

Stony Brook University



OFFICIAL COPY

The official electronic file of this thesis or dissertation is maintained by the University Libraries on behalf of The Graduate School at Stony Brook University.

© All Rights Reserved by Author.

A Gay Neoclassical Movement

A Thesis Presented

by

Robert Diamond

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Art History and Criticism

Stony Brook University

May 2012

Stony Brook University

The Graduate School

Robert Diamond

We, the thesis committee for the above candidate for the
Master of Arts degree, hereby recommend
acceptance of this thesis.

James H. Rubin,

Professor of Art History, Art Department, Stony Brook University

Zabet Patterson

Professor of Art History, Art Department, Stony Brook University

This thesis is accepted by the Graduate School

Charles Taber
Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Abstract of the Thesis
A Gay Neoclassical Movement

by

Robert Diamond

Master of Arts

in

Art History and Criticism

Stony Brook University

2012

In anticipation of a larger project, I propose a broad view of the Neoclassical period. The question of gay culture, and, particularly, where it exists before the emergence of the modern internal gay subculture in the 20th century, is a pertinent art historical topic, since the very evidence for gay communities comes in large part from visual culture. The Neoclassical period offers a rich repository of homoerotic art that is, in fact, based on self-conscious artistic expression emerging from an underground but burgeoning homosexual community. This expression includes not only the movement's important theorist, Winckelmann, but also many of the movement's patrons, collectors, critics, and artists. Even the well-known art works that epitomize the Neoclassical style, including examples by Jacques-Louis David, Antonio Canova, Anne-Louis Girodet, and Ingres, have absorbed the influence of this homoerotic aesthetic. Neoclassicists often used intellectual "masks" to bring homoerotic work, now identifiable as such, to the uninitiated mainstream, which accepted the work, but not without a constant ambivalence that underlines the erotic nature of the work and particularly the male nude.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
<u>Chapter 1</u> : The Antique and the Homosexual Community: Past and Present	3
<i>i. Introduction</i>	
<i>ii. The Post-Medieval Origins of the Homosexual Community and Its Dependence on Antique Prototypes</i>	
<i>iii. Eighteenth-Century Sexuality</i>	
<i>iv. Eighteenth-Century Homosexuality</i>	
<u>Chapter 2</u> : Antiquities and the Homosexual Community in Early-Neoclassical Italy	27
<u>Chapter 3</u> : Winckelmann and the Theorization of a Figurative Homosexual Aesthetic	38
<i>i. Winckelmann's Homosexual Aesthetic</i>	
<i>ii. Anxiety in the Classical Nude: Mengs, David, and Canova Seize the Winckelmannian Aesthetic</i>	
<u>Chapter 4</u> : The Homoerotic Use of Male Nudity (Or How Male Nudity Reinforces an Erotic Male Gaze)	59
<i>i. The Sensual Male Nude Draws the Male Gaze</i>	
<i>ii. Homosexual Narratives in Art</i>	
Conclusion	94
End Notes	97
Works Cited	98
Appendix: Illustrations	101

Introduction

When I went to that house of pleasure
I didn't stay in the front rooms where they celebrate,
with some decorum, the accepted modes of love.
I went into the secret rooms
and lounged and lay on their beds.
I went into the secret rooms
considered shameful even to name.
But not shameful to me—because if they were,
what kind of poet, what kind of artist would I be?
I'd rather be an ascetic. That would be more in keeping,
much more in keeping with my poetry,
than for me to find pleasure in the commonplace rooms.
—Konstantin Cavafy ¹

Neoclassicism is not traditionally discussed as a gay art movement.² However, the favoring of the male nude as the primary object of the male gaze compels a deeper investigation of the movement's impetus, elaboration, and popular reception in relation to the queer subcultural community of the time.³ The homosocial nature of the art world, in which men were the primary artists, theorists, critics, and patrons, offered a camouflage for gay men to unite in promoting, discussing, and consuming the male body—in some cases ostentatiously winking at the impropriety of the subject and in other cases, winking at each other with a salacious grin. From such germination within queer circles emerged a quintessentially gay aesthetic. Despite gendered ways of looking that imbue not just bodies, but art itself, with simplistic labels like “feminine” or

¹ “And I Lounged and Lay On Their Beds,” in C. P. Cavafy, Collected Poems. Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard. Edited by George Savidis. Revised Edition. Princeton University Press, 1992. <http://www.cavafy.com/poems> (Feb. 2012)

² However, advances in queer studies have already challenged this traditional view. Alex Potts gives the best early reading of Winckelmann's homoeroticism in Flesh and Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). Satish Padiyar describes the homoerotic aspects of David and Canova's work in Chains: David, Canova, and the Fall of the Public Hero in Post-Revolutionary France. (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007). Meanwhile, outside of Neoclassicism, the unique relationship between the arts (and not just the fine arts, but music, literature, theater, dance, film, decorative arts, fashion, and commercial art) and the homosexual subculture has begun to fascinate scholars such as Michael J. Sherry (Gay Artists in Modern American Culture: An Imagined Conspiracy, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

³ For any questions about my use of the terms “queer,” “homosexual,” “gay,” etc., please see Endnote 1.

“masculine,”⁴ the Neoclassical male nude defies any such categorizations by presenting an array of types defined in terms of desirability rather than social function. In fact, underlying the entire history of classically-styled figurative art is the “erotic challenge” of the male nude.

In my thesis, I will examine how various material and theoretical aspects of Neoclassicism situate the movement in a homosexual subcultural context. First, I will identify the ways in which homosexual practices in Antiquity informed post-medieval subcultural traditions. In order to underline the continuity of these traditions and stress their relevance for the Neoclassical movement, I will not only present a summary picture of the homosexual community in the 18th century but also look back from this period to the Renaissance and forward from this period to the Victorian era. I will then examine how homosexual patronage directly impacted the archaeology, diffusion, collection, scholarship, and even artistic emulation of the antique. I will discuss how this early interest in the antique generated the theoretical foundations for Neoclassicism within the confines of the homosexual artistic community, most significantly in the person of Winckelmann. I propose that Winckelmann’s theoretical foundations then mingled with both personal artistic tastes and patronal desires to produce artwork of an unmistakably homoerotic persuasion. Finally, I will demonstrate that critical responses to Neoclassicism were, as much as personal appraisals, largely based on the sensual appeal of the ubiquitous male nude, which was a controversial but compelling subject in the markedly homoerotic discourse.

⁴ Picking up on a tradition, going back to the art criticism of the 18th-century, that associates “masculinity” with vigor, force, and innovation and “femininity” with decadence, triviality, and insignificance, Abigail Solomon-Godeau, in Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1997), picks up the gendered argument—and interpretation—of Neoclassicism. I dispute her point of view but will use her scholarship in my research.

Chapter 1: The Antique and the Homosexual Community: Past and Present

Chapter 1 – i. Introduction

In search of the vaguely defined homosexual subculture and identity before Gay Liberation, there are compelling reasons to find similarities that transcend time. When the invention of the term “homosexual” in 1869 (not to be confused with some kind of “invention of homosexuals”⁵) offered the long-standing underground community a rallying point for political emancipation and subcultural production occurring distinctly outside of the mainstream,⁶ the Victorian homosexuals identified themselves with the pederasts of Ancient Greece. When they dared to break the silence, they touted antique precedents to justify and describe homosexual practice;⁷ they disseminated antique literature in their periodicals; and they circulated classically styled images of male nudes for their erotic pleasure. Walter Pater’s 1867 essay on “Winckelmann” proposed that Neoclassicism’s primary theoretician’s “‘affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual’ but that the ‘subtler threads of temperament’ interwoven in it were derived from ‘his romantic, fervid friendships with young men.’”⁸ Because the Victorians were the first generation to—tentatively—“come out,” we can better recognize the type of coded language they used when they needed to hide their homosexuality. Once this type of language,

⁵ As Foucault and others have suggested. For identifying homosexuality as a biological phenomenon (or one that occurs across time, cultures, and even species within the animal kingdom), see, for example, Francis Mark Mondimore, *A Natural History of Homosexuality* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

⁶ Along with 19th-century medical research (and pseudo-research) that brought other terms besides “homosexuality” into the mix, calls for political emancipation increased. An outburst of literary works from 1880 to 1935 (Nemers, 24), as well as the community’s first self-targeting periodicals, distinguishes the Victorian era from earlier periods.

⁷ Salient examples include Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs, who borrows the term “Uranian” (third-sex) from Plato’s *Symposium* in his writings about male-male love from the 1860s; John Addington Symonds, who published *Male Love: A Problem in Greek Ethics and Other Writings* in 1883 (and who deserves special credit for restoring the masculine pronouns to Michelangelo’s love poetry); Wilde, who, in his 1895 trial, stated, “‘The love that dare not speak its name’ in this century is such a great affection of an elder for a younger man as there was between David and Jonathan, such as Plato made the very basis of his philosophy, and such as you find in the sonnets of Michelangelo and Shakespeare” (Testimony of Oscar Wilde, *Wilde vs. Regina*, 1895, published online by University of Missouri-Kansas City Law School: <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/wilde/Crimwilde.html> [April 2012]); and Gide, whose *Corydon* (1924), with its simultaneously antique and homosexual title, relies heavily on historical and literary precedents.

⁸ Bryne R. S. Fone, ed. *The Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature: Readings from Western Antiquity to the Present Day*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 266.

often replete with references to the Antique, is identified, we can trace it back to earlier periods, such as the Neoclassical era. When the homosexual community advanced in its cohesiveness throughout the 20th century, culminating in post-Stonewall gay liberation of the 1970s, this special relationship to the Antique remained strong; and its unifying visual culture favored figurative images inextricably bound to Polykleitos, Praxiteles, and other proponents of the perfectly-proportioned male body.

However, the homoerotic discourse surrounding the “Neo-Classical” photography of Robert Mapplethorpe (1946-89) and Herb Ritts (1952-2002) in the post-Stonewall era hardly means these artists invented the antique-based homosexual paradigm. The homoerotic art tradition encompassed countless classical revivalists who directly emulated the antique. The earliest most recognizable association between poetically beautiful male forms and homosexuality occurs during the Renaissance, with Leonardo, Michelangelo, Il Sodoma, and other men who loved men. The homosexual artist’s impulse to capture male beauty, largely defining the cultural production of a small but enduring community, hardly disappeared in the three hundred years between Michelangelo’s death in 1564 and the 1864 publication of Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs’ *Forschungen über das Rätsel mann männlichen Liebe*. In fact, the Neoclassical Period offered the most important efflorescence of homoerotic art since the Renaissance.

Other important characteristics of 20th century gay culture inform us about its earlier incarnations. These do not describe what homosexuality celebrated in the arts, but what homophobia suppressed. Even at times when the art world provided gay men not only with a haven but with a forum for influence, institutionalized homophobia silenced a public discourse of queer influences: while the art world decried effeminacy and harrowed production, academia all but obliterated traces of homosexuality from the history of art.⁹ Even after Stonewall, gay art

⁹ Many works now tell this story of the first half of the 20th century, when gay men Rather than trying to summarize such a vast topic, I invite the reader to look more closely at biographies of Charles Demuth (Jonathan Weinberg, [Speaking for Vice: Homosexuality in the Art of Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and the First American Avant-garde](#). New Haven : Yale

invaded mainstream culture *unspoken*, as homosexuals balanced personal expression with mass appeal. Thus, we have a paradox, wherein influence, patronage, and production do not successfully combat censorship and oppression. All the ways in which gay subcultural production has been encoded to clandestinely communicate to an initiated audience demand that scholars scratch far beyond the surface, lacquered over by the jaundiced moral majority, to uncover a more accurate historical picture.

Chapter 1 – ii. The Post-Medieval Origins of the Homosexual Community and Its Dependence on Antique Prototypes

The Renaissance, despite lingering medieval fetters, gave birth to modern gay culture. From that time, production that resonated with other community members began to be handed down without interruption. The Neoclassicists were even better exposed to antique art (thanks to the new archaeological surge and a proliferation of publications), but they largely inherited their understanding of Greco-Roman society from the Renaissance, when countless precious manuscripts were rediscovered, studied, and translated. As Jacob Burckhardt writes, “The literary bequests of antiquity, Greek as well as Latin, were of far more importance than the architectural, and indeed than all the artistic remains which it had left.”¹⁰ One of the most surprising, threatening, and influential elements of the antique literary tradition was the abundance of references to love between men. Because too much of the available information on Renaissance homosexuality¹¹ is too little known, and yet central to this thesis, a basic summary of the subject is an appropriate introduction to a discussion of 18th-century homosexuality.

University Press, 1993), Grant Wood (R. Tripp Evans, *Grant Wood: A Life*, New York: Alfred J. Knopf, 2010), and George Platt Lynes (David Leddick, *Intimate Companions: A Triography of George Platt Lynes, Paul Cadmus, Lincoln Kirstein, and Their Circle*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000). Sprinkled with homophobic comments (most notably by America’s foremost artist of the 1930s, Thomas Hart Benton), these works implicitly explain how America invited homosexuals in to the art world and then locked them behind bars of rigid heteronormative social conventions.

¹⁰ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 129

¹¹ One of the best and earliest art historical sources is: James M. Saslow. *Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in Art and Society*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). For other studies of Renaissance homosexuality, see Jonathan Goldberg’s *Queering the Renaissance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994)

First of all, the concept of “Greek love” inherited by the 18th century enjoyed its own rebirth during the Renaissance, when men who loved men finally found the philosophical groundings for their “sinful” proclivities.¹² Interestingly, the reputedly libertine Romans—whose Etruscan ancestors painted Greek-style homoerotic symposia scenes on tomb walls, whose silversmiths lovingly carved scenes of homosexual intercourse,¹³ and whose sculptors glorified the cult of Hadrian’s beloved Antinous—already viewed homosexual practice as non-normative and characteristically Greek. As such, Renaissance Italians certainly never referred to “Latin love” when speaking of a practice so common on their native soil that other European nations would associate it quite directly with them. Quattrocento humanists, based largely in Florence and including such notable figures as Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, vigorously explored a Neo-Platonism with—what Burckhardt, Kristeller, and others left out—inherent homosexual overtones.¹⁴ As James Saslow points out, Zeus’s beloved youth Ganymede (introduced in Homer and best known from Ovid) came to embody Neo-Platonist “theories about divine love, a concept that occupied a central place in its values.”¹⁵ In an era replete with esoteric symbolism, the story’s erotic connotations could be conveniently obscured,¹⁶ but contemporary satire certainly supports more intuitive assumptions: referring to sodomy, Ariosto wrote in his

¹² James Davidson has recently offered some more historically valid new interpretations of emotional and physical relations between Ancient Greek men that deserve more currency (James Davidson. The Greeks and Greek Love: A Bold New Exploration of the Ancient World. New York: Random House, 2009), but I’ll largely limit my argument to what interpretations meant to an 18th-century artists and audiences.

¹³ For example, on the Warren Cup, 1st century C.E. The British Museum

¹⁴ See Leonard Barkin’s *Transuming Passion: Ganymede and the Erotics of Humanism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991) and James Saslow’s Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in Art and Society (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). Marsilio Ficino (1443-99), whose influential commentary on Plato’s *Symposium*, 1469, questioned (in the form of a dialogue) the inclusion of “desire” in friendship.” Pico della Mirandola (1463-94) and the poet Girolamo Benivieni “wrote passionate sonnets to each other and were buried in the same tomb in San Marco, like husband and wife,” although the poet died 40 years after Pico. Saslow admits that there is “little concrete evidence to suggest that Ficino’s deep love for Giovanni Cavalcanti—whom he enthroned as the hero of his annual symposium commemorating the death of Plato on November 7—was anything other than chaste.” Likewise, there are no explicit accounts of sexual activity between the Pico and Benivieni. (Saslow, Ganymede, 29)

¹⁵ Ibid, 22. Saslow goes on to cite Panofsky: “The idea of love is, in fact, the very axis of Ficino’s philosophical system.” (Ibid)

¹⁶ For their interpretation of the Ganymede myth, the Neoplatonists officially followed Xenophon’s interpretation of an intellectual and divine force—but they were fully aware of other ancient writers, such as Plato, who offered more erotic interpretations (Ibid, 28-29) References to Ganymede in a homoerotic context are to be found in Castiglione, Aretino, Michelangelo, Cellini, and Poliziano. (Fone, 129)

Satires, “Few humanists are free of that vice.”¹⁷ This “disguising” of homoerotic content, usually self-preservational, often subversive, plays a central role in homosexual artistic production throughout the centuries, notably in the theorization of Neoclassical imagery.

Outside of Plato, the intellectual elite encountered a plethora of ancient homoerotic texts,¹⁸ and some, such as Ficino’s pupil Angelo Poliziano (1454-94) felt emboldened, for the first time in the post-classical world, to explore homoerotic subject matter along ancient models.¹⁹ In one rather lusty Greek epigram, he writes:

Watch over me from heaven while within my arms I hold my boy,
And don’t envy me, Zeus, because I envy no other.
Be contented, Zeus, be contented with your Ganymede, and leave to me
My shiny Chrysokomos [Goldenlocks], who to me is sweeter than honey.
O how happy I am—three and four times! O yes, I have kissed—
Truly kissed your mouth, you delicious boy-love!
O mouth, O locks, O smile, O light from your eyes!
O gods, truly you are mine, you delightful boy, yes mine!...²⁰

These lines, written within the core of Neo-Platonist humanism, discredit the chaste theories and associate Greek love with an actively homosexual subculture. Neoclassical theorists and artists would follow the Renaissance lead in resurrecting other homosexual classical subjects besides Ganymede: Apollo’s loves Hyacinthus and Cyparissus, Achilles and Patroclus, Pylades and Orestes, the Tyrannicides Harmodius and Aristogeiton, Virgilian heroes such as Corydon and Alexis, and all the beautiful youths the muses inspired Anacreon to sing of. Following

¹⁷ Ludovico Ariosto. *Satires*. (penned from 1517-25, but posthumously published in 1534) Referred to in Saslow, *Ganymede*, 33, and Fone, 127

¹⁸ Giovanni Dall’Orto describes classical homoerotic literature as “so rich that it has no equal in quantity and quality until the twentieth century.” (Qtd. in Fone, 127) For examples, see also Fone, 11-88. Salient examples include Solon, Anacreon, Pindar, Thucydides (for Harmodius and Aristogeiton), Plato, Plutarch (whose *The Life of Pelopidas* includes the story of the Sacred Band of Thebes), Strato (“the muse of boy love”), Pseudo-Lucian (whose *Amores* includes the story of Orestes and Pylades), and Xenophon; and, in Latin, Catullus, Virgil, Ovid (the story of Hyacinthus may be found in *Metamorphoses* 10: 163-219, and the story of Cyparissus may be found in the same, 106ff), Catullus (poems), Petronius, and Martial.

¹⁹ Angelo Poliziano (1454-94), a central figure in the Medici circle (and an important influence on Michelangelo), translated part of Homer and other Greek works; he seems, in *Orfeo*, “to approve the decision of Orpheus to choose boys instead of women for love.” (Fone, 128; see also Saslow, 30-31, for commentary) His imitations of Greek and Latin verse have homoerotic elements, mostly directed at “boys.” For a discussion of other poets, see Fone, 127-56.

²⁰ “Love Song for Chrysokomos (Goldenlocks),” in *Ibid.*, 137

Renaissance precedents that appeal to nature to validate homosexuality,²¹ defenses of sodomy multiplied in the second half of the 18th century²²—along with virulent denunciations. Together, these defenses and diatribes indicate that homosexuality was much more visible in the public domain, and they make generalizations problematic. The Enlightenment, the era that intended to end the reign of religion and superstition over reason and philosophy, naturally roused voices against unnecessary punishment. “Sodomy,” with its strongly religious connotations, was a capital crime throughout early modern Europe—a fact which would certainly explain the circumspection and elaborate theorizing of the Neo-Platonist circle as much as that of the Neoclassicists. However, Western Europe slowly and somewhat painfully (if we look at the vitriolic hyperbole of the period) passed towards tolerance, or, if not tolerance, an aversion to implementing the death penalty; and the first subcultural urban communities grew apace with the cities themselves.

Chapter 1 – iii. Eighteenth-Century Sexuality

Before focusing on homosexuality, we should look at 18th-century sexuality in general. There, we find a paradoxical contrast between the notoriously libertine culture of 18th-century France²³ and its areas of prudishness, namely, the two that concern us: a taboo on homosexuality and a taboo on illustrating sex, pictorially or in writing. The type of “sensuality” that, for the

²¹ The writer Matteo Bandello (c. 1480-1562) anticipated the 18th century’s appeal to nature in defense of homosexuality. In his *Decameron*-like series of stories, the character Poricellio admits, “To divert myself with boys is more natural to me than eating and drinking to man, and you asked me if I sinned against nature!” (Saslow, *Ganymede*, 74) Despite the common references (including artistic ones) to “boys” and the association of “Greek love” with pederastic relationships, letters and diaries suggest that friendships and sex existed between men of the same age. (Fone, 128)

²² See Endnote 2 for a list of important examples. While Diderot, Sade, and Bentham are the clear stand-outs, it’s worth quoting here Anarcharsis Cloots’s reference to the Ancients in the 1790s, *en plein Néoclassicisme*: “Eh! because Achilles loved Patroclus; Orestes, Pylades; Aristogeiton, Harmodius; Socrates, Alcibiades, and so on, were they the less useful to their country? People speak much about nature without knowing it, fix its limits at random; they do not know or ignore that it is impossible to thwart it.” (Qtd. in Delon, 129)

²³ “It is surely not by chance that the modern meaning of the ‘libertinism’ evolved at this time, a period which was tolerant about sexuality...” (Blanc, 69); “By 1780 libertinism in the sense of amorous relations outside marriage seems to have become common in Paris [for both men and women] and, more generally, in urban environments, which were less subject than rural areas to the influence of the Church.” (Ibid., 70)

Goncourts, defined the era is beautifully illustrated in the 2006 exhibition, “The Triumph of Eros: Art and Seduction in 18th-century France.”²⁴ This is widely regarded as the age of women, or one in which a certain “feminine sensibility” predominates.²⁵ However, gender roles are as clearly defined there as in the rest of Europe.²⁶ Effeminacy in men is reviled and, once associated with manners or art, feminizing influences are seen to dangerously threaten patriarchal authority. At the same time, sexual freedom (even heterosexual masculine lust) evokes the privileged and degenerate aristocracy²⁷ and symbolizes the mounting crisis that could only end, in France, with Revolution.

The erotic interpretations of Rococo artwork center on voluptuous portrayals of the female nude. Breasts, buttocks, and even the hairless mons pubis find their way into images that more amply cover their male counterparts. (I will discuss the ways in which the opposite will become the norm for Neoclassicism.) Licentious prints of contemporary scenes, tucked in portfolios or the most intimate quarters of Rococo interiors, provide the modern-day female counterparts to the titillating nymphs and goddesses crowded onto Salon walls. But even the most private prints rarely illustrate male or female genitalia, never mind sex acts.

²⁴ Retrospectively, the Goncourts described the attributes of the century in *La Femme du dix-huitième siècle*. (Althaus, 36)

²⁵ For Will Durant, the feminine influence is what enables France to reach its cultural summits. (Will Durant. *The Age of Voltaire: A History of Civilization in Western Europe from 1715 to 1756*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965.) Boys of noble birth might be brought up in the manner of Charles Duclos’ hero in *Confessions du Comte de **** (1741): whereas his schoolteachers fail him, the women such as Mme de Valcourt and Mme de Rumigny each in their turn “provide his education” and turn him into the perfect gentlemen of pleasure. (Sarane Alexandrian. “Education in Love in the Age of the Enlightenment,” in Althaus, 36)

²⁶ A popular anglophone example can be found in Tom Jones, which serves as a microcosm—or a broad societal sketch—for 18th-century English thoughts and mores. In a story where “sluts,” “whores,” “trollops,” “wenches,” “hussies,” “harlots,” and “strumpets” abound in the provincial countryside without male counterparts (except outside of the realm of sexuality), Tom Jones is described thus:

Mr Jones, of whose personal accomplishments we have hitherto said very little, was, in reality, one of the handsomest young fellows in the world. His face, besides being the picture of health, had in it the most apparent marks of sweetness and good-nature. ... It was, perhaps, as much owing to this as to a very fine complexion that his face had a delicacy in it almost inexpressible, and which might have given him **an air rather too effeminate**, had it not been joined to a most **masculine** person and mien: which latter had as much in them of the Hercules as the former had of the **Adonis**. He was besides active, genteel, gay, and good-humoured; and had a flow of animal spirits which enlivened every conversation where he was present. ... (Book IX, ch. 5)

²⁷ Olivier Blanc reminds us that aristocratic pleasures were not for the commoners: “If the wealthy and the privileged flaunted themselves with impunity, ordinary people tended, on the contrary, to conceal adultery and liaisons outside marriage, which were looked down on by peers, who were much influenced by the teaching of the Church...” (Blanc, 70)

Art, however *galant* or licentious, did not show what writers dare to describe. The 18th century revived, or rather reinvented, literary pornography. If the genre begins in the modern era with Aretino, illustrated with prints by Marcantonio Raimondi after Giulio Romano (a pictorial standard long after Aretino's text was replaced), it gets new life in the *annus memorabilis* 1748, which saw the publication of John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* in England and *Thérèse Philosophe, ou mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du P. Dirrag et de Mlle Eradice* in France.²⁸ Such developments fit quite securely in their Enlightenment context. *Thérèse...* evokes the French *philosophes* in its very title. Diderot himself wrote an erotic novel called *Les Bijoux indiscrets*, 1748. And Winckelmann was well aware of his contemporary pornography. He "appreciated that Fanny's description of a male body dared to give erotic voice not only to women but also to the feminine mollies who heard her ventriloquizing their own passionate gaze."²⁹

The general licentiousness of the time reveals itself, less pornographically, in Casanova's *Histoire de ma vie* (1797) and Choderlos de Laclos' *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782). But the pornographic genius is the Marquis de Sade; no comparable artistic genius explored sexuality in such an innovative way as Sade did in *La Nouvelle Justine* (1791) and later works. Visual elaborations of such raw sexuality would await artists like Robert Mapplethorpe, almost two centuries later. For the moment, concessions to sexuality came in the form of confectionary Rococo paintings and cold Neoclassical marbles.

Chapter 1 – iv. Eighteenth-Century Homosexuality

Before we examine these marbles more closely and find out if "cold" is really a fair

²⁸ For discussions of French pornography, see Robert Darnton. *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1995.) He refers to a new wave of pornography that began in 1741. Works from the 1740s-50s were reprinted during the 1760s-70s, when production of original work declined. The genre reemerged in the 1780s with the pornographic works of Mirabeau: *Errotika Biblion*, 1782, *Ma Conversion, ou le libertine de qualité*, 1783, and *Le Rideau levé ou l'éducation de Laure*, 1785. Of the ground-breaking *Thérèse...*, he writes that it "took sex far beyond the boundaries of a decency that had been generally recognized under the Old Regime", and, as such, was the only work to measure up to Sade's standards. (Darnton, 89)

²⁹ Saslow, *Pictures Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts*. (New York: Viking Penguin, 1999) , 166

description, a more detailed history of laws and attitudes towards homosexuality in the 18th century should dispel the common art historical mistake that dealing with homosexuality in the art of that time is anachronistic.³⁰ Three major themes will illustrate this. First of all, a queer subculture clearly evolved within past traditions and with its own unique expressions, including identifying clothing and accoutrements, coded means of communication, special establishments (both public and private) for socializing, known cruising locations, and distinct artistic predilections. Second, the devastating persecutions of homosexual behavior, by law and by custom, made it all but impossible for homosexuals to leave a straightforward record of their cultural achievements and habits. Nonetheless, their defining characteristics were often recorded by (usually hostile) outsiders. Third and most importantly, the extent to which homoerotic art may fall within a bisexual norm (*viz.* heterosexuality) is irrelevant, considering not only the fact that there was a recognizable culture and a systematic suppression of homosexuality, but also that the group already had a self-conscious awareness of a separate class of people, with a different sexual persuasion, and this led them to seek political and social emancipation as well as freedom of artistic expression.

Four countries contributed significantly to the development of Neoclassicism: Britain, whose Grand Tourists became enthusiastic archaeologists and collectors; Germany, which contributed Winckelmann and Mengs; France, whose painters became the first enduring Neoclassicists and art critics; and Italy, the archaeological home base for antiquities, an outdoor museum with newly excavated objects for indoor museums every day, the common ground for antiquarians, artists, and patrons. Therefore, I will focus on the homosexual communities of these countries.

Homosexual monarchs and royalty existed in each of these countries in the 18th century.

