanbon; even the somewhat vacuous stare of the Pautrizel is just too specific in its vacuity to fit the generalizing formula exemplified by the Sièyes.

It needs to be stressed, though, that if all the

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medallions display some unusualness in regard to the earlier standard, they do so in varying degree. The Paturizel is the least "unusual." The Jeanbon and the Bernard are most striking, extraordinarily "insubordinate" vis-à-vis the norm illustrated by the Sièyes. One is reminded of the sitters' different status in the Terrorist power apparatus which had perhaps some impact on their relation to the codes. (The little known deputy Pautrizel being not nearly as "charged" a subject as the "Pickax" radical Bernard.)

Take the Jeanbon Saint-André: it is a mug shot, one wants to say, more than a portrait of a représentant du peuple. But what is it exactly, in visual terms, that makes us say that? Where is it precisely that the code "cracks"? One such site is the body language, and particularly the tension between the torso shown en trois quatre and the head that turns away from us, not without a strain -- there's a fold of flesh above the cravat, connecting the neck with the chin, that registers a degree of muscular tension -- as if in order to take its position within the medallion, to "cut" a profile. The arrangement as such -- torso en trois quatre, head in profile -- was used by David in his earlier medallion: the fold of flesh appears in the (earlier in my view) Dubois-Crancé, but it is hardly noticeable there, in the context of the otherwise immobile body that seems to have taken its place within the frame with only a slight head adjustment. Even in the Pautrizel or in the Unknown Deputy the position

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of the body and the head was more harmoniously resolved, so that we do not notice any effort on behalf of the sitter in taking the position.

What enhances the sense of tentativeness or transience of Jeanbon's pose -- as if he were about to be literally snatched away from the format of portrait by some other, perhaps narrative, code -- is also the posture of the entire body slightly leaning forward, almost hunched. This is further enforced by facial features that emphasize this leaning forward: a line running across the cheek -- as if a slight echo of the strain of the head that turns, and the resolutely bumpy outline of a rather protruding nose -- as far from the regularity of a Roman profile as it could be -- both features manifesting the artist's resolute refusal to idealize. And then there is the sharp dark, almost ominous, rim of the hat jutting forward aggressively against the luminous void of the oval background. It is largely the effect of this hat that defines Jeanbon's gaze as sinister or furtive, for its rim casts a shadow in front of the eye -- a patch of darkness right next to the pupil.

Jeanbon's long hair falls in natural curls, parts of it being held back in a tail by a ribbon that juts out in a rather distracting fashion -- it seems you can just pull and you will undo it. No trace of a frisure, let alone a wig -- a sign of fashion radically altered in the course of the Revolution, the hair having become the site of the "natural"

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(as opposed to the artful). And, finally, the dissonant stump of the top hat, a rather unusual accessory for a profile bust, with its rectilinearized shape that refuses to rhyme with the oval of the medallion, eschewing, that is, the kind of formal elegance that the artist made sure to display in 1783 in the portrait drawing of Mlle Sedaine, where the circular rim of the hat with its feathers participates in a sophisticated parallelism of shapes and textures, helping to weave the inner network of curves that holds the image together. There is none of this in 1795; instead, Jeanbon's hat has a jarring, almost brutal presence within the formal economy of the portrait: replacing the oval of the head and preventing it thus from rhyming with the frame. (It is true that the hat has a cylindrical ovalness of its own, but it has been so transformed and flattened as to become incongruous, almost mute, that is, incapable of resonance with the oval of the frame.

If Jeanbon's body conveys a sense of volatility, perhaps even furtiveness by the different ways in which it seems to be slipping away from the immobilizing grip of the code, Bernard's, on the other hand, appears to be, so to speak, lagging behind the code. For what we are looking at in the second drawing seems to be much more a posing body than a subject that has already been seized by the net of rules governing medallion portrait. Even the chair on which Bernard sat to pose for the artist made it into the image -- an

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unusual intrusion into the established rhetoric of a bust, a mark of the process in what is supposed to be its end product.

Although the coordination of the torso, much more foreshortened here, and the head seem smoother than in the Jeanbon, in the sense that both parts are shown more resolutely in profile, this also contributes to Bernard's unnatural thinness, with the trunk of his body almost equaling in volume the top hat he wears on his head. This disproportion is enhanced by the obstinate prominence of the sitter's large fingers with their long nails lurking from under the cutting edge of his arm in the foreground. These are echoed, in a somewhat disembodied fashion, on the other side of his chest by the fingers of the other hand -- a hedge of extraordinary little stumps against the void of the background. As in the Jeanbon, the position of the arms folded on the chest is a quasi-violation of the rules of bust portraiture inasmuch as it introduces too much of a gesture, and with it, the meanings that threaten to unbalance the narrow semantic precincts of this type of official commemorative image. What meanings? This gesture seems to be engaged in some kind of play with the rather extraordinarily flat geometrical pattern created by the vertical bar of the chair's back and the curiously straight edge of the arm, outlined with a thick contour which seems as if it had been drawn over and over again. One cannot help noticing, of

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course, that this pattern forms a shape of the guillotine's blade, inscribed, moreover, by a synechdoche of its function: the stumps of the fingers. Even if we do not want to perform any literal readings, we are still obliged to register that there is a concern with the effect of cropping articulated with interesting insistence in the portrait of Bernard, the "Pickax".

This concern is also present to some degree in the other prison medallions. Look at the cropped fingers lurking from underneath the arm of Dubarran: quite incongruous in their casual, thick and clumsy fragmentariness (little sausages hidden in the cloak's folds), with the sitter's gaze -- as long as we want to recognize its upward direction as a signifier of some sort of spiritual elevation. (Dubarran's expression is very similar to David's earlier profile portrait of Rabaut-Saint-Etienne mentioned above, where the upward gaze conveyed the active mode of the sitter's participation in the historical event of the oath of the Tennis Court.) Or look at the Pautrizel: because David cropped the arms so low, the arms begin to convey a downward movement which makes us wonder where it ends and thus problematizes (makes visually frustrating) the cropping. And in both the Jeanbon and the Unknown Deputy the insistence of the fingers on their own presence as they rest conspicuously on the arm is puzzling. As if the idea of cropping off (conveyed already rather eloquently by the medallion's

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circular format) were being inadvertently, but reassuringly (the "naturalness" of gesture) enacted in the body language.[108]

But coming back to the Bernard: there is his downcast gaze, further problematized by the shadow cast, as in the Jeanbon, by his top hat -- such a marked contrast with the dignified straightforwardness of the pre-Thermidorian Sieyès. The head itself seems to slightly droop, with the chin held close by the chest, almost pressing against the folds of the cravat. The unknown deputy stares straight out, closest to the detached gaze of the Sieyès, but David seems to have needed such a thick, multiple stroke to outline his profile that it appears as if it had been retraced by some unskilled hand. This execution seems to literalize the problem of the subject's inscription in the code. Lastly there is Pautrizel, with his empty look, a face that cannot long hold any viewer's attention, especially given the elaborate proliferation of the collars, cravats and lapels, all these folds having been endowed with a rather distracting plasticity. (See also a similar excess of folds in the Dubarran.)

Which brings us to the the obstinate contemporaneity of the hairstyle and costume that seems particularly resonant in the context of the Parisian street "fashion wars" of winter and spring 1795. The long braid of the cadenette in the Bernard, the Jeanbon, and the Dubarran, which was worn after

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Thermidor chiefly among the jeunesse dorée as one of the very signs by which they distinguished themselves from the sans-culottes, strikes a strange note in the portraits of the "last Montagnards" (especially in the Bernard, an image of the former hébertiste). And the top hat, with the sharp outline of its rim cutting the space -- as does Bernard's sharp profile, with which it rhymes --strikes a note of formal discord with the unperturbable smoothness of the oval mount. (This very kind of top hat will reappear in David's very next production, the portrait of his brother-in-law, although it will by then lose its aggressive, sharp, cutting contour to became instead a factor of inner reconciliation of forms, cushioning the subject's insertion in landscape through its consonant rhythms and rhymes with other elements in the picture.)

What, then, does this minute inspection of the medallions amount to? It allows us to discern a kind of a network of leaks through which Jeanbon, Bernard, Dubarran, Pautrizel and the unidentified deputy seem to have slipped, as subjects of representation, out of a certain regime inherent in the portrait formula adopted by David. The bodies of the sitters seem to be forever hesitating between the casual, if coded, specificity of their physical appearance and the ennobling scheme in which, as representatives of the people, they used to be depicted. The question is what did this hesitation or lack of fit mean? Two registers need to be considered here.

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The series could be understood, first of all, as a more or less systematic effort by David (although not necessarily systematic from the beginning) to give form, and through it, to secure an alternative Symbolic place for the "derniers Montagnards" with whom he was imprisoned, thus also for himself: as one of them, and as an artist. In the context in which it was taking place (in prison, and more broadly, in the context of the political and cultural crisis of the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction, whose various manifestations we have considered extensively) this effort was bound up with the need to distinguish these men from the thoroughly negative figures through which the Jacobins were being constructed by the discourse of the reaction, but also, to a degree, from past codes. Thus, although David might still have thought of his models, as he used to do earlier, as the "athletes of the Revolution," adopting as he does the older format of the revolutionary medallion, he needs to rework it to fit a new kind of subject into it -- a Jacobin deputy after Prairial. The portraits could be seen as addressing the problem posed by the emergence of the new negative codes for representing such subject in the course of the Thermidorian reaction: the Jacobin deputy's problem of being symbolically merged with the figure of the sans-culotte and the female militant. The conspicuous top hat, the hair frisé or the cadenette could be seen as the visual marks of cultural distinction through which David's portraits,

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whether intentionally or not, were indicating that the "last Montagnard" was definitely not a sans-culotte in a red bonnet. True, the deputies are shown simply in what they were wearing. But the way their clothes were rendered, in which they act within the formal economy of the image, and are thus made to signify, is another matter. Similarly, the sitters' obstinate gesture of inaction could not help but remind us that these men were imprisoned for participating in a revolt they neither organized nor really identify with. The journées of Germinal nor Prairial were not their doing: it was the female militants of Paris who were responsible for them.

These local marks of distinction work together with the choice of the bust format. For while there was a variety of other portrait genres available for David, this particular one engaged rather interestingly with the broader cultural context. It could be that such a choice, whether consciously or not, was attempting to "save" the format for the Montagnard deputy not long after the anti-Jacobin sentiment was acted out on the Marat busts. The medallion portraits were done when the clouds of dust raised by the crushed plaster busts of Marat had not yet settled and the Parisian streets still reverbeated with the cries that accompanied these acts of symbolic destruction: "A bas les Jacobins! A bas les buveurs de sang!"[109]

This brings us to another register of this intepretation in which the meaning of these medallions' formal specificity

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was bound, presumably beyond David's control with a broader historical process of dislocation, on the level of Republican representation. Given the specific context of crisis of representation outlined here before, we can say that the medallions present to us a deputy's body released from or no longer fitting the heroic vocabulary of the earlier phase of the Revolution, with its Imaginary that was now put into crisis, one that hovers between codes, without being able to generate any new ones. In the way they appear, Jeanbon and Bernard, for example, make us think of the older scheme of, say, the Dubois-Crancé medallion, while at the same time calling our attention to the the fact that this format could no longer accomodate a Jacobin deputy in 1795.

In that sense, David's medalllions could be compared to the print discussed here earlier, the Anarchiste, où le Nouveau Janus français (Fig.80): despite difference in the cultural register on which these two kind of images were to operate (a print of wide circulation vs. a prison drawing), and despite difference in date, both are symptoms of the cultural effect of Prairial on the image of Jacobinism. Both articulate the same problem of the post-Prairial Jacobin as a figure incapable of inhabiting one single code. While in the print, he is forever split between a tricoteuse and a muscadin, in the David the split is pronounced in not quite as concrete terms: it is rather the impossibility for the "last Montagnard" to inhabit a heroic code that would afford

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him an autonomous place in Revolutionary history.

One could argue, of course, that David's injection of a physical and psychological specificity into the hieratic commemorative format was more a self-conscious subversion than a sign of crisis. Is not the artist defiantly creating a new code, rather than merely letting his sitters slip out of the older one? What makes one think of these images as the sites of articulation of crisis rather than re-invention? I suppose it is that, while striving to articulate his subjects with a considerable degree of psychological specificity, David eschews the formula that would allow him to elaborate that psychological depth and empathy with the viewer in a frontal view. He opts instead for what will imply a certain foreclosure of psychological contact, the profile. At the same time, his images refuse to abide by the rules of the deputy medallion, spelling out on many levels their differences and departures from it.[110]

Here, the date on at least these two medallions seems significant: both were done in July, that is after the event most traumatizing for any former Terrorist: the end of the trial of Prairial insurgents and Jacobins who were said to have been complicit with them. This was the very moment when the notion of the "martyrs of Prairial" was coined, referring to these Jacobin deputies who, in a gesture of revolt against the Thermidorian code that sought to put them in the position of criminals, refused the sentence of death under the

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guillotine and reached instead for an alternative Roman model of a heroic suicide, one that David's canvas of Socrates had extolled. Done when the issue of the lack of fit between Jacobin subjects and the post-Thermidorian Republican code was collectively experienced by the entire class of revolutionaries, the medallions seem, in their own way, to be setting their subjects adrift.[111] The portraits thus articulate the larger political and cultural issue of the loss of legitimacy experienced by these représentants du peuple as a kind of expulsion from the political as well as symbolic sphere. In that sense, in their multiform departures from the rhetoric of the Roman coin, they join the medallion portrait of Robespierre as a buveur de sang discussed in the first part of this study. Similarly, they join the collection of Thermidorian caricatures of such notorious Terrorists as Carrier (Fig.92), not surprisingly also portrayed in medallion form, where the exaggerated features and body torsion, not unlike that of the Jeanbon, are matched with a description of the sitter's sanguinary crimes.[112] Thus, David's drawings spoke, as if against themselves, with the same language of crisis as these prints, testifying to the way these prints eroded the place that was once occupied by the Jacobin subject in the Republican Imaginary. The medallions are, then, a document of friendship, but also a document of the unavoidable problem that the representation of the Revolution and its actors posed for any artist, and

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especially for David, at the time of a radical transformation of the Republican rhetoric. They are a document of a subject on trial that is in process, between codes: the Jacobin subject, and David as a Jacobin artist, in the spring of 1795. And this is a dimension of the "cruel loss" ("la perte cruelle") regarding his capacities as an artist to which David referred in his prison letter to the authorities. But it is one, perhaps, that he would not be able to articulate in these exact terms.

It seems to me that the Femme au turban (Fig.93) executed by David, I will argue, at roughly the same time, raises the issue of this specific "cruel loss" albeit in a different manner.

It is first of all its inscription, the same as on the Jeanbon -- J.L. David faciebat in vinculis -- that suggests that the head was produced by David in the Quatre Nations, rather than, as has been suggested, in the Hôtel des Fermes or Luxembourg.[113] But there are other stylistic and technical features that seem to link this work with David's prison medallions. It is also a bust. Moreover, notice that in her pose, the woman is an almost exact inversion of Jeanbon's body in the medallion, her trunk also en trois quatre, placed diagonally within the space of the drawing, with her head turned and thus thrown into a profile -- only that we look at her from the back. (On the sheet's verso, the drawing is repeated as more strictly a profile.) And if Jeanbon's hat

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struck a certain dissonance within the Antique rhetoric of the medallion bust, the woman's striking headwear -- an improvised turban held idiosyncratically by a ribbon very much tightened under the chin -- is also surprising in a figure that simulates so suggestively an Antique sculpture (e.g., the "blind" eyes; the statuary smoothness of body surface, etc.). Such headwear could be much easier found in painting -- in Raphael (numerous female figures in the Stanze della Segnatura; the foreground figure in the Transfiguration in Vatican's Pinacoteca) in Michelangelo (the Sybils of the Sistine Chapel ceiling) -- than in sculpture. Moreover, one is struck by David's focus and the exquisite rendition of these hasty, improvised but complex wraps which make up the woman's turban, down to its every knot and fold.[114]

The turban aligns this figure with another image of David with which it also happens to share its particular technique: the tight cross-hatchings and the strong chiaroscuro modeling, if unusual in the artist's drawing practice, were used by him before in his drawing of Marat's head (Fig.94) destined to be engraved by Copia.[115] This alignment of the two works is most interesting for several reasons. First, because it seems to suggest that the artist meant the Femme au turban to be engraved as well. The note to David's student Mulard on the verso of this drawing could be seen as confirmation that the work was to be circulated publicly.[116] Secondly, as an image meant for public circulation, the Femme

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au turban could be seen as a sort of anti-Marat: as David's defensive response to the process of cultural inversion of the symbolic status of Marat in the course of winter and spring of 1795. In other words, the Femme au turban seems to have been meant as a sort of manifesto of the artist's aesthetic redefinition, his taking his distances, as was Republican culture at this time, from the codes of the Revolutionary here and now in general (in favor of the codes based on Antiquity), and from Marat, the "monstre sanguinaire," in particular. Moreover, the drawing was a display of cultural mastery of someone branded as a vandal and a "painter of blood," one that, therefore, ostentatiously paraded its aesthetic perfection, yet -- and here is this work's link with the medallions -- at the same time betraying in its rhetoric a kind of vulnerability, typical of the figures denial.

At first, it is difficult to see this work's connection to the medallion portraits. As a matter of fact, everything seems to separate them: here is a female figure from Antiquity, there are the Montaganrd deputies; while she is as immobile as a marble statue, her eyes "blind," foreclosing any contact or trace of subjectivity, their bodies seem almost too tangible, too mobile for the code, as are their "insubordinately" individuated gazes. While they seem to be too much of a (human) subject, she appears as almost not a subject at all: she is, so to speak, all representation. But

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I think that it is precisely in this excess of the code that the Femme au turban could be seen as an articulation of crisis. Both in the bust format, this figure of a woman and the portrait of, say, Jeanbon point to the same thing precisely in their differences: it is as if David could not do anything but either leave the subject unresolved between two codes (the medallions), or present a coherent code depleted of the subject (the female head).

It is interesting to observe how the way in which David used femininity as a signifier of crisis changed during the period of imprisonment. Most telling is the contrast between the Femme au turban and the Psyché abandonnée (a contrast that is, moreover, consistent with the dating that I am suggesting here for both these works). While the Psyché seemed to be a figure through which the subject in crisis was articulated, who stood for the subject, as a figure of empathy both with the artist and with the viewer (whom she addressed, even solicited, in a most direct manner), the woman in the drawing seems to be a site where the crisis is being forestalled, through which a wishful mastery over it is conveyed. While the first "speaks" the crisis, the second spells it out against "herself": exquisite and masterful, yet also blinded and petrified. Like the Head of Marat she, too, is an image of a kind of death, of the "perte cruelle," as David himself said referring to sterility as a threat for art in prison. What I want to suggest is that between the

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emphatic Psyché and the "blinded" Femme au turban, the shadow of Prairial has been cast.

In other words, the various forms of politico-cultural reaction to Prairial, in their negative insistence on the woman as a castrating Fury, coincided and thus reinforced the gender pattern in the visual and textual forms through which David "lived" or acted out his individual crisis. Let us recall the use of the feminine as a negative figure of the Revolution, (which is to say, the Revolution as the Terror) in David's Réponse: the uncontrollable "tourbillion révolutionnaire" and the figure of affective excess. This coding of the artist's intra-psychic processes received a Symbolic support in the broader cultural phenomenon of crisis where a femininization of political Otherness -- of the Terror -- took place. To be sure, I am not saying that David changed political camps, switching from Jacobins to Thermidorians. He did not. (His problem as a public artist was rather to retain some sort of continuity with the Republican past, and his own artistic past, while adapting to the changed, and constantly changing, political circumstances.) What I want to draw attention to is that, from the point of view of gender, David's language of crisis paralleled the language of the reaction. (This does not imply that David's forms were caused by the processes of reaction: the nature of this relationship was rather one of a more complex, reciprocal circularity.)

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The gendered distribution of functions between maleness as a representation of immediate Revolutionary experience (a code under pressure) and femininity as the generalizing code through which a distance from and control over this experience could be conveyed, will shape David's aesthetic/cultural decisions under the Directory. After his release from prison David will seek the renewal of the commission for the Tennis Court Oath (in practical terms: a studio to work in and money and support from the Directorial government), even at the cost of altering the identities of some foreground participants in the original event, now compromised by the course the Revolution took. At the same time, he will work on the elaboration of the Sabines. Both the Tennis Court Oath and the Sabines were understood as tableaux of the Revolution, albeit approaching the issue from within different aesthetic territories. That of the Sabines is prefigured by the head of the woman drawn in the prison of the Quatre Nations in a most remarkable fashion. To be sure, this is not to say that the head was necessarily a study for the Sabine Women. Since we do not know when David definintely abandoned the Homer project, we could think that the drawing, although admittedly less probably, belongs to it, as an advanced elaboration of one of the women coming from the left, who, as was observed, looks as if taken straight from a Greek frieze.[117] What I mean to suggest is that the highly fetishized combination of Antiquity, sculpturality and

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femininity in the Femme au turban will also characterize the Sabine Women's project.

iv. The subject and the code

> J'aurais voulu faire un tableau d'histoire, vraiment, c'était bien par la qu'il aurait fallu leur riposter, mais le temps, mais la tête m'auraient manqué...[118]

It should be clear by now that David's experience of the Thermidorian reaction affected the artist's relation to the visual codes in a fundamental way. This was not only the question of problems with adjusting his subject(s) to the codes within a field of representation, but also, as this quote from his letter written soon after his provisional release from the Quatre Nations indicates, it was a problem of David's own relation to the codes, a problem on the basic level of artistic self-definition: how to remain a history painter -- a producer of large scale, elaborate, learned, publicly relevant canvases -- after having emerged from a situation of a personal and cultural crisis. Unable to handle greater tasks immediately after his release from prison, David chose to reinsert himself back into the public domain by two portraits: the Sériziats (Fig.36 & 37).

It was in the country estate of his in-laws in Saint-Ouen, after his release from the Quatre Nations prison on 3 August 1795 (and not, as Jules David maintained, in between the two

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imprisonments), that David painted first Emilie, his wife's sister, and then her husband Pierre. A letter from his wife, mentioned here before, suggests that the second portrait was began only sometime at the end of August, if not later, and with the thought, upon her suggestion, of exhibiting at the Salon due to open in September.[119] So the portraits perhaps began like the medallions, as donum amititiae, amoris solatium, but they were subsumed just as soon by the need for a declaration of professional ability that, David's (ex-)wife and friends felt, was needed to silence his enemies. We have to keep in mind as we look at these portraits that part of their intention was not only to register bonds of friendship but also to re-establish David's public position as an artist. In addition to paying his dues to the Sériziats who had consistently offered the artist support throughout the period of crisis, David was, then, also targetting an audience that could anchor him as an artist in a new situation.[120] Shown at the Salon of 1795, which did not open until 2 October, thus coinciding with the very moment of transition from the Thermidorian reaction to the Directory,[121] the paintings offered a successful and artistically most influential portrait formula through which a part of the post-Thermidorian bourgeoisie could think about itself. It was the Republican part, as the cockades registered on the hats of both Sériziats made sure to emphasize.[122]

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In the context of our inquiry, the most interesting aspect of these images is how they deal with some of the problems David groped with in prison, specifically, problems involved in positioning male and female subjects in representation. It has to be stated straight away that, compared to the prison medallions, these portraits seem like the site of a perfect fit between subject and code. Yet, in an admittedly subtle way, not lost, however, on the contemporary critics, they also testify to some residual traces of friction between the two.

