

FROM STORE TO MUSEUM: THE
REORGANIZATION OF THE LOUVRE'S
PAINTING COLLECTIONS IN 1848

Le Musée a pris un aspect tout nouveau,
grâce à MM. Jeanron et Villot, et semble,
depuis le remaniement opéré dans les peintures,
dix fois plus riche qu'auparavant.
(Théophile Gautier)¹

On 8 August 1848 Eugène Delacroix wrote to Auguste Préault, the leading Romantic sculptor of the day, on the subject of the reorganization of the Louvre's collections being undertaken by the Directeur des Musées Nationaux, Philippe-Auguste Jeanron, and the museum's Curator of Paintings, Frédéric Villot:

Mon cher ami,

[. . .] Je veux vous parler de notre ami Villot et de son arrangement du Louvre. Je crois que le système qu'il a suivi de réunir ensemble les ouvrages des maîtres et surtout de rapprocher de l'œil, dans un arrangement calculé, beaucoup de chefs-d'œuvre qui étaient ignorés à cause de l'éloignement, va nous faire une exposition admirable. C'est pour que vous le recommandiez à vos amis et que vous le fassiez soutenir convenablement que je m'adresse à vous. L'Institut a déjà fait siffler ses serpents à l'occasion de ce remaniement, dans lequel on ne verra plus les Gérard et les Girodet à côté du Corrège, etc., et il y a cabale contre notre ami.

Un mot donc comme vous savez les dire à nos amis de la presse. Nous combattons ici pour la patrie, car je suppose que votre patrie à vous, c'est Rubens, Titien, etc. Et Villot, par un hasard pour lequel il faudrait peut-être attendre vingt autres révolutions, se trouve propre à la place qu'il occupe et en état de faire valoir nos richesses.

[. . .]

Eug. DELACROIX.

Villot ouvrira probablement le 15, c'est-à-dire dans peu de jours. Parlez donc à Gautier, si vous pouvez.²

In his letter Delacroix reminded Préault of the rationale for new arrangements governing the presentation of the painting collections, advised him that the Institute was seeking to prevent, or at least delay, implementation of the changes, and urged him to contact friends in the press who could be relied on to intervene in support of the Jeanron–Villot plans.³

How Préault responded to the letter, if at all, and whether he contacted Gautier are not known, but there is no evidence of any concerted campaign on

¹ 'Le musée ancien', *La Presse*, 10 February 1849, repr. in *Tableaux à la plume* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1880), pp. 1–30 (p. 1), as the first of seven chapters grouped under the title 'Études sur les musées'. This article was followed by a second in two parts on 'La galerie française' in *La Presse* of 13 and 17 February 1849 (*Tableaux à la plume*, pp. 31–64). Subsequent references to the *Tableaux à la plume* will be given in the text, identified by the abbreviation *TP*.

² Eugène Delacroix, *Correspondance générale*, ed. by André Joubin, 5 vols (Paris: Plon, 1935–38), II (1936), 355–56.

³ Gautier had been a staunch supporter of both Delacroix and Préault since beginning his career in art journalism in the early 1830s. See my forthcoming *Théophile Gautier, Orator to the Artists: Art Journalism during the Second Republic* (Oxford: Legenda, 2007).

the issue in the Paris press during the weeks that followed. The need for one may in any event have been reduced by Delacroix's own intervention, which he described to Villot in another letter, written five days after that to Préault:

Mon cher ami, j'ai été hier au ministère, et j'ai parlé très longuement avec Mercey de la commission qu'on veut nommer pour revoir ou plutôt pour entraver vos travaux. J'ai fait valoir de mon mieux tout ce que vous avez fait, et j'ai essayé de lui faire bien entendre votre système et le succès qu'il en fallait attendre. Je lui ai représenté que nommer une commission composée d'éléments nécessairement discordants n'en finirait pas. Enfin j'ai obtenu de lui, du moins je l'espère, qu'il obtiendrait de Charles Blanc de déclarer que l'arrangement étant presque terminé et le Musée sur le point d'ouvrir, il remettrait la nomination d'une commission au moment où le travail ayant été vu du public et des artistes on jugerait plus sagement. Il faudrait que vous priiez Jeanron, lequel avait été obligé, pour se mettre à couvert, de demander lui-même la commission, de voir Blanc dans le sens où je vous dis, c'est-à-dire de faire valoir la raison ci-dessus, comme la seule raisonnable après tant de travaux faits.

J'ai engagé Mercey à aller au Louvre voir par lui-même; comme c'est un homme de goût, je ne doute pas qu'il ne fût de votre parti.⁴

Charles Blanc had been appointed Directeur des Beaux-Arts at the beginning of April 1848. Frédéric de Mercey was his *chef de bureau*, as he had been that of Blanc's predecessors since 1840. The reorganization of the Division des Beaux-Arts by the Minister of the Interior in the Provisional Government, Ledru-Rollin, announced on 7 April, had placed Jeanron and Blanc at the head of its two major departments, with Jeanron responsible for museums and their collections, and Blanc for contemporary art exhibitions, commissions, and patronage.⁵ When Antoine Sénard became Minister of the Interior in the executive established in the wake of the June Days, he modified Ledru-Rollin's arrangements by subsuming Jeanron's department within that of Blanc, making Blanc in effect the head of the Fine Arts administration. On 7 August, when Jeanron's budget proposals for 1849, which included the restructuring of the Louvre's management systems, came before the Assemblée Nationale, two commissions were appointed to consider the proposals. Fearing that those opposed to the reorganization of the collections would try to use the creation of these commissions to impede its implementation, Delacroix sought to persuade Blanc through de Mercey to support Jeanron and Villot on the issue of the collections at a time when Sénard's changes to Ledru-Rollin's management structure were creating tensions between Blanc and Jeanron.⁶

On 27 August Villot presented the reorganized Old Master collections to the public in the Salon Carré and the Grande Galerie.⁷ How serious or concerted the opposition to the new arrangements had been (and we shall see presently one specific feature of it), and how significant Delacroix's intervention, are

⁴ Delacroix, *Correspondance générale*, II, 357–58.

⁵ See Madeleine Rousseau, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron: peintre, écrivain, directeur des musées nationaux 1808–1877* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux, 2000), pp. 68–71.

⁶ Jeanron was determined to resist Blanc's efforts to assert his authority over the Direction des Musées Nationaux. See Rousseau, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, pp. 67–68.

