THE MOVEMENT TO CREATE A NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FRANCE

by

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INTRODUCTION

Most people know that the Louvre is one of the world's great museums of art, the richness and variety of its collections rivaled by perhaps only three or four other European and American galleries. Certainly anyone who has been to Paris is familiar with its low grey bulk stretching for blocks along the right bank of the Seine and branching off into a sprawling complex of wings, courtyards, and pavilions. The determined tourist will tramp for miles through a seemingly endless succession of rooms and galleries and will climb many a staircase, great and small. If he reads his guidebook conscientiously he will learn that this vast labyrinth of a building was originally a palace in the English sense of the word, that is, the official Paris residence or town house of the kings of France. He will also learn, if his eyes have not already told him as much, that the palace is actually a collection of buildings put up over a long span of historical time, most of them in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries, although the foundation of the Louvre dates back to the Middle Ages and Philippe Auguste.

Pursuing the history of the palace further, the tourist will be appraised of the fact that Louis XIV, who loathed Paris, abandoned the Louvre as soon as Versailles was habitable and that no French sovereigns actually resided there until the October Days of 1789 when Louis XVI

and his family were brought as virtual prisoners to be lodged in the Tuileries, a part of the Louvre complex which was destroyed during the Commune of 1871. The guidebook will then go on to state that on November 18, 1793, the Louvre officially opened its doors as a museum of art for the first time, displaying works formerly a part of the royal collections. This information is surely accepted by the average educated American tourist with a nod of satisfaction as being right, proper, and entirely natural. How ideologically logical that the Revolution should have confiscated the royal palaces and the royal possessions and made the king's great art collection available to the masses! This is precisely what one would expect of the Revolution. With the advent of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity cats may look at kings and fishwives may look at the king's pictures, formerly locked away from vulgar inspection in the various royal residences. Satisfied as to the background of the palace and the origin of the museum, the tourist is free to go and to see the Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo, the Winged Victory, and as much else as his time will permit.

But in actual fact, the origin of the museum is not so simple. The idea of transforming the royal collections into a great national museum of art available to the public was old long before the Revolution and can be traced at least to the seventeenth century and Colbert. Nor were the kings and the royal administrations of the Old Regime as

selfish with the crown collections as is generally believed. Certainly from the middle of the eighteenth century to the Revolution the agitation on the part of intellectuals for a museum like the Louvre intensified, and various plans and ideas for a national gallery of art displaying the royal collections were put forth both by private individuals and by the government itself. This study will attempt to assess the content, nature, and accessibility of the royal collections during the eighteenth century prior to the Revolution and to trace and to analyze the ever-growing movement for a national museum of art during the decades before 1789. It will not concern itself with the palace of the Louvre or its fabric as such but only with the idea for a museum and the plans put forth to implement the idea. These plans and ideas did not always focus themselves upon the palace of the Louvre, and the fabric of the Louvre will be a matter for consideration here only insofar as it was involved in the realization of the idea for a gallery of art in which the royal collections would be mounted for public exhibition. This examination of the contents of the royal collection and the hopes and plans for displaying it publicly will primarily and necessarily be concentrated upon the collection of paintings. Of course, the royal collection of art objects enclosed tens of thousands of items other than paintings -- sculpture and bronzes, drawings and prints, and precious objects of every kind ranging from coins

to tapestries -- but the paintings were the heart of the collection and that part of it which was of greatest interest to the eighteenth century; further, the documentation for the paintings is more complete and precise than it is for any other aspect of the collection.

This study is a compound of both synthesis and original research. The problem considered here has been dealt with previously only in generalized or fragmentary ways. Some French historians and art historians have briefly examined the history of the idea for a museum in the course of other works, most often in an introduction or preface. Certain narrowly limited portions of the subject have been treated in articles or touched upon obliquely in biographies or other writings primarily concerned with other themes. The author has gratefully used the most helpful of these secondary treatises but has relied principally upon a body of primary materials gathered in the Archives Nationales de France, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the Archives et Bibliothèque du Louvre. The primary and secondary sources specifically relied upon are discussed in detail in the bibliographical essay at the end of the study.

This examination of the attempts made in pre-Revolutionary France to bring the crown collections to the people is an effort to make a contribution, however small, to the cultural history of France generally, to the history of the Louvre as a museum peripherally, and to the cultural and intellectual history of the Old Regime particularly.

Chapter I

THE ROYAL COLLECTIONS DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

A. Origin and Contents: The Growth of the Collections[1]

Francis I, who ascended the throne of France in 1515, must be credited with laying the modest but solid foundation of what was to become one of the richest and most extensive royal art collections in Europe. Some of his predecessors had also been collectors; Charles IV and his brothers had put together large collections of art which were later dispersed, and Charles VIII and Louis XII were both interested in fragments of antique sculpture and similar objects. But it was Francis I, bemused with the Italian Renaissance and possessing a highly developed taste for luxury and beauty, who began systematically to assemble a collection of important paintings and other art objects which came to constitute the nucleus of the great French national collections.

Francis' interest in art and collecting undoubtedly stemmed from mixed motives. He cannot have been insensitive to the prestige value inherent in the possession of many rich,

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[1] Secondary sources most fully utilized for this section are: Gaston Brière, L'École française; Louis Hautecoeur, Les Écoles italiennes; Gabriel Rouchès, L'École espagnole; Clotilde Brière-Misme, Les Écoles septentrionales, all in Histoire des collections de peintures au Musée du Louvre (Paris: Musées Nationaux, 1930.) (Hereafter Histoire des collections.)

Frederic Villot, Notice des tableaux exposés dans les galeries du Musée Impérial du Louvre (Paris: Vinchon, 1852).

valuable, rare, or curious articles, and his passion for displaying such items in his residences was surely due in some part to his desire to appear before the world as a cultivated sovereign of refined taste presiding over a brilliant and elegant court. Perhaps pride of possession is inherent in some degree in all collectors. Certainly Francis was neither the first nor the last collector to seek prestige in the acquisition of beautiful and unique objects; Andrew Mellon, whose magnificent collection forms the core of the National Gallery in Washington, betrayed somewhat the same kind of rarefied snobbery -- he would buy only the best and he preferred to buy only from people on exalted social levels such as ruined German royalties and impecunious British peers with historic names.[2] Nevertheless, Francis also surely made many purchases simply because the object intrigued him, or titillated his curiosity, or satisfied his personal esthetic values. He did not, for example, confine his collecting to great paintings but also assembled a "Cabinet of Curiosities" in which there were enshrined such oddities as "dried rare plants, exotic stuffed animals, ancient medals, fragments of antique sculpture, the feet of

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[2]Hans Tietze, Treasures of the Great National Galleries (London: Phaidon Publishers, Inc., 1954), pp. 112-113.

an Egyptian mummy, and feathered robes of American savages."[3] This kind of catholic, magpie collecting was entirely within the tradition of the Renaissance prince with his complex of interests and his growing awareness of parts of the world hitherto unknown or known but dimly. Any royal collector of those times would buy with equal eagerness and impressive impartiality a great painting, the horn of a unicorn, or a dubious holy relic; virtually anything was welcomed into the collection so long as it was singular, beautiful, bizarre, intriguing because of cunning workmanship, or precious because of the materials of which it was made. Indeed, it was to be rather a long time before the concept of a gallery of art, as distinct from the cabinet of curiosities and the relic collections, was clearly to emerge in northern Europe.

But if Francis I bought parts of mummies and Indian feather cloaks, he bought many other things of greater artistic significance. Although his name is forever linked with certain famous paintings, he also acquired vases and medallions, antique bronzes, drawings, antique sculptures, and tapestries. Francis' primary claim to fame as a royal collector rests, however, on the acquisition of a small

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[3]Francis Henry Taylor, The Taste of Angels (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948), footnote p. 190. Quoted from a letter written to Taylor by Jean Adhémar, a French authority on the collection of Francis I. The letter as reproduced in the work cited is in French; all translations from the French in this study are by the author.

number of now priceless paintings which are today the jewels of the Louvre's collection of masterpieces. Leonardo da Vinci's Virgin of the Rocks was acquired by Francis' immediate predecessor, Louis XII, in 1506. The new King, whose taste in painting was sound and discriminating, and who was dazzled by the glories of the Italian Renaissance, loved the Virgin of the Rocks and determined to have more works by the great Italian masters. He determined, moreover, not to confine himself to the collection of Italian paintings but to acquire the source itself and collect Italian painters. Raphael and Michelangelo could not be seduced away from Rome, partly because the popes would not allow it; there were some things even the king of France could not command. But Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto, among many other Italian painters, sculptors, and architects, were persuaded to come to France. Leonardo was an elderly and infirm man when he came to Francis' court in 1515, and he died in 1519 without having produced anything significant for his royal patron. The King acquired some of Leonardo's most splendid works, however, including the great Virgin, Child, and St. Anne, which is in the Louvre today, and that portrait known to all the world as the Mona Lisa. Andrea del Sarto, who arrived in France in 1518, executed several works for the King, including the Charity now in the Louvre. Francis also acquired, by gift or purchase, Raphael's Belle Jardinère; Holy Family of Francis I; St. Margaret, possibly

painted for his sister, Marguerite de Valois; St. Michael; and a portrait of Joanna of Aragon. In addition to these, he bought other important Italian paintings, such as Fra Bartolomeo's Annunciation and Sebastiano del Piombo's Visitation. Francis was not so much interested in Venetian painting as he was in the Florentine and Umbrian schools, but he was presented with one important example of the Venetian style, the famous portrait of himself which was done by Titian from a medallion likeness of the King but which is vivid and sprightly for all of that. One author[4] insists, without documentation, that Francis also collected Flemish paintings, especially works by Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Breugel the Elder, but no confirmation for this assertion can be found in French authorities thoroughly conversant with the origins of the Louvre's collections. The French art historians would date the acquisition of Flemish paintings by the royal collection from the seventeenth century, and this is undoubtedly correct.[5] Certainly it would have been difficult for Francis to have collected Breugel the Elder in that the King died in 1547 and Breugel, who was born somewhere between 1525 and 1530, did not begin to

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[4] Ibid., p. 191.

[5] Brière-Misme, Histoire des collections, p. 82.

produce until the 1550's.[6] Indeed, the inventory of the king's paintings prepared in 1709 and 1710 by Nicholas Bailly, keeper, indicates that the royal collection even then did not possess a single Bosch and included only eight works by Breugel the Elder, most of them acquired in the seventeenth century.[7]

Most of Francis' collection was kept at Fontainebleau. Records concerning it are fragmentary and contradictory and no one really knows precisely what he did possess in the way of paintings, sculpture, and other important works of art. In any event, Francis' collection was not a large one and was only an acorn from which the great oak of the royal collection was to grow. A listing entitled Trésor des Merveilles de Fontainebleau prepared by one Father Dan in 1642 constitutes the first inventory of the royal collection of paintings and lists only forty-seven or forty-nine paintings.[8] This listing was surely incomplete, but it is

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[6] Wolfgang Stechow, Pieter Bruegel the Elder (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1954), p. 6.

[7] Fernand Engerand, Inventaire des tableaux du roy rédigé en 1709 et 1710 par Nicholas Bailly, hereafter cited as Engerand I (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1899), pp. 221-284, 632-635, 229-232.

[8] Villot, op. cit., Avertissement, pp. XX-XXI; Engerand I, Introduction, pp. III-IV.

generally agreed that at the accession of Louis XIV the French crown owned something less than 200 paintings.[9] But if Francis I's collection lacked quantity one must nevertheless concede that it compensated brilliantly for this in quality; the Leonardos and the Raphaels alone would qualify it as an impressive collection, and a mere half-dozen of Francis' most important acquisitions would make the reputation of any museum today.

The royal collections received few additions of significance from Francis' time until the seventeenth century. Francis' sons did not manifest any of their father's superb artistic taste. Henry II, presented with Michaelangelo's Slaves by Roberto Strozzi, was actually so indifferent to the possession of these treasures of sculpture that he casually gave them away as a present to the Constable de Montmorency.[10] Catherine de Medici, possessed of an Italianate taste for luxurious and sumptuous living, was an inveterate collector of virtu, bibelots, small precious objects, tapestries, and the like, for the decoration of her residences. She also possessed many paintings, most of them undistinguished portraits of sovereigns and illustrious people. During this period, however, no acquisitions of real consequence were made. From 1560 until nearly the

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[9] Villot, op. cit., Avertissement, pp. XXI-XXII.

[10] Brière, Histoire des collections, p. 13.

turn of the century France was suffering the agonies of the religious wars and was torn repeatedly by internal conflict and civil strife. The Valois kings and their governments, harassed and beset by political problems on all sides, were primarily concerned with maintaining themselves through a series of dangerous crises and had little time, effort, or money to expend on the building up of a splendid royal art gallery.

The accession of Henry IV, first of the Bourbons, to the throne of France signaled an end to the tragic and bitter period of the civil wars. The new King, a wise and diplomatic man whom the French still revere as one of their greatest sovereigns, immediately set about the pacification and restoration of France. He also began laying the foundation for the royal absolutism which was to flower so fully under his grandson, Louis XIV, and to create a royal environment in which the growth of an imposing art collection would become not only possible but psychologically necessary as a prestige symbol for the crown. Henry IV was himself no serious collector, but he was concerned that his palaces be appropriately decorated and it seems likely that he acquired some important Italian Mannerist and early Baroque paintings, including several by Carracci, Vernonese, Guido Reni, and Giulio Romano.[11] Perhaps the most important acquisition of

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[11]Hautecoeur, Histoire des collections, p. 49.

this period was one made by Marie de Medici, Henry IV's second wife. In 1621 Marie, who became Queen Regent of France upon the assassination of her husband in 1610, ordered from Rubens a series of twenty-four large paintings glorifying her, for the decoration of one of the large galleries in her palace of the Luxembourg. The series, called The Life of Marie de Medici, was completed and installed in 1625 but was moved to the Louvre in 1815. These enormous and almost overwhelming paintings, which must be measured by the square yard, tell the story of Marie's life and career in grandiose allegorical terms -- the birth of the princess presided over by Jupiter and Juno, her education by Minerva, the birth of her son attended by a symbolic figure of Fecundity, and so on. The subject matter of the paintings and the pomposity with which it is treated seems today to be more than a little comical; but the series remains an impressive example of Rubens' full Baroque style and constitutes the first significant Flemish acquisitions by the French crown, hitherto primarily preoccupied with the Italian schools.

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"We are badly informed on the purchases of the kings at the end of the sixteenth century and at the beginning of the seventeenth century."[12] This is true enough, and it

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[12] Ibid.

is impossible to know exactly how many paintings were in the royal collection when Louis XIV came to the throne at the age of five in 1643, to say nothing of the impossibility of knowing just what paintings the crown owned at this time. It is difficult to know, for example, whether the figure of "about 200" did or did not include some or all of a motley assemblage of bad to ordinary family portraits of no artistic significance whatever. Certainly the royal family possessed many such, and in his inventory of 1710 Bailly summarily dismisses them as "251 little family portraits of ancient kings and great lords, without frames, of varying qualities."[13] At Louis' death in 1715, however, the collection possessed nearly 2,500 paintings. Fernand Engerand says that "in 1710 the collection of the crown comprised exactly 2,376 paintings."[14] The Grand Monarque wished to be the greatest king in Europe in all respects, which meant that he wished also to be the greatest art collector in Europe and was willing to spend effort and money to achieve this aim. It was during Louis XIV's long reign that the French royal collection burgeoned with astonishing rapidity from its modest beginnings under Francis I to a collection of the first magnitude. One must grant that whatever Louis did he did with vigor and in the grand manner; this was no less true of his collecting

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[13] Ibid., p. 14.

[14] Engerand I, Introduction, p. X.

than of his other activities. Indeed, one French authority says bluntly: "In reality, it was Colbert who, realizing the intentions of Louis XIV, definitely created the collection of the crown and gave to it all its importance."[15] Another, referring specifically to French painting, says: "The true founder of the collections of French painting was Louis XIV. Aided by his natural taste for magnificence, the King wished to surround himself with objects proclaiming his grandeur. He understood that artists should serve to proclaim his glory, and Colbert reminded him that protection accorded to the arts, as well as to letters, was one of the attributes of a sovereign."[16]

The royal collection was developed from many sources during Louis XIV's time. Cardinal de Richelieu, who did so much to make Louis' reign possible, died in 1642 just before Louis' accession to the throne. The Cardinal, a tireless and discriminating collector, willed his Palais Royal to the crown together with many items of artistic importance; these included Italian paintings of significance and Michaelangelo's Slaves, two of the most valuable pieces of sculpture in the Louvre today, which he had obtained -- one wonders by what dubious means -- from the Montmorency family.

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[15] Ibid., p. IV.

[16] Brière, Histoire des collections, p. 16.

The French royal collection was enormously enriched, in an indirect manner, by the political disaster and personal tragedy which befell the Stuarts in England in the 1640's. This impressive increase in Louis XIV's collection took place in two great strokes of acquisition. Charles I of England, who was much interested in art, acquired in 1627 the gallery of the financially ruined Duke of Mantua whose collection was justly regarded as one of the most splendid in Italy. Charles added to this core from other sources, and by the time of his death in 1649 owned more than 1,300 paintings and about 400 items of sculpture, as well as a huge collection of drawings by the great masters.[17] Between 1650 and 1653, the Parliamentary government of England gradually put Charles' collections on the sale block. There were in Europe at this time two collectors whose passion for possession amounted almost to obsessive madness. One of these was Cardinal Mazarin, a creature of Cardinal de Richelieu who had succeeded to his master's power in France upon Richelieu's death in 1642; the other was one Jabach, a banker of Cologne who normally resided in Paris. Both men were well able to indulge their tastes -- certainly Cardinal Mazarin, whose opportunistic greed was notorious, was rich beyond all dreams of avarice. "Mazarin and the banker

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[17] Villot, op. cit., Avertissement, p. XXII.

Jabach divided between themselves the spoils of the sovereign,"[18] and by virtue of their heavy purchasing the cream of the unfortunate Charles' collection came to France. Mazarin who had been collecting all his life from a variety of sources, died in 1661, in possession of a collection which was little short of amazing for its richness, scope, and depth. Moving swiftly and with the King's authority behind him, Colbert acquired the best of Mazarin's hoard from the Cardinal's heirs. The French crown thus acquired "more than 600" paintings in one fell swoop.[19] This purchase included 283 paintings of the Italian school, seventy-seven German and Dutch, seventy-seven French, and 109 of miscellaneous schools, as well as nearly 300 items of sculpture.[20] The list of the paintings thus acquired reads like a select partial inventory of the Louvre's most important holdings: three works of Correggio, Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin, the Holy Family which is attributed to Giorgione, Leonardo da Vinci's St. John the Baptist,[21] several Titians, two

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[18] Hautecoeur, Histoire des collections, p. 50.

[19] Engerand I, Introduction, p. IV.

[20] Villot, op. cit., Avertissement, p. XXIV.

[21] The St. John thus came "home" to the French collection; Louis XIII had traded it with Charles I for Holbein's portrait of Erasmus and a Holy Family by Titian.

Veroneses, four Poussins, two Claude Lorrains, several Vouets, at least four Holbein portraits, and many works by Van Dyck. The second great windfall occurred in 1671 when Colbert acquired for the King, at a bargain price, some 100 paintings and 5,500 drawings from the financier Jabach, who was struggling with reverses of fortune. In the space of a decade, then, Colbert aggrandized the royal collection to the extent of more than 700 paintings, thousands of drawings, and hundreds of pieces of sculpture. Nearly all of these items had been in the Mantua and Stuart collections and had reached the crown by way of the Mazarin and Jabach collections.

The royal collection was constantly increased during the remainder of Louis XIV's reign. Individuals and governments wishing to curry favor with the Sun King often presented Louis with paintings or other works of art. The Venetian government, for example, sent him Veronese's Feast in the House of Simon the Pharisee. Italian cardinals made him gifts of many paintings of the lesser Italian artists of the Mannerist and Baroque periods. André Le Nôtre, Louis' friend and great landscape architect, gave the King three important Poussins. Louis also purchased, in lots and single items. French representatives and agents all over Europe were ordered by Colbert to be alert for the acquisition of notable paintings and art objects, especially items illustrative of masters not present or poorly represented in the collections of Mazarin and Jabach.

According to Engerand's analysis of the catalogue drawn up by Nicholas Bailly in 1709-1710, five years before the death of Louis XIV, the crown at that time possessed "exactly 2,376" paintings of which 1,478 are classified as being by "masters" of the various schools, as follows: eighty-nine Roman and Florentine; 102 Venetian; 178 Lombard; 179 German and Flemish; 930 French.[22] The King also possessed an impressive collection of thousands of drawings, many of them from the hands of the great; a print cabinet enclosing about a quarter of a million items; hundreds of pieces of sculpture, both ancient and modern; and innumerable objects which are usually placed in the category of "decorative" or "minor" arts -- tapestries, medallions, coins, gems, gold and silver vessels, bronzes, ivories, furnishings, and the like.

Louis' collection did, however, have certain gaps. The Spanish school was hardly represented at all, this in spite of the fact that Louis was the son of one Spanish princess and the husband of another. But there is good reason for this lack of Spanish paintings in the royal collection of France. Spanish painting was little known in Louis' time and less thought of. The rage for El Greco was far in the future, Velasquez was not considered to be a great master. The taste in seventeenth-century France was

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[22] Engerand I, Introduction, pp. IX-X.

all for Italian and French painting and, to a lesser extent, the artists of the Low Countries. Louis thought that he owned several Velasquez portraits of his Spanish Hapsburg ancestors and relatives, but only one of these, the portrait of the Infanta Marguerita, is now regarded as a genuine Velasquez and displayed as such. The entire collection did not enclose more than two or three other paintings by Spanish artists, and even these are somewhat doubtful.[23] Another blank area in the collection which seems striking to us today is the lack of Rembrandts. The Bailly inventory lists only one painting by this man who is perhaps the most famous and widely known of all European artists. The one Rembrandt was a self-portrait, probably acquired sometime during the 1680's.[24] Again, however, there is some reason for this dearth of Rembrandts. This master was not particularly well-known as yet, nor much sought after; indeed, the whole Dutch-Flemish school was still somewhat controversial in France. An analysis of the Bailly inventory of masters shows that for the 999 French and 369 Italian paintings in the collection there were but 179 "German and Flemish" works. The classical academicians championed Raphael and Poussin against those who preferred the warmly coloristic work of

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[23] Rouchès, Histoire des collections, pp. 67-68.

[24] Engerand I, pp. 267-268.

Titian and Rubens. Rubens was represented in the collection (six paintings, apart from the Marie de Medici series), but the elegant and Italianate Van Dyck was more amenable to the current French taste (eighteen paintings in the Bailly inventory). It was not until the eighteenth century that paintings of the Dutch and Flemish masters began to enter the royal collection with some regularity.

But if Louis XIV's collection was poor in Spanish paintings and Rembrandts, it was impressively rich in virtually everything else. Louis increased the painting collection alone by more than ten times the size it was when he came to the throne, and he increased it with quality as well as quantity. He laid solid foundations for the print and drawing collections as well, and added significantly to the sculpture collection. Never before had the French royal collection experienced so rich an acquisition period as occurred during the years 1660 to 1690, nor would it ever again achieve so much in so short a time.

French art historians complain that Bailly's famous inventory of 1709-1710 is "laconic," but it is nevertheless the best inventory of the royal collection of paintings done up to that date, and in spite of its terseness it is most informative. A brief analysis of this inventory will serve to convey some impression of the richness of the

collection at this date. The inventory contains a table by school,[25] listing each master represented and giving the number of paintings by him which are in the collection. Following is a condensation of this table, the artists chosen because of their obvious fame:[26]

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[25]Archives Nationales, hereafter referred to as A.N., O^1 1975. In all Archives citations the numbered letter refers to the archival series; the sequence of numbers which follows is the carton number within the series; any number or numbers following the carton designation refer to the number of the document within the carton. In certain A.N. citations, the carton number will be followed by a number in parenthesis; this refers to the book within the carton in which the cited document is to be found. Not all cartons are divided into numbered series of book each with its own series of documents; in many cartons the documents are loose and simply numbered in sequence. The document here cited, O^1 1975, constitutes an entire carton itself. It is a large bound volume written in a clear, obviously professional script.

[26]It should be noted that not all of Bailly's attributions have stood the test of modern scholarship and that many attributions have been challenged and revised in recent times.

Leonardo da Vinci	12
Raphael	18
Andrea del Sarto	3
Titian	21
Tintoretto	8
Veronese	28
Caravaggio	4
Perugino	4
Correggio	9
The three Carracci	36
Holbein	11
Rubens	30
Van Dyck	18
Breughel	8
Simon Vouet	18
Poussin	34
LeSueur	8
Claude Lorrain	11

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Royal collecting under the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI followed a somewhat erratic and desultory pattern. This is not to say that the French crown did not make notable acquisitions during the eighteenth century and before the Revolution; during this period however, there was no vigorous and intensive policy of collecting such as had been pursued by Colbert in the name of Louis XIV, at least not until the Comte d'Angiviller assumed the position of Director General of Buildings in 1774. Indeed, in 1717 the Regent, probably hard pressed for cash, sold a fine collection of fifteenth and sixteenth-century portraits which had been left to the crown by a French nobleman.[27] French art historians note

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[27] Brière, Histoire des collections, p. 20.

this dispersion with horror, but they might well be grateful that the Regent, always in desperate need of money, did not make further and more disastrous incursions into the royal collection.

The great French artists of the eighteenth century received only a limited and specific kind of patronage from the crown. They were given commissions to paint elegant panels for the decoration of the intimate salons in the royal residences and executed many such depicting scenes of amorous gallantry, fêtes champêtres, the hunt, allegories of the triumphs of Louis XV's reign, and, of course, an endless parade of dazzling royal portraits. Many of these works were, to be sure, produced by some of the period's most fashionable artists, men who reflected with skill and taste the glittering society for which they labored: Boucher, Lancret, Nattier, Natoire, Van Loo, DeTroy, Oudry, Desportes, Parrocel, Lefant, Quentin de la Tour.[28] Many of the decorative panels painted for particular places have suffered in removal. Further -- and this is a fact from which the French have never recovered -- the really great painters of eighteenth-century France were neglected by the crown and their works were allowed to escape the royal collection. This was

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[28] Fernand Engerand, Inventaire des tableaux commandés et achetés par la direction des bâtiments du roi (1709-1792), hereafter referred to as Engerand II (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901), Introduction, pp. VI, XII-XXVI.

particularly true of Watteau, Chardin, and Fragonard. "The princely collections of French painting of the eighteenth century were formed outside of France: in Prussia, for Frederick II, in Russia, for Catherine II, in Sweden, by the agency of the Comte de Tessin."[29]

In 1742, however, the crown did move to purchase some thirty-three paintings from the collection of Victor Amadeus of Savoy, Prince de Carignan, who died in May 1741. The total cost of these thirty-three paintings was 150,000 livres, a bargain indeed in consideration of the fact that the lot included works by Ludovico Carracci, Guido Reni, Carlo Maratta, Andrea Solario, Castiglione, Mola, Pietro da Cortona, a Virgin by Raphael, a Tintoretto, two paintings of Rubens, a Rembrandt, four Wouvermans, a Teniers, two Claude Lorrains, and a Valentin, among others. The most expensive paintings in the group were a Marriage of St. Catherine by Pietro da Cortona (10,000 livres) and a Bourguignon, The Battle of Joshua (15,000 livres). The Rembrandt, a work called Tobias and the Angel, was obtained for 6,000 livres, and the Raphael cost but 2,000.[30]

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[29] Brière, Histoire des collections, p. 20.

[30] Engerand II, pp. 530-539. During most of the eighteenth century the value of the livre was roughly equivalent to today's new franc, that is, it had a purchasing power in modern terms of about twenty cents.

These paintings from the collection of the Prince de Carignan constituted the only large *en bloc* acquisition made during the reign of Louis XV. The King continued to make isolated purchases of importance, however. In 1749, for example, the crown bought for 12,000 livres Rubens' *Crucifixion*, and in 1751 Jacob Jordaens' *Christ Expelling the Money Changers from the Temple*.[31] In 1753, the Marquis de Marigny, then Director General of Buildings, inquired of the King whether he might purchase for the sovereign a collection of drawings of "great beauty," including two of Raphael; the King wrote "oui" on this request.[32] In 1756, the King acquired for 600 livres eighteen drawings of Daniel Volterra and others, including two attributed to Michaelangelo.[33] The expulsion of the Jesuits from France in 1763 afforded the crown an opportunity to purchase works of art owned by these dispossessed clerics, forced by act of the *parlement* of Paris to sell them in order to pay their debts. On July 22, 1763, Monsieur Cochin, keeper of the royal cabinet at Paris, addressed a long letter to his superior, the Marquis de Marigny, concerning important

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[31] *Ibid.*, p. 606; A.N., O^1 1907^b (18), 31, 38.

[32] A.N., O^1 1908 (1), 49.

[33] A.N., O^1 1908 (4), 185.

paintings in the Jesuit churches.[34] In this letter he expressed a particular desire to obtain for the crown a Poussin painting of St. Francis Xavier, but he also cast covetous eyes on works by Vouet, Tintoretto, Guido Reni, Annibale Carracci, and Le Brun, among others. He warned Marigny that they must move rapidly as there were agents in Paris empowered to purchase for the King of Prussia and for several English collectors as well, and he expressed the opinion that it would be a disgrace to the crown if these masterpieces were allowed to leave France. The Poussin was acquired for 3,800 livres; the Vouet (its subject, ironically, The Virgin Protecting the Jesuits) was also purchased, but apparently the other paintings were permitted to pass into private and foreign collections.[35]

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During the reign of Louis XV, then, the crown was preoccupied, insofar as the patronage of painters was concerned, in commanding delectable and decorative panels for the embellishment of the residences, but added to the royal collection in only a fitful, occasional, unmethodic manner which revealed both a lack of policy and the absence of a strong hand to guide the destinies of the collection. All

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[34] A.N., O^1 1910 (2), 15.

[35] Engerand II, p. 634.

of this was changed with the accession of Louis XVI to the throne in May, 1774, and the appointment of the Comte d'Angiviller to the position of Director General of Buildings in August, 1774, a post which he held until April, 1791[36] when his position and his world were swept away by the storm of the Revolution. Angiviller was a vigorous, bold, and sometimes ruthless administrator who occupied a position which afforded him a peculiar kind of power, rather narrow in scope but very deep within its limits. This position and this power he used with determination and daring in pursuit of a dream, the dream of transforming the royal collections into a great national public gallery of art. The nature of the position of Director General of Buildings, the career of the Comte de'Angiviller, and Angiviller's plans for a national gallery are all discussed at length later in this study, but for the moment we are concerned only with his activities in relation to accessions to the royal collection.

A catalogue published by Fernand Engerand in 1901 reveals that between 1774 and 1785 Angiviller added at least 200 paintings to the royal collection, to say nothing of hundreds of drawings and studies in oil.[37] Other catalogues indicate that more than thirty additional paintings were

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[36]Jacques Silvestre de Sacy, Le Comte d'Angiviller, dernier directeur général du bâtiments du roi (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1953), pp. 54, 228.

[37]Engerand II, pp. 540-584.

added between 1785 and 1787,[38] so that Angiviller must be credited with enriching the crown collection of paintings by a minimum of 230 items. Since accession records were not always kept with precise accuracy, the figure 230 is conservative -- 250 is probably a more accurate estimate.

Further, Angiviller's purchases were calculated, made always with the future museum in mind. "The comte d'Angiviller . . . bought a great deal and -- this was something new -- he bought with method."[39] His method, quite logically, was to concentrate his purchasing power in the area in which the royal collection was least impressive, that is, in the Dutch and Flemish schools. Engerand says: "We must not forget that under his direction the collection of the crown was notably enriched, particularly by numerous acquisitions of the most beautiful paintings of the Flemish and Dutch schools, of which the Louvre is today very justly proud. . . . It is largely due to the Comte d'Angiviller that the Flemish and Dutch schools are represented at the Louvre as they are; this consideration alone, it seems, should be sufficient for granting him national recognition."[40] Angiviller purchased works of both the great and small masters of the Low Countries. He often sent agents into

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[38] Ibid., pp. 585-594.

[39] Brière-Misme, Histoire des collections, p. 94.

[40] Engerand II, Introduction, pp. XXVII-XXVIII.

Belgium and Holland to bid for the crown at public sales and to negotiate with dealers. In 1777, for example, the suppression of the Jesuits in Belgium put important religious paintings on the market, and in 1783 a similar situation occurred there when the Emperor Joseph II abolished more than one hundred religious houses. Angiviller was represented on both occasions, and although the Emperor reserved the choicest items for himself the French crown was able to acquire some things, perhaps the most important being Rubens' Adoration of the Magi, bought in 1777.[41] A document of May 10, 1785, reports to the Count the purchase in Holland of ten works by small Dutch masters, all of them certified to be "superior, original, and in good condition."[42] On the whole, 1785 was an active year of collecting. Angiviller received constant and often excited reports at this time from agents in Brussels who were negotiating purchases from the estates of the suppressed religious houses and other sources.[43] On October 12, 1785, the Parisian dealer Le Brun informed the Count that he had received a collection, purchased en bloc, from Holland. Would Monsieur le Comte be interested in any of it? Monsieur le Comte was and dispatched the painter Hubert Robert, an official in the

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[41] Ibid., p. 607.

[42] A.N., O^1 1918 (2), 136.

[43] A.N., O^1 1918 (3), 297; (4), 385, 437, 449, 459, 467, 479.

Superintendence, to inspect the offerings with regard to the possibility of adding some of them to the collection for "the future museum." Robert, in a written report, found seven or eight of the works worth acquiring.[44] In March Angiviller heard of a great English collection about to come on the market and immediately set in motion an investigation of this rumor.[45]

A detailed cataloguing of Angiviller's Dutch and Flemish acquisitions would be out of place here, but the following is a representative selection of paintings from the Low Countries added to the royal collection during the last years of the Old Regime: Jacob Jordaens' The Four Evangelists, purchased in 1784 for 4,000 livres; several Teniers and Wouvermans; Ruisdael landscapes; three Rembrandts purchased in 1784 at the sale of the Comte de Vaudreuil for a total of 26,389 livres; Rubens' Adoration of the Magi acquired in 1777 for 27,720 livres; many "triste" Dutch landscapes by the minor masters; Rembrandt's Good Samaritan; Van Dyck's splendid portrait of Charles I of England, acquired from Madame du Barry in 1775 for 24,000 livres; a Rembrandt self-portrait bought in 1785 in London for 3,024 livres.[46]

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[44] A.N., O^1 1918 (4), 406, 407.

[45] A.N., O^1 1918 (1), 94.

[46] Engerand II, pp. 547-573; 587-592; 593; 602-608.

Angiviller's collecting activities were indeed centered primarily on strengthening the crown's holdings of Dutch and Flemish masters, but he did not neglect to make acquisitions in other areas. Several Italian paintings of note were added to the collection under Angiviller's administration, among them works by Guido Reni, Alessandro Veronese, Pietro da Cortona, Panini, Crespi, Parmigianino, Guercino, and several other examples of works by Italian artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Insofar as French painting was concerned, Angiviller was particularly interested in obtaining works by Eustache Le Sueur, who possessed a great reputation. The Count did manage to acquire several Le Sueurs, and in order to achieve these acquisitions he sometimes allowed his iron fist to be seen beneath the courtly velvet glove which usually covered it. One example of his occasionally ruthless techniques will suffice. Angiviller coveted for the crown a set of twenty-two paintings by Le Sueur depicting the life of St. Bruno which was in the possession of the Carthusian monks in Paris, and he did get them. Brière says laconically that "the Carthusians surrendered the Life of St. Bruno in 1776,"[47] but there was more to it than that. The Count suggested to the prior of the Paris abbey and to the father general of the order that

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[47] Brière, Histoire des collections, p. 22.

the monks make a grand and gracious gesture to the nation by freely offering this collection to the King. The prior demurred and the father general would not force his hand. The adamant prior soon found himself relieved of his post and supplanted by a colleague amenable to Angiviller's "suggestion." The paintings were duly "offered" to the King and accepted by him. As a signal of his appreciation, and possibly as a gesture of penance, the King presented the Paris abbey with his portrait and 30,000 livres to be used in the repair of the abbey church.[48] Other important French paintings acquired by Angiviller included works by Philippe de Champaigne, Vien, Greuze, Desportes, and a whole set of decorations from the Hotel Lambert which were sold by the family of Monsieur de la Haye, a well-known farmer-general.[49]

Angiviller also added to the crown's few holdings in the Spanish school. At the time the Count took office in 1774 the royal collection did not include more than three or four Spanish paintings of consequence, but in 1784 he bought three Murillos for 9,001 livres at the sale of the Comte de Vaudreuil's collection, and in 1782 he acquired another at the Sainte-Foy sale. In 1786 he bought a great Murillo Madonna and Child for 22,000 livres from the Comte

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[48] Engerand II, pp. 574-575.

[49] Ibid., pp. 574-585.

de Serrant.[50] Of these five Murillos, two are no longer attributed to him but to a pupil, so that when the Old Regime ended the crown still did not possess more than half-a-dozen genuine and significant Spanish paintings, a meagre holding reinforced only by some questionable Hapsburg portraits. The Spanish school is still the Louvre's greatest weakness, but this can be said of virtually all museums; one who would see the glories of Spanish painting must go to Spain, and especially to Madrid and the Prado, in order to experience Spain's three greatest artists, El Greco, Velasquez, and Goya. Angiviller's lack of vigor in collecting Spanish painting is perfectly understandable. No one in the eighteenth century thought about Spanish painting and, in point of fact, only works by Murillo were readily available for purchase, a circumstance reflected in Angiviller's acquisitions.

The highhanded methods Angiviller used in obtaining the St. Bruno cycle from the hapless Carthusians was not his usual method of acquisition. Normally he purchased, from individuals, from dealers, and at public sales. The latter part of the eighteenth century saw the dispersal of several excellent private collections, and these sales were often fruitful sources of acquisition for the crown. Among

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[50] Ibid., pp. 546, 592.

the more important of these sales in France were those of the estates of the Prince de Conti and Monsieur Randon de Boisset in 1777 and of the Marquis de Marigny in 1782. The extent of Angiviller's purchases and the sums he expended are partially revealed in two representative documents available in the Archives Nationales. In a three-page memorandum dated April 15, 1786, drawn in Angiviller's own hand, the Count makes a report directly to Louis XVI on paintings acquired between the years 1779 and 1785 for "the projected museum." This memorandum shows an expenditure of 627,701 livres, of which 4,476 was spent for marble busts. The report is markedly terse, not listing most of the paintings by title or description but simply by the name of the artist -- one Rembrandt, one Guido Reni, and so forth. At the end of the memorandum the Count slips in an expenditure of 126,036 livres for an unspecified number of paintings "purchased in Holland . . . from various Dutch cabinets. . . ." In analyzing the document, one cannot avoid the impression that Angiviller hoped the King would not be too much interested and would not ask too many questions; in any event, the word "approved" is affixed to the report in another hand, presumably Louis' own.[51] In another memorandum, dated January 25, 1788, Angiviller again reports to the King on acquisitions made during 1786 and 1787 "for the museum," and for these he begs "the special approval of His Majesty."

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[51] A.N., O^1 1919 (1), 109.

This memorandum reveals a total expenditure of 144,102 livres for various objects of art including paintings, drawings, and "a very numerous collection of Etruscan vases assembled at Naples by Monsieur Denon, charge d'affaires."[52] These two documents alone indicate that between 1779 and 1787 Angiviller spent at least 771,803 livres on items "for the museum." These two reports cannot be considered as complete and inclusive. There were undoubtedly many other acquisitions of an occasional or isolated nature; for example, in March of 1786, Monsieur Cochin reports to the Count that, according to orders received from him, he has purchased some eleven drawings for 1,962 livres from the sale of Monsieur Baudoin, a lot which included drawings by Titian, Pietro da Cortona, Guido Reni, and others.[53]

Angiviller's purchasing came to an abrupt halt in 1787; actually, relatively few acquisitions were made after 1785. The economic position of the royal government was becoming daily more precarious and more desperate. The office of the Controller-General of Finances demanded economy and money for buying paintings, sculpture, drawings, and Etruscan vases was no longer available to the Director General of Buildings. The Revolution was nigh, and at its advent all was changed. Just how changed Angiviller's

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[52] A.N., O^1 1920 (1), 15.

[53] A.N., O^1 1919 (1), 69.

position and policy were is vividly illustrated by a correspondence in which he engaged in the spring of 1791, shortly before he left his post in the royal household to go into emigration. A great painting by Titian, his Three Graces, came on the market for sale and was offered to the crown.[54] Angiviller rejects the offer, with obvious regret, on the grounds that his department's funds have been so severely restricted as to make such an acquisition impossible.[55] Monsieur Robert, the gentleman who has the painting for sale, replies to Angiviller's rejection with astonishment and pain and reminds the Director General that too often in the past artistic treasures which should have remained in France have been allowed to leave the country for England, Russia, and Germany; surely, he says, this situation is one which involves not so mundane a consideration as money but, rather, the national honor and glory.[56] In a letter dated March 11, 1791, which was one of the last he wrote as Director General of Buildings, the Count thanks Monsieur Robert for his zeal for the royal collection and again explains, with perfect and patient courtesy, that times have changed; his department no longer has sufficient funds even for "urgent needs," nor does the King have

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[54] A.N., O^1 1920 (5), 35.

[55] A.N., O^1 1920 (5), 9, 10.

[56] A.N., O^1 1920 (5), 13.

personally at his disposal from his civil list any extra money for such purchases.[57] This letter of Angiviller's graphically illustrates the fact that by 1791 the Old Regime was dead and a new era had begun. The Count's halcyon days of spending freely from the royal treasury, with accountability only to his sovereign, were clearly gone forever.

By 1789, then, the royal collection of paintings, soon to become the French national collection, had been importantly enhanced under the administration of the Comte d'Angiviller.. Colbert and Angiviller between them did more for the crown collection than any other two people; if Colbert may be said to have laid the real foundation for the collection, certainly it must be conceded that Angiviller built upon that foundation with taste and intelligence, strengthening its weaknesses and enlarging its scope.

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There are insoluable difficulties involved in any attempt to determine how many paintings the royal collection enclosed at the end of the Old Regime. Indeed, it is not possible to arrive at an exact figure, although an approximate one can be ventured with reasonable safety. The royal administration was not notable either for efficiency, consistency, nor scrupulous accuracy. Analyses of the various inventories

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[57] A.N., O^1 1920 (5), 14.

made during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lead one inevitably to the conclusion, or at least to the suspicion, that the officials of the crown collection usually did not know just how many items they were responsible for; still less, it seems, did they know exactly what was where in that the king's possessions were scattered about in at least a dozen different residences. Inventory figures sometimes do not agree, a fact probably due less to error in counting than to different policies in deciding what should be counted, a problem which plagues anyone today who studies the inventories. No system of scientific classification, careful inventory, and maintenance of precise records was applied to the collection until the nineteenth century. The pre-Revolutionary inventories are casual, occasional, fragmentary. Madame Chamson-Mazauric rightly says of them: "They give information of unequal value and are difficult to consult, especially because of their confusing arrangement."[58]

Bailly's inventory of 1709-1710 remained the standard reference work during all of the eighteenth century because nothing better was produced. Something better was attempted in the 1740's and 1750's when Monsieur Lépicié, an official

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[58]Lucie Chamson-Mazauric, "L'Inventaire du Musée Napoléon aux Archives du Louvre" in Études et documents sur l'art français du XII[e] au XIX[e] siècle (Paris: Archives de l'art français, Librairie Armand Colin, 1959), p. 335.

in the Superintendence of Buildings, began a monumental catalogue raisonné of the king's paintings which was to include "the biography of each artist and a detailed description and history of each painting."[59] The first and second volumes of this work appeared in 1752 and 1754 respectively, both of them dealing with paintings of the various Italian schools. Lépicié died in 1755, however, and his impressive project, which would have been invaluable had it been completed, was dropped.

Several inventories of paintings in various specific places -- Versailles, the Luxembourg, Fontainbleau, the Louvre -- were drawn up during the eighteenth century, but no careful general inventory was made which can be regarded as supplanting the basic Bailly work.

As stated previously, the Bailly inventory shows that in 1710 the royal collection enclosed 2,376 paintings. Of this figure, 1,478 were classified as paintings of "the masters," reported by "school" as follows:

Roman and Florentine	89
Venetian	102
Lombard	178
German and Flemish	179
French	930
	1,478

The remaining 898 works are classified in a manner which implies that they are a kind of artistic debris -- minatures,

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[59] Engerand I, Introduction, pp. XVI-XVII.

copies, inconsequential family portraits, paintings by unknown artists, and the like.[60] Most of these were religious paintings, landscapes, historical and mythological "machines," and still life subjects used for the casual decoration of the multitudinous royal residences. Thirty-four of these, for example, hung in the apartment of the Duchesse du Maine at Marly.[61]

The last "general total" of paintings in the royal collection made before the Revolution was a kind of cursory "head count" completed in 1788 by the Sieur Louis DuRameau, himself a painter, who was a keeper of the king's paintings and therefore an official in the Superintendence of Buildings. In a letter of March 8, 1788, DuRameau writes to the Comte d'Angiviller to say that when he entered into his position he fully expected to find a current inventory which would allow him to know exactly how many paintings the collection included, where they were located, and so on. How astonished he was to find that no such work had been undertaken since Bailly's time! He severely and rather self-righteously takes his predecessors to task for their failure in this matter, and he sets about rectifying their negligence by submitting to the Count a "general total" of the royal paintings.[62]

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[60] Ibid., Introduction, pp. IX-X.

[61] Ibid., pp. 586-590.

[62] A.N., O^1 1920 (1), 78 bis.

In DuRameau's inventory the paintings are simply listed according to the number located at a particular place -- seventy-four at the Louvre, 108 at Fontainbleau, eighty-six at Marly, and so on.[63] The total given is 1,879; a note on the document indicates that Bailly's inventory showed a total of 1,545, which is not correct according to the Engerand publication. If one takes Bailly's figure of 1,478 works by "masters," and presumes that DuRameau's total includes only paintings considered to be important enough to rank as a part of the crown collection (it seems obvious that he did not count any "debris"), one can deduce that acquisitions between 1710 and 1788 numbered about 400. This seems reasonable enough in consideration of the fact that Angiviller acquired about 230 works, which means that approximately 170 were added between 1710 and 1774. These figures must be considered essentially speculative, however, as one cannot tell from DuRameau's total whether or to what extent he counted paintings ordered by the crown from contemporary French artists, decorative panels executed for the residences, royal portraits, and other such peripheral items. He did count ceiling paintings for a total of 279, but these are listed separately and not included in the total figure of 1,879.

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[63] A.N., O^1 1965, 12, A.

Despite the uncertainties which surround the totals given in the inventories, one may safely conclude that in 1788 the royal collection of paintings numbered somewhere between 1,800 and 2,000 works of importance. It is also clear that the crown owned hundreds of additional paintings -- works by court painters, a great collection of royal portraits, series of decorative panels, and other such works, many of which would be regarded as valuable today but which were not classified as "master works" in the eighteenth century. In any event, the French royal collection of paintings was one of the richest and largest in the world, in every way worthy of the prestige of the crown and certainly an assemblage of European painting from which a splendid national gallery could be born full-blown. This was especially true of the collection just before the Revolution, in 1785 or 1786, by which time the Comte d'Angiviller had done his heaviest buying and made his most important acquisitions.

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If it is difficult to be precise as to the number of paintings in the royal collection at any given time in the eighteenth century, it is even less possible to be specific as to the number of other works of art in the collection -- sculptures, bronzes, drawings, and the like. Several <u>cartons</u> in the Archives Nationales are filled with

inventories of these objects,[64] but they are of limited value; they are fragmentary, most are listings of items in specific locations only, some are undated, and all are suspect as to accuracy and completeness. An example of these limited inventories is one made in 1733 of vases and figures in bronze and lead at Marly, both those stored and those in use; only these specific objects in this particular place are considered.[65] Another such inventory is a partial listing, made in 1724, of drawings in the royal collection, presumably only those in the Paris department of the Superintendence; the total given is 8,932.[66] A memorandum and inventory of 1747 refers to the bad state, because of dampness, of 400 large cartoons stored in the Louvre; it is proposed that these be salvaged by cutting out the best parts and reserving them in portfolios.[67] A 1752 inventory of drawings for the Paris department lists a total of 9,837 stored in 1,249 boxes.[68] In 1733 an inventory was made of sculptures in marble and bronze, busts, reliefs, and such, but no attempt was made to date the objects or give them attributions.[69]

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[64] A.N., O^1 1965, O^1 1967, O^1 1968, O^1 1969.

[65] A.N., O^1 1965, 1.

[66] A.N., O^1 1965, 3.

[67] A.N., O^1 1965, 2.

[68] A.N., O^1 1965, 8.

[69] A.N., O^1 1965, 4.

Many of these inventories are simply brief additional listings of new acquisitions and obviously were meant to be added to existing inventories. A little inventory of 1790 of paintings in the "Petit Hotel du Gardemeuble" is interesting in that it attempts to do something new, that is, to assess a monetary evaluation of the items;[70] the inventories of the Old Regime never bothered with anything so crass as the money value of the king's art objects.