Emilie Sériziat is aligned with nature but also with the domestic enclosure within which she is portrayed. A bouquet of freshly picked flowers in one hand, a child held by the other, she is shown half-sitting, half-rising from a table covered in red cloth. David engages here the Rousseauian topos of the woman as a "good mother" visually disseminated in numerous genre and portrait paintings of the second half of the Eighteenth century in France, which Carol Duncan analyzed so well.[123] Specifically, the artist might be thinking of Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun's self- portraits, such as the one of 1789 in the Louvre, which shares with Emilie Sériziat the position of the sitter (seated on a table) and her contact with the child, based on the model of the Madonna with the Child, was her most prominent attribute. Yet, as Régis Michel observed perceptively, David also breaks with this model in that Emilie Sériziat does not hold her

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child in her arms.[124] There is none of the affective intensity of Vigée-Lebrun's mother-daughter bonding here. The contact of David's sister-in-law with her son[125] seems tenuous in comparison, and there is, moreover, a degree of ambiguity in the way the son glances back at the viewer, somewhat furtively.

To better appreciate David's departure from convention in this regard, one could look at his former rival François Vincent's portrait of Mme Boyer, 1796, also in the Louvre (Fig.95).[126] For it is an image that was evidently influenced by David's Mme Sériziat while displaying none of its ambiguities. As in the earlier eighteenth-century formula, the child, who stands by his mother's lap, embraces her in a way that is similar to Vigée-Lebrun's earlier images. He too glances back at us, but with none of the ambiguity of Emile Sériziat's gaze. And the mother's position in the Vincent leaves no doubt about what she is doing here: she does, firmly and unequivocally, sit in an armchair.

Mme Sériziat, on the contrary, leaves much doubt as to her position and the action it is supposed to imply: is she about to leave the room, or has she just came in and is placing herself on the table. (What an uncomfortable piece of furniture to choose for a model to sit for the portrait!) The Salon critics noticed this pose and judged it, too, uncertain and equivocal.[127]

To depict Pierre Sériziat, David mobilized the formula

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developed in the eighteen-century English portraiture -- the gentleman at leisure in nature, as in Thomas Gainsborough's Mr. and Mrs. Andrews. Monsieur Sériziat has even some of the attributes of Gainsborough's sitter: the long riding boots and the whip.[128] And David made an effort here to convey a similar degree of gentleman's désinvolture by the body language of his sitter. It was possible that David was getting the English model sifted through French precedents: the Salon critics cited Sablet and Guiffrey as examples.[129] What is interesting is how he used these models.

For aside from introducing the natural setting into the portrait of a single figure (both Sablet's and Guiffrey's were group portraits), David seems to have thought a great deal about how exactly to relate his sitter to it. Firmly placed on a rock, one leg flung nonchalantly over the thigh of the other, kid gloves in one hand, a whip in the other, Pierre Sériziat seems to have little doubt about where he stands in the world: who he is, where he came from, where he is going (to echo one not so distant voice from the immediate Thermidorian past). A series of most subtle adjustments of form -- the whip placed so as to rhyme exactly with the diagonal shaping of the landscape in the background, the rim of the hat picking up and repeating this rhyme -- make sure to establish an important visual fact: it is Sériziat's body that inscribes nature, that, literally, gives it direction and form. Differing in this from the British convention, this

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image displays a much greater concern with conveying the mastery of the (male) sitter in regard to his surroundings.

This is interesting. It is as if, despite all the appearances of visual ease with which this portrait was delivered, the invention of the male Republican self as a man of leisure effectuated here was fraught with more uncertainties than this image wished to acknowledge. And one is tempted to wonder at the meaning of the (compensatory?) nonchalance that David seeks to convey through his sitter, all the while painting from the position of a subject crushed in body and mind by persecution and prison. Clad with fashionable elegance, in a bucolic setting, Pierre Sériziat was, of course, the opposite of the "charged" political subjects of David's prison medallions. In addition to being a portrait, it could thus also be seen as a visual proposal for a post-Thermidorian wishful maleness -- a discreetly political private self --, one that would have little problem fitting the codes: an image of a kind of forgetting.

The Sériziats were received at the Salon with acclaim, although, as mentioned, their unusual aspects were also noted by the critics -- the ambiguity in her portrait, the novelty of his.[130] The code and the subject seem to have finally "snapped" together, if not, in her case, without leaving some gaps, and, in his, snapping somewhat too tightly.[131] Couldn't we suggest that the ambiguity of the woman's place in the portrait had something to do with a more general cultural

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concern with femininity in (Republican) representation, a concern due to the gendered nature of the spring 1795 political crisis? Couldn't we also say that the high degree of ostentation in conveying both the male subject's comfort in the field of representation and David's own comfort or ease as an artist capable of skillfully engaging and reformulating past conventions in Mr Sériziat had something to do with his experience of profound political and aesthetic crisis, as articulated in the portraits of the "last Montagnards"?

Yet, if we do discern in the Sériziats some residual traces of crisis, it has to be emphasized that the portraits, nevertheless achieved the purpose for which David destined them: they secured his succesful re-entry into the public sphere as an artist. He was once again talked about as a skillful professional and this is precisely what he wanted to obtain from the Salon of 1795. Let us keep in mind that at the time of the opening of the exhibition on 2 October, David was still a "subject on trial": despite his provisional release, he remained officially under accusation until the end of the month.[132] The portraits' critical acclaim promised a certain stabilization for David as a painter. And the voice that speaks from his letters written at the time seems to be wanting just that: to be a painter:

> Je ne veux plus désormais m'occuper que de mon talent et si le ciel m'a doné [sic] de quelques dispositions, je

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veux en tirer parti et penser un peu aussi à faire le bien e mes enfants sans cependant oublier la gloire...[133]

We need to take a statement like this carefully: it need not be, as it was at times, taken as an announcement of the artist's withdrawal into the privacy of an aesthetic enclave.[134] Aesthetic matters, to be sure, needed to be considered and re-considered after what amounted to a major transformation of the Republican Imaginary and David's personal artistic crisis. But the notion of the artist's studio as a space of production of private aesthetic objects is ahistorical. David never ceased being and wanting to be a public artist.

Yet, for the kind of public artist he was, a history painter, positive reception of the Sériziats was important, but was not in itself sufficient grounds for stabilization. The question of what a Republican public art was to be like, after 1794, remained open. Neither David nor any other Republican artist had any ready aesthetic models to follow at this point. The symbolic repertory had been eroded by the processes of reaction. However, given David's pre-Thermidorian prominence as a revolutionary artist, the pressure was on him to come up with the models. He did try to rehearse the old ones. But with no success: the artist's petition to the authorities to be given a studio space to finish the Tennis Court Oath had no effect.[135] As late as 1798 David sought government support for the project,

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offering even to "adjust" it by changing some protagonists of the original design.[136] It was to no avail. Thus, it was left to the Sabine Women to become the tableau summing up the Revolution, and David's experience of its last phase.

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Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the prison output of J.L. David in the context of the profound transformation that occurred in French Republican culture after the fall of Robespierre. The major question here concerned the exact nature of the impact that this context had on the immediate and, to a degree, the future aesthetic production of the artist.

The form of this dissertation was in large measure dictated by the heterogeneous and fragmentary nature of the material treated here. In order to explore the complex reciprocity between the two kinds of non-linear processes that I focused on here -- the individual artistic crisis and the crisis of the collective Republican Imaginary -- I have adopted a non-linear, discontinuous structure for presenting my arguments and tried to avoid, as much as possible, a kind of teleological build-up which would inevitably culminate in the "peak" of a conclusion. Thus, I think it would be counter-productive here to offer a conclusion in the traditional sense of the term. A brief recapitualtion of the most important arguments is, however, in order.

The nature and effects of the cultural crisis that unfolded in the fifteen months of the Thermidorian reaction

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were analyzed here, for the first time, across both political discourse and visual imagery. The major problem for Republican culture after Robespierre's fall was how to retain continuity with the revolutionary past and yet mark a radical rupture with one of its episodes: the Terror. Immediately after the Thermidorian coup, the need to define the meaning of Robespierre's regime, and soon also that of what came to be called the "system" of the Terror, became evident. In reconstructing the image of the Terror which gradually emerged from political debates, pamphlets, and imagery as a sanguinary barbaric parenthesis within the Revolution, I have argued that it had a profound effect on the Republican Imaginary: it was a kind of wedge that forever split the unitary symbolic space within which the Republic defined itself, giving form to some of its repressed meanings. Another space was formed, that of Republican political unconscious and I discerned here some of its major visual tropes and figures: the rhetoric of severed limbs (of the "formes acerbes"); and the figures of the buveur de sang, the cannibal, and the vandal, to which the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction added the female figures of the tricoteuse de Robespierre and the furie de guillotine. I have argued that, in response to the gendered nature of the last popular insurrections of Germinal and Prairial, there emerged in the Republican Imaginary the figure of woman as a political and sexual threat, a construction that sought to

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contain the class- and gender-specific fear of male Thermidorian moderates vis-à-vis the sans-culotte militant women. One of its major symbolic consequences was the feminization of the negative tropes through which the year II was imagined after Thermidor. In other words, in the Republican culture after Prairial the Terror acquired the status of the feminine Other.

David was situated in the context of this cultural process. The artist's prison work was for the first time discussed here as an ensemble. Furthermore, I have analyzed the rhetoric not only of David's images but also of his texts -- notably the hitherto unexamined manuscript of the artist's defense from the period of his first imprisonment -- to trace across this common ground the transformation that took place in the artist's Imaginary. My argument was that the situation in which David found himself after Thermidor had a profound impact on him as an artist. Yet, I focused not as much on the impact of empirical circumstances on David as a person or a biographic subject, but rather sought to examine closer the interaction between transformations in the collective cultural codes and David's position as a subject of his texts and images. Specifically, I have argued for the recognition of the effect of the Thermidorian image of the Terror as a signifying force within David's works.

I thus sought to demonstrate that David's crisis manifested itself as a profound displacement of the subject

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within Republican codes. This was articulated differently, and with varying force, across the artist's prison opus: as a lack of fit between the subject and the format of representation (e.g., the Self-portrait; the medallion portraits of David's Montagnard prison mates); as a coexistence of competing and mutually erosive systems of visual articulation within one image (e.g., the Homer drawings); as the iconographic alignment of the otherwise male-identified artist with the figure of woman in crisis (the Abandoned Psyche); as an unusually long, detoured and contradictory process of preparation for a painting (the corpus of the Sabine Women drawings); and, last but not least, as the effect of "petrification" in a visual display of mastery (Woman in a turban). One could say that the artist's individual crisis was, like the transformation of Republican language after Thermidor, a process structured by the eroding work of the "Terror" as a kind of "virus" code that disarticulated the master('s) visual program.

In my discussion, I have paid particular attention to the signifying function of gender. What I hoped to have demonstrated here was a complex, yet historically specific, dynamic, which could be summed up schematically as follows. The artist used gender symblically to "sort out" his own crisis. The use of the feminine and masculine in his texts and images served to attach his meaning and value to certain concepts on which his survival as a political subject and as

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an artist depended, especially, the Revolution. For example, we have witnessed in the rhetoric of the artist's written defenses a shift from an image of the the Revolution as the "virtu mâle et sublime" of Robespierre (in the Justification), to an image split in two between the Revolution as a positive force, imagined through the "fraternité", a figure of male bonding, and the Revolution in the feminine, seen as an unpredictable and hostile force (the Réponse). (We have, moreover, attended to semantic overlays in Delafontaine's version of David's own account of the origins of the Sabine Women, in which the artist's Thermidorian opponents are collapsed onto the castrating image of the Academy.) This was paralled by what could be called, with some reservations, the evolution in the signifying function of femininity in David's visual work. (I did not imply here any clear-cut linearity, though. The drawings of the Sabines, for example, demonstrated the complexity in the development of the gender structure of the image.) To choose one example, a trajectory could be traced from the painted sketch of the emphatic Psyché abandonnée, a woman as a figure of the male self in crisis produced in the first stage of the Thermidorian reaction, to the drawing of the Femme au turban, an image of a woman as Other and as a conveyor of male (artistic) mastery, done in the course of the artist's experience of the second stage.

I have suggested that David's individual feminization of

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the image of the Revolution as a negative force and the shift in the artist's visual use of femininity coincided and was reinforced by the forms in which the crisis of the Republican Imaginary articulated itself. Between David's two images mentioned above, for example, there interposed itself not only the artist's personal experience of the second stage of the Thermidorian reaction as another imprisonment, but also a radical change in the Republican symbolic repertory within which he had to work as a public artist. As a result, certain figures from the artist's intra-psychic repertory of identity crisis were validated or received cultural legitimacy, while others did not. And, reciprocally, these figures went on to contribute to the work of reconstruction and consolidation of the Republican Imaginary under the Directory, notably in the Sabines painting.

In addition to offering an intepretation of David's body of work from prison, I hope to have reconstructed the individual as well as cultural dimension of the origins of the Sabine Women, and what may be called its visual unconscious. On the level of imagery, in presenting my account of the formation of the Republican visual unconscious, I hope to have revealed also the important source of Romanticism. It is on the repertory of cannibalistic and sanguinary figures, the "repressed" and the "abject" of the Revolutionary language, that the imagination of the Géricaults and the Delacroixs will thrive, of course,

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but my point is also more specific. I think that in the work of these artists there could be seen an effort to grope with the historical-visual memory of the Terror first constructed during the Thermidorian reaction. This is not to establish any kind of teleology, but to point to the importance of the Thermidorian heritage for public art produced after the French Revolution.

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Notes to chapter 4:

1. Here are the facts leading to David's arrest. Already the Germinal events served as a pretext for the Convention to order the immediate deportation of the four grands coupables, the former members of the committees Barère, Collot, Billaud and Vadier, who were sent to Guyane (Barère escaped) without even being able to present their defense, as was guaranteed by law. See Baczko, Comment, 315-16. Eight other deputies, among them Cambon and Amar (the latter was David's colleague at the CSG) are also imprisoned. Immediately after the events of Prairial, the Convention accused thirteen Jacobin deputies of complicity with the insurgents and ordered them arrested. And on 10 prairial (29 May 1795), continuing what it called its "great act of justice", the government had all former members of the old (Terrorist) committees put into prison. Among these was David.

On the decision about David's arrest taken during the session of the Convention Nationale on 9 Prairial, year III, see Moniteur, t. 22, no. 254, (11 Prairial, year III [30 May 1795]), 575. For the circumstances of the arrest of the Jacobin deputies, see also, A. Mathiez, La reazione thermidoriana, 274; and F. Brunel, "Les derniers Montagnards," esp. 391-2.

2. Deputy Gouly: "Il n'est s'agit pas ici d'accusations particulières; il s'agit de faire un grand act de justice." Arrested were the deputies Rober Lindet, Voulland, Jean-Bon Saint-André, Jagot, ELie Lacoste, Lavicomterie, David, Barbeau-Dubarran, Bernard de Saintes. Carrier and Louis de Bas-Rhin were the only ones spared (although attacked). See Moniteur, t. 22, no. 254, 574.

3. Writing to Boissy, David excused himself from his absence at the Convention by saying he suffered from "débordement de bile". See Wild., 1145.

4. Levasseur states that of those Montagnards who did not renege or pass to the enemy camp, all were depressed and discouraged. See his Memoirs, III: 264, also cited in Tarlé, Germinale e Pratile, 92.

5. Réponse de David de Paris, Représentant du Peuple, aux dix-sept chefs d'accusation, 5. This text was also reprinted in Wild. 1198. I will be referring here to the original version. A handwritten inscription on the Bibliothèque Nationale's copy of the Réponse dates its publication for Prairial, year III (May 1795).

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6. I am paraphrasing David, in his Réponse, 5-6.

7. This is what he ascertains in a letter of 3 May 1795 addressed to the section Muséum, see Wild., 1190.

8. See J.L. David, Letter to the National Convention, 27 April 1795, Wild. 1186.

9. David, Letter to the CSG, 15 July 1795. Wild, 1203.

10. Only Carnot was spared because he "organized victory"; there were also those who were ordered arrested but escaped, like Levasseur and Baudot. See A. Mathiez, La reazione thermidoriana, 274; and F. Brunel, "Les derniers Montagnards," 391-2.

11. See the account of the section's procedure in Saintomer letter, reprinted in Jules, 165-6. The case of Saintomer who, though David's enemy, refused to testify and instead wrote the artist to warn him against the preparation of denunciations, is telling in that regard; as is the case of David's brother-in-law, solicited, unlike Saintomer with success, to testify about the matter that had potentially embarassing implications for himself (a list of proscribed artists allegedly prepared by David but in the circulation of which Hubert was also being implicated.) (Ibid.)

12. Procès-verbaux de la Convention nationale, repr. in J.J. Guiffrey, Louis David, pièces diverses, 422. See also Jules, 247-51.

13. The Girondists were re-integrated into the Convention in February 1795, having been ousted by the Jacobins in May 1794. For excerpts of the Convention debate, see Jules, 247-51.

14. In his response to the accusation David reprints verbatim all the charges. I refer here to Réponse de David, 7-40.

15. Of course it is the political issue of belonging with the circle of Marat's radical supporters that is at stake here.

16. See Jacques Godechot, Les Institutions, 308-14.

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17. For example, points 11 through 15 deal with one and the same fact that David refused to receive a woman soliciting the liberation of her husband. 11ème: "D'avoir insisté au CSG, pour qu'on n'accordât à aucun citoyen de la section du Museum de la liberté sans son agrément et son participation" (the source for this information is the testimony of citoyenne Marcel as are all the following items.). 12ème: "D'avoir cependant refusé constamement sa porte à une citoyenne qui alloit solliciter la liberté de son mari." 13ème: "D'avoir repoussé la même citoyenne, portant dans ces bras un enfant qu'elle nourissoit, et de lui avoir dit qu'il ne vouloit point s'intéresser pour un marchand, et encore moins pour un marchand épicier." 14ème: "De lui avoir dit que son mari seroit guillotiné, ou au moins déporté." 15ème: "D'être la cause, par cete brutalité, que cette citoyenne a éprouvé des crises convulsives dont elle souffre encore et dont elle souffrira toute sa vie." See Réponse de David, 7-40.

18. Yet, this negative image of David will affect his future constructions. E.g., Chennevières, writing in 1897, uses almost the same negative terms to describe David's involvement in the revolution. (In "Une collection des dessins," 410-25.) This is an example of the durability of certain tropes established for David in this period.

19. E.g. David was referred to as a "lâche fanfaron" and as "principal agent et premier ministre de l'infernal Robespierre." See Pièces à la charge du Citoyen David. A.N. AA45. See also Jules, 259.

20. Notice the typically post-Germinal rhetoric of denunciations in the original testimonies, e.g., in item 10, where it was stated that David "avait soin d'attiser la rage de ces furies, tant contre la Convention que contre le peuple." Quoted in Jules, 260.

21. Indirectly referred to in the itemized act of accusation but spelled out in the section's Rapport, where David was referred to as "le digne ami du Marat" (and, elswhere, of Robespierre), cited in Jules, 252.

22. That is, the end of January to the end of March 1795. Tönnesson, La défaite, chap. V and esp. 98. My analysis of the sectional persecution that follows here is based largely on Tönnesson's account, combined with information from Tarlé Germinale e Pratile; and Godineau, Citoyennes.

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23. For example, this is how the section Invalides proceeded: "...Le citoyen Guigard a été dénoncé par plusieurs membres comme terroriste et buveur de sang, qui depuis 4 ans n'a cessé de manifester des principes contraires à l'humanité et tendants à l'effusion de sang. L'assemblée [...] a arrêté qu'il serait désarmé sur-le-champ." Archives nationales, F72510, Registre des Assemblées générales de la section des Invalides. Séance du cinq prairial. Cited by Tarlé, Germinale e Pratile, 210. Tarlé explained that the term buveur de sang was most often used because it avoided the confusion that the term terroriste could imply -- a lot of leading réacteurs, e.g., Tallien and Fréron, themselves used to be Terrorists.

24. Section Lepelletier at the Convention on 18 February 1795 (30 Pluviôse, l'an III. Archives Nationales, C 336, 1570, 19. As cited in Tönnesson, La défaite, 107.

25. Ibid.

26. It also helped erase from the Republican agenda a certain social intepretation of such republican values as equality. The new constitution of the year III that will inaugurate the Directory will self-consciously put the republic in the hands of an elite of the educated and the propertied.

27. Under attack since the beginning of March, these four deputies, whose status evolved from prominent Thermidorians into the unwanted remnants of the Robespierrist regime were, in the wake of the Germinal riots, abruptly sentenced to deportation to Guyane without trial (except for Barère who escaped). Eight other Montagnard deputies, among them Amar and Cambon, were arrested. Attacks were initiated by the denunciation read at the Convention on 2 March 1795 (21 ventôse) in the name of a special commission by the deputy Saladin. For this denunciation, see Baczko, Comment, 313. The term "brutal acceleration" is also his.

The fate of these deputies was important for the definition of David's status. Vadier was David's former colleague at the CSG. David also defended Collot from what he saw as unjust accusations of complicity with Robespierre; see David, "Letter to the president of the Convention Nationale", 28 March 1975, Wild., 1177.

28. Even if this was not explicit, neither in the section's accusations, nor, later, in the way the government justified David's second arrest after Prairial, the shadow of this association will have its long lasting ripple-effect: it will echo in the choice of terms for the deriding dismissal of the

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Sabine Women in 1799 -- as a work of "the Raphael of sans-culottes." And David, as a subject and as an artist, will have to take into account this ripple-effect in whatever he was to do in the future. Another testimony to the lasting power of the terms used in the section's accusations against David is Mercier's reprinting in his Nouveau Paris the phrase David allegedly was to say, according to Cecile-Ange Houdon (mentioned in item 7 in the accusations), that a canon charged to send a hail of bullets at the artists could do a lot of good for the Republic. For Mercier, slightly reformulated, see Archives nationales, Police générale, David peintre, F7 6711, plaq.6.

29. On 25 March 1975 (5 germinal year III)) David writes to the president of the section Demay to inform him that he he heard of the section's intention to denounce him and to remind him that he was absolved from any guilt by the Convention and that its three Committees, having heard his defense and refutation of all the accusations, declared him innocent. Being ill at home, he has no chance to gather information that would allow him to refute new calumnies and asks Demay to let him know the precise nature of denunciations so that he can send him his response. See Wild. 1173.

On 27 April (8 floréal) David writes to the Convention to demand a leave of absence to retire to the countryside. On 28 April (9 floréal) he writes to the Convention to state that he fears calumnies. He states again that he is at his brother-in-law's, to make it known to his colleagues, in case his enemies try to precede his response to their calumnies, which he is about to publish. He declares himself to be ready to appear at the Convention anytime he is summoned. Wild., 1186.

Finally, after the section presents its case at the Convention when David is gone, he responds by an open letter to the section which he has published and posted all over in public spaces in Paris. In it, he describes his attempts to clarify the accusations personally (he tried to appear in front of the section's commission to refute them; then, when the section was to submit the evidence against David at the CSG, on a day of public petitions, David appeared at the CSG in order to confront them and present his defense, but the accusers failed to appear), and he avows to pursue his denunciatiors, whom he declares calomniateurs and enemies of the national representation and the revolution. See David (de Paris), Représentant du Peuple, à la section du Muséum. (Also repr. in Wild. 1190.)

30. See Wild. 1169.

31. "Oui,je vous poursuivrai à mon tour, calomniateurs effrontés, ennemies irreconciliables de l'ordre, de la justice, et de la probité. C'est en vain que vous vous enveloppez de

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ténèbres; je porterai la lumière dans les replis les plus cachés de votre coeur...." He denounces his accusers as his professional enemies, as academicians who "always loved the debasing favors of the Ancien regime, the begged-for distinctions, the insulting privileges." The letter ends with an address to his enemies-academicians: "Combien vous devez me détester, puisque la contagion des mes crimes a étoufféee toutes vos vertus!" David à la section du Muséum.

