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PICTORIAL SIGN AND SOCIAL ORDER:

L'ACADEMIE ROYALE DE PEINTURE
ET SCULPTURE 1638-1752

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Abstract | i . |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Chapter One | 20 |
| Chapter Two | 54 |
| Chapter Three | 83 |
| Chapter Four | 116 |
| Chapter Five | 154 |
| Chapter Six | 182 |
| Epilogue | 239 |
| Bibliography | 252 |
| Appendix One | |
| Figures | |

PICTORIAL SIGN AND SOCIAL ORDER: L'ACADEMIE ROYALE DE PEINTURE ET SCULPTURE 1648-1752

In my doctorate, I have sought to question the establishment of the Academy in France along two particular lines of enquiry. I considered why the government established a state institution for the arts and how and why it sought to influence artistic production. Under Richelieu, artistic initiatives were subordinated to the requirements of factional court politics. But after the upheavals of the Fronde (1648-53), the monarchy created the Absolutist court in which aesthetics were politics. In the phrase used by the logicians of Port-Royal: Le portrait du César, c'est César".

The increased political importance of the image coincided with a radical re-evaluation of sight and its representation in the visual image, following the work of Descartes. I therefore set out to analyse the debates in and around the Academy concerning theories of vision and their implication for the artist. I found the Academy resisted Cartesian and perspectival theory and expelled its first Professor of Perspective, Abraham Bosse, in a dispute which sheds much light on its institutional and theoretical base. Far from being an easy Academic victory, the dispute required the intervention of Colbert himself. Instead of the Desarguan perspective championed by Bosse, the Academy's theorist, Grégoire Huret sought to control the pictorial sign through gender difference. But his theory contained too many prohibitions to be of practical use to artists.

It was not until the Academy was pushed by the government into accepting the Modern theories of Roger de Piles that a gap opened between nature and its representation in which artists could operate. These two histories were closely linked, for it was not until the Academy found a means of representing its theory in the work of Watteau and the fête galante artists, that it achieved institutional security. The final chapter of my thesis analyses Watteau's work as a resolution of the long-standing theoretical uncertainty in the Academy over the status of the visual image. In an epilogue, the rapid death of the fête galante as a genre is shown to mark the end of this chapter of Academic history.

In elucidating the often complex artistic theories in early modern France, I have made use of the methodology and theory of contemporary French thinkers such as Louis Marin, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Their insights have helped me appreciate the complexity and vitality of Academic thought which has so often been readily dismissed as sterile scholasticism. The painters of the Academy were also theorists. In that sense, we have much to learn from them.

Nicholas Mirzoeff

Introduction

"What is the use of seeing without thinking?" Goethe

This work sets out to study the status and importance of painting in French society for one hundred years after Descartes as it was mediated by the institution of the Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture (hereinafter the Academy). It has at no point been assumed that there was anything natural either in the relationship of state and artist or in the depiction of reality in paint on canvas. Rather the focus is on the complex interactions of politics, philosophy, science and other forms of artistic practice that all met within the frame of a painting of this period. The key question at stake is what function the theory and practice of art played within this complex network.

The foundation of the Academy was contemporary with the beginnings of observational science after the innovations of Descartes. From then on the status and importance of sight and its observations were at a premium. The role of painting as one of the most important models for the re-presentation of sight was at once much advanced in status. Cartesianism did not win acceptance within the Academy, however, and there followed a contest amongst theoreticians and artists over the status of vision and its representation in art. The new government of Louis XIV, above all through his minister Colbert, were quick to intervene in this dispute. The Academy was suddenly transformed from a painter's organisation into a part of the court system of Versailles. This system evolved as a response to the upheavals of the Fronde (1648-53) and was designed to ensure they did not recur. With the Academy secure as a royal service industry, independent of the guilds and the new science, the King often

lost interest in it so long as the supply of artists for his tapestry manufactures and ceremonials was maintained. Academicians in this period had therefore to face an unpredictable level of government involvement ranging from indifference to total supervision. Louis XIV was, however, extremely careful to ensure that his image was maintained in the glory he felt it required. The logicians of Port-Royal held that: "Le portrait du César, c'est César". The Absolutist monarchy took the production of art under its protection to ensure that the King's portrait was properly made and seen to be so.

The Academy had also to teach its pupils in the school and develop its own form of artistic theory that would keep it distinct from guild artists and other art forms. They did not find this easy and much of what follows is an account of their attempts to do so. It is by no means a total history of the Academy and the work of Academic artists in this period. It is initially an account of the Academy's evolution of its own poetics of representation in the period 1648-1670 through its resistance to the scientific theories of perspective. The result was so circumscribed with prohibitions and cautions that it was to all intents and purposes unusable in the context of the period. The Academy therefore fell into decline from which it was once again rescued by government intervention. A new, more open poetics had emerged on the Modern side of the Ancients and Moderns debate and the reluctant Academy found itself summoned to take account of it by a new government minister. But it was at this point that the Academy began to find artists such as Watteau, Lancret and Pater who could give their theory actual embodiment in painting. For a period lasting roughly twenty-five

years the Academy was therefore able to satisfy both its own artists and its royal masters. This success and its origins are the culmination of this work. This history is not a straightforward story of art. The margins between artistic theory and practice are never precise and in this period where the status of representation itself was shifting rapidly, they were perhaps more than ordinarily elusive.

The theoretical debates conducted in and around the Academy over the status of representation are of more than purely antiquarian interest. I have described the theories of the Academy as forming a poetics, a term that might lead to criticism. Yet it is the best description because it gives the clearest notion of how the ancien régime theorists themselves operated. Ut pictura poesis, the painting like a poem, was a cliché of the period and writers continually compared and contrasted the two arts. Poésie in the French also referred to dramatic verse and the worlds of theatre and painting were intimately linked, a relationship that was particularly crucial for Watteau and his successors. Indeed, without this model, derived from the visual language of the theatre, their work is inconceivable. To think of their art as part of poetry is then to think of it in a way that the artists themselves would have understood it (1).

The term poetics is also one of growing importance in the postmodernism debate today (2). Poetics refers to a methodology that is flexible and able to contain and generate many different discourses. Furthermore, a postmodern analysis does not seek to hierarchise the arts or attribute relations of causality within them. It is a suspicious approach, only too aware of how the grand narratives of the past have fallen down, often with tragic

consequences. At the present time, when the geo-political map seems to be redrawn almost daily, such caution seems more than ever justified. As Jean-Francois Lyotard, one of the originators of the theories of postmodernism has observed:

"We have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience." (3)

My work does not seek, then, to establish a new, all-inclusive paradigm for art history or history in general. Rather it seeks to open questions, to generate further problematics (in the sense given to the word by Michel Foucault- that is, the possibility of discourse{4}). It does not address the question 'What is beautiful?' in the period under review. Instead, it asks what the role and functions of art were in the period that saw the establishment of modern science and the birth of the Enlightenment.

In this questioning of the status and operations of the artwork, we can find parallels within the works of the ancien régime theorists. Initially, the Academy argued for a rigidly realist point of view. Paintings were to show things as they were, or, in the case of history painting, as they would have been. The key motif for theorists of the period was vraisemblance, verisimilitude. The subject for their debate was how accurately the painter had achieved this task. But at the same time they rejected the new realism of perspective as being too mechanical for the liberal art of painting. It subjected figures to a "depraving" effect that was intolerable. Caught between wanting to depict the noble figure, but without using perspective, the Academy was caught in a theoretical vice.

It was left to theorists from outside the official ranks of the

Academy, such as Charles Perrault and Roger de Piles, debating with the supporters of the Ancients, to show a way forward. They opened a gap between the object and its representation, arguing that the viewer's experience of the two was not the same. Indeed, the visual pleasure which was the very point of painting was to be found in precisely that separation. For de Piles this could only be described as a "je ne sais quoi" effect. For later writers such as the Abbé Dubos and Montesquieu, it was an area of more specific investigation. It was in that gap opened up by the theorists that Watteau and his contemporaries were able to deploy a visual language learned from the theatre with the full approval of the Academy. For now all was not as it seemed. The moment of viewing was the interaction that counted rather than History. The desired aim was pleasure not moral edification. However, the gap remained open for an all too brief period. By the 1750s with the installation of a new regime in the Academy, and the rise of a new morality, an intellectual closure applied once again, albeit with very different results and consequences.

The history of this contested vision and visibility is of considerable interest in the light of the current debate over such issues within contemporary art and art criticism. The issues of spectatorship and the gaze have been at the heart of what has been known as New Art History. In works such as John Berger's Ways of Seeing (1972), there was a confidence that the new methodologies could resolve these questions and quickly establish a new basis for the study of art. In such an interpretation, the importance of Descartes and the visual revolution of the seventeenth century was clear. It established vision as the bourgeois mode of perception. Modernity came to be seen as

defined by its ocularcentricity, a scopic regime beginning with the Renaissance and stretching right up until the the avant-garde interventions of the late nineteenth century.

Yet while such an attack on the dominance of perspective and the Cartesian world view was certainly necessary and remains the starting point for this work, the triumph of perspective has been too easily assumed. In joining hands with the deep assumptions of the Modernist tradition, the New Art History became in some ways a new interpretation of what had gone before. In this work, I shall argue that perspective and its visual regime did not quietly triumph over its medieval predecessors, instituting a new era with whose effects we are still dealing with today. Rather, there arose a number of visual systems and theories of vision which competed against and alongside one another. However, whereas medieval theories of vision had shared certain key premises, differing only in interpretation, there were now visualities that expressed themselves in different languages and addressed themselves to different audiences. In the words of Martin Jay:

" The scopic regime of modernity may best be understood as a contested terrain, rather than a harmoniously integrated complex of visual theories and practices. It may, in fact, be characterised by a differentiation of visual subcultures, whose separation has allowed us to understand the multiple implications of sight in ways that are only now beginning to be appreciated." (5)

This research has attempted to describe the emergence of one of those subcultures, the Academic vision of a respectable realism, given expression by the painting of Watteau and the theory of the Moderns. It is not a complete history of the Academy between 1638 and 1752, nor does it pretend to be. It is the history of the emergence, brief dominance and decline of a style of seeing that, under the title fête galante, resisted both perspective and

Descartes but managed to be very much of its time.

It is in this way that my work departs from that of the current leading scholar in this field, Thomas Crow. Although his work has inspired some of my own research, it is motivated by very different aims (6). On the one hand, despite the new light that Crow sheds on the work of artists such as Greuze, Watteau and David, there is little note taken in his book of the criticism of the notion of the 'great artist' and the received canon that has been advanced in much recent art history. The Tradition, as it has become known, selects certain artists for art historical examination and study. These artists are rewarded with space in galleries and museums and are given major exhibitions every decade or so in order to maintain their place in the hierarchy. Without denigrating the work of these artists, many of whom were long dead before achieving their current status, it is evident that by concentrating on the few acknowledged 'great' artists, art history has produced a partial and incomplete account of its subject. History involves losers as well as winners and it is the job of the historian to understand the processes that generated victory and defeat. By now, such a critique of the canon is almost a commonplace. Victor Burgin, for example, described the canon as a graveyard:

"The contents of this graveyard is the canon of established 'masterpieces'; to be admitted to it is to be consigned to perpetual exhumation, to be denied entry is to be condemned to perpetual oblivion. The canon is what gets written about, collected and taught; it is self-perpetuating, self-justifying, and arbitrary; it is the gold standard against which the values of new aesthetic currencies are measured." (7)

Whilst no-one can deny the importance of the artists Crow privileges, it is perhaps now necessary that he justify his selection. The eighteenth century is a particularly vital period

in the formation of the canon as we know it and in the development of the critical techniques that support it. We need to ask why it is that Watteau, for example, reached such lasting fame from such a brief career rather than accepting it as a given. The answers will be found not just in his paintings but in the entire network that produced and supported art in the period.

Crow's work is directed towards proving his thesis that in the eighteenth century artists gradually evolved a notion of the public whom they could address. His work is permeated with a nostalgia for such a unifying project for artists and art critics alike. Elsewhere, he has said:

"As we look back, these practices feel as if they constituted a unity, a resurgent public sphere that seems diminished and marginal now." (8)

It seems to me highly likely that Crow's enthusiasm for the vitality of the eighteenth century public has led him to accept the canon at face value. The result is an impressive book that moves forward effortlessly, telling the familiar narrative in a new way. It is just such smooth, unproblematic discourse that postmodernism is seeking to disrupt. Crow has made his dislike for postmodern criticism clear but the consequence has been a failure to explore some of the implications of his own work. In his anxiety to move forward to the era of David, significant disputes and contradictions have been overlooked which this work will seek to explore, particularly in the study of the artistic representation of the visual field.

There is no longer the certainty which both John Berger and Ernst Gombrich, from their very different viewpoints, brought to the analysis of vision. Umberto Eco has observed that nowadays, in the postmodern era, knowledge consists of the ironic

restatement of the already said- the modern. It is obvious that irony abounds in the current situation of the intellectual. The heroic struggles of the twentieth century's modernists have been both won and lost. The emblematic works of the period by Proust, Joyce, Picasso, Cezanne and the rest, are securely embedded in the academic world at the centre of undergraduate courses and research alike. But the public at large has never been more indifferent to the works of contemporary artists or more sceptical of the values claimed by such work. Postmodern art and architecture has featured a neoclassical revival on what might be termed its right wing in response to such feelings.

These attacks have been all the more successful as the modernists themselves become more and more unsure of their own ground. Unwilling to defend their former heroes against accusations of sexism, racism and even - in the case of Heidegger -Nazism, the moderns have been unsurprisingly in retreat in the face of two-pronged attack (9). For even the status of knowledge and information itself is undergoing a radical transformation with the development of computers and information technology. Intellectual research in the humanities may be about to undergo its most profound transformation since the invention of printing. Perhaps the collage of reading, notetaking and writing in tranquillity that the current work represents will soon come to be seen as quaintly antique as parchment rolls and illumination.

At the same time, scientists' long opposition to the arts on grounds of the superior objectivity and usefulness of their work is beginning to break down. Current frontrunner amongst mathematical theories is that of 'chaos'. Chaos has overthrown many of the golden rules established by Newton for the dynamics of the universe. In place of certainty has come complexity,

unpredictability and the collapse of rigid disciplinary boundaries. Science is moving into areas which the previous rules of legitimation can no longer control or describe. For example, it is a commonplace amongst physicists to talk of space in up to twelve dimensions- yet there is no method of conceptualising the fourth dimension and beyond in any terms other than the theoretical. Those humanistic disciplines which had attempted to escape from the crisis of confidence referred to above by seeking the status of a science for their work find that once again the pot of gold has eluded them. For as Lyotard has put it:

" It is therefore impossible to judge the existence or validity of narrative knowledge on the basis of scientific criteria or vice-versa." (10)

Reactions to this changed and changing situation have often been characterised by a deep pessimism. A recent article in Block, the leading British art theory magazine, has noted:

"Previously solid referents have been replaced by a disorientating flux, calculated risks by terror, known dangers by the invisible reign of the unknown." (11)

The confusion and worry of previously radical critics, writers and artists has been matched by an increased confidence amongst those whom Jurgen Habermas has labelled the neoconservatives. Their argument for common-sense and intelligibility has been given much impetus by the difficult language of the New Art History generation. But these are merely new colours for an old stalking-horse. Those in authority have always sought to make their ideas and ideology seem no more than 'what everybody thinks' whilst characterising the ideas of their opponents as outlandish, barbarous and futile. The Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, has described this process as hegemony- that is the means by which a minority not only holds power over the

majority in society but receives their active consent to being ruled. The view of the few has become the view of the many and as Gramsci observed:

" It is not important that this movement had its origins in mediocre philosophical works, or at best, in works that were not philosophical masterpieces. What matters is that a new way of conceiving the world and man is born and that this conception is no longer reserved to the great intellectuals, to professional philosophers but tends rather to become a popular, mass phenomenon, with a concretely world-wide character...capable of modifying popular thought and mummified popular culture." (12)

Ironically, it has been the popular culture of capitalism, not the communism Gramsci supported, that has achieved this hegemonic character- hence the confidence of the neoconservatives and the despair of radicals.

As I have suggested, the roots of this hegemony are not necessarily as secure as they might seem. Vision continues to play a central and dynamic role in the postmodern world as information technology and the electronic media are redefining our everyday life and work. The perspective system advanced by Alberti and many others involves the use of only one eye, as if looking through a peephole. The impersonality and distancing of this process has been its strength but it may also prove a telling weakness. With both eyes open, there are many more ideas and images available to us. These might be summed up as constituting the poetics of the image. When Gaston Bachelard came to consider this question, he was struck by the suddenness of the impact the poetic image- in its widest sense- makes on the psyche. In terms strikingly similar to those used by eighteenth century writers he says:

"When I receive a new poetic image, I experience its quality of intersubjectivity. I know that I am going to repeat it in order to communicate my enthusiasm. When considered in transmission from one soul to another, it

" becomes evident that a poetic image evades causality."
(13)

For Bachelard the key question was the receptivity of the image at the moment of its appearance and he attempted to write a phenomenology of this process. In denying causality to the poetic image, Bachelard does not mean to say that there are no causes that can be uncovered behind the image. But he realised that, given the primacy of the individual viewing of the image, we must recognise the importance of the historic present.

History also entails a recognition of the present in which we write. We need to recognise and be aware of the particular characteristics of our own day in order to be fully able to understand those of the past. Historiography has always been resistant to writing that is aware of itself. Students are urged to avoid the use of the personal pronoun 'I' as much as is possible. In that way the present can be elided and the historicist analysis can see in every event its antecedents and future effects - everything except its specificity. Walter Benjamin was particularly concerned with this recovery of the present in our approach to the past. His concern with the loss of the shock of the past is all the more pertinent today. Fashion, which Baudelaire took to be the epitome of an era, is now revived and recycled with extraordinary speed. At the same time, the global culture of McDonalds in Peking, Pepsi in Moscow and tourists everywhere, even Albania, is steadily reducing any notion of cultural difference. Writers such as Francis Fukuyama are even claiming that the present era will see the end of history as all differences are elided into liberal democracy. In order to claim the difference of the past, Benjamin observed in his Theses on the Philosophy of History:

" A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop. For this notion defines the present in which he himself is writing history." (14)

In the painters and writers of the early eighteenth century, we can find an earlier example of such consciousness of the present.

There is, in fact, a strong possibility that we are about to see a resurgence of general interest in the eighteenth century and particularly the ideas of the Enlightenment. Obviously, there has always been a steady level of interest in the leading figures and events of the period. However, at any one time there tends to be an era in the past which historians and writers see as somehow specially relevant to their own time. For the Enlightenment itself that period was Classical antiquity-Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, David's Oath of the Horatii, and Robespierre's cult of virtue are just some examples. Benjamin was aware that, although this was in part fashion, it had greater meaning:

"History is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the 'now'. Thus, to Robespierre ancient Rome was a past charged with the time of the now which he blasted out of the continuum of history. The French Revolution viewed itself as Rome reincarnate." (15)

For Benjamin, in his curious mix of Kabbala mysticism and historical materialism, the shock of the present can be difficult to recreate in our own time as our society is increasingly fragmented. Yet in key periods of the past that resonance can be found, as it were, in concentrated form. In our modern era-"Postmodernism is not modernism at its end but modernism in its nascent state" (Lyotard)-that began in the eighteenth century, we have come to see ourselves as radically separated from the past

but also as constantly hurtling towards the future. As Jurgen Habermas has observed in his recent study of the origins of modernity: "Time becomes experienced as a scarce resource for the mastery of problems that arise." (16) The past, then, becomes our main source for affirmation and resolution of problems.

In questioning the achievements of the Enlightenment, postmodernist criticism has set itself a double task. On the one hand, it is important to question how solid and uncontested these achievements actually were. As part of this re-examination, the roots and origins of Enlightenment thought may need more consideration than they often receive. Secondly, if the Enlightenment achievements are not so secure as they seemed in the era of high Modernism, it will be important for critics to define their own position towards them with more than simple hostility or approval. Historians of the French Revolution have been aware of this need for a long time. It is possible, like Habermas, to see the Enlightenment as a project that has yet to be completed. One may join with Lyotard in criticising the Enlightenment ideas of a unitary subject and a teleological notion of history. Richard Sennett has lamented the fall of eighteenth century public man whilst Michel Foucault had hoped to see him erased like a face drawn in the sand by the edge of the sea (17). But there seems to be emerging out of all these divergent views an agreement that the Enlightenment and its origins are central to our present day concerns. Whether they are to be rejected or embraced, the debate engendered can only benefit from the high ground staked out by the writers, artists and politicians of the period.

It should by now be clear that postmodernism does not deserve the reproach often levelled at it of being either ahistorical or

somehow wishing to end history. As a historical phenomenon itself, postmodernism has divergent views and opposed left and right wings- if we want to carry on with the French revolution's terminology. But undoubtedly there is a feeling that a different history is needed, a more relative history. This history would be able to cope with the divergent and decentred patterns of the past. It does not seek a grand narrative to resolve the contradictions that are so evident today as well as in the past. Twentieth-century historiography has been very critical of any move away from the 'facts' towards theory without perhaps paying enough attention to how the corpus of material known as the 'sources' has come into being. Libraries, archives and museums are themselves historical products with a specific set of values and purposes. There is nothing that says that these purposes must be sinister, but it is important to recognise they exist. Hayden White has observed that it may now be time to think:

"that history, as currently conceived, is a kind of historical accident, a product of a specific historical situation, and that, with the passings of the misunderstandings that produced that situation, history itself may lose its status as an autonomous and self-authenticating mode of thought. It may well be that the most difficult task which the current generation of historians will be called upon to perform is to expose the historically conditioned character of the historical discipline, to preside over the dissolution of history's claim to autonomy among the disciplines." (18)

That is far from saying that history has no value or that is a mere language game that we play because it amuses us. It is precisely because the writing of history is so important to our understanding of ourselves that it is important to take care over how it is done. In Orwell's telling phrase: 'He who controls the past, controls the present.' But the changes in the way we look at the past that are now arising may make the exertion of such

control impossible in future. History could once again know openness, plurality and excitement as people begin to rediscover their multiple past. In today's fiction and film the exploration of history in order to know the present is increasingly important. Perhaps the final irony is that it may be the universities where so much of that process began who are last to come to terms with it.

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The following work consists of six chapters that attempt to describe one narrative version of the period 1648-1752. In the first chapter, the background situation in seventeenth century France is sketched out, both in terms of the status of vision in general and painting in particular. The second examines the Cartesian revolution in optics and its reception amongst French intellectuals. In the next chapter, the second theme of the opening is continued in a discussion of the foundation and consolidation of the Academy. That chapter limits itself to the institutional profile of the Academy within the framework of the Fronde and the subsequent establishment of a court structure in the Absolutist state. In the fourth chapter, the intellectual and ideological raison d'être of the Academy is discussed in light of the debate on optics set up by Descartes. It continues to discuss the resolution of the Academy's dispute with its own Professor of Perspective led to a crisis of identity ended again by royal intervention in 1708, discussed in Chapter Five, which examines the aesthetics of Absolutism. In the final chapter examines how the opening created by de Piles' theory was exploited by Watteau who created a visual style for the Academy that, for the first time, succeeded in uniting the demands of contemporary thought and the institutional needs of the court. An epilogue examines

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the decline of the fête galante and the artists who painted them. It points to a change in the history of the senses, following the work of Locke and Condillac. A more relative, experiential theory of the senses gradually replaced the Cartesian reliance on vision. Art theory became increasingly concerned with the sublime, following the translation of Longinus' treatise. History painting came to be seen as the medium for such sublime art and the fête galante became a historical curiosity. This decline is further discussed in terms of contemporary critical theory. As this work sets out to describe the history of certain ideas and artists, rather than being an all-inclusive history, many leading artists do not receive the consideration a full profile of the Academy would demand. But at the same time, and more importantly, several figures are restored to a place in the Academy's history from which they have long been excluded.

French was not a standardised language throughout the period under consideration. Quotations have been cited as written, including emphases, in part so that the gradual development of a national culture may be perceived. Sources are referred to printed texts wherever possible. Acute accents print as " e" throughout.

NOTES

1. See Chapter Six below for an extended discussion of the relationship between art and theatre.
2. See Linda Hutcheon, A Poetics of Postmodernism, (London, 1988), pp.3-21 and also pp.222-231.
3. Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, (Manchester University Press, 1984), p.81-82. See also Tombeau de l'intellectuel et autres papiers (Paris 1984) for a development of Lyotard's fear of the overlap of the totalising narrative and Terror. The extraordinary impact made by Solzhenitsyn and the revelations of the Gulag in the USSR cannot be underestimated in French intellectual life. Lyotard had been a part of the Socialisme ou barbarie group and is obviously determined not to make easy mistakes again, whilst remaining on the left. One awaits to see what impact the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe may or may not have on Lyotard.
4. See Michel Foucault, L'usage des Plaisirs, (Paris, 1984), pp.20-31 for an example of how such questioning produces new work.
5. Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," in Vision and Visuality, (ed. Hal Foster), (Dia Art Foundation, 1988), p.4ff.
6. Thomas E. Crow, Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Paris, (Yale University Press, 1985).
7. Victor Burgin, The End of Art Theory, (London, 1986), p.159. See also the feminist critique of the Old Master tradition in Griselda Pollock and Rosika Parker, Old Mistresses, (London, 1981).
8. Thomas Crow, " The Birth and Death of the Viewer: On the public function of art", in Hal Foster (ed), Discussions in Contemporary Culture, Number One, (Seattle, 1987), p.1. See the

transcript of the discussion afterwards for Crow's defence of his position against some hostile questioning, pp.24-29.

9. The role of Heidegger within the Nazi Party has become an advanced academic controversy in France. Jacques Derrida has published an examination of the Question as it has become known in De l'Esprit (Paris, 1987) in which he confesses to nervousness and hesitation in the face of the problem (see esp. pp.31-53). Forthcoming publications in English can only spread the controversy in Britain and perhaps most damagingly amongst the Deconstructionist school of Yale in the USA.

10. J-F Lyotard, *op. cit.* , p.26. See pp.28-53 for an extended discussion of the problems of legitimation.

11. Iain Chambers, " A Handful of Sand" in Block (No 13, 1987/8) p.62.

12. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks, (London, 1971), p.417.

13. Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, (Eng. trans., Boston, 1969), p.xx.

14. Walter Benjamin, Illuminations , (London 1973), p. 264

15. Benjamin, *op cit.* p.263. Benjamin echoes Marx's famous comments at the opening of the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte in which he describes how Roman ghosts "watched over the cradle" of the bourgeoisie of 1789.

16. Jurgen Habermas, Philosophical Discourses of Modernity, (Blackwell, 1988), p.6 see also pp.3-21.

17. Michel Foucault, The Order of Things, (London, 1970); Richard Sennett, The Fall of Public Man, (London, 1986); one might also cite the resurgence in Georgian architecture promoted by the neoconservative architects.

18. Quoted in Linda Hutcheon, *op cit* , p.95.

CHAPTER ONE

The study of history is perhaps most rewarding when it challenges a received assumption, forcing a change of view and a rethink of what seems to be obvious. This thesis re-examines two assumptions. The development of an Academic vision under the ancien régime monarchy of Louis XIV and the Regency is the subject in question. We need to ask why painting became a subject for debate and theoretical examination in the seventeenth century in France. Hitherto it had simply been practised, with or without royal patronage, and no significant body of writing about painting existed. However, from the establishment of the Academy in 1648, a stream of writing began about art both in practical and theoretical terms that turned into a flood during the famous Querelle of the Ancients and Moderns and has continued until our own day. It will be the purpose of this chapter to examine the context in which painting became an intellectual problem in seventeenth century France.

The second aspect of our inquiry is as to why the monarchy became involved with painting on an institutional basis. When Francis I brought Leonardo to France to work as his court painter, he did not set up an Academy around the Italian artist. Leonardo knew of the Renaissance Academies in Italy but did not, as far as we know, see the need to match them when he came to France. Yet in the immediate aftermath of the civil war known as the Fronde (1648-53), when the very basis of monarchical government was being recreated, Louis XIV and his advisers devoted time and money to establishing an Academy of Painting and Sculpture. The political and institutional background to this initiative is the subject of the next chapter. However, this history will not be fully understood until it is set in the full

intellectual context that made both vision and its operation in painting a key intellectual problem of the time.

However, vision was not a discrete subject for intellectual inquiry in the seventeenth century. It formed part of the study of optics, an area in which the operation of the eye, the mechanisms of perception, the functioning of mirrors and the philosophical importance of sight could all be discussed. For the discrimination and categorisation now accepted as an integral part of all intellectual systems was not in force by the mid-seventeenth century. The medieval schools proceeded by scholastic debate and question which allowed many theories which would now be seen as mutually exclusive to stand side by side. A regime of Truth, operating under agreed standards of objectivity had not yet been established (1). The sixteenth century scholar, Melancthon, wrote in the introduction to his Initia Doctrinae Physicae:

" Les hommes de science à l'esprit delié se plaisent à discuter une foule de questions où s'exerce leur ingeniosité; mais que les jeunes sachent bien que ces savants n'ont point l'intention d'affirmer de telles choses." (2)

The scholastics were not concerned to establish a neatly organised body of knowledge. the symbols '+', '-' and '=' were not agreed as standard until the seventeenth century was well advanced. Western mathematics also remained opposed to the use of zero, long after its introduction in Hindu around 1300 (3). A consequence of this hostility was that the ancien régime used jetons rather than figures for their accounts right up until 1789. The government was thus unable accurately to assess its own activities, perceiving the world not as a subject for scientific inquiry but as a text everywhere inscribed with signs. Michel

Foucault described the limits of this system thus:

" There is no difference between the visible marks that God has stamped upon the surface of the earth, so that we may know its inner secrets, and the legible words that the Scriptures, or the sages of Antiquity, have set down for us in the books preserved by tradition. The relation to these texts is of the same nature as the relation to things: in both cases there are signs to be discovered." (4)

The range of scholarship was correspondingly all-embracing, making use of systems of resemblance and similitude that, by their very natures, knew no limit. Knowledge was arranged in a series of overlapping circles, described by Foucault as:

" The infinite accumulation of confirmations, all dependent on one another. And for this reason from its very foundations it will be a thing of sand."

A clear example of how this system actually operated, and the extent to which it differed from the the modern era, can be found in the pre-modern perception of the existence of magical forces throughout life. Nor did the rationalising winds of the Renaissance clear away such medieval ideas. In 1600, William Vaughan wrote that:

"Nowadays amongst the common people, he is not adjudged any scholar at all, unless he can tell men's horoscopes, cast out devils, or hath some skill in soothsaying." (5)

Forces existed in the natural world beyond the range of ordinary perception and control. Night, for example, was not merely an absence of light but a real presence, filled by beings and forces that could be used by mortals for good or evil ends. The last great witch hunt in France began in 1580 and ended as late as 1610. Further scandals occurred such as the affair at Loudun in 1637 where the priest Urbain Grandier was condemned for possessing nuns with demons (6).

The existence of such happenings was not open to doubt, for, as Pierre de Lancre observed in 1622:" L'écriture sainte dit

clairement en une infinité de lieux, qu'il y a de la magie et du sortilège et des Magiciens et des sorciers" (7). In the records of witch trials where torture did not have to be used to obtain confessions, there appears a kind of complicity between judges and accused in which both were aware of what needed to be said in order for the existence of the phenomenon - and the judicial system organised around it - to be reaffirmed. The language used recalls that of fantasy to modern ears, particularly in the obsessive detail in which satanic acts were described. Whatever the psychic origins of the witchcraft confessions, the willingness of both sides to enter into this macabre game depended on both sides accepting that such was in fact the nature of things (8).

The example of witchcraft demonstrates the gulf of perception that exists between the modern and pre-modern worlds. Knowledge was everywhere, yet remained impotent. Ideas held sway over hundreds of years without their premises being challenged whilst scholastic debate raged over detail. The world was everywhere inscribed with signs, yet there was no method for distinguishing between them. Edmund Husserl developed an analysis on these lines and concluded:

"Il manquait en général un motif pour se consacrer à
l'analyse des connexions des dépendances causales."
(9)

It was for this reason that Descartes, that emblematic figure of the break between the traditional and the modern, devoted himself to a study of method.

The first example Descartes used to demonstrate his method was the study of vision and his work is as important in the history of optics as it is in that of pure philosophy. He inherited a mass of confused optical theory with elements from the Greeks,

Arabs and scholastic philosophers that had existed in Europe since the thirteenth century. Many of these theories disagreed on the most fundamental points. Euclid held that vision was the result of emissions from the eye reaching the object under observation. Despite the work of Al-Hazen in the eleventh century which effectively destroyed this argument, Euclidean ideas continued to be influential until the seventeenth century (10). On the other hand, Democritus held that objects emitted an eidolon, or appearance, which contracted in size until it entered the eye through the pupil, thus allowing the psyche to reconstruct reality (11).

By far the most successful of these theories was that espoused by Aristotle, derived from Plato and disseminated in the Middle Ages by Albertus Magnus and his pupil, St Thomas Aquinas. Like the other theories mentioned, it remained in use until Descartes' era by which time its intellectual dominance had hardened into unimaginative dogma. He described the academic climate of his youth in the Discours de la Méthode (1637):

" J'ai été nourri aux lettres dès mon enfance et pour ce qu'on me persuadit que, par leur moyen, on pouvait acquérir une connaissance claire et assurée de tout ce qui est utile à la vie, j'avais un extrême désir de les apprendre. Mais, sitôt que j'eus achevé tout ce cours d'études, au bout duquel on a coutume d'être reçu au rang des doctes, je changeai entièrement d'opinion. Car je me trouvais embarrassé de tant de doutes et d'erreurs, qu'il me semblait n'avoir ait autre profit, en tachant de m'instruire, sinon que j'avais découvert de plus en plus mon ignorance. Et néanmoins, j'étais en l'une des plus célèbres écoles de l'Europe, où je pensais qu'il devait y avoir des savants hommes, s'il y en avait en aucun endroit de la terre." (12)

Descartes was referring to the University of Paris, where Aristotelianism had won a complete triumph.

By way of illustration, we can examine the case of one

Anthoine Villon from the time that Descartes was a student. In 1624, Villon produced a series of theses hostile to Aristotelianism which he pinned up on the door of the Hôtel de la Reine Marguerite. The University quickly responded, declaring that:

" C'est une maxime dont plusieurs Estats du monde sont encor aujourdhuy une espreuve déplorable, qu'il n'y a rien de plus séditionnel et pernicieux qu'une nouvelle doctrine. Je ne dis pas seulement en Théologie mais mesmes en Philosophie." (13)

The Parlement upheld the verdict of the Sorbonne and Villon was forbidden on pain of death from propagating his ideas, it being agreed that: "La philosophie d'Aristote...est la mieux approuvée des Pères d'Eglise." However, the next day, Villon and his supporters organised a demonstration of eight or nine hundred people, backing his theses which denied transubstantiation and Paracelsus' theory of the elements. Two large bundles of his theses were distributed to Parisians during this demonstration and as a result the author was banned from teaching in the University of Paris.

The impact of such intellectual debate was greater than might be supposed, given the low level of literacy. A recent analysis of Richelieu's attempts to control the printed word concluded that:

"A partir de là, toute écriture est susceptible d'être politisée, c'est à dire, d'être investie par les luttes qui s'ourdissent au niveau de l'Etat, ou à celui, plus modeste de la ville." (14)

The impact of such politicisation was felt through a network of lecteurs populaires who read out works in public, and through the teaching offered on the bridges of Paris (15). The results became fully apparent during the Fronde when a mass of popular writings, pamphlets, placards and prints appeared. Parlement was influenced by fear of such popular movements in the Villon case.

Through the Sorbonne, Aristotelianism had become almost part of the Scriptures, and was certainly at the heart of the prevailing orthodoxy. Promoted by Church and State, it was in effect the key to the ruling ideology of late medievalism. This is not to say that Aristotelianism had hard and fast rules. Indeed, thinking on vision was, to modern eyes, confused and what might appear to be glaring contradictions existed side by side for centuries. However, to expose these differences and to praise Descartes for getting it right, would be to misrepresent the Medievals. For in the tradition established by Plato, vision was not a subsection of anatomy or physics (in the modern sense of the word) but a central part of philosophy and theology. For the Medievals, God was often thought of in terms of light, and light remained the original metaphor for spiritual realities. Here, as so often, the Classical inheritance was a crucial factor. In his discussion of the role of sight, Plato had interpreted it as a gift from the Gods:

" The sight of day and night, the months and returning years, the equinoxes and solstices, has caused the invention of number, has given us the notion of time, and made us inquire into the nature of the universe; thence we have derived philosophy, the greatest gift the Gods have given or will give to mortals." (16)

Vision was thus part of the chain of self-awareness and was more an intellectual process than a relationship with the material world. Sight was carefully distinguished from the other senses by Plato and he was careful to point out that, unlike them, it involved neither pain nor pleasure (17). Aristotle followed Plato's lead and although he quickly sketched out how: "the visual qualities of objects are communicated to the organs of sight", his primary area of concern is whether or not sight should be subject to the moral restraint sophrosune, or

moderation (18). Thus in the Nichomachean Ethics, we find Aristotle discussing vision as part of his examination of pleasure. Plato had taught that perception of an object occurred as the result of the object's qualities altering the air itself in front of the eyes so that they could then perceive its nature. No process of alteration took place within the eye itself which was solely the agent of reception. So it was that Aristotle held that: "the unimpeded exercise of a faculty is a pleasure" and therefore subject to the restraints of temperance whilst excluding sight from this category. He wrote in explanation:

"The people who find pleasure in looking at things like colours and forms and pictures are not temperate or intemperate (19)

As sight was at once of the highest importance and not a physical process, it was in a separate category to the other senses. Aristotle wrote:

"There is a theory that some pleasures generally described as the 'higher' pleasures are exceptionally desirable, while the bodily pleasures (which give the intemperate man his opportunity) are not... [For] there are states and movements of the soul which cannot be in excess of what is good and movements which can. You cannot have excessive pleasure from the former but from the latter you can... On the other hand, the pleasures which are derived of objects pleasant by nature and not per accidens and therefore unaccompanied by pain do not admit of excess." (20)

As sight was part of this last, highest category of movements of the soul, it was not important to describe or investigate its precise functioning. It was enough to explain how the visual essence of objects was presented to the eye which then acted as the agent of the soul. The crystalline lense within the eye was held to be the locus of this transfer of information. Although details were questioned, this theory remained broadly intact until Descartes.

The influential eleventh century Arab scholar Al- Hazen compared the eye to a mirror, passively receiving the light

source and well designed to transmit it to the brain. The purity of light and the simplicity of its reception were central to the Medieval aesthetic, even if certain questions had to be smoothed over to make these ideas work. A cliché of Medieval aesthetics was that proportion was the key to beauty; light was also held to be inherently beautiful but it was obviously difficult to assign it proportions. Light was thus found beautiful by virtue of its quality and for its own sake. In this way, it was distinguished from the qualitative beauty inherent in material things which had to be brought out through proportion. St Augustine, in De Ordine, drew a linguistic distinction between these different beauties. Only pleasures of visual perception and moral judgement were allowed aesthetic character by Augustine and were grouped under the heading pulchritudo. The pleasures of the lower senses, hearing, taste and touch, were described as part of suavitas, the Latin equivalent of Aristotle's sophrosune. St Bonaventure linked the Classical notion of restraint to the Medieval emphasis on proportion:

"We say there is suavitas when an active power does not overwhelm its recipient too disproportionately: for the senses suffer from excess but delight in moderation." (21)

This hierarchy of the senses left sight in a noble position, and still further separated from the other senses in Aquinas' system by its peculiar suitability for learning.

But the philosophical importance of vision meant that optics lingered unattended as a science for generations. If sight was a passive, divine mechanism for transmitting the nature of the material world to the soul, there was nothing to investigate. Within the Medieval understanding of vision, it was not only divine and therefore beyond understanding but also an

uncomplicated relay process that was unworthy of study. The senses of taste and touch were held to involve a mingling with the material world, a much more interesting problem. So it was possible for the differing theories of Antiquity, Arab and Medieval civilisation to coexist in what might appear unresolved confusion. In fact, on the basic points all were in agreement and the rest were simply minor points of dispute.

Aristotle had been prepared to extend some of the qualities of sight to hearing, but the medieval theologian Albertus Magnus wrote:

" It is to be said that 'sense' has a two-fold relation, namely ad sensitivum and ad sensibile: ad sensitivum in producing the sensitive being and ad sensibile in knowing. And according to the first mode, touch is the first sense, the second is taste...and the last is sight...However, according to the mode of cognition, sight is the first...and then follows hearing...and finally touch." (22)

His pupil Thomas Aquinas developed this theory yet further by accommodating this version of Aristotelianism with both the teachings of the Church and the discoveries of the Perspectivist school of optics, based on the work of Euclid. Sight was awarded the highest rank in the new hierarchy on account of its greater spirituality. Aquinas wrote:

" The reason, in fact, why we employ 'light' and the other words referring to vision in matters referring to the intellect is that the sense of sight has a special dignity; it is more spiritual and more subtle than any other sense...For objects fall under sight in virtue of properties which earthly bodies have in common with the heavenly bodies." (23)

The spirituality of sight was confirmed by the very mechanisms of perception, for, as Aquinas wrote:

" Sight, which is without natural immutation either in its own organ or its object, is the most perfect and the most universal of all the senses." (24)

Thus in the apparently circular logic of the time, sight was the

most spiritual sense because it had no material effect on the object of perception or within the eye itself. There was no such effect because of the divine origins of sight. This arrangement was manifest in the physical arrangement of the sense organs, according to Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim:

" For the eyes, placed in the uppermost place are the most pure, and have an affinity with the nature of fire and light...[whilst] the touching is diffused through the body and is compared to the grossness of the earth."
(25)

The human body itself was inscribed with signs as to the relative importance of the senses. Touch was not only impure as a result of its contact with matter but was further devalued because of its overlap with taste, as Aquinas repeatedly emphasised:

"One sense regards one contrareity; as sight regards white and black. But the sense of touch grasps several contrareities; such as hot or cold, damp or dry and suchlike. Therefore it is not a single sense but several... Further, a species is not divided against its genus. But taste is a kind of touch. Therefore it should not be classed as a distinct sense from touch." (26)

In this tabulation, Aquinas moved away from his Aristotelian model. Aristotle had held that certain qualities of perception were common to all senses, forming a kind of bed-rock of sensibility, composed of perceptions of movement, rest, number, shape and dimension (27). For Aquinas, these overlaps were likely to cause confusion:

" But the senses can be deceived about objects only incidentally sensible and about objects common to several senses. Thus sight would prove fallible were one to attempt to judge by sight what a coloured thing was or where it was."

His point was that as sight distinguished white from black, it would be unable to identify a coloured object correctly. His conclusion indicates the gulf that exists between the medieval

and modern mind. For modern eyes nothing could seem more natural than to perceive colour with the eye and to make visual judgements about the positions of objects. But for Aquinas, the very exalted nature of sight entailed its weakness. Sight transmitted God's creation, and nothing more. As for the rest:

"To be cognizant of the natures of sensible quantities does not pertain to the senses but to the intellect."

This remarkably abstract position led to an almost inevitable indifference as to the operation of the eye itself. After all, in reality, there are very few occasions when all the eye has to do is distinguish between black and white. In most situations colour, movement and shape are likely to be involved. Even on the most fundamental issues, the Scholastics were not concerned to resolve these outstanding differences and contradictions. Many had questioned whether sight was the result of rays emitted from the eye or of 'species' given off by objects entering the eye. If the eye was responsible, the problem was how one could see very distant objects such as stars, for it seemed unreasonable to suppose that any ray could travel that far quickly enough. On the other hand, if objects were the source, giving off images of themselves that diminished in size until they were small enough to enter the eye, then how could very large objects be perceived, especially from close up?

In the eleventh century, the Arab scholar Al-Hazen argued from the after-images that persist when the eyes are shut after looking at a bright source of light, such as the sun, that sight must be the result of rays entering the eyes. He accounted for the perception of large objects by creating a visual pyramid with its peak in the eye and its base on the object. This experiential evidence did not cut much ice with the Christian

philosophers. Aquinas was sufficiently aware of such ideas to insist, without any authority from Aristotle, on the existence and importance of the visual pyramid. But he wrote:

" It makes no difference whether seeing takes place by movement from the eye outwards, so that the lines enclosing the triangle or pyramid run from the eye to the pyramid or e converso, so long as seeing does involve this triangular or pyramidal figure; which is necessary because, since the object is larger than the pupil of the eye its effect has to be scaled down gradually until it reaches the eye." (28)

Aquinas felt able to ignore such questions because he was indifferent to them. Because it fell outside his terms of reference, he overlooked the fact that the idea of the visual pyramid arose in order to prove the intromission theory. Not until the beginnings of experimental and observational science in the mid-seventeenth century were these questions resolved in Europe.

In a recent study of the history of optics, David Lindberg concluded:

" The traditional framework, though occasionally questioned, remained basically intact until early in the seventeenth century." (29)

For despite the Renaissance use of linear perspective in art, the way in which the artists thought of sight had not changed. Alberti, for example, made use of the visual pyramid, but like Aquinas dismissed any further investigation:

"the function of the eyes need not be discussed in this place." (30)

For he believed that perspective was the representation in art of the actually existing visual pyramid Al-Hazen had described. The eye was then able to function in the same way looking at art as at reality. Renaissance perspective marked an important change in artistic convention but it was readily accepted because it entailed no profound shift in the understanding of vision.

Leonardo da Vinci was in doubt over the exact functioning of the eye but used and understood perspective. He described it in this manner:

"Perspective is a rational demonstration whereby experience confirms that all objects transmit their similitudes to the eye by a pyramid of lines. By a pyramid of lines, I understand those lines which start from the edges of the surface of bodies and, converging from a distance, meet in a single point; and this point, in this case, I will show to be situated in the eye which is the universal judge of all objects." (31)

Renaissance perspective can be understood as an improved means of depicting the Scholastic understanding of vision. The artists who used it saw it not as a device but as the representation of the actually existing visual pyramid that delivered 'similitudes' to the eye for judgement.

This model was so stable and secure that even major discoveries did not affect its five hundred year old authority. Johannes Kepler discovered by experimentation that images are inverted on the retina of the eye. He also demonstrated the processes of refraction in the eye. Yet even these discoveries did not change the notion of the eye as a transmitter of information to the soul. Kepler concluded his Ad Vitellionem Paralipomena of 1604 thus:

" I say that vision occurs when the image of the whole hemisphere of the world that is before the eye... is fixed on the reddish white concave surface of the retina. How the image or picture is composed by the visual spirits that reside in the retina and the nerve, and whether it is made to appear before the soul or the tribunal of the visual faculty by a spirit within the hollows of the brain, or whether the visual faculty, like a magistrate sent by the soul, goes forth into the administrative chamber of the brain into the optic nerve and the retina to meet this image as though descending to a lower court- this I leave to be disputed by the physicists." (32)

Kepler thus located his discoveries in the old system for no physical discovery alone could upset the primacy of the soul over

the senses. His lack of interest in reaching any firm conclusions about the actual process of sight reflected the continued vigour of traditional optics as a system of knowledge. There was no sense of imminent collapse or of working towards a new order. Kepler described the body as a miniature society in which vision played the part of a senior judge, with all the associations of impartiality and importance which that comparison generated. His investigation still proceeded by resemblance and the chain of being which took priority over his observations. Such a system made change very difficult. T.S. Kuhn's description of the process of scientific change begins with a growing awareness of the contradictions produced by normal work until:

" that awareness of anomaly opens a period in which conceptual categories are adjusted until the initially anomalous has become the anticipated." (33)

The anomalies Kepler encountered did not lead him to change his overall views at all. It seems fair to conclude that the system of vision derived from Plato, Aristotle and Al-Hazen was alive and well in the early seventeenth century.

The theory inevitably had practical effects, for, as Bachelard has noted, scientific instruments are nothing more than "théories matérialisées", and, he continues:

"Les 'objets' de la science, loin d'être de pauvres abstractions tirées de la richesse du concret, sont les produits théoriquement normés et matériellement ordonnés d'un travail qui les dotent de toute la richesse de la sensibilité des précisions expérimentales." (34)

Bachelard's theory has two implications for the case in hand. On the one hand, it explains why the instruments of vision remained so rudimentary for so long, and, on the other, it guides us towards an understanding of why attitudes changed in the seventeenth century. The weakness of theories as to the exact functioning of sight led to difficulties in correcting or

improving vision. Glasses were first discovered by artisans in the 1280s but the reason why they worked was not understood. They remained of very poor quality for hundreds of years and there was no discussion of glasses on the theoretical level until 1589 (35).

The apparatus of vision (as opposed to the theory) was in fact part of the all-embracing system of magie naturelle, that system of knowledge introduced earlier. Magie was the good use of natural knowledge and was sharply distinguished from sorcellerie, that is, black magic. One of the best sources for this subject is the work of Giovanni Batista della Porta, an Italian whose Magie Naturelle appeared in French in 1650. He took an elevated view of magie:

"Il n'y a rien plus hautain, ne plus agréable aux amateurs des bonnes lettres, ne l'estimans estre autre chose qu'une consommation de naturelle Philosophie et une suprême science. Cette Magie douée d'une planteuse puissance abonde en mysteres cachez et donnent contemplation des choses qui gisent sans estre apprehendées et la qualité, propriété et cognoissance de toute nature, comme sommet de toute Philosophie... elle fait des oeuvres que le monde estime miracles." (36)

The system was rooted in its understanding of nature through the complex system of affinities and correspondences (37). Within this order, objects were attracted to one another or repelled each other. The truth of this system could easily be observed in the way like attracts like. Della Porta's examples were the spreading of fire, people becoming cowardly in the presence of a coward and the eating of a chicken's stomach to cure your own stomach. These correspondences were not the product of chance but originated from the chain of being itself which operated in a clearly defined fashion:

" A mon avis, il n'y point de doute que les choses inférieures servent aux supérieures et que cette nature

" etherée découle et dérive une efficace et vigueur: de sorte que les choses qui sont subjectes à mutation par une loi certaine, et ordre continue, sont corrompues et engendrées." (38)

Far from the witless superstition one might suppose, magie was, then, an articulated system for the description and use of external reality.

Within that system, vision and its apparatuses played a central role. Porta wrote:

" La Magie contient une puissance et faculté speculative, qui appartient aux yeux et tromper elle suscite de loin des visions es eaux et es miroirs faconnez en rond, concavez, étendus et diversement fermez desquelles choses la plus grande partie de la magie naturelle dépend." (39)

Indeed, so important was the study of mirrors for Porta that he devoted an entire book to the subject, in which he discussed the manufacture of a camera obscura. He did not see the full implications of the camera obscura in the way that the seventeenth century theoreticians were to do after him. Again we are reminded that observation alone does not create a scientific discovery unless the observer is looking for something in particular. For Porta it was merely a curiosity rather than a model for the processes of vision.

Nonetheless he was familiar with the work of Euclid, Ptolemy and Vitellio with whom he shared the definition of optics as a part of mathematics. In his introduction to the French translation of Porta's work, Lazare Meysonnier told his readers that a knowledge of magie was useful because you could then solve:

"Plusieurs problèmes de Géométrie, d'Algèbre, d'Optique, de Gnomique et semblables dépendances de Mathématiques." (40)

It might seem that such a connection made optics after all a practical discipline. But in fact, it was seen as part of pure mathematics in the tradition inherited from Antiquity. For Plato

vision was the highest and most spiritual sense. It was therefore most closely associated with the Idea itself which, in his late works, Plato saw as being composed of numbers. In the Timaeus, Plato resisted the idea that bodies can be understood by mathematics because matter resists the imposition of form. But as he allowed mathematics to be applied to vision, it cannot, by extension, be a material process. This view again survived until the seventeenth century when Galileo, putting the Aristotelian line, wrote:

"After all... these mathematical subtleties do work very well in the abstract, but they do not work out when applied to sensible and physical matters. For instance, mathematicians may prove well enough that sphaera tangit planum in punto..., but when it comes to matter, things happen otherwise. What I mean about these angles on contact and ratios is that they all go by the board for material and sensible things." (41)

So sight became part of geometry, rather than physics or medicine, as a consequence of the initial premise that it was of divine origin. Optique in seventeenth century France was a subset of mathematics but it had its own dependences as well. Porta wrote that:

" Il y a un partie de Géométrie qu'on appelle Perspective laquelle appartient aux yeux, et laquelle opère plusieurs merveilleuses expériences, si qu'orès elle vous fera voir en dehors une effigie et tantost ne vous presentera chose aucune, et d'ailleurs bigearrement vous transportera ses effets en vous formant diverses images." (42)

It is noticeable that the use of perspective was not to confirm our experience of the natural world but to amaze and mystify the audience. For in this world organised by resemblance an image was not the 'window on the world' we have come to take for granted. Rather it had the kind of power and associations more readily associated in modern terms with so-called primitive peoples rather than with the enlightened West. Images did not just

reflect those depicted but had a close association with their subjects. In this way, the Masai people in Africa today do not allow people to take their photograph without permission as they feel this takes away part of their soul. So too thought Lazare Meysonnier in his work of 1669:

" Mais pourtant comme la représentation des hommes, qui est faite avec des sons assemblez par l'ouye à ceux qui les entendent et les lettres qui les expriment, comme une peinture par la veue, est soutenue par ces mesmes hommes qui les représentent en sorte qu'ils sont jaloux de soustenir ce qui fait à cette représentation, comme s'il se faisoit à eux-mesmes, pensans que l'affection qu'on porte, ou l'aversion qu'on a à ce qui les représente est la mesme qu'on celle a en verité pour eux; en sorte que si quelqu'un parmi nous par mépris déchiroit un papier où seroit écrit le nom de nostre Roy Très-Chrestien LOUYS DE BOURBON ou le fouloit au pied avec des paroles insolentes, le Roy le scachant s'en sentiroit offensé en sa personne et feroit punir ce criminel." (43)

Representations were not simply reflections of reality but a resemblance linked by the chain of affinities to its subject. It is interesting to see that Meysonnier, like Kepler before him, saw representations as being covered by the law and any damage to them as a criminal act. This privileged status was not easily conceded and was to prove a key obstacle in the path of Cartesians and others attempting to alter the reception of images under the monarchy of Louis XIV. For images gained their importance as being the end of a chain that began with God:

"Dieu est partout et voit tout, se tient devant nous et nous ne le voyons point; mais que nous voyons son nom et voyons les signes de ses Ministres, qui font ce qu'il dit. Ainsi disoit Dieu incarné sous le nom de IESUS, à qui les anges servent, à la parole duquel les Demons sottent, les Ames revenans avec les corps qu'elles ont quitté." (44)

Seeing was divine in origin as we have seen. But Meysonnier importantly extended the argument to include the signs made by his Ministers, who, of course, included the King who was

annointed at coronation. The status of sight thus ultimately rested upon the same tenets of belief as both Church and State. Any effort to change these beliefs would inevitably attract the interest of the forces of government. It is a testimony to how powerful the ideology of Christian theology and monarchy had become that, as far as sight was concerned, there was so little dispute for so long.

Part of that strength lay in the genuinely popular roots of magie within the folklore of towns and villages. In his major study of this subject, Religion and the Decline of Magic, Keith Thomas concluded:

" Instead of the village sorcerer putting into practice the doctrines of Agrippa or Paracelsus, it was the intellectual magician who was stimulated by the activities of the cunning man into a search for the occult influences which he believed must have underlain them." (45)

This public confidence in the practices of magie emerged in the intellectual texts that survive today. Porta, for example, advised his male readers how to test the fidelity of their wives using the diamond's quality of virtue (46). The chain of resemblance was a feature of everyday lived experience, not just a theoretical premise of the educated elite.

Whilst the regime of resemblance and qualities was effective, there was little need for government to intervene to control or support it. Indeed, although the status of sight was high, it was in a weak position. Painting was thus not one of the liberal arts, which were confined to the three graces of Architecture, Poetry and Music. It was rather one of the arts de la main, giving it a rather lowly, artisanal status. As a result, the French did not seek to challenge Italy's self-proclaimed pre-eminence in painting and the visual arts despite Francois I

bringing Leonardo to be his court painter. Although French artists and Academicians were to make much of this heritage later, there was no attempt after Leonardo's death to bring over other artists or to cultivate a home grown variety.

Painting continued to be controlled by the guild of master painters, les maistres, as it had been since their foundation in 1391. Several times subsequently the guild had had their legal powers reconfirmed. These were based on the apprenticeship system and control over the picture trade. In an important court action of 2 December 1619, the maistres established that, in the words of the decree:

" Nul ne pouvoit être receu m[aistr]e qu'il n'eut été 5 ou 6 ans sous la sujettion de l'apprentissage, et qu'il n'eut encore apres servi 4 ans en qualité de compagnon." (47)

In this way the guilds were able to control entry to their profession and, unsurprisingly, the right to become a painter quickly turned into a matter of inheritance from father to son. The master painter gained ten years cheap labour for his studio as well as apprenticeship fees if the pupil was not the son of a guild member. Their control extended to the sale of art, and the guilds were empowered to ban any merchant , whether French or foreign from buying or selling works of art. Following the decree of 1619, the guilds also became the censors of visual material. Nudity was condemned in:

" figures et postures indécentes, deshonnestes et scandaleuses... pour corrompre la jeunesse et...blessent la chastet." (48)

So these "dirty, illicit and forbidden" images were banned on the pain of a substantial fine of 500 livres. The maistres had thus won a reinforcement of their traditional right to visit artists and check up on their work. The Parlement decreed:

" Nulle Image de pierre ne soit peinte jusqu'à premièrement l'Image n'ait esté veue ny visitée par les Iurez dudit mestier, pour scavoir s'il est bien et deuement fait."