Studying these disorganized and piecemeal inventories is rather like being allowed frustrating glimpses into a series of fabulously furnished rooms just before the doors are shut -- one obtains fleeting impressions of great riches but is never afforded the opportunity to take a really good look. Nevertheless, we know enough of these possessions of the French sovereigns, other than paintings, to know that if ever the government of the Old Regime had managed to create a national gallery it would have been able to complement the exhibition of paintings with a selection of items chosen from among vast holdings of antique and modern sculpture, busts, bronzes, reliefs, ivories, tapestries, drawings, prints, medals, coins, medallions, and all manner of objects falling into the classification of "minor" or "decorative" arts.

Here one can move into a fringe area of deciding what is and what is not "art," and, even more difficult, an

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[70] A.N., O^1 1967, 5.

area of determining what the eighteenth century did and did not regard as "art." These matters hardly need be decided here; it is sufficient for our purposes to realize that the royal collection at the end of the eighteenth century was as rich in its way in art objects of all kinds as it was in paintings.

B. Disposition and Accessibility of the Collections: Who Could see What, and Where?

"The kings had always displayed their collections freely, but no one in the seventeenth century thought of claiming that the general public should have regular access to the galleries. It seemed that the masterpieces were to be objects of enjoyment only for connoisseurs and of study only for artists."[71] Certainly the general public did not have regular access to the royal collections in either the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, but to see the collections would have been somewhat difficult even for one favored with admission to them. Such a person, armed with a letter of permit from the Director General of Buildings, would have had to be something of a traveler as well as a man possessed of much leisure time and a great deal of patience; even granting him all of these requirements, there would undoubtedly have been some objects of surpassing importance which he would never have seen.

A study of Bailly's inventory of 1709-1710[72] reveals that the "exactly 2,376" paintings in the possession of the

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[71] Louis Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, le château - le palais - le musée, des origines à nos jours, 1200-1940 (Paris: L'Illustration, n.d.), p. 77. (Hereafter Histoire du Louvre.)

[72] Engerand I. Statements made on pages 47-50 concerning the location of paintings are based on an analysis of the Bailly inventory as a whole.

crown at that time were distributed among eleven royal residences: Versailles, the Luxembourg, Saint Germain-en-Laye, Fontainebleau, the Louvre, Meudon, the Trianon, Marly, Vincennes, the Tuileries, and Chaville. The Louvre, the Tuileries, and the Luxembourg were, of course, in Paris. The Trianon was a small auxiliary palace near Versailles where the court seldom actually resided but to which it repaired on occasion for some fête or other. Saint Germain was an old château about fifteen miles from Paris which had been assigned to the exiled James II of England but to which the court seldom went in the eighteenth century. Meudon, only a few miles from both Paris and Versailles, was the personal residence of Monseigneur, the Grand Dauphin, Louis XIV's son and heir, and continued to be associated with the dauphins and their families during the eighteenth century. Marly was a small, beautifully situated château near Versailles which Louis XIV used as a private retreat when he wished to be "informal." The château of Vincennes, seven or eight miles west of Paris, was used in the eighteenth century only as a prison and an arsenal. Fontainebleau, about forty miles to the southwest of Paris, is considered by many to be the most human and charming of all the royal residences; Louis XIV and his successors, all dedicated hunters, were often at Fontainebleau for the sake of following the chase in the surrounding forest. Most of these residences still exist, of course, and all are either in Paris or relatively close to it.

According to the Bailly inventory, which is very precise as to the location of each painting, most of the 369 Italian masters were at Versailles. The 179 "German and Flemish," the 930 French, and the 898 "debris" items were distributed impartially among all the residences, with some things in storage. Certainly the best and most important paintings graced Versailles, most of them hanging in one of six locations within the main château: grand appartement du roi, petit appartement du roi, cabinet des médailles, cabinet de la surintendance, petite galerie du roi, and cabinet des tableaux. Many paintings, of course, hung elsewhere in the palace -- in the apartments of Monseigneur, the Duchesse de Berri, Madame de Maintenon and other members of the royal family, and in various other rooms, apartments, halls, and galleries. Some examination of the location of famous works at Versailles, as specified by the Bailly inventory, may be useful. The Mona Lisa, for example, hung in the petite galerie du roi and other Leonardos in the surintendance. Raphael's St. Michael and his Holy Family of Francis I were both in the grand appartement. Pietro da Cortona's Nativity of the Virgin was also in the grand appartement, as were at least three Titians, a Veronese, several works by Guido Reni, a Domenichino, Guercino's Virgin and St. Peter, two works by Rubens, three by Van Dyck, and many other paintings. Of thirty-four works by Poussin, nine were in the petit appartement, eleven in the

cabinet des tableaux. Rembrandt's self-portrait was in the cabinet des tableaux. Most of the Holbeins were in the surintendance. Of the four Caravaggios, one was in the petit appartement and three in the cabinet des tableaux. The twenty-eight works attributed to Veronese were scattered all over the château, but all eight of the Tintorettos were concentrated in the cabinet des tableaux. The Duchesse de Berri had two of the seven so-called Giorgiones as well as two Raphaels. Andrea del Sarto's Charity and Holy Family both hung in the surintendance.

During the eighteenth century the paintings in the royal collection were not necessarily immobilized in any particular location. They could be and were moved about from place to place within a residence, or from château to château, at the desire of the sovereign, upon the whim of a member of the royal family, or even at the will of some lesser being. For example, during the reign of Louis XIV the Director General of Buildings was in leading strings to the king and had little leeway for independent action. In 1716, however, the Superintendence was created an autonomous department, primarily in order that the duc d'Orléans might be relieved of the boredom of making "an infinite number of signatures" for it. Directly this occurred, the cream of the royal collection of paintings disappeared from view for twenty years. The Director of Buildings from 1709 to 1736 was the Duc d'Antin, Madame de Montespan's legitimate son,

and of him Engerand says: "The first act of the Duc d'Antin, thus emancipated, was to transfer to his own Paris residence all the most beautiful paintings of the king's collection in order to enjoy them personally and exclusively for the remainder of his administration."[73]

The physical status of the collection remained approximately the same under Louis XV and Louis XVI as it was in 1710, that is to say, it remained dispersed in a wide area around Paris. The only difference was that by the end of the Old Regime the collection was more scattered than ever in that the crown had in the meantime acquired several more residences -- hunting lodges, little retreats, a new château here and there for particular members of the family. DuRameau's "head count" inventory of 1788[74] reveals that the paintings were at that time located in no less than twenty-four different places, eighteen of which were officially royal residences albeit many of them were seldom or never visited by king and court. DuRameau's inventory, with regard to the number of paintings at a given location, is as follows:

Château du Louvre	74
Château de Tuileries	31
Château de Versailles	102
Château de Fontainebleau	108
Château de Saint Cloud	
Château de Compiègne	16
Château de Bellevue	23

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[73] Engerand II, Introduction, pp. IX-X.

[74] A.N., O^1 1965, 12, A.

Château de Choisy	62
Château de Marly	86
Château de Meudon	57
Château de La Muette	16
Château de Vincennes	39
Château de Saint Germain	7
Château du Grand Trianon	93
Château du Petit Trianon	16
Château de La Ménagerie	76
Château de Brunoy	4
Communauté de Saint Cyr	8
Hotel des Invalides	12
École Militaire	21
Manufacture des Gobelins	
Cabinet des Tableaux à Versailles	666
Depot au Louvre rez-de-Chaussée	144
Depot au Louvre Pavillon neuf	193
Galerie du Luxembourg	24
Saint Hubert	1
Total	1,879

This inventory shows that of the 1,879 total, more than half were at Versailles locations: 666 in the cabinet des tableaux, 102 hung in the château in various other places, and a total of 185 in the Grand and Petit Trianons and the Ménagerie. Four hundred and thirteen items were at the Louvre, but of this number 339 were in storage. The remaining 513 paintings were very unequally divided among sixteen other places; this division was undoubtedly made largely on the basis of the decorative requirements of the various residences and the tastes of their occupants.

In 1784, four years before he did his "head count" inventory, DuRameau executed an inventory of paintings in the office of the Superintendence at Versailles.[75] This

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[75]Louis-Jacques DuRameau, L'Inventaire des tableaux du roi placés à la surintendance des bâtiments de sa Majesté à Versailles. 1784. Tome Premier. Bibliothèque du Louvre, No. 905.

inventory, which is in the Bibliothèque du Louvre and presently in the keeping of the Cabinet des Dessins, is a charming piece of work, very much a product of the eighteenth century. Done in miniature volumes, it is a "topographic" inventory, that is, it is really a drawing, delicately tinted, showing the wall plan of the collection with a keyed listing opposite each wall illustration. At this time there were 369 paintings hanging in a total of nine rooms belonging to the Superintendence. These 369 works included the following number by some of the most famous masters:[76]

Raphael	7	Michaelangelo	2
Rembrandt	2	Poussin	14
Correggio	3	Titian	12
Leonardo	7	Tintoretto	2
Giorgione	5	Veronese	9
Rubens	4	Claude Lorrain	6
Van Dyck 4			

This collection of paintings in the Superintendence was obviously a concentration of some of the best items in the entire royal collection. Eighteen paintings hanging in the first room included Leonardo's La Belle Ferronière, a Holbein portrait, a Raphael Virgin and Child, a Veronese, an Andrea del Sarto, and Titian's Young Man with a Glove. It is intriguing to see, however, that the Leonardo, the Holbein, and the Raphael shared a wall with four dog paintings by Desportes, one of which was entitled: "Three dogs, named Nonne, Bonne, and Ponne, who are pointing redleg

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[76] Again the reader is advised that eighteenth-century attributions are not guaranteed.

partridges."[77] Fifty-two paintings hung in the second room, among them works by Leonardo, Rubens, Titian, Van Dyck, and Veronese. Altogether, this little collection was a most select one and included many paintings of great fame, including: the Pontormo and Raphael self-portraits; Raphael's portrait of Joanna of Aragon; a Rembrandt self-portrait; a Raphael Holy Family; Titian's St. Sebastian and his Pilgrims at Emmaus; Veronese's Christ Carrying the Cross, his Apparition of Christ to Sts. Peter and Paul, and his Moses Saved by the Pharoah's Daughter; Leonardo's Virgin, Child, and St. John; Van Dyck's portrait of Marie de Medici; Andrea del Sarto's Holy Family; and works by Claude Lorrain, Poussin, and Giorgione. Fifty-eight paintings hung in the personal apartment of the Director General of Buildings who was, of course, the Comte d'Angiviller. One is constrained to admire Angiviller's taste -- his "personal collection" included the Mona Lisa; two Raphael portraits, one of which was the famous portrait of Count Balthasar Castiglione; a Titian portrait of a man and a Titian Holy Family; Rembrandt's Pilgrims at Emmaus; a Veronese Holy Family; Tintoretto's portrait of a young Venetian woman; Poussin's Death of Adonis; Rubens' Lot and His Family; and three Correggios.[78]

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[77] DuRameau, op. cit., p. 1.

[78] Ibid., pp. 35-43.

These paintings kept in the Superintendence at Versailles were not hung according to any system of school, chronology, or value. Leonardo's Virgin, Child, and St. Anne, which is one of the great triumphs of Renaissance painting, and Sebastian del Piombo's Visitation were displayed on the same wall with an outsize portrait of Madame la Dauphine by Tocque and Rigaud's portraits of the Duc de Bourgogne and the Grand Dauphin; the royal likenesses had by far the lion's share of the wall space.[79] This 1784 inventory of DuRameau also included a listing of some 753 paintings in storage at Versailles; most of these were copies and works by obscure, mediocre, or anonymous French painters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although the list included some important things, such as: five Bouchers; four Breugels; two Holbein portraits; several works by Nattier, Lancret, and Natoire; one Rubens (Victory Crowning a Hero); two Tintorettos (Descent from the Cross and Martyrdom of St. Maurice); three Titians (the Ecce Homo and two portraits); and a Veronese (Christ Healing a Woman).[80]

Collections of other art objects belonging to the crown were as dispersed as the collection of paintings. Most of the drawings were kept at the Louvre. Busts,

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[79] Ibid., p. 20.

[80] Louis-Jacques DuRameau, L'Inventaire des tableaux du roi placés à la surintendance des bâtiments de sa Majesté à Versailles. 1784. Tome Second. "Tableaux et bordures qui sont présentement au magazin." Bibliotheque du Louvre, No. 905.

sculptures, reliefs, and bronzes were distributed about the residences and the parks and gardens which surrounded them. For example, there is in the Archives Nationales an inventory of bronzes and marbles which shows that these items were divided among Versailles, the Ménagerie, the Trianon, the park of Versailles, Marly, Meudon, the Tuileries gardens, the Luxembourg, Vincennes, Fontainebleau, and the garden of the Orangerie, and that many more were in storehouses at Versailles, Marly, the Louvre, and the other residences.[81] Versailles housed much of the sculpture and marbles.[82] An inventory of 1710 by Monsieur Coypel indicates that the Paris department of the Superintendence was responsible not only for most of the drawings but also for collections of bronzes, antique marbles, and medieval ivories.[83] A 1733 inventory states that in the Salle des Antiques at the Louvre there were displayed about sixty figures, 103 busts, and seventy-five heads, some antiques and some copies.[84] A large collection of medals, coins, medallions, and carved gem stones was in the cabinet des médailles at Versailles. The tapestries and other objects of decorative art were here and there in the various residences according to need. Much of

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[81] A.N., O^1 1967, 4, undated but of the eighteenth century.

[82] A.N., O^1 1967, 2.

[83] A.N., O^1 1965, 3.

[84] A.N., O^1 1965, 4.

everything, of course, was in storage, mostly at Versailles and the Louvre, for the simple truth was that by the middle of the eighteenth century the crown owned far more in the way of paintings and art objects than it could actually use.

During the Old Regime, then, the royal collections were at once highly concentrated and extremely scattered, that is, they were widely dispersed within a relatively small area. Virtually every painting and art object the crown owned was in Paris or its immediate environs and certainly within a fifty mile radius of the city. Within this area, however, the collections were divided among a dozen different locations at the end of Louis XIV's reign and among two dozen places by the end of the Old Regime, including about six additional châteaux acquired by the crown during the course of the eighteenth century. Further, the items in the royal collections could be highly mobile within the rather narrow limits of their travel possibilities. An item at Versailles in 1710 would not necessarily be found there in 1715 but might have been put into storage, sent to the Paris department, or dispatched to some other royal château. In 1733, for example, there were about 150 paintings at Meudon; in 1788 there were but fifty-seven in that location.[85] In 1785 the château of Saint Cloud housed 350 paintings, but three years later, in 1788, there were

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[85] A.N., O^1 1967, 7; O^1 1965, 12, A.

none there.[86] Marly had over 200 paintings in 1733 but only eighty-six in 1788.[87] In 1741 the Trianon possessed about 150 paintings but had less than 100 in 1788.[88] All of this would seem to indicate that the collection was shifted about a great deal within the fifty-mile circle of territory which encompassed the royal châteaux. It would seem, however, that this impression is not entirely correct. A study of the inventories cited above leads to the conclusion that most of the paintings in the lesser residences were insignificant or "debris" works, many of which were consigned to storage during the eighteenth century. The really important items in the painting collection -- the Leonardos, the Raphaels, the Rembrandts, and works by the other great masters -- were not moved lightly, if at all, at least not after the Duc d'Antin's raid on the collection early in the eighteenth century. The best of the royal collection, in all categories and genre, was always at Versailles, at the Louvre, and at the Luxembourg, and anyone wishing to see the finest art in the king's possession would not have had to stir far from Paris; Versailles, after all, included both Trianons and the Ménagerie. The other royal residences did not normally house items of real importance, with the exception of

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[86] Ibid.

[87] A.N., O^1 1965, 5; O^1 1965, 12, A.

[88] A.N., O^1 1965, 6, C; O^1 1965, 12, A.

Fontainebleau; a trip to this latter château, which is one of the farthest from Paris, would have been rewarding in that it was used more or less regularly by the sovereigns and did enclose paintings and other objects of significance.

The DuRameau inventory of 1784 of paintings in the Superintendence offices at Versailles reveals that a great number of the finest and most valuable works in the painting collection were housed there, many of them in the Director General's own apartment. Considering the action of the Duc d'Antin, one might be tempted to presume that this concentration of artistic splendor in the Director General's suite was for the personal enjoyment of the Comte d'Angiviller. Such a conclusion would probably be incorrect, however. Angiviller had a passion for paintings, to be sure, but he had a still greater passion for the creation of a public museum; his temperament and his policy both militate against any assumption that he appropriated the best of the crown's paintings for his private delectation. The assemblage of great masterpieces in the Superintendence at Versailles was most likely a simple security measure, a policy designed primarily to afford these priceless paintings with the greatest degree of safety pending their transfer to a fully constituted and properly staffed national gallery. Thousands of people wandered in and out of Versailles every day and the palace was not especially well-guarded. "The policing of Versailles left much to be desired. Toward the end of

the [seventeenth] century thieves succeeded in removing the gold bullion fringes from the curtains in one of the principal salons, and at about the same period a sacrilegious scoundrel, who was never caught, stole a solid silver receptacle from under the King's own bed. One summer night in 1699, harness and hammer cloths to the value of about 10,000 louis d'or were stolen from the Grand Ecurie, and there again, the thieves were never discovered."[89] In common with museum directors of today, the king's Director General of Buildings had always to be concerned with the security of the objects confided to his keeping.

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Any attempt to determine who could gain access to the royal collections during the Old Regime must necessarily rest upon a consideration of the facts of social and court life in eighteenth-century France. Certainly the royal collections were not open to the general public; about this there can be no question. The kings of France led extremely public lives, however, and many thousands of people had regular access to the royal palaces. Versailles alone harbored some 10,000 persons when the full court was in residence. The royal châteaux generally, and Versailles particularly, were rather open places. All the great

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89 W. H. Lewis, The Splendid Century (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957), p. 51.

galleries and salons in the residences were more or less public, especially at Versailles. Indeed, the sovereign's very bedroom was hardly a private place; the king's every action in rising and retiring was witnessed daily by an eager crowd of courtiers, princes of the blood royal, functionaries, chaplains, officials, and servants. It seems safe to presume, therefore, that nearly anyone connected with the court could manage to see a great many of the king's paintings and other art objects easily enough, either by making a special effort or just in the ordinary routine of the day. If one's position as courtier, official of the royal household, servant, or whatever were such that one accompanied the sovereign on his frequent peregrinations from château to château, one could manage eventually to see what was in nearly all of the crown residences. It would also seem reasonable to suppose that anyone attached to a particular residence could easily enough gain entrance to any of the others upon application to the proper official. There were even occasions when the ordinary citizen could penetrate Versailles, a feat most easily accomplished on the days when the king dined in public. In this regard, W. H. Lewis says: "If Louis was dining au public, any decently dressed person could witness him doing so, and to drive out from Paris to Versailles to see the King eat was a popular form of entertainment. But, unlike the more favored courtier, you could not stand and stare at him;

the public was admitted at one door and let out at another, in a queue which was kept moving past the royal dinner table."[90] Just how much in the way of art one might contrive to see on such an excursion to Versailles is admittedly problematical, but the circumstance did provide an opportunity whereby average people not attached to the court might glimpse some of the king's treasures, at least in passing.

A commonly accepted historical assertion is that virtually all court business, and much of the business of state, in eighteenth-century France was conducted on the basis of personal relationships -- family connections, old friendships, old enmities, traditional obligations, favors given and received, and the like. The question of who could see what in the royal collections depended to a large extent upon who one was and, perhaps still more important, whom one knew. It may be taken for granted that the professional courtier could contrive to see most of what he might wish to see. But even if a noble were not a courtier he would normally have a connection somewhere in the intricate ramifications of his complex of relatives and relatives by marriage which would produce a letter of permit from the Director General of Buildings. There was scarcely a member of the French nobility living in the eighteenth century who

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90 Ibid., p. 50.

was so provincial and so remote from the life of his class that he did not have kindred or friends somewhere in the vast, interlocked hierarchy of the court through which he could wrangle a petty favor every now and then. And most French nobles tended to make full, unblushing use of their connections at court, no matter how tenuous or vague these might seem to modern eyes. There are in the Archives many examples of special permits issued by the Superintendence to nobles. In 1777, for instance, the Marquis de Cossé wrote to the Comte d'Angiviller to request that he be allowed to take a party of friends, including a foreign count and countess, to view the paintings in the Superintendence at Versailles. Angiviller replied cordially, and the Marquis' permit was dispatched forthwith.[91] In December of 1788 a Monsieur de Croismare wrote to Angiviller for permission to see the paintings in the Luxembourg, which by that time had been closed to the public. Monsieur de Croismare, pleading ignorance of art, also requested permission to bring along

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[91] A.N., O^1 1670, 112, 113. The documents referred to are the Marquis de Cossé's letter (112) and the drafts of Angiviller's reply and permit, written in the Count's hand (113). A record of the action taken by the Superintendence in many situations was preserved in the archives in this way, that is, the Director General's drafted reply was retained to serve the function that carbon copies serve today. Professional scribes or secretaries copied the draft in an elegant script for dispatch and the draft was kept for the files.

some connoisseur friends who could explain the pictures to him. This request was readily granted, and Monsieur Bailly, keeper of the paintings at the Luxembourg, was instructed to give Monsieur de Croismare and his company full access.[92] In April of 1787 a brace of vicomtesses was given special permission to view the collections in the Louvre, this at the request of the Baron de Bernecourt.[93] Indeed, if one's rank were high enough every manner of privilege might be demanded and obtained. In 1783 the Duc de Luxembourg asked Angiviller for permission to escort some ladies, "who feared the crowds," to see the annual salon in the Louvre at a time when it was closed to the public. Needless to say, the Duke was accommodated.[94]

Most members of the upper middle class, the French economic aristocracy, could also expect to operate successfully in the same way as the noble. A banker, financier, farmer-general, or merchant yearning to see the royal art collections could, almost without doubt, exploit his position and friendships -- and sometimes a family alliance with the nobility -- to gain the necessary permission. Educated persons with scholarly interests and artists with professional interests also usually had rather free access to the

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[92] A.N., O^1 1916 (1), 420, 421.

[93] A.N., O^1 1670, 164, 165.

[94] A.N., O^1 1670, 240, 241.

collection, especially those parts of it which were at the Louvre and the Luxembourg. The Archives contain many petitions by artists for permission to study and to copy in the royal galleries and many permits granted for such activities. Requests by artists were not always honored, but it appears that they were acceded to more often than not.[95]

But most Frenchmen, after all, belonged to that part of society referred to by Marx as "the proletariat," by Ortega y Gasset as "the masses," and by nearly everyone as "ordinary people." What of them? What of the butcher, the baker, the weaver, the shopkeeper, the carter, the servant, the clerk, the innkeeper, the barmaid, the tailor, the craftsman, people not necessarily "decently dressed," sans culottes, middle class people without any connections whatever at court or in the royal administration, people without the influence or wealth which opened doors and produced permits? Had they any opportunity whatever to see any part of the crown collections during the Old Regime? The answer must be no, except for what they might have glimpsed in the royal gardens and what might have been seen between 1750 and 1779 in the little public gallery at the Luxembourg, a phenomenon discussed at some length in a later chapter. The question of whether or not these "ordinary people" wished to see the royal collections would seem irrelevant to the issue here.

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[95] A.N., O^1 1916 (1), 323; O^1 1908 (2), 2, 3, 4, 5; O^1 1684, 340, 341, 351; O^1 1910 (3), 76, 77.

Many undoubtedly had no interest in art, but many, perhaps, would have enjoyed seeing the king's paintings and sculpture; the important point is that the royal collection was so effectively closed to them that it might as well not have existed.

An eighteenth century guidebook to Paris, published in 1778, lists the names and address of twenty-nine private persons in Paris possessing "beautiful cabinets of paintings."[96] The owners of these cabinets, the author asserts, have "opened them to all those who wish to study the great models in order to form their taste or perfect their talents." These private collections belonged to such people as the Prince de Condé, the Duc de Praslin, the Marquis de Marigny, farmers-general, bankers, and other wealthy members of the nobility and the upper layer of the Third Estate. The guidebook also directs the attention of the reader to the collection of the Duc d'Orléans, "known as one of the richest in Europe," and implies that one can gain admission to this

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96 Antoine Nicolas Dezallier d'Argenville, Voyage pittoresque de Paris, ou indication de tout ce qu'il y a de plus beau dans cette ville, en peinture, sculpture, & architecture (6th ed.; Paris: Frères de Bure, 1778), Préface, pp. v-vii. Authorship is verified in A. A. Barbier et. al., Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes (3rd ed.; 4 vols.; Paris: Paul Daffis, Libraire-Éditeur, 1872-1879), IV, 2e partie, p. 1094. (Hereafter "Barbier.")

collection also.[97] None of these collections, of course, had anything to do with the royal collection, which is the only concern of this study, but it seems doubtful that just anyone could have gained admission to them in spite of the author's cheerful confidence as to their accessibility. These collectors apparently did open their cabinets with considerable generosity, but a tattered maidservant or a muddy drayman seeking admission would probably never have got past the Swiss, assuming that such people would even have made the attempt. The guidebook also refers to the Louvre and to that part of the crown collection reserved there. In this regard, the author says: "It is necessary not to neglect to see the Cabinet of Drawings of His Majesty: it is a collection of about 10,000 drawings and great paintings, old as well as modern, the guardianship of which is confided to Monsieur Cochin, secretary and historiographer of the Academy of Paintings, at the Galleries of the Louvre."[98] The author is not specific as to how one gets into the Cabinet of Drawings, but his careful citation of Cochin's title and address implies that a letter of application would be the normal means; certainly the royal collection at the Louvre was not public in the sense that anyone could walk into it.

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[97] Ibid., Préface, p. v.

[98] Ibid., p. 59.

What of tourists in the eighteenth century, that breed of people who are such indefatigable museum visitors? What could the foreign traveler see of the royal collections? Here, again, some reference to the social realities of the Old Regime is necessary. Today all manner of people travel abroad, people from every walk of life and every degree of economic circumstance. Such was not the case in the eighteenth century. Who were the tourists, those traveling for pleasure and edification, who came to France before 1789? Usually they were German princelings escaping from the boredom of their estates, Polish and Russian nobles bent on the same mission, young English gentlemen making a leisurely grand tour in the company of a tutor, and such people. Others did travel, of course, on private or state business or for personal reasons, but the usual tourist was a member of an aristocratic or upper level of society at home. He would normally bring with him letters of introduction which would gain entry for him into a comparable level of French society. These contacts would usually provide him with some access to court, perhaps even presentation to the sovereign, and certainly would be such that he could arrange to see much of the crown collection if he wished to do so. For example, in 1783, the Baron de Ramdohr, a nobleman from Hanover visiting Paris, wrote to the Comte d'Angiviller requesting permission to see the Rubens paintings in the Luxembourg and also the Le Sueur cycle of the life of St.

Bruno. Angiviller was happy to oblige with reference to the Luxembourg but was not sure he could arrange for the Baron to see the Le Sueurs because of particular circumstances at that moment.[99] In 1778 Angiviller made arrangements for another foreign gentleman to have special access to the gallery of Rubens at the Luxembourg, this at the request of the Comte de Buffon.[100] The guidebook writer cited above points out that "one of the primary objects of those who travel is to acquire or to perfect a taste for the arts." His book, he states, is written for just such people, as well as for "the great number of inhabitants of the capital who are strangers in their own city."[101] His assumption seems to be that anyone, tourist or native, who reads his guidebook will be the kind of person who can, without question, obtain access to the royal collection and the various private collections in Paris. This assumption was probably sound enough.

Most historians of the Revolution now assert that the real social, political, and economic distinctions in the Old Regime lay not between the three estates but between a relatively small minority of "privileged" and the great mass of "unprivileged." This distinction was certainly valid

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[99] A.N., O^1 1917 (1), 305, 306, 307.

[100] A.N., O^1 1915 (1), 189.

[101] Argenville, op. cit., Préface, p. iii.

with reference to access to the royal collections. François Benoit, a French art historian, says: "In 1785, of 1,122 paintings inventoried by DuRameau, 369 only were exposed and these in châteaux inaccessible to the public. The drawings were in portfolios; the gems and medals were so jealously guarded that they were practically invisible and one of the keepers, Barthélemy, went off to Italy carrying the key to the storeroom!"[102] This statement is incorrect on several points. The DuRameau inventory cited was done in 1784 rather than in 1785. The figure of 1,122 paintings referred to was the number of works in the Superintendence and in storage at Versailles and not, as Benoit implies, the total number of paintings in the entire collection. The 369 paintings specified by DuRameau were those which hung only in the offices of the Superintendence at Versailles; Benoit's statement would lead one to believe that only 369 paintings out of the whole collection were on display somewhere. According to DuRameau's "location count" of 1788, at least 876 paintings were hanging in various locations, and this figure does not include the 666 in the cabinet des tableaux at Versailles. Further, Benoit gives a false impression as to the accessibility of the collection, implying as he does that the royal art treasures were so thoroughly locked up and put away that no one could see anything of them. Of

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102 François Benoit, L'Art français sous la Révolution et l'Empire (Paris: Société française d'éditions d'art, L.-Henry May, 1897), p. 111.

course the drawings were in portfolios; all museums today keep their drawings in storage of some sort as it would not be possible to display all of them, but this does not mean that they cannot be seen and it did not mean that in the eighteenth century. Naturally the gems and other small precious objects were kept locked up as a security measure, but again one cannot conclude from this that they were invisible to all.

The truth of the matter lay somewhere between Benoit's implication of almost total inaccessibility and a policy of regular public admission. Many people could see much of the royal collection, although not those items in the private apartments of members of the royal family; most people could see little or none of it; a few people could see any of it they might wish to see. The extent of one's admittance to the collections or exclusion from them depended upon whether one was "privileged" or "unprivileged," and, if one were fortunate enough to belong to the former category, the degree of one's privilege. This in turn depended upon one's birth, position, profession, economic status, "contacts," or a combination of these factors. In summary, it can be safely asserted that during the Old Regime the crown collections were rather generously open to a large number of people, both French and foreign, but were not open at all to the vast majority of Frenchmen.

C. The Status of the Collections: Royal Treasure or National Heritage?

The past few hundred years have seen many a monarchial regime disappear in Europe. Very often when some royal family has found itself ousted from its sovereignty by the sweep of history it has also found itself separated from properties, objects, and chattels which it considered to be rightfully its own. Such situations have led to prolonged and sometimes bitter wrangles over the question of what royal possessions belonged to the family personally and what might correctly be regarded as the property of the nation. The French Revolutionary leaders solved the problem in a neat and uncomplicated manner by confiscating, in the name of the state, the totality of the royal domain and possessions. But, in truth, the question does not admit of any facile solution other than an arbitrary one.

No inquiry into the legal status of the royal art collections was ever posed during the reign of Louis XIV. No one would have dared to challenge that sovereign on such a matter, but if anyone had done so Louis would surely have had a reply directly to the point and of the essence of simplicity: the collections were his to do with as he liked. Why would they not be his? All of France was his -- his realm received from Divine Providence, his domain to rule as he saw fit, his private estate duly and properly inherited from his ancestors; his the land and his the law, his the

power and his the state, with all appertaining thereto. And in theory, of course, Louis was right. It is generally conceded that whether or not he ever said, "I am the state," he could have said it and been on very solid ground. He was the state, both in abstract principle and in daily reality. The identification of the sovereign with the nation and the state, the absorption of the nation and the state into the person of the sovereign -- these concepts were inherent in the very nature and substance of seventeenth-century royal absolutism, a system of government with its historical roots in the development of early medieval Europe, its functioning reality in practical necessity, and its rational justification in the Divine Right dogma as expounded by James I of England and Louis XIV's Bishop Bossuet. With such a premise, it becomes extremely difficult to separate the man from the sovereign, the monarch's personal income from the revenues of the state, and the king's private possessions from those of the nation. Indeed, in the case of a full-blown absolutism such as Louis XIV's, such separations are not possible. Louis XIV was never simply Louis de Bourbon; taxes collected all over the kingdom constituted his personal income, to dispose and expend as he would; what the state possessed was his, and what he possessed was the state's, for they were one.

During the reign of Louis XV the question of the status of the royal collections, and the question of the

extent to which the nation should be permitted to enjoy them, began to be debated, tentatively at first and then more boldly. With the Enlightenment came the idea that although the collections might be the king's in law they were the people's in equity. The royal government, itself permeated to some extent by the Enlightenment and the theories of enlightened despotism, began to make concessions. A small gallery displaying a fraction of the royal collection of paintings was opened in the palace of the Luxembourg in Paris in 1750. Ideas for the transformation of the crown collections into a national gallery, in the sense in which that term is usually employed, began to appear within the royal administration. Louis Courajod, a French art historian who is something of an apologist for the Old Regime, states: "There is no error more strongly engrained in the Parisian mind than that which gives to the museum of the Louvre an exclusively Revolutionary origin. Deceived by appearances, they confuse the actual organization with the institution itself. From the year 1750 the principle of the publicity of the royal collection, and one can say national collection -- for at this time the two phrases become synonymous -- was established in France. From this date a notable portion of the king's paintings was exposed publicly and freely at the Luxembourg. The doors were open twice a week, which was sufficient for art lovers in those times when dilettantism did not yet run in the streets. In winter

the rooms were heated at the king's expense, that is to say, at the expense of the state. The paintings exhibited were designated in a booklet which was sold at the entrance; at the same time all the king's paintings were inventoried, described, and brought to the attention of the entire world in a magnificent catalogue prepared by Bernard Lépicié with the greatest care and printed with the greatest luxury. All art lovers who could justify a serious motive could see them, as is the practice still today in the public libraries of Europe with regard to the monuments which they possess. The only and immense disadvantages were the dispersion of all the works of art in a great number of different residences, the dangers of all sorts to which they were exposed, and the difficulty of making comparisons. But one can say that the publication of Lépicié's catalogue, in a rational country such as ours, had as a necessary and inevitable consequence the gathering together of all the king's paintings in one place. Their permanent exposition was to be only a matter of time."[103]

Courajod's statements are open to some challenge. Just how significant the little gallery of the Luxembourg was, what it really meant, and how "notable" a portion of the royal paintings was exhibited there -- these are questions which will be considered in Chapter IV of this study.

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[103]Louis Courajod, Alexandre Lenoir, son journal et la Musée des Monuments Français (3 vols.; Paris: Honoré Champion Librairie, 1878-1887), I, Introduction, pp. XXV-XXVI.

The Lépicié catalogue, which Courajod seems to regard as a kind of turning point in the development of the crown collection from the status of royal treasure to that of a national heritage, was not an inventory of "all the king's paintings" which focused the attention of "the entire world" on the French royal collection; it was a great project, to be sure, but it died almost stillborn with the death of its creator, Lépicié, who finished but two volumes dealing only with the Italian paintings.[104] Courajod would also have his readers believe that by the middle of the eighteenth century the king had been so far won over to the "national heritage" viewpoint that the royal collections were freely open to "all art lovers who could justify a serious motive." When Courajod says "all art lovers" he is in the position of the Washington hostess who says happily that "everybody" was at her party; what the hostess means by "everybody" is "everybody who matters," and what Courajod means by "all art lovers" is "all art lovers of the right sort" -- which does not include most people. Courajod also bluntly asserts that by 1750 or so the royal collections had "lost their character of furnishings marked for the personal use of the sovereign in order to assume that of a national establishment."[105] He

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[104] Engerand I, Introduction, pp. XVI-XVII.

[105] Courajod, op. cit., I, Introduction, p. XXV.

rather vitiates his own thesis, however, by admitting that the collections were open only in what must be regarded as a highly selective manner and, furthermore, were difficult to see because of the fact that they were so scattered among the numerous royal châteaux. The latter point, especially, is significant; it clearly reveals that during the eighteenth century the collections were still regarded essentially as royal chattels and still being used as they had always been used, that is, as decorations to lend splendor to the residences. One can grant that during the reign of Louis XV the royal consciousness and the royal administration began to be penetrated by some new attitudes toward the status of the collections and began to take the first exploratory steps toward a policy of converting at least a part of them into a national gallery. Nevertheless, the paintings were still "the king's paintings," and all the other art objects in the royal collections were just as much the sovereign's possessions -- to have and to hold, to propose and to dispose -- as they were in the time of the Grand Monarque.

The legal status of the collections did not change with the accession of Louis XVI to the throne in 1774. They did not become more accessible but actually less so for reasons which will be discussed later in this study. With the advent of Louis XVI, however, the position of Director General of Buildings fell into the hands of the Comte d'Angiviller, a vigorous administrator, a child of the

Enlightenment, a friend of Turgot, and a believer in enlightened despotism. Under Angiviller's administration of the Superintendence, the royal government committed itself fully to the goal of creating a great national museum in the Louvre, a museum which would display the best of the royal collections and be available to the general public. The adoption of this policy by the crown and the dedicated pursuit of it by Angiviller obviously demonstrates at least a tacit admission on the part of the sovereign that the art collections he had inherited from his predecessors were really the property of the nation, and were a property to which the nation had right of access. France was an absolutism, however, until the Revolutionary reorganization of the monarchy, and the legal ownership of the collections, at least in theory, continued to be vested in the sovereign for the remainder of the Old Regime. But Angiviller's efforts to create a national museum were generally known, and any attempt on the part of the King to behave in a genuinely absolutistic and arbitrary manner toward the collections -- to sell a part of them, for example -- would undeniably have resulted in so great a public hue and cry as to render such a policy not practicable. The truth appears to be that by the 1780's the nation had come to consider the royal art collections as its own, regardless of all technicalities of legal possession, a view with which the royal government, by that time, concurred. Certainly Louis XVI never proposed

to behave absolutistically in regard to the collections; indeed, there is no evidence to indicate that he was even particularly interested in them, or in art at all.

Royal treasure or national heritage? The question was hardly debatable during the reign of Louis XIV; the collections were then unquestionably royal treasure unless one cared to accept the proposition that the sovereign was the state and therefore his treasure was the nation's treasure. The Sun King himself would not have cared to accept this proposition or, rather, would have insisted that it be framed in the reverse. National heritage in the sense that the nation should be able to enjoy the heritage, seeing that it had paid for it to begin with? This view began to germinate in the time of Louis XV and reached full flower under Louis XVI. The fruition never came during the Old Regime, but this was largely a matter of circumstance. This answer to the question is suggested: throughout the eighteenth century the crown collections were both legally royal treasure and actually national heritage. At the end of Louis XIV's reign the emphasis was on the "royal treasure" aspect of the collections, but as the century progressed a gradual shift in attitude took place, and by the time the Old Regime ended both the crown and the nation had come to regard the royal collections as a "national heritage" in the full meaning of that term.

Chapter II

THE EXAMPLE OF OTHER MUSEUMS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FRANCE AND EUROPE[1]

The concept of the public museum came relatively late to Western civilization in the train of the Enlightenment, the equalitarian ideas emerging from the French Revolution, and the higher level of general education achieved during the nineteenth century. In the ancient world, the temples and public monuments served to bring the art of the times to the people and performed, at least to some degree, the role which museums have in modern life. The same may be said of the Christian church in all of history but particularly of the medieval church. By the time of the Renaissance, however, art began to be increasingly isolated from the masses. The common man could, of course, still see great art in the churches and in obviously public places, but from about 1500 forward much of Europe's most important art -- and this was especially true of painting -- came to be enclosed in collections which were essentially private: royal collections

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[1] Secondary sources used for this chapter are: Edouard Michel, Musées et conservateurs, leur rôle dans l'organization sociale (Brussels: Université Libre de Bruxelles, Institut de Sociologie Solvay, 1948); Michel Hoog, Le Part des préoccupations éducatives dans la création et le développment des musées français jusqu'en 1850 (Paris: Mémoire présente a l'École du Louvre, 1956); Georges Poisson, Les Musées de France (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950); Tietze, op. cit. The author is particularly indebted to Monsieur Michel Hoog, an official of the Louvre, for the opportunity to read his thesis, which is an important source for the study of the history of the provincial museums of France, an area in which little research has been done.

such as those of the Hapsburgs, the French kings, and German princes; and the collections of newly wealthy bankers and men of money such as the Fuggers of Augsburg and the Medici of Florence. "These were private collections, assembled for the glory of their owners and to satisfy their tastes as enlightened lovers of art. Secondarily they could serve for the instruction of artists. They were open to foreigners possessing letters of recommendation and to people of importance, but they were not public museums and they were not for the crowd."[2]

With the Enlightenment came an emphasis upon education and the idea, basically rooted in John Locke's concept of knowledge, that man could improve his education, his intellect, and his taste by the exposure of his intelligence and his senses to works of greatness in every field of cultural endeavor. Indeed, this philosophy went further and insisted that it should not only be man's pleasure to improve himself but his duty to do so, a duty based both on his responsibility to himself as a rational being and on his responsibility to society. From the betterment of the individual, it was believed, would come superior future generations and the ultimate perfection of a reformed and reconstituted society. This faith of the Enlightenment in the efficacy of education and a refined environment was one

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[2]Michel, op. cit., p. 11.

of the prime motives of those who began to clamor in the eighteenth century for the establishment of museums and the opening of the royal art collections to the public.

Prior to the Revolution there were perhaps twenty museums in France, all but one of them creations of the eighteenth century and most of them of the last half of the century. These institutions were of various types but the majority of them served an "educational" purpose in the strictest meaning of the word, that is, they were attached to art schools and used in the teaching process. Between 1748 and 1785 ten such establishments, several of them with excellent collections, were opened in the French provinces: Reims, Tours, Aix, Besançon, Poitiers, Montpellier, Saint Quentin, Dijon, Valenciennes, Macon.[3] The Royal Academy of Painting in Paris also had a public museum of art attached to it. The collections of these museums which were auxiliary to educational institutions tended, of course, to enclose works considered important for the teaching program but which were nevertheless of interest to art lovers generally.

Other galleries in pre-Revolutionary France were "educational" in more general terms than were the art school museums with their specific training function to perform. The oldest museum, as such, in France was founded at Besançon in 1694 by the legacy of one Abbé Boizot, who willed his

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[3]Hoog, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

library and a collection of paintings, medallions, and antiquities to the abbey of which he was commendataire with the understanding that all these objects be made available to the public.[4] In 1778 a kind of private museum was opened in Paris by a group of scholarly gentlemen who put together a rather odd assemblage of objects which produced a combination art museum, natural history museum, and scientific museum. In 1781 there was opened in the Palais Royal in Paris, under the patronage of Monsieur and Madame, a fairly extensive scientific museum which was open to the public but not free. The city of Bordeaux possessed an art collection which was an integral part of a kind of "cultural center" but was not strictly a museum. Arles opened a museum of antiquities in 1784. The art museum of the city of Aix-en-Provence is one of the oldest in France and, incidentally, a fine museum; it was founded in 1771 by the Duc de Villars, Governor of Provence.[5] A few eighteenth-century museums were founded on the private collections of a benefactor; the museum at Carpentras, established in 1755, owed its existence to Monseigneur d'Inguimbert and the Calvet Museum in Avignon to the doner whose name it bears. At least one gallery of the period was the result of benefactions made by a

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[4] Ibid., p. 2.

[5] Poisson, op. cit., p. 59.

successful artist to the city of his birth: the art school and its corollary museum in Saint Quentin were founded by the famous eighteenth-century pastellist, Quentin de la Tour.

The forty years in France just preceding the Revolution were rich in many projects for museums of every kind, most of which were never realized. Those which did come into being during the Old Regime -- a few in Paris, most in the provinces -- were highly varied in nature but fell into two general categories: the galleries attached to schools of art and drawing and museums which were not strictly or only museums of art but which, rather, presented extremely diversified exhibitions. In these latter institutions paintings, drawings, and objects of art lived cheek by jowl with stuffed fauna and dried flora, collections of seashells and minerals, ethnological exhibitions, natural curiosities, examples of scientific inventions and experiments and, sometimes, a library. What these museums amount to, in effect, was a continuation into the eighteenth century and a projection into the world of the public of the Renaissance prince's "cabinet of curiosities" with its jumble of wonders, peculiarities, and art of every kind. The concept of the museum of art as such and as it is understood today did not emerge in a clear and defined manner until after the Revolution except in reference to the projects concerning the royal collections.

The extent to which these eighteenth-century French museums were really public is also debatable. The term

"public institution" today usually means a facility open to all without distinction, sometimes gratuitously and sometimes upon payment of a nominal admission fee. The concept of the "cultural center" in eighteenth-century France, such as that at Bordeaux, generally involved subscription membership, just as did many early "public" libraries. All of these museums were concerned with education, however, either in a specific or general sense, and this concern implies seriousness on the part of the viewing public. In his analysis of museum guidebooks and catalogues, Monsieur Hoog found that in nearly all of them printed between 1750 and 1860 the word "instruction" appears repeatedly.[6] The primary public of the art school museums, of course, was the student body, people who were at least presumed to be serious and bent upon "instruction." As far as the museums not associated with art schools were concerned, it was apparently expected that their public, too, would be more or less dedicated to self-improvement. An extract from the text of the catalogue published by the museum at Anvers about 1800 is typical and illustrative: "The frequentation of this museum should not be restricted to the satisfaction of a sterile curiosity; one can acquire here, if not a perfect knowledge of paintings, at least that which is indispensable."[7] Precisely

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[6] Hoog, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

[7] Ibid., p. 17.

how it was determined whether one's motive in visiting the museum was simply "sterile curiosity" or something more exalted is not indicated, but obviously people wishing simply to while away an hour were not welcome. Other museum directors found curiosity fertile and good rather than sterile and bad[8] but, in general, the atmosphere of these museums must have been rather formidable and somewhat inhibiting, an atmosphere which may very well have been comfortable only to the educated and "decently dressed," in short, to the privileged. "But there is a motive for the creation of a museum which was almost never allowed to appear . . . it is that of pure enjoyment."[9] This being the case, the clientele of the museums in eighteenth-century France was probably fairly well restricted to students, scholars, the educated, and the middle and upper classes. Indeed, the museums were probably not gathering places for the lighthearted even among these groups; certainly they did not cater to the "public" in the wide sense in which that word is understood today. Still there were a few museums in provincial France of the Old Regime, such as the old one at Besançon, which had been left by testament to "the public," and it would appear that these institutions must have been open to all, at least in theory. It seems clear, then, that if the modern concept of

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[8] Ibid., p. 18.

[9] Ibid., p. 20.

the museum of art had not fully emerged in France before the Revolution, neither had the idea of the fully public museum, a fact referrable to the social structure and economic realities of the time.

With reference to museums, however, the eighteenth century was essaying a venture with a new social and educational phenomenon and was undeniably moving toward the idea of the museum which would be strictly an art gallery and which would be available to the general public; both ideas were perfectly clear in the mind of the Comte d'Angiviller and his plans for the royal collections. Eighteenth-century French experimentation with the museum idea was creative and productive, patently a result of the Age of Reason, and this museum activity in the provinces must have made some contribution to the growing demand for a national gallery of art based on the crown collections; the museum at Besançon, for example, was well-known and visited by many travelers.

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There were not many public museums anywhere in Europe before the nineteenth century, but a few of those which did exist stood as examples to the French and were used as such by intellectuals who were arguing for the transformation of the royal collections into a national gallery. Italy was always a goal for those French who could afford to travel, and in Italy they found museums. "The example of Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758), who established the Capitoline

Museum in Rome, was invoked by the many travelers who made their tour of Italy."[10] Pope Benedict not only created the Capitoline in 1749, a museum of medallions, coins, and antiquities, but also founded the Pio-Clementino Museum so that from the middle of the eighteenth century forward there were two important papal galleries to be seen in Rome. Italy also had museums attached to the academies of painting, just as did the Royal Academy in Paris, and a few museums which were incorporated into universities or libraries.

But by far the most impressive gift of art to the public in Italy came in 1743 in Florence with the death of the childless Princess Anna Maria Ludovica, Electress Palatine by marriage. This Princess, the last of the Medici, willed her family's tremendous art collection, one of the most fabulous in Europe, to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany to be held in perpetuity "on condition that none of it should ever be removed from Florence, and that it should be for the benefit of the public of all nations."[11] It has been asserted that with this gift the Electress Anna Maria provided that the family name should die in a manner worthy of its glory in relation to the arts and made a gesture "which

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[10] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 77.

[11] G. F. Young, The Medici (New York: The Modern Library, 1930), p. 740 and p. 823, Footnote 8, quoted from Article II of the Electress Palatine's will.

deserved to outweigh and make forgiven many faults of her ancestors."[12] Of all the museums and museum projects in Italy at the middle of the eighteenth century, the Medici bequest and the papal galleries in Rome must have been the most interesting and provocative to French travelers; these situations were analogous to that of the crown collections in France and were essentially the opening of royal galleries to the public by sovereigns.

In England prior to 1789 there was only one institution which could qualify as a public museum -- the Ashmolean at Oxford, opened in 1683. The National Gallery was not founded until 1824, and the British Museum, established in 1753, was so difficult to get into that, for all practical purposes, it could hardly be considered a public institution although it was owned and administered by the state. There were no public museums in Holland or Belgium until the 1790's. In the Germanies many of the greater rulers had art collections of consequence and virtually every petty princeling, duke, margrave, and count within the Holy Roman Empire had a picture gallery of some kind -- this was expected as a status symbol, a mark of sovereignty, culture, and prestige. All of these galleries, however, were private royal collections open only to people of rank and foreigners of importance. Two of the most famous German collections were those of the

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[12] Ibid., pp. 742-743.