⁷ The Salon des Sept Cheminées and the Galeries du Bord de l'Eau, where Jeanron and Villot relocated post-1715 French painting, reopened on 21 November. For a map of the first floor of the Louvre in 1848–49 showing the galleries referred to in this article, see Rousseau, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, p. 177.

impossible to determine. Yet though Delacroix raised the issue with Préault in the context of the Louvre's Old Master collections ('Rubens, Titien etc. '), and though critics of the July Monarchy's management of the museum certainly believed that the regime had failed to protect the Louvre's position as the site of the world's greatest collection of this work, it was in fact their sense of its neglect of French work, particularly that of the eighteenth century, that fuelled their demands for reform. In what follows I shall present these issues chiefly through the commentaries of two of the most prominent art critics of the period and supporters of the Jeanron-Villot initiative. The first was Louis Clément de Ris, who wrote for *L'Artiste*; the second, as Delacroix had hoped, was Gautier.⁸

Within hours of the proclamation of the Second Republic on 24 February, the Académie des Beaux-Arts, the Institute's *quatrième classe*, felt the first effects of regime change, when Ledru-Rollin annexed the Civil List's attributions in the Direction des Beaux-Arts et des Musées and put an end to the Academy's right, exercised through the offices of the Civil List, to select the jury of the annual Fine Art Salon.⁹ Soon the appointments of Jeanron and Villot to key positions

⁸ In 1848 Clément de Ris wrote five articles for *L'Artiste* on the subject of reform in the Louvre, of which the first was published days before the revolution of 1848, the second and third the following month, and the fourth and fifth (devoted to the results of the reorganization of the collections) at the end of the year: 'Remarques sur le Musée du Louvre', 20 February 1848, pp. 248–50; 'Le Musée du Louvre', 18 March, pp. 29–30; 'L'École française au Louvre', 26 March, pp. 39–40; 'Nouvelle Galerie française du Musée du Louvre', 1 December, pp. 110–12; 'Musée du Louvre. Grande galerie', 15 January 1849, pp. 149–52. References to these articles will be given in the text identified by the abbreviations CdR1 to CdR5. For the Gautier articles, see above, n. 1.

Though histories of the Louvre have focused more on the building than on its contents, it is surprising that the major reorganization of the collections in 1848 has received so little critical attention. Daniel Sherman's wide-ranging history of Parisian and provincial museums, *Worthy Monuments: Art Museums and the Politics of Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1989), does not mention it. The superb catalogue of the exhibition, *La Jeunesse des musées: les musées de France au XIX^e siècle*, directed by Chantal Georgel (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1994), does so only briefly, as does Christiane Aulanier in her ten-volume *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Éditions des Musées nationaux, 1947–71): I (1947), 65; II (1950), 31; VII (1958), 96–98. Adolphe Tabarant, in *La Vie artistique au temps de Baudelaire* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1942), notes succinctly that Jeanron, with 'un intelligent auxiliaire en M. Frédéric Villot [. . .] réorganise le Salon carré, remanie les salles du bord de l'eau, procède à un classement chronologique des écoles' (p. 150), and Gérard Monnier, in *L'Art et ses institutions en France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), refers to the changes only in the context of the increasing professionalization of the curator's role (p. 107) and on the basis of the summary of that issue which he acknowledges in Georgel (*La Jeunesse des musées*, p. 293). Similarly, Georgel, though she devotes a chapter of her excellent book, *1848: la République et l'art vivant* (Paris: Fayard and Éditions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1998), to 'Le Musée du Luxembourg sous la Seconde République' (pp. 148–63), does not discuss the reorganization of the Louvre collections. In 'Les maisons de l'art: l'imaginaire du musée de peinture au XIX^e siècle' (*Romantisme*, 112 (2001), 31–44), Jean-Pierre Guillerme recognizes that it established the dominant paradigm of the Louvre visit, referring briefly to Gautier's article on the 'Musée ancien' in this respect, but deals principally with modernism's subsequent challenges to this paradigm. He also limits his discussion to the 'peintures anciennes', whereas it is clear from contemporary accounts that in 1848 the main interest centred on the new arrangements for French painting since 1715. The issue of the *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* entitled *Littérature et musées* (95.1, January–February 1995), deals with literary representations of the museum, which is another matter. In Gautier's art writings the 'Études sur les musées' have not been studied in any detail.

⁹ The decree stated: 'Tout ce qui concerne la Direction des Beaux-Arts et des Musées, autrefois dans les attributions de la Liste Civile, constituera une division du ministère de l'Intérieur. Le

in the Provisional Government's arts administration were a further unwelcome development for the Academy. Jeanron had been a committed republican and advocate of social art in his painting and journalism from the outset of the July Monarchy.¹⁰ In 1847, following the uproar generated by the decisions of the Salon jury that year, he and Villot had taken part in the discussions at the home of the painter Fernand Boissard on the need to reform the institutions of French art.¹¹ The upshot had been a brochure entitled *De l'exposition et du jury*, written by Boissard, Villot, and Clément de Ris, and published anonymously on 12 February 1848.¹² In the letter to Ledru-Rollin in which he recommended Villot for the post of Curator of Paintings in the Louvre, Jeanron referred to his involvement with the Boissard group to reinforce the case for his suitability for the post.¹³ It was little wonder, therefore, that, as de Chennevières later put it, 'L'Institut depuis 1848, s'était toujours méfié de Villot.'¹⁴

With the proposal for reform of the jury in press, Clément de Ris turned his attention to the Louvre, which, if the agenda that Boissard described to Gautier is anything to go by, had also figured prominently in the group's discussions. In the first of his five articles on the museum, he concentrated his fire on three main targets, the catalogues (more precisely, the lack of them), restoration policy, and the painting collections. On the collections issue, he was scathing about the July Monarchy's presentation of the works in the Salon Carré and the Grande Galerie:

Le salon carré devrait offrir, comme la Tribune de Florence, une réunion des chefs-d'œuvre de toutes les écoles et de tous les maîtres. Il semble qu'on ait pris à tâche de faire le contraire. Quand on aurait cité les deux Véronèse, le Panini, le *Saint François Xavier* de Poussin, la *Descente de croix* de Jouvenet, le *Saint Antoine au désert* du Titien, le portrait de *Bossuet* et quelques Poussin de petit format, tout cela suffit-il pour faire pardonner la suite de petites toiles placées à hauteur d'appui, faux Canaletti, mauvais Weenix, mauvais Pérugin, mauvais Coypel, mauvais Franck, mauvais Peter Neeff, mauvais Allori, pitoyable Guérin; Backhuysen, Van de Velde, Vlieger, Fytt sans valeur aucune? (CdR1, p. 250)

It was the same story in the Grande Galerie:

Si nous pénétrons dans la grande galerie, nos observations, si nous voulions les faire toutes, ne seraient jamais finies. Les tableaux de l'école française, celle que nous connais-

Jury chargé de recevoir les tableaux aux Expositions annuelles, sera nommé par élection.' See Rousseau, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, p. 64.

¹⁰ See [Marie-Martine Dubreuil,] *Philippe-Auguste Jeanron: peintre, dessinateur et graveur* (Caen, Musée des beaux-arts et de la dentelle, 2003); Neil McWilliam, 'Art, Labour and Mass Democracy: Debates on the Status of the Artist in France around 1848', *Art History*, 11 (1988), 64–87 (p. 67); Rousseau, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, pp. 40–43.

¹¹ On 19 March 1847 Boissard wrote to Gautier: 'On se réunit chez moi jeudi prochain 25 mars, pour parlementer au sujet du jury, de l'exposition, de l'institut, de tout le bataclan, de toutes les misères contre lesquelles nous nous débattons en vain' (Théophile Gautier, *Correspondance générale*, ed. by Claudine Lacoste-Veysseyre, 12 vols (Geneva and Paris: Droz, 1985–2000), III (1988), 176, emphasis original).

¹² It was a revised, longer version of a brochure entitled *Appel aux artistes: de l'oppression dans les arts*, which Clément de Ris had published in late 1847. See Philippe de Chennevières, *Souvenirs d'un Directeur des Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Arthena, 1979), pt I, pp. 34–35 (articles first published in *L'Artiste*, 1883–89).

¹³ The letter is quoted in Rousseau, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, p. 184.