32. See Jules, 245.

33. See "Observations préliminaires," in Réponse de David, 1-6. Hereafter cited in the text with the page number in parenthesis. The date inscribed manually on the title page of the copy of this text preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale dates it for Prairial, year III, i.e., late May/early June 1795.

34. David says he was nothing (une nullité absolue) at the CSG, his membership in it -- a pro forma thing, and he instead spent all his time and energy at the CIP, his exclusive concern for the arts serving him as a kind of alibi continuel, as he puts it. (3-5)

35. Pierre Sériziat already wrote to the authorities on behalf of David during the artist's first imprisonment, on 4 November 1794 (14 Brumaire). See Wild. 1142. The friendship between the two was of longer date. David painted Pierre Sériziat's portrait in 1791. In the same year, the artist made an effort to get Sériziat a job at the tribunal de cassation. See David, 1989, 236. Sériziat's brother Charles, a general whom David tried to save, unsuccesfully, from arrest during the Terror, offered his services petitioning the Convention to be admitted to the bar to speak in defense of David on 20 June, 1795 (2 messidor, year III). Wild. 1199. See also David, 1989, 236, no.96. David refers to Charles Sériziat in his Réponse, ibid., 45.

36. D.L. Dowd, "J.L.David, Artist Memeber of CSG."

37. The fact that the Museum section initiated the accusations against David could also be linked to the fact that the Louvre district counted many former academic artists (who, in David's own interpretation, were the impetus behind the new case against him) should not be disregarded. (See the point of accusation revolving around the statement that David was to have said that all the academicians should be arrested and perish on the

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guillotine; item 7 in Réponse, 24-6). Yet, none of the most renowned of the former academicians (such as his rival Vincent) denounced David.

38. David is mixing his metaphors here rather clumsily, but what is interesting is this understanding of himself as a sort of a canvas ("surface immense"). Elswhere in the text this understanding of the effort of his enemies through the metaphor of a slanderous portrait painted of him (and contrasted with the "true picture") appears as well: "Ah! que ces ennemis cruels qui me pursuivent, et qui en abusant des circontances, osent me peindre de plus sombres couleurs, descendent dans l'interieur de ma vie, et qu'ils en exposent, s'ils le veulent, le tableau fidèle sous les yeaux public...." (48, underline mine).

39. David, Letter to the CSG, 15 July 1795 (27 messidor, an III), Wild. 1203. But also in the Réponse David invites the reader to recognize the "inquiétude d'un homme transporté hors de sa sphère et entraîné par le tourbillon révolutionnnaire dans des fonctions étrangères à son charactère, à ses connaissances, à ses principes à son coeur" (47).

40. Lise Andries discerned and analyzed a new type of quasi-literary document produced in and by the context of imprisonment during the revolution, the mémoire of self-defense. Although the mémoires she discussed were usually addressed to the revolutionary tribunal, having been written by the "regular" indicted prisoners, rather than deputies under provisional arrest who continued to refer themselves, as did David, to his colleagues, we can consider the Réponse as a similar type of text. See Andries, "La Mémoire d'autodéfense," in J.-C. Bonnet, ed., La Carmagnole des Muses, 261-75.

41. For the notion of the feminine and the female figure as privileged notion for everything French revolutionaries did not wanted to be identified with, see Lynn Hunt "The Many Bodies of Marie-Antoinette," in Erotics and the Body Politics, 108-30.

We see then that in the course of the Thermidorian period a transformation occurred not only in David's public image and status but also in the way he understood and presented himself. Even if the text is not a mirror of his "real" beliefs but a strategic document with a purpose, some of this image will be important in the way David will position himself and be positioned by others during the Directory.

42. The term "mapping fantasy" is Jameson's ("Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan," 353-5).

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43. What I am saying, then, is that it is not only that David, on an important level, could not escape the post-Priairial logic of republican discourse, but that the gendered drift of this discourse, in which the negative aspects of the revolution were conveyed through a figure of a castrative woman, could thus reinforce and legitimize his own.

44. Attributed to N.A. Taunay and titled Le Triomphe de Marat aux Enfers. A fairly large oil on canvas (1.29 x 1.68m) for which an oil sketch, reproduced here (Fig. 83) is preserved at the Musée Carnavalet. For the Leningrad painting, see B. Berezina, Francuzkaja Zyvopis pervoy nonoviny i serednij XIX vieka w Ermitaze, 217-29. The Carnavvalet sketch is titled Le Triomphe de la guillotine aux enfers. Both titles are arbitrary, the paintings bearing neither a title nor a signature and no other evidence that could confirm it. One may note that it is not only Marat's triumph, though, nor that of the guillotine, given the presence of other personages, Robespierre and Fouquier-Tinville, the latter two as prominent as Marat. One may also notice the importance of the collective actor here, the sans-cullotte and the Jacobin.

The attribution of the painting to de Taunay by the Hermitage's curator, N. Berezina, is based exclusively on stylistic analysis, i.e., on comparison with landscape and military paintings attributed to Taunay that are in the Hermitage's collection. The former curator at the Musée Carnavalet, Pascal de la Vassière does not essentially disagree, but offers also an alternative author: Le Barbier. It is difficult to deal with a painting for which no documentation exists nor was it exhibited at the Salon. My dating, as suggested later here, is for the time of the anti-Marat campaigns of the Pluviôse-Ventôse year III (the Nantes noyades in any case dictate post-Thermidorian dating.) The size of the Leningrad picture, unusually large for that kind of work, was originally even bigger before the painting, apparently in a rather bad shape, was trimmed and re-canvased during restoration.

I would like to thank Christof Leribault, conservateur at the Musée Caranvalet and Pascal de la Vassière, conservateur-en-chef at the Musée Cognac-Jay for their kind help and the comments they offered during my research on the sketch preserved at the Musée Carnavalet in Paris.

45. There is no portrait likeness secured for either David or the other artists but, within the allegory's economy of meaning the leading painter's identity is clear. This is also the opinion of the the Hermitage curator Berezina (in Francuzkaya Zyvopis, 218), who moreover suggests the others represented are André Chénier, Gossec, Ledoux and Sieyès.

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46. E.g., the fusillades organized in Lyon by Collot. See Palmer, Twelve who ruled, 153-76.

47. Poitiers, ventôse, 3e année républicaine, (February/March 1795), cited after J.-C. Bonnet, "Les Images négatives," 171.

48. Although sanguinary representations of the Terror abound in the printed imagery throughout the Thermidorian period, at least three specific references allow us to date this image with considerable certainty for the period from January to May 1795: 1. the noyades of Nantes (revealed to the public only in the course of Carrier's trial, in November-December 1794) as well as the derisive prominence of Marat (as a symbol, under attack only since January, which culminated in his de-Pantheonization in early February '95) and of Fouquier-Tinville, the public accuser at the revolutionary Tribunal, whom the réacteur Fréron demanded "qu'il aille expier dans les enfers le sang qu'il a versé." (Quoted in Gérard Walter's entry on Fouquier-Tinville in Michaud, Biographie universelle, 733-4.) Fouquier-Tinville was arrested soon after the Thermidorian coup, but his trial, which ended in his execution, took place much later, in the context of Germinal unrest, between 17 April [18 germinal] and 6 May [17 floréal] 1795. One may notice that this image's rhetoric resembles closely the rhetoric of anti-Marat pamphlets. The same motifs are used, for example, in P.A.L. Maton de la Varenne, Les Crimes de Marat, Paris, 1795, and in the Hermitage painting. Perhaps the painting could have been commissioned by the author of the pamphlet, similarly to Poirier's commission of the engraving Formes acerbes.

49. Despite the fact that the different manifestations of the Terror did actually happen more or less all over France, the kind of coherence that the period acquired under the Thermidorian reaction had, needless to say, little to do with reality. (E.g., not all Jacobin deputies on mission ordered or were complicit with the massacres as was, for example, Carrier, and even in his case, the degree of his awareness of the massacres is not entirely certain. Moreover, there were others who, like the Terrorist Fréron in Toulon, were known for particularly violent and arbitrary acts of persecution, and who, having turned into most zealous anti-Terrorist réacteurs, enjoyed not only freedom but considerable power after 9 Thermidor. See Palmer, The Twelve Who Ruled, passim.

50. The effect of the iconography of the Last Judgement, based here perhaps on the Flemish rather than Italian sources, contributes here to the effect of pictorial and semantic coherence of the otherwise arbitrary concatenation of the Terror-

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related episodes from the provinces and from Paris. Flemish sources are suggested by Pascal de la Vaissière. One should also certainly mention French iconographic precedents of mass massacres, such as sixteenth-century illustrated books on social sins and crimes that had a didactic function, many of which were reproduced in Natalie Zemon Davis, Fiction in the Archives.

51. Given his prominence as a leader in the revolutionary arts, and the houppelande that we know from his prison self-portrait, this artist could have hardly been anyone else.

52. Clearly, the author of the painting is reworking in this part of his image the compositional scheme of such engravings as the one published by Chéreau, The Mound Erected at the Champ-de-Mars for the Festival of Supreme Being, June 8, 1794, at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des estampes; repr. in Schnapper, David, témoin, 140.

53. The danger of this image of David as the Terrorist monster could not be underestimated in the context of spring 1795. Although not the direct cause of David's second arrest, the section's act of denunciation furnished ready-made articles of accusation that, once deposited in the files of CSG, could help textualize the government's own act of accusation and offer a supporting matrix of evidence. The section's accusations were even amplified by the grievances that the families of the Terror's victims begun articulating against the former members of the committees. E.g. the Trudaine sisters accused Bernard de Saintes of cruelty and David of callousness. See Jules, 266.

54. On 26 July (8th thermidor) Courtois reads his report on the events of the 9th of Thermidor, on the eve of its anniversary. In it, he accuses David in strong terms, calling him a "man of blood" and imputing to him a role in Danton's trial and acts of vandalism. Moreover, he restates that Robespierre planned to turn the Festival of Bara into a coup or even a massacre of the Convention. Courtois insinuates that David put pressure on the judges of the tribunal, Topino, Sambat and Trinchard, to sentence Danton and his associates, despite lack of evidence. (Sambat already testified once and never mentioned David. See Jules, 267.) Further, David is accused "d'avoir trempé les mains dans le sang des innocents," of being "homme du sang" who allegedly announced in front of many artists that if he loved blood, it was because he was born to love it. And he cites an incident reported to him by his friend in the commission des arts, of which David was also a member, deputy Reboul of Hérault, who was to see him during the September massacres, on 3 September, calmly drawing the dying who were being thrown on the heaps of the killed

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prisoners. In the commission des arts, he was supposed to have demanded all the statues of the Tuilleries and from Versaille to be melted either for cannons or for mortars. He wanted Rubens' Medici canvases to be cut into pieces and given to students as samples for restorations. E.B. Courtois, Rapport, n. 12, 11-13; and 43. See also Jules, 267-8.

Courtois's accusations, even if presented without evidence, were important in that his Rapport was not only read at the Convention but also published as a brochure, thus entering this image of David as vandal and man of blood into public circulation.

55. Reboul approached David drawing the dying: "Que faites-vous là, Monsieur David, lui dit-il? --Je saisis, répond le peintre, les derniers mouvements de la nature dans ces scélérats." Courtois, Rapport, 12-3.The massacres of 2-5 September 1792 consituted one of the revolutionary episodes of collective punitive violence, in which ca. 1500 Parisian prisoners found death in the hands of a largely sans-culotte crowd. It was immediately used by the Montagnards and then, in their turn, the Girondists in their rival struggles for power. Robespierre sought to direct the popular anger against the Gironde; the latter tried to accuse the Montagne of having organized the event. For the most concise explanation, see Richet and Furet, La Révolution; see also M. Bouloiseau, La République Jacobine, 17-20.

53. Ibid., 13. There exist indeed several sketched portraits by David of his deputy colleague Danton, of which the ones preserved now at the Musée Carnavalet (See la Révolution français. Les dessins, 1982, no. 22) as well as the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lille (repr. in Michel, David, 86) have an almost caricatural quality. They are said to have been done during sessions at the Convention. Robinet in Révolution française, 1888, t.XIV, 707-8, repeats the anecdote of a drawing done by David (in a different café, though) while Danton passed on a cart to the execution, which was supposed to belong to Chenavard. Also, A.P. Wintermute (1789: Art and the Revolution, 150, n. 10) mentions David's drawing of Danton's profile, auctioned in London at Christies on 4 July 1889, lot no. 185. This might be one of the drawings exhibited in Carnavalet in 1938 (one from the collection Lavedan, another from that of Duruy), both untraced since.

The durable effect of such accounts that, once put into circulation, were available for whoever wished to mobilize them for their agenda, could be illustrated by the fact that as late as 1797, when David had regained, as a member of the Institute national, a position within the official cultural establishment, a royalist publication l'Espion de la Révolution française reprinted some of the anecdotes cited by Courtois, adding others to them, all presented under the rubric of the barbarious acts of the Terrorist deputies, such as Lebon. See [Isaac-Mathieu

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Crommelin] L'Espion de la révolution française par M.C.***, ci-devant Membre de plusieurs Académies, Paris, an V, (1797).

57. For if it was David who had, almost single-handedly constructed both a new aesthetic ideal/language and a republican value/hero out of a revolutionary personnage of problematic, ambiguous, unstable reputation, if it was he who had prepared grounds for the pantheonization that the Thermidorian executed at the confusing beginning of their rule, he was to pay for it when the gears of official republican culture were being changed.

58. Ian Germani mentions one such caricature ("Les métamorphoses"). Moreover, we can presume that there were more images such as the Hermitage allegory, which did not survive until now or are still to be discovered. The fate of David's own Lepelletier illustrates the vicissitudes of the highly political images produced in the revolution.

59. See David, 1989, 295. The more advanced, if not finished Caranvalet version is dealt with here. The earlier one is at the Louvre, Cabinet des dessins. See the interesting discussion of this work in Philippe Bordes, "Le recours à l'allégorie sous la Révolution."

60. I will not enter here into any expanded discussion of this interesting work, although the frieze-like spatialization of this argument -- the King has to die because the heroes of the People were killed, obviously a construct of Jacobin propaganda given that the King was executed first and constructions of the revolutionary martyrs followed, partly to justify the exectution -- has to be noted. David retains the frieze format throughout summer and fall/winter 1795, as his Homer and the Sabine Women prove.

61. For this exclamation, and the figure of Marat here as its enactment, see S. Howard, Sacrifice of the Hero. Howard also noticed a similarity of between this figure and the old woman's gesture in the final verison of the Sabine Women.

Marat was the essential model for David's oratory style as a radical deputy, providing David with the rhetoric of political radicalization, as well as for his visual style as revolutionary artist. Suffice it to listen to David's speech when he was offering his Marat painting to the Convention (e.g., the typically maratiste formula, "Je démande que vous m'assasiniez!") to realize the degree of David's identification with this figure of "Grub street" intellectual. One should also recall the houppelande in David's prison self-portrait, another sign of his

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identificatory relation to Marat.

62. N. Bryson, "Mortal sight: The Oath of the Horatii," chap. in Tradition and Desire, 63-84.

63. David, "Letter to the CSG." Archives Nationales, Police générale. David peintre. F7 6711, plaq. 7, no. 592. (Also repr. in Wild., 1203.)

64. See Caroline Pecoul, "Letter to the CSG," Archives Nationales, ibid., no. 589; and Jules, 294-5.

65. "Depuis plusieurs jours le rép. David se plaint de douleurs internes, malaise et lassitude. Hier après-midi les douleurs de côté l'ont obligé de se mettre au lit," reports the prison supervisor. He states further that the doctor was called for who treated David for high fever and recommended someone look after him overnight. David complained that he suffered from "humeur scorbutique" which augments the "grosseur de la lère inferieure, du côté gauche." His illness was thought to have been caused by the humidity of the cell. Rapport aux répresentants du peuples... par concierge de la Maison des Quatre Nation, Blanchelaine. Archives Nationales, Police générale. David peintre, plaq.7, no. 590.

66. Ibid., no.591.

67. Caroline Pecoul writes to the authorities, appealing to their "justice and humanity," to ask that David be transferred to her house because he is very ill. See her "Letter to the Convention Nationale," ibid., no 589.

68. The David couple divorced during the Terror, on 16 March 1794, due to political differences. After David's imprisonment, however, his wife made all attempts to help him out, visiting him in prison and lobbying with the deputies for his release. The couple's reconciliation is signaled in their correspondence. (See, for example, Caroline Pecoul, "Letter to David," 14 August 1795 [27 Thermidor, year III], ms. at the Ecole des beaux-Arts, Paris. They officially remarried on 12 November 1796. See Wild. 1236.

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69. Archives Nationales, F7 6711, plaq. 7, no. 588. For the names of CSG members who signed the order for David's provisional liberation, see Jules, 293.

70. The portraits of Bernard de Saintes and of Dubarran, in the auction in Strasbourg, as documented by the auction catalogues, groupe Gersaint, 29 June and 17 November 1989, respectively.

71. Pierre Rosenberg, the chief curator at the Department of Painting in the Musée du Louvre was kind enough to share some information with me about the Bernard des Saintes and the Dubarran, for which I wish to thank him. He also stated that he knows of seven revolutionary medallions by David but that he does not know the location of all of them nor was he able to ascertain the identity of all the sitters. (Communication by letter, 15 July 1991.) It is unclear whether Rosenberg has in mind all the medallions David produced during the revolutionary decade or only those done at the Quatre Nations. The Dubois-Crancé, (David, 1989, no. 133, 302), for example, must have been produced, in my view, at a different revolutionary moment than the series I discuss here -- its sitter, who used to be David's ally in the period of the Tennis Court Oath commission, was after Prairial with those who sent David and other Jacobin deputies to prison. Dubois-Crancé was in fact responsible for the formaton of the military commision that tried the Romme group. See Tönnesson, 325-7.

I may add that it would be interesting to examine the possible links between the medallions produced by the young Ingres ca. 1795-6 and the ones of David's series. For Ingres, see H. Naef, "Ingres' frühe Profilbildnisse in Medaillonform." Naef suggests the medallions were done before Ingres' arrival in Paris and in David's studio. Given the striking similarities in their visual rhetoric, especially in their common departures from the traditional format of the medallion bust, to me it seems hardly possible that Ingres did not know David's portraits done in the Quatre Nations prison.

72. It has been very briefly discussed in A. Schnapper, David, témoin de son temps, 170 and in David, 1989, no. 137, 308.

73. The spelling of the deputies' names is given according to Kuscinski, Dictionnaire de conventionnels, with the alternative version in parenthesis.

74. This attribution is due to the original owners of the drawing, the brothers Goncourts. J. Wilhelm raised some doubts about it ("David et ses portraits," 164-5). Arlette Sérullaz

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(David, 1989, no.93, 231) accepts this identification, not without some hesitation. She dates the portrait for ca. 1790-91, predominantly on the basis of its resemblance to David's self-portrait at the Uffizi Galleries (similar frisé hairstyle).

Evidence could be presented both for and against identification of the sitter as David. Arguments for it are basically two: 1. there is the testimony of the original owners of the drawing, which cannot be neglected, although no documentation on which it was based is available; 2. the sitter resembles David, especially as represented in his self-portrait at the Uffizi.

What speaks against it is that, compared to his other portraits, David's nose seem different. Moreover, he never signed his self-portraits before. And there is the question of the swollen cheek that, had it been David, should appear on his left cheek, visible here, and yet it does not. (Wilhelm argued it would require three mirrors to paint his right profile as if it were the left, thus to avoid registerign the tumor.)

The point is that there is no way we can ascertain the identity of anyone on the basis of representation. The mediation of different codes has to be taken into account: we are not looking merely at, say, David, but as a form that stands for him or any other deputy. Thus, it is futile to seek to establish if it does "look" like anyone (e.g., David whom we know, moreover, only from other representations, thus always already mediated.)

Similarly, the problem of dating is difficult to resolve. To base it on appearance, especially on the frisé hairstyle is, again, tenuous at best. For if it is true that David appeared in natural hairstyle in the Luxembourg self-portrait, we could not exclude him having his hair frisé again in the Quatre Nations prison -- as Dubarran and Pautrizel portrayed by him there did.

75. What speaks for the medallion belonging with the series is the fact that it is almost exactly the same size (the "David" is O, 180; the Jeanbon is 0.182); the same placement of signature; the same medallion format with the sitter's bust shown in profile; the same unusual and intriguing body language with the gesture of folded arms as in the Jeanbon, Bernard, and the Dubarran; and other aspects that will be discussed below.

76. The Prieur de la Marne is in the Musée des Beax-Arts et Archéologie in Besançon; the Rabuat is in the Henry E. Huntington Libraries and Art Gallery in San Marino, California. Repr. in David, no. 111, 272-3 and fig. 84, 270, respectively. (A second version of the Prieur, attributed to David, is in the Musée de la Révolution in Vizille.)

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77. For basic information on David's sitters, see A. Kuscinski, Dictionnaire des Conventionels, and Michaud, Biographie universelle. Moreover, see A. Lods, Un conventionel en mission: Bernard de Saintes; A. Montier, Robert Lindet, député à l'Assemblée Nationale et à la Convention; L. Levy-Schneider, Le conventionnel Jeanbon Saint-André.

78. All three figure together with David on the list of the arrested of 9 Priairial. See Mathiez, La reazione, 274; and Brunel, "Les Derniers Montagnards," 392, n.32. The latter also includes the list of all Jacobin deputies arrested in relation to the Germinal/Prairial uprisings.

79. When imprisoned in May 1795, both Jeanbon and Bernard were approximately the same age as David:46 and 44 respectively; David was 47.

80. Pautrizel, who was arrested few days earlier (arreté of 5 et 6 Prairial, see Brunel, "Les Derniers," 392) was a much less prominent figure. He was elected to represent Guadelupe, (where he served in the army and where he spent most of year II) at the Convention. See Kuscinski, 477.

No traces of Pautrizel's previous contact with David exist. Serrullaz suggests that the medallion of the deputy Thirius de Pautrizel (Louis-Jean-Baptiste-Cyrus Pautrizel) was executed in 1792. However, according to Kuscinski Pautrizel had not become deputy until 1793 (on 9 fructidor he sits at the Convention Nationale). Moreover, he was imprisoned in the same place as David and this is the only documented time when the two met. Lastly, his portrait medallion shares, to a large degree, the medallion rhetoric with the other three.

81. For the death sentence, against the appel au peuple, against sursis. See A. Patrick, The men of the First republic, 108-36.

82. In addition to Kuscinski, Michaud, Lods, Montier, and Levy Schneider cited here earlier, my account of David's sitters was based here also on Godechot, Les institutions, 308-16; Palmer, The twelve who ruled, 202-21; and A. Patrick, The Men of the First French Republic, passim.

83. Palmer (The twelve, 202-21) calls Jeanbon liberal; Godecho, (Les institutions, 109) situates him in relation to other members of the CSP as one of the left, together with Robespierre, as distinct from the extreme left of Collot and Billaud, the center of Barère, and right of Lindet, Carnot and

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Prieur de la Côte-d'Or.

84. Quoted in Kuscinski, 347.

85. See A. Patrick, 387.

86. See Palmer, 202-21.

87. This is what Kuscinski maintains ("Jeanbon Saint André"), as does Jordan, The Revolutionary Career of Maximilien Robespierre, 167.

88. Godechot, 309.

89. Kuscinski, "Jeanbon."

90. Ibid.

91. Godechot, 344.

92. Kuscinski, "Bernard de Saintes."

93. Ibid.

94. The other three medallions share certain aspects with these two (low cut bust format; rather unusual position of arms in the Dubarran and the Unknown Deputy); but in other aspects they differ (notably, the left rather than right profile shown the more proportionate and more prominent torso in all three; no hats; instead, frisé hairstyle). They could have been done at another moment during David's imprisonment, possibly earlier on.