Elector of Bavaria at Munich and the Elector of Saxony at Dresden. In 1777 the Electoral Prince of the Palatinate assumed the rule of Bavaria and created a gallery in Munich which was "accessible to artists and dilettanti."[13] The Dresden collection was open to a limited public. "A catalogue of the Electoral Gallery of Dresden, dated 1765, informs us that the gallery 'serves to conserve the monuments of art which adorn the spirit and form the taste of the nation.' On the other hand, while keeping its character of a private collection, the gallery was widely open in the interest of the 'quality public,' to art lovers and foreigners."[14]

The richest collection of art in the Germanies, one to rival any in Europe, was that of the Hapsburgs in Vienna. In the eighteenth century the imperial collection was arranged in the Stallburg, a building near the Hofburg in Vienna, but was later transferred to the Belvedere, Prince Eugene of Savoy's Baroque summer palace. In 1781 the gallery was opened to the public, and a catalogue of 1784 reveals that the collection was available gratuitously to the public three days a week.[15] At first glance, this may seem

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[13] Tietze, op. cit., p. 134.

[14] Michel, op. cit., p. 14.

[15] Tietze, op. cit., p. 16; Michel, op. cit., p. 14.

astonishing and almost incredibly progressive, but it is not when one remembers that Joseph II, that dedicated disciple of enlightenment, came to power in 1780. Unlike so many of the older galleries, the Vienna museum was carefully and rationally arranged to emphasize, in the best Enlightenment tradition, the idea of education. Just how much this Hapsburg gallery was a product of the Enlightment and how far museum planning had moved toward modern concepts can be seen in the introduction to the museum's 1783 catalogue: "The aim of all these endeavors has been so to arrange the gallery that, in its entirety and its detail, it should be, as much as possible, a source of instruction and a visual history of art. A great public collection of this kind, aiming at educational purposes rather than at passing pleasure, can be likened to a rich library, where he who is thirsting for knowledge will be happy to find works of every kind and of all periods, not only things enjoyable and perfect, but varied contrasts, by the study and comparison of which he can become a connoisseur of art."[16] But by the time the Vienna gallery was made accessible to the public the French royal government had been committed to a similar policy for several years. The fact that a public museum of art

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[16] Ernst H. Buschbeck and Erich V. Strohmer, Art Treasures from the Vienna Collections Lent by the Austrian Government (n.p., 1949-1950), Introduction, p. 9. This work is the official catalogue of the exhibition of that part of the Hapsburg collection which was shown in the United States in 1949 and 1950.

displaying the royal holdings was realized in Vienna twelve years before the Louvre opened its doors was due to Joseph II's determination to effect enlightened reforms with despotic dispatch and to the problems surrounding the French project, problems discussed in a later chapter in this study.

The institutions and events in other parts of Europe in the eighteenth century which undoubtedly had the most effect upon public opinion in furthering a project to create a national gallery of art in France were the papal Capitoline and Pio-Clementino Museums, coming into existence at mid-century, and the bequest of the Medici collections to the public in 1743. While French intellectuals and travelers may have envied Joseph II's brusque efficiency in opening a gallery in Vienna in 1781, the French were generally aware by then that their own government was in the process of creating a public museum for the display of the crown collections. The other art galleries in Europe were similar to those existing in France -- royal and state collections with little or limited public accessibility, museums attached to universities and schools of art, and galleries accessory to professional academies of painting.

Chapter III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MOVEMENT FOR THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL GALLERY IN PARIS: RESPECTFUL SUGGESTIONS

"But it is certain, and it is important to state it, that the foundation of a museum was a general need which expressed itself by numerous manifestations, became a project which germinated in many heads, and was encouraged and welcomed by the administration of the arts, but which was first demanded by the public."[1] One of the earliest manifestations of a public demand for the transformation of the royal collections into a national museum of art came in an anonymous mémoire submitted to the Director General of Buildings in November 1744.[2] The author of this brief memorandum points out that the king possesses a "prodigious quantity" of paintings, curiosities, and objects of art which are distributed about the royal châteaux, "even in those where the king does not go, or goes but rarely." The writer proceeds to indicate where many of these collections are located; he specifies, for example, that many "very beautiful" paintings are in the Gallery of Apollo in the Louvre but are "shut up in cupboards" to which "Monsieur Bailly, keeper of the king's

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[1] Courajod, op. cit., I, Introduction, p. XXX.

[2] Ibid., I, Introduction, pp. XXX-XXXII; Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 77.

pictures, has the key." He believes that better use can be made of these royal paintings and art objects, and his idea for using them centers upon the Gallery of Ambassadors in the palace of the Tuileries.

The Tuileries was a palace built very near the Louvre in the 1560's by Catherine de Medici on land purchased in 1518 by Francis I. This palace, destroyed during the Commune in 1871, was originally an independent structure stretching along what is today the Avenue Général Lemonnier and facing Le Nôtre's Tuileries Gardens. By the early seventeenth century, however, the Tuileries had been joined to that long wing of the Louvre which lies along the Seine to form an L-shaped complex. If the Tuileries existed today, in other words, it would close off the whole western end of the Louvre, and the area in which Napoleon's Arc du Carrousel is located would be, in effect, an enclosed courtyard. The great vista of four and one-half miles which one has from the Carrousel through the Tuileries Gardens to the Place de la Concorde and the Champs-Élysées to the Arc de Triomphe exists only because the Tuileries has disappeared. The western end of the Louvre-Tuileries complex was different in the eighteenth century from the appearance it has today and also from the aspect it presented in the nineteenth century. The wing of the Louvre lying along the Rue de Rivoli and enclosing the north side of the Place du Carrousel did not exist in the eighteenth century but was created in

stages during the course of the nineteenth century, most of it under Napoleon I and Napoleon III. In the eighteenth century this concatenation of buildings consisted of the old Louvre built around its courtyard at the eastern end of the complex, the long riverside wing on the south, and the Tuileries branching off the river wing at a right angle to form an L. The north side from the corner of the Tuileries back to the old Louvre was open. By the eighteenth century, the palace of the Tuileries had long been abandoned as a royal residence and was largely given over, as was the Louvre, to lodgings granted by the king to courtiers and artists as "grace and favor" apartments.

The author of the anonymous suggestion of 1744 had obviously been to Italy. The walls of palaces there, he says, are "covered with paintings." Clearly, what he had in mind was a typical eighteenth-century picture gallery, the paintings hanging in serried ranks to the ceiling in a cheerful and disorderly mixture of periods, masters, and values. The nearest thing to such a gallery existing today is undoubtedly the Pitti Palace in Florence, a museum which some find delightful as a reminescence of an old gallery but which others consider distracting because of its confusing and unscientific arrangement. The Gallery of Ambassadors in the Tuileries, the anonymous author believes, would be most suitable for such a display of paintings. He further recommends that the gallery be embellished with items of sculpture, both ancient

and modern, busts, porcelains, bronzes, vases, and other objects of art of which, he says, "there is a great quantity in the storerooms of the king's buildings." How much better to make use of these things rather than to allow them to languish "where they can be seen by no one!" He then proceeds to tick off the precise locations of objects and groups of objects which he would like to see in the Tuileries; he says that at Versailles, for example, there are many "Chinese curiosities" tucked away which could be used to ornament the Tuileries gallery in places "where the light is not favorable for pictures."

What the author of this mémoire was really suggesting was the creation of a modest museum, displaying a part of the crown collections, in the Tuileries. He did not ask that the royal residences be stripped of their treasures for the sake of his idea but only that some objects in the collections which were not in actual use in the châteaux be assembled in the Tuileries so that they might be seen and enjoyed. After all, many of these things were forgotten in storage or were located in places to which no one had access. This seemed a waste and a shame and proved that the king had more paintings and objects of art than he could actually use for decorative purposes in the palaces. Would it not be reasonable for him to share a portion, at least, of this excess of riches, displaying them in one of his Paris palaces, also unused? Certainly the suggestion would seem reasonable and

moderate -- even timid -- to us, but it was a novel idea in the middle of the eighteenth century, an idea with many inherent implications which those in authority would not be slow to discern. The fact that the author of the plan chose to remain anonymous may only indicate that he was a retiring person, but it may also be taken as evidence that his suggestion was such as to dictate some measure of discretion. The plan is significant as the earliest evidence in France of an awakening public interest in the royal collections and a growing public desire for access to them. Certainly this suggestion did not envisage a great national public museum, but it was an early, tentative step in that direction. No evidence is available to show what influence it might have had in the development of the government's policy in regard to the collections, but it does at least constitute the opening note in what was to become a chorus of intellectual demand for public exhibition of the royal art treasures.

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The decade following the anonymous suggestion of 1744 saw the appearance in Paris of several pamphlets concerning the royal collections and the possibility of a national gallery of art. These pamphlets were also published anonymously, as was the usual custom in eighteenth century France when the subject matter was controversial, but their authorship is known to us and was undoubtedly known to contemporary readers. Two writers who produced such works were La Font de

Saint-Yenne, an art critic and man of letters, and Louis Petit de Bachamont, a pamphleteer and connoisseur who was active and widely known in Parisian intellectual and social circles. Unlike the anonymous writer of 1744, these two men did not concentrate their ideas upon the Tuileries but, rather, upon the Louvre.

The Louvre in the middle of the eighteenth century was in a rather sad state. It was, in point of fact, unfinished. The royal government had taken little interest in it since Louis XIV had definitely abandoned Paris for Versailles, and from the late seventeenth century onward it began to be "invaded," as Louis Hautecoeur puts it. Between 1672 and 1710 the French Academy, the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, the Royal Academy of Architecture, the Academy of Inscriptions, the Royal Academy of Sciences, and the Political Academy (a school for the training of diplomats) were all installed in the Louvre. The palace also housed the Ministry of War and certain of the Secretaries of State as well as a part of the Royal Library, a goodly portion of the royal art collection, and the collection of plans in relief of the fortified cities of France which is today in the Invalides. The old palace had experienced a brief revival during the 1720's when the boy king Louis XV resided there temporarily in 1721 and 1722 and when it was designated as the residence of the child infanta Marie-Anne-Victoire, the King's fiancée, who arrived from Spain in 1722 but was

packed home unmarried in 1725. The Louvre was also the residence of various courtiers and personages of rank such as the Prince de Conti, the Duchesse d'Estrées, and Madame de Thianges, who was Madame de Montespan's sister. These people all had large "grace and favor" apartments which they decorated and remodeled to suit themselves. The same roof under which the Prince de Conti and the Duchesse d'Estrées resided in state also covered the students attached to the academies of painting, sculpture, and architecture in whose cramped quarters life was often riotous and raucous. The palace, then, housed a large and motley population and through its corridors and courtyards roamed duchesses, academicians, students, servants, Swiss guards, prostitutes, scholars, government officials, and a variety of scoundrels. Further, the façades of the palace had been hideously disfigured with shanty-like buildings erected against them, buildings housing stables, shops, concessions, and the like. These areas were a constant headache to the Paris police as they were the scenes of uproars created by the students, brawls, duels, and crimes of every kind. The courtyards of the palace must also have been fearful places as on "November 2, 1701, the minister Ponchartrain wrote to the captain of the château: 'The King has been informed that the courts of the Louvre serve the most infamous usages of prostitution and debauchery and that the gatekeeper favors these disorders and allows the opening of the gate and entry into

the courts.'"[3] All in all, the palace was badly maintained physically and hung about with a disreputable, carnival-like atmosphere. One wonders, indeed, why nobles of influence would chose to live in so bawdy and questionable an environment except that the Louvre was still the king's official Paris residence and prestige attached to the possession of an apartment there; and, of course, the apartment was free, a consideration not to be overlooked by a courtier needful of securing every economic advantage and either unable or unwilling to bear the expense of maintaining a suitable town house.

This neglect of the Louvre and its degeneration into a kind of royal slum had become a public scandal by the middle of the eighteenth century. The condition of the palace was regarded as a disgrace to the city of Paris, to the prestige of the crown, and to the honor of the nation. Demands for its renovation and completion began to appear, and these demands came to be linked with suggestions for using the Louvre as the site of a national gallery of art displaying the royal collections. A good example of this kind of thinking appears in a pamphlet written by the critic, La Font de Saint-Yenne. La Font attended an exhibition of contemporary painting in 1746 and was highly displeased with

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[3]Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 71. Statements made concerning the Louvre in the eighteenth century are based on Hautecoeur's work and especially on Chapter VI, pp. 65-76.

what he saw, holding that the pictures were, for the most part, trivial, mediocre, commonplace, and lacking in any sense of grandeur or dignity. The following year he published a pamphlet entitled Reflections on Some Causes of the Present State of Painting in France and on the Fine Arts; a new and expanded edition of this work was issued in 1752, and it is the later edition which is examined here.[4] In this pamphlet, the author set forth his theories on art and taste which are interesting but irrelevant to this study. The important point for the purposes of this inquiry is that La Font believed one of the causes of the decline in French painting lay in the fact that artists did not sufficiently study the great masters of the past. For this deficiency he had a remedy -- "a vast gallery, or several contiguous galleries, well-lighted, in the château of the Louvre." He recommended the renovation of the palace on the interior and the removal of the disfiguring shacks "which crowd about this edifice on all sides," and pointed out that the state of the Louvre was a source of grief to the people, who were saddened "to see the house of their king dishonored. . . ." He also proposed that the suggested galleries be filled with masterpieces from the royal collection which "are today crowded

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[4] La Font de Saint-Yenne, Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France, et sur les beaux-arts (Nouvelle Édition; n.p., 1752). (Hereafter Réflexions.) Authorship is verified in Barbier, IV, 1re partie, p. 170.

together and buried in badly-lighted little rooms and hidden in the city of Versailles, unknown, or ignored by the curiosity of foreigners because of the impossibility of seeing them." La Font was also concerned with the preservation of the most precious of the royal paintings, another purpose which would be served by a gallery such as the one he suggested; in this regard, he took note of the carelessness with which the Rubens paintings of Marie de Medici in the Luxembourg were treated. While La Font desired especially to see contemporary artists exposed to the great paintings in the royal collection in order that they might be inspired to emulate the masters of the past, he did not think of the proposed gallery simply as a study hall for artists. He conceived of the gallery as a public museum, a fact attested to by his concern for the "nation" and the "public." In discussing the inaccessibility of the royal collection, he lamented the"loss of talent to our nation" by the "imprisonment" of the royal paintings and exclaimed: "With what satisfaction would interested people and foreigners view in freedom priceless works exposed in a suitable gallery!" He expressed his concern "for the glory of our nation by the conservation of the rare beauties which it possesses," and in another place he discussed the importance of good lighting in the proposed gallery, insisting that this would be "absolutely necessary in order that the public and, above all, the connoisseurs may enjoy all the beauties and fine

details" of the paintings.[5] In his rather lengthy pamphlet, La Font gave a detailed plan for a gallery in the Louvre and wove into this his theories on art, but what he was arguing for, essentially, was the revival of the Louvre as a national monument and the creation in it of a public art gallery exhibiting a choice selection of paintings and sculpture from the crown collections. One might well question some aspects of his notions about art, but his suggestion for a national gallery was sound and well-presented. There is no evidence to indicate the extent of La Font's effect upon the royal government, if any, but at least one French authority believes that his writings were a factor in the opening of a public gallery in the Luxembourg in 1750.[6]

La Font had little interest in the Luxembourg, however -- the Louvre was always the point of his efforts. Not long after the publication of his Reflections, La Font brought out another long pamphlet, this one entitled The Shade of the Great Colbert, the Spirit of the Louvre, and the City of Paris, a Dialogue; a second edition (1752) of

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[5] Ibid., pp. 223-238.

[6] Villot, op. cit., Introduction, p. XXXI.

this work is the basis of this analysis.[7] As the title indicates, the pamphlet is cast in the form of a dramatic dialogue between the ghost of Colbert and personifications of the Louvre and the city of Paris. The dialogue is more than a little amusing in its formal, exaggerated emotions, its declamatory phraseology, and its high-flown sentiments. The Louvre, for example, is made to cry: "Oh, Paris! Ungrateful city, so aware previously of my elevated position, can you be today so indifferent to my groans and my grief, can you see my deplorable condition and leave me without consolation and without hope? Are you no longer my mother?"

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[7] La Font de Saint-Yenne, L'Ombre du grand Colbert, le Louvre, et la ville de Paris, dialogue (Nouvelle Édition; n.p., 1752). (Hereafter L'Ombre.) Authorship is verified in Barbier, III, 2e partie, p. 709. This edition of L'Ombre has an engraved frontispiece as an illustration which shows the Louvre, personified by a winged, half-clothed creature of indeterminate sex (génie) crumpled wretchedly on the ground at the foot of a pedestal bearing a bust of Louis XV. Standing over the Louvre is Paris, an impressive matron regally crowned and robed. On the right sulks the ghost of Colbert looking like an actor playing a ghost -- his buckled shoes and knee breeches can be seen beneath his enveloping cloak. In the background is the main façade of the palace, marred and partly hidden by "a multitude of ignoble and indecent buildings." (Explication de la planche du frontispice, pp. iii-vi.)

The city, soothingly maternal, replies: "No, my child, I have not entirely forgotten you since you see me hasten to your crisis in order to understand the subject of it and to relieve your pain, if that be possible." The Louvre, full of self-pity and petulance, snaps: "The subject? Can you be ignorant of it? Can you see the condition I have been in for years without suffering a dishonor which makes you feel ashamed? I have patiently endured my ignominy during the times of minority and war, but I had hoped, after the long course of those, that my King. . . ."[8] The ghost of Colbert then appears and the dialogue becomes a tragic trio, highly suggestive of the opera, in which all three participants mourn the degradation of the Louvre and wistfully recall the great plans which Colbert had for it and for the city of Paris.

The presence of Colbert's ghost at this dialogue bewailing the condition of the Louvre is, of course, perfectly natural and understandable. Colbert, who was Louis XIV's most forceful minister of state, had always wished to see the Louvre completed, had wanted to see the king reside in the capital city, and had interested himself in the appearance and condition of Paris. When Bernini came to Paris in 1665 to work out a design for the rebuilding of the Louvre he was constantly besieged by Colbert for plans

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[8] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

for other structures -- bridges, obelisks, squares, chapels, and so on -- which would help transform Paris from the cramped city of the Middle Ages, which it still was, into an elegant, handsome seventeenth-century capital.[9] He had never looked upon the King's Versailles project with a favorable eye, partly because he found the cost of the scheme altogether too staggering and partly because he could see no justification for it; why should the King want an elaborate château at Versailles, of all places, when he had the Louvre, Fontainebleau, and Saint Germain at his disposal? Because of these facts, Colbert is presented in La Font's Dialogue as the father, hero, and protector of Paris and the Louvre; the two latter characters take up much of the pamphlet with long arias and duets in which they sing Colbert's praises in fulsome declamations. How great were the days of his administration, they say, when he protected and nurtured the arts and sciences, commerce and craftsmanship, and all aspects of life which contributed to the welfare of the public, the prosperity of the nation, and the glory of the state! Intermingled with all of this is a considerable amount of indirect criticism of conditions existing at the time the pamphlet was written. Directly pertinent to the subject of this study, the Louvre at one point asks Colbert if he remembers the

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[9] Victor-L. Tapié, The Age of Grandeur, Baroque Art and Architecture (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1960), p. 118.

invaluable collection of masterpieces which he acquired for Louis XIV. "Do you think -- and who would not think it? -- that these riches are exposed for the admiration and enjoyment of the French, who possess such rare treasures, or for the interest of foreigners, or for study and emulation by our school of painters ? Know, oh great Colbert, that these beautiful works do not see the light of day and that they have passed from the honorable places which they occupied in the cabinets of their possessors to an obscure prison at Versailles, where they have languished for more than fifty years."[10] This is a straightforward and unambiguous assertion to the effect that the royal collections were really the property of "the French" and should be displayed as such for the "nation," for foreign travelers, and for the instruction of artists and students. La Font takes cognizance in a footnote of the little gallery of the Luxembourg, opened "since the first edition of this work," but he makes it clear that this gallery could hardly be considered an adequate or final solution to the problem of the royal palaces and collections.[11]

At mid-century the air was full of plans for improving the city of Paris, and all of these "reminded the

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[10] La Font de Saint-Yenne, L'Ombre, p. 18.

[11] Ibid.

public of the incomplete state of the Louvre."[12] By 1749 the royal government had decided to take action in regard to the Louvre, and in 1750 Gabriel, member of a famous family of architects, was asked to draw up some plans. La Font wrote a brief pamphlet on this occasion, a work entitled Thanks from the Citizens of the City of Paris to His Majesty on the Subject of the Completion of the Louvre.[13] In this writing, in which he congratulated the King on his decision to rescue the Louvre from its sorry state, La Font said nothing specific about a museum. He did, however, state how disgraceful it was that the Louvre had been allowed to fall into shameful disrepair, and he deplored the fact that it was "closed to the view of our people and the admiration of foreigners."[14] The tone of La Font's writing implies that he considered the Louvre to be the property of "the true French" and "citizens zealous for their Fatherland,"[15] and

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[12] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 72.

[13] La Font de Saint-Yenne, Remercîment des habitans de la ville de Paris a Sa Majesté au sujet de l'achèvement du Louvre (n.p., 1749). Authorship is verified in Barbier, IV, 1re partie, p. 263.

[14] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[15] Ibid., p. 2.

that they had a right to be concerned about it. Unquestionably, La Font saw the completion and restoration of the palace as something important in and of itself, but he just as surely regarded this as the first move toward the creation of a national gallery of art in a newly splendid Louvre.

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Another pamphleteer who turned out a considerable amount of material on the subject of the Louvre was Louis Petit de Bachaumont, who was also an art critic and connoisseur. In 1749 he published a brief essay entitled Mémoire on the Completion of the Louvre;[16] he later produced two works called Mémoire on the Louvre, the First and Second,[17] of which revised and corrected editions appeared in 1752. These last two mémoires are essentially expanded versions of the 1749 pamphlet. These works are markedly different from those of La Font de Saint-Yenne. Bachaumont's style is dry and matter-of-fact and is devoid of the florid emotionalism of La Font's writings. Bachaumont was also a man with a cold eye for architectural detail and less of a spinner-of-theories than was La Font. In his essays he

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16 Louis Petit de Bachaumont, Mémoire sur l'achèvement du Louvre (n.p., 1749). (Hereafter Mémoire sur l'achèvement.) Authorship is verified in Barbier, III, 1re partie, p. 153.

17 Louis Petit de Bachaumont, Mémoires sur le Louvre, Premier mémoire and Second mémoire sur le Louvre (Nouvelle Édition; n.p., 1752). (Hereafter Premier mémoire and Second mémoire.) Authorship is verified in Barbier, III, 1re partie, p. 258 and 2e partie, p. 995.

briefly reviewed the history of the Louvre and then, in a realistic and practical fashion, analyzed the various architectural plans which were current for liberating the palace from the squalor into which it had fallen. He concerned himself primarily with the completion of the Louvre in regard to the façades and the external appearance of the buildings. Like La Font, however, he regarded the Louvre as a symbol of national prestige and honor and declared that the King's decision to do something about it was a cause of "universal joy."[18] He was also confident that the work would be completed and concluded two of his essays with this prophetic statement: "Today it is only a question of beginning well and working little by little on a general plan which has been well-conceived; time will do the rest."[19] Bachaumont expounded the Louvre theme in yet another pamphlet, one entitled Essay on Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, a revised and expanded version of which was published in 1752.[20] In this essay he developed the idea of educated self-improvement, so dear to the Enlightenment, and linked this with an appreciation for the arts. "I have wished to prove in this writing that with some natural inclinations, aided by a good

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[18] Bachaumont, Memoire sur l'achevement, p. 3.

[19] Ibid., p. 8; Premier memoire, p. 100.

[20] Louis Petit de Bachaumont, Essai sur la peinture, la sculpture, et l'architecture (2nd ed.; n.p., 1752). Authorship is verified in Barbier, II, 1re partie, p. 243.

education, one can indeed acquire understanding of the arts, above all in applying, contemplating, and comparing. I would judge myself very happy if my Essay could produce this effect for some of my readers and encourage them to follow along paths which I have only indicated." He concluded his introduction by stating that he had not written his essay "for those who are already connoisseurs, but for those who wish to become such."[21] Bachaumont's ideas on the Louvre and on the importance of understanding the arts are typical of his time and are a part of the hope held by many for a national museum of art in the Louvre.

Another philosophe of greater fame who interested himself in the completion of the Louvre and wrote on the subject was Voltaire.[22] A four-stanza poem which he composed on the Louvre in 1749 and rewrote in 1752 appeared in one pamphlet by La Font[23] and in one by Bachaumont.[24] The first two stanzas are identical in both publications, but the last two stanzas vary.

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[21] Ibid., Avertissement, pp. ii-iii, vi.

[22] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 72.

[23] La Font de Saint-Yenne, L'Ombre, pp. 177-178. These verses are contained in Oeuvres completes de Voltaire, (52 vols.; Paris: Garnier Frères, Librairies-Éditeurs, 1877-1885), VIII, pp. 520-521. The version of the poem given in the Bachaumont publication was written in 1749; the variation with footnotes printed in La Font's work was written in 1752.

[24] Bachaumont, Second mémoire, p. 123.

Verse on the Louvre by M. de Voltaire

Unfinished monuments of that vaunted century
On which all the fine arts have founded their memory!
In attesting its glory, shall I see you always
Making a reproach to posterity?

Is it necessary that one feel shame when one admires you?
And that nations which wish to defy us,
Glorying in our failures, be able rightly to say of us
That we begin all but complete nothing?

The last two stanzas as given by Bachaumont are as follows:

Under what shameful debris, under what crude accumulations
We allow these divine masterpieces to be buried!
What barbarian has mingled contemptible Gothic
With all the grandeur of the Greeks and the Romans!

Louvre, stately palace by which France honors herself,
Be worthy of this king, your master and our strength;
Embellish these regions which his valor decorates
And, like him, show yourself in all your brilliance.

But these stanzas as given in the version printed in La Font's work read differently:

But, oh, new insult! What offensive audacity (1)
Comes to degrade this divine masterpiece further?
What undertakes to occupy a place (2)
Made for admiring the attributes of the sovereign?

Louvre, stately palace by which France honors herself,
Be worthy of Louis, your master and your strength.
Leave the shameful state in which the universe abhors you
And, like him, show yourself in all your brilliance. (3)

(1) They built then in the middle of the court of the Louvre the building which one sees there today.

(2) In the plan for the Louvre a statue of the King had been projected for the middle of the court.

(3) At that time, Louis XV came to Paris victorious, triumphant, and a peacemaker.

The three footnotes, of course, are Voltaire's explanations of certain passages in the poem. These two poems hardly bear comparison with Voltaire's best literary efforts, and today

one may well be cynical about his courtier-like references to Louis XV's "brilliance" and "strength." One might, perhaps, be even more cynical about the third footnote, which is an obvious reference to the ending of the War of the Austrian Succession; whether Louis emerged from that conflict "victorious, triumphant, and a peacemaker" is indeed a debatable proposition. But these exaggerated and flattering statements about the King were a polite convention of the time, a part of the standard etiquette surrounding the sovereign. In 1749 Louis XV was not quite forty and the French were still hopeful that his reign would be beneficial to the general welfare and productive of reform. Certainly everyone welcomed the termination of the war, and the enlightened hoped the peace would mean the diversion of government funds into more constructive projects, such as the completion of the Louvre, the embellishment of Paris, and the creation of a national museum of art.

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The anonymous writer of 1744, La Font, Bachaumont, Voltaire -- the writings of all of these men typify the ferment which was taking place in Paris in the middle of the eighteenth century in reference to the improvement and adornment of the city. The intellectuals of the period wished to see Paris made into a city of which the French could be proud, which would delight travelers, and which would be the envy of foreign countries. The eighteenth

century of the Enlightenment is generally thought of as being a non-nationalistic period, but in the emphasis placed by these philosophes and pamphleteers upon French pride, honor, glory, and prestige one can discern the embryonic nationalism to which the Revolution was to give birth, which was to come of age in the following century, and which the French still nurture as "grandeur." Through all of the plans for the completion of the Louvre and the establishment of a national gallery of art there ran a strong tide of emphasis upon public interest and public welfare and a strong implication of public ownership of the great monuments of Paris.[25] A secondary current, hardly less strong, was the desire to lead the world culturally and to impress foreigners with France's wealth, power, and taste. The idea for a national gallery of art displaying at least some part of the royal collections was definitely an element in these schemes for a more splendid Paris and a greater France, and these ideas for a museum were always centered upon some part of the Louvre complex, either the Louvre itself or the Tuileries. But when a selection of paintings from the royal collection was placed on public exhibition in

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[25]There is always some question as to precisely what writers like La Font, Bachaumont, and Voltaire meant when they used the word "public" and similar terms. What connotation these words had depended in part upon context, but it is suggested that when such terms were used in reference to a museum they may, at least for some writers of the time, have had a more restrictive meaning than the word "public" conveys today.

1750 it was hung not in the Louvre nor in the Tuileries, but in the palace of the Luxembourg.

Chapter IV

THE LITTLE GALLERY OF THE LUXEMBOURG

A. Origin: A Gracious Royal Gesture

The Luxembourg is a relatively small palace on the Left Bank on the edge of the Latin Quarter and near both the Panthéon and the church of St. Sulpice. It was built between 1615 and 1620 by Marie de Medici as her personal residence and has something of the look of a Florentine palace, although it is constructed around the usual French interior courtyard. Formal gardens, which were once much more extensive than they are now, lie around the palace on three sides and are the favorite park of Left Bank Parisians. During the seventeenth century the Luxembourg was the residence of Monsieur (Gaston, Duc d'Orléans), Louis XIII's brother, and then of Monsieur's daughter, La Grande Mademoiselle (the Duchesse de Montpensier), who died in 1693. During the eighteenth century the palace was home for a time to two other Orléans princesses, the Duchesse de Berri and the dowager Queen of Spain,[1] but until 1750 it was given

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[1] This young dowager Queen of Spain was the daughter of the Regent d'Orléans and was married to Don Luis, eldest son of Philip V of Spain. Luis ruled Spain for eight months in 1724, until his death from smallpox, after his father had abdicated in a fit of piety. Philip resumed the throne upon his son's death and the dowager Queen was sent home in 1725 in retaliation for France's rejection of the Infanta Marie-Anne-Victoire as a bride for the young Louis XV. She was lodged in the Luxembourg upon her return to France and later the gallery of paintings was arranged in the apartments which she had occupied.

over largely to lodgings and apartments granted by the king to courtiers, nobles, and officials. After 1750, however, the occupants of the palace had to share the building with a museum, for it was in the Luxembourg, in October of 1750, that a part of the royal collection of paintings was exhibited to the public for the first time.

No one seems to know now who in the royal administration first had the idea for the creation of this public gallery. Fréderic Villot implies that the credit should go to the Marquis de Marigny, Madame de Pompadour's brother.[2] Contemporary writers, however, state that the exhibition was the work of Monsieur Le Normant de Tournehem, the Pompadour's uncle by marriage. In the 1752 edition of his The Shade of the Great Colbert, La Font de Saint-Yenne says in a footnote:[3] "Since the first edition of this work, M. de Tournehem, Director General of Buildings of His Majesty, has caused to be transported to the palace of the Luxembourg a part of the paintings of the King's Cabinet at Versailles, with some precious drawings, and they are exposed to the eyes of the public two days each week. It was a great injury to the nation that such treasures were buried for so long a time. What advantage for our young painters to examine them and to be able to copy such excellent models, having before

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[2] Villot, op. cit., Introduction, p. XXXI.

[3] La Font de Saint-Yenne, L'Ombre, footnote, p. 18.

their eyes the masterpieces of all the schools of Europe!" In his Reflections on Some Causes of the Present State of Painting in France, and on the Fine Arts, 1752 edition, La Font links the establishment of the Luxembourg museum with his own idea for such an art gallery and, again in a footnote, says that the public is "indebted to M. de Tournehem for having consented to execute this idea and to fulfil the wishes of all Paris and of foreigners in exposing the paintings of the King's Cabinet in the palace of the Luxembourg, and for arranging them in good order."[4] The first three editions of the official catalogue of the exhibition state that the arrangement of the gallery "has been ordered, under the good pleasure of His Majesty, by M. de Tournehem, Director General of Buildings, Gardens, Arts, and Manufactures of His Majesty."[5]

In any event, Monsieur Le Normant de Tournehem was indeed Director General when the Luxembourg gallery was

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[4] La Font de Saint-Yenne, Réflexions, footnote, pp. 227-228.

[5] Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy au Luxembourg (Paris: Prault, 1750), title page. (Hereafter Luxembourg Catalogue I.)

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy au Luxembourg (2nd ed.; Paris: Prault, 1750), title page. (Hereafter Luxembourg Catalogue II.)

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy au Luxembourg (3rd ed.; Paris: Prault, 1751), Avertissement, p. iii. (Hereafter Luxembourg Catalogue III.) The wording varies slightly in this edition.

created. He assumed his post in 1746 and held it until his death in 1751. Tournehem was a farmer-general, and Engerand says of him that he "was not at all prepared for the functions" of Director General.[6] In actual fact, Tournehem held the post of Director General for five years as a kind of trust for Madame de Pompadour's brother, the Marquis de Marigny, who was then using the title of Marquis de Vandières.[7] Marigny was a boy of less than twenty when Tournehem took the directorship of the Superintendence of Buildings and was considered too young and immature for the responsibilities of the position. Nevertheless, Marigny was, in effect, appointed a kind of coadjutor Director General with right of succession and Tournehem held the position with a reversion to Marigny. To prepare him for his eventual assumption of the Director Generalship, the young Marigny was sent to Italy for a prolonged tour from 1749 to 1751, partly, no doubt, in order that the travel and experience

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[6] Engerand II, Introduction, p. XVI.

[7] One reason for the change in title from Vandières to Marigny was that "Marquis de Vandières" can be made to sound exactly like "Marquis d'Avant-hier," and wits at court began referring to him in this manner ("marquis of the day before yesterday") in malicious reference to his recent arrival in the ranks of the nobility. After he became Marigny he was often called "Marquis de Mariniers" ("marquis of sailors") in a play upon sound alluding to his bourgeois surname of Poisson (Fish). Later in his life he became Marquis de Ménars, a title taken from the name of his country house. Throughout this study he is referred to as the Marquis de Marigny.

might help him to grow up but also that he might see and study famous monuments of art and architecture. There are, then, several possible sources for the original idea for the public gallery in the Luxembourg. The anonymous mémoire written to the Director General in 1744 and La Font's suggestion in his 1747 edition of Reflections on Some Causes of the Present State of Painting in France, and on the Fine Arts, may well have been responsible for planting the seed of the idea within the royal administration;[8] certainly La Font wanted to think that his writings had a direct influence. Marigny, traveling in Italy, knew of the papal galleries created in Rome by Pope Benedict XIV. Madame de Pompadour, herself enlightened and a friend of the philosophes, may be presumed to have favored the project. There is some evidence that the plan for the gallery, or something similar to it, was alive in the royal government as early as 1747; the first edition of the Luxembourg catalogue states that the project "was in question in 1747,"[9] and the second edition specifies that it "was in question from the beginning of the year 1747."[10] The Director General at the time of the anonymous memorandum of 1744 was Philibert Orry, a financier;

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[8] Courajod, op. cit., I, Introduction, footnote, p. XXVII. The suggestions made in the 1747 edition are substantially the same, even to the wording, as those in the 1752 edition (see pp. 87-90 of this study).

[9] Luxembourg Catalogue I, unnumbered page facing p. 7.

[10] Luxembourg Catalogue II, unnumbered page facing p. 5.

Engerand says that Orry was "a ponderous spirit, very economical, but capable of large views. . . ."[11] This could indicate that the concept for some kind of public gallery displaying a part of the crown collections was under tentative consideration by the royal government even before Le Normant de Tournehem came into the Director Generalship in 1746. But if the royal administration did indeed accept the idea for a public gallery as early as 1744 or 1747, someone with influence had to keep the project alive or had to revive it if it was allowed to languish. Furthermore, someone in power had to bring the plan to realization in 1750 and press for the actual organization and opening of the museum. The final push may well have come from the Pompadour, or from Marigny through her, or may even have been provided by Le Normant de Tournehem himself. No matter who was working behind the scenes in behalf of the project, however, the official credit for it must go to Monsieur de Tournehem in that the museum became a reality under his administration of the Superintendence.

The gallery would not have been possible at all, of course, without Louis XV's will and consent, which one might reasonably speculate were obtained through the good offices of the Marquise de Pompadour. Contemporary publications make it perfectly clear that the exhibition was a gift from

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[11] Engerand II, Introduction, p. XII.

a magnanimous sovereign to his good people. The Luxembourg catalogues state that the gallery has been arranged "under the good pleasure of His Majesty,"[12] and the first edition of the catalogue has an introductory paragraph which reads: "His Majesty has permitted that a part of his paintings be transported to Paris to decorate the apartments formerly occupied by the Queen of Spain in his palace of the Luxembourg in order that lovers of painting and those who seek to perfect themselves in an art so sublime may have the leisure and the freedom to make useful studies of the beautiful things which are exhibited to them."[13] A 1751 guide to the exhibition and commentary on it, published with official approbation, states that the King has "permitted" these masterpieces of his to be displayed in the Luxembourg and that his intention in doing so "is to favor art lovers, to stimulate the criticism of connoisseurs, and to reanimate the fervor of our artists."[14] Another similar publication makes

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[12] Luxembourg Catalogue I, title page; Luxembourg Catalogue II, title page; Luxembourg Catalogue III, Avertissement, p. iii; Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy au Luxembourg (7th ed.; Paris: Pierre-Alexandre Le Prieur, 1759), Avertissement, p. iii (hereafter Luxembourg Catalogue IV); Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy au Luxembourg (Nouvelle Édition; Paris: Pierre-Alexandre Le Prieur, 1761), unnumbered first page of Avertissement (hereafter Luxembourg Catalogue V).

[13] Luxembourg Catalogue I, unnumbered page facing p. 7.

[14] Lettre sur les tableaux tirés du cabinet du roy et exposés au Luxembourg depuis le 14 octobre 1750 (Paris: Prault, 1751, p. 2. (Hereafter Lettre sur les tableaux.)

the point that the King has "permitted" the exhibition.[15] Interestingly enough, in neither of his two footnotes on the Luxembourg gallery does La Font pay tribute to the King or thank him for his generosity in allowing the gallery to come into existence; on the contrary, he takes a tone of mild exasperation which is perhaps best summarized by the phrase: "It is about time." But the official catalogues of the gallery and those writings concerning it which were published with official approval give proof that the royal government regarded the museum as a gracious gesture which the King "permitted" at his "pleasure." There was no official concession to the point of view that the public had a right of access to the royal collections and certainly there is no evidence to indicate that the crown, in creating the Luxembourg gallery, had accepted the theory that the collections were actually the property of the nation and the people. One might indeed argue that the mere existence of the gallery was a tacit admission of these views on the part of the royal administration, but in law and in fact the collections were the sovereign's to dispose as he willed; if he willed to show some of his paintings to the public he did so at his "pleasure" and out of generosity.

This gallery in the Luxembourg, which was the first

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[15] Lettre de M. le chevalier de Tincourt à Madame la marquise de *** sur les tableaux et desseins du cabinet du roi, exposés au Luxembourg depuis le 14 octobre 1750 (Paris: Merigot, 1751), p. 5. (Hereafter Tincourt.)

of its kind in France and one of the very few of its kind anywhere in Europe in the eighteenth century, opened its doors on October 14, 1750. The museum was accessible to the public two days each week, on Wednesday and Saturday. From October through April it was open from nine in the morning until noon and from May to October from three in the afternoon until six in the evening.[16] In subsequent years the hours were changed on occasion, but this general pattern of accessibility for three hours a day on two days a week was adhered to until the gallery was closed in 1779.[17] The gallery displaying the Rubens cycle of the life of Marie de Medici was available to the public on the same days and at the same hours as the main gallery. The galleries were heated by stoves in winter and in damp weather, not so much, it seems, for the comfort of the visitors as for the preservation of the paintings.[18]

To what extent, one might well ask, was this first public exhibition of royal paintings really public? Was the gallery visited by large crowds? All available evidence indicates that the Luxembourg museum was a popular attraction which drew many people each day it was open. The fact that its official catalogue, sold at the entrance, went through multiple editions between 1750 and 1779 is partial proof of

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[16] Luxembourg Catalogue I, title page.

[17] Argenville, op. cit., p. 327.

[18] A.N., O^1 1684, 145, 146.

this. In 1754, the Marquis de Marigny, then Director General of Buildings, informed the King that the palace, occupied by many people and enjoyed by the public twice a week, required careful police supervision; he requested that the King allow him to appoint a retired army officer as chief concierge at the Luxembourg and to create the post of inspector of the Swiss and doorkeepers.[19] In 1756 the Swiss petitioned Marigny for a raise in salary, pointing out that they were required to mount guard twice a week in the public gallery but received nothing extra for this.[20] Ten years later, Monsieur Godard, inspector of the Swiss at the Luxembourg, asked of the Marquis de Marigny that he be permitted to employ an additional Swiss for service in the public gallery of paintings.[21] In August of 1777 Monsieur Bailly, keeper of the king's pictures at the Luxembourg, complained to the Comte d'Angiviller that the Swiss were negligent in mounting guard as they should in the public galleries. Angiviller consequently instructed the Comte de Modene, governor of the palace, to correct this situation so that there might be no "disorders" in the galleries, and Modene promised to give the Swiss orders "most severe and most positive" in this regard.[22] All of this concern for the

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[19] A.N., O^1 1069, 150.

[20] A.N., O^1 1684, 302, 303.

[21] A.N., O^1 1685, 92.

[22] A.N., O^1 1914 (5), 310, 311, 312.

guarding of the galleries and the prevention of "disorders" in them on days when the public was admitted would seem to indicate not only that the museum was visited by many people but that it was indeed open to a rather wide public. Presumably it was within the power of the Swiss to turn away from the doors any person having a suspicious or doubtful appearance, but apparently very few who wanted to go into the palace were denied admission on the public days. Of course, it is also probably true that the people who might have been refused entrance -- the lower elements of the Parisian population -- did not attempt to gain admission and did not wish to do so. As Courajod says haughtily, these were times in which "dilettantism did not yet run in the streets."[23] The fact that the museum made an appeal only to certain kinds and classes of people probably also explains the fact that it was open for so few hours each week. It was perhaps often crowded during these times, but six hours a week were apparently sufficient to accomodate those who wished to see the galleries.

Certainly the officials of the Superintendence were concerned about accomodating the public which came to see the king's pictures in the Luxembourg, at least according to their understanding of the word "public." In 1762 Monsieur Bailly informed the Marquis de Marigny that a painting by

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[23]Courajod, op. cit., I, Introduction, p. XXV.

Rubens which had been absent from the gallery in order that it might be engraved had been returned in good condition and would be rehung, "to the satisfaction of the public, which has suffered a long time from the deprivation of so beautiful a painting."[24] In 1777 Bailly wrote to the Comte d'Angiviller to tell him that Jacob Jordaens' Christ Expelling the Money Changers from the Temple should be retired from the collection for certain repairs; he stated that he hesitated to do this, however, as "we have already removed from this exposition several paintings which the public regrets," and he also spoke of giving "pleasure to the public." Angiviller replied by noting the "privation the public has already sustained by the removal of various paintings from the exposition" and ordered that "this painting remain on display."[25]

Efforts were also made to expand and augment the museum to some degree. There are several documents in the Archives,[26] exchanges of letters between Marigny and officials of the Paris department, as to the disposition to be made of an apartment next to the gallery of Rubens formerly occupied by the Marshal de Lowendal, who had died. Both Bailly and Monsieur Soufflot, a leading royal architect,

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[24] A.N., O^1 1910 (1), 161.

[25] A.N., O^1 1914 (5), 311, 312.

[26] A.N., O^1 1684, 320, 325, 326, 329, 330; O^1 1541, 41, 251, 322, 392.

wished to add these rooms to the museum. This project appeared as early as 1756, at which time Bailly began "sighing" for the Marshal's apartment.[27] In August of 1758 Marigny presented the plan to the King and received the royal "bon" for it.[28] The project was to mount in this apartment, for public exhibition, Joseph Vernet's famous series of paintings called The Ports of France. The royal administration's concern for the public is manifested in many of these documents. In his memorandum to the King, Marigny says: "Foreigners and the curious who wish to see the paintings in the grand apartment twice a week will also see those of Vernet in going to the gallery of Rubens. . . ."[29] Soufflot, in making his recommendation for this plan, put it forward as something which would "give a great deal of pleasure to the public."[30] According to Soufflot's biographer, the apartment of the Marshal de Lowendal was therefore, "by the grace of Soufflot . . . given over to the exposition of the

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[27] Jean Mondain-Monval, Soufflot, sa vie - son oeuvre - son esthétique (1713-1780) (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Lemerre, 1918), p. 277; A.N., O^1 1541, 41.

[28] A.N., O^1 1684, 325.

[29] Ibid.

[30] A.N., O^1 1684, 330.

series of The Ports of France by Joseph Vernet."[31] Curiously enough, neither the 1761 edition of the Luxembourg catalogue nor the 1778 guidebook to Paris mention this Vernet exhibition, although the guidebook does take its reader on a tour of the Luxembourg galleries.[32] This could be explained by the fact that the authors of the catalogue and guidebook concerned themselves only with the great paintings of the main gallery and the gallery of Rubens and perhaps regarded the Vernet paintings as an exhibition of interest but one not requiring explanation or commentary. Vernet, after all, was a well-known contemporary artist and his series on the French ports was famous and self-explanatory. In point of fact, the series was not even complete in 1758; at that time Vernet had finished only eight of twenty-one paintings, the last of which was done in 1765.[33]

The evidence cited above clearly reveals that the royal administration had a sense of responsibility to the public in regard to the Luxembourg gallery and was anxious that the collection displayed there be a good one which would be satisfying to the viewers. At the same time that Bailly, Soufflot, Marigny, and Angiviller -- and even the King -- were attempting to further

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[31] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., p. 279.

[32] Luxembourg Catalogue V; Argenville, op. cit., pp. 314-338.

[33] Engerand II, pp. 501-507.

the public interest in reference to the gallery they had often to contend with the vested private interests of the nobles who had apartments in the Luxembourg. These were people like the Princesse de Talmond and the Comtesse de Béarn whose personal desires sometimes clashed with the needs of the museum and who created situations of jurisdiction and right which are almost symbolic of the conflict between new ideas and the established order.[34]

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[34] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., p. 279; A.N., O^1 1684, 240, 241; O^1 1685, 183, 184.

B. Contents: A Small but Good Collection

The first official catalogue of the Luxembourg exhibition was not ready when the galleries were opened to the public for the first time in October of 1750. One wonders why this should have been so when the plan for the museum was under consideration by the royal government as early as 1747. In the introduction, or Avertissement, to the third edition of the catalogue, published in 1751, apologies were made for errors committed in the first two editions. This third edition Avertissement is written in the first person but is unsigned; undoubtedly it was the work of Monsieur Bailly, keeper of the king's pictures at the Luxembourg, who was responsible for the arrangement of the exposition. In any event, the author states that the idea for the catalogue was conceived only "a few days before the opening" of the galleries[35] but that it was decided to go ahead and publish it hurriedly in order that the public might not be kept waiting for it. The first two editions, says the author, bear all the marks of work done "with hastiness," and he hopes "that this third edition will pursuade the public to forgive me the faults of the first two, which would not have occurred if I had been able to moderate my desire to give prompt

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[35] Luxembourg Catalogue III, Avertissement, p. iv. The official authority to publish the first edition (Luxembourg Catalogue I, Errata page following p. 47) states that the printing permit was issued on October 11, 1750.

service."[36] The Avertissement of the first edition states that the catalogue has been prepared and published "to oblige the public." The editors of this first edition also specify that they decided to add to the catalogue a description of the Rubens paintings of the life of Marie de Medici in view of "the enthusiasm with which the public and foreigners have come to see the gallery of Rubens."[37] Apparently the catalogue was not ready for sale to the public on the opening day of the exhibition for one of two reasons: 1) either the final decision to open the museum was made so quickly that it was surrounded with confusion and there was no time to prepare a publication, or 2) the royal government was so inexperienced in such matters that the necessity of a catalogue, or the desirability of one, never occurred to anybody until the last moment.

These first three editions of the catalogue are revealing of two significant facts. Monsieur Bailly and the royal administration exhibit in these publications a rather surprising concern for pleasing "the public" and appear in the Avertissements almost like modern museum directors in their eagerness to have people come to see and to enjoy the exposition. These catalogues are also indicative of the

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[36] Ibid., pp. iv-v.

[37] Luxembourg Catalogue I, Avertissement.

popularity of the Luxembourg gallery. The first edition presumably appeared a few weeks after the gallery opened but apparently was sold out almost immediately -- the second edition was also published in 1750, and it was already late in the year when the exhibition was opened to the public. This second edition added an alphabetical table or kind of index listing the painters represented, the number of paintings of each, the exhibition numbers of the paintings, and the pertinent catalogue pages, but the totals are incorrect -- the editors overlooked two Raphaels, one Rubens, one Valentin, and one Titian.[38] A third edition was necessary in 1751, the edition which the editor hoped would compensate for the errors of the first two. But, alas, even this third and improved edition is not without fault; in compiling his totals, the editor failed to account for one Raphael portrait and one Titian portrait.[39]

The exhibition as it appeared when it was opened in 1750 consisted of ninety-nine paintings hung in four rooms of the apartments formerly occupied by the dowager Queen of Spain: an antechamber, the Little Gallery, the Throne Room, and the Grand Gallery. The first painting visitors saw was Andrea del Sarto's Charity, displayed in a place of special

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[38] Luxembourg Catalogue II, pp. 44-47.