¹⁴ *Souvenirs d'un Directeur des Beaux-Arts*, pt III, p. 88.

sons le moins, sont odieusement mal placés. Personne n'a jamais regardé attentivement les Lahire, les Patel, les Vouet, les Claude Lefevre, les Dufrenoy, les Sébastien Bourdon, les Jouvenet, par la bonne raison qu'on ne peut les voir. (CdR1, p. 250)

In addition, he claimed that there were hundreds of paintings locked away in the Louvre attics which had never been catalogued, notably French work of the eighteenth century and 'tous les tableaux de réception des académiciens' (CdR1, p. 250) submitted between the creation of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in 1648 and its dissolution in 1793.¹⁵ He urged the museum's administrators to use the annual early summer closure to locate these works and to give them proper representation in a reorganized exhibition of the national collections.¹⁶

By the end of the week in which this article appeared, the country was under new political management. Clément de Ris's second and third articles the following month now reflected the plans on which Jeanron and Villot were working behind the scenes while public interest centred on the Salon of 1848. In the second, he proposed the restructuring of the museum's holdings into six new departments; in the third, he returned to the issue of the painting collections. Here he claimed that though the previous regime, bowing to public pressure, had in its latter stages finally begun to exhibit works of the French school in the Grande Galerie and in the Galeries du Bord de l'Eau, 'aucune intelligence n'avait présidé au choix des toiles exposées, aucun ordre n'y avait été apporté, aucun catalogue n'en avait été dressé qui pût renseigner le visiteur et l'artiste à travers cette confusion' (CdR3, p. 39). This lack of purposeful classification and presentation was to be explained, he said, by the fact that the interests of these collections had been sacrificed to the July Monarchy's self-serving prestige projects, the creation of the Musée Historique at Versailles from 1833 and the Musée Espagnol, opened in 1838 and supplemented by the Standish bequest three years later.¹⁷ During the July Monarchy, 'l'administration du Louvre était uniquement employé [. . .] à cataloguer, organiser et désorganiser le Musée de Versailles: tout le reste était négligé, oublié même' (CdR2, p. 29). As for the Musée Espagnol, he considered it quite literally a waste of space.

¹⁵ Each painter seeking election to the Academy had been required to submit for approval a work which became the Academy's property in the event of election. In his report of 7 April to Ledru-Rollin, Jeanron confirmed that the Louvre attics 'contiennent un nombre considérable de tableaux roulés ou sur châssis provenant de différents dépôts ou résidences royales' and which did not figure in official inventories (Archives des Musées nationaux, Z 1, 1848 *Rapports de Jeanron*).

¹⁶ The Louvre was scheduled to close from 1 February to 15 March and again from 15 May to 1 July to enable the work exhibited in the annual Salon to be installed upon, and then removed from, the temporary supports erected for the purpose in the Salon Carré and the Grande Galerie.

¹⁷ On the Musée Historique see Michael Marrinan, *Painting Politics for Louis-Philippe: Art and Ideology in Orleanist France* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988); Marie-Claude Chaudonneret, 'Historicism and "Heritage" in the Louvre, 1820–1840: From the Musée Charles X to the Galerie d'Apollon', *Art History*, 14 (1991), 488–520; Chaudonneret, *L'État et les artistes: de la Restauration à la Monarchie de Juillet (1815–1833)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999); Pierre Sesmat, 'Le Musée historique de Versailles: la gloire, l'histoire et les arts', in *La Jeunesse des musées* (above, n. 8), pp. 115–21. In 1835 the July Monarchy sent Baron Isodore Taylor to Spain to buy Spanish art. The Musée Espagnol was created in three rooms of the Louvre's Galerie de la Colonnade to house the 446 works which Taylor brought back. Lord Frank Hall Standish was an English author, patron, and collector, resident in Seville, who amassed nearly 500 paintings and drawings. See Jeannine Baticle and Christina Marinas, *La Galerie espagnole de Louis-Philippe au Louvre 1838–1848* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1981).

If the Louvre's new managers had any worries about where they would put all the French work they would find locked away in the Louvre storerooms, they only had to 'enlever une bonne moitié des tableaux des galeries espagnoles qui sont faux ou d'une infériorité tellement constatée, que c'est tromper le public en les exposant plus longtemps, et que d'un autre côté, sauf une dizaine de tableaux au plus, le musée Standish est une dérision, et ne doit subsister sous aucun prétexte. La place alors ne manquerait pas' (CdR3, p. 41).¹⁸ As we know, two years later Clément de Ris got rather more than he bargained for when the Second Republic accepted Louis-Philippe's claim that the contents of the Musée Espagnol, acquired by the Civil List, and of the Standish bequest were his private property and returned them to him.¹⁹ In 1848, however, the real villain of the piece as far as Clément de Ris was concerned was the Civil List, for it had in his view imprisoned the Louvre in a pre-1789 legal and administrative framework which made its collections subject to the whims of the monarch.²⁰ The Second Republic's abolition of this discredited mechanism would enable the Louvre to achieve its 'glorieuse et utile consécration' as France's 'Musée national' (CdR3, p. 40, emphasis original).

Opposition to the Jeanron-Villot plans from within the Academy was only to be expected. Having already lost control of the Salon jury, it now found itself sidelined on an issue over which it would have claimed to have special responsibility. Members of the Academy may or may not have been surprised by the lack of consultation, but when Villot's team began to remove from the walls of the Salon Carré and Grande Galerie major works from the period of the Empire and Restoration, the reaction within the Academy was, according to Clément de Ris, one of outrage. In particular, the relocation of Girodet's *Une scène de déluge* from the Salon Carré to the Salon des Sept Cheminées was torture to 'MM. de l'Institut ou aux vieux élèves des élèves de l'École

¹⁸ Villot had expressed the same view in his 1844 'Essai d'un catalogue raisonné des gravures et des lithographies exécutées par P.P. Prud'hon', in which he referred to the 'musée du Louvre qui se contente d'un Watteau [. . .], qui n'a consenti qu'à regret à donner 6,000 fr. pour le radeau de la *Méduse*, mais qui, en compensation, n'a pas regardé à quelques centaines de mille francs de plus ou de moins pour fonder un Musée espagnol, où brillent quatre-vingt-un Zurbaran' and to the 'misère honteuse et volontaire' of the Louvre's galleries (*Le Cabinet de l'amateur et de l'antiquaire* (1844), 483–84).

¹⁹ His heirs auctioned them at Christie's of London in 1853. In 1864 Baudelaire railed against the loss of 'ce merveilleux musée espagnol que la stupide république française, dans son respect abusif de la propriété, a rendu aux princes d'Orléans' (in his *Correspondance*, ed. by Claude Pichois, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2 vols (Paris, Gallimard, 1973), II, 386), but Gautier was closer to the general view when he wrote in 1850: 'Nous-même, quoiqu'au fond désappointé, nous payâmes notre tribut d'admiration comme les autres, et, si nous pensâmes que MM. Taylor et Dauzats auraient pu faire un meilleur choix, nous ne le dûmes pas' ('Le Musée espagnol', *La Presse*, 27 August 1850, in *TP*, p. 96).