95. Hubert Robert et la Révolution. nos 20-23. And 1789: French Art during the Revolution, 273-80.

96. The series, among which were the portraits of David's former protectors, the Trudaine brothers, and of André Chénier, was exhibited at the Salon 1795. See R. Michel in Michel and Bordes, eds., 59-60.

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97. Such was, for example, Mme Roland's wish. See B. Didier, Ecrire la Révolution, 257. For the portraits see L'Art de l'estampe, and Un Collectionneur pendant la Terreur, passim.

98. See Serullaz in David, no. 63, 156. Incidentally, it too was a "gift of friendship," albeit offered in less charged circumstances.

99. Invented by a certain Chrétien, a musician at the Royal Chapel, it became most popular in Paris before and well into the revolution. Chrétien collaborated at first with Quenedey who then went on to establish his own business that operated until 1796. It was possible to buy prints or original drawings resulting from this procedure of tracing. See R. Hennequin, Les portraits en physionotrace, quoted in L'Art de l'estampe, no. 84, 21.

100. Collection des portraits des MM. les Députés de l'Assemblée Nationale, whose first installment was announced in November 1789. There were to be eight deputies' portraits published each week to produce altogether three volumes containing 600 images. Some of those that got to be published are now preserved at the Musée Carnavalet. See L'Art de l'estampe, no. 91, 21.

101. Bruun Neegard (Sur la situation des Beaux-Arts) refers to the well known collection of portraits of the deputies of the Constituancy 1791-93, known as the collection of Fiésenger, who engraved after the design of Jean Guérin. This series used a profile bust in an oval, rather than a circle, however. There was also the Collection des Grands Hommes, with engravings by Pierre-Michel Alix executed between 1791-97 (L'Art de l'estampe, no. 94, 22); and the series Portrait des personnages historiques de la revolution, designed by F. Bonnevile, engraved by J.B.Compagnie, published in four volumes between 1796-1802. These were often using other artist's portraits, like Guérin/Fesinger's portrait of V.-P.Malouet. (Ibid., no. 93, 22.) All these collections are also listed in the catalogue of the collection de Vinck at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

102. Collection de 66 portraits représentants les personnages qui ont le plus marqué [sic] dans la Révolution française appeared in print as the third volume of the 1804 edition of the Tableaux. See M. Tourneaux, "Les Tableaux historiques." Although this cannot be discussed here at length, this series developed a most interesting format of its own of which the medallion was the most prominent part. Each was accompanied by a small narrative image that contained the episode for which the sitter was best known. Both negative and positive heroes were depicted, such as

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Carrier with his noyades. For my argument the importance of this volume is in its mobilization of the medallion format which signals how it was established as a form of official republican representation. However the need to "split" the sitter into his likness (the medallion proper) and the narrative episode that epitomized his importance for the revolution (the stemma-like rectangle below) is something that links these images with the problematic of a subject split by the codes that I will be addressing here below.

103. For the function of visual codes in revolutionary prints, see Herding, "Visual Codes."

104. Dubois Crancé secured the public commission for the artist's Tennis Court Oath. For his medallion portrait, see David, 1989, no. 133, 302. It seems that the specific links between him and the artist in regard to the Tennis Court Oath indicate that the portrait was done ca. 1792 and not, as has been suggested (see ibid.) in 1799. Dubois-Crancé landed on the other side of the barricade from David after Thermidor and especially after Prairial, when he became instrumental in setting up the apparatus of anti-Jacobin repression of which David became a victim. (Tönnesson, La défaite, 325-7.) It seems hardly probable, albeit not altogether impossible, that David executed his medallion after this.

105. Which is not exactly the same as the opposition between the public vs. private of the image.

106. I am aware of comparing two different media: David's being drawing; Fiesinger being an engraving, thus more distanced and stabilized by this technical relay. Yet, the comparison is useful.

107. According to J.M. Plane (Physiologie ou l'art de connaître les hommes, 1: 218-9 and planche C), this gesture signifies "méditation d'un homme du monde."

108. Of course there are also some differences: some seem to have a stronger gestural eloquence: increasing the body's mobility in the Jeanbon, making ostentatious the corporal declaration of inaction in the Bernard. In both, it seems, and this they share with the Anonymous Sitter, the folded arms seem to spell out a certain uneasiness about the body being cut off arbitrarily by the mount.

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109. In the series there resonated also another project for which David did a lot of the deputies' portraits, the Tennis Court Oath. And, on the other hand, it could be seen in relation to the Léonidas, where the enobling filter of Antiquity took over the Jacobin ideal, whose heroic defeat the Spartan bodies were meant to convey. For Leonidas as a crypto-Jacobin image, see the perceptive remarks of Tom Crow in his "Gross David with the Swol'n cheek."

110. Yet, it should also be clear then that I disagree with the kind of "straightforward" literalizing intepretation of the medallions' meaning as offerred, in regard to Jeanbon, by Warren Roberts (J.L. David, the Revolutionary Artist, 107) when he wrote that David represented Jeanbon as "[...] this just and fair man, who is seen standing his ground against his accusers, did not deserve to be where he was and defending himself as he had to. To show a fellow prisoner in this way was to show him as a victim of injustice, and for David to say he worked "in the irons" was to reveal his own feeling of victimization." Aside from mistakes in this passage and in the entire discussion (as well as throughout the book) -- David did not write "in the irons" it is Schnapper (in David, témoin) who translated the latin in vinculis, which means "in prison" via reference to tying ropes, not metal, as "dans les fers" and Roberts pick it up from this, rather than bothering to translate the Latin himself; he also claims th medallion format was an exception for David which it hardly is, with four other drawings in existence; etc., etc), Roberts refuses to read the image visually, formal analysis being an unknown tool to him (and indeed visual arts is such a strange area for him that he does not distinguish between easel and palette) and he seems who projects his expectations, without verifying them with visual and historical evidence, onto both David and his portrait of Jeanbon.

While there is visual evidence of resistance or subversion in the Jeanbon, there are other aspects that seem to undermine such an optimistic reading, as was pointed out here. Rather than firmly "confronting his accusers," Jeanbon seem to have problems occupying his position, in finding a place for himself in the Symbolic, in a code. There is a sense of dislocation and not belonging that plays with the defiant "looks" and begs intepretation.

111. On Romme's group being imprisoned briefly, if incommunicado, in the Quatre Nations, where David and his sitters were confined, see Tarlé, Germinale, 223-7, and Claretie, Les Derniers Montagnards, 286-7.

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112. I refer here to the medallion illustrating Grachus Babeuf, Du système de dépopulation ou la vie et les crimes de Carrier, Paris, An 3e de la République. A quote from Voltaire's "Henriade" with the image of rivers of blood and other sanguinary details is placed under the medallion.

113. See Arlette Sérullaz in David, 1989, no.137, 308.

114. In that regard, notice the difference in the sketchily rendered turban in David's earlier Tête de pestiféré (Ecole des beaux-Arts, Paris), a study for his painting of Saint Roch, which also differs from the Femme au turban in the intensity of the man's gaze, a signifier of subjectivity, which the woman in the prison drawing seem to be lacking. See David, 1989, no. 41, 108.

115. A. Sérullaz noticed similarity in technique; see her entry for the Tête de Marat mort in David, 1989, no. 119, 286.

116. "Je prie Mullard [sic] de me faire coller ce dessin sur en gros papier fort et tendu simplement et de le rogner ou il voit le fond terminé sans bordiure de papier bleu si Mullard n'y est pas chargé en badouin." Cited in David, 1989, 308. This care about how the work should be mounted indicates that the artist wished to protect it, most probably because it was either to circulate publicly or be engraved. (Another option, however not very probable, is that it was to be sold.)

Mulard was among the students who pleaded for David's release from the Luxembourg prison at the Convention. He remained faithful to his master and in 1816 and signed the petition for the exiled artist's return to France. See Wild., 1152 and A. Sérullaz in David, ibid.

117. See Sérullaz on Homer in David, 1989, no. 139, 310.

118. David, Letter to Citoyenne Huin, 1 Vendémiaire an 4, (26 September, 1795), in R.Peyre, "Quelques lettres inédits de Louis David et de Madame David," 110. (Cited also in Wild. 1215, with mistakes.) David also writes to the dealer Lebrun (and not, as Wildenstein states, to Topino-Lebrun), asking him to frame a painting that he wants to exhibit at the Salon (this must be the portrait of Mme Sériziat; Mr Sériziat was sent with a delay), with comments to the same effect: that he would have liked to produce a history painting but, being afraid that he would paint only a mediocre thing given the short time that he had, he gave up. It is also a document of how careful David was in staging his public come back. He asks Lebrun to send the painting to the

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Salon as early on as possible "pour ne pas avoir l'air de me faire désirer, chose qui est bien loin de ma pensée et qui ne vaut pas certainement la peine." See Wild.,1217.

119. Schnapper in David, témoin, 173-4, suggests the image was done in September. In any case we know that the painting was not ready for the beginning of the Salon because it did not figure in the Salon livret.

120. And quite succesfully so: these portraits will set the trend for the bourgeois portraiture for quite some time, up to, and beyond, Ingres.

121. These were the last days of the National Concention. On 23 September, a new constitution was introduced. On 26 October, the Convention officially dissolved itself. On the 31st, the executive Directory was elected. See Furet & Richet, La Révolution française.

122. The cockades must have been, of course, worn by the sitters. But, as I emphasized earlier, the way in which David chooses to register some elements of costume and ignore others in his portraits is important. Interestingly enough, none of the deputies he portrayed in prison had a cockade.

123. "The Happy Mother and Other Ideas in French art."

124. In Michel & Bordes, eds., Aux armes et aux arts, 61.

125. It has been accepted that the child represented here is Emile Sériziat, born in 1793, thus two years old here, who died at a young age. Mme Sériziat herself died young, in 1806. See Schnapper, in David, 1989, 313.

126. Inv. RF 1938-73. See I. Compin, and A. Roquebert, Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures des Musées du Louvre et du Musée d'Orsay, 275.

127. Seconde lettre de Polyscope, 553; and Exposition publique des ouvrages..., 418. Both cited by R. Michel, in Michel and Bordes, eds., Aux armes, 61 and n. 73.

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128. These are, of course, attributes of most male sitters in these kind of portraits, i.e., in nature. See, for example the numerous portraits of the Danish artist Jens Juel, notably his portrait of Greenaway, 1798, in Glärup. We might note in passing that in artists' standard source of visual reference, Cesare Ripa's Iconologia, the whip is the attribute of Terror, personified by a male figure. See Cesare Ripa, Baroque and Rococo Pictorial Imagery. The 1758-60 Hertel edition of Ripa's Iconologia, Edward A. Maser, ed., New York, 1971, 76.

129. Seconde lettre de Polyscope, 553. Cited in Michel and Bordes, eds. Aux armes, 61.

130. "Quel vigeur de pinceau!" exclaimed the critic Amaury Duval. See La Décade, t. VII, no. 55, 1 November 1795, 205. As a matter of fact, the acclaim was led precisely by Amaury Duval who, together with the Decade Philosophique constituted a major supporting force for David throughout the Directory.

131. Certainly, the subtle difference between the two portraits needs also to be seen as result of the fact that the portrait of Emilie was not necessarily meant for public display from the start -- David's wife suggests exhibiting in her letter when the portrait is already done; whereas the portrait of Pierre was intended for showing in public from the very beginning; as a matter of fact, it was painted precisely so that the portrait of Mme Sériziat could be sent to the Salon, for David did not want to follow the suggestion of his wife and send it together with his Psyché abandonnée. Was is because the latter was too much of a manifestation of crisis which David was not willing to share with the public? Thus -- M. Sériziat.

132. On 4 Brumaire year IV (26 October 1795), the National Convention, before dissolving itself, decrees amnesty for all the "faits relatifs à la Revolution." All the detained, with the exception of the royalist insurgents of 13 Vendemiaire (the beginning of October 1795), were released as were the ones under house arrest, e.g., David. See Moniteur, no.44 (5 November 1795), 347-9. Also see Jules, 295-6 and Wild., 1221.

133. Letter to Mme Huin, in Peyre, "Quelques lettres," 110. Bolded letters mine.

134. Most recently such a view was presented by Warren Roberts, J.L. David, revolutionary artist.

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135. Letter to the CIP, 4 brumaire an IV (26 October 1795). See Guillaume, Procès-verbaux du CIP, IV: 876. Referred to also in Wild., 1222.

136. See his letter to the Directory, not dated, cited in Jules, 344-6, and in Wild., 1293.

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Illustrations

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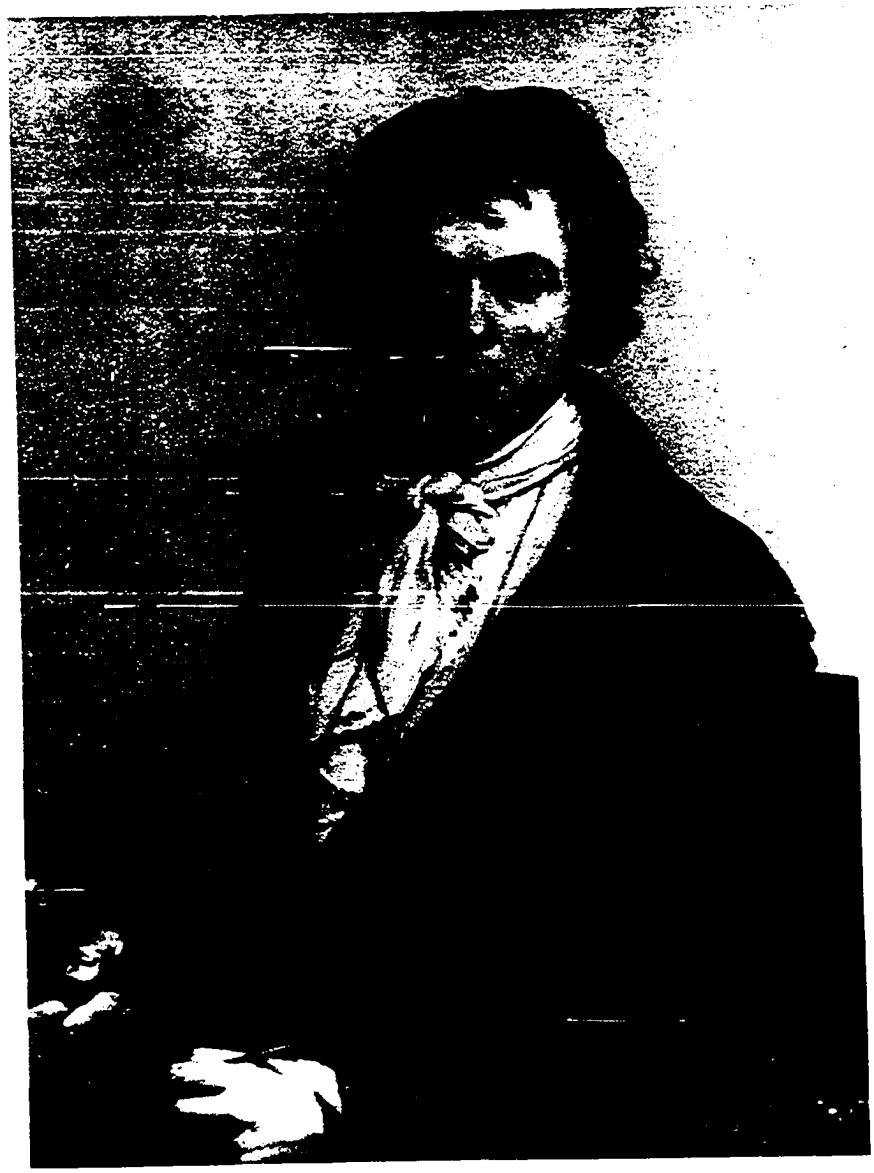

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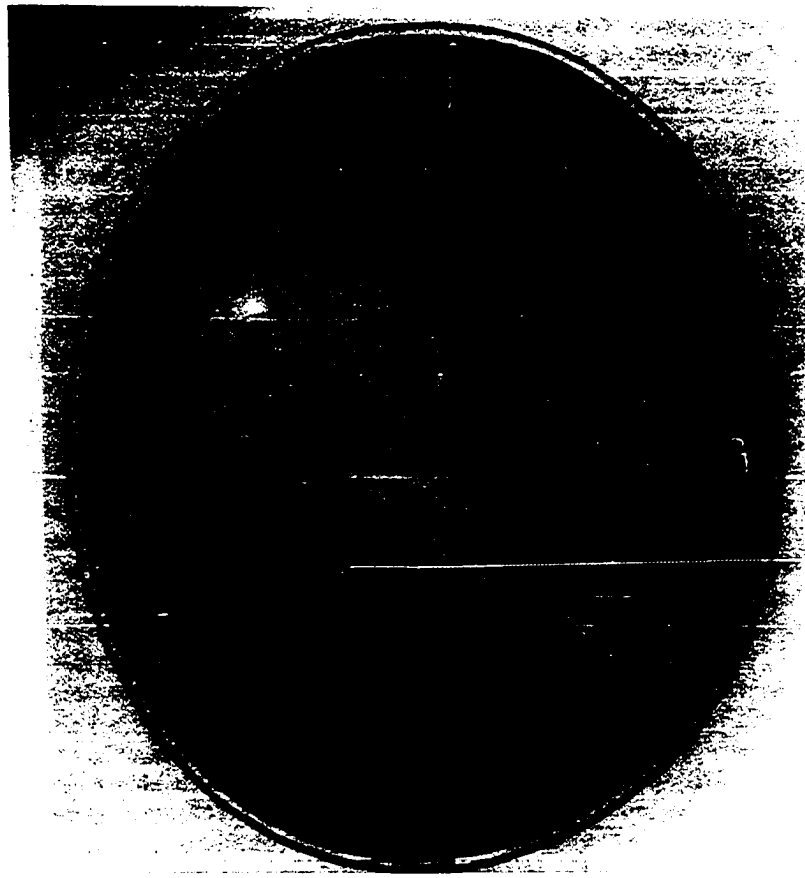

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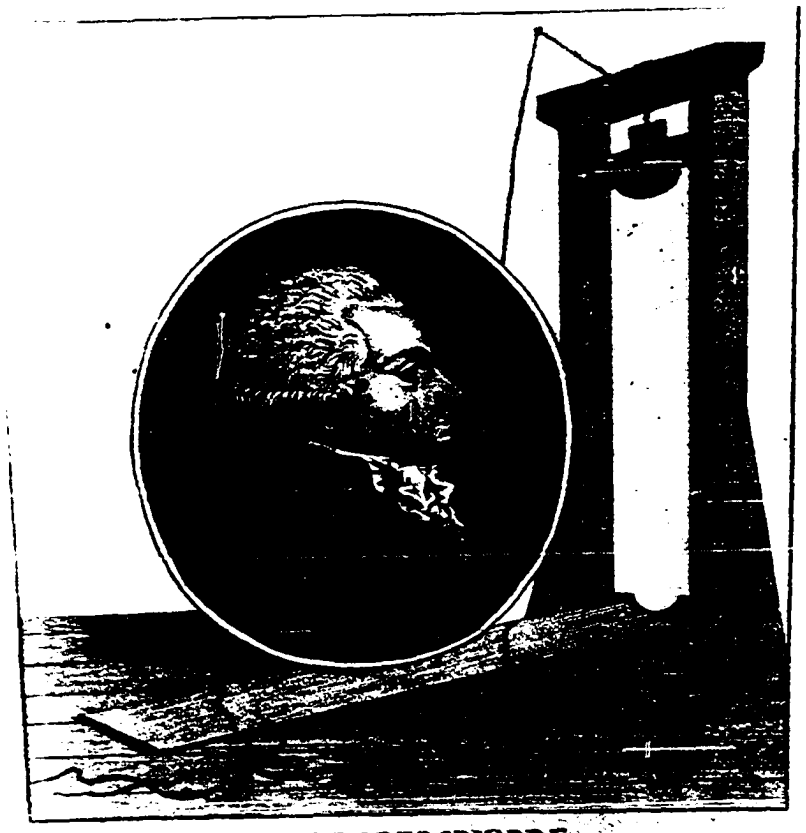

M.M.I. ROBERSPIERRE.

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Fig. 8 (p. 70)

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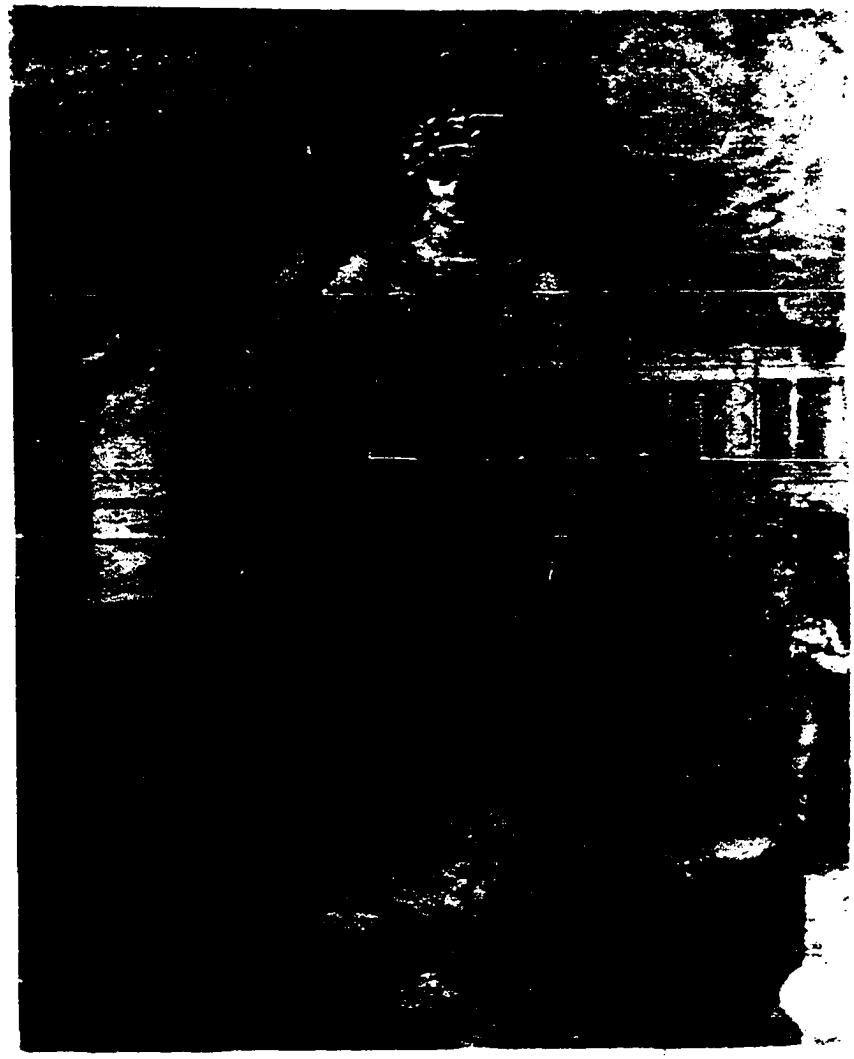