The century opened with echoes of homosexuality resounding through the French and British

³⁰ James Smalls goes so far as to call it an institutionalized homophobia. (James Smalls. "Making Trouble for Art History: The Queer Case of Girodet," in *Art Journal*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Winter, 1996), pp. 20-27)

courts. Louis XIV's brother, the rather flagrantly homosexual "Monsieur," Philippe duc d'Orléans, who died in 1701, left such an impression that the duchesse de la Ferté wondered, in 1722, if "the turn of the mignons had come again" after royal oscillations between love for women and love for men in the past century and a half.³¹ Meanwhile, rumors of William III's homosexuality plagued the British monarch as he reached the end of his reign (1605-1702).³² In Florence, the Medici duke Gian Gastone, 1723-37, retained a certain amount of popularity despite his open predilection for young boys.³³ Friedrich II "the Great," who ruled Prussia from 1740-86, extended his homosexual proclivities to cultural patronage.³⁴ Another important homosexual monarch, who visited Italy, was Gustav III of Sweden.³⁵ "The courts of such monarchs, networks of friendship and sex among men helped determine the distribution of patronage, preferment and rewards."³⁶

As Michael Sibalís summarizes, "Although this subculture became visible only around 1700, it may have already existed for two or three generations."³⁷ James Saslow finds, in a London woodcut illustration from 1707, "the first visual witness to the homosexual subculture that ...now burst into public view in the mushrooming cities."³⁸ Two years later, Ned Ward's *A Complete and Humorous Account of All the Remarkable Clubs and Societies in the Cities of London and Westminster* describes a club of effeminate and affected men called "mollies."

³¹ "Henry II and Charles IX loved women, and Henry III mignons; Henry IV loved women, Louis XIII men, Louis XIV women." (Qtd. in Crompton, 445)

³² For discussion on William III, see Henri A. Van der Zee's *William and Mary* (New York: Knopf, 1973) and Wouter Troost's *William III, The Stadtholder-king: A Political Biography* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2005).

³³ Crompton, 457

³⁴ For his male lovers and companions and his effeminacy, see Crompton, 506-08; for cultural patronage, Saslow, 163.

³⁵ Alex Hunnicut. "Gustav III, King of Sweden (1746-1792)" in GLBTQ.com Social Sciences. http://www.glbtq.com/social-sciences/gustav_III.html

³⁶ Aldrich, 104: *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe* (Kent Gerard and Gert Hekma, eds., New York, 1988), pp. 105-28, 163-75, 349-81)

³⁷ Sibalís, in Aldrich, 104

³⁸ Saslow's *Pictures and Passions* includes "The Women-Hater's Lamentation," a tract with a woodcut illustration of 1707, was one among the pamphlets, single broadsheets, or satirical printed flyers that show "neighborhood hostility" was strong, but the "illustration shows that men who loved men had become a familiar urban type." (152)

German scholar Ivan Bloch, in his *Sexual Life in England: Past and Present* (1938),³⁹ uses primary sources in his lengthy account of the exposure of the mollies and the subsequent development of the gay subculture.⁴⁰ This early work is factually sound and informative,⁴¹ and even Bloch's unabashed prejudices regarding homosexuality flavor the writing with equally interesting and informative views about the subject in academia.⁴²

In 1748, Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* satirizes the effeminate homosexual type.⁴³

The next year, a pamphlet called *Satan's Harvest* (1749) reads:

...paederasty in former times was a vice almost unknown to our people. ... Now, however, our papers are often full of the crimes committed by these brutes, and despite their having been severely punished on many occasions, we have every reason to fear that many of them are undiscovered as yet, and this terrible vice may thus take root

³⁹ Ivan Bloch. *Sexual Life in England : Past and Present*. Hertfordshire: Oracle Publishing, Ltd., 1996 (orig publ. by Alfred Aldor, London, 1938; trans. fr. German)

⁴⁰ There is a curious band of fellows in the town who call themselves 'Mollies' (effeminate, weaklings), who are so totally destitute of all masculine attributes that they prefer to behave as women. They adopt all the small vanities natural to the feminine sex to such an extent that they try to speak, walk, chatter, shriek and scold as women do, aping them as well in other respects. In a certain tavern in the City, the name of which I will not mention, not wishing to bring the house into disrepute, they hold parties and regular gatherings. As soon as they arrive there they begin to behave exactly as women do, carrying on light gossip as in the custom of a merry company of real women. [...] Thus each imitated the petty feminine faults of women gossiping over coffee, in order to disguise their natural feelings (as men) towards the fair sex, and to encourage unnatural lusts. They continued these practices until they were discovered and driven away from their hiding-place by some agents of the Reform Society. Several of them were publicly punished, and this fortunately ended their scandalous orgies." (qtd in Bloch, 394-95) "According to the reports of the Old Bailey from 1720 to 1730, the paederasts had brothels of their own, with boy prostitutes at the disposal of their masculine lovers." (Ibid., 399)

⁴¹ There are no major departures or contention in more contemporary examinations of homosexual history in Britain. Trumbach summarizes, "Between 1707 and 1730, public officials under the inspiration of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners launched a series of attacks against a new kind of effeminate sodomite among the London poor. These men constructed around themselves a protective subculture of meeting places and ritual behavior." (Trumbach, 92)

⁴² Similar editorializing (most commonly associating homosexuality with decadence or degeneracy) occurs throughout Will and Ariel Durant's voluminous *The Story of Civilization*, one of the most authoritative overviews of European history, from Greece to Napoleon. Due to their prejudices, Bloch and Durant use fallacious reasoning; namely, they assume that there are more homosexuals at times when they are more visible. They fail to see homosexuals as a constant presence in society whose visibility reflects the amount of persecution they are subjected to. They may be implying that there is a cause for the *visibility*, which is societal decadence, but their language strongly suggests that they actually believe that homosexual activity and desire is a cultural construct in a way that heterosexuality is not, since homosexuality is a "perversion of natural feeling." (Bloch, 388) Yet, Bloch, without defending homosexuality, also says of the laws against it, "We need hardly mention that we consider these measures barbarous and unworthy of a civilized country, and as a preventative of the spread of homosexual practices they are quite useless." (390)

⁴³ Fone, 201 (Interestingly, Smollett reappears in a neoclassical context, in 1767, giving a warning to young travelers "to be on their guard against a set of sharpers (some of them known in our country) who deal in pictures and antiquities." [Ingamells, in *Grand Tour*, 28])

more firmly day by day.⁴⁴

Another passage from *Satan's Harvest Home* rails against these “enervated and effeminate animals” who had “sucked the Spirit of Cotqueanism [cotquean: a man who acts like a woman or housewife] since infancy.”⁴⁵ The intentionally abusive language belies the presentation of the “molly” as a natural and unalterable type. In stark contrast to these denunciations, Thomas Cannon called for tolerance in *Ancient and Modern Pederasty Investigated and Exemplified*, published in 1749. He and his printer John Purser were persecuted together and had to flee abroad. Notably, Cannon defended pederasty in light of Greco-Roman precedents.⁴⁶

The public discourse concerning male-male love, irrepressibly mounting despite official attempts to wipe it from public consciousness by only alluding to this unnamable crime with the most hyperbolic vitriol, often reprises the idea of innate preference (something erroneously considered a 19th-century invention but in fact dating back to antiquity).⁴⁷ Bloch cites a 1787 work in pointing out Britain's exceptional revulsion to buggery⁴⁸: “Attempted homosexuality

⁴⁴ *Satan's Harvest Home, or the present state of Whorecraft, Adultery, Fornication, Procurring, Pimping, Sodomy, and the Game of Flatts, and other Satanic works, daily propagated in this good Protestant Kingdom. Collected from the memoirs of an intimate comrade of the Hon. Jack S. n. r etc.* (London, 1749), qtd in Bloch, 401-02.

⁴⁵ Bryne S. Fone *A Road to Stonewall: Male Homosexuality and Homophobia in English and American Literature, 1750-1969*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995.

⁴⁶ Oddly, it was John Cleland, author of the best-selling *Fanny Hill*, who instigated the prosecution of the treatise. (Wagner, 35)

⁴⁷ These themes of public protection, sexual identity, and unspeakable sinfulness are summarized in this court case from 1789: “Two Englishmen, Leith and Drew, were accused of paederasty or, according to the English formula, of the ‘horrid, brutish crime, the name of which must not be pronounced among Christians.’ As the details of these delicate affairs must be discussed and explained fully and circumstantially, the judges were careful to clear the Court of women and youths. The evidence given by the plaintiffs was, as generally the case in these trials, very imperfect. On the other hand, the defendants denied the accusation, and produced witnesses to prove their predilection for women. They were in consequence acquitted.” (Archenholtz. *British Annals*, 1789, Vol. III, qtd in Bloch, 402) The English has been retranslated from German and appears in its original form as: “Alexander Leith and John Drew were indicted for that they not having the fear of God before their eyes, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, did commit and perpetrate with each other, that detestable and abominable crime not fit to be named among Christians, against the peace, &c” (*Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 6.0, 20 Feb. 2012), Feb. 1789, trial of Alexander Leith and John Drew (t17890225-40).)

⁴⁸ Although effeminate fops were most reviled, “buggers” were also sinful “sodomites” and criminals who indulged in “unnatural vice.” (Wagner, 35) “In the public mind, all men in the molly-houses—as well as those who used the public latrines, the parks, or the cruising streets and arcades to find sexual partners—belonged to the same category, no matter what their behavior in the public sphere. All were members of a third gender that deserved to be treated with contempt.” (Trumbach, 93) Of note, homosexuality was so prevalent—and so vilified—by the end of the century, that, “The kiss of friendship between men is strictly avoided as inclining towards the sin regarded in England as more abominable than any

[sic.] is punished by the pillory and several years of imprisonment, the act itself by the gallows. The pillory, however, is almost as good as death.”⁴⁹ Blackmail,⁵⁰ police raids,⁵¹ arrests, trials,⁵² political ostracism,⁵³ banishment,⁵⁴ suicide,⁵⁵ ignominy,⁵⁶ and lynchings⁵⁷ added to the virtual and actual death toll of homosexuals in 18th-century Britain. British brutality reached a frenzied

other.” (W. Bornemann, *Einblicke in England und London im Jahre 1818*. (Berlin, 1819, p. 179), qtd. in Bloch (398), who corroborates this with another contemporary source.)

⁴⁹ J. W. von Archenholtz, *England and Italy* (Leipzig, 1787. Vol. II, p. 267), qtd. in Bloch, 389. Trumbach repeats this sentiment, alluding to hanging, imprisonment, and the pillory: “They were hanged in the few cases where anal penetration and seminal emission could be proven. Otherwise, they were fined, imprisoned, and sentenced to stand in the public pillory, where a few were stoned to death. But even the majority who survived the pillory must have had their lives ruined, since they usually were sentenced to stand in those neighborhoods where they previously had managed to hide their identities as sodomites.” (Trumbach, 93)

⁵⁰ The rich could be blackmailed by the poor, although the law could protect them if they were willing to risk exposure (Trumbach, 91) “Charges of sodomitical assault and of attempting to blackmail a man for being a sodomite made up at least half of the sodomy cases in the London courts.” (Trumbach, 94)

⁵¹ Men were arrested in such public spaces, while police raids on the secret clubs continued till the end of the century. Bloch (400) refers us to several 18th-century authors, including Archenholtz, who described an incident in 1794 where an anonymous letter led to a police raid on a house of men clad in women’s dresses and 18 arrests and a near-lynching of the prisoners, who were protected by soldiers. In another incident in 1785, men were caught faking childbirth. (*The Phoenix of Sodom, etc.*, London 1813, p. 27)

⁵² “Some of the well-known trials of this nature were those of Briggs and Bacon in 1790, of the actor Samuel Foote, of the innkeeper Thomas Andrews in 1761 for active paederasty with the sleeping John Finimore, of teachers in colleges for paederastic assaults on their pupils (as, for instance, the Reverend Dr. Thistlethwayte and Mr. Swinton of Wadham College, Oxford [published in 1739]), and finally of men of high position in society such as Mr. Beckford, Richard Heber, Gray Bennet, Jocelyne, Bishop of Clogher, Bankes and Baring Wall.” (Bloch, 402)

⁵³ “After 1750 aristocrats whose effeminacy was too obvious (for instance, Horace Walpole and Humphrey Morice) found that, while they were tolerated socially for their amusing tongues, they were very likely to be excluded from a share in real political power by those aristocratic men whose taste was now exclusively for women.” (Trumbach, 91)

⁵⁴ Charles Fielding, a young unmarried aristocrat, was rescued from blackmail by his family, which promptly “forced him to live abroad where his tastes would not embarrass them.” (Ibid., 91)

⁵⁵ One of the most tragic examples is the case of Samuel Foote, the well-known actor and dramatist. Although he had fathered several children, he was “nonetheless reputed to be homosexual, mainly because of the roles he played in his theater and because he was not married. As the result of a vengeful act, in 1776, Foote first found himself in court on sodomy charges, and then held up as an object of ridicule, with homosexuals in general, in a satirical pamphlet entitled *Sodom and Onan, a Satire, Inscribed to ———Esq., Alias the Devil upon Two Sticks* [1776]. In this short work of twenty-nine pages, which also attacks buggers in general, readers lodging in hotels are advised:

Observe this rule: – ne’er pull your Breeches off. –
From Health restoring Slumbers strive to keep,
Or ten to one you are B——’d in your Sleep.

Foote was completely unnerved... ..he died the following year.” (Wagner, 37-39)

⁵⁶ Although legal proceedings started against fifteen members of the pederastic society of Exeter, whose members were nearly all men of rank and wealth, caught in their orgies, ended in acquittal, “the incensed people were so convinced of their guilt that they burnt them in effigy without respect for their rank.” (Bloch, 401)

⁵⁷ “In 1761 a young homosexual of Cornhill, London, who had been sentenced for an attempt of buggery [a violent, rather than consensual crime], was almost lynched by the furious mob. Two years later, two men, similarly sentenced, were killed by the crowd.” (Wagner, 27: *Satan’s Harvest Home*, and Hyde, *The Other Love*, Trumbach, “London’s Sodomites,” and the *Annual Register* 6, 1763, 67) When another unfortunate sodomite faced the rage of the public in 1763, a broadside folio was produced to celebrate the merry occasion”: *This is Not the Thing, or Molly Exalted*, 1763, with a picture whose caption reads “A man at Stratford in the pillory Ap. 1763 was killed by the populace” and a tune (Wagner, 37)

peak in a bloody lynching of 1810 that, today, seems far more unspeakable than the crime.⁵⁸

When uttered, “the love that dares not speak its name” has an interesting terminology. Mary Wilson, in her preface to the third volume of the *Volupturian Cabinet* (1788), comments on the homoerotic scenes in Mirabeau’s original of *Le Rideau Levé* (translated therein). A proprietress of a brothel, she calls the spread of doctrines of “socrastistical love” “criminal.”⁵⁹ In France, where Michael Rey’s research has shown that the same type of urbanization led to a similar type of subcultural growth infusing all levels of society⁶⁰—including artistic milieus—,⁶¹ several striking terms turn up to denote the “mollies,” “pederasts,” “sodomites,” and “buggers” of 18th-century England, and the “homosexuals,” “fairies,” “queers,” “gays,” and “fags” of 20th-century America. References hark unmistakably to the loci of classical culture, as we shall see, but there’s also a more exotic reference to North Amerindians: “*bardaches*.” The association of

⁵⁸ The 19th century begins, with the discovery of the ill-famed—and ill-fated—“Vere Street Coterie.” The Coterie met in a public-house near Clare Market, a district that seems to have been favored in homosexual circles, and which is described in *The Phoenix of Sodom...*, 1813. (Bloch, 403) In July 1810, twenty-three individuals were arrested, nearly lynched (by a mob of women) on their way to the police station, and sentenced to three years’ imprisonment and to the pillory, where they were bombarded with offal and dung, rotten fruits and vegetables, corpses of dogs and cats, “stinking flounders” and decaying fishguts; the manliest and biggest of all, an innkeeper “was bombarded twice as furiously”; they were also hit with blows and harder objects such as brick-bats; the language was “abusive” and insulting; one fellow, who nearly fainted after his ordeal, was treated to a whip; “faces bled horribly.” (Ibid., pp. 408-12)

⁵⁹ Quoted in Bloch (389), who comments that her business created an interest in discouraging homosexuality.

⁶⁰ Rey used police records to ascertain not only that homosexual activity existed, but that the city was littered with cruising grounds, as well as clubs or taverns, whose various locations indicate that the homosexual subculture infused all layers of society. Rey notes that the methodology (hours of observation) give accounts of daily life and cruising habits. (179) Meeting places were socially diversified: from the Tuileries gardens—where arrests include mostly those of the nobility and middle class but also some master craftsmen, schoolboys, students, and household servants—to the boulevards (crowded places). (Michel Rey, “Parisian Homosexuals Create a Lifestyle, 1700-1750: The Police Archives,” in *‘Tis Nature’s Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality During the Enlightenment*, ed. by Robert Purks Macgubbin, New York: University of Cambridge, 1987, 179) He reports how cruising or pick-ups (*raccrochages*) happened. (180-81) The arrests were almost 50% craftsmen/merchants, thus suggesting a social organization around the low middle class and involving “effeminacy and politeness” in their associations or gatherings. (186-87) Merrick, referring to Rey, notes hundreds of men were arrested in Paris between 1715 and 1750; then there is a “sizeable gap between two surviving series of archival record”; and then hundreds more were arrested in the 1780s. Merrick and Blanc, who both discuss this later period, refer to Jacques Peuchet, *Mémoires tirés des archives de police de Paris*: “Jean Charles Pierre Lenoir, the lieutenant general of police for the first half of that decade [the 1780s], characterized ‘pederasty’ as an aristocratic vice, but he must have known that most of the ‘pederasts’ apprehended by his subordinates were ordinary workingmen and that most of them spent no more than a few weeks in prison.” (Merrick, 85-86, referring to Peuchet) “ ‘Arrests of pederasts were very common’ under Lenoir, lieutenant general of police from 1776 to 1785, ‘and provided much work for and profit to those who were responsible for the business. There were many mistakes and abuses.’ Surveillance slackened after Lenoir, ‘and these gentlemen surrender themselves freely to their tastes.’ ” (Blanc, 80, citing Peuchet, as quoted in Claude Courouve, *Les Assemblées de la manchette* (Paris, 1996), 2.) “Repression resumed in 1792... .. During the Terror round-ups in public places, especially the Palais-Royal, multiplied, and several men were subjected to legal prosecution.” (Blanc, 80)

⁶¹ Police records speak of a “master sculptor” and a “painter.” (Rey, 188)

male-male love to distant cultures indicates that homosexuality is decisively *not* French.

In 1722, a group of young nobles, who had formed a *confrérie*, staged a party at Versailles that, according to the *maréchal de Richelieu*, ended in “Greek orgies” under “the very windows” of the boy king. Such flagrant displays of “Greek” sexual mores resulted in the banishment of many of these young nobles.⁶² Of note, the King was not told why so many young men had disappeared, and a cautious nobleman remarked that, “as this vice is unknown among the people,” it was necessary to mete out a punishment “that afforded no scandal.”⁶³ Thus, the French concur with the British that a magical “vanishing act” is the best means to rid society of such corrosive forces, although these forces were estimated to make up over 3% of the population⁶⁴—a more significant minority than the Jewish and Protestant populations of the time.

However, the French did not believe in such harsh punishments as the English did. Burnings for sodomy in France were rare but not unknown; typically, there were extenuating circumstances.⁶⁵ One of the victims, Deschauffours, though clearly a villain, became a homosexual martyr whose death in 1726 was invoked several years later in pamphlets

⁶² At a council called to consider the affair, an exasperated regent declared, “We must send a rude summons to these seigneurs and tell them that they were not showing the best of taste.” Informed that they had formed a brotherhood (*confrérie*), he ordered it dissolved and a number of youths exiled. (Crompton, 445)

⁶³ *Ibid.* There are notable contradictions in this resolute belief that homosexuality was not inherently generated and thus unknown. In 1726—several years after the incident of the “Greek orgies” (and the same year as the procurer Deschauffours was executed: *see below*)—“a middle-class lawyer, Edmond-Jean-François Barbier, noted in his journal, ‘For a long time the vice has reigned in this land, and recently it has been more fashionable than ever. All the young seigneurs are ardently given over to it, to the great chagrin of the ladies of the Court.’” (*Ibid.*) Yet, he almost paradoxically added that most people did not even know what the crime of sodomy was. Meanwhile, Abbé Théro, professor at the Collège Mazarin who spied for the police for several decades, seems to believe that the “corruption” is widespread and hidden: “If one spares the corruptors too much ... there will be great disorders ... because all kinds of people will take off their masks, believing that everything is permitted for them, and they will organize leagues and societies, which will be disastrous, with respectable people in the lead. I have already heard of one, and when I am better informed about it, I will warn the magistracy.” (*Ibid.*, 447)

⁶⁴ A police report from 1775 estimated the number of “sodomites” in 1725 at about 20,000 (*Ibid.*), in a population of about 600,000 for the 18th century. Visibility increased by the end of the century, when estimates were doubled. Mouffle d’Angerville, in his *Mémoires secrets* for October 1784, wrote that the “police commissioner Foucault, who died recently, had responsibility for this party and had shown his friends a great book in which were inscribed all the names of pederasts known to the police. He claimed that there were almost as many of them in Paris as prostitutes; that is to say, almost 40,000.” (*Ibid.*, 448)

⁶⁵ In 1720, Philippe Basse and Bernard Mocmanesse went to the stake, but they were also convicted of blasphemy (*Ibid.*, 449) One of the saddest cases was that of 18-year-old Bruno Lenoir and 20-year-old Jean Diot on January 4, 1750. Jacques-François Pascal, who assaulted an errand boy on 3 October 1783, was executed.

powerfully theorizing homosexuality as an “inclination from birth.”⁶⁶ Thus, by the 1730s, we have the semantic essence of modern biological “homosexuals”—without a universal lexical unit⁶⁷—loosely expressed in borrowed appellations, such as “*infâmes*”⁶⁸ and “*anti-physiques*.”⁶⁹ In 1732, the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* uses a more neutral term, “*nonconformité*,” but like “sodomy” it had religious undertones as well.⁷⁰

Other terms continue to evoke the Antique and the classical culture of Renaissance Italy. Montesquieu was among those who referred to the “philosophical sin,” which certainly brings to mind the humanists as much as the Greeks.⁷¹ “Pederasty,” a term which entered the police records in the 1730s,⁷² was another reference to homosexual practice in Ancient Greece: *παιδεραστία*.⁷³ For Rey, the switch from the word “*sodomite*” to “*pédéraste*” indicates not just

⁶⁶ Benjamin Deschauffours kidnapped boys and sold them to aristocrats; he was even accused of killing one. Some two hundred high-ranking aristocrats were implicated in this case, so the government wished to hush-up the affair, but the chief of police insisted on making an example of Deschauffours, who was burned in the Place de Grève in 1726. The burning had the desired effect, and for some time, Parisian sodomites were especially fearful. (Ibid., 449) / Several years later, in 1733, a whimsical pamphlet entitled *Anecdotes pour servir à l'histoire des Ebugors* depicted Deschauffours as the champion of an oppressed group. More significantly, an imaginary dialogue entitled *L'Ombre des Deschauffours*, 1739 (B.N.), a humorous skit, taking place in hell, contains some very poignant lines (my italics): “You are absurd to want to reform the *tastes of humankind*. I, who have never liked bitches or cunt, am I for that reason not to like *bardaches*? Each to his taste, one man drinks, another eats. In nature, *each has his inclination*.” The response: “Our friend is right. Why the devil should anyone want to dispute tastes and complexions. *Inclination* takes its direction at the moment of birth. How can you want to reform it when you have no power over it?”

⁶⁷ But lack of a universal lexical unit or morpheme does not suggest non-existence of the thing itself. In fact, it's very telling that there is no semantic difference between “fag,” “molly,” “fairy,” “nancy,” “*bardache*,” and “poof”—even if there's a historical one—just as there's no difference between “sodomite,” “bugger,” and “antiphysique.”

⁶⁸ Crompton, 446

⁶⁹ Delon, 124. (This is the term of Lafitau – see below.) (See also Blanc, 70)

⁷⁰ The dictionary entry reads: “Some call love for boys the sin of non-conformity.” But the word also refers to religious heterodoxy. In the outline of one of his dramas Diderot introduces one character as “somewhat non-conformist” (Delon, 123)

⁷¹ This term, used by Barbier (op. cit.), was reprised by Montesquieu in 1729. (Ibid.)

⁷² Rey, 188

⁷³ “Pederasty” may technically refer to a relationship between an older man and a youth; however, the police records of the time do not indicate that “pederasts” referred to men soliciting boys. Moreover, the term “*pédé*” is still used in France today to denote “fag”—with absolutely no thought to age or type of homosexual relationship. As to the issue of pederasty, it is important to remember that adolescent girls were typically initiated into sexual practice by older men, through marriage, in the West, long after Greek men stopped sexually initiating adolescent boys. However, Davidson dispels what was already a vague myth concerning the age disparities in Greek love. After all, Achilles and Patroclus were a pederastic pair whose age relationship was close enough to cause confusion. (Certainly, one had to be the “elder,” the mentor, in classical Athenian interpretations of their love, but their physical and mental maturity made their exact roles debatable.) Meanwhile Greek pederastic vases, frescoes, and sculpture show fully grown men, as well as boys, being courted by, respectively, older men and older adolescents. On another note, it may be worth considering to what extent “love of boys” appeared somehow more socially acceptable than “love for men,” for it is less emasculating at several levels, notably in patriarchal constraints imposed on traditionally masculine roles regarding sexuality and beauty.

the waning of the theological influence during the Enlightenment, but evidence of a “lifestyle,” “a taste that sets one apart from other men, being seen both as a refinement and a source of particular identity,”⁷⁴ as well as a new understanding of “a man whose sexual desire is oriented exclusively towards other men.”⁷⁵ Similarly, beginning in the 1740s the police reports used another expression that was to remain in use at least until the French Revolution: “*les gens de la Manchette*” or “*les chevaliers de la Manchette*.”⁷⁶ Although this phrase suggests community cohesiveness, homosexuals were not always identifiable by their participation in the culture of tavern houses, orgies, and cruising, for this is just one type of homosexual expression.⁷⁷ Private correspondence, biography, and artistic expressions of homoerotic desire will be important avenues for finding homosexuals who are not in the police records.

James Saslow finds a classical reference used by Rosalba Carriera, who, “stung by the insufficient enthusiasm of a male art critic for the work of women like herself, wrote to a French patron about 1740, ‘but what could you have expected from a Ganymede?’”⁷⁸ On the other hand, Blanc notes that the term “Italian taste” was “commonly used in the most advanced circles at the time.”⁷⁹ Another term suggesting refinement is “*le beau vice*,” which Mouffle d’Angerville, in his *Mémoires secrets* for October 1784, associates with the classical beauty of an Adonis:⁸⁰ “This vice, which used formerly to be called *le beau vice* because it affected only noblemen, intellectuals, or Adonises, has become so popular that today there is no rank of society, from

⁷⁴ Rey, 179

⁷⁵ Ibid., 188

⁷⁶ The term ostensibly refers to the aristocratic affectations of the group. (Ibid.)

⁷⁷ Rey describes what is essentially the same problem of promiscuity and over-effeminization in homosexual gatherings today. (Ibid.)

⁷⁸ Saslow, *Pictures*, 154

⁷⁹ Blanc, 70. Although Blanc calls this term “straightforwardly positive,” I find his conclusion a bit odd. While I agree that Italy is traditionally associated with artistic achievement and accomplishment, homosexuality was never “straightforwardly positive.” In fact, “*Italian taste*” suggests a typical 18th-century European xenophobia in the sense of “otherness.” Frankly, it sounds more like a venereal disease, which the Europeans are always famously attributing to one or other target nationality. Blanc’s sources are: Charles Théveneau de Morande, *Correspondance de Madame Gourdan* [1775], quoted in Pol André [pseudonym], *Le XVIIIe siècle galant et libertin* (Paris, n.d.), 140, 152; and Jean Hervez, *Les sociétés d’amour au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1906), 269, 274.

⁸⁰ Numerous 18th-century sources (including the above-cited *Tom Jones*) remain suspicious of male beauty as a sign of effeminacy.

dukes to footmen and the common people that is not affected.”⁸¹

Amidst these lamentations, what were the attitudes of the important thinkers and cultural icons of French society? As early as 1736, in response to the Deschauffours case, it had been stated, “In nature, each has his inclination.” The response: “Our friend is right. Why the devil should anyone want to dispute tastes and complexions? Inclination takes its direction at the moment of birth. How can you want to reform it when you have no power over it?”⁸² This combines an important Enlightenment idea (*tous les goûts sont dans la nature*) with what will become Sade’s justification for his sexual proclivities: everything created by nature is normal.