²⁰ He repeated the point in his fifth article: 'La loi qui plaçait les musées dans les attributions de la liste civile en était en premier lieu la cause [of the neglect of the Louvre]. La personne royale, aux termes de la loi, disposait comme elle l'entendait des richesses du musée du Louvre' (CdR5, p. 149). In his long report of 25 May to Recurt, who had succeeded Ledru-Rollin as Minister of the Interior on 10 May, Jeanron, setting out the history of the national collections, stated that under the July Monarchy 'le bon plaisir eut plus que jamais force de loi. Les Musées restèrent dans les attributions de la liste civile, qui, devenant usufruitière d'un magnifique héritage, s'en montra peu reconnaissante par son administration arbitraire et inintelligente. Les Musées, sous le dernier règne, plus qu'en aucun autre temps, furent administrées comme des succursales du garde-meuble' (Archives des Musées nationaux, Z 1, 1848 *Rapports de Jeanron*).

académique dont les entrailles se sont déchirés quand ils ont vu le *Déluge*, de Girodet, descendre de la muraille qu'il couvrait dans le grand salon pour faire place aux *Disciples d'Emmaüs*, du Titien' (CdR4, p. 110).²¹ Bayle Saint John, an English friend of Jeanron and an important witness of his period as Directeur des Musées Nationaux, described with some amusement Jeanron's efforts to soothe the injured sensibilities of an Academician 'struck dumb when he saw the canvasses of David, of Gros, of Girodet, and of Gérard, taken to the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, at that time still dark and undecorated':²²

He [Jeanron] had withdrawn these works from the Great Saloon in order to show them to better advantage, by removing them from the society of paintings more powerful in a material point of view, and which attenuated the great moral and intellectual merit of the others. The 'Deluge' of Girodet was not understood in all the depths of its expression and its dramatic delicacy by the side of the enormous 'cheat-the-eye' of Paul Veronese [*The Marriage at Cana*].²³

The accumulating evidence suggesting that Girodet rather than David was the focus for the anger felt in 1848 by supporters of the 'école de David' within the Academy over the relocations taking place in the Louvre (Delacroix too had referred to Girodet in his letter to Préault) may indicate the relative standing of both artists within the Davidian legacy at that time.²⁴

Whatever opposition Delacroix thought the Academy was mustering against Villot was swept aside when the Old Master collections went on show to the public on 27 August. Villot produced a brochure explaining the rationale behind the new arrangements:

²¹ On Girodet, see the catalogue of the exhibition held in the Musée d'Orsay (22 September 2005–2 January 2006), *Girodet 1767–1824* (Paris: Gallimard and Musée du Louvre Éditions, 2005); for *Une scène de déluge* see pp. 282–99. It makes no mention, however, of the reorganization of the Louvre collections in 1848 and the part played in it by Girodet and his *Déluge*.

²² *The Louvre; or, Biography of a Museum* (London, Chapman and Hall, 1855), p. 300. Philippe de Chennevières stated that even the Louvre's attendants were traumatized by the perceived insult to Girodet. The reorganization went ahead, he said, 'non, je m'en souviens, sans résistance comique de la part des gardiens, de ce pauvre Tubœuf notamment, qui ne voulait pas admettre que l'on touchât au *Déluge* de Girodet. Il était accoutumé à voir le *Déluge* depuis son entrée au Louvre, sous la Restauration, dans la même place, vis-à-vis la porte d'entrée du grand salon; il aimait mieux quitter le musée et ses galons que de décrocher Girodet de son clou traditionnel' (in *Souvenirs d'un Directeur des Beaux-Arts*, pt II, p. 86).

²³ *The Louvre; or, Biography of a Museum*, p. 301.

²⁴ No Davidian sympathizer in 1848 would have needed reminding that in the competition held in 1810 to determine the best art work produced during the first decade of Napoleon's rule, the jury had chosen *Une scène de déluge* above David's *Sabines*. Thomas Crow, in *Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), presents possible intellectual and political reasons for this decision, stating that with the *Déluge* 'Girodet had set his art thoroughly against the rationalist, communitarian precepts of his formation in David's circle' and that 'conservatives in the fine-arts division of the Institute, who despised the republican associations that still clung to the classical canon, put a positive value on this same perception of incompatible values [David's attack on the painting as a betrayal of the principles he and Girodet had once had in common]' (pp. 253, 257). Referring to comments on David's work in reviews of the Salon of 1831 published in the conservative press, Nicos Hadjinicolaou makes a similar point on aesthetic grounds: 'La mention de Girodet à côté de David n'est pas fortuite pour ce genre d'auteurs: elle témoigne d'un parti-pris esthétique très net. En réalité le "vrai classique" à leurs yeux n'est autre que Girodet, le "classicisme" de David avant les *Sabines* [of 1799] étant trop "raide" et vulgaire pour leur goût' ('Jacques-Louis David au premier Salon de la Monarchie de Juillet', in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Federico Zeri*, 2 vols (Milan: Electa, 1984), II, 908–15 (p. 915)).

A un arrangement principalement basé sur la symétrie des cadres et sur la dimension des toiles a dû succéder une classification réelle.

Cette classification devait satisfaire à la fois aux justes exigences des artistes, des amateurs, des historiens et des critiques.

Pour concilier des intérêts si différents, pour faciliter les études pratiques et des recherches difficiles, il fallait absolument:

- 1^o Réunir les œuvres éparses d'un même maître et celles de leurs élèves ou imitateurs;
- 2^o Classer chronologiquement chaque groupe dans chaque école, italienne, allemande, française;
- 3^o Placer en bas, et le plus près possible de l'œil, les tableaux reconnus chefs-d'œuvre et copiés journallement.²⁵

As Villot's *avertissement* made clear, the new classification displayed the epistemological break between arrangements based on random, material considerations (dimensions, symmetry of frames) and those based on a 'real', i.e. chronological, system of classification. As Clément de Ris pointed out, even the July Monarchy had recognized that the architecture of the Grande Galerie lent itself to the division of the collections into the three major European schools—'La galerie du Louvre se compose [. . .] de trois grandes travées séparées par des entre-colonnements formant eux-mêmes des espèces de petites salles. La division méthodique et rationnelle se trouvait donc parfaitement en rapport avec la division architecturale'—but under the previous regime 'on ne se faisait aucun scrupule de la rompre par l'adjonction de tableaux étrangers à l'école dans laquelle ils figuraient; les compositions d'une même époque et d'un même maître se trouvaient désunies' (CdR5, pp. 149–50). The new historicist classification integrated what the July Monarchy had dispersed, creating an unbroken sequence in which, he said, quoting Villot's brochure, 'chaque maître, entouré de ses élèves, isolé de tout contraste nuisible, jouit des avantages inappréciables d'une exposition faite pour ainsi dire dans son atelier, et chaque école conserve dans son ensemble et dans son intégrité l'aspect qui la caractérise tout d'abord' (CdR5, p. 149). It reconstituted the national school organically and, endowed with the objective authority of History itself, transcended sectional interests and decorative contingencies. Jeanron and Villot had not invented the chronological presentation of art collections, for this had become general practice in the late eighteenth century elsewhere in Europe, often within a classification based on schools.²⁶ Within France itself and outside the Salon system, small, private, and more specialized exhibitions were already demonstrating the advantages of chronological presentation, most notably, for example, in the case of the first exhibition of the Association des Artistes in the Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle in 1846 (made famous in the literary history of the French nineteenth century by Baudelaire's review of it).²⁷ It was rather that the application of it by Jean-

²⁵ *Avertissement* (see n° 171 in J. J. Marquet de Vasselot's *Repertoire des catalogues du Musée du Louvre (1793–1926)*, 2nd edn (Paris: Musées nationaux Palais du Louvre, 1927), p. 64). The text of Villot's brochure appeared in the *Moniteur universel* the same day (p. 2183). Clément de Ris quoted extracts in his fifth article, CdR5, p. 149.