[39] Luxembourg Catalogue III, pp. 41-44.

honor on an easel.[40] Hanging on the door to the antechamber, the first room in which paintings were hung, was Raphael's portrait of a cardinal, believed at that time to be of Cardinal Giuliano de Medici.[41] Ten paintings hung within the antechamber and constituted a brilliant little collection in themselves. They included Veronese's Martyrdom of St. Mark; Titian's Jupiter and Antiope; two Van Dyck portraits; two Claude Lorrains, a landscape and his great, romantic Cleopatra Disembarking; and three Poussins.[42] Hanging on the door between the antechamber and the Little Gallery was Titian's portrait of Cardinal Ippolito de Medici.[43] Twenty-three paintings hung in the Little Gallery, at least seventeen of which would be considered important today: Rembrandt's Tobias and the Angel; Titian's St. Jerome; a Breughel; seven Poussins, including The Triumph of Flora and allegorical paintings of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter; Veronese's Moses Saved by the Pharoah's Daughter; four works by Valentin; and two paintings by Guido Reni.[44]

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[40] Luxembourg Catalogue I, p. 7.

[41] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[42] Ibid., pp. 8-12.

[43] Ibid., p. 12.

[44] Ibid., pp. 13-20.

From the Little Gallery the visitor entered the Throne Room, which was dedicated to the French School. Of this part of the exhibition the catalogue says: "The paintings which are in this apartment are all of the great painters of the French school. We would wish to have been able to show here Boulogne, Jouvenet, de Troyes, and other excellent artists, but as their works ornament the apartments of the King at Versailles, the Trianon, Marly, and Fontainebleau, it has not been possible to give this satisfaction to the public. We hope that enlightened art lovers will view with pleasure these contemporary masters, who sustain the honor of the nation not only by these precious works with which they have enriched us but also by the students they have left."[45] This small exhibition of French painting of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries enclosed twenty-five items. Fewer than one-half of these twenty-five paintings would be considered of the first or second ranks in the scale of artistic values which prevails today, but a few of them any museum would be happy to have. The outstanding paintings in the Throne Room, according to modern standards, were two landscapes by Claude Lorrain, a religious subject by Le Sueur, an allegorical painting of Louis XIII by Vouet, a Poussin painting of the apotheosis of St. Paul, and a portrait of Louis XV by Rigaud, who was one of the foremost "grand manner"

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[45] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

portraitists of the late seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries. The other works were portraits and religious and historical subjects by such artists as Le Brun, Le Moine, Coypel, Mignard, Vivien, La Fosse, Santerre, and Jeannet.[46] But from an art history point of view -- which is different from a purely critical framework of judgment -- these twenty-five pictures constituted an excellent condensed survey of French Baroque painting, extending back somewhat into Mannerism on the one hand and forward into Rococo on the other. The painters represented ranged in time from Porbus, who was born in 1570, to Hyacinthe Rigaud, who did not die until 1743. For the art historian of today, as well as for modern critical analysis in terms of style, this small exhibition of the French school would be regarded as a significant and valuable collection of documents for study even if not every work present could be considered as possessing great artistic value in itself. Connoisseurs who visited the French collection in the Throne Room undoubtedly took this same critical and historical approach to the pictures exposed there, but to most gallery visitors of 1750 these paintings simply represented a showing of the works of some more or less contemporary artists.

From the Throne Room the public proceeded to the Grand Gallery, the last of the four exhibition rooms. The

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[46] Ibid., pp. 20-28.

Grand Gallery housed thirty-eight paintings constituting, by anyone's standards, an excellent collection. These thirty-eight works included: Raphael's St. George, his St. Michael, and his Virgin, Child, and St. John; Titian's Virgin and Child with St. Agnes and St. John and his Virgin and Child with a White Rabbit; Caravaggio's portrait of Adolphe de Vignancourt, Grand Master of the Knights of Malta; The Virgin in Glory, a country scene, and the Kermesse by Rubens; Veronese's Crucifixion; Leonardo da Vinci's Virgin and Child with St. Elizabeth and St. John; Andrea del Sarto's Holy Family; a Van Dyck portrait; Correggio's Jupiter and Antiope; Pietro da Cortona's Marriage of St. Catherine; four works by Domenichino; Annibale Carracci's Village Wedding; a portrait by Antonio Moro; three works by Guido Reni, all religious subjects; and five paintings by Francesco Albani. This exhibition in the Grand Gallery also displayed four works of "little" masters of the Netherlands school, two by Wouvermans and two by Berghem; one painting by Domenico Feti; and two works by Pier Francesco Mola. Both Feti and Mola were Italian painters of the seventeenth century.[47]

Scattered throughout the exhibition rooms were thirteen master drawings under glass. Four of these were in the antechamber, four were in the Throne Room, and five

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[47] Ibid., pp. 29-40.

were in the Grand Gallery.[48] The drawings, which were to be "varied from time to time," were not identified in the catalogue, and in this regard Monsieur Bailly chose to play with his "public" the kind of guessing game with which students in art history classes are so familiar. "We have not placed numbers on the drawings, nor the names of the artists, in order to allow enlightened art lovers the advantage of deciding."[49] The catalogue does state, however, that the drawings are "beautiful"[50] and specifies that four of them in the Grand Gallery are "drawings of the greatest Italian masters,"[51] probably works of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michaelangelo. The second edition of the catalogue, which is almost identical to the first in both form and content, identifies the fifth drawing in the Grand Gallery as being from the hand of "one of the greatest Italian masters."[52] This particular drawing, which was the last item in the collection, hung directly beneath Raphael's Virgin, Child, and St. John, a clue which was probably obvious enough for even an unenlightened art lover. The third edition of the catalogue is the same as the first two editions insofar as the content of the painting exhibition

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[48] Ibid., pp. 12, 22, 34, 40.

[49] Ibid., p. 12.

[50] Ibid., pp. 22, 40.

[51] Ibid., p. 34.

[52] Luxembourg Catalogue II, p. 36.

is concerned, but it varies somewhat with regard to the drawings. One cannot tell from this catalogue how many drawings were displayed nor where they were located in the galleries; the Avertissement simply states that "some drawings of the greatest masters" are a part of the exposition but that it is not possible to specify them in the catalogue in that they will be changed "from time to time."[53]

The tour of the Luxembourg was to end with a survey of the twenty-four paintings in the Rubens gallery. The catalogue was furnished with a special section to explain the meaning of these paintings concerning the career of Marie de Medici and the many allegorical, classical, and historical references which they contain.[54]

As might be expected, the exhibition emphasized the Italian and French schools and offered comparatively little in the way of Dutch and Flemish painting. The crown's holdings in the Netherlands schools were still relatively slight at this time and were not to be augmented appreciably until after 1774 and the arrival of the Comte d'Angiviller on the scene as Director General. Of the ninety-nine paintings in the Luxembourg museum in 1750 and 1751, forty-eight were of the Italian school and thirty-seven of the French school, but only fifteen were works of painters identified with the

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[53] Luxembourg Catalogue III, Avertissement, p. iv.

[54] Luxembourg Catalogue I, pp. 41-47.

Low Countries or Germany.[55] This does not, of course, include the twenty-four paintings in the Rubens gallery. As to the painters represented in the exhibition, the following table, taken from the third edition of the catalogue, is helpful in judging the museum in terms of its value and contents:[56]

Name of painter	Number of his paintings in the exhibition
Albani	5
Bassano	2
Berghem	2
Breughel	1
Bril	1
Carracci (Annible)	1
Castiglione	1
Correggio	1
Cortona	1
Coypel (Nöel)	1
Coypel (Antoine)	1

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[55] Luxembourg Catalogue II, pp. 44-47; Luxembourg Catalogue III, pp. 41-44. With reference to the classification of artists in terms of school and nationality, it should be noted that some artists are difficult to label in this manner in that they were international wanderers. Valentin (Jean de Boulonge), for example, was born in France but died in Spain and was classified by the eighteenth century as a painter of the Italian (Lombard) school. Antonio Moro was born in the Netherlands but worked in England, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. Poussin and Claude Lorrain are generally conceded to be of the French school but spent much time in Italy. For the purposes of the analyses in this study, the classifications specified by the eighteenth century and used in the Luxembourg catalogues have been accepted.

[56] Luxembourg Catalogue III, pp. 41-44. The names are given in the alphabetical order in which they appear in the catalogue's table but the spellings have been corrected (in parenthesis when necessary because of the alphabetical arrangement) to the commonly accepted modern versions.

Domenichino	4
Feti	1
Guido (Guido Reni)	5
Jeannet	1
La Fosse	1
Le Brun (Charles)	4
Le Moine (François)	1
Lanfranco	1
Le Sueur	1
Michaelangelo Caravaggio	1
Mignard (Pierre)	4
Mignon (Abraham)	1
Mola	3
Moro	1
Porbus	2
Poussin	11
Raphael	4
Rembrandt	1
Rigaud	1
Rubens	3
Santerre	1
Sarto (Andrea del)	2
Titian	4
Valentin	4
Van Dyck	3
Veronese	5
Vinci (Leonardo da)	1
Vivien (Joseph)	2
Vouet	1
Vowerman (Wouvermans)	2
	97
Raphael (not included in above)	1
Titian (not included in above)	1
Total	99

The evaluation of painters in hierarchical terms is always a somewhat questionable procedure and one which is usually provocative of dispute, but of the forty-one painters listed above at least eleven, or one-fourth of the total, would be placed in the first rank of importance by virtually all authorities: Breughel, Correggio, Caravaggio, Poussin, Raphael, Rembrandt, Rubens, Andrea del Sarto, Titian, Veronese, and Leonardo. Certainly these eleven artists are considered today as being among the greatest masters, and

they were so regarded by the eighteenth century. These eleven painters were represented in the exposition by thirty-six paintings, or over one-third of the total of ninety-nine. From this point forward, the assessment of value, in terms of the significance of the works displayed in the Luxembourg, becomes more difficult. The eighteenth-century museum visitor, for example, would have been interested in the two paintings by the Coypels, Nöel and Antoine, in that Antoine, Nöel's son, had been First Painter to the King until his death in 1722 and was the father of Charles Coypel, who was First Painter in 1750.[57] The Coypels, in short, were a prominent family of artists in their time, but today their works are of little interest except for the purposes of art history and to scholarly specialists in eighteenth-century French painting. Both the eighteenth-century and the modern viewer, however, would agree as to the importance of Van Dyck and Domenichino, the former represented by three pictures and the latter by four. The interest in Mannerism and in Baroque art generally which has manifested itself within the last generation or so would mean that many a modern "enlightened art lover" would be particularly intrigued by the several examples of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Italian and French works in the Luxembourg collection, paintings by such artists as Bassano, Annibale Carracci,

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[57] Luxembourg Catalogue I, pp. 23-24.

Albani, Guido Reni, Le Sueur, and Vouet. The 1750 visitor to the gallery was also interested in these works, but from a different point of view and for somewhat different reasons. Some of the portraits exhibited, such as those by Rigaud and Antonio Moro,[58] were impressive to the eighteenth century and are impressive today. The public which visited the gallery in 1750 undoubtedly manifested a particular interest in the four Netherlandish paintings by Berghem and Wouvermans[59] in that the French of the eighteenth century had little opportunity to see works of the Low Countries schools. Today the names of Berghem and Wouvermans are not among the most important of the Dutch-Flemish painters.

Fashions in art and taste change and what was "good" and of value to one generation is "bad" and worthless to another, but in summary one might safely conclude that in terms of today's tastes and values approximately one-third of the Luxembourg exhibition was impressively important, one-third was interesting, and one-third was of little significance. From the point of view of 1750, however, roughly one-third of the collection was of surpassing value, one-third of great significance, and none of it unimportant. This analysis of the Luxembourg exhibition in terms of value, which required some comparison between eighteenth-century

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[58] Ibid., pp. 25-26, 39.

[59] Ibid., p. 31.

and modern values as a point of reference, is clear evidence that in creating the gallery the royal administration did not cull out of the crown collection ninety-nine mediocre, worthless, or "debris" items. Further evidence of this can be seen in an exchange of letters in 1754 between the Marquis de Marigny and Monsieur Lépicié, a painter and an official of the Paris department of the Superintendence. On August 26, 1754, Lépicié wrote to Marigny to say that Monsieur Bailly had asked for twenty-four additional paintings for the Luxembourg gallery. Lépicié found Bailly's zeal for the exhibition commendable but also found the number of paintings he asked for to be "considerable." He proposed to the Marquis that he look into the matter himself but stated: "In retiring ten paintings which are weak and substituting in their place ten superior ones, I think that this number will be sufficient to make this collection not only more worthy of the attention of foreigners but still more profitable for the study of all artists." Marigny replied in a letter of September 6, 1754, stating that he would himself, in consultation with Monsieur Portail, an artist at Versailles, make the selection of the paintings to be sent to Bailly as some of those requested by the keeper at the Luxembourg were "actually in the apartments."[60]

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60 Marc Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de M. de Marigny avec Coypel, Lépicié et Cochin, Première partie, Nouvelles archives de l'art français, troisième série, Tome XIX, Année 1903 (Paris: Jean Schemit, 1904), pp. 75-76. (Hereafter Correspondance de Marigny, Première partie.)

In this exposition the King placed before the public some of the finest paintings in his collection, thirty-five or forty of them from the hands of the greatest artists European civilization had produced. Certainly the Luxembourg gallery was well worth going to see in the eighteenth century and would be well worth going to see today, if only for the works by Leonardo, Raphael, Rembrandt, and Rubens. The crown obviously wished this museum, limited as it was, to display an excellent, well-balanced collection; this goal was achieved within eighteenth-century terms and within the framework of certain inherent restrictions, such as the relatively small number of works exposed and the weakness of the royal holdings in the Dutch and Flemish schools.

The exposition was arranged in the galleries by Monsieur Bailly,[61] a fact specified by the title pages of

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[61] Frequent references in this study to "Monsieur Bailly" as an official in the Superintendence from early in the eighteenth century to the Revolution requires some explanation. The Bailly family constituted a veritable dynasty of keepers of the king's pictures. Nicolas Bailly, the son of a painter, was appointed keeper of paintings in 1699, a position which he held until his death in 1730. Nicolas was the keeper who prepared the inventory of 1709-1710. At his death the office of keeper was divided between two officials, the one having responsibility for Versailles and the other for Marly, Meudon, Compiègne, Fontainebleau, the Luxembourg, and the other royal houses. From 1730 to 1754 Jacques Bailly, Nicolas' son, held the latter position. Jacques was also a man of letters, the author of plays and other pieces for the theater, and according to Engerand and the Dictionary of French Biography he was responsible for the Luxembourg catalogue. In 1754 Jacques Bailly was followed in his position by his son, Jean-Silvain, who held the office until the Revolution. Jean-Silvain Bailly was a scholar, astronomer, and politician who figured rather prominently on the Paris scene in the first phases of the Revolution. He was mayor
(Continued on the following page)

both the first and second editions of the Luxembourg catalogues. Except for the exhibition of the French school in the Throne Room, and the Rubens gallery which was an entity in itself, it is difficult to see what plan or system Bailly used in hanging the paintings. Indeed, none is discernable. Modern museums exhibit their paintings according to some clearly defined system of classification, usually one based essentially on "school" groupings and a chronological progression in order that the viewer may see the evolution of style in a particular period and country and then proceed to see how the style was developing elsewhere at the same time. There are, of course, several approaches to the problem of organizing a collection of paintings, but all of them must take into account some rational consideration of time and place, school and style. Monsieur Bailly, however, apparently had no particular pattern of organization in mind. The visitor to the gallery began with two Italian paintings of the Renaissance and then moved to the antechamber where the ten items displayed included five French, three Italian, and two Flemish works ranging in time from Titian to Claude Lorrain. Of the twenty-three works in the Little Gallery,

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of Paris during the first few years of the Revolution and was executed during the Terror. (Engerand I, Introduction, p. XV, and Liste chronologique des divers gardes des tableaux de la collection de la couronne de 1680 à 1792, p. XXVII; Dictionnaire de biographie française, Tome IV (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1948), pp. 1346, 1355, 1347-1354.))

twelve were Italian, eight were French, and three were of painters of the Low Countries and Germany. The time period presented in the Little Gallery spanned the later sixteenth century through the seventeenth century. French painting was not represented at all in the Grand Gallery where the thirty-eight items displayed were divided unevenly between twenty-nine Italian paintings and nine works attributed to the Dutch-Flemish school. The styles represented in this collection of thirty-eight works included the High Renaissance, Mannerism, and full Baroque. Perhaps an orderly arrangement by school or period was not so very important in this little eighteenth-century museum because of the smallness of the collection and the fact that Monsieur Bailly, unlike a modern museum director, was working with only about a century and a half of stylistic development; furthermore, three-fourths of the exhibition involved only French and Italian artists. Except for the concentration of French works in the Throne Room, Monsieur Bailly probably hung his pictures according to wall space available, lighting conditions, and his personal idea of a visually pleasing arrangement. In short, the Luxembourg gallery in 1750 presented the appearance of a typical eighteenth-century picture gallery, that is, an arrangement of paintings notable for its lack of arrangement, one which today would be considered too casual, confusing, and disorderly. Modern notions of museum organization began to manifest themselves late in the eighteenth century and there is even some hint of them in the Luxembourg gallery in

the grouping of the French exhibition in the Throne Room, although there were also French paintings in the antechamber and the Little Gallery.[62]

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The Luxembourg gallery changed very little from the time of its opening until it closed in 1779. Occasionally a picture was removed to be replaced by another and eventually the number of works exhibited rose from ninety-nine to about 113, but the collection remained relatively static. The number of drawings on display varied from time to time and apparently were changed with some regularity. The exhibition was never enriched with sculpture or other objects of art.

Apart from the catalogues, sources of information as to the contents and appearance of the museum in its early days include two works which are guides to the exposition and commentaries on its collection. Both of these works are dated November 1750 and were published in 1751 with official approbation. Both are in the form of long letters, one written by a chevalier to a marquise absent from Paris[63] and one by a connoisseur to a member of the Academy of Padua.[64]

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[62] This paragraph is based upon an analysis of Luxembourg Catalogue I as a whole.

[63] Tincourt.

[64] Lettre sur les tableaux.

The catalogues, which simply identify each painting and give the dates of the artists, are infinitely preferable to these "letters," which are filled with fatuous rhapsodizing and exactly the kind of fashionable, inane prattle one can hear in any museum from self-appointed experts. Apparently the public response to the museum was so great, however, that a demand was created for critical commentaries which would serve to supplement the somewhat laconic catalogues. Works such as these letters undoubtedly found a ready sale, at least during the first few years of the gallery's existence when its attraction as a novelty was at its height. In the letter to the marquise, the author expresses his desolation that his friend is not in Paris in order that they might enjoy the exhibition together. Failing this, the chevalier conducts his presumably imaginary marquise on an imaginary tour of the gallery, paying her extravagant compliments all the while and carrying on a long (104 pages) conversation with her, inventing her reactions and responses. This form of writing lends itself with particular facility to every manner of silliness, but the chevalier's comments are revealing on several points. The fact that the opening of the gallery was considered a major event in Parisian artistic and intellectual cricles is indicated by the chevalier's comment to the effect that he knows the news of the museum will intensify the marquise's regret at being away

from Paris.[65] As to the arrangement of the gallery, the very thing about it which would probably annoy most modern museum visitors, its lack of rational organization, appealed strongly to the eighteenth century. In this regard, the chevalier tells the marquise: "They [the paintings] are arranged in a manner which cannot but be agreeable to ladies. How charming and how pleasurable for them to be able to view in rapid succession scenes pious and gallant, heroic and pastoral, tragic and comic! How agreeable to pass in review almost simultaneously all the different kinds of picturesque beauty, to enjoy successively the piquant contrasts of roughness and finish, of greatness and fineness, of darkness and light!" Far from being dismayed by the mixture of periods and styles which the museum presented, the author goes on to say that the marquise will be "agreeably surprised" to find in the antechamber and on its entrance and exit doors (thirteen paintings) "a sampling of five different schools. The cleverness and the agreeable contrasts! The variety of subjects is not less happy."[66] One might almost suspect the chevalier of irony, but this is unlikely; throughout the letter there is an emphasis upon the importance of contrasting subject matter and style as a

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[65] Tincourt, p. 4.

[66] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

basis for arrangement and the pleasure of seeing several schools and periods exhibited together.

The chevalier is enthusiastic about Andrea del Sarto's Charity (which reminds him of the King's charity in permitting the exhibition and the gratitude which the public owes to the sovereign for this), most of the Poussins and Lorrains, and Titian.[67] He likes the contrast in mood to be seen in a Breughel battle scene and a peaceful Bril landscape hanging near each other; he doubts that the Breughel is entirely from the hand of that master and finds much fault with it, but he is impressed by the atmospheric light and color of the Bril pastoral.[68] The chevalier is somewhat critical of Rembrandt's composition but says of Rembrandt what has so often been said of him, that in looking at his work "one is astonished, surprised, without knowing precisely why."[69] At the time the chevalier made his tour of the gallery the number of drawings on display had increased from thirteen to twenty. Playing Monsieur Bailly's guessing game, he believes that seven of these are definitely Raphael's, that two are Rubens', and that two are Bassano's. In the case of a drawing in the Grand Gallery he hesitates between Raphael and Andrea del Sarto and in another instance between Giulio Romano and Polidoro. Three he declines to

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[67] Ibid., pp. 7-20.

[68] Ibid., pp. 31-33.

[69] Ibid., p. 40.

identify and of four in the Throne Room he is inclined to give two or three to Poussin.[70] The author rather scorns the catalogue but in doing so he reveals something about its popularity and the popularity of the gallery. "I suppose, madame, as I must, that you would not be biased by the catalogue. You will see it in the hands of nearly all the spectators, who without its help would perhaps understand nothing of that which is the subject of their curiosity; persons of a spirit as cultivated as yours certainly wish to withdraw on every occasion from the ways of the vulgar."[71]

The letter written by the connoisseur to the academician in Padua is not so much a tour of the gallery as a critical essay on the paintings exhibited. He does not amble room by room through the gallery, chattering as he goes, but discusses the paintings in groups based largely on subject matter; for example, he analyzes in one section of his work all paintings in the exposition having a religious theme -- the Virgin and Child pictures, the Holy Families, the saints, and so on.[72] "Profane" subjects, portraits, and all other categories are then taken up in turn. This gentleman is vigorously nationalistic in his approach to

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[70] Ibid., pp. 20-21, 42, 64-65, 96-100.

[71] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[72] Lettre sur les tableaux, pp. 5-23.

painting, championing the French school at every opportunity. In this exposition, he says, "the masters of the different schools dispute among themselves for superiority and the French, too often regarded as inferior to these first, have the glory of disputing them and perhaps even of carrying off the victory." He compares Poussin to Raphael and Domenichino and states that Poussin is the "subject of astonishment and jealousy on the part of the Italians." He is even more enthusiastic about François Le Moine, an eighteenth-century French artist in whom he sees combined all the special talents of Giulio Romano, Guido Reni, Correggio, and Rubens, company into which Le Moine certainly would not be admitted today.[73] This exaggerated, self-conscious pride regarding France's leadership in the arts, as reflected not only in these commentaries but also in the contemporary pamphlets urging the restoration of the Louvre and the establishment of a national gallery of art, suggests that even in the middle of the eighteenth century the French were still struggling with a feeling of artistic inferiority with regard to the Italians. One cannot but wonder how a member of the Academy of Padua would have received such a letter had it actually been sent to him by a French friend. This connoisseur author agrees with the Chevalier de Tincourt that there are twenty drawings exhibited in the gallery and

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[73] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

agrees with most of the Chevalier's attributions, but he does assign one of the drawings to Titian. He is most impressed with the drawings of Raphael and Poussin and, as might be expected, intimates that the works of the latter are every bit as brilliant as those of the former.[74]

By the time the catalogue's seventh edition appeared in 1759, almost ten years after the opening of the museum, the number of paintings on display had increased from ninety-nine to 113.[75] Some substitutions had also taken place, but the additions to the exposition were by no means insignificant and included Rubens' Crucifixion; two Holbein portraits, one of them the portrait of Anne of Cleves; a work by Lorenzo Lotto and one by Salvator Rosa; The Marriage Feast at Cana which was then attributed to Jan Van Eyck and later to Gerard David; Jacob Jordaens' Christ Expelling the Money Changers; and three or four other examples of the Dutch-Flemish schools.[76] The Avertissement to this seventh edition of the catalogue states that the gallery presents a "new arrangement, so useful to artists and so agreeable to art lovers," ordered by the Marquis de Marigny and carried

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[74] Ibid., pp. 47-56.

[75] Luxembourg Catalogue IV.

[76] Ibid., pp. 2, 7, 10, 18, 23, 28. According to Engerand (Engerand I, p. 275), The Marriage Feast at Cana by Jan Van Eyck/Gerard David was placed in the Luxembourg in 1750, but none of the first three editions of the catalogue lists it.

out by Monsieur Bailly, by this time Jean-Silvain Bailly.[77] A comparison of the catalogues reveals that the pictures have indeed been shifted about somewhat, but the plan behind the new arrangement is no more clear than was the design of the old one. Another edition of the catalogue was published in 1761.[78] It is not numbered as to edition but is called simply a "New Edition." Comparison of it with the 1759 edition reveals no significant change in the exposition.

Argenville's 1778 guidebook to Paris, which is the sixth edition, indicates that the collection was almost entirely the same then as it was in 1761 except for the addition of three more paintings, one of them another Holbein portrait.[79] According to Barbier's Dictionary of Anonymous Works, however, this guidebook was first published in 1752 and "several times reprinted,"[80] which could indicate that the 1778 edition might not have been altogether current with reference to the Luxembourg exhibition. As has been seen, the composition of the collection changed relatively little during the nearly thirty years of the museum's life, a fact

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[77] Luxembourg Catalogue IV, Avertissement, p. iii.

[78] Luxembourg Catalogue V.

[79] Argenville, op. cit., pp. 314-337.

[80] Barbier, IV, p. 1094.

which might tempt a careless publisher to reprint an earlier edition of a guidebook without determining its current accuracy. Correspondence between the Comte d'Angiviller and Monsieur Bailly cited earlier indicates that the collection did undergo some modification and at least a temporary diminution in the later 1770's.[81]

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[81] See pp. 126-127 above.

C. The Gallery is Closed: Monsieur Takes Possession

The plan concerning the Luxembourg which was ultimately to result in the closing of the public gallery there was already under consideration as early as 1770. There is in the Archives a document of that year entitled: "Ideas or projects proposed on the palace of the Luxembourg in case the King decides to lodge there Messieurs the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois."[82] The Comtes de Provence and d'Artois were the younger brothers of the Dauphin, the future Louis XVI. The Comte de Provence was the elder of the two, would himself become Louis XVIII, and was known during Louis XVI's reign as Monsieur. The Comte d'Artois would also be king of France, as Charles X. The document cited concerns certain proposed architectural revisions and changes, but it is evidence that even during Louis XV's time there was developing a plan which would remove the Luxembourg entirely from the public domain and convert it into an actual residence for certain members of the royal family. By 1772 members of the Comte de Provence's household were making demands on the officials of the Luxembourg. In March of that year Monsieur Bailly wrote to the Marquis de Marigny in some indignation to report that Monsieur de Challegrain, a member of Provence's household, was demanding for his master's archives the keys to rooms in which Bailly

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[82] A.N., O^1 1685, 217.

had paintings hung and stored.[83] Bailly refused to surrender the keys without a specific order from the Marquis that he do so. But the keeper of the king's pictures lost this round of what was to be a long battle between the Superintendence and Monsieur's administration; a note in Marigny's hand on Bailly's letter states that he has instructed Bailly to yield the keys to the two rooms which the Comtesse de Béarn used for salons and to another as well "as it appears that the service of Monsieur the Comte de Provence will not brook delay." Monsieur Bailly may have found some comfort in the situation in being able to report to Madame de Béarn that she, too, had lost ground to Provence's superior forces; the Comtesse was a veteran resident of the palace who had certain squatter's rights in two of the disputed rooms and who was an old enemy of Bailly's on this account. In spite of the Marquis de Marigny's willingness to accommodate the Comte de Provence with all speed, the project for turning the Luxembourg over to him moved along very slowly and the galleries remained open to the public. Documents of the years 1773 and 1776 reveal that the royal administration was considering the problem in a leisurely manner in terms of the cost involved, necessary renovations in the palace, and the difficulties presented by the public gallery and the

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[83] A.N., O^1 1685, 270.

gallery of Rubens.[84] The point is also made in the 1776 documents that the Comte de Provence, now referred to simply as Monsieur,[85] must have an establishment suitable to "the elevation of his rank." This is, of course, a reference to the fact that Provence was direct heir to the throne during part of his brother's reign and never less than second in line of succession, heir after Louis XVI's young son.

The Rubens paintings of the life of Marie de Medici presented particular difficulties. They had been created for the place where they were located, Marie's Luxembourg, and their removal would pose problems not only because of this but also because of their size. Nevertheless, in December, 1777, Angiviller informed Monsieur Pierre, a painter and official of the Paris department, that the King had decided to retain the Rubens paintings for himself and that Monsieur had "contented himself with asking for copies of them."[86] By 1778 it was decided that all of the original paintings in the Luxembourg would be replaced by copies, those in the main gallery as well as those in the gallery of Rubens, and

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[84] A.N., O^1 1685, 256, 257, 385; Marc Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de M. d'Angiviller avec Pierre, Première partie, Nouvelles archives de l'art français, troisième série, Tome XXI, Année 1905 (Paris: Jean Schemit, 1906), pp. 7-9. (Hereafter Correspondance de d'Angiviller, Première partie.)

[85] This simplified title was by custom accorded to the eldest of the reigning sovereign's younger brothers.

[86] Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondence de d'Angiviller, Première partie, p. 158.

on May 26 of that year Angiviller instructed the Comte de Modene, governor of the palace, to give orders to the Swiss that the public was no longer to be admitted to the galleries when the copying work began.[87] In the meantime, arrangements were being considered for the disposition of the paintings and the evacuation of the Luxembourg, and Angiviller stated in one letter that he was being "pressed" to do this quickly. Most of the paintings which had been on display were to go into storage at the Tuileries, although a few were to be sent to Versailles for actual use in the decoration of the apartments.[88] The work of copying the paintings in the Luxembourg was suspended before it got underway, however, because Monsieur changed his mind about the project,[89] which meant that the museum was allowed to remain open for a little while longer. Finally, in December, 1778, the King issued letters patent by which he formally transferred the Luxembourg to the appanage of "our very dear and beloved brother, Louis-Stanislas-Xavier, son of France, Monsieur." The letters patent were registered by the parlement of Paris on February 5, 1779, by the Chambre des Comptes on April 15, and by the Commission on June 23.[90]

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[87] Ibid., pp. 204-205; A.N., O^1 1914 (6), 22, 146.

[88] Ibid., pp. 200-201.

[89] A.N., O^1 1915 (1), 260, 261.

[90] A.N., O^1 1685, 354, 411.

In March, 1779, Angiviller informed his subordinates in the Superintendence that the Luxembourg was to be transferred from their jurisdiction but that in assigning the palace to Monsieur the King had expressly reserved the right to remove from it the Rubens paintings of the life of Marie de Medici. This specification apparently was necessary; there was no question that the other paintings in the Luxembourg exhibition belonged to the crown collection and would be removed, but the Rubens cycle was really an integral part of the Luxembourg's decorations.[91] Monsieur was not happy about being deprived of the Rubens paintings, and the King's insistence upon this can surely be credited to Angiviller's advice. Louis XVI himself probably did not care much what happened to these twenty-four works by the great Flemish master, but certainly Angiviller did in that they represented an extremely important holding in works of the Flemish Baroque school by one of Europe's greatest colorists. The Count wanted the paintings for the future museum and had no intention of allowing them to become isolated from view in Monsieur's private residence. If Angiviller was indeed responsible for the decision to remove the Rubens paintings from the Luxembourg -- and this seems a very safe presumption -- one must credit the Count with a good deal of courage. There was considerable risk involved in opposing Monsieur,

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[91] A.N., O^1 1685, 415, 416.

who was a personage of great importance, and if by some chance Provence had become king, Angiviller's day at court would unquestionably have been over. One has only to remember what the social and governmental structure of the Old Regime was like to imagine what the sovereign's displeasure would mean to a professional courtier such as Angiviller. Soon thereafter a commission of architects and representatives of both Monsieur and the Superintendence surveyed the Luxembourg in preparation for the formal transfer.[92] A document of July 21, 1779, states that the gallery of Rubens was closed at that time,[93] and letters written in August by Angiviller to Monsieur Bailly and the Comte de Modene indicate that by then the entire palace was closed to the public.[94]

The problem then arose as to what should be done with the paintings in that the museum planned by Angiviller for the Louvre was not ready to receive them. The Superintendence hoped to be able to store them temporarily in the gallery of Rubens, but Monsieur's household was not pleased about this.[95] Nevertheless, the paintings were retired into the gallery of Rubens, and by the summer of 1780 the

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[92] A.N., R^5 530, Procès-verbal de reconnaissance de palais du Luxembourg.

[93] A.N., O^1 1685, 423.

[94] A.N., O^1 1685, 421, 422, 425, 426, 428.

[95] A.N., O^1 1915 (4), 121, 123, 130, 131.

exhibition at the Luxembourg had been dismantled.[96] In the spring of 1782 the paintings were still in storage in the gallery of Rubens awaiting Angiviller's museum, this much to the exasperation of Monsieur's administration. In August the Comte de Provence's household officials were still imploring Angiviller, who had been procrastinating, to remove his pictures while the good weather made the move possible. By autumn Angiviller was making arrangements for the removal of the collection to the Louvre,[97] but in 1785 some of them, at least, were still in storage at the Luxembourg.[98] All of them must have been removed by 1788 in that DuRameau's inventory of that year shows only twenty-four paintings in the Luxembourg;[99] these twenty-four were the Rubens series, which was not removed to the Louvre until 1815. The continued presence of the Rubens cycle in the Luxembourg came to be a source of worry to the Superintendence, however, in that the gallery of Rubens had become a kind of unsupervised and unguarded public passage for everyone living in the palace. Apprehensive of this lack of safety for the paintings, Angiviller gave orders in August, 1790, that they should be

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[96] A.N., O^1 1685, 436, 437, 438; O^1 1915 (5), 177, 204, 205.

[97] A.N., O^1 1916 (3), 133, 134, 135, 147, 153, 156; O^1 1916 (4), 203^1, 203^2, 204, 221, 248, 249.

[98] A.N., O^1 1918 (2), 219.

[99] A.N., O^1 1965, 12, A.

taken from the Luxembourg to "the security of the depot in the Louvre."[100] These instructions were never carried out under Angiviller's administration, and eight months later he was no longer Director General of Buildings.

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The gallery which existed in the Luxembourg for nearly thirty years was unique in France, and in all of eighteenth-century Europe there were only a few other museums which could be compared to it. During the Old Regime this gallery was the only place where the general public had regular access to a part of the crown collection of paintings. To be sure, the collection exhibited in the Luxembourg enclosed less than ten percent of the paintings owned by the king. And certainly it must be granted that the royal administration did not develop the exhibition as it could have been developed; it failed to expand the collection appreciably over a span of three decades and apparently no one ever thought of augmenting and enriching the exposition with sculpture and other objects of art. Nevertheless, the collection, small as it was, placed before the public some of the best of the king's pictures and the works of several of Europe's most famous artists. This little gallery was the nearest thing to a national museum of art that the French possessed before the Revolution and it must be

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100 A.N., O^1 1920 (5), 38, 39.

regarded as an important step in the development of the idea for a great national gallery displaying the royal collections in all their richness and variety. The King's sharing of even a portion of his art treasures with the public set a significant precedent, one replete with implications to the effect that the public had a right of access; certainly no such public right was formally or officially conceded by the royal administration, but the attitude of the Superintendence in regard to the gallery was definitely one of wishing to please and to accommodate the public. The very existence of the museum -- and it is not incorrect to call it that -- added to the policy of the Superintendence, may reasonably be interpreted as evidence of a tacit admission on the part of the crown that the public did indeed have some rights, admittedly limited perhaps, with reference to the royal collections. The gallery also accustomed the public to having access to a collection of important paintings and must have given it some idea of what a really developed national museum would be like. As Hautecoeur says of the gallery, it proved to be a "half-satisfaction which only stimulated" public desire for something bigger and greater.[101] In this sense, the little Luxembourg exhibition may be considered the forerunner of a national museum and, indeed, it had been open for only a few years when the intellectual public and

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[101] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 77.

the royal government began to think of replacing it with a real national gallery of art. This fact may account, at least in part, for the crown's somewhat apathetic attitude toward the Luxembourg exposition and its willingness to allow the gallery to more or less stagnate for a generation. The Luxembourg museum contributed in yet another way to the development of the plan for a national gallery when it was closed. The public had come to take for granted the access to great art which it afforded; the fact that this amenity was no longer available after 1779 gave impetus to the project on which the Comte d'Angiviller was even then at work.[102] This project, of course, had come to be focused on the Louvre, as were nearly all of the ideas for a national gallery which were put forth in the 1750's and the 1760's.

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[102] Ibid., p. 78.

CHAPTER V

THE MOVEMENT FOR A NATIONAL GALLERY GROWS: THE MARQUIS DE MARIGNY, PHILOSOPHES, PAMPHLETEERS

The idea for a national gallery of art in France appeared, disappeared, and reappeared in several quarters and various shapes during the 1750's and the 1760's. The pursuit of this idea through these two decades, however, is rather like the pursuit of an elusive, intangible creature of fantasy which refuses to take definite form or solid substance but is nonetheless real and occasionally manifests itself long enough to assert that reality. There is no single reason why the dream of a national museum was not realized during this period. For one thing, the Old Regime was never in a hurry about anything and often used up years and decades in the execution of any project. Furthermore, the years 1756-1763 were those of the Seven Years' War, not a happy time for France and certainly not a propitious time for launching and completing great, expensive projects. Money was always a problem; any royal administrator proposing a plan which would cost money had to face the Controller-General of Finances and often met with a veto unless the expenditure could be justified as necessary or involved something in which the King had a personal interest. But another possible reason for the failure of the royal government to create a gallery during this time was the fact that

the Marquis de Marigny was Director General of Buildings from 1751 to 1773.

Abel-François Poisson, Marquis de Marigny, was the younger brother of Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson Le Normant d'Étioles, Marquise de Pompadour. Madame de Pompadour became Louis XV's mistress in 1745 when she was twenty-three and retained her status as such, at least officially, until her death in 1764. In 1741 Mademoiselle Poisson was married to Monsieur Le Normant d'Étioles, nephew of the wealthy farmer-general Le Normant de Tournehem, who was Director General of Buildings from 1746 to 1751. The relationship between the Le Normant and Poisson families becomes more complex -- or perhaps simpler -- when one realizes that Le Normant de Tournehem had as his mistress Madame Poisson, the Pompadour's mother, who was herself a great beauty. In her rise to power, Madame de Pompadour pulled up in her wake the Le Normants and the Poissons, except for her husband, about whom everyone apparently forgot. (Madame de Pompadour held the estate of Pompadour and the title of marquise thereof in her own right, a gift from the King in 1745.) Monsieur Le Normant de Tournehem, for whom the Marquise had great affection and whom she regarded, not illogically perhaps, as a kind of step-father, was given the Superintendence of Buildings in 1746, with reversion to madame's brother. The Poissons had all been ennobled and the brother was at that time known as the Marquis de Vandières. So it was that by

virtue of his sister's exaltation -- or degradation, depending upon how one chooses to regard it -- Abel-François Poisson entered into the royal government. Marigny was not yet twenty years old in 1746 and did not actually have anything to do with the Superintendence for another five years. From 1749 to 1751 he was in Italy on a long educational tour in the company of Soufflot, a prominent architect, Cochin, an artist, and the Abbé Leblanc, a scholar. He therefore received some specific training in art history to prepare him for the position he was to occupy and in this respect was different from most of the Directors General of Buildings. Marigny actually assumed his post late in 1751 upon the death of Monsieur de Tournehem, but it appears that he functioned as Director General for the last few months of Tournehem's life.

The Marquis de Marigny was a man of much personal charm, rather shy, somewhat retiring, not at all driven by ambition nor puffed up with pride. The courtiers despised him and made fun of him, but the King liked him and treated him as a brother-in-law. Marigny's administration of the Superintendence was not brilliant, but neither was it unsuccessful. His position was such that he could play an important role in furthering the new taste for neo-classicism which was beginning to replace the Rococo in the arts, and this he did -- his long sojourn in Italy had given him an appreciation for the antique. But Marigny was not a strong

or bold administrator, not an innovator, not a man vigorously to pursue and to carry out a difficult and intricate project such as the plan for a national museum of art. As Director General he conducted himself in such a manner as to please as many people as possible, to cause no trouble, and to stir up no problems or difficulties. Engerand, whose judgment of him is somewhat severe, says that he was "very weak of character and indecisive."[1] Émile Campardon says of him: "The Marquise had no illusions about her brother; she knew that he was not a superior man. . . ." Campardon also says, however, that Marigny was a modest man who had no illusions about himself and was perfectly well aware of the fact that his rank and position had nothing whatever to do with his own merits, whatever they may or may not have been.[2] This very fact would in itself account for his somewhat diffident and tentative rule in the Superintendence. In short, the Marquis, partly perhaps because of his inherent nature and partly because of the awkwardness of his situation, was a man who might listen to large ideas and even think about them, but clearly he was not a man to bring large ideas to realization.

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[1] Engerand II, Introduction, p. XX.

[2] Émile Campardon, Madame de Pompadour et la court de Louis XV au milieu du dix-huitième siècle (Paris: Henri Plon, 1867), pp. 29-30.

Some brief comment as to the nature of the position of Director General of Buildings may be useful at this point, particularly in view of the fact that the Director General played a determining role in relation to any plan for the creation of a national museum.[3] The post was first created in 1664 and given to Colbert, who had the title Superintendent of Buildings. Louvois also held the office, as did the famous architect Mansart. When Mansart died in 1708 Louis XIV issued an edict changing the title of the position from Superintendent to Director General and tightening his personal control over the department; for example, the Director General, unlike the Superintendent, could no longer expend funds without the royal "bon." The Duc d'Antin was appointed Director General in 1708. Immediately the old King died in 1715 the Duc d'Antin, who had been allowed little freedom of administrative action, set about slipping the harness of the 1708 edict and transforming the Superintendence into an autonomous department. This was a project in which the Regent d'Orléans was only too happy to cooperate in order that he might not be bothered with the business of the department. This situation continued until the death of the Duc d'Antin in 1736, at which time the department and the position were reorganized according to the terms of the

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[3]Statements concerning the history and nature of the position of Director General are based primarily on Engerand II, Introduction, pp. VII-XXXV, and Sacy, op. cit., pp. 54-65.

1708 edict, that is, the office again became that of Director General of Buildings, although the department as a whole continued to be referred to as the Superintendence. The Director General occupied a rather curious position which "was not exactly a sinecure."[4] The job did indeed demand work and sometimes a great deal of it, particularly work involving much attention to detail. The Director General was in complete charge of all the royal residences and buildings insofar as maintenance, repair, policing, decoration, and new construction were concerned, and of the royal parks and gardens as well. He was in charge of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, the Royal Academy of Architecture, and the French Academy in Rome. He was responsible for the conservation of all art objects in the royal collections and for all acquisitions of this nature. All special construction projects in which the royal government was involved, such as the Place Louis XV, the church of Sainte Geneviève (today the Panthéon), the Invalides, and the Military School, were under his jurisdiction. So also were the royal tapestry factories of Gobelins and Savonnerie and, later in the eighteenth century, the royal porcelain factory at Sèvres. The department employed a large number of people, some of whom composed a professional or semi-professional staff of artists, architects, designers, keepers of the

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[4] Sacy, op. cit., p. 54.

king's pictures and collections, administrators, and clerical personnel. Many of the employees, however, were part of a large corps of craftsmen, security personnel, and workers necessary for the daily maintenance of numerous vast buildings in which thousands of people lived; this staff included painters, carpenters, stonemasons, cabinetmakers, upholsterers, metalworkers, plumbers, Swiss guards, and the like. The department was broken down into a complex administrative hierarchy of inspectors, sub-inspectors, the governors of the various palaces and châteaux, and so on, all of whom were responsible to the Director General. The Director General himself was responsible only and directly to the sovereign, although he had always to contend with the Controller-General of Finances for his budget and for extraordinary expenditures. The Superintendence was, therefore, a rather extensive and important operation and during the eighteenth century it tended to become ever bigger and more costly, partly because of the gradual inflation which took place in France during these years. The budget for the Superintendence for the year 1700 was 2,400,000 livres, but by 1775 the Comte d'Angiviller was insisting that he had to have 4,500,000 livres annually in order to meet his departmental expenses.[5]

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[5] Ibid., p. 56.

The position of Director General was such that the incumbent of this office "found himself a veritable director of the arts in France charged with guiding the entire artistic movement of the realm."[6] Most of the Directors General, however, were primarily administrators who depended upon the architects and artists, their departmental subordinates, to provide them with expert advice in the arts. Mansart, of course, was an architect and Marigny's study in Italy had provided him with a background of what would today be called art history, but apart from these two the Directors General were either courtier nobles like the Duc d'Antin or bourgeois men of business like Philibert Orry (1736-1746). Sometimes the Director General held another office as well -- both Orry and the Abbé Terray, who was Director General for a short time in 1773 and 1774, held the important post of Controller-General of Finances together with the Superintendence. The position of Director General carried a great deal of prestige at court and when the office was held by a noble or someone like Marigny the king often enhanced it and its incumbent with many additional honors which proved its value. Marigny, for example, was a member of the most exclusive and coveted Order of the Holy Spirit and its secretary, Commander of the Orders of the King, Councilor of State, Lieutenant General of the provinces of Beauce and

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[6] Ibid., p. 57.

Orléans, and Captain Governor of the château and city of Blois.[7] The Comte d'Angiviller was Councilor to the King in Council, Master of the Camp of Cavalry, knight of the Royal and Military Order of Saint Louis, Commander of the Order of Saint Lazare, Governor of Rambouillet, and Director of the Academy of Sciences.[8]

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The Luxembourg gallery may have been regarded by the art lovers of Paris as only a "half-satisfaction," but there is no evidence to indicate that the royal administration seriously considered the creation of a fully developed national museum of art in the 1750's. Certainly people like La Font de Saint-Yenne and Bachaumont did not look upon the little Luxembourg exhibition as an acceptable substitute for the completion of the Louvre and the establishment of a great art gallery there. In the 1752 editions of their writings, previously discussed, they continued to argue for their original ideas -- the Louvre and the exposition of the royal collections there -- and tended to dismiss the Luxembourg experiment in footnotes. La Font, particularly, carried on his fight for the Louvre; there is in the Archives a letter of March 21, 1756, which he wrote to the Marquis de Marigny

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[7] Campardon, op. cit., pp. 34-35, 331.

[8] DuRameau, op. cit., title page.

to tell him that all Paris was grateful to him for some work on the Louvre which was then being undertaken and also to inform him that he, La Font, was dedicating a book to him. The Marquis answered with a polite note in which he thanked La Font for the honor of the dedication and admitted the fact that the Louvre was "precious to the public and to lovers of art."[9] Nevertheless, the royal government did not begin to think in terms of the Louvre as a site for a national museum until the 1760's. During the 1750's only one project for a great museum was officially presented to the royal administration and officially considered by it. This plan, which was rejected, was submitted by Germain Boffrand and was linked to the Place Louis XV.

The creation in Paris of a great square as a site for an equestrian statue of Louis XV was a project which preoccupied the Royal Academy of Architecture, the Superintendence, the court, and the King for several years. The idea for this square was conceived in 1748. It was pondered, considered, deliberated, argued over, worked on and, characteristically, was not completed until the late 1770's, nearly thirty years after the appearance of the original plan. The Queen's father, old ex-King Stanislas of Poland, then Duke of Lorraine and Bar, "had conceived the idea of the Place Stanislas, at Nancy, in bed one night and by the

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[9] A.N., O^1 1908 (4), 47, 48.

next afternoon he already had twenty workmen engaged on it; he was very scornful of the slow progress of his son-in-law's Place."[10] But the French government did not work that way. On June 29, 1748, the Royal Academy of Architecture assembled in extraordinary session to be addressed by the Director General, who was Le Normant de Tournehem at that time. The Director General informed the Academy that the city of Paris desired to erect a statue of the King in a square in honor of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and asked all of the members to submit designs for this project, "leaving to each the freedom of choosing the site, the extent, and the expense" of the square.[11] More than twenty elaborate designs were submitted to the Superintendence by members of the Royal Academy and by architects who were not members. Amateurs also submitted ideas, among them Bachaumont, who sent in a letter and a long, detailed memorandum complete with estimates of cost. These first conceptions for the square tended to be very grand and extensive and would have been very costly had they been adopted, not only because of

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[10] Nancy Mitford, Madame de Pompadour (New York: Random House, 1954), p. 300. This statement must be accepted with qualifications as Miss Mitford, unfortunately, does not document it.