Rousseau, who expressed personal repugnance for “*les gens de la manchette*” in his *Confessions*, nonetheless finds multiple occasions for recording his homosexual encounters and, oddly, claims to have overcome his disgust for female *jouissance* only through his greater disgust for male pleasures.⁸³ Jean-Jacques typically looked to nature for practical guidance, but here he misattributed a type of sexual practice that thrived in pure and primitive societies to decadent civilization. In fact, in a complete reversal of Rousseau’s ideas, as early as 1724, while “Greek orgies” were transpiring in the royal palace, the missionary Father Lafitau warned against “natural morals” in his call for civilizing forces to end the “one among vices which is most hateful and most revolting to reason;” although he found his muse in the Americas, he did not forget that the “monstrous vices” were widespread among Arcadian Greeks.⁸⁴ Fortunately, those

⁸¹ Crompton, 448. (Also partially quoted, with a different translation, by Merrick, 90) Merrick associates this comment with an entry on the execution of Jacques-François Pascal.

⁸² Qtd. in Crompton, 449

⁸³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau. « Les Confessions, » (1782) in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Œuvres complètes 1. Paris : Gallimard, 1959.

⁸⁴ “Father Lafitau and other missionaries often cited pagan and primitive cultures to show the inadequacy of natural morals and the necessity of revelation. Ancient philosophers may have reached the acme of purely human wisdom, and some American Indians may have lived in the innocence of nature; both, however, yielded to their passions: Socrates loved Alcibiades, and American Indian males sometimes mated with each other. They lacked divine law.” (Delon, 123) ... Lafitau goes on to say, “For though the Greeks were subject to monstrous vices which have become but too common everywhere, vice nevertheless, whatever it may be, always carried with it a withering character of shame which makes it seek darkness even among the utmost Barbarians themselves. This reason is more than enough to convince us that if the one among vices which is most hateful and most revolting to reason had been attached to such kinds of friendly connections, those rulers would have been wary of bringing it into honor.” (Ibid., 124: *Mœurs des sauvages américains comparés aux mœurs des premiers temps* (Paris, 1724; rep. ...1983), p. 27-38)

without Rousseau's prejudices, remembering that Greece was a Golden Age of human civilization, would be keen enough to use his nature-based arguments for their purposes.

Montesquieu and Voltaire tried to point out to their unenlightened contemporaries the similarity between the laws against sodomy and against witchcraft, in an age when most intellectuals had rejected sorcery. But Voltaire is uncomfortably ambivalent about homosexuality. His writing indicates a strong distaste for same-sex eroticism. Yet, homosexuals abounded in his closest circles, and he enjoyed a close friendship with Frederick the Great. This leaves room for scholars to continue exploring the visibility of homosexuals in Enlightenment salons—and not just in aristocratic playhouses, clubs, brothels and dark alleys. It was conspicuous enough—and elevated enough—for Voltaire to include an entry entitled “*Amour nommé socratique*” in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*,⁸⁵ which covers all of his Enlightenment bases: nature and classical references. “How could it happen that a vice which, if it were general, would destroy the human kind, and which is an infamous offense against nature, should however be so natural? It seems to be the last degree of deliberate corruption and yet it is commonly shared by those who have yet had to be corrupted.”⁸⁶ It's worth reading Delon's summary of Voltaire's attempt to make sense of this unnatural/natural “vice”:

The peculiar loves of ancient Greece and Plutarch's commentary on them cannot be official theory and practice of homosexuality. They have become so only by overindulgence. Society can neither tolerate nor legitimate this kind of love: ‘No, it does not pertain to human nature to make a law which contradicts and outrages nature, a law which, if literally observed, would annihilate mankind’ (p. 20). Nature can err but momentarily; it remains a norm and a reference to which human laws, in their diversity and contradictions, are but many variations. All of Voltaire's examples reduce homosexuality to pederasty, or, more exactly, to a relationship between young men. So Socrates could not love Alcibiades physically: ‘It is as certain as ancient science can be that Socratic love was not an infamous love; the very name of love has deceived us’ (p. 20).” ... [Voltaire then goes on to associate pederasty with the Jesuits by mocking the Abbé Desfontaines. However, he] does not propose legal repression but rather moral

⁸⁵ G.S. Rousseau also mentions his “candid, if disarming” discussion of Socratic love in the poem “L'Anti-Giton, à Mademoiselle Lecouvreur.” (Rousseau, G.S., 140)

⁸⁶ Qtd. in Delon, 124-25

condemnation.⁸⁷

His final statement on the matter was that: “When not accompanied by violence, sodomy should not fall under the sway of criminal law, for it does not violate the right of any man.”⁸⁸

Diderot, finds Delon, seems to toy with the acceptance of bisexuality via the antique and the concept of beauty:⁸⁹

In the Salons, Diderot brings up this idea [that male nudity was a pivot of both public and artistic production] several times. Beauty, like patriotic devotion, consists of sexual desire. In ... the *Salon de 1763*, Diderot [writes]: ‘There is no comparing our saints, our apostles, and our sadly ecstatic virgins with those feasts on Olympus where virile Hercules, leaning on his club, amorously beholds fragile Hebe, where the master of the gods, intoxicating himself with the nectar poured brimful by the hand of a young boy with ivory shoulders and alabaster thighs, makes the heart of his jealous wife swell with spite.’ (5:420). Desire is not divided into homo- and heterosexuality; it is a homage to beauty, whatever its sex. ... The *Essai sur la peinture* that accompanies the Salon de 1765 reverts to the parallel between paganism and Christianity, between a religion that glorifies the body and one that suppresses it. Ancient man was able to perceive in his fellow creatures Thetis’ feet or Venus’ bosom, Apollo’s shoulders or Ganymede’s ‘rounded buttocks’: ‘When the assembled people enjoyed themselves beholding naked men in public baths, gymnasiums, public games, there was, without their suspecting it, in the tribute of admiration they paid to beauty, a blended hue of the sacred and the profane,

⁸⁷ Delon, 125

⁸⁸ “La sodomie, lorsqu’il n’y a point de violence, ne peut être du ressort des lois criminelles. Elle ne viole le droit d’aucun autre homme. Elle n’a sur le bon ordre de la société qu’une influence indirecte, comme l’ivrognerie, l’amour du jeu. C’est un vice bas, dégoûtant, dont la véritable punition est le mépris.” (Voltaire, *Œuvres complètes*, Tome 30. Paris: Garnier, 1880, p. 570)

⁸⁹ “He cautiously refuses to approve publicly homosexuality or masturbation, but he recognizes that the philosopher can accept no argument against them. Far from limiting homosexual desires to minor causes, Diderot expands the range of its possible origins. The *Suite [de l’entretien]* ends with a question put by Mlle de l’Espinasse: ‘Where do these abominable tastes come from?’ Bordeu replies: ‘Everywhere from the abnormal nervous systems [*pauvreté d’organisation*] in young men and from decaying of the brains [*corruption de la tête*] of old men. From the **lure of beauty in Athens**, the scarcity of women in Rome, the fear of the pox in Paris’ (p. 104). Physiological causes and social arguments are presented in turn. A positive reason, the lure of beauty, crops up in the middle of negative explanations. ¶ Homosexuality appears in the young as well as the old, among the savage and civilized worlds alike. A reader of travelogues, Diderot ponders the ‘unnatural taste’ of American Indians.finally, he adds a notion that totally transforms the conception of sexuality, turning it into a principle of pleasure in everlasting quest of itself: at the origin of unnatural taste one would find ‘the oddness that leads in everything to uncommon pleasures,’ ‘the quest for a wantonness more easily imagined than explained.’” (Delon, 125-26) In regard to his comedy *Le Train du monde; ou, les mœurs honnêtes comme elles le sont* (1759), Delon finds: “Homosexual desire is now both a fact of nature and a fact of society. Religion suppresses it and portrays it negatively, as Diderot shows in the passion that Suzanne Simonin induces in the mother superior of the convent of Arpajon in *La Religieuse* (written 1760, published 1796). But it can also appear wholly positive in the **Greek antiquity** that often served Diderot as a model. These passions unfolded in a sense of patriotic devotion. Individual and public life were never separated from their physical dimension.” Glossing over Nero and the “twelve Caesars,” Diderot sees the positive qualities of Ancient society. “He contradicts the edulcorated, normalized, and Christianized Greece of the schools with his knowledge of ancient texts. Plato’s love was not platonic love, and the ‘Composition’ entry of the *Encyclopédie* ends with the description of an assembly of the venerable men fascinated by the eloquence and charm of young libertine called Alcibiades (3:553). In the city-state male nudity was a pivot of both public and artistic production. (Ibid., 127)

I do not know what bizarre mixture of libertinage and devotion.’ (6:284)

Better than Tahiti, where sexuality remains subordinate to procreation, Greece becomes a utopian model of liberated bodies. Diderot begins to dream of a similar sexualization of Europe. We, too, could be taken by curiosity and desire for naked men. But how to mention it? It is difficult to confess, even to his best friend, Sophie Volland: ‘Once in the public baths among a number of young men, I noticed one of astonishing beauty, and I could not help drawing near him’ (5:666). [Letter of 24 July, 1762] Acknowledging this desire would transform Western society and religion. Diderot is unafraid of writing the New Testament anew after the pagan model: the Virgin Mary would be praised for her physical beauty and the archangel Gabriel for his fine shoulders. The nuptials at Cana would resemble the feats on Mount Olympus: ‘Christ, half soused, somewhat non-conformist, would have surveyed the bosom of one of the bridesmaids and St John’s buttocks, uncertain whether to remain faithful to the apostle with the chin shaded by light down’ (6:287). The scene is quietly blasphemous. The whole of Diderot’s work cannot be reduced to this one glorification of ancient bisexuality, but one must recognize the recurrence of this theme in Diderot.’⁹⁰

These repeated interconnections between antiquity, male beauty, and the homoerotic anticipate the theoretical groundings of Neoclassicism, and Delon proposes a deeper investigation into this movement (as I’ve begun to undertake).⁹¹

The *Correspondance littéraire et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc.*, deals with the subject of homosexuality—in a critical way—at least twice, for the same readership as Diderot’s *Salons*.⁹² Despite the anti-monasticism of the second account (which describes the crime of the monk Pascal) and despite the fact that celibacy is targeted as well, homosexuality remains, in 1783, a “vice that offends nature.”⁹³ Thus, in the end, the implicit homoeroticism of

⁹⁰ Ibid., 127-29

⁹¹ “Since Diderot’s audacity used the ancient model and is voiced in the *Salons*, we should also investigate neoclassicism as both an aesthetic movement and a political reality at the end of the eighteenth century. Homosexual passion inspired the work of Johann Winckelmann, who saw in pederastic desire the origin of artistic achievement in antiquity and who proposed Greek art as a model for the Europe of his time. Neoclassical painting included numerous pairs of Achilles/Patroclus and Apollo/Hyacinthus or Apollo/Cypris, and Anne-Louis Girodet magnified male beauty in the features of Endymion. Bodies tend toward androgyny, and the scandal of homosexual mating is extenuated by the growing effeminacy of male forms.” (Ibid., 129)

⁹² See below for “Where the vermin live, Rivarol does the cooking, and Champcenetz does the cleaning.” Attributed to Beaumarchais in *Correspondance littéraire et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc.*, ed. Maurice Tourneux, 15 vols. (Paris, 1877-82), 15 : 99

⁹³ This excerpt from the *Correspondance littéraire* occurs with the relating of the monk Pascal incident: It “began more sensationistically but ended more philosophically. It declared that ‘vice that offends nature and love by thwarting their wish,’ presumably for the reproduction of the species, was responsible for this crime of unexampled atrocity and fury. It concluded by invoking nature to denounce not only sodomy but also celibacy, which contradicted ‘the most sweet,

Neoclassicism cannot find an explicit forum before Gay Liberation.

Germany, which most boldly pioneered the gay liberation movement in the late 19th century, was among the first nations to make a bold call for toleration. Friedrich August Braun bravely “pleaded for more leniency in the case of sodomites in his *Dissertatio juridica de mitigatione poenae in crimine sodomiae, von Milderung der Strafe bey dem Laster der Sodomiterey* (Frankfurt, 1750), which he [had] presented in an inaugural address to the faculty of law of his university in 1739.”⁹⁴ Meanwhile, the German lands moved away from capital punishment, while hoping to keep homosexuality invisible.⁹⁵ In the hereditary domains (Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary) of Maria Theresa (r. 1740-80), in the Holy Roman Empire, the Empress prescribed by the *Constitutio Criminalis Theresiana* (1768) that sodomites should be “exterminated from the earth by burning to death.” However, “her son, Joseph II, r. 1780-90, promulgated a new code in 1787 that made ‘disparag[ing] humanity’ through ‘carnal desire with the same sex’ a ‘political crime’ that earned imprisonment, forced labour, and flogging.”⁹⁶

In Prussia, the case was more interesting, since the young prince Frederick came to his majority amidst illicit love and brutal loss. His father, King Friedrich Wilhelm I (r. 1713-40) had decreed that all sodomites in his realm should be burned at the stake, and at least one perished in Potsdam in 1730. As king, Frederick the Great (r. 1740-86) overturned his father’s legislation on Enlightenment grounds, allegedly remarking that “‘in his states he granted freedom of conscience and of cock’. This was not quite true, but the General Prussian Code, drafted during his reign and promulgated in 1794, did replace the death penalty for sodomy with imprisonment

necessary, and admirable wish of nature.’ Unnatural abstinence caused the ‘transport of desire’ that exploded, in this instance, in the most ‘barbarous’ way.” (Merrick, 89)

⁹⁴ Wagner, 53

⁹⁵ “The last execution (by decapitation) for sodomy in Hamburg occurred in 1726 (the accused had raped a boy). The city magistrates usually preferred banishment without trial, or at the very least to hold trials in secret. When Hamburg’s pastors preached about an ongoing sodomy case in 1749, the Senate warned them that this would let common people learn that such crimes were possible.” (Aldrich, 110) Only one case of sodomy came to trial in 18th-century Württemberg, in 1762, and resulted in decapitation. (Ibid., 111)

⁹⁶ Ibid., 109-10

for at least one year, flogging on entering and leaving prison, and banishment for life.”⁹⁷ Although Napoleon brought the more tolerant Code Napoléon to Germany, German homosexuals would suffer again under Prussian laws during the Nazi Holocaust.⁹⁸

If Germany gave Neoclassicism royal patronage and regal erudition, the movement emanated from Italy. Ironically, the least amount of scholarship has been devoted to the homosexual practices of 18th-century Italy, which (like Germany) was not a unified political entity. The four major destinations of the Grand Tour brought visitors through four distinct territories: the Papal States (for Rome), the Grand Duchy of Tuscany (for Florence), the Venetian Republic (for the City of Canals), and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (for Naples, Pompeii, and Paestum). Since visitors were coming from the North, they may have passed through countries such as Savoy, the Republic of Genoa, the Austrian Milanese territory, Modena, or Lucca.

Saslow distinguishes the South as a place where “sex with boys was tolerated.”⁹⁹ However, he alludes to a separation between “grown men [who...] sought each other” out and the ancient tradition of catamite prostitution that flourished in the context of impoverished locals and wealthy tourists, liberated from the types of constraints that fettered them in their home settings.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, money and mores made Southern Italy a fertile ground for classically styled models, ranging from adolescents to young men, in the homoerotic photographs of the German barons Von Gloeden (1856-1931) and Plüschow in the late 19th century. Their photographs, unarguably intended for homosexual arousal rather than the artistry that still provided a veil of respectability, inherited much more than their outward trappings from

⁹⁷ Ibid., 109

⁹⁸ It was not Frederick’s law, but the infamous Paragraph 175 of the German Penal Code, promulgated in 1825, which prescribed prison and the loss of civil rights in cases of “acts against nature” between men. (Nemer, 54) This law was extended to all of Germany in 1871, when Prussia annexed the territory.

⁹⁹ Saslow, *Pictures*, 155. He adds, Likewise, Merrick offhandedly mentions that Italy is “conventionally associated with sodomy.” (Merrick, 88) Certainly, several figures who were banished from their homelands for homosexual activity found refuge in Italy.

¹⁰⁰ Italian boys were more readily available to satisfy travelers’ passions than at home. (Saslow, *Pictures*, 161).

Neoclassical imagery. The settings are classical, filled with Greco-Roman columns and Mediterranean landscapes. Props are limited to timeless vessels; clothing is limited to drapery and sandals (often worn alone); the most common accoutrements include fillets, laurel wreaths, and head garlands. Contrapposto and pseudo-Antique, or Academic, posing is common, but the varied types depart from their predecessors in the unabashed proximity of male body parts and the meatier proportions of the penis. Yet the emphasis on form and contour is neoclassical, as is the pretense for creating these images, which easily masqueraded “officially” as “art images” rather than pornography.

Looking forward to the 18th century from the past proves as enlightening as looking back from the future. Not enough is known about Quattro- and Cinquecento homosexual activity, but this idea of “Italian taste” becomes a leitmotif throughout Europe. Renaissance-era Germans used the verb “*florenzen*” to denote anal sex between two men,¹⁰¹ and 17th-century French satire made connections to the floral city as well.¹⁰² An honor to the city that harbored Poliziano, Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Cellini, it’s rather a shame we don’t speak of “florencing” today! Despite the external acknowledgement of internal vice in Florence, legislation conspired with religion and popular sentiment to keep male-male sex illegal, even during the reign of Gian Gastone, 1723-37. This was true for the entire Italian peninsula, largely under control of the Catholic Church, and it’s difficult to say if the British and French were thinking particularly of Florence in accounts that referred to male homosexuality as “the Italian vice.”¹⁰³ Even at the

¹⁰¹ Crompton, 254

¹⁰² “In one [satirical] song [from the *Chansonnier Maurepas*], Lully states that the beauty of the duchesse de la Ferté enchanted him so much that ‘I who am Florentine, I’ve changed sides’ [*Maurepas* I: 256]” (Lewis C. Seifert, “Masculinity and Satires of ‘Sodomites’ in France, 1660-1715,” in *Homosexuality in French History and Culture*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 2001, 47-48)

¹⁰³ Saslow reports that Renaissance-era Frenchmen referred to homosexuality as the “Italian vice” (a term which, as we have seen, later transmuted into the “*beau vice*” and the “*Italian taste*”). (Saslow, *Ganymede*, 214, n. 73) Later examples likewise refer to an “Italian” vice.

- Samuel Pepys, writing in London, reported hearing in 1663 ‘that buggery is now almost as common among our gallants as in Italy, and that the very pages of the town begin to complain of their masters for it’. (Aldrich, 104: qtd in Richard Davenport-Hines)
- In *Satan’s Harvest Home...* (1749, op. cit.), we read, in one passage, “Oh, cursed fashion! Imported from Italy with a lot of other unnatural vices!...” (qtd. in Bloch, 397-98) In another passage, an English pamphlet described Italy as ‘the Mother of Nurse of Sodomy ... where the Master is oftener intriguing with his Page, than a fair Lady’ (qtd in Sibalis, 103); Wagner offers an alternate piece of the

height of Neoclassicism, in 1799, a satirical French print called “The Italian School” refers both to a national school of painting and to Italy’s supposed taste for sodomy, hinted at by the couple behind the screen.¹⁰⁴ In view of such visibility, in view of the fact that that every major philosopher of the period—from Voltaire and Rousseau to D’Holbach and Diderot—touched upon the subject, it seems almost impossible that educated artists like David and Canova remained uninfluenced and unaware of the subculture pervading the substrata of art and society. In any case, the relative security—not to mention the eye candy, both flesh and sculptural—made Italy a happy home for such homosexuals as Winckelmann and Horace Walpole and a safe haven for banished French and British aristocrats.

citation: “Most publications, whether they were satires or moral diatribes, ascribed the increase of sodomy, which they seemed to perceive, to the ‘Modish way of bringing up young Gentlemen’, and to the ‘Effeminacy of Dress and Manners’, such as kissing each other, a habit ‘brought over from Italy (the Mother and Nurse of Sodomy)’.” (Wagner, 36)

¹⁰⁴Illustrated in Sibalis, p. 104

Chapter 2: Antiquities and the Homosexual Community in Early-Neoclassical Italy

We have finally reached Italy, the birthplace of Neoclassicism. Since I have already traced so much homosexual history, I won't try to recap Neoclassicism, which has been the subject of scholarly discourse for much longer than homosexual studies, notably in Hugh Honour's *Neoclassicism*. However, like all discussions of Neoclassicism, I must weave three currents into my tale. The first is the archaeological excavations that began with Bianchini's digs on the Palatine in from 1726. Farther south of Papal Rome, in the Kingdom of Naples (annexed to Spain in 1735), the discovery of Herculaneum in 1731 and Pompeii in 1748, which would exponentially expand knowledge of Greco-Roman arts, crafts, and culture, would also give impetus to the Neoclassical movements, as more and more ancient treasures were uncovered.¹⁰⁵ The second is the Italian sojourn—or even expatriation to Italy. While artists and scholars made temporary or permanent homes in Rome, Florence, and other Italian cities, archaeology went hand-in-hand with tourism. The exhibition catalogue *Grand Tour: The Allure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century* (1996)¹⁰⁶ provides invaluable information about this phenomenon and delves into a variety of details. The Grand Tourists financed and feasted on the excavations of the antiquarian dealer Gavin Hamilton and other Brits.¹⁰⁷ This market would push excavations farther south, to Paestum and, even later, to Siracusa and other parts of Sicily. The third and final current is the complex French theoretical criticism that called for Grand Manner painting and rejected the Rococo. Academic art never realized that it had foresworn classicism, as the Rococo

¹⁰⁵ Honour notes that initial reactions were somewhat cool—probably because excavations didn't reveal the classical world educated Europeans had come to believe in. (Honour, 45) Honour also notes that interior decoration à la grecque in Paris follows the early excavations, 1750s. However, this was *not* a style based on archaeological exactitude, but rather whimsical notions of Antique — and in rectilinear opposition to curvy Rococo. (Ibid., 26) By 1763, Grimm could write that everything in Paris was à la grecque : exteriors, interiors, furniture, fabrics, jewelry, hairdos; Honour insists on the superficiality of this, going so far as to say it's generally outside of Neoclassical developments. (Honour, 27) Nonetheless, these early years will be equally important to my argument, since both the foundations (theoretical, financial, etc.) and the production play equally important roles in determining what gave birth and prominence to this movement. Winckelmann's first relevant writing were in 1755, 1759, and 1764. Neoclassical theory will fundamentally never advance beyond Winckelmann's work, which epitomizes the movement.

¹⁰⁶ Andrew, and Ilaria Bignamini. *Grand Tour: The Allure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century* (exhibition catalogue). London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1996.

¹⁰⁷ Including Thomas Jenkins, Colin Morison, and Robert Fagan.

culled its delightful, delectable, and dimpled figures from Olympian heights and Arcadian fields, but the clamor for serious, edifying subjects in a clear, cerebral (rather than sensual) style provided the basis for Neoclassicism.

I would add a fourth current, which queer scholars are beginning to take for granted, but which mainstream scholars are still overlooking. This is homoeroticism.¹⁰⁸ The interconnected circles of antiquarians, Grand Tour hosts, collectors, patrons, scholars, and theorists gave birth to the movement long before David painted his *Oath of the Horatii* in 1784. Although David's School of painting and Winckelmann's theories alone capture the essence of homoerotic Neoclassicism, I would like to show that their works emerge from the coalescence of a longstanding subcultural tradition where homosexual men first gathered in a community to disseminate their cultural predilections, and then, in doing so, strengthened and expanded this ever-growing, ever-more visible community. Since Winckelmann was a documented homosexual, the spotlight remains on him, but I shall point out how the German scholar inherited the labors of, formed his opinions around, gained his material means from, and spoke directly to the gay subculture. In fact, philosophical ideas and artistic works are disseminated to future generations of homosexuals, just as sexual mores are handed down. The great philosopher Lord Shaftesbury (1671-1713), who liked young men,¹⁰⁹ wrote the *Characteristicks* Winckelmann so admired.¹¹⁰

Another Prussian antiquarian, who preceded Winckelmann in attaining Rome, was Baron Philipp von Stosch (1691-1757). Like his compatriot, an early work—*Gemmae Antiquae Caelatae*

¹⁰⁸ Saslow, one of the first, calls them "a community of intellectuals and artists marshaling history and aesthetics as a means to self-understanding and justification," and declares that homosexual painters, poets, and theorists (with key support from freethinkers and feminists) were leaders in creating both neoclassicism and romanticism. (Saslow, [Pictures](#), 158)

¹⁰⁹ Trumbach, 91

¹¹⁰ "The source for Winckelmann's ideas on art and morality was the philosophy of the influential and widely read Shaftesbury. Winckelmann was very familiar with Shaftesbury's writings, notably the *Characteristicks* (1711, revised 1714)..." (Irwin, 38)

(*Pierres antiques graveés*), 1724—made him the primary authority on the Antique of his time.¹¹¹

Also like his compatriot, the “expatriated Prussian sodomite” (as Sir Compton Mackenzie called him)¹¹² was as seduced by the Roman youths as by Antiquity. “The legendary deist, freemason, and open homosexual” (in the words of Jonathan Irvine Israel)¹¹³ appears in 1725, during his happy Roman years,¹¹⁴ surrounded by antiquarians in a print by Pier-Leone Ghezzi (fig. 1), in which P. O. Rave (1957) describes the protagonist in a string of not-so-subtle hints at his homosexuality.¹¹⁵ Yet, Stosch actually looks like the most respectable figure amongst the heavily caricatured motley crew. Prominently featured in the background is an antique fragment of a buttocks, which is an early indication of the tongue and cheek associations with Antiquity.

More importantly for the development of Neoclassicism, the baron appears in a Roman-style bust portrait by Edme Bouchardon from 1727 (fig. 2). The premature classicism of this work startles Hugh Honour, who connects the work to the past rather than registering it a harbinger of Neoclassicism.¹¹⁶ However, Michael Levey, who finds this preliminary example the

¹¹¹ “Fortan galt er in Rom, in ganz Italien und überhaupt in der gelehrten Welt als oberster Richter für alles, was Steine und Münzen und schlechthin Altertümer betraf. Jetzt begann er auch, in weitschauender Vorwegnahme einer stadtrömischen Topographie [...] sein großes Unternehmen einer „Kosmographischen Karte“ von Rom, einer Art Generalinventar oder Gesamtaufnahme, die alle antiken und neuen Bauten der Ewigen Stadt in Rissen umfassen sollte und heute noch der Bauforschung vielschichtige, einmalige Unterlagen bietet.” (Rave, 21)

¹¹² Diana Preston, *The Road to Culloden Moor: Bonnie Prince Charlie and the '45 Rebellion*. (London: Constable, 1995), 21.

¹¹³ Jonathan Irvine Israel. *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 133.

¹¹⁴ “Diese römischen Jahre Stoschs waren die reichste und glücklichste Zeit seines Lebens, in der er den Mittelpunkt bildete in jenem drolligen Schwärm verbohrender Antiquare und liebenswerter Dilettanten, Kunstfreunde und Künstler, Kenner, Sammler und Händler, Trödler, Fremdenführer und Kustoden, vielfach geistlichen Standes, die der Ewigen Stadt eine Art wissenschaftliches Lokalkolorit verliehen.” (Rave, 21)

¹¹⁵ James Saslow has identified this type of language to designate the “unnamable” homosexuals. So, Rave, who seems to be dying to tell us something he can’t say, deftly hints at it with known stereotypes, calling the Baron “strange,” “unusual,” and “colorful”: “einer jener merkwürdigen Menschen, die der Kulturgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts so überaus seltsame und farbige Züge verleihen.” (P.O. Rave. “Eine Neuerworbene Bildnisbüste des Barons Philipp von Stosch von Edme Bouchardon,” in *Berliner Museen*, 7. Jahrg., H. 1., Jun., 1957, p. 20) As for his description of the drawing: “So sieht man ihn ... auf Zeichnungen seines Künstlerfreundes Pier Leone Ghezzi, des „römischen Hogarth“, mit *gesuchter Sorgfalt gekleidet* und (eine *bestaunte Sonderbarkeit!*) das Einglas ins Auge geklemmt, ferner auch auf zwei größeren Gedenkblättern von 1725 und 1728 (heute in der Albertina und in der Vaticana), auf denen man unseren Stosch als einzigen im Lehnstuhl sitzen sieht, während vor ihm ein Dutzend oder mehr höchst abenteuerlich anzuschauender Altertümpler versammelt steht, sich Rats zu holen bei dem allwissenden Orakel; die schöne Vorarbeit dazu zeigt ihn mit seinem den Fiaschetto schwenkenden Ragazzo.....” (Rave, 21-22) (Unfortunately, Rave has not illustrated this preparatory study with the Italian boy.)