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98

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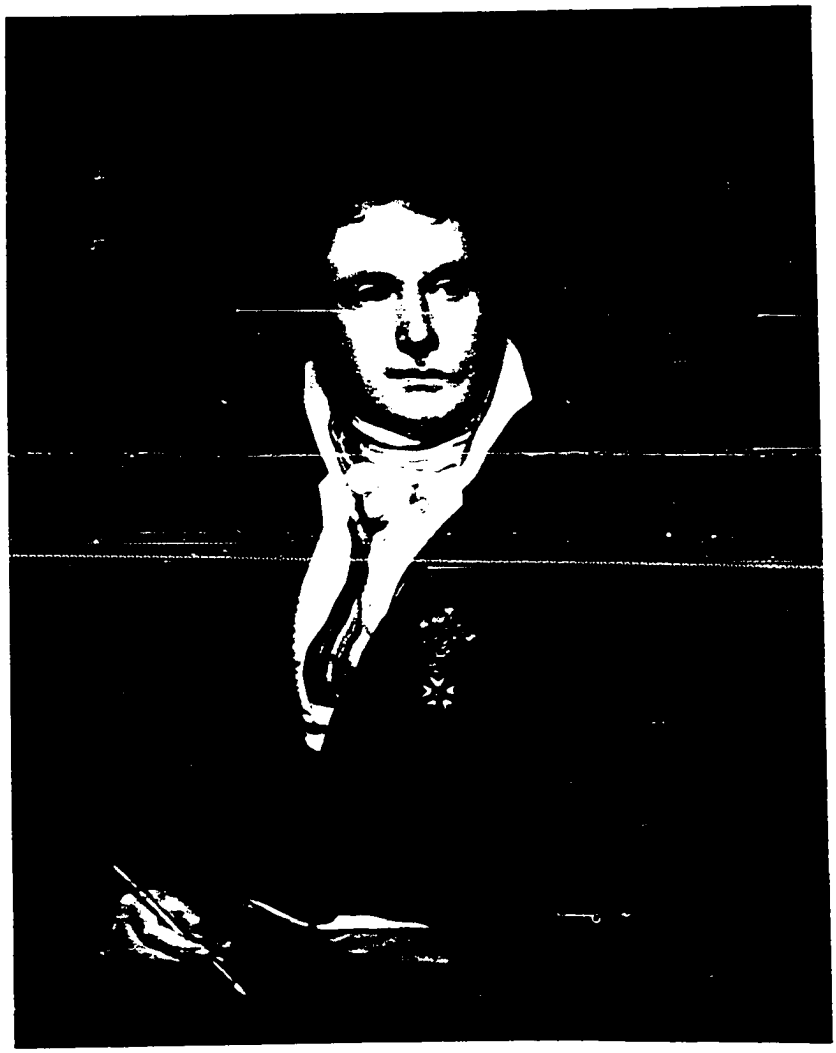

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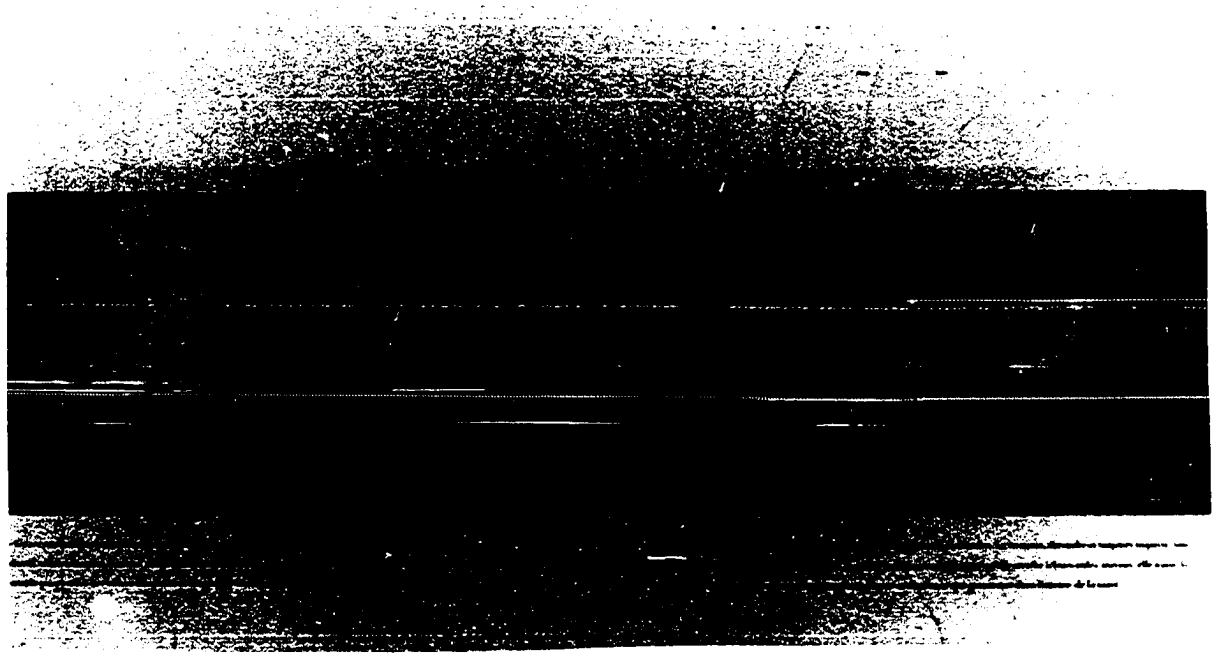

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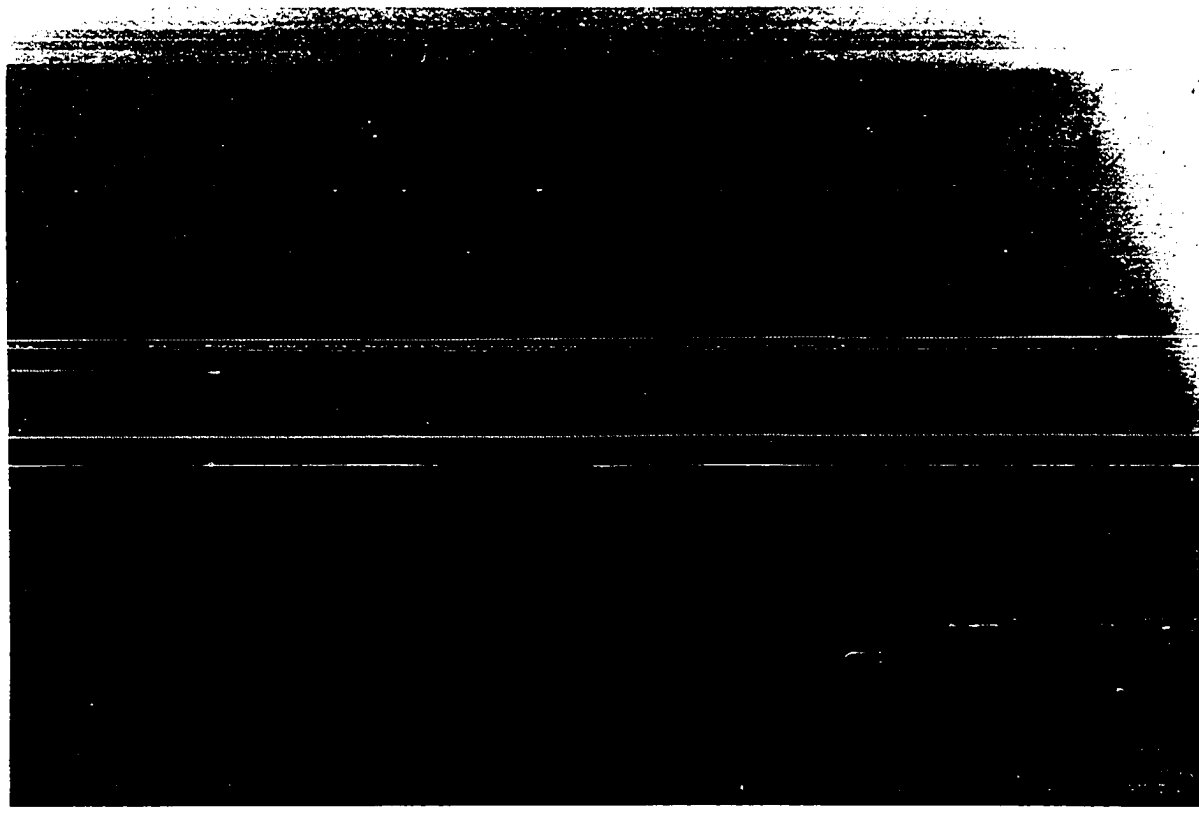

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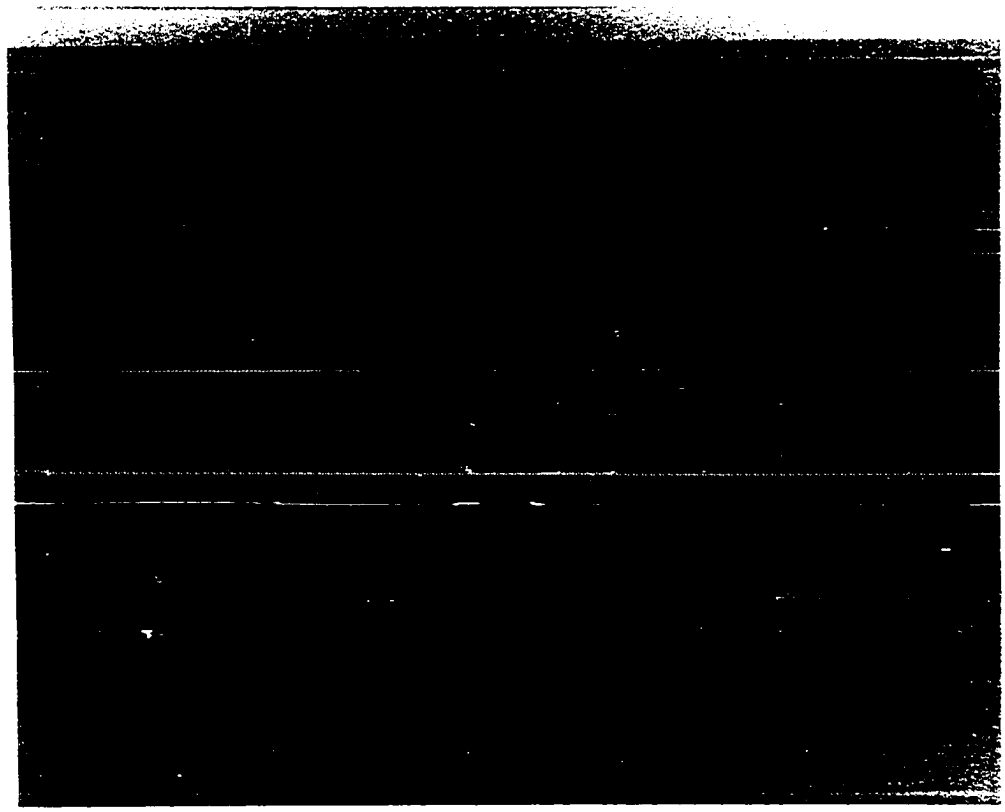

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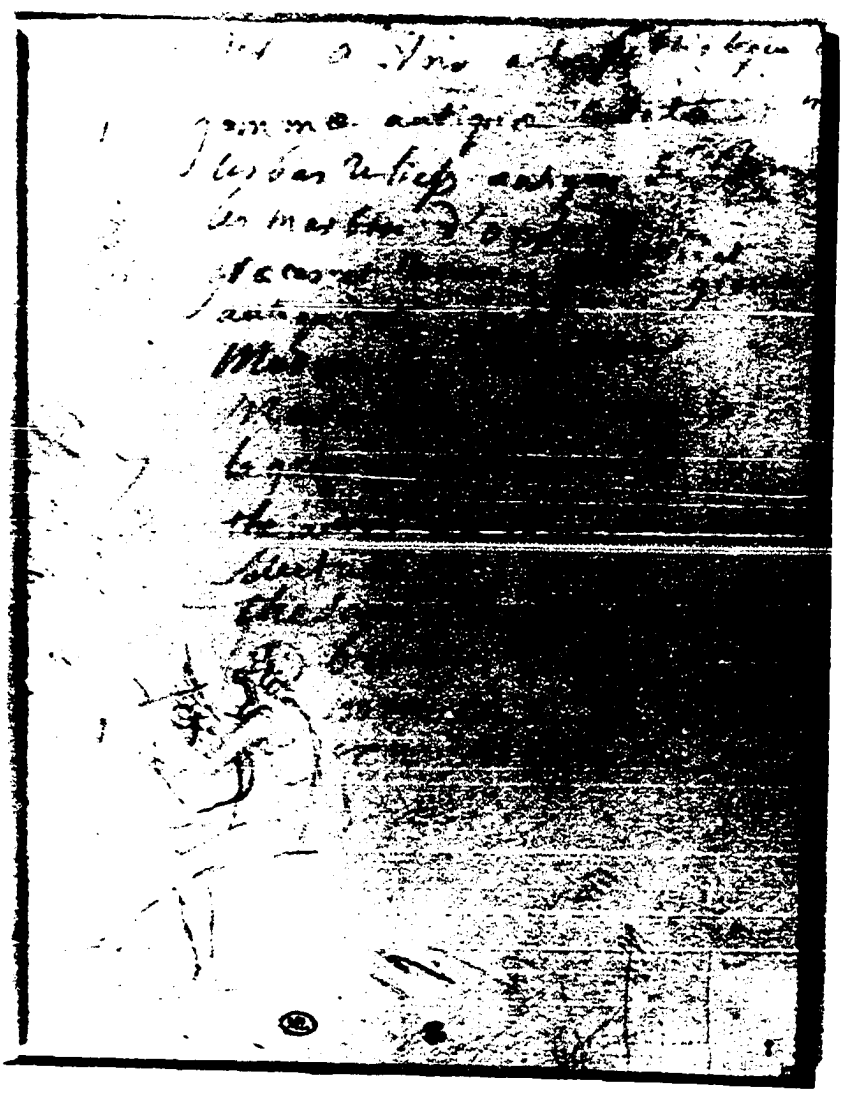

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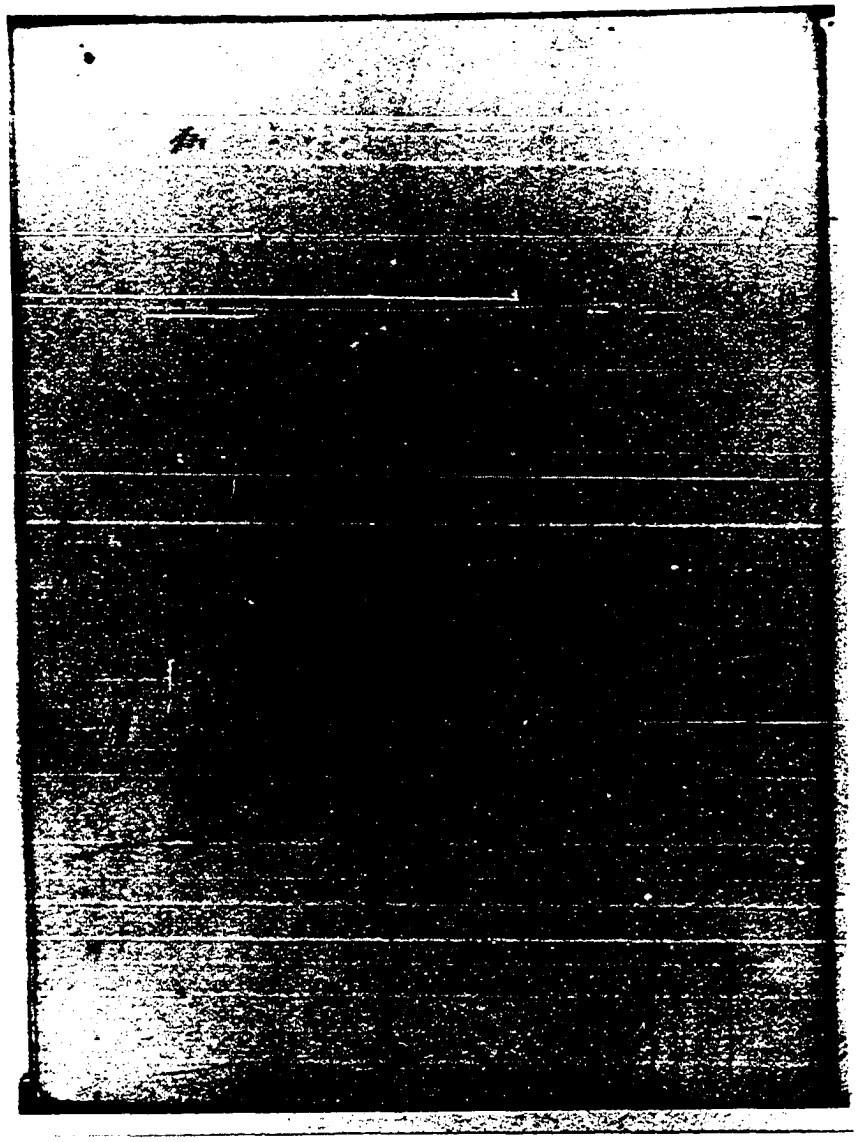

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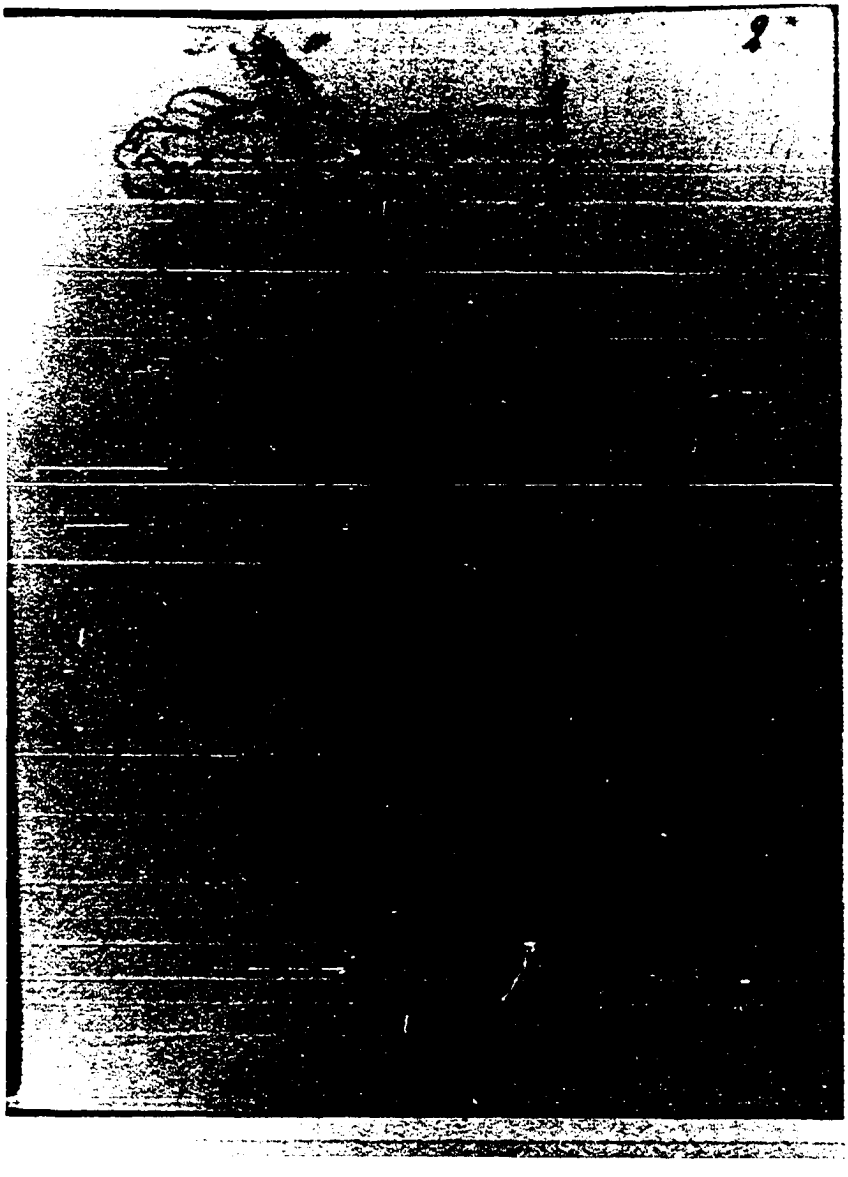

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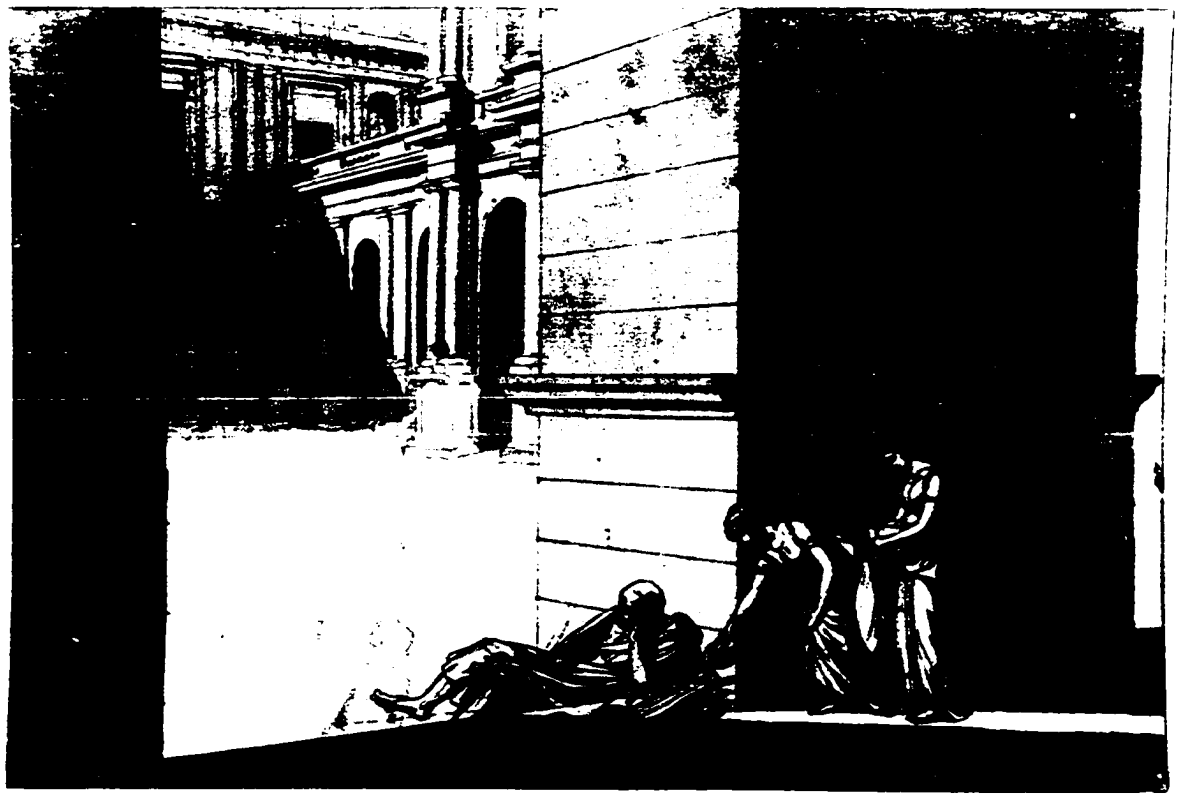