[11] Henry Lemonnier, Procès-verbaux de l'Academie Royale d'Architecture, 1671-1793 (11 vols.; Paris: Edouard Champion; Librairie Armand Colin, 1911-1926), VI, pp. 105-106.

the usual expenses of building and so on but because many of these designs involved the purchase of a considerable amount of real estate and the demolition of many existing buildings.[12] On January 18, 1753, the Academy again met in extraordinary session and was addressed by the Marquis de Marigny who informed the members that the King had selected a site for the square, land lying between the Tuileries Gardens and the Champs-Élysée, and desired "that his statue be placed in the direction of the grande allée which is opposite the Tuileries." The location of the square decided upon, the King requested the academicians to present plans for this site to the Marquis no later than Easter.[13] The place chosen by the King for the square was, of course, the area west of the Tuileries Gardens which is today the Place de la Concorde but which at that time was a piece of wasteland. The selection of this site meant, in effect, that Boffrand's elaborate plan for the Place Louis XV had been rejected. The Academy continued to work on this matter, but while it was still doing so the Superintendence announced, in the summer of 1754, that the architect whose plan had been chosen and who was appointed to supervise the entire project was Ange-Jacques Gabriel, who was to have the right to utilize any part of any of the designs which had been submitted to the

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[12] A.N., O^1 1585, 288 to 245.

[13] Lemonnier, op. cit., VI, p. 191.

government.[14] Gabriel, product of a celebrated dynasty of architects, was First Architect to the King, Director of the Academy, and unquestionably the leading architect of his day. Under his direction the Place Louis XV was brought to completion. On June 21, 1757, the King issued letters patent formally specifying the project, designating its location, and naming Gabriel as supervising architect.[15] Appended to the letters patent is a plan for the square and the surrounding areas; it is dated 1755, is signed by Gabriel, and looks recognizably like the Place de la Concorde of today. Gabriel worked on this assignment for twenty years and created on the north side of the square the elegant buildings which today house the Hôtel Crillon and the Ministry of the Marine. In June, 1763, the King's equestrian statue was erected in the middle of the Place Louis XV; this sculpture, by Bouchardon and Pigalle, was done away with during the Revolution. The square was inaugurated by great public celebrations through which there ran a tone of unfriendliness to the King, who was no longer Louis "the Well-Loved."[16] So the Place Louis XV came to partial realization as the Seven Years' War was ending, although it had been intended to celebrate the ending of the War of the Austrian Succession.

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[14] Ibid., pp. 222-223; 227. See also Introduction, VI, pp. XXVI-XXVII.

[15] A.N., O^1 1585, 307.

[16] Campardon, op. cit., p. 153.

After 1753 and the selection of the site, the project for the Place Louis XV became scaled down in size and expense from the original concept. One of the many plans submitted during the first and more expansive phase of the project was by Germain Boffrand, a plan notable for its inclusion of a national art museum. Boffrand died in 1754 at the age of eighty-seven, but he was energetic and active until the end and was one of the most prominent and productive members of the Royal Academy of Architecture.[17] When the King asked for drawings for the square Boffrand went to work and produced an extensive plan for the area lying between the old Louvre and the Tuileries. In his plan this open space would have become the Place Louis XV, centered with an equestrian statue of the King. The north side of the square was open at that time as the nineteenth-century wing which lies along it now did not exist. On this north side of the projected Place Louis XV Boffrand would have erected a new opera and a special building for the housing and display of the royal art collections.[18] In this plan, then, the Place Louis XV would have been enclosed on the east by the old Louvre, on the south by the river wing of the Louvre which connected that palace to the Tuileries, on the west by the Tuileries itself, and on the north by an opera and a national museum

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[17] Lemonnier, op. cit., VI, Introduction, p. XVII.

[18] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, pp. 72, 77.

of art. Louis XV, prancing in bronze glory, would have dominated the open space in the middle of the enclosure.

This was an impressive plan utilizing the Louvre and the Tuileries, already among the most important architectural monuments in Paris, and joining to them two new public cultural facilities, an opera and a museum. It was also an expensive plan. Three sides of the square were, to be sure, already taken care of by the Louvre and the Tuileries, but the plan would have required considerable work on the façades of the Louvre and the clearing of the central square area which was filled with buildings of all kinds. Still more expensive, Boffrand's design called for the acquisition of a rather large amount of real estate along the north side of the square, the destruction of many buildings, and the erection of two large new edifices, all of which would have involved heavy expenditures. Boffrand's plan was not chosen and Gabriel, placed in charge of the project, did not chose to incorporate any portion of it into his own designs. Nevertheless, the Boffrand plan reveals that the idea for a national gallery of art was still alive in official circles. Furthermore, it presented a plan for a museum which was different from the others that had been or were being put forward, that is, it centered upon a new and special building rather than upon utilization of the Louvre, the Luxembourg, or the Tuileries. No one knows why Boffrand was enthusiastic about the plan for a national gallery

of art or what influence led him to think of designing one; perhaps he had been reading La Font or was inspired by the example of the Luxembourg exhibition. And his plan for a museum may, in fact, have been more practical for its day than the one upon which the royal administration finally settled, the conversion of the Louvre into a gallery. As will be seen later in this study, the project involving the Louvre was not inexpensive either, and some of the problems with which it was plagued, such as that of lighting, could have been obviated by the construction of an entirely new edifice specifically designed to function as a museum. Boffrand's plan, however, was apparently not the first one which envisioned the construction of a special building for the royal art collections. There is in the Archives a document which makes a brief and fleeting reference to an idea for the construction of such a gallery at Versailles near the Orangerie. This is referred to as "the project of Monsieur de Tournehem."[19] Nothing more is known of this plan, it may never have been intended as a public museum, and it was never, of course, realized. Boffrand's project for a national gallery never got past the drawing board, either, and was, in effect, born dead. But it remains as an interesting and unique example of an idea presented for a national gallery, an idea different from all the others

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[19] A.N., O^1 1914 (4), 99, 100.

which had been and would be suggested and which was an essential element in a greater project for the Place Louis XV.

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Both the Paris intellectuals and the royal administration were silent on the subject of a national museum during the war years of 1756-1763. The financial capacities of the government were heavily burdened by the expenses of the war. "The royal treasury could manage to stagger along . . . in peacetime, but war inevitably brought a financial crisis."[20] The Duc de Choiseul, who became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1758 and assumed the ministries of War and the Marine in 1762, introduced stringent economies. Rayner says of these times: "France's entry into it [the Seven Years' War] had been senseless, and she came out of it with her trade ruined, her empire lost, her army discredited, her navy destroyed, and her expenditure for debt-service alone greater than her revenue."[21] Large projects, such as the establishment of a great art gallery, simply had to await better days. When the idea for a museum began to be discussed again, after the war, by Paris intellectuals

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[20] Alfred Cobban, A History of Modern France (2 vols.; Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1961), I, p. 57.

[21] Robert M. Rayner, European History, 1648-1789 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), p. 277.

and to be considered again by the royal administration, it was the Louvre upon which attention was centered.

In 1749 and 1750 the public stir over the disgraceful condition of the Louvre had impelled the crown to make decisions looking toward the completion and renovation of the palace, although it should not be thought that public concern was the only force which moved the royal government to this policy. Certainly the prestige of the monarchy was linked to the Louvre and this factor undoubtedly played a large part in the government's decision to do something about the palace. As might be expected, however, there were many plans and ideas but relatively little prompt action.[22] During the early 1720's a scheme had been advanced for transferring the Royal Library to the Louvre so that it might serve as a convenient research center for the royal academies already housed in the château. One might think the Louvre large enough to shelter one small princess and the library as well, but apparently it was not -- this project had to be put aside when the little Infanta Marie-Anne-Victoire came from Spain to take up residence in the Louvre. It was revived in 1750 and Gabriel was asked to submit some designs for it. Gabriel's drawings contemplated, among other things, the addition of another floor to the palace as its attic

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[22] Statements made concerning the condition of the Louvre and work done upon it in the 1750's and 1760's are based largely on Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, pp. 72-76, and references throughout Lemonnier, op. cit., VI and VII.

had never actually been completed, but the library project made no further progress. The King's difficulties with the parlements in the 1750's resulted in the establishment in the Louvre of the Royal Chamber and the Grand Council, the former a judicial body, the latter an administrative one, but both designed to assist the royal government in either circumventing or controlling the refractory parlements. Between 1755 and 1759 Gabriel worked on many plans, some of them very elaborate, for chambers to be occupied by the Grand Council. Plans for exterior remodeling were also undertaken, particularly with a view toward clearing the colonnade. Gabriel, already preoccupied with many other matters, was assisted on the Louvre projects by Germain Soufflot, the Marquis de Marigny's traveling companion on the Italian trip, and was eventually replaced by him. In the spring of 1756 Marigny and Soufflot decided to destroy and rebuild the third floor of the Louvre but almost immediately encountered financial obstacles and modified their plans. In 1756 and 1757 a certain amount of work was accomplished including "the last floor on the colonnade wing on the courtyard," and the restoration of Perrault's colonnade itself, which was in very bad condition.[23]

Another important project was to clear out of the great courtyard between the old Louvre and the Tuileries

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[23]Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 74; Lemonnier, op. cit., VI, pp. 256-257, 271-272.

the miscellaneous buildings which cluttered it and to tear away the shanties which had been built against the façades of the palace. This work was begun in 1756 and old prints show the demolitions in progress.[24] Again, however, the project was not fully carried through and some of the buildings which should have been destroyed were still standing and still occupied at the end of the century. In 1758 the Royal Council formally promulgated an ambitious plan for the "integration of the Louvre."[25] Some preliminary work was accomplished but most of the great design, of which Soufflot was the principal author, was not realized in that by 1759 or 1760 the government was feeling the financial strain of the Seven Years' War. All work on the Louvre ceased except for minor repairs. When the government's interest in the château dwindled many of the old abuses reappeared and, sad to relate, cafés and shops were again built against the façades. "The courtyard 'served as marketplace and privy to all the rag sellers of Paris.' Marigny was distressed and wrote in 1772 that the spectacle 'dishonored at first sight the most beautiful monument of French architecture.'"[26] Marigny may have been distressed

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[24]Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, pp. 72-73.

[25]Ibid., p. 75.

[26]Ibid.

over the condition of the Louvre, but he could get nothing effective done about it. In 1767, four years after the Seven Years' War ended, some new plans were submitted with reference to the Louvre-Tuileries complex, or rather, some old plans were revived. One of these, a variation of Boffrand's design for the Place Louis XV, contemplated effecting a "union" of the Louvre and the Tuileries, which in truth were not architecturally or esthetically integrated, by the erection of an opera and other buildings. Soufflot again trotted out the now familiar project for placing the Royal Library in the palace. One must credit the Marquis de Marigny with fighting hard for this plan, and the King himself specifically stated his desire for it, but the Controller-General of Finances adamantly refused to consider the matter. Such was the state of the Louvre in the 1760's when the idea of opening a national gallery of art there again appeared in intellectual and artistic circles in Paris and was again considered by the crown.

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The idea for creating a gallery of the royal paintings in the Louvre was not original io the eighteenth century. Apparently even Richelieu had pondered some plan for assembling portions of the crown art collections in the Louvre for the convenience of the Academy and to serve in

the teaching of art students.[27] That Richelieu should have considered such a project seems reasonable enough when one remembers that the Academy was the Cardinal's own creation. Colbert actually achieved the establishment of such a gallery, although it should be emphasized that these seventeenth-century projects concerning the royal collections and the Louvre were not conceived in terms of a public museum. The credit for thinking of placing the crown treasures on public exhibition does belong to the eighteenth century even if the plan for mounting them in the Louvre does not. As has been stated previously, Colbert had a "grand design" for the Louvre, a design thwarted by Louis XIV's determination to get out of Paris and settle himself, his government, and the entire court at Versailles. The King was already thinking about Versailles in 1664 and 1665 when Colbert was consulting with Bernini and other architects on the completion and aggrandizement of the Louvre. By 1669 "when final efforts were being made to complete the Louvre, and just at the moment when all effort and available funds were needed for it, the King decided to build a new château at Versailles."[28] From that time forward, much to Colbert's dismay, more and more funds were diverted to the construction at Versailles, although Colbert continued to struggle along in his effort

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[27] Taylor, op. cit., p. 350.

[28] Tapie, op. cit., p. 139.

to see the Louvre brought to a proper state of splendor. He was fighting a losing battle, however; in 1678 the King ordered Hardouin-Mansart to make Versailles still larger, and "after 1680 the King decided to sacrifice the Louvre to Versailles."[29] In actual fact, work on the Louvre ceased in 1678.

Colbert still hoped, however, to make the Louvre a center of royal prestige even though the sovereign himself refused to reside there. Partly to further this policy, and partly to serve the Academy of Painting and its students, Colbert assembled in the Louvre a large portion of the royal collection of paintings and arranged them in an exhibition. He was assisted in this work by the artist Le Brun, who was probably responsible for selecting most of the paintings and deciding upon their arrangement. This gallery, called the Cabinet du Roi, was visited by Louis himself on December 6, 1681, the date of its formal opening. The King's visit and the appearance of the gallery were reported in the Mercure de France of December, 1681.[30] The exhibition was arranged in seven large galleries in the old Louvre, rooms rebuilt by Le Vau after a fire in 1661. There were four additional galleries in the nearby Hôtel de Gramont. The reporter for the Mercure found the galleries dazzling and apparently

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[29] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 64.

[30] Quoted in Taylor, op. cit., pp. 350-353, and Villot, op. cit., Introduction, pp. XXIV-XXVII.

confusing -- he could not even guess as to how many pictures were exhibited. "You may well judge that one cannot see so many places filled with the King's pictures without their number appearing to be infinite." Any viewer might well have been bewildered by the sight of so many paintings, and the writer says that "the highest apartments are hung with them right up to the cornices." This, of course, was the most usual way of hanging pictures at that time, in rows and ranks, all over the walls from floor to ceiling. No catalogue was published, but according to the Mercure account and the attributions of those times the exhibition enclosed sixteen Raphaels, six Correggios, ten Leonardos, eight Giorgiones, twenty-three Titians, six Tintorettos, eighteen Veroneses, fourteen Van Dycks, seventeen Poussins, and "a quantity of others, how many I do not know; I know only that they are by Rubens, Albani, Valentin, Antonio Moro, and others masters equally well-known." The four galleries in the Hôtel de Gramont were devoted to sculptures in bronze and marble and to a collection of ivories. This museum, which must indeed have been impressive and splendid, was not public nor was there then any question of making it so; it was available to members of the Academy and the Academy's students, to the court, and to persons of rank, but was otherwise a closed royal collection. Colbert's gallery in the old Louvre did not long survive his death in 1683. The collection was eventually dispersed and the most important

items in it were sent to Versailles, although some part of it probably remained in the Louvre and the Louvre's storerooms. Nevertheless, Colbert's experiment with a royal museum forever linked the Louvre with the idea of a national gallery and was remembered and cited by such eighteenth-century writers as La Font when they were championing the creation of another -- and this time public -- museum in the old palace.

One of the first suggestions for the creation of a national museum to appear after the Seven Years' War came from the pen of a leading philosophe, Denis Diderot, and was published in a work which was famous even then, the Encyclopedia.[31] Diderot's suggestion is outlined in an article under the heading "Louvre" which appeared in the ninth volume of the Encyclopedia, published in 1765. The article is not lengthy and takes up only about two-thirds of a single column. Almost half of the article consists of a brief history of the palace, which Diderot refers to as "the principal ornament of this capital." The three brief paragraphs pertaining to the creation of a gallery in the Louvre are worth quoting:

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[31] Courajod, op. cit., Introduction, p. XXVI; Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 77; Poisson, op. cit., p. 10; Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres, Tome neuvième (Neuchâtel: Samuel Faulche, 1765), pp. 706-707.

> The completion of this majestic edifice, carried out in the greatest magnificence, remains always to be desired. One would wish, for example, that all the ground floors of this building were cleaned and the porticoes were re-established. These porticoes could serve for arranging the most beautiful statues of the kingdom, for reassembling these most precious works, now scattered in gardens where no one ever goes and where the air, time, and the seasons destroy and ruin them. In the part situated in the middle they could place all the paintings of the king which are presently stacked up in confusion in the warehouses where no one can enjoy them. They could be placed in the north part of the gallery of plans, if no obstacle to this were found. The cabinets of natural history and medallions could also be transported to other places in this palace.
>
> The façade on the side of Saint Germain-l'Auxerrois, free and cleared, would offer to all views of this beautiful colonnade, which citizens could admire and which foreigners would come to see.
>
> The different academies could assemble here in halls more convenient than those which they occupy today; finally, various apartments could be created to lodge the academicians and artists. This, we say, is that which it would be admirable to do with this vast palace, which for nearly two centuries has offered only debris. Monsieur de Marigny has recently seen to the most important of these things, the preservation of the palace.

There is really nothing new in Diderot's plan. People had been talking for at least a century about finishing the Louvre, and the government had been working intermittently on the project for a still longer period. And, as has been seen, all sorts of ideas had been put forth for utilizing the palace in some way. The various academies, of course, had been located in the Louvre since the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and academicians and artists -- to say nothing of many other people -- already had

lodgings in the château. In this article, however, Diderot seems to look not only to the completion of the Louvre and the restoration of its façades but also to a reorganization of its interior space. His recommendations with regard to museums are neither new nor revolutionary. The "part situated in the middle" which he suggests for an art gallery is undoubtedly a reference to the long Grand Gallery on the river side which linked the Louvre and the Tuileries. With reference to the contents of the art museum, he seems to be suggesting that the paintings displayed could be those stored in the royal warehouses and not to be recommending that pictures be taken from the residences. He believed that much of the important sculpture could be displayed in protected "porticoes" on the palace, a concept which does seem to be new and which apparently concerned the colonnades as they should have been, that is, freed from the encumbering structures which had been erected against them. His statement that the Marquis de Marigny had "recently" performed an important service in seeing to the "preservation" of the palace is undoubtedly an allusion to the work done on the Louvre in the late 1750's. Diderot also makes it clear in his article, at least by implication, that any museum or museums established in the Louvre should be public.

There is no point in speculating on the source of Diderot's idea for a museum -- the general hope for such a gallery in a restored Louvre had been current among Parisian

intellectuals and connoisseurs for about fifteen years and it is perfectly logical that Diderot would refer to this idea in writing an Encyclopedia article on the Louvre. He had surely read La Font, and Bachaumont, and Voltaire on this subject and certainly agreed with them on it. But his article -- brief, not detailed, not very specific, and containing nothing essentially new -- must be regarded as a significant step in the development of the idea for a national gallery. The suggestion for a museum in the Louvre had not really been aired since the early 1750's. Diderot was an influential intellectual very much interested in the arts, and the Encyclopedia was an influential and widely-read publication. It is, of course, impossible accurately to measure the specific influence of Diderot's article on the royal government or on general opinion, but it did again present the plan for a museum, and in an important publication. The King read the Encyclopedia on occasion[32] and Madame de Pompadour was its ardent supporter, although the whole problem of the Encyclopedia placed her in an awkward situation in that "the position which she occupied at court compelled her at least to appear to respect religion."[33] At one point when the whole Encyclopedia project was in jeopardy because of censorship difficulties, Madame de Pompadour let d'Alembert and Diderot know that she would do what she could

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[32] Campardon, op. cit., p. 281.

[33] Ibid., p. 280.

for them if only they would agree to be tactful on the subject of religion, a suggestion which both rejected. Indeed, the Pompadour was friendly with the philosophes generally and particularly liked Quesnay and the Comte de Buffon. She acted as protector at various times to Voltaire and d'Alembert and would have liked to extend her patronage to Rousseau, but he would have none of it.[34] Diderot did not think much of her and when she died he wrote: "Madame de Pompadour is dead. So what remains of this woman who cost us so much in men and money, left us without honor and without energy, and who overthrew the whole political system of Europe? The Treaty of Versailles, which will last as long as it lasts; Bouchardon's Amour, which will be admired forever; a few stones engraved by Guay which will amaze antiquaries of the future; a nice little picture by Van Loo which people will look at sometimes, and a handful of dust."[35] This is an unchivalrous and even uncharitable comment by a philosophe about a woman who was literally a friend at court to the group to which he belonged. The Encyclopedia article on the Louvre appeared after the Marquise de Pompadour's death in 1764, but she had helped to make a place at court and among her circle for the publication. Perhaps the Louvre article was

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[34] Ibid., pp. 265-282.

[35] Ibid., p. 312; Mitford, op. cit., pp. 306-307. The translation of Diderot cited is Miss Mitford's.

read by the King or people of importance at court. Perhaps it was read by the Marquis de Marigny, who is mentioned in it. In any event, the next development in the plan for a museum in the Louvre was linked to Marigny, the Pompadour's brother.

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Sometime between 1765 and 1768 the Marquis de Marigny apparently gave some consideration to Diderot's Encyclopedia suggestion for a national gallery, or to some similar plan for the Louvre. There is no direct and specific evidence to show that Marigny was indeed studying such a project. Biographical studies of the Marquis and his sister are silent on this matter. The Archives contain no memorandums or correspondence between Marigny and his departmental subordinates, or from the Marquis to the King, which throw light on the subject. The only surviving information concerning Marigny and this plan is in the form of indirect evidence contained in a contemporary publication. In 1768 a pamphleteer named Reboul published anonymously a book of some length (323 pages) entitled Essay on the Ways of the Times.[36] One can easily understand why the author chose to remain anonymous in that this work is a scathing

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[36] Reboul, Essai sur les moeurs du tems (London and Paris: Vincent, 1768). Authorship is verified in Barbier, II, 1re partie, p. 259.

denunciation of the social and economic organization of his day and one which would make a political conservative of our own time turn pale. The general tone of the pamphlet is set forth in the introduction in which the author says: "I have seen the errors of my century and I have published this advice; I can be mistaken and my advice can be bad, but my intentions are good. I speak to the rich in favor of the poor, to the happy part of the nation for the suffering and unhappy part; I wish to equalize the conditions of men and to diminish that tremendous difference which wealth puts between one man and another because I feel that I have no more right than another to eat when I am hungry or to get warm when I am cold. . . ." Reboul insists that "no one will find in this work anything against the government, nothing which can harm religion or its principles," and in one part of his introduction he loyally refers to the King as the nation's "communal father . . . Louis, the Well-Loved of his people."[37] He then proceeds to discuss agriculture, education generally, the education of girls particularly, the arts, literature, the pernicious love of luxury which pervades society and the disintegration of morals, and to give advice to the rich on behalf of the poor.

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[37] Ibid., Avis préliminaire, pp. 1-7.

With reference to the arts, Reboul says that "taste for the arts has degenerated into love of luxury." He deplores the fact that the masterpieces of Poussin, Le Brun, and Le Sueur are neglected by people who stand "in a state of ecstasy before the portrait of a coquette" and charges that the arts are being abused when "great painters, great sculptors, and great architects are obliged to limit their genius and to abase themselves to the level of the imbecile rich who employ them. . . ." Luxury, he says, has won the day when "capable artists are forced to prostitute their talents to decorating a carriage panel or ornamenting a screen or an indecent boudoir. . . ."[38] Proceeding in this vein, Reboul states that Paris should have, but does not have, "superb galleries, built with magnificence, as sanctuaries for the masterpieces of painting" and "immense parks embellished with marvels of sculpture."[39] Reboul is also critical of the condition of Paris and charges that the capital lacks great public buildings and monuments worthy of it. He complains that the "royal library, one of the most precious that has ever existed, is lodged in a bourgeois house,"[40] and that

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[38] Ibid., pp. 181-184.

[39] Ibid., p. 186.

[40] The Royal Library was housed in the Hôtel de Nevers early in the 1720's when the plan which was then current for arranging it in the Louvre was changed by the arrival of the Infanta Marie-Anne-Victoire from Spain.

the "paintings of the king, the richest collection in the world, are hidden in storehouses." This passage in the text has a footnote in which the author refers to a great project currently in progress under the direction of the Marquis de Marigny.

> They speak of a great and magnificent project which will create the most beautiful temple of the arts that has ever been. They say that the royal library will be placed in all that part of the old Louvre which gives onto the river; the gallery of Apollo will be restored and the salon where they exhibit the paintings suitably redecorated. The cabinet of medals, that of prints, that of natural curiosities given by Monsieur Donsenbraye, and the precious collection of the king's paintings will be placed immediately in the immense gallery of the Louvre, from which the plans will be taken to the Military School, where the public will enjoy all these riches.
>
> If this project is executed, the enlightened minister who presides over the arts and protects artists, Monsieur the Marquis de M . . . , deserves a statue in the most prominent place in this superb Museum.

It is true that in 1767 and 1768 there was a sudden flurry of activity in the Superintendence with reference to the Louvre. The war over, some of the perennial projects for the palace were re-examined and it was indeed in 1768 that Soufflot submitted to the Marquis de Marigny an elaborate design entitled Mémoire on the Establishment of the Royal Library in the Louvre. A new opera was contemplated for the Louvre area, as well as some other works, and for all of these there is documentation in the form of memorandums, mémoires, or architectural drawings.[41] All of these exuberant

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[41] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 75.

plans were effectively squelched by the Controller-General of Finances and none of them were realized, either at that time or later. There is nothing in the Archives, however, to substantiate Reboul's statement about a great public art museum to be established in the Grand Gallery.[42] (Reboul's reference to "the salon where they exhibit the paintings" is an allusion to the room where the Academy held its annual exhibition of contemporary paintings and has nothing to do with a museum or art gallery.) His footnote gives the impression that the plan was in an advanced stage of development and even that the opening of the museum was imminent. Reboul states that the art collections were to be placed in the Grand Gallery, which is an echo of Diderot's 1765 suggestion, but he asserts that the plans in relief were to be removed from the gallery and placed in the Military School. Diderot, on the other hand, seemed to accept the idea that there would be room in the Grand Gallery for both the plans and art. Reboul's statement concerning the removal of the plans in relief lends a note of authenticity to what must otherwise be regarded as a "they say" rumor. The plans in relief were, and are, a collection of miniatures of the

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[42] Ibid., p. 78. Hautecoeur states that the plan apparently was submitted to Louis XV late in 1767 and was approved by him on January 3, 1768. Hautecoeur also states, however, that we have knowledge of the project only by way of Reboul's book, a fact verified by this author's personal research in all of the pertinent cartons in the Archives Nationales, including a carton full of Marigny's personal records and papers.

fortified cities and harbors of France executed in scale model and finely detailed almost to the last house in the towns and the last shrub in the surrounding countryside. This collection was begun by Vauban, Louis XIV's great designer of fortifications, and was continued through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The plans in relief are today on the fourth floor of the Invalides and may be visited by anyone. They have a fairy tale charm and are a delight to children, but they were not originally intended for enjoyment or pleasure; in their day they were secret and were used by the general staffs for the purpose of strategic planning. The plans in relief were actually removed from the Grand Gallery by the Comte d'Angiviller not so very many years after Reboul's book appeared. This fact indicates that Reboul may have known what he was writing about and may have had access to some reliable source of information as to what was going on in the Superintendence.

Only one conclusion seems possible in regard to Reboul's footnote reference to a project for a national gallery, and this conclusion must rest on logical speculation. A plan for a public art museum displaying the crown collections in the Grand Gallery of the Louvre, such as that mentioned by Reboul, was very probably being talked about in 1767 and 1768 and apparently had even reached a certain preliminary stage of formulation, at least to the point where the King's knowledge and consent became necessary. According

to Hautecoeur, the royal "bon" was bestowed in January, 1768. Three months later, however, the Controller-General of Finances vetoed the project concerning the Royal Library and therefore, in effect if not specifically, killed the museum plan at the same time. It seems probable, then, that some plan for an art gallery in the Louvre was in an early formulative phase late in 1767 and early in 1768 but was aborted by financial difficulties even before it had progressed to the stage requiring administrative work, a fact which would account for the lack of documentary evidence concerning it. The plan was allowed to languish, not to be revived until Angiviller's day. The Marquis de Marigny had neither the determination nor the influence to carry the King with him in an effort to override the disapproval of the Controller-General of Finances. Marigny was not to have a commemorative statue in the "most prominent place" in a museum of the Louvre and was not to achieve recognition as its founder.

Other people, however, seemed determined to make a great and creative administrator out of the Marquis de Marigny and to see him carry out some splendid project concerning the Louvre and the Tuileries. Certainly ideas for such a project were not lacking in the 1760's. A most interesting plan for the Louvre, one different from the others, was put forward by Monsieur Maille Dussausoy in a work entitled <u>The Objective Citizen, or Various Patriotic Ideas Concerning Some Establishments and Useful Embellishments for</u>

the City of Paris, the first part of which was published in 1767 and the second part in the following year.[43] Only the first part of Dussausoy's book is of interest here. This work was not published anonymously but was signed and, indeed, appeared with the imprimatur of official approbation. Dussausoy's whole attitude differs radically from that of his contemporary, Reboul, who takes a markedly sour and disenchanted view of his times and his city. Dussausoy, on the other hand, is confident and cheerful. He believes that things are fine but that they can be much better, and he proceeds to produce, with astonishing facility, a bewildering plethora of ideas for making them so. He obviously had a fertile and boundless imagination reinforced by a strong strain of inherent optimism -- none of his notions, no matter how complex or difficult they might be, seems to him impracticable.

Dussausoy outlines a plan for the Louvre which must have made Marigny and the officials of the Superintendence somewhat giddy; the reaction of the Controller-General of Finances can only be imagined. This plan was a daring one, however, and its author must be admired for his courage. No one in more than two centuries, says Dussausoy, has been able to do anything effective with the Louvre and it is

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[43] Maille Dussausoy, Le citoyen désintéressé, ou diverses idées patriotiques, concernant quelques établissemens et embellissemens utiles à la ville de Paris, Première partie (1767), Seconde partie (1768) (Paris: Gueffier, 1767-1768).

time the problem were approached from a new point of view. He suggests that since the kings do not need the palace and do not propose to live in it, the Louvre be turned over by the crown to the city of Paris for utilization as a city hall. "What does it serve the king to have two palaces [the Louvre and the Tuileries] in his capital if the one is incomplete and the other uninhabitable?" Dussausoy confesses that this idea of making an Hôtel de Ville out of the Louvre is "not entirely new" in that it had been thought of in 1749 and had also been "proposed in part by the late Monsieur Turgot."[44] His plan, however, is much more extensive than anything of its kind to appear before and he proceeds to elaborate it in great detail. According to Dussausoy's plan, the palace would be owned by the city of Paris and occupied jointly by the municipal administration and certain elements of the royal government. A part of the old Louvre, for example, would house some of the royal academies and the archives of the royal household, all dependencies of the crown to which the city would graciously extend its hospitality, as well as all the officials, bureaus, commissions, and departments comprising the government of the city of Paris.[45] Another portion of this end of the palace would serve the French Academy, the Academy of Sciences, and

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[44] Ibid., pp. 130-134.

[45] Ibid., pp. 135-139.

the natural history collection of "the late Monsieur d'Onzembray."[46] Continuing along the river side of the Louvre one would find a hall for public festivals which would be called the Gallery of Illustrious Men. Dussausoy believed in illustrious men and his plan for the Louvre called for filling the château with busts and full-length sculptures of people famous in French history and culture. The plans in relief would be removed to the Military School and the Grand Gallery devoted to the Royal Library and the collections of prints, drawings, medallions, and engraved stones.[47] The Tuileries might be renovated to provide a residence for the sovereign when he wished to come to Paris and for other members of the royal family. An engraved map of the Louvre area included in Dussausoy's book gives some understanding of the scope of his project.[48] The plan calls for three new squares, a large one before the colonnade on the Saint Germain-l'Auxerrois side, a smaller one before the Palais Royal, and another large one near the Tuileries; fountains; a new opera; a new hôtel for the farmers-general; and various other new constructions, to say nothing of necessary interior remodeling and decorations. The financing of this ambitious and appallingly expensive project would be a problem, of course, but Dussausoy is not dismayed; he has an

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[46] This name is spelled "Donsenbraye" by Reboul.

[47] Dussausoy, op. cit., pp. 140-142.

[48] Ibid., Plate IV.

answer, or rather several answers, as to how his plan might be carried out.[49] It should be done in planned phases, he says, with the crown and the city sharing the cost. The funds would come from varied sources -- rents, bonds, the national lottery, and so on. Each year the farmers-general were to be accorded "the glory of contributing to a monument which will attest to future generations their **patriotic zeal and love.**" Put more bluntly, a special tax of 3,000 livres per annum would be laid on each farmer-general. Wood needed for the construction projects could come from the forests of the royal domain. In the preface to his book Dussausoy discusses the problem and cost of labor in regard to the many construction projects which his ideas involve, and in this connection he suggests the creation of a special commission to oversee a program of public works upon which the military, otherwise unoccupied, could be used and which would also provide work for the unemployed. All of this, he asserts, would stimulate the economy by putting additional money into circulation. A national public works program involving the construction of new buildings everywhere and the improvement of communication facilities would raise the standard of living generally and contribute to the creation of a healthier and more prosperous France.[50] Dussausoy estimates

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[49] Ibid., pp. 155-159, 176-179.

[50] Ibid., Préface, pp. 7-12.

that the first phase of his Louvre project would cost about 300,000 livres and, unlike the Director-General of Finances, has no doubts as to the possibility of raising this sum.

In his plan for the Louvre Dussausoy takes into consideration a part of the royal art holdings -- the collections of prints, drawings, medals, and engraved gem stones -- but says nothing specific about the paintings. This is a strange omission and one for which it is difficult to account. Nevertheless, Dussausoy's expansive project must be accorded its place in any consideration of the development of the idea for a national gallery. He envisioned the Louvre as a great public building dedicated to the city of Paris, to the arts, and to the cultural life of the nation. This is typical of the thought of those people who wished to see the Louvre as the site of a national museum of art and reflects the public interest in the palace which was current in Paris in the later 1760's.

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When Madame de Pompadour died in 1764 the Marquis de Marigny went immediately to the King and resigned his position as Director General of Buildings and his other posts as well. The King returned the Superintendence to him together with all his other honors, and he continued as Director General until his final resignation in 1773. He was followed in the position of Director General by the Abbé Terray, who was also Controller-General of Finances at the

same time. The question of a museum in the Louvre again appeared during the Abbé Terray's brief administration in the Superintendence. In August, 1773, a Monsieur Lacombe wrote a short letter to the Superintendence stating that the royal paintings at Versailles "should ornament Paris." This gentleman asserts that he "proposed this noble project to Monsieur the Marquis de Marigny in 1760" and that the Marquis "returned to it after the peace." Monsieur Lacombe also states that Paris should be "the temple of the arts and the rendezvous of foreigners" and, as had been done before, cites the example of Colbert's intentions in this regard.[51] An unsigned note commenting on this letter states that there are indeed many paintings at Versailles which could be put to better use in public exhibition and points out that the Grand Gallery of the Louvre would be the best place for such a museum were it not occupied by the plans in relief. A further notation, in yet another hand, states that the Controller-General of Finances has said any project involving the Louvre would be impossible.[52]

There are other documents, however, which present a somewhat different picture. In September, 1773, Monsieur Jeaurat, who was an artist and a member of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, submitted a rather long formal

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[51] A.N., O^1 1912 (4), 82.

[52] A.N., O^1 1912 (4), 83.

memorandum to the Superintendence on the subject of the royal art collections.[53] Jeaurat stated that the offices of the Superintendence at Versailles were adequate for housing royal portraits, the paintings desired for actual use in the decoration of the apartments, and so on, but that some other and better disposition was needed for the remainder of "the most precious collection which is known." He considered the construction of a new gallery but rejected this idea as too expensive in both time and money. He then stated that it would be "more expedient to revive the project of placing the paintings in the gallery of plans in Paris and transporting said plans to the Royal Military School." He did not believe the Grand Gallery of the Louvre to be a very proper place for the plans in relief anyway. "A gallery which is necessary for communication between the old Louvre and the Tuileries is little suitable for enclosing things which must not be public, such as the plans." Jeaurat also pointed out that an exhibition arranged in the Louvre would be useful to students and that "foreigners could more easily enjoy the paintings at Paris than in Versailles." In a set of "Observations" following the text of his letter, Monsieur Jeaurat noted that the Luxembourg was apparently destined to become a royal appanage and asked what would be done with the paintings on exhibition there. He observed that some consideration had been given to creating a place for the

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[53] A.N., O^1 1912 (4), 99.

paintings in the Tuileries but stated that this plan was objectionable for several technical reasons. He concluded his communication by stating that "the gallery of plans appears most convenient in all respects." A note on the letter in another hand reads: "He has already spoken to Monsieur de Monteynard in regard to the execution of the proposed project."[54] The document following Monsieur Jeaurat's letter is a commentary upon it written by Pierre, who was First Painter, to Monsieur de Montucla, a high official in the Superintendence.[55] Pierre says that "Monsieur Jeaurat proposes in this mémoire some means of putting the royal paintings more at large." Pierre summarizes Jeaurat's suggestions but dismisses them by stating: "I think that these projects are superfluous, seeing that the Controller-General has already taken with Monsieur de Monteynard measures for using as this depot the Grand Gallery of plans." A note made by Montucla on Pierre's commentary reads: "These projects are superfluous, the Controller-General having other views, has already taken measures in consequence." These documents would seem to indicate that

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[54] The documents make it evident that Monsieur de Monteynard was an official either in the Superintendence or in the office of the Controller-General of Finances; it seems a virtual certainty that he was in the Superintendence.

[55] A.N., O^1 1912 (4), 100. See also Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondence de d'Angiviller, Première partie, pp. 7-9.

the Abbé Terray was considering some plan for an art gallery in the Louvre late in 1773, and there is further evidence of this. In Bachaumont's Secret Memoirs there is an entry dated November 14, 1773, which reads in part:[56]

> There is a gallery of immense length which joins the palace of the Tuileries to that of the Louvre. It is here where there are all the models of the various frontiers and fortified places of the realm. . . . There has been presented to the Abbé Terrai a project in which it is proposed to build a gallery at the Military School to which these plans would be transported, the funds for the construction to come from royal châteaux to be demolished. . . .
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> In this gallery, thus freed from the immense apparatus of such machines, the author proposes to exhibit the royal paintings, the sculptures, and His Majesty's rich objects of every kind, stored either in the Hall of Antiques or in various warehouses, thus to form in this gallery a Vauxhall, that is to say, a place of public assembly for the winter. . . .
>
> This project, presented to the Controller-General, has been well received there, and this minister does not seem far from agreeing to it.

Bachaumont's statement, like Reboul's footnote reference to Marigny's plan for a gallery in the Louvre, was apparently based on hearsay, but it was a rumor for which there is some substantiation in the documents cited above.

As has been seen, the idea for a national museum of art as it existed in the 1750's and 1760's and the first few years of the 1770's showed itself in just such vague and insubstantial manifestations as this one involving the

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[56] Quoted in C. Gabillot, Hubert Robert et son temps (Paris: Librairie d'Art, 1895), p. 170.

Abbé Terray. Rumors, hearsay reports, occasional references in official documents, plans put forward by pamphleteers and others outside the government, projects considered briefly and then dropped -- such elements make up the history of the hope for a national gallery during this period. And while the idea for such a museum never even approached a full planning stage at this time, there is abundant evidence to indicate that, on the other hand, it was never really dead and was always beckoning as a future reality. One might charge that the royal government's failure to create the great gallery which could have been possible was the fault of Marigny and ineffective leadership in the Superintendence. This may be partly true, but it would be unfair to lay the blame entirely at the Marquis' door. The royal government's financial problems were especially acute during the last half of the eighteenth century and the administration was often at the point of a fiscal crisis during this time; this situation existed for many reasons but resulted particularly from the cumulative costs of the two mid-century wars. There was no money, and this was not Marigny's fault. Another and different type of administrator might have managed to surmount the fiscal difficulties, but Marigny was not the man to do this.

The Abbé Terray was not in office long enough for anyone to know what he might ultimately have done in regard to the creation of a gallery. He seems to have been favorably disposed to the idea, and since he was also Controller-

General of Finances he might, in his dual administrative capacity, have achieved what Marigny could not achieve. But on May 10, 1774, Louis XV died and was succeeded by his grandson, Louis XVI. On August 24, 1774, the Abbé Terray was replaced in the Superintendence by the Comte d'Angiviller, a very different kind of man from Marigny. With the appointment of Angiviller as Director General of Buildings the plan for a national gallery moved into a new and, for the Old Regime, final phase.

CHAPTER VI

THE COMTE D'ANGIVILLER'S PROJECT FOR A MUSEUM, 1774-1789: PATIENCE AND PERSISTENCE

A. Early Plans: Optimism and Hope

Charles-Claude de Flahaut de la Billarderie, Comte d'Angiviller, was born in 1730 at the château of Saint-Remy-en-l'Eau in northern France on the edges of both Picardy and the Ile-de-France.[1] His father was Charles de Flahaut, Marquis de la Billarderie, the representative of an old house of épée nobility. His mother was a daughter of the Marquis de Nesle, and Angiviller was descended on both sides from families which, in the tradition of the French nobility, were active in the military and also held posts at court and other honors. When he was thirteen years old Angiviller became a page at court, and at the age of sixteen he was given a commission as a captain of cavalry in the Gardes du Corps. From this time forward Angiviller's fortunes at court rose steadily. He had a serious temperament and a sober way about him which appealed especially to the Dauphin, whose own cast of character was similar. Late in

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[1] Biographical information concerning Angiviller is drawn largely from Sacy, op. cit., particularly Chapters I-V. With reference to Angiviller's role in the movement to create a national gallery, his biographer devotes to this question only eight pages (pp. 135-142) in a book of 258 pages.

1759 the Dauphin moved to appoint Angiviller a gentilhomme de la manche to his eldest son, the Duc de Bourgogne, but the boy died in the spring of 1760 before Angiviller had actually entered into the office. A few months later, however, Angiviller resigned his army commission to become gentilhomme de la manche to the Dauphin's other three sons, the Duc de Berri, the Comte de Provence, and the Comte d'Artois. The gentilshommes de la manche were members of the Dauphin's household who were particularly charged with the care and education of the royal children and who acted, in effect, as assistant governors to them. Angiviller became especially attached to the Duc de Berri, which was politic of him in that Berri was destined soon to be dauphin and eventually to be king. The Dauphin died in December, 1765, and the Duc de Berri succeeded to his father's position as heir to the throne. The death of the Dauphin removed from the scene Angiviller's most powerful friend at court, and the death of the Dauphine, Marie-Josephe de Saxe, in 1766 was an additional blow to him. Furthermore, Angiviller had never got on well with the Duc de La Vauguyon, the governor of the young princes. These circumstances moved Angiviller to withdraw from the court into private life, and in 1766 he resigned his post in the Dauphin's household.

Angiviller would probably have had to leave the Dauphin's service even if that prince had lived; about 1765 the Count embarked upon a prolonged liaison with the

Baroness de Marchais, a proceeding of which the pious and strait-laced Dauphin would never have approved. Madame de Marchais -- somewhat older than Angiviller, sprightly, intellectual -- was the daughter of the farmer-general Laborde and the wife of the Baron de Marchais, Louis XV's premier valet de chambre. In 1768 the Baron was appointed Governor of the Louvre and given a town house in the nearby rue de l'Oratoire. Angiviller was also granted a little "grace and favor" house in Paris, one conveniently next door to the Marchais residence. In this setting the Baroness de Marchais, unencumbered by her busy and preoccupied husband, presided over one of the most brilliant salons in Paris, an important gathering place for physiocrats, men of letters, and intellectuals generally. In her drawing room one could meet Quesnay, Turgot, Mirabeau, Diderot, Marmontel, La Harpe, d'Alembert, the Baron d'Holbach, Helvétius, Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Comte de Buffon. Angiviller came to know all of these people well; some of them he liked and some of them he did not like, but he always retained a great and particular admiration for Rousseau. He and d'Alembert were good friends, but he disliked Diderot and on one occasion sharply debated with the great Encyclopedist the question of the existence of God. He found Voltaire's cynicism and vanity annoying, as many people did, and was not much impressed by the Baron d'Holbach. The Comte d'Angiviller's exposure to these minds, which constituted the fountainhead

of the Enlightenment, must have been important in shaping his attitudes and philosophies, although it seems that he had his own ideas and opinions and was capable of maintaining himself intellectually in this company. The determination to create a great public national gallery of art which Angiviller displayed as Director General of Buildings can very probably be traced, at least in part, to the ideas and influences of the intellectuals and philosophes with whom he associated in Madame de Marchais' salon.

From 1766, then, Angiviller lived in this environment in Paris as a private gentleman. His personal means, however, were not extensive and he gradually became amenable to the idea of returning to a post at court. He did possess pensions amounting to about 10,000 livres a year and in 1770 was appointed Governor of La Tour-de-Bouc in Provence, a sinecure which augmented his income somewhat. The Dauphin, the former Duc de Berri and future Louis XVI, never ceased to be concerned about Angiviller, his old friend and tutor, and continued to seek a good appointment for him. In 1771 Angiviller was given the reversion of the post of Director of the Royal Botanical Garden, a position held at that time by the famous naturalist, the Comte de Buffon. Buffon lived until 1788, however, and Angiviller's opportunity had come long before that time. Louis XV died of smallpox in May, 1774, and his grandson, Louis XVI, ascended the throne. The new King, a young man of twenty, was finally in a position

to do something for Angiviller and it was to be only a matter of time until the Count found himself back at court in a position of prominence. Angiviller was named Director General of Buildings in August 1774, on the same day that his friend Turgot was appointed Controller-General of Finances.

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Angiviller's first concern as Director General was to look to the finances of his department as they were "in a deplorable state."[2] He found, for example, that the Superintendence was in debt to the extent of ten or eleven million livres. Artists who had executed commissions for the department and tradesmen who had furnished it with supplies months previously had not been paid. Indeed, the salaries of many members of the staff of the Superintendence were three and even four years in arrears. One wonders how these people managed to live, but such was the situation; they probably survived largely on credit, just as the Superintendence itself was doing. In such circumstances it was good to have the Controller-General of Finances as a personal friend, and Angiviller lost no time in consulting Turgot with regard to his department's muddled fiscal affairs. He also addressed himself to the task of studying his department's

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[2] Ibid., p. 54.

economic history for the preceding century -- which must have been a depressing job -- and to preparing for it a reasonable and planned annual budget, the first such that the Superintendence ever really had. There was little, however, that Turgot could do for his friend the Director General of Buildings; the condition of the royal treasury was such that any attempt to institute a sound financial policy in the Superintendence was necessarily futile. In addition to his effort to overhaul the fiscal structure of his department Angiviller applied himself to its administrative reform. The Count's powers as Director General were strengthened by a royal edict of September 1776, and on the basis of this edict Angiviller proceeded to suppress many sinecure offices in the Superintendence and generally to revise its administrative procedures, personnel policies, and salary schedules. Insofar as the expenditure of the department's funds was concerned, none were to be disbursed unless the paying visa had been signed by the King and countersigned by the Director General, although Angiviller had the power to spend up to 100,000 livres on his own authority in certain emergency situations. In reorganizing his department, tightening his control over it, and attempting to bring order to its finances Angiviller was actually applying the theories of enlightened despotism to the Superintendence. The department had not felt so firm and determined an administrative hand since the days of Colbert. Once he felt he had put his

house in some kind of working order, Angiviller turned with equal vigor to the prosecution of projects pending in the Superintendence. One of these, of course, was the plan for a national gallery. "He was a man of decision, and from the time of his arrival in the Superintendence he took to heart the realization of this museum so often envisioned but, before him, never realized. If he was not the first to have the idea of using the Grand Gallery of the Louvre he was the promoter of proper measures for the execution of a project until then very vague. One does not really find before 1773 any study having to do with the creation of a museum."[3]

The above statement, made by the Comte d'Angiviller's biographer, is accurate enough in a strict sense. But the idea for a national museum was a generation old by the time Angiviller became Director General of Buildings. It is true that no elaborate study or formal plan of operations for the creation of a gallery had been undertaken by the crown before Angiviller's time, but certainly various ideas for a museum had been before the royal government since the 1740's and every Director General since then had at least considered some project of the sort. It is also true, however, that Angiviller was the first Director General to formulate an

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[3] Ibid., p. 137.

effective plan for the establishment of a national gallery and the first to bend his energies and powers to a sustained attempt at its achievement. Indeed, there is evidence to indicate that the Count began to think of a museum in the Louvre immediately after he took office. The Duc de Croy reports that on August 26, 1774, two days after Angiviller's appointment to the Superintendence, he found the Count with Louis XVI and that the subjects of conversation included the Louvre.[4] Certainly some such talk must have been in the air at that time as Monsieur Bailly was moved to write a long memorial to the Count in the autumn of 1774 which touched upon this subject of a museum.[5] Bailly was apparently feeling apprehensive about his position in relation to a new museum, particularly in view of the fact that there was a new Director General. He also obviously regarded the change in Directors General as a possible opportunity for enhancing his own post. In any event, in this rather lengthy document Bailly recalls the long service of his family to the crown in the Superintendence and then asks Angiviller to specify in detail "what are the functions and duties of my position." He then proceeds to discuss the necessity for a new inventory of the royal paintings, stating that he knows such an

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[4] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., footnote, p. 214.

[5] A.N., O^1 1912 (5), 143.

inventory to be needed and to be within the scope of his duty. "I spoke of this last year to Monsieur the Abbé Terray, then Director General of Buildings. He judged it appropriate to delay it [the inventory] until the time when all the royal paintings should be brought together in the Gallery of Plans." This is further evidence that the Abbé Terray was considering some project for a national gallery shortly before Angiviller took office as Director General. Monsieur Bailly then goes on to point out that an inventory would certainly be easier once a gallery had been established in the Louvre but wonders if it should be delayed in that "the execution of this project [the museum] might be deferred for some years yet." Bailly then suggests that the Director General look eventually to the consolidation of the positions of keepers of the king's pictures. The paintings at Versailles were under the jurisdiction of a separate keeper; Bailly wished to see this position and his own combined into one enhanced post, and he wanted this appointment for himself. Monsieur Bailly seems in this mémoire to be probing Angiviller on two points: 1) the new Director General's policy toward the creation of a museum, and 2) Bailly's position in relation to this. Bailly continued to press Angiviller on these matters; his memorandum was followed almost immediately by a personal letter to the Count.[6]

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[6] A.N., O^1 1912 (5), 142.