¹¹⁶ Honour cites a bust of the fifth count of Exeter, from 1701, as a precedent. (Hugh Honour. *The Connoisseur*, May 1958, p. 220. (Also discussed in Levey.). On the other hand, Rave cites a portrait medallion of the Baron by Giovanni Pozzo from 1717. (22; illus. p. 23) This bust, with the same toga draped over Stosch’s right shoulder, is clearly a reference to the sitter’s

most successful of Bouchardon's busts, calls it "deliberately revolutionary in its cold, pure classicism."¹¹⁷ Levey continues:

Cette œuvre, « antique » dans sa conception et son exécution, est tellement néoclassique que l'on est surpris de constater que Winckelmann n'avait encore que dix ans à l'époque. Bouchardon étudia certainement des bustes comme celui du cardinal Borghese par Bernin, mais son portrait est nettement un rejet du baroque, un pastiche tellement parfait de la fin du style classique que l'on croirait avoir affaire à quelque empereur décadent. Stosch aurait probablement apprécié cette analogie...¹¹⁸

Although Levey finds that the statue's style cannot entirely be explained by the classical tastes of the model because Bouchardon executed two classical-type portraits from the 1730s that have nothing to do with classically-minded patrons,¹¹⁹ he does not take into account that Bouchardon has already absorbed Stosch's influence. In fact, it hardly seems coincidental that Bouchardon was working on a copy of the *Barberini Faun*—that statue which has so vividly captured the homoerotic imagination for centuries—for the King of France at a time (1726-30) when he was associated with Stosch. (fig. 3) (All the *pensionnaires* in Rome were required to make a copy after the antique to send back to France.)

Bouchardon and Stosch share a connection to another "queer" work of art. In 1729, while Bianchini was digging on the Palatine, the Frenchman diplomat and antiquarian Melchior de Polignac¹²⁰ made an important discovery of marble statues while burrowing into a Roman suburban villa in 1729.¹²¹ The group was identified as Odysseus about to discover the young Achilles, dressed as a maiden among the Daughters of King Lykomedes. A strapping young man in drag: what could be gayer than that? As a friend of Polignac, Stosch played a significant role

enthusiasm for coin-collecting and creates a direct link between Stosch's interest in the antique and Bouchardon's image of him.

¹¹⁷ Levey, 96.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ "...car Bouchardon concevra peu après une statue du Prince de Waldeck, pratiquement nu (1730), tandis que le seul portrait en buste qu'il exécuta en France est celui du *Marquis de Gouvernet* (1736), où il se dépense même du morceau de draperie qui figure encore sur le buste de Stosch. Il s'agit là d'une forme extrême du style romain de Bouchardon. » (Levey, 96)

¹²⁰ Rave calls him a "witty Frenchman, accomplished Latinist, and sparkling conversationalist," "an expert coin collector and, in competition with Mosignore Alessandro Albani, bent on snatching up the treasures from the Roman ground." (Rave, 23) As a cardinal, he never married, and his sexual interests are not widely documented.

¹²¹ Ibid.

in the restoration of the work, which was effected by Bouchardon and other members of the Académie de France.¹²² Winckelmann pointed out that Stosch modeled for the head of the spear-bearing transvestite.¹²³ (fig. 4) Friedrich der Grosse's later purchase of Polignac's collection establishes a link between two generations of homosexual antiquities enthusiasts. Also through his friendship with Polignac, Baron von Stosch entered the circle of Cardinal Albani,¹²⁴ who, despite 20th century appraisals of Bouchardon's bust, seems to have appreciated the work as a representation of early neoclassicizing tendencies.¹²⁵

During this time, while he undertook a second volume of the *Gemmae*, Stosch assembled around him a group of young artists, some of whom lived in his house. He lived "most closely" with the artist Johann Justin Preisler, who not only made a copperplate of Bouchardon's bust of Stosch but also engraved five of Bouchardon's drawings of Roman statues.¹²⁶ Stosch left Rome, presumably for irreligion, for Florence in 1731. There, in 1756, he received a letter from the newly arrived Winckelmann, who wished to view his famed collection. An epistolary exchange regarding the collection specifically and Antique art in general began, but the Baron was nearing the end of his life.¹²⁷ Winckelmann became his direct homosexual inheritor, as his work was underwritten by Baron von Stosch's nephew and heir, Heinrich Wilhelm Muselius, another lifelong bachelor, who had come to stay in Florence with Stosch in 1757 and had been adopted as his heir.

Before rushing to Winckelmann, we should consider other important early influences. The sexually ambiguous antiquarian and connoisseur Anne-Claude-Philippe de Tubières, comte de

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ P. O. Rave discusses this relationship by citing a letter (preserved in the *Correspondance des directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome*, VII, 1724-1728) from the painter Nicolas Vleughels to the Duc d'Antin, dated 26 November 1727. "Il (le Cardinal Alexandre Albani) a vu un portrait en marbre qu'un de nos pensionnaires a fait, qui lui a beaucoup plu; aussi est-il très bien. Ce pensionnaire se nomme Bouchardon. Le portrait est d'un Allemand, nommé le baron Stochen (sic !), ministre ici de différents princes et pensionnaire d'Angleterre. Il est ami du Cardinal (Al. A-bani)." (Vgl. Festschrift der Nationalbibliothek in Wien, Wien 1926, S. 231, Anmerkung.) (Cited in Rave, 20)

¹²⁶ Rave, 23-24

¹²⁷ Ibid., 25

Caylus (1692-1765) “kissed the head of a fawn each night before going to bed and ... nearly worshipped homoerotic marbles such as the heads and coins of Antinous he collected by the hundreds.”¹²⁸ Caylus, whom Diderot disliked, was, like his compatriot Polignac, a member of the *Ordre de la Mouche à Miel* and a wealthy art collector, but he was also an outspoken advocate of Neoclassicism and a protector of Bouchardon. The latter, whose career advanced under the patronage of Stosch, Polignac, and various members of the Albani circle,¹²⁹ created an original homoerotic work for the French royal court, *Amour faisant un arc...* (1734/50) (fig. 5), born in scandal and bred in shame. The sculptor was arrested when he solicited a boy bathing in the Seine.¹³⁰ Although he was acquitted when it was recognized that he was in search of a model, the scandal attests to an unconventional methodology and even hints at the unduly lustful gaze of a riverside *flâneur* upon his subject. It’s worth noting that in 1726, when Bouchardon was working with Baron Stosch in Rome, the history painter Jean-Baptiste Nattier (older brother of the better-known Jean-Marc Nattier) committed suicide in prison after he was compromised in the Deschauffours scandal.¹³¹ The type of post-mortem disgrace inflicted upon him by the Académie—not to mention his suicide—indicates what types of professional and social problems artists would face if their homosexuality was exposed. In any case, Bouchardon’s esteemed position and spotless record prompted his release with no stain on his reputation. Nonetheless, disapproving courtiers found too much of the *gamin* in Bouchardon’s over-aged Cupid. (The dismissal of mythological figures as “common” resounds through 19th-century Salon criticism like a code word for “lascivious,” or suggestive of the prostitutes artists typically used for

¹²⁸ G. S. Rousseau. “Travel Literature,” at [www.glbtc.com](http://www.glbtc.com/literature/travel_lit.html) (http://www.glbtc.com/literature/travel_lit.html, Feb. 2012)

¹²⁹ « À Rome, Bouchardon exécutera des bustes des cardinaux français Rohan et Polignac, mais son entrée dans le cercle gravitant autour du cardinal Albani – certainement facilitée par la commande de Stosch et par son amitié avec Ghezzi – lui sera également utile, et, lorsqu’en 1730 un Corsini est élu pape sous le nom de Clément XII, l’amitié de Vleughels et du cardinal Neri Corsini (neveu du pape et amateur d’art) vaudra à Bouchardon de réaliser un buste du nouveau souverain pontife. » (Levey, 96)

¹³⁰ Honour, 116

¹³¹ Saslow, *Pictures*, 157

models.) They also found the pose, with its blatantly coy “*manque de naturel*,” disconcerting.¹³²

Caylus’s other protégé was Bouchardon’s pupil Louis-Claude Vassé, who was pit against Jacques Saly at the Salon of 1751 with their respective *morceaux de réception*. Vassé’s *Sleeping Shepherd* (fig. 6) essentially reworks the pose of the Barberini Faun that his master had created for the Louvre, but lacks the erotic charge that gives the antique work such force. Ironically, Caylus lays the same type of criticism on Saly’s *Jeune Faune tenant un chevreau* (fig. 7) that had met Bouchardon’s Cupid: he found much of the “*homme de campagne*” in the young man. However, he quickly added, “Mais c’est un jeune homme que tous les rapports rendent noble et agréable.”¹³³ If we are to believe that Caylus was kissing statues of fauns, it seems inevitable that he would have enjoyed Saly’s delightful work, on the brink of the Neoclassical with its Praxitelean contrapposto, graceful musculature, and kriophoros pose.

Caylus was France’s most important antiquarian collector and early Neoclassical theoretician, but in Italy, others paved the way for Winckelmann. One of his correspondents was the antiquarian and doctor Giovanni Ludovico Bianconi (1717-81), who wrote works on Piranesi, Mengs, and the “Circuses” of Ancient Rome. His brother Carlo Bianconi was a Neoclassical painter, but his connection to the court of Saxony put him into contact with another German-oriented Italian, the philosopher and art critic, Francesco Algarotti (1712-64). Algarotti charmed Frederick the Great, who introduced him to Voltaire and wrote letters of such passionate friendship that many have surmised that they had an actual love affair. In fact, Algarotti was largely rumored to be homosexually active and corresponded with other prominent homosexually active men, such as the politician Lord Hervey.¹³⁴ Voltaire, who reportedly gave him the epithet “the dear swan of Padua,” reportedly said of the philosopher, “When I see the tender Algarotti crush with passionate embrace the handsome Lugeac, his young friend, I

¹³² Levey, 100

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 126

¹³⁴ See Robert Halsband. *Lord Hervey: Eighteenth-Century Courtier*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973)

imagine I see Socrates fastened on the rump of Alcibiades”¹³⁵—yet another instance where Voltaire viewed homosexuality in derisive but very Greek terms. Algarotti, whose life ended in 1764, belonged more to the Rococo than to the Neoclassical period, but his championing of Palladio—like Winckelmann’s championing of the Antique—gave momentum to Europe’s conversion to Neoclassicism.

While many of these men remained in contact through letters, many gathered under the roof of Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692-1779). He had already established himself as one of Rome’s leading antiquities collectors when he made plans for his famous Villa Albani (1745; built from 1751 to 1763). The villa featured a distinguished collection of antique sculpture and a “homosocial atmosphere tolerant of discreet bisexuality.”¹³⁶ Nonetheless, his worldly and undisciplined customs, and his sympathy with the Hanoverian party in Great Britain (whereas Clement kept the Stuart pretender as his perennial guest in Rome), exemplified by his friendship with Baron Philipp von Stosch, who shared many of Cardinal Albani’s interests, and his correspondence with Sir Horace Mann, the British envoy at Florence from 1740-86, caused Clement many occasions of concern.¹³⁷

Mann’s home made Florence a pivotal congregating point for British homosexuals.¹³⁸ There gathered such figures as Thomas Patch, “who accepted Mann’s hospitality after being banished from papal Rome in 1755 for some homosexual indiscretion, [and] painted popular caricatures of his visiting countrymen,”¹³⁹ and Horace Walpole, with whom he corresponded for many years.¹⁴⁰ Walpole (1717-97), who pioneered the Gothic revival with Strawberry Hill and the *Castle of Otranto* (1765), nonetheless gave early momentum to the Neoclassical movement.

¹³⁵ qtd. at Rictor Norton, “Lord Hervey,” from Great Queens of History (www.ricknorton.co.uk/hervey.htm, March 2012) (From Halsband, 272)

¹³⁶ Saslow, Pictures, 159

¹³⁷ They corresponded in particular in preparation for the visit of the Duke of York in 1763 (Bignamini, 33) For the Albani-Mann correspondence, see Lesley Lewis, Connoisseurs and Secret Agents in Eighteenth-Century Rome, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961.)

¹³⁸ Mann himself was called a sodomite by the gossipy Mrs. Thrale. (Saslow, Pictures, 163)

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ingamells, Grand Tour, 22-23

He traveled to Florence with the poet Thomas Gray in the 1730s, amassing Antinous figures and other classical trophies, while Duke Gian Gastone amassed trophy boys in the streets.¹⁴¹

Much later in the century, William Beckford (1760-1844), the richest man in England, found a haven in Florence when he was “hounded out of Britain in 1784 after being caught in the bedroom of an earl’s sixteen-year-old son.”¹⁴² After his Grand Tour of the Uffizi Tribuna, he said, “I fell into a delightful delirium which none but *souls like us* experience.”¹⁴³ (We might recall this comment singling out homosexuals when we read Canova’s reaction to the Belvedere collection.)

Meanwhile, south of Florence, the Brits also enjoyed Cardinal Albani’s liberal policy regarding excavation and exportation. The cardinal, who enjoyed special diplomatic relations with London and Vienna,¹⁴⁴ was “architect of the Papal Government’s new foreign policy, which meant that he had crucial input regarding the exportation of arts.”¹⁴⁵ British Grand Tourists also liberally patronized Italian portraitists like Pompeo Batoni, one of the earliest Neoclassical history painters to favor the male nude.¹⁴⁶ Back at home, “connoisseurs formed clubs like the Society of the Dilettanti, whose name still perpetuates the link between homosexuals and amateur art collecting and appreciation.”¹⁴⁷ One of the Society’s members was Thomas Dundas, later 1st Baron of Dundas, who is depicted by Batoni in a full-length portrait from 1764 with the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoön, the so-called Belvedere Antinous, and the Vatican Ariadne.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴¹ Saslow, Pictures, 163

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 165

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Ingamells, 23

¹⁴⁵ Bignamini, 33 [“From 1764, shortly after the Duke of York left Rome, until 1796, a long series of excavation licences was issued to British excavators such as Thomas Jenkins, Gavin Hamilton, Colin Morison, and Robert Fagan, the latter obtaining an exceptionally long-lasting general licence ... in 1793. Nothing comparable occurred with excavators of other nationalities, who were very few.” (*Ibid.*, 33-34)]

¹⁴⁶ Examples include the *Hercules at the Crossroads* of 1765 and the *Achilles Recalled by Thetis* of 1770. Before converting to a portrait-painter and neoclassicist, Batoni had already shown interest in the male nude in such paintings as *Achilles Being Taught by the Centaur Chiron* of 1746, *Apollo and the Two Muses* of 1747, and earlier versions of *Hercules at the Crossroads* (1748, Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna; 1742, Pitti)

¹⁴⁷ Saslow, Pictures, 162-63

¹⁴⁸ Bignamini

Not all Italian artists felt a natural affinity with the Neoclassical style. Wilhelm Friedrich Schaumburg-Lippe, a 28-year-old German baron, commissioned Giovanni Battista Tiepolo to make the *Death of Hyacinth*, c. 1752 (fig. 8). The baron “lived blissfully in Venice with a Spanish musician until the youth died in 1751. Since Wilhelm’s father wrote to him about ‘your friend Apollo,’ the bereaved younger noble probably commissioned this memorial to as a tribute to his lost godlike beloved.”¹⁴⁹ Although this work provides one of the earliest examples of a homosexual patron culling from classical mythology to openly allegorize his own love affair, Tiepolo remained almost entirely within a Baroque paradigm. The Michelangelesque figure of the dying Hyacinth recalls classical precedents, but the grief-stricken, lumbering Apollo, the crowded composition, the assorted costumes, and the discus-turned-tennis racket are not quite the best anticipators of the emerging Neoclassicism.

Nonetheless, in the 1750s artists like Batoni and Vien were looking at archaeological findings to produce simplified frieze-like compositions that combined Rococo charm with Poussinesque sobriety. Meanwhile, Albani’s library attracted Winckelmann—and then all the artists inspired by him; “Mengs, Von Maron, Angelika Kauffmann, Tischbein, Kniep, and Hachert were the ground-breakers.”¹⁵⁰ Winckelmann’s influence makes him a primary focus of study.

¹⁴⁹ Saslow, *Pictures*, 163-64.

¹⁵⁰ De Seta, *Grand Tour*, 17

Chapter 3: Winckelmann and the Theorization of a Figurative Homosexual Aesthetic

Chapter 3 – i. Winckelmann’s Homosexual Aesthetic

Although the male nude abounds in Neoclassicism, its embodiment of the *beau idéal* makes it little more than an aseptic trope for elevation of character: Neoclassical exponents transubstantiated masculine flesh, muscle, and sinews into a metaphysical ideal devoid of sensuous earthly trappings.¹⁵¹ This interpretation has legitimate theoretical foundations dating back to the inception of the Neoclassical aesthetic, notably in the writing of Johann Joachim Winckelmann. However, these foundations have a *dual* aspect, of which the epithetical “noble simplicity and calm grandeur” accounts for only one half, the exterior aspect. The other, interior aspect, historically overlooked due to its homoerotic implications, consists of what might be called a “wistful yearning and subtle eroticism,” in which the male nude, under the male gaze, anxiously asserts itself as the site of desire.

The anxiety surrounding the long-suppressed erotic aspect of the Neoclassical male nude¹⁵² manifests itself, foremost, in the tension between the artists’ desire to show the *entire* body and their contrived ways of concealing genitals, pubic hair, and buttocks. Covering these anatomical parts only emphasizes their potential erotic potency. On the other hand, the titillating exposure of the normally hidden parts of the body openly invites sexual thoughts. Thus, an imposing question looms regarding the discrepancies between the view of Neoclassicism as an “academic” and “institutional” art and its anxious decrivals of “indecent” and “licentiousness.” What motivated artists to skirt propriety and even trespass into the prurient? The male nude, inherently or willfully sexualized, becomes a disruptive force that jolts traditional Neoclassicism out of its

¹⁵¹ Kant’s idealism has been particularly influential in later interpretations of Neoclassicism.

¹⁵² This desire has been noted by post-Feminist scholars. Notably, Abigail Solomon-Godeau’s *Male Trouble* uses a primarily heterocentric dichotomy to explain the type non-heroic beauty of the male figure that she identifies as “male trouble;” she even attempts to assign rather traditional male and female pictorial roles to the homosocial world of Neoclassicism without satisfactorily delving into the homosexual context blatantly offered by the Antique.

exclusively serene, noble, rational pretensions and re-fixes it in a sensual, emotional, yearning paradigm expressive of the homosexual experience.

This experience, as elaborated in Winckelmann's writing, centers on passionate desire for the male forms he singled out one by one for sensuous description in his *History of Ancient Art*: eyes, lips, hands, legs, chest, abdomen, and even the "private parts." But these desires, forbidden from man to man, also imply feelings of alienation and melancholy, frustration and longing, dissemblance and defiance—all elements of Winckelmann's theory that would give emotional depth to Neoclassical depictions of the *beau idéal*. His conclusion for the *History of Ancient Art* reads (with my italics):

I have in this history of art already gone far beyond its bounds; and though in observing its decline I almost feel like someone who, when describing the history of his fatherland, has to touch on its destruction, which he himself has experienced, nevertheless I could not restrain myself from gazing after the fate of works of art as far as my eye could see. Just as a woman in love, standing on the shore of the ocean, seeking out with *tear-filled eyes* her *departing lover* whom she has no hope of ever seeing again, thinks she can glimpse in the distant sail the image of her *beloved*; we, like the woman in our love, have remaining to us, so to speak, only the shadowy outline of *our desires*: but this makes the *desire for the objects* we have lost *ever more ardent*, and we examine the copies of the original masterpieces with greater attention than we would have done were we to be in *full possession* of them.¹⁵³

Identifying with the woman in order to propose an amorous relationship, Winckelmann is the lover and the loser—of men and of art, which he conflates.¹⁵⁴ As such, his emotional range extends from longing and melancholy to ardor and teariness. Employing the philosophical language of "lover" and "beloved," he is evoking the prescribed roles of Athenian homosexual practice: that of *erastes* and of *eromenos*. Suggesting that the graven forms of the male nude are but "the shadowy outline of our desires," he is acknowledging the lost-and-found carnal

¹⁵³ Quoted in Alex Potts. *Flesh and Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 127

¹⁵⁴ Compare to this wistful passage from Winckelmann's "Description of the Torso in the Belvedere in Rome," in which he also identifies with the woman lover: "O, I would like to see this imagine the greatness and beauty in which it revealed itself to the understanding of the artist... But, full of sadness, I stop, and just like Psyche as she began to lament love once she had learned about it! My great fortune, following upon the artist's great fortune, was to learn of this work..." (*Essays on the Philosophy and History of Art*, Vol. 1, ed. Curtis Bowman. (Bristol, England: Thoemmes, 2001), xviii)

pleasures hovering between marmoreal representation and fleshy reality.

Kenneth Clark, one of the earliest scholars to speak and write at length about the nude, tellingly titled his 1953 lecture on the subject “*A Study in Ideal Form*.” He still conceived of the naked (versus “nude”) form as something embarrassing and awkward, but he dealt frankly with the eroticism of the nude. He wrote, “no nude, however abstract, should fail to arouse in the spectator some vestige of erotic feeling, even though it be only the faintest shadow—and if it does not do so, it is bad art and false morals.”¹⁵⁵ Clark bravely refused to qualify the spectator in terms of gender. The nude may be male or female; the viewer may be male or female—and of any sexual orientation. Regardless, a well-presented nude arouses.

Clark, however, finds little eroticism in Neoclassicism: “...when nude figures, which had been evolved to express an idea, ceased to do so, and were represented for their physical perfection alone, they soon lost their value. This was the fatal legacy of neoclassicism...”¹⁵⁶ Clark’s view is hardly isolated. Hugh Honour points out that the term “Neo-classicism” was “invented in the mid-19th century as a pejorative term for what was then thought to be a lifeless, chilly, and impersonal ‘antique revival’ style expressed in still-born imitations of Graeco-Roman sculpture.”¹⁵⁷ Earlier, 18th-century critics, theorists, and artists had used the term “true style”—one for all men, in all times—and “*risorgimento*” to designate their aims and ideology, thus designating artists as the mouth-pieces for eternal truths, edifying subjects, and noble themes tending towards a stylistic austerity that reflected the simple virtues of their messages.¹⁵⁸ However, the aspiration to lofty ideals, elaborated at length over the course of the 18th century, dissipated with the French Revolution before Winckelmannian pictorial principles were even fully explored. The lasting hallmark of Neoclassicism proved to be its search for perfect beauty

¹⁵⁵ Kenneth Clark. *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*. (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964), 8

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 26. In fact, Clark does not disdain to include more than two examples of male Neoclassical nudes—Mengs’s *Parnassus* and Canova’s *Perseus*—in his work. David, Flaxman, and Girodet are mentioned, without any discussion of their nudes, and artists such as Guérin and Fabre are not even considered. (Some of the 19th century omissions for males are even more outrageous—but this was, of course, before gay studies brought many rarely seen works to light.)

¹⁵⁷ Honour, 14

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 18-19; 29

(the *beau idéal*) in Greco-Roman models—a concept which never explicitly abandoned ennobling principles but which primarily distinguishes it from Grand Siècle classicism and the mythology-laden Rococo.

As early as 1755, Winckelmann, in his *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*, had bound the search for the true style to an emulation of the Antique,¹⁵⁹ defining its primary attributes as “*stille Einfalt und edle Größe.*” These descriptors implicitly reject Rococo licentiousness and ornamentation, as they search to purify society of corruption, decadence, and vice. However, when Winckelmann rejected sexual license, he targeted the privileges of the heterosexual aristocracy (led, in example, by the French). In Rococo art, the female figure was the primary object of representation, elaboration, and consumption, but the nude was not always the primary attribute. Ironically, perhaps for the first time in Western art, the *clothed* body fetishistically incarnated sexual desire.¹⁶⁰ Satin shoes and skirts, silk stockings and petticoats, velvet gowns and gloves, and stiff corsets excite the senses, just as powder and rouge, lace and frills, bows and garters accentuate the body parts offered for (male) delectation. However, there was enough nudity for Diderot to lament:

Je ne suis pas un capucin ; j’avoue cependant que je sacrifierais volontiers le plaisir de voir de belles nudités, si je pouvais hâter le moment où la peinture et la sculpture, plus décentes et plus morales, songeront à concourir, avec les autres beaux-arts, à inspirer la vertu et à épurer les mœurs. Il me semble que j’ai assez vu de tétons et de fesses ; ces objets séduisants contrarient l’émotion de l’âme, par le trouble qu’ils jettent dans les

¹⁵⁹ Contemporaries who immediately seized upon his ideas were Mengs, who elaborated some of these ideas with him and Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his foundational lectures to the British Academy. In France, where the Academy had been established for a much longer period of time, artists and critics proliferated Winckelmann’s ideas, notably Quatremère de Quincy and Jacques-Louis David.

¹⁶⁰ Margaret Walters, in *The Nude Male: A New Perspective*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1978) observes, “In eighteenth-century art, there are signs of a new and modern self-consciousness about nakedness. People are excitedly or uneasily aware that the nude is an undressed body. It is not nudity but clothes that excite and stimulate. Clothes are fetishized, and fabric ... arouses artists more than the skin. Rococo is the art of the striptease. ... Fashionable dress ... is the major theme of eighteenth-century art, at least in France.” (204) A contemporary source expresses disapproval at the “effeminacy” of this tendency : “...whilst we look on Paintings with the same eye, as we view commonly the rich Stuffs and colour’d Silks worn by our Ladys, and admir’d in Dress, Equipage, or Furniture, we must of necessity be *effeminate* in our Taste.” (207)

sens.¹⁶¹

Diderot's quote, while stressing the idea that ubiquitous female nudity carries the inherent problem of a disturbing eroticism in Rococo art, raises the question of precisely what changes occur (if any) when "*belles nudités*" are transferred to the male subjects of Neoclassical art. If we recall Diderot's own contemporary writing, there is little difference: "... the master of the gods, intoxicating himself with the nectar poured brimful by the hand of a young boy with ivory shoulders and alabaster thighs, makes the heart of his jealous wife swell with spite."¹⁶² Desire arose from beauty, exemplified no more by Thetis's feet and Venus's bosom than by Apollo's shoulders and Ganymede's "rounded buttocks." Accordingly, we have seen Diderot confess that he "could not help drawing near" a man "of astonishing beauty" in the public baths.¹⁶³

If Diderot approached beauty, Winckelmann touched it, both literally and figuratively. His writing always departed from a fusion of eroticism with perfect form. However, he did not discourage heterocentric interpretations of Neoclassical nudity as morally purifying. In fact, for many artists following Winckelmann, the deliberate rejection of Rococo heterosexuality could serve as a foil to the homoerotic basis of Neoclassicism. Throughout history, the homosexual subculture has repeatedly seized upon figurative art based on classical precedents to transgress taboos.¹⁶⁴ Homosexuals have also proved adept at coding their desires in complex theoretical frameworks or multi-layered images that obscured their transgressions¹⁶⁵ in order to avoid imprisonment, banishment, physical abuse, death sentences, or other types of public

¹⁶¹ Denis Diderot. *Pensées détachées sur la peinture*, 1776-77. Full quote in French at <http://www.univ-paris-diderot.fr/2009/dif-20090710.php> (Also partially quoted in Honour, 118)

¹⁶² (Salon de 1763, 5:420) Qtd in Michel Delon, "The Priest, the Philosopher, and Homosexuality in Enlightenment France" (*Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality during the Enlightenment*, Robert Purks Maccubbin, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 127-28

¹⁶³ Op. cit.

¹⁶⁴ This idea becomes apparent in James Saslow's pioneering work on the history of gay art, *Pictures and Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts*.

¹⁶⁵ A salient and easily graspable example of this is Marsden Hartley's *Portrait of a German Soldier*, which abstracted his beloved into a formal arrangement of shapes and colors to such a successful degree that its meaning was almost entirely lost by viewers. (See Jonathan Weinberg, *Speaking for Vice: Homosexuality in the Art of Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and the First American Avant-garde*. (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1993)

condemnation and recrimination.¹⁶⁶ Winckelmann, with the typical subtlety and subversiveness of the sexual outcast, framed homosexual desire in a way that simultaneously disguised it from the general public while speaking directly to an initiated clandestine subculture.¹⁶⁷ Winckelmann makes it very clear to his initiated audience that he cannot write with complete freedom. He ends the preface to his *History of Art* by saying,

As Greek art is the principal point which this *History* has in view, I have, consequently, been obliged in the chapter upon it to enter more into detail; yet I should have been able to say more if I had written for the Greeks, and not in a modern tongue, which imposes on me certain restrictions. For this reason, I have, although reluctantly, left out a *Dialogue upon Beauty*, after the manner of the *Phaedrus of Plato*, which would have served to elucidate my remarks when speaking of it theoretically.¹⁶⁸

This statement enables readers to capture the essence of his motives and his enthusiasm: art appreciation is bound to the experience of “Socratic love,” as Voltaire named homosexuality. Without acknowledging his omission, Winckelmann would have left a hole in his theory filled only by indirect—though none the less transparent—allusions to homoeroticism in his passionate descriptions of antique art and culture.¹⁶⁹

Feeling at odds with society as both a sexual misfit and an unprivileged scholar,¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ For one of the most recent, and most comprehensive works, with multiple references, see Louis Crompton. *Homosexuality and Civilization*. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003).