The guild masters made much play with their concern to see that good and proper materials were used in art but no doubt the monopoly they gained as a result was not too displeasing to them.

Under the monarchy of Henri IV, attempts were made to limit the extent of the guilds' power. In 1608, an application to create a maistrise for the illuminators was rejected by the King in this fashion:

" L'erection de maistrise étant extrêmement préjuduciable à l'intention de Sa Majesté qui a esté d'embellir ceste ville par le moyen des manufactures et l'enrichir de toutes sortes d'ouvrages, ce que l'erection en maistrise et jurande empesche totalement." (49)

But in the difficult years following the assassination of Henri in 1610, the government made little progress in its struggle against these traditional privileges. In fact, after the court decision of 1619, the maistres took to paying visits upon those artists working under the brevet of the Crown. If they were discovered not to be members of the guild, their works were confiscated.

Many French artists realised that their careers were better pursued elsewhere and moved to Italy. As the Counter Reformation got underway, Rome increasingly became the centre of a newly dynamic Catholicism, seeking to give its doctrine visual expression. Under the Cardinals and Popes of the era, patronage flourished and artists prospered. However, it is difficult to see the French artists in Rome as laying the foundations of a French style. Their aims and outlook were very different. Simon Vouet (1590-1649) was President of the Accademia di San Lucca and later a founder member of the Académie Royale de Peinture in his native France. But his contemporary Valentin (1591- 1632), who also

lived in Rome, instead joined the Bentveughels, a rival Flemish and Dutch organisation. Stylistic differences also appeared in their art with Valentin preferring a dark, suggestive space following the school of Caravaggio whereas Vouet took a more Classical approach (50).

But if there was no school of French art in exile, there were plenty of French artists. So when Cardinal Richelieu, having secured his political authority by 1629, turned his attention to the arts, Rome naturally caught his attention. Richelieu initially set out to control the printed word. Despite the low levels of literacy, such politicisation made its effects felt through the network of lecteurs populaires who read out the latest works in public. One could be taught outside the closed ranks of the Sorbonne by itinerant teachers who gave their classes on the bridges of Paris (51). This literary underground emerged into the open during the Fronde when an extraordinary surge of popular writing arose. Known as the Mazarinades because their chief target was the authority of Cardinal Mazarin, these pamphlets were everywhere. But new ideas also appeared on placards and in prints. Some claimed inspiration from the English Revolution and its writings which are the closest parallel for this work. Richelieu had certainly known what he was doing when he sought to bring the republic of letters more closely under royal command.

So in 1635, Richelieu set up the Académie Française under the authority of Nicolas Faret to control and define the French language. It was also at this time that the first efforts were made to organise government intervention in the visual arts. Although accounts in modern times of the Academy's history have

begun in 1648, the secretary of the Academy in the mid-eighteenth century, one Hulst, thought differently:

" L'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture se doit reporter au règne de Louis XIII et est dû à M. Desnoyers, secrétaire d'Etat et Surintendant des Bâtiments. Ils spécifient même que M. Desnoyers mit cette Académie sous la direction de M. de Chambray, frère de M. Chantelou et qu'après la mort de ses protecteurs, cette Académie demeura fort négligée, jusqu'à l'époque ci-contre qui ne serait ainsi qu'un renouvellement." (52)

Although Hulst wrongly assumed that Richelieu's gathering of artists under royal protection was the same as having an Academy, in broad outline he was right. An attempt was made to bring French artists back to France to redecorate the Louvre and to assist the Italianisation of the court. But it did not mark a decisive break with the guilds and the artisan tradition which Richelieu and his servants simply ignored. The Academy itself was founded in direct response to the encroachments of the guilds on Crown artists (see Chapter III below). Nonetheless, Richelieu's stratagem was important for two reasons. Firstly, it did bring painting more closely into noble and royal circles, giving a greater chance of success to the bolder initiatives which followed it. Secondly, by taking Italian art and its practice as the model for French artists and patrons to imitate, the Richelieu circle determined the direction the early Academy was to take until the triumph of the Moderns over the Ancients in 1708 (see Chapter VI below).

Richelieu's agent in this task was Sublet de Noyers, appointed Secretary for War on 17 February 1636 and very much: "la créature de Richelieu" as a contemporary saw it. His appointment as Surintendant des Bâtiments followed in September 1638 (53). He was chosen because of his connections with the Barberini family who were dominant in Rome at the time.

Maffeo Barberini had been Papal nuncio to France in 1604 and had been made a cardinal whilst he was still there in 1606. On 6 August 1623, Maffeo became Pope Urban VIII and his cousin Francesco became a Cardinal: the Barberinis had arrived. Francis had been sent to France in 1625-6 and rose to become Vice-Chancellor of the court in Rome and founder of the famous Barberini library. At the same time, Urban was relying heavily on France in his struggles with the Hapsburgs. Artistic contacts grew out of these diplomatic endeavours. The Barberinis set the Accademia di San Luca on a secure footing when they gave it the right to tax all art and artists in Rome and a monopoly on all public commissions. Their courtier, the poet Giambattista Marino, persuaded Poussin to leave France for Rome in 1623. Francesco bought the work of French artists and gave commissions to both Poussin and Simon Vouet (54). Cultural and political links between Rome and the French government were strong.

So the close association between Sublet de Noyers and the Cardinal del Pozzo, a colleague of Francesco Barberini was of considerable political value. Del Pozzo was also one of Poussin's major patrons and it was De Noyers' intention to bring this artist back to France. Thus began years of negotiation and intrigue. De Noyers used his childhood friends, the Fréart brothers, as his agents in this business. The Huguenot Fréart family had converted to Catholicism along with Henri IV. Jean, the eldest of the three brothers, had been a conseiller du roi in the 1630s but it was his juniors Roland de Chambray and Paul de Chantelou who carried out de Noyers' work. Roland had studied mathematics, geometry and perspective and lived in Rome between 1630 and 1635 where he met the painter Errard (55). He was thus

well suited to act as an emissary to Rome and to deliver a letter from de Noyers to Poussin. He wrote that since becoming surintendant:

"Il me vint en pensée de me servir de l'autorité qu'elle me donne pour remettre en honneur les arts et les sciences; et comme j'ay un amour tout particulier pour la peinture, je fis dessein de la caresser comme une maistresse bien aimée et de luy donner les primices de mes soins."

He continued to say that it was the King's desire that both Poussin and "des autres rares et vertueux" artists should come to live in the Louvre or at Fontainebleau for a reward of 1000 écus a year. The artists would not have to work on ceilings and the agreement would not last for more than five years (56). These were the best terms any French artists had been offered by their own government. Yet in a time of affluence and peace in Rome, they were not enough to tempt Poussin to return.

So the Fréart brothers were sent to Italy once again in May 1640. Roland de Chambray described their mission as:

"une affaire importante... d'ouvrir le chemin de France à tous les plus rares vertueux d'Italie; et comme il estoit leur calamité, il nous fut aisé d'en attirer un grand nombre auprès de lui, dont la coryphée estoit ce fameux et unique Peintre, Monsieur le Poussin, l'honneur des Francois en sa profession et le Raphael de nostre siècle. Pour le mesme effet nous apportasmes une grande diligence à faire former et ramasser tout ce que le temps et l'occasion de nostre voyage nous peut fournir des plus excellentes antiques, tant d'Architecture que de Sculpture." (57)

Richelieu was aware of their journey and wrote to Mazarin informing him of it and asking him to supply the Fréarts with letters of introduction to the right people in Rome (58). De Chambray's mission was still not as successful as he would have liked despite this influential backing. Artists such as Duquesnoy, Pietro da Cortona and l'Algarde turned him down. He did gain the main prize in the shape of Poussin and was also

responsible for beginning the Royal collections of Antique and Classical art. He made mouldings of classical sculptures, including one of Trajan's Column, which were to become the basis for Academic training and remain so right up until the Revolution. Through his friendship with del Pozzo, Chantelou was able to obtain a copy of Leonardo's Treatise on Painting as the original manuscript was in the Cardinal's library. In 1651, de Chantelou was able to have this work printed and it played a part in the formation of Academic doctrine (59).

However, events at home were overtaking this cultural expedition. Richelieu was already weak with his final illness and his enemies sensed an opportunity. De Noyers wrote to the Fréarts:

" Je vois que vostre séjour à Rome donne lieu à nos ennemis de faire des contremines à tout ce que vous entreprenez, je suis d'avis que vous résolviez ce que vous pourrez, soit pour l'un soit pour l'autre et que vous laissez des ordres secretes, concertez avec ceux qui avoient assès de coeur pour venir en France, pour les faire partir quand et comment vous le résouldrez avec eux." (60)

One would hardly think from the conspiratorial tone of this letter that it referred to artists and sculptures. It is an indication that court politics came very much first and that the paintings and artists who form our main interest were only means to an end.

Nevertheless, the Fréarts returned to France as requested with Poussin on 17 December 1640. Poussin began work on the Louvre and despite de Noyers' earlier promise soon found himself expected to work on the ceiling and general design of the Grande Galérie. Considerable use was made in this work of the mouldings taken in Rome (61). De Noyers may in fact have hoped to create some form of permanent institution with the Grande Galérie as its home. He

did establish an Academy and college in the city of Richelieu and, in the words of de Chambray, he created:

" Des bibliothèques entières; car en deux années il en sortit soixante et dix grands Volumes en Grec, en Latin, en Francois et en Italien."

If there was any underlying purpose, it was part of the characteristic court intrigue of the day and was itself frustrated by such tactics. The intendant, Jacquelin, in alliance with the nobles de Lermancier and Baron Fouquières, combined to force Poussin to leave the court which he in fact did at the end of September 1642 (62).

Less than a year later de Noyers own fall had been engineered by his opponents, deprived as he now was of Richelieu's protection. On 10 April 1643 he left court with de Chambray and returned to Le Mans (63). The circumstances of his disgrace are not now entirely clear. The nineteenth century biographer of de Chambray suggested that de Noyers was involved in a plot to secure the succession of Anne of Austria. It was the discovery of this plan that led to his fall. If this is correct (Chardon did not cite his sources), then de Noyers was playing at a very high level of politics. When he attempted to return to the court in the following year, Mazarin had him stripped of the title Secretary of State. In 1644, de Chantelou was offered the post of surintendant des bâtiments in his stead but refused it. Poussin wrote to congratulate de Chantelou on his virtue in this action (64). Meanwhile his brother, de Chambray, became attached to the Duc d'Enghien, shortly to succeed to the title of Prince de Condé, who was to be a significant force in the Fronde. Again, it is tempting to see a conspiracy emerging from this chain of circumstance, but nothing can be proven.

Even though nothing can be proved either way, it seems clear

that the arts had yet to claim their own operational area. They were made use of when it suited court politics but were not of importance in themselves. There was not yet a word equivalent to the modern 'artist' in French and painters were described as artisans, the same as leather makers or blacksmiths. This relatively low status was institutionalised by the guilds and their privileges. It remained unaltered for so long because the subject of their work, vision and its representation, had an esteemed but weak status. As long as these conditions pertained, painting was not important in France. But change was coming both to the study of sight and to the practice of painting. First Descartes turned the world upside down with his new theory of optics. Then a group of artists broke decisively with the guilds to form an Academy that at first enjoyed Royal protection and was then taken over by it. These two developments form the subjects of the following chapters.

NOTES

1. See M. Le Doeuff, Voyage dans la Pensée Baroque (Paris, 1983).
2. Lucien Febvre, Rabelais et le Problème de l'Incroyance au XVIème siècle, (Paris, 1947), p.439.
3. Brian Rotman, Signifying Nothing, (London, 1987) p.33 and Chapter One in general.
4. For further details see: Michel Foucault, The Order of Things, (London, 1966); Robert Mandrou, Introduction to Modern France, (London, 1975); Gaston Bachelard, Formation de l'Esprit Scientifique, (Paris, 1938).
5. Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, (London, 1971), p.227.
6. R. Mandrou, Magistrats et sorciers en France au XVII siècle, (Paris, 1980), p.17ff
7. Ibid, p.88
8. Mandrou, op. cit., provides descriptions of these trials. Magie is discussed later in this chapter as an important part of the history of vision.
9. Edmund Husserl, 'La crise des Sciences Européennes et la Phénoménologie Transcendentale', Les Etudes Philosophiques, Nouvelle série, no. 3-4, (1949), p.233.
10. Vasco Ronchi, L'Optique. Science de la vision, (Paris, 1966), p.23.
11. Ibid, p.24. See David C. Lindberg, Studies in the History of Medieval Optics, (London, 1983), p.349 passim, for the diverse reception of these theories in the Middle Ages. See also Lindberg's Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler, (University of Chicago, 1976).
12. R. Descartes, Discours de la Méthode, (ed. Marabout

Université, 1974), p.31.

13. Jean Baptiste Morin, Refutation des Theses Erronées d'Anthoine Villon dit le soldat philosophe et Estienne de Claves Medecin Chymiste par eux affichées publiquement à Paris le 23 Aoust 1624 à l'encontre desquelles les y a en censure de la Sorbonne et Arrest de la Cour de Parlement, (Paris, 1624), Preface. See pp.4-13 for what follows.

14. Christian Jouhaud, La Fronde des Mots, (Paris, 1985), p.27.

15. Ibid, p.81.

16. Plato, Timaeus, (Harmondsworth, 1964), p.64.

17. Plato, op.cit., p.84

18. Lindberg, (1983), op. cit., p.341

19. Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, (Harmondsworth, 1953), p.222 and p.103. For a longer discussion of this point see M. Foucault, L'Usage des Plaisirs, (Paris, 1984), p.48ff.

20. Aristotle, op.cit., pp.223-25

21. Quoted in Umberto Eco Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages (Yale University Press, 1986), p.67. See also Chapter IV and Chapter VI for a fuller discussion of these questions.

22. Lindberg, op. cit. (1983), p.36.

23. Aquinas, Commentary on Aristotle's 'De Anima', parallel text with Aristotle , translated by K. Foster and S. Humphries, (London, 1951), p.267.

24. Lindberg, op. cit. (1983), p.36 n.36.

25. Ibid, p.38-9.

26. Aquinas, Summa Theologica, translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, second ed., (London, 1922), Vol. IV, p.82.

27. Aristotle, De Anima, p.252.

28. Aquinas, Commentary on Aristotle's 'De Anima', p.275, for

this and preceding quotations.

29. Lindberg, op. cit. (1976), p.147.

30. Ibid, p. 149.

31. Ibid, p. 159.

32. Ibid, p. 203.

33. T.S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, (University of Chicago, 1962), p.64.

34. Quoted in Dominique Lecourt, Pour Une Critique d'Epistémologie, (Paris, 1972), p.31.

35. V. Ronchi, op.cit., p.30.

36. La Magie Naturelle Par Iean Baptiste Porta contenant les Secrets et Miracles de Nature, (Lyons, 1650), p.2.

37. See Michel Foucault, The Order of Things, (London, 1966), Chapter One.

38. Porta, op. cit., p.48.

39. Ibid, p.4.

40. Lazare Meysonnier, "Introduction à la Magie Universelle", in Porta, op. cit., p.7.

41. Nancy L. Maull, "Cartesian Optics and the Geometrization of Nature", in S. Gaukroger (ed.), Descartes: Philosophy, mathematics and physics, (Sussex, 1980), p.24.

42. Porta, op. cit. p.339.

43. Lazare Meysonnier, La Belle Magie ou l'Esprit Contenant les Fondemens des Subtilitez et des plus Curieuses et Secretes Connoissances de ce Temps, (Lyons, 1669). p.67.

44. Ibid, p.71.

45. Keith Thomas, op. cit., p.229.

46. Porta, op. cit., p.208.

47. Statuts, ordonnances et reglements de la communauté des

Maitres ès Arts de Peinture, Sculpture, Gravure et Eluminûre de cette Ville et Faux-bourgs de Paris, (Paris, 1682), p.9.

48. Ibid, p.32-34.

49. J. Guiffrey, L'Histoire de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, (Paris, 1915), p.5-7.

50. See Pierre Rosenberg, France in the Golden Age, (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1982) for a wide range of examples of the art of the period. This exhibition proposed a linear history of French art I am trying to avoid but the argument is highly subjective and backed by little evidence in these early years.

51. Christian Jouhaud, La Fronde des Mots, (Paris, 1985), p.81

52. Louis Vitet, Histoire de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, (Paris, 1861), p.7.

53. Orest Ranum, Richelieu and the Councillors of Louis XIII, (Oxford, 1963), p.112-115.

54. Francis Haskell, Patrons and Painters, (London, 1963), pp.18-59 for these references and greater detail.

55. Henri Chardon, Les Frères Chantelou, (Paris, 1867), p.15-24.

56. Ch. Jouannay (ed.), Correspondance de Nicolas Poussin, (Paris, 1911), p.6-7.

57. Roland Fréart, Sieur de Chambray, Parallele de l'Architecture Antique et de la Moderne, (Paris, 1650), Preface.

58. Jouannay, op.cit., p.31 n.1.

59. Ibid, p.34. Further details of the Leonardo manuscript and its printing will be found in Chapter III below.

60. Chardon, op.cit., p.40.

61. These casts were to be a lifeline for the Fréarts after the fall of their patron. Thus when de Chambray was escorting Bernini on his 1655 visit to France, he made a point of referring to them

in the presence of Louis XIV.

62. Chardon, op. cit., p.46-49

63. Roland de Chambray, op.cit., Preface.

64. Chardon, op.cit., pp. 55-60.

CHAPTER TWO

As long as the Great Chain of Being was intact, the position of artists was unlikely to alter significantly. For whilst the operations of sight were no more than a transfer within that chain, there was no inherent reason why artists should be any more prized by patrons than goldsmiths, jewellers or the other decorative crafts. The chain was finally broken by René Descartes in his Dioptrique of 1637, appended as the first example of the famous Discours de la Méthode. From the outset of the work, it is clear that Descartes' whole approach to the question of vision was radically different from that of his classical predecessors. His achievement was, in essence, simple. Instead of regarding sight as the most spiritual sense, and hence the most philosophically important, he brought it down to earth. He described sight as a material process and hence the best tool for the description of material reality. By altering these first premises, Descartes was able to solve the problems that had previously been obscure. In a recent history of optics, A.I. Sabra has observed:

" The Cartesian theory was the first to clearly assert that light itself was nothing but a mechanical property of the luminous object and of the transmitting medium."
(1)

As such, the text reads altogether more intelligibly to twentieth century eyes than the Scholastics. His examples are drawn from everyday experience without any reference to previous texts or authorities.

The question at once arises of what change had occurred that allowed Descartes to make this break in theory that Kepler, for example, did not achieve on the same evidence. On the face of it, the theory advanced by Gaston Bachelard and later developed by

T.S.Kuhn in his Structures of Scientific Revolutions seems the most appropriate to explain this change. Bachelard held that theory was predominant in the sciences and that changes result from what he termed the rupture épistémologique. That is to say, the order of knowledge shifts not gradually but suddenly following from an alteration in the whole system of concepts that make up the épistème, the range of possibilities within knowledge at any one time. Bachelard arrived at this theory from a study of the origins of Einstein's work and took issue with the then fashionable view that Newton held the seeds of Einstein's discoveries. Bachelard rejected this continuisme and its concomittant réalisme and introduced instead his theory of the rupture épistémologique, the epistemological break (2). This theory gained a dramatic new lease of life in the 1970s when Louis Althusser applied it to the history of Marxism, seeking to define a pure theory of Marxism free from Hegelian influence after an epistemological break around 1845. The unfortunate consequence of this operation was that the vast majority of Marx's work had to be classified as not truly 'marxist'. The Althusserian wave has now receded and his theory has become a curiosity of the period (3).

It may, perhaps, be felt that Bachelard's theory is more applicable to the scientific area in which it was developed. The history of optics might seem promising ground but, although the theoretical break made by Descartes is indisputable, it was caused in some ways by very practical matters. Further, the Cartesian theory remained contested, particularly as far as the Academy was concerned, until the eighteenth century.

However, it was not technical change that inspired Descartes. Glasses had been known since the thirteenth century and the

telescope was invented in the late sixteenth century, as Descartes observed at the start of his work (4). It seems unlikely that purely technical advance caused Descartes to rethink the nature of light. It is in any case difficult to see how an instrument built to aid the working of one theory could create evidence for another unless it created unexpected results.

There were, of course, many other intellectual changes that might have had a knock-on effect into optics. One contender might be the discovery of the New World. Claude Lévi-Strauss has written of these voyages:

"Never had humanity experienced such a harrowing test, and it will never experience such another, unless, some day, we discover some other globe inhabited by thinking beings." (5)

It seems eminently reasonable that the dramatic expansion of the planet and of the peoples on it should cause a thoroughgoing re-examination of contemporary thought. Perhaps above all, a new mode of seeing was required. This was certainly the view of an anonymous writer in the Journal des Savants, the official learned journal of the day in 1667:

" La plupart des livres que l'on fait maintenant sur les autres matières, quelque'utiles qu'ils soient, ne sont pas absolument nécessaires; ce qu'on en écrit les Anciens étant suffisant pour nous en instruire: Mais on ne se pouvoit plus passer d'un nouveau Traité d'Optique. Car lorsqu'on eut decouvert le nouveau Monde, il fallut faire de nouvelles Cartes Géographiques, de mesmes maintenant qu'on a trouvé quantité de secrets pour perfectionner la veue dont les Anciens n'ont point de connaissance; il étoit nécessaire que l'on fist une nouvelle Optique qui comprist tout ce que l'on a jusqu'icy decouvert dans ce science. M. Descartes avoit commencé à travailler sur ce sujet et avoit desja démontré suivant ses principes une des trois parties dont l'Optique est composée." (6)

Yet despite the surface clarity of this chain of causality, it is in fact a clear case of reading history backwards. Columbus had made his voyage to America in 1492, one hundred and seventy five

years before the Journal des Savants found optics a matter of urgency. Sixteenth century descriptions of the known world by authors such as Jacques Signot and Boemus, did not even mention the existence of America (7). Either they had not heard about the discoveries or it was not of sufficient importance for them to mention it to their readers. Either way, it is a sharp indication that the sixteenth century was a period in which the tenets of observational science that are now so familiar as to seem natural, had not yet gained ascendancy. That is to say, in the argument of Karl Popper, that a scientific theory stands by the principle of falsifiability. Thus a scientist can repeat another's experiment to see if the same results are achieved. If not, the theory is held to be false. Likewise, a new discovery in the field might also disprove a current theory. But neither the discovery of the New World nor any other such discovery seems to have provoked a rethink of the principles of observation and sight. In the one hundred years before Descartes, the now famous work of Copernicus, in which he showed that the earth moved around the sun and not vice-versa, went through only three editions (8). Traditional attitudes as to the importance of the earth remained unchanged. No purely theoretical discovery or text can be held to have initiated Descartes' break.

In that sense Descartes did indeed initiate an 'epistemological break' in the sense given to the phrase by Bachelard and Althusser. However, it did not arrive as a bolt from the blue and nor was it uncontested. In the 1960s the notion of a general crisis in seventeenth century Europe became an important historical debate (9). After twenty-five years' discussion, the idea of a general crisis is still far from

universally accepted. Nonetheless, it seems clear that a profound series of disasters struck France following the outbreak of the Thirty Years War in 1618. An economic crisis in 1622 led to a subsistence crisis in 1630. At the same time, the supply of American silver began to dry up, falling sharply after 1630. Combined with the agricultural dearth, this collapse sparked a general economic recession that lasted anything from forty to eighty years depending on whose interpretation you follow. Whatever the exact truth, while Descartes was a young man high prices and food shortages were common. At the same time, the demands of war led to greatly increased taxation. The taille, the most widely paid tax, rose from a level of 20 million livres in the late sixteenth century to between 50 and 60 million livres in the 1640s. War and economic crisis always entail a measure of social dislocation. In the early seventeenth century, the monarchy adopted the sale of offices as a means of financing its much increased expenditure. Offices brought exemption from taxation and higher social status. Whole groups of middle ranking merchants, lawyers and clerks suddenly found an open door to the higher ranks of society. The old order was perceptibly changing and might have seemed on the point of collapse at times. There was, for example, a particularly severe outbreak of bubonic plague in France between 1636 and 1639 (10). As a soldier, René Descartes perhaps knew better than most the disruption and uncertainty that had visited Europe in the opening decades of the seventeenth century. It seems not unreasonable to surmise that these social upheavals in which the great sometimes fell and the lowly might rise caused Descartes to question the Chain of Being. In the light of all that was happening, the security and stability of the Aristotelian system no longer sufficed.

In his Meditations, Descartes began from this premise:

" What is a thing which thinks? It is a thing which doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses and also imagines and feels." (11)

For Descartes, to be human is to doubt and question. The final resource for the questions asked is the subject itself, the one being whose existence cannot be doubted. The predominance of the subject, outside of and separate from any Chain of Being, became the leitmotif of seventeenth century philosophy. John Locke, writing as a good Cartesian in the Essay on Human Understanding, confirmed the basis of this point when he wrote:

" 'Tis past controversy, that we have in us something that thinks, our very doubts about what it is, confirm the certainty of its being, though we must content our selves in the ignorance of what kind of being it is."
(12)

Thus at the heart of Cartesianism lay an uncertainty, but an uncertainty that could not be questioned. It was perhaps this tension that promoted Descartes' restless sense of enquiry into the world around him.

One of the first areas to receive this scrutiny was the operations of sight. Descartes' radical scepticism quickly led him to reject the essences of the scholastics as having no empirical basis. Instead he approached light as a physical substance with material being. He used everyday metaphors to describe light, such as the stick used by a blind person to guide themselves. Thus, in the same way that the stick touches the object under consideration directly, so does light. But light was not as concrete as a stick. Descartes described it as being like the wine that comes out of a bucket when grapes are being pressed, leaving the grapes behind.

In this deliberately sceptical analysis, light lost the

spiritual, almost divine, quality that had been attributed to it by the Medieval scholars. They had seen light as the proof of the existence of God. Descartes, more prosaically, described it as a tennis ball, moving under pressure. In place of theology came mechanics:

" La lumière, c'est-à-dire le mouvement ou l'action dont le soleil, ou quelque autre des corps lumineux, pousse une certaine matière fort subtile qui se trouve en tous les corps transparents." (13)

Armed with this new understanding, Descartes was able to deal with the refraction that Kepler had noticed but not been able to explain. He formulated the inverse sine law for refraction and extended his conception of light as a process of movement to seeing itself. Refraction and inversion on the retina were now understood as part of the process by which the retinal image was sent along the optic nerve to a particular spot in the brain (14). The very locus of vision was thereby relocated from the retina to the brain, getting round Kepler's puzzlement at the inverted image. The eye ceased to be considered a divine instrument in itself and instead acted as transmitter of information to the brain. Nor was it seen as just a passive agent. Now the eye controlled the important: "qualités de la vue" which were light, colour, situation, distance, size and shape. These were, of course, the very processes that scholastic philosophy had denied to vision. This break marked the beginning of the ascendancy of sight as the supreme sense, the scientific arbiter of all questions to do with the external, material world.

Clearly, these changes in how vision was understood went hand in hand with an alteration in the conceptualisation of vision as a process. No longer was it part of a chain of resemblances. Now it was a representation of reality to the brain. These were the

terms in which Descartes himself expressed the change, not a historian's word-play. The old philosophers, he wrote, were unable to explain the senses:

" Car, d'autant qu'ils ne considèrent en elles [images] autre chose, sinon qu'elles doivent avoir de la ressemblance avec les objets qu'elles représentent, il leur est impossible de nous montrer comment elles peuvent être formées par ces objets, et reçus par les organes des sens extérieures et transmises par les nerfs jusques au cerveau." (15)

Descartes' was able to show that resemblance was faulty using the examples of "signes et paroles". Every day we understand them yet they bear no resemblance whatsoever to the things they convey to the brain. Descartes did not say that it was impossible for signs to resemble their objects, or that there was never a causal relationship between them. But he maintained that between object and image:

" Il suffit qu'elles leur ressemblent en peu de choses; et souvent même, que leur perfection dépend de ce qu'elles ne leur ressemblent pas tant qu'elles pourraient faire." (16)

A functioning representation thus has no necessary relationship with the object it represents. Classical philosophy on this subject had been based on the concept of 'intentional essences', which, because of their resemblance to the object which emits them, the soul could recognise as accurate depictions of the real. Descartes' new system, by contrast, was an empirical project rather than an a priori philosophy.

He used engravings as an example of his theory of representation. In his opinion, engravings convey the idea of the object they represent without having any genuine physical similarity with it. For example, he noted that the rules of perspective made it necessary to depict a circle as an oval on a flat surface and concluded that this showed that:

" Souvent pour être plus parfaites en qualités d'images et représenter mieux un objet, elles doivent ne lui pas ressembler. Or il faut que nous pensions tout le même des images qui se forment en notre cerveau, et que nous remarquions qu'il est seulement question de savoir comment elles peuvent donner moyen à l'âme de sentir toutes les diverses qualités des objets auxquels elles se rapportent, et non point comment elles ont en soi leur ressemblance. " (17)

So although Descartes had declared that he did not wish to depart too far from the Ancients, he was now working in an area they had not even considered. The title of his work, Dioptrique, should have restricted him to a consideration of the refracted ray of light ('optic' being the unaltered ray and 'catoptic' the reflected one). Instead, he was relocating the entire process of vision.

For Descartes perceived a difference between representation and signification which the Ancients had not described. He differentiated between judgements and sensations. So when looking at a rose, the sensation of red gives rise to the judgement that the rose is red, a process to which we are so accustomed that we do not notice it (18). The very nature of the mind itself was now thought of in a different way. Pre-Cartesian philosophy saw the mind as a "glassy essence", distinguished from the physical essence of the body which constituted the corpse after death. In Aristotle, the retinal image was the model for: "the intellect which becomes all things". In this model, 'rosiness' is seen in the same way that roses actually are. But for Descartes the mind looked at representations in order to judge their accuracy. Scepticism was an integral part of this process in which the spirit had, as it were, withdrawn from the front line to a operations room in the rear. The mind was conceived as a space through which ideas - that is, perceived representations - could be reviewed by the Inner Eye of Judgement. The mind itself was no

longer synonymous with reason. As Richard Rorty has written:

" The Cartesian change from mind-as-reason to mind-as-inner-area was not the triumph of the prideful individual subject freed from scholastic shackles so much as the triumph of the quest for certainty over the quest for wisdom." (19)

For at the heart of Descartes' theory was a worrying lack of certainty. This system, so often referred to as the triumph of confident reason, was based on nothing more than a premise. In his Sixth Meditation, Descartes held that there must be a causal relationship between perception and external objects on the basis that such objects had been placed there by God, who does not lie or seek to confuse. But although we receive real sense perceptions, our judgement may be at fault in interpreting them. Descartes cited an instance in which he looked at a tower from a distance and concluded it was round, only to find from close up that it was square. It was this tension between the thinking subject and the objective world, knowable but veiled, surrounded by traps for the unwary, that provided Cartesianism with such dynamic force. If the world could be known accurately, then both the existence of God who created it and the subject who observed it could be proven. Far from Aquinas' scholastic proof of the existence of God, the Cartesian subject is constantly attempting to escape doubt through experimentation and thought.

Even in the realm of the deliberately fantastic, Descartes held that it was possible for the thinking subject to understand the most unlikely creations. In the Meditations, he wrote:

" For, as a matter of fact, painters, even when they study with the greatest skill to represent sirens and satyrs by forms the most strange and extraordinary, cannot give them natures which are entirely new, but merely take a certain medley of the members of different animals; or if their imagination is extravagant enough to invent something so novel that nothing similar has ever before been seen..., it is certain all the same

" that the colours of which this is composed are necessarily real." (20)

Thus the observer could make sense out of this creation by recognising the colours within it. But soon after this apparent certainty, Descartes considered what consequences might result from an evil genius, such as the Devil, attempting to deceive his senses in this regard. He was forced to conclude that no certainty could be placed on the evidence of the senses even if the matter seemed to be as straightforward as could be. Perhaps the forces of Hell could cause the subject to be deceived every time two and three were added.

Descartes' famous escape from this uncertainty was the formula cogito ergo sum. This phrase has passed into the commonplace book of all Westerners. Yet Jacques Derrida has reminded us of:

" The hyperbolical audacity of the Cartesian Cogito, its mad audacity, which we perhaps no longer perceive as such because, unlike Descartes' contemporary, we are too well assured of ourselves and too well accustomed to the framework of the Cogito, rather than to the critical experience of it." (21)

Here Descartes felt that he had found a base from which no scepticism could shift him. Even if the thinker was deceived, even if the thoughts were such that they might be called mad, there was no challenge to the 'I think therefore I am'. For even the madman thinks, even a wrong thought is a proof of the thinker. Just as Descartes had, as it were, displaced the mind by moving the judgement behind the ideas of the mind, he now created an original point behind thought. Both reason and unreason began from this zero point. For only by this resolution could Descartes resolve his doubts, though hardly with certainty. The Cogito, in the analysis of Derrida and Foucault, is a metaphysical construct where meaning resists non-meaning only by the process of thought itself. It was not the content of the

thought that mattered but simply the process of thinking. It was as if to say: "I who think, I cannot be mad". This point from which the subject finally gained certainty might be described as the vanishing point of Cartesianism, in light of Descartes' pictorial metaphors. In both the system of philosophy and of perspective, the vanishing point is not so much seen, as known to be there. For without it, the system cannot operate. With it, thought and space respectively can be organised and understood in relation to other thoughts and spaces. Yet the whole system rested on a single metaphysical assumption, surrounded by doubt on all sides.

Within this new order, the eye was only one optical receptor amongst many. Telescopes, for example, presented a better perception to our judgement than unaided sight. Sight was the practical area in which Descartes felt able to expose the break in the chain of being. His theory of optical reception may have begun from a consideration of refraction but his conclusions, in the words of Lamore's recent study:

"Served to undermine the traditional conception (deriving from both Greek and Christian sources) that God has given us the perceptual organs that we have because they naturally display the nature of the world we desire to understand. In short, this aspect of his empirical epistemology served to deteleogize our perceptual system." (22)

Observation alone no longer provided reliable knowledge about the external world. Sight had become the inquiring, experimental gaze. Whereas for Aristotle: " the mind which is actively thinking is the object which it thinks", Descartes was creating an objective reality of ideas that was always subject to revision (23). God's ordering of things was no longer immediately apparent to the observer. The representation caused by the physical

impression of light was nothing more than representation in need of interpretation.

The impressions registered by sight now needed to be tested and this theoretical change contributed to the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century. The time had come when two conflicting theories could no longer happily coexist - they had to be confirmed or denied by the facts generated from experiments (24). Descartes led the way by testing his theory on the dioptric ray and he found it to hold good.

In his work, Descartes repeated the magician's trick of the camera obscura, producing an image of the exterior on the wall of a darkened room through a small opening. But in the opening, he placed the eyeball of a newly-killed cow, with the result that, in his own words:

" Vous verrez, non peut-être sans admiration et plaisir, une peinture, qui représentera fort naïvement en perspective tous les objets qui seront au dehors." (25)

Painting had now come to stand for the new scheme of representation, its conventions standing as replicas of the body's own devices. The terms used here were to become stock in trade for ancien régime art critics. Representation in light and representation in paint were considered as similar processes. The description of how the visual peinture was built up only reinforced the connection between the two media. Descartes described how the peinture was never as distinct at the sides as in the middle. Vision derived principally from this "essieu de la vision", that is the rays passing through the centre of the pupil, as the scholastics had also taught. The pupil had therefore not to be over large, so that the figures seen could be distinct. The peinture was foreshortened, diminished and inverted as Kepler had described but, unlike Kepler, Descartes

fitted these elements into a pattern. For him, they composed: "un tableau de perspective", another indication that artistic terminology was equally applicable to the material world. The way in which perspective operated further reinforced his argument concerning the predominance of judgement over perception. Painting had no exact resemblance to the outside world, but was still understood by the subject:

"Et il est manifeste aussi que la figure se juge par la connaissance ou l'opinion, qu'on a de la situation des diverses parties des objets, et non par la ressemblance des peintures qui sont dans l'oeil: car ces peintures ne contiennent ordinairement que les ovales et des losanges lorsqu'elles nous font voir des cercles et des carrés."
(26)

In the year after these words were written, Richelieu and his circle began their efforts to establish painting on a higher level in France and it seems likely that these developments were related. There was a world of difference between painting as part of the chain of resemblance and painting as the embodiment of how the outside world is represented to the judgement. Descartes' break had succeeded in literally turning the world upside down by establishing the inverted retinal image as the source of perception, rather than a curiosity. The world was no longer to be simply observed but was now a resource for experimentation. Painting was one of the first areas to be affected as a consequence of its new importance within perception. As a result there was an Academy of Painting for twenty years before there was an Academy of Sciences.

Descartes himself did not play up the difference of his theory, perhaps feeling intimidated by the recent condemnation of Galileo as a heretic by the Catholic Church. His followers were less reticent. Discussion groups sprung up around these ideas and the scientist Jacques Rohault emerged from their ranks. In 1671

he wrote a treatise on Physics which dealt with all natural phenomena. In this text, he was scornful of the excessive respect shown to Classical philosophy:

" Il est certain qu'une soumission si aveugle à tous les sentimens de l'Antiquité, est cause que les meilleurs Esprits, recevant souvent sans y penser des opinions comme vraies qui peuvent estre fausses, ne sont plus en estat de connoître celles qui leur sont opposées, ny par consequent de trouver toutes les autres vérités, dépendantes de celles qu'un si pernicieux préjugé les empêche d'appercevoir. Et de plus cette forte persuasion d'estre si fort inférieur aux Anciens engendre une espece de paresse ou de défiance qui ne permet pas de rien entreprendre." (27)

Although there was confidence here, it was not the confidence of a writer who knew he was repeating generally accepted truths. Instead, it was a polemic directed against the stubborn survival of Classical philosophy, despite Descartes' discoveries. Over thirty years after the Discours de la Méthode, Cartesians were still writing as the opposition. The first section of his book was an extensive discussion of vision, the chosen battleground of the new science. At this point, Rohault's language became yet more violent:

" Ce n'est pas seulement parler sans raison, mais c'est mesme choquer la raison, que de dire la vision s'acheve dans l'humeur crystalline et que l'humeur vitrée est derrière pour le mesme usage que le vif argent est derrière un miroir à sçavoir pour terminer l'action de l'objet visible: Car il est indubitable que cet objet doit continuer son action du travers de l'humeur vitrée, qui estant la chose du monde la plus transparente que nous connaissons, ne scauroit raisonnablement estre comparée à du vif-argent, qui est très opaque." (28)

The key word in this passage is clearly raison, standing for the entire process of perceived representation, subjected to the judgement. For Rohault, it was clear to any scientist investigating the physical properties of the eye that the system of correspondences was invalid. Yet that system obstinately refused to give up. As we have seen, texts on magic continued to

be written, translated and used throughout the early decades of the Classical Age in France (29). This was an era in which different visual systems contested against each other. Right up until Kepler, writers on this subject did not seek to reverse previous theories and, indeed, were happy for contradictions to coexist. But the Cartesians believed that they were right to the exclusion of all other ideas.

Rohault described his system as "l'oeconomie de la vision". Within this disputed field 'economy' cannot have had the sense of balance and harmony to the extent that Rohault evidently wanted. It is perhaps better understood as the resolution of doubt within the field of vision, just as the cogito resolved Descartes' metaphysical doubt. The doubt was plain in the text. Rohault, following Descartes, wrote that each person sees differently. It was only custom that leads us to use the same name for the same object. Rohault felt unable to describe colour to his readers, for it would have been as impossible as to describe colour to a blind man (29). This almost existential doubt was later resolved. Rohault recognised that Cartesianism displaced the problem of visual perception from the retina to the brain. The question was left as to how this spiritual image was formed and why it was clear and distinct. Rohault had to resort to a statement of faith:

"Notre Ame est de telle nature qu'à l'occasion de certains mouvemens qui se sont dans le corps auquel elle est unie, il s'excite en elle certains sensations."
(31)

That is to say, Rohault used Descartes' defence of the honesty of God within the body. The soul, as the divine element linked to the body, was incapable of deception. Although Rohault had poured scorn on the essences of the Aristotelians, he was himself using

the essence of the soul to underpin his visual economy. It was a considerable gambit. Rohault was trying hard to be Cartesian, which meant, as Derrida has written:

" To-attempt-to-say-the-demonic-hyperbole from whose heights thought is announced to itself, frightens itself, and reassures itself against being annihilated in madness or death. At its height hyperbole, the absolute opening, the uneconomic expenditure, is always reembraced by an economy and is overcome by an economy." (32)

The economy of vision here should be understood as the means by which the tensions of Cartesianism were held in check and given force. The mind/ body dualism that has become a weary chestnut for philosophy ever since was, at this time, a difficult and exciting new problem. Rohault himself clearly stated this tension between reason and spirit:

" Les deux choses que l'on doit principalement rechercher dans toutes les sciences humaines [sont] l'aggrandissement et la justesse de la raison et cette ouverture de l'esprit qui le rend capable de juger sainement de tout et de se mêler des questions les plus difficiles, estant incomparablement plus à estimer que toutes les sciences du monde." (33)

Cartesian reason has become the arbiter of the visual court that Kepler had described. It is noticeable that Rohault also used legalistic terminology to describe vision, a court in which the soul itself was the judge, represented as The Judgement. As a result the study of sight became the most important of all the sciences for the Cartesians.

The Cartesian revolution was a liberating one for those who embraced it, casting off the shackles of worn-out scholasticism in favour of a new approach to knowledge that required discussion and experimentation. As late as 1699, Fontenelle declared in the Academy of Sciences that:

"We are forced to look on present-day science, at least physics, as if it were in its cradle." (34)

Physics was dominated in this period by optics and the reorganised system of vision affected not just the theory but all the practices which it supported. Bachelard has observed in this connection:

" L'observation scientifique est toujours une observation polémique... elle hiérarchise les apparences...; elle reconstruit le réel après avoir reconstruit ses schémas." (35)

However this process of reconstruction did not take place smoothly. The Cartesian revolution was not accepted without demur, but required years of intellectual debate. A central part of their project was the geometrisation of nature, seen now as the object of mathematical enquiry and description rather than the text inscribed with signs known to the Scholastics. Yet Rohault observed bitterly in his Physics that most students had virtually no knowledge of mathematics. He was convinced that the more mathematics was studied, the more students would come round to the new principles (36).

Within the field of vision, the re-ordering principle was that of perspective, bringing with it constraints as well as freedoms. Perspective, like the mathematics of which it was a part, was greatly extended and revised from its original function. Art had been the field in which perspective had been most used in its old form. During the Italian Renaissance, as is well known, various systems of perspective had been developed for use in visual imagery. Its uses were less all-embracing than the complicated systems the seventeenth century was to produce. In his detailed study of the subject, John White concluded that throughout the Renaissance, pictures were made using one sort of perspective or another. However, within the churches he examined, the pictures were often located so that the viewer could not be at the

designated viewpoint. Thus he writes:

" The advent of a focused perspective system makes no material alteration to a decorative pattern well established in Giotto's day and itself unchanged from the time when spatial realism was of no concern to the artist or the onlooker." (37)

Given the stability of theories of vision throughout this period (which were not part of White's book), it would have been surprising if perspective had created any deeper change in ideas of space and vision.

Within France, perspective made far less impact in pictorial terms. It remained part of the trickery of magic and one of its commonest uses was in theatrical sets (38). Jean Pelerin Viator introduced the academic community in France to perspective in the first ever printed text on the subject in 1505 (39). There were very few further writings on the subject before Descartes and they did not depart from the traditional, practical orientation of the subject (40). In 1638, one Nicéron from the order of Minims published his La Perspective Curieuse. He described the automaton mentioned in magie texts and continued:

" La vraye magie, ou la perfection des sciences consiste en la Perspective, qui nous fait cognoistre et discerner plus parfaictment les beaux ouvrages de la nature, et de l'art et qui a esté estimée de tout temps, non seulement du commun des peuples, mais encore des plus puissans Monarques du terre." (41)

Nicéron thus not only located perspective as part of magic, but acknowledged its origins as part of popular entertainment.

It was, as we have seen, at just this time that Descartes was upgrading the importance of perspective, not simply as the organising system of vision but as a physical counterpoint to the Cartesian subject itself. Soon after he published in 1637, an outburst of works on perspective appeared. These texts were very different, except that they all agreed on the importance of the

subject. Some were explicitly for or against Descartes. Others took up a position by implication but it is clear that this upsurge in interest stemmed from the re-evaluation of an intellectual curiosity known for well over a hundred years. Although Descartes had set up perspective as a key subject for debate, he did not quickly win that debate. The Academy of Painting itself expelled its own Professor of Perspective, who actually used a pre-Cartesian form of perspective (this drama is the subject of Chapter Four). In the eleven years between Descartes' theory and the formal foundation of an Academy of Painting, there were a series of interventions in the perspective debate.

In 1642, the Jesuit, Jacques du Brueil, produced a book on perspective in three volumes that was strongly influenced by Descartes. He raised the status of perspective in art according to its new scientific importance as one of the key sections of contemporary mathematics. Now perspective was in command:

" Elle instruit quelles couleurs il doit mettre, vives ou mornes, en quel lieu il faut appliquer les unes et les autres...en un mot, elle doit commencer et finir puisqu'elle doit estre par tout." (42)

Du Brueil has taken the supremacy of sight and the mathematicization of nature from Descartes and applied it directly to the role of perspective in visual imagery, thus giving it a leading role. But he immediately retreated from this bold position, fearing that he would not be understood. He continued:

" J'ay esté contraint de dire contre ma pensée, que c'est la prunelle qui recoit les rayons des objets, comme s'ils s'y terminoient, à raison que j'ay expérimenté que quand je dis que la vision se fait sur la rétine, au fond de l'oeil que les rayons ne font que passer par la prunelle et que les images ou espèces de ce que nous voyons se renversent; qu'il semble que je

" parle un langage nouveau et ne peuvent concevoir cela." (43)

Extraordinarily, then, du Brueil abandoned the scientific justification for his new perspective and continued to act as if the traditional view that vision took place in the lens of the eye was correct. He stated that all sight was in perspective, yet continued to act as if it were not. But in this state of confusion - where he believed that a dramatic discovery had been made, yet was unable to convince anyone else of it - he actually produced a very traditional text.

Perspective was defined by du Brueil as what would be seen on a transparent flat surface, interposed between the object and the viewer. He described a visual pyramid with its apex in the eye and its base at the object being viewed. The angle formed at the eye was 90 degrees as the eye was deemed incapable of seeing beyond this angle. Du Brueil described these lines as rayons visuels rather than the traditional lignes diametrales, possibly as a means of attempting to use Cartesian-style terminology. The perspective was still constructed in traditional fashion, below a line in the image taken to represent the horizon, that is, our eye level. On this line, a point is marked in to represent the actual viewpoint. From here the rayons visuels were marked in to the base. On the horizon, or eyeline, two points of distance are then marked in, as distant from the viewpoint as the viewpoint is from the base. This grid forms the basic tool for the perspective. The object to be depicted in perspective is marked on the base between the rayons visuels and lines taken from its extremities to the viewpoint. Lines are also taken to the points of distance, and the point at which these lines intersect marks the extremities of the line as seen in perspective. This fan like

construction produced a rapidly receding perspective, evidently better suited for dealing with regular shapes such as buildings than irregular ones like people. Du Brueil outlined the many possible uses for perspective, such as placing a scene drawn in perspective at the end of a garden walk, to give the appearance that it was longer than it really was (see fig.1).

Only a year later, in 1643, Etienne Migon, a professor of Mathematics, produced another treatise on perspective. A much shorter work than du Brueil's, it was concerned solely with demonstrating his theory rather than the practical applications that the former offered so extensively. For Migon, perspective was of two sorts. The first was speculative, used by the Spirit to understand objects. The other was practical, carried out by the hand to represent objects in pictures in such a way that the Spirit could understand them (44). He claimed to have based his method on the manuscript of one Aleaume, dating from 1628, but the influence of Descartes seems clear enough. For example, he wrote that perspective was the natural manner in which objects were represented to the Judgement, using the Cartesian vocabulary (45). His perspective method proceeded in the traditional way but attempted not to use the points of distance, an advantage for those working on very large projects. However, the grid that he produced, via some tortuous geometry, receded extremely sharply. He therefore argued that the angle of vision should not be more than 60 degrees, rather than the usual 90, so that the foreshortening was not too extreme. He argued that this was necessary:

" Car un angle plus aigu ne pourroit pas porter à l'Oeil assez distinctement toutes les espèces contenues dans le Tableau; de cette sorte, le semidiamètre du Cercle qui sert de base au Cone visuel, sera à l'axe du mesme Cone, comme à 3 à 5; ou 15 à 26.; qui est une distance de

" l'Oeil au Tableau assez convenable; car les rayons visuels ne faisans qu'un angle de 60 degrez, ne pourront que trop facilement comprendre toutes les parties dudit Tableau." (46)

Whilst this theory had the convenient effect of making the triangular grid narrower, and the foreshortening thus a little less rapid, it also marked a growing use of perspective as a method of controlling pictorial space. In this case, the visual angle itself became the means for determining the size of the picture. However, unlike du Brueil, Migon did not use perspective to control colour. So whilst there was common agreement as to the importance of perspective, there was no agreed terminology, technique or range of applications for the newly-important science.

Above all, the problem was one of language. The new perspectivists lacked a common phraseology to talk with one another. An attempted resolution of this problem came in 1648 with René Gaultier's Nouvelle et Briève Perspective. His description of the eye was based on Descartes', whom he described as "une des meilleurs plumes de ce siècle". However, his terminology was not that of Descartes. He blended medieval words with some from more recent science and coined his own terms as well, derived from Ancient Greek (47). Yet his metaphors were often homely, like that of a spider's web, following his intention of being intelligible to everyone from scholars to artisans. Gaultier provided a transcription of the Greek alphabet into Roman for the use of artisans, for whom he held his work to be particularly intended. But he felt perspective had an universal appeal:

" Cette science donne, et cause de merveilleux contentements à ceux qui ont la connoissance de la coupe des pierres et du bois, c'est-à-dire de l'Architecture, Charpenterie, et Menuiserie, principalement aux

" Ingenieurs, aux Graveurs en cuivre en bois et Peintres pour représenter par les règles de cette science les images, ou Perspectives, de toutes sortes d'édifices, meubles et corps solides; non seulement pour la satisfaction du plus noble de leurs sens, qui est la veue, mais de ce qui les emploient pour représenter dans leur galeries ou cloîtres quelque beau dessein du dedans d'une belle Eglise ou salle bien meublée." (48)

This mixture of science, artisanship and magic was not especially successful in practice. The idea was that by drawing a geometric plan of the object to be represented in perspective, the perspective could then be plotted onto the area in question without the need for lines to be taken outside the work surface. There was, again, clear potential for those working on walls or other large surfaces. But, as can be seen from figure two (which shows the four variations of Gaultier's method), it was also of far too great a geometrical complexity to be anything other than a curiosity.

Yet his efforts were no less significant for their lack of success. Gaultier was attempting to find a language for the new science that could be understood across all classes. 1648 was also the year in which the periodic civil upheavals of the previous twenty years broke out into open civil war, known as the Fronde. The Parlement was attempting to create an alliance stretching from the great nobility to the bourgeoisie and artisans. Gaultier was aware of the implications of his work and justified it in these terms:

" L'auteur du livret du Politique très-Chrétien qui dit: 'Que la science qui ne réduit pas en acte, et qui ne se manifeste point est inutile.'"

The point is not that perspective was a specific political issue in itself, but that in seeking to create a useful and intelligible science, Gaultier turned to perspective. It was a new science, standing for the new order that might come about. He

lived in Angers which had seen three major popular insurrections in the twenty years before the Fronde and had a large Huguenot population. Out of these discontents emerged the Fronde, mindful of the successful English Revolution. These were the kind of changes in the social order that had caused the long accepted ideas of the Chain of Being to fall into question. Descartes' work had made an undoubted break with that legacy. But he had not created a new paradigm sufficiently strong or sufficiently clear to dispose of the old order overnight. Equally, the seventeenth century crisis of French government was far from over. It was to be through the complex interaction of social and political forces, on the one hand, and philosophical and artistic discourse on the other that the new Academic vision was to arise.

NOTES

1. A.I.Sabra, Theories of Light from Descartes to Newton, (Cambridge, 1982), p.48.
2. See Dominique Lecourt, Pour Une Critique d'Epistémologie, (Paris, 1972), p.22-3 and Gaston Bachelard, Formation de l'Esprit Scientifique, (Paris, 1938).
3. See Louis Althusser, For Marx, (London, 1977) for the classic statement of his theory. See Simon Clarke (ed), One Dimensional Marxism, (London, 1980) for a detailed series of objections to the structuralist line. In the History Workshop collection, People's History and Socialist Theory, Raphael Samuel (ed), (London, 1981), there is a reprint of a furious debate on Althusserianism that gives the flavour of the times very well.
4. Renè Descartes, Discours de la Méthode, suivi par Dioptrique, (Paris, 1966) p.100, Garnier-Flamarrion edition.
5. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Triste Tropiques, (London, 1976), p. 89.
6. Anon, Journal des Savants, (1667), p. 113-4.
7. L. Febvre, Rabelais et le Problème de l'Incroyance au XVIème siècle, (Paris, 1947), p. 416. Both works were published in 1539.
8. Ibid, p. 442. The editions were actually published in 1543, 1566 & 1617.
9. See T. Aston, (ed), The Crisis in Europe 1550-1660, (London, 1965), for a collection of the most important contributions to this debate.
10. See P.J. Coveney, (ed), France in Crisis 1620-1675, (London, 1975), pp. 26-37 and Ernst Labrousse, (ed), Histoire Economique et Sociale de la France, Tome II (1660-1789), (Paris, 1970), pp. 329-337.
11. Quoted in Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, (London, 1979), p. 48.

12. John Locke, Essay in Human Understanding, (IV.iii.6), quoted in Catherine Belsey, The Subject of Tragedy, (London, 1985), p.85. See pp.82-87 for a fuller discussion.
13. Descartes, op. cit., p.134.
14. Ibid, p.147.
15. Ibid, p.127.
16. Ibid, p.128.
17. Ibid, p. 128.
18. Nancy L. Maull, " Cartesian Optics and the Geometrization of Nature", in S. Gaukroger, (ed), Descartes: Philosophy, mathematics and physics, (Sussex, 1980), p.33
19. Richard Rorty, op.cit., p. 61. See also pp.44-62 for a more detailed discussion of the preceding paragraphs.
20. The Philosophical Works of Descartes, translated by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, (Cambridge, 1970), p.146.
21. Jacques Derrida, Writing and Difference, trans. Alan Bass, (London, 1978), p.56. See pp.31-64 for Derrida's reinterpretation of Michel Foucault's analysis of Descartes in his Madness and Civilisation, trans. Richard Howard, (New York, 1965), especially in Chapter Two. Foucault replied to Derrida in the second French edition of Histoire de la folie à l'age classique (Paris, 1972) in an afterword entitled: ' Mon corps, ce papier, ce feu.'
22. Charles Lamore, " Descartes' Empirical Epistemology", in Gaukroger, (ed), op. cit., p.19.
23. Aristotle, De Anima, 431 b 17-18. See also John W. Yolton, Perceptual Acquaintance from Descartes to Reid, (Blackwell, 1984), p.6f.
24. Lucien Febvre, op. cit., p. 455.

25. Descartes, op. cit., p. 132.
26. Ibid, p.152.
27. Jacques Rohault, Traité de Physique, (Paris, 1671), Preface, n.p.
28. Ibid, p.317. One might speak of this problem in Bachelard's terms as the obstruction épistémologique, the block imposed by common sense, as absorbed by us all, to developments in epistemology.
29. See Chapter One above.
30. Rohault, op. cit., p.267.
31. Ibid, p. 336.
32. Derrida, op. cit., p.61-2.
33. Rohault, op. cit., p.373.
34. Roger Hahn, The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution: The Paris Academy of Science (1666-1683), (University of California, 1971), p.6.
35. Gaston Bachelard, Le Nouvel Esprit Scientifique, (Paris, 9th ed., 1966), p.12.
36. Rohault, op. cit., Preface.
37. John White, The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space, (London, 1967), p.193.
38. Jurgis Baltrusaitis, Anamorphoses, (Paris, 1969), p.9-11.
39. See Lilianne Brion-Guerry, Jean-Pelerin Viator, (Paris, 1962), in which she expands on the artisanal origins of Viator's work.
40. See Jacques Androvet de Cerceau, Lecons de Perspective, (Paris, 1576) in which perspective positive is distinguished from optique as being separate areas of study. The former dealt with representations on paper whereas the latter was concerned with the processes of vision. His work, like that of Viator, was

primarily intended for architects.