He soon had an answer, but an answer which could not have been satisfactory to him. Angiviller replied that he hoped the "greater part" of the royal paintings would be exhibited in the Gallery of Plans "before too long" and that he believed an inventory should be delayed until that time. He also stated he knew that the existence of a gallery in the Louvre would necessitate "new arrangements relative to the posts of keepers of the crown paintings" and that he would take Monsieur Bailly's recommendations in this regard into consideration at the proper time.[7] These documents are clear evidence that Angiviller came to the Superintendence resolved to see a national gallery established in the Louvre and prove that he gave his attention to the preliminary problems involved almost immediately, hoping to have the museum a reality "before too long." As has been stated, however, Angiviller had many other difficulties to cope with during the first few years of his administration and was not able to give his full attention to the gallery project for some time. Nevertheless, the Count kept the plan for the museum constantly before him. For example, letters of the year 1775 written to Angiviller by Monsieur Godefroid show that the Superintendence was already concerned with having the collection in good order when the gallery was ready. Monsieur Godefroid was a restorer of paintings employed by

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[7] A.N., O^1 1912 (5), 153.

the Superintendence, as were his parents before him. In these letters Godefroid states that he has "made a very detailed report to Monsieur de Montucla [an official of the de[department]] on the most[peditious and least expensive means of putting the King's paintings in a condition to be exhibited in the projected gallery. . . ." He refers to the museum plan as a "beautiful project which will bring together in a single gallery all of this precious collection," and he specifies his ideas for the restoration and preservation of the paintings -- the need for a full descriptive report on each picture and its condition, the problem of winter cold and humidity in the gallery, and so on.[8]

One of the first preliminary steps to be taken in the creation of a museum in the Grand Gallery was the removal from it of the plans in relief. This had been considered before, but nothing had been done about it. Certain difficulties presented themselves in regard to this project; the plans are large and rather delicate and would naturally be somewhat awkward even to move, to say nothing of transporting them any distance. What is more, they had been constructed in the Grand Gallery and were too large to go through any of its exits or to be accommodated very easily on the small staircase which led to it. There could be no question of destroying the plans or taking them apart -- they

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[8] A.N., O^1 1913 (2), 278, 279.

were to be preserved and to be moved without suffering damage or mutilation. Angiviller turned to this problem in the autumn of 1776. On October 1 the Count instructed Soufflot to visit the Grand Gallery, which he referred to as the "Gallery of Plans," with a view to surveying it as the place which "would become the gallery of the king's paintings."[9] On October 20 the Comte de Saint-Germain, Minister of War, informed the Superintendence that he had given orders for the removal of the plans to the Invalides and stated he believed this could be accomplished "before the end of the year."[10] A few days later Monsieur Larcher, keeper of the plans in relief, sent to the Superintendence a long memorandum entitled "Observations relative to the evacuation ordered of the plans in relief in the gallery of the Louvre."[11] In this mémoire Larcher outlined and emphasized all the difficulties involved in moving the 127 plans in relief -- the importance of protecting them from damage, the necessity for careful measurements both in the gallery and in the Invalides, the objections to making the move in the winter, and so forth. Monsieur Larcher, as might be expected, was protecting his

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[9] A.N., O^1 1544, 462; O^1 1670, 105.

[10] A.N., O^1 1670, 106.

[11] A.N., O^1 1670, 107.

collection and also attempting to delay the move. Angiviller would have none of this. He wrote long marginal notes on the memorandum in which he disposed of all of Larcher's points and objections, and on October 28 he sent the amended document back to the Comte de Saint-Germain with a covering letter.[12] The Ministry of War really wished to delay the move until the next spring, and the Ministry and the Superintendence exchanged notes on this point during the last week in October. In the meantime, Soufflot and another royal architect, Monsieur Brébion, were in frequent consultation with Larcher and were organizing the removal of the plans. In a letter of October 29 Soufflot made a detailed report to Angiviller on the progress of this work, furnishing the Director General with precise measurements and explanations of the architectural and technical problems which would be encountered. Angiviller replied with an observation to the effect that Monsieur Larcher was exaggerating the difficulty of the project. He further stated that he was opposed to any effort to remove the plans down the staircase and believed that they could best be taken out the windows by a "simple machine."[13] The Count also made it clear to Soufflot that he was determined to see the plans in relief

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[12] A.N., O^1 1670, 106.

[13] A.N., O^1 1544, 473; O^1 1670, 109.

cleared out of the gallery with an absolute minimum of delay. The Comte de Saint-Germain, who had perhaps received orders from on high, suddenly became exceedingly cooperative, and by mid-November the planning phase of the removal project was nearing completion.[14] The entire proceeding was finished before the end of the year and the plans in relief deposited in the Invalides, where they are today. This was not accomplished, however, without subjecting the gallery itself to a little "demolition" work in order that the plans might be taken out intact.[15] By the beginning of the year 1777, then, the Grand Gallery of the Louvre was empty and ready to be converted into a museum of art. Judging by the urgency with which Angiviller prosecuted the removal of the plans in relief one might think that the Count had the intention of installing the royal collections in the Louvre almost immediately. Perhaps he did have some such hope, but he was to be disappointed.

Angiviller continued to behave, however, as if the museum were to be an imminent reality. On November 10, 1776, Monsieur Pierre, the First Painter, wrote to the Count to say that the Duc de Penthièvre wished five paintings from the royal collection to be placed in his private apartment at

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[14] A.N., O^1 1670, 110, 111.

[15] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 78; Mondain-Monval, op. cit., p. 214.

Versailles. The Duc de Penthièvre was a grandson of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan and ranked as a Serene Highness and a prince of the blood by virtue of the legitimization of his father, the Comte de Toulouse. A curt note by Monsieur de Montucla on Pierre's letter states that the Count was "little disposed" to accede to this request as it was "contrary to the views he has for assembling all the royal paintings in the gallery." Angiviller replied personally to Pierre on November 12, stating that he very much desired "to evade" Penthièvre's request. He asserted that it was not "normal usage" to ornament a private apartment with paintings from the royal collection, even when the apartment in question belonged to a prince of the blood. This certainly was not true, but Angiviller apparently hoped he could confuse the Duke with such an assertion. He stated that he found Penthièvre's request "a strong interference with my project for bringing together all of the king's paintings for display in the gallery."[16] In Angiviller's mind the projected museum came first and he was willing to do battle for it against even a prince of the blood. The Duc de Penthièvre did not get the pictures he wanted; they were not very important pictures, but the Count was unwilling to give him any. How different was this Director General from Marigny, who would certainly have hastened to satisfy the Duke's

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[16] Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de d'Angiviller, Première partie, pp. 108-109.

desires! This letter also reveals how strongly Angiviller had identified himself with the plan for a national gallery -- it is "my project." The Director General's refusal of paintings from the crown collection to a prince of the blood was an important change in policy indicating that the king's art treasures were now definitely to be regarded as belonging to the nation and were no longer to be used as private possessions at the general disposal of the royal family.

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The project for a public museum in the Grand Gallery did not make much progress during the year 1777 in spite of the Comte d'Angiviller's haste to see the gallery vacated by the plans in relief. There are many documents of this year which prove that the plan was certainly under constant consideration and study but that little specific action was taken. An incomplete and unsigned document of June, 1777, refers to the gallery as the place destined "to receive the collection of paintings, drawings, and works of sculpture belonging to the king" and goes on to specify some of the problems which will be encountered in mounting the works of art -- the lighting, the necessity for breaking up the enormous length of the gallery without blocking the views, and so on.[17] The writer rather ingeniously suggests that

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[17] A.N., O^1 1670, 118.

the annual salon exhibiting contemporary paintings and sculpture be held in the Grand Gallery as a kind of dress rehearsal for the royal museum which would allow the Superintendence to experiment with arrangements and lighting. Later in the year a gentleman whom Angiviller had consulted about the arrangement of the gallery replied with his opinions and referred to it as "the new gallery or museum which you propose. . . ."[18] This is one of the earliest uses of the word "museum" in connection with the project, a significant usage in that this word conveys much more strongly the idea of a national public institution than such words and phrases as "gallery" and "gallery of the royal paintings." A museum is what Angiviller intended to establish and before long he began to use this word in an emphatic manner in his own correspondence. A letter which he wrote to Soufflot on September 30, 1777, is important because it clearly sets forth Angiviller's views with regard to the gallery. The Count asks Soufflot to make a study of problems of lighting and arrangement for "this gallery of the Louvre in which I propose to assemble all the king's riches in paintings, drawings, statues, and vases, stored in obscurity for a long time in places where they are accessible neither for the instruction of artists nor to the curiosity of the public." The letter makes it plain that the Count will not

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[18] A.N., O^1 1670, 119.

permit his gallery to be a hastily conceived and badly arranged exhibition. It is a matter "of the greatest importance" to him that it should be a splendid museum which would be a source of pride to France and to the crown.[19] And, perhaps, serve as Angiviller's own imperishable monument?

Soufflot had already been studying the plan for the museum, a project which had his wholehearted support. The problem of money was always in the forefront of everyone's mind, of course, and in July, 1777, Soufflot wrote to Angiviller obliquely suggesting that the château de Madrid, an old and abandoned royal château in the bois de Boulogne which was badly in need of repairs, be sacrificed in order that more funds might be diverted to the museum project.[20] During the autumn of that year Soufflot and other members of the Royal Academy of Architecture, particularly Brébion and Clerisseau, were studying the Grand Gallery and making reports and recommendations to Angiviller concerning needed architectural changes and the problems surrounding the installation of the collections. Soufflot never minded in the least the writing of long, detailed memorandums in a tiny, cramped hand.[21] But Clerisseau was no writer and begged

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[19] A.N., O^1 1069, 486.

[20] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., pp. 214-216.

[21] A.N., O^1 1670, 122.

the Count's leave to present his ideas orally in that "the details are too long to make to you in writing."[22] Angiviller, a true administrator, replied that he would much prefer to have Monsieur Clerisseau's reflections on paper.[23] Angiviller must have infused his whole department with a sense of urgency insofar as the museum project was concerned and apparently many people thought its realization was not far in the future. The Count actually began to receive applications for positions on the museum staff. In October, 1777, Monsieur DuRameau, the painter and official in the Superintendence who made the Versailles inventory previously discussed, wrote to Angiviller to request for his brother the position of concierge in the "museum in the gallery where the plans were."[24] In a most courteous and obviously pained letter the Count replied that DuRameau's petition caused him great "embarrassment" because he could not satisfy the request. The interesting point about this letter is that in it Angiviller goes into detail concerning the personnel arrangements for the museum; he indicates that considerable thought had already been given to the question of staffing the establishment and, indeed, that the whole matter had been

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[22] A.N., O^1 1670, 121.

[23] A.N., O^1 1670, 120.

[24] A.N., O^1 1914 (5), 383.

discussed with the King and approved by him.[25] Angiviller apparently proposed to have a working museum very soon if he had gone so far as to consider how many keepers and concierges he was going to need for it.

In October, 1777, Monsieur Clerisseau, the reluctant writer, forwarded to Angiviller his ideas concerning the museum. The covering letter is in Clerisseau's own hand, but the formal memorandum is in an elegant script and has obviously been written by a professional scribe.[26] The memorandum, entitled "Observations on the Gallery of Plans," is drawn up in four sections. In Clerisseau's opinion, the gallery was too long and too big for the eye and the mind to comprehend,[27] and he recommended that some renovation be undertaken which would give it better proportions. He also discussed the ceiling, part of which had been painted by Poussin, in relation to the problem of lighting the gallery. Clerisseau believed it "absolutely necessary to bring the daylight from above for a good effect on the paintings and statues which will ornament the gallery." In other words, Clerisseau advocated windows or skylights in the ceiling.

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[25] A.N., O^1 1914 (5), 384.

[26] A.N., O^1 1670, 123, 124.

[27] The reader is reminded that this was indeed an immensely long gallery and was, in fact, the whole southern wing of the Louvre which lies along the Seine and at that time connected the old Louvre and the Tuileries.

This question of lighting the gallery was later to develop into a thorny issue of the first magnitude. Finally he considered various ways of placing the sculpture and certain changes which he felt should be made in the cornices and walls for the sake of hanging the paintings. In November Monsieur Brébion forwarded his recommendations to Angiviller.[28] Brébion's memorandum is brief and architecturally technical but concerns itself primarily with the problem of lighting in terms of the differing qualities of light experienced in varying weather and at various times of the day.

Angiviller had determined to decorate the museum with statues of illustrious men of France, a plan which was possibly an echo of Dussausoy's ideas for the gallery, and had obtained the royal "bon" for this project as early as 1775.[29] In November and December of 1777 the Count was engaged in correspondence with Pigalle, the famous sculptor, and with Pierre, the First Painter, on this subject, and was negotiating for "some valuable and appropriate objects to figure in His Majesty's gallery of paintings."[30] These latter eventually proved to be some vases and columns of porphyry obtained from the Marquis de Marigny, who was living in retirement on the estate of Ménars which he had

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[28] A.N., O^1 1670, 125.

[29] Gabillot, op. cit., pp. 170-171.

[30] A.N., O^1 1670, 127; Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de d'Angiviller, Première partie, pp. 163-164.

inherited from his sister. The year 1777, then, saw the Comte d'Angiviller much preoccupied with the museum project and with making plans for it. It is even apparent that he thought the realization of the goal to be within sight, although it is difficult to understand why he felt so optimistic -- the year did not really seem to advance the project very far in terms of specific accomplishments. One thing had been achieved by Angiviller at this point, however, and that was the full commitment of the King and the royal government to the creation of a national gallery in the Louvre. Indeed, by this time the project was receiving publicity and had become common knowledge. "All the newspapers of the time reported it. L'Année litteraire, for example, in its Salon of 1777, said that 'the gallery of the Louvre is destined to become a cabinet of painting, and this superb Museum, the most beautiful in Europe, will be decorated with statues of the celebrated men that France has produced in every field of endeavor.'"[31] It is interesting to see here that this publication uses the word "museum" and does not refer to the projected institution as "the royal gallery" or "the gallery of the king's paintings," references which would have been the correct and standard ones a few years earlier.

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[31] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 170.

Angiviller willingly and impartially considered all ideas presented to him concerning the proposed museum regardless of whether they came from an official source or not. As the project for the museum became public knowledge more and more suggestions from private citizens began to arrive at the Superintendence. In January, 1778, for example, an elderly and retired artist presented Angiviller with a most original idea for the gallery, one which proved that his mind was still lively even if his hands were no longer young.[32] This Monsieur Duchene suggests that thirty-two windows of the gallery could be utilized "to form fourteen triangular rooms of which the bases would be lighted by three windows, alternately on the south and on the north. Each room would have wooden walls inclined so as to carry the paintings in their true light to the right and to the left. The point of the triangle opposite the base would have a blocked-up window forming a niche in front of which would be placed a figure or a group on a pedestal. . . ." This idea, which is rather like one a modern museum designer might have, apparently intrigued Angiviller; a note on Monsieur Duchene's letter states that it is to be filed with "the proposals relative to the establishment of paintings." Another analysis of the museum project and its problems was placed before Angiviller in January, 1778, this one from Monsieur

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[32] A.N., O^1 1670, 130.

Brébion of the Royal Academy of Architecture.[33] Brébion's memorandum is of unusual length, twenty-six pages, and has a long and involved title: "Mémoire to serve as an explanation of the different ideas and plans proposed to Monsieur the Director General of the King's Buildings for preparing the gallery of the Louvre in a manner to place advantageously the collection of paintings, statues, vases, and other effects relative to the arts belonging to His Majesty." Brébion begins his memorandum with a "Description of the place and of the actual condition of the Grand Gallery of the Louvre."[34] This is a detailed description of the physical appearance of the gallery, complete with measurements, and a consideration of the ceiling decorations, including those done by Poussin and from Poussin's designs. Brébion asserts that he has the greatest respect for Poussin but believes that the gallery's ceiling was decorated, for the most part, by inferior artists, and he questions the wisdom of attempting to preserve these paintings. Brébion then proceeds to make four basic recommendations which can be summarized as follows: 1) the achievement of better lighting by a rearrangement of the windows and a general lightening of the tone of the gallery by the destruction of those portions of the decorations which are "gloomy" and

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[33] A.N., O^1 1670, 129.

[34] Ibid., pp. 2-5. The paging of this document is the author's and not Brébion's; the pages of the actual memorandum are not numbered.

"heavy" and tend to give a darkening effect; 2) a rearrangement of the wall space to allow for better mounting of the collections; 3) the division of the gallery's length into three unequal parts; 4) a reworking of the vault and ceiling and the placing of lunettes in the vault if this should prove necessary for providing more daylight.[35] He then presents no less than three projects or propositions, all different, for the arrangement of the gallery.[36] All of these propositions are based on a professional architect's technical conceptions and descriptions. A detailed analysis of them would add nothing to this study; suffice it to say that all three propositions are attempts to find solutions to the five basic questions which were the general concern of everyone involved in the museum project: 1) how to light the gallery so as to provide a maximum amount of daylight and a minimum of shadows; 2) how to arrange the windows and wall space in such a way as to make it possible to mount the collections in the most attractive manner; 3) how to divide the enormous length of the gallery into smaller areas, if this should indeed be done at all; 4) how to decorate the ceiling; 5) how to protect the gallery against the disaster of fire.

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[35] Ibid., pp. 5-11.

[36] Ibid., pp. 11-17.

The problem of lighting was especially difficult and is a major motif in all plans concerning the gallery. It was also a problem which provoked a great deal of argument and disputation in that virtually everyone had a different idea as to how the gallery might be lighted to the best advantage. The question of lighting was a matter of paramount importance, of course, because Angiviller, unlike the museum director of today, did not have a broad range of artificial lighting effects at his disposal; he had to depend upon natural daylight, and it was absolutely essential to the success of the museum that the light be brought into it in a manner which would do the most for the collections. Certainly everyone concerned with the project was anxious that the gallery be impressive. Brébion, for example, was eager to see that the "richness and true magnificence of the collection of royal paintings" be shown off to full advantage and that the museum be furnished in such a manner as to "give pleasure to the public and to foreigners."[37]

Brébion then makes a long résumé of the details of his ideas, a résumé in which he gives much attention to the vault, fireplaces, and chimneys, and to various means for minimizing the risk of fire, a danger which was as much of a nightmare to Angiviller as it is to museum staffs today.[38]

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[37] Ibid., p. 14.

[38] Ibid., pp. 17-25.

The vault of the Grand Gallery was of wood and Brébion considers the possibility of reconstructing it in brick. In a concluding "Observation" Brébion discusses the necessity for a new stairway to give better access to the gallery. He estimates that work on the gallery, not to include a new vault or a new staircase, would cost at least 300,000 livres and states that if the work is begun promptly "the public can enjoy the whole arrangement of the gallery" sometime in the year 1779.[39] The opening of the museum did seem to be a distinct possibility, and even a probability, during the first months of 1778. There was a great furor of planning activity being carried on in connection with the project. Soufflot, who was in almost constant communication with Angiviller, wrote a lengthy letter to the Director General early in March in which he went thoroughly into the question of rebuilding the gallery's vault in brick as a protection from fire. He also believed that a new staircase would be necessary but repeatedly expressed a concern for expense, possibly because he held so responsible a position in the Superintendence.[40]

Soufflot's observations were followed later in the month by those of Monsieur Hazon, another member of the Royal

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[39] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

[40] A.N., O^1 1670, 131.

Academy of Architecture.[41] Interestingly enough, Hazon did not believe that the great gallery should be divided up into sections. He states that he went into it after the plans in relief were taken out and found that its size gave an impression "more striking than anything I have seen in my life." Disagreeing with some of his colleagues, he found the gallery's immense length impressive and splendid and thought that the division of it "would spoil this monument which, of its kind, does not, I think, have an equal in any court in Europe." Hazon was so much in love with the gallery as such that he seems in his letter to wish to give it the starring role in the future museum. He would suppress all elaborate ornamentation, including the ceiling designs of Poussin, for the sake of a simplicity emphasizing the proportions and the great size of the gallery. Hazon was something of a rebel on all points, and a fascinating one. He did not believe, for example, that the lighting problem was so difficult as had been made out. He states that he has been in the gallery many times and has always been able to distinguish even fine details perfectly well; white ceilings, he says, would also help the lighting a great deal. He questions the real value of brick vaults as a protection against fire. Hazon's general feeling seemed to be that the Royal Academy of Architecture and the Superintendence were elaborating the

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[41] A.N., O^1 1670, 132.

project for a museum out of all reasonable proportion and that a gallery could be established in the Louvre with less effort and for less expense that everyone seemed to think. He really did not see why the public could not "very soon" enjoy a museum which would be "to the glory of the arts and of the nation and which will render your administration forever memorable." Hazon's approach to the museum project is refreshingly direct and simple. Angiviller would unquestionably have had a museum in short order if Hazon had been able to influence him to the extent that Soufflot did.

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One might imagine that Hazon's advice would have appealed to Angiviller, who was in a hurry insofar as the museum was concerned, but apparently it did not. On April 1, 1778, the Count put aside all the advice he had received up to that time and on that date started over, in effect, by formally appointing a committee to study the gallery project and to make recommendations concerning it. This committee, or commission, was composed of Heurtier, Brébion, Mique, Hazon, and Soufflot, all architects; Pierre and Hubert Robert, painters; and Pajou, a sculptor. Mique, Hazon, and Soufflot were all Intendants General of Buildings, Heurtier was Inspector General, and Brébion was a Controller of Buildings; Pierre was First Painter, and all of the men on the commission were members either of the Royal Academy of Architecture or of the Royal Academy of Painting and

Sculpture.[42] There are in the Archives several copies of the formal instrument by which Angiviller constituted this committee.[43] In this document Angiviller stated that one of the main questions to be faced was that of whether the Grand Gallery should "be conserved in its whole length or if we should divide it into several parts." He states he has sought much advice on this point, not only from professionals within the department but also from private connoisseurs, and that the majority of opinions have been in favor of not dividing the gallery. The Director General confesses that he himself does not wish to see the gallery sectioned and that he has virtually made up his mind on this issue; nevertheless, he desires that the committee study the matter and assures it that he will consider all ideas and recommendations. And what, he asks, should be done about the lighting of the gallery? How can the best and most concentrated daylight be obtained? Should the existing window arrangement be changed and, if so, how? Or should the gallery be lighted from above? With regard to the lighting, the Count states that, of course, expense is always a factor to be kept in mind but that he does not want the committee to think only of solutions which are the "easiest and least expensive."

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[42] Sacy, op. cit., pp. 60-63, 137.

[43] A.N., O^1 1544, 540; O^1 1670, 133, 134, 220.

Angiviller then asks the committee to consider the problems of the vault and the ceiling but warns the members that apparently they must "absolutely detach" themselves from any hope of preserving that part of the ceiling associated with Poussin. The Count says this must be for three reasons: 1) decoration of this kind cannot be extended uniformly to the rest of the gallery; 2) this portion of the ceiling is in rather bad condition and would be expensive to restore; 3) neither the ceiling nor any other feature of the gallery itself must be allowed to compete with the collections for attention. The committee is also to think of means of protecting the gallery against fire and is to decide whether the floor should be done in parquet or tile. Angiviller also asks that the committee members share with each other all the ideas they have expressed to him so far and to append to their recommendations plans and drawings which will allow an estimation of cost.

Angiviller sent the document formally establishing the committee to it with a personal covering letter.[44] In this letter the Director General refers to the hope for a museum as "a national affair" and states that "I have very much at heart the consummation of this project. . . ." On the same date, April 1, Angiviller wrote a personal letter

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[44] A.N., O^1 1544, 539; O^1 1670, 219.

to Pierre in which he again used the phrase "a national affair" and which emphasized his desire to see the museum a reality.[45] It is apparent, however, that although Angiviller wished to bring the museum into existence as soon as possible he was equally concerned that it be the best museum possible, an institution worthy of the collections it would house. Angiviller was willing to spend time if time had to be the price of excellence.

The committee and its individual members went to work immediately, pondering the problem of the gallery both separately and in conference with each other. On April 15 Mique, Soufflot, and Hazon wrote a joint letter to inform Angiviller that they had begun to study the question of a new staircase giving access to the Grand Gallery. They also proposed to conduct experiments in the gallery in which paintings would be hung at "different heights . . . to judge if the daylight will be sufficient."[46] Soufflot's basic idea with regard to the lighting was to reduce the number of existing windows in the walls and to construct a new attic which would bring in the daylight from above. Why, one might ask, would anyone think of eliminating any of the windows when the problem at issue was to provide as much light as possible? The matter was not so simple,

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[45] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 171.

[46] A.N., O^1 1670, 135, 222.

however. The architects were concerned not only with providing an abundance of light but also with bringing in light of a quality which would most enhance the collections. This meant that certain concentrations of light were desirable and that problems of glare and shadow had to be considered. Another issue linked to the question of the number of windows in the walls was that of providing adequate wall space for the mounting of a very extensive collection of paintings; if the light could be brought in from above, either by clerestory or skylight windows, or a combination of both, more wall area would be available for hanging paintings. Angiviller, who was always much influenced by Soufflot, inclined toward Soufflot's solution, although it certainly was one of the more expensive ones.[47] Soufflot's plan was not acceptable to some of his fellows on the committee. In May, 1778, for example, Brébion wrote a letter to the Director General in which he referred to Soufflot's design as one which would require "the demolition of the entire existing roof and vault in order to construct in its place an attic of stone and by this means bring light into the gallery from above."[48] Brébion believed this project would be "difficult to execute because of the very great expense which it would entail . . ." and also because of problems

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[47] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., pp. 216-218; Sacy, op. cit., pp. 138-139.

[48] A.N., O^1 1670, 137.

it would create in regard to the interior decoration of the walls and ceilings. The basic expenses for converting the gallery into a museum would run to 400,000 or 500,000 livres, Brébion says, but Soufflot's project would raise the total to about a million and a half. Monsieur Hazon, Brébion asserts, agrees with him on this point, and he insists that a new staircase is far more worthy of the expenditure of limited funds than is a new attic.

Angiviller continued to hope that work on the gallery could begin soon, although by June, 1778, he had apparently resigned himself to not seeing any actual construction started until 1779. On June 2 he wrote to Pierre to inform him of his intention to appoint Hubert Robert as keeper of paintings in the new museum; in this letter the Count referred to the gallery as a "project the execution of which I count on having in progress without delay next year."[49] Angiviller continued to maintain an open mind on the lighting question even though he was personally inclined to Soufflot's recommendations. On August 6, 1778, he wrote two letters, one to Soufflot and one to Pierre, in which he instructed both of them to give every assistance to the Abbé de Rochon, a "distinguished physician and optician" who had presented the Count with "some ideas" on the lighting of the gallery and who wished to conduct experiments in it

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[49] Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de d'Angiviller, Première partie, p. 210.

relative to these.[50] The Director General was always willing to consider anyone's ideas and to investigate anything in regard to the gallery. In November, 1778, for example, Monsieur Loriot, an inventor, wrote the Count a letter with a supplement in which he discussed work he had done for the royal government. He also told Angiviller of a new discovery he had made which the Director General might wish to consider for "the superb museum which it is reserved to the splendor of your administration to bring into existence." This discovery concerned a new material for tiling floors which its inventor asserted was as beautiful as marble, as durable as flagstone but much cheaper, far superior to parquet "because it is made without seams," and could be had in a selection of colors. Angiviller must have been intrigued; he indicated by a note on the letter that he wished to see Monsieur Loriot.[51]

So the year 1778 ended with Angiviller displaying both patience and persistence, with the committee debating and disagreeing, and with the project for the museum not appreciably nearer to completion -- or even nearer to a substantial beginning -- than it had been in 1777. The public, however, was beginning to anticipate the opening of the gallery. In the 1778 edition of his guidebook to

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[50] A.N., O^1 1915 (1), 214, 215.

[51] A.N., O^1 1670, 139, 140.

Paris Argenville says in reference to the Louvre: "The plans, transported to the Invalides, give way to the rich collection of the king's paintings which Monsieur the Comte d'Angiviller has resolved to offer to public view. The assembly of masterpieces of old and modern schools of which it is composed will form an exhibition of great importance to foreigners which will also be of interest to the nation and useful to artists. What a Museum, what a place of learning, where genius will warm itself at the brilliance of the great men who are immortalized by their works! I am eager to give a description of it when it is opened to lovers of the arts and to add the description to this guidebook."[52] This pressure of public opinion added to the Director General's personal desire to see the museum brought to realization. He was now publicly wedded to the project, his name personally linked to it; his own prestige and the success of his administration as Director General now depended upon the creation of the gallery. The prestige of the crown and of the royal government generally was also, of course, involved in the project to some degree. But the next few years were to be filled with disappointments for Angiviller and with delays and difficulties for the museum.

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[52] Argenville, op. cit., p. 58.

B. The Project Languishes: Frustrations and Disagreements

Soufflot's design for the gallery was the one favored by the Comte d'Angiviller, who was not satisfied with simplified and economical plans which represented a compromise with his hope for a magnificent museum housed in an outstanding and impressive gallery. The members of the committee, however, did not find Soufflot's project acceptable, primarily because of its inordinate cost. The majority of the committee took a far more modest -- and far more realistic -- view of what could be and should be done to the Grand Gallery to prepare it for receiving the royal collections. They believed that only a minimum amount of renovation and redecoration should be done and recommended that the floor be retiled, the existing windows made larger, and a great deal of white used in the decoration of the gallery. These were the only actions which the committee as a whole considered absolutely essential. The light would be adequate, they believed, and with these few changes the museum could be opened within a reasonable time and for the expenditure of a reasonable amount of money.[53] But Angiviller hesitated, unwilling to accept the committee's proposals for a limited plan for the Grand Gallery.

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[53] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., p. 218; Sacy, op. cit., p. 139.

The Director General remained indecisive for just a little too long. In 1778 France openly entered the War of the American Revolution. The French government had already sent assistance in the form of money and arms to the Americans; the American victory over Burgoyne at Saratoga precipitated active participation in the war. France was therefore involved in yet another conflict with England. The strain placed upon the royal treasury by these new war demands was enormous and increased the French national debt by one and a half billion livres.[54] Funds became scarce, as always in time of war, and the royal government began retrenching wherever possible. Furthermore, the Controller-General of Finances was no longer Angiviller's friend Turgot. Turgot had been forced to resign in May, 1776. The functions, if not the title of the office, had eventually been assumed by Jacques Necker, a Swiss banker who was reputedly a financial wizard.[55] Angiviller knew both Monsieur and

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[54]Leo Gershoy, The French Revolution and Napoleon (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1933), p. 92. It should be noted that estimates vary in regard to French expenditures in the American Revolution.

[55]Necker was neither a French subject nor a Roman Catholic and therefore was not accorded either ministerial rank nor the title of Controller-General of Finances; he possessed all the power of this position but was called Director General of Finances.

Madame Necker, of course -- the Old Regime world in which these people moved was a small one. Madame Necker, herself a formidable intellectual, was a friend of the Baroness de Marchais and was often to be found in the latter's salon. But Angiviller's relationship with Necker was simply that of casual friendship whereas he and Turgot were old and good friends of long standing. Soufflot had touched upon this situation in a letter he had written to the Count on April 23, 1778. "I have no doubt about your situation with regard to finances; I fear it is very bad. You did not extract a decision from Monsieur Turgot because he was your friend and because you did not wish to harass him; for a reason very nearly the contrary, you do not extract one from his successor. But, monsieur, you have the example of frequent changes in the ministries, which can give one reason to hope that more favorable things will follow." In this letter Soufflot also cautioned the Count to go slowly for the sake of creating a great museum rather than to move with dispatch, only to find that he had attained an inferior establishment. He outlined a plan for the gradual realization of the gallery as he envisioned it and concluded by saying: "By these means, monsieur le comte, you will finish little by little, but you will have made the best possible [museum] for the King's glory and your own, and for the pleasure and use of the public."[56]

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[56]Quoted in Mondain-Monval, op. cit., pp. 218-220.

By 1779, however, both Angiviller and Soufflot were ready to admit that they were going to have to reduce the scale of their ambitions for the projected museum. Indeed, Necker had expressed his disapproval of Soufflot's more extensive plan for the gallery and had made it certain that there would be no funds for financing it.[57] In a letter of February 21, 1779, written to the Intendants General of Buildings, Angiviller confessed that "the insurmountable difficulties of the times forces me to limit my own ideas. I desire at least to benefit from the advantages of the place [the Grand Gallery] and to arrange it, by repairs and simple adjustments, to receive the priceless collection for which it is destined. This depository is the object of a general wish which I truly share for the glory of the King and the nation; it is for you to specify how I shall be able to fulfill it." Angiviller then asked the Intendants General, who were, of course, royal architects on the committee, to re-examine the project in order that "work may begin this year," at least to the extent of whatever funds might become available.[58]

In May, 1779, the Intendants General, complying with Angiviller's instructions, sent to the Director General an estimate of costs for repairs to the interior of the Grand Gallery which they regarded as fundamentally necessary for

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[57] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 78.

[58] A.N., O^1 1544, 588; O^1 1670, 223.

preparing it to receive the collections.[59] The document, signed by Hazon, Soufflot, and Mique, indicates that the architects believed it would be possible to put the gallery in the necessary condition for 294,098 livres. Of this amount 47,748 livres would be spent on work on the ninety-two windows. The total amount of the estimate did not include the cost of a new staircase, and the architects stated that a beginning fund of 100,000 écus would be necessary. It should be noted, however, that the total estimated cost of nearly 300,000 livres did include an estimate of 100,000 for exterior repairs. Angiviller replied to the Intendants General in a letter of May 17, 1779, in which he reported sadly: "The condition of the finances will not permit me to give to the erection of this monument all the activity which it demands."[60] The architects were to continue to work on the project, however, and to construct some scale models for study; in the meantime the Director General would see what could be done with regard to expenses. A document of May 25, 1779, refers to a report that the goal of creating a museum in the Louvre "will be suspended until the peace. . . ."[61] The public was beginning

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[59] A.N., O^1 1670, 136.

[60] A.N., O^1 1544, 606.

[61] A.N., O^1 1670, 141.

to say that the gallery would never be opened. The Duc d'Aiguillon made in his memoirs some skeptical comments about the museum project: "Nothing will be finished . . . But what a most beautiful addition [to the city]! . . . Imagine a foreigner arriving at the Louvre; he traverses the colonnade and on one floor passes successively into the cabinets of prints, medallions, the library, the Gallery of Apollo . . . the great museum of 1,321 feet! But in this country nothing is ever completed; never is a plan followed through; we will never have the National Gallery!"[62]

But in spite of the lack of funds, and in the face of public doubts, Angiviller proceeded with plans for the museum. During 1779 Soufflot, confronted with the disapproval of his colleagues and the Director General of Finances in regard to his first project for the gallery, proposed another solution which was designed to be less expensive and constituted something of a compromise. In this second project Soufflot gave up his hope for constructing a new attic and substituted for it a mansard roof, that is, a roof with dormers intended to supplement the light from the windows below, some of which were to be retained. This new plan did not allow for as much wall space for displaying the collections as had the first project, and the cost of it was still estimated at a rather staggering 350,000

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[62]Quoted in Mondain-Monval, op. cit., pp. 220-221.

livres.[63] In August, 1779, Angiviller was still considering the reconstruction of the vault in fireproof brick and was studying the need for a new staircase.[64] In December the Director General was having difficulties with Monsieur Bailly in regard to the staffing of the museum; Angiviller proposed retiring Monsieur Bailly, who was not an artist, to an honorary or emeritus status on the staff, a proposition to which Bailly objected vigorously.[65] These documents prove that the Count was continuing to work toward the goal of a national museum despite the fact that the project was in a virtual state of suspension.

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In April, 1780, Monsieur Brébion presented to Angiviller a detailed memorandum on the reconstruction of the gallery's vault in brick as a safeguard against fire, a project which he estimated would cost about 100,000 livres.[66] The memorandum was accompanied by an architectural drawing showing the barrel vault of the gallery lined with Burgundy brick, a type of brick considered especially resistent to fire, and the pointed roof itself supported above the vault

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[63] Ibid., pp. 222-223; Sacy, op. cit., p. 139.

[64] A.N., O^1 1670, 142.

[65] A.N., O^1 1915 (3), 286^1, 287.

[66] A.N., O^1 1670, 145.

on a framework of wooden beams. According to the drawing, all wooden construction was to be held away from the interior of the gallery at all points, either by brick or stone. Also in April the Director General wrote to the Comte de Modene, Governor of the Luxembourg, to state that the paintings which had been on public display there must remain in the Luxembourg for the rest of the year 1780 as it did not appear that the gallery in the Louvre would be ready to receive them for a while.[67] In June Brébion sent to Angiviller for his approval countersigned drawings ordering the construction of a new staircase.[68] The question of a new staircase was an issue almost as important as that of the lighting, albeit not so controversial. Access to the Grand Gallery was through the salon in which the Academy exhibitions were held (today the Salon Carré). This salon was reached by a small, inadequate staircase which the architects feared would not even be safe under the weight of the large crowds which the museum would inevitably attract. The plan sent to the Director General in June, 1780, and approved by him was that of Soufflot and called for a large, commodious staircase rising from the Infanta's Courtyard (today the Cour du Sphinx) to the exhibition salon which was "to serve

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[67] A.N., O^1 1915 (4), 121.

[68] A.N., O^1 1670, 228.

as a vestibule" to the Grand Gallery itself. Soufflot died in August, 1780, but his staircase was actually completed in 1781, although it was subsequently replaced.[69]

Although Soufflot's plan for a staircase giving better access to the future museum was accepted and carried through, his second project for the gallery itself was no more successful than was the first one. In a letter of August 16, 1780, Angiviller invited the Intendants General of Buildings to meet with him and Soufflot "to discuss more thoroughly" this second plan of Soufflot's.[70] He informed the Intendants General in advance that there were five points he wished them especially to be prepared to discuss: 1) Is it "absolutely and indispensably necessary" to light the gallery from above? 2) What are the reactions of the Intendants to Monsieur Soufflot's proposal for a mansard roof with light from above furnished by dormers? 3) Will the dormers make the daylight "too strong and too harsh" in parts of the gallery? 4) Will the dormers present an esthetically acceptable appearance? 5) Are there technical problems concerning dormers which will increase the risk of fire? On August 26, 1780, the Intendants General rendered to Angiviller a formal report of their opinions on Monsieur Soufflot's second project.[71]

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[69] Mondain-Monval, op. cit., pp. 223-224.

[70] A.N., O^1 1670, 230.

[71] A.N., O^1 1670, 231.

The Intendants briefly review Soufflot's first project and state that even though it was found too expensive, "the zeal of our colleague, in spite of the poor state of his health," has prompted him to make the effort of revising it. They then proceed to answer each of the five questions which Angiviller had posed to them concerning the project. The Intendants do not believe the lighting from above to be "an absolute and indispensable necessity" and are of the opinion that other measures, such as the enlarging of existing windows and the use of much white in the decoration of the gallery, would suffice to provide adequate light. Nevertheless, the Intendants state that if the Director General can find the money and is willing to spend the time required, and if he will be content only with arranging the gallery with "the degree of perfection which is its potential," then they recommend lighting from on high. This kind of light, in their opinion, would give the best and most advantageous light for the collections. As to Soufflot's plan for a mansard roof and lighting by dormers, they find that this would involve, "without doubt, a very considerable expense. . . ." Would the dormers give too strong a light in parts of the gallery? If so, the Intendants state, the problem could be met by curtains or some similar solution. With regard to their opinion as to the esthetic appearance of the proposed mansard roof, the Intendants believe that it would be acceptable for its advantages, even if complete uniformity

could not be achieved. The dormers, they say, would not increase the risk of fire if properly constructed of brick. They also discuss the possible use of mirrors in the vaults to reflect and intensify the daylight. In summation, the Intendants found Soufflot's second project generally acceptable and agreed, in principle, that the lighting should be from above, if possible. They found, however, that the second plan lacked some of the advantages of the first, and they had serious reservations about it in regard to the expense it would entail. They also tactfully reminded the Director General that there was a simpler and more economical solution to the problem of the gallery, one which envisioned only relatively minor renovations and the utilization of the existing lighting arrangements. They seemed to sense, however, that Angiviller would not be satisfied with these more modest proposals and would insist upon pursuing his splendid but unrealistic dreams.

Not everyone concerned with the arrangement of the gallery agreed that it should be lighted from above. Soufflot and the Intendants General, all architects, believed that lighting from above would be best for the several reasons which they specified. Sculptors also tended to agree to lighting from on high and asserted that statues are seen to the best advantage when light falls evenly on them from above, eliminating the possible distortions and unplanned shadowings which can result from lateral lighting. Some

painters involved in the project, however, objected to the principle of zenithal[72] lighting on the grounds that paintings were never intended to be illuminated from above and that such a light was unnatural for pictures.[73] The protest of the painters had some validity. Untempered daylight falling onto a painting from above can establish an atmosphere of light unflattering to the work and create areas of glare and other visual problems. One's reaction to the question of zenithal or lateral lighting for the gallery also depends upon one's reaction to overhead illumination generally; many people intensely dislike any kind of overhead lighting, either natural or artificial, and find it too intense, or cold, or depressing. Nor can the problem faced by Angiviller and his committee and Intendants in this regard be thought of in terms of modern museums. Many galleries of today do use overhead illumination, but technical advances in the field of lighting, which is now a complex art in itself, have been such that a modern museum director can

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[72] Most correctly, the word "zenithal," in both French and English, means from or at the top, the summit, the zenith. With reference to the project for lighting the Grand Gallery, however, French texts use the term in a broader sense to refer to any plan for lighting the gallery from above, whether from the summit or the flanks of the vault. In strict definition, the word should be used only to describe a project for lighting from the summit of the vault, but in this study the term is employed in the wider meaning specified above, that is, in reference to overhead lighting generally.

[73] A.N., O^1 1670, 231; Sacy, op. cit., p. 139.

obtain virtually any lighting effect he might desire. Angiviller, on the contrary, had only natural daylight with which to work. There was a further consideration with regard to the Grand Gallery and the lighting issue. The gallery as it existed was lighted in the usual manner, by windows in the walls. Lighting from above could be obtained only by the investment of considerable time and money, and no one could be absolutely certain of the effect it would produce in the gallery. Commitment to the principle of zenithal lighting therefore involved an element of substantial risk. And certainly the opinion of the dissenting painters had to be considered; after all, the dominant feature of the museum would be the great collection of royal paintings. In any event, these disputes, the lack of funds, and the Comte d'Angiviller's hesitations effectively arrested the development of the project. There are virtually no documents in the Archives concerning the museum for the year 1781, the year in which the American war drew to a close. The only action taken in that year which contributed to the museum project was the completion of Soufflot's staircase, but this was intended to serve the Academy's exhibition salon also and was not constructed only or specifically for the Grand Gallery.

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Beginning in 1782 there was again activity in the Superintendence with regard to the museum project. In

February of that year a carpenter petitioned Angiviller for a continuation of his pay, stating that in August of the previous year he had fallen from a scaffolding being constructed for use in the Grand Gallery and had not been able to work since that time.[74] This would indicate that even late in 1781 some preparations were taking place for beginning work in the gallery. In May, 1782, Angiviller asked the Intendants General to provide him with estimates of the cost of necessary masonry work for the gallery.[75] The Intendants complied with this request within a few weeks and sent the Director General their estimates.[76] The document is signed by Mique, Hazon, Brébion, Guillaumot, and Lespée;[77] the last two men were also royal architects in the department, Guillaumot an Intendant General and Lespée an expert in masonry. The architects did not provide Angiviller with a total cost but gave their estimates in terms of cost per cubic and linear foot for each aspect of the project and according to the material to be used -- stone, Burgundy brick, or whatever. They considered the cost of work on

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[74] A.N., O^1 1670, 147.

[75] A.N., O^1 1670, 148.

[76] A.N., O^1 1670, 149.

[77] Lespée's name is variously spelled as Lespée, L'Espée, and L'Epée; the first spelling, however, is the one used by the man himself in his signature.

the windows, necessary preparatory work for a brick vault, repair to the interior and exterior cornices, and so forth. Apparently the Count hoped to have the masonry construction under way soon as it would necessarily have to precede other phases of the work. On June 23 he requested the Intendants to make the same kind of estimates with regard to carpentry work required for the gallery; a note on Angiviller's letter states that the required report was made by the Intendants on August 22.[78]

The general public was also apparently aware of the fact that the museum project was again progressing, which was true enough, although it was progressing far more slowly than the public seemed to know. In September, 1782, a Monsieur Dufourny de Villiers, an artist, requested permission to draw from the ceiling frescoes done by Poussin in the Grand Gallery, paintings which he apparently believed were destined for imminent destruction.[79] In the autumn of 1782 Angiviller received a letter from a Monsieur Chippart who desired to impart to the Director General some ideas for the financial support of the gallery.[80] In May, 1783, Monsieur Née, an engraver, wrote to Angiviller with a plan for engraving the collection of paintings to be exhibited in the

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[78] A.N., O^1 1670, 150.

[79] Abstracted in Gabillot, op. cit., p. 172.

[80] Ibid.

Grand Gallery and publishing the engravings in a quarto volume for sale to the public.[81] The Count replied that Monsieur Née's proposition was a bit premature and one he could not yet consider as it would be "still some time before the royal paintings can be arranged in the museum. . . ."[82] In June of the same year application was made to the Count soliciting for one Jacques Charbonnier the place of floor-polisher in "the gallery of the museum. . . ,"[83] an application which Angiviller duly filed away for future reference. About this time -- late in 1782 and early in 1783 -- the word "museum" began to appear regularly in documents and correspondence concerning the project for the gallery. Angiviller himself began consistently to use the term in his own letters and often capitalized and underlined the word.

In 1783 and 1784 Angiviller began seriously to consider the arrangements to be made for the staff of the new museum. By a document of January 1, 1783, the Director General, with many flattering phrases, eased Monsieur Bailly from his place as keeper of the king's paintings and made him an honorary keeper with the particular duty of assisting in the preparation of a catalogue of the royal

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[81] A.N., O^1 1916 (5), 141.

[82] A.N., O^1 1916 (5), 142.

[83] A.N., O^1 1670, 153, 234, 235.

collection.[84] The closing of the Luxembourg gallery and the personnel changes occasioned by the organization of the museum had wrought havoc with Monsieur Bailly's position; he did not, understandably enough, take gracefully to being ousted from the post he had held since 1754 and expressed his opinions to Angiviller in a rather forceful letter of April 17, 1783.[85] The Director General replied politely but firmly, invoking the royal "bon" and referring to "the new order of things" made necessary by the "new Museum."[86] Monsieur Bailly had earlier expressed his "repugnance" for the position Angiviller intended to give him,[87] and it was not until late in the year 1784 that Bailly was pacified, particularly with regard to salary. At that time the Count wrote to Monsieur Bailly, with evident relief, that he was "charmed" finally to have arranged the position and its pension to the "satisfaction" of Monsieur Bailly.[88] On June 24, 1784, Angiviller appointed Hubert Robert keeper for the new museum. Both Gabillot and Sacy state that Robert was made "keeper of paintings,"[89] but the brevet of

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[84] A.N., O^1 1917 (1), 357.

[85] A.N., O^1 1916 (5), 102.

[86] A.N., O^1 1916 (5), 98.

[87] A.N., O^1 1916 (5), 101.

[88] A.N., O^1 1670, 156; O^1 1917 (1), 356, 389.

[89] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 174; Sacy, op. cit., p. 139.

appointment and other documents indicate that his responsibility and authority were not to be confined to paintings only but extended to all objects exhibited in the gallery and that he was to be "keeper of the Museum."[90] Later in the year Angiviller petitioned the King for permission to appoint another keeper of the museum as he had become convinced that the responsibility for so large an institution would be too great for Monsieur Robert alone.[91] This second appointment went to Monsieur Jollain, also a painter, whose brevet was issued in the autumn of 1784.[92] Both Robert and Jollain were to be responsible as keepers to Monsieur Pierre, the First Painter, who was to have supervisory charge of both the gallery and its contents. In letters written to Pierre and Jollain on September 8, 1784, concerning Jollain's appointment, Angiviller stated: "The arrangement of the museum, monsieur, ought not to be too far in the future. . . ."[93] The salaries of Robert and Jollain were not fixed until 1787 as 1,500 livres per year each, which seems an exceedingly small compensation for the duties and responsibilities encompassed in the positions. But, as Gabillot says: "The King was paying poorly at this period."[94]

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[90] A.N., O^1 1274, 230, 231; O^1 1670, 158; O^1 1917 (3), 212.

[91] A.N., O^1 1917 (4), 378.

[92] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 174; Sacy, op. cit., 139-140.

[93] A.N., O^1 1917 (4), 307.

[94] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 174.

In a letter of September 14, 1784, to Monsieur Bailly, Angiviller again referred to the arrangement of the museum as being "not too far distant. . . ."[95] The Director General was apparently feeling optimistic with regard to the gallery in the autumn of 1784 and, indeed, certain objectives were being accomplished which served to strengthen the hope that a national museum would soon exist. The letter to Monsieur Bailly cited above concerned the restoration of the paintings which had been on public display in the Luxembourg in preparation for their exhibition in the Grand Gallery. There are several documents of the year 1784, exchanges of letters between Angiviller, Monsieur Pierre, and Monsieur Godefroid, the restorer, concerning the cleaning and restoration of paintings destined for the museum and the necessity for reframing some of them.[96] Writing to Pierre in July, 1784, concerning the condition of the frames of the paintings, Angiviller asked the First Painter to be certain that the frames were in good order and stated: "But you understand, surely, and I need only point out to you in this regard the precautions to take in order that, when the moment for assembling the museum arrives, nothing impedes it."[97] In a

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[95] A.N., O^1 1917 (4), 317.