¹⁶⁷ Saslow, 161. Of course, many, including Goethe, recognized early on the importance of homosexuality in Winckelmann’s theories. (See Whitney Davis, “Winckelmann Divided: Mourning the Death of Art History,” in the *Journal of Homosexuality*. The Haworth Press, Inc., Vol. 27, No. 1/2, 1994, pp. 141-59. On Goethe: p. 145-46) Nonetheless, this aspect was not stressed, and those who wished to overlook it could do so quite easily. Ultimately, eroticism is implied more than explicitly stated. Potts writes, “On the one hand, he voices an unusually explicit erotic enjoyment of the male nude together with a quite passionate apologia for the value of male friendship and love. ... [I]t comes as close to homosexuality as was allowable in a public context in the eighteenth century. Equally, however, Winckelmann’s writing could not but be inflected by his culture’s prohibition on associating ideal manhood with sexual desire between men.” (Potts, 5) Potts goes on to explain the restrictions Winckelmann himself felt in this public context. Most pertinently for his public face, Winckelmann, fearing that his reputation was finally catching up with him, tried to recant or disavow the apparently all-too-obvious homoerotic overtones of his writing. (Potts, 208-21)

¹⁶⁸ Quoted in David Irwin. *Winckelmann: Writings on Art*. (New York: Phaidon, 1972.), 105-06. Saslow and Potts are among the first to allude to Winckelmann’s self-cited omissions.

¹⁶⁹ Essentially, Alex Potts has already summarized Winckelmann’s writing on Greek art, whose most “visibly striking aspect” is “the unapologetically sensuous homoeroticism of his reading of the Greek male nude.” (Potts, 5) Potts goes on to say that the male becomes “for the male viewer both an object of desire and an ideal subject with which to identify.” (Ibid.) He adds: “I found it impossible to make sense of even the most scholarly ideologically and psychically charged fantasies evoked by the Greek body beautiful which keep erupting in his text.” (Ibid., 9)

¹⁷⁰ Alex Potts, who discusses the surge of interest in Winckelmann’s writing several decades after his death and the focus on his humble background, also writes: “While exploring the partially disavowed problems and contradictions inherent in

Winckelmann was prone to an intellectual and emotional escapism apparent in both his scholarly and private writing. Relatively scant historical references to Greek society enabled him to reframe it as a land of political and sexual freedom. The historical accounts of Spartan warriors, the philosophical discourse and recorded practice of classical Athens, the imagery on ancient pottery and excavated walls, and the countless stories from Greek mythology and heroic history provided the foundation for an imaginative homosocial ideal where male beauty and homosexual practice were duly celebrated.¹⁷¹ His writing, a mix of flights of fancy and historical scholarship, constantly expresses a wistful wandering to a bygone era, and his imagination is actively at work in his descriptions of antique art he had not yet seen before going to Rome, just as it is in his passages on Greek gymnasia inspired by Plato and other ancient writers.¹⁷² He declares:

The gymnasia, where, sheltered by public modesty, the youths exercised themselves naked, were the schools of art. ...Phidias [frequented them] for the improvement of his art by their beauty. Here, he studied the elasticity of muscles, the ever varying motions of the frame, the outlines of fair forms, or the contour left by the young wrestler on the sand. Here *beautiful nakedness* appeared with such a liveliness of expression, such *truth* and variety of situations, such a *noble air of the body*, as it would be ridiculous to look for in any hired model of our academies.¹⁷³

Winckelmann has found the means of tying Diderot's "*belles nudités*" to truth and nobility, while ever implying corporeal pleasure ("elasticity of muscles," "varying motions," "fair forms").

Winckelmann's conception of the Greek ideal, I hold to the dominance of two issues that feature centrally and explicitly in his account of Greek art: the ideal of political and subjective freedom and the sensual eroticism of ancient Greek images of ideal masculinity." (Ibid., 9)

¹⁷¹ All of Europe (and not just homosexuals!) was aware of the homosexual associations with Antiquity. Already, in the 18th century, the term "sodomite" was falling out of usage—in common and official speech—in favor of expressions designating community. Many—such as Greek love, Socratic love, and pederasty, as well as the term "ganymedes" or "Adonises" for homosexuals themselves—were redolent of the antique, thus further establishing the psychic import of Ancient Greece in the Early-modern gay mind.

¹⁷² Plato, in the *Phaedrus*, situates the gymnasium as one place where homoerotic desire emerges: "And when this feeling continues and he [the beloved/eromenos] is nearer to him [the lover/erastes] and embraces him, in gymnastic exercises and at other times of meeting, then the fountain of that stream, which Zeus when he was in love with Ganymede named Desire, overflows upon the lover, and some enters into his soul, and some when he is filled flows out again..." (Plato, *Phaedrus*, Lines 250-60, translated by Benjamin Jowett, Digireads: Stilwell, Kansas, 2006)

¹⁷³ From *On the Imitation...* (Irwin, 64) Whitney Davis comments, "...the naturalistic beauty of Greek statues derived, he says, from the Greek sculptors' close observation of inherently beautiful boys naked in the gymnasium. But why the boys are beautiful is not represented as an hallucination of the historian-observer himself, who cannot actually see them." (Davis, 143)

Winckelmann's entry into the Eternal City immersed him into the homosexual subculture gathered around the study and appreciation of antiquities discussed above;¹⁷⁴ it also gave him access to a real-life beauty that approached his artistic ideal. His private correspondence and professional writing, overlapping in the same subculture, share the same sensual and ecstatic tone. His second year in Rome, he wrote to a friend: "How beautiful are the boys of Italy. Here nature deviates as little as possible from her most beautiful form, the straight line of the forehead and nose, and I have the pleasure to observe this every day in a young Roman who is one of the most beautiful of men."¹⁷⁵ Meanwhile, in his professional writing of the same period, he goes into raptures over the Apollo Belvedere, the Belvedere "Antinous," and the Laocoön. Among the many examples of his sensual descriptions of the male body, one of the most direct allusions to homosexuality is in that of Apollo's mouth, "shaped as one from which voluptuous desire flowed to the beloved Branchus."¹⁷⁶ Homosexuality is also represented by the figure of Antinous (destined to become an icon of the 19th-century homosexual subculture¹⁷⁷). Winckelmann, taken with the beauty of a statue in the Belvedere Collection, mistakenly identified it as Emperor Hadrian's favorite. The relief of *Antinous as the Mythical Vertumnus* (fig. 9), which he declared to be "a paragon of male beauty,"¹⁷⁸ appears with him in a portrait from 1768 (figs. 10-11).¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Potts notes, "Though publicly there was a line to be drawn between a way of life that revolved around highly charged male friendship, and one that embraced sexual relations between men, it is clear from Winckelmann's correspondence that, within the social circles he moved in Rome and among his more intimate German and Swiss correspondents, little taboo was attached to talking privately about sexual relations with young men. ... Living with Albani seems to have allowed him considerable freedom to conduct his sexual affairs as he wished. ... He inhabited an exclusive male sphere, where, according to a comment he made to Casanova, it was safe to engage in 'pederasty' than to be known to have a mistress." (Potts, 208-10) "The particular circumstances in Rome, which tolerated a marginalized sexual permissiveness" (writes Potts) may have prompted Winckelmann to declare, "I am healthy and healthier than I ever was in Germany, free and contented, and I can say that I have begun to live for the very first time in Italy." (Potts, 210)

¹⁷⁵ Qtd in Rose, Bradley. "Winckelmann in Italy" (Video) <http://www.willsworld.org/winckelmann/winckelmann.html>

¹⁷⁶ Potts, 125

¹⁷⁷ Waters discusses how Antinous, whose "youth and beauty, and the romantic circumstances of his life and death, have made him the object of homosexual attention," was immediately seized upon by contemporaries. "Just as Hadrian championed the cult of Antinous in his own day, then, so, homophile collectors and aesthetes were responsible for preserving and celebrating Antinous's image and story in the modern period." (Sarah Waters. "The Most Famous Fairy in History: Antinous and the Homosexual Fantasy," in *The Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Oct. 1995, 198-99)

¹⁷⁸ In his published catalogue of Albani's collection, *Moverzti Antichi Inediti* of 1767. (Saslow, Pictures, 159)

¹⁷⁹ Anton Maron represented him with his beloved image in a portrait of the scholar from 1768, currently held by the Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar. (Reproduced in Waters)

“The supreme beauty is male rather than female,” he wrote to Friedrich von Berg.¹⁸⁰ This was a departure from traditional ideas about beauty, even in intellectual circles, and certainly a departure from Burke’s recent discussions of the beautiful and the sublime, in 1757. For Burke, the sublime, while having no human corporeal manifestation, was essentially *masculine* in essence, while the beautiful was essentially feminine in essence. This will contrast with Winckelmann’s own interpretations of the sublime, which not only approximates physical beauty with sublimity but also makes the *male* nude the focus of the beautiful (in a reversal of the heterocentric privileging of the female nude – always chaste! – as beautiful). Alex Potts writes:

When Winckelmann singled out the Apollo Belvedere as ‘the highest ideal of art among the works of antiquity that have escaped its destruction’, he envisaged it as a complex intermingling of erotically charged beauty and sublime power and elevation... Winckelmann makes this ideal male figure the focus for quite overt fantasies of erotic desire, while still retaining its significance as the model of a manly elevation that preclude it from being seen as a simple object of delectation. In effecting such a confusion of the rigidly gendered separation between sublimity and beauty envisaged by Burke, he was not engaging in some unusual or illicit eroticization of the male nude, but playing out a male fantasy central to the dominant cultural norms of his time. ... [So, for the 18th century, the] epitome of ideal manhood was ... an ideal conflation of the austere sublime and sensuously beautiful, namely the Apollo Belvedere.¹⁸¹

Not only was the supreme beauty male, but the supreme gaze was homoerotic. Winckelmann’s statement that, “those who are observant of beauty only in women ... seldom have an inborn instinct for beauty in art,”¹⁸² is treacherously complex. While he seems to be associating homosexuals (those who find beauty outside of women, i.e. in men, and those who are stereotypically more “sensitive”) with art, he is simultaneously obfuscating homoerotic interpretations by joining “true style” theorists in their rejection of Rococo-type pictures, which are full of beautiful women but do not represent “good art.” Time and again, however, his unflinchingly bold sensual descriptions betray his true meaning in a way that no arcane erudition or theoretical concoctions could mask.

¹⁸⁰ From the “Essay on the Capacity for the Sentiment for the Beautiful in Art, and On Instruction in It,” qtd. in Saslow, 159

¹⁸¹ Potts, 118

¹⁸² Saslow, Pictures, 161

Occasionally, his personal passions led him far astray from accurate scholarship. In 1760, his friends Anton Raphael Mengs and Giovanni Battista Casanova (the brother of the better known autobiographer Giovanni Giacomo) conspired to present Winckelmann with a homoerotic fresco of Jupiter and Ganymede that they claimed had been uncovered in a villa outside Rome.¹⁸³ (fig. 12) Winckelmann, falling into raptures over the image and praising it with superlatives,¹⁸⁴ found his senses particularly fired by the “somnolent sensuality of the beautiful youth, ‘pining for sensual pleasure.’”¹⁸⁵ In his blind enthusiasm, he immediately published the “find,” only to discover later it was a hoax. This episode serves as a metaphor for Winckelmann’s approach to art as an erotic conduit, but it also evokes a real-life episode. The adventurer Giovanni Casanova reportedly surprised Winckelmann in his study “withdrawing quickly from a young [Roman] boy”¹⁸⁶—who was, just like the Ganymede of the false fresco, ostensibly “pining for pleasure.”

Winckelmann conflated art and eroticism in other ways. He muses on the Apollo Belvedere:

I become oblivious to everything else as I look at this masterwork of art, and I myself take on an elevated stance, so as to be worthy of gazing at it. My chest seems to expand with veneration and to rise and heave, as it happens with those I have seen who seem swollen with the spirit of prophecy, and I feel myself taken back to Delos and the Lycean fields, places that Apollo honoured with his presence; for my image seems to take on life and movement, like Pygmalion’s beauty ... I place the idea which I have given of this image at its feet, like the wreaths offered by those who could not reach the head of the

¹⁸³ “The most curious aspect of Jupiter and Ganymede, however, lies not in its general prurience, but rather in its blatant and specific homo-eroticism. And whatever stylistic peculiarities he may have overlooked, Winckelmann was certainly not insensitive to this aspect of the painting. We need only recall the lubricious phrases he chose, in print as in private, to demonstrate the particular beauty of Ganymede to realize that it was precisely the erotic sensuality of the youth, above all other considerations, which had fired his interest in the painting.” (Thomas Pelzel. “Winckelmann, Mengs and Casanova: A Reappraisal of a Famous Eighteenth-Century Forgery,” in *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (Sep., 1972), 307)

¹⁸⁴ Pelzel quotes from Winckelmann’s *Briefe* (II, 107, no. 377): “There has been found outside Rome ... the most beautiful painting to have emerged from antiquity to the light of our time. It represents in life-size Jupiter, who is kissing Ganymede, with an expression and execution such as exist in no other work.” But lest we should imagine it is merely the quality of the fresco, Winckelmann, in another letter, to Muzel-Stosch (*Briefe*, 109, no. 379), describes Ganymede in similar terms as “a handsome and well-formed youth of eighteen years ... [whose] head is beautiful beyond all comprehension.” (qtd. in Pelzel, 304.)

¹⁸⁵ In a letter dated January 1761 to Muzel-Stosch (*Briefe*, II, 111, no. 380). (Pelzel, 304)

¹⁸⁶ Qtd. and discussed in Potts, 212

divinity that they wished to crown.¹⁸⁷

With the myth of Pygmalion, which presents artistic creation as a process of desire and yearning, Winckelmann offers another poignant key to his theory that echoes his privately recorded sentiments.¹⁸⁸ He writes confessionally of the statue of a beautiful young faun in his possession: “It is my Ganymede, which I can kiss without causing scandal in the presence of all the saints.”¹⁸⁹ One of his most direct links between art and lust, this statement overturns any attempt to reduce the *beau idéal* to a set of intellectual principles. Rather than elevating and edifying, the statue incites a yearning and a desire that it paradoxically exacerbates (by not accessing the absent beloved or desired) and relieves (by providing immediate alternative sensual comfort and mental escapism). Thus, the vigor of Neoclassical art, represented primarily by the beautiful male nude, lies in its tendency to aggravate and assuage emotions. Winckelmann, whose deepest desires remained hidden, poured his outward love into the perfect beauty of art, unmarred by the secret tumult of interior life, and invested it with vitality.

Nonetheless, Winckelmann never felt forced to merely sublimate his flesh-and-blood desire into the pristine purity of marble or to forego the comfort and warmth of corporeal presence for the vivid tableau of Roman youths. He had frequent sexual relations with men.¹⁹⁰ Before reaching Italy, he had what was probably his happiest love affair with a youth named Lamprecht; later, he called Friedrich von Berg, a 26-year old baron from Livonia making the Grand Tour in

¹⁸⁷ Qtd. in Potts, 127

¹⁸⁸ James Rubin discusses the importance of J.-J. Rousseau’s interpretation of the myth for subsequent illustrators and their audiences. He notes that, “...immediately visible on the surface of the dialogue between Pygmalion and the now living Galatea is an allusion to the Platonic allegory of complementary opposites. Pygmalion's complement is his art, which thus becomes none other than a materialisation of his own projected self: Jean-Jacques thus pleads the cause of the *source intérieure*, the personal and imaginative origins of visual art, the moral status of which is secured by its ties to God and nature.” (James H. Rubin. “*Pygmalion and Galatea: Girodet and Rousseau*,” in *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 127, No. 989 (Aug., 1985), pp. 517-20) Going further, Platonic theory embraces a homosexual interpretation of Rousseau’s theory as well: in the *Symposium*, Aristophanes assigns equal value to heterosexual and homosexual love by explaining that these divided souls seek to reconnect with their other half (le moi en toi).

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 215

¹⁹⁰ Winckelmann wrote extensively about these in his private correspondence. In Florence in 1758-59, he advanced beyond “the surface of Platonism ... I bent my head and submitted to an act analogous to b-----.” Implying that more traditional “buggery” was part of the picture as well, he said, “Thus I have paid the genius of Florence the tribute of my virginity.” (Potts, 209) Other sexual affairs followed in Rome, but love is more elusive. He writes, “Sometimes I fall in love.” (*Ibid.*)

Italy, his “second real love.”¹⁹¹ Winckelmann dedicated his *Treatise on the Capacity for the Feeling for Beauty* to Berg, saying, “...the parting from you was one of the most painful of my life...”¹⁹² As Potts points out, “the dedication was saturated by recollection, memory, and absence,”¹⁹³ all central themes of Winckelmann’s aesthetic.

A sense of transience, of the passage of youth and beauty into old age and decay further informs the melancholic passages of his writing, where he pines for the lost lover/work of art. Real-life beauty could be unattainable or ephemeral, as were both the case with a Florentine youth named Castellani, whom he failed to access. Hearing several years later that the youth’s looks had faded, Winckelmann writes:

I am truly saddened by the transitoriness of so high a good and by the speed with which the springtime of our life runs its course, the latter being short-lived for those of exceptionally fine physique. One is thus able to proceed with greater certainty and more lasting ideas in the case of beauties in marble.¹⁹⁴

Thus, Winckelmann explains the role of art not only as part of an endless search to capture perfection, but also as a substitute for more passing and elusive real-life beauties: a mix of wistful contemplation and erotic consolation.

However elusive a relationship with Berg remained, he wrote to the baron, whom he had only known for a month, comparing his love for him to that of Theseus and Pirithous and Achilles and Patroclus.¹⁹⁵ His conceptions of love and sexuality are as rooted in Ancient Greek culture as are the artistic and historical references in his writing. Perhaps this was the only possibility for a homosexual man from a provincial German town where homosexuality was

¹⁹¹ Qtd in Rose. “His affair with Berg came to be seen by Winckelmann as one of the two great passions of his life, the earlier being with a young man called Lamprecht, when he took up his teaching in Seehausen in 1743—‘my first love and friendship’ as he recalled twelve years later.” (Potts, 204) For these relationships, see Potts, 202-07.

¹⁹² Potts, 203

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 214-15

¹⁹⁵ Qtd in Rose. Potts describes his homoerotic desire as “framed within the classicizing paradigm of Socratic or Platonic friendship.” (Potts, 206) For more on the language of “love” in Winckelmann’s letters to Berg, see Potts, 203-07. Of note: “My dearest friend, I love you more than any other creatures, and no passage of time, no accident, no old age, can diminish this love.” (Ibid., 204)

publicly condemned. Necessarily, the perfectly beautiful white Greek statues became a blank screen onto which he could project his private fantasies. Just as the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus presented a heroic ideal, just as the statues of the homosexual lovers Aristogeiton and Harmodius (the “Tyrannicides”) reflected a democratic ideal, so too did the nude body of Ganymede or Antinous reflect a purely erotic ideal. Thus, Winckelmann’s homosexual viewpoint inextricably informed his artistic ideal and ensured the place of primacy given to the beautiful male nude in art for the next several decades.

Chapter 3 – ii. Anxiety in the Classical Nude: Mengs, David, and Canova Seize the Winckelmannian Aesthetic

Although nudity was a prerequisite of Winckelmann’s aesthetic, permissiveness regarding the exposure of the genitals in art could not be taken for granted. In July 1759, Winckelmann wrote, “By the Pope’s order, this week the *Apollo*, *Laocoön*, and the rest of the statues in the Belvedere were given little metal aprons which hang by a wire around their hips to cover their cocks. ... There has hardly been such an asinine ordinance.”¹⁹⁶ Certainly, any art lover would regret seeing a beautiful work of art marred by an act of censorship. However, the ordinance exemplified European ambivalence towards the male nude as a figure that bares *all*, including the genitals, and Winckelmann’s use of the colloquial in his comment reminds why, for it rips these hallowed works out of the lofty realm of the *beau idéal*. The “elevated stance” and “veneration” Winckelmann claimed to have felt when viewing “this masterwork of art” (the *Apollo*) does not accord with the evocative use of the term “cock” any more than a coarsely realistic depiction of a “cock” would on the work itself.

The anxiety surrounding the eroticism of the male genitalia had affected the production and

¹⁹⁶ Qtd. in Rose

exhibition of classicizing art since the Renaissance, when “Il Braghettone” (Daniele da Volterra) rendered Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* decent by painting “little breeches,” or swaths of drapery, over the nude figures. In fact, the swath of drapery established a conventional solution to this problem by the 18th century.¹⁹⁷ Then, Neoclassical artists again ventured to expose the genitals. Mengs’s *Parnassus* of 1762 (fig. 13), one of the earliest manifestos of Neoclassicism, charmed Winckelmann with its nude Apollo and erudite references. Honour’s fair judgment is that “it seeks to do no more than recreate a dream of classical perfection by a synthesis of antique sculpture and Raphael’s paintings;”¹⁹⁸ there are no ennobling or didactic features to the illustration. However, Winckelmann referred to Mengs’s fresco in the Villa Albani as a great accomplishment in the *History* (which he also dedicated to the artist).¹⁹⁹ The central figure reprised, of course, the general look of the Apollo Belvedere, including the full-frontal nudity allowed by his back-swung cape. (fig. 15)

Outside the permissive walls of the Villa Albani, however, Mengs approached heroic nudity more tentatively. The central figure of his *Perseus and Andromeda* of 1777 (fig. 16) is utterly Winckelmannian in conception, including its focus on beautiful Greek nudity. In fact, the somewhat awkward, Baroque composition, which predates the Neoclassical triumph of the 1780s, seems designed less to create a clear, balanced pictorial narrative than to put the luminous male nude on display. However, the exhibition of flesh is now interrupted by perfectly-placed hilt ribbons swept up by a fortuitous breeze, which just barely allow a teasing peep at the hero’s genitals.

Several years later, sculptor Antonio Canova’s *Apollo Crowning Himself* of 1781 (fig. 18),

¹⁹⁷ Although one might find an intermittent nudity in Poussin’s artwork of the 17th century, it has essentially disappeared in the treatment of mythological subjects by Rococo masters such as Coypel, Lemoyne, La Fosse, J-Fr De Troy, Natoire, Van Loo, Boucher, Nattier, Hallé, Vien, and Fragonard. Even Batoni, whose work often anticipates the return to classicism, used the heavy drape, in such works as *Apollo and the Two Muses* (1741) or *Mercury Crowning Philosophy* (1748).

¹⁹⁸ Honour, 32

¹⁹⁹ From *The History of Ancient Art*, translated by G. Henry Lodge (1880), qtd in *Essays on the Philosophy and History of Art*, Vol. 2, ed. by Curtis Bowman. (Bristol, England: Thoemmes Press, 2001), 409

recalling Mengs's *Parnassus* and their mutual antique sources,²⁰⁰ unabashedly dispenses with ribbons, metal aprons, and any other concealing accoutrements. The statue exemplifies Canova's swift conversion to Winckelmannian principles after his arrival in Rome in 1780. Like Winckelmann and Mengs, he was directly influenced by the antique. His stay began with the requisite visit to the Belvedere sculptures. The architect Giannantonio Selva, who became a life-long friend, notes in his *Itinerario* that, "he was enraptured by the sight of so many beautiful works."²⁰¹ Canova's own *Quaderni di viaggio* mentions only male statues: Apollo, Laocoön, Antinous, Paris, and an Emperor dressed as Hercules.²⁰² Honour informs us that when the Venice native reached the city, he "fell in love with an international set of artists and theorists, notably Gavin Hamilton, and ... applied himself to the creation of a new style, revolutionary in its severity and uncompromising in its idealistic purity."²⁰³ Honour cites the *Theseus and the Dead Minotaur*, 1781-82, as the key manifestation of this transformation.²⁰⁴ Hamilton convinced him to depict the moment of calm, after the victory (rather than the fight). This work "won him the title not merely of 'restorer' but also 'continuer' of the antique tradition."²⁰⁵ Thus, two years before David's *Oath of Horatii* caused a sensation in the city of Rome, the expectant art world had found its most prominent Neoclassicist.

At the same time, Canova created what was perhaps the best embodiment of the "*beau idéal*" in *Apollo Crowning Himself*, 1781. The god is perfectly proportioned, majestic, and carefully carved, right down to the slightly larger left testicle (recommended by Winckelmann in

²⁰⁰ Ancient sources include the *Apollino* in Florence and the *Apollo or Adonis* in the Libreria Marcian. (Giulio Carlo Argan, et al. Canova – Exh. Cat. from the Museo Correr and , Museo canoviano. Venice: Marsilio, 1992, p. 341)

²⁰¹ Argan, 341

²⁰² Selva writes, "I was the first to take him to the Belvedere, where he was enraptured by the sight of so many beautiful works." (5 November 1780). Canova's diary mentions "Appolo," "Aocoon," "Antinoos," "Paris," and "a certain Emperor dressed as Hercules." (Ibid., 341-42)

²⁰³ Honour, 37

²⁰⁴ Honour also discusses the Monument to Pope Clement XIV, 1783-87, as a turnover of the Baroque, notably of billowing draperies, multi-colored marble, rich ornamentation, illusionistic devices, symmetrical compositions, and allegorical personifications in a kind of purification that (notwithstanding) attained "noble simplicity and calm grandeur." (Honour, 40) The critic Milizia praised that it appeared to have been "carved in the best period of Greek art, for composition, expression and draperies." (Qtd in Ibid.)

²⁰⁵ Honour, 39

the *History*) (fig. 19). Commissioned by Prince Abbondio Rezzonico, nephew of the Venetian pope Clement XIII, in 1780, almost immediately after his arrival in Rome, it was carved in competition with a *Minerva Pacifica*, which the Prince had already requested from the Roman sculptor Giuseppe Angelini. Despite the “male gaze” of sculptor and patron, the statue has a heterosexual theme: the laurel leaves come from the bay tree of the sun god’s beloved Daphne. Nonetheless, Apollo looks more magnificent than aggrieved. One scholar, in an attempt to align the work with Winckelmann’s ideal of “noble simplicity and calm grandeur,” calls the self-crowning a “reflective gesture” rather than a “dynamic pose.”²⁰⁶ What’s more profoundly Winckelmannian about Canova’s interpretation of the Ovidian subject are the wistful tones associated with love lost and the subtle eroticism captured in this sensual tribute to male beauty.

The shift to the Winckelmannian aesthetic, with its emphasis on the more wistful and erotic aspects of the beautiful rather than the heroic and severe, began over a decade after his 1768 death. An important French critic who helped pave the way for David after the comte de Caylus was Quatremère de Quincy, who traveled to Italy as early as 1776. Quatremère, a Winckelmannian disciple, influenced David’s first conversion to the antique—what became the “Roman” antique of his better-known early Neoclassical phase, exemplified by those Poussinesque works of the 1780s. David, who so ardently desired the Rome prize but was delayed for many years from success, finally accompanied his proto-Neoclassical master Vien to Rome with little intention of being seduced by the Antique. He met and admired Thomas Banks, whose *Death of Germanicus* (1774) (fig. 20) would become an important influence for Neoclassicists seeking pictorial prototypes for their recumbent male nudes; but he had been in Italy for four years before he traveled to Naples with Quatremère and the proverbial blinders came off. He said:

Il me semble qu’on venait de me faire l’opération de la cataracte. Je compris que je ne pouvais pas améliorer ma manière dont le principe était faux et qu’il fallait divorcer

²⁰⁶ Argan, 232

avec tout ce que j'avais cru d'abord être le beau et le vrai. Je sentis que copier la nature sans choix, c'est faire un métier vulgaire ... mais que procéder comme les anciens et comme Raphaël, c'est vraiment être artiste...²⁰⁷

“Beauty” and “truth” are Winckelmannian buzz words of the time, circulated by artists and academicians such as Mengs and Reynolds, but David recounted this story many years later, when he was more deeply immersed in the elaboration of a purified *beau idéal*, and it was recorded by his pupil Delafontaine. Quatremère de Quincy, whom Solomon-Godeau calls a “misogynist bachelor,”²⁰⁸ championed such artists as Canova and Julien, both of whom are known for their sensual ephobic nude statues.

One of the other major compilations of antique works that influenced David and the emerging Neoclassicists was the *Collection of Etruscan, Greek, and Roman Antiquities from the Cabinet of the Hon.^{ble} Wm. Hamilton*, 1766-67 (published until 1776), a joint effort by Sir William Hamilton (1730-83), a Scottish diplomat and antiquarian in Naples and the Baron Pierre-François-Hugues d'Hancarville (1719-1805), an established art historian—both of whom have rather fuzzy connections to the gay community but offered two rather notorious publications. In 1786, William Hamilton and his protégé Richard Payne Knight published the infamous *Worship of Priapus*, ostensibly about fertility worship but perhaps too indicative of their personal sexual tastes. Hamilton was at the end of his career when the book published, and Knight was just starting. The latter managed to have a successful career as a classicist and artistic commentator despite frequent allusions to his homosexuality. Meanwhile, in 1780, Hancarville, who had met Winckelmann and considered him a dear friend, published a two-volume erotic project including “The Private Lives of the Twelve Caesars,” a bisexual pornographic derivative of Suetonius’s *De vita Caesarum*, from 121 CE.²⁰⁹ (figs. 21-22)

While the bawdy work might be dismissed as frivolous, it has deeper implications.