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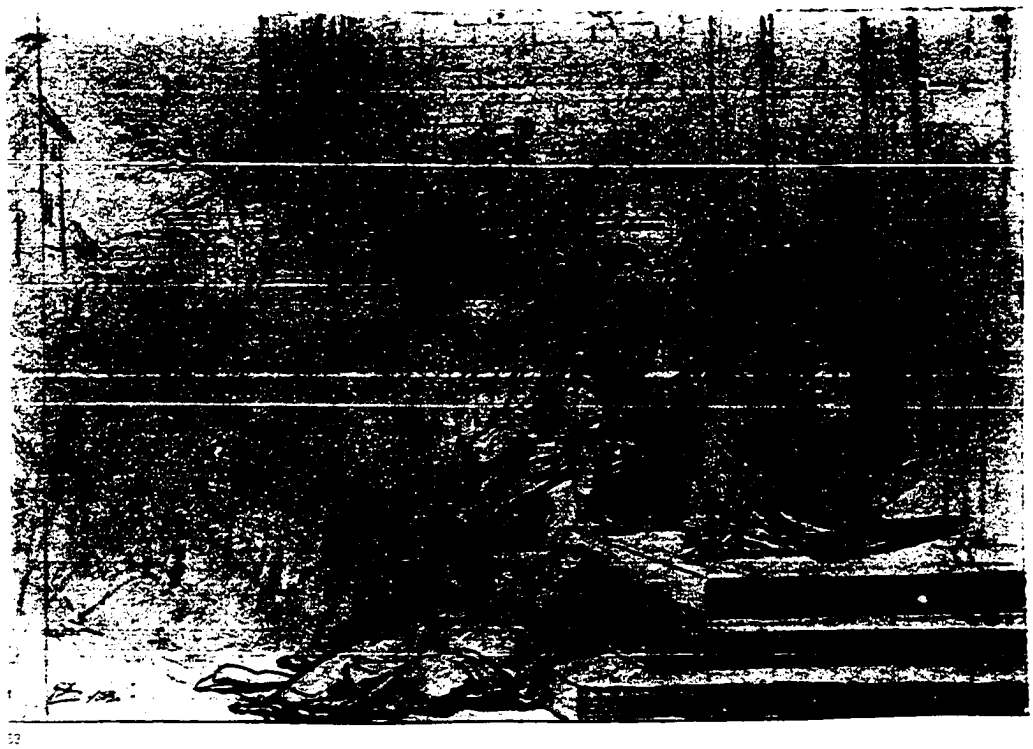

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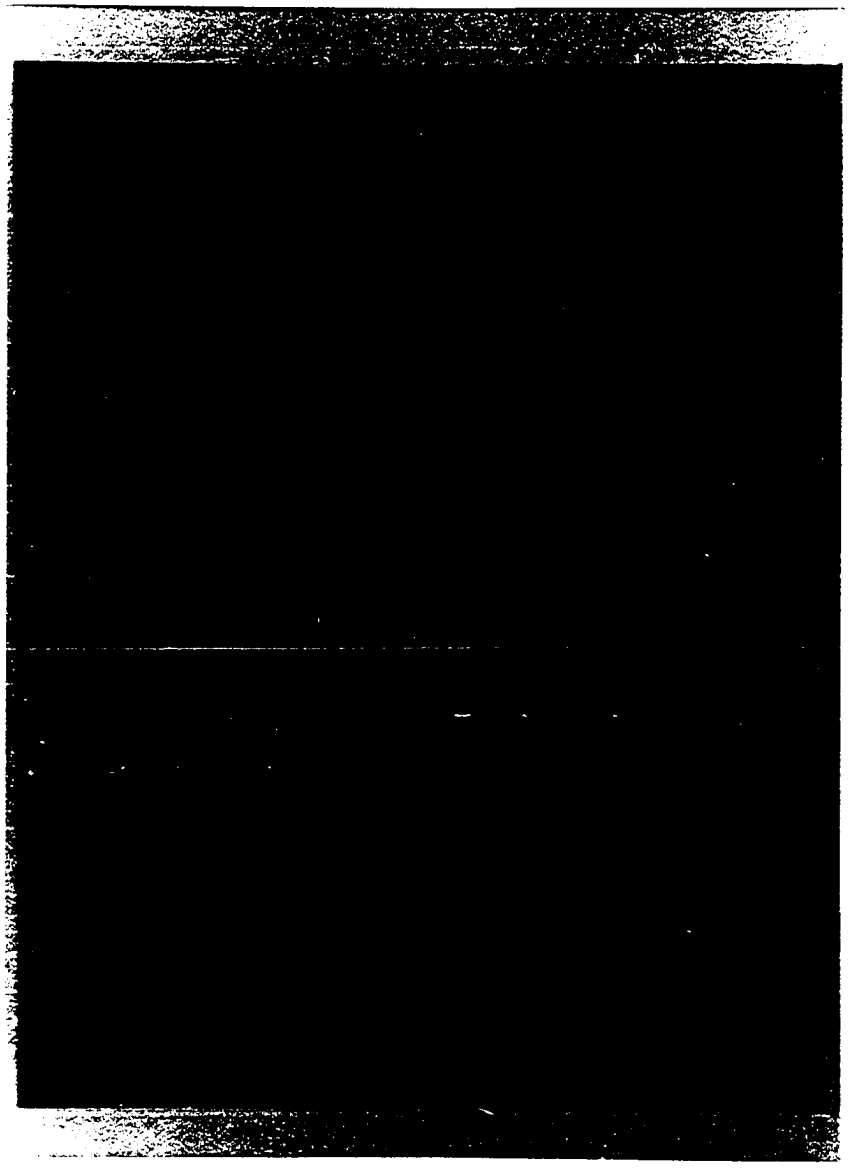

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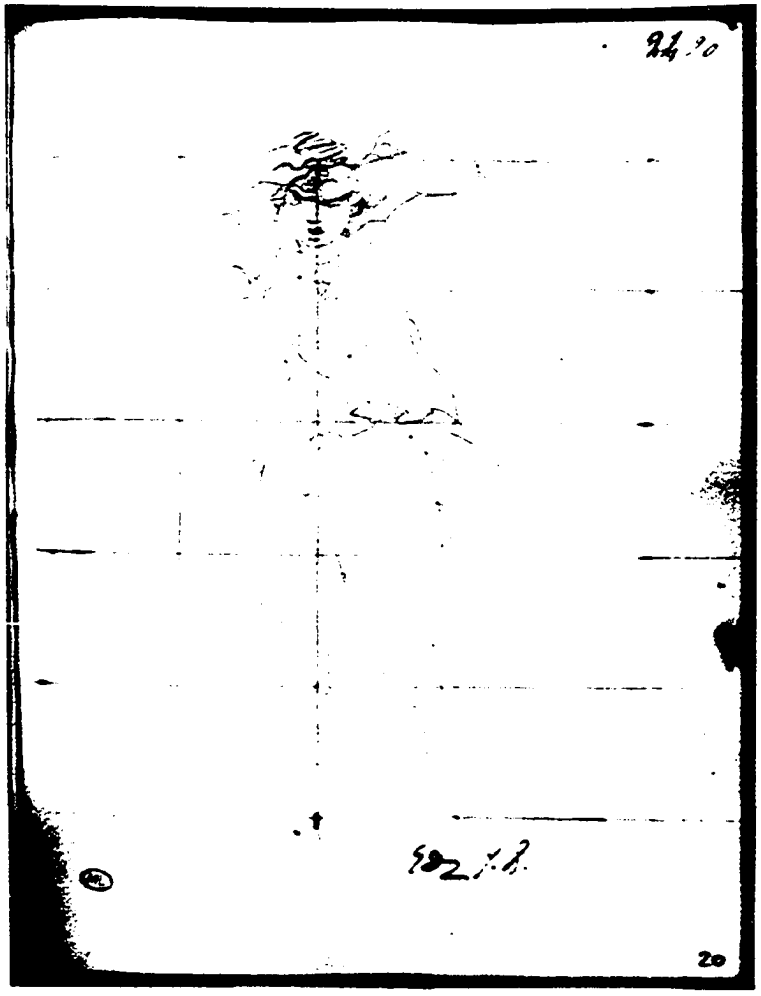

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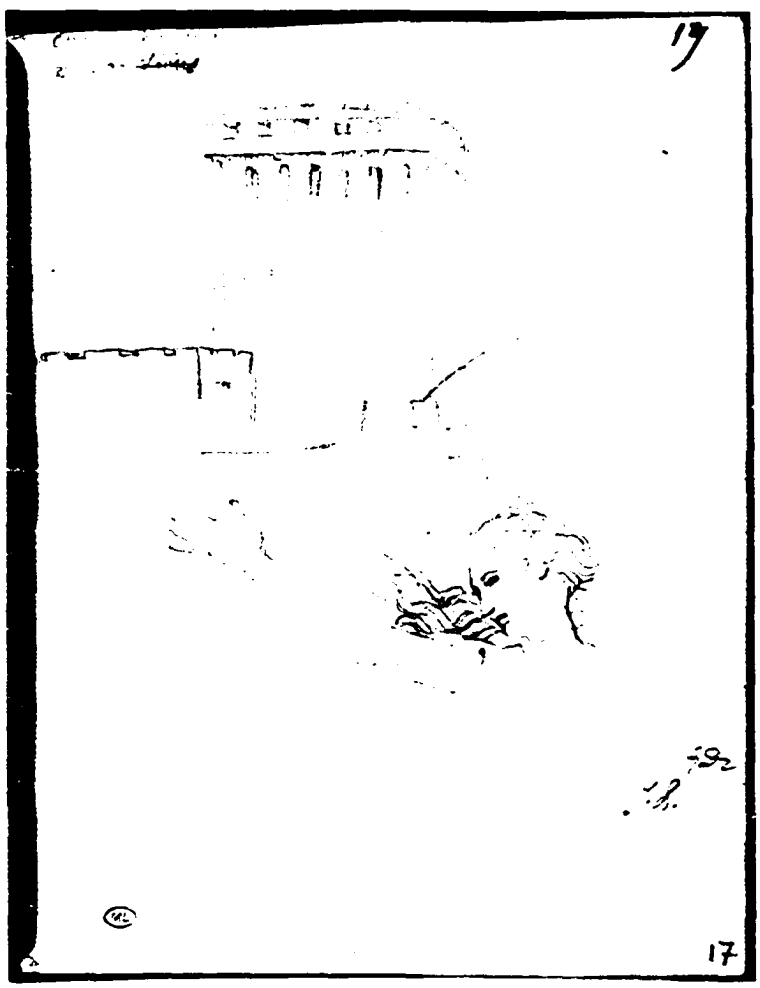

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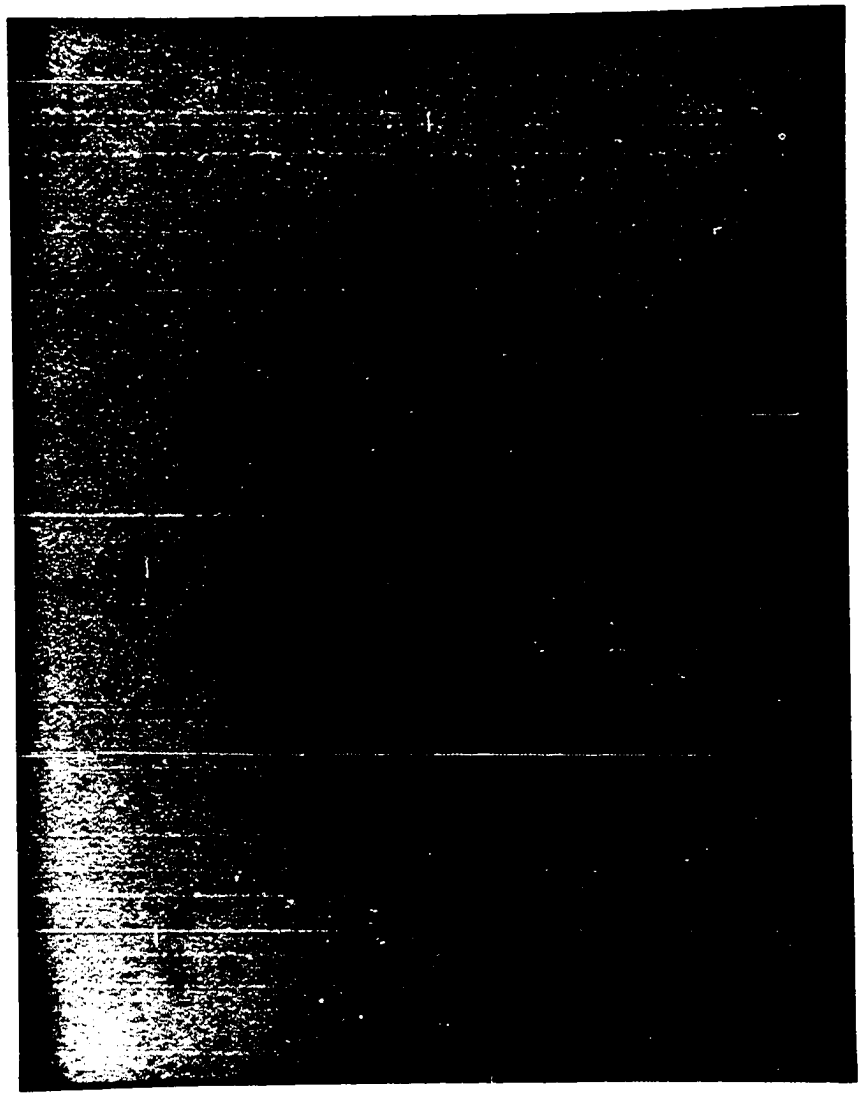

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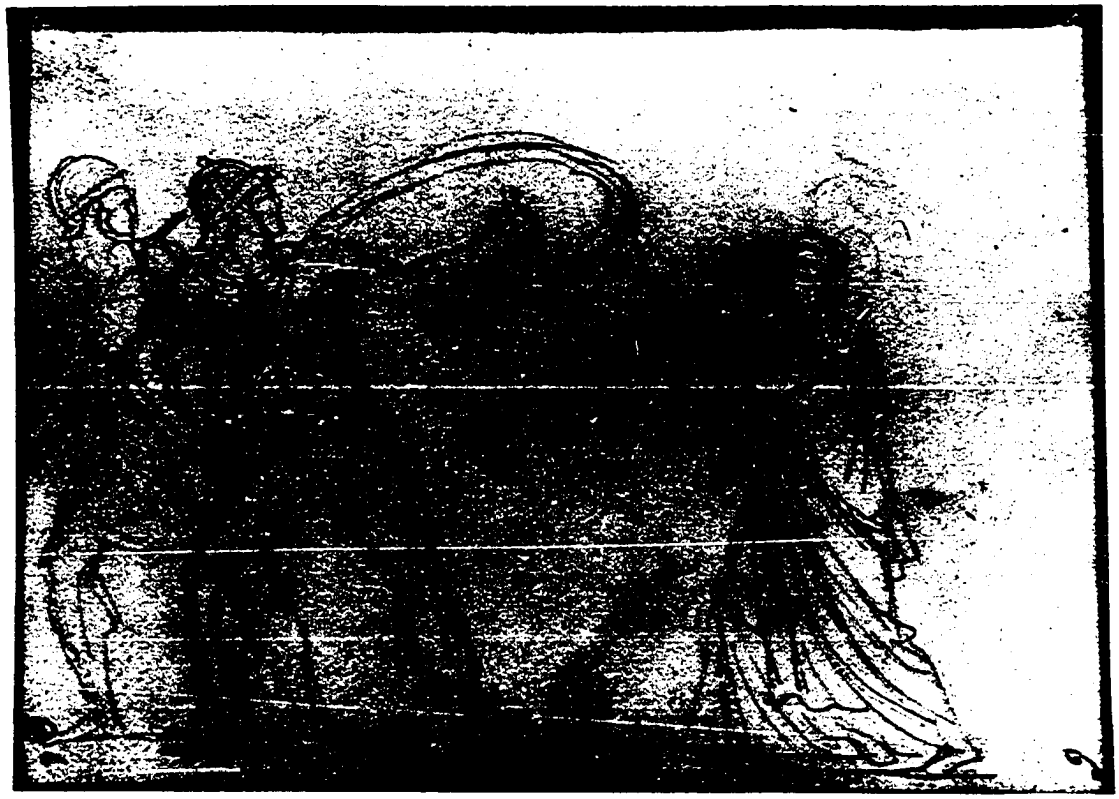

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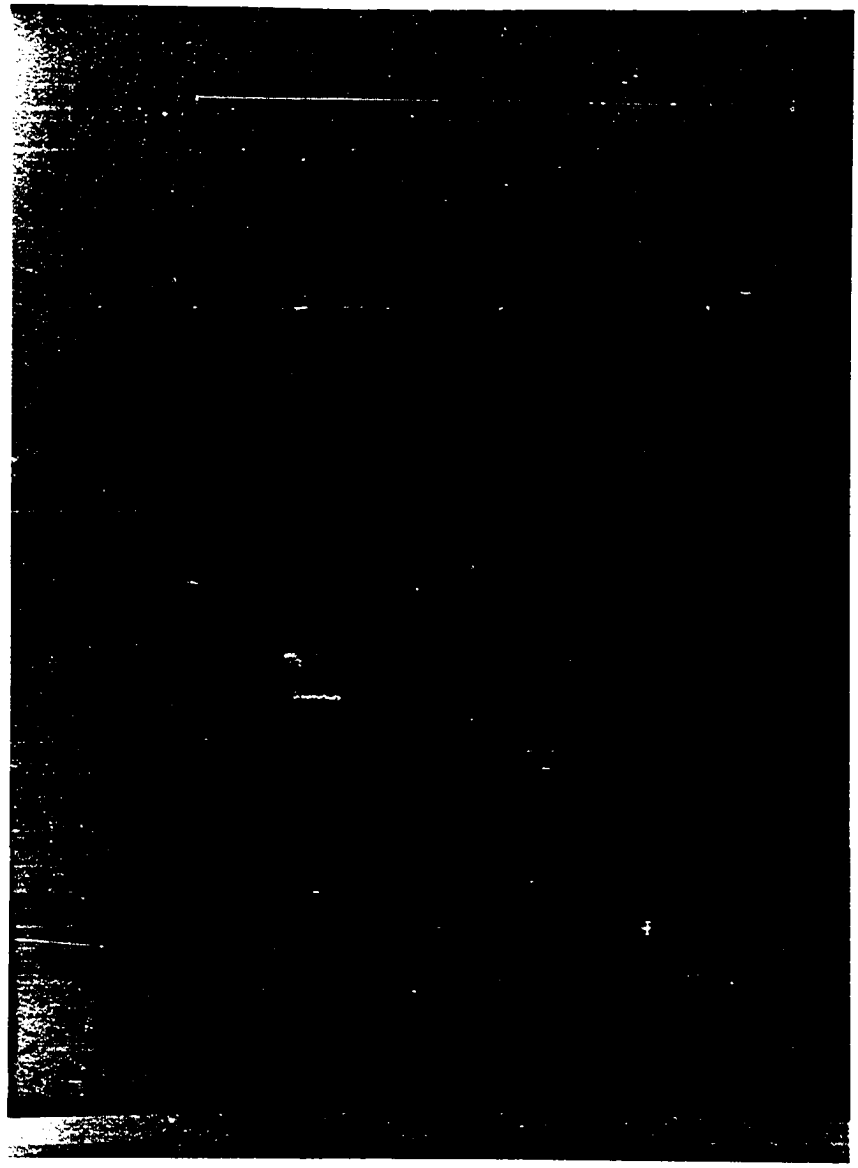

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Fig. 54 (p. 307, n.73))

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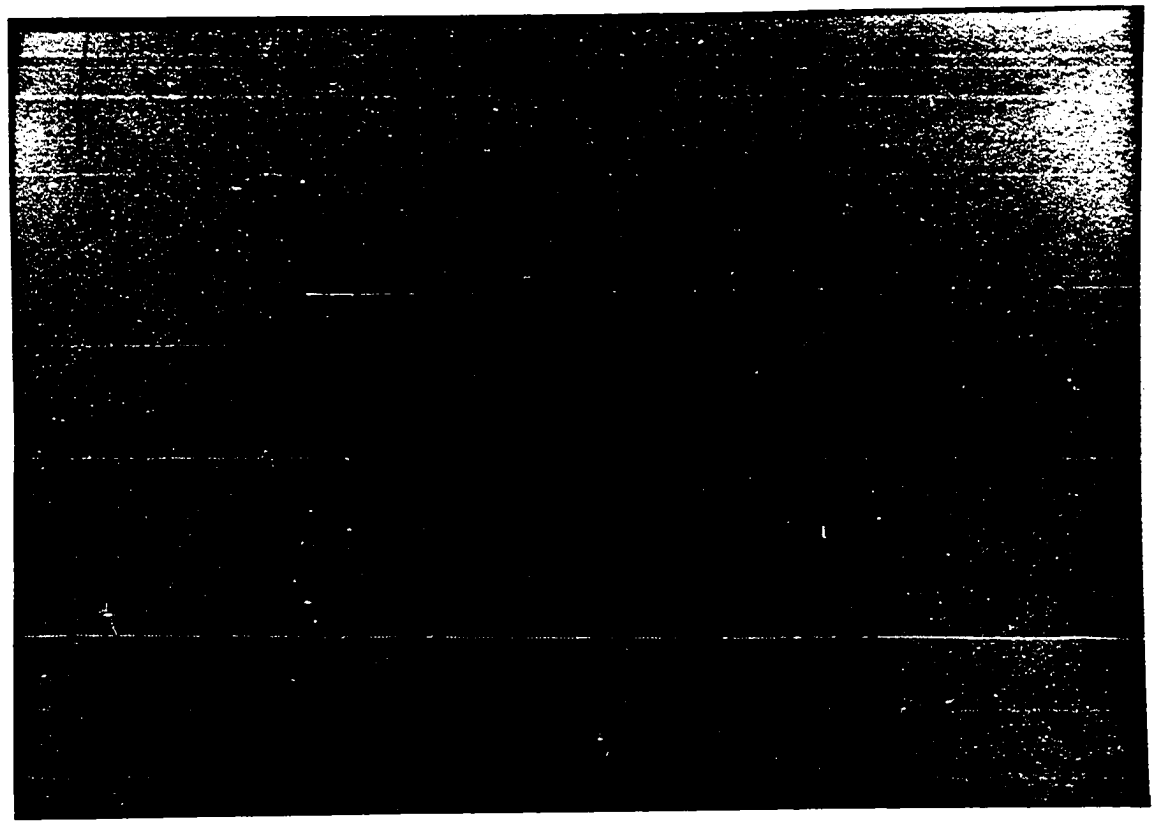

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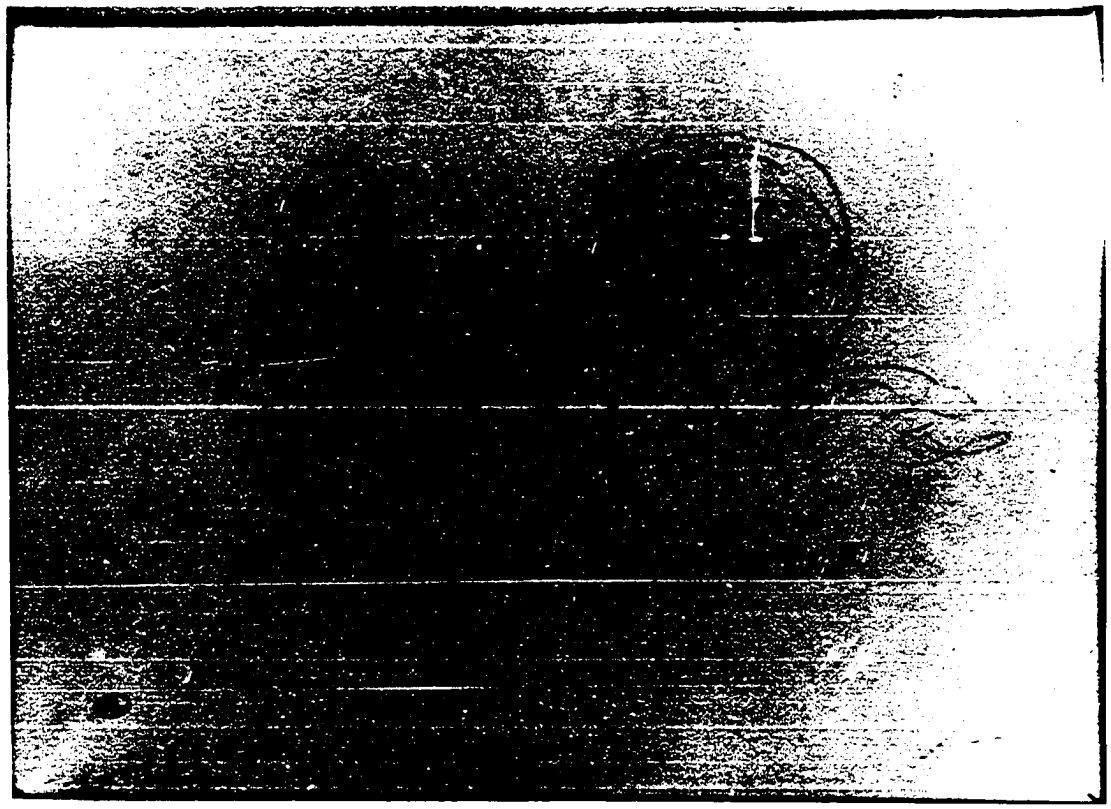