41. Niceron, La Perspective Curieuse, (Paris, 1638), Preface.

42. Jacques du Brueil, La perspective Pratique necessaire à tous Peintres, Graveurs, Sculpteurs, Architectes, Orfèvres, Brodeurs, Tapissiers et autres se servant du dessein, (Paris, 1642), 3 vols, Preface.

43. Ibid, loc. cit.

44. Estienne Migon, La Perspective Speculative et Pratique, (Paris, 1643), p.1-2.

45. Ibid, p.154.

46. Ibid, p. 79.

47. Gaultier de Marignannes, Nouvelle et Briève Perspective, (Paris, 1648). Gaultier used the Rabelaisian portrait, rather than the more recent peinture (1575) to refer to the retinal image. The term taie was used to describe part of the cornea as it had been since the fourteenth century. On the other hand, Du Bartas' term raisinière (1583) was used to describe the fourth tunic of the eye. As a final example, he coined a neologism blepharoide for the eyelid, derived from the Homeric Greek blepharon, a word uncommon in Greek prose and unknown elsewhere in French. See J. Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l'Ancienne Langue Francaise, (Paris, 1889) and Littrè, Dictionnaire de la Langue Francaise, (Paris, 1958).

48. Ibid, Preface.

CHAPTER THREE

Throughout the Thirty Years War, the government of France faced popular opposition to its policies, particularly with regard to the steep rises in taxation. The taille, from which nobles were exempt, doubled in the ten years after 1626. Increasingly, the burden became too much for the lower classes to bear and they found support and, in some cases, leadership from the aggrieved bourgeoisie (used in the strict sense of town dweller). Sublet de Noyers, who we have already met as the executor of Richelieu's cultural policy, reported the situation in Amiens to Chancellor Séguier in 1636, on the occasion of yet another tax increase:

" Selon la connaissance particulière que j'ay de l'extrême misère de ce peuple et des mouvements estranges qu'elle excite dans les espritz, j'estime du service du Roy que si la necessité des affaires veult que l'on établisse ce droit, au moins on le diffère en une saison plus favorable et où l'esloignement des maux que trois années de peste et la guerre a causés dans ceste ville, rendent celui de cest impost moins sensible à ceux qui, accablés des douleurs précédentes, sont presque incapables de souffrir l'effort de ceste dernier, la seule apprehension de ce droit aians desjà faict cesser la moitié du commerce et reduict plus de trois mille ouvriers et entr'iceux plusieurs à la mendicité et à la mort. Je le dictz, Monseigneur, parce que je l'ay veu". (1)

For a surintendant to speak out so boldly, de Noyers must have feared an imminent break down of royal authority. Such reports can be found from all over the country and, sure enough, popular disturbances did result. The most serious of these was in Normandy in 1639 which was only suppressed by an army of 1200 horse and 4000 foot under the command of General Gasion. Other revolts were on a similar scale up and down France (2).

Apart from such direct challenges to royal authority, it was in the Parlements, especially the Parlement of Paris, that opposition focused. The Parlement had an ill-defined role in the French constitution, unlike its English equivalent. Although it

was in theory the highest court, in practice it was very difficult to distinguish between state and civil offences. The chancellery had gradually increased its authority as it had the right to review legislation. But the officers of the Parlement defended their authority by claiming divine right as a part of the apparatus of royalty (3). As royal authority weakened, this dispute escalated into a questioning of the ordering of the state.

The crisis broke in 1648. Following Condé's military victory at Lens on 20 August, 1648, the leading Parliamentarians were arrested. In turn this provoked an insurrection in Paris which secured their release. The Parlement established itself in the Chambre St Louis in order to settle the constitutional question for once and for all. They intended to end the mystery of monarchy by separating the King from the kingdom (4). The St Louis constitution would have created a Parlement with full control over all taxes, the main grievance of the populace. Monopolies and the intendant system were to be suppressed and there were to be no arrests without due legal process. It was ratified on the same day as the Peace of Westphalia was proclaimed, October 24, 1648. This was no mere riot in protest at some excessive government action but the culmination of a long period of development in French society. At stake was the very seat of power itself. As the King was forced to leave Paris in 1648, like Charles I abandoning London in 1642, the issue was by no means settled. A pamphlet of the time declared:

" Les grands sont tels seulement parce que nous les portons sur nos épaules; il nous suffirait de les secouer et ils couvriraient la terre." (5)

The question had broadened from the operation of sovereignty to

the action of power within society in general.

It is perhaps better to see the Fronde not as a simple opposition between crown and Parliament but as broad based dispute as to the relations of power in early modern France. There was not one but many Frondes, involving all classes of society in fluctuating alliances. Royal officials reported to Sèguier of: "s les paysans renforcez et conduits par des gentilhommes" (6). Throughout the Fronde, alliances were constantly being forged between the Parisians and the Parliament. These alliances were no less significant for being temporary and ultimately unsuccessful. In 1649, Parlement took their claims to authority a step further, holding that the Parlement represented the whole of France as the heir to the Assembly which bestowed royalty on Pharamond, the father of Clovis (the Dark Ages monarch who was seen as the founder of France). They also called for a full restoration of the Conseil du Roi, rather than face the continued domination of the unpopular Cardinal Mazarin and his creatures (7). Local events must have seemed more important to many people at a time when mental horizons were so much smaller (which is not to say inferior) than our own. In this respect, Paris, as Western Europe's largest city, was not typical (8). The King was able to return to Paris on 21 October 1652 but the revolt continued in Bordeaux until August, 1653. A recent account of the Fronde has concluded:

" En 1648 à Paris, la ville fronde; c'est à proprement parler, une Fronde bourgeoise. Puis le Parlement prend l'initiative et, au tout début du siège, le pouvoir. Dans les semaines qui suivent, et surtout à partir du printemps 1649, la Fronde devient une Fronde des chefs, une Fronde des factions...La logique du combat des chefs remplace celle des projets de réforme et des revendications bourgeoises, officières ou populaires qui ne s'expriment plus qu'à travers la récupération ou par la bande. Le mot Fronde couvre tout." (9)

The Fronde was at once a struggle about itself- what it meant and for whom- as with others. It was a struggle about meaning and language at the same time as a struggle for power. Without the language to express a claim to power that claim could not be realised. This linguistic and political complexity is reflected in the many differing accounts of the Fronde and its importance. But these accounts, whether expressed in terms of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, or as a political dispute, or as an irrelevance, seem often to reduce this divergent and irresolvable complexity into one overriding problematic (10). As a result, many aspects of what happened have been overstated or ignored in turn. It might be more profitable to consider the complexity of the Fronde as the solution to its nature rather than as a problem to be overcome. This rewriting and rediscovery of the Fronde has first to overcome the deliberate attempt by the victorious Louis XIV to obscure its memory. In 1668, he ordered that public records for the period 1648-52 be destroyed and the proceedings of the Parlement of Paris, and other such bodies involved in the Fronde , be rewritten with suitable deletions of any subversive activity (11).

Louis at least was sufficiently convinced of the importance of the Fronde to want to eradicate its memory. As late as 1687, he established a special ceremony to forgive the Hotel de Ville in Paris for its part in the Fronde. It had taken thirty-five years for the Sun King to feel secure enough to be magnanimous. His achievement was the creation of the court system, centred on Versailles, which was able to hold in check the tensions that had exploded into civil war. This remarkable feat was not achieved without difficulty. The establishment of an Academy of Painting was part of that institutionalisation. In the rest of this

chapter, we shall examine it in those terms. In the following chapter, the Academy will be situated ideologically, within the scientific, philosophical and cultural debate opened by Descartes.

The painting guilds and the royal artists had a long history of dispute (see Chapter One) but they had more or less accepted each other's right to exist. In the 1640s that was no longer the case. The general settling of political accounts that dominated the period did not leave out the arts. In 1645, the guilds challenged the legality of the brevet by which the King authorised his painters. Although this practice stemmed from 1399, the Parlement overturned the ruling of the royal court at Chatelet and dismissed the brevets held by two painters, Laurent Levesque and Nicolas Bellot. The guilds also demanded that the number of the King's painters to six and the Queen's to four. Furthermore, these artists were not to sell their work, maintain a shop, or to work for the Churches or anyone else. The guilds meant the royal artists to remain just that and to be simply servants of the court, leaving the open market to them (12). After the expansions planned by Richelieu and de Noyers, the guilds were attempting to legislate these schemes out of existence. The Parlement obliged and called on all those who called themselves the King's painters or sculptors to justify themselves under the new regulations.

The royal artists responded in kind with their own set of regulations and organisation, intended to beat the guilds at their own game by giving the new body, the Academy of Painting, a superior legal status to that of the guilds. Despite the traditional assertion that the future Director of the Academy,

Charles Le Brun, was responsible for this move, there is no firm contemporary evidence on this point. The artists Corneille and Sazarin have also been proposed as the founders but it seems more likely that the man who put the idea to the Regent, Anne of Austria, was in fact responsible (13). This was De Charmois, from Le Mans like the Fréarts, whom he knew. He had also been in Rome at the same time as the two brothers so it is likely that he was aware of de Noyers' plans (14).

The success of de Charmois' initiative stemmed from its appeal not only to the government's hostility to both the guilds and the Parlements, but also to the artists concerned. The social status of the artist was not high in this period. In the early seventeenth century, Loyseau, a writer on the nature of French society, described the great dividing line between those with honour and the rest:

" Les marchands sont les derniers du peuple qui portent qualité d'honneur estans qualifiez honorables hommes ou honnestes personnes et bourgeois des villes; qualitez qui ne sont attribuées ni aux laboureurs, ny aux sergens, ni aux artisans." (15)

At this time no French word yet existed with the signification of the modern artiste. Either you were, for example, an artiste en tapisserie, or an artisan. In the Dictionary of 1694, artiste was defined as "opérateur en chimie". It was not until 1762 that the Academic Dictionary defined artiste as: "celui qui travaille dans un art où le génie et la main doivent concourir" (16). So in the seventeenth century, painters and their ilk would have been included in Loyseau's lower category, without honour. The title bourgeois had a specific meaning and specific rights, so that being without 'honour' had direct practical consequences, such as exclusion from city honours and assemblies.

The painters had good reason to wish for an upgrading in

status at this particular time, in addition to the re-evaluation in the status of vision that we have already observed. As commerce expanded, the luxury trades were amongst the first to be affected. In order to increase production, the craftsmen found themselves under increasing pressure, and found their formerly protected trades becoming wage labour like any other. It may seem inconceivable to modern eyes that painters should have suffered such a fate. But that was exactly what happened to the silk trade under similar commercial pressure. Painters themselves gained authority over the tapestry makers and turned the ancient art into the workshop at Gobelins. Their authority stemmed from the successful transformation of painting from one of the arts mécaniques into one of the arts libéraux. Individual pictures came to serve as blueprints for tapestries which were then mass produced. There was, of course, no inherent reason why matters should have taken this turn rather than the exact opposite. But the painters succeeded in organising themselves through the Academy and were adopted by the monarchy. In this sense, even within the arts, there was a Fronde, a dispute between different ranks and, within those ranks, as to the ordering of power.

The Academy's defensive character clearly emerges from a reading of their first statutes. In de Charmois' presentation to the Regent, he declared that an Academy was necessary because of the persecution of the guilds (17). He cited Francois I's support for Leonardo as evidence that painting was both protected and practised by Kings and demanded that nothing should be done:

" pour reduire en Maistrise des Arts qui doivent estre
exercez noblement."

Art, he claimed, was not like:

" Une porte cochère qui est sujette à la visite pour vérifier sy les couleurs sont huiles ou en destempe et sy elles sont capables de resister aux injures de l'air."

Painting was a liberal art, he went on to say, and required knowledge of other liberal arts such as Astronomy, Perspective and Anatomy and should not have to be reduced to apprenticeships in colour grinder's shops. Like any good politician seeking a change in his favour, de Charmois made out that his request was nothing more than the confirmation of common sense. But it was clear that, to follow his own logic, if painting was a liberal art, then the guilds should not be allowed to practise it. So he demanded that they be banned from making:

" Aucun tableau de figures et histoires, ni pourtraits, ou peisages, figures de ronde-bosse ou bas-reliefs, pour les églises ou austres bastiments publics ni particuliers, mais seulement se dorer, peindre ou faire relief des moresques, grotesques, arabesques, feuillages et autres ornements à peine de deux milles livres d'amende et de confiscation des dits tableaux ou sculptures." (18)

So just as the guilds had tried to restrict the royal painters to being court servants, they in turn were trying to make the guilds into interior decorators for private individuals.

On 9 March 1648, Chancellor Sèguier established the Academy by his order and confirmed their statutes. The new Academy owed much in its format to the guilds. It was dedicated to virtue and all blasphemers or those who spoke of religion with disdain were excluded. The Academy had already changed from its original conception of a body open to all painters, whether French or foreign, and even to guild painters providing they had left voluntarily. Initially, in de Charmois' January proposal, the Academy was to be run by the twelve oldest members, the anciens. The March decree reads:

" Les anciens de nombre de douze, s'assemblent tous les premiers Samedis du mois...pour délibérer avec le Chef qui présidera et vuidera le partage des voix des affaires de la Communauté, tant esdits jours qu'aux Assemblées extraordinaires, soit pour le jugement de contraventions...que pour le réception ou pour autre occurrence."

The anciens have become the ruling group rather than the elders, with powers over entry and membership. Another innovation was the post of Chef with considerable authority over what was now termed the Communauté, the traditional name for a guild. Although the rhetoric spoke of freeing the arts, it was not borne out in practice. In fact, what was at stake was not freedom but control (19).

But the new Academy was quickly overtaken by the events of the Fronde. With the King, Regent and Cardinal out of Paris, royal authority carried rather less weight. In 1649, the guilds took advantage of this to break the Academy's new monopoly on teaching from the live model. They opened a school offering not one but two models; well-known artists such as Mignard, Simon Vouet and Dufresnoy as teachers; and equally importantly, it was free of charge unlike the Academy. It adopted the name of the famous Rome Academy, the San Lucca (Saint Luc in French), as a further jibe at the Academy which saw itself as bringing the Italian tradition to France. These measures quickly took their toll on the fledgling Academy. In December 1649, the records show that 24 livres and five sols had been taken that month:

" Laquelle somme ne suffisant pas pour paier le modelle, il reste à luy payer cinq sols, des susdites cinq semaines outres ce qu'il étoit des mois présédant.

Reste aussi à payer les deux termes de la salle de l'Académie, scavoir St Remy et Noel." (20)

As a result, the Academy had to consider closing its school but Louis Testelin offered to meet the expenses himself in order to keep it open. However, even this generosity did not convince the

members that their organisation was viable. By August, 1650, only three or four could make the effort to attend meetings ^{so,} they had to be abandoned. The receipts for the previous month show that only four students were using the school at the time and no-one at all turned up for the October and November meetings (21).

The guilds were now in a position to defeat their royal rivals and moved to do so. In February 1651, they presented a set of articles to the Academy of which there is now no surviving record. However, it seems likely that these were the blueprint for the proposed merger between the the two groups. The Academy's reply was evidently unsatisfactory for the guilds decided to take the Academy to court, demanding a revocation of the Academy's statutes. The Academy launched a counter action in order to have its privileges and statutes confirmed. The surviving records are unclear as to the exact course of events at this point. However, it may fairly be assumed that at this, the lowpoint of royal fortunes in the Fronde, the guilds had the advantage. The two sides did merge in what was known as the jonction in May 1651, on terms that must have been dictated by the guilds. The preamble stated that the Academy had been established:

" Sans aucun dessein de préjudicier en quoi que ce puisse estre au Corps de la maistrise" (22),

which was obviously the exact opposite of the truth. Their advantage continued as the new body was to be made up of all the old Academicians and all the guild members. All members were to have voting rights, giving the guilds a massive in-built majority. In 1682, there were over four hundred registered members of the guild and only forty Academicians. Thirty years earlier, the numerical advantage would have been even more decisively in favour of the guilds. The assembly was to decide on

new admissions so the majority could reproduce itself. Finally, all apprentices and pupils were to enter in the new Livre de ladite jonction at the cost of one gold écu, thereby ensuring both the survival of the apprenticeship (which the Academy had tried to circumvent) and the finances of the new body. In return the Academicians were now exempt from 'visits' by the guilds and, more importantly, were to share expenses. However, in what later proved to be a useful gain, the statutes were recognised by Parlement in June 1652, giving the Academy a legal status it had hitherto lacked. De Charmois recognised the reality of the situation nonetheless, and resigned from the Academy in protest, realising that his project was in effect over (23).

With de Charmois out of the picture, there now seemed to be a renewed chance for the de Noyers group to assert themselves. But in a classic example of the divisions brought on by the Fronde, the brothers found themselves on opposite sides. After the collapse of the de Noyers circle, Roland de Chambray remained in exile from the court, the whole affair, in his words:

" m'a donné matiere de faire une bonne réflexion sur la vanité et la volubilité des fortunes de la Cour, dont je suis présentement bien desabusé." (24)

The time he referred to was 1651, the year of the jonction and the height of the Fronde. Together with his brother Jean, he was leading the fortification and defence of their home town, Le Mans, against the royalist army, commanded by Jarzé (25). But he also found time to publish a translation of Palladio and to write his own work on architecture, a work that he carried out on de Noyers' instructions. De Chambray was a champion of Palladio and his work sought to defend the nobility and importance of the arts. In a passage that strikingly prefigured the Ancients and

Moderns debate, he asserted that:

" Nous avons autant de droit d'inuenter et de suivre nostre génie que les anciens sans nous rendre comme leurs esclaves, veu que l'art est une chose infinie qui se va perfectionnant tous les jours, et s'accomodant à l'humeur des siècles et des nations qui jugent diversement et définissent le Beau chacune à sa mode." (26)

For Roland de Chambray, the modern beauty that could be achieved was literally worth fighting for.

On the other hand, his brother de Chantelou preferred to fight for the monarchy. He had become secretary to the duc d'Enghien in the spring of 1645. The move was well timed for on 26 December 1646, his patron became the Prince de Condé, one of the leading titles in France. From now on de Chantelou once again mixed with the great of France and had overcome the disgrace of de Noyers. However, although he had changed camps, de Chantelou still used the arts as a political weapon. Whilst the brothers were in Rome on de Noyers mission, they had acquired a manuscript belonging to del Pozzo from the Barberini library. This manuscript was supposed to be a version of Leonardo de Vinci's unfinished treatise on painting. Now, in 1651, de Chantelou decided to publish it.

The text is, to say the least, an oddity. The history of Leonardo's treatise began with a copy made by his heir, Francesco Melzi, from the mass of notes left by the great artist. He produced a work of 944 chapters, now known as the Codex Vaticanus. Even this text cannot be accepted as fully reliable because Melzi admitted that he found Leonardo's mirror writing very hard to decipher (27). A comparison of the text printed in 1651 and the Vatican manuscript shows the published version to be at several removes from even this 'original'. Chapters were muddled up, put into a new order by the editor, Du Fresne, or

sometimes simply made up. The book was the result of a compilation of the two manuscripts that were then in circulation, both deriving from the Codex Vaticanus. Type A had titled chapters which were not numbered and Type B consisted of consecutive numbered chapters with an index of the missing titles. But both versions were missing Part I, Parts V-VII and Parts II, III and VIII were significantly shortened (28). The result was that this publication, hailed in the introduction as:

" La derniere perfection .. qui doit doresnavant la
reigle de l'art et la guide de tous les vrais peintres"
(29)

was in all practical matters useless. But these claims had a wider purpose, hinted at also by the incorrect attribution of the illustrations to Poussin. De Chantelou's intention was to draw out the connection between Francis I's court painter, the leading French artist of the day and the royal painters in Paris. The purpose of his publication was to give validity and authority to the Academy and those attached to the court. His efforts did not go unnoticed. In August 1653, Le Brun referred to the Treatise in the Academy as the book on which all artists should base their work and it was to be one of the grounds of his argument with the Professor of Perspective, Abraham Bosse (30). But at the time of its publication, the Leonardo was just one amongst thousands of politicised texts pouring off the presses.

It did not even cause a great stir in the Academy which was paralysed in a dispute over precedence. It was resolved in a compromise that gave the Academy control over the presidency of the new body whilst the jurés of the guild made up the rest of the executive, along with one of the Academicians. The ordinary members were to sit as they wanted without any ranks or precedence. So although the Academy had nominal precedence, the

inbuilt majority of the guilds rendered this purely ornamental. When meetings finally recommenced, in October 1653, they were held in the Maison S-Catherine, which belonged to the guilds. Unsurprisingly perhaps, many of the Academicians did not turn up even for these first meetings and the guilds had matters all their own way. A flower painter and musician from the guilds, one Lemoine, was elected to officer rank, for example, on 1 October, 1654 (31). The authority of the guilds was now entrenched and agreed to by the royal Academy. It was one example of the continuing power struggle that continued in French society after the military issue had been resolved in the Fronde.

One issue only had been decisively settled by the outcome of the Fronde- the right of the King to rule. The military force that had settled the issue emanated from the Crown. It was the political genius of Louis XIV and his advisors to turn that simple fact of power into the keystone of an entire political edifice. Without attempting to end or resolve the labyrinth of disputes over precedence and authority, of which the founding of the Academy is but one example, the King simply absorbed them all into one overriding structure. The mechanism he chose to do this was the court system of Absolutism. Its guiding principle was the fact of the Fronde- the overwhelming power of the King. In medieval society, the King was held to have, as it were, two bodies. His physical body represented his legitimacy as the heir to the throne and the ruler of the Kingdom. But through his annointment at coronation, the King also had divine right. This other, godly existence transcended the individual monarch and legitimised the entire edifice of feudal authority. However, after the Wars of Religion in the sixteenth century and the

gradual collapse in social order that culminated in the Fronde, that divine right evidently held little authority in the mid-seventeenth century.

Louis XIV resurrected and recharged the royal presence. His dictum was, however, secular rather than religious: " L'Etat, c'est moi." Louis recreated the French monarchy about himself. The King, although still holding a religious authority, dominated as the key to all political life. Compare the Frondeurs debates on sovereignty and political power with Jurieu's 1691 complaint:

" Autrefois, explique un opposant, on ne parlait que des intérêts de l'Etat, des besoins de l'Etat, du maintien de l'Etat. Aujourd'hui un tel langage serait un crime de lèse-majesté. Le roi a pris la place de l'Etat, le roi est tout, l'Etat n'est plus rien. Il est une idole à laquelle on sacrifie les provinces, les villes, les finances, les grands, les petits, tout!" (32)

Undoubtedly much of this strategy originated with the King himself. He decided to rule alone, without a first minister, and redirected court life away from outside realities towards himself. His favour and, by association, the favour of his creatures and mistresses became the leitmotif of the courtier's activity. This mechanism was not created innocently. Louis often referred to himself as a gentilhomme and the premier aristocrate. In so doing, he linked the nobility closely to himself and distinguished them from others. By portraying himself as an individual, albeit of a very special kind, and favouring or condemning individual nobles, Louis prevented the alliances of the Fronde from re-emerging. He often used to remark: " la jalousie de l'un sert de frein à l'ambition de l'autre". Saint-Simon observed in his memoirs of the period that Louis was a past master of allocating and distributing his favours and by so doing, he controlled the nobility who had previously conspired against him. Norbert Elias writes:

" La cour et l'étiquette faisaient précisément office, aux yeux du roi d'un tel mécanisme de régulation, de consolidation et de surveillance." (33)

Court life was not the folly of the aristocracy so enjoyed by Hollywood. It was a deliberate monarchical strategy, based on the traditional principle of 'divide and rule'. The cleverness of Louis' tactic was to ensure that the ruled made and enforced the divisions amongst themselves, whilst the ruler was able to keep a suitably disinterested distance from such matters. In maintaining his position, Louis paid close attention to ritual, ceremony, and display in order to emphasise constantly the gap between the monarch and the rest of society, as well as the gap between society (revealingly known as le monde, everything) and the common people. In his Memoirs, Louis observed:

" Ceux-là s'abusent lourdement qui s'imaginent que ce ne sont là que des affaires de cérémonie. Les peuples sur qui nous regnons, ne pouvant pénétrer les fonds des choses, règlent d'ordinaire leurs jugements sur ce qu'ils voient au-dehors, et c'est le plus souvent sur les préséances et les rangs qu'ils mesurent leur respect et leur obéissance. Comme il est important au public de n'être gouverné que par un seul, il lui est important aussi que celui que fait cette fonction soit élevé de telle sorte au-dessus des autres qu'il n'y ait personne qu'il puisse ni confondre ni comparer avec lui, et l'on ne peut, sans faire tort à tout les corps de l'Etat, ôter à son chef les moindres marques de la supériorité qui le distingue des membres." (34)

These formulas of respect and difference between ranks were later to be used by the Royal Academy as a means of organising pictorial space, modelled on the court of which they were a part (see Chapter Four below).

The court was now organised as a political means of control. To the outsider, in France and abroad, it gave the impression of being a neatly ascending pyramid towards the King at its head, a society in which everyone knew their rank and stuck to it. But after the Fronde this fiction could not be maintained behind the

closed doors of Versailles. In fact, a complex of different, but interdependent, groups made up the whole of the court, constantly rivalling one another, and holding each other in check. A line of distinction did exist between the groups from bourgeois origins, who held official office, and the traditional nobility (35). Again, it was the King who held these two differing factions together. His role was more than simply a personal matter of authority over individuals. The King became a sign that stood for order and reconstituted itself as an autonomous subject in the political discourse of France. The court, in this sense, was the predicated object of the Crown. This separate but symbiotic existence gave Absolutism a dynamic resilience which simply absorbed the differences of the Fronde into itself (36). The longevity of the ancien régime, which has often been puzzled at, owed much to the versatility and resilience of this structure.

Soon the monarchy was strong enough to move against its old opponents. In 1673, the Parlement of Paris found its role reduced to making remonstrances only after edicts had been passed, effectively ending its national powers (37). But almost twenty years before then, just after the Fronde had finished, the government intervened in the Academy in order to end the authority of the guilds. The initiative was planned by Ratabon, de Charmois' successor, working in close association with Cardinal Mazarin. In contrast to the early Academy, the emphasis was now on internal organisation and control, within the newly organised court system. From the first article of the new statutes, presented to Mazarin on 24 December, 1564, it was clear that an entirely new organisation was being planned:

" Qu'à l'exemple de l'Académie de Peinture et Sculpture, dite de S. Luc, florissante et célèbre à Rome sous la protection de Monsieur le Cardinal Francois Barberin et

" auparavant luy autres Cardinaux, neveux des Papes: il sera priez à l'Académie Royale de choisir de telles personnes de plus Eminentes qualitez et conditions du Royaume qu'elle estimera à propos pour la protection et vice-protection." (38)

The Academy now found itself in unfamiliar but elevated company amidst Kings, Popes and Cardinals- a long way from the manufacturing guilds.

The reference to Barberini was not coincidental. His name recalled the efforts of the Richelieu period and it was perhaps not without relevance that Cardinal Antonio Barberini had been made Bishop of Poitiers in 1652, rising rapidly to become Archbishop of Reims in 1667 (39). The Barberini connection had previously been exploited by one court faction for their advantage over the others. Now, in the new mood, it was turned into an institutional development for the benefit of the monarchy. The proposal for an Academy was drawn up into Lettres Patentes in January 1655 and confirmed by Parlement in June. It says much for the restoration of central authority that when Ratabon called a convocation of the Jonction on 3 July, the guilds seem to have known nothing of the plan. In a room specially hung with tapestries and arranged in conformity with the new regulations, Ratabon began to read the statutes. He was unable to finish as the meeting broke up in uproar. But the guilds had been presented with a fait accompli- all that was open to them now was protest.

Ratabon and Mazarin had inscribed the new distinctions between the court and the rest of France, as well as the internal court distinctions, within the new, legal Academy. The decree established painting and sculpture as elite arts:

" Ceux deux Arts que l'ignorance avoit presque confondus avec les moindres mestiers, sont maintenant plus florissans en France." (40)

The royal painters and sculptors thus won at a stroke the status of liberal art they had been seeking throughout the past twenty years. They were also given the Gallery of the Sorbonne as a meeting place as well as a royal pension of 1000 livres a year to pay for teachers of geometry, mathematics, architecture, perspective and anatomy. In this way, the Academy was now able to match the guilds' teaching capacity in these areas, but they were also granted a monopoly:

" Sa Majesté veut et entend que doresnavant il ne soit posé aucun modèle, fait monstre ny donné leçon en public touchant le fait de Peinture et Sculpture qu'en ladite Académie Royale."

This was one royal monopoly created well before Colbert's rise to power. It was this resource that guaranteed the survival of the Academy. Further, using the hollow excuse that the maitrise was devalued by the royal habit of awarding them at their marriages and coronations, the Academy was exempted from all the regulations and controls of the guilds. The Academy was free from the traditional restraints of the corporations but far from independent.

The Academy had been reorganised along the hierarchical, pyramidal lines that characterised the court, with all the potential for a 'one member, one vote' system removed. The head of the Academy was no longer the Chef but the Directeur, a title that could be held as long as was felt convenient. A new category of official, called the recteurs, were chosen from the twelve elders. Their functions were considerable:

" Ils jugeront tous les différends qui surviendront touchant les sciences desdites Arts, mesme pourront estre arbitres du prix desdits ouvrages de Peinture et Sculpture." (41)

Competition and hierarchy were the keynotes of the new Academy.

Only the Director, Rectors, the twelve professors, the Advisors (a new class made up of old professors) and other officers were allowed to vote in the meetings of the Academy. It was held that this was a return to the practices of 1648 but the truth can be seen from the fact that it was the reading of this statute which broke up the July meeting. The elaborate concern for protocol that characterised Louis' court was brought in wholesale to the Academy, with much concern over the keeping of official records, and the design of the Academy's seal. It was, however, precedence within the Academy that was the primary issue:

" Et pour éviter qu'il n'arrive aucun différend ni jalousie en ladite Académie sous prétexte de rangs et séances de ceux qui la composent, le Directeur comme Chef et Président en l'absence des Protecteur et Vice-Protecteur, aura la place d'honneur, à sa droite seront le Recteur en quartier, les autres Recteurs, le Chancelier et les autres Conseillers, et à sa gauche le Professeur en mois, les autres Professeurs, le Trésorier en ensuite les Académistes selon l'ordre de leur reception."

During the jonction, the Academy had been modelled on the procedure of the Parlements, but now, following the shift in political authority, it was very much part of the Absolutist state (42). Its internal division between Officers and Academicians reflected the twin pyramids of nobles and bourgeois in the court at large.

The necessary ladders for promotion and emulation were also set in place for those not yet part of the Academic structure, so that outsiders could aspire to join. On the feast of St Luke, a competition was to be set to the students on a general subject covering the heroic actions of the King. The winning student was commissioned to carry out the work in oils and received these privileges:

" En cette considération lui ordonnera un prix d'honneur proportionné au mérite du travail et outre ce, ledit

" estudiant aura le privilège de choisir telle place qu'il voudra pour dessigner à l'Academie et déposer le modelle en absence des Professeurs, et des Académistes à l'exclusion de tous autres."

This policy of creating little internal divisions and competitions, so as to keep attention focused inwards, was continued as far as the penultimate statute which awarded the privileges of the Académie Française to the Officers and the eleven most senior Academicians. Finally, a clause was introduced allowing a member to be expelled for the first time. The grounds were very general and provided the Director and his officers with an easy means of disposing of their enemies, a facility they were soon to be using (the affair of the expulsion of Abraham Bosse in 1661 and the disputes over perspective are dealt with at length in the next chapter).

In seven years, the Academy had come a long way. But in 1663, the new force in the government, Colbert, intervened in the Academy. He instituted what the eighteenth century was to call la Grande Restauration of the Academy after he had resolved the dispute between the Academy and Abraham Bosse. He himself became Vice-Protector and Director of the Academy at once. He re-issued the statutes with some minor changes, the most important of which raised the annual income of the Academy to 4000 livres a year (43). A new sub-division in the hierarchy was created, namely a class of adjoints to the Rectors and professors from whom new full-ranking officers were to be recruited. Prize-winning pupils lost the right to pose the model as quickly as it had been granted. The electoral procedures were also made rather more vague than they had been hitherto, doubtless so that Colbert could ensure his influence prevailed. The general emphasis was on giving an appearance of continuity for, like so many radical

administrations, Absolutism liked to present itself as a simple extension of already existing traditions. All the clauses of the 1663 statutes were referred back to previous decrees and statutes, particularly those of 1648 as if the Fronde had never happened.

The guilds attempted to respond in their traditional fashion by challenging the Academy in the courts. The case was heard in the Parlement on 14 May 1664. But not only did the court find in favour of the Academy, it actually extended the rights of Academicians. Even the Academy's watchmen were given the right to practice the arts if they so desired. Studying at the Academy for three years was held to be the equivalent of an apprenticeship to the guilds that lasted five years (44). The guilds now seemed to be a lesser department of the Academy, for Academicians were allowed to take on more than one pupil, which the Masters were not. The court held that children of a guild member should be taught by the Academy free of charge but numerous subsequent court cases show that the Academy was not overscrupulous in adhering to this ruling.

The real change in 1663 was, however, to the membership. In that one year alone 58 new members joined the Academy, including the first woman Academician, Catherine Duchemin (45). In no subsequent year until the abolition of the Academy in 1793 did anything like this number join again. The average rate was more like between two and six new members a year. At a stroke, the Academy gained the numbers that made it possible for the new, multi-layered hierarchy to work and, of course, for Colbert to carry out his schemes of glorifying the monarchy.

In order to make the policy work, care was now taken over the calibre of applicants to the Academy. Loyalty to the regime was a

keynote. As a result, the initial tolerance of the Academy disappeared. At least six of the early Academicians were Huguenots but there is no record of any joining after 1663 (46). The Academy anticipated the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by four years in expelling its Huguenots in 1681. The Academy had quickly become a tool of the monarchy and a section of the court system.

However, like the court, it had tensions built into it, concerning promotion and patronage but especially the gulf between officers and Academicians, as well as the divide between the Academy and the guilds outside. Disputes were not slow to arise. The initial choice of Director for the new Academy was the first area of disagreement. Pierre Mignard had many of the right credentials for this post. He had studied in Rome where he met the Academician Dufresnoy. He knew Cardinal Barberini and they studied Mattheo Zaccoloni's (work) Optics together. Later Mignard } was received by Margu  rite de Medicis in Venice but was summoned to return to France by Louis XIV in 1656. He painted a portrait of Cardinal Mazarin and then left on a visit to Italy. On his return he found that Le Brun had been appointed over his head. He angrily informed Colbert that he preferred the Acad  mie de Saint-Luc to the Acad  mie Royale and not even the threat of exile would make him change his mind (47). Le Brun won the post as a reward for his unswerving loyalty to the Crown and the episode shows Colbert's determination to ensure the reliability of his team, even at the expense of losing one of his most able artists. In turn, Mignard's response indicates that he for one felt that the guilds were not a spent force.

If individual painters still felt able to contest the new

orthodoxy, so too did officials higher up the scale. Bernini's visit to Paris in September, 1655, was the occasion of one such encounter. Bernini came to Paris at the invitation of the Fréart brothers, de Chantelou and de Chambray, making one last bid for influence. At first, they succeeded. Bernini visited the Academy and called on the company to emulate the work of Cardinal Barberini's Academy. In so doing, he recalled the efforts of de Noyers to establish such an institution in Paris. Colbert was quickly stung to reply that although de Noyers had been a man of talent, his work on the Louvre had been done with more of an eye to economy than achievement. De Chantelou recorded uproar over this speech, a statement that might require a pinch of salt, due to his partiality in the matter (48). However, de Chantelou obtained an audience with the King in which he recommended that the reliefs he had made at de Noyers' request should be used for the Academy's school. His long-standing loyalty to Louis was marked by this favour:

" Tout le monde était resté à la porte d'antisalle; depuis sont venus MM. les maréchaux du Plessis et de Villeroy et M. d'Armagnac." (49)

In the protocol obsessed politics of Louis XIV's court, such favour was crucially important. Colbert was able to respond using his own influence, for he refused to allocate more funds for the rebuilding of the Louvre, using the excuse of the costs of war. In a final effort, de Chantelou retorted that de Noyers would have found the money, a reply that set him outside the politesse of court behaviour. This move beyond the boundaries of honour left Colbert the field. A quarrel between Bernini and Colbert ensued, after which the Italian did not remain long in Paris. It was left to de Chambray to write to Colbert on 15 June 1668 to persuade him to continue the Louvre project. His Frondeur

mentality led him to phrase the letter disastrously:

" L'on ne doit pas croire de M. LeBrun qui s'est plaint du peu d'honneur qu'il avait reçu du Cavalier, lorsqu'il fut le saluer avec l'Académie, eût voulu vous inspirer ce changement après ce qui avait été commencé, peur de perdre le ministre de bâtiments, qu'il a sous vos ordres; ni M. Perrault non plus par ressentiment du grand démêlé qu'il eut avec le Cavalier; ce serait pour de très petits intérêts empêcher l'exécution d'un grand et important ouvrage." (50)

To suggest that a slight to honour was a little matter compared to a building project was fatally to misunderstand the workings of the Absolutist court. The Fréart brothers had finally lost any chance of controlling the Academy they might have had.

However, the new institution's problems were not all internal to the court system. For example, in 1678 the Academician Lamoignon de Basville made a plea to the assembled company on behalf of their fellow, the sculptor Girard Vanopstal. The case concerned a commission for some work made by a Seigneur N., who had died with the fee still outstanding. His widow refused to pay the money on the grounds that it was traditional that debts to artisans were not transferred to the client's heirs. De Basville made a great plea for the liberal arts, claiming that they provided the basis for an ordered society. Sculpture in particular was traced back to none other than God himself who had made Adam out of clay. Other former sculptors were said to include Socrates, the Emperor Hadrian and Francis I of France. Pliny and Aristotle were cited to prove the antiquity of the art and its philosophical importance. All to win one fee, but de Basville raged:

" Comment se pourroit-il donc faire MESSIEURS? qu'une profession qui tire sa naissance du Dieu même... fût aujourd'huy méprisée et mise au plus bas rang des Arts mécaniques par la nation du monde la plus poli." (51)

There is no record that Vanopstal ever got his money. Yet the

change in confidence and tone in the thirty years since the first Academy had been established was remarkable. What had been set up as an almost religious order, seeking independence from the craft guilds, now ranked itself with philosophers, Gods and Princes. The Academy was one amongst many sub-divisions of the court. Like all courtiers, its members had ambitions and hopes. Once it had been enough for them simply to have their status recognised. Now they seemed to be playing a wider game altogether. That might serve as an index of the success of royal policy, in that the institution had moved beyond itself to try and play a larger role.

But there was no overall unity to the Academy as the preceding examples have shown. At every level the Academicians and politicians involved continued the disputes that had flared into civil war. The genius of Absolutism was to absorb these very tensions within itself and indeed create a power structure from them. At only one point did all these opposites meet and that was in the person of the King. The Academy that was created by Colbert on Louis' instructions was to last as long as the monarchy, a remarkable achievement. Politics and art were thus inseparably linked in the ancien régime so that the Academy at once produced luxury goods and royal propaganda. As an institution, the court never reached the quiet stability of the modern bureaucracies. The personalities, classes and ideas brought into check, but simply maintained in tension, by the new structures always had the possibility of breaking out.

NOTES

1. Roland Mousnier (ed), Lettres et Mémoires Adressés au Chancelier Séguier (1633-49), (Paris, 1964), Vol. I, p. 340
2. See Roland Mousnier, Les Institutions de la France Sous la Monarchie Absolue, (Paris, 1980), Vol. II, p.578-85, for further details and also Boris Porshnev, Les Soulevements Populaires en France, 1623 à 1648, (Paris, 1963).
3. A.W. Moote, The Revolt of the Judges, (Princeton University Press, 1971), p.9-12.
4. R. Mousnier (1980), op. cit., Vol. II, p.588-93.
5. Porshnev, op. cit, p. 516.
6. Ibid, p. 527.
7. Mousnier (1980), op. cit., p. 594. There is a parallel here with the English revolutionaries claiming descent from the Anglo-Saxon Witan. They saw themselves as casting off the Norman yoke and restoring traditional freedoms. Both assemblies thus conformed to the classic revolutionary pattern of dressing up entirely new policy as a return to tradition: but they probably believed their own propaganda. For Gerard Winstanley, the Digger's leader:" the last enslaving conquest which the enemy got over Israel was the Norman over England", quoted in Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, (London, 1972), p.145. See also Hill's, Puritanism and Revolution for a full discussion of the Norman Yoke.
8. William Doyle, The Old European Order, (Oxford, 1978), p. 29
9. Christian Jouhaud, La Fronde des Mots, (Paris, 1985), p. 239.
10. These opinions range from Ernst Kossman's dismissive conclusion: " La Fronde manque donc d'une qualité qui plus qu'autre chose peut rendre intéressant un phénomène historique: elle n'a aucune valeur créatrice...La Fronde ajoute rien à

l'histoire," in his La Fronde, (Leiden, 1954), p.260 to this verdict from an English historian: " It is by far the most important single fact of the seventeenth century", P.J.Coveney, France In Crisis 1620-75, (London, 1975), p.37. The major stream of historical thought that has attached importance to the Fronde has been that of Marxism, which sees it as a turning point in the development of the bourgeoisie. Undoubtedly, they have made a major contribution as they are not bound by what the Soviet historian, Porshnev, identified as:

" La vénération du 'Grand siècle', qui est devenue depuis longtemps en France une tradition d'école et un devoir politique...L'historiographie française au cours du XIX et XX siècles est gênée avant tout dans l'étude du XVII par l'idée même de sa grandeur", op. cit., p.29-30. Perry Anderson in his Lineages of the Absolutist State, (London, 1978) developed Porshnev's argument that the Fronde was a bourgeois revolution by describing the Absolutist state which followed it as: " a redeployed and recharged apparatus of feudal domination". Yet the question remains as to what kind of feudalism could be said to exist in seventeenth century France. More importantly, this formula, devised so that the 1789 revolution can be a proper bourgeois revolution, denies Absolutism its newness and specificity which was to encompass, embrace and control the new social forces, (see below for details).

11. Porshnev, op. cit, p. 505-6. In a sense, then, the period needs to be reconstructed, seen as it was without the benefit of hindsight. Such methods, involving analysis of the terms of political debate and the conditions by which they were moulded, owes much to the methodology of Michel Foucault. Foucault moved

beyond the certainties of positivist history, whether marxist or liberal, in an attempt to create what he described as an archaeology:

" There was a time when archaeology, as a discipline devoted to silent monuments, inert traces, objects without context, and things left by the past, aspired to the condition of history, and attained meaning only through the restitution of a historical discourse; it might be said, to play on words a little, that in our time history aspires to the condition of archaeology, to the intrinsic description of a monument."

Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, (London, 1972), p.7.

12. Statuts, ordonnances et reglements de la communauté des Maitres ès Arts de Peinture, Sculpture, Gravure et Eluminûre de cette Ville et Faux-bourgs de Paris, (Paris, 1682), p.9.

13. Corneille and Sazarin are proposed by Bernard Teyssedre in his Roger de Piles, (Paris, 1957), p.20, without attribution. Le Brun himself liked to maintain that he was the Academy's founder in later years. Historians have supported him on the basis of a text entitled Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture depuis 1648 jsuqu'en 1664, whose authorship is usually attributed to the first secretary of the Academy, Henri Testelin. This identification was made by the nineteenth century editor of the text, Anatole de Montaiglon. He assumed that the writer must have been one of the original members of the Academy, and, after eliminating every other member on the grounds of death or presumed inability with French, the only remaining candidate was Testelin. One might agree with de Montaiglon that the fulsome praise the text lavishes on Testelin was not unusual in a seventeenth century writer. On the other hand, de Montaiglon's thesis rests on the assumption that Testelin wrote the book in exile in Holland just after being expelled from France for his Huguenot beliefs. The book is,

however, full of praise for Charles Le Brun, the author of the Huguenots' expulsion from the Academy in 1681. At best, this seems unlikely, especially given that the original manuscript does not survive and is only known in a copy by the eighteenth century secretary of the Academy, Hulst. Did Hulst write this text, giving his predecessor in the secretaryship, Testelin, a leading role, while upholding the received view that Le Brun had always been the man behind the Academy? Of the two options, it seems to me the more likely, but neither can be proven.

14. Henri Chardon, Les frères Chantelou, (Paris, 1867), p.20.

15. Porshnev, op. cit., p. 542. 16. Louis Vitet, Histoire de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, (Paris, 1861), p.17 n.1.

17. Ibid, pp.195- 216. All quotations on this subject are from this source, unless otherwise stated.

18. Ibid, p.65.

19. This interpretation differs from the conventional view, derived as I argued in note 13, from a dubious source. Thomas E. Crow, in his Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Paris, (Yale University Press, 1985) takes an intermediate position, recognising that contemporary politics were very much involved in the foundation of the Academy but still viewing the

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20. Anatole de Montaiglon (ed.), Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture (Paris, 1875), Tom. I, p. 26.
21. Ibid, pp.34-36.
22. Statuts, ordonnances...des Maistres, (Paris, 1682), p.35 and p.40, also for subsequent references.
23. Vitet, op. cit., p.106.
24. Roland de Chambray, Parallele de l'Architecture Antique et Moderne, (Paris, 1651), Preface.
25. Chardon, op. cit, p.100.
26. De Chambray, op. cit, p.2.
27. Kate T. Steinitz, Leonardo da Vinci's "Treatise on Painting": a bibliography of the printed editions 1651-1956 (Copenhagen, 1958), p.8 and p.19.
28. L.H. Heydenreich, introduction to P. McMahon (trans), Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270, (Princeton, 1956), p.xiv-xv.
29. Preface, Traité de Peinture de Leonard da Vinci, (Paris, 1651).
30. Bernard Teyssedre, Roger de Piles, (Paris, 1957), p. 579. See Chapter Four below for the Bosse dispute.
31. Vitet, op. cit., p.101-109.
32. Norbert Elias, La Société de Cour, (Paris, 1974), p.117.

33. Ibid, p. 134.
34. Ibid, p.116.
35. Ibid, p. 310
36. Eugenio di Rienzo, La Transformation du Système des Finances Publiques de l'Ancien Régime à la Revolution, à la lumière de l'interpretation de Marx, (Institut de Recherches Marxistes, Paris, 1985), p.1ff.
37. J. Wallace Hadrill and J. McManners (eds), French Government and Society (London, 1957), p.110.
38. Archives Nationales, Paris, series O (1) 1925 (a). This clause was later inserted into the 1655 Statutes of the Academy, but it is clear that their content was decided by the government.
39. Paul de Chantelou, Journal du Voyage du Cavalier Bernin en France, edited by Ludovic Lalanne, (Paris, 1885), p.3
40. Etablissement de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture par lettres Patentes du Roi, vérifiées en Parlement, (Paris, 1664), pp.9-13.
41. Statutes reprinted in Vitet, op. cit., pp.229-36.
42. A.L. Moote, op. cit., p. 20-22, provides a description of the procedure in the Parlement.
43. Etablissement..., op. cit., pp27-38.
44. Ibid, pp.38-42.
45. Vitet, op. cit.. pp. 327-81 gives full details of accessions, but without analysis.
46. The Huguenot Academicians were: T. Pinager (d.1653), L. Testelin (d.1655), L. le Guernier (d.1659), Michel Lans (d.1661), Abraham Bosse, Henri Testelin and J. Michelin. See O. Fidière (ed.), Etat-Civil des Peintres et Sculpteurs de l'Académie Royale: billets d'enterrement 1648-1713, (Paris, 1883). De Piles,

in his biographies of 1699, also cites Sebastien Bourdon as a Huguenot (p.500). See Chapter Five below.

47. For this and subsequent references to Mignard see Abbé de Monville, La vie de Pierre Mignard, Premier Peintre du Roy, (Paris, 1730), pp.12-86.

48. De Chantelou, op. cit., pp.135-39

49. Ibid, p.181.

50. Ibid, p. 264.

51. N. Lamoignon de Basville, Pladoie pour le Sr. Girard Vanopstal, un des recteurs de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, (Paris, 1678), p. 31-2.

CHAPTER FOUR

The monarchy subdued the martial Fronde relatively quickly and, after 1653, there was no serious threat to Louis' throne. But the social forces that had created it remained powerful for a time. The Fronde was continued by other means and in other places. Ultimately, these were no more successful, and the Absolutist monarchy grew in strength. But it is only with the advantage of historical hindsight that this tendency becomes so clear. In the seventeenth century, the matter did not seem so decided. The Frondeurs even penetrated the Academy and a small version of the larger struggle was played out within the new institution. This struggle formed the backdrop to the evolution of the Academy (see Chapter Three) and did much to determine its later character. The opposition to the government was led by Abraham Bosse, the Professor of Perspective. The quarrel, preceding the more famous Ancients and Moderns debate by twenty years, has not attracted as much notice from later historians. The questions at stake seem abstruse and irrelevant today, a mere blip on the rise of the Colbertian Academy. Yet there is much to learn from this losers' history about the nature of Absolutism and its control of visual representation. The grievances expressed about the Academy in the Revolution have their origins in this Fronde de la Perspective.

The value and construction of visual space was the key issue at stake. The sides differed about the techniques to be used, even if we may perhaps doubt how well the complex terminology and mathematics were understood. However in this chapter, the debate will be examined as a struggle for the discourse surrounding visual space. The question becomes, then, not which perspective was used and in what way, but why perspective was used at all and

why there were those who opposed it. After all, nothing now seems more ordinary than the teaching of perspective in art schools. But, as Pascal reminds us, second nature may in fact be first habit and the habit of perspective had yet to be acquired by the Academy. At stake was not the depiction of an a priori reality but the creation of a new ordering of visual space. By focusing on this one area, it is possible to observe the struggle of different social groups for hegemony, ending with decisive victory for one of them.

As in many disputes, the issue was primarily power: in this case, power over the visual image. There was no simple distinction here between tradition and progress, the good and the bad. Abraham Bosse argued for an all-inclusive perspective system, derived from the mathematical principles of his teacher, Girard Desargues. But although Desargues did work with Descartes, his perspective was written before the Discours de la Méthode was published. Without the benefit of the clarifying Cartesian principles, Desargues' method remained a classic baroque machine, mathematically interesting, but of little practical use. But after the Fronde, the mix offered by Bosse of traditional artisanal method and new mathematics had a greater, political force. Bosse held that perspective determined not only the foreshortening effect but also the fall of light and shade and the strength of colour. In other words, Bosse believed he had a set of precise rules for painting that he could teach and pass on, just as the traditional guilds had done. But as the Academy was doing its best to define painting as a liberal art and themselves as a group separated from the guilds by genius and nobility, they could not possibly accept Bosse's method.

The Academy responded on two fronts. Firstly, they set out to create a suitable theoretical alternative to Bosse and the perspectivists. In so doing they arrived at a deliberately anachronistic position that denied all the advances of modern optics. But at the same time, the Academy's institutional profile fell precisely into line with the theories of kingship and government being developed by Louis XIV. The Academy might well have seen itself as attempting to combine the best of Ancient and Modern and, in this sense, they were perhaps right. The texts used ranged from the classics of Euclid, through the Renaissance in the persons of Leonardo and Lomazzo, to works by their own members such as Grégoire Huret and Félibien. But their internal discipline and organisation was pure ancien régime and it is therefore fitting that Colbert himself was directly involved in the resolution of the dispute.

Bosse and Desargues were, on the other hand, perfect examples of the new social forces the crown had to contend with in the mid-seventeenth century. Girard Desargues (1593-1662) was born in Lyons of good family and rose to prominence as a mathematician at an early age (1). However, facts about his life are scarce and one is often forced to rely on the dubious evidence supplied by his enemies for the details of his career. A decisive moment in his life came in 1628 when Cardinal Richelieu called for his assistance during the seige of the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle. Amongst the other mathematicians present was Descartes and it seems likely that the friendship between the two men began here (2). Perhaps Descartes had some influence on Desargues' first published work, a broadsheet on perspective of 1636. It was this method that Bosse was later to champion in the Academy. The broadsheet format was clearly intended to gain the widest

possible attention for his work and, despite some influential ideas on the problem of cones, the perspective was Desargues' best known work. Despite his obscurity today, Desargues was a well-known figure in his day and conducted a correspondence with Descartes. For the young Blaise Pascal, Desargues was of sufficient importance that he wrote: " J'ai taché autant qu'il m'a été possible, d'imiter sa méthode" (3). Nonetheless his perspective stirred such passions that it led to court cases and even a duel. Above all, there was a war of words, conducted through placards, pamphlets and, eventually, full-length treatises on perspective. But Desargues himself followed his preference for stating a principle and allowing others to draw out the consequences. It was Bosse who became his champion in the perspective war.

Bosse (1602-1679) was always likely to have come into dispute with the regime. He was born in Tours to a Calvinist family of artisans and, in all probability, he learnt his trade as an engraver from his father (4). It is an engraver that he is now chiefly remembered, but in the latter half of his career, he devoted himself almost exclusively to the study and tuition of perspective. His engravings offer much information about his personality, for despite Calvin's dictum that artists should only paint what they saw (5), Bosse's work was overtly didactic and moralistic. His depiction of the Protestant family at dinner (see figure 3) is a homily on the virtues of the patriarchal Huguenot household. The gazes of all the family meet at the viewing point but it is the father who looks straight out at the viewer in commanding fashion. Above his head are the Ten Commandments emphasising the father's role as law giver and

authority figure. The scene bears more than a passing resemblance to scenes of the Last Supper and, by extension, the father is occupying the place normally taken by Christ.

The same tablets of the Ten Commandments dominate Bosse's engraving of The Wise Virgins, part of a pendant pair with The Foolish Virgins in which the central point is taken up by a mirror (see figures 4 & 5). This stern contrast between the frivolity of the foolish, indulging themselves with music and love games, and the wise, discussing the Holy Scriptures in austere clothing, is an indication of the moral conviction that pervaded Bosse's work (6). It was perhaps the source of his strength to continue the dispute with the Academy all but single-handed - but it must also have contributed to his unpopularity.

Another consistent and important theme in Bosse's work was his record of the innovations, customs and ideology of the emerging French bourgeoisie at this crucial time in its history. For example, as medical practice developed the use of hospitals, Bosse depicted scenes of childbirth and the newly opened Hôpital de la Charité (fig. 6). He engraved scenes depicting the giving of enemas which did not offend his morality but instead were examples of progress. These works were not simple records but pieces of propaganda for the values of the new social forces that united in the Fronde, and also for the Huguenots. In his 1648 print of David (figure 7), Bosse used the tradition of the exemplum virtutis to champion the rebel cause as the attached verse made clear:

" La Fronde en cet endroit fit un coup Merveilleux,
Mais l'Esprit Eternel en conduisit la pierre,
Et luy donna du poids contre un front orgueilleux,
Pour mettre en ce moment ce Colosse par terre.

Frondeurs, de ce qui le bruit s'espand par tout le monde,

" Cet exemple Sacré vous a donné des Loix.
Vous pouvez justement faire claquer la Fronde,
Pour la cause du ciel et pour celle des Roix."

These verses were, then, Bosse's thinly veiled declaration of support for the Fronde itself, holding it to be a just rebellion. In the Fronde, Bosse was able to link the cultural values of Calvinism to a political cause.

Both Bosse and Desargues had seen the unrest in France at first hand before the rebellion proper in 1648. In Lyons, where Desargues was based, there were five riots or uprisings from 1622 to 1648 with a serious challenge to royal authority being made in 1640 (7). Desargues and his circle can hardly have been unaware of such activity in his own town. In Tours, Bosse's home, there was one significant incident, reported by the intendant, de Heer, in 1643. He described how the silk workers had led a protest against a new tax on wine and added:

" Cette sédition a esté excitée par un greffier de la prévosté, qu'il a donné argent, poudre et plomb à ces ouvriers en soie pour chasser les commis de trentes sols qui avoient aresté sur vin. J'en ay le preuve, il s'en fuy."

The intendant had considerable difficulty in persuading the bourgeoisie of the town to cooperate in his efforts to subdue the revolt. Only after three weeks did he restore public order with the public execution of the rebel leader, Captain Sabot (8). In Tours, the pattern of cross-class alliance against monarchical authority, which came so close to victory in the Fronde, was sketched out. The artisans of the silk trade accepted the material support of the clerk of court, and the leadership of an army officer, in order to oppose a tax which they would all have paid. There is no way of knowing what, if any, involvement Bosse had in this uprising but he did attempt to use the strategy of class alliances in his own work.

In Paris, Bosse was a part of the Huguenot circle that had a central role in the establishment of the Academy. Perhaps the most famous of these was Louis Testelin, the Academy's secretary but, even at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, there were nine Huguenot Academicians (9). These artists attended the same church, the Temple de Charenton, and had close social links. For example, Bosse's marriage took place in the Temple de Charenton and he was a family friend of the Moillons whose daughter, son and son-in-law were all members of the Academy whilst they were eligible. Also part of this group was Samuel Bernard, one of the founder members of the Academy (10). This group of Huguenot artists operated from the centre of Protestant activity in Paris, giving them access to wealth and influence. In this sense, they formed a rival power base to the court painters which helps to explain Le Brun's furious opposition to Bosse.