²⁰⁷ Wildenstein, p. 9, n. 58

²⁰⁸ Solomon-Godeau, 94

²⁰⁹ Winckelmann met Hancarville when he passed through Naples in 1768, shortly before his death.

Hancarville's more respectable *Collection* has been recognized as one of the three standard sources for the neoclassical period, along with the publications of Winckelmann (a homosexual) and Saint-Non.²¹⁰ That the same man was responsible for one of the most important illustrations of homosexuality in the 18th century cements the connection between Neoclassicism and homoeroticism. Predating the orgiastic *Justine* illustrations by over a decade, the work featured "a series of prints, imitating antique cameos," of various heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexual encounters.²¹¹ What is most remarkable about this group of drawings is not just the way it reinforces the stereotypes almost automatically associating antiquity with homosexual practice; it is the imaginative variety of the encounters. Scholars who have tried to pigeonhole restrictive categories of homosexual practice (such as receptive sodomites, penetrative sodomites, masturbatory or oral types, effeminate types, cross-dressing types, romantic friendship types) in a way that undermines the idea of a united community find a vividly illustrated grouping of all of these various types. Here is Nero in drag, being penetrated by an ostensibly virile lover. There is Caligula, bending over one tempting youth while being taken from behind by another. Elsewhere, two soldiers meet for a sexual encounter. Not all of the images can be considered as anything less than satirical, but they show that neither age nor status has anything to do with the roles and positions the participants take. And the very grouping of these images turns the isolated act of sodomy into a cultural practice. Moreover, it identifies not just the type to appear in these illustrations, but the type to *look* at them. David (as we shall see) was one of the people who looked at the homosexual drawings after the antique Hancarville unabashedly included with his more respectable illustrations of *antiquités* as well.

In painting, one of the primary indicators of the shift to Winckelmannian principles was Jacques-Louis David's commitment to—and defense of—nudity in the *Intervention of the Sabine*

²¹⁰ De Seta, *Grand Tour*, 16. Saint-Non's work is the *Voyages pittoresque ou description des royaumes de Naples et de Sicile*, 1781-86.

²¹¹ Saslow, *Pictures*, 166. For more information and illustrations, see also Cecilie Beurdeley (transl. by Michael Taylor). *L'Amour Bleu*. (Spain: Evergreen, 1994).

Women of 1799. (fig. 23) David explored Neoclassical nudity as early as 1788, with his painting of *Paris and Helen* for the Comte d'Artois, but he didn't make the definitive Winckelmannian statement until after the disruptions of the Revolution. The first work in which David reconceived his aesthetic as something closer to the Greek ideal, derived from Winckelmann, was the *Sabines*.²¹² Here David depicted another *Roman* subject but converted to Greek nudity, which he lengthily justified in a treatise subtitled "On the Nudity of my Heroes."²¹³

A defense was certainly necessary, as prudish viewers objected to both male and female nudity in public spaces. At the Salon of 1785, for example, the state's official censor condemned Augustin Pajou's plaster *Psyché Abandonnée*, a delightful vision of the female nude on the cusp between late Rococo and early Neoclassical tendencies. Pajou subsequently found his studio, where he had to relegate the sensational work, crowded with visitors, just as Houdon had almost a decade earlier when he exhibited his "too nude" plaster *Diana*.²¹⁴ More pertinently to David's work, the Napoleonic booty, including Winckelmann's revered *Laocoön* and *Apollo Belvedere*, entered the French national collections with some controversy in 1798. Despite the Pope's "asinine" ordinance that put metal aprons on the works decades earlier, one influential pundit wrote of the dangerous effects of exhibiting the work:

It is ridiculous to subject our innocent youth to such naked images; after viewing these objects time after time, our speech will become less respectable, our conversation more audacious. [These statues] are likely to sanction our corruption, to push indolence toward moral baseness, and to shape us gradually to the most despicable slavery.²¹⁵

David, who had seen all of these works in Rome, greatly disapproved of their transfer to

²¹² David said : « J'ai entrepris de faire une chose toute nouvelle ; je veux ramener l'art aux principes que l'on suivait chez les Grecs. » (Wildenstein, Daniel, et Guy. Louis David, Recueil de Documents complémentaires au Catalogue Complet de l'œuvre de l'artiste. Rouen: l'Imprimerie Rouennaise, 1973 ; note 1253, p. 138)

²¹³ Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby has made a relatively recent discussion of David's text and its principles in an article called "La Nudité grecque of 1799" (1998). She focuses largely on Chaussard, who also discussed the nudity in the picture at length in "Sur le tableau des Sabines." (Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, "La Nudité grecque," in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Jun., 1998), pp. 311-335)

²¹⁴ Michael Preston Worley. "The Image of Ganymede in France, 1730-1820: The Survival of a Homoerotic Myth, in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 76, No. 4 (Dec., 1944), 640.

²¹⁵ Worley, 640

Paris,²¹⁶ but the type of exposure it afforded to so many young artists who had not or could not make the Grand Tour undoubtedly accelerated the acceptance of Winckelmannian principles, particularly regarding nudity. Nudity never meant nakedness, and even the most ardent Neoclassical artists, like David, always preserved a certain amount of decorum. A comparison of the figure of Romulus (fig. 29) with a sketch of David made of a figure in the same pose (fig. 27-28) shows an interesting alteration: the scrotum is missing, spirited away into the ether on the wings of propriety. Despite David's disclaimers and his pictorial concessions, the nude male figures naturally caused a sensation. Satirists mocked the artist, the public whispered about its decency, and critics questioned the prurient tone of the painting.²¹⁷

One critic, Pierre Chaussard, boldly defended the work and delved more profoundly into the subject of nudity. His work established the pattern for many later critics, who sharply divided the pictorial and narrative roles by sex. At the center of the painting, the buxom Hersilia, with her highlighted nipples, separates her father and her husband in a gauze-like dress that clings to her body. Flanking her, the statuesque Romulus, with his magnificent, round buttocks, outshines almost all other figures in the painting and won universal praise.²¹⁸ David has merely reprised what was becoming a stock pose (in the *Horatii* and the *Tennis Court Oath*), and it is the nudity that entirely reinvents the figure and highlights the difference in effect between the weightiness

²¹⁶ Wildenstein, n. 1287, p. 143

²¹⁷ In the *Journal des Arts*, an amateur critique that he found the figure of Tatius "Beautiful, but too nude," thus provoking an art student to "vaunt... his commitment to nudity as part of his artistic credentials." But it was the critic for *Le Courrier des Spectacles* who offered the most vehement and adamantly literal attack on the nudity in the *Sabines*. Permitting art no metaphorical latitude, the author "C.Z." could not forgive David for portraying warriors unrealistically: no people, antique or 'savage,' placed naked men in circumstances requiring clothing." (Grigsby, 313)

Among the satirical lyrics in the press, one finds :

«En habitant, in naturalibus,
Et Tatius et Romulus,
Et de jeunes beautés, sans fichus, ni sans cottes,
David nous apprend que ce que l'on savait ;
Depuis longtemps Paris le proclamait
Le Raphaël des sans-culottes. » (Wildenstein, n. 1329, p. 150)

Likewise, Wildenstein notes, « Madame Campan est charmée par le tableau des Sabines, mais avoue à son élève, la future Reine Hortense, qu'elle trouve Tatius indécemment nu et Hersilie trop blanche. » (Wildenstein, Note 1330, p. 150)

²¹⁸ Grigsby writes, "Thus, while Romulus's seamless figure bolstered classicists' arguments about nudity's ideality, Tatius's clumsy form fueled critics' hostility regarding the absurdities of nakedness. ... It seems that neither David nor his critics were capable of addressing both Tatius and Romulus at once. (Grigsby, 320)

of armor on the human form and the glossy beauty of soft and rounded flesh. A more youthful nude, also seen from the rear (which had direct associations with homosexual relations since the Christians named the sin of “sodomy”), likewise caught the attention of Chaussard, who noted the figure’s useless presence but exquisite beauty.²¹⁹ (fig. 24) The critical inclination to invest figures of great beauty with noble character and pictorial importance indicates a conversion to Winckelmannian principles of the *beau idéal*.

²¹⁹ See Pierre Chaussard’s “Sur le tableau des Sabines par David.” (Paris, 1800)

Chapter 4 – The Homoerotic Use of Male Nudity (Or How Male Nudity Reinforces an Erotic *Male Gaze*)

Chapter 4 – i. The Sensual Male Nude Draws the Male Gaze

Above all, lyricism characterizes the Winckelmannian aesthetic, for whatever content the German scholar brings to his writings, he connects with art at an emotional level clearly expressed in his poetic style of writing. The fascination with beauty relieved art of its narrative obligations, thus freeing both artists and viewers to invest the male nude with much more personal meanings, ranging from the wistful and reflective to the tender and erotic. The uncloaked male body may well be the catalyst for all kinds of meditative wanderings; yet, following David's bold defense of nudity, the exposed human sex remained as controversial as it had been before Napoléon's 1799 coup.

In the years from 1799 to 1825, the nude did *not* appear indiscriminately. A survey of the prix-de-Rome winners for these years shows that artists, while generally accepting the idea of the Neoclassical male nude, also felt more traditional restrictions. They used all kinds of contrived devices to cover the genitals.²²⁰ Only two prize-winners displayed full-frontal nudity in twenty-six years: Ingres, in his notably homoerotic *Ambassadors of Agamemnon* of 1801, and Louis-Vincent-Léon Pallière, in his *Ulysses and Telemachus Killing the Suitors of Penelope* of 1812. (fig. 30)

While Ingres' painting is more exemplary of a clear Winckelmannian subtext (as I shall discuss below), Pallière's painting offers a better example of the range of contrived genital

²²⁰ Blondel's 1803 prix de Rome, depicted Aeneas with fly-away drapery and his son with a wisp of fly-away drapery. In 1809, Langlois' nude Achilles is covered by a swath of drapery, just as Court's realistic nude Samson is covered by a piece of fly-away drapery in 1821. In 1815, Alaux' Achilles is covered with even heavier drapery, as is Thomas' Paris in 1816, Admète's figure in 1819, and Larivière's figure in 1824. In 1807, Heim seems to make reluctant use of the sword-sheath on a fully nude Theseus, but Coutan makes full use of this device for his Achilles in 1820, as does Debay in 1823. In Cogniet's pair of Castor and Pollux, one gets the sword sheath while the other wears a chiton. Back nudity, with fully exposed buttocks, occurs in 1818 and 1824. (See Philippe Grunhech. Les Concours des Prix de Rome, 1797-1863, Vol. 1. Exh. Cat., École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1986.)

covers. He dispenses with the popular sword sheath solution, but draws attention to the parts he very resistantly covers by outlining them so carefully. For example, the cape that sweeps over Telemachus's thigh is ample enough to fully cover his mid-section. Yet, Pallière sharply alters the diagonal thrust of his flying fabrics in order to offer what must be called a teasing peek at the hero's groin; we see almost half of his scrotum and the base of his shaft. At the same time, the portion of drapery that covers the rest—instead of flowing freely over it—carefully follows the lines of the genitals. The edge of the drapery follows the curve of the scrotum, while a deep shadow seems to frame his penis. Oddly, a heavy fold of drapery hanging in the open space between Telemachus's lunging legs indicates that Pallière had the means to cover his figure if he had so desired. Elsewhere, Amphimedon, the fallen suitor who occupies a substantial portion of the composition (forming the lower half of a central pyramidal structure with his assassin), has a noteworthy beauty,²²¹ in his floral-crowned blond locks of hair, his full Grecian lips, and his sensuous body, with Courbet-like wisps of golden underarm hair with blue shadows and a dark patch of scraggly pubic hair. He is turned to face the viewer in a full-frontal position that enables us to enjoy his anatomy more than it makes sense in terms of the action. His genitals disappear behind a ribbon that has inexplicably surged from the ground to cover them—or, more appropriately, to rub up against them. He lies on his fellow suitor,²²² in a way that brings a hint of eroticism to the type of battle scenes recently portrayed by Girodet (which have been discussed in homoerotic terms by James Smalls²²³). Yet, while Girodet's picture has a sexual energy (or at least an energy evoking sweat, passion, and coursing blood), and while Géricault's future masterpiece, *The Raft of the Medusa*, which also heaps dying figures on corpses, has a dark morbidity, Pallière's more neoclassical picture has a frozen, still, composed feeling that

²²¹ One might say "a beauty befitting a descendant of Apollo," but it is not clear whether the Homer referred to Melaneus, son of Apollo, when he cited a Melaneus as Amphimedon's father.

²²² Identified as Antinous in the same article, he is hardly an attractive personality in the *Odyssey*, although his name had much stronger associations to Hadrian's beloved at this name.

²²³ See James Smalls, "Making Trouble for Art History: The Queer Case of Girodet," in *Art Journal*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Winter, 1996), pp. 20-27.

opens itself to restfulness and poetry, wistfulness and melancholy—a contemplation of death and the loss of beauty rather than the action of male heroism.²²⁴

The stock poses and assemblage techniques of the *prix-de-Rome* painters obviate deep interpretation, but certainly, the very nature of pictorial conventions repeatedly enabled artists to gratify their own deeper interests as much as it constrained them. For an artist who found the muses tugging his hand towards illustrations of intertwined male bodies, such a scene as this would have afforded him an opportunity to sublimate any underlying erotic interests into perfectly acceptable images of heterosexual virility and heroic pathos. Without more information, it's difficult to say what motives inspired artistic decisions, but it's fair to assume that the heroic ideal expounded in David's pre-Revolutionary Poussinesque paintings and formulaically repeated in countless canvases for generations afterwards, could not make the same emotional impact after the Campaign of 1812, which administered the first of the final blows to the nail in the already festering revolutionary coffin. Admittedly, David's paintings of the 1780s are, in some ways, more contemplative than his later works. Sacrifice, the single most important theme of his three successive masterpieces from 1785 to 1789 (and reprised in the *Leonidas* of 1814), here revolves around questions of duty, patriotism, and honor. However, these abstract concepts are absorbed in a heroic call to action: suicide, filicide, and homicide. They make the dramatic impact of illustration, but they don't deliver the punch of art, which stems from the sensual rather than the cerebral. They also trap men in a highly restrictive gender role. As women swoon in the *Horatii*, fulfilling their role of the weak and decorative, men flex their muscles and fulfill the role of the warrior / killer. Yet, in Ancient Greece, Spartan women were paragons of health and vigor, and many youths displayed a prize-worthy beauty. More conscious of this Greek fluidity of gender roles, Neoclassicists rejected the idea that virility and masculinity are merely defined as

²²⁴ Contemporaries recognized the composed beauty I speak of: "Ces deux figures, surtout la dernière vue en raccourci et la tête renversée, sont fort belles et forment un beau groupe au centre de la composition. ... les autres [figures], particulièrement celles des deux guerriers terrassés, ont de l'élégance sans afféterie. » (Qtd. in Grunchev, 98)

the strength to kill and conquer, and femininity is defined as the fragility to yield and seduce. Thus, while subjects such as Odysseus and Telemachus Fighting the Suitors of Penelope exclude women from representation, they enabled artists to consider homosocial relations and present a more expansive picture of their own psyche, not the least of which included the various types of physical desire aroused by their fellow men.

Only by a wild stretch of the imagination could the two fallen men from Pallière's canvas be lovers, but their death-like poses *do* also suggest sexual activity, and their corporeal intimacy, even in death, is noteworthy. Even the discolored face of the slain suitor cannot mask his beauty of face and figure; his Caravaggesque dark curls, picked up in the black strands of his underarms, evoke the implicit messages of the over-ripe fruit in the Baroque master's fresh and fragrant *Boy with a Fruit Basket*: the transience of beauty so heartily felt by Winckelmann. After going to such lengths to cover up his other nude figures, Pallière leaves Odysseus fully exposed, in full frontal splendor on the left of the canvas. The broad-chested middle-aged man lacks the ephelic beauty of the other figures, but his rather inconspicuous genitals—small and shadowed—have a stand-in in the rather phallic shadow extending from his pubic hair down along his inner thigh. Before leaving Pallière's painting, it's worth noting that, in many ways, including the proportions of his figures, the frieze-like sculptural lay-out of his easily-read and well-designed composition, and what can only be called "calm grandeur," he has captured the Neoclassical ideal better than most of his peers for this period;²²⁵ it is also worth noting that Pallière's work will come up again.

Almost every artist of the period who undertook the nude participated in this tug-of-war between coverings and displays. Even in the figural study called simply the *académie*, which

²²⁵ Boutard mostly concurs: « ...le dessin, sans être d'un grand caractère, est facile est assez correct ; l'effet général est très bon... » He notes that, « On peut remarquer ... que l'école s'éloigne ... du style antique et sévère qu'elle recherchait, avec excès peut-être il y a quelques années, » (qtd. in Grunhech, 98) but David had already replaced severity with poetry in the *Sabines*, thus announcing Neoclassicism as a "Grecian," Winckelmannian aesthetic rather than a neo-Poussinesque, Grand Siècle one.

marked a highly traditional starting point and summit of French training long before Neoclassicism,²²⁶ the sex was decorously draped.²²⁷ This opposition leaves intriguing questions about individual motivation and intent. After all, if nudity was so controversial, why bother with it? A study of a full-length marble statue, such as Canova's *Apollo* or Michelangelo's *David* (fig. 31), reveals that the male genitalia, while preserving the integrity of the human body, interrupt the aesthetic lines of the figure. The blossom-like intricacy of the genitalia (even in its most schematic form) disrupts the smooth planar flow of the body's limbs and musculature and attracts attention with its flowery profusion of highlights, shadows, arabesques, grooves, and bulbous projections. The appearance of the centrally-located genitalia is as visually conspicuous as it is emotionally disruptive (to paraphrase Diderot), drawing equal attention through its formal properties.

That leaves no easy answer as to why artists toyed with nudity, for they really did toy with it, in a way that evokes the fondling or manipulation of a physical object. In an anonymous painting of the shepherd Paris from 1786-87,²²⁸ an ambiguous strap has wandered from behind the hips, down to the genitals and wraps around the phallus like a sensual caress, only emphasizing the parts it intends to hide. (fig. 32-33) This rather coy device (which Pallière picked up in his prix de Rome picture) is further undermined by the realistic pubic hair and the shadow standing in for the missing genitalia, not to mention the inlaid quality of the nipples, the pouty lips, and exaggerated contrapposto.

Considering Winckelmann's theoretical foregrounding, perhaps there was a psychic import of the nude in Neoclassical art that appealed, above all, to homoerotic inclinations. Anne-Louis

²²⁶ Figure drawing was the basis of academic training from the inception of the *Académie* in 1648; a *prix* for the *étude de torsé* emerged later. Prix de Rome winners should display mastery of anatomy and drapery, as well as gestural and facial expression. *Envois* from Rome should demonstrate mastery of the painted life-size figure after the model.

²²⁷ Solomon-Godeau provides the following examples from the first phase of Neoclassicism: David's *Hector* of 1778, Drouais' *The Dying Athlete* of 1785, François-Xavier Fabre's *Roman Soldier at Rest* of 1788 Louis Lafitte's *The Dying Warrior* of 1795. (See Solomon-Godeau, pp. 75-78)

²²⁸ See *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79. Regrettably, the author does not explain the dating of the picture, the former attribution to Drouais, or the illegible inscription on the bottom left, ending in ---uis f. and presumably a year (if the f. stands for "fecit"), for the painting shows a very advanced Neoclassicism for its time.

Girodet's daring approach to the nude in his *Endymion* of 1791 (fig. 44) may reflect the artist's own homosexual tendencies,²²⁹ but it gratifies the Winckelmannian aesthetic of homoerotic beauty rather than the French "true style" aesthetic of didactic nobility. In this indelible image of languorous masculine beauty, Girodet heightened the erotic tenor of his picture by leaving the genitals uncovered.²³⁰ Although he follows the conventions of depicting the genitals diminutively and in shadow, for the sake of decency, he does not omit the pubic hair that gives an earthy realism to the picture of the sinuous and elongated youth. The heterosexual narrative of this encounter between Diana and Endymion is undermined by the presence of the oddly adolescent Zephyr,²³¹ who also flashes his perky penis along an axis that parallels the beam of moonlight striking Endymion's lips, thus directing itself at the recumbent figure. Despite the manneristic liberties taken with the body (which consternated David, despite his overall approbation²³²), one hears echoes of Winckelmann's panegyrics, for Girodet offered a heightened "somnolent sensuality of the beautiful youth, 'pining for sensual pleasure.'"²³³

Charles Meynier's *Adolescent Eros Weeping Over the Portrait of the Lost Psyche* (1792, Salon of 1795) (fig. 35), mimics (almost verbatim) the pose of Girodet's *Endymion*. A less innovative painting in terms of its strange Rococo trappings, including a flock of rather ugly little cherubs, its unconventional use of lighting that nonetheless cannot compare to the brilliant virtuosity of Girodet's glowing moonlight, its more classically proportioned figure, and its

²²⁹ See James Smalls, op. cit.

²³⁰ Thomas Crow's discussion of this work in *Emulation: The Making of Artists for Revolutionary France* compares it to a more muscular, less vulnerable, but equally *naked* precursor in the *Household Gods of Aeneas Appearing to Him in his Sleep*, 1791, which is also a nocturne. (Crow also refers his readers to scholars who have found sources for the painting.) Crow explains the discrepancy between the two similar figures partly in terms of what is essentially the focus of his book, Girodet's departure from David's aesthetic, and cites the artist's quote that he "means to avoid plagiarism." (Thomas Crow. *Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 133-35)

²³¹ Also identified as Zephyr.

²³² From David's autobiography, we have : « Que son défaut habituel était l'exagération, de prendre garde qu'il y a de quoi de l'exagération aussi, à outrer la simplicité, et que passer le but s'appelle la manière. Il a prouvé pendant son séjour en Italie qu'il m'avait fort bien conçu, par les études qu'il envoya à Paris, et notamment dans son beau tableau du *Sommeil d'Endymion*. Non, je ne crois pas que Corrège, le fameux Corrège eut pu faire pour la forme et même pour le coloris, un plus bel amour que celui que fit M. Girodet dans ce tableau où il représenta dérangeant les branches des arbres qui cachant à Diane la présence de celui qu'elle aime. » (Wildenstein, note 1368, p. 158)

²³³ See citation above. (Pelzel, 304)

decorous drapery, the painting has garnered much less critical and popular attention. However, the picture is historically noteworthy, in its aim of putting languid male beauty on display, with no other purpose than erotic delectation, for the Salon public. The feminine presence, Psyche, usually such a prominent pictorial element of this narrative, is, in terms of the erotic gaze, conspicuously absent.²³⁴ The viewer is left with nothing to pore over but the silky flesh and soft muscles, all of a rose-petal smoothness and sanguine blush. Solomon-Godeau writes:

With his serpentine contours, sinuously rounded left hip, and elegantly flowing limbs, Meynier's Eros might superficially appear more closely allied to the pneumatic female figures of the nineteenth-century Ingres than to his teacher Vien's Greek subjects. Moreover, Meynier's ambitiously scaled painting ... is, like Ingres's *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*, intended as a virtuoso demonstration of theoretical, formal, and aesthetic expertise. Like Ingres's painting too, this expertise is martialed to display his ability to produce an erudite and unmistakably Winckelmannian notion of the *beau idéal*. Meynier's *Eros* thus stand at the intersection of four overlapping aesthetic tributaries: classical art theory as it was codified within the pedagogy of the Ecole Royale and the Academy and within which the *beau idéal* was a central tenet; the Winckelmannian elevation of the ephebic youth to the apogee of ideal beauty; the Neoclassical predilection for male, rather than female nudes; and last, the vogue for those mythological subjects that French art criticism designated with the term "Anacreontism."

Here, Solomon-Godeau launches into her discussion of the latter trend (more richly discussed in its homosexual context by Padiyar in *Chains*²³⁵), but her description of this painting allows me to offer another example of her point of view in her own words ... and to critique it. My thesis already shows how I believe that, if there were "tributaries," they were the various homosexual circles that contributed to the movement, and that, the *beau idéal* merges with a current of homosexual sensibility from which "ephebic youth" and "predilection for male nudes" cannot be extricated. In other words, the *beau idéal* is the predilection for the nude male, and, considering Winckelmann's praise for the Apollo, a figure that has a much more ageless maturity in his svelte but imposing figure than, say, the Apollo Sauroctonos, or the "Apollino" (fig. 36),

²³⁴ Solomon-Godeau claims to have found no pictorial prototypes and also observes that the episode does not occur in Apuleius. (Solomon-Godeau, 118)

²³⁵ Satish Padiyar. Chains: David, Canova, and the Fall of the Public Hero in Postrevolutionary France. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.

despite its obvious differences from the Laocoön that met with equal praise, Solomon-Godeau's imagined dichotomy between the "ephebic" and the "manly" melts into an array of anatomically *male* figures.

Likewise, her constant use of feminine terms to describe male figures shows a serious lack of imagination. For example, in referring to Meynier's *Eros*, she writes, with my italics:

Far more interesting than Meynier's artistic sophistication, however, is his bizarre exaggeration of the *effeminacy* of his Eros, an *effeminacy* whose morphological attributes are further underscored by Eros's dolorous passivity; for example, his limp and enervated right arm from which his arrows and quiver have fallen. The rounded and undulating forms of the body, themselves a visual code evocative of *femininity*, are further emphasized by the arrangement of the embroidered mantle snugly secured between the columnar thighs, between which not even the barest hint of genitalia is suggested. ... And...the impression of weightless...functions to heighten the effect of *girlish* grace and delicacy. This attenuated and serpentine figure reappears regularly through the period...²³⁶

Solomon-Godeau is completely mired in a genderized discussion of form—one that she even pretends reflects biological realities ("morphological attributes")—, just as she is locked outside a basic understanding of desire. Above all, Solomon-Godeau's prose exercises (which enable her to flex her psychoanalytical "academic-feminist" muscles) wander into the land of no conclusions, i.e. the place where she never explains to us why Meynier, who could very well have represented a truly "feminine" Psyche staring at a picture of Eros, did not. In suggesting that Winckelmannian theory is at play, she is both astute and misguided. As much as this picture, with its wistful lyricism, reflects Winckelmann's influence on the arts, his writing hardly

²³⁶ Solomon-Godeau, 118-19. She continues: "...In the case of Meynier ..., we must not discount the fact that what we consider to be the manifest eroticism of such paintings was not perceived as such by contemporary viewers. ..." Here, her overly personalized viewpoint does *not* reflect the eroticized interpretations of classical and Neoclassical works expressed throughout this thesis, and so, with a complete lack of understanding of homosexual desire, she finally concludes (with my italics): "Such *insistently feminized bodies* can thus be interpreted as a return to the repressed, such that the *feminine* returns like a symptom, covertly inscribed, upon or within the body of the ideal youth. Notwithstanding the *feminization of the body*, however ..." (ibid, 120-22) To be fair, she acknowledges the "homoerotic tenor of the Neoclassical culture" and acknowledges that "given the existence of homosexual proscription...we may speculate that artists producing *feminized* or androgynous youths had to navigate the 'problem' of a too-blatant homoerotic address." (Ibid., 123) But she never explains why the body was "feminized" (to use her phrase) in the classical period, in the Renaissance, and even in the early 18th century, at the height of the Rococo reign of women. A handful of images predating the *Endymion* (figs. 37) suggest that a long-standing homoerotic aesthetic, exemplified by personal artistic taste, only took hold after gay men found the right theoretical framework and patronal support to promote these images in the mainstream.

prescribes such a picture. This is no *Parnassus*. Ultimately, if Winckelmann provided the *means* for artists to make such images, such unique visions are dependent entirely on the artistic imagination. Likewise, the personal investment in creating such a picture cannot be explained by a theory that had not yet taken hold of the art world. Regardless, Solomon-Godeau has backed herself into her own corner in offering no explanation why a picture that she insists on describing in feminine terms is not, simply, a woman. She forgets a rich part of her own cultural history, one in which most decidedly *boyish* (and not “girlish”) grace and charms delight not only countless Ancient artists, but also Ancient, post-medieval, and modern writers, not the least of which include Shakespeare, Byron, Oscar Wilde, and the Anacreon she wrote at length about. No logical argument can reduce a boy to a mere substitution for a girl when girls are so abundantly available. A distinct desire drives male-male love. The lustful paeans, dactyls, and iambics to male beauty neither follow from nor conclude in, “Because I cannot have a girl...” Likewise, youths are “fair as flowers,” “coy,” “charming,” “teasing,” “exasperating,” “blushing,” “golden-locked,” but never “feminine,” never “girlish,” never “effeminate.” At least, if they are what we would call “effeminate,” the poet-artist sees only beauty, enticement, and temptation. Does Solomon-Godeau forget that by defining “dolorous” and “passive” as feminine traits, she’s not only denying “real men” of these attributes” but imposing them innately on women? The gay community has embraced traditionally feminine attributes, including dress, mannerisms, and even reproductive functions, since its very formation. However, the femininity projected onto a male figure with no sartorial, gestural, or reproductive codes too eagerly assumes a patriarchal historical construct for this picture that was entirely irrelevant. Despite these complaints, I can refer the reader to Solomon-Godeau for more information about Meynier.²³⁷

Although Meynier shielded his adolescent’s genitals with drapery, Girodet, by putting Endymion’s sex fully on display, had set a precedent for artists who wished to reinforce the

²³⁷ See Solomon-Godeau, pp. 102-03. This includes some autobiographical information and a discussion of his artistic relationship to Girodet.

manhood of their languorous, ephebic, or torpid subjects.²³⁸ Pierre-Narcisse Guérin retains his predecessor's nudity when he reinterprets Endymion's pliant voluptuousness in *Aurora and Cephalus* of 1810 (fig. 38)_ and *Morpheus and Iris* of 1811 (fig. 39). These pendant pictures reframe the full-frontal recumbent nude in a slightly different context. By shielding the genitals with an ineffectual cottony mist and thus hinting at the forbidden nature of viewing them while still allowing full exposure, the artist makes the sight of them all the more exciting. Guérin seems slightly more emboldened in the later work, which features a hint of pubic hair and raises the figure's arms over his head in a way that suggests both display and vulnerability. Of the earlier picture, the *Aurora and Cephalus*, one contemporary critic wrote:

I know of nothing more beautiful than Cephalus: in the midst of sleep his drooping head maintains an expression of nobility and sweetness; his hair is arranged with graceful negligence; his body offers an admirable union of youthful beauty and heroic form. Here, the nude is not out of place: the artist, far from employing a facile, detailed display of anatomy of the torso, has shadowed, softened, married with an exquisite sensibility the joints and muscles in their full and vigorous roundness of the flesh: no flaccidity, nothing indeterminate; no harshness, nothing peremptory or labored; these are male beauties and feminine graces: this recalls the Meleager, the Hermaphrodite...²³⁹

Solomon-Godeau finds the “spirit of strong partisanship” and “enthusiasm” “fairly Winckelmannian.”²⁴⁰ The heterosexual narrative of the painting, redolent of the Rococo, superficially undermines the compelling homoeroticism of the Winckelmannian nude, but the painting indeed maintains his most important principles. The insistent male gaze (of artist, patron, and critic²⁴¹) gives the work a homoerotic persuasion, and the female presence is never fully harmonized with the male object of desire.²⁴² In comparison to the natural, graceful beauty of the nude men, the women have a stilted, mannered eroticism that undermines the ostensibly

²³⁸ I propose this homoerotic interpretation in contrast to discussions by Solomon-Godeau, Thomas Crow, and others, who wish to transpose such androgynous figures into ambiguous female substitutes.