[96] A.N., O^1 1670, 157; O^1 1917 (1), 414; O^1 1917 (4), 339, 383.

[97] Marc Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de M. d'Angiviller avec Pierre, Deuxième partie, Nouvelles archives de l'art français, Troisième série, Tome XXII, Année 1906 (Paris: Jean Schemit, 1907), pp. 56-57. (Hereafter Correspondence de d'Angiviller, Deuxième partie.)

letter of November 1, 1784, also to Pierre, Angiviller stated that he believed it time "to make a detailed examination" of all the paintings intended for the museum in order to determine their need for restoration. He also referred again to the frames and concluded by saying: "But I have already written to you on this last subject; you understand easily that since the work in the gallery is going along at a good rate it is necessary that the arrangement of it not be arrested by unexpected difficulties, either by the poor condition of some paintings, or that of the frames or the lack thereof; so it is that I desire you to occupy yourself with this double objective as soon as possible."[98]

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While Angiviller was making appointments to the staff of a museum which did not yet exist and concerning himself with the condition of the paintings and their frames, some important work was being achieved in the Grand Gallery. In the summer of 1783 additional estimates were made by Mique, Brébion, Hazon, Lespée, and Guillaumot on the cost of carpentry work to be accomplished in the Gallery.[99] These estimates considered work to be done on walls, windows, embrasures, and doors, and specified the laying of a new oak

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[98] Ibid., pp. 80-81.

[99] A.N., O^1 1670, 154, 155.

floor throughout the gallery. By the spring of 1784 Angiviller and Pierre found it necessary to refuse working space in the salon adjacent to the Grand Gallery to artists and others wishing to use it -- including the famous chemist, Lavoisier -- on the grounds that it was "actually encumbered with carpentry work destined for the decoration of the museum and will be for a long time yet."[100] On April 12, 1784, Angiviller wrote to the Intendants General to request their advice and estimates on necessary repairs to the lower vault of the Grand Gallery, that is, not to its ceiling vault but, rather, to the one beneath its floor.[101] In May the Intendants replied to this request with a lengthy document signed by Mique, Hazon, and Guillaumot and accompanied by a detailed architectural drawing showing a cross-section of the Grand Gallery from its foundations to its roof.[102] The Intendants reported that this lower vault was in a deteriorated condition in several parts of its great length. They did not believe it would be necessary to rebuild it entirely but did recommend extensive repairs which would cost more than 40,000 livres.

So the need for more repairs appeared and so the cost of the museum project mounted at a time when the financial

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[100] A.N., O^1 1917 (2), 86; Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondence de d'Angiviller, Deuxième partie, p. 46.

[101] A.N., O^1 1670, 242.

[102] A.N., O^1 1670, 243.

condition of the French government was becoming increasingly desperate. Nevertheless, between 1781 and 1785 some significant work was achieved with regard to the fabric of the Grand Gallery and the physical transformation of it into a museum. The new staircase was completed, the wooden ceiling vault was reconstructed in brick, necessary carpentry was accomplished, and work on the supports of the floor was completed. Haunted by the spectre of fire, Angiviller also carried through additional precautions against this disaster by the construction of brick firewalls throughout the gallery. The Count even had lightning rods installed in order that he might never be charged with neglecting the least protection against fire.[103] The Director General summed up all these accomplishments in a letter he wrote to the Royal Academy of Architecture on November 12, 1785, and referred to them as works having as their "essential goal the solidity and security" of the gallery.[104] In 1784 and 1785, then, Angiviller selected the staff of the museum, looked to the condition of the paintings to be displayed in it, and saw some major construction and repair take place in the Grand Gallery. In 1784, at least, he even seemed to have high hopes that the museum could be opened to the public very soon. By 1785, however, it was apparent that the museum

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[103] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 78; Sacy, op. cit., p. 139.

[104] Lemonnier, op. cit., IX, pp. 358-362.

was almost as far from being a reality as it had ever been in that the project was still confronted with two seemingly insurmountable barriers. One of these, of course, was the perennial financial difficulty, the eternal lack of money, now more serious than it had ever been before. The other, hardly less formidable, was the problem of lighting the gallery, a question which seemed to defy all attempts at reasonable solution.

C. The Final Years: A Definitive Plan Emerges

The Comte d'Angiviller was still most reluctant to abandon the idea of lighting the gallery from above, and this in spite of the expense which it would demand, the objections which had been raised concerning it, and the fact that this issue was largely responsible for the Count's failure to bring the museum to realization. Late in 1784 the Director General attempted again to solve the lighting question by referring the matter to still another architect, one who had not yet been involved in the project. Perhaps he was looking for a man who could bring a fresh mind to the problem, a man whose creativity, in this regard at least, had not been jaded by prolonged association with the difficulties presented by the gallery. The architect to whom he turned was a younger man, one Monsieur Renard, who was Monsieur Guillaumot's son-in-law.[105] Renard was not yet even a member of the Royal Academy of Architecture and was only an inspector in the Paris department, a position undoubtedly procured for him by his father-in-law. How, one might well ask, could the Director General even consider bringing in the light from on high now that the gallery's wooden ceiling vault had been replaced by a brick vault? In this regard, it must be remembered that when Angiviller and the architects referred to "lighting from above" they did not necessarily mean light brought from the

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[105]Gabillot, op. cit., p. 172; Lemonnier, op. cit., IX, p. 359.

vault itself. They were almost always thinking primarily in terms of windows of some sort -- clerestory windows, dormers or lunettes -- placed in the upper part of the walls. To be sure, windows of certain designs, such as dormers or lunettes, would require a reworking of the vault at points where such windows would necessarily intersect it, but apparently Angiviller was willing to undertake additional adjustments in the vault if some satisfactory solution to the lighting problem could be found and if funds for financing that solution could be procured.

Monsieur Renard duly produced two designs for lighting the gallery from above, and both were duly objected to by the architects and by others who disliked the principle of zenithal lighting. Hautecoeur states that Monsieur Brébion and his colleagues in the Academy opposed the plans of Renard on the grounds that lighting from above was not advantageous to paintings and that such lighting arrangements would give the gallery a "blind" and "gloomy" appearance.[106] Hautecoeur is mistaken in this statement. In August, 1780, Brébion and the Intendants General had unreservedly accepted the principle that zenithal lighting was to be preferred, a position which they reiterated in August, 1785, and later.[107] The

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[106] Hautecoeur, Histoire du Louvre, p. 78. The words "blind" and "gloomy" are Hautecoeur's.

[107] See pp. 259-260 above; A.N., O^1 1670, 231; O^1 1932 (7), 50; O^1 1932 (8), 74; Mondain-Monval, op. cit., p. 223; Sacy, op. cit., p. 139.

only reservations which the architects generally had to every plan so far put forward for lighting the gallery from above stemmed from a consideration of financial realities. This was their primary objection to Renard's designs, of which only the second received serious attention. In July, 1785, the Count, in a letter which has a somewhat weary tone, wrote to the Intendants General on "a question delicate and important, already very familiar.. . ."[108] The subject was, of course, the lighting of the gallery. Angiviller asked the Intendants to consider Monsieur Renard's plan in detail, to consult with him, and to watch him demonstrate his thesis with a scale model of the Grand Gallery. In this letter the Director General again expressed his anxiety to see the museum opened soon, not only for the sake of the connoisseurs but also for the benefit of that wider class "which we call the public. . . ."

On August 10, 1785, Mique, Hazon, Guillaumot, Brébion, and Lespée sent to the Director General a letter expressing their reactions to Renard's plan for lighting the gallery from above.[109] The architects state that they met with Renard and examined his drawings and elevations as well as the model he had constructed to illustrate his idea. This idea, which was the second of two projects planned by

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[108] A.N., O^1 1932 (7), 41.

[109] A.N., O^1 1932 (7), 50.

Renard, envisioned the letting of twenty-nine large openings into the top of the existing vault, a solution which would require the reworking of both the vault and the roof of the gallery. What Renard was actually proposing here was the piercing of the vault with twenty-nine "lanterns," a technical architectural term which is the same in both French and English and which means, in the language of the layman, a form of skylight.[110] The five architects agree with Monsieur Renard that the daylight should be provided from above but question the practicality of his design in view of "our climate, with its long and frequent rains, violent winds, and snows. . . ." Obviously, the architects feared that large skylight constructions on the roof would not stand up well to the elements and might allow water to leak into the gallery; because of these considerations they express the opinion that it would be "preferable to bring the daylight from the flanks of the vault rather than from the summit. . . ." They believed, in other words, that dormer or lunette windows would be better and safer than lanterns. The architects also state that although Monsieur Renard believes his plan would allow for the conservation of parts of the existing vault [the newly built one of brick], they do not agree and think that in the execution of the design

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110 Gabillot, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

it would be necessary "to sacrifice the actual vault. . . ." The authors of the report point out that Renard's plan would necessarily be expensive, but that bringing in the daylight from the sides of the vault would not be so costly, since this method would not require the total destruction and reconstruction of the vault and roof. The architects also have a suggestion to make in the event that the Director General still has doubts about lighting the gallery from above and hesitates to commit himself to it because of the risk and expense involved and because of possible complaints about the final effect. They recommend that an experiment in overhead lighting be conducted in a "sufficient length" of the Grand Gallery with a special exhibition mounted during the time of the salon showings of contemporary painting. This would be a fairly inexpensive experiment, they say, and would provide a demonstration of overhead lighting in actual reality as well as an opportunity to measure public and critical reaction to the system. Finally, the five architects warn Angiviller that he should have no illusions as to the considerable expense which Renard's project would entail. On August 28, Renard estimated that his plan would cost 312,359 livres,[111] but, on August 31, the Intendants and Brébion and Lespée reported to Angiviller that they believed Renard's project could not be effected for less than 427,582 livres.[112]

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[111] Ibid., p. 172.

[112] Ibid.

And so the consultations of Monsieur Renard and the Intendants and other royal architects were not productive; Renard's plan met with the same fate which had befallen all of those preceding it -- it became the object of dissentions, disagreements, and hesitations, and probably an instrument for use in internecine professional rivalries. One element in the rejection of Renard's project was very likely a human one of annoyance and jealousy on the part of the architects because Angiviller had not accepted any of their recommendations and had chosen instead to place his trust in a young architect who was not even an academician. Insofar as cost was concerned, the total estimate for the execution of Renard's design was certainly less than the estimate for Soufflot's first project and, according to Renard's own figures, slightly less than the estimate for Soufflot's second plan, although the Intendants did not agree with Renard's arithmetic. In any event, it was apparent by this time that the gallery was not going to be lighted from above for less than about 350,000 livres. And certainly there was still some apprehension as to the effect zenithal lighting might create in the gallery, a fact which can partially account for the obvious reluctance of both Angiviller and the architects to go forward and definitely to put into execution a plan for bringing in the light from above. One wonders, indeed, if Angiviller and his associates would have taken this final step even if they had had unlimited funds

at their disposal. Thought and discussion were cheap and easy. But suppose the gallery, lighted from on high, did prove to be "blind" and "gloomy" and depressing? This was a fearful possibility which must always have lurked at the back of Angiviller's mind.

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In the autumn of 1785 Angiviller, in effect, threw up his hands and referred the entire problem of lighting the Grand Gallery to the whole body of the Royal Academy of Architecture. The Director General may have had several motives in taking this action. Most obviously, he hoped that the Academy as a whole might be able to find the solution which had thus far eluded the Intendants and individual architects. He also undoubtedly hoped that his appeal to the full membership of the Academy would result in a generally acceptable plan which would terminate the disagreements which the problem had generated and would, therefore, break this impasse which was arresting the entire museum project. Enlightened despotism had failed to produce a workable design and Angiviller was willing to essay a venture into departmental democracy. The Count was also skilled in the ways of the court and the government, was sensitive about his own reputation, and was fully alert to the potential dangers inherent in the museum project. In associating the Academy with him in a final decision regarding the gallery he was preparing a means whereby the full blame for any

errors in taste or judgment would not fall on him alone. This last statement is not to be found in Angiviller's biography or in any secondary works, nor can it be substantiated by documents in the Archives, but it seems a most reasonable presumption based upon an interpretation of the circumstances. The question of lighting the gallery had become "delicate and important," and Angiviller was now willing to share the glory for creating the museum with the Academy for the sake of having the Academy share with him the burden of guilt for anything which might not turn out well. Some of the academicians were undoubtedly flattered to be consulted on a "national affair" of such significance; others, more aware of the vexing issues surrounding the museum project and of the risks which Angiviller offered to them, may not have been pleased with the assignment. The records of the Academy's meetings on the museum question and the documents concerning its study of the problem have about them a certain brusqueness which suggests that the Academy was impatient with the entire museum affair and did not appreciate being asked by the Director General to produce a solution for a matter which had defied solution for over ten years. But, in any case, the Academy had no choice -- it was the King's will that his Royal Academy of Architecture undertake this labor and make recommendations for the gallery.

On November 12, 1785, Angiviller addressed to the gentlemen of the Academy a long letter in which he formally

remitted to them, for their study and discussion, the problem of lighting "this gallery destined by the King's munificence, and by his love of the arts, to be a monument unique in Europe."[113] The Director General reviewed the project as it had developed since 1778 and again expressed his preference for lighting the gallery from above "if I am not forced, as administrator for the King, to devise secondary arrangements which are held to the interest of the King's finances." Angiviller also asked the Academy to consider and to study Monsieur Renard's design but informed it that the question of how the gallery should be lighted was to be considered an open one; they were not even to be bound or constricted by anything done in the gallery to that point. He informed the members that the King desired the Academy itself to formulate a plan which would have the approval of a majority of the academicians. The Director General then confided the problem "to the zeal of the Academy" and expressed the hope that the coming winter would be productive of a solution. This letter was read to the assembled Academy on November 14, 1785.[114] It was read a second time on November 21, and at this meeting the Academy "occupied itself with this great project" by voting that the Count be asked to provide its secretary with the records "of all that which

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[113] Lemonnier, op. cit., IX, pp. 358-362.

[114] Ibid., p. 166.

concerns this affair. . . ."[115] On December 5 the Academy repeated this request and asked specifically to be provided with "all the plans and memorandums, and particularly the works of Monsieur Soufflot on this matter. . . ." The Superintendence complied with the Academy's request and on December 12 that body named ten of its members as commissioners to study these materials and to make a report on them. Mique, Hazon, Guillaumot, Lespée, and Brébion were appointed to work with the commissioners, obviously because of their long experience with the project.[116] About the middle of December the commission "transported itself" to the Grand Gallery to examine the location and so to be able to add personal observation to the study of the documentary history of the project; this visit must have been a mere formality for most of the commissioners, since virtually all of them knew the Grand Gallery only too well.[117] On December 19 Monsieur Renard read to the Academy a paper concerning his plan for the gallery, with which "the Academy occupied itself while awaiting the report of messieurs the commissioners."[118]

On January 23, 1786, the Academy, becoming impatient, asked the commissioners when they would be ready to make a

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[115] Ibid., p. 169.

[116] Ibid., pp. 169-171.

[117] A.N., O^1 1932 (7), 45.

[118] Lemonnier, op. cit., IX, p. 171.

report on the result of their study of the Grand Gallery and the documents concerning it. The commissioners replied, somewhat defensively, that they had been meeting frequently but were not yet prepared to present the results of their work to the Academy.[119] On February 6, 1786, six members of the Academy presented to their assembled colleagues separate memorandums on the gallery, each memorandum accompanied by drawings. The Academy ordered that these six memorandums, together with Renard's project, be mounted in the Academy's rooms for study by the members. It was also announced at this sitting that on February 13 the academicians would assemble at ten o'clock in the morning for a trip en masse to the Grand Gallery. This excursion took place as planned, the academicians being "in very great number," and a decision was made that at the next meeting the Academy would hear the report and opinions of the commissioners it had appointed to study the gallery and the lighting problem.[120] Also in this month of February Angiviller found in his mail an anonymous mémoire from some private citizens who had "critical reflections" to make on the museum project. Stung by their criticisms, and perhaps interested in their comments, Angiviller -- who would go to any lengths to hear of ideas for the museum -- inserted a

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[119] Ibid., p. 173.

[120] Ibid., pp. 174-175.

notice in the Journal de Paris in which he asked the authors of the mémoire to come forward as he had "the desire and the need to confer with them." In March these citizens complied with the Count's request and consented to consult with him.[121] Public pressure on the Director General for the opening of the museum was again intensifying and adding to his own desire to see the gallery completed and arranged.

Pressure was also obviously being applied to the Academy, which was working on the museum project with unwonted speed and consistency. On February 20 the academicians listened to "several mémoires on the gallery" and had some "long discussions" on the subject, and on February 27 Angiviller's letter of November 12, 1785, was formally read to them for the third time, which might be construed as a form of prodding. Finally, on March 6, 1786, the Academy decided, by a majority vote, that the Grand Gallery should be lighted from above but that there should also be daylight from below which could be used "at will."[122] This decision was, in truth, not a decision but a safe, diplomatic, temporizing solution which would have made both zenithal and lateral lighting available -- if the light from either above or below proved to be inadequate or unsatisfactory it could be both supplemented and controlled by means of blinds or

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[121] Gabillot, op. cit., pp. 172-173.

[122] Lemonnier, op. cit., IX, pp. 175-176.

curtains. The decision would also be satisfactory to everyone in that it provided for every possible kind of daylight.

At the end of March Angiviller and the architects were contemplating an experiment with overhead lighting in the salon where contemporary paintings were exhibited (not the Grand Gallery) for the sake of seeing what effect this light would have, an experiment which was undoubtedly considered with the problem of the Grand Gallery in mind.[123] On April 23 the commissioners named by the Academy "for the affair of the gallery" read to the academicians assembled a mémoire on the subject, and at this same meeting the members agreed, again by a majority vote, that the zenithal lighting in the gallery should come from "the summit of the vault."[124] This recommendation from the Academy must have been somewhat discouraging to Angiviller in view of the fact that the vault had just been reconstructed in Burgundy brick, work which would necessarily be destroyed by any scheme of lighting from "the summit of the vault." On May 9 the Academy resolved on a convocation "to deal with, in the last resort, the affair of the gallery."[125] This convocation took place

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[123] A.N., O^1 1670, 183.

[124] Lemonnier, op. cit., IX, p. 180.

[125] Ibid., p. 183.

on May 15, 1786. "The Academy having assembled, after the reading of particular reports concerning the gallery and after observations and discussions on this subject, the report of the commissioners concerning the affair of the gallery was read and approved by a majority vote; by vote, it was resolved that a certified copy of the said report would be sent to Monsieur Mique for presentation to Monsieur the Director General."[126] At this point the Royal Academy of Architecture as a body, having made its "last resort" effort, more or less withdrew from "the affair of the gallery."

The report of the Royal Academy sent to Angiviller, a document of seven pages, is dated May 15, 1786, and is signed by the ten commissioners.[127] The commissioners review the Director General's letter of November 12, 1785, and then discuss the designs of Monsieur Renard for the gallery. His first project was similar to Soufflot's first project in some respects in that it called for the construction of an attic and the bringing in of the daylight by means of arched vaults, a design which the commissioners point out would necessitate the "destruction of the vault and of the present roof." The second design envisioned by Renard and reviewed by the commissioners in this letter was the one suggesting the letting of twenty-nine openings into the top

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[126] Ibid.

[127] A.N., O^1 1932 (8), 74.

of the existing vault, a solution which Renard asserted would demand the reworking of the vault and roof but would not require the total destruction and rebuilding of both. The commissioners state that Renard's proposals "merited the greatest attention" and were studied by the commission both in drawings and scale models and, finally, in the gallery itself. The ten architects state that on this visit to the gallery they thoroughly examined its fabric from the foundations to the roof to acquaint themselves with its actual condition and with the new carpentry and masonry work which had been done in it. The commissioners then state that, after much study, discussion, and deliberation, they have arrived at the following five conclusions: (1) that the gallery should not be divided even by decorations, such as columns or pilasters, and that it should be preserved in its entire splendid, impressive length; (2) that the gallery would be best lighted from above rather than by the existing windows; (3) that the daylight from above should be brought into the gallery by means of several large openings (lanterns) let into the summit of the vault, but that the existing windows should be retained for light to be used "at will," to provide ventilation and a means of moving objects into and out of the gallery, to allow for views to the outside, and for the sake of the inherent beauty of the gallery; (4) that the creation of the lanterns would necessitate the destruction and rebuilding of the vault; (5) that

since the destruction of the vault would make the destruction of the carpentry of the roof "a sad necessity," it would be advisable to rebuild the roof of fireproof materials as an additional insurance against fire. The commissioners also state that the lower vault of the gallery, the one beneath the floor, requires some attention. With regard to the interior decoration of the gallery, the commissioners recommend that this be carried out with a "noble simplicity" which will be in keeping with the general character of the place and which will not detract from nor compete with the collections. And this report, the commissioners imply, is the Academy's final word on the subject of the Grand Gallery and its problems.

This report must have been a disappointment to the Comte d'Angiviller if he had hoped that the Academy would be able to produce some kind of magic formula which would rescue him from the perplexities and dilemmas which surrounded the museum project. The Academy's conclusions, in fact, sealed the doom of Angiviller's hope to be remembered as the creator of France's national museum and meant that no such gallery would ever be achieved by the Old Regime. In this report, the Academy, in effect, endorsed Renard's second project for lighting the gallery with lanterns in the vault, although several of the architects had previously objected to the design on the grounds that it would be excessively expensive. Monsieur Renard to the contrary notwithstanding, the Academy

as a whole -- and probably correctly -- assumed that the execution of the recommended project would demand the total demolition and full reconstruction of the vault and roof. The vault had just been redone, at considerable expense, all of which was to be wasted. Why, one wonders, had Angiviller been so illogical as to insist upon proceeding with the reconstruction of the vault in brick when the prime issue of lighting had not been resolved? There are three possible answers to this question. (1) At the time he undertook this renovation he had apparently abandoned any idea of lighting the gallery from the summit of the vault and believed that any future plan adopted for the lighting would not involve more than dormer or lunette windows which would require some adjustments in the vault but not its destruction; later he changed his whole concept of the lighting difficulty, most probably because of the general professional consensus of opinion that zenithal lighting would be best for the gallery. (2) He was so afraid of fire that he was determined to replace the gallery's dangerous wooden vault with a brick one even if it meant that this vault was not to be permanent. (3) The pressure on him to open the gallery was so great that he felt the psychological need to do as much work as possible -- to do something -- and to ignore the fact that some of this work might have to be partially or wholly undone when the time came for settling the lighting issue.

In actual fact, the Academy's recommendations were good and were those which prevailed in the distant future -- today the Louvre is lighted by a combination of upper and lower windows supplemented when necessary, of course, by artificial light. And certainly an enormously long, unbroken gallery with only overhead light and no windows giving a view to the outside would very likely be a depressing and visually unattractive place. The Academy's report recommended a system for utilizing both zenithal and lateral lighting in a manner which provided for great flexibility and control. But the Academy's report also recommended a lighting system which was impossibly expensive and would have cost at least half a million livres. Angiviller had no hope of extracting half a million livres from the Controller-General of Finances at this time, especially when he would have to admit that some of these funds would go for destroying work which had just been done and upon which money had just been spent. Certainly the Academy knew this and one cannot avoid the suspicion that it made its recommendation, without suggesting a less expensive alternative, simply for the sake of discharging the responsibility with which the Director General had shouldered it. The responsibility was now again the Count's alone, and he found himself in an exceedingly awkward position. The Academy had indeed resolved the dissentions which had raged about the lighting issue, and this was good, but it was small comfort in view of the fact that

the solution put forward was impossible of realization. The Academy had solved one problem only to create another. With the commissioners' report before him, Angiviller would not dare now to go ahead and arrange the museum in the gallery as it stood; to do so would require the flouting of all professional advice and, besides, his pride and his desire to establish the most impressive museum possible would not allow him to settle for less than the best. But France at this time could not provide him with the financial means for obtaining the best; if he would not settle for something more modest he would have to do without. This report made by the commissioners of the Academy in May, 1786, is a turning point in the history of the effort to create a national museum in that it constitutes a stalemate, based primarily on financial difficulties, which was never broken. And it was getting late in the day for the Old Regime. The Academy's "last resort" effort was more of a last resort than it knew.

In June, 1786, one Abbé Grenet wrote to Angiviller to offer him a "useful and curious machine" as a "beautiful ornament" for the proposed museum.[128] The Count knew of this "machine" with which the Abbé proposed to endow the gallery as it had been reported in the newspapers. It was a contrivance showing the movement of the earth on its axis and in relation to the sun and the moon, a device probably

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[128] A.N., O^1 1919 (2), 183.

similar to those used today in high school and college geography classes. Angiviller believed that this construction of the Abbé's "would be very foreign to the arts for which the museum is destined" and that, in any event, "it would be yet some time" before the gallery was ready for the installation of the collections. The Count also believed that the Abbé's invention gave a false impression of the universe. On July 4 the Director General wrote one of his customarily polite letters to the Abbé in which he thanked the latter for his interest in the museum but firmly declined the offer of the machine on the grounds that the gallery was to be dedicated to "the paintings and sculptures of the king and other works of this kind. . . ." He also stated that since the museum would not be ready in the foreseeable future he could not assume the responsibility of accepting and storing a variety of objects which might or might not eventually be placed on exhibition. He concluded his letter by saying that he had already been compelled to refuse "various offers very similar to yours."[129] This exchange of correspondence between the Abbé and Angiviller indicates that there was still public interest in the museum project but that in the minds of some people the concept of a museum of art as such was not clearly established, although it was perfectly clear in the mind of Angiviller. Angiviller's

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[129] A.N., O^1 1919 (2) 182, 184.

notes and letter also indicate that by mid-year in 1786 he had again resigned himself to seeing the project for the museum delayed "for a very considerable time yet. . . ."

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In the report of its commissioners made to Angiviller in May, 1786, the Royal Academy of Architecture delivered its final decision on the subject of the Grand Gallery. This is what the Director General had asked of it; the Academy had complied; and so, one would think, the issues of whether or not the gallery should be lighted from above and, if so, by what means, were settled. They were not. The Comte d'Angiviller still could not make up his mind; he hesitated; he sought more advice; he considered other plans and ideas; he mused and discussed; but he took no positive steps toward bringing the museum out of the realm of speculation and theory and into the world of reality. During 1787 Angiviller was ostensibly continuing to study the museum project, but the truth seems to be that the deliberations and consultations were at least partially a screen behind which there was a Director General who really did not know what to do because of his own continuing uncertainties and because he could not find the money for preparing the gallery as he believed it should be prepared.

The Academy's report of May, 1786, may have been its "last resort" as a body on the question of the museum, but Angiviller did not accept it as a final solution nor as a

settled plan toward which he could work. On March 13, 1787, the Director General wrote to the Intendants General to state that he had "profoundly meditated" the Academy's recommendations "with the desire to fix my opinions."[130] He admits, however, that he has not been able to find in the Academy's report a fully satisfactory and acceptable plan and that several other ideas presented to him since the time of the report have "augmented my doubts." He states that the issue is no longer whether or not the gallery should be lighted from above but, rather, a question of how this might best be achieved. "Nevertheless," he asserts bravely, "I am absolutely determined to proceed with these works and to put the gallery in order." The Count expresses his "esteem" for all the members of the Royal Academy of Architecture but implies disappointment in them as a body by proceeding, in this letter, to appoint a new committee for "the further examination" of the museum project. Angiviller expresses his belief that a committee "less numerous than the entire assembly of the Academy" might be more efficient and be better able to make "deeper" studies in order "to arrive at useful and acceptable results." He then names a committee of nine architects to include the three Intendants, who were Mique, Hazon, and Guillaumot, and six academicians: Brébion, Boullé, Jardin, Heurtier, Antoine, and Raymond. Angiviller

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[130] A.N., O^1 1670, 161.

then informs the Intendants that the committee must abandon all thought of Monsieur Renard's design for bringing daylight into the gallery from the summit of the vault.[131] The Director General confesses that he relinquishes this idea, which he believes has "a true character of genius," with some reluctance but does so because he has doubts as to how well it would actually function in the Paris weather. He gives other reasons as to why he has turned away from Renard's plan: the necessity for constant care which the lanterns would demand; the possibly unpleasing appearance which they might give to the exterior of the Louvre; and the fearful risk that they might let into the gallery "a mass of light" which would be "extremely disadvantageous." Because of these considerations, Angiviller instructs the Intendants General that the committee must concentrate on finding a

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[131] Angiviller refers to this design as Renard's "first idea," but it seems that it was actually the second of two projects put forward by Renard for lighting the gallery from the vault. He also later produced a third plan for lighting from the flanks, and this may account for Angiviller's reference to the plan cited in his letter as Renard's "first idea." This plan could be considered Renard's "first" project in relation to the design for flank lighting if the latter were regarded as the second plan, which is apparently what Angiviller was doing in this letter. The very first project which Renard put forward and which was a scheme for lighting from the vault was hardly considered at all and apparently Angiviller does not count it in the numbering of the Renard designs. In any event, there can be no question about the fact that the plan Angiviller cites here was Renard's proposal for lighting the gallery from the vault with twenty-nine lanterns.

"means of lighting from the flanks [of the vault] at the most advantageous points." In asking for a plan for lighting the gallery from the flanks of the vault Angiviller was surely also thinking of another consideration which he does not mention; a lighting scheme utilizing the flanks would be much less expensive than lighting from the summit and would probably permit most of the new brick vault to be retained intact. Angiviller goes on to state that Monsieur Renard, who apparently was endlessly inventive, had produced a design for flank lighting which he would like the committee to consult, although they were not to feel bound by it. One cannot but wonder how the nine mature architects, Intendants and academicians all, reacted to this order that they see what Monsieur Renard might have to say on the subject of flank lighting. Angiviller then asks that the committee give as much priority as possible to this assignment. He closes his letter with an indication of his extreme concern for the safety of the royal collections by informing the committee that it must, above all, consider the security of the "immense riches" which the gallery is to enclose, "the loss of which could be repaired by nothing in the universe." Angiviller's very genuine fear for the safety of the objects confided to his care may well have been an important consideration in his rejection of Renard's design for lanterns in the vault; the very thought of rain washing down onto the Mona Lisa or The Virgin of the Rocks would certainly have

been enough to turn him away from any thought of skylights.

The committee replied to Angiviller's request for further studies with a long mémoire of thirty-nine pages dated April 4, 1787.[132] They report that they met on March 21 to discuss their mission and to review the pertinent documents, particularly the Director General's letter of November 12, 1785, to the Academy and the Academy's conclusions of May 15, 1786. They then proceed to read Angiviller a lecture, in which there is a distinct note of exasperation, on what the Academy as a whole, or any body of architects, can and cannot do. The Director General, they say, seems to be under the impression that a group of architects working together can produce a complete "project," by which they mean a fully worked out and detailed architectural plan ready for immediate execution. The committee says that no such thing is possible and that, indeed, the Royal Academy of Architecture has a by-law forbidding it to engage as a body in the production of any "project." Architecture, they assert, is not a matter of group endeavor but an art based upon individual genius and talent. A number of architects working together, they claim, can no more produce a unified and coherent architectural plan than can the French Academy assembled produce a tragedy. The Royal Academy of Architecture can judge between projects and can

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[132] A.N., O^1 1670, 162.

enunciate general principles upon which a project can be based, but this is all it or any committee or commission of architects can do; the final project must come from the mind and hand of a specific artist. The committee firmly states that a number of artists designing in concert could only fashion a "monstrosity."[133] By virtue of this little dissertation on the practice of the art of architecture, the committee informed the Count that he could not expect from them the definitive solution he was seeking and must content himself with recommendations and conclusions of a general nature.

The committee then takes up the defense of the Academy in the face of Angiviller's implied dissatisfaction with it as a body. They review the Academy's report of May, 1786, and inform the Count, rather coldly, that the conclusions expressed in that document were not reached "lightly" but only after long and hard deliberation and by "a very great plurality of votes."[134] The committee then proceeds to review the entire lighting problem in all of its aspects and details. Angiviller had informed them in his letter that they were no longer to consider lighting

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[133] Ibid., pp. 4-6. The page numbers are the author's; the pages of the actual document are not numbered.

[134] Ibid., p. 10.

from the summit of the vault, but they disregard his instructions and include in their report an analysis of the lantern plan for lighting the gallery. In this regard, they state, they read with interest a memorandum sent to them by the Director General criticizing the lighting effects produced by lanterns in the chapel of the religious community of St. Mery. According to that memorandum, the light from the vault in the chapel caused glaring reflections to be thrown back into the vault from the floor and walls and created disagreeable shadowing effects. The committee visited this chapel, taking care to arrive at high noon on a fine sunny day in order to see the effect of the most brilliant sunlight streaming into the building from the three great oval lanterns which lighted it. They observed the effect of the light on the paintings and sculptures in the chapel and concluded that the author of the critical mémoire (who is not identified) was altogether wrong; they found that the chapel of St. Mery, for various technical reasons, was one of the "least favorable" examples of lighting from the summit of the vault, but even so they agreed that the effect produced in the chapel was very satisfactory.[135]

The committee then briefly mentions the theories of light held by Descartes and Newton but states that knowledge of the phenomena of light is still very "imperfect" and

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[135] Ibid., pp. 11-13.

asserts that the senses are often more trustworthy than the intellect in these matters. The architects next consider the general proposal that the gallery be lighted from the flanks of the vault and a specific suggestion made to Angiviller that this flank lighting be brought in at an angle of about 45° on the theory that this is the light which painters prefer for working. Not so, says the committee; an artist may have his canvas on an easel at about a 45° angle, but he will always take his light from on high if he possibly can. The committee cites as examples of the good effect of overhead lighting on pictures the sale galleries of two Paris art dealers, one in the Hotel Bullion and the other in the establishment of Monsieur Le Brun. They refer also to the shop of Monsieur Barbier, a silk merchant, and to the excellent results produced in his store by overhead lighting.[136] The committee reports that it then traveled about Paris visiting several buildings and churches lighted from the flanks of their vaults in order to observe the results of daylight brought into the interiors in this manner. They visited the churches of St. Leu, St. Gilles, St. Martin-des-Champs, Notre Dame de St. Gervais, St. Germain-des-Prés, the Capuchin church in the Marais, and other places as well. They report that they were not impressed by flank lighting, complain that it is usually inadequate,

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[136] Ibid., pp. 16-18.

and state that it can sometimes trap "the spectator . . . in a mass of living light," that is, in light coming strongly from opposing sources which conflict with each other.[137]

The architects went also to see the effects of a combination of lighting in the assembly hall of the College of Surgeons which was illuminated by three large lateral windows and a central lantern. They state that the light in this hall bounced and glared about the room in a most unpleasant manner until peace was achieved by an experiment which darkened the lateral windows and allowed the light from the lantern to prevail. In order to avoid this in the Grand Gallery, the architects state that the lower windows should be closed up and all of the light brought from a multiplicity of carefully placed flank windows, an operation which they say would be very costly and which would alter the whole aspect of the exterior façades. They also pose technical objections to the introduction of lunettes into the pediments of the façades and come to the conclusion that "the project of lighting the gallery from the flanks is impracticable. . . ." They also remind Angiviller that any system of flank lighting would necessarily demand wooden superstructures in the roof and therefore increase the risk of fire.[138]

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[137] Ibid., pp. 19-21.

[138] Ibid., pp. 21-22.

The committee then proceeds to demolish Monsieur Renard's plans both for flank and summit lighting, although they say politely that in doing so they do not have "any reproach to make to Monsieur Renard." His plan for flank lighting is not acceptable because of what it would do to the façades, because it would allow combustible materials in the roof, because it would require the division of the gallery with columns and pilasters, and so forth. They also proclaim, rather astonishingly, that Renard's plan for lighting the gallery with lanterns in the summit of the vault is no longer acceptable, either, and that "it does not any longer fulfill the wish of the Academy." This plan is rejected because it, too, requires wood in the roof, demands that the shape of the roof be changed, and calls for the use of supporting columns in the gallery which would have the effect of dividing it. In short, the committee renounces Monsieur Renard and all his grandiose schemes.[139]

The architects review their impressions of various kinds of daylight on sculpture and declare emphatically that light from the summit of the vault would be best for statues, just as it would be best for paintings. The committee states that it would not hesitate to recommend lighting the gallery with the existing windows except for two points: (1) the carpentry work surrounding them constitutes

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[139] Ibid., pp. 23-25.

a fire hazard; (2) the light they give would be unfavorable to sculpture, an important matter in view of the fact that there will be much sculpture in the gallery, including the statues of illustrious men with which the Director General proposes to decorate it.[140]

The architects turn again to the subject of lighting from the summit of the vault, the very plan which Angiviller asked them to forget. They tell the Director General that he should no longer have any doubts whatever as to the favorable effect such lighting would produce in the gallery; this question they consider settled. They also believe that his fear concerning the effect of weather on lanterns is unfounded and point out that there are several buildings in Paris with lanterns which have successfully withstood the elements for many years. Certainly, they say, windows in the flanks would not be any safer or easier to care for than lanterns. The committee then proceeds to compare vault and flank lighting in terms of advantages and disadvantages, the control of light, the effect of the light under specific circumstances, the value of using mirrors in the gallery, and so on, citing as examples various buildings in Paris and churches in Rome.[141] Angiviller is then warned that the roof will continue to pose a fire hazard as it

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[140] Ibid., pp. 25-28.

[141] Ibid., pp. 29-34.

contains much wooden structure, and he is reminded that the time will come when it will be both necessary and possible to rebuild it in a fireproof manner; the architects believe this should be done before the collections are installed, not only for their safety but because any subsequent reworking of the roof and vault would require removal of the collections. Here the committee touches upon a vital point in the whole museum project. The safety of the collections and Angiviller's concern for this demanded a fireproof roof, but the question of roof construction was inextricably linked with the lighting question; upon both of these issues turned the decision as to whether the museum should or should not be opened in the gallery as it existed. If the roof must eventually be rebuilt in order to make it fireproof, why not rework the vault at the same time in order to provide the proper lighting? And if these works must eventually be undertaken, would it not be futile and foolish to open the museum on what would be, essentially, a temporary basis? The committee laid all of these points before Angiviller in a most specific manner; one point led logically to another, and all of them led logically to further delays for the museum project.[142]

Turning to the subject of expense, the committee blithely informs the Director General that this matter should

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[142] Ibid., pp. 34-36.

no longer be "frightening" in view of the fact that much of the work which would be desirable for the gallery was a part of the necessity for rendering it safe for the collections. They estimate that the reconstruction of the roof in fire-proof materials and the preparation of the vault for lighting from the summit would cost about one million livres or, they add casually, perhaps a few hundred thousand more. The committee could well afford to bandy about figures of this size -- it was not in Angiviller's position of having to obtain the money from the Controller-General of Finances. Nevertheless, in emphasizing the need for the safety of the collections and making the lighting plan dependent upon this matter, the committee placed within the Count's hand a potent weapon for use in requesting funds.[143]

In summation, the committee rejected all of Monsieur Renard's designs, including his particular project for lighting the gallery with lanterns in the summit of the vault, but it adopted the general principle of lighting by lanterns in the vault. This amounted to a restatement of the Academy's conclusion of May, 1786. The committee did not recommend flank lighting and did not believe that it would be sensible or advisable to open the museum in the gallery as it stood. The report is signed by the three Intendants and by five of the six academicians who were

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[143] Ibid., pp. 36-37.

members of the committee; at the foot of the document is a notation signed by Brébion, the ninth member, in which he expresses his dissent from the majority opinion that the daylight should be brought into the gallery by means of lanterns in the vault.[144]

Angiviller must have been surprised by the committee's report; it was not what he had asked of them and certainly not what he had expected to get from them. He wrote to the Intendants on April 10 to thank the committee for its efforts and its sincerity and to state that he had read the report with the most profound interest.[145] He also stated that the document would be submitted to the King and that it would undoubtedly be helpful to His Majesty in assisting him to come to a decision, "after which I shall take all appropriate measures to terminate this important enterprise." France was still an absolute monarchy, the king was deferred to in all things, and all business of the ministeries was at least theoretically subject to his scrutiny and approval. It seems unlikely, however, that Louis XVI played any active role in the museum project, nor is there any evidence to indicate that he did; the King never manifested any notable interest in the arts and undoubtedly trusted Angiviller in this matter of the gallery. Angiviller, in his letter to the

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[144] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

[145] A.N., O^1 1670, 163.

Intendants, took the committee's lecturing of him about the practice of architecture gracefully and in good spirit; he stated he knew that a finished architectural plan could not be "a communal work" and that he had only been seeking "fundamental principles" anyway.

So the decision and initiative were again remanded to the Count himself, and he again found himself faced with professional advice urging a solution to the problem of the gallery which would cost a great deal of money and which would unquestionably delay the opening of the museum for an uncertain number of years -- more years than Angiviller had left in which to work. In short, he found himself in precisely the situation he occupied in May, 1786, when he received the Academy's conclusions and recommendations. The committee's report was presented to the King on April 29, 1787.[146] And there, on the King's desk, the matter more or less rested for nearly a year.

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In 1788 Angiviller engaged in correspondence concerning the statues of illustrious men destined "to be placed one day in the Museum."[147] An old army comrade, the Baron de Besenvald, asked Angiviller for a position as an inspector in the "gallery of the Louvre," reminding him that Angiviller

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[146] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 173.

[147] A.N., O^1 1920 (1), 68; O^1 1920 (2), 226.

had once promised him such a post; the Count replied that he remembered his promise and would be happy to oblige his friend but admitted that he found it "very difficult" to know when such a position might be available.[148] Artists requested permission to copy in the royal galleries, but the Director General was compelled to refuse them on the grounds that the "actual arrangement of the cabinet of paintings no longer allows anyone to work there."[149] He instructed Pierre, the First Painter, to have Monsieur DuRameau inspect the paintings "in the different royal houses in the environs of Paris," and particularly at Meudon, adding: "Perhaps among these paintings he will find some sufficiently distinguished to be given a place in the Museum."[150] During this year the Director General received reports from Monsieur Guillaumot concerning a plan for arranging overhead lighting in the salon where contemporary paintings were exhibited; this was contemplated for the salon of 1789 and was an experiment planned for the sake of the Grand Gallery rather than for the salon itself.[151] These documents indicate that during 1788 Angiviller went ahead by doing what he could for the project and by continuing his preparations for the gallery; they

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[148] A.N., O^1 1670, 167.

[149] A.N., O^1 1920 (2), 129, 130.

[150] Furcy-Raynaud, Correspondance de d'Angiviller, Deuxième partie, pp. 232-233.

[151] A.N., O^1 1670, 168, 169.

also indicate that he had little hope of seeing the museum a reality in the near future.

One extremely important development concerning the museum did occur in 1788. On March 31 the King gave his "bon" to the general plan for the gallery outlined in the committee's report of April 4, 1787, and ordered that preparations proceed for transforming the committee's ideas into a fully developed architectural project. The King had retained the committee's mémoire in his personal possession since April 29, 1787, and did not affix his "approuvé" for nearly a year after he received it.[152] On June 11 a letter of order, based on the King's decision, was sent by Angiviller to Guillaumot and Renard, which indicates that perhaps Renard, after all, was to be chosen as supervising architect for the project.[153] This was a significant step forward. At long last it was definitely decided that the gallery was to be lighted from above with lanterns set into the summit of the vault and that the museum was not to be opened until this work had been accomplished. All that remained was to develop the committee's fundamental principles into a set of working plans and to order the project into execution. There was also, of course, the question of where the royal government was to obtain the million or so livres

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[152] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 173.

[153] Ibid.

which the work was to cost, but the King's approval of the report indicates that he had the firm intention of seeing the project carried through and apparently believed that the necessary funds would be forthcoming from somewhere. It would be interesting to know why Louis kept the committee's report for so long, but we do not know why. Perhaps he found the technical aspects of the lighting problem intriguing; he had no real interest in art but he did like mechanical problems, machinery, woodworking, carpentry, and the like. Or perhaps the King was simply indifferent to the entire project and delayed reading and acting upon the committee's report out of lack of concern.

Angiviller summed up the status of the museum project at the end of the year 1788 in a formal mémoire which he addressed to the King on November 2.[154] This mémoire is in the nature of a report to the King on the project as it then stood and on activity concerning it which was planned for the near future. The Count refers to the plan for a national gallery as "an interesting and truly national project for forming in the gallery of the Louvre (a monument unique of its kind) a Museum which will offer to foreigners, as well as to France itself, the spectacle of the incalculable riches which belong to the crown in painting, sculpture, engraving,

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[154] A.N., O^1 1670, 246; O^1 1920 (2), 210. The first document cited is the actual mémoire sent to the King and noted by him; the second document cited is a draft copy written in Angiviller's own hand.

and other productions of the arts." The Director General states that the project "has been suspended . . . because of the difficulties of the times" and also because of "the diversity of opinion" concerning the lighting of the gallery. Angiviller states that he has been so impressed with the importance of the project and with his own responsibility in relation to it that he has refused to take "risks" and has made "the most profound studies" with the Academy and other royal architects in the department. He reminds the King that the basic issues concerning the gallery and its lighting were resolved by the committee report of April, 1787, and by the sovereign's approval of that report and the conclusions and recommendations contained in it. Angiviller then informs the King that since the royal consent has been secured for a definitive plan, he can now proceed with studies for putting the project into execution. He states that he proposes to see these studies begin in 1789 and to finish the entire museum project "in three or perhaps two years. . . ." The expense of the project, he estimates, will be about "one million."

Referring to the Estates General already convoked for the following May, Angiviller expresses some apprehension as to what effect this "assembly" may have on "new projects and enterprises" such as the museum project. He asserts, however, that the museum will be "most obviously useful" and will be important to all Europe and to France.

He also makes the point that such a gallery would help to bring foreign tourists and their money to France and that this economic stimulation would return "a hundredfold" the investment made in the completion of the museum. Angiviller is expressing here the hope that the museum project will survive any political and economic changes resulting from the convocation of the Estates General; he makes an effort to see that it does survive in whatever new world may be emerging by emphasizing the project's national and international importance and by putting it forward as a sound economic venture.

The Director General then proposes to the King that an experiment in overhead lighting be conducted in the salon next to the Grand Gallery. This was the room in which the work of the members of the Academy of Painting was exhibited to the public every year. Angiviller states that the public complains regularly about the poor lighting in this salon and that lighting it from above would have the "double advantage" of improving the light in this exhibition hall and of convincing everyone the museum must be lighted from above. By this experiment Angiviller hoped to win the approval of the public for the idea of overhead lighting and also to let it see that the advantages to be gained from such lighting justified delaying the opening of the museum for a few more years. He probably also wanted to see for himself the actual effect produced in the Louvre by light

brought in from vault lanterns and so to resolve in his own mind any lingering doubts he might have concerning this particular system of lighting from above. Certainly the experiment in the exhibition salon would provide practical experience which would be useful in working out the lighting system for the Grand Gallery. Angiviller informs the King that the work of lighting the salon from above could be completed by August, 1789, the time of the next exhibition, for a cost of 80,000 livres, an amount which he asserts is modest for an experiment "so important." This project for the salon, Angiviller tells the King, will be for "the general interest of the national glory" and cannot but win "universal applause" from the public. The Director General concludes his mémoire by stating that he awaits the King's orders. The last page of the document bears the King's "bon" and the date of November 14, presumably the day on which Louis gave his approval to the contents of the mémoire.

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The work of lighting the exhibition salon from above, as proposed by Angiviller to the King in November, 1788, and approved by him, preoccupied the Superintendence and the architects during the first half of the year 1789, the last year of the Old Regime. There are many documents in the Archives concerning this project -- letters, progress reports, contracts, estimates of expense, and so forth. An

examination in great detail of the development of this work would add little to this study. The exhibition salon was not a part of the Grand Gallery and the plan for lighting it from above has relevance to the museum project only in that it was carried out partly as an experiment from which Angiviller and the architects hoped to gain knowledge for the lighting of the Grand Gallery in a similar manner. Angiviller also wished to see how the public and the critics would react to overhead lighting in the Louvre and to prepare them for it in the museum. Not all of the documents available on this matter are utilized and cited here but, rather, only representative letters and reports which are illustrative of the progress of the work and of its ultimate results. This experiment is interesting, however, in that it points the way to the Grand Gallery and demonstrates how the royal museum would have been lighted had Angiviller been granted a few more years in which to work.

On February 9, 1789, Monsieur Guillaumot, who was to be supervising architect for the project, submitted to Angiviller a mémoire setting forth in detail a proposal for reworking the salon's vault to place within it a single great lantern.[155] This would also, of course, necessitate work on the roof, and Guillaumot provides the Count with an explanation of precisely what is to be done and with

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[155] A.N., O^1 1670, 170.

estimates of cost for the various phases of the project -- the masonry, the carpentry, the metalwork, the glazing of the lantern, and so on. In preparing his mémoire Monsieur Guillaumot consulted with his son-in-law, Monsieur Renard. The total cost of the project, it seems, was to be a few thousand livres in excess of the original estimate of 80,000. Notes on the document in Angiviller's hand indicate that Monsieur Guillaumot's project was discussed in the Superintendence on February 10. Angiviller outlined the project to the King in a mémoire of February 11,[156] and on February 15, according to a note on Guillaumot's report, Louis bestowed the royal "bon." On February 17 letters of order were dispatched to Messieurs Guillaumot and Brébion which placed the project in execution. One of Angiviller's notes states that the work was to be completed in time for the academic exhibition scheduled for August, 1789. On February 17 a contract was let for rebuilding the wooden superstructure of the roof in iron and for the fabrication and emplacement of the lantern, work which was to cost 37,730 livres. According to this contract, the lantern was to contain 240 panes of glass.[157]

There was some rather bitter quarreling among the architects, however, even on this matter of lighting the

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[156] A.N., O^1 1670, 171.