Although the Protestant artists had a clear social profile and a base for their political activity, they did not have a common artistic outlook or aesthetic. Artists such as Louise Moillon, Samuel Bernard and Jean Michelin were all still-life practioners, X much influenced by their Flemish contemporaries with their highly realistic style. One modern critic has held ~~up~~ them up as an X example of the confusion of Academic theory which had yet to evolve a distinctly French flavour (11). In these paintings, the subject matter was dominated by the discarded produce of everyday life. The object was always seen in use with no tendency to idealisation. Lemons were peeled, asparagus bundled for sale, peas revealed in their open pods. Roland Barthes analysed this style within Flemish painting:

" La seule issue logique d'une telle peinture, c'est de revêtir la matière d'une sorte de glacis le long de quoi

" l'homme puisse se mouvoir sans briser la valeur de l'objet." (12)

The still-life presented the viewer with a catalogue of use-values, relating not to the new nobility of painting but to the developing merchant class. In this analysis, the relationship between picture and viewer was one of consumption which was not just to do with content but also the creation of pictorial space. Barthes wrote:

" Or, tout art qui n'a que deux dimensions, celle de l'oeuvre et celle du spectateur, ne peut créer qu'une platitude , puisqu'il n'est que la saisie d'un spectacle vitrine par un peintre-voyeur. La profondeur ne naît qu'au moment où le spectacle lui-même tourne lentement son ombre vers l'homme et commence à le regarder." (13)

For Barthes, the depth of these paintings was an illusion, created by the window-shopping spectator's collusion with the art work itself. The still-life created a pictorial space by presenting a catalogue of objects for the spectator to acknowledge as useful and therefore saleable.

The French Protestant painters did produce work within this style. Louise Moillon's La Marchande des Fruits (Musée du Louvre, Paris) of 1630 shows a bourgeois (in the strict sense of town dweller) woman inspecting the wares of a greengrocer (14). The figures are there in their capacities as buyer and seller and are otherwise characterless. The real focus of attention is the display of produce, set out on the market stall for our consumption as spectators. The picked, peeled and arranged fruit is merchandise for our enjoyment. The picture was painted on the scale of a History painting at 121x165 cm. Art was spectacle here, just as at Versailles, but on exhibition was not the pyramid of society, but a pile of fruit.

In Samuel Bernard's Still Life with Violin, Ewer and Bouquet of

Flowers (1657, Priv. coll., New York, 79x94.5 cm), the consumption was of a higher order, although the canvas size was smaller (15). A peeled lemon and half-eaten fruit testify to the use-value of the objects shown. But a Chinese fruit bowl and a lavish Oriental rug indicate a higher standard of living than could be implied from Moillon's work. The consumer here has access not just to a Parisian market but to the international luxury goods trade. Bernard was also trying to integrate these new commodities into the Academic canon, as can be seen from the Classical decorated ewer on the right of the canvas.

One might be tempted to see these pictures as embodiments of a new world view, the products of nascent French capitalism, following the mercantilist Dutch into the new era. But if it was so, it was a view contested both within the Academy and the Huguenot community. The Academy found its own version of still-life in the dynasty of painters founded by Nicolas Baudesson (1611-1666) who produced works with an aristocratic disdain for utility. For example, his Fleurs dans un vase de terre (Priv. Coll., France, 44x31 cm) shows a bunch of flowers in a vase, handled with much swirl and flourish. The picture was now far too small to be considered History painting. Baudesson conveyed the effect of the flower arrangement with little concern for the component parts of the whole and still less for their use or exchange value (16). This flight from reality was continued in the work of Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer (1643-1699) whose Vase de fleurs, fruit dans un paysage, (HM the Queen, 127x165 cm) located the flowers and fruit in a rural scene, surrounded by Classical ruins. In other words, they were as far removed from their place of use in city markets as possible. Still-life might approach the territory of History painting but only insofar as this served to

distance their subject from contemporary reality (17). After the expulsion of the Huguenots, Gérard de Lairese wrote a theory of still-life, published in 1720, which set about enobling still-life and giving individual flowers particular mythological significance (18).

The Huguenots were defeated by the wider social forces behind the Academy. But during the period in which this contest was decided (1648-1661), they were not united amongst themselves over what pictorial style they should be using. For these were also years in which Bosse was promoting his perspectival theories. He attempted to continue the artisanal tradition dressed in the new clothes of perspective and with different aims to the still-life artists. At this point, it is appropriate to examine the nature of Bosse's theory (19). His writings were often unclear on details of technique and it requires diligent examination to understand his aims. In the process, forgotten languages and strategies for visual representation come to light, demonstrating that neither the Cartesian nor the Academic scopic regime arose unopposed.

Bosse adopted the perspective of Desargues who was one of the first to write on perspective in France. His Manière Universelle appeared in 1636 and does not initially seem a particularly controversial document. His method did not involve working outside of the field of representation, as did the traditional perspective methods, such as that of Jean Pelerin Viator. In such a method, the eyeline is marked in above the base and points of distance are marked in along this line at the same distance from the viewpoint as the eyeline is from the base. These were difficult to use on a large scale and Desargues operated his perspective solely within the space of the image, with the

consequence that he produced a very sharply receding space. The main feature of Desargues' work was set out in his opening line:

" Les mots PERSPECTIVE, APARENCE, REPRESENTATION, et
POURTRAIT y sont chacun le nom d'une mesme chose."
(20)

A work of perspective was now equated with the image as a whole, giving it an altogether higher authority and importance than it had hitherto enjoyed. Desargues did not set out arguments for this case but simply stated it to be so. He then proceeded to define all the terms he used. His attempt to reduce the different systems of visual signification to one universal manner of perspective was matched by his attempt to reduce to a single language the different vocabularies available to describe artworks. At times, this was no easy task:

" Ce qu'aucuns nomment plan géometral, autres la section plan de terre, autres la plante du sujet, y a nom ASSIETE du SUJET. " (20)

Desargues was referring to the geometric plan made of the object to be transferred into perspective and chose as his universal description a phrase that only he and Bosse often used. To modern eyes, a more serious weakness of this method was Desargues' indifference to the science of optics:

" En cet Art, il est supposé qu'un seul oeil voit d'une même oeillade le sujet avec son assiette et le tableau disposez l'un au drèt de l'autre, comme que se soit: il n'importe si c'est par Emission de rayons visuels ou par la réception des Espèces émanées du sujet, ny de quel endret, ou lequel des deux il voit devant ou derrière l'autre, moienant qu'il les voie tous deux facilement d'une même oeillade." (21)

This casually offhand attitude is curiously reminiscent of later Academic work on perspective. Desargues' reorganisation of the perspective system predated Descartes and was soon to be left behind by that work. His intentions were more mathematical than artistic and his work operated as Euclidean geometry rather than

optics.

Bosse added a theory of representation to this mathematical skeleton which was to be at the heart of his attempt to unify pictorial representation. Whereas Desargues had simply published an intellectual polemic, Bosse was to try and institutionalise his theories. In his Perspective de Desargues (1648), Bosse illustrated the manner in which the visual rays, as he called them, reached one eye in the form of a pyramid (fig. 8). As an indication of modernity, a figure in seventeenth century dress was used unlike the classical dress used by Du Brueil (fig. 9) and others. The result was a traditional visual pyramid and he continued the usual description of painting as being a slice across that pyramid (22). When he later published the course of lectures he taught in the Academy, Bosse illustrated the point literally (fig. 10) by having a lift-up picture attached to a geometric plan (23).

It was when he outlined his theory of representation that Bosse departed from accepted lines. He took the example, used by Descartes, of the need to paint an oval in order that the viewer might see a circle and concluded that the worst mistake for an artist was to paint what the eye sees. Instead, the aim of painting was to depict things in such a way that it gave rise to the same sensation as the sight of the original would. Bosse did not accept the Cartesian model for sight. Instead, he created his own version of the emanation theories proposed by Democritus, and long since discredited by Al-Hazen. That is, the eye was held to emit rays that actively perceive the objects in their path, rather than being a receptor for light. Bosse added his own touch in concluding that because the surface of the eye is curved, the

emanations from it must also be curved. The size of objects was therefore judged by the visual angle formed, as can be seen in figure 11. Through the correction of the judgement (a nod to Descartes, perhaps), the eye can then form a true impression of the height of an object. But if the painter were to paint exactly what is seen, then mistakes would follow. In the figure the artist would paint the height as marked at AB, because the correction has not yet been made, which is clearly short of the true figure's height. Thus the geometric lines used in perspective were more accurate as judges of external reality than unaided eyesight with its inbuilt curvature (24).

Bosse concluded that if visual perceptions are made with the use of lines; and if only perspective can control these lines in a representation because the unaided eye was untrustworthy; then it followed that perspective should dominate representation. It was also important to follow precise rules in making the perspective to avoid mistakes. The eye had to be positioned in one particular spot and the perspective worked out from there. He told his students that:

" Il faut connoître aussi la Distance, la Station, et Elévation de l'oeil, l'angle de la Vision et autres circonstances de ces pratiques et de plus la situation de ce Tableau entre l'oeil et l'objet. (25)

Yet he found that when looking at history painting, he could discover very few that obeyed even these basic rules, with the most unfortunate consequences:

" Car je remarquay qu'il se trouvoit dont les jambes sembloient avoir huict pieds de long et leur bras cinq ou six et le reste du corps à proportion, quoy que l'intention du Peintre fust que ces corps n'en eussent au plus que cinq et demy en toute leur hauteur." (26)

Bosse was criticising the most senior level of Academic painting and finding its technique wanting in what was the first lecture

he gave to students each year. It is perhaps understandable that the leading painters of the day took offence at being mocked in front of their students.

Bosse was nonetheless convinced that Desargues' method provided a simple means of correcting these errors and creating a new science of representation. He was adamant that it was the only means whereby an artist could create intelligible work. He declared, in a work published at the height of the Fronde, that:

" Le règle de représenter est ce qu'on appelle communément la perspective, mot qui ne signifie que ceux de portrait, portraiture, ou tableau, sans laquelle un peintre ou un autre tel dessinateur ne peut s'assurer du bon effet de son ouvrage." (27)

This lone principle set him apart from the still-life painters in his own community as well as the Academy. The Protestant still-life took its meanings from the collection of use values which the spectator could recognise and desire. The Academy, on the other hand, was trying to create a new homo significans out of the painter and leave behind the homo faber of the past (28). Bosse had moved away from the guilds in that he published his theories, and thereby made them available to all, rather than guarding his secrets for guild members. But his emphasis on craft and technique threatened painting's newly achieved status as a liberal art and could not be accepted by the Academy.

Bosse wrote that he felt he had three types of reader. One who was interested in the geometric principles on which his work was based, the typical intellectual of the time. Another who wanted to understand how these principles could be a practical rule and a third who wished to see unity of theory and practice (29). Bosse himself believed that theory was dominant and that the rules of practice were, in his phrase, the daughters of theory. Despite this, there was a strange gap in Bosse's writing. For

although he constantly referred to Desargues' rule of the petit pied, he nowhere explained it in his own work. That was perhaps because the method was of literally baroque complexity, denying Bosse's assertion that it was easy to learn. It may be that Bosse himself taught a simplified version of this perspective and used Desargues as a reference to give it authority.

However, the method that we have is from Desargues' pamphlet to which Bosse often referred. This perspective created a grid system, suitable for controlling the entire space of the image, thereby bypassing the unreliable estimates made by unaided sight. Desargues' perspective, according to Bosse, was the most effective method of generating the same sensations as would be felt when looking at the real scene (Details of the precise operations of the perspective can be found in Appendix 1. See figure 12 for the results obtained from it).

The complexity of this method was such that it might perhaps help to explain why Bosse often cited it without actually explaining it in detail. He was more concerned with the implications of such perspective than with the details that he had mastered in his engravings. For Bosse, perspective was the means by which the artist could control the unknowable real:

" Si vous trouviez estrange ce que je dy, considérez le principe de Géométrie qui porte qu'on ne scauroit tirer une ligne droite ni faire un rond parfait, qui sont les deux plus simples ouvrages de l'art et vous conclurez avec moy que les moyens de faire effectivement une chose, ne scauroient estre trop précis et l'ouvrier qui fait le moins mal avec les précis est le meilleur." (32)

For Bosse, the time and trouble involved in making a perspective was well worth it, if he could be considered the least inaccurate craftsman. In this reputable ambition lay the seeds of his dispute with the Academy, whose notions of individual genius and

of the innate nature of an artist's talent were not to be constrained by an artisan's grid.

Following the lead of Desargues, Bosse further insisted that his method controlled the application of colour, shadow, tints and touches. Colour was stronger the closer to the front of the pictorial field the subject was placed (33). Bosse therefore held that a picture should have a single light source, as well as single point perspective to be intelligible. In his lessons at the Academy, he denied that it was through the effects of light and shade that the viewer gained a sensation of relief within the image. Instead, he held that the angle of vision, combined with the weakening of colour together produced the effect. Bosse set out his guidelines for this aerial perspective as follows:

" D'autant plus que l'air est clair, pur et net, d'autant plus ces endroits ombrez estans supposez éloignez de la Baze du Tableau, doivent estre moins bruns, concevant cet air d'entre l'oeil et ces ombres, faire comme si on les voyait au travers d'une toile de soye très-fine et blanche, ou pour mieux dire, de la couleur de l'air, qui par conséquent seroit bien plus propre à faire le brun blanchy que le clair ou blanc noircy, puis que cet air en jour clair tient plus de cette nature de couleur blanche que la brune." (34)

Thus the further the object was from the base, the paler its shadows should be. Bosse did not give a source for this knowledge of aerial perspective, as used in the Italian Renaissance, despite Desargues' claim that it had never been printed in France. Bosse's innovation was to link the extent of this whitening effect to the perspective scale of Desargues, again reducing the individual judgement in favour of the craft technique.

Such technique required a more exact knowledge of the dimensions of figures in order that they could be placed into perspective correctly. He pointed out that builders must know the

dimensions of a building they are working on, but artists were often ignorant of the exact size of the body, their principal subject. He disapproved of the methods used by artists to determine the body's proportions, that is relating the size of each limb to the length of the head. He felt that this method, so widespread amongst the Renaissance artistic canon, was bound to vary from person to person. But, more importantly, he held that such methods might work in a portrait but were ineffective when the figures were being shown in perspective, as was often necessary (35). This was a further reference to History painting and its inexactitude of bodily proportion of which Bosse so often complained.

In order for the perspective to work correctly, the viewer had to stand in precisely the same position from which it had been calculated. Given that Desargues' method was not widely used or understood, there was a danger of incomprehension between artist, viewer and image. But Bosse, showing what might well be seen as artisanal pride in his craft and tools, proposed a way out of this danger:

" Au lieu que si vous scavez les pratiques du géométral et du perspectif, vous pouvez laisser en un coin de vostre Tableau sans le défigurer en la moindre chose, l'eschelle des mesures perspectives sur laquelle vous en avait fait le traict, avec la note de la distance que voue entendez qu'il y ait de l'oeil au tableau, suivant l'endroit auquel il se rapporte: et sur cette eschelle vous pourrez satisfaire au désir de cette personne".

(36)

To Bosse, this advice seemed sensible and one might understand it in the tradition of Phillipe de Champaigne's Ex-Voto (Musée du Louvre, Paris) with its explanatory inscription. But from historical hindsight, knowing the Academic tradition that was to arise of illusion and trompe l'oeil, these words are striking. Yet in 1648, as Bosse wrote this passage, this more accessible

art that admitted its artistry seemed possible.

Bosse was clearly attempting something new. His project was to create an alliance between the artisans and the bourgeois, that is between design and finance. He wrote that his work was intended to explain perspective to the artisan and added: "Si vous estes ouvrier de quelque Art, vous scaurez par ma vocation que je le suis aussi d'un" : but he was also royal professor of the new science of perspective. He wanted to make this kind of union more common and recalled that, previously, he had found discussions of theory empty. Now he disliked:

" Du malentendu qui à mon avis sert d'obstacle et de barrière entre la théorie et la pratique de cet Art, et empesche ces deux parties dont il est rendu complet, d'aller toujours conjointement, ou bien à costé l'une de l'autre, comme on trouve qu'elles doivent faire quand on les entend."

He noted that until then, 1648, artisans had ignored perspective, believing it too difficult for their work. But the theoreticians had not stopped to consider the implications of their ideas for those who might try and put them into practice. At meetings between the two groups, Bosse saw a complete lack of progress because the language used by either side was mutually incomprehensible. The theoreticians, who fully understood their ideas, were amazed at the obstinacy of anyone who refused to adopt them. Bosse, with perhaps more sympathy, noted the artisans case:

" Ces ouvriers, ou praticiens, voyans que les Théoriciens ne leur produisoient que des paroles ausquelles ils n'entendoient rien, et qu'au contraire ils faisoient des ouvrages qui parloient aux yeux du monde; de là ils prenoient occasion de se préférer à eux et ne scavoient que juger; ou ils avoient quelque raison en ce qu'ils leur proposoient, ou ils ne passoient point d'imagination."

These two groups were, on the one hand, the guilds and the

Academy but also, on a wider scale, the artisans and the bourgeoisie and its intellectuals.

For Bosse, both theory and practice were incomplete without the other. So, by extension, the two classes needed to stand together. At the outset of the Fronde, this message had wide implications (37). His work marked a new departure within published French writing on perspective, for it was the first to attempt to be a manual for practical use as well as a guide to the theory of the subject. As such, it was dedicated not just to artists and geometers but also to carpenters, engineers, cabinet makers, and anyone whose work involved drawing. Bosse hoped to end the division between the liberal and mechanical arts which the Academy was trying to institutionalise.

An essential prerequisite for this fusion was a common language and so at the outset of his Perspective (1648), he attempted to create exactly that. Here is a typical example:

" Au lieu que les Géometres disent faire un point en une ligne, ces ouvriers disent faire un repaire en une ligne: NOTEZ que je me sers de ce mot repaire en quelques endroits à cause de ces ouvriers." (38)

Even terms as basic as 'right angle', 'perpendicular' and 'horizon' had to be defined and set out in detail. Often, the two sides spoke in totally different fashion:

"Ce que les Géometres nomment des sections d'un demy cylindre, d'une demy sphere ou d'un demy sphéroïde ou conoïde par un plan; ces ouvriers le nomment des cherches et les distinguent en ralongées, surbaissées et surchaussées."

It is easy to think of the more familiar geometric language as being correct, modern French and the artisanal phrase as being a medieval relic. But in fact, the artisans often had a wider vocabulary and range of concepts than the theoreticians. Here is one example cited by Bosse:

" La recontre de deux plans verticaux entr'eux ces ouvriers nomment encoigneure et la ligne où ces deux plans se renconctrent, ils la nomment vive-arreste en matière d'Architecture."

This text provides an insight into the evolution of the French language aside from the debates of the Académie Francaise. It shows that the Academy, far from simply recording the language as they found it, controlled and organised it. Inevitably, once the monarchy was secure, this reorganisation favoured the elite groups in French society rather than the artisans Bosse had tried to represent. By the Dictionary of 1694, the artisanal language has either lost the theoretical sense that Bosse gave it or it has disappeared altogether (39). In under fifty years, words that had been used in one Royal Academy were deemed not to exist in another. The Dictionary was the codifying of a long-won victory over groups such as Bosse and his allies - that is, the Huguenots, the urban bourgeoisie, the artisans and other potentially disloyal groups. One section of that struggle was played out in the Academy of Painting over the role, mechanism and vocabulary of perspective. This guild-orientated theory of representation was defeated by Absolutism's vision of itself and, in truth, it was an uneven struggle. It nonetheless required the intervention of Colbert himself to settle the dispute.

Arguments over perspective predated the Academy itself. Du Brueil recorded Desargues' campaign against his book on the subject :

" Il tache par toutes voyes de faire croire avec ses placards que le livre ne contient qu'erreurs incroyables et fautes énormes." (40)

The placard was one of the primary means of expressing political dissent and Desargues made full use of it. He put up twelve placards, alleging errors in twenty sections of du Brueil's work.

In reply, du Brueil warned Desargues that his support from Bosse and de la Hire was not all he might want:

" Qui se moquent sans doute en leur de lui, iugeant avec raison que c'est trop d'estimer se soy de penser que pour avoir fait une seule figure de Perspective, ou pour parler comme luy, une cage formée de quatre lignes pour le plan et d'autant pour l'élévation, qu'on soit incomparable et le plus grand Perspectif qui ait paru sur terre."

Although Desargues' supporters remained loyal, du Brueil had nonetheless identified the weakness of their case. His final accusation against the group was a revealing one. He dismissed their linguistic innovations, claiming that:

" Voulant par sa invention donner une méthode facile, mais au contraire la rendre si obscure par ses escrits et ses termes barbares non usitez, qu'il est impossible que les ouvriers y puissent rien comprendre sans ayde."

Du Brueil was quite right. Artisanal French, such as that promoted by Bosse, did jar on the courtly ear, used to the mannered phrases of Castiglione or Baltasar Gracian. The struggle between these two languages was the essence of the Bosse dispute.

A further argument broke out between Desargues and one Curabelle whose Examen Critique des Oeuvres de Sieur Desargues appeared in 1644. The case went all the way to the Parlement, but no record of it now survives (41). It was, however, Bosse who carried the argument to the heart of the Academy after he commenced teaching perspective there on 9 May, 1648 (42). Although he presented two copies of his Sentimens sur la Distinction des manières diverses de Peinture, Sculpture et Gravure to the Academy in June 1649, his classes lapsed for a while (43). De Charmois asked Bosse to recommence them in May 1650 which he did (44). But it was only during the jonction with the guilds that Bosse was received as a full Academician with voting rights (45). Bosse always made reference in his later

disputes to the fact that he was appointed when the guilds were part of the Academy. But what was an advantage from his point of view was a further drawback in monarchist eyes after 1653.

The Academy certainly did nothing to support the new Professor or his arguments. The royal artists launched a series of initiatives to gain the upper hand in the debate over the visual image. One of the first events in this campaign was the publication of a French translation of Lomazzo's sixteenth century text on proportion by Hilaire Pader. At this time, Pader was court painter for Maurice of Toulouse but he joined the Academy on his return to Paris in 1659. Although Lomazzo's text was clearly rather 'outdated, it held several attractions for the Academy. Lomazzo insisted on the primacy of Italian art and its Academies over all others. The French Academy, busy trying to escape what they saw as the gothic heritage of the guilds, were eager to endorse such statements as:

" L'Italie, que chacun regarde comme la source de toutes les belles choses, les raretés et les merveilles de la peinture." (46)

Pader presented Italy to the French as the source of all artistic value, revolving around the twin geniuses, Michelangelo and Raphael. Lomazzo was seen as the guide through the labyrinth of Italian art who could help the reader understand not just proportion but all the elements of painting. A parallel might be drawn here with Bosse's insistence on the primacy of perspective. It was continued in Pader's concern for the linguistics of art. Pader placed himself in the courtly tradition by apologising for his stylistic weaknesses. He addressed the amateur, rather than professional or artisan, and was concerned that the strength of the Italian ideas should not be swamped in the intricacies of the French language. Pader continued to describe his ideal artist. As

painting was a liberal art, the artist should be a free man but he should also be rich in order to buy the necessary books and to pay for lessons. Above all, he stressed the nobility of painting, defined in Italian terms, separate from its rude native cousin, the guild artist.

Pader sited Lomazzo's theories amongst the contemporary debates over perception and the image:

" La Peinture émeut l'oeil, lequel ayant receu l'impression des objets, baille en dépost les espèces ou les Images à la mémoire, laquelle les représente à l'entendement, lequel ensuite concoit la verité ou la fausseté des choses et les ayant connues, les représente à la volonté, laquelle hait les mauvaises et chérit les bonnes, et se porte vers elle une pente et inclination naturelle.

L'on peut connoistre de toutes ces choses la grande utilité et excellence de la Peinture puis qu'elle est l'instrument de la Mémoire, de l'Intellect et de la volonté; un signe et une figure que les hommes ont inventée pour représenter toutes les choses naturelles et artificielles."

Although Pader has made use of some Cartesian vocabulary and ideas, the notion of perspective was conspicuous by its absence from his work. Lomazzo himself held that the physical arrangement of the image was all important and that proportion was the key to success here:

" Le Peintre est obligé de proceder en tout ce qu'il fait avec proportion et Art. Parce qu' auparavant qu'il desseigne un homme, il faut qu'il scache sa quantité et stature." (47)

In so doing, the painter imitated nature which starts with formless matter and transforms it into the finished form which is beautiful, by Platonic definition. Although painting was a sign, for Lomazzo it was also an imitation of the natural formation of signs. The form of a figure was an indication of its quality and status and so he insisted on artists beginning with these indicators. It would be wrong, for example, he wrote, to convey a

peasant as being larger than a king by using perspective, contradicting the difference in their quality. Lomazzo insisted instead on a spatial organisation, derived from Michelangelo, organised around a multiple pyramid. He wrote:

" Et pour représenter ce mouvement, il n'y a point de forme qui s'y accomode mieux que celle de la flamme du feu, lequel, suivant ce que dit Aristote, et tous les autres Philosophes, est l'élément le plus actif de tous." (48)

This combination of Michelangelo and Aristotle, couched in philosophical and noble terms had the right feel for the new Academy.

Pader certainly thought it had its uses for he presented his claims to the Academy in a manifesto poem, La Peinture Parlante, of 1653. The lengthy poem was made easier for those seeking highlights by the judicious use of Roman type to block out key passages from the surrounding Italics. Like Bosse, Pader provided a glossary at the start of his work but they were very different in content. Instead of Bosse's artisanal terms, Pader attempted to Italianise French, in order to produce an élite artistic language. He introduced his readers to Italian art terms, gave derivations of existing French words from Italian and coined neo-logisms from Italian and Classical sources (49). This Italianate culture was obviously limited in its audience, as the number of Italian speaking French people was not great. But unlike Bosse who sought as wide an audience as possible, Pader saw this selectivity as a positive virtue. His poem was couched as a dialogue between father and son and it happens the son asks to be told the secret of painting. The father replied as follows:

" En effet ce secret ne doit pas escrire,
Il fait nostre Cabale et suffir de le dire,
De bouche à son ami comme autrefois je fis,
Et le père le doit conserver pour son fils
Mesme le luy cacher s'il voit que sa jeunesse

" Le laisse encor agir avec trop de faiblesse.
Par luy tu connoistras ce qui t'est inconnu
Et comme sous le Linge il faut marquer le nû
Par luy ie t'apprendray d'une ruse scavante
A peindre après nature une escharpe volonté."
(50)

Pader has in effect reinstated the exclusivity of the guilds, against which the Academy protested so vigorously, dressed up as a learned Italian court pastime. He rejected perspective as being too mechanical and preferred Lomazzo's proportion:

" Si Cousin est facile, Albert par sa méthode,
Pour estre trop correct, te seroit incommode.
En un mot, le Lomasse a trouvé le vray biais,
Nous ouvrant un chemin qu'on n'avoit veu jamais.
Le livre du Cousin doit estre reietté,
Celuy d'Albert Durer nostre esprit embarasse,
Mais le grand Milanez s'y prend de bonne grace."
(51)

The excessive correctness of Durer and Cousin led to them being considered embarrassing whereas Lomazzo was commendable for his grace. This moral terminology was due to Pader's concern for courtly politesse to be shown by painters. This politesse would then further confirm the new status of painting as a noble, liberal art. The rejection of the perspectivists was complete and Bosse did not even rate a mention. But this manifesto for the courtly art of painting seems to have had little success, despite Pader's efforts to be of use to the Academy. Perhaps Lomazzo, his hero, was simply not famous enough for the Academy's hierarchy.

For shortly after this text appeared in 1653, Le Brun, the director of the Academy, championed Leonardo da Vinci's Treatise on Painting as the best rule for the Academy. As has been shown, this text was in a confused and disordered state in its French edition (52). The chapters were out of the correct order and many were missing altogether. Bosse later dismissed the Treatise as:

" Un ramas de pensées écrites en divers temps, à mesure qu'elles venoient en l'imagination de l'Authéur...Il les a mis en un si mauvais ordre, y laissant tout ce qu'il y

" a de mauvais et de dangereux à suivre; ensemble un nombre important de redites, foiblesses, contradictions, et beaucoup d'obscuritez." (53)

His criticisms did have some validity, even if it was not Leonardo's fault. But the Treatise had a valuable function for Le Brun and the Academy. As Leonardo had been Francis I's court painter, it provided a more concrete link with the Italian Renaissance than Pader's linguistic efforts. Furthermore, it served to integrate the legacy of the leading French artist of the period, Poussin, to the Academy. Roland de Chambray, the translator, had dedicated the text to Poussin and thanked him for completing any deficiencies in the text itself:

" Vous nous avez supplée ce qui y restoit à désirer: car outre que vous avez donné la dernière perfection à ce rare livre qui doit estre doresnavant la reigle de l'art et la guide de tous les vrais peintres, vous avez montré encore en cela l'estime que vous faisiez de l'auteur et de son ouvrage." (54)

The book was published at the height of the Fronde, when anti-Mazarin feeling was running high, so it was not the time to claim that French art derived from the Italian. But with the civil war over, Le Brun was eager to champion the view that the torch of painting which had been lit by artists such as Leonardo in the Renaissance had passed to Poussin and now, through their collaboration on this treatise, had come to the Academy. This genealogy was noble, cited great artists and avoided any mention of the recent, troublesome connection with the guilds.

Unfortunately for Le Brun, Bosse was easily able to prove this version of events wrong. He wrote to Poussin and asked him for his views on the Leonardo text. Poussin replied that although he had drawn some figures for the book, most of the drawings were by one Alberti or Errard, the Academician. He continued:

" Tout ce qu'il y a de bon en ce Livre se peut écrire sur une feuille de papier en grosse lettre; et ce qui

" croient que j'approuve tout ce qui y est ne me connoissent pas; moy, qui professe de ne me donner jamais le lieu de franchise aux choses de ma profession que je connois estre mal faites et mal dites.

Au demeurant, il n'est pas besoin de vous rien écrire touchant les Lecons que vous donnez en l'Académie, vous estes trop bien fondé." (55)

Bosse had neatly turned the Academy's position against itself, gaining Poussin's support and destroying the credibility of the Leonardo.

The Academy moved instead to use its institutional procedures against Bosse. With the new apparatus of the Absolutist court on their side, it was now inevitable that the Le Brun faction would win. The interesting side of the affair is how difficult they found it to enforce their victory. On 24 December 1654, Ratabon, the new director of the Academy, ended the jonction with the guilds and reinforced royal authority over the artists (56). One of the measures announced was that all members of the Academy were to return their lettres de provision which gave them their rank so that they could be reissued in accordance with the new statutes. Part of that process inevitably involved downgrading Academicians who were out of favour. Bosse was probably at the top of this list and tried to defend his position. In his original letter of engagement, he was employed to teach: " the dependencies of perspective". For Bosse, this was his licence to address the entire range of pictorial technique for, as has been shown, he felt that all painting was a dependency of perspective. He sought written clarification of the meaning of this phrase from the Academy which was not forthcoming. Days later on 7 June 1655, he presented his Perspective of 1648 to the Academy so that it could be approved as the basis of his teaching (57). A response was deferred so that Ratabon could try and defuse the situation. On 31 July, Ratabon offered Bosse one of the new

conseiller posts in the Academy in exchange for his dropping all references to Desargues—in his perspective. Bosse refused and the next day seven influential Academicians issued a declaration of support for Bosse's work. These were Vignon (ancien), Laurent de la Hyre (ancien), Corneille (ancien en mois), Bernard, Mauperch , Ferdinand and Montagne (58). These names included other Huguenots and supporters of Desargues but also included less partisan artists. So, just as the Academy was expelling the guilds, it had found a split in its own ranks. Bosse gained in confidence and at the Academy's meeting of 7 August 1655, he claimed Desargues' method was:

" Un tr s avantageux, prompt, solide et facile avancement de la jeunesse en la d.[it] pratique de cest art, par un ordre arrest  de conduite m thodique, scientifique et d monstrative,   n'estre jamais oubly e ny d laiss e pour une autre." (59)

Unfortunately for Bosse this hyperbolic moment was the highpoint of his success. At the same meeting, it was agreed that Bosse should publish his Perspective but under his own name, not that of the Academy. No agreement was reached over the meaning of the key phrase d pendances de perspective but the issue of the letter was not pursued further at this stage (60).

The Academy clearly felt a need to have a rival text in their armoury before they could move once and for all against Bosse. Now that Poussin had discredited the Leonardo, the Academy commissioned one Le Bicheur, a member since 1648, to write a treatise on perspective on 1 February 1657. Published in 1660, the work was dedicated to Le Brun and circulated around artists in manuscript before publication. Later historians and writers have paid little attention to this work which was obviously plagiarised from Desargues' 1636 pamphlet (61). The difference

lay solely in the presentation and application of the method. Le Bicheur made no effort to explain his terminology to his readers and proceeded throughout as if he were dealing with a problem of geometry, making no reference to practical applications for painters, as Bosse had done. For Le Bicheur, perspective was a device for controlling foreshortening of lines within an image and nothing more.

As soon as the work was commissioned in February 1657, Le Brun recommended it to the Academy. By 27 February, Bosse was complaining in a letter to the Academy that Le Brun was saying that Le Bicheur's perspective should replace his own teaching (62). The argument really took hold after the book was published. On 3 July 1660, Bosse protested to the Academy that Le Bicheur had acted: " au dèshonneur de l'Académie, de M. Le Brun et de nostre nation". Le Brun then returned to the registration debate of five years earlier and denied Bosse the right to take part in the Academy because he had not obtained a new letter of membership. This new combination of textual and institutional strategy was successful and Bosse was excluded from the Academy. On 18 July, he complained about his loss of speaking rights but the official record did not even note the event. At the next meeting, he again tried to raise the issue but the discussion was postponed, much to his annoyance. He then produced a dossier of Le Bicheur's plagiarisms, to which the latter replied that as he had not been in Paris for two years, he could not have seen Bosse's work and that, in any event, the Academy was not so ignorant of perspective as Bosse assumed. On 7 August 1660, Bosse was offered peace on the Academy's terms. In exchange for the rank of conseiller, Bosse was to surrender his old letter and submit to the Academy's authority or else face punitive measures

within three months.

Bosse had few options left. He shouted abuse at Le Brun at a meeting on 2 October 1660 and was again excluded for his pains. Finally, on the eve of the expiry of the Academy's deadline, Bosse wrote to Mauperché, the professeur en mois and one of his supporters in 1655, mocking:

" Cette ridicule qualité d'Académiste et conseiller sans les mêmes privilèges que celle de professeur...[Je suis reçu] non en cachette ny par brigue comme on dit, mais au contraire dans un de ces plus amples assemblées, accompagné mesme de celle de Mrs les Maistres peintres et sculpteurs."

Mocking the Academy's new organisation by comparison with the guilds was not the most likely way for Bosse to gain favour. Yet he once again seemed to gain the upper hand. At the meeting of 6 November 1660, Bosse stayed away as the session was to decide his future. But, despite Le Brun's efforts, no decision was taken. Instead, one Academician from each side- Corneille for Bosse, Errard for Le Brun- was deputed to find means of resolving the dispute and to bring them to an extraordinary general assembly of the Academy. In effect, this decision was a challenge from the membership to the Director. By making all Academicians responsible for the ending of this long-running dispute, the Academy was seeking to reverse the pyramidical hierarchy of the reorganised Academy. Presumably, in the absence of hard evidence, one must conclude that there was too much support for Bosse for Le Brun to override (62).

Certainly the final resolution of the dispute by Le Brun was not that of a man confident of gaining a majority. On the morning of 7 May 1661, there was the usual monthly meeting of the Academy at which little of interest was discussed. In the afternoon, the extraordinary meeting to rule on the Bosse/ Le

Bicheur dispute was held unannounced. The minority present were all Le Brun's supporters and a letter expelling Bosse from the Academy was drawn up and passed. Their case was quickly put. Bosse had been engaged to teach geometry and perspective but had taught all aspects of painting, using his initial, out-of-date letter as justification. Bosse was further accused of supporting Desargues, extorting signatures of support and defying two calls for the return of his membership letter. He was actually expelled under the catch-all clauses of the constitutions of 1648 and 1655 which provided for the expulsion of anyone who defied the statutes or acted against the Academy's interests (64). Fourteen names were attached to this order out of a membership of thirty-three in 1661. This minority declines still further on closer examination. Jacques Vanloo, who signed the letter, did not become a member of the Academy until 2 September 1662. One Chabon, whose name also appeared, never joined at all. One member's name was attached as Lecleuze en Flandre which appears to indicate that he was not there in person (65). In sum, only a third of the Academy could be persuaded to sign the letter on which so much energy had been expended and which was so clearly backed by the authorities. It is noticeable that seven out of the ten painters who signed reached Officer rank (the eleventh, Le Moine, was a musician), a far higher proportion than one would expect from a random third of the Academy. It seems that the Academy had yet to become a docile agent of Royal authority.

Bosse did not give up easily. The letter of expulsion was posted up in the Academy's school, a clear indication of his authority there. He now retaliated by setting up a rival school at St Denis where the courses were free, unlike those at the

Academy. Furthermore, the school was nearer the students' homes and provided not just drawing from the model but perspective lessons as well. These details have survived in a protest letter written by the students when the school was closed by government order on 24 November 1662. The decree came from the Conseil des Finances, in effect Louis' cabinet. The Council was controlled by Colbert and it was undoubtedly he who intervened to support his protégé, Le Brun. The decree forbade:

" Les assemblées desdits prétendus estudiants sous quelque prétexte que ce fut, à peine de prison, et à tous les propriétaires et locataires des maisons de les recevoir, à peine de cinq cents livres d'amende, payable à l'hôpital général. Et quant à ce que concernoit Bosse, S.M. lui défendit de même de s'ingérer d'aller se présenter dorénavant à l'Académie Royale, de continuer de prendre la qualité de membre de cette Académie, d'en parler autrement, ainsi que de tous ceux qui la composent qu'avec honneur et respect, et enfin, d'écrire aucunes lettres, libelles, mémoires, requêtes, factums, ni autre chose qui les pût regarder à peine de prison."

(66)

Against this full imposition of monarchical authority, there was nothing that Bosse could do. His students did lodge the protest referred to above. They complained that:

" L'Académie Royale ayant abrogé les leçons qui s'y donnent ci-devant sur la perspective, ses étudiants ne pouvoient plus marcher dans la route des arts que comme des aveugles, étant certains que cette science en est comme l'oeil et l'indispensable guide sans lesquels on ne sauroit voir avec justesse ou agir avec sûreté." (67)

All they received for their pains was a ban from the Academy's school, now the only functioning art school in Paris. A few years later, Bosse published his account of it all, marked by the bitterness of failure and his continued belief in his rectitude:

" Je laisse donc à juger quelle satisfaction peuvent avoir des personnes d'honneur, d'estre d'une Compagnie ou Communauté où une seule et deux ou trois de brigue, disent et entreprennent de faire de telles choses, et d'autres si opposées à ses Statuts et à ses Ordonnances, sans aucun fondement." (68)

But the very fact that he could now tell his version of events

was a testament to the success of Colbert in reorganising and redeploying the Academy. At the time of his intervention, the Academy was split amongst differing court factions such as the Fréarts and Le Brun, between old guild members and Academicians as well as over the theoretical debates over perspective and representation. Colbert intervened into this confusion, armed with the very thing the Academy lacked, namely a coherent aesthetic and a means of putting it into effect (see Chapter Five below for details). For while the Academy had continued to work out the conflicts of the Fronde era, Louis XIV and his advisors had devised the new dynamics of Absolutism. The initial reorganisation of 1655 had not proved sufficient to bring the Academy into line with this new regime. In the seven years afterwards, the artists debated the nature of pictorial representation and to whom it belonged. The dispute between Bosse and Le Brun characterised the two poles of opinion. In the end, although Le Brun emerged triumphant, the real player was once again the government. Colbert intervened on behalf of Louis XIV and the Academy was forever changed as a result. Not for nothing did the eighteenth century Academy date its origins from the reorganisation of 1663 rather than the foundation in 1648. It was only after 1663 that the Academy decisively emerged as an agent of royal authority above all else. But the Bosse dispute serves as an important reminder that this was not the only option for French art and artists. Like all conquests, the celebratory art of Absolutism contained within it the story of a defeat, that of the guilds, Abraham Bosse and the Frondeur aesthetic.

NOTES

1. Poudra, Oeuvres de Desargues, (Paris, 1864), Vol. I, p.11.
2. Ibid, p.13.
3. A. Blum, Abraham Bosse et la société Française au XVIIème Siècle, (Paris, 1924), p. 42.
4. A. Bosse, Le Peintre Converty aux précises et universelles règles de son art, hereinafter PC, (ed. R. Weigert), Introduction, p.15.
5. Ibid, p. 18
6. Women were not condemned out of hand in Bosse's work. His engraving of Judith, after the assassination of Holofernes (figure 7) depicted her as a French heroine and an example to all.
7. B. Porshnev, Les Soulèvements Populaires en France de 1623 à 1648, (Paris, 1965), pp.152-55.
8. Ibid, pp. 221-25. There was another uprising by the silk workers in 1647 but no detailed record survives.
9. A. de Montaiglon, Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, Tome II, (Paris, 1878), pp.197-205. The Huguenots were expelled from the Academy on October 10, 1681 in the early stages of Louis' move towards Catholic orthodoxy. Perhaps the memory of the difficulties over the Bosse affair was an additional motivation for the government but there is no specific evidence to this effect.
10. M. Farè, Le grand siècle de la Nature Morte en France, (Fribourg, 1976), pp. 50-67.
11. Ibid, p.256.
12. R. Barthes, " Le Monde Objet", in Lettres Nouvelles, no. 4, (Paris, 1953), p.396-7.
13. Ibid, p.405
14. Ibid, p.65

15. See P. Rosenberg (ed.), France in the Golden Age, (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1982), p.207 & p. 222.
16. Farè, op. cit., p. 283.
17. Ibid, p. 315.
18. Ibid, p. 386-87.
19. In this chapter, Bosse's work is considered primarily as a discourse about the use and control of visual space within the picture. For reasons of space and coherence, I do not propose to look at the formal construction of perspective in Bosse's system as compared to other methods. It is not part of my concern whether his perspective was more or less accurate than others'. Perspective, as we have known since Panofsky, is a construction and what is examined here is the principles behind that construction.
20. [Girard Desargues], Exemple de l'une des manières universelles de S.G.D.L. touchant la pratique de perspective, sans employer aucun tiers point de distance ni d'autre nature qui sont hors du champ d'ouvrage, (Paris, 1636), p.1.
21. Ibid, p.2.
22. A. Bosse, Manière Universelle de Mr Desargues pour pratiquer la Perspective par petit-pied, comme le Géométal, Ensemble les places et proportions des Fortes et Foibles Touches, Teintes ou couleurs, hereinafter MU, (Paris, 1648), p.48.
23. A. Bosse, Traité des Pratiques Géométrales et Perspectives, hereinafter TP, (Paris, 1665), Planche 50.
24. A. Bōsse, PC, p.16.
25. A. Bosse, TP, p.6.
26. Ibid, p.12.
27. R. Weigert (ed.), Sentimens sur la Distinction des diverses manières de dessein et gravure par A. Bosse, p.121-2.

28. Norman Bryson, Word and Image, French Painting of the Ancien Régime, (Cambridge University, 1981), p.30. Bryson provides a longer discussion of the relationship of these terms.
29. A. Bosse, MU, p.20.
30. G. Desargues, op. cit., p.6.
31. Ibid, p.6-7.
32. A. Bosse, MU, p.3.
33. R. Weigert, op. cit., p.179.
34. A. Bosse, TP, p.20-21.
35. A. Bosse, MU, p.41
36. Ibid, p.44.
37. Ibid, p.30-32.
38. Ibid, p.14. All further references to this vocabulary are from pp.14-16.
39. Examples of this process at work as follows: Repaire, used by Bosse to describe a point in a line, referred to a meeting of walls in the 1694 Dictionary. Cintre was defined by the Academy as: " Figure en arcade, en demi-circle" and by Bosse as: " La section d'un cylindre par un plan perpendiculaire à l'essieu". Bosse knew the sauterelle as a useful tool: " Cet outil de deux règles clouées ensemble par un de leurs bouts qui ouvre et ferme comme un compas avec lequel on prend les angles sur un relief." For the Academy it was only: " une sorte d'insecte". Other words used by Bosse in a geometric sense, such as bombé and renflé had disappeared altogether by 1694.
40. Jacques Du Brueil, Diverses Méthodes Universelles et Nouvelles en Tout ou en Partie pour faire des Perspectives, (Paris, 1642), Préface, n.p. All references come from here.
41. Poudra, op. cit., p.36-7.

42. Weigert, op. cit., p.17.
43. De Montaignon, op. cit., p.23
44. Ibid, p.31.
45. See A. Blum, op. cit., for a different interpretation of Bosse's election- that he was a candidate proposed by the Academy to reduce the guild majority-, p.16.
46. Hilaire Pader, " Discours sur le sujet de cette Traduction", in Traicté de la Proportion Naturelle et Artificielle des choses par Iean Pol Lomazzo, (Toulouse, 1649), n.p. All references from here unless otherwise cited.
47. Ibid, p.3.
48. Ibid, p.5.
49. Hilaire Pader, La Peinture Parlante, (Toulouse, 1653), Préface, n.p. For example, Pader described the primacy of contours in design as the abagliamento. The French carton, for drawing, was held to be derived from the Italian carta. He termed excellent architects polions, derived from Vitruve Polion (as Vitruvius was known in French).
50. Ibid, p.42.
51. Ibid, p.11. 52. See Chapter III above.
53. A. Bosse, TP, p.127-8.
54. Roland de Chambray (trans.), Traité de la Peinture de Leonard da Vinci, (Paris, 1651), Dedication, n.p.
55. A. Bosse, TP, p.127-8.
56. See Chapter III above.
57. De Montaignon, op. cit., Vol. I, p..73-4.
58. A. Bosse, TP, p.136.
59. A. Blum, op. cit., p. 201.
60. De Montaignon, op. cit., I, p. 104.
61. J. Le Bicheur, Traicté de Perspective faict par un Peintre de

l'Académie Royale, (Paris, 1660), p.26f.

62. A. Blum, op. cit., p.22-3.

63. My discussion is based on the relevant passages in A. Blum, op. cit., pp. 22-31 & 194-207 and in de Montaiglon, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 171-173.

64. Viz. Article 21 of the 1655 Statutes which gave grounds for exclusion as: " Soit par mépris des statuts, corruption des mœurs, abandonnement des intérêts de l'Académie ou autrement." Other relevant clauses were Article 9 and Article 12 of 1648 Statutes.

65. Louis Vitet, L'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, (Paris, 1861), gives details of accessions and membership.

66. A. de Montaiglon (ed.), Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture depuis 1648 jusqu'en 1664, (Paris, 1853), Vol.II, p. 86.

67. Ibid, p.84.

68. A. Bosse, Au lecteur sur les causes qu' il croit avoir eues, de discontinuer les cours de ses Lecons GEOMETRALES et PERSPECTIVES, dedans l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture et mesme de se retirer, (Paris, 1666), n.p.

CHAPTER FIVE

Colbert's intervention in the Bosse dispute marked a coming of age for the arts in France. From being the object of court intrigue under Richelieu, painting and the representational arts now became a central pillar of the ideology of Absolutism. Louis XIV's own involvement in this process guaranteed its importance. Inevitably, the Sun King had only one interest in painting and that was insofar as it could advance his rule and authority. In this area, the Academy received a clear aesthetic direction from above. It was up to them to work out how this applied to painting and sculpture in general. Unsurprisingly, this took time and there were many false starts, some of which have already been examined. Yet it was to be fully half a century before the Academy had a working relationship in place between its theory and practice subject matter other than royal portraits.

In 1661, Louis XIV assumed personal government of his kingdom and resolved to rule without an all-powerful first minister, such as Richelieu and Mazarin had been. He himself chaired the new, small sized Conseil d'en Haut which became the steering committee of the government. All other nobility were excluded from this important institution, keeping power close to the throne. Historians have noted the parallels between this method of government and the aesthetics of the baroque. Ernst Kossmann described it thus:

" Contemporaries felt that Absolutism in no way excluded that tension which seemed to them inherent in the State and altered none of their ideas of government. For them, the State was like a baroque church in which a great number of different conceptions mingle, clash and are finally absorbed into a single magnificent system." (1)

The system did nonetheless have one point of unity, a point that

could not be doubted or challenged and that was the King.

As Louis Marin has described, the means by which the King ensured that his majesty was recognised was through and in his image. It was this body of power that the Academy was to represent. Now that the King ruled alone, it was important that he be known, recognised, feared and obeyed. This kingship effect was known above all through the image of the King, in some ways distinct from the actual person of the king. As Pascal observed:

- "Even when kings enjoy their royalty and act as Kings, they are not exempt from life's miseries and Nature's infirmities." (2)

That is to say, a king was, by virtue of his humanity, not always divested with the divine attributes of Kingship. The full authority of the monarchy stemmed, however, only from those moments in which the ruler was King. In that sense, the head of a royal house was always an image- that of the King- with which the individual concerned was never quite the equal. Thus the Jansenist logicians of Port-Royal concluded that: "Le portrait du César, c'est César." Marin analyses this counundrum as follows:

" It does not matter that the king's body subsists in its own nature, so long as in our senses is excited the image of a body that helps us to conceive in what way the king's body ...is lavished by His Majesty to ensure more and more the happiness and rest of his peoples and how the subjects are united amongst themselves in the same political body." (3)

Thus the disparate elements that composed the baroque aesthetic of Absolutism were held together as elements of the figural body of the King. The King was, then, a portrait which allowed these different subjects to find one identity within and through the King. Marin again:

" The king (with a small k, the real individual with knees swollen by gout- the organic body) is changed entirely into his 'image' and becomes 'representation'- the King (capital K, dignity, Majesty and the political

body)." (4)

Here was the ultimate trompe l'oeil of the baroque- the transformation of man into Majesty through the use of his image in painting, sculpture, coins, medals and architecture.

Louis XIV successfully maintained this image throughout a long reign. His adherence to the principle "L'Etat, c'est moi" can best be understood as part of this careful policy. Once Louis had occasion to look at his own portait and uttered the memorable phrase: "C'est Louis le Grand". He did not identify it as himself, it was another, his portrait. And rather than being only the fourteenth Louis, he was Louis the Great, distinct from the rest of his line. The fact that this portait could be identified and known was a contributory factor to the success of his reign and he, like anyone else, had to pay homage to the image.

The portraiture of the King was of more than ordinary importance in the new politics of Absolutism. It was this political aesthetic that lay behind Colbert's intervention into the Academy. The King's portait was not to be disturbed by any notion that the image was dominated by perspective, as Bosse had suggested. More than that, the image was not even to be a subject for debate. Soon after the dismissal of Bosse and his students in late November 1662, Félibien published a short text discussing Charles Le Brun's Les Reines des Perses aux Pieds d'Alexandre which set the standard for Academic portraiture of the King. The portrait of the King was presented as that of Alexander after his conquest of Persia.

In Félibien's text, Le Brun's inspiration had come from Heaven in order that he could paint the King. In effect, he concluded that to paint the King was to celebrate the transubstantiation of the King's body. Just as the King was more than a man, being

God's representative on earth, so too Le Brun used ordinary canvas and paint but the result was transformed into the royal portrait. He rated Le Brun's achievement higher than that of Zeuxis who had painted the perfect woman taking different parts of her anatomy from a variety of different women:

" How much greater happiness it is to today's excellent painter to find in the sole person of Your Majesty the material for making the portrait of a King who will be, in the future, the model of all other Kings." (5)

For Félibien, the portrait of Louis XIV was a milestone in both political and artistic terms. The portrait of the King was as much a portrait effect as the actual work, generating the belief that the man and the King were the same, after the disputed lineage of France's early modern history. Félibien found its embodiment in the actual work of Le Brun and it was to remain at the centre of all the Academy's future activity.

Furthermore, the Academy quickly moved to dismiss Bosse's perspective. On 8 January, 1665 Grégoire Huret of the Academy published a pamphlet which rejected the use of geometry for all human figures, as well as flowers, trees, animals and indeed all natural subjects. A reply was published in the Journal des Savants to which Huret responded with a paper circulated in the Academy. An anonymous response again appeared but Huret once more reiterated his case (6).

Huret published a full-length book in 1670 that became the Academy's definitive statement on theory but in the meantime it was Félibien who continued to revise the Academy's position. Between 1666 and 1668, Félibien published four volumes of Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres, anciens et modernes. (At this point, only the polemical aspects of the work relating to the evolution of an Academic

aesthetic will be considered). The Preface quickly disposed of the kind of rules which Bosse had tried to introduce into painting:

" On ne peut dire comment il faut donner plus de force, plus de majesté et plus de grâce aux figures; tout cela dépend du génie du Peintre...C'est un moyen qui ne consiste pas en des règles qu'on puisse enseigner, mais qui se découvre par la lumière de la raison et où quelquefois il faut se conduire contre les règles ordinaires de l'Art." (7)

The depiction of the figure, especially the Royal figure was at the centre of Félibien's concern. He accepted that it might be necessary to break the rules of optics in art and dismissed those censors who might understand perspective but did not understand the overall needs of painting. Bosse put out a disingenuous open letter, claiming that Félibien had not meant to attack him. In fact, Félibien's championing of an elite notion of artistic genius was radically opposed to all Bosse stood for. He proposed an aesthetic based on the human body and its representation:

" La beauté naît de la proportion et de la symétrie qui se rencontre entre les parties corporelles et matérielles. Et la grâce s'engendre de l'uniformité des mouvemens intérieurs causez par les affections et les sentimens de l'âme." (8)

Félibien held that if painting was to convey these interior passions rather than mere external appearances, it had to be of a different and higher order than geometry. He distinguished his conception of the true artist as someone who paints for honour from those who merely work for money (9). Having reassured his readers that painting was a truly noble art, he then proceeded to give classical authority for his views from writers such as Galen. Simple representation was a mechanical task that could be learnt. But Félibien held that there was a scale of artistic difficulty. As the work became more difficult, it became more

noble and illustrious, less concerned with simple likeness and more involved with depicting the higher emotions.

The secret of painting, located at the heart of this lengthy work, lay in applying dignified restraint and concealment to the image:

" Quelque beau que soit un visage, la pudeur est capable d'y ajouter un grand éclat et même de faire naître du respect dans l'âme de tout le monde." (10)

The notion of respect was the key to Félibien's understanding of the creation of pictorial space. It provided depth and space without resort to the mechanical device of perspective. For respect carried with it notions of distancing and separation. In the terms of the period, an economy of respect was created. That is to say, the notion of respect valorised the distances between people. Thus the figures in an image were separated not by pure chance but by the respect that operated between them, giving that space a value and a meaning of its own. The idea of economy was also used to convey the harmonious balance that was achieved by the use of respect. A social balance was also generated which gave meaning to the pictorial space of the image. The area within the frame was now subject to control.

The distance between two people of the same sex implied by respect became much stronger when applied to the two sexes. In the analysis of Sarah Kofman, it became : "une opération de maîtrise" (11). The separation caused by respect was most effective as a mark of gender difference. In this circumstance, it had a clearly defined role, as Kofman has written:

" A la femme il permet l'économie éventuelle de la vertu et aux deux sexes, une économie sexuelle, un certain répit: la femme refuse, l'homme demande." (12)

This respite was afforded in Félibien's model by the use of pudeur which both located the woman and prevented the man from

approaching her. At the same time, pudeur and respect created a sense of space in which these events could take place. As so often in the creation of Absolutism, a system evolved in which the unity of the whole depended on the component parts being kept apart.

Félibien's theory required considerable support to make it work. He advised that when painting a great personage, any natural defects should be concealed so that the respect due to their station should not be compromised by physical weakness. Beauty was needed to generate respect and make the space credible. But beauty was a relative term and, for Félibien, it served to emphasise and define the difference between the sexes. Although women were protected by their pudeur, it was a passive role compared to the active respect felt by the man. Félibien thus identified two types of beauty:

" La première se connoît dans les hommes, lors qu'ils se sont voir avec un aspect plein d'un véritable noblesse; qu'il se trouve un je ne scais quoi dans leur taille, dans leur port et sur leur visage, qui les fait réverer et qui remplit de respect ce qui les regardent. L'autre se recontre dans les femmes, quand on y remarque une contenance noble et en est grande, bienfaite et aisée; qu'elle porte bien le corps, et font tout leur action avec grandeur; qu'elles parlent gravement; rient avec modestie; tiennent s'il faut ainsi dire, un certain avantage sur les autres femmes; et qu'avec tout cela on voit un air plein de pudeur et chasteté." (13)

Men thus occupied the position of respect which they both inspired in others for themselves and which they also showed to women. In order for women to enjoy this respect, they had to demonstrate pudeur in ways that were closely defined.