²⁶ On the spread of the chronological presentation of paintings in the European museums see Roland Schaer, 'Des encyclopédies superposées', in *La Jeunesse des musées* (above, n. 8), pp. 38–51 (p. 47).

²⁷ The exhibition, organized to raise funds for the association's Caisse de Secours et de Pensions, featured 71 works by 18 artists, ranging from Greuze's portrait of Johann-Georg Wille of 1763 to

ron and Villot appeared to have enabled the Louvre to demonstrate objectively its status as the world's greatest art collection. In the Orleanist *Revue des deux mondes* Prosper Mérimée was enthusiastic: 'Quant à la convenance d'une disposition nouvelle dans la collection du Louvre, l'heureux essai tenté dernièrement par M. Jeanron, directeur du Musée, a montré tout ce que cette admirable collection pouvait gagner à un arrangement judicieux et méthodique.'²⁸

The Louvre's architect from 1801 to 1848, Pierre Fontaine, had already envisaged the possibility of creating a second Salon Carré in the Salon des Sept Cheminées.²⁹ Jeanron and Villot picked up his idea and used it to create a symmetrical system of exhibition in which a sequence of galleries presenting a national school led into a tribune containing the definitive masterpieces of that school, on the model, as Clément de Ris had proposed, of Florence's Palazzo degli Uffizi. To the Old Master tribune plus nine galleries of the Salon Carré and Grande Galerie now corresponded that of the modern French school's Salon des Sept Cheminées and the Galeries du Bord de l'Eau. This symmetrical arrangement represented a significant cultural promotion for French painting since 1715 and undoubtedly helped to defuse conservative outrage about the eviction of David and his pupils from the Salon Carré. The first room leading off from the Salon des Sept Cheminées held what Gautier called the 'queue de l'école du temps de Louis XIV' (*TP*, p. 46), picking up the French school where the final section of the Grande Galerie had left it. The second was given over to hunting scenes, the third to flower paintings, the fourth to the eighteenth-century *peintres galants*, the fifth to Joseph Vernet's *marines*, the sixth to those referred to by Gautier as the 'amis et contemporains de Diderot' (*TP*, p. 49), notably Greuze and Chardin, while the final three rooms charted what Clément de Ris called 'la formation, grandeur et décadence de l'école de David' (*CdR4*, p. 112). The promotion of still life to its own separate gallery space brought official recognition of the revision that was taking place in the Academic hierarchy of subjects, which had traditionally placed history painting at the top and still life at the bottom. The rehabilitation of Boucher, Lancret, Pater, and 'Diderot's

Ingres's portrait of the Vicomtesse d'Haussonville of 1845. For Charles Lenormant, this type of exhibition was more instructive than the annual Salon on account of 'l'intérêt historique qui, de notre temps, se mêle à toute chose, l'avantage de pouvoir suivre des artistes éminents dans toute leur carrière, et de comparer les phases qu'a parcourues notre école depuis Greuze jusqu'à Ary Scheffer' ('Exposition au profit des artistes malheureux', *Le Correspondant*, February 1846, p. 665). Baudelaire made the same point in 'Le musée classique du Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle', in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Claude Pichois, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), II, 408–14. On the exhibition see [Anne-Marie Debelfort and Frédérique Giess, under the direction of Bruno Foucart,] *Le Baron Taylor, l'Association des artistes et l'exposition du Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle* (Paris: Fondation Taylor, 1995).

²⁸ 'Restauration du musée', *Revue des deux mondes*, 1 March 1849, pp. 813–19 (p. 813). A brief comparison between the final catalogue of the July Monarchy in 1847 and Villot's first catalogues from 1849 gives an idea of the gains made. The single slim 1847 volume listed in its first 52 pages and two short supplements a total of 373 works under the 'école française'. Villot's first catalogue contained three volumes, one for each school, of which the French volume alone totalled 424 pages and listed 660 works, as well as providing much more information on provenances and sales than its predecessor. Of the two categories of work mentioned by Clément de Ris, Villot's catalogue included at least one painting from over fifty eighteenth-century artists not mentioned in its 1847 predecessor. Of the 45 *tableaux de réception* included by Villot, only 13 featured in the 1847 catalogue.

²⁹ See Aulanier, *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre*, VII, 95.

painters' was posthumous revenge on their Davidian detractors. The creation of a 'salle Vernet' emphasized the contribution his series of *Ports de France* had made to France's national history.³⁰ In all these respects the Louvre appeared to have achieved a new inclusive and authentic history of French painting, not to mention one which had also caught up with what had been going on in the Paris art market for much of the July Monarchy.³¹

For Clément de Ris, however, the new arrangements made one baffling concession to the supporters of Neoclassicism in the selection of work placed in the Salon des Sept Cheminées. In his brochure Villot stated: 'Le Salon des Sept-Cheminées deviendra la tribune de l'élite des peintres français modernes, comme le grand salon précédant la galerie sera celle des maîtres des écoles anciennes'. Clément de Ris evidently assumed that 'modernes' referred to French painters since 1715 (or, as Villot himself said later in his brochure, 'la série des peintres à partir du siècle de Louis XV jusqu'à nos jours'). He was therefore surprised to find the new French tribune occupied exclusively by artists of the Empire and the Restoration:

A moins de donner au mot *moderne* une interprétation tout à fait judaïque, il ne nous semble pas que la salle des Sept-Cheminées réponde exactement à la destination qui lui était assignée. Elle est spécialement destinée aux peintres de l'Empire et de la Restauration. David, Guérin, Hennequin, Gros, Gérard, Girodet, Géricault, Prud'hon, Lethière y ont seuls pris une place qui eût pu être partagée, sans trop de désavantage, par quelques-uns des maîtres que nous citerons tout à l'heure. (CdR4, p. 110)

Before identifying these other artists, he speculated on what might have motivated the decision to reserve tribune status for the work of the major painters of the Empire and Restoration. He offered two possible explanations. The first was that Villot was seeking to appease conservatives appalled by the removal of Girodet from the Salon Carré: 'Leur a-t-il abandonné cette salle [des sept cheminées] comme une fiche de consolation?' (CdR4, p. 110). Knowing what Villot really thought of the 'école de David'—'tout en rendant justice aux éminentes qualités des divers maîtres de l'Empire [il] les juge cependant avec la sévérité qu'ils méritent' (CdR4, p. 110)—Clément de Ris was sure that he would not have compromised his convictions by offering their contemporary supporters the 'consolation prize' of seeing their predecessors occupy the French tribune almost exclusively. The second possibility was that Villot had placed these painters in well-merited quarantine: 'Est-ce que comme nous l'entendions dire autour de nous, que l'école qui occupe le salon des Sept-Cheminées ne peut supporter le voisinage d'aucune autre, et doit rester dans une exposition ce qu'elle est dans l'histoire: complètement isolée?' (CdR4, p. 110). This second

³⁰ See Chaudonneret, *L'État et les artistes*, pp. 13–14.