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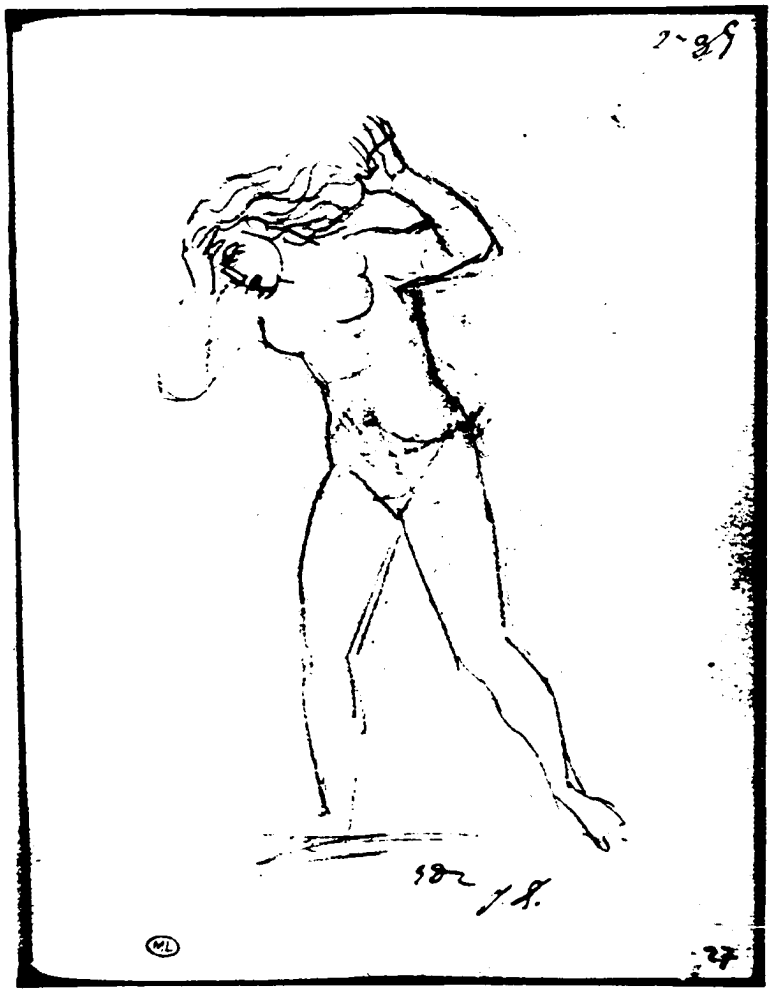

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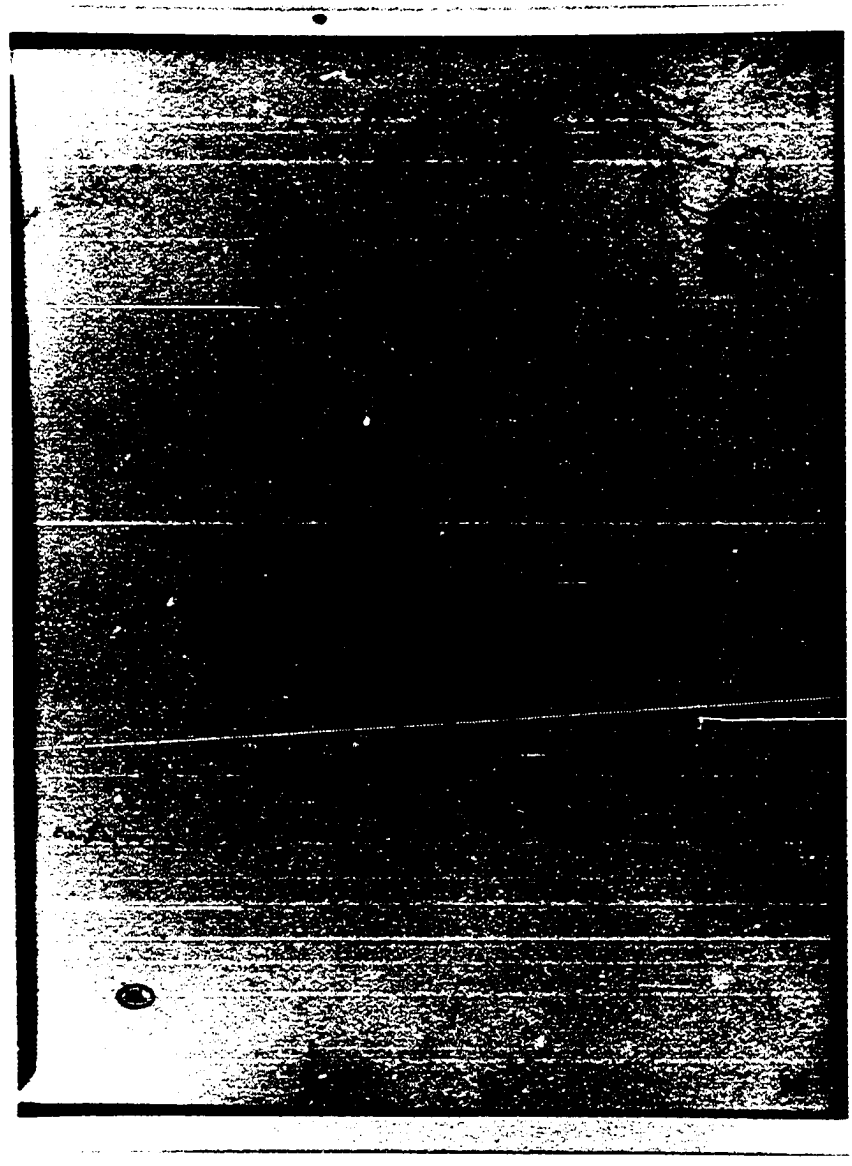

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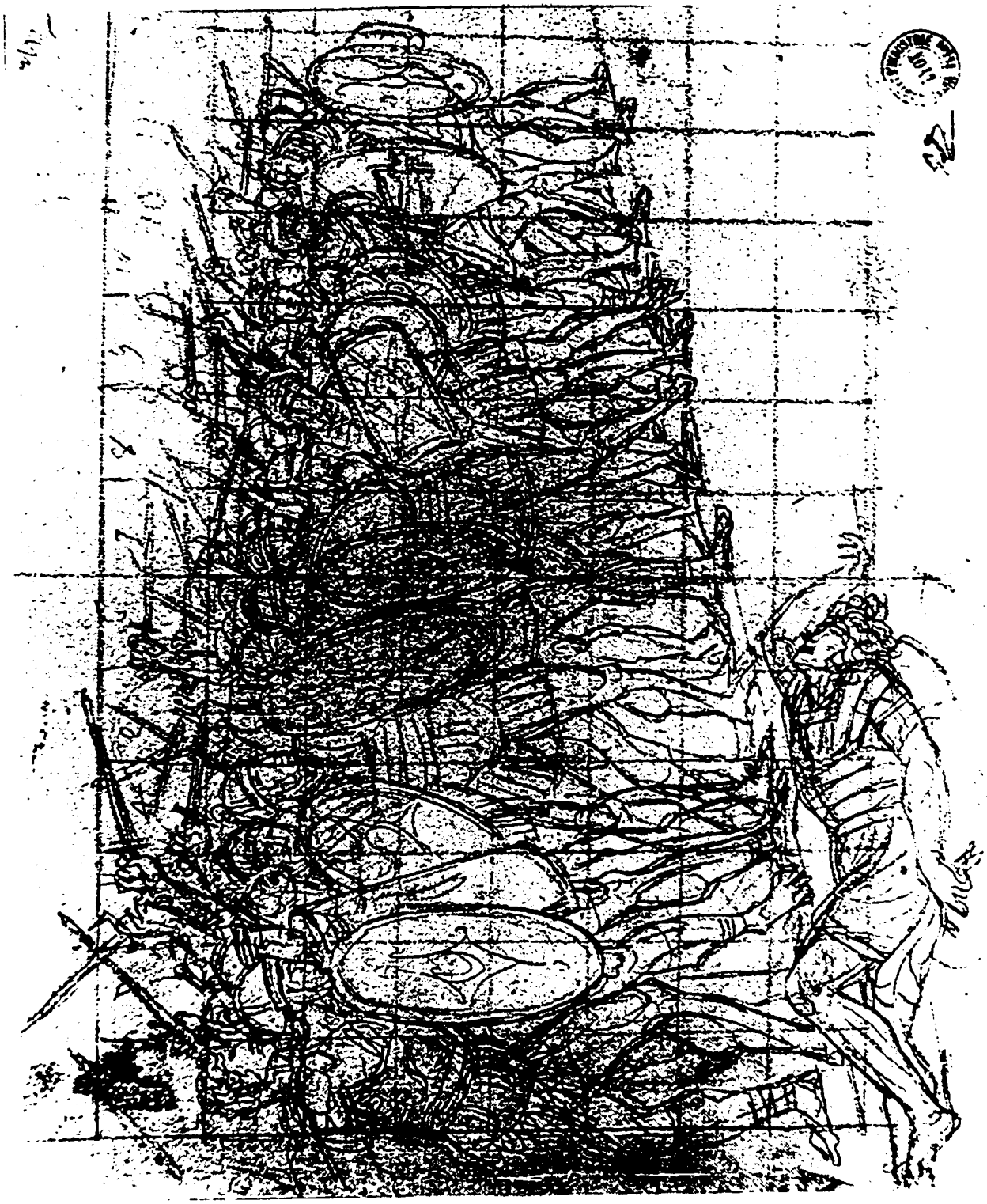

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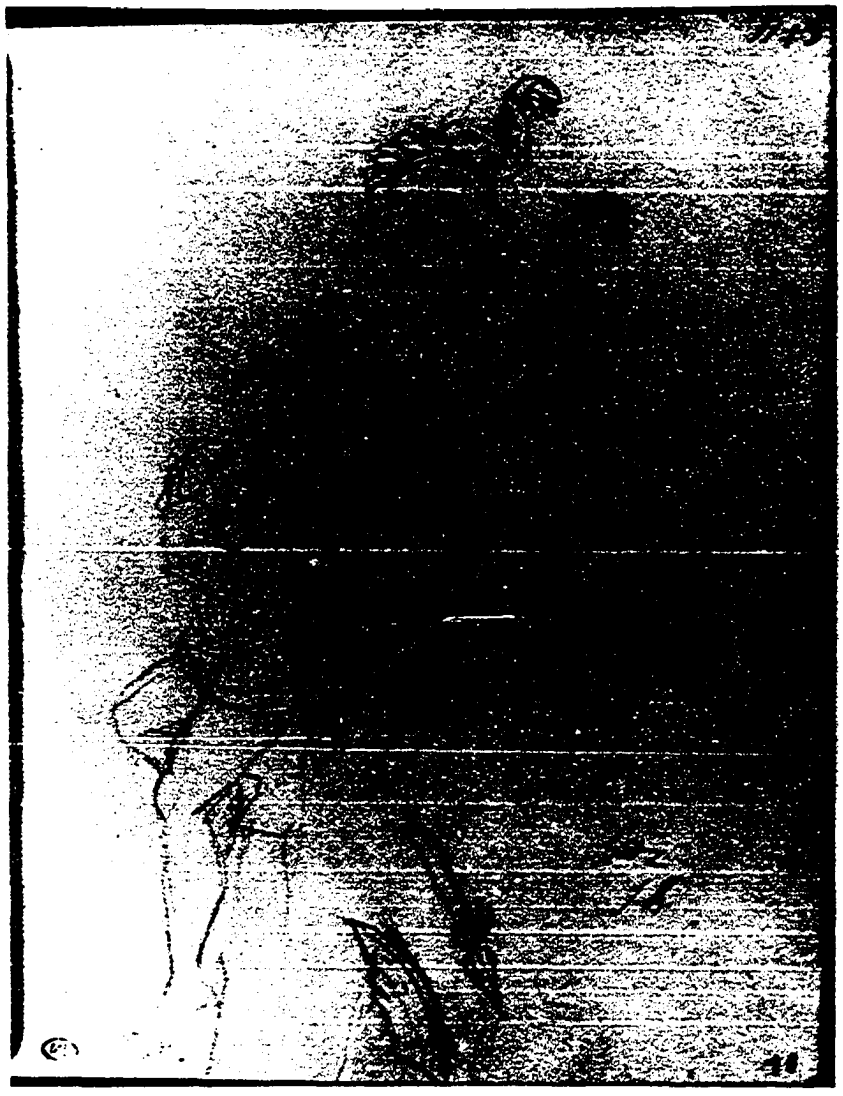

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Fig. 65 (p. 308, n.82)

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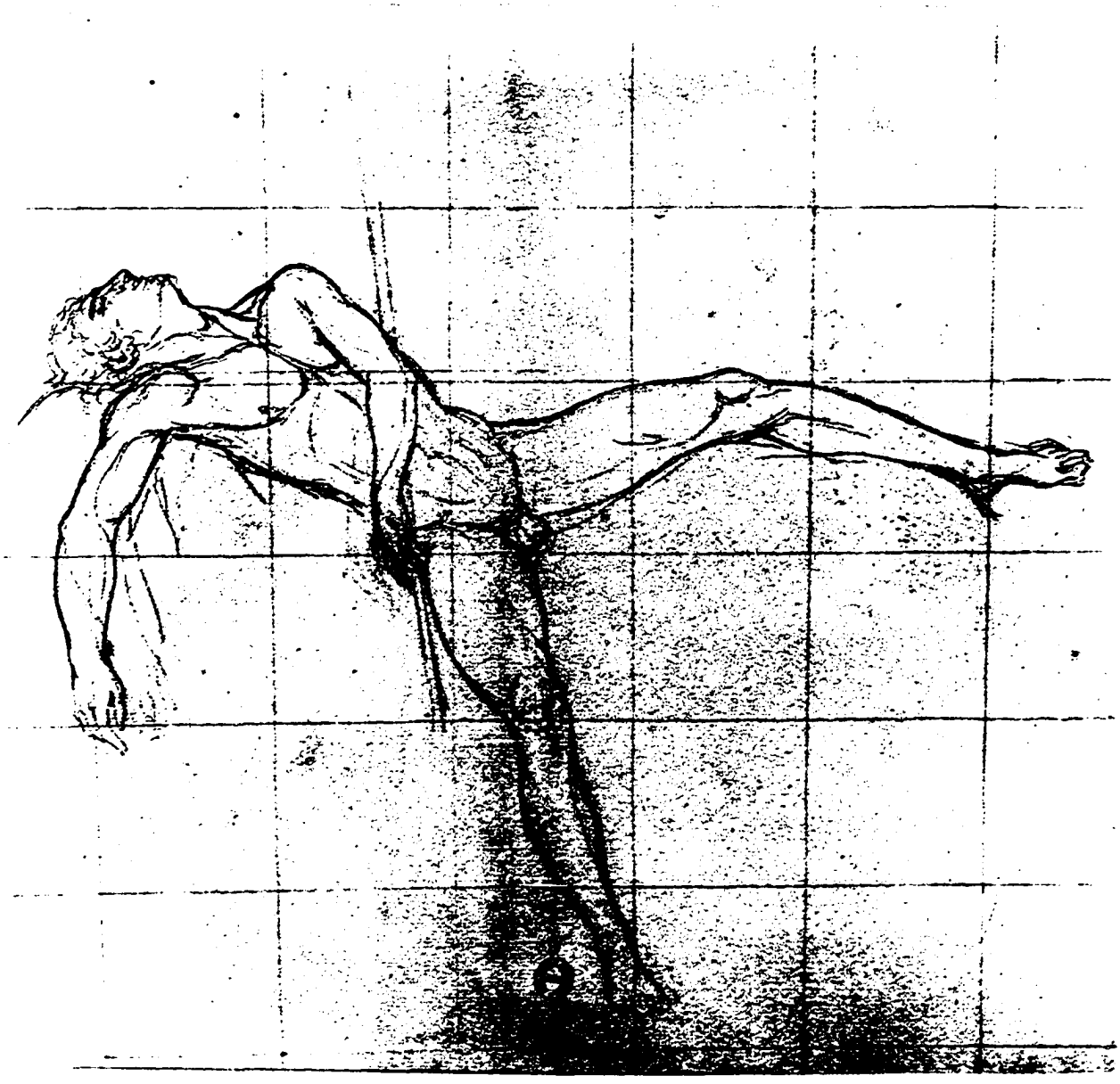

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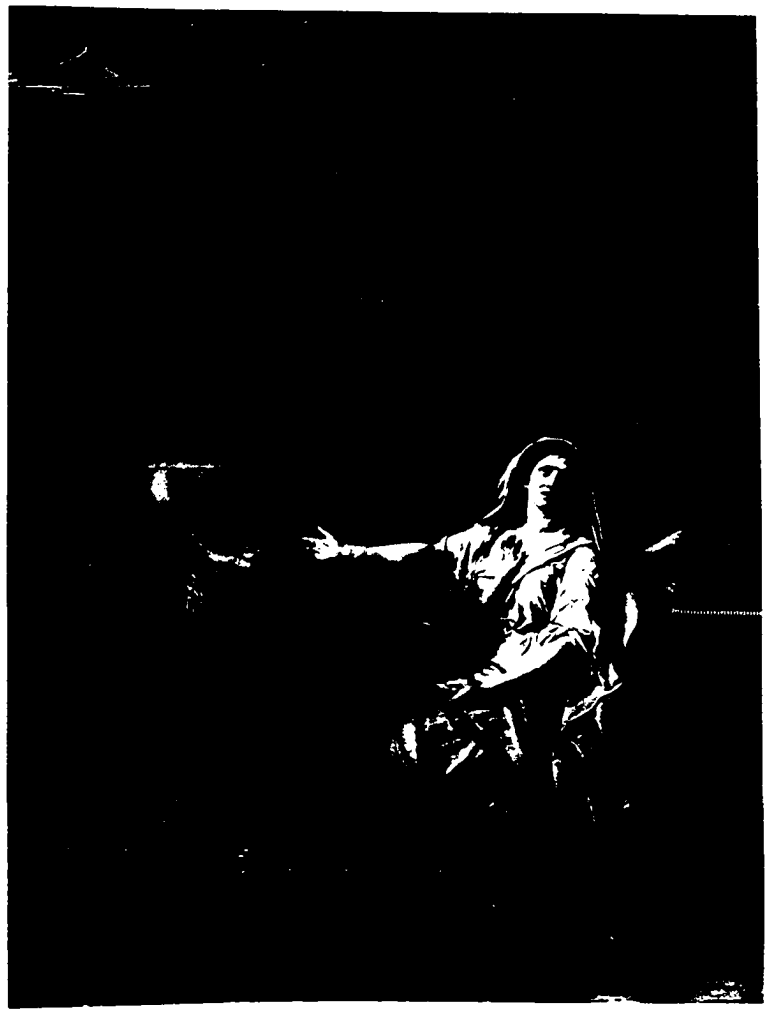

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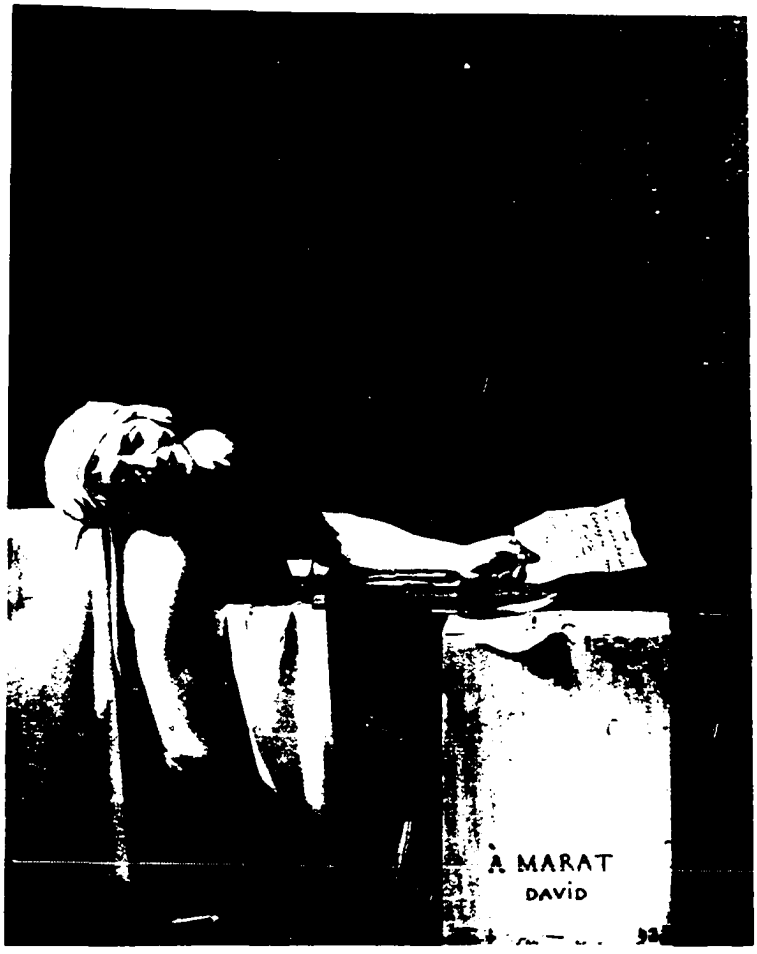

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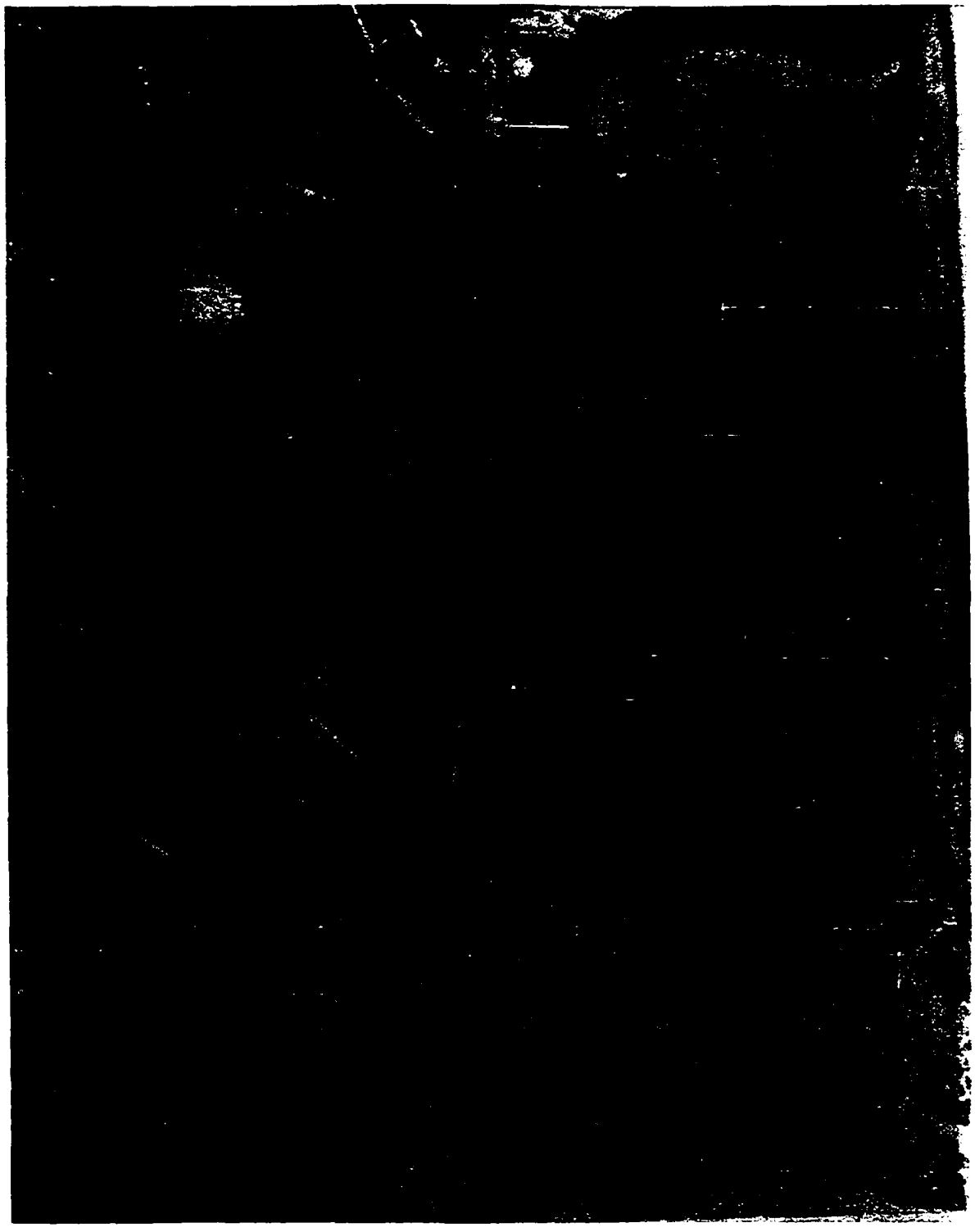

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Fig. 77 (p. 334)

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Fig. 78 (p. 349)

Ah ! Méchante Canaille, grâces aux Dieux, votre Règne est passé !