Within the economy of respect, Félibien constructed an emotional topography which, within tightly controlled conditions, could order pictorial space. He placed an overwhelming emphasis on figure painting, being acutely aware of the Academy's first

task, the representation of the King. Perspective, permitted for the depiction of architecture, played no part in this central task. Figures were to be arranged in groups depicting scenes from History and Mythology. Félibien wrote:

" Il faut représenter des grands actions comme les Historiens, ou des sujets agréables comme les Poètes; et montant encore plus haut, il faut par des compositions allégoriques , scavoir couvrir sous la voile de la fable les vertus des grands hommes et les mystères les plus révélez... C'est en quoi consiste la force, la noblesse et la grandeur de cet Art." (14)

Once again, Félibien added a layer of complexity to painting that could not be described within a perspective dominated space. The allegorical veil that he installed kept away the gaze of the uninitiated, that is to say, those outside the nobility.

However, despite the complexity of Félibien's theory, it was not provided in a form that could be useful to painters or taught in the Academy's school. Rather, it was scattered in sections of his four volume work. Furthermore, like many of the early perspectival theories, it did not offer practical solutions to the use of pictorial space. Félibien had simply ignored all the contemporary changes in optics that were going on around him. Although respect generated a notion of distance, how was this actually to be represented? Perspective at least had the virtue of being very good at ordering space. A more cogent and better organised theory was needed.

It was to this end that Grégoire Huret's Optique de Portaiture et Peinture was published in 1670. It was explicitly designed to meet the teaching purposes of the Academy. He reiterated the line he had taken in his pamphlet five years previously in rejecting: "la rigueur des règles". Bosse was the prime example of this error which Huret condemned as well as his methods of self-publicity. These included placards, as used by Desargues in 1636,

put up at the crossroads of Paris. Both the artisanal technique and the Frondeur politics had no part in the Absolutist Academy.

Right at the outset, Huret declared his belief that:

" La Géométrie n'a aucun pouvoir en la portraiture de tous les animaux, arbres, fleurs, paysages, et autres sujets compris de superficies courbées irrégulièrement."
(15)

Huret dismissed each writer on perspective from Leonardo to Desargues in turn and all on the grounds of this principle. His judgement was backed up by his theory of vision which he felt had to take into account the operation of both eyes:

" D'où il s'en fuit que chaque regardant ayant deux yeux, recoit aussi deux images d'un seul et mesme sujet, mais... ces deux images s'y trouvent réunies en une seule, lors que nostre jugement pense à ce qu'il voit et à gouverner nos yeux. Et les expériences de la dioptrique nous ont fait connoistre que ces images entrans dans les yeux, y sont d'abord renversées par refraction au rencontre de la première superficie de l'humeur cristalline, puis redressé par la réfraction de la seconde etc." (16)

This passage is typical of the whole work in its relentless confusion of the old with the new into a unique hybrid. The influence of Descartes can be clearly seen in the references to refraction and the role of the judgement. Huret in fact cited Descartes' Dioptrique as evidence for the traditional theory of the visual pyramid. But no Cartesian would have ended a discussion of refraction with a casual 'etc.' as Huret did. For him, it was not so important to explain how the eye worked but to indicate that its operations were in a confusion which was only resolved by the mind. He might have seemed here to be heading in a Cartesian direction but then he attempted to criticise the geometers on their own ground. He pointed out that pictures were created as if seen through only one eye although the mind in fact received two intermingled images that were made

comprehensible by the judgement. Thus the geometers could not recreate the visual pyramid as it was experienced because they assumed only one eye was used. If painting was, as was by now commonplace, held to be the representation of what would be seen on a sheet of glass interposed between the viewer and the subject, then two overlapping pyramids needed to be recreated, not the single one used in perspective (17).

His argument was thus two-pronged. Geometry and perspective were unable to reproduce the complex, double process of vision through their monocular structures. As a result, *images produced* by the geometric system could not reproduce the sensation felt by the viewer of the actual scene. In order for sensation to be properly conveyed, Huret insisted on the use of proportion. The Academy was back with its earliest theory, that of Lomazzo. Proportion was now deployed within Félibien's economy of respect and opposed to the technicalities of perspective. Huret picked on another hole in contemporary perspective theory to support his case. He pointed out that if we see the same object at different distances, we still know that it is the same size. He claimed that in perspective, the different visual angles presented by an object at different distances ought to lead to a judgement that they are different sizes. Although that was not necessarily so, he did score a hit when he pointed out that the use of proportion allowed viewers to look at a picture from whatever viewpoint they chose and with both eyes (18). For the judgement, he held, was able to perceive distant objects through its internal knowledge of bodily proportion. It was therefore a mistake to alter the proportions of a figure by perspective for if they were changed, the figure would become unrecognisable. He gave four reasons why 'depraved' figures in perspective produced aversion:

" Le Premier, parce que cette vision contrariant à l'éloignement et obliquité desdites parties du Tableau, se trouve en proportion troublée ou perturbée, qui est la plus contrevenant à l'ordre ordinaire des autres espèces des proportions et qui repugne nos sens (conduits par nostre jugement) cherchant dans la nature pour leur satisfaction. Deuxième, parce qu'il connoist qu'il n'y a que le seul endroit où il est posé, dont on puisse souffrir la vûe de ce Tableau. Troisième, parce qu'il appréhendera de le regarder estant hors dudit endroit, à cause que l'infirmité de nature fait que nostre imagination est beaucoup plus facilement blessé par une laideur, que recrée par une beauté. Quatrième, parce que ces objets depravez et desordonnez luy peuvent remettre dans l'esprit des rêveries passées, ou des songes lugubres, qu'il aura en autrefois en des maladies, fièvres etc" (18).

Perspective was held to be not merely optically incorrect but a danger to moral and physical health. Huret held a remarkably vulnerable concept of Man that contrasted noticeably with the confidence of Absolutism. He later expanded on this idea but first he set out his own solution to the use of pictorial space.

He cited seven objections to Bosse's perspective which were essentially variations on the twin themes of the difficulty of his method and the impossibility of creating beautiful results with it (20). Huret advocated an altogether simpler method. First, the artist marked in a line at the eye level of the painted figure presumed to be 'nearest' to the spectator in the visual pyramid. All the other figures were simply drawn so that their eyes would also be on this line, assuming they were standing up. The artist worked their proportions out using Vitruvius' scale in which the human body was held to be eight times the length of the head. So if a line from the intended position of the figure to the eyeline was marked in, it could be divided into eight parts to correspond to the different sections of the Vitruvian body. As the figure was correctly proportioned, it would be comprehensible to the viewer. Proportion was not an end in itself as perspective had been for Bosse. Artists were

urged:

" De considérer la longueur du pied, ou la hauteur de la teste de la figure qu'ils veulent faire, pour luy donner de hauteur sept fois, ou sept fois et demy, ou huit fois etc. la grandeur, suivant qu'ils jugeront à propos, pour correspondre au sex, à l'âge et à la qualité de la figure qu'ils veulent représenter; mais cela se doit faire sans autre compas que celui de l'oeil et du jugement" (21).

So the proportional method removed the technical restraints of perspective such as points of distance or diagonals and created instead new, subjective determinants for the pictorial image: namely, age, quality and sex.

These restraints on the image were justified in the ethical and medical terms referred to above. Huret linked the senses to morality in terms reminiscent of the medieval scholastics:

" Parce que la santé de l'homme dépend principalement de la joye de son esprit, et que la joye de l'esprit dépend principalement des plaisirs qu'il recoit par l'organe des sens, desquels le plus noble est celui de la vûe, qui luy fait recevoir les apparences de toutes les merveilles visibles de l'Univers, entre lesquelles après le Soleil et les Astres, les belles personnes humaines tiennent le premier rang; puis de suite...il s'enfuit que l'art de Pourtraiture et Peinture, qui représente sur les Tableaux lesdits sujets doit faire en sorte qu'ils donnent le plus de récréation à la vûe et à l'esprit qu'il se pourra." (22)

Sight was understood as noble but vulnerable. It should therefore only see the most noble subjects in order for it to uplift the spirit. At this point, the move towards a liberalisation of the image implied by Huret's rejection of the perspectival codes abruptly ended. In fact, Huret was to place the image in such a tight theoretical vice that it was all but impossible to achieve in practice.

Huret defined the subject matter of painting as being found within the two passions of love and hate. He quickly qualified this position by describing the dangers of these emotions:

" C'est pourquoy le moins que nous y pouvons penser est le meilleur, et particulièrement aux extrêmes de

" mauvaises, comme le désespoir et la rage, lesquelles aussi on ne doit jamais représenter sur les Tableaux etc., puisque cela ne peut qu'offenser la santé des regardans, qui ont l'imagination tendre, leur remplissant l'esprit d'horribles idées, surquoy on doit remarquer que le désespoir n'est qu'une tristesse ou chagrin en son suprême degré et que la rage ne doit pas estre mise au nombre des passions, puisque c'est une maladie venineuse qui se peut acquérir par divers accidens, ausquels on peut couper chemin ou en guérir par differens remèdes ainsi que les autres maladies causées par les venins." (23)

Following his emphasis on the depiction of the human body as the prime task of painting, Huret placed the image under the limits of medicine. The seventeenth century understood the passions to be a biological fact, causing disease if they became unbalanced. Symptoms of such illness could be both physical and mental, as in the case of despair described by Huret. Despair was also a state of the soul and a mortal sin, so it was to be avoided at all costs. Yet Huret suggested that it could be induced by looking at a painting which represented these passions.

As was becoming typical of the Academy, Huret's theory was a blend of old and new. The chain of association described above belonged in some ways to the traditional operations of magic, with its great Chain of Being (24). Yet it also owed much to the new project of containment of the mad, sick and poor that began in the mid-seventeenth century and has been analysed at length by Michel Foucault (25). Following the foundation of the Hôpital Général in Paris in 1656, the government began to imprison the mad, defined as those who had made an uncontrolled extension of reason. This project was extended to the whole country in 1676. These 'hospitals' had a broader social function than their name implied for they defined: " mendicancy and idleness as the source of all disorders" (26). They thus absorbed the unemployed who were driven into poverty, in part by the political upheavals of

the time, and in part by the government's offensive against the guilds which caused disruption to employment. Soon after its foundation, the Hôpital Général housed over six thousand people, or one per cent of the Parisian population.

Madness was held to be caused by the excesses of Reason, and this analysis played a key part in the new agency of social control. For example, a madman who believed himself to be dead, starved to death following the impeccable logic: " The dead do not eat; I am dead; hence I do not eat". Unfettered reason was thus understood to have direct and harmful physical consequences. However, Huret's use of restraint in the visual image was not a borrowing from a convenient source but flowed directly from the seventeenth century's linking of the imagination and madness. Foucault described this chain thus:

" In other words, beginning with passions, madness is still only an intense movement in the rational unity of soul and body; this is the level of unreason; but this intense movement quickly escapes the reason of the mechanism and becomes its violences, its stupors, its senseless propagations, an irrational movement; and it is then that, escaping truth and its constraints, the Unreal appears...Madness is thus beyond imagination, and yet is profoundly rooted in it; for it consists merely in allowing the image a spontaneous value, total and absolute truth. " (27)

The closeness of imagination to madness prompted Huret's concern for the vulnerability of the spectator in front of the image. In his view, perspective represented precisely that unfettered reason that led to unreason and beyond to madness. It was the totalising power of perspective, claimed by Bosse, that gave it this fearful power. Although it is tempting to interpret Huret as simply giving useful excuses to justify his rejection of Bosse, that is perhaps to give Bosse too much credit. By the time Huret published, Bosse had been out of the Academy for nearly ten years and there was no prospect either of his return or of the

Academy departing from its Absolutist aesthetic. In light of the importance attached to the King's portrait outlined above, it might be preferable to take Huret's concern for the power of images at face value. In our image saturated society, it is difficult to understand the caution with which the most powerful government in Europe approached paintings. Yet in an era that had only just emerged from the regime of magic and continued to invest the royal image with Absolute authority, such scepticism was not yet available (28).

Huret thus advised his fellow Academicians to operate in a very tightly defined field:

" Jeunes hommes de 25 à 30 ans, auxquels l'amour qu'ils pourront avoir pour des Maîtresses pourra causer toutes les passions imaginables, puis qu'il sera suivy des desirs et des espérances de les posséder, ou de la crainte d'en estre rejetté, après suivra la joye d'en estre aimé, ou la tristesse de se voir rebuté; ce qui produira la jalousie et la haine contre les rivaux, accompagnée de colère et fureur, ou de crainte, chagrin ou désespoir." (29)

Huret should be understood as saying that the romantic subjects he proposed allowed all the passions imaginable which it was safe to experience. He suggested that age, sex and quality were the keys to the definition of visual space. Yet now he has defined the ages of the participants and it was only the nobility who could possibly have had the time to pursue their romances in this manner. That left only one variable operating, that of gender. Distance was maintained through the operation of respect, originating in the young man's fear of losing the woman he loved. Respect in turn valorised the picture space and gave it meaning. The man's joy came from acceptance and his sadness from being rejected: in itself the passion was worth nothing until it was valorised by the woman, the Other, who created distance and depth

on the flat picture surface.

Yet this intrusion of the Other was not without its risks. Huret devoted considerable space to a furious rejection of the technique, now known as anamorphosis, but then simply seen as an extension of perspective. Anamorphoses are drawings produced following a perspective created from a point on one side of the image rather than from a viewing point in front of the image. From the front, all that can be seen (in theory) is a confused jumble of lines. The image can only be understood by placing the eye on one side.

These drawings originated in the Renaissance and Leonardo is known to have drawn some. All later theoreticians of perspective had included them in their work, especially Durer and Nicéron (1638) as well as Bosse. Anamorphoses were often used to depict erotic or obscene material. One might see them as the original peepshows, as their content could only be seen from the side viewpoint. The earliest known example of this sort is Erhard Schon's Aus du alter Tor (1535) and they survived in popular prints until the nineteenth century (see figs. 13 & 14).

The use of anamorphoses for this kind of forbidden viewing is indicative of the presence of the Other within the image, drawn out by the distorted representation. For Huret, they represented all the dangers inherent in the use of an over-ordered perspective system. Anamorphoses were the point at which the twin dynamics of reason and gender came apart and degenerated into madness. He condemned them as monstrosities, which added still greater strength to his argument, that the human figure should not be subject to the depraving effects of perspective. His warning on the use of anamorphotic perspective was memorable. He wrote that they were:

" Plûtôt faits pour représenter des visions des songes lugubres, ou des sabbats des sorciers, seulement capables de donner la tristesse et la frayeur et mesme faire avorter ou dépraver le fruit des femmes enceintes que pour représenter des sujets naturels et agréables à l'ordinaire." (30)

The breakdown of natural proportion was held to have truly remarkable effects, invoking black magic, madness and inducing abortions. It is noticeable that in the same way that women were the object of respect, so too it was their fertility that was at risk from the depraving influence of the perspective. For men, the risk was a disorder of Reason, for women a disorder of the body.

Huret's writing lends force to the analysis of Jacques Lacan, the pyschoanalyst, on anamorphoses. In a discussion of Holbein's The Ambassadors, which depicted two ambassadors surrounded by the symbols of vanitas and separated by an anamorphic drawing of a skull, the symbol of death, he asked:

" Comment ne pas voir ici, immanent à la dimension géométrale- dimension partielle dans le champ du regard, dimension qui n'a rien à faire avec la vision comme telle- quelque chose symbolique de la fonction du manque- de l'apparition du fantôme phallique?" (31)

For Lacan, the phallus was a key signifier in what he termed the 'dialectic of desire'. Holbein's phallus-shaped skull was interpreted as in the imaged incarnation of the fear of castration, across which fundamental drives operate. It was this intrusion of desire into the image that was so unsettling to Huret. He saw it as potentially very dangerous unless restrained by pudeur and respect. His vulnerable concept of Reason has much in common with Lacan's notion of the subject. Juliet Mitchell has explained this position thus:

" Lacan's human subject is not a 'divided self' (Laing) that in a different society could be made whole, but a self which is only actually and necessarily created

" within a split-being that can only conceptualise itself when it is mirrored back to itself from the position of another's desire...Lacan states that desire itself, and with it, sexual desire, can only exist by virtue of its alienation." (32)

For these two French writers either side of the Enlightenment and Modernism, the human mind appears to be a fragile vessel, incapable of existing for itself, but known only through the respect or desire of others (33). Huret sought an answer by simply not going too far, and avoiding dangerous situations, of which the most dangerous was the anamorphosis. Yet the project was, to pursue our comparison a little further, flawed from the outset. For all the restraints of respectability, Huret's ideal artistic scene did nonetheless depend on desire between the protagonists. Without desire, the subsequent passions were inconceivable. But in Lacan's view:

" Desire is neither the appetite for satisfaction, nor the demand for love, but the difference resulting from the subtraction of the first from the second, the very phenomenon of their splitting." (34)

However these appetites for satisfaction were at the centre of Huret's project. If Lacan's analysis is right, then Huret's theory, however closely policed, was cracked at its very centre. The operations of desire, far from unifying the picture and pictorial space, served to distance and separate.

Reason had perhaps good cause to be afraid of its own limits. The system of restraint that the Classical Age had created for the irrational was confinement and Huret had applied it to pictorial space. The image, however, resisted such treatment. Huret's definition of subject matter was too narrow and his prohibitions too strong. The theory remained as a monument to the Absolutist temper of the time, and as an indicator of the extent to which the Academy had now been cast in its image. But for

artists, it was both too general and too specific. Whilst paintings continued to be so important at the symbolic centre of the monarchy, the Academy was condemned to an impotent place of glory as the King's painters. Until that circle was broken, it could only pursue its unique path, refining the gilded mirror it held up to Louis XIV.

The texts produced by the Academy after Huret did not refer to his work directly. But they carried on in the direction his theory had indicated. In 1673, Charles Perrault produced a French translation of Vitruvius, so that the proportions on which Huret had so strongly insisted could now be found in exact detail. For example, Vitruvius held that the distance between the chest and the roots of the hair is one-sixth of the length of the whole body. With these precise proportions, the system of relative heights described by Huret was more practicable.

The body continued to be the central preoccupation of Academic writers. In 1688, Roger de Piles published a guide to anatomy with the aid of Francis Tortebat's illustrations. De Piles was careful not to overstate the importance of anatomy:

" C'est pour la science devant que d'être pour l'agrément...mais si vous y joignez le bon goût, la belle nature, et les proportions de l'antique, vous ferez des miracles." (35)

De Piles did not propose a rule for painting, but held it to be a mixture of talents, regulated by good taste. The book itself consisted of a series of plates, representing the anatomical figure and labelling the various muscles and bones. These were not particularly detailed but the work was so suited to the Academy's needs that it was reprinted as late as 1765. Both Perrault and de Piles were later to find themselves on the Modern side of the Ancients and Moderns debate (see Chapter Six). But at

this time, the Absolutist hegemony was strong enough that they were no more than contributors to it on points of detail.

The Academy did make efforts to cover areas which needed either expanding or correcting in Huret's work. His rather cavalier dismissal of modern optics was not a convincing response to the Cartesians, and, in 1679, Sebastien Le Clerc, the new Professor of Perspective at the Academy, wrote a short pamphlet in an attempt to fill this gap. The tone of Le Clerc's work is off-hand and he was not concerned to refute Descartes in detail. Instead, as the dedication to Colbert made clear, he was fulfilling his official duties as Professor of Perspective and holding the Academic line, secure in the knowledge that royal backing was all the authority his text required.

Le Clerc argued that although we have two eyes, they function in the same way the hands do- that is, we are either left-eyed or right-eyed and the other eye is used only as an occasional supplement. He supported this idea by considering the eyes as two geometric points. Following this idea, if we look into a mirror, the two eyes, although forming the same angles of incidence and reflexion with the mirror, ought to perceive the object as being in two different places. But experience proved otherwise- that we see only one object at a time when looking with both eyes open. This common sense argument was the basis for his refutation of Descartes:

" Monsieur Descartes, ayant consideré que suivant ses principes, les objets extérieurs devoient faire impression sur les deux yeux, et que l'âme n'avoit qu'une perception, a crû que les images d'un mesme objet qui se trouvent dans les deux yeux se réunissoient dans le cerveau. Mais si ce grand génie avoit fait un peu de refléxion sur les demonstrations qu'il en a voulu donner dans son traité de la machine de l'homme, il auroit reconnu que les images des deux yeux, quoy que produites d'un mesme objet, sont diffêrantes et qu'estantes diffêrantes, la réunion en est impossible." (36)

Le Clerc continued to base his arguments on everyday experience, pointing out that an object appears different to us when viewed from each eye in turn. Therefore the Cartesian description of visual images being received on the pineal gland could not be correct. Le Clerc argued instead that we are like birds who cannot look at something with both eyes at once. So when we decide to look at something, in Le Clerc's view, the soul sends its spirits to one eye or the other, as appropriate (37). Like Huret, Le Clerc used what he perceived as a weakness in contemporary optics to reject the whole science. Unlike his predecessor, who then turned to alternative sciences of containment to regulate the visual image, Le Clerc returned to the Classical theories of Euclid. For him, the soul actively viewed the world through its windows, the eyes. Its agents were the spirits as described in Classical and Medieval texts. Le Clerc also followed Euclid in holding that the diversity of visual images depends on the diversity of visual angles, making sight a part of geometry rather than optics. He set a limit of 45 to 50 degrees for the visual pyramid because beyond that limit confusion was possible. He had thus still further reduced Huret's boundary of 60 degrees and it remained at this level throughout the ancien régime (38). Le Clerc remained solidly unimpressed by developments in optics after Descartes, such as those of Isaac Newton, and in his later restatement of his theory in 1712, confessed to a basic ignorance at the heart of his work:

" Il me semble que les images ne servent qu'à nous avertir des objets qui se présentent à nous, et à tracer dans nos yeux les routes et les passages par lesquels les esprits doivent se diriger à la rencontre des rayons qui en sont réfléchis et desquels ils doivent recevoir l'impression pour la communiquer à l'ame; mais de quelle manière? c'est ce que j'ignore." (39)

Once again, the Academy displayed its casual indifference to central debates in optical theory at a time when these questions were at the heart of epistemological investigation.

Yet in other respects the Academy was often able to be modern. Charles Le Brun himself introduced the ideas of Descartes into Academic teaching in his Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les Passions, a curious and famous work (40). Le Brun borrowed freely from Descartes' Traité des Passions and provided a series of illustrations depicting the method by which the various passions could be depicted on the face. The Academy's insistence on figure painting now had a range of teaching devices available, on anatomy, expression and perspective, to reinforce its position. In his speech to the Academy, reprinted by way of introduction to the figures, Le Brun elaborated on the premises behind his work. Following Descartes, he described how the pineal gland was the site of the reception of the passions in the brain. But he then described how, following classical philosophers, he divided the passions in two. He defined:

" Deux appétits à la partie sensitive de l'Ame, dans l'appétit concupiscible logent des passions simples, et dans l'appétit irascible les plus farouches et celles qui sont composées car ils [anciens philosophes] veulent que l'amour, la haine, le desir, la joie et la tristesse soient enfermées dans le premier; et que la crainte, la hardiesse, l'espérance, le desespoir, la colère et la peur resident dans l'autre." (41)

The distinctions were, at first sight, a little confusing- joy was acceptable, but hope was not. But as Le Brun moved through definitions of the different passions, it becomes clear that he was attempting to loosen the theoretical straightjacket which Huret had imposed on the Academy. As we have seen, Huret centred his pictorial system on the complex operations of desire, and was forced to limit pictorial subject matter accordingly. Le Brun

redefined these passions to remove their disturbing characteristics:

"L'AMOUR est donc une émotion de l'Ame causée par des mouvemens qui l'incitent à se joindre de volonté aux objets qui lui paroissent convenables".

Love has perhaps been more excitingly defined, but Le Brun wanted to remove the darker side of the passions recommended for painters. At the same time, he emphasised the unifying and attracting quality of love which contributed to the unity of the picture. In his list of passions, Le Brun approved of all those held to attract, and rejected all those that separated. Expression could thus be used to create an attraction between figures to generate a pictorial space without the risks inherent in Huret's chain of passions. Le Brun simply relegated all the dangerous passions to his second class. He gave desire a positive connotation, as a passion that caused attraction:

" LE DESIR est une agitation de l'Ame causée par les esprits qui la disposent à vouloir des choses qu'elle représente lui être convenables; ainsi on ne désire pas seulement la prescence du bien absent mais la conservation du present."

Desire was a simple passion, bringing people together, without complications.

Just as Huret had seen physical dangers in the excess of reason, so Le Brun thought the passions had direct physical effects. In the case of the simple passions, these effects were very beneficial. Love, as the highest passion, had the best effects:

" Le battement du poulx est égal et beaucoup plus grand et plus fort de coûtume. On sent une douce chaleur dans la poitrine et la digestion des viandes se fait doucement dans l'estomach; en sorte que cette passion est utile pour la santé."

Desire also brought health benefits in the form of a stronger pulse and more spirits reaching the muscles from the heart. These

movements were manifested on the face and, above all, in the most mobile of the features: the eyebrows. The bulk of Le Brun's text was concerned with a description of how artists could use the eyebrows to depict these movements of the passions, as is well known. Le Brun found himself advocating this curious mixture of the medieval chain of resemblances and Cartesian philosophy, because of his own campaign against Bosse and the perspectivists. The Academy had thus set off on the road to which Colbert's later intervention confined them.

Academic theory had, then, found itself divorced from contemporary ideas on optics, images and representation except in the crucial area of royal portraiture. This peculiar position did not go unnoticed. In 1674, Malebranche published the first volume of his Recherche de la Verité which began, like Descartes, with a discussion of vision. Malebranche developed the Cartesian notion that vision was fallible unless tempered by the judgement to a more radical conclusion. The recent refinement of microscopes had discovered the existence of insects too small to be seen with the naked eye. Malebranche argued that, although we wish to believe that we see things as they are and rely on the impossibility of God deceiving us, our judgement often acts hastily and in error. He concluded:

" C'est donc un préjugé, qui n'est pas appuyé sur aucune raison, que de croire, qu'on voit les corps tels qu'ils sont en eux-mêmes... Nos yeux ne nous sont pas donnez pour juger la vérité des choses, mais seulement pour nous faire connoître celles qui peuvent nous incommoder, ou nous être nuisible." (42)

He thus held that we cannot see mites because they are no threat to our well-being; the same argument applied to very distant objects, avoiding this vexed question. The power and importance of vision had already declined from its unquestioned divine

authority in scholasticism but Malebranche took this process a stage further. Vision was now limited to being an alarm system.

The Academy was still arguing against Descartes and Desargues but the scientific debate had moved forward still further. Malebranche took a swipe at the Academies at the conclusion of his first volume. His description of vision led him to recommend the thoroughgoing use of doubt to his readers so that they did not trust their senses alone. But he noted that there were two types of doubt:

" On doute par emportement et par brutalité; par aveuglement et par malice; et enfin par fantasie, et parce que l'on veut douter. Mais on doute aussi par prudence et par défiance, par sagesse et par pénétration d'esprit. Les Académiciens et les Athées doutent de la première sorte: les vrais philosophes de la seconde. Le premier doute est un doute de ténèbres, qui ne conduit point à la lumière, mais qui en éloigne toujours. Le second naît de la lumière, et il aide en quelque façon à la produire à son tour." (43)

Malebranche identified not only the anachronism of the Academies but also their modernity. In describing their brutality, he called to mind the adoption of the system of containment and royal glorification that were at the heart of the Academy of Painting. It had changed in twenty-five years from being an association of artists who painted for the crown into a tightly controlled part of the royal court structure. Nevertheless, it was not to be until the death of the Sun King that Academic painters found the means to create paintings conforming to their own theoretical dictates, other than the portraits of the King - which had created that theory in the first place.

NOTES

1. Ernst Kossmann, quoted in Perry Anderson, Lineages of the Absolutist State, (London, 1974), p.96.
2. Blaise Pascal, Pensées, quoted in Louis Marin, " The Body-of-Power and Incarnation at Port Royal and in Pascal or Of the Figurablility of the Political Absolute", in Michel Feher (ed), Fragments for a History of the Human Body, Part Three, (Zone, 1989), p. 428.
3. Louis Marin, The Portrait of the King, trans. Martha Houle, (London, 1988), p.209.
4. Marin, op. cit., (1989), p.422. I have here only provided a thumbnail sketch of Marin's argument which can be followed in extensive detail via the references cited. My only point of departure from Marin's reading is in the sense of inevitability and inescapability with which he invests Absolutism. As I have tried to show above, the pictorial sign was highly contested, even if the victors were undoubtedly the government.
5. Quoted in Marin, op. cit., (1988), p. 214.
6. Grégoire Huret, Optique de Portaiture et Peinture, (Paris, 1670), p. 74.
7. Félibien, Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres, anciens et modernes, (London, 1705; first published Paris, 1666), 4 vols. Vol I, Preface, n.p.
8. Ibid, Vol. I, p. 28.
9. Ibid, Vol.I, p.90.
10. Ibid, Vol. III, p.183.
11. Sarah Kofman, La Respect des Femmes, (Paris, 1976), p.29.
12. Ibid, p.33.
13. Félibien, op. cit., Vol. II, p.8.
14. Ibid, Vol. IV. Préface, p.15.

15. Huret, op. cit. Préface, n.p.
16. Ibid, p.58.
17. Ibid, p.53.
18. Ibid, p.93.
19. Ibid, p.94.
20. Ibid, p.78-81.
21. Ibid, p. 85. See also pp.1-3.
22. Ibid, p.75-6.
23. Ibid, p.103.
24. See Chapters One and Two above for details.
25. M. Foucault, Madness and Civilisation, (London, 1967) provides full details.
26. Ibid, p.47. See also pp.38-50.
27. Ibid, p.95. See pp.93-96 for details on this conception of madness and reason. 28. See Chapter Six below for a description of the process by which theorists and artists moved away from this cautious position.
29. Huret, op. cit., p.99.
30. Ibid, p.164-5. See Jurgis Baltrusaitis, Anamorphoses, (Paris, 1969) for details of the later history of these drawings (although I disagree with his assessment of Huret's work as approving of perspective).
31. Jacques Lacan, Les Quatres Concepts Fondamentaux de la Psychanalyse, (Paris, 1971), p.82.
32. Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne- Feminine Sexuality, (London, 1982), pp.5-6ff.
33. Clearly, one does not want to take this analogy too far, but the parallel in the precise instance of the look, respect and

desire is an interesting one.

34. Mitchell and Rose, op. cit., p.81

35. Roger de Piles, Abregé d'Anatomie, (Paris, 1688), p.iii.

36. Sebastien Le Clerc, Discours Touchant le Point de Veue Dans lequel il est prouvé que les choses ne sont pas veues que d'un oeil, (Paris, 1679), p.44.

37. Ibid, p.55.

38. Ibid, p.29-30.

39. S. Le Clerc, Système de la Vision, fondée sur de nouveaux principes, (Paris, 1712), p.31.

40. See Norman Bryson, Word and Image, (Cambridge, 1981), Chapter II for a full discussion of le Brun's treatise.

41. Charles Le Brun, Méthode pour Apprendre à dessiner des Passions, (Amsterdam, 1712), p.1. Subsequent references are from pp.6-12.

42. Malebranche, Recherche de la vérité, in Oeuvres Complètes, ed. G. Rodis-Lewis, 3 vols, (Paris, 1962-3), I p.87-89.

43. Ibid, I, p.188.

Chapter Six

The Academy's inability to resolve its dilemma over the method of painting it should promote was to undermine its support from its original sponsor, the monarchy. As Louis XIV aged his attitudes became increasingly inflexible and the Academy found itself lucky to survive the end of his long reign. The Regent brought a new openness to the government and a more favourable attitude towards the arts. The Academy was able to take this opportunity to regain both royal favour and artistic credibility, thanks to a converging series of developments.

The theory of art evolved outside the ranks of the Academy in such a way that the status of painting was importantly shifted. The constraints on realism that has operated under Classicism were relaxed as the status of the image changed. The codes that had been devised to control the imitation of nature became out of date as the scientific revolution gathered pace. The widespread acceptance of the ideas of Locke, Berkeley and above all, Newton, made it very hard to continue to insist on theories designed as a response to Cartesianism. Furthermore, in the changed social climate of the Regency, the tight censorship of the close of Louis XIV's reign was ended. Writers on art came to accept the limitations of the visual image. The importance of attracting and keeping the spectator's attention became a problem as the cultural focus shifted from Versailles to Paris. With it came a new market for art and a new set of criteria for what was desirable in painting. Now the skill of illusion was the source of merit in an artist and the viewer was expected to take pleasure in appreciating it. Art was now considered a pleasure and a distraction from the rigours of life rather than a strict moraliser.

The Academy had the new theoretical attitude imposed upon it by the government. But although it had relaxed its notions of what was permissible in the pictorial sign, its limited and hierarchical approach to subject matter meant that it was unable to take advantage of the new ideas. It took a combination of the particular artistic talent of Antoine Watteau and the changes he observed in the visual language deployed by the theatres of Paris to make it possible for a painting to emerge that respected both the Academic tradition and the new theory. In turn the fair theatres he worked with had to evolve rapidly their own work in response to legal injunctions brought against them by the faltering Comédie Française. They created a new kind of theatre, based on the Italian comedy, but with a very French flavour. It was extremely popular and succeeded in crossing the social divisions of ancien regime society. The new focus on Paris and the creation of a new public made this considerably easier than it would have been ten years before. Watteau saw in them a means of depicting the amorous intrigues that Huret had wished to see but had surrounded with prohibitions.

This success seemed a very long way away towards the end of the seventeenth century. Following the expulsion of the Huguenots, Louis XIV moved closer to a religious way of life. As ever, his concern was primarily for appearances. Madame de Maintenon, widely credited with the king's move towards religion wrote:

"He wishes to observe all the externals [of religion], but not its spirit. He will never miss a station or a penance, but he will never understand that it is necessary to humble himself and enter into the true spirit of penitence." (1)

Louis, of course, was fully aware that from the ceremonial centre of Versailles nothing more than his adherence to ritual was

required from the Sun King. The Academy was not directly involved with this new spirit at court but it fell foul of the closer scrutiny that accompanied it.

The Academy had seen a gradual increase in its revenues from the 2000 livres allowed for it in the constitution of 1663 until the new surintendant des Bâtiments, Colbert de Villacerf, increased it to 8000 livres (a rise of 2000 on the previous year) in 1693 (2). In his accompanying letter de Villacerf spelt out that the King wished the school to continue and to remain free but that the Academy should only rarely receive new members itself. The accounts for 1693 show that the new money was almost entirely used by the Academy, leaving a surplus of only 85 livres and 15 sols. To that extent, it appeared as if the Academy was failing to keep within its prescribed limits. The situation in country at large was becoming desperate. The famine of 1693 was dragging on into 1694 and the war against the Second Coalition continued at ever increasing cost (3). Anything that seemed excessive was trimmed back.

On April 24 1694, de Villacerf ordered the complete closure of the Academy. In desperation, the Academy offered to carry on teaching unpaid and this offer was accepted on April 30. From the comfortable position of the previous year, the Academy was now reduced to an allowance of 2000 livres to cover the expenses of the school alone. No provision was made for the meetings of the Academy itself and only 400 livres was set aside for prizes (4). It seems as if Louis meant what he said and only attached importance to the school and none to the Academy's other purposes. Indeed after the death of Mignard in 1695, Louis did not appoint another Premier Peintre at all- it awaited the

installation of the Regent in 1716 for Coypel to gain the post (5).

The Academy's intellectual position had been increasingly left behind as the debate between the Ancients and the Moderns progressed. For Charles Perrault, one of the champions of the Modern, beauty was a far more complex operation than the Academy allowed for. In his view there were two kinds of beauty that combined to form the whole that we see. These were:

"Des beautez naturelles et positives qui plaisent toujours, et indépendamment de l'usage et de la mode...Ces sortes de beautez sont de tous les gousts, de tous les pays et de tous les temps. Il y a d'autres beautez qui ne sont qu'arbitraires, qui plaisent parce que les yeux s'y sont accoustumez." (6)

Perrault prefigured Baudelaire's famous description of beauty as being composed of equal parts of the eternal and the modern. He emphasised the artificiality of visual conventions and how they therefore change from epoch to epoch.

In his discussion on painting, Perrault used the modern discovery of perspective to draw a distinction between ancient and modern images. His definition of perspective was unacceptably wide from the Academy's point of view, including not only the representation of figures but the expression of passions and the composition of the tout ensemble, the conventional expression for the overall scheme of a painting. However, he carefully differentiated the functions of these various components in making up the representation. Likeness was to appeal to the eye whilst expression moved the heart. The organisation of light and shade and the "degradation" of figures according to the plan pleased the reason. He noted that this joy was less lively than might have been experienced by seeing the actual scene but it was therefore more spiritual and worthy of a man (7).

Perrault used a relative concept of beauty which worked through the understanding that the viewer brought to the image of visual conventions. Key amongst these was his notion of perspective, understood by Descartes to be central to vision. Just as Descartes complicated the visual process by his work, so too did Perrault refine and complicate his notion of beauty in art.

Controversy quickly arose in the Academy over the issue. A manuscript circulated by one Abbé Sallier insisted that the Ancients did know about perspective and cited Vitruvius and Plato in support of the argument. He agreed that modern knowledge was more advanced, but held that:

"Le principe qui les guidait pour tromper les sens, c'était la modification des grandeurs et des figures; c'était la modification des couleurs dont on augmente la force et l'éclat." (8)

Perrault did not leave this challenge unanswered and presented his Cabinet des Beaux Arts to the Academy on 30 June 1691 in which he argued that ordonnance, ordering, was the most important of the three sections of painting- the others were drawing and colour. Ordering in his view was painting and the control of it was the modern breakthrough that the Ancients were unaware of (9).

His point of view gained support in other quarters as time went on and the Academic position had less and less credibility. In September 1698, one Autier could write in a pamphlet that perspective was as important in the sciences as sight was to the senses:

" Puisqu'elle s'occupe à considérer les effets de lumière qui donne la beauté à toutes les choses sensibles et par ce moyen l'on trace si à propos les lignes sur un plan donne, qu'elles expriment des figures solides qui trompent les yeux et dessinent presque le jugement et la raison." (10)

Perspective was understood as artifice but one so good that it

could deceive both the eyes and the judgement. By the end of the seventeenth century, attitudes had shifted away from trying to conceive of the image as a true representation of reality. Increasingly, its very artificiality was the force that created the illusion and the mind was held to enjoy this deception.

Once again , it was government intervention that changed the direction of the Academy's theory and teaching. Following the peace of Nieuwberg on 20 September 1697, government revenues began to improve and there was now space to consider the arts once more. In January 1699 a new surintendant des bâtiments, Mansart, was appointed in place of de Villacerf. He dismissed Noel Coypel as Director of the Academy, appointing La Fosse instead and set about restoring the tired institution (11).

Mansart called a meeting of the Academy on 16 July 1699 at which Roger de Piles was invited to speak. His topic was: De la nécessité d'établir des principes et les moyens d'y parvenir. This was as much a coup as the ending of the jonction had been forty years before as the leader of the Modern opposition, de Piles, was now being invited to lay down the law to the most recherché of the Ancients institutions. In the presence of Mansart and La Fosse, an old friend, de Piles had a free hand to reshape the Academy. His short speech emphasised the need to discover solid principles to guide themselves by and with which to teach. He took the Academicians own ground by finding in Antique sculpture:

" Le droit chemin [pour] ceux qui ont les yeux pour les voir et pour en pénétrer la perfection..[Ils sont] la règle de la beauté." (12)

The implication was that those who had previously run the Academy had not used their eyes to see the inner perfection of these

sculptures but had been distracted by the surface outlines into their rigid espousal of drawing. In order to establish the new rules, de Piles offered his own theory to the Academy and- unsurprisingly in the circumstances- the vote went his way. The result was a series of lectures later to be published as his Cours de Peinture in 1708.

De Piles sought to bring the Academy up to date with the new ideas that were now common in France. His work has been analysed at length elsewhere in its own right. Here it is considered only in terms of the alterations to Academic theory caused by his government sponsored takeover. De Piles made it possible for Academic artists to treat the kind of subject matter that Huret had advocated thirty years previously. He shifted the Academy's attention away from the pure pursuit of Truth towards a more subtle approach, based on the spectator's appreciation of an art work. In his view painting had to appeal to a viewer and keep the attention engaged. He moved away from the seventeenth century dogma of art for Truth's sake, because he recognised that art did not have a monopoly on Truth :

" mais le Vrai dans la Peinture doit par son effet
appeller les Spectateurs."

Artists could not simply perform to their own standards, they had to attract an audience. Painting now had consumers and in his lectures de Piles even gave some hints on how to raise the price of a picture (13).

De Piles described how the "perfect or composed" form of the truth was a combination of the simple depiction of Nature and the idealised concepts we derive from it that cannot always be found in one natural example. An artist who works towards this aim will always be thinking about catching the spectator's attention and

giving pleasure. Other artists will only succeed in doing so occasionally by accident. For de Piles, the artist must always seek to please both in style and subject. The imposed hierarchies of Academic art had to give way to this overriding priority. Although history painting was still the most important genre for de Piles, he extended it to include what we call portraiture, landscape, animal paintings and in fact : "toutes les productions de l'Art et de la Nature."

The subject matter became of less importance than the organisation of the picture. De Piles insisted that *all the* different areas of a painting must work together for the full effect to be realised. He called this the "tout ensemble", a concept that was not by any means the same as composition. He described it thus:

"J'ai tâché de la faire concevoir comme une machine dont les roues se prêtent un mutuel secours, comme un corps dont les membres dépendent l'un de l'autre et enfin comme une oeconomie harmonieuse qui arrête le Spectateur, qui l'entretient et qui le convie à jouir des beautés particulières qui se trouve dans le tableau." (14)

The skilful use of this mechanism produced a feeling of enthusiasm in the spectator, an enthusiasm which was shared in common with the artist. This effect combined with the appreciation of the vrai in the spectator's mind with differing but related results. From the vrai came the admiration and surprise that kept the attention fixed on the picture. At this point, enthusiasm came into play and generated a higher, more mature feeling which is the realisation of the sublime, a new category for Academic theory.

The sublime was an emotion that could be reached either through the general effect or via detail whereas enthusiasm is felt for the tout-ensemble alone. Enthusiasm was immediate, the sublime

took longer. De Piles concluded:

"Il me paroît, en un mot, que l'Enthousiasme nous saisit et que nous saisissons le Sublime." (15)

The sublime, then, was something sought by the viewer in a picture and was the ultimate aim of looking at art. But an artist could not guarantee the sublime, only supply the constituent parts of truth and enthusiasm in such a way as to seize and keep the wandering attention. The sublime was a fusion of the skill of the artist and the intellect of the viewer. It was this rather than pure beauty at which de Piles aimed and in so doing he markedly changed the status of the pictorial sign within the Academy.

A picture was no longer an icon, secure within itself that proceeded according to given rules. Rather it was a conversation between artist and spectator in which the artist had to ensure the spectator could understand what was meant. In order to clarify the meaning and details of difficult History paintings, de Piles recommended that inscriptions be added. In addition, the use of clair-obscur, the disposition of light and shadow could further make the intentions of the painter easier to understand, acting in the same way that emphasis does for the speaker. The hero of a painting done in this style could literally be found in the spotlight. The success or failure of a painting now depended on the understanding of the viewer.

It was not intended that the viewer believe the picture to be a true representation. Rather the purpose was that the image should be so visually compelling that all disbelief was willingly suspended. De Piles did not continue the previous attempts of Academic theoreticians to make painting part of optics. The image was no longer taken to be a slice of the visual pyramid and nor

were there complex arguments against the use of perspective. He accepted that pictures were nothing more than flat surfaces on which a form of drawing was done. For de Piles, it was the use of colour that set painting apart from other types of drawing just as reason sets Man apart from the other animals. Furthermore, he argued that although drawing came before colour, this demonstrated the superiority of colour as nature moved from basics to more difficult things. In short:

"On peut regarder le coloris comme la différence de la Peinture et le Dessein comme son genre." (16)

This being the case, it was obviously important to study colour closely, particularly in the work of Titian and Rubens.

But de Piles was scathing about the standard of teaching supplied within the Academy. The good offices of the crown depended above all on the standards of the school which he knew were now low. His verdict was direct:

"Les écoliers ayant été recus trop jeunes et trop ignorans dans l'école de l'Académie, ils y passent beaucoup de tems sans gout et sans discernement et enfin sans faire du progrès remarquable dans leur études prétendues." (17)

The consequence was insipid prize entries and poor art. His prescription was direct and might well have evoked some echoes of former campaigns within the Academy such as those of Bosse. He called for the study of geometry as this instilled a sense of logic; of anatomy and proportion to facilitate the imitation of Nature and of the Antique figure. From the latter the students would learn not only proportion and line- as was the current practice- but they would also discover the source of grace, elegance and the expressions.

He encouraged them to study the model and learn to correct natural minor imperfections. At this point, they would be ready

to start work on a picture but first they should make an "esquisse" in colour that would seek to capture the effect of the tout-ensemble. In finishing the work, the student should then think about the place in which it was to be hung and the correct viewing distance. Once these were decided upon the touches and colour could be rendered accordingly. He ended his programme on a note of caution for teachers:

" De tous les gènies, je ne croi pas qu'il y en ait un plus libertin que celui de la Peinture, ni qui souffre le frein plus impatiemment." (18)

Despite the difficulties the Academy had encountered with its teaching, it had never considered that these might be endemic to painting itself. De Piles took painters another step away from the guilds by distinguishing their training from a mere apprenticeship- even as students they needed to be free from restraints.

De Piles had moved quickly and had opened up a gap within the theory of the Academy between the representation and the object. This difference arose because viewers were now held to be aware of the illusion they were confronting and, furthermore, to enjoy painting for precisely that reason. The sublime was now the highest goal in art, a complex and compound emotion. But it was not a purely theoretical change he had made. The teaching programme indicated above was by far the most detailed programme for Academic training that existed up until that date. From his remarks we can judge that the previous school had consisted of little more than drawing after the collection of antique casts and statues the Academy had assembled. As we have seen, under Le Clerc's authority, the teaching of perspective had declined to pre-Euclidean levels (19). No serious anatomy teaching had ever

been undertaken within the Academy. Expression was learnt from Le Brun's curious treatise. It is perhaps little wonder that de Piles was so unimpressed with the results obtained by his former rivals.

However, the comfortable monopoly that the Academy had enjoyed over teaching since its establishment had now been seriously challenged. Its rival was not a new one. In fact the traditional guilds of painting, the Maitres, were back in action. The same financial crisis that had led the crown to cut the Academy's budget led the government to re-examine its relationship with the guilds. It attempted to impose new registration fees for the guilds by changing the positions of the officials who were to administer them. Thus the guild of painters found that in order to renew its officers and to gain the post of Treasurer it was expected to pay 20,000 livres. They agreed to this on condition that in return the government *allow them to pose models and run a school for painters and sculptors*. In effect, they demanded the right to challenge the monopoly of the Academy and set up a school of their own.

An order to this effect was issued in 1705 and on 20 January 1706, the school of what was to become known as the Académie de Saint Luc opened its doors to students. The premises were in a building adjoining a church formerly known as St Symphorien, now renamed Saint Luc, which the guild had taken over and refurbished. In a royal declaration of 1723 which saw a further reversal of royal policy, eight new maitres were created in both painting and sculpture to commemorate the opening of the new reign. This declaration shows that the organisation of the school was modelled on that of the Academy- but with several key differences. Firstly, the Saint Luc Academy was open to all, free

of charge. Secondly, it offered courses in drawing, geometry, architecture, painting, sculpture, perspective and anatomy. With between 700 and 800 members of the guild, it seems likely that this impressive list was actually maintained. So the school offered by the guilds was not only free but could make good such deficiencies as perspective and anatomy that had long been recognised in the Academy's own school. Once the money due to the crown had been paid in 1708, the school was secure. It grew in influence, issuing statutes in 1730 and holding exhibitions from 1751 under the patronage of the *Marquis de Voyer*. The royal Academy was under serious challenge (20).

The indications were not good for the Academy, divided within and facing competition from better financed opponents. Yet on 28 August 1717, Antoine Watteau submitted as his morceau de réception the extraordinary Pèlerinage à l'Isle de Cythère to the Academy. In an unusual display of speed and flexibility, he was immediately accepted in a new category called fête galante, a genre that he developed with extraordinary rapidity until his early death in 1721.

There has been an abundance of writing on Watteau but it has not considered his work within the context of the evolving Academy and its discourses on the pictorial sign (21). Taken from this angle, Watteau's work raises a number of important questions. Perhaps the most famous aspect of his work is his involvement with the figures of the Italian commedia dell'arte, Harlequin, Colombine, Gilles and the others. Yet they had not appeared in Academic painting before; why were they suddenly not only so popular but so acceptable to the authorities? Watteau painted these actors not in theatres but in open, ill-defined spaces. What kind of representation of reality did these players

then take part in? Watteau, in fact, achieved what the preceding generations of theorists and painters within the Academy had not managed; he reconciled the dictates of the Academy over pictorial construction and subject matter with the need to please the picture viewing public. The fée galante in this interpretation is not simply a piece of light entertainment but a skilful resolution of the apparently irreconcilable demands put on the artist by the twin poles of court and town.

Antoine Watteau was born in Valenciennes in 1684, the son of a roofer. He is reported to have been an apprentice to a painter at the early age of ten but he definitely arrived in Paris in 1703 to work as a copyist of religious images (22). He came to live in the Saint-Germain area of Paris which was at that time a centre for both artists and actors. This concurrence was a decisive influence on his career, and repays examination in some depth. The annual fair held at Saint-Germain was a chance for painters to sell their works without incurring the penalties of the guilds. Actors too could perform despite the monopoly created by the formation of the Comédie Française in 1680. The fairs, with their markets and theatres, operated in a way that was literally marginal to the more controlled environs of Paris. Their medieval right to disruple survived by historical chance into the age of Absolutism and provided a place for people to escape the restraints of everyday life.

The sixteenth century guild, La Confrérie de la Passion, had held exclusive rights to act in Paris, providing they kept to the religious story of the Passion of Christ. However, over the years, their plays became ever more bawdy and the guild declined with them. Eventually, the Confrérie was content to make a living

selling the right to perform to others. The seventeenth century saw a remarkable theatrical efflorescence in France, including the tragedies of Corneille and Racine, Molière's comedy, the acrobatics of the fairs and the visiting Italian theatre. However, in 1680 the government took a hand and formed a troupe to be known as the Comédie Française who were to have exclusive rights of performance. The Italian comedians escaped this ban by virtue of royal favour until their unfortunate production of La Fausse Prude in 1697. The character of Madame de Maintenon was all too clearly recognisable in this piece and the consequence was their expulsion from France. So the fair theatres were left as the sole competition to the Comédie Française, although their position was far from stable as we shall see (23).

It was into this situation that the young Watteau arrived. His first teacher was Claude Gillot who often painted both theatrical paintings and actual stage scenery. He may well have been the author of a play performed at the Saint Germain fair in 1708. Nor was he the only painter to cross into theatre and vice versa. The painter Anthoine de la Place was also in a Pierrot troupe. On the other hand, the famous fair actor and playwright, Octave, was also an artist and was received into the Academy in 1725 with a work entitled Foire de Bezons. In return, the artist Autreau wrote the first play to ever be performed in French by the Italian comedians. The dealer Jean-Baptiste Raguenet was also an actor.

Those more directly involved with Watteau can often be proved to have theatrical links. His patron, Vleughels was a friend of leading theatre people such as Antoine de la Roque and René Lesage who were much involved with the triumph of the fair theatres. In the café society of the period critics such as La

Fosse de Saint Yenne mixed with leading artists such as La Fosse- the Academy's new Director- and Coypel in such places as the Café Gradot (24). In this mingling of different intellectual groups, the café resembled the fairs where people from all social classes mixed together, most unusually in ancien régime society. Given this mingling and proximity it is perhaps no surprise that painters began to use the theatre as a subject for their work.

Perhaps such interaction may seem marginal to the great enterprises of Art and Beauty the Academy had embarked upon. Yet these margins have a great deal to tell us about their society as a whole for no area is so closely supervised. As Robert Darnton observed in his studies on the eighteenth century:

" All borders are dangerous. If left unguarded, they could break down, our categories could collapse and our world dissolve into chaos." (25)

Within the dynamic and varied city life of the eighteenth century, maintaining control over these margins was not straightforward. Often the mainstream absorbed and worked with forces from the periphery. The intersection of art and the theatre is a very good example of this process at work in and around the cultural margins of Paris.

Furthermore, writers on the arts had so often compared painting to poetry that it had become a cliché of such works. The word 'poésie' referred not just to poetry in the form with which we are still familiar, but to theatrical verse- perhaps the more common usage. In de Piles' course of lectures to the Academy, he described what a future Palais de Peinture might look like. He added, in the manner of someone stating the obvious, that poetry would also live there (26). Painting was often a source of metaphor for those writing about language in general. For the

authors of the Logique de Port Royal, the evident superiority of drawing over colour in painting was the proof of their argument that eloquence had nothing to do with the purity of language. Rather they argued that language should help the listener:

" A concevoir fortement les choses et à les exprimer en sorte qu'on en porte dans l'esprit des auditeurs une image vive et lumineuse" (27-original emphasis)

At this epoch, the sign was a representation and the representation a sign. Writing to justify the importance of the Aristotelian rules of Tragedy -unity of time, place and action- the Abbé Aubignac argued:

" Il est certain que le Théâtre n'est rien qu'un image" (28).

So just as one History painting depicts no more than one action, so too the theatre should only stage unified writing. Yet under the strict codification of the seventeenth century, painters had to avoid theatrical subjects. However, after the victory of the Moderns painting did not have to be a direct imitation of nature.

The more painters could concentrate on pleasure and artifice, the greater licence they had to deal with subject matter away from traditional edifying realism. But although the old had been devalued in theory, a new visual code had yet to emerge in artistic practice which was intelligible both to artists and to their growing audience.

Times were changing and people needed precise codes of behaviour to orientate themselves. The cut of clothing remained largely constant from the mid-seventeenth century until the early eighteenth. It was at the extremities that the differences were marked: by the use of wigs- often in remarkable shapes- by shoes and by make-up. Under Louis XV, the use of beauty patches became fashionable and the location of a patch gave a message to others,

rather like the wearing of keys has in our own time. These messages were none the less precise for their conventionality. As Sennett emphasises, the artifice of the period did not mean artificiality. Indeed, the adoption of roles seems to have allowed people room for personal expression in an unusually direct manner, so that open weeping at the stage death of an actor or disorder if a play was unpopular were commonplace (29).

Given this situation, it makes it all the more important that we understand why Watteau adopted theatrical motifs for his painting. At a time of openness within and without the Academy, he could have chosen many areas to construct his new visual language. He chose Italian theatre, not perhaps the most obvious area. After all, he lived at the close of the greatest age of French theatre that of Corneille, Racine and Molière and in the early days of the Comédie Française. Furthermore, as we have seen, the Italian comedians themselves had been expelled in 1697 so Watteau never saw them himself. Such pictures as his The Departure of the Italian Comedians are not precise paintings of modern life, but a fantasy recreation of recent events.

Watteau used the Italian theatre because it gave him respectability and licence at once. The Church traditionally regarded actors as infamous and refused them burial in sanctified ground. It tried its utmost to have performances banned or moved elsewhere. So it was that Molière, despite his favour at court, was not buried with the sanction of the Church. Although the situation had relaxed a little by the eighteenth century, the old problems remained. This can be deduced from the vehemence with which the philosophes attacked religion. The Comédie Française itself was moved from venue to venue due to the opposition of local priests until it found haven in Saint Germain in 1689 (30).

As late as 1730, Voltaire wrote an outraged pamphlet in protest at the refusal of the church to bury an actress he had known. So for the Academy, which was under close royal supervision, the theatre was unlikely to be considered a suitably noble subject for painting.

However, the Italian comedians were a case apart from their French fellows. They were immediately less threatening as Italy had been the role model for so much of Academic culture. They were able to present themselves as the heirs to the classical tradition of Terence and Plautus. Furthermore, they came to France at royal invitation and enjoyed royal favour. One consequence of this was that they avoided the anger of the Church. In 1694 when Scaramouche—one of the leading Italians—died, he was buried at the Eglise Saint-Eustache with great pomp and was followed by " une foule extraordinaire de toutes sortes de personnes", according to a contemporary writer. He left a considerable bequest to the Church as well as over 100,000 ecus to his son (31). For the Italians, acting was not only a respectable but a lucrative way of life. So for an artist looking to use the theatre as a subject without being indecent, the Italians offered one means of doing so.