³¹ As the Société libre des Beaux-Arts, not known for republican sympathies, noted when Volume 1 of Villot's new catalogue, devoted to the Italian schools, appeared in 1849: 'N'est-il pas à espérer que l'adoption d'un mode de catalogue analogue à celui inauguré par M. Villot viendra mettre un terme aux oscillations funestes que la mode imprime souvent au commerce des tableaux de maîtres? Les œuvres capitales de toutes les écoles une fois estimées d'une façon officielle, il ne dépendra plus de telle ou telle volonté de faire fléchir le prix du mérite réel ou d'exalter la médiocrité mise en vogue [. . .] Nous applaudissons donc vivement au travail de M. Frédéric Villot, et nous remercions M. Jeanron d'avoir prêté le concours de son autorité à la publication d'une œuvre qui sera vivement appréciée des amateurs et des artistes' ('Catalogue des tableaux du Musée du Louvre', *La Tribune des artistes*, 1 (1849), 147–49 (pp. 148–49)).

explanation was in his view no more credible than the first since the whole point of the tribune was to demonstrate that genius transcended national and stylistic particularisms: ‘nous ne pensons pas qu’il y ait plus de dissemblances entre David, par exemple, et Vanloo, qu’entre le Corrège et Watteau [. . .] qui cependant se coudoient dans le salon carré’ (CdR4, p. 110). Reserved for the major works of the Empire and Restoration, the Salon des Sept Cheminées appeared to him to abolish the distinction between the universal and particular, the timeless and historical, that the tribune was designed to display and to encourage the claim of the Davidian minority to rule over the non-Davidian majority. He therefore proposed a series of substitutions with which to establish the tribune as he had expected to find it.³² Meanwhile, bemused, he had little choice but to give Villot the benefit of the doubt: ‘Nous ne doutons pas que les raisons qui l’ont décidé à prendre ce parti n’aient été soigneusement pesées et mûrement réfléchies, mais nous aurions désiré qu’elles fussent plus palpables’ (CdR4, p. 111).³³

Where Clément de Ris had stressed more local issues of realignment between a hitherto dominant classical tradition and other types of painting which for much of the previous two centuries it had succeeded in marginalizing, Gautier set out to present the bigger picture. On 27 August 1848 the Louvre, hitherto no more than a ‘magasin de merveilles’, in which ‘aucune idée, aucune doctrine n’avait présidé à l’arrangement de ces trésors de génie lentement amassés par les siècles’, had finally become a museum, thanks to ‘cette idée si simple de réunir les œuvres de chaque école, les manières de chaque maître, de les faire se suivre chronologiquement’ (TP, p. 4). Application of the historical paradigm established by the Enlightenment and Romanticism had transformed a fragmented collection of masterpieces into an unprecedented narration of the story of European painting, its law of development and decline. ‘Les pages toutes prêtes attendaient, ne demandant qu’à être numérotées’ (TP, p. 4). Jeanron and Villot had numbered the pages and placed them in order. On the walls of the Grande Galerie and the Galeries du Bord de l’Eau ‘l’on voit naître, se développer et mourir les grandes écoles d’Italie, de Flandre et de Hollande, auxquelles se substitue, peu à peu, l’école de France, la seule qui vive au-

³² ‘Des tableaux comme la *Mort de Virginie*, de Lethière, *Oreste et les Furies*, d’Hennequin, *Pyrrhus et Andromaque*, de Guérin, *L’Amour remouleur*, de Gérard, le *Passage des Thermopyles*, de David, eussent pu être avantageusement remplacés par le *Phaëton* de Lesueur, le *Denier de César*, de Valentin, *Henri IV créant des chevaliers de l’ordre du Saint-Esprit*, de De Troy; le *Déjeuner de chasse*, de Vanloo, le *Portrait de Desportes*, et d’autres que nous pourrions nommer [. . .] tableaux qui tous eussent convenu à la destination que M. le conservateur voulait donner, d’après sa notice, au salon des Sept-Cheminées’ (CdR4, pp. 110–11).

³³ Clément de Ris would have found an explanation in Bayle Saint John’s account of Jeanron’s real reason for placating the irate Academician with tongue-in-cheek praise of the Davidians: the need to persuade the government to fund much-needed renovation and refurbishment of the Louvre’s key exhibition spaces, including the Salon des Sept Cheminées. Jeanron, he claimed, had told the Academician that he destined this room ‘to the *élite* of the Davidian school, which should there be exhibited in all its majesty, without contact, without stain, and in the solemn isolation to which it was entitled’ and that ‘when it became known in the [National] Assembly that such magnificent works were placed in so bad a light, no one would refuse the money necessary for its improvement’ (*The Louvre; or, Biography of a Museum*, p. 302). Jeanron’s strategy, if that is what it was, worked to perfection. In December 1848 the Assemblée Nationale voted to provide a budget of two million francs for the renovations he sought. See Rousseau, *La Vie et l’œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, p. 77.

jourd'hui' (*TP*, pp. 4–5). In this 'cours d'art complet, fait par des professeurs qui, pour être muets, n'en sont pas moins éloquents', modern French art could be clearly seen to be the finality which the art of the earlier great European schools had prepared, the sole surviving heir to the great tradition. 'Tout cela se suit, s'enchaîne, se déroule avec une clarté extraordinaire' (*TP*, p. 5).

If the walls of the Grande Galerie now presented art's dominant historical paradigm, those of the new Salon Carré displayed the timeless forms of absolute Beauty. In the one, the visitor took the didactic walk through history, in the other experienced mystical communion with works which transcended history.³⁴ In the Salon Carré there were approximately a hundred of them.³⁵ Since the visitor seeking access to the *Beau idéal* was therefore spoilt for choice, Gautier proposed two of his own gods of painting, Watteau and Veronese, whose work celebrated the search for happiness that was for him the purpose of being. On the wall opposite the entry from the Grande Galerie, Correggio's *Antiope* occupied the *place d'honneur* in the centre, flanked by Rubens's *Kermesse* and Watteau's *Pèlerinage à l'île de Cythère* and forming with them 'une adorable trinité pittoresque' (*TP*, p. 10). Correggio and Rubens displayed in extreme form the canonical opposition between classical southern and realist northern European painting. Placed side by side they demonstrated 'l'immensité de l'art et l'inépuisable variété des moyens qu'il emploie pour atteindre le beau, son but éternel' (*TP*, pp. 7–8). On the other side of the Correggio, the presence of Watteau, newly elevated to the Salon Carré and to equal status with these towering figures, consecrated Romanticism's promotion of national art during the July Monarchy. As a 'dessinateur plein de grâce et de naturel' and 'le plus fin coloriste qui ait jamais existé après Rubens' (*TP*, p. 9), Watteau's authentically French art transcended divisions between *dessinateurs* and *coloristes*, while its representation of pleasure's serious moral purpose eclipsed the classical tradition's more austere lessons:

Si jamais il y eut un peintre vraiment national et français, ce fut Watteau. Il fit de l'art avec les matériaux de son temps sans cesser d'être un dessinateur plein de grâce et de naturel, un coloriste très fin et un artiste sévère. Ce mot étonnera à propos de Watteau, car nous sommes habitués à ne regarder comme savants que les ennuyeux et les pédants, et nous étonnerons beaucoup de monde en disant que, comme peinture, le *Départ pour l'île de Cythère* est une chose beaucoup plus sérieuse que *l'Enlèvement des Sabines* ou le *Passage des Thermopyles*. (*TP*, pp. 9–10)³⁶

The virtue of pleasure was also what for Gautier warranted Veronese's pro-

³⁴ Thus Gautier never entered the Salon Carré 'sans éprouver une émotion religieuse. Ne sommes-nous pas en effet là dans une des plus saintes et des plus vénérables églises, dans le temple du génie humain?' (*TP*, p. 6). On the museum as church and temple in nineteenth-century discourse, see Bruno Foucart, 'Le musée du XIX^e siècle: temple, palais, basilique', in *La Jeunesse des musées* (above, n. 8), pp. 122–35.