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Fig. 79 (p. 351)

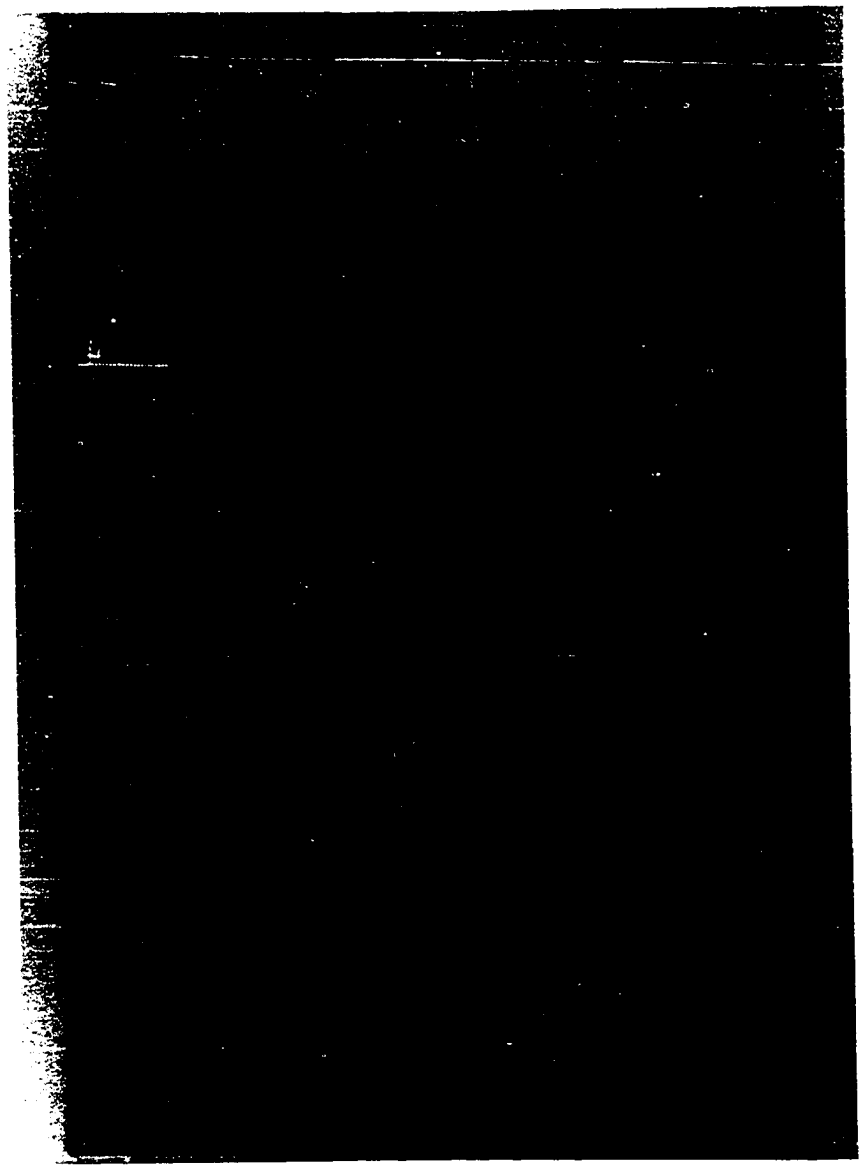

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Fig. 82 (p. 354)

Journée du 1er Prairial de l'an III.
(1795). Représentant la Populace assassinant dans la Convention Nationale

Fig. 83 (p. 394)

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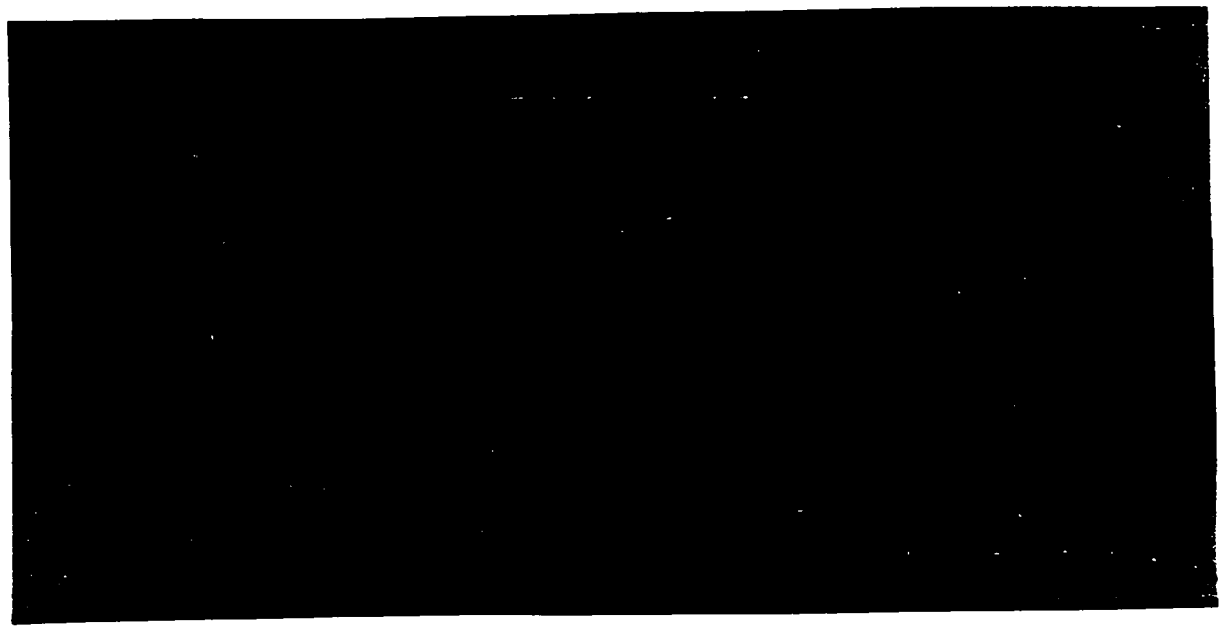
Fig. 84 (p. 400)



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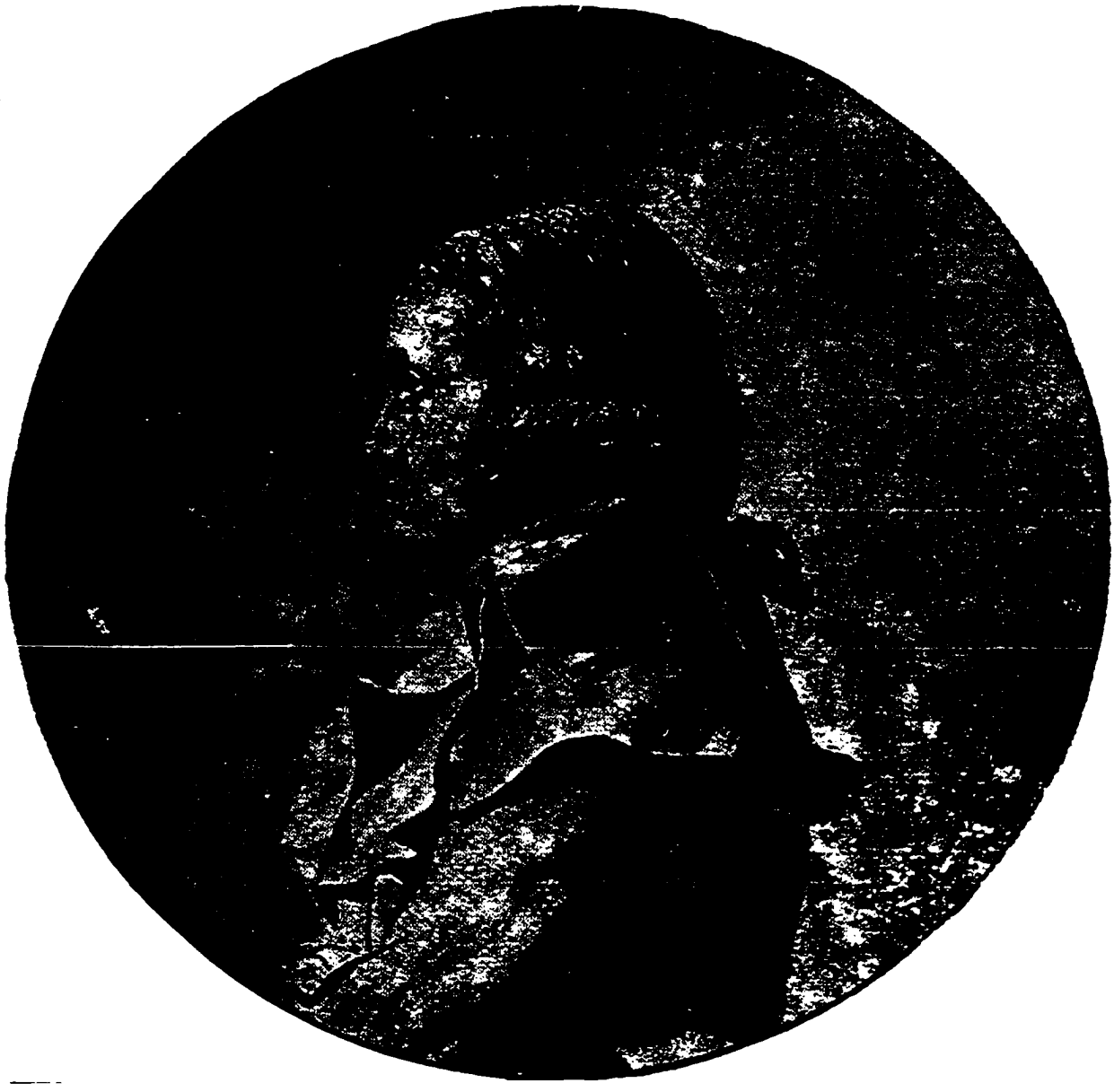

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Fig. 88 (p. 406)

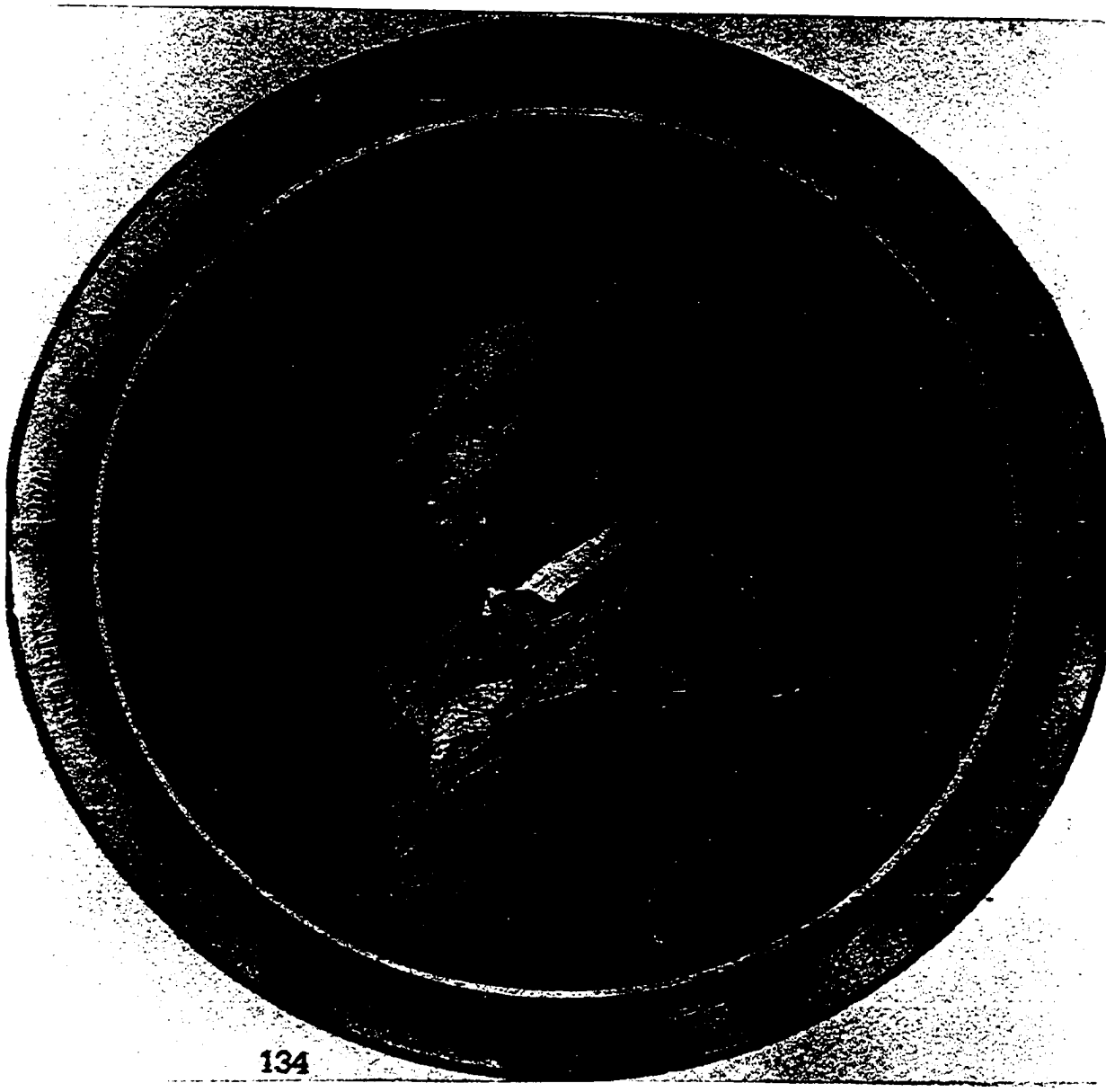

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Fig. 91 (p. 415)

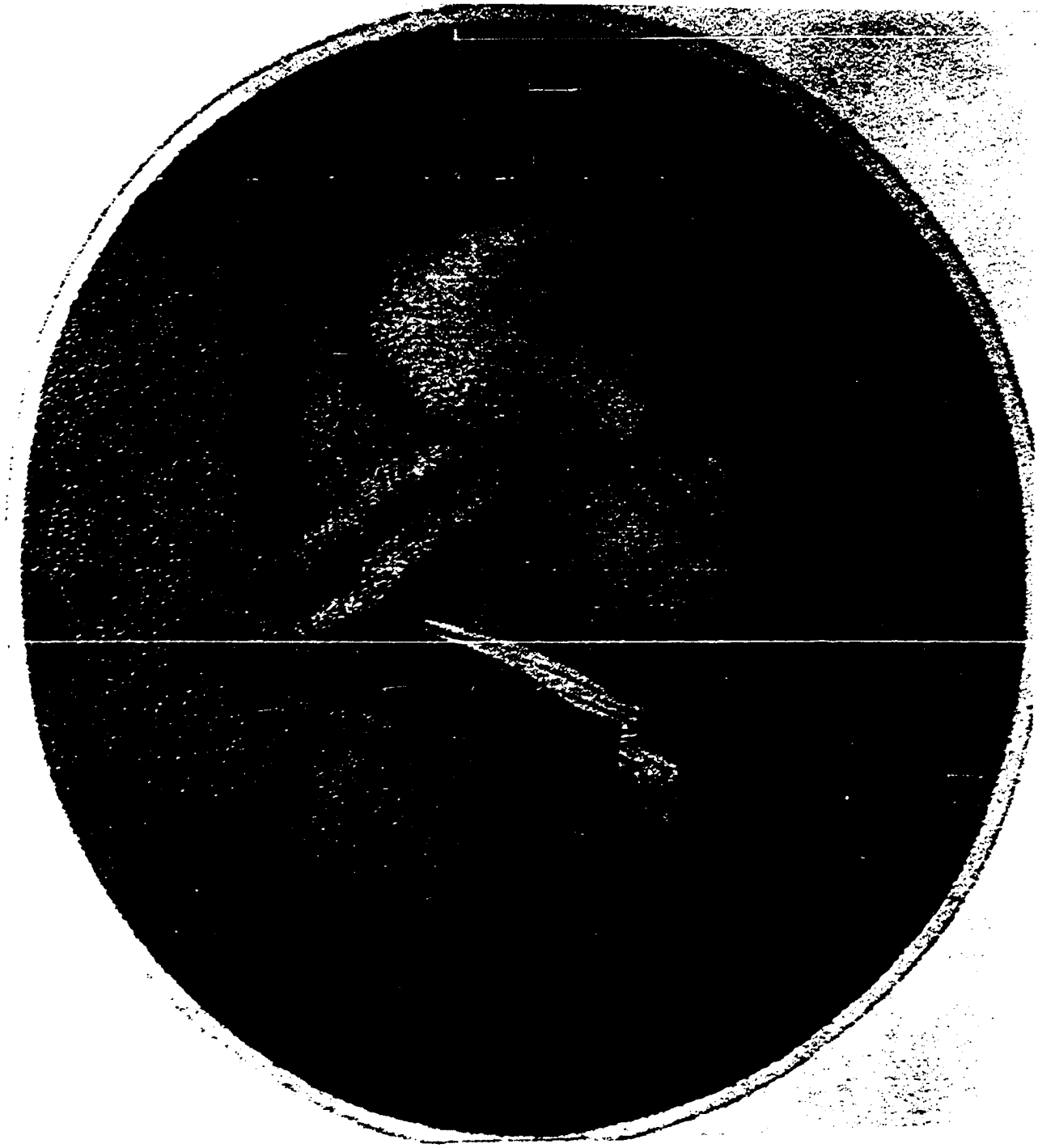

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Fig. 92 (p. 428)

J.B. CARRIER,
Né à Yolot, Dépt du Cantal.

Quand il ordonne un crime, il est trop obéi;
Par cent mille assassins son courroux est servi,
Et des fleuves français les eaux ensanglantées
Ne portaient que des morts aux mers épouvantées.

Volt. Henriade

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Fig. 93 (p. 429)

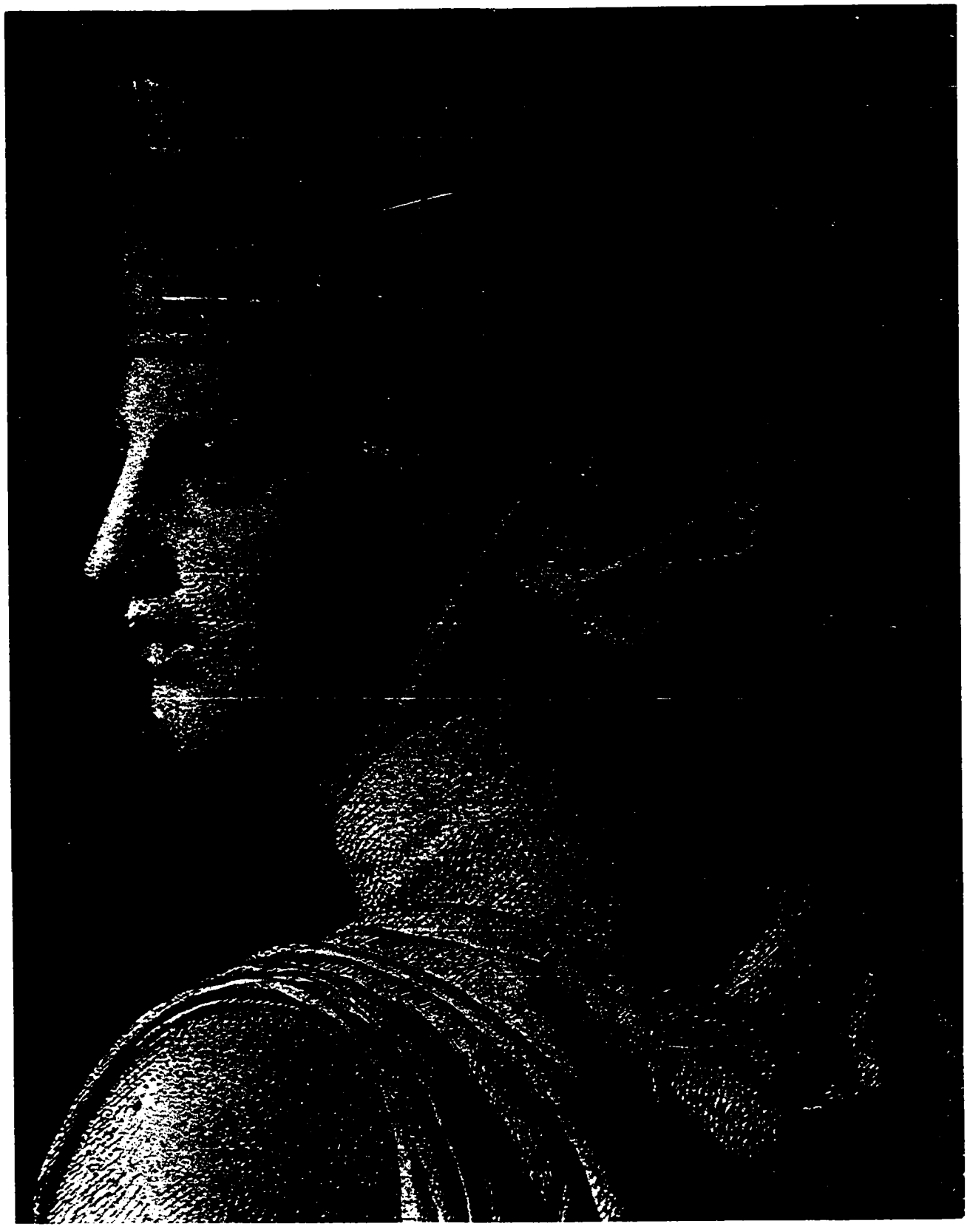

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Fig. 94 (p. 430)

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Fig. 95 (p. 438)

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