The Italian comedy also escaped the sharp distinctions of genre made between comedy and tragedy at the period. For the seventeenth century writer, the Abbé Hedelin d'Aubignac, there were three kinds of life in France. That of the Grands at court, that of the bourgeois in Paris and the life of the countrydweller. The theatre was divided to match. So tragedy showed the lives of Princes and the catastrophes that befall them and therefore pleased those at court. By contrast:

" La comédie servoit à dépeindre les actions du peuple, et l'on n'y voyait que Débauches de jeunes gens, que Fripponeries d'Esclaves, que Soupleses de femmes sans honneur, qu'Amourettes, Fourbes, Railleries, Mariages et autres accidens de la vie commune." (32)

Comedy was the daily life of the town on display as art and was found displeasing to the superior nobility.

In fact, the Abbé explicitly stated that no-one living by the code of honnesteté, the aristocratic watchword of the day, could enjoy comedy. Being rooted in the people, the style of writing was common and the sentiments expressed came from the mouths of nobodies. The crises of the action were resolved by tricks and intrigues, rather than the marvellous and heroic actions found in Tragedy. The two genres were different in style, reflecting their different audiences but also, it was felt, their capacity to understand. In the words of La Mesnardière:

" The crude multitude can derive no pleasure from a serious, truly tragic discourse and...this many headed monster can know at most only the ornaments of theatre." (33)

French comedy was, then, beyond the pale for the nobility- except in the case of the Italians who were able to cross the town/court divide. Their royal patrons and elite heritage ensured their success at court whilst the commedia style was popular with the urban audience.

French tragic theatre was also a difficult subject for Academic painters, but for rather different reasons. Although it was one of the monopoly arts organisations so popular with Louis XIV, the Comédie Française was very different to the Academy. A description of the Comédie in 1718 recorded that the fourteen men and thirteen women of the company enjoyed far greater openness and self-control than their painter contemporaries. All had the right to speak and vote in the weekly meetings which decided

policy. New plays submitted for performance were read by two of the company who reported back to the rest on its suitability. Their involvement was not limited to artistic matters. All performers owned a part of the company. A full part was worth one twenty-seventh of receipts and had to be bought on joining. As most could not afford this, new actors usually had a fraction of a part which they then built up over the years. In return, the company guaranteed them a pension of 1000 livres per year on retirement. This model seems closer to a joint-stock company than the court hierarchy imposed on the Academy of Painting.

Not only was the Comédie Française an unsuitable model, it was, at the time Watteau came to Paris, an unsuccessful one. The source for the above information, Nicolas Boindin, reported that the Comédie had been playing to empty houses for years. In order to revive the company five members were retired rather against their will in 1718. However, they had all done at least thirty years service and were perhaps due to go (34). What is not said, but can be inferred, is that the sight of a company of old people playing young tragic heroes might well have seemed ridiculous and certainly might account for the poor audiences. In the early eighteenth century the future of the Comédie Française looked as precarious as that of the Academy.

It was, then, the Italian comedians whom he had never seen that provided Watteau's inspiration. He learnt of their style from the fair theatres who adopted the style during their exile from France. What he saw was not commedia dell'arte as we know it-or indeed as Italian actors of the eighteenth century knew it- but a peculiarly French style of theatre. It was forged from popular theatrical devices and the necessity to avoid legal restrictions such as censorship and the official monopoly of the Comédie

Francaise. Yet it is mainly from this theatre- and the paintings of Watteau- that we derive our notion of the commedia dell'arte . Small wonder then that a recent historian of the style has observed:

" L'histoire de la Commedia dell'arte est peut-être l'histoire de son mythe, et rien d'autre. Peut-être c'est quelque chose de plus: l'histoire d'une idée qui recouvre systématiquement, par son pouvoir d'enchantement, d'autres histoires, d'autres presences." (35)

The interlinked history of the art and theatre of the early eighteenth century is a fascinating mix of influence and counter-influence, of absorption and assimilation, and, above all, of the relationship between art works and their consumers.

The extent to which the French had altered the terms of the 'Italian' comedy can be judged from the annoyed reaction of the Italians themselves on their return in 1716. Luigi Riccoboni, who played the character of Lelio, and wrote plays and other works on the theatre, described how, on his return:

"Tout le monde attendait des Comédiens Italiens ce type de comédie que je blamais tout, et que tous les gens de lettres désapprouvent. Chacun me répétait que le public n'attendait de nous qu'une joie folle et un rire non assujetti aux règles, que le spectacle italien, auquel il était accoutumé, ne lui avait pas donné d'autre idée, et que je ne devais pas songer à jouer des comédies de bon goût, puisque la manière des Comédiens Italiens ne s'y pouvait pas accommoder." (36)

Riccoboni took this reversal badly and , once he had retired, proposed a series of moralistic reforms of the French theatre. However disgruntled he may have been, his comments show that a new style of comedy had emerged in France during his absence. The translations of Racine and contemporary Italian tragedies that he wanted to perform simply found no audience. Even when they avoided their complex intrigue plays and performed in French, not Italian, the people were not impressed.

Riccoboni emphasised that their work was not improvised theatre but rather allowed an actor to react whilst another was speaking and to make their lines appear naturally spoken. Therefore, by comparison with the stilted formality of the French theatrical tradition, the Italian comedy appeared so lively that audiences might have thought their work was improvised. These differences were highlighted by Watteau in his contrasting pictures L'Amour au Theatre Italien and L'Amour au Theatre Francais in which the Italians are seen in far more intimate atmosphere and relaxed style than the French. Riccoboni also noted that as they usually acted in Italian, they did sometimes improvise in front of a French audience, knowing them to be unable to follow the plot.

Despite their changes, the returned Italian comedians were not sufficiently lively or different to compare to the fair theatres that had taken on their clothes. The Italians were still part of the classic drama tradition whilst the fairs were busy inventing new devices and techniques.

The fairs existed in a legal loophole- but with difficulty. The leading company, that of Alard, had gained a royal privilege in 1679, just before the formation of the Comédie Francaise; this, combined with the traditional licence granted to the fairs, allowed them to survive. The original privilege allowed them to play individual scenes interspersed with tumblers and dancing. But after the expulsion of the Italians, Alard decided to capture their market. He built a new theatre and opened with Italian style plays in 1697. Legal action was immediately taken against them by the Comédie Francaise but they managed to stall and delay the verdict by means of appeals and other devices.

While the case was sub judice, one Fuzelier, a fair theatre

promoter, put on shows with music, in breach of the Opera's monopoly, arguing that the whole affair was being decided by the courts. Finally in 1703, the fair theatres were banned from performing plays. They then commenced performing works that had scenes in different places and at different times, so that under the Aristotelian rules carefully upheld by the Comédie Française (these insisted on unity of time, place and action), their work could not properly be described as a play. They performed, for example, a version of the Odyssey, showing Odysseus in various different stages of his voyage. So the fairs brought a more modern notion of plot development to the theatre almost by accident.

The Comédie, realising soon enough that they had been fooled, decided to obtain a more sweeping court order which banned the fairs from using the basis of all drama, namely dialogue. They responded with the invention of monologue theatre in which one actor spoke individually or, to create a dialogue, would go off after their lines and let another come on to reply. The comic potential here was excellent and, so, with liberal use of mime, the fairs created a perfectly intelligible style.

In 1709, the Comédie was able to have these banned as well, in what were ever more desperate moves to capture an audience for their classical performances. The fairs responded by performing nonsense verse in perfect Alexandrines whilst mimicking the voices and mannerisms of the Comédie's performers. They ran a very successful season parodying the Romans, as the official actors were known. The irony here was that the satirists of the fairs used Italian characters to mock these Romans.

So, at last, the Comédie were pushed to take the strongest possible action and, bypassing the Parlement, they obtained a

royal edict forbidding the actors in the fairs from speaking at all. Their intention was that the fairs should be able to do nothing more than their traditional activities of tumbling and dancing on tightropes and suchlike. But the ingenious operators behind the popular entertainments had other ideas. They came up with a completely original format which enabled them to keep within the law and still perform. They began to use écriteaux, placards, on which the lines that the actor would have spoken were written. At first, these were used as straightforward substitutes for lines.

Then, the painter and actor Octave, previously a member of the Italian comedians, realised the écriteaux had greater possibilities. Now a fair actor, Octave still enjoyed the protection of the Duc d'Orléans who rescued him from scrapes with the law on more than one occasion. He began by putting the lines into verse, usually four lines long. Then, the orchestra would strike up a popular tune of the day. A comic opera by the fair authors Fuzélier, Lesage and d'Oréval described what happened next:

" Le spectateur y devenait acteur lui-meme. Dès que l'écriteau était déroulé, l'orchestre donnait le ton, et l'on entendait aussitôt un chorus discordant, le plus réjouissant du monde." (37)

Actors and audience were joined together in defiance of the Comédie Française and the court- but with the backing of the future Regent- to create an entirely new theatre. In so doing, they also indirectly asserted the values of the town and created a new visual language, dependent on a knowing and committed interaction between spectator and scene. It was this language that Watteau was to use in his paintings.

The potential for the écriteau plays came both from the social

setting of the fairs themselves and the state of the theatre at the period. In 1716 a contemporary writer described the fairs as an exciting scene of intrigue:

" C'est un lieu fertile en bonnes aventures, ou les coquettes triomphent aux dépens de leurs amants, qui en sont le plus souvent les dupes." (38)

The fairs mixed a liberation from the stifling social restraints of Louis XIV's court with an obvious margin of sexual licence. Here the play and the venue became almost one and the same. The critic of comedy, the Abbé Aubignac was put out by: "toutes les intrigues soustenues par la finesse et non par le merveilleux." In the same way, the Saint Germain was known as La Foire Galante and was, in the words of a contemporary, the: "centre de fripponneries galantes et bacchiques". These words were echoed in Biancolelli's play of 1710:

" Banissons les soupçons jaloux,
A la Foire Galante
L'Amour nous trompe tous." (39)

The accent, then, was on love and its deceptions and on the abandonment of conventional restraint both in the actual fairs and in the plays put on there.

In fact, like the Hollywood musical, fair theatre was very often about the fair and its actors, particularly during their troubles with the Comédie. The fairs acted as a meeting point for the three ways of life- court town and country- being on the edge of town and visited by all. They set aside normal barriers, as Niemitz's travel guide of 1727 relates:

" I have viewed with astonishment that even ladies of quality were able to hear and see the obscenities without blushing in shame; but what can I say, seeing that they have no need to hide the contentment they feel and laugh from the heart? This is Parisian high society. The more a drolerie is earthy and grotesque the more one is entertained. All is permitted to Harlequin and Colombine, these two happy children." (40)

Even allowing for the travel guide's traditional exaggeration of the licentiousness of your destination, it seems clear that the theatrical world of the fair was somehow different.

Even within the traditional theatres, there were many differences compared to a modern theatre. The clothes of the period distinguished between street wear and clothes for the home. But actors always wore street clothes, even in intimate settings. It was by no means uncommon for new fashions to be set by a costume. In other words, the theatre did not belong to the inner world of intellectual and emotional experience but to the public setting. In Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes, his hero wanders at one point into a theatre and is unable to tell who is performing and who is in the audience as everyone is carrying on in such a fashion (41). The audience were not in the dark as they are today, so this mistake was all the more possible.

Within the theatre, unlike outside, all was dominated by the parterre, the pit, a seventeenth century innovation. It was an area without seating or elevation, ranged in front of the stage. The boxes in which the nobility sat were behind in two or three rows and were too far away from the stage to influence the atmosphere. The audience were all but part of the performance and in fact there were seats actually on the stage itself. Those who sat there took delight in acknowledging their friends in the audience and moved around as they felt like it, rather than sitting quietly as might happen today. It was a straightforward move from such sideline disruptions in the traditional theatres to direct participation and involvement in the écriteau plays. The Abbé Aubignac complained that gentlemen of honour were attacked in the theatre by pages and lackeys with swords. He

regretted that there were often murders and always disorder. His solution was to fill the parterre with seats, to have royal guards on duty and to appoint an Intendant de Théâtre.

The Comédie Française was perhaps a government answer to this permanent problem of disorder. If so, it was unsuccessful. On one occasion, in response to the continuous innovations of the fairs, the Comédie advertised a play as containing a device never seen before. For once the theatre was crowded but the parterre was so unruly that two acts had to be cut in order to reach the new device. When this turned out to be the tame expedient of having two actors play the same part, the whole performance broke up in disorder. The parterre had dictated things to such an extent that only one and a half acts out of an intended five had been performed.

The fair theatres were always lively places. One critic who was much attached to the virtues of Aristotelian unity, visited them and had to admit:

" Les pièces se sont trouvées également amusantes et ingénieuses enfin si pleines de variétés et de nouveautés, le tout mis en action, qu'il était difficile de n'avoir pas la curiosité de le voir plus d'un fois." (42)

From his description of events, it is easy to see why he was so struck. First, a donkey walked the tightrope- suspended by other ropes. Then, the play opened with all the fair actors on stage and depressed because they were not allowed to speak or dance. An actor in the character of Momus then encouraged them that their leaps and agility would compensate and they cheered up. The piece itself concerned the rescue of Isabelle from the Demons. Someone had to spend a night in the haunted castle without becoming scared. Harlequin and Scaramouche then tried to achieve the feat, tempted by the reward of 1000 pistolles. But they were scared

away by a Lion and a Bear. Then others try and fail but finally an Officer who wanted to see only Isabelle succeeded and was able to marry her. This was followed by a version of the Sorcerer's Apprentice story with Harlequin being transported to the court of the Sultan of Persia and narrowly escaping death. In one famous fair presentation, Pierrot represented the cause of the fairs in the Quarrel of the Theatres in which the Comédie was much mocked.

Given the lively and changing nature of both audience and performance in the contemporary theatre, it is easier to understand both why de Piles was so concerned with catching and keeping spectators' attention and why so much Academic painting of the time appeared to be so out of touch. Watteau's breakthrough lay in his ability to harness the vitality of contemporary performing arts within an acceptable Academic framework. His experience ideally suited him for this task since having moved in theatrical circles of Saint Germain, Watteau next moved into the Academy. In 1709 he left Gillot's studio for that of Claude III Audran, the nephew of Gerard Audran, printmaker and Academician. As a result, Watteau was able to take classes at the Royal Academy school, just after de Piles' course had been published. While he was still a student Le Clerc gave his course on perspective, designed to reinforce the earlier work of Huret (43). So, in his eight years as an aspiring member of the Academy, Watteau must have been taught elements of Academic theory dating back to the 1670s and coming right up to date. From this pot-pourri of painting theory, he took the the ingredients necessary to build his own style. Throughout his career, he followed Gillot in working his figures and backgrounds separately. Huret's theory which gave priority to figures over

all else made this approach acceptable to the Academy. Watteau might also have learnt his indifference to perspective in this early text, reinforced by the aged Leclerc's lectures.

In his early work La Perspective (1715, Museum of Fine Arts Boston), Watteau gave expression to this hierarchy of priorities. The main interest in the piece is the foreground figures. The background trees and piece of architecture were worked so as to give an impression of receding space without affecting the size of the figures. The figures were suitably young and noble as prescribed by Huret and the scene in fact shows the Montmorency house of the art patron Crozat (44). Watteau's overseers for his morceau de réception at the Academy were Coypel and the sculptor, Francois Barrois. The patronage of such established artists had opened the gilded doors of privilege to the young painter.

But although these elite haunts were a long way from Saint Germain, he had not forgotten his theatre. His early efforts in the new style were not uniformly successful. In 1713, he painted La Conversation, (Toledo Museum of Art), an outdoor scene which lacks the arrangement and the sense of dramatic tension that we associate with his best work. On the other hand La Partie Quarrée, (Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco), from the same year, shows a group of three seated figures with Pierrot having his back to us. A statue of Amor riding a dolphin and the scattered effects of a fan, guîtar and a mask combine to catch our attention. These props together with the costume and statue directed the spectator towards thinking of the image in terms of a love play, the comedy of the fairs. Gradually, Watteau was evolving a technique that relied on Academic tradition for his backgrounds and on the theatre for the figures.

In his 1718 Voulez-vous triompher des belles?, (Wallace

Collection, London), the use of the theatrical to overcome the restrictions of pictorial space was clear. The aggressive advance of Harlequin towards Colombine took place next to a noblewoman, her suitors and their valets. Yet the groups are separate for the servant-actors Harlequin and Colombine were from a different world to that of the aristocrats, rather as Watteau himself was. Only within the prescribed limits of the fairs could such a meeting have actually occurred. The scene was not so specific in Watteau's painting; all that we can see is that the figures were somewhere outdoors. Yet by using characters in fair theatre costume, Watteau has taken their licence to break down society's rules and created a new visual style. He was much helped by the changed status of the art object which did not now have to be so exact an imitation of the observed world as it did in the seventeenth century. Aware of illusion and alerted to it by the theatrical costumes, an eighteenth century audience could accept what might have been incomprehensible to their parents.

Watteau did not leave his audience to work out the theatrical origins of his art from the image alone. His paintings were often accompanied by two couplets of verse which served the function of an écriteau. In this way, he was also able to carry out de Piles' suggestion of captions for paintings in a way the spectator could understand. The silent theatre of painting had moved from the depiction of tragedy to comedy. Watteau realised the originality of his work and provided his audience with the clearest possible indication of his sources.

Yet we must not insist on too literal a depiction of the theatre. It seems natural to ask whether Watteau's paintings were an exact representation of theatrical practice or noble pastimes.

The uses of the écriteaux might make us seek the plays from which Watteau might have taken inspiration. But Watteau's work was not simply a reflection of the theatre around him- it was a direct influence upon it. As we have seen, the French evolved their own version of the Italian theatre which differed profoundly from the original. On their return in 1716, the Italians were initially successful but soon found their audiences dwindling, annoyed both with their incomprehension of Italian and by the style of the performances. The Italians began to perform at first partly, then wholly in French. They attempted to open an evening theatre on the Champs Elysées to draw the crowds. Eventually they conceded defeat and played what their audience wanted- comedy from the fairs. By 1718, a critic observed :

" Les personnes de bon sens...changent insensiblement leurs critiques en louanges, parce qu'effectivement on s'apperçoit de jour en jour que leur jeu se conforme à notre goût." (45)

It was French taste that formed the phenomenon we have come to know as commedia dell'arte, whose myth has claimed an almost entirely false Italian ancestry.

One of those influences that formed French taste so decisively was the painting of Watteau. Four years elapsed between his becoming an agrée at the Academy and the return of the Italians during which he was too busy to complete a reception piece. His representation of Italian comedy changed the Italians' own practice and has led generations of scholars to research commedia dell'arte and Watteau together. But as Taviani, a recent historian of the subject has written:

" L'illusion que le genre théâtral Commedia dell'Arte ait existé dans l'histoire des théâtres italiens nait du fait que ce genre existe réellement chez Callot, chez Gillot, chez Watteau." (46)

Watteau depicted an ideal type of theatre, based on his knowledge

of the fairs and the myth of the departed Italians, which created a public taste to which the real theatres had to pander. The Academy had from its beginnings sought the status of a liberal art rather than a craft. Now that its painters were directly influencing other art forms, that aim might be said to have been achieved. Watteau used an innovative mix of illusion and representation in his art that for the first time put Academic painters ahead of the theoreticians.

In his Fêtes Venetiennes of 1718, (National Gallery of Scotland), this work reached maturity. On the left stands the identifiable figure of Vleughels, friend of Watteau and a fellow-painter. It has also been suggested that the muset player on the right, forming a pyramid with Vleughels is Watteau himself. The theory is lent plausibility by the fact that Watteau was staying in Vleughels' house at the time this picture was made. Yet the statue of a nymph is also drawn to our attention by the use of lighting and is equally obviously not a 'real' statue. No more is the backdrop of trees and foliage botanically accurate. On the other hand, the painter has simply coloured a life drawing of the female nude in stone to represent a statue and thereby introduced the element of eroticism and deception for which the fairs were noted.

In the background a couple departs from the scene. The man makes an unmistakeably arrogant gesture at Vleughels which suggests that a change in affections on the part of the woman may have occurred. The diagonal between the painter, the couple and the statue is the dominant compositional feature of the work. It leaves the brightly-lit woman in the foreground ever so slightly displaced, a feeling reinforced by the fact that she is the only

woman in the picture not to have a man paying close attendance upon her. Nor can the spectator simply regard the scene with a dispassionate air. The first seated woman on the left looks out at us, as does the nymph on the extreme right. The point of the intersection of their gazes is the spectator's viewpoint- in a picture only 55.9 x 45.7 cm the artist could be sure of that. Watteau's mix of the real and the unreal, the image and the spectator has moved beyond the simply theatrical into a profound awareness of appearance. Of course, the fair theatres had also been blurring still further the *vague distinction between* audience and actors by this time and so Watteau had less need to be direct.

By way of comparison, we can cite the earlier painting Feste de la Foire du Landit (1711, Staatliche Schlosser und Garten, Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin). Another small picture (64.7 x 91.3 cm) the subject is a fair outside Paris and tents are visible in the background. On the right, there is a fortune teller. In the centre, dancing couples are circling around whilst Pierrot collects money in a hat. There are other figures seated nearby watching. The composition is reminiscent of Watteau's Flemish origins and lacks the ordering and discrimination of later works. Here the light is used traditionally, strongest in the middle, fading to the sides and rear. In short, Watteau is straightforwardly showing us a fair scene with plenty of visual clues to help the spectator. Seven years later, the elements of light and composition were used subtly to emphasise certain aspects of the image. Now all has become elusive, uncertain and incomplete, giving these paintings their continuing fascination.

One method of attempting to elucidate these problems might be to examine the life of the artist in detail and relate his

experiences to the paintings. Yet a frustration for the historian of Watteau is that, although he was much concerned with the contemporary, very little source material for his life exists apart from his paintings. However, on his early death in 1721, there were several obituaries that reinforce our conception of Watteau as a painter of Comedy. His friend Gersaint, a picture dealer, described his pictures as dealing with comedy and fantasy. He also recalled, in a parallel with the embittered clown, Riccobini, that Watteau's character was not so happy:

" Il avait le caractère inquiet et changeant; il était entier dans ses volontés; libertin d'esprit, mais sage de moeurs; impatient, timide, d'un abord froid et embarrassé, discret et réservé avec les inconnus, bon, mais difficile ami, misanthrope, même critique malin et mordant, toujours mécontent de lui-même et des autres."
(47)

Although we must make allowances for the creation of the Watteau myth already well under way by the time of writing in 1744, there seems to have been agreement that Watteau was a difficult character. Yet his work was altogether different. Dubois de Saint-Gelais who was later to become Secretary of the Academy, described how:

" Il a parfaitement bien représenté les concerts, les danses et les autres amusements de la vie civile, mettant la scene dans les jardins, dans ces bois et dans d'autres lieux champêtres." (48)

As we have already shown, the town meant comedy in the theatre and a way of life distinct from those of the Great at court.

It was obviously not a problem for the author that these urban scenes were set in the countryside, in suitably Academic space. Critics could now accept Watteau as an accurate artist whilst being fully aware of the divergences in his work from the traditional imitation of nature. Antoine de le Roque wrote the obituary which appeared in the fashionable Mercure de France in

1721. He described Watteau as:

" Exact observateur de la Nature, il s'ouvrit par elle un nouveau sentier pour arriver aux perfections les plus délicates et les plus piquantes de son Art...On y voit un agréable mélange du sérieux, du grotesque et des caprices de la mode française ancienne et moderne..Sa touche et la vaghezza de ses paysages sont charmantes." (48-original emphasis)

Such vagueness would not have been acceptable to the seventeenth century realists but the triumph of the moderns had entailed a new concept of nature. For the Ancients, nature was Fallen and man a being separate from it. Indeed, the measure of humanity was the extent to which a society had succeeded in distancing itself from the state of nature. Versailles, with its ordered gardens and parks was the symbol of this domination of nature. The fountains alone used more water than the whole of Paris and Saint-Simon wrote of Louis XIV's intentions to "tyrannise over nature". Within the royal Academy, a similar determination to focus on the *noble figure rather than debased nature was to be found*.

However, in the early eighteenth century nature began to come into vogue. The fashionable elite took new maisons de campagne in places such as Boulogne, the Seine and Loire valleys. It became the done thing to take day excursions to Sceaux, Saint-Cloud or Montmartre on Sundays. The notion that the countryside was a place of leisure and relaxation was a new one, espoused by the modernist writers. Fontenelle, in his Discours sur la nature de l'églogue (1688) had dismissed the Ancients notion of the eclogue. This had identified itself with a tradition stretching from Virgil which saw nature as a source of moral reflection and virtue. Virgil envisaged a golden age in which man had lived an ascetic and virtuous life in harmony with his environment. He saw the world around him as a sad corruption of that state of grace

and the Ancients in the Academy had adopted this idea albeit with a Christian veneer. Fontenelle, however, wanted an eclogue which described a concurrence of laziness and love. The message conveyed would be that the reader should aspire to a quieter, pastoral life, primarily concerned with love. Although literature did not respond to this call until Rousseau's La Nouvelle Heloise in 1761, it seems as if social practice and the visual arts were quicker off the mark (49).

The famous Ancients and Moderns' polemic drew to a halt in 1715 when Fontenelle agreed that Homer was a model to work from but was characterised by faults peculiar to his epoch. Both sides could therefore claim victory- the Ancients because the supremacy of Homer had been upheld, the Moderns because they could now justify their attachment to their own day. With this cessation of official hostilities, it was easier for painters, critics and students such as Watteau to adopt what had formerly been Modern positions within the Academy. It was in the interpretation of nature that the broadening of opinion was most clearly felt. Once that interpretation had shifted, so too did many other aesthetic positions, for it had long been established that the proper subject of art was the imitation of nature. The real question was now what that meant and how it was applied.

During the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, it seemed that an increasingly mechanical nature was emerging from the new discoveries- one that obeyed laws which simply awaited deciphering. These advances reinforced the confidence of the Moderns and gave them the confidence to attack the received wisdoms. For they felt that the determining laws of nature were also laws that led towards perfection. Thus as man advanced

towards a realisation of his own nature and the achievement of happiness, the Moderns knew that the highest state was yet to come - it was, indeed, a scientific inevitability.

But, as ever, the bastions of supposed superstition did not fall as easily as had been hoped. Nature became not just the subject matter for empirical discoveries but a mythology to be used against the supernatural and the artifice of social conventions. As the historian Jean Ehrard has put it:

" Pour libérer l'homme des malédictions qui pesaient sur lui, le XVIIIème siècle est contraint de substituer à la nature empirique une nature reconstruite selon les exigences de sa raison." (50)

If nature was to be imitated, there were broadly speaking two options for the artist. Either a direct realism in which all the world could be used as material or, more commonly, a depiction in which the representation of the real was controlled by good taste.

For Boileau, in his L'Art Poétique (1672), the extent to which the real passed his test of the agreeable was very limited. In a striking phrase, he emphasised : "la pudeur des mots", particularly in connexion with love and religion (51). Many critics have preferred to concentrate on Boileau's acceptance that subjects which were awful in reality might be pleasing in art if delicately rendered. But his sense of "pudeur" regulated and controlled this concession to Modern thought. Like Huret's Optique, with which it is contemporary, the apparent breadth of Boileau's approach was in practice severely constrained. Although reason was the unifying force in Boileau's artistic theory, it was restricted by social convention to the extent that his theory was very difficult to use in practice.

In the classical approach, then, artists were to paint not

simply nature but belle nature, refining their perceptions to meet what was required. Perrault's Modernist approach was, by contrast, to go beyond nature itself towards a Platonic notion of what nature might be. In this way he hoped to move beyond the difficulty, highlighted by Pascal, of identifying what was pleasurable in order to write about it. He wrote:

" La plus grande difficulté ne consiste pas à bien représenter des objets, mais à représenter de beaux objets, et par les endroits où ils sont les plus beaux. Je vais encore plus loin, et je dis que ce n'est pas assez au peintre d'imiter la plus belle nature telle que les yeux la voient, il faut qu'il aille au-delà, et qu'il tache à attraper l'idée du beau, à laquelle non seulement la pure nature, mais la belle nature même ne sont jamais arrivées; c'est d'après cette idée qu'il faut qu'il travaille, et qu'il ne se serve de la nature pour y parvenir." (52)

Thus Perrault moved so far away from an exact representation of nature as to say that the nature we see around us is only an imperfect imitation of the ideal nature that is unknown to us. One interpretation of this idea might be to see Perrault working towards a Cartesian abstraction of the mathematical, mechanical universe. In this light, Perrault appears as the champion of the new science against the 'qualities' espoused by Aristotelians. He thus led the Moderns into battle against the Classical realists (53). It is, of course true that in the late 1680s when Perrault was writing, there was a real split in the ranks of French intellectuals. However, thirty years later by the time of Fontenelle's truce over Homer, the situation was very different. The quarrel now seemed outdated, a new reign was beginning.

At this point, the establishment came to absorb as its own what had previously been oppositional. As the Regency began, the ancien régime was still vital, capable of taking on and hegemonising contradictory forces. In this case, the ruling Academies were able to use Perrault's idealism as a way out of

their difficulties with respectable realism. For whilst the theory was neat enough, the restrictions it engendered were so tight as to slowly squeeze the life out of official French painting. Now with the Moderns established in the Academy the time was ripe for a shift in the rules as to what could safely be represented in a painting.

The agent for this theoretical acceptance of changed conditions was the Abbé Jean-Baptiste Dubos (1640-1742), a diplomat and member of the Académie Française. In two lengthy tomes entitled: Réflexions Critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture, published first in 1719 and many times reprinted, Dubos discreetly opened up the orthodoxy of Louis XIV to the eighteenth century. For Dubos the object of art was pleasure. Pleasure was defined as a satisfaction of need and the soul's needs were the greatest of all. The soul needed to be occupied in order avoid the langours of ennui. Art was of major importance in creating a means of artificial enjoyment. The pleasure gained from the imitation was distinct from that created by the real and was necessarily artificial. Dubos thus distinguished two types of this vraisemblance, mechanical and poetical. Mechanical vraisemblance:

" Consiste à ne rien représenter qui ne soit possible suivant les loix de la statistique, les loix de mouvement et les loix d'optique,"

whereas the poetical:

"Consiste à donner à ses personnages les passions qui leur conviennent suivant leur âge, leur dignité, suivant le temperament qu'on leur prête et l'intérêt qu'on leur fait prendre dans l'action." (54)

In effect, Dubos had not only reinstated the Academy's traditional prescription against the mathematicisation of art but had also restated their belief in respectful and respectable realism. Yet whilst his text was studded with references to

Aristotle, Le Brun and Poussin, he accepted the Moderns' definition of art. Painting was now seen as an artificial device for the pleasure of the spectator, in terms evolved by Perrault, Fontenelle and de Piles.

Dubos, however, used a new method of explaining this artifice, abandoning the overly difficult rules of his Academic predecessors. He in fact held that criticism was of little value. We either like a picture or we do not, in his view, and no amount of critical work will change our minds. For Dubos, what he called sentiment ruled over reason, in all the arts whether painting poetry or music. This sentiment was so essential to his understanding of art that he called it our sixth sense:

" C'est ce sixième sens qui est en nous sans que nous voyons ses organes. C'est la portion de nous même qui juge sur l'impression qu'elle ressent, et qui, pour me servir des termes de Platon, prononce sans consulter la règle et le compas. C'est enfin ce qu'on appelle communément le sentiment." (55)

Dubos' sentiment was an operation of the heart which preceded the workings of reason. He had taken Descartes' formulation for the operation of judgement and inserted sentiment in between the sense impressions and reason. In this way, he took the doubt out of the process for, in his example, we know that we like the taste of a ragoût without knowing or caring how it was cooked.

What Dubos had introduced was the era of common sense criticism, often disparagingly referred to by modern critics as the 'I don't know much about art, but I know what I like' school. Yet in the early eighteenth century, Dubos' open and calm approach must have seemed a refreshing change from the sterile exchanges of the Ancients and Moderns debate. In his view:

" Le public est capable de bien juger des vers et des tableaux sans scavoir les règles de la Poésie et de la Peinture...La Parterre sans scavoir des règles juge d'une

" pièce de théâtre aussi-bien que les gens du métier."

Dubos opened up the way for a bourgeois sensibility in the arts. He wanted this art to ape the noble art that had preceded it, but to be accessible to the public. He defined the public as those who had acquired learning whether through reading or through commerce but specifically excluded the "lowly people". The aim was to extend the virtues that had previously been seen as noble to the bourgeoisie in a way that they could understand but which also sharply distinguished them from the common people.

It is within this concept of the natural and artistic that Watteau must be understood. Only within this more liberal climate could his mix of Modern and Ancient, academic and theatrical, be successful. This success can be measured, as de la Roque observed, from the excessive price that his pictures commanded. Watteau, as befitted a showman, was an excellent exploiter of the commercial possibilities of his work and as such belonged with the traders of the town as much as the nobles with whom he sometimes associated .

However, in his recent interpretation of Watteau, which has much in common with the above, Thomas Crow has seen the artist as more closely associated with the nobility. He cites a noble craze for amateur dramatics along the lines of the fair theatres as a possible source for Watteau's outdoor scenes. He expands his argument to say:

" Watteau found a means to represent, for the first time in visual terms, that set of contemporary aristocratic values and modes of behaviour which together fall under the category of honnêteté." (56)

However, as we have seen, contemporaries specifically excluded anything to do with comedy from the code of honnêteté as it was irretrievably part of the bourgeois life-style. Furthermore, the

kind of balls and galante activities that Crow refers to were described by a writer on etiquette as: "un sujet de soins penibles et de tumultes." His advice was to avoid them, unless they were royal occasions, particularly if there was any suspicion of galanterie (57).

Watteau was not aiming at such court ideals but sought the tastes and purchasing power of the city now that they too could be identified as part of the artistic world. This world now talked of the "public" rather than the elite "republic of letters". In this respect, theoreticians like de Piles and Dubos who wrote of the artists' need to attract spectators attention were in part giving intellectual expression to a commercial necessity. The new impetus was felt across all the arts. In the 1720s, theatres began selling tickets in the foyer in the manner to which we are accustomed, thereby reducing the possibilities for traditional patronage, in which tickets were given away. Watteau was, as Crow rightly suggests, the first painter to seek to exploit the free picture market.

The evidence we have for the picture-buying habits of the Parisian bourgeoisie suggests that he got it right. Amongst those buying pictures in the period 1695-1715, portraits were much the most common as one might expect. However, whilst still-life and mythological scenes were rarely bought, there were substantial numbers of copies of work by Watteau and his followers, such as Nicolas Lancret. Scenes from the Italian comedy as well as related subjects such as Fêtes Venetiennes and Noces de Village were also common. Pictures were bought primarily for subject-matter at this period and the fête galante appears to have been high on the list. History painting is conspicuous by its absence (58). It seems as if Watteau had targetted his audience well.

Nonetheless, the extent of picture purchasing amongst the Parisian bourgeoisie is noticeable. It is in itself an indication that the new aesthetic of sentiment had reached the general public- in the contemporary sense of the term.

Theorists outside the closed ranks of the Academy responded by producing a very personal notion of creativity. In 1722 the playwright Marivaux wrote in his journal Le Spectateur Francais in this vein:

"Ecrire naturellement..n'est pas écrire dans le gout de tel ancien ou de tel moderne, n'est pas se mouler sur personne quant à la suite des idées, mais au contraire se ressembler fidèlement à soi-même... en un mot penser naturellement c'est rester dans la singularité d'esprit qui nous est échoue."
(59)

Clearly such a personal notion of taste, which allowed the universal to overlap directly with the taste of eighteenth century high society, made possible a very diverse range of picture-buying. Dubos' sentiment sought to be far more generalised but the new writers were not to be confined. At the same time, Montesquieu, for example, was writing his Essai sur le Goût , although it was not published until much later. For him, the source of all beauty was to be found within the individual and there was no question of interposing a universal sixth sense to cover up the differences:

" Notre manière d'être est entièrement arbitraire; nous pouvions avoir été faits comme nous sommes ou autrement; mais si nous avions été faits autrement, nous aurions senti autrement; un organe de plus ou de moins dans notre machine, auroit fait une autre éloquence, une autre poésie." (60)

Taste was, then, an arbitrary affair bound by no ideals or universals but coming from within. Agreeing with the common view that pleasure was the function of art, he identified three types, all revolving around the individual. In a letter to Bel, written in 1726, Montesquieu took this individualising, bourgeois

tendency to its logical conclusion by disparaging the aristocracy's (le monde) self-awarded monopoly on taste:

"Les gens du monde jugent ordinairement mal; c'est qu'ils ne prennent aucun intérêt aux choses dont ils jugent, n'allant point au théâtre pour écouter et ne lisant point pour s'instruire." (61)

It was a logical conclusion that the distracting powers of art should have most impact on those who actually had something to do, rather than the aristocracy.

However, in the printed work Montesquieu did not draw out his conclusions quite so radically. In fact he remained firmly within tradition in one important way. Initially, he appeared to offer a totally open field for artistic expression for, although custom and habit are part of our judgement, they are just as arbitrary- and therefore open to change- as other elements. However, he identified one constant that operated in all societies:

" La loi des deux sexes a établi parmi les nations policées et sauvages, que les hommes demandent, et que les femmes ne feroient qu'accorder: de-là il arrive que les graces sont plus particulièrement attachées aux femmes. Comme elles ont tout à defendre, elles ont tout à cacher; la moindre parole, le moindre geste, tout ce qui se met en liberté devient une grace, et telle est la sagesse de la nature, que ce qui ne seroit rien sans la loi de la pudeur, devient d'un prix infini depuis cette heureuse loi, qui fait le bonheur de l'univers." (62)

So in fact the play of art- and indeed life- was regulated after all by a universal law which transcended national and historical barriers- the law of pudeur.

As Joan Landes has shown, this law was far from being universally observed. Indeed, aristocrats and bourgeois were at this time united in a condemnation of the excessively liberated women at court. Molière mocked them in his play Les Précieuses Ridicules and many writers condemned the reversal of roles that women's emergence had brought about. Landes writes:

" Reflecting the prejudices of the parliamentary nobility to which he belongs by birth, Montesquieu alerts us to the want of order and propriety in the public and private life of France. France...calls out for a reconstructed domestic regime. In its absence, there exists nothing but weakened marriages, uncontrolled social mobility, declined population and prosperity, prostitution, excessive celibacy, and both abortion and excessive anti-abortion laws." (63)

Montesquieu's universal law of pudeur was, then, not a fact but a manifesto. He, like Huret and others before him, was calling not for the maintenance of the status quo but for the restoration of order in gender relations and, by extension, in civil society as a whole. It was one of the peculiarities of the ancien régime that this discourse on gender originated amongst the aristocracy, concerned at the debasement of their class, and later helped to forge the patriarchal family unit upon which bourgeois society of the nineteenth century rested.

Yet these cross-class alliances were a feature of the Fronde and later of 1789. Absolutism usually strove to prevent them as far as was possible but in this case, royal support through the Academies and elsewhere was assured. For if the body of the King was to command respect through his portrait, it was important that there be no confusion over gender roles. The perception that the women who organised the salons held wide influence at court was widespread. This in turn might contribute to a lack of respect which could destroy the social fabric of the nation. The promotion of equality would lead to degeneracy. Montesquieu wrote:

" If respect ceases for old age, it will cease also for parents; deference to husbands will be likewise thrown off, and submission to masters. This licentiousness will soon captivate the mind; and the restraint of command will be as fatiguing as that of obedience. Wives, children, slaves will shake off all subjection. No longer will there be any such thing as manners, order or virtue." (64)

For Montesquieu, Huret and Watteau alike, respect was the cement

that held civil society together. Their work campaigned for its development and extension throughout French life.

The widespread promotion of the universal law of gender difference had two important consequences for the Academy. Firstly, its notion, advanced since the 1670s, of respectable realism was now seeking to become hegemonic. It had escaped the narrow operating limits originally set upon it by using the aesthetic of the Moderns. And although the most radical of these were now seeking to make the bourgeois the arbiters of taste rather than the nobility, on the key point there was no disagreement across the spectrum.

It followed, secondly, that the scenes Watteau depicted held both the Modern meanings we have identified above and could also rightly be interpreted as classic. His love scenes were a true fusion of the Ancient and the Modern, as his contemporaries would have seen it. The vision they presented of an ordered relation between the sexes, tempered by respect, offered morality rather than licentiousness. The Utopian quality, identified by Ernst Bloch, in Watteau's painting stemmed in part from this programmatic element to his work (65). The commercial success of Watteau's art amongst the urban bourgeoisie owed much to the same source. A new buyer on the picture market could purchase a Watteau comfortable with the visual language, largely derived from his everyday life and with the subject matter which could now be understood as part of the classical tradition. Finally, Watteau's images of the two sexes stood for a more respectable and moralised ordering of leisured society than was held to be current at the time. Despite his aristocratic connections, Watteau was an outsider in court circles like many of his clients

and his art reflected their views and prejudices.

As his career progressed, Watteau was increasingly able to take such public understanding for granted and even felt able to make his work comment on it. His two most famous late works before his early death at the age of thirty-seven in 1721 displayed an increasing sophistication in this regard. Gilles, his famous depiction of the moronic character from the fair theatre, has recently come to be identified as a shop sign for the retired actor Belloni (66). His painting of town life had now come to have a direct commercial function. Art and commerce were beginning to mix in a new way. The precise history of Gilles is unclear and it is difficult to assign it a place in Watteau's career. Belloni retired in 1718-1719 so if the conjecture is correct, it is from that period. It marks the beginnings of a move away from the small, cabinet scale work of his fête galante work towards a grander scale, closer to that of history painting, and possibly a new style.

In his last major work L'Enseigne de Gersaint, Watteau continued in this direction, moving in accord with contemporary aesthetics and picture buying. In 1719 he had visited England, following the Anglo-French alliance of 1716. It is often held that it was here that he contracted the pulmonary disease that was to be the cause of his death. What is certain is that he would have seen a thriving commercial society which was considerably in advance of the French economy. Perhaps Watteau recognised the signs of an emerging order.

On his return to France in August of 1720, he went to live with his friend, the picture dealer, Edme-Francois Gersaint. In exchange for this hospitality, Watteau painted a sign for Gersaint's shop Au Grand Monarque on the Notre Dame Bridge. Its

grand scale continues in the vein opened by Gilles. The picture measures 163x 308cm which made it fully as wide as Gersaint's shop itself. Originally, it was curved at the top to fit into a sign but was later extended to traditional picture shape. Gersaint himself provided an interesting commentary on the picture in a small notice on Watteau's life, published in 1744 when his reputation had begun to decline. Of his shop sign, he wrote

" Le tout était fait d'après nature; les attitudes en étaient si vraies et si aisées, l'ordonnance si naturelle, les groupes si bien entendues qu'il attirait les yeux des passants; et mêmes les plus habiles peintres vinrent plusieurs fois pour l'admirer." (67)

As the Academy was still unable to hold regular Salons, Watteau had found a way of testing his art directly with the public. If Gersaint is to be believed, he had fully succeeded in the aesthetic task set by the Moderns: to attract the viewer's attention at the first glance. Gersaint certainly was aware that he had been given something extraordinary. Within a few days the picture had been taken down from outside the shop and sold to the collector M. de Julienne for a considerable sum.

Gersaint's account followed critical opinion in praising the natural appearance of the scene. Yet in this work the constructed elements of Watteau's 'naturalness' are particularly apparent. The shop seemed in the painting to be broad and spacious but we know from the width of the painting itself that in reality it was about ten feet wide. It would also have had a front wall, of course. The pictures that adorned the walls in such profusion were fantasies as well. They appeared to be imitations of works by Titian, Rubens and other quality paintings. However, they neither represented actual works by these artists or the kind of

pictures that a small dealer like Gersaint had available.

It was perhaps this kind of inconsistency that led Horace Walpole from across the Channel to hold Watteau guilty of a "grievous absurdity":

"His trees appear as unnatural to our eyes, as his figures must do to a real peasant who has never stirred beyond his village." (68)

To the no-nonsense view from England, the falsity of Watteau's nature was only too apparent. But the French accepted it, for art had abandoned claims exactly to reflect the real. L'Enseigne de Gersaint shows profound awareness of appearance and illusion and comments ironically upon it. The shop sign took in the street of the foreground, the shop itself and the back door to the house beyond. It was in the intermediate space of the shop that both the painted pictures and figures were found. A shop boy crated up a portrait of Louis XIV, an ironic disposal given the name of the shop, Au Grande Monarque. Watteau seems to suggest that the era of the Sun King was over in painting as in politics, since the customers in the shop pay no attention to this activity. Yet the portrait of Louis XIV had been at the centre of the political culture of Absolutism. Now a new aesthetic era has arrived. The customers preferred the Modern painting on offer in the shop. The mythical shop defined the meeting point of art and reality where the illusion becomes a commodity. Watteau has given pictorial form to the space that emerged under the early Regency in which artists and actors could work.

Art was now a commodity, moving beyond the tightly controlled Academic monopoly of Louis XIV towards the open market. Watteau's adoption of the shop sign as a new medium places his work firmly amongst that of the innovators of his time. It suggests he realised that what was intended to be commercial could become art

in its turn (69). There is some evidence to suggest that he was aware of the double-edged nature of his ideas. In a poem of 1736 the Abbé de la Marre described Watteau as uniting: " L'Art, père de l'Ironie" with Nature in his work (70).

Yet Watteau is remembered as the painter of charming, slightly mysterious love scenes. His work broke new ground in finding a way for painting to be both contemporary and traditional. It articulated the emerging sexual morality of both noble patron and bourgeois customer. In this way, it was acceptable to both the court and the town, the two main groups of Louis XIV's post-Fronde settlement. This reconciliation was part of the political rapprochement initiated by the Regency in matters as far apart as censorship, foreign policy and patronage. This opening, brief though it was (71), coincided with the triumph of the Moderns in the Académie Française and their imposed success in the Academy of Painting.

Watteau used this opportunity to give visual expression to what has been a central aesthetic of the bourgeois experience, although not one highly regarded by art historians, namely sentiment. He used the prevailing theories of sentiment to promote a conception of the image that was highly self-conscious as art and thereby gained new freedom of expression. Within his own work, that innocence was used to deal with a range of issues that had been difficult to deal with under the seventeenth century's rigid rules. However, the new ideas still accepted and promoted the ideal of the law of pudeur which incorporated the traditional respectable image, as defined by Huret. Gender difference was both a restriction on the new images-for all their artifice and intelligence- and a means whereby they gained rapid

acceptance.

The future for such 'sentimental' images lay with these restrictions rather than Watteau's late awareness of commodity and appearance. The popular image of the eighteenth century that we have inherited of polite, risqué society was formed in the genre painting that followed the genuine fête galante painters. Even today, this idea is alive and well in the mock art found in pubs and popular historical novels. Once again, the gentle irony of postmodernism is at work but also the power of a hegemonic system to absorb and neutralise any potential difference or opposition. Watteau was far from being oppositional- rather he embodied the monied bourgeoisie and its attitudes, now hoping to emulate England's commercial success. Yet it was from within this class that the core of opposition to the crown arose in 1648 and were to do so again in 1789 when the monarchy appeared to stand in the way of its modernising, capitalist drive. The monarchy and its institutions in the early Regency appeared, on the other hand, to be giving rein to these forces. It was Watteau, legitimised by the Modern Academy, who gave concrete, visual expression to these social changes.

NOTES

1. Frederic Brown, Theatre and Revolution, (New York, 1980), p.49.
2. A. De Montaiglon (ed.), Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture (Paris, 1878), Vol. II, p.118
3. P. Goubert, Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen, (London, 1970), pp.155-161.
4. De Montaiglon, op cit, Vol. II, p.139-144.
5. P. Rosenberg, France in the Golden Age, (Metropolitan Museum of New York, 1982), p.5.
6. Charles Perrault, Querelle des Anciens et Modernes (Paris, 1688), Tom. I, p.138-9.
7. Ibid, pp.209-214.
8. Discours sur la Perspective de l'ancienne peinture et sculpture par l'Abbé Sallier, (Ms, n.d., n.p) Collection Deloynes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet d'Estampes, [hereinafter CD] , Vol. 63, no. 2065.
9. Bernard Teyseddre, Roger de Piles, (Paris, 19??), p.395 n.6.
10. Lettre de M. Autier sur la science de la Perspective, (Paris, 1698), n.p. , CD , Vol. 63, no. 2068.
11. Teyseddre, op cit, p. 461. At this time a quarter of the Academy's membership never attended meetings. Most attended one in ten- a clear indication of the rut it was now in.
12. De Montaiglon, op cit, Tom III (Paris, 1880), p.269-272.
13. See B. Teyseddre, op cit, for a very full account whereas Thomas Puttfarken, Roger de Piles' Theory of Art, (Yale, 1986) concentrates on the value of de Piles' aesthetics.
14. Roger de Piles, Cours de Peinture, (Paris, 1708) p.113 . For his comments on 'Vrai' see pp.4-42.
15. Ibid, p. 117.

16. Ibid, p.312. For more discussion on colour see pp.303-359. Compare the deconstructionist view-"Colour is a question of differential values, and therefore traces", Geoff Bennington in Art and Design, (April, 1988).
17. Ibid, p.400. See pp.387-418 for further detail.
18. Ibid, p.418.
19. See chapter three above.
20. J.J. Guiffrey, Histoire de l'Académie de Saint-Luc (Paris, 1915), has collected all the relevant material. See esp. pp.9-33.
21. Donald Posner, Antoine Watteau, (London, 1984) and the catalogue for the Watteau exhibition of 1984-Watteau 1684-1721, Margaret Morgan Grasselli & Pierre Rosenberg (eds), (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1984)- for full bibliographies. The recent work by Thomas Crow, Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Paris, (Yale University Press, 1985) is the leading exception to this rule although I have my disagreements with his work-see below.
22. Grasselli and Rosenberg, op cit, pp.14-26.
23. See Thomas Crow, op cit, pp.45-55 for a survey of the theatre at the time of Watteau. For fairs see: O.G.Brocket, "The Fair Theatres of Paris in the Eighteenth Century: The Undermining of the Classical Ideal", in Classical Drama and Its Influences, M.J. Anderson (ed), (London, 1965), pp.252 -267 ; and M. Albert, Les Théâtres de la Foire, (Paris,1900).
24. Robert Tomlinson, La Fête galante: Watteau et Marivaux, (Geneva, 1981) pp.9-17.
25. Robert Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre, (Allen Lane, 1984), p.193
26. De Piles, op cit., pp.21-25.

27. Quoted in Louis Marin, La Critique du Discours, (Paris, 1975), p. 68-9.
28. Abbé Hedelin d'Aubignac, La Pratique du Théâtre, (Paris, 1657), p.101-102.
29. See Richard Sennett, The Fall of Public Man, (London,1986), pp.64-88.
30. Jacques Lorcey, La Comédie Française, (Paris, 1980) , pp.36ff.
31. Ferdinando Taviani & Mirella Schino, Le Secret de la Commedia dell'Arte, (Firenze, 1984) p.262.
32. Abbé Hedelin d'Aubignac, op cit, p.184-subsequent refs pp.184-189.
33. Quoted in Frederic Brown, op cit, p.48.
34. Lettre Historique à M.D*** sur la Comédie Française, (Paris, 1718). Published anon. by Nicolas Boindin.
35. Taviani & Grasselli, op cit, p.271.
36. Ibid, p.278.
37. Maurice Albert, Les Théâtres de la Foire, (Paris, 1900), p.65. See pp.20-65 for preceding discussion.
38. Ibid, p.4.
39. Tomlinson, op cit, p.10.
40. T. Crow, op cit, p.52. It is difficult to agree with Crow that the theatres represented a threat to the hierarchies of classicism- the Academy and the Regent were amongst those who were able to accept them as useful to the regime.
41. R. Sennett, op cit, pp. 66-72 & pp.106-112.
42. Nicolas Boindin, Quatrième Lettre Historique sur les Spectacles, (Paris, 1718), p.22. See pp.22-26 for subsequent description.
43. See chapter three above.

44. Grasselli and Rosenberg, op cit, p.34.
45. Nicolas Boindin, Troisième Lettre sur les Spectacles, (Paris, 1718) p.3ff.
46. Taviani and Schino, op cit, p.281.
47. Pierre Rosenberg, Vies Anciennes de Watteau, (Paris, 1984), p.30-39
48. Ibid, p.21.
48. Ibid, p.5-6.
49. See D.G. Charlton, New Images of the Natural in France 1750-1800 (Cambridge University Press, 1984), p.15-31.
50. Jean Ehrard, L'idée de Nature en France dans la première moitié du XVIII siècle (Paris, 1963), 2 tom., I, p.252. See p.251-281 as the source for much of what follows.
51. See G. Pocock, Boileau and the nature of Neo-Classicism (Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.96-98.
52. Perrault, op cit, Vol. III, p.220, quoted in Ehrard, op. cit., p. 259.
53. See Ehrard, op. cit., pp. 260-266 for more details of this argument.
54. Abbé J-B Dubos, Réflexions Critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture (Paris, 1719), 2 toms, Tom. I, p.242-43. For remarks on the role of art see Vol.I , pp 9-26.
55. Ibid, II, p.308. See also p.309-316.
56. T. Crow, op. cit. p.66f.
57. Abbé Hedelin d' Aubignac, Les Conseils d'Ariste à Celimene sur les moyens de conserver sa réputation (Paris, 1692), pp. 127-30.
58. Georges Wildenstein, " Le goût pour le peinture dans le cercle de la bourgeoisie Parisienne autour de 1700", Gazette des

Beaux- Arts, Tom. XLVII, Sep. 1956, pp.119-36.

59. Quoted by Ehrard, op. cit., p.266.

60. Montesquieu, Essai sur le Goût, ed. C-J Beyer, (Geneva, 1967), p.64

61. Ibid, p. 31.

62. Ibid, p.89.

63. Joan B. Landes, Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution (Cornell University Press, 1988), p.33. The introduction and first two chapters of this book provide an excellent summary of recent research in this field, interpreted in the light of Habermas' theory of communicative action.

64. Ibid, p.37, quoted from De l'Esprit des Lois.

65. See Ernst Bloch, Le Principe d'Espérance, French translation, (Paris, 1985), II Tomes, Tom. II, pp.410-14, for his Utopian interpretation of The Departure for Cythera.

66. See Posner, op. cit., pp.266-70, for a full discussion.

67. Rosenberg , op. cit., p.37.

68. Ibid, p.102.

69. It might be possible to suggest a parallel with other uses of the commercial in art on the eve of a revolution in production such as the Dada readymades or Warhol's soup cans. The self awareness and irony implied by such parallels are present in Watteau's work as has been shown above

70. Rosenberg, op. cit., p.24.

71. See Epilogue below.

EPILOGUE

Over fifty years passed between the Colbert's reformation of the Academy and Watteau's reception. The Academic vision of the fête galante had required a complicated series of intellectual, social and political developments to coincide in order for it to gain the space in which to operate. Twenty years after Watteau's early death, the genre was obsolete and has remained so, despite art's enthusiasm for recycling the past. The fête galante was, and has remained, very much part of its time. This epilogue is concerned with the reasons behind this sudden and permanent decline and will also suggest some of the theoretical consequences that might be drawn from the whole essay.

Watteau was not an enthusiastic teacher. He did not have a studio, full of eager apprentices, ready to carry on his style. One of the few known to have worked with him was Jean-Baptiste Pater (1695-1736), a former guild painter (1). Pater took lessons with Watteau in either 1710 or 1711 (at which time Watteau had only just finished being a pupil himself) and again in 1721. He was received into the Academy as a fête galante artist in 1728 but never attended its meetings. His career revolved around commissions from such noble collectors as Julienne, the Comtesse de Verrue and the Prince de Carignon.

Pater's work continued the theatrical themes found in Watteau. For example, in his La Fête de la Foire à Bezons (1733, 90 x130 cm, Chateau de Sans-Souci, Potsdam), he depicted the closing scene of Dancourt's 1695 play of the same title which played at the Parisian fairs. The scene shows a ball for the marriage of the village couple, with the theatrical nature of the scene being underlined by the presence of Gilles and Harlequin on the left (2). Pater produced a considerable number of such scenes, as well

as military pieces and a 'Bathers' series. Gersaint, Watteau's friend and dealer, was critical of Pater's work for:

" Les groupes de ses compositions sont mal ordonnés et qu'ils manquent de ce beau naturel , que l'on reconnaît facilement dand ceux dont les figures sont faites d'après nature."

But Gersaint wrote his piece in 1744 by which time the fête galante had already had its day. What had seemed natural and pleasing ten years before, now looked artificial and strained.

It was in 1744 that the last of the galante painters, Nicolas Lancret, died and this biographical coincidence surely hastened its decline. Lancret (1691-1744) had been a remarkably successful artist. Born into an artisanal family, he was apprenticed to the Academician, Pierre Dulin. By 1708, he had gained admittance to the Academy's school, although he was suspended for a time due to a quarrel with Lemoyne (3). After this setback, he went to work with Watteau's teacher, Gillot, where he made useful connections. In 1719, he was received into the Academy and for some years he attempted to gain recognition as a History painter. In 1723, he exhibited a History piece at the Place Dauphine exhibition for young artists (4). But it failed to attract any attention and thereafter Lancret concentrated on galante scenes with remarkable success. He could command as much as 10,000 livres a painting from such patrons as Crozat, M. de Boullogne and the Prince de Carignan. He also obtained a privilège, or copyright, over engravings of his work in 1730 that would have brought in a good deal of money. Unlike Pater and Watteau, Lancret continued to attend the Academy's school throughout his career and, once appointed a Conseiller in 1735, he was a regular at the Academy's meetings. Although he has been largely forgotten since, Lancret won critical acclaim in his own day for his compositional skills.