³⁵ Rousseau reproduces Villot's original maps of the west- and south-facing walls, in which he identified the paintings to be placed there (*La Vie et l'œuvre de Philippe-Auguste Jeanron*, pp. 175–76).

³⁶ The republican art critic Théophile Thoré, in an article advocating closure of the French Academy in Rome, had celebrated Watteau as the only authentic French master since the late sixteenth century, 'un vrai Français de son temps' who had never studied in Italy ('De l'École française à Rome', *L'Artiste*, 6 February 1848, pp. 214–18). See also P. Hédouin's articles on Watteau in *L'Artiste* of 16, 23, and 30 November 1845 (pp. 45–48, 59–61, and 78–80).

motion in the new Salon Carré to equal status with Titian at the head of the Venetian school. The huge *Noces de Cana* and *Madeleine aux pieds de Jésus* had retained their original places (on the south- and north-facing walls respectively) but the former was now flanked by his *Pèlerins d'Emmaüs* and *Esther devant Assuérus*. For Gautier the prejudice within Academic doxy against Veronese's allegedly unserious subjects, seen as no more than pretexts for the display of his 'exécution prodigieuse' (*TP*, p. 16: we remember Jeanron's comments to the Academician), was now officially rejected:

Rien n'est plus sérieux que cette peinture si gaie et il faut avouer qu'elle mérite bien la place d'honneur qu'elle a obtenue dans le Salon carré [. . .]. Cette fête éternelle de ses tableaux a un sens profond: elle place sans cesse sous les yeux de l'humanité le vrai but, l'idéal qui ne trompe pas, le bonheur, que les moralistes inintelligents veulent reléguer dans l'autre monde. (*TP*, pp. 14–16)³⁷

The constraints imposed by the *feuilleton* format left Gautier further scope for only brief comments on Ribera's *Adoration des bergers*, Titian's *Christ au tombeau* and *Christ flagellé*, Rubens's *Tomiris*, and Raphael's *Sainte Famille*.³⁸ Each work offered a definitive representation of different features of the painter's craft and the moral and spiritual guidance they contained, and his regular readers in *La Presse* would have been familiar with the ways in which he accounted for the one in terms of the other. Taking them along the Grande Galerie, he described the cyclical law of art's historical development displayed on its walls. All art began in idealism and ended in naturalism, achieving its highest expression in its middle phase, when idealism and naturalism sustained one another in harmonious equilibrium. All art began with the venerated symbols of religion, followed by the idealized representation of real or mythological figures, followed in turn by the non-idealized representation of the human form, and its progressive disappearance. This process was confirmed by the evolution of the genres, in which religious painting was succeeded by history painting, which in turn gave way to landscape, which, having initially served as decor designed to give prominence to the human figure, achieved independence from it to become a major genre in its own right. In formal terms, 'tout art commence par la raideur et finit par le chiffonné. Le beau se trouve dans la période moyenne' (*TP*, p. 21):

³⁷ The litany of life's essential pleasures which Gautier located in the art of Veronese was the same as that listed in 1835–36 in his preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, where he stated that 'la jouissance me paraît le but de la vie et la seule chose utile au monde' (*Romans, contes et nouvelles*, ed. by Pierre Laubriet, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), 1, 231). In July 1848 he had repeated his view that the republic was the system of government best suited to deliver the freedom that was the precondition of the search for happiness: 'Quel est l'instinct le plus vif de l'homme? Celui de la liberté. Pourquoi désire-t-il être libre? Pour chercher le bonheur' ('La République de l'avenir', *Le Journal*, 28 July 1848, repr. in *Fusains et Eaux-fortes* (Paris: Charpentier, 1880), pp. 227–38 (p. 231)). His association of Watteau, Veronese, and the search for happiness reappeared with reference to Henri Baron's evocations of the eighteenth-century *fête galante*: 'Nous aimons les peintres qui contentent par leurs œuvres, ébauches de l'avenir, le secret désir de bonheur que conserve l'humanité comme une réminiscence vague de la vie édénique: Paul Véronèse est un de ceux-là [. . .] Watteau en est un autre' ('Exposition de 1859', *Le Moniteur universel*, 6 July 1859).

³⁸ Jean-Pierre Guillerme states: 'Au Salon Carré, Gautier regrette de ne pas trouver Velasquez, nul ne songerait alors à lui octroyer un royaume' ('Les maisons de l'art', p. 35) but omits to make it clear that Gautier regrets this in 1867 (in his *Guide de l'amateur au Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Séguier, 1994), p. 25), not in 1848.

La ligne, droite d'abord, s'arrondit, puis se tortille; les fonds d'or cèdent la place aux fonds bleus, auxquels se succèdent les paysages. Ces deux transformations sont l'histoire de la peinture dans tous les pays et à toutes les époques. Contrairement à la logique apparente, l'idéal est le point de départ et la nature le terme. Au delà, il n'y a plus que le trompe-l'œil et le daguerréotype, et l'évolution est à recommencer. (*TP*, pp. 21–22)

The rise and fall of schools made visible the synthesis between history and the cyclical law of historical development. The didactic walk through the gallery complemented the experience of transcendence in the tribune.

These lessons from the history of art brought Gautier to the threshold of the modern age, the subject of his second article, 'La Galerie française', divided into two parts, the first on the new French tribune in the Salon des Sept Cheminées, the second on the works presented in chronological order in the Galeries du Bord de l'Eau. He applauded the decision to evict the modern French painters from the Salon Carré, not only because a few months before, in his commentary on Chenavard's planned representation of universal history in the commission he had received from the republican government to decorate the Pantheon, Gautier had made it quite clear what he thought of Girodet's *Une scène de déluge*,³⁹ but also because he failed to understand why any member of the Institute in his right mind would wish to see Gérard's *Psyché et l'Amour* annihilated in perpetuity in the Salon Carré by what he called the 'voisinage homicide' (*TP*, p. 33) of masterpieces by Mantegna and Claude Lorrain. Furthermore, he was pleased to note that, transferred to the Salon des Sept Cheminées, Girodet, Guérin, and the other members of the Davidian school were obliged to endure the posthumous revenge of the victims of their tyranny, Prud'hon and Géricault.⁴⁰ The works collected there encouraged further reflection on the Davidian legacy but Gautier was not inclined to revise his judgements. He reminded his readers that he had led from the front the Romantic revolt against the authority of the Institute, 'légataire et représentant inextinguible des traditions tyranniques du maître [David]' (*TP*, p. 33). David, he claimed, lacked any real understanding of the antique and was best in his naturalist portraits of Marat and Madame Récamier, but even the latter did not escape the crucial defect of his lack of passion for women. The forms of his reaction against Boucher's flamboyant rococo had initially been a positive development but became in his hands a disabling authority which in one way or another had made victims of his pupils and theirs. Gros, as Delacroix had argued in his 1848 article on the painter which Gautier had evidently read closely, had taken too much to heart David's criticisms of his contemporary subjects, but at least the Second Republic had sealed his rehabilitation by hanging his *Peste de Jaffa* and *Champ de bataille d'Eylau* opposite David's *Enlèvement des*

³⁹ Chenavard's representation of the Flood was 'non pas pris comme ceux de Poussin ou de Girodet, dans le sens épisodique d'une douzaine d'hommes qui se noient d'une façon plus ou moins théâtrale, mais entendu comme le cataclysme destructeur du monde primitif et des races antédiluviennes' ('Le Panthéon: peintures murales, par Chenavard', *La Presse*, 5–11 September 1848, repr. in *L'Art moderne* (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1856), pp. 1–94 (p. 7)). On Chenavard's Pantheon project see *Paul Chenavard: le peintre et le prophète*, ed. by Marie-Claude Chaudonneret (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux, 2000).