²³⁹ François Guizot, “De l'état des Beaux-Arts en France et du salon de 1810,” qtd. in Solomon-Godeau, 161

²⁴⁰ Solomon-Godeau, 161

²⁴¹ The patron, Giovanni-Battista Sommariva, had been pressing Girodet to sell him the *Endymion* before convincing Guérin to create a suitable substitute. (Crow, 262)

²⁴² Solomon-Godeau describes the overall “alarming presence” of the women in the paintings. (pp. 158-63)

amorous narratives of these pictures and emphasizes their purpose as male figure studies. Nonetheless, the female presence is significant. Just as Winckelmann had spoken from the perspective of a woman losing her beloved, the male protagonists, whose charming beauty undoubtedly produced many a wistful sigh, seem somehow out of reach of the lover. The critic repeated another one of Winckelmann's main ideas in imbuing Cephalus's face with "an expression of nobility and sweetness" and finding in his body "an admirable union of youthful beauty and heroic form." The "sweetness" and "beauty" are much more empirically valid than the "nobility" and "heroism," which are products of theoretical extrapolation. The critic's phrase that "these are male beauties and feminine graces" suggests that graces belong to the feminine province, but proposes that graces need not emasculate the man. It comes close to overturning the genderized domains of beauty, grace, and sublimity that Winckelmann had already rejected. By stating that these are "*male* beauties," the critic reminds us to view the figure *as a man*, not a substitute for a woman. The male figure has absorbed the graces of the feminine domain without losing his biological sex or even his traditional gender role (he has "no flaccidity," is "full and vigorous" and "heroic," notes the critic).²⁴³ Finally, it is worth noting that the critic felt compelled to "defend" the nudity of the figure. Clearly, it might still be perceived as gratuitous, two decades after Girodet's *Endymion* and over a decade after David's *Sabines*.

When Canova undertook what was probably his own most decorative presentation of the male nude, in November of 1807, he wrote enthusiastically to Giuseppe Bossi, "I could now let you see another model of a fully naked Paris."²⁴⁴ (fig. 40) This "*fully* naked," apparently a matter of great personal significance to Canova, remained a crucial theoretical question in the elaboration of the *beau idéal* when Canova conceived the work, but two versions of the statue

²⁴³ As noted, Solomon-Godeau entirely overlooks this prominent facet of Neoclassical art. Like much Feminist criticism, she is over-eager to have the female penetrate masculine spaces, while finding "crisis" in the places where the male invades feminine territory. For her, the only possible solution is a short-lived conflation of so-called "effeminate" men with women themselves. Winckelmann's homosocial world does not require these divisions of gender; in Sparta, women are strong, athletic, and as free in sexual matters regarding procreation as men are, but they are excluded from the military, where men, fully conscious of their role as men, do not redistribute themselves in the gender roles they've willfully divided.

²⁴⁴ *Lettere* 1839, in Argan, 180

ended up with fig leaves.²⁴⁵ The subject of Paris, the other face who launched a thousand ships, as charming instigator of the Trojan War, decisively departs from Neoclassicism's germinal aesthetic of stoic virtue. Homer presents Paris, the beloved of Aphrodite, as a poor fighter and a beautiful man.²⁴⁶ As such, he had no other purpose in art but to delight the senses—just like Endymion, Cephalus, Morpheus, and the melancholic Apollo.

As such this work provoked sensual responses that echo Winckelmann's most rapturous sentiments regarding both antique sculpture and the mock-fresco of *Jupiter and Ganymede*. When Canova's friend Leopoldo Cicognara saw Joséphine's version, he went into absolute ecstasies:

What a delicately drawn line between man and God, and what divine beauty in those forms! If it is true that objects striking the imagination influence human conception, I would decree that an image of this Phrygian shepherd modeled on your marble be set at the foot of all marriage beds; I am sure this would greatly benefit the human race. All the senses are delighted in a way that is easier to experience than describe ... the chisel is the last tool that comes to mind, for if statues could be made by caressing marble rather than by roughly cutting and chipping, I would say that this statue had been formed by wearing down the surrounding marble by dint of kisses and caresses!²⁴⁷

This incredible quote, with its kisses and caresses, with its delighted senses, with its almost wistful musings on arousal, brings to mind some of Winckelmann's most sensual passages and reaffirms his enduring theoretical elaboration of artistic yearning and eroticism. Cicognara's homoerotic gaze (in which a beautiful ephebe somehow promotes fecundity—or, at least, inspires sexual thoughts) comes vividly to life in his imaginative vision of the male sculptor kissing and caressing the marble forms of the naked youth in order to bring him into being.

²⁴⁵ One was made for Joséphine de Beauharnais, 1807-12 (now in St. Petersburg), and the other was made for Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria, 1810-16 (now in Munich). Hugh Honour illustrates these two and one other, "fully naked" version, writing, "A third version which may either be a copy or a statue roughed out in Canova's studio and completed after his death by Cincinnato Baruzzi." (Honour, "Canova's...", 225)

²⁴⁶ Of the numerous references, Paris's character is introduced in Book III, with Hector's speech: "Paris," said he, "evil-hearted Paris, fair to see, but woman-mad, and false of tongue, would that you had never been born, or that you had died unwed. Better so, than live to be disgraced and looked askance at."

²⁴⁷ Letter of 245 July 1813; Cicognara, 1973, in Argan, 18

Clearly sensual passion, rather than logical reason, is the tool of Neoclassicism.²⁴⁸

Other artists had more trouble disguising the vulgarity of their eroticized male nudes. Bouchardon's *Cupid* is a direct precursor to Léon Pallière's adolescent *Mercur*, which was his *envoi de Rome* for the year 1815 (fig. 30), and the Académie's *rappor*t of 1816 showed a similar disapproval for what they viewed as "common." The insinuating language critiquing Bouchardon's sculpture does not figure into the Académie's estimation of Pallière's painting; in fact, while praising the color, they completely ignore the fact that the "*dessin*" is less *faulty* than *contrived*.²⁴⁹ The tilt of the youth's pelvis affords the viewer a titillating view of his genitals, while suggesting a slight parting of his unseen buttocks. It also creates one of the most interesting linear compositions among the academic figure studies. Geometric right angles and triangles meet with masterful accentuations of curves in a way that prefigures 20th-century photographic studies of the nude. Likewise, this rather direct precursor to the photography of Von Gloeden and Plüschow—which underlines its homoerotic interest—finds anatomical validation in the torso-twisting poses of the German barons' Sicilian youths. (figs. 42-46)

Admittedly, Pallière's "Mercury," with his indecorous hints of pubic hair and slack musculature

²⁴⁸ Hugh Honour, in a 1972 article on Canova's studio practice, acknowledges Canova's sensuality, but associates this with his slick marble surfaces (a theme reprised by Padiyar) rather than in erotic transfer. To Canova's quote, "I nudi sono vera e bellissima carne," he comments that it "seems to refer to the sensuous appeal of the marbles and to the quality of their carving rather than to theories of sculptural form, let alone Winckelmannian notions of noble simplicity and calm grandeur." Yet, all in all: "His attitude to sculpture appears to have been more sensuous than cerebral." (214) Of interest, Honour describes Canova's actual working practice, which did not consist of kisses and caresses, per se, but something as erotically evocative: "con grandissimo passione e calore." (217) (Hugh Honour. "Canova's Studio Practice-II: 1792-1822," in *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 114, No. 829 (Apr., 1972), pp. 214+216-29)

²⁴⁹ « Nous pourrions répéter ici avec plus de force les reproches que viennent de nous suggérer les convenances du sujet. Cette figure, absolument nulle d'intérêt ne peut convenir qu'à un jeune pâtre et ne saurait représenter un Dieu. M^r Pallière, décorant trop légèrement son étude du nom d'une divinité n'a pas pensé qu'il compromettrait son jugement et son goût en voulant qu'on y reconnut l'élégante beauté du fils de Maya. Il y a beaucoup de talent sans doute dans cette figure, mais combien n'en a t'on [*sic.*] pas perdu depuis qu'on fait de la peinture, et combien n'en perdra t'on pas encore en négligeant les qualités qui ont le pouvoir de nous intéresser en se privant sur tout d'un ressort puissant, l'expression, cette muette éloquence à qui seule appartient le droit de remuer notre âme ! ... Ce jeune pâtre, nous ne saurions autrement l'appeler, décèle la nature commune et incorrecte qui lui a servi de modèle. Des qualités recommandables cependant s'y font remarquer. Le coloris en est vrai, brillant ; l'effet vigoureux, la draperie et le terrain participant de la vive clarté répandue sur la figure montrent très heureusement que l'on peut obtenir autant et plus d'effet par une lumière habilement distribuée..., le modeler, qui révèle un sentiment d'imitation fort louable, a beaucoup de ressort, mais le dessin manque de délicatesse et de choix. On aurait pu, en restant dans le même caractère de nature, éviter des lourdeurs remarquables surtout dans les pieds ; le torse d'une belle pâte, laisse beaucoup à désirer sous le rapport du dessin : forcé de mouvement, trop resserré vers les hanches, il ne paraît pas bien ensemble. » (qtd. in Grunchev, 38)

in his torso, is nothing more than a “shepherd boy” (as the Academy noted), or really, nothing more than a Roman *garzone*, just as Renoir’s *Diana* of 1867 is nothing more than a Second Empire *fille*. Decades before the Impressionist Revolution, it brings into question the mythological pretext that clearly does little more than justify the nude. No heterosexually-minded scholar would argue that Renoir’s *Diana* has more meaning than that of a plump and pleasing nude. But then, Pallière’s work must have little more meaning than that of a lithe and luscious nude as well. Yet, Pallière anticipates *Olympia* as much as *Diana* with his unflinching and expressionless gaze. Exactly as with the descendant of Venus, this supposed Olympian god stares at the viewer with what can only be called erotic awareness due to the *Olympia*’s defiance lies in the crotch-blocking gesture of her hand and crossed legs; the defiance of Mercury, despite his pelvis-offering pose and splayed limbs, lies in his haltingly self-assured attitude and in the slightly tensed hand that grips the hard, long crook as if ready to raise it as a barrier—or whack any who would dare approach. In 1815, “Mercury” could not have a modern-day role as *Olympia*’s courtesan, but Pallière’s reluctant acceptance of classical tropes hardly implies a rejection of Winckelmannian principles. Winckelmann’s theory calls for the translation of nature into a type of perfect beauty achieved in antique art, but the German scholar never resolves the question subjectivity, even in his ramblings about the trained or educated eye. His own professional examples and personal responses are too varied, and original Greek statuary was almost entirely unknown to him. Indeed he privileges a much more literal nature, with his lubricious dreams of oiled-up Spartans and his longing gazes on the straight-nosed Romans who pass him on the street. Winckelmann’s reaction to Mengs’s Ganymede fresco indicates that he would have found in Pallière’s *envoi* an exemplary illustration of youthful, antique-style beauty.

Whatever Winckelmann would have thought, critics found that Canova’s male nudes better exemplified the *idéal* of antique perfection. Yet even his perfectly polished marble never relinquished the earthy sensuality of Pallière’s divine boy. While working on the full-length

statue for Paris (1807-12) (fig. 40), Canova also carved portrait busts of the Trojan prince, one for Monsieur Alquier, the French ambassador to Rome, in 1808, and the other for Quatremère de Quincy, in 1810. The latter, described by one scholar as a “misogynist bachelor” (which does not preclude homosexuality),²⁵⁰ wrote a thank-you note that reads: “There is in it a mixture of heroism and voluptuousness, of the noble and the carnal; I think that in no other composition can there be such a combination of life, sweetness, purity, and perfection.”²⁵¹ Among other things, the man responsible for David’s conversion to both stages of Neoclassicism²⁵² has here most explicitly stated the Winckelmannian association between presumed nobility and beauty of a deeply carnal sensuality. But the very idea of nobility in this statue stretches the limits of the association between outward beauty and inner character. Paris, the archer, despite his pivotal role in the *Iliad*, is more of a seducer than a hero—exactly the role Canova has aptly given him in his statue, according to the reactions.²⁵³

Of course, nobility cannot be dispensed with. As in Winckelmann, the need to associate male beauty with nobility of character is tied to the practical need to deny homoeroticism. Even the “decadents” of the late 19th century, equally fascinated with exterior beauty and also centered in a homosexual subculture, felt the need to avoid overtly homosexual content; thus, Oscar Wilde self-censored his *Picture of Dorian Gray*. Of course, Dorian’s devastatingly handsome physiognomy concealed a wicked soul—just as many dissipated personalities of the Neoclassical era surely did. This work retrospectively exposes the pretensions to nobility of character as specious theoretical justifications for concealed homoerotic appreciation.

²⁵⁰ Solomon-Godeau, 94

²⁵¹ This sculpture is now housed at the Chicago Art Institute. (N.K.K., Argan, 320, with ref. to Pavanello, 1976)

²⁵² Quatremère de Quincy, who accompanied him to Naples in 1779, influenced his conversion to the aesthetic of the antique. (Wildenstein, n. 58, p. 9) Honour further credits him for the nudity of the Sabines.

²⁵³ It is worth noting that Canova strove for great refinement in the physiognomy of his statues. Honour writes: “when Canova was working on the second version of his statue of Paris he told the Crown Prince of Bavaria (later Ludwig I) who had commissioned it: ‘nella testa porterà la fisionomia alquanto cambiato’. Comparison of the two statues, one now in the Hermitage, the other in Munich, reveals only the slightest modification in the plumpness of the cheeks, the roundness of the chin (the Hermitage version is slightly more determined) and the relationship of nose to mouth, though there are also differences in the locks of hair which curl up around the base of the Phrygian cap.” (“Canova’s...,” 225)

Chapter 4 – ii. Homosexual Narratives

Even Girodet's *Endymion*, which subverts traditional gender roles in terms of both presentation and spectatorship to such a dramatic extent that it can only be called "queer," frames its homoerotic imagery (the interplay between Zephyr and Endymion) in a heterosexual narrative (the interplay between Diana and Endymion). Canova's Paris, Guérin's Cephalus, and David's Romulus all have female lovers. But there are also instances when artists married male visual delectation with more overt homosexual narratives.

As noted, a stock of homosexual subjects—more latently from the ancient Greek chroniclers of mythology and history, more actively from Ovid—existed since the Renaissance. The primary subject, Ganymede, appeared in a variety of guises. Rembrandt depicted him as a crying babe in his rendition of the subject, but Michelangelo had already proposed an unprecedentedly sexualized interpretation of the subject, even transforming the Trojan adolescent into a plump and muscled young man. (fig. 47) His pose, uncannily akin to the Barberini Faun not discovered until the 17th century and resembling a swastika, or (as we might call it with its proto-Nazi significations) a Greek gammadion, enables the viewer's eye to sweep over both genitals and the crack in his buttocks. The eagle lustfully pulls the willing Ganymede's legs apart, while the boy's golden head sinks contentedly onto his shoulder and his pliant arms spread into a graceful vulnerability. The flop of his wrist, whose arabesques extend to his gently curling pinky finger, suggest the utter relaxation of sensual abandonment. Although Michelangelo's flawlessly constructed composition makes the pose look effortless and natural, the upward tilt of the pelvis and forcefully thrust-up left leg are contrived to enhance the fullest

erotic possibilities: namely, acquiescence and penetration.

Judging by the number of copies, we can assume this rather provocative work was fairly well-known in artistic circles. There is an 18th-century drawing “attributed to” David. (fig. 48) Whoever the artist is has slightly altered the pose, so that the more youthful Ganymede is less twisted; the outward thrust moves to his more rounded, less muscled tummy rather than his pelvis and shoulders. Perhaps the erotic subtleties have faded, but the youth, his legs still spread, now rests his hand gently around the shoulder of the eagle in a way that underlines the amorous narrative of the Greek myth. David reprised the subject of Ganymede on several other occasions. Namely, he decorated the letter “I” with a picture of the golden youth feeding the Olympian eagle. (fig. 55) In David’s portfolio is also a tracing inscribed “*pendentif d’après Raphael*,” which depicts a bearded Olympian god, presumably Jupiter, kissing a tautly muscled ephebe; one hand rests on the youth’s cheek, the other on the nape of his neck. (fig. 49) The original pendentive, attributed to Raphael and executed by Giulio Romano in the Villa Farnesina, illustrates the Father of the Gods presumably scolding an equally long-haired but stouter Cupid, complete with wings and bow and arrow. (fig. 50) The transformation of the young god of love into an adolescent Ganymede-type figure in David’s tracing intentionally *homo*-eroticizes an image previously tied to the heterosexual love story of Cupid and Psyche. Clearly, artists could not resist the inspirations offered by the proximity of plump boyish flesh and manly libido and chose not to waste the pictorial model provided by Renaissance classicism on such an innocent encounter. Wilhelm Böttner’s *Zeus Seated on an Eagle, Embraces Ganymede* (c. 1790-1800) (etching, fig. 51), which gives the adolescent the attributes of Ganymede and the man the attributes of the raptorial god, puts the body of the classically-styled cup bearer, now more fully on display, behind his captor’s legs and more firmly in his grip. Such images attest to the Neoclassical artists’ awareness of the erotic suggestions of the myth.

Homosexual erotics are conspicuously present in David’s portfolio. Although these are

sanctified subjects of the ancient art David so admired, it's interesting to consider the way 18th-century artistic minds faced a subject that was otherwise unspeakable in public discourse. There's a disconnect between what is drawn and what is spoken that makes it hard to penetrate into the psychological depths of 18th-century sexual attitudes. How did David and other artists reconcile these blatant illustrations of pederasty with the arrests, raids, hangings, and general public scorn that ruined or took the lives of contemporary pederasts? Certainly, there was a certain amount of fantastical disassociation from the gritty realities in David's drawing (based on an antique statue from Pompeii) of a satyr seducing a pipe-playing youth, both depicted with full-frontal nudity. (figs. 52-53) But what context did David imagine for his various tracings after d'Hancarville's second volume? Here we find a symposium scene where bearded men lounge with beardless men. (fig. 54) There are hints of affection, in the subtle gestures that link the pairs but no overt sexuality. On the other hand, another scene depicts two men, one larger and presumably older (or more divine), but both beardless and similarly crowned, in a rather frank sexual encounter. (fig. 58) The "younger" man appears poised to mount the seated older man. The body types make the sex of the two men fairly obvious, but the younger man's front leg is raised to give the viewer a glimpse of his genitals. On the other hand, it seems that an erection, which appears in the original vase painting (fig. 57), was erased from the seated man. In any case, the illustration clearly indicates that consensual sex between athletic men was not only in David's consciousness but in his visual repertoire. It enables scholars to recover from Victorian-era prudery (and timeless homophobia) and flesh out the sexual context that nuanced David's most accomplished paintings.

In a drawing from 1825, David depicts Ganymede, looking rather Paris-like in his Phrygian cap and slender full-frontal nudity as he feeds the majestic bird while gently stroking his neck. (fig. 59) Of course, as cup-bearer in Olympus, the youth would have been offering nectar to Jupiter in the form of a lusty and brawny man. But David's metaphorical drawing is more poetic.

The eagle, barely more than a fanciful abstraction in thick dark pencil strokes, is scarcely delineated, in the unsteady, but well-trained hand of old age. Meanwhile, Ganymede's body is drawn with a soft, thin stroke, whose almost ephemerally delicate outlines achieve the look of palpitant flesh under the fluttery, but purposeful hand of the seventy-six year-old David. It's hard to imagine more graceful virtuous than what David achieved in the off-parallel undulations of the body's S-curves, and the ever-inviting propped-up right leg, with its arched foot, enables David to caress the rounded under-thigh with his pencil, in the line that connects genitals to knee. Could it be that, in the last year of his life, after years of featuring the beautiful male nude in his compositions, foremost on David's mind were the wistful reflections over youthful male beauty, not only under the appreciative gaze of the older male, but under his decisively desirous gaze as well?

Other Neoclassicists approached the subject of Ganymede, and Michael Preston Worley discussed its occurrence in France between 1730 and 1820.²⁵⁴ Charles Natoire, who would delight viewers with his ephobic Cupid in 1737, painted the first representation of Ganymede in the 18th century—a handsome Rococo adolescent looking into the eagle's own adoring eyes. However, sculptors more often used the eagle as a prop to represent a nude contrapposto youth. Pierre Julien brings a new Neoclassical sensitivity but also an unexpected controversy. (fig. 60) Worley, who points us the attributes referring to love, informs us, "The sculpture was one of the first works in eighteenth-century France to elicit charges of indecency."²⁵⁵ It was conceived as Julien's *morceau de réception* in 1776, but refused—a devastating blow to the middle-aged artist. Subsequently, however, two patrons commissioned marble versions of the work, one of

²⁵⁴ Michael Preston Worley's article "The Image of Ganymede in France, 1730-1820: The Survival of a Homoerotic Myth" (*The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 76, No. 4, Dec., 1994, pp. 630-43) is essentially his answer to James Saslow's book, *Ganymede* (op. cit.), which suggested that the homoerotic myth retreated from visual culture in the 17th and 18th centuries. Paintings showing the abduction include Natoire's and Van Loo's room decorations from 1731, while paintings showing the cup bearer include J.-B.-M. Pierre's lost work seen at the Salon of 1743 (the composition is known from a contemporary engraving by J. M. Preissler and Jean-Jacques Forty's work seen at the Salon of 1791.

²⁵⁵ Worley, 638.

which met with much success at the Salon of 1785.²⁵⁶ Winckelmannian language pervaded the discourse in the admiration of the adolescent figure, whose genitals were covered by a skimpy enough drapery to leave his backside fully exposed. (fig. 61) Baron Grimm described the work as graceful and nobly posed.²⁵⁷ Another critic, calling himself “Le Peintre Anglais,” praised the well-proportioned adolescent for his “ravishing beauty” and his embodiment of “*la belle nature*” (another term for the *beau idéal*).²⁵⁸ Other critics spoke of the pose “worthy of antique simplicity” and of the “*belles formes*” of the pleasant statue.²⁵⁹ Evoking lyricism, simplicity, and nobility, as well as eroticism and perhaps a touch of the wistful, critics defined interpretation of the Neoclassical male nude in Winckelmannian terms.

However, the subject elicited homophobic criticism as well. One Salon critic wrote: “Joli garçon, mais lourd; je dis de plus sans feindre. Qu’il nous rappelle ici des singuliers amours ; Jupiter amoureux a bien fait d’autres tours, Qui sont plus naturels à peindre.”²⁶⁰ These verses make it quite clear that even a long-established painterly subject like Ganymede retained specifically homosexual connotations in the public mind, and they insist on questions of motivation and artistic choice. The fact that other subjects, even Jupiter’s other “more natural” amorous adventures, for example, offered a more acceptable alternative to such indecent illustrations certainly load David’s work with irrepressible connotations. At the same time, it raises questions about why some critics ignored them. The lawyer and second author of the famous *Mémoires secrets*... Moufle d’Angerville approved of the statue overall but found, “The very name of this handsome young man recalls a most obscene fable ... with its eyes, the eagle seems to devour the seductive, nude cupbearer; it hugs him closely, and amorously caresses his

²⁵⁶ The Baron de Juys, Julien’s friend and patron, commissioned the marble seen at the Salon; the other version (that at the Louvre) was purchased by Jean Hyacinthe Louis Emmanuel Hocquart, marquis de Montfermeil, president of the Paris parlement.

²⁵⁷ In the *Correspondance littéraire et philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc.* ... (Worley, 639)

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Qtd. in Ibid., 640

buttocks with his wing.”²⁶¹ A strange mix of unabashed prurience and moral repugnance suggest interesting implications. Although he defines his position as objecting, he relishes drawing our attention to the homoerotic caress of the buttocks, the site of anal penetration; and he seems to take for granted the “seductive” and “handsome” qualities of the youthful nude along with the lusty rapaciousness of the bird of prey. These same words recur in Neoclassical interpretation over twenty years later, notably in the descriptions of Canova’s Paris, whose seductive forms seem to have been “amorously caressed” into life by the sculptor, to be visually devoured by the viewer.²⁶²

Foremost among the painters who reprised the controversial subject after Julien’s success in 1785 was Jean-Pierre Granger, whose 1812 painting (fig. 62) is little more than an excuse to translate Praxiteles into flesh and put the adolescent male body on display; there is little significant interaction between boy and bird. Granger returned to homoerotic imagery in 1817, when he depicted *Apollo and Cyparissus*.

The loves of Apollo, or rather, the Death of Hyacinth and the Death of Cyparissus, were more popular subjects in the Neoclassical period. Benjamin West had treated the subject of Hyacinth as early as 1771 (fig. 63); Merry-Joseph Blondel reprised the theme in early 19th century; Andrea Appiani depicted the subject in 1799-1800 (fig. 64), just before Jean Broc’s version appeared at the Salon of 1801 (fig. 65). In his book on Romanticism, Jean Clay illustrates two of these images under the heading “*une seule courbe lie les gestes d’amour*.”²⁶³ This powerful description eloquently captures the sentiment that we intuitively recognize when we see two bodies lovingly united through the pictorial choices of the artist. In the homoerotic works that lack an accepted social construct for inferring a heterosexual narrative, the best way

²⁶¹ Qtd. in *Ibid.*, 639-40

²⁶² Incidentally, in 1789, David’s pupil Wicar esteemed Julien above Canova, but David—whose *Horatii* appeared at the same Salon where the critics alternately praised and reviled Ganymede’s “*belles formes*”—believed the Italian master was on a path to greater artistic glory. (Wildenstein, n. 207, p. 27)

²⁶³ Jean Clay. *Le Romantisme* (Paris: Hachette, 1980), 127.

to suggest physical love in images that can only explicitly convey great tenderness is to pictorially unify the bodies in a way that metaphorically suggests sexual union. Full nudity enabled artists like Appiani and Broc to stress man-to-man contact by repeating the penis motif in the interlaced figures of the aggrieved Apollo and collapsing Hyacinth. Appiani's version stands out for other reasons. First of all, it fuses the two bodies into one triangular arc; their heads meet, and Hyacinth's body rests against Apollo's left side, covering the god's leg and arm and "completing" the divine figure with his own. Second, the artist, rather than using Hyacinth's limp arms to hide the male sex, has used the youth's hands to frame the two sets of genitals—the one part of their bodies that lines up exactly—in a position that almost suggests that if Hyacinth gripped both he could bring them together. The nudity seems intended to underline the picture's homoeroticism, for Appiani's pendant piece, *Apollo and Daphne*, preserves the same god's modesty by conveniently covering his genitals with the laurel maiden's up-blown skirt.²⁶⁴

Broc's version suggests tenderness and affection more than sexual fusion, especially in his childish depiction of Hyacinth. Broc's personal life remains mysterious, but his homoerotic picture has remained the prime example of the aesthetic of the *primitifs*, or *barbus* ("bearded ones"), of David's studio as well as the purists. Despite the rebelliousness of the romantic-spirited group, it's impossible to ignore the elements that link the *barbus* with the most Winckelmannian period of Neoclassical production: simplicity and linear clarity, archaicizing pictorial elements, lack of spatial depth that gives the works the quality of a bas-relief, a still or frozen quality, poetry, primal emotion, and muted, fresco-like tones. There is also a strange link between with the primitive-Neoclassical style that emerged in David's studio as he worked on the Sabines and the first impulse towards homosexual subjects, as if Girodet's *Endymion* conspired with David's theories of nudity and Winckelmann's theories of male beauty to inspire the unreserved depiction of natural, idyllic homosexuality as a poetic ideal.