[157] A.N., O^1 1670, 172.

salon. Monsieur Brébion, who had dissented from the majority opinion rendered by the committee of 1787, continued to oppose any overhead lighting system involving lanterns and refused to cooperate in the project for the salon.[158] Brébion, an important architect, was Controller of Buildings in the Superintendence and therefore occupied a position which permitted him to express his opinion and to make it carry weight. On March 16 Guillaumot wrote to the Director General to complain that Monsieur Brébion created difficulties "every day in order to retard and render impossible the construction of the new roof in iron for the salon. . . ."[159] Conferences were held concerning these disagreements,[160] and Angiviller, characteristically, named a committee to study and report on the problem.[161] This committee, composed of Mique, Hazon, Guillaumot, Jardin, Brébion, and Heurtier, met on March 27 and subsequently composed a report of their proceedings.[162] According to this document, which is signed by all members of the committee, including the recalcitrant

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[158] A.N., O^1 1670, 173, 174, 175.

[159] A.N., O^1 1670, 176.

[160] A.N., O^1 1670, 176, 179, 180, 181.

[161] A.N., O^1 1670, 184.

[162] A.N., O^1 1670, 185.

Brébion, the meeting was not productive of a full reconciliation of all parties. Jardin tended to uphold Brébion's objection to the manner in which the roof of the salon was being constructed. Nevertheless, the dissidents were overruled, the project went ahead, and in April Guillaumot and the Count were exchanging letters on the progress of the work.[163] In May the architects submitted to the Director General a report on the 240 glass panes which would be required for the lantern, and on June 24 the order for the manufacture of these was given.[164] By June 7 Monsieur Renard was able to inform Angiviller that the work on the salon was progressing rapidly.[165] In June and July the Superintendence was making arrangements to procure 298 panes of glass, "white and not polished on one side."[166] The document does not specify how this glass was to be used but it was undoubtedly the glass for the lantern, which required 240 panes; the additional panes were probably intended as insurance against breakage in installation and for whatever future replacements might be necessary. The work was finally completed and the salon exhibition held. The regular windows in the room were covered over and the light from the lantern allowed to prevail. A report made to the King on November 16,

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[163] A.N., O^1 1670, 187, 188.

[164] A.N., O^1 1670, 189, 191, 192.

[165] A.N., O^1 1670, 190.

[166] A.N., O^1 1670, 194.

1789, states that the exhibition was "a great success" and that "the public waits with impatience to see the gallery lighted in the same manner."[167]

On December 16, 1789, Monsieur Brébion was able to report that high winds on the night of the fourteenth and fifteenth had damaged the lead covering on the flat roof of the salon and had broken or cracked twenty-four panes of glass in the lantern.[168] He recommended, undoubtedly with much satisfaction, that the lantern be enclosed, at least for the winter, and that the planking which masked the salon's windows be removed. When he went up on the roof to inspect the damage he took Monsieur Renard with him, a little tour which must have been a source of triumph to Brébion and of great chagrin to Renard.

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The successful experiment with overhead lighting in the exhibition salon, which was actually a preview of what was intended for the Grand Gallery and the museum, came too late. By midsummer of 1789 the events of the Revolution had begun to intrude themselves into the Superintendence and to disrupt all of its plans and projects, just as they were disrupting the whole institution of the monarchy. In

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[167] A.N., O^1 1670, 247.

[168] A.N., O^1 1920 (3), 129.

fact, Angiviller was not even in France when the salon exhibition was held. The Count was an ardent royalist and had made himself conspicuous as an upholder of the royal prerogative, so much so that he became something of an embarrassment and a liability to the King at that particular time. He was advised to leave France for a while for his own safety, and the King urged him to go. He left Paris incognito at four in the morning on July 28 and set out for Spain, where he remained until January, 1790. Angiviller's biographer states that at this time the King himself was considering fleeing from France to Spain with his family and that possibly Angiviller was sent to Spain on some secret mission in connection with this plan, but apparently there is no evidence for this. The Count did not resign his post as Director General and the Superintendence was only remitted temporarily into the hands of three administrators.[169]

By August the officials of the Superintendence were in a flurry of alarm over the safety of the royal collections stored in the Louvre. On August 7 Monsieur Vien, a painter and an official in the Paris department, wrote to the administrators of the Superintendence to report that "two deputies of the district of St. Germain l'Auxerrois" were demanding, in the name of the Marquis de LaFayette, the rooms in the Louvre in which the royal paintings were stored pending

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[169] Sacy, op. cit., pp. 193-194, 205-206.

completion of the museum; these halls were wanted for the Paris militia for "barracks for the soldiers."[170] Monsieur Vien says despairingly that he fears "we must favor these demands, which it does not appear to me possible to refuse," and he begs a "prompt response." He also discusses the need for the guarding of the palace and its contents. Early in September Hubert Robert, keeper of the royal collections, wrote in the same vein to Monsieur Cuvillier, First Commissioner of Buildings, who was virtually acting as Director General, but Cuvillier replied by stating that he thought nothing would come of this matter.[171] On September 7, however, Monsieur Vien wrote again to Cuvillier to report, in a state of distraction, that the demands for the depot of paintings were being renewed with vigor. He says that Cuvillier, who was at Versailles, could well afford to be tranquil but insists that the situation in Paris is such that "there is not a moment to lose. . . ." He implores the Superintendence to do something, and specifically to ask the Comte de Saint-Priest, Minister of the Royal Household, to intervene.[172] On September 13 Monsieur Cuvillier, shocked,

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[170] A.N., O^1 1670, 77.

[171] A.N., O^1 1670, 194; Gabillot, op. cit., p. 176.

[172] A.N., O^1 1670, 76.

wrote to Robert: "I cannot refuse to reveal to you my uneasiness concerning information which has been given me. This is to the effect that you have delivered to the district of St. Germain-l'Auxerrois a part of the warehouse of the royal paintings. It is impossible for me to believe this."[173] Robert replied on September 18 denying that he was responsible for surrendering part of the royal depot of paintings to the city of Paris.[174] But "the soldiers" did receive some of these halls for use as barracks, a fact which immediately raised for the Superintendence all manner of problems concerning the moving, storage, and security of the paintings, subjects discussed in a letter of September 24 from Robert to Cuvillier.[175]

On November 16, 1789, the three Intendants General of Buildings, Mique, Hazon, and Guillaumot, in the absence of Angiviller, addressed directly to the King a mémoire concerning the Grand Gallery.[176] This document indicates that the King, working under some influence or other, may have decided to install the royal collections in the gallery as it stood. The Intendants state that they have been "informed of the intention of His Majesty to complete the gallery of the Louvre destined to contain the precious and immense

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[173] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 176.

[174] A.N., O^1 1670, 196.

[175] A.N., O^1 1670, 197.

[176] A.N., O^1 1670, 247.

collection of his paintings and sculptures, to place them in it without changing the carpentry or roof of this edifice, and to allow this gallery to be lighted by daylight directly from the existing windows. . . ." The Intendants presume to "present to His Majesty some reflections on this subject." They remind the King that Angiviller has been attempting for ten years to finish this project and decided in its early stages that the light should be brought into the gallery from the summit of the vault. They state that "the financial situation" did not permit the Count to proceed with this project of overhead lighting, and that he therefore abandoned it "for some time" and replaced the gallery's wooden vault with a brick one as a protection against fire. Turning to the subject of the lower vault beneath the gallery's floor, the Intendants state that it is in poor condition; the Superintendence has long planned to repair it but has been prevented from doing so "in default of funds." They warn the King, however, that the lower vault is in such a state in places that it cannot be trusted safely to support the weight of heavy marble statues and that its repair must be "the first expenditure to make. . . ."

The Intendants recall that a promise of funds in 1783 and the increasing desire of the public "to see the gallery lighted from above" prompted the Comte d'Angiviller to revise his plans for the museum, particularly with regard to the lighting question. The recommendations made by the

Royal Academy of Architecture in 1786 and by the committee in 1787 are reviewed for the King, recommendations overwhelmingly in favor of lighting the museum from above and of reconstructing the roof of fireproof materials in order that no one might ever have "useless regrets" because of a disaster by fire which could have been prevented. The Intendants state that the Director General had definitely settled on this project -- lighting from above and a full reconstruction of the roof and vault -- and that the King gave to this plan his "positive approbation."[177] Reviewing the recent history of the museum project, the Intendants point out that Angiviller decided upon an experiment in 1789 in the exhibition salon with the type of roof and lantern intended for the Grand Gallery. This experiment, they declare, was "a great success. . . ."

The Intendants then state: "The actual condition of the finances undoubtedly does not permit the undertaking of it [the museum project as planned], but the expense would not be regarded as excessive in happier times. . . ." They estimate the total cost of the project at a million and a half livres, which was about half a million more than Angiviller had estimated, and assert that the work could be completed in "less than two years. . . ." But, the

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[177] The words "aprobation [sic] positive" are underlined in the document. The Intendants are referring, of course, to the royal "bon" given on March 31, 1788, to the report made by the committee on April 4, 1787.

Intendants concede, none of this need prevent the arrangement of the Grand Gallery in such a manner as to render it useful "for the service of the court during its stay in Paris. . . ." In concluding their mémoire, the architects recommend that only a minimum amount of work be done in the gallery, if it is to be put to some temporary use, on the presumption that some day it will be arranged properly, that is, with a fireproof roof and lighting in the vault. For example, the vault should not be decorated as this would be a "pure loss" when the time came for rebuilding it and the roof. The Intendants do insist, however, that a certain amount of "indispensable" work will have to be done on the lower vault, this "before all things . . . for the safety of His Majesty, the royal family, and the public. . . ." The royal family was now in residence in the Tuileries, brought there from Versailles during the October Days.

By a covering letter which bears the same date as the mémoire, November 16, Cuvillier transmitted the Intendants' observations to the Comte de Saint-Priest for presentation to the King.[178] A separate note of November 17 by Cuvillier states that the mémoire concerns "necessary works for putting the gallery in a condition of service."[179] A hint of this new plan for the gallery appears in the documents

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[178] A.N., O^1 1670, 198.

[179] A.N., O^1 1670, 199.

even before the evidence presented by the Intendants' mémoire. On November 2 Hubert Robert wrote to Cuvillier on another matter but added a postscript in which he stated: "As it is a question of completing the Grand Gallery of the Louvre and exposing there, as a consequence, numerous paintings; and as a part of these paintings are in need of washing, relining, cleaning, restoration, etc., etc., does it not seem appropriate to you, monsieur, that we occupy ourselves with this as soon as possible, and also to have frames made for those that need them. . . ."[180] On November 20 a copy of the Intendants' mémoire was sent to Angiviller, still Director General, in Spain.[181]

This set of documents is rather puzzling, and is open to more than one interpretation. On March 31, 1788, the King had definitely accepted Angiviller's plan to delay the opening of the museum for two or three years in order that the roof might be rebuilt and the Grand Gallery lighted from above. He had approved the experiment in the exhibition salon. Suddenly, in November, 1789, he apparently decided to have the gallery put in order without delay. Louis very probably desired this work in order that the gallery might be used by the court; certainly the old Tuileries was inadequate for the large and elaborate royal household which

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[180] A.N., O^1 1920 (3), 125.

[181] A.N., O^1 1670, 200.

surrounded the person of the sovereign in the eighteenth century. But the King's intention with regard to the Grand Gallery is not made unquestionably clear in the documents; the Intendants' mémoire and Robert's postscript make it reasonable to speculate that what the King may have intended was the immediate creation of a public museum in the gallery. Robert's note suggests that the royal paintings were to be readied for mounting in the gallery as soon as possible; to be sure, this could mean only that some paintings were wanted for the decoration of the gallery in preparation for its use by the royal household. The Intendants, however, express a specific concern for the safety of the "public," a word they would hardly have chosen to use in reference to the court. Moreover, they present to the King a lengthy review of the entire museum project, a proceeding which would hardly seem required if all Louis wished to do was to use the gallery temporarily for his household. Certainly the Intendants go to some lengths to make clear their belief that the gallery should not be used at all until such time as it could be fully prepared for use as a national museum according to the plan definitively adopted in 1788. And would the King have dared to appropriate the Grand Gallery for the private use of the court in view of the strong public wish that it be a museum? Would he have dared so to flout the public will with his family residing in a potentially explosive Paris? On the other hand, would the King,

under the circumstances of those times, wish to have immediately adjacent to the royal living quarters a large gallery freely open to everyone? Certainly such a situation would present some element of risk to the security of the royal household. Perhaps what Louis had in mind was some plan of sharing the gallery with the public, that is, a plan in which it would be open as a museum on certain days of the week but also available for the use of the court. Nothing is said of this matter in any secondary works.

If the King did intend to have the Grand Gallery opened as a museum on some basis or other, there are two possible explanations for his decision. Public demand for the museum may have been such that Louis was convinced of the necessity for conceding to it without delay. There is another possible explanation, however. During Angiviller's enforced absence in Spain a plot against him was concocted in the Superintendence. The nominal acting Director General was the Comte de Saint-Priest, Minister of the Royal Household, although the actual business of the department was administered by Cuvillier and the Intendants. Saint-Priest was ostensibly Angiviller's friend, but in the Count's absence he proposed to the King sweeping changes in the Superintendence and apparently did all he could to undermine Angiviller's position at court and in the government. His close ally in this project was Monsieur Heurtier, one of

the architects.[182] Louis XVI was always indecisive and always susceptible to the advice of those immediately around him. Saint-Priest was with the King daily, Angiviller was in Spain. The Minister of the Royal Household may have convinced Louis that Angiviller's plan for the museum was unnecessarily elaborate and expensive and that there was really no reason why the gallery could not be opened at once. Or perhaps the Comte de Saint-Priest, or someone else close to Louis, influenced him to think of opening the museum immediately as a politic move calculated to strengthen the sovereign's position with the Parisians.

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Whatever may have been in the King's mind late in 1789 with regard to the Grand Gallery, nothing was done. For all practical purposes, the museum project was suspended at this time. Both the monarchy and the Superintendence were soon to be reorganized by the new government of France and the King subjected to a civil list. The initiative for the creation of a French national gallery of art passed from the crown into other hands. In any event, the history of the Old Regime was fixed and sealed when it came to an end in the events of May and June, 1789. The royal government's opportunity for creating a national museum was forever past.

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182 Sacy, op. cit., pp. 200-205.

In January, 1790, Angiviller returned to court and to his position as Director General. On April 29, 1791, he resigned his post while under attack for his militant royalist stand and for his administration of the Superintendence. He left France immediately for permanent exile and spent most of the remainder of his life in various places in the Germanies and Denmark. He died in 1809.[183] In 1779 Angiviller's portrait was painted by Duplessis. It shows him seated in a Louis XVI chair and looking the very epitome of an eighteenth-century French courtier, his left arm resting on a desk on which there are architectural drawings. A large plan of the Grand Gallery of the Louvre is unrolled along the desk and falls across the Count's lap.[184] This portrait is symbolic -- the transformation of the Grand Gallery into a national museum of the first rank was Angiviller's primary goal from the day he assumed the office of Director General of Buildings. In November, 1793, living in emigration, Angiviller had to endure the sting of learning that the museum toward which he had worked for more than fifteen years had been realized by a Revolutionary government under Jacobin domination. To be sure, the museum opened in the Louvre in 1793 was not the splendid establishment Angiviller had envisioned, but the Revolution had managed to

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[183] Ibid., pp. 228-229, 246, 255.

[184] Ibid., plate facing p. 168.

do what he had failed to do, that is, to bring the royal collections to the general public. But by the autumn of 1793 this bitterness was for Angiviller but one more added to many others. The monarchy had come to a formal end on September 21, 1792. Louis XVI, Angiviller's pupil, friend, and sovereign, was guillotined on January 21, 1793. France was a republic and the government which created the museum of the Louvre was the government of the Terror. The Count's world had disintegrated so rapidly and in so catastrophic a manner that perhaps his failure with regard to the museum project paled into insignificance in contrast with the other and greater blows dealt him by the Revolution.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

"The question of the origins of the Museum of the Louvre resembles a little that of the battle of Toulouse, a battle which for a long time Marshal Soult won or lost in turn, according to the parties which were in power. For certain persons, and they are the greatest number, the Louvre is a creation of the Revolution; for others, on the contrary, it must be credited to the monarchy."[1] It is difficult to see why there need be any conflict over this question. No one can take from the Revolution the credit for having actually opened the museum to the public for the first time in 1793. Nor can it be denied that in expropriating the royal domain and transforming the royal collections into a national gallery the Revolution did only what it would logically have done regardless of what might or might not have preceded it in regard to a plan for a museum. In May of 1791 the Revolutionary government granted the King a civil list of twenty-five million livres and took from him, in the name of the nation, the royal lands, the crown jewels, and the royal art collections; it also resolved to establish a national museum in the Louvre.[2] In the spring of 1791, then,

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[1] Gabillot, op. cit., p. 169.

[2] Ibid., pp. 169, 179-180.

the royal art collections ceased to be the property of the sovereign and passed legally to the ownership to the nation; at the same time, the responsibility for establishing a museum moved out of the crown's power to rest with the National Assembly and its successors. In point of fact, the development of the museum project was arrested by the events of the Revolution at the end of 1789 and was revived only after the National Assembly had assumed control of the government and the collections.

But if the Revolution must be accorded the glory of having established the Louvre as a museum, the Old Regime must, in justice, be granted the right to claim that it had fully intended to do the same thing and had, indeed, prepared the way for the creation of the gallery by the Revolutionary government. Gabillot says: "It is evident that the government of Louis XVI could not conceive of a national museum such as the present Museum of the Louvre. . . ."[3] No such conclusion is evident at all. On the contrary, the documents prove beyond any doubt that the creation of "a national museum such as the present Museum of the Louvre" is precisely what the government of Louis XVI, and Angiviller in particular, did intend. Angiviller's correspondence and the formal memorandums of his administration are filled with the words "museum" and "public" and "nation" and make

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[3] Ibid., p. 169.

it abundantly clear that the museum proposed for the Grand Gallery was to be an institution freely open to all, French and foreigners. Moreover, this gallery was to display the best and, indeed, virtually all of the brilliant royal collections in every field of the plastic arts. Hans Tietze has put forward a good definition of the term "national gallery," a definition which seems appropriate here:[4]

> It might, perhaps, be wise to begin by defining what we mean by the words "National Gallery" or "National Museum" since the terms themselves can refer either to the ownership of the collection or to its contents. The name may mean -- as it usually does in Italy and France -- that the institution is the property of the State, distinguishing it from similar institutions which belong to a province, a city, or some other public or private body. On the other hand, the name may -- as is most common in German usage -- have the meaning "national" as opposed to "international." The Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg was founded in the Romantic era for the purpose of collecting examples of German art and culture, and the Nationalgalerie in Berlin was created in 1861 as an extension of the much older international collection, with the object of providing a home for German art of the nineteenth century.
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> These two meanings have given rise to another, deeper, meaning, describing a collection of pictures which is not merely the property of the whole nation but is able -- and intended -- to express the peculiar relationship of the nation to the art of the past, and to show that relationship effectively. Such a collection represents the nation in a field in which every other nation seeks to outdo it and as a rule there is only one gallery in each country which bears this distinguishing label.

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[4] Tietze, op. cit., Introduction, p. 1.

A national museum in the broader sense of this definition is unquestionably what Angiviller and the royal government proposed for the Louvre -- an outstanding public art gallery for France but an institution which would also have international significance and stature. Certainly the legal ownership of the museum would have resided theoretically in the sovereign and the institution would probably have been called "the Royal Museum." These points appear meaningless. Any ship of the British navy is called "Her Majesty's Ship" and is technically the Queen's property, but this means nothing in practical reality. From about the middle of the eighteenth century the royal government moved gradually toward accepting the theory that the royal collections belonged to the nation, and by the time of Louis XVI this idea was firmly established in fact if not in law. And, of course, the idea for a national gallery of art displaying the royal collections was alive in the royal government long before the time of the Comte d'Angiviller and Louis XVI. Indeed, the nation had such a museum, in minuscule form, in the Luxembourg from 1750, although perhaps too much can be made of this little gallery and its significance.

But if the evidence proves that the idea and the plan for a national museum long antedated the Revolution, the fact remains that the museum did not become a reality until more than four years after the Old Regime was dead. Angiviller's biographer seems to go rather too far when he

insists that to the Count must go "the merit for having created the museum."[5] Angiviller wished ardently to create a museum and nearly succeeded in doing so, but his long struggle toward this goal ended in failure and died with the Old Regime. In supporting his statement that the last Director General of Buildings was the true creator of the Louvre, Sacy reminds us that it was Angiviller who had the plans in relief removed from the Grand Gallery, undertook exhaustive studies of the lighting problem, carried through necessary and important works of renovation in the gallery, and, with the museum in mind, methodically enriched the collection of paintings with the examples of the Dutch and Flemish schools which it lacked. He began preparations for the actual mounting of the collection by selecting paintings to be hung and ordering necessary restoration, cleaning, and reframing. Sacy also points out that Angiviller staffed the museum; some of his appointments did indeed survive the Revolution -- both Hubert Robert and Jollain, for example, played an active role in the establishment and administration of the Louvre when it was finally opened.

Louis Courajod, a frank partisan of the monarchy, is willing to grant the Revolution still less credit for the Louvre -- indeed, he is willing to grant it virtually nothing. He tends to emphasize the vandalism to art

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[5]Sacy, op. cit., p. 142.

objects of which the Revolution was guilty and claims that all the Revolutionary government did in opening the museum in 1793 was to take one small, effortless step toward the completion of a project which was on the verge of realization anyway.[6] There is much truth in the positions taken by Sacy and Courajod. Nevertheless, actions speak louder than words in history, and deeds rather than intentions are remembered. The Louvre as a great museum will be forever associated with the Revolution, simply because it was under the Revolutionary aegis that the gallery was given life and substance. With reference to the museum project, the Old Regime dealt only in theories, plans, preparatory works, and good intentions which never developed into the stuff of reality.

Why did the royal government fail to create the imposing national gallery which the France of the eighteenth century should have had and could have had? Courajod says: "There was lacking to the government of Louis XVI only the time to open it [the museum]."[7] This assertion is acceptable only with severe limitations and qualifications. It is difficult to excuse the royal government's failure to establish a gallery on the theory that it had not the time in which to do so when the evidence indicates that it had at least forty years to spend on the project. The crown can hardly be

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[6]Courajod, op. cit., Introduction, pp. XVII-XVIII, XXVII-XXX.

[7]Ibid., Introduction, p. XXXII.

censured for not creating a museum before 1750; the concept of the public art gallery was unknown before the 1740's and appeared only with the particular intellectual and social circumstances which came into being about the middle of the eighteenth century. From at least 1750 forward, however, the idea for a gallery, alive or quiescent, in one form or another, was always present either in the royal government itself or before it in the writings of the philosophes and pamphleteers. A tentative step toward a museum was taken in 1750 with the opening of the exhibition in the Luxembourg, and during the Marquis de Marigny's administration as Director General of Buildings the idea was considered and discussed. Angiviller came to office in 1774 with the firm intention of pursuing the project, and by 1778 the royal government was fully committed to it. When the Old Regime came to an end more than ten years later the Superintendence had just reached the point of having evolved a definitive plan for the museum. Had Angiviller been given a few more years in which to work he would unquestionably have brought the museum into existence, providing always that the million, or million and a half, livres which the project demanded could have been found. So it can hardly be said that the Old Regime lacked time in which to create the museum, except at the very end when another two or three years would have made all the difference.

But before one charges the Old Regime with being dilatory and wasteful of time it would perhaps be well to recall that the world before 1789 moved in a more leisurely manner than it did once the French Revolution had begun. The eighteenth century, and especially the upper class world of the eighteenth century, had a concept of life and of time almost incomprehensible to the twentieth century with its devotion to efficiency and speed. The royal government normally took years to bring any project to completion: the design and execution of the Place Louis XV consumed a quarter of a century; the arrangement of the small, simple exhibition in the Luxembourg required three years of planning; the removal of the plans in relief from the Grand Gallery demanded many years of discussion and contemplation; the transfer of the Luxembourg to Monsieur was being considered in 1770, but the letters patent were not registered until 1779, and even in 1789 the palace had not been fully vacated by the Superintendence. The royal government may have had to stint on money but, unaware that its days were numbered, it spent time lavishly. Time ran out for it very suddenly and very abruptly.

Money, of course, was one of the primary factors in the failure of the Old Regime to create a museum. Half a million livres, a million, a million and a half -- sums such as these appear today to be mere bagatelles, trifles, not enough to pay the operating expenses of a modern government

for even one day. To an eighteenth-century government, however, these were substantial sums of money; to the royal government of eighteenth-century France, bedeviled by war, recurring fiscal crises, and economic problems, they were impossible sums of money. The idea for a national gallery never reached even a planning stage in the 1750's and the 1760's, and this was largely because there was at that time no hope of adequate resources for carrying through such a project. The documents of Angiviller's administration are filled with references to "the default of funds" and "the financial situation." Certainly the Count pursued his hope for a museum from one year to the next without ever knowing where the money for it was coming from, or even whether there would be any at all. In reference to this subject of money, the project for the museum was intimately linked to the Old Regime's efforts to reform itself and its inability to do so. Indeed, the project can itself be regarded, both ideologically and practically, as one of the monarchy's frustrated reform movements. There can be no doubt that the museum would have been realized before 1789 had the royal administration been able to effect the tax and governmental reforms which so many eighteenth-century ministers proposed and essayed. The failure of the museum project was, in this sense, a part of the general failure of enlightened despotism in France.

The lighting issue was another element in the royal government's fatal delay in establishing a museum, and the responsibility for this must rest squarely on Angiviller. In studying the numerous documents concerning this matter one can easily enough become impatient and annoyed with the Count and the architects and their interminable disagreements, their endless studies, their hesitations, reservations, dissentions, and doubts. One becomes irritated and wishes they would make a decision, any decision, in order to settle the question. This reaction, although perhaps humanly understandable, is not fair to Angiviller and the architects and artists who were involved in the project. The lighting problem was an enormously important one, the significance of which can hardly be exaggerated. It was also a problem fraught with risks and unknown factors. The nature, quality, and amount of light entering any room can establish or change its character, and the manner in which a museum is to be lighted is obviously a question of prime consideration. Given a particular lighting system, what will the daylight be like at different times of the day? In different seasons of the year? On cloudy days? On days of brilliant sunlight? Will there be too much light? Will there be too little? Where will the shadows fall? Will there be glare? What kind of light would be best for paintings? For sculpture? For the Grand Gallery itself, with its great length and its own particular architectural qualities? Should the light come

from the sides or above? If it is to come from above, should it be brought in from the flanks or the summit of the vault? Or should a system be used combining lateral and overhead lighting? What are the advantages of one syster in comparison with another? How do they compare with regard to expense? What of maintenance? Does this system or that one present any peculiar risks to the safety of the collections? What techniques can be used for controlling the daylight? The problem of lighting was, in short, complex and difficult and one can understand Angiviller's reluctance to commit himself to any lighting project until he was absolutely certain that he was making the right decision. A mistake would have been fatally massive, expensive, and exceedingly awkward to rectify. To make a small error in judgment is one thing, but to make a literally monumental error is something else again; hence the years of study, consultation, and experiment. Angiviller was acutely sensitive to the fact that this gallery would be the finest in Europe and would be displaying some of the most magnificent painting and sculpture produced by Western civilization. He was determined that the museum should be lighted properly and to the best advantage so as to be worthy of its contents. The Count was also extremely conscious of his responsibility for the safety of the irreplaceable objects which would be exhibited in the gallery and was especially terrified of the possibility of fire. The problem of how best to secure the collections against the

irreparable disaster of fire was linked to the construction of the vault and roof and was therefore an integral part of the lighting problem. These two issues retarded the museum project for years. Ironically, both the question of lighting and that of safety were resolved in 1788 and were being put to a successful experiment in 1789 just as the Old Regime was ending.

Angiviller's ambition for the gallery was still another delaying factor. He wanted the museum to be splendid and impressive, he wanted it to be as safe as possible for the collections, and he wanted it to be lighted to the best advantage. Never at any point was he really willing to compromise with these goals. After 1785 he could have opened the kind of museum which the Revolutionary government did open; by that time he had placed the fabric of the Grand Gallery in the condition it was in when it became the museum of the Louvre in 1793. But Angiviller would not do this. If the lighting problem was not solved, he would wait until a solution was found. If funds for executing the project in a grand and proper manner were not available, he would wait until they were. Anxious as he was to see the museum completed, Angiviller preferred to go slowly, if necessary, and to finish with an institution about which he would have no regrets, which would add luster to the crown, enhance the glory of the nation, and, perhaps, confer immortality on his name. He waited a few years too many and paid for

his caution and ambition by failing to bring the project to realization. Perhaps it was some measure of comfort to him in 1793 to know that the Revolutionary government had compromised and opened a less than perfect museum, the kind which had also been within his power to create but to which he would not, in his day, consent.

Time and money, the problems of lighting and of insuring the safety of the collections, Angiviller's determination to create the best museum possible -- all of these factors combined to deprive the royal government of the historical prestige it would have gained for establishing the museum of the Louvre. But this study, on the whole, reflects merit on the Old Regime and on the royal administration. There is an abundance of evidence to prove beyond doubt that the crown had every intention of creating the national gallery which circumstances permitted the Revolution to establish and that the royal government was actively engaged on the project for years before 1789. By 1789 the plan was actually moving into its last stages, those of the final preparations and the execution. Some of the most momentous events in modern history intervened, and the Revolution shares with the Old Regime the credit for the museum of the Louvre.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

I. Primary Materials

A. Manuscript Sources

Anyone wishing to work in the Archives Nationales in Paris in the field of art history or allied subjects would do well to consult first Mireille Rambaud, Les Sources de l'histoire de l'art aux Archives Nationales (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1955). This publication of the Ministry of Education was prepared by an official of the Archives possessing a specialized knowledge of its holdings in the area of art history; it is an invaluable introduction to the Archives generally and an indispensable guide to archival materials of this particular nature. Mlle. Rambaud begins her work by explaining the Archives' classification system and specifying the basic instruments for research, both those which deal with the Archives generally and publications for use in highly specialized areas, such as the history of music or the theater. The work is divided into two chronological sections called "ancient" and "modern," the latter beginning with the Revolution. Mlle. Rambaud organizes her guide on the basis of series, which is the fundamental archival classification, and specifies in considerable detail the nature of the material to be found in each series. Her analysis of every series ends with a bibliography of manuscript and printed inventories of that particular series. There is an excellent index. The other basic research guide used for this study was Henri de Curzon, Répertoire numérique des archives de la Maison du Roi, série O^1 (Bordeaux: Imprimerie G. Gounouilhou, 1903). This book is extremely rare in the United States -- the only known copy is in the Widener Library of Harvard University, which will not lend it. A reference copy is available for use in the reading room at the Archives Nationales. Curzon's work, divided into nine parts, is a thorough guide to Série O^1, the archival series which was the most important single one for this study. Again, there is an excellent index of the names of both persons and places.

The research in the Archives Nationales for this study involved the checking of approximately 20,000 documents in thirty-five cartons; between 450 and 500 documents were selected for use from a total of twenty-six cartons. Virtually all documents used were drawn from a single series, Série O^1, Maison du Roi, a very large and extensive series enclosing the papers of the royal household from about the middle of the seventeenth

century to the Revolution. The classification within Série O^1 which was most thoroughly exploited was that entitled Direction générale des bâtiments enclosing cartons O^1 1045 to O^1 2805. The three major subdivisions within this classification from which most of the documents were taken are:

1. Administration générale (O^1 1045 to O^1 1323).
2. Châteaux et bâtiments royaux (O^1 1324 to O^1 1906).
3. Académies et beaux-arts (O^1 1907 to O^1 1980).

The bulk of the documentary material utilized in this study came particularly from the following specific cartons:

1. O^1 1670 -- documents concerning only the palace of the Louvre, the gallery of plans, the gallery of paintings, and the museum project for the years 1741 to the Revolution, although the carton does contain some documents for the years 1790 to about 1792.
2. O^1 1684 -- documents concerning only the palace of the Luxembourg (general correspondence, works, personnel, acquisitions and transactions, etc.) for the years 1627-1765.
3. O^1 1685 -- Luxembourg, as above, for the years 1766-1785.
4. O^1 1907 to O^1 1932, inclusive, although documents were not drawn from every carton enclosed by these numbers -- documents concerning the academies and the fine arts for the years 1753-1792 (general matters, correspondence, museums, acquisitions, purchases, questions on art, etc.)
5. O^1 1965 to O^1 1975, inclusive -- inventories of paintings and other works of art in the various royal residences. All of these inventories are of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; most are of the eighteenth century.

Isolated documents or sets of documents were drawn from other cartons and series -- royal acts, letters patent, certain items of correspondence, the survey report of the Luxembourg made in 1779, etc.

One important item of manuscript material was used in the Louvre, specifically in the Cabinet des Dessins; this was Louis-Jacques DuRameau's charming little two-volume topographical inventory, done in 1784, of royal paintings in the Superintendence at Versailles. The two volumes are entitled:

> L'Inventaire des tableaux du roi placés à la surintendance des bâtiments de sa Majesté à Versailles. 1784. Tome Premier.
>
> L'Inventaire des tableaux du roi placés à la surintendance des bâtiments de sa Majesté à Versailles. "Tableaux et bordures qui sont presentement au magazin." 1784. Tome Second.

B. Printed Materials

Argenville, A. N. Dezallier d'. Voyage pittoresque de Paris, ou indication de tout ce qu'il y a de plus beau dans cette ville, en peinture, sculpture, & architecture, 6th ed. Paris: Frères de Bure, 1778.

Bachaumont, Louis Petit de. Essai sur la peinture, la sculpture, et l'architecture, 2nd ed. n.p., 1752.

_____. Mémoire sur l'achèvement du Louvre. n.p., 1749.

_____. Mémoires sur le Louvre, nouvelle édition, revue et corrigée; Premier mémoire; Second mémoire. n.p., 1752.

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy, au Luxembourg. Paris: Prault, 1750.

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy, au Luxembourg, 2nd ed. Paris: Prault, 1750.

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy au Luxembourg, 3rd ed. Paris: Prault, 1751.

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy, au Luxembourg, 7th ed. Paris: Pierre-Alexandre le Prieur, 1759.

Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet du roy, au Luxembourg, nouvelle édition. Paris: Pierre-Alexandre Le Prieur, 1761.

Diderot, Denis. Article "Louvre" in Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers par une société de gens de lettres. Vol. IX. Neuchâtel: Samuel Faulche & Compagnie, 1765.

Dussausoy, Maille. Le Citoyen désintéressé, ou diverses idées patriotiques, concernant quelques établissemens et embellissemens utiles à la ville de Paris; Première partie (1767); Seconde partie (1768). Paris: Gueiffer, 1767-1768. Both the first and second parts are bound in a single volume.

Engerand, Fernand. Inventaire des tableaux du roy rédigé en 1709 et 1710 par Nicolas Bailly. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1899. Bailly's inventory of 1709-1710 is the only complete inventory of the royal collection of paintings made in the eighteenth century and is a basic research document in this field. Engerand's scholarly publication of this inventory is invaluable. The editor's copious notes and documentation greatly enhance the value of the work, as does his introduction concerning the royal collection and its administration during the eighteenth century. There is an excellent index arranged on a cross-index basis which allows a reader to refer immediately to a particular work either by artist or by the title of the painting.

_____. Inventaire des tableaux commandés et achetés par la direction des bâtiments du roi (1709-1792). Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901. This work complements and completes the publication of the Bailly inventory. The comments made concerning the work cited above are applicable here also. Particularly valuable for this study were several annotated catalogues of paintings purchased for the royal collection during the eighteenth century, most of them acquired during Angiviller's administration of the Superintendence.

Furcy-Raynaud, Marc. Correspondance de M. de Marigny avec Coypel, Lépicié et Cochin (Première partie). Nouvelles archives de l'art français, troisième série, tome XIX, année 1903. Paris: Jean Schemit, 1904.

_____. Correspondance de M. de Marigny avec Coypel, Lépicié et Cochin (Deuxième partie.) Nouvelles archives de l'art français, troisième série, tome XX, année 1904. Paris: Jean Schemit, 1905.

_____. Correspondance de M. d'Angiviller avec Pierre (Première partie). Nouvelles archives de l'art français, troisième série, tome XXI, année 1905. Paris: Jean Schemit, 1906.

_____. Correspondance de M. d'Angiviller avec Pierre (Deuxième partie). Nouvelles archives de l'art français, troisième série, tome XXII, année 1906. Paris: Jean Schemit, 1907.

The four works listed above are publications of letters exchanged between the Marquis de Marigny and artists who were officials in the Paris department of the Superintendence and the Comte d'Angiviller and Pierre, who was First Painter. The editorial work is excellent, the letters are properly documented and annotated, there are useful introductions and good indexes. These works had limited value for this study but were sometimes especially useful in providing printed copies of documents which were in the author's possession in photographic form; the value of printed copies can be realized when one notes that Furcy-Raynaud complains that these eighteenth-century documents, and particularly those done by Marigny, are in "execrable writing and covered with erasures."

Lemonnier, Henry. Procès-verbaux de l'Académie Royale d'Architecture, 1671-1793. 9 vols. Paris: Édouard Champion; Librairie Armand Colin, 1911-1926. These nine volumes publish the minutes of the meetings of the Royal Academy of Architecture from its founding by Colbert in 1671 to its dissolution in 1793. The work is excellent and scholarly. Each volume has a valuable introduction giving a history of the Academy and its works for the time span covered and brief biographical sketches of the academicians of the period. For purposes of this study, Vols. VI and VII were used for material concerning the plans for the Place Louis XV; Vol. IX was especially useful for records of the Academy's deliberations in 1785 and 1786 on the subject of the museum project.

Lettre écrite à Monsieur le Chevalier de . . . de l'Académie des Ricovrati de Padoue, &c. au sujet des tableaux tirés du cabinet du roy, qui se voyent au Luxembourg depuis le 14 octobre 1750. Paris: Prault, 1751.

Reboul. Essai sur les moeurs du tems. London and Paris: Vincent, 1768.

Saint-Yenne, La Font de. L'Ombre du grand Colbert, le Louvre, & la ville de Paris, Dialogue, 2nd ed. n.p., 1752.

_____. Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France et sur les beaux art, avec quelques lettres de l'auteur à ce sujet, nouvelle édition corrigée & augmentée. n.p., 1752. This work and the one cited immediately above are bound together and were issued together in 1752 in what was the second edition of both.

_____. Remercîment des habitans de la ville de Paris à sa Majesté au sujet de l'achèvement du Louvre. n.p., 1749.

Tincourt, Chevalier de. Lettre de M. le Chevalier de Tincourt à Madame la marquise de . . . sur les tableaux et desseins du cabinet du roi, exposés au Luxembourg depuis le 14 octobre 1750. Paris: Merigot, 1751.

II. Secondary Sources

A. General Histories

Cobban, Alfred. A History of Modern France. 2 vols. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1961. Only Vol. I, 1715-1799, was consulted for this study.

Gershoy, Leo, The French Revolution and Napoleon. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1933.

Rayner, Robert M. European History, 1648-1789. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949.

Wright, Gordon. France in Modern Times, 1760 to the Present. Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1960.

All of the above works were consulted for historical background and used as reference sources for historical data. The Cobban and Rayner works were the most specifically useful of those listed.

B. Histories of Museums and Collections

Benoit, Francois. L'Art français sous la Révolution et l'Empire. Paris: L.-Henry May, 1897. Only a paragraph in Chapter I of this work had relevance to this study.

Courajod, Louis. Alexandre Lenoir, son journal et le Musée des Monuments Français. 3 vols. Paris: Honoré Champion Librairie, 1878-1887. Only the Introduction, Vol. I, was used. Courajod devotes several pages in his long Introduction to the development of the idea for a

national gallery in eighteenth-century France. His position is essentially one of justifying the Old Regime and attempting to prove that the Louvre as a museum was not the creation of the Revolution. Nevertheless, Courajod's Introduction was valuable to this study in that it is one of the few secondary treatments of any length concerning the idea for a national museum.

Histoire des collections de peintures au Musée du Louvre. Paris: Musées nationaux, Palais du Louvre, 1930. This is a collective work composed of a series of essays by distinguished authorities on the Louvre's collection of paintings. These scholarly essays were especially relied upon for certain aspects of Chapter I of this study dealing with the origin and growth of the royal collections. Each essay is carefully documented. There is a bibliography for the work as a whole. The four essays utilized in this study are:

1. L'École française by Gaston Brière, Conservateur adjoint du Musée de Versailles.

2. L'École septentrionales by Madame Clotilde Brière-Misme, Conservateur à la Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archeologie de l'Université de Paris.

3. Les Écoles italiennes by Louis Hautecoeur, Conservateur du Musée du Luxembourg.

4. L'École espagnole by Gabriel Rouchès, Conservateur adjoint au Musée du Louvre.

Hoog, Michel. La part des préoccupations éducatives dans la création et le développement des musées français jusqu'en 1850. Paris: Mémoire presented to the École du Louvre. 1956. This work, which is a thesis, is unpublished. It was especially useful for Chapter II of this study in providing information concerning the provincial museums of France in the eighteenth century, a subject upon which little research has been done.

Michel, Edouard. Musées et conservateurs, leur rôle dans l'organisation sociale. Brussels: Office de Publicité, Université Libre de Bruxelles, J. Lebègue et Cie, 1948. This work was used primarily for a small portion of it dealing in a broad manner with the general history of the museum idea.

Poisson, Georges. Les musées de France. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950. A most valuable and interesting work but one containing only very limited material of use to this study.

Taylor, Francis Henry. The Taste of Angels, a History of Art Collecting from Rameses to Napoleon. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948. The author, who was director of the Metropolitan Museum in New York before his death, has here a fascinating subject upon which little has been written. His work must be used with extreme caution, however; it has all the accessories of a scholarly production but is open to numerous criticisms. There are errors of fact in the text. Documentation is erratic and inconsistent and much material which should be documented is not. The policy on translation is inconsistent in that some material is translated from foreign languages while some is not. The book is badly and confusingly organized, which is probably a result of the fact that it is too large and broad in scope. The literary style is lively but the work as a whole lacks coherence and unity. The book is handsomely produced and is furnished with excellent illustrations. There is a good index of both persons and places and an extensive bibliography. No statement made in the work can be trusted, however, unless it is documented and supported by a recognized authority.

Tietze, Hans. Treasures of the Great National Galleries. London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1954. This work was utilized for material which it contains concerning the histories of the great museums of Europe. The reproductions are superb. There is an index of artists but no bibliography. Also useful are brief histories of selected famous paintings which are included in the work to accompany the reproductions.

Villot, Frederic. Notice des tableaux exposés dans les galeries du Musée Impérial du Louvre, 4th ed. Paris: Vinchon, Imprimeur des Musées Impériaux, 1852. This work is a catalogue designed for sale to the public. It has a long scholarly introduction containing valuable material on the growth of the royal collections and some information on the movement for a national gallery. This work also has a useful bibliography of Louvre catalogues from 1793 to 1852.

C. Works Concerning the Fabric of the Louvre

Hautecoeur, Louis. Histoire du Louvre, le château - le palais - le musée, des origines à nos jours, 1200-1940, 2nd ed. Paris: L'Illustration, n.d. This study could not have been written without frequent reference to Hautecoeur's excellent book on the evolution of the palace of the Louvre in that constant reference to the physical state of the building was necessary. The work is one of the best available on the subject. It is

essentially the architectural history of one building, or complex of buildings, but since that building is the Louvre the work naturally includes a substantial amount of material of a social, political, and economic nature. The carefully selected illustrations are as important as the text and are essential to an understanding of the history of the Louvre as a building; they include plans, architectural drawings and elevations, old prints and drawings, paintings, and photographs and allow the reader to gain a clear understanding of how the Louvre and its area looked in, for example, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Tapié, Victor-L. The Age of Grandeur, Baroque Art and Architecture. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961. This work was consulted for the sake of information concerning the Louvre in the seventeenth century and particularly Colbert's "grand design" for the palace. The book was first published in France in 1957. Some of Tapié's theories would certainly be challenged by many historians and art historians, but the work as a whole is a valuable and stimulating survey of Baroque art in all of its manifestations. Tapié's approach is scholarly but his style and presentation are such as to make his work attractive to the general reader. Documentation is thorough within its limits. There is an extensive bibliography and an excellent index of persons and places. The book has over 200 illustrations, most of them in black and white; they include photographs as well as reproductions of paintings, prints, and drawings. All of the illustrations are unusually good, but the black and white photographs of the exteriors of buildings are particularly sharp and clear and revealing of architectural detail.

D. Biographical Materials

Campardon, Émile. Madame de Pompadour et la cour de Louis XV au milieu du dix-huitième siècle. Paris: Henri Plon, 1867. Campardon's work is one of the standard biographies of Madame de Pompadour. The author has no admiration for the Marquise and takes a somewhat moralistic tone toward her. His work is intended as a scholarly one and is carefully documented, resting largely on contemporary memoirs. Campardon relies heavily on the memoirs of the Marquis d'Argenson, who was one of the Pompadour's most dedicated enemies. There is an index but no bibliography. The biography of Madame de Pompadour is followed by inventories of objects of art sold from her estate and the estate of her brother after their deaths. This work was consulted primarily for factual data concerning the Marquise de Pompadour and

was also valuable for information which it contains regarding the Marquis de Marigny.

Gabillot, C. Hubert Robert et son temps. Paris: Librairie de l'art, 1895. This excellent work is the definitive biography of the artist Hubert Robert and, as the title indicates, is also a social and artistic history of his times. The work includes a chapter of twelve pages concerning the idea for a national gallery in the eighteenth century. This chapter emphasizes the status of the movement for a museum as it existed in the 1780's when Robert became involved in the project and was appointed one of the two keepers of the museum (which, of course, did not exist at the time). Particularly valuable for this study was a series of condensations of documents included by Gabillot in this chapter; a few of the documents are quoted in their entirety, but most are abstracted.

Mitford, Nancy. Madame de Pompadour. New York: Random House, 1954. Miss Mitford's biography of the Pompadour is not scholarly and is not intended to be. The author's style is sprightly and readable, but the work must be used with great caution in that she does not document her sources, a practice particularly questionable in the cases of the many conversations and dialogues which she includes. She is a champion of the Marquise and is franker about this than Campardon is about his veiled hostility. Miss Mitford can be relied upon, however, in matters of simple historical fact as opposed to her imaginative inventions and questionable presumptions. She includes in her work some useful information concerning the Marquis de Marigny. There is an index and a good bibliography by chapter.

Mondain-Monval, Jean. Soufflot, sa vie - son oeuvre - son esthétique (1713-1780). Paris: Librairie Alphonse Lemerre, 1918. This work, which was originally a doctoral thesis presented to the University of Paris, is the definitive biography of Germain Soufflot, one of the most prominent architects of eighteenth-century France. It is a work of impeccable scholarship. The book had limited relevance to this study but does include useful material on Soufflot's role in arranging the Luxembourg exhibition and the designs he put forward for the museum in the 1770's and 1780.

Sacy, Jacques Silvestre de. Le comte d'Angiviller, dernier directeur général des bâtiments du roi. Paris: Librairie Plon, 1953. This excellent and scholarly work is the only biography of Angiviller. It is valuable not only as a full treatment of its specific subject but for

its examination of the court, society, Paris, and the arts in the Old Regime, and the world of the émigré in the Germanies. Curiously enough, however, only eight pages in the entire work are devoted to the Count's efforts to create a national gallery, a strange brevity in view of the fact that the creation of the museum was one of Angiviller's primary preoccupations as Director General. There is a bibliography and an index.

E. Miscellaneous

The following works were consulted in a very limited manner as references for verifications or on some particular point.

Barbier, A. A., et. al. Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes, 3rd ed. 4 vols. Paris: Paul Daffis, Libraire-Éditeur, 1872-1879.

Buschbeck, Ernst H., and Strohmer, Erich V. Art Treasures from the Vienna Collections. Official catalogue of Hapsburg collections exhibited in the United States in 1949-1950. No place of publications is given.

Dictionnaire de biographie française. Vol. IV. Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1948. This volume of the biographical dictionary was consulted with reference to the Bailly family.

Lewis, W. H. The Splendid Century. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957.

Oeuvres completes de Voltaire. 52 vols. Paris: Garnier Frères, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1877-1885. Vol. VIII was consulted for verification of Voltaire's verses on the Louvre which appear in the pamphlets of Bachaumont and La Font de Saint-Yenne.

Stechow, Wolfgang. Pieter Bruegel the Elder. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1954.

III. Published Articles

Journal material did not prove to be a fruitful source of information for this study. The only published article utilized was the one listed below.

Chamson-Mazauric, Lucie. "L'Inventaire du Musée Napoléon aux Archives du Louvre," Archives de l'art français - Études et documents sur l'art français du XII^e au XIX^e siècle, Nouvelle période, XXII (1959), pp. 335-339.