Ballot de Sovot wrote:

" On accordoit à M. Lancret le talent des plus grandes et de plus riches compositions, admirables surtout pour leur enchaînement et pour leur liason. Les sujets qu'il a traitées, tels que des foires, des bals, des noces de village, le prouvent assez. Ses groupes en eux-mêmes n'étoient pas moins de belles et scavantes compositions, comme tout l'est on doit l'être dans un tableau pris dans chacune de ses parties comme dans son tout"

In style, composition and subject matter, Lancret continued the early Watteau style, although the more developed ideas seen in L'Enseigne de Gersaint did not seem to have any influence on him. Having found a successful formula, Lancret stuck with it.

Lancret outlived the other galante painters by some years. Bonaventure de Bar (1700-1729), an imitator of Watteau was made an agrée and received into the Academy on the same day, 25 September, 1728. P-A Quillard (1701-1739) won second prize in the Grand Prix competition at the Academy for two years in a row, 1723-4, losing to Boucher and Charles Van Loo the younger. In 1726, he went to join the new Academy established by John V of Portugal and rose to become court painter there by the time of his death (5). One other galante painter was accepted in the Academy, the singer Francois Octavien (1682-1740), who submitted a scene entitled Foire de Bezons as his reception piece in 1725. It showed the fair at Bezons, which took place on the Seine near Versailles, in the style of Watteau (6). Octavien was also known as the father of Alard whose troupe were influential at the Saint-Germain theatre.

These five Academic artists have all come to be seen as imitators and followers of Watteau rather than as part of an artistic movement. This judgement has been based on the aesthetic value placed upon their work which has been seen as poor at best. Yet for a style which did not even exist in 1715 to have had six

Academicians by 1728, this verdict might seem over hasty. The fête galante artists have been condemned to obscurity by their rapid rise and equally rapid fall. For after the generation that rose to prominence by the end of the 1720s (and who were all dead by 1744), no new group came forward to take their place (7). There were three important reasons for this.

Firstly, the notions of sensory perception derived from Descartes lost ascendancy. In place of Descartes' two-stage process in which the senses perceive but the judgement observes, writers such as Condillac installed a unitary, mechanical system. Condillac's Traité des Sensations was published in 1754 and it marked a radical break with his previous work. Until then, he had followed Locke in asserting that nothing is inherent to our intellect and all our knowledge derives from the senses. Knowledge was gained in a two-fold process of sensation followed by reflexion. This refinement of the Cartesian notion of the judgement was now rejected by Condillac. He followed George Buffon and La Mettrie in seeing the body as a machine, to be primed with information from without. Now only sensation mattered, although we are so well adapted to learning from these sensations that it can appear to involve another process altogether. Using his famous model of a statue, structured like a body but with no senses, he imagined what would happen if the statue gained the senses one by one. He wrote:

" All our knowledge comes from the senses..No sooner is touch trained, than it becomes the teacher of the other senses. By themselves, the eyes would only have sensations of light and colour. Touch teaches them to estimate sizes, shapes and distances. And they are taught so quickly that they seem to see without having learned." (8)

For Condillac, there was no difference between seeing and

believing. Experience was all, sense was sensibility.

The consequences of this philosophical shift were profound and Academic aesthetics were a rapid casualty. The theories of Dubos and de Piles, and the practice of Watteau, Pater and Lancret, had operated in the margins of doubt between sight and judgement. If the judgement no longer played a role in perception, it was no longer possible to argue that art was pleasing precisely because the mind was aware it was subject to an illusion. The self-confidence of the galante artists relied on the enjoyment of this game. Unfortunately, the rules had now changed. Sight had found its status altered and diminished once again. Malebranche had relegated sight to being an alarm system but at least gave it priority over the other senses. In Condillac's system, the senses were interdependent but essentially separate and relative. No single sense was of an altogether different kind to the others as sight had been in Descartes' philosophy and its variants. The ingenious compromise by which Academic aesthetics had kept in line with other contemporary ideas on perception, whilst refusing to limit artists to any one technique, was at an end.

Secondly, in 1746, a new regime took over the Academy, under the control of Madame de Pompadour (9). The new administration, under the directorship of Lenormand de Tournehem, represented the ultimate ascendancy of the financial elite in the art world of the day. Tournehem was a director of the Indies Company and a Farmer-General and now used the Bâtiments as a power base within the government. A change in personnel brought with it a new ideology to the Academy. The emphasis was now on grand, narrative painting, inspired by seventeenth century classicism. Whereas writers such as Dubos had praised paintings for their overt illusionism, critics no longer found this acceptable. In the

years around 1750, the alethia, the impossibility of forgetting, was replaced in the critical vocabulary by adequatio, the exactitude of illusion. Watteau had made use of the margin between reality and the representation which the following generation were now trying to suppress. The fête galante was accused not merely of lacking seriousness but of being inherently second rate. As a genre, it had relied on a knowing suspension of disbelief. Such mental games were now deemed unacceptable for the highest level of art. La Font de de Saint Yenne, often held to be the first of the salon critics formulated the new attitude: " La peinture, outre l'amusement du plaisir et de l'illusion, doit être encore une école de moeurs" (10).

It is at this point that the Pompadour regime is often accused of failure. Artists such as Boucher continued to win commissions from their circle and both contemporary critics such as La Font and modern art historians have reproached them for lack of seriousness and diminishing French taste. Yet, in the light of our earlier reading of Watteau, we can perhaps suggest an alternative to this rather prim approach. In Watteau and the other fête galante painters, the economy of respect and the operation of the laws of pudeur were at the heart of the genre's appeal. The bourgeoisie, from the towndwelling merchant to the wealthy financier at court, shared the morality of these paintings which were manifestos for distinct gender roles. The criticism of the time focused on the skill with which artists depicted groups within their compositions for this reason. Academic theory came up with a new term to help elucidate this process: papillotage. C-A Coypel, who originated the term in 1721, meant it to convey the way in which the eye flitted from

group to group, from figure to figure, like a butterfly. He described it as: " une élégance de forme, pour ainsi dire incertaine, ondoiyante et semblable à la flamme". But when Diderot looked at Boucher, he could see nothing: " Quel tapage d'objets disparates" (11). The difference between the two forms of criticism is a suitable indication of the change that had taken place.

The Tournehem administration may, then, have attempted to patronise the arts according to the aesthetic and social code they had learned during the preceding order. If this is so, then it was entirely consistent for them to commission Boucher, and call for morality in the arts. For Boucher represented the last home of the galante aesthetic, which was dominated by the morality of gender difference. Yet this morality had no continued interest for the 1750s audience, demanding sterner stuff, and yet uncertain of how to achieve it. Winckelmann, writing in 1756, bemoaned the modern artists' lack of expression:

" A cet égard, nos Artistes se trouvent comme dans un pays désert. Les langues des Sauvages qui n'ont point de termes pour exprimer les idées de reconnaissance, de durée, d'espace ne sont pas plus dépourvues de signes pour rendre les conceptions abstraites que l'est notre peinture moderne." (12)

From this point until the revolution of 1789, French artists found themselves in the unfortunate situation of having an ever larger body of critical response to their work, which was ever more critical of it.

But the distinction so often applied between the frivolous art of the fête galante and the seriousness of Neo-Classicism no longer seems to hold good as an explanation for this change. If it were, then one might expect writers such as La Font to respond favourably to the permanent establishment of the Salon and other

innovations. Instead, criticism grew ever stronger. The Academy which had spent over half a century creating a working aesthetic, seemed unable to respond.

Some recent developments in criticism might help explain this inability to regain the initiative. The economy of respect contained within it an element of control, literally of mastery, whereby men, and more particularly women, were contained into acceptable roles. These roles were not how society 'really was' but how the artists and their patrons would have liked it to be. The paintings did not have as their referent the existing society around them but a widely held series of beliefs as to how it should be. They could therefore be accepted as natural and well-observed. In this sense, the discourse of the fête galante might be seen to have a performative aspect, seeking to generate new meanings. That is to say, in Tania Modelski's phrase: " To be doing something beyond restating already existent ideas and views, wherever these might happen to reside" (12). The term performative has been adopted from the critical debate surrounding Jacques Derrida's response to the linguistic philosophy of J.L. Austin. Performative criticism sees language as transitive and active, symbolised for Austin by the response in the wedding ceremony 'I do'. Austin held that an utterance is judged not by truth or falsity but across the axis of the felicity or infelicity of the remark. Thus, a convention must already exist so that we can judge the speech of others. This apparently closed circle did allow for innovatory acts by their nature as performance. As Austin himself was aware, the example of the wedding ceremony indicates that performative speech is not neutral: " A performative utterance...has existence only as an act of authority."

These terms are all reminiscent of the language used in connection with the economy of respect, established in the early eighteenth century. Both performative utterance and the respectful realism of the Academy depend at root on authority. In this sense, although these discourses move away from a notion of the 'real world' outside language, they are still inherently political- that is, they allow language and communication an effect outside of themselves. These new ideas provide a means for understanding their earlier predecessors. By underlining the performative nature of communicative action, the theatrical origins of the galante visual language is emphasised. Under Louis XV, the fair theatres had enjoyed a golden age of royal approval and popular support which bolstered the pictorial theatre of the fête galante (14). It is noticeable that, in the scenes of Lancret and Pater, the theatre was shown directly without Watteau's ambiguity, a sign of the theatre's increased acceptability in these years. However, that broad popular approval for the theatre came to an end around the middle of the eighteenth century. The most famous example of hostility to the stage came in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Letter to d'Alembert of 1754. For the stern Genevan philosopher, the theatre was condemned by its artificiality. He contrasted the vigour of Ancient Greek athletic games to the modern theatre:

" It was in the midst of this imposing apparatus, so well engineered to elevate and and stir the soul, that actors, animated by the same zeal, would share...such honours as were conferred upon victorious athletes...I am not surprised that, far from abasing them, their métier, exercised in this manner, gave them a pride of courage and noble disinterest that seemed at times to make the actor as lofty as his role. All this notwithstanding, never was Greece, except for Sparta, cited as an example of good morals; and Sparta, which did not tolerate theatre, withheld honours from those who attended it." (15)

So, even in Classical times, the theatre was an incitement to lax morals according to Rousseau. There was little new in what he had written. Rousseau reached back across the early eighteenth century to the traditional condemnation of the theatre by the Church. A visual language based on the theatre could no longer command the consensus of support that had briefly been possible for the galante artists. Although there was an undoubted theatrical element to the Neo-Classical art later in the century, it was never again so explicit as it had been (16).

So, although Tournehem and his circle continued to commission Boucher and other Rococco art, one might say in Austin's terms that it was now an infelicitous language to use. For, now that Condillac had reconceived sight, and Rousseau dismissed the theatre, the new administration in the Academy no longer had any authority behind their respectable realism. In a brief epilogue, one cannot work out all the implications for a critical reading of ten years of cultural history. However, it seems a to offer more profitable means of making sense of these complex interactions than to advance down the straightforward avenue marked out by Crow that is currently dominant in the field. That is :

" To map the expanding public sphere that surrounded French painting in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a sphere that was at once a discursive formation and a site of actual social practice." (17)

From this Modernist perspective, a single answer to the questions of vision and its representation is still possible and has been already achieved in the public art of the eighteenth century. This essay has argued that such singularity of purpose can only be achieved by omitting the contradictions and conflicts, whether theoretical, artistic or political, that repeatedly arose for

early modern French painters.

Instead, one might try and revive the forgotten debates and conflicts, using our own critical language to understand that of the past. As I have sketched out above, there are often surprising similarities to be found and, in this reflexivity of text upon text, a certain microcosm of the postmodern predicament can be found. As Rosalind Krauss has argued:

" It is only now, it could be argued, now that we feel ourselves slammed up against the limit, so that every image comes to us already in a nest of quotation, so that artists everywhere are operating through the terms of reproduction, that this historical recovery is possible. It is only from the vantage of the hyper-real, the simulacrum, that we can experience not just the price but the cost of the formulaic. Would it ever be possible to do that such that we were not ourselves the limit of its conditions of visibility?" (18)

Perhaps in understanding how the already said came to be a cliché, how seeing became believing and why everybody knows what everybody knows, we may yet open a new performance that, through its very self-consciousness, allows us to see the other side of the mountain.

NOTES

1. Florence Ingersoll- Smousse, Jean-Baptiste Pater (Paris, 1921), p.2. References to Pater, unless otherwise attributed, are taken from the introductory essay to this work pp.1-20. Like the other fête galante painters, Pater has not attracted much modern attention.
2. Ibid, p.122 for reproduction.
3. Georges Wildenstein, Lancret (Paris, 1924), p.10. Subsequent references from pp.10-30.
4. See Thomas E. Crow, Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Paris, (Yale University Press, 1985), pp.82-88 for details of the Place Dauphine exhibitions.
5. V. Alvin-Beaumont, Autour de Watteau (Paris, 1932), pp.31-67.
6. F. Ingersoll-Smousse, op. cit., p.11.
7. The important exception of Boucher and his followers is discussed below.
8. Quoted by Harlan Lane, When the Mind Hears: A History of the Deaf (Harmondsworth, 1984), p.83.
9. Crow, op. cit., pp.110-33 provides full details. See also Jean Locquin, La Peinture d' Histoire en France de 1747 à 1785 (Paris, 1912).
10. Quoted in Marian Hobson, The Object of Art (Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.69. See pp. 64-72 for a detailed description of this argument.
11. Ibid, pp.53-55.
12. Ibid, p.72.
13. Tania Modelski, " Some Functions of Feminist Criticism, or The Scandal of the Mute Body", in October 49, (Summer 1989, MIT Press), p.14. Modelski provides an introduction to the ideas of performative criticism pp. 14-24. See also Chapter Seven in

Christopher Norris' Derrida (London, 1987) for a discussion centred on deconstruction rather thn feminism.

14. O.G. Brocket, " The Fair Theatres of Paris in the Eighteenth Century: The Undermining of the Classical Ideal", in M.J. Anderson (ed.), Classical Drama and Its Influence (London, 1965), p.261ff.

15. Quoted in Frederick Brown, Theatre and Revolution, (New York, 1980), p.75-6.

16. See Michel Thévoz, Le Théâtre du Crime: Essai sur la peinture de David (Paris, 1989). Thévoz cites Derrida's views on theatre before discussing the theatricality in David's painting.

17. Crow, op. cit., p. 255.

18. Rosalind Krauss, " The Future of an Illusion", in Ralph Cohen (ed.), The Future of Literary Theory (London, 1989), p.286-7.

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APPENDIX ONE

This appendix examines the operations of the Desarguian perspective in detail. It was based on a trellis system, known as the "petit pied", which divided the base of a picture into equal parts in order to act as the starting point for the perspective, the line "ab" in figure 13. The operation of the perspective was drawn schematically at the top left corner from where all references are taken here. The main drawing represents the perspective in practice) . These feet usually measured twelve inches, as one might expect. The height of the eyes was marked in (line "fe") as well as the exact situation of the eye (the point "g"). Lines were taken from here to the corners of the picture (lines "ga" & "gb") as well as a perpendicular to the base (line "gc"). A rectangle was thus formed with its corners being "afgc". Next, the diagonals of this rectangle were marked in and at the point of their intersection, a parallel line to the base was drawn in. A new rectangle was formed with corners marked "hfgt". The new diagonal "tf" has an intersection with the original diagonal "ag" and from this intersection, a new parallel was drawn creating a new rectangle and so on. Desargues only marked in three lines on his scale, and it is clear that were all twelve to be marked in (thus fitting nine lines in the space "ufgp"), the scale would be ridiculously confused. Desargues referred to these horizontal divisions as the: "ECHELLE des ELOIGNEMENS, dira qui voudra d'optique".

In addition, to complete the perspective, lines were taken from the viewpoint "g" to all the divisions on the base which produced the: " ECHELLE des MESURES, dira qui voudra Géométrique". This was a mathematical representation of the compass of proportion, a tool used by artisans. It was shaped

like an ordinary compass but had a scale marked in down each arm. Desargues had thus found a way to give artisanal practice a theoretical expression. This practical origin in masonry might also explain why the perspective seems so impractical on the small scale. The combined scale was ready for use and can be seen marked in within the larger figure. Desargues described its use as follows:

" Avec l'échelle des éloignemens on trouve les places au tableau des apparences de chaque point remarquable du plan de l'assiette du sujet, et du sujet même.

Et avec l'échelle des mesures on trouve les diverses mesures de chacune des lignes du sujet qui sont parallèles (sic) au tableau, suivant leurs divers éloignemens au regard du tableau même, et l'angle sous lequel elles sont veues."

That is to say, the horizontal lines on the scale marked receding distances equivalent to that of the base at each point. Thus, in this example, as the base is twenty-four feet long, the line HD represents a distance twenty-four feet behind the intersection in the visual pyramid made by the picture. The line QN is forty-eight feet behind and so on. Intermediate distances were dealt with by taking a line to the relevant point on the base (a line seventeen feet behind AC was found by taking a line from F to the seventeen mark on AC. Where this line crossed AG was the seventeen foot line). To find one particular point on this line, you marked a line from G to the point along AB corresponding to its distance from the viewpoint. Where these two lines intersected, you had the precise point in Desarguanian perspective.

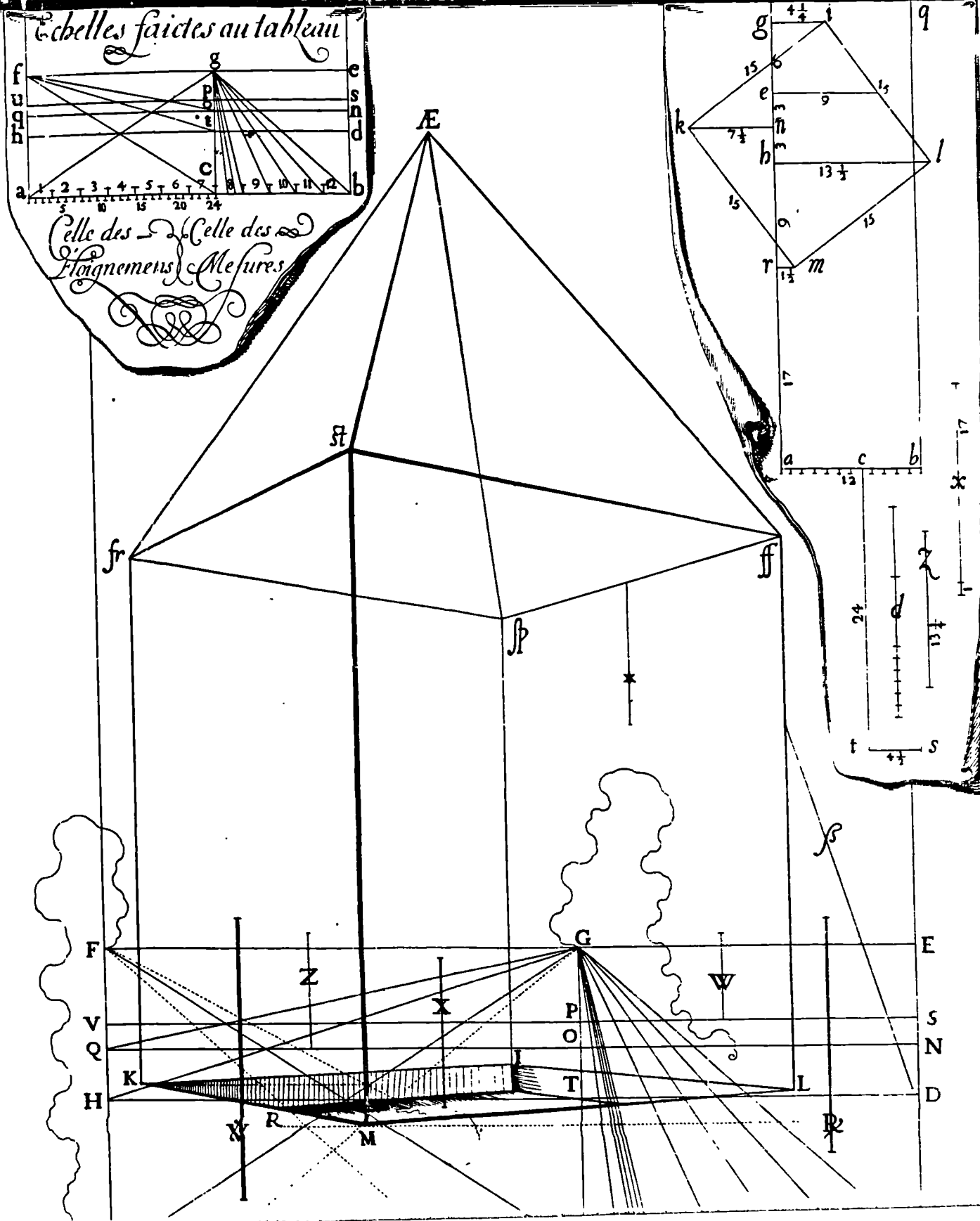
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I have attached the full text of the 1636 broadsheet by Desargues for those who wish to follow his argument in detail.

*Exemple de l'usage des manieres uniuerselles du S.^r G.D.
Touchant la pratique de la Perspective, Sans employer aucun tiers point. de
distance ou d'autre nature. qui soit hors du champ de l'Ouuerage.*



EXEMPLE DE L'VNE DES MANIERES
 VNIVERSELLES DV S. G. D. L. TOVCHANT
 LA PRATIQUE DE LA PERSPECTIVE SANS EMPLOIER
 AUCVN TIERS POINT, DE DISTANCE NY D'AVTRE
 nature, qui soit hors du champ de l'ouurage.



OMME cét Exemple d'une maniere uniuerſelle de pratiquer la perspective ſans employer aucun tiers point, de diſtance ou d'autre nature, qui ſoit hors du champ de l'ouurage, ſe manifeſte en langue Françoisſe, auſſi les meſures y ſont de l'uſage de la France.

Les Mots PERSPECTIVE, APARENCE, REPRESENTATION, & PORTRAIT, y ſont chacun le nom d'une même choſe.

Les Mots, EXTREMITÉZ, BORDS, COSTEZ & CONTOVR, d'une figure y ſont auſſi chacun le nom d'une même choſe.

Et les Mots, REPRESENTER, PORTRAITRE, TROUVER L'APARENCE, FAIRE ou METTRE en PERSPECTIVE y ſont employez en même ſignification l'un que l'autre.

Les Mots à NIVEAV, de NIVEAV, PARALEL à L'HORISON, y ſignifient auſſi chacun une même choſe.

Les Mots à PLOMB, PERPENDICVLAIRE à L'HORISON, & QVARREMENT à L'HORISON y ſignifient auſſi chacun une même choſe.

Et les Mots QVARREMENT, à L'EQUIERE, à DROITS ANGLES, & PERPENDICVLAIREMENT y ſignifient encor en general une même choſe l'un que l'autre.

Ce qu'on ſe propoſe à pourtraire y à nom SVIET.

Ce qu'aucuns nomment plan geometral, autres plan de terre, autres la plante du ſujet, y à nom ASSIETE du SVIET.

Ce qu'aucuns nomment la transparence, autres la ſeccion, autres d'un autre nom, à ſçauoir la ſurface de la choſe en laquelle on fait une perspective ſ'y nomme TABLEAV, deuant comme apres l'ouurage acheué.

L'assiète du ſujet, & le tableau dont il eſt icy parlé ſont en des ſurfaces plates, c'eſt à dire qu'il n'eſt icy parlé que des tableaux plats, & des aſſietes de ſujet plates, leſquelles aſſietes & tableaux ſont conſiderez comme aians deux faces chacun.

La face du tableau qui ſe trouue expoſée à l'œil ſ'y nomme le DEVANT du TABLEAV comme ſon autre face laquelle n'eſt pas expoſée à l'œil, ſ'y nomme le DERRIERE du TABLEAV.

Quand l'aſſiète du ſujet eſt eſtendue à Niveau, celle de ſes faces qui ſe trouue tournée du coſté du Ciel, y à non le DESSVS de L'ASSIETE du SVIET, comme l'autre face de la meſme aſſiète qui ſe trouue tournée

du côté de la terre y à nom le **DESSOVS de L'ASSIETE du SVIET.**

L'étendue ou la surface plate & indéterminée, en laquelle est figurée l'assiette du sujet s'y nomme **PLAN de L'ASSIETE du SVIET.**

L'étendue plate & indéterminée aussi, dans laquelle est le tableau s'y nomme le **PLAN du TABLEAU.**

Toutes les lignes y sont entendues droites.

En une seule & même stampe, & pour ce même & seul exemple il y a trois figures séparées & cotées de Caractères d'un même nom, mais de forme différente en chacune de ces figures.

Les Caractères de renvoi sont de la même forme en l'impression, qu'en celle de ces trois figures à laquelle se rapporte le discours en chaque endroit.

Quand en l'impression il y a pour renvoi plus d'une fois en suite des Caractères de même nom; mais de forme différente entr'eux, cela signifie que le discours en cet endroit là, s'adresse également à chacune des figures ou les semblables Caractères sont estampez.

Quand les deux bouts d'une ligne en l'une de ces figures sont cotés de Caractères de même nom que les deux bouts aussi d'une ligne en une autre de ces figures, ces deux lignes ainsi cotées ont de la correspondance entre elles, & sont l'une en sa figure & en son espèce, la même chose que l'autre en sa figure & en son espèce.

En cet Art il est supposé qu'un seul œil voit d'une même œillade le sujet avec son assiette & le tableau, disposez l'un au drêt de l'autre, comme que ce soit: il n'importe si c'est par Emission de rayons visuels, ou par la reception des espèces émancées du sujet, ny de quel endroit, ou lequel des deux il voit devant ou derriere l'autre, moienant qu'il les voie tous deux facilement d'une même œillade.

Il est encore supposé que celui qui pratique cet Art, entend la façon & l'usage de l'échelle à faire une assiette du sujet avec son élévation; & dans cet exemple il est supposé qu'il entend qu'elle chose c'est qu'on nomme communement la perspective.

Et par cette manière icy de la pratiquer aiant l'assiette & les élévations nécessaires d'un sujet avec les intervalles convenables tracés en telle grandeur que ce soit, ou seulement leur route & leurs mesures écrites en un devis, & la disposition des plans de l'assiette du sujet & du tableau cogneus; avec la règle & le compas communs on trouve & fait au premier coup facilement le trait de la perspective d'un tel sujet, en ce tableau de telle grandeur qu'il puisse être, sans ayde aucune de point qui soit hors de son étendue en telle distance & de telle façon, que le sujet son assiette & le tableau soient disposez entre eux & devant l'œil.

Dont les règles générales s'expriment en autre langage, enuelopent diverses manières universelles de pratique, s'appliquent à nombre de cas & de figures dissemblables, & se demonstrent avec deux seules propositions manifestes &

familieres à ceux qui sont disposez à les concevoir.

Mais quand à present, & pour ceux qui sçauent seulement executer les anciennes régles de la pratique de l'art, cét exemple simple en langage, & de sujet commun à ces régles anciennes, est de pure pratique.

Où pour circonstances de remarque on commence par trois especes de preparations.

L'une qui regarde le sujet & se fait au plan de son assiete, ou bien autre part.

Les deux autres concernent l'aparence du sujet, & sont faites communement au tableau même.

Le sujet en cét exemple est une cage bastie simplement de lignes, quarrée & d'égale grosseur iusqu'à certain endrét depuis lequel elle aboutit en pointe massiue, à la maniere d'un bastiment couuert en pavillon, assiz en raze campagne, élevé sur terre à plomb iusqu'au toit, creuzé dans œuvre plus bas que le niueau du terrain d'alentour, avec les mesures de quelques lignes debout & penchantes en diuers endréts hors & dans cette cage dans terre, sus terre, & suspenduës hors terre, chacune paralelle au tableau qui pend à plomb.

Au haut de la Stampe à main droite.

La figure quarrée, *m, l, i, k*, de telle étendue qu'elle se rencontre, est l'assiete de cette cage, laquelle assiete est icy posée de niueau.

La ligne, *x*, est la hauteur des éléuations, pieds dréts, ou montans de la même cage, entendus posez à plomb à son assiete un à chacun des quatre coins du quarré, *m, l, i, k*.

La ligne, *d*, est la longueur de trois thoises de l'échelle, à laquelle ont esté mesurez les bords de l'assiete de cette cage, & ses éléuations, ici nommée **ESCHELLE** du SVIET.

La ligne, *t s*, est la mesure de la hauteur perpendiculaire de l'œil au dessus du plan de l'assiete du sujet, laquelle hauteur d'œil rencontre ce plan au point, *t*.

Par le même plan de cette assiete du sujet, à sçauoir à l'endrét auquel est entendu que le plan du tableau le rencontre est menée une ligne, *a b*, nommée **LIGNE** du PLAN du TABLEAU, de façon qu'ici l'œil voit le tableau deuant le sujet, ou bien l'œil voit le sujet derriere le tableau.

La ligne, *t c*, est la distance perpendiculaire du pied de l'œil au tableau, c'est à dire, la distance perpendiculaire de l'œil au même tableau.

Par un des points, *a*, ou, *b*, de cette ligne, *a b*, comme ici par le point, *a*, dans le même plan, & de la part de l'assiete du sujet est menée une ligne indeterminée, *a g*, paralelle à la ligne, *t c*.

Puis de chacun des points remarquables en l'assiete du sujet ici des quatre coins, & du milieu de l'un des côtez du quarré, *m, l, i, k*, sont menées iusqu'à cette ligne, *a g*, des lignes paralelles à la ligne, *a b*, comme les lignes, *m r, l h, k n, e i*, & *i g*.

Par l'autre point, b , de la même ligne, $a b$, est menée la ligne encore indéterminée, $b q$, parallèle aux lignes, $a g$, $t c$.

La longueur de chacune de ces lignes ou piece remarquable d'icelles, est mesurée avec l'échelle du sujet, d , & leur mesure est retenue en memoire, ou pour memorial est écrite sur elle, ou en un deuis.

Ainsi les nombres 15. écrits aupres des bords du quarré, m , l , i , k , denotent que chacun des côtes de cette figure a quinze pieds de long.

Et les nombres 1, 17, écrits aupres de la ligne des élévations, x , denotent que chacune des élévations du sujet a dix-huit pieds de long, à sçavoir dix-sept pieds hors terre, & un pied dans terre.

Ainsi le nombre 12. écrit aupres de la ligne, $a b$, denote qu'en cet exemple, cette ligne a douze pied de long.

Ainsi le nombre 17. denote que la piece de la ligne, $a g$, contenuë entre les lignes, $r m$, & $a b$, se rencontre auoir dix-sept pieds de longueur, & par ce moien, ou selon cette facon de mesurer, ici dauanture le sujet est derriere le tableau a dix-sept pieds loin de lui, ce qui veut dire encore qu'ici dauanture le tableau se rencontre deuant le sujet a dix-sept pieds loin de lui.

Semblablement le nombre $4\frac{1}{2}$ de la ligne, $s t$, monstre qu'ici l'œil est élevé quatre pieds & demi de hauteur perpendiculaire au dessus du plan de l'assiete du sujet.

De même le nombre 24. signifie qu'ici le pied de l'œil, ou l'œil même, est éloigné quarrément à vingt-quatre pieds loin du tableau deuant lui.

De même le nombre $13\frac{1}{2}$ denote que la ligne, $l h$, a treize pieds & demi de long.

De même l'un des nombres 9. denote que la piece de la ligne, $a g$, contenuë entre les lignes, $r m$, $l h$, a neuf pieds de long.

Tout de même des nombres 3. comme encore de chacun des autres semblables. Et voila celle des trois preparacions qui regarde le sujet, acheuée.

Maintenant, la Stampe entiere est comme une planche de bois, une muraille, ou semblable chose accommodée & preparée à faire un tableau de telle étendue qu'il puisse estre, entendu pendant à plomb sur le plan de l'assiete du sujet, auquel plan il touche comme en la ligne, $a b$, dans lequel tableau suppose que l'on se propose à représenter cette cage par une figure en perspective, de grandeur proportionnée à celle du tableau, sans aide pour cela d'aucun point qui soit hors de lui, ny faire premierement ailleurs une autre perspective de largeur égale à la ligne, $a b$, pour apres la contretirer dans ce tableau proportionnellement, au moien du treillis ou du petit pied.

Au bas de la Stampe.

A cette fin est menée la ligne, $A B$, de niveau si longue, qu'il est possible au bas du tableau correspondante à la ligne, $a b$.

De suite aux bouts, A , & B , d'une même part de cette ligne, $A B$, sont menées.

menées deux autres lignes, AF , & BE , parallèles entr'elles, & communément comme ici perpendiculaires à cette ligne, AB .

Puis cette ligne, AB , est diuisée en autant de parties égales, que la ligne, ab , contient de pieds.

Ici la ligne, ab , contient douze pieds de long, partant la ligne, AB , est diuisée en douze parties égales marquées au dessus d'elle, qui sont une échelle d'autant de pieds, l'un desquels ici le septième, sa moitié, ou son quart est sous-diuisé en ses pouces, & lignes s'il en est besoin.

D'abondant est considérée la hauteur de l'œil au dessus du plan de l'assiette du sujet, laquelle hauteur d'œil est ici de quatre pieds & demi, & cette mesure de quatre pieds & demi, est lors prise des pieds de l'échelle ainsi faite en la ligne, AB , & portée sur chacune des deux lignes, AF , & BE , sçavoir d' A en F , & de B , en E , puis est menée la ligne, FE , parallèle par ce moyen à la ligne, AB .

Davantage en cette ligne, FE , est marqué le point au drét duquel on entend que l'œil est au bout de sa distance, pointé devant le tableau, comme ici le point, G , au drét duquel on entend que l'œil est vingt-quatre pieds loin à l'équiere devant le tableau.

Par ce point, G , l'une suite est menée la ligne, GC , parallèle à chacune des lignes, AF , & BE , sçavoir ici quarrement à la ligne, AB , de façon que l'espace, $AFEB$, se trouue diuisé d'auenture en deux autres espaces, dont les bords oposez sont en chacun, des lignes parallèles entr'elles, sçavoir ici les espaces, $GCAF$, & $GCBE$.

Lors, ou dans tout l'espace, $ABEF$, ou bien dans l'un ou dans l'autre des deux moindres espaces, $GCAF$, & $GCBE$, comme ici dans l'espace, $GCAF$, sont menées les deux lignes, AG , & CF .

Par le point auquel ces deux lignes, AG , & CF , se rencontrent, est menée la ligne, HD , parallèle à la ligne, AB , laquelle ligne, HD , rencontre la ligne, BE , au point, D , la ligne, GC , au point, T , & la ligne, AF , au point, H .

Puis de l'un ou de l'autre des points, H , ou, T , est menée une ligne dans le même espace, $GCAF$, à celui des points, G , ou, F , qui lui est oposé diagonalement.

Si cette ligne est menée comme au bas de la Stampe du point, G , tendant au point, H , c'est la ligne, GH .

Que si cette ligne est menée comme au haut de la Stampe à main gauche, du point, F , tendant au point, T , c'est la ligne, FT .

Et supposé que par les points, F , & T , l'on ait mené la ligne, FT , lors par le point auquel cette ligne, FT , rencontre la ligne, ag , est menée la ligne, nq , parallèle à ligne, ab .

Puis par le point auquel cette ligne, nq , rencontre la ligne, cg , icy le point, o , & par le point, F , est menée la ligne, fo .

Puis par le point auquel cette ligne, $f o$, rencontre la ligne, $a g$, est menée la ligne, $s u$, parallèle à la ligne, $a b$.

Et semblable operation est continuée autant de fois qu'il en est besoin.

Supposé maintenant qu'on ait pratiqué cette operation au moien des lignes, $c r$ & $a f$, les lignes, $n q$ & $s v$, sont toujours au même endrêt du tableau qu'elles seroient aiant esté menées au moien des lignes, $a g$, & $c g$.

Finalement la piece de la ligne, $a b$, $a b$, laquelle se rencontre du côté de l'espace auquel on a fait une semblable operation, comme ici la piece, $a c$, $a c$, est diuisée en autant de parties égales qu'en contient la distance de l'œil au tableau.

Ici la distance de l'œil au tableau contient vingt-quatre pieds de longueur, partant cette piece, $a c$, $a c$, de la ligne, $a b$, $a b$, est diuisée en vingt-quatre parties égales marquées sous elle, qui sont comme autant de pieds, l'un desquels sa moitié ou son quart peut au besoin être encore sous-diuisé en ses pouces & lignes.

Lors est acheué. l'une des deux preparations qui concernent la perspective entreprise, laquelle preparation forme une figure ici nommée ECHELLE des ELOIGNEMENTS, dira qui voudra d'optique ou autrement.

Davantage, de tel point que ce soit commode pour l'ouvrage, en la ligne, $a b$, $a b$, comme ici du point, G, g , sont menées des lignes aux points de la premiere diuision en douze pieds égaux de la ligne entiere, $a b$, $a b$.

Dans cet exemple ces lignes sont menées du point, G, g , seulement aux points de cette diuision, qui sont en la piece de cette ligne, $a b$, $a b$, qui se rencontre du côté de l'espace, $G C B F$, $g c b f$, laquelle est ici la piece, $b c$, $b c$, d'autant qu'il suffit de cela, voire de moindre nombre: Et de même du point, G, g , sont menées des lignes aux points de la sous-diuison de l'un de ces douze pieds, ici le septième, sa moitié ou son quart en ses pouces.

Lors est acheuée l'autre des deux preparations qui concernent la perspective entreprise, laquelle preparation forme une figure en triangle, $G C B$, $g c b$, ici nommée ECHELLE des MESURES, dira qui voudra Geometrique ou autrement, & qui dans cette maniere de pratiquer la perspective, est à l'ouurier un outil de même usage que le compas de proportion.

Ces deux échelles des éloignemens & des mesures pour la perspective, peuvent au besoin être faites ailleurs, & disposées autrement au tableau même en nombre comme innombrable, de manieres diferentes qui reniennent toutes à même chose.

Et au moien du raport ou de la correspondance qu'il y a de l'une de ces deux échelles à l'autre, on fait ce que l'on desire en perspective.

Car avec l'échelle des éloignemens on trouue les places au tableau des apparences de chaque point remarquable du plan de l'assiete du sujet, & du sujet même.

Et avec l'échelle des mesures on trouue les diuerses mesures de chacune des

lignes du sujet qui sont parallèles au tableau, suivant leurs diuers éloignemens au regard du tableau même, & l'angle sous lequel elles sont venues.

Maintenant, les lignes, $AB, ab, \& a b$, considérées comme une seule & même ligne, il auient de ces preparations que l'aparence de la ligne, ag , est en la ligne, AG, ag , & que l'aparence de la ligne, bq , est en la ligne, BG, bg .

Dauantage, il auient que la ligne, AG, ag , se trouue retranchée du côté du bout, G, g , premierement en sa moitié, puis en sa troisième, puis en sa quatrième partie, & ainsi de suite en autant de parties que l'on continue de fois l'operation qui fait l'échelle des éloignemens.

De plus, il auient que le point du premier de ces retranchemens de la ligne, AG, ag , qui est le point auquel la ligne, HD, hd , la rencontre, est l'aparence d'un point en la ligne, ag , reculé 24. pieds derriere le tableau, scauoir aussi loin du tableau derriere lui, que l'œil est éloigné du même tableau deuant lui.

Et que le point du deuxième de ces retranchemens de la ligne, AG, ag , qui est celui auquel la ligne, NQ, nq , la rencontre, est l'aparence d'un autre point en la ligne, ag , reculé 48. pieds derriere le tableau, scauoir deux fois aussi loin du tableau derriere lui, que l'œil est éloigné du même tableau deuant lui.

Et que le point du troisième de ces retranchemens de la ligne, AG, ag , qui est celui auquel la ligne, sv, su , la rencontre est l'aparence d'un autre point de la ligne, ag , reculé 72. pieds derriere le tableau, scauoir trois fois aussi loin du tableau derriere lui, que l'œil est éloigné du même tableau deuant lui.

Et semblablement des autres semblables lignes quand on continue plus de fois l'operation qui fait l'échelle des éloignemens.

D'abondant, il auient que les mêmes lignes de l'échelle des mesures qui venans du point, G, g , aux points de la premiere diuision en 12. pieds de la ligne, AB, ab , marquent & diuisent cinq de ces 12. pieds en la piece, BC, bc , de cette ligne, AB, ab , les mêmes lignes marquent & diuisent les pieces qu'elles rencontrent des lignes, HD, hd, NQ, nq, sv, su , & de leurs parallèles chacune de même en cinq pieds égaux entr'eux, qui sont autant d'échelles diferentes pour les diuerses mesures des aparences des lignes du sujet, parallèles au tableau, & situées à diuers éloignemens au regard du tableau même.

Il auient finalement de ces preparations, que la ligne, AB, ab , contenant 12. pieds de long, la ligne, HD, hd , en contient 24. la ligne, NQ, nq , 36. & la ligne, sv, su , 48. cét à scauoir chacune de ceux que l'échelle des mesures marque en la piece qu'elle en rencontre.

Desquelles choses il est euident que la ligne, HD , est l'aparence d'une ligne du plan de l'assiete du sujet, parallèle à la ligne, ab , & reculée 24. pieds

derriere le tableau. Mais le point, *m*, n'est reculé que 17. pieds derriere le tableau même, donc ce point, *m*, est en une ligne, comme, *rm*, parallele à la ligne, *ab*, & reculée 7. pieds moins du tableau derriere lui, que n'en est reculée celle que la ligne, *hd*, represente.

L'aparence de ce point, *m*, est donc trouuée en cette façon.

Premierement, avec l'échelle des éloignemens est trouué un point en la ligne, *ag*, qui soit l'aparence d'un point en la ligne, *ag*, reculé 17. pieds loin du tableau, c'est à dire, est premierement trouuée l'aparence du point, *r*, & pour ce faire, du point, *r*, est menée une ligne au point qui marque la 17^e, & la separe d'avec la 18^e des 24. parties égales de la ligne, *ac*, & le point auquel cette ligne ainsi menée rencontre la ligne, *ag*, ici le point, *r*, est l'aparence d'un point en la ligne, *ag*, reculé 17. pieds loin du tableau, c'est à dire, que le point, *r*, est l'aparence du point, *r*, puis par le point, *r*, est menée la ligne, *rm*, parallele à la ligne, *ab*, laquelle ligne, *rm*, est l'aparence de la ligne, *rm*, en laquelle est le point, *m*, partant l'aparence du point, *m*, est en cette ligne, *rm*.

Et dautant que le point, *m*, est en la ligne, *rm*, à dréte de la ligne, *ag*, un pied & demi loin du point, *r*, la ligne, *rm*, alongée qu'elle trauersé l'échelle des mesures, lors avec un compas commun est prise la longueur d'un pied & demi, de ceux que l'échelle des mesures marque en cette ligne, *rm*, & le compas ouuert de cette mesure, une de ses iambes est ajustée au point, *r*, & son autre iambe est tournée à dréte de la ligne, *ag*, & arrestée sur la même ligne, *rm*, & comme au point, *m*, lequel est l'aparence du point, *m*.

L'aparence du point, *k*, est trouuée en la façon qui suit.

Consideré que la ligne, *ar*, à 17. pieds de long, la ligne, *rh*, en à 9. & la ligne, *hn*, en à 3. aiant aiousté ces trois nombres 17, 9, & 3, leur somme est 29. de façon que ce point, *k*, se rencontre en une ligne parallele à la ligne, *ab*, & reculée 29. pieds loin du tableau derriere lui, scauoir est cinq pieds dauantage loin que n'en est reculée celle que la ligne, *hd*, represente.

En ce cas, Premierement avec l'échelle des éloignemens est trouuée en la ligne, *ag*, l'aparence d'un point en la ligne, *ag*, reculé 29. pieds loin du tableau, c'est à dire, cinq pieds dauantage loin que n'en est reculée la ligne que la ligne, *hd*, represente; & pour ce faire, du point, *g*, est menée une ligne au point qui marque la 5^e & la separe d'avec la 6^e des 24. parties égales de la ligne, *ac*. Par le point auquel la ligne ainsi menée rencontre la ligne, *hd*, est menée une autre ligne au point, *r*, & le point auquel cette derniere ligne rencontre la ligne, *ag*, est l'aparence du point, *n*, puis par cette aparence du point, *n*, est menée une ligne parallele à la ligne, *ab*, laquelle est l'aparence de la ligne, *nk*, en laquelle est le point, *k*, partant l'aparence du point, *k*, est en cette derniere ligne.

Et dautant que le point, *k*, est en la ligne, *nk*, à gauche de la ligne, *ag*, sept pieds & demi loin du point, *n*, aiant alongé la ligne derniere menée au tableau

tableau parallele à la ligne, AB , c'est à dire celle qui est l'aparence de la ligne kn , afin qu'elle traaverse l'échelle des mesures ; lors avec un compas commun sont pris 7. pieds & demi de ceux que l'échelle des mesures y marque, & le compas ouuert de cette mesure, une de ses iambes est aiustée à l'aparence du point, n , & son autre iambe tournée à gauche de la ligne, AG , & arrestée sur la même ligne ainsi dernière menée, & comme au point, k , lequel par ce moien est l'aparence du point, k .

Si l'on vouloit auoir en la ligne, AG , l'aparence d'un point en la ligne, ag , reculé 53. pieds loin derriere le tableau, sçauoir 5. pieds dauantage loin que n'en est reculée la ligne que represente la ligne, NQ . En ce cas aiant mené la ligne du point, c , au point qui marque la 5, & la separe d'avec la 6^e des 24. parties égales de la ligne, AC , lors du point auquel cette ligne ainsi menée rencontre la ligne, NQ , l'on meneroit une ligne au point, F , laquelle rencontreroit la ligne, AG , en un point lequel est l'aparence d'un point en la ligne, ag , reculé 5. pieds dauantage loin du tableau que n'en est reculée la ligne, que la ligne, NQ , represente, & ainsi des semblables.

Les points, L , & I , aparences des points, l , & i , sont trouués en la même façon.

Après sont menées conuenablement de point en point les lignes, ML , MK , KI , & LI , qui sont les aparences chacune de sa correspondante des côtez, ml , mk , ki , & li , du quarre, m , l , i , k .

Maintenant pour trouuer l'aparence d'un point eleué 17. pieds à plomb au dessus du point, m . Par le point, M , est menée de la part de la ligne, FE , une ligne, Mst , perpendiculaire à la ligne, AB , & cette ligne, Mst , est faite égale à 17. des pieds que l'échelle des mesures marque en la ligne, MR , ainsi la ligne, Mst , est l'aparence de l'éléuation du sujet, haute de 17. pieds à plomb sur le point, m .

Les lignes, Lff , Kfr , & Isp , aparences des éléuations du sujet sur les autres points, l , k , i , de son assiete quarrée, m , l , i , k , & longues aussi chacune de 17. pieds, sont trouuées de même façon que l'aparence, Mst , bien entendu que les 17. pieds dont chacune de ces aparences est longue, sont de ceux que l'échelle des mesures marque en la ligne menée par son bout d'embas parallele à la ligne, AB .

Pour auoir les aparences des abaissemens du sujet un pied sous les mêmes points, m , l , i , k , & par les mêmes lignes des éléuations, on alonge par embas les aparences de ces éléuations chacune un pied de long de sa mesure propre & particuliere ; & par les points bas du pied dont ces aparences là sont alongées, on mène des lignes conuenables desquelles on marque ce que le dehors œuvre en l'assiete du sujet, n'empesche pas d'être veu comme le montre la figure du bas de la Stampe.

Dabondant la ligne, Z , longue de 13. pieds un quart, étant la mesure à plomb de c , dont le point auquel aboutissent les arrières du couuert, est éléué

deffus le poinct milieu de l'assiete du sujet plus haut que chacune de ses encoignures, les aparences de ces arétiers sont trouuées en la même façon.

Car aiant au moien ci-deffus trouué le poinct, \mathbf{x} , aparence du poinct auquel aboutissent les arétiers au feste du sujet, lors de chacun des poincts hauts des aparences des éléuatiens des encoignures ici des poincts, \mathbf{st} , \mathbf{ff} , \mathbf{fr} , $\mathbf{\&}$ $\mathbf{\beta}$, sont menées à ce poinct, \mathbf{x} , les lignes, \mathbf{st} \mathbf{x} , \mathbf{ff} \mathbf{x} , \mathbf{fr} \mathbf{x} , $\mathbf{\&}$ $\mathbf{\beta}$ \mathbf{x} , lesquelles sont les aparences chacune de sa corespondante des lignes de ces arétiers.

Les lignes, \mathbf{N} , \mathbf{z} , \mathbf{W} , $\mathbf{\&}$ \mathbf{R} , sont les mesures des hauteurs de quelques personnes debout en diuers endrés du plan de l'assiete du sujet.

La ligne, \mathbf{x} , est la mesure de la hauteur d'une personne debout sur le fonds du creux de la cage, lequel fonds est supposé de niveau comme celui d'un bassin de fontaine.

La ligne, $\mathbf{\beta}$, est l'aparence d'une ligne de 12. pieds de long, qui pose d'un bout sur le plan de l'assiete du sujet en la ligne alongée, \mathbf{h} \mathbf{l} , 4. pieds 9, poudes loin du poinct, \mathbf{l} , $\mathbf{\&}$ apuie de l'autre bout au montant que la ligne, \mathbf{l} \mathbf{ff} , represente.

La ligne, $\mathbf{\star}$, est l'aparence d'une ligne de 5. pieds de long, suspendue ou pendante à plomb du milieu de la cime de l'un des flancs du sujet.

Ces aparences là, celles de chacun des membres des ornemens de l'architecture, celles de la cheute des ombres, $\mathbf{\&}$ generalement les aparences de toute chose telle que elle puisse estre de nature à représenter en portraiture, moieonnant les intervalles conuenables conceüs sont ainsi trouuez en un tableau plat de quelque façon $\mathbf{\&}$ biais qu'il soit disposé, pendant à plomb en plat fonds, ou penchant d'un ou d'autre côté deuant l'œil, soit que le poinct qu'on nomme à l'ordinaire poinct de veüe, se rencontre dans ce tableau, soit qu'il en soit hors; mais en chacune de ces diferentes circonstances, il y a matiere de nombre d'exemples diferens comme de plusieurs figures: outre que l'intelligence de cette maniere de faire les tableaux plats, conduit aisément au moien de faire les tableaux en toute autre espee de surface, $\mathbf{\&}$ des filets atachez aux poincts \mathbf{f} $\mathbf{\&}$ \mathbf{g} , releuent l'ouurier de beaucoup de lignes fausses.

Il y a règle aussi de la place du fort $\mathbf{\&}$ du féble coulory, dont la demonstration est mêlée en partie de Geometrie, en partie de Phisique, $\mathbf{\&}$ ne se trouue en France encore expliquée en aucun liure public.

Pour les diuers rencontres en cet art, il y a des moiens particuliers de les expédier chacun aisément à la façon de cet exemple $\mathbf{\&}$ autrement, ou bien avec des instrumens fondés en demonstration Geometrique, desquels il y a diuerses façons.

Les uns pour copier diligemment tout sujet plat en plus petit, égal, ou plus grand, $\mathbf{\&}$ le métre de même en perspective avec ses éléuatiens, de quelque façon, biais $\mathbf{\&}$ distance que ce soit, aussi promptement qu'on l'auroit copié.

Les autres pour desiner exactement le sujet en le voiant par une figure plus petite, égale, ou plus grande, $\mathbf{\&}$ semblablement posée que celle qui vien-

droit au plan même auquel l'instrument est appliqué, de quels instrumens, ou de l'un d'eux, a été fait à Rome un traité deux ans environ apres le privilege des presentes scellé en France, lequel traité de Rome ne contient pas le moïen d'avoir la figure d'aparence, égale & disposée comme celle qui se fait au même plan auquel l'instrument est appliqué.

Il y a de même des manieres uniuerselles & démontrées, touchant la pratique du trait pour la coupe des pierres en l'Architecture, avec les preuues pour conétre si l'on a procedé bien exactement à l'execution.

Il y a de suite des manieres uniuerselles aussi démontrées pour tracer les quadrans solaires avec la règle, le compas, le plomb & l'equiere communs, en toutes les surfaces plates généralement, ou l'esieu du monde est conuenablement appliqué, de quelque sens ou biais qu'elles soient étendues.



En ce reste de place les contemplatifs auront quelques propositions lesquelles peuuent être enoncées autrement pour diuerses matieres, mais elles sont accomodées ici pour la perspective, & la demonstration en est assez intelligible sans figure, puis que toutes les lignes y sont encore entendues drées, & les tableaux toujours plats. Il est vrai qu'en fin c'est une fourmilierie de grandes propositions, abondante en lieux.

Aiant imaginé qu'au centre immobile de l'œil passe une ligne indeterminée & mobile ailleurs de son long en tous sens, une telle ligne est ici nommée **LIGNE DE L'OEIL**, laquelle au besoin est menée parallele à telle autre ligne que ce soit.

Quand le sujet est un point, & que des points de sujet & de l'œil, sont menées iusqu'au tableau des lignes paralleles entre elles, l'aparence du sujet est en la ligne menée par les points ausquels ces paralleles rencontrent le tableau, d'autant que ces paralleles, & cette ligne ainsi menée au tableau, sont en un même plan entr'elles.

Quand le sujet est des lignes, elles sont, ou bien paralleles, ou bien inclinées entr'elles.

Quand des lignes sujet sont paralleles entr'elles, la ligne de l'œil menée parallele à icelles, est ou bien parallele, ou bien non parallele au tableau, mais toujours chacune de ces lignes sujet, est en un même plan avec cette ligne de l'œil, en laquelle tous ces plans s'entre-coupent ainsi qu'en leur commun esieu.

Quand des lignes sujet sont paralleles entr'elles, & que la ligne de l'œil menée parallele à icelles est parallele au tableau, les aparences de ces lignes sujet sont des lignes paralleles entr'elles, aux lignes sujet, & à la ligne de l'œil, à cause que chacune de ces lignes sujet est en un même plan avec cette ligne de l'œil, en laquelle tous ces plans s'entre-coupent ainsi qu'en leur commun esieu, & que tous ces plans sont coupez d'un autre même plan le tableau.

Quand des lignes sujet sont paralelles entr'elles, & que la ligne de l'œil menée paralelle à icelles n'est pas paralelle au tableau; les apparences de ces lignes sujet, sont des lignes qui tendent toutes au point où cette ligne de l'œil rencontre le tableau, d'autant que chacune de ces lignes sujet est en un même plan avec cette ligne de l'œil, en laquelle tous ces plans s'entre-coupent ainsi qu'en leur commun esieu, & que tous ces plans sont coupez d'un autre même plan le tableau.

Quand des lignes sujet inclinées entr'elles tendent toutes à un point, la ligne de l'œil menée à ce point est, ou bien paralelle, ou bien non paralelle au tableau, mais toujours chacune de ces lignes sujet est en un même plan avec cette ligne de l'œil, en laquelle tous ces plans s'entre-coupent ainsi qu'en leur commun esieu.

Quand des lignes sujet inclinées entr'elles tendent toutes à un point, auquel aiant mené la ligne de l'œil elle est paralelle au tableau; les apparences de ces lignes sujet sont des lignes paralelles entr'elles, & à la ligne de l'œil à cause que chacune de ces lignes sujet est en un même plan avec cette ligne de l'œil, en laquelle tous ces plans s'entre-coupent ainsi qu'en leur commun esieu, & que tous ces plans sont coupez d'un autre même plan le tableau.

Quand des lignes sujet inclinées entr'elles tendent toutes à un point, auquel aiant mené la ligne de l'œil elle n'est pas paralelle au tableau, les apparences de ces lignes sujet sont des lignes qui tendent toutes au point où cette ligne de l'œil rencontre le tableau, d'autant que chacune de ces lignes sujet est en un même plan avec cette ligne de l'œil, en laquelle tous ces plans s'entre-coupent ainsi qu'en leur commun esieu, & que tous ces plans sont coupez d'un autre même plan le tableau.

La proposition qui suit ne se deuide pas si briuement que celles qui precedent.

Aiant à pourtraire une coupe de cône plate, y mener deux lignes, dont les apparences soient les esieux de la figure qui la représentera.