⁴⁰ 'David, Gérard, Gros, Guérin, Lethière sont là côte à côte comme en plein Institut. Prud'hon et Géricault y sont aussi, les glorieux *outlaws*, et semblent narguer à leur tour ceux qui, vivants, les opprimèrent et les méconnurent' (*TP*, p. 33).

Sabines and *Léonidas à Thermopyles*.⁴¹ In the case of Guérin, a pupil of Jean-Baptiste Régnault but widely believed during the nineteenth century to have been a follower of David, it was ‘cette couleur fausse et sans consistance mise en honneur par le maître’ (*TP*, p. 40) that had blunted his natural abilities in drawing and modelling. Gérard’s four *Renommées*, female figures unrolling the fictive tapestry of the *Bataille d’Austerlitz*, commissioned by Napoleon for the ceiling of the Salle du Conseil d’État in the Tuileries but removed after the fall of the Empire, were best for the Venetian qualities of the colour, a comparison which presumably neither David nor Gérard himself would have appreciated (*TP*, p. 41). What Gautier saw as the negative tension in the relationship between master and pupil had, he said, been most pronounced in the case of Girodet, in whom it had triggered aberrant responses, notably in his recherché effects of light (*TP*, p. 41). These were largely commonplaces in the critical reception of the Davidians during the 1840s, and despite the fact that the exhibition in the Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle galleries in January–March 1846 had to some extent generated renewed interest in the painters of the period 1770–1830, Gautier, who for reasons which remain a mystery did not review that exhibition, evidently saw no reason to distance himself from the generally less sympathetic view of these painters prevalent in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the July Monarchy.⁴²

In the Galeries du Bord de l’Eau, Gautier paused longest in the sixth room, containing the work of those he called Diderot’s painters and where Diderot was as much the subject as they were. The label was, needless to say, self-interested, for the elevation of the ‘founder of French art criticism’ into France’s temple of the arts gave new status to the genre he practised and therefore to his successor, which, as we know, was how Gautier liked to see himself and others to see him.⁴³ Indeed, *connaissance de cause* was, he reminded readers, the area in which the pupil surpassed the master, for, in the rediscovery of eighteenth-century art to which the Jeanron–Villot reforms in the Louvre gave an official seal of approval, Gautier was evidently confident that his account of Chardin’s ‘prodigieuse exécution’ (*TP*, p. 53) would enjoy a brighter future than Diderot’s taste for the ‘côté bourgeoisement pathétique et littéraire’ (*TP*, pp. 50–51) in the work of Greuze. Gautier used his commentary on the Galerie Française to make his own pitch on behalf of the critic’s role and his own position in relation to the Diderot legacy. Once he had done so, there was little to detain him in the remaining rooms containing French art from 1770, with the exception of a Prud’hon portrait (*TP*, pp. 58–59) and Vigée-Lebrun’s self-portrait with her daughter (*TP*, p. 61).

⁴¹ Delacroix, ‘Gros’, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 September 1848, in *Œuvres littéraires*, ed. by Élie Faure, 2 vols (Paris: G. Crès, 1923), II, 163–200. On the implications, very relevant to our subject, of a more recent relocation of the *Bataille d’Eylau* within the Louvre, see Christopher Prendergast, *Napoleon and History Painting: Antoine-Jean Gros’s ‘La Bataille d’Eylau’* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 3.

⁴² On the Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle exhibition of 1846 see [Debelfort and Giess,] *Le Baron Taylor*.

⁴³ In 1847, writing his own prospectus for the forthcoming publication of his *Salon de 1847*, Gautier claimed: ‘Depuis Diderot et ses fameux Salons, personne n’a parlé des arts avec plus de feu et d’enthousiasme et l’on peut dire aussi avec plus de connaissance de cause que Mr Théophile Gautier’: quoted in Claude Lacoste, ‘Théophile Gautier juge de lui-même’, *Bulletin de la Société Théophile Gautier*, 11 (1989), 156–60 (p. 158).

What remained was to draw out lessons which the past contained for the present. France was now 'le seul pays où l'on fasse encore et réellement de la peinture' (*TP*, p. 62), the only country in which the sacred flame had not been extinguished, not even 'aux époques les plus déplorables' (*ibid.*) of the Davidians:

Plus heureux que ces illustres opprimés [Prud'hon, Géricault, and Sigalon], Delacroix, Ingres et tant d'autres peuvent marcher tête levée parmi leurs contemporains, et la critique d'art, qui a pris de si grands développements ces dernières années, peut revendiquer une bonne part dans cette heureuse révolution. Que pourraient donc nous opposer les autres pays de l'Europe? L'Italie, rien; la Flandre, peu de chose; l'Angleterre, quelques adroits paysagistes, portraitistes, aquarellistes et un peintre de chiens, Edwyn Landseer. L'Allemagne seule offre une sorte d'école, plus archéologique et philosophique qu'originale et puissante. (*TP*, p. 63)

Ingres and Delacroix were the living proof that the legacy of the Old Masters was in safe hands in Paris in 1848, just as Gautier himself, who throughout his career in art journalism had defended both artists in their struggles against Davidian authority, could be relied on to play his part in ensuring that their achievements would be conveyed to the changing art public in the appropriate terms. By 1848 reform of the Louvre's exhibition arrangements had been long overdue, for the predecessors of the new republican managers of France's fine-arts administration had prevented the museum from achieving the objectives the National Convention had set for it in 1793 and, in doing so, had surrendered the advantage over its European competitors that the richness of the Louvre collections ought to have secured.⁴⁴ That Jeanron and Villot appeared to have succeeded in less than three months in re-establishing so effectively the museum's international position undoubtedly helps to explain the decision of the National Assembly in December 1848 to vote a budget of two million francs for the renovation and refurbishment of the tribunes and galleries which displayed these riches and of the Galerie d'Apollon which linked these exhibition areas. It was a consensus achieved by none of the Second Republic's other major initiatives in the fine arts.⁴⁵ The Second Empire took its Louvre policy further by completing the Grand Louvre project which the Second Republic had decreed but been unable to finance.⁴⁶ Napoleon III duly reaped the benefits of France's pre-eminent position established in the field of contemporary art by the annual Salon and in the art of the past by the completed, renovated, and reorganized Louvre, when Paris hosted the Exposition Universelle in 1855.

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⁴⁴ On the creation of the Louvre during the Revolution see Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Carol Duncan, *Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 21–33; and Georgel, *La Jeunesse des musées*, pp. 31–32 and 58–70. Clément de Ris began his article on the Grande Galerie with a recognition of the Louvre's competitive decline in favour of 'les somptueuses galeries de Florence, de Rome, de Londres, de Dresde, de Vienne, qui, beaucoup inférieures comme valeur, sont cependant entretenues avec une sollicitude dont on semblait ignorer les premiers éléments' (CdR5, p. 149).

⁴⁵ See my *Théophile Gautier, Orator to the Artists*.

⁴⁶ See Michel Carmona, *Le Louvre et les Tuileries: huit siècles d'histoire* (Paris: Éditions de la Martinière, 2004), pp. 310–40.