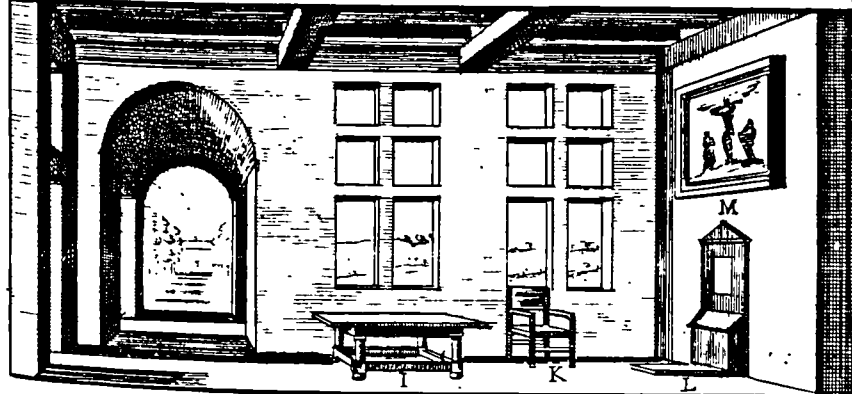
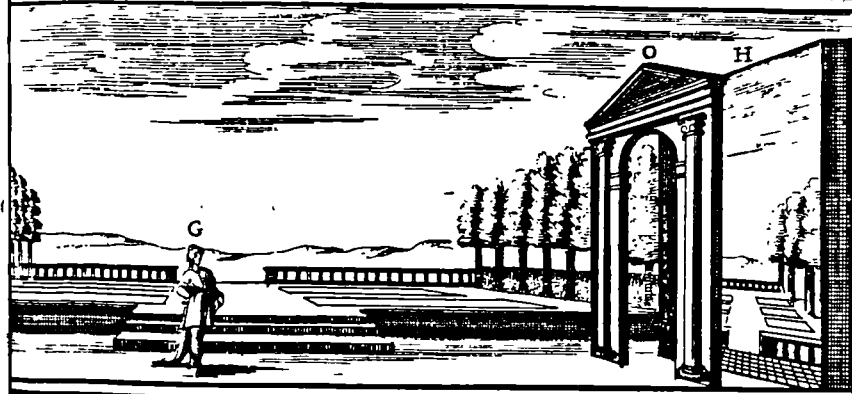
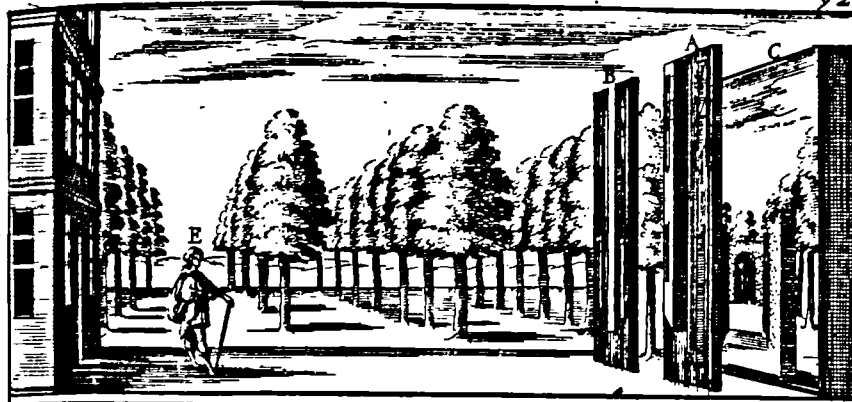
A Paris, en May 1636. Avec Priuilege.

Ces Exemplaires sont es mains de Monsieur Bidault H. du Roy, demeurant au gros Pauillon des Tuylleries, au bout de la grande Galerie du Louure.

FIGURES

(References to works already detailed in the bibliography are referred to the entry there.)

1. Jacques du Brueil- Perspective (Paris, 1648), p.32
2. Jacques Gaultier- Perspective (Paris, 1648), p.46
3. Abraham Bosse- The Protestant Family (in A. Blum , 1924)
4. Abraham Bosse- The Wise Virgins
5. - The Foolish Virgins
6. - L'Hôpital de la Charité
7. - David
8. - Perspective de Desargues, (Paris, 1648), Pl. 2
9. Jacques du Brueil- Perspective, (Paris, 1648), p.133
10. Abraham Bosse- TP, p.50.
11. - TP, p.75.
12. Girard Desargues-Perspective, 1636.
13. Anamorphosis, Collection Desloynes, Cabinet des Etampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, no. 1936.
14. Ibid.
15. Grégoire Huret, Traité d'Optique (1670), Pl. 6.



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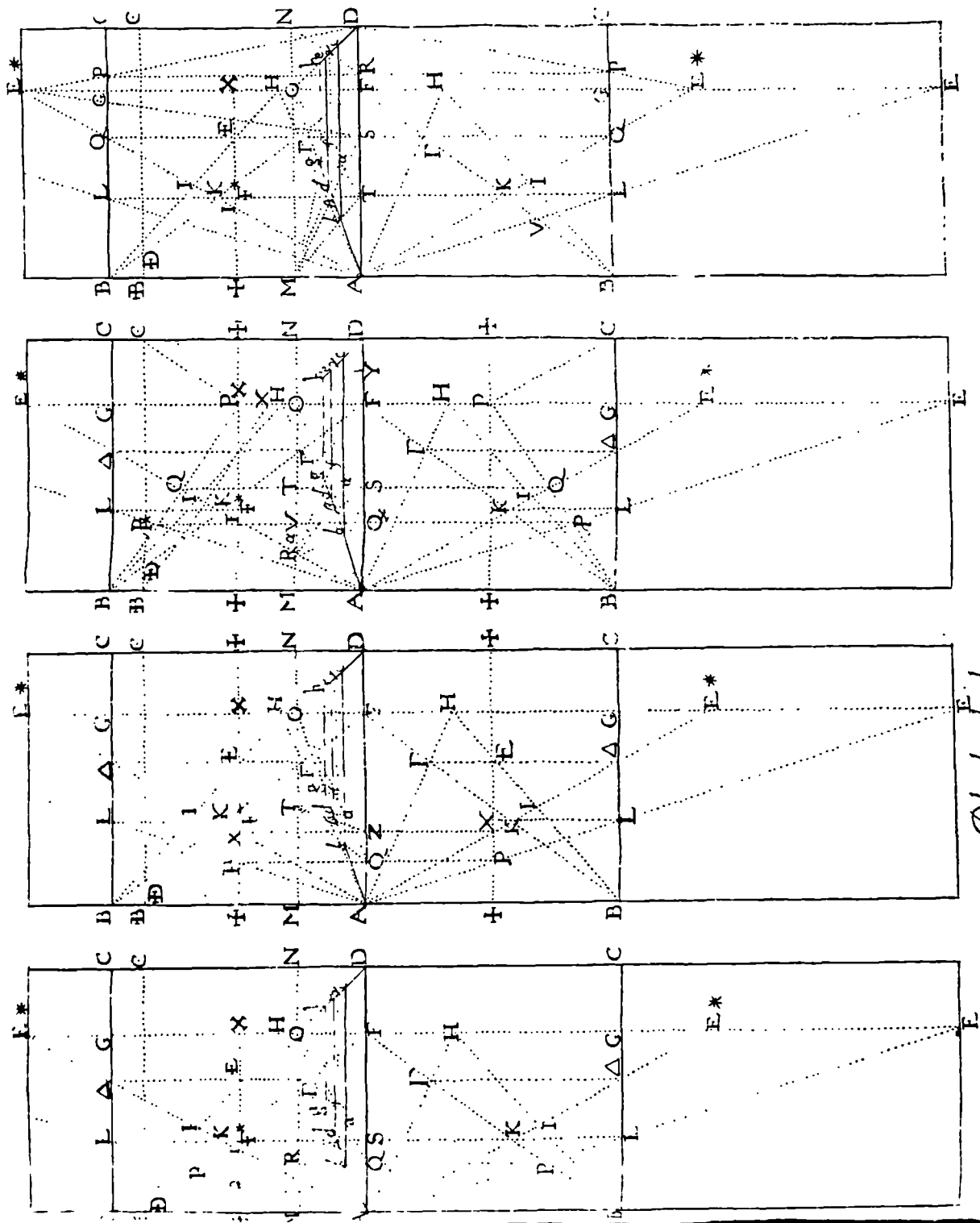
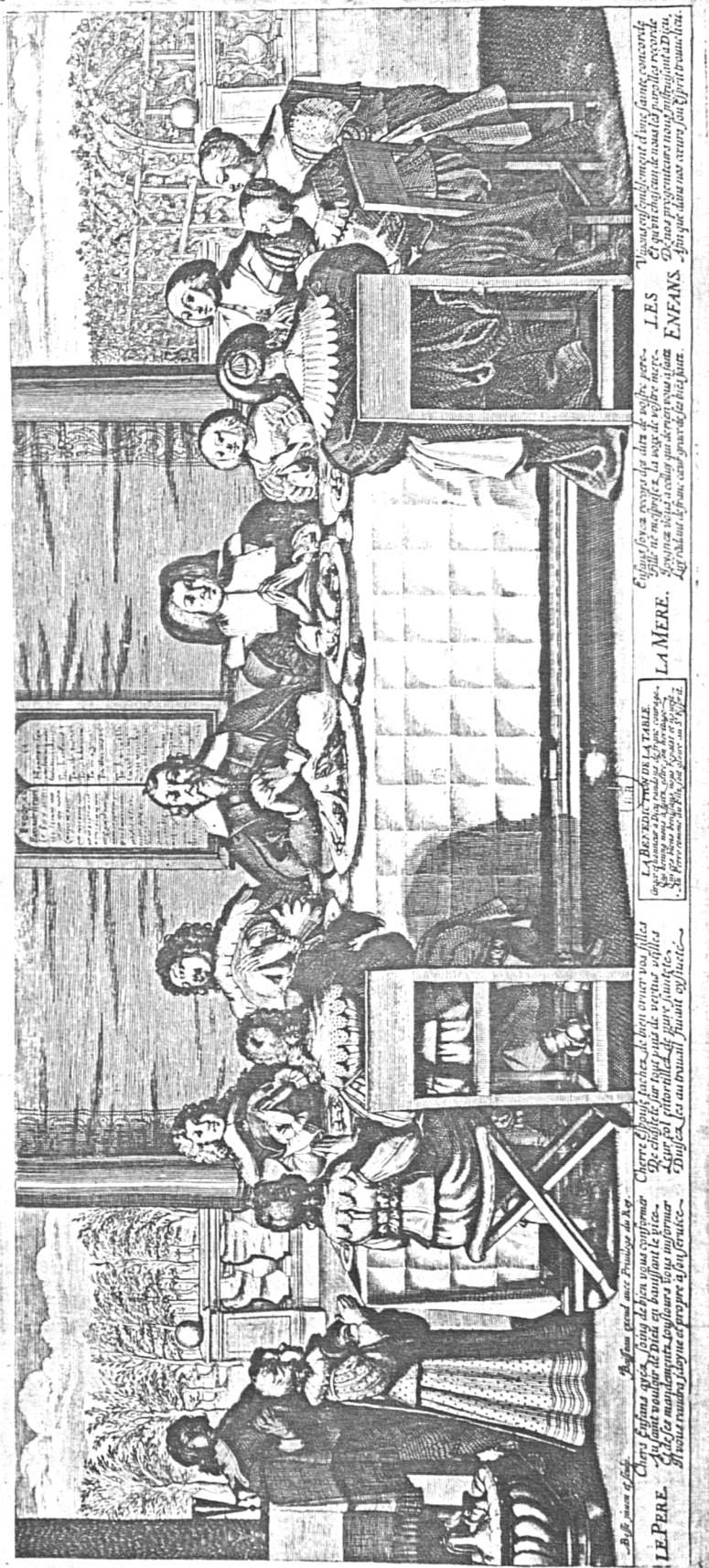


Planche de la 4. maniere

51C-634A ch. de ranc
 von. Hannu n° 2546 (061675)
 ch. de ranc 75C 73873

La Bénédiction de la table
 par Abe Boice G.D. 13/2
 Protestant family

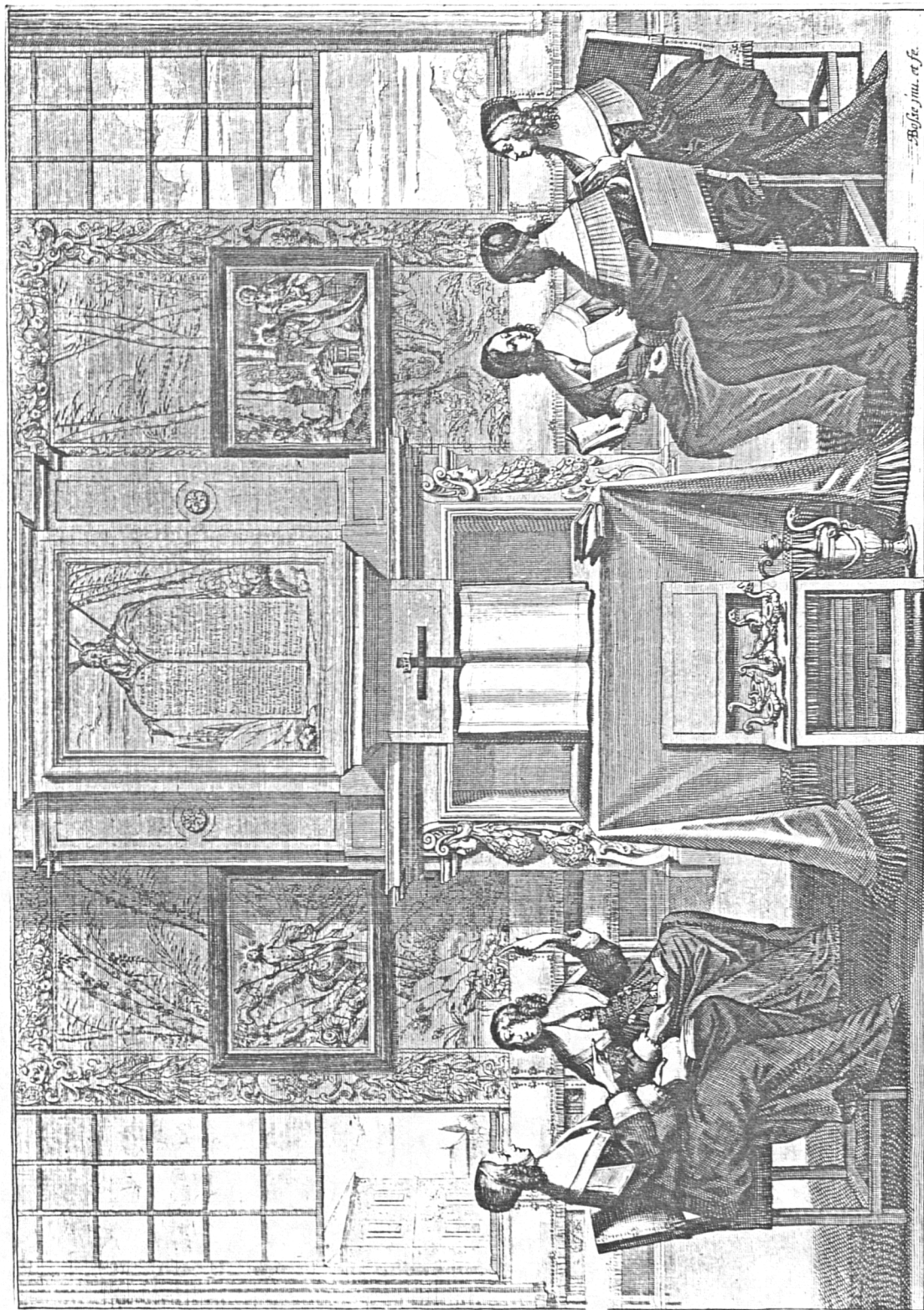


LE PERE. Chers Enfants que je voy de bien vous conformer
 Au saint vouloir de Dieu en buisant le vray.
 Si vous n'avez point de Dieu en vous, vous n'avez point de Dieu.
 Si vous n'avez point de Dieu en vous, vous n'avez point de Dieu.

LA MERE. Enfants, soyez vous-mêmes d'un saint concorde
 Et qu'en chacun de vous la pureté revende
 Et que par vous-mêmes la pureté revende
 Et que par vous-mêmes la pureté revende.

LES ENFANS. Seigneur, nous te rendons gloire et louange
 Et nous te rendons gloire et louange
 Et nous te rendons gloire et louange
 Et nous te rendons gloire et louange.

20670 - "Les verges sages s'entretiennent des
 55529 mystères de la croix" par A. Berse [G. O. 48] (aussi Ed. 1000)



Ces belles Vierges que tu vois
 Sont à l'environ de cette Table;
 Des hauts Mystères de la Croix
 Font leur entretien délectable.

LES VIERGES SAGES.

Se sachant que le Monde n'est rien,
 Abon droit Elles le méprisent;
 Et cherchent le souverain bien
 Dans les S. livres qu'elles lisent.

Ainsi, sans jamais soupirer
 Après les délices mortelles;
 On les voit toujours aspirer
 Aux félicités éternelles.

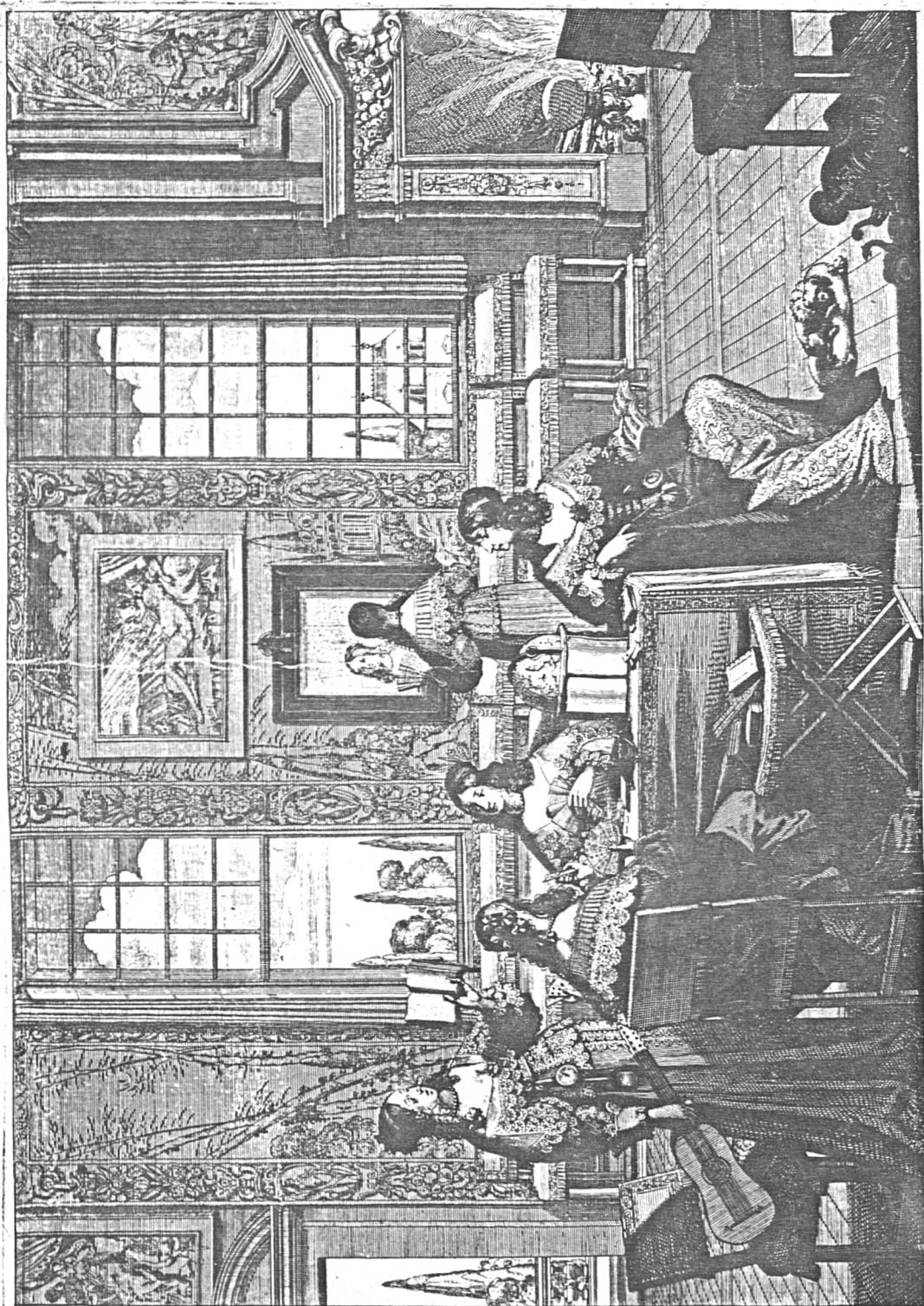
Leur Cœur brûlant de Charité,
 De remords secrets ne se rouge;
 Et l'amour de la vérité,
 Leur fait détecter le Mensonge.

le Blond excusé avec Privilège du Roy.

431
5877

les verges folles
par para Bone C.G.D 461

E



D'un faux lustre leur vie gélait.
Elles aiment ce qui leur nuit
Et lors que le Monde les flatte,
Il les enchante et les détruit.

On que ces Ames insensées
Cherissent les Mondanités!
Leurs parolles, et leurs pensées
Ne s'attachent qu'aux vanités.

LES VERGES FOLLES.
Les faux, les Festins, la Musique,
La coquetterie et les livres d'amour;
C'est à quoy leur Esprit s'applique,
Y passant la nuit, et le jour.
A Paris, chez le Blond, rue St Denis, au Pavillon Royal. Avec Privilège du Roy.

Tu vois comme ces Verges folles
S'amuseient inutilement
Après des actions frivoles,
Quont elles font leur Element.

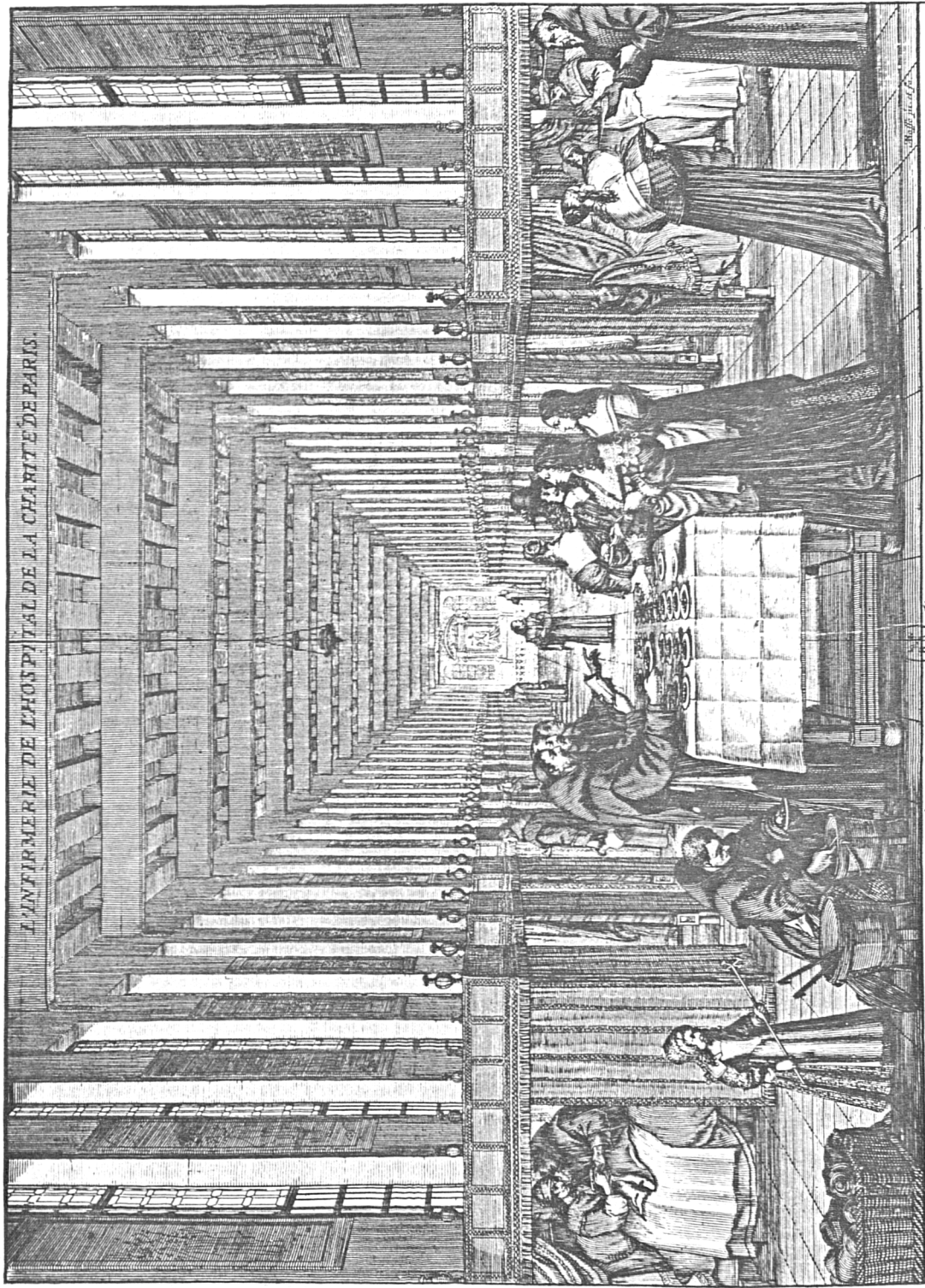
Adieu, juu. et se.

Dussig

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167

Infirmière de l'Hopital de la Charité
grav. par A. Boisse. [G.D. 1266]

E



L'INFIRMERIE DE L'HOSPITAL DE LA CHARITE DE PARIS.

Vous aurez beaucoup mérité,
Pour jouir des choses précieuses;
Si vous finiez la CHARITÉ,
Qu'exerceront icy ces bons Peres.

A Honorable et Vertueuse Dame, FRANÇOISE ROBIN, veufve de feu JEAN LINTLAIR, vivant Ingenieur du Roy en ses Fontaines artificielles DD.

Par vostre tres humble serviteur Herman Weyer.

Vous voyez combien ardemment
Leur propre Vertu les oblige
A devouer à tout moment
Ceux que la Maladie afflige.

Ils font toute sorte d'efforts,
Dont un zele saint les enflamme;
Et pour la guérison du Corps,
Ils posent au salut de l'Âme.

Imitant leurs senex genereux,
Vous devez employer vos peres
A servir les Pauvres comme eux
Dans les infirmités humaines.

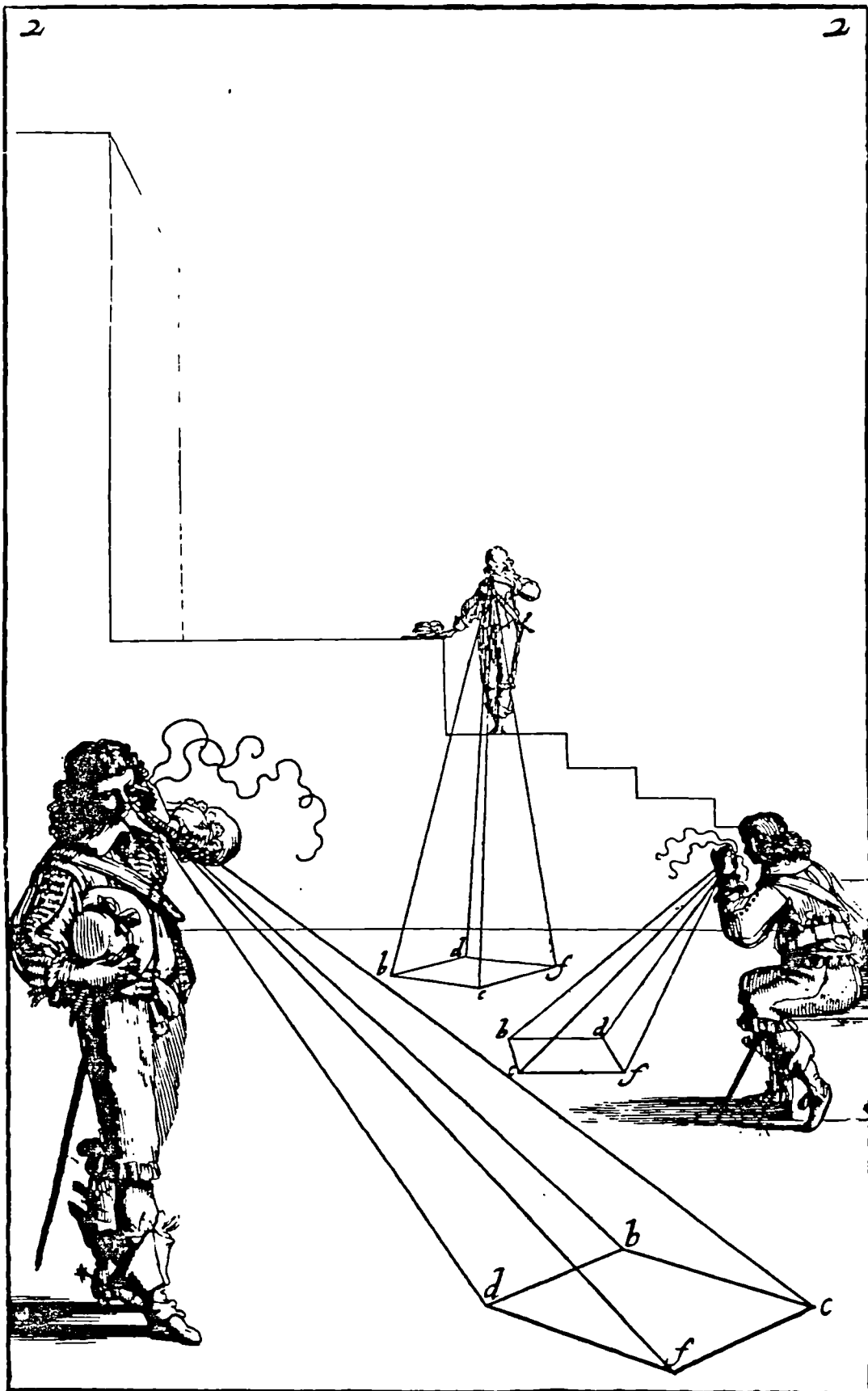
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Dand
par A Bossu [G.D. 13]

Ed.

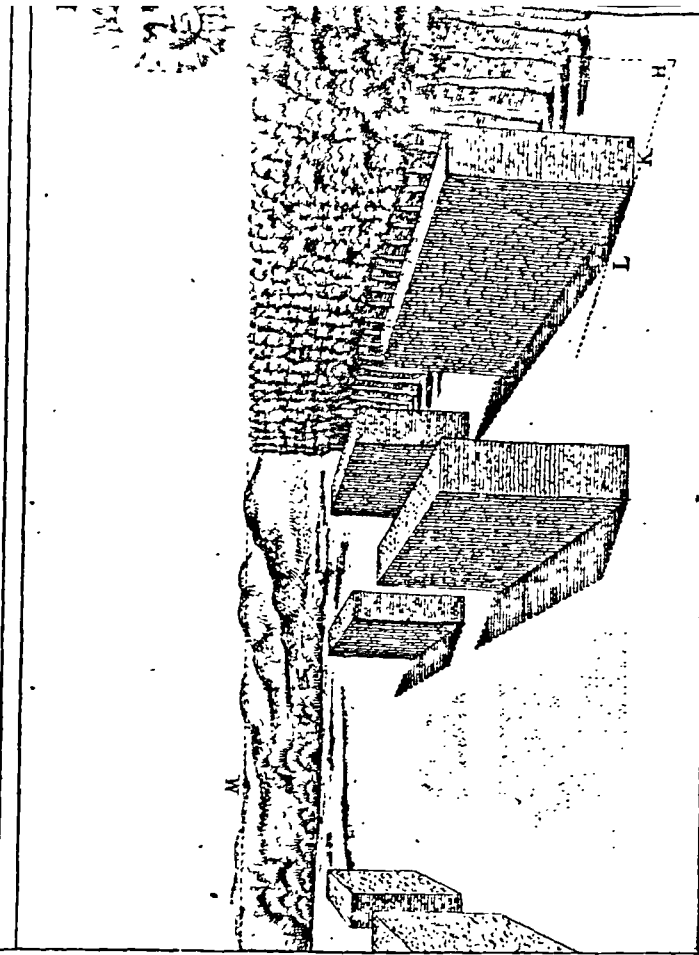
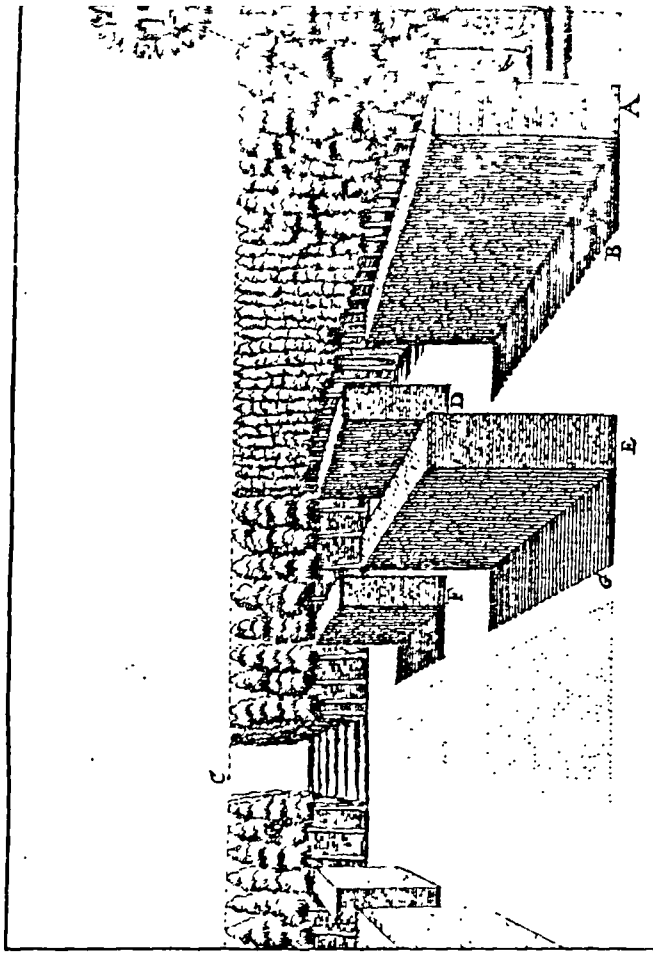
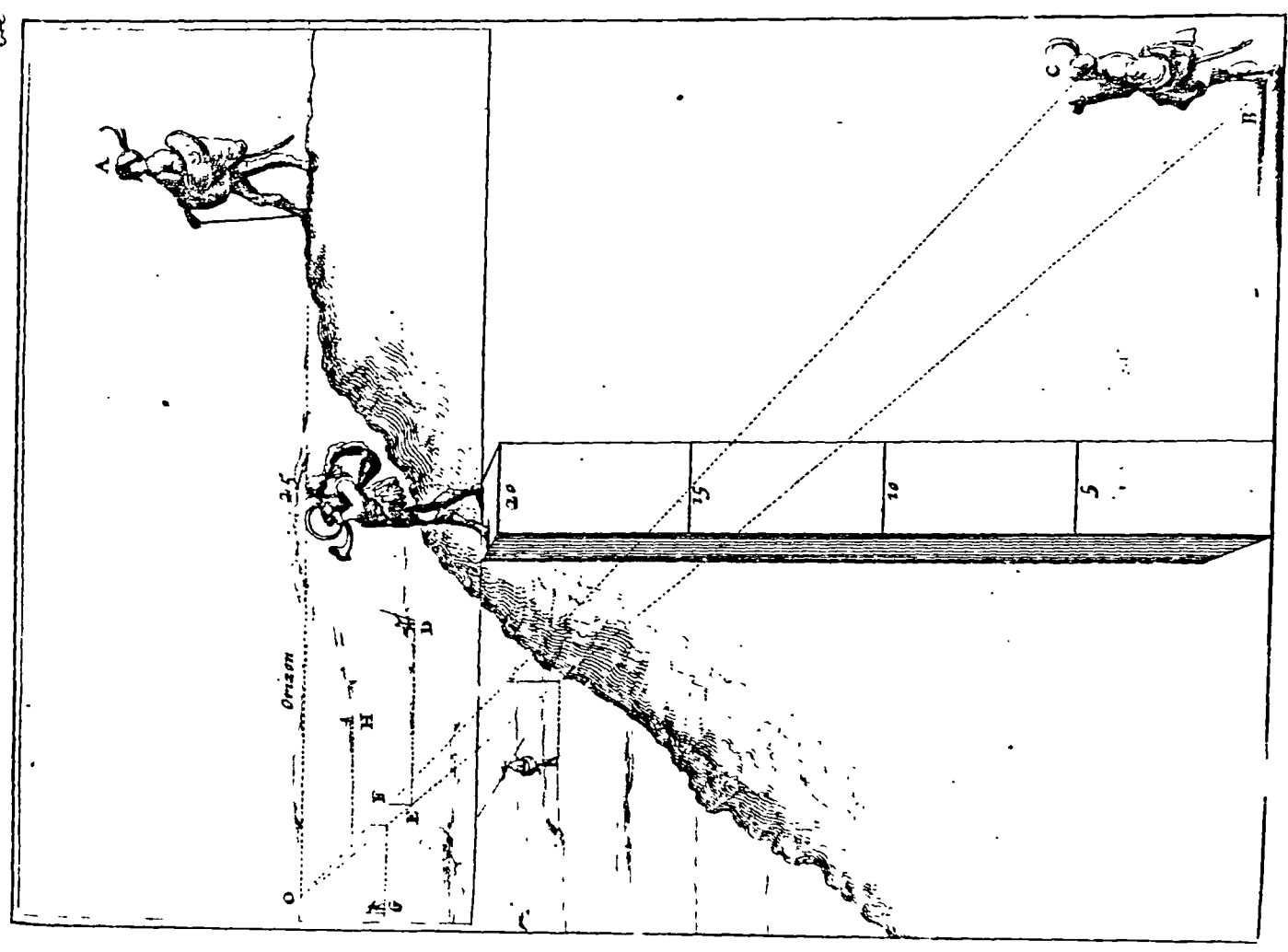


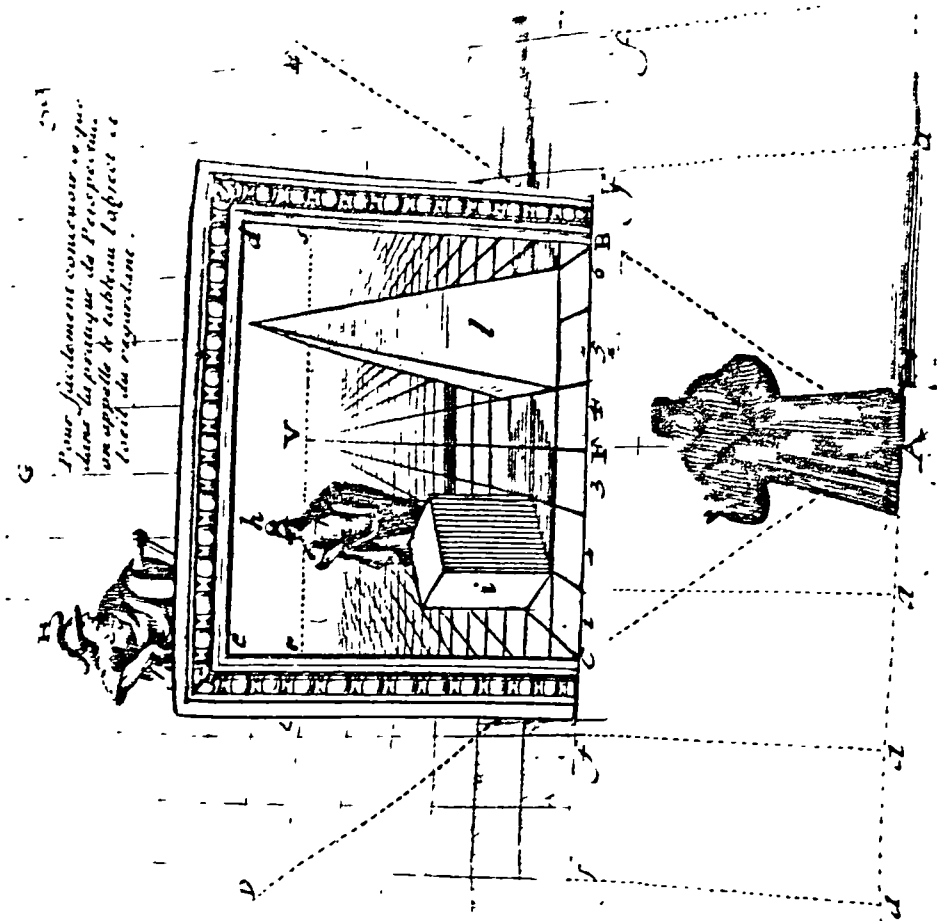
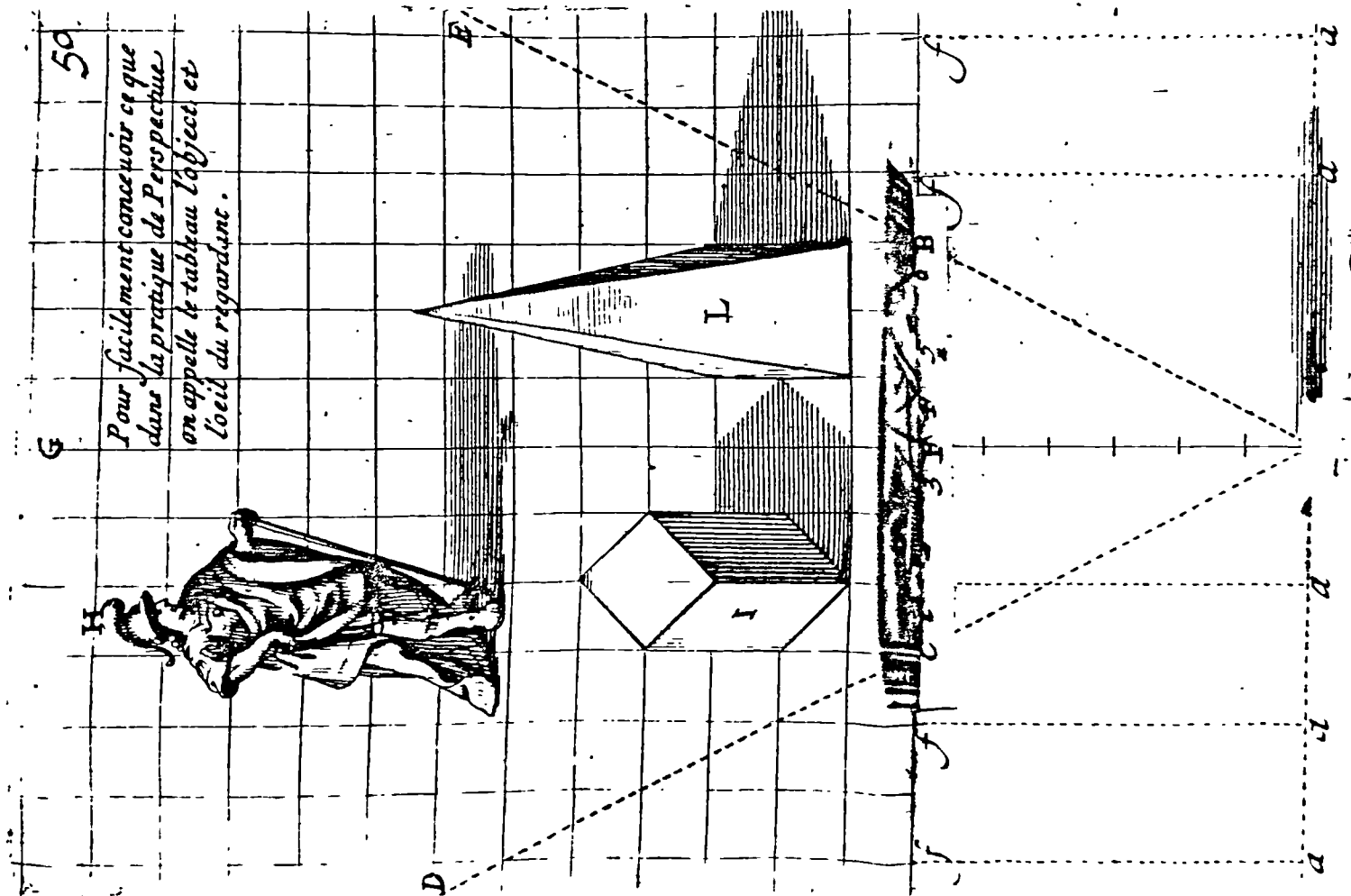
La Fronde en cet endroit fit un coup Merueilleux,
Mais l'Esprit Eternel en conduisit la pierre.
Et luy donna du poids contre un Front Orgueilleux,
Pour mettre en un moment ce Colosse par terre.
Frondeurs de qui le bruit s'uspend par tout le Monde,
Cet Exemple sacre vous a donne des Loix.
Vous pouviez, justement faire claquer la Fronde,
Pour la Cause du Ciel et pour celle des Rois.



to find the height of distant objects

12)

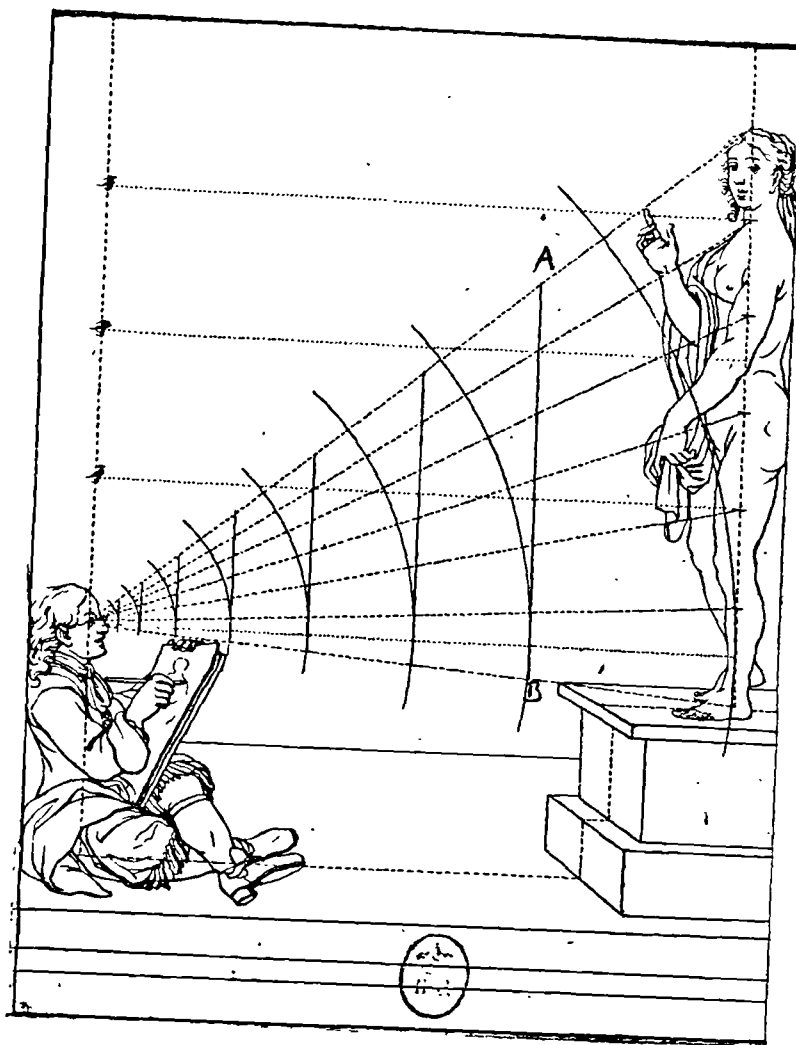


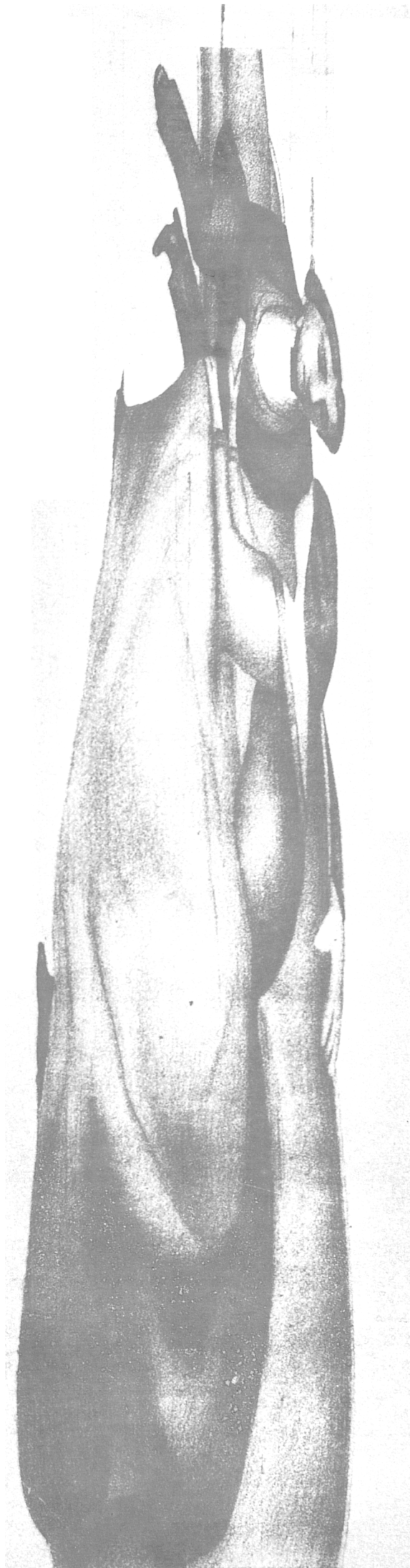


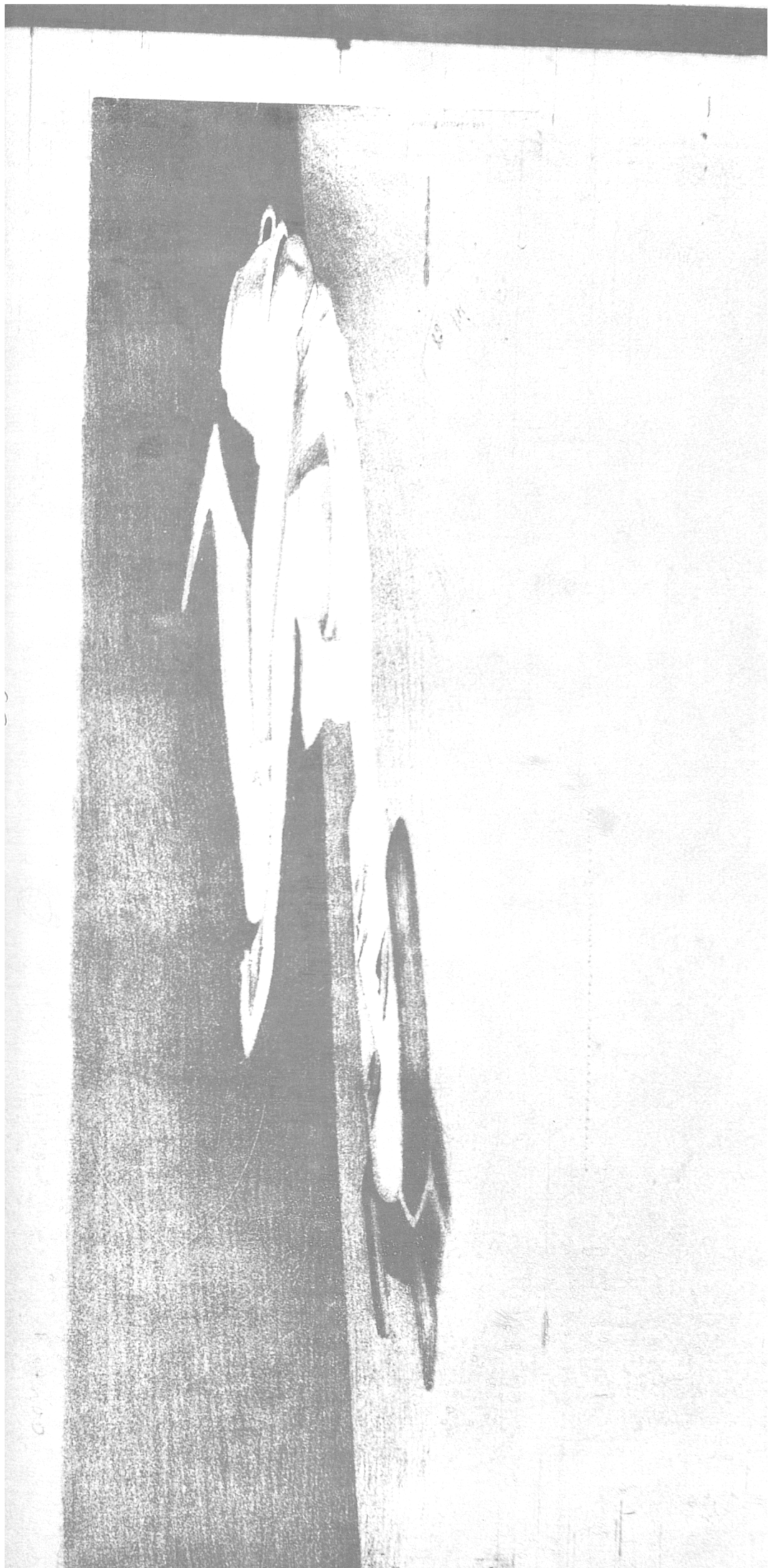
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Peintie dessinant une femme
par A. Bon [G.D. 983]

1665







Le temple de l'one des manieres universelles du S.^r G.D.
Touchant la pratique de la Perspective, Sans employer aucun tiers point. ni
Distance ou d'autre nature qui soit hors du champ de l'ouvrage.

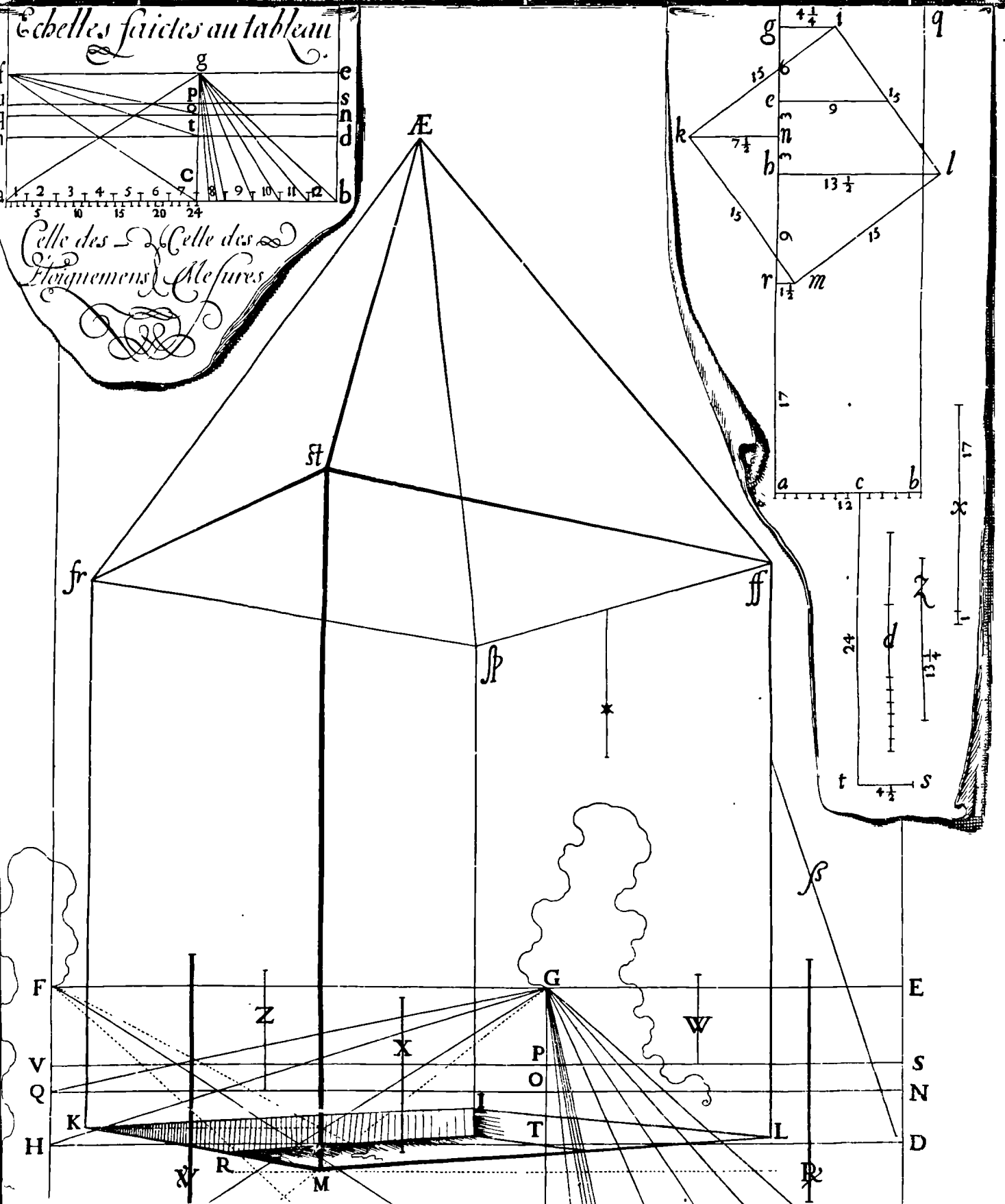


PLANCHE VI.