²⁶⁴ Even his *Parnassus*, of 1811, reprises the more decorously covered model by Raphael rather than the fully-exposed antecedent by Mengs.

Ingres absorbed these powerful influences in 1801, when he created his prize-winning *prix de Rome* composition. Ingres' foray into homoerotic subject matter seems like an anomaly—though a compelling one! The subject of his *prix de Rome* picture, *Achilles Receiving the Envoys of Agamemnon* (1801) (fig. 66) was, of course, chosen by the *École*. However, the original conception, which scholars situate prominently in his catalogue and which continues to enchant viewers (it remains one of his most reproduced images), belongs entirely to Ingres' powerful imagination.²⁶⁵ The composition has many attributes of the “neoclassical frieze” so in vogue at that time, linking it to other prize winners but highlighting his innovations. The right side of the composition groups together bulky, muscled men, made heavier by the mass of rocky mountains crowning them.

However, the left side shows Ingres at his arabesque best. Ingres uses compositional elements to underline the bond, suggested as sensual and physical rather than amicable, between Achilles and his beloved Patroclus. (fig. 74) Their bodies form but one curve, just as Gavin Hamilton, John Flaxman, and others had depicted the couple in scenes of Achilles mourning Patroclus. (fig. 72) Patroclus's head, cropped by the fan-shaped drooping curves of a fern above his oval helmet, initiates the play of arcs and S-curves that interlock the figures. From the feather capping the Achaean hero's helmet, we follow a soft arc down to the left side (viewer's right side) of Patroclus's startlingly handsome face (one could say Ingres has hit a rare moment of ideal Greek perfection), and thence across his chin, down the upper half of his akimbo arm to Achilles's face (in profile) and down the entire left of Achilles's long, gently curved right arm, his finger leading us down to his arched foot, whose toes point us back into the composition. This sweeping curve, which unties the figures into something of a single entity is reinforced by the exaggerated *contrapposto* of Patroclus's pose and the strong sinuosity of Achilles's torso—

²⁶⁵ “Ingres resta lui-même fort attaché à son tableau : rappelons le témoignage de son élève Amaury-Duval (*L'Atelier d'Ingres*, Paris, 1878, p. 57) selon lequel Ingres reprit son tableau « dans l'intention de reprendre toutes les parties d'ombre et de les *empâter* ». (Grunchec, 76)

ingeniously echoing the sinuosity of his companion's torso in three-quarter profile rather than in a frontal view. A circular movement around Achilles's covered buttocks leads from his thighs to his knees and immediately reconnects visually—and literally, in the touching V-intersection of the lovers' calves—with Patroclus's knees and thighs, leading us back up to the svelte figure of Patroclus, which points to the center of the composition. Instead of finding a void or a linear link to the men on the right side of the canvas, Ingres has almost inexplicably put a group of nude Spartan-type youths in this place of prominence. One holds a discus, but another Michelangesque figure poses languorously on the earth. Two other figures stand side by side; one, in a seductive contrapposto, rests his arm on the shoulder of his companion while turning his face in towards him. This figure, helmeted, looks out towards the tent where the primary action is taking place, but his hand intersects or caresses his companion's hip. This group has more in common with Michelangelo than Sistine-ceiling like poses; they recall the homosexual Renaissance master's group of nude youths in the *Doni Tondo* (fig. 68-69)—and are as equally gratuitous, except in light of an erotic reading. If the purpose of the nude group is to suggest indolence in opposition to the raging battle across the plains, the strongly erotic undertones can only allude to the nature of the relationship of the protagonists.

As noted, the body types of Achilles and, even more so, Patroclus are beautiful and ephobic in comparison to the Herculean forms of Odysseus and Ajax, just as they are fully exposed (exhibited, one might say) in comparison to Odysseus's red cover and the yellow drapery covering the right half of Ajax's body. Although the Homeric subject lends itself to Davidian nudity (despite Homer having said nothing specific about the undress of his heroes in this encounter²⁶⁶), Ingres's choice is entirely subjective, and his figures are rather daringly undressed in comparison to his *prix de Rome* contemporaries. Yet Ingres' bodies, however decorative and pretty, communicate much through their unconventional poses. Patroclus, for all his Praxitelean

²⁶⁶ Homer, *Iliad*, Book 9.

litheness, has an especial jauntiness in his outthrust right hip, which impeccably balances the billowing tuft of rich blue drapery on his left. The aloof look, at once piercing to the point of iciness, *méfiant* to the point of defiance, impassive to the point of disdainfulness, and playful to the point of haughtiness, brilliantly condenses the gestalt of the figure—the particular tilt of his head on his strong neck, the dramatic tilt of his body, and the imperturbable stance, whose rigidly resting arm, fist-on-hip, and crossed leg redefine the life-giving contrapposto. Meanwhile, Achilles, whose slender legs are as impossibly long as his companion's, is caught in a half-movement, a pose infused with new life by its attention to linear wholeness and emotive connotation. Homer describes how “Achilles, startled, sprang to his feet, the lyre still in his hands, leaving the seat where he had sat in peace...”²⁶⁷ The lyre fills the only gap between the two figures, enabling Ingres to continue the undulating line that connects Patroclus and Achilles. It also brings Achilles's hand in dangerous proximity to Patroclus's genitals. In fact, in his original sketch, Achilles's hand *covered* Patroclus's genitals. Either way, and despite the discrepancy between Achilles's strong hand and Patroclus's diminutive genitals, there is an electric spark of eroticism in this juxtaposition. There is the hint of a caress in the backwards S-shape repeated in Achilles's bent finger and Patroclus's scrotum, and his penis turns down in an unmistakable counterbalance to Achilles's bent forefinger. Here, there is almost a floral complexity that echoes, on a smaller scale, the vegetal profusion above Patroclus and insists once again on the arc sweeping from Patroclus's head through his midsection to Achilles's midsection ... and, following the swath of white drapery across Achilles's midsection, back up to the spectral figure of Briseis, whose thinly-painted shadowed figure appears even less distinct than the background figures in the full light of day. In fact this U-curve is emphasized by the drop of heavy green drapery, on the left of the U, moving across Achilles's chest, along his left forearm (at the bottom of the U), up the line of Patroclus's pelvis, before it is picked up by Patroclus's

²⁶⁷ Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 9, lines 232-34. Translation by Robert Fagles. (See also Philippe Grunchev, *Les Concours des Prix de Rome, 1797-1863*, p. 76)

scarf-like tunic slung over his left shoulder and looping over to his right hip, on the right of the U. This division of Achilles's loves between the feminine, to the left of the U-curve, and the masculine, in the right of the U-curve, is poignant, and the inclusion of Briseis, who has no specific narrative role (Agamemnon advised his ambassadors to offer to return the girl), as an observer in this shadowy recess is a clever psychological addition that, compositionally, reorganizes the duo onto the left into a trio, and adds more weight to the left side in counterbalance to the group on the right. Homer tells us Achilles sincerely loved Briseis, and yet, honor did not permit him to accept the offer of her return. It seems an odd thing for a lover to reject his beloved, especially when this lover has enough passion to overturn his much more crucial decision to stay out of the war after the death of his other beloved, Patroclus. But too many others before me have tried to determine the nature of the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus. Let it be what the story-teller or viewer or reader imagines or intends. In any case, Ingres knew enough about "Greek love" to make this an implicit part of Achilles and Patroclus's relationship—just as those in Periclean Greece did (arguing rather about who was *eromenos* and who was *erastes*, than whether they were lovers at all).

Ingres's edition of the *Iliad* was translated by Paul-Jérémie Bitaubé, who "expatiated rather liberally on the 'uncouth' manners of Homeric society: 'It is in the state of a still half-civilized society that passion and sentiment spread more energetically, and there has never been a people more sensitive than the Greeks,' he wrote in 1764.²⁶⁸ His quote preempts any attempts to link his Hellenophilia with homophilia. Yet, the classical world remained an acceptable terrain for exploring homoerotic desire. Ingres's "anomaly" may not be entirely unique in his oeuvre. In an undated line drawing identified as *Alexander and Hephaistion* (fig. 73),²⁶⁹ Ingres has depicted a rather bulky, robed seated Hephaistion turning back presumably to feed the standing Macedonian

²⁶⁸ Guégan, 29

²⁶⁹ Guégan makes this connection between his prix de Rome picture and this drawing in the Musée Ingres in Montauban (30)

conqueror, who leans on the back of his chair. Hephaestion's fingertips touch the lips of Alexander, who was said to be "ruled by his thighs."²⁷⁰ Hephaestion's long hair, copious robe, and nearly undistinguishable chest give him a very feminine aspect, but his robe, exposing half his torso, is masculine in cut. Why has Ingres chosen this scene of great intimacy between the two men? Only his *Paolo and Francesca* approaches that type of quiet tenderness between two figures, although Ingres made a handful of erotic drawings of couples (including some probably related to *Paolo and Francesca* and the *Raphael and the Farnesina*) that make a much more immediate sexual impact. None of his biographers have hinted at bisexuality, and he deeply loved two wives and painted some of the most famous pictures of sensual women. But if nothing else, the apparently squat and ugly Ingres²⁷¹ was a sensitive aesthete, and heterosexuality should not preclude the appreciation of male beauty—precisely what makes tracking subculturally meaningful *homo*-eroticism in the broad range of *human* eroticism so challenging.

For David, too, we must defer to his biography while examining a well-known painting whose homoerotic pictorial elements are strongly reinforced by a homosexual subtext from Ancient Greece. Unlike Ingres, however, David had, as we have seen, showed a homoerotic approach to art throughout his career.

In 1814, David, in his most Winckelmannian picture,²⁷² brought noble simplicity and calm

²⁷⁰ Diogenes of Sinope, *Letters*: 24.

²⁷¹ For contemporary descriptions of Ingres, see Pierre. Rosenberg. *From Drawing to Painting: Poussin, Watteau, Fragonard, David, and Ingres*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 10-11. Despite the idealized beauty of his famous self-portrait, one might keep in mind the well-known figure of the archer for which he posed in David's studio.

²⁷² My own line of reasoning follows, but Martin Kemp already discussed the picture in Winckelmannian terms, in "J-L. David and the Prelude to a Moral Victory for Sparta." (*The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 51, No. 2, Jun., 1969, pp. 178-83) His opening paragraphs (p. 178) distinguish between a "heroic phase" of Davidian Neoclassicism in the 1780s and a later phase more directly influenced by Winckelmann. He adds: "The Spartan way of life was of special relevance for the theories of Winckelmann, in particular for his notion of Greek physical fitness. ... The young Spartan would be as fleet of foot as an Indian brave; his movements would be agile and fluent. Something of this fluent vitality emerges in the springing soldiers on the right of David's painting. This emphasis upon youthful characteristics in discussing beauty of physique is typical of Winckelmann's tastes. ... The subtle refinement of his style in these paintings clearly reflects his fresh appreciation of the finest antique pieces for those very qualities most highly valued by Winckelmann." (p. 180) Kemp also points out David's direct appropriation of the figure of Leonidas from Winckelmann's *Descriptions des pierres gravées*.... In conclusion, he finds that, "David moves decisively beyond Winckelmann, introducing a higher degree of positive emotional expression than had been envisaged by the German theorist." (p. 181-82) I argue that this very emotional expressiveness further links him to the German theorist.

grandeur back to these types of images that relied primarily on melancholic emotionalism and erotic sensuality. His ability to capture the essence of Winckelmann's theory occurred, most naturally, in an idealization of homosocial fraternity. *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, David's only major painting to restrict its content to male figures, reverses many of the ideals of early Neoclassicism, even though it reprises the theme of public duty. The heroic stoicism of the warriors facing sure death is transposed, overall, into a serene contemplativeness worlds away from the stern severity of the *Oath of the Horatii*. Even the expressions of joy and exuberance among the garlanded men, with their youthfully beautiful bodies, their plump curves and rosy skin, only serve to elicit the viewer's sense of melancholy, loss, and yearning, due to the keen awareness of their imminent sacrifice.

David, an ardent revolutionary who repeatedly watched his political ideals crumble, seems to yearn for this world of ideal brotherhood and homosocial love, which inexplicably marginalizes the female presence. David was as outspoken about women's rights (at least in terms of their having ateliers in the Louvre alongside the men²⁷³) as he was about traditional gender roles. David, as artistic director of the national *fêtes* that replaced traditional religious holidays during the revolution and celebrated the Republic, praised women—but exclusively in their role as mothers and wives. Women represent maternity and fecundity in public discourse. Meanwhile, he complimented the portrait Mme Vigée-Lebrun sent to the Salon and placed as a pendant next to his by telling her that, “One would think my canvas was painted by a woman, and [yours] by a man.”²⁷⁴

David's personal relationships with women were more complex, including that with Vigée-Lebrun herself.²⁷⁵ By almost all accounts, David was an ugly man.²⁷⁶ This sensitive artist who

²⁷³ See Wildenstein, notes 181-82 (p. 24).

²⁷⁴ From the *Mémoires* of Mme Vigée-Lebrun. (Wildenstein, n. 1313-14, 146)

²⁷⁵ Her *Mémoires* indicate that she never forgave him for his persecutions (notably against Hubert Robert) during the Revolution. (Wildenstein, n. 1754, 200)

²⁷⁶ For example, see Wildenstein, ns. 41, 1754.

believed in the Winckelmannian principle that exterior beauty reflected interior nobility had a face deformed by a tumescent growth in his cheek caused by an untreated puncture by a foil to his upper jaw in his youth.²⁷⁷ It's hard to know if his admirers met with the same kind of physical repulsion as his enemies, but he certainly had many admirers, including the many devoted pupils who fought for his attention.²⁷⁸ The one David loved best was Germain Drouais, and we find David whisking his young pupil off to Rome just four months after the birth of his second son. His wife accompanied them, along with his pupils Wicar and Debret, but David, eager to paint to his *Horatii* in Rome, planned his trip around the presumed winning of the Rome prize by Drouais. Later, in his *Autobiographie*, David wrote that his decision to go to Italy was determined by the “reciprocal friendship, which passed into a sort of idolatry” on the part of Drouais.²⁷⁹

As close as the two men were, David, full of glory after the unveiling of his *tableau* in Rome and eager to bask in his success after its hanging at the French Salon, left his young pupil in Rome a brief thirteen months later, in the summer of 1785. Of course, Drouais would die, only three years later, and so, David perhaps romanticized their time together. He continues, “par ses adieux, ses embrassades et ses pleurs, il avait l’air de me présager que nous ne devrions plus nous revoir.”²⁸⁰ In French, “*embrassades*” can mean hugs or kisses, or both, but David’s matter-of-fact account of this departure suggests the intense emotion of a filial or friendly relationship, rather than an amorous one. In fact, Drouais seems like the more eager, perhaps passionate, correspondent over the next couple of years, as David grew in glory and the Académie de France boarder consumed himself with work in Rome. David merely hints at a personal emotional

²⁷⁷ (Wildenstein, n. 29, 6) Of note, David always portrayed himself as a rather handsome man in self-portraits, although Ewa Lajer-Burcharth published a caricature David made of himself highlighting his swollen cheek and possessed eyes. (Lajer-Burcharth, 38)

²⁷⁸ See Thomas Crow, *Emulation: The Making of Artists for Revolutionary France*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), for a discussion of the rivalries, intermixed with jealousies regarding David’s affections, in his studio in the 1780s and 90s. David maintained highly devoted male pupils till the end of his life, when he was exiled in Belgium.

²⁷⁹ Wildenstein, n. 1368, p. 157

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

intensity on his part, implying (or admitting) that he valued Drouais first and foremost as an artist: “Drouais m’échauffait, ses progrès augmentaient mon amour pour la Peinture. Il est mort; c’en fait, j’ai perdu mon émulation.”²⁸¹ So, when David said he “could no longer do without him,”²⁸² did he mean his art would never be the same, or his heart?

After Drouais’ death, as the Revolution began in France, David began to obsess over a kind of a distinctly masculine *fraternité* visualized in all kinds of *embrassades*. His sketchbooks constantly return to the motif of hugging, embracing, and kissing men, especially in his preparatory drawings for the *Leonidas*, where this type of physical interaction between men appears more like a *raison d’être* for the canvas than a visual translation of his ideas of brotherhood and solidarity. (figs. 75-91) A sheet from David’s drawing portfolio, numbered “1779” (fig. 92) metaphorically expresses this idea. On one side, in horizontal format, we recognize an early version of the familiar *Leonidas* composition; on the verso, in large vertical format, we find a pair of soldiers in an embrace reminiscent of an adoring couple. The sheet, when taken as a whole, suggests the idea that the multi-figured composition is only a support for this image of tender interaction between two men that David leaves uninterrupted by the types of peripheral sketches that typically fill in the blank spaces of his portfolio. Everywhere, this vision of interlocking male nudes seems to be haunting his mind as he compulsively uses his pencil to investigate the best means of expressing it. The Montpellier sketch of the ensemble (usually called the “*première pensée*” and dated to c. 1800) features four embraces, mostly in trios, although two of these include kisses. (fig. 96-97) The final sketch (at the Metropolitan) (fig. 98)—which leaves three figures, including Leonidas, fully nude, instead of just one—includes the embraces that will appear in the final painting, but, in the unpainted sketchiness, the fresh candor of the expressions is somehow more striking—and, in the soldier who looks away from their offerings to lean tenderly on the shoulder of his companion, more touching. (figs. 99-100)

²⁸¹ *Mercure de France*, 7 juin, 1788 (qtd. in Crow, 40)

²⁸² Saslow, *Pictures*, 171

Although this type of demonstrativeness began with illustrations for revolutionary ideals, Ewa Lajer-Burchard brilliantly projects all kinds of homoerotic fantasies onto David's conflated "psychosexual" being and political ideology, and I refer the reader to her *Necklines*,²⁸³ as well as Padiyar's *Chains* for, among other things, a better discussion of David's earlier works like the *Socrates* of 1787. *Leonidas* certainly makes the most immediate visual impact. Its subject carries other connotations in the mingling of male flesh. While Greece was generally associated with homosexuality, Sparta's warriors were particularly famed for the pederastic relationships they formed within their highly militarized society in order to promote bravery, courage, and honor. The sources for this homosexual Spartan social organization were the very ones David seems to have been reading: Herodotus and Xenophon.²⁸⁴ Implicit in this picture of interlocked nudes is more than revolutionary *fraternité*; if we trust our history, there is emotional ardor of the type we might call romantic love and—even in the ascetic Spartan society—physical friction between those plump thighs, rosy behinds, and carefully covered genitalia.²⁸⁵

David clearly wished to lavish attention on these body parts in this undeniable tribute to male beauty. The painting has a uniformly warm and ruddy palette in the compression of active flesh and red drapery. Nowhere else in David's oeuvre does excitement and energy translate into such a heated palette, and nowhere else is he so sensitive to pervasive color harmony. Local color, most notable in a few cool accents of green, turquoise, and Prussian blue, seems to melt into a fusion of reds, oranges, and ochres. Faces flush with passion and skin glows with coursing blood; pink flowers and scarlet plumes pick up the crimson tones of the drapes, and even rocks

²⁸³ Though still too dependent on patriarchal Freudian and Lacanian language (and on undermining her own discussions of "inter-male eros" with an omnipresent "narcissistic construction of masculinity" [p. 203-04]), Lajer-Burchard compares David's speech regarding Robespierre to "specifically a Platonic rhetoric of love" found in the *Phaedrus*. (Lajer-Burchard, 52) She also identifies David with the *Abandoned Psyche* he painted (she argues) in jail, much as I suggest a correlation between Winckelmann's abandoned woman and David's other female protagonists, and claims that the painting "visualizes the Platonic discourse of love..." (Ibid., 56)

²⁸⁴ Martin Kemp, discussing David's sources, cites Herodotus's *History* and Xenophon's *Constitution of Sparta*. (Kemp, 178-79)

²⁸⁵ Thomas Crow writes, "David unequivocally displayed his understanding of the central place held by same-sex *eros* in the warrior culture of ancient Greece." (Crow, 99)

and trees pick up the ruddy tones of Leonidas's shield and the soldiers' sandal straps.

We should note that this work was excluded from the Salon of 1814, when Napoleon was exiled and the Bourbons had been restored to power. A contemporary journal reported the reason as David's forgetful omission of draperies.²⁸⁶ In fact, the centrally-located Leonidas's sword offers a teasing glance at his genitals, while the kneeling youth in the foreground is fully exposed. The strange mix of exposure and awkward concealment of the pubic area of his heroes (fig. 101) hints at a reluctance on David's part to de-sexualize this powerful scene of erotic virility. For even the most ample drapes fall off the body, leaving all the alluring parts of the anatomy exposed. But even though contemporary writers determined that the thinly veiled excuse to keep David out of the Salon reflected political motives, it stresses the very meaningful discourse of decency regarding nudity in art. David, barely fifteen years after he proposed the radical Greek aesthetic in his *Sabines*, was somehow out of touch with the art of his time—not because the so-called “Romantics” would cull from a different repertoire of subjects after 1824, but because his “true style” work might shock, offend, or corrupt.

David's innate acceptance of the male figure as the embodiment of the beau idéal, so manifest in the *Leonidas*, reveals itself, once again, in his sketchbooks. We have seen drawings of embracing men; we have seen overtly homoerotic subjects; but we have not yet examined David's infatuation with the male nude. Besides the obvious examples like his painting of Bara or his drawing of Ganymede, it is worth looking at the genesis of his works that have heterosexual *amour* as a theme. His major works include *Paris and Helen* of 1788 (fig. 109), *Sappho and Phaon* of 1809 (fig. 102), *Cupid and Psyche* of 1817, *Apelles Painting Campaspe before Alexander*, c. 1817 (fig. 106), the *Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis*, 1818 (fig. 104), and *Mars Disarmed by Venus and the Three Graces*, 1824 (fig. 110). As with Winckelmann's lover on the shore, a feminine viewpoint, or feminine “gaze” predominates. A conceptual sketch

²⁸⁶ « *Le Journal des Arts* annonce que le tableau des Thermopyles ne figurera pas au Salon « parce que le peintre a, malgré son talent, négligé la excuse cache des partie des draperies » ; cette étrange raisons politiques. » (Wildenstein, n. 1699, p. 196)

for Paris and Helen shows a very different composition from the one David decided on. Paris stands, fully nude in full-frontal contrapposto beauty, while Helen, heavily robed looks up longingly to him from the bed where she is seated. (fig. 107) Helen may well have had the face that launched a thousand ships, but her face is a blank oval. David has spent much more time articulating the contours of the beautiful prince's face and body. As always, David has not shied away from drawing the penis, as so many of his contemporaries did. The final painting reverses the "attraction": Paris clings to Helen and looks into her face, while her body is put more on display for the viewer. Nonetheless, it's interesting to consider where David's imagination first took him. Likewise, a conceptual drawing for *Mars Disarmed* (fig. 109) seems to have begun with a full-frontal presentation of the seated, nude Mars. Venus slithers up alongside him, outlining his forms more than showing her own. Undeniably, it is a more erotic drawing than the final version. Davis has achieved a beautiful unification of the two figures, and Mars's hand rests affectionately on Venus's curvy behind. Still, it is the male body that seduces the viewer, even as the female body seduces the man. This largely holds true in the final painting, where Mars's strong diagonal pose and various accoutrements draw attention to his figure. Venus is presented from behind, like an Ingresque beauty, but, despite the gracefulness of her pose, she lacks the voluptuousness that an artist more accustomed to drawing the female nude might have lent to her. We realize, in viewing this late painting, that the female nude was never a subject he perfected, and our minds wander to his final sketch of the youthful Ganymede.

Oddly Mars (who seems to be looking at Venus in the sketch) is looking past her, as if her beauty, her special kind of seductiveness had nothing to do with his choice to give up his arms. Even more strangely, David's other masculine protagonists, Cupid, Telemachus, and Phaon look directly out at the viewer. Just who is this viewer? Is it David, the artist, getting lost in the eyes of his ephebic models? Or does it bespeak male heterosexual identification with the male protagonist? Cupid's Psyche is one of the most delightful female nudes in David's repertoire,

and Telemachus's Eucharis is one of the most touchingly beautiful. In fact, the latter embodies her sadness—in her clinging posture and melancholic expression—so well, that Winckelmann inevitably comes to mind. Yet, as the male hero leaves his love, he looks not at the woman he leaves behind, but out at the viewer. Do his eyes say, “You know how I feel”? Or do they say, “I’m leaving you”? Here, I will present more questions than answers, but I think it’s worth noting that David’s painting does not lend itself to the type of feminist ideological framework so easily projected onto some other paintings.

Likewise, the ostensibly seductive figure of the centrally located Sappho, with her exposed breast, is undermined by Phaon’s penetrating gaze, again, directed at the viewer rather than the woman he has allegedly seduces. His cloak falls down exposing his own taut nipple, and there is a graceful laxity to his pose—an almost disingenuous (or staged) tilt to his shoulders enabling his straps to tumble below his breast—that recalls Marilyn more than a Greek hero. Also worth noting is that heterosexual amorousness requires a male intercessor: a rather adolescent-looking Cupid with an awfully pronounced behind. David approaches hetero-eroticism through a sort of intercessor once again in the *Apelles*, as if the painter is ambivalent about where his desire lies. Campaspe poses fully nude, while Apelles paints her and Alexander looks on. As the story goes, Alexander offered his mistress to the painter, who was more taken with her beauty than he. Although David is the painter of this scene, it’s not clear that he identifies with the painter fixated on the woman. His own painting shows equal interest in revealing the beautiful male form of Alexander, a known homosexual (or reluctantly acknowledged bisexual, depending on how one views it). No conventions—other than David’s personal commitment to “Greek style nudity”—prescribed that David disrobed Alexander in this scene, and the way his drapery bunches up around his genitals while leaving the rest of his body fully exposed once again only emphasizes the gratuitous nudity of the figure.

I do not wish to imbue David’s paintings with false subtexts. However, I do wish to point

out that the somewhat unconventional heterosexual narratives in his work may inform his approach to the male nude. Certainly, he constantly culled from Antique and Neoclassical sources. Frontal contrapposto doesn't show a very inventive approach to the male nude, even though it might show an appreciative one. Mars's open-legged pose recalls Benjamin West's two versions of *Thetis Bringing the Armor to Achilles*, 1804 and 1806 (figs. 111-12)—a sort of thematic reversal of David's painting. His source for the figure of Leonidas was Winckelmannian: an antique figure of Ajax from the *Monumenti antichi inediti* (1767) (fig. 113). And his aspirations to achieve the perfect facial expression appear in multiple sources. He said:

Moi, je veux donner à cette scène quelque chose de plus grave, de plus réfléchi, de plus religieux. ... Je veux essayer de mettre de côté ces mouvements, ces expressions de théâtre, auxquels les modernes ont donné le titre de peinture d'expression. ... A l'imitation des artistes de l'Antiquité, qui ne manquaient jamais de choisir l'instant avant ou après la grande crise d'un sujet, je ferai Léonidas et ses soldats calmes et se promettant l'immortalité avant le combat.²⁸⁷

While there is an undeniable exuberance in his painting, a more predominant lyricism quiets the work into a poetic expression of beauty. David achieved something of the religious quality he sought in the contemplative expression of Leonidas, in the strong bonds uniting the men in such physical proximity, and, of course, in the sacrificial, ritualistic undertones of the action.

So, this serene and reflective work replete with expressions of the *beau idéal* becomes transgressive and controversial. The erotic associations with the male nude, a disruptive but defining element of the Neoclassical ideal, honor their Winckelmannian roots far more than the French theoretical impetus towards didacticism and austerity. Stillness and tranquility cede, with grace and beauty, to tension and yearning in examples that associate the homoerotic ideology of Winckelmann with the homoerotic production of the most prominent Neoclassical artists of the period.

²⁸⁷ Wildenstein, n. 1295, p. 144

Conclusion

The scope of this topic means that it was more introductory than definitive. In fact, one of my goals was to gather and synthesize a lot of previous scholarship, since hunting down a lot of scattered information proved one of the greatest challenges of undertaking this topic. Dealing with homosexuality in discrete increments rather than in a general way creates a type of “divide and conquer” approach that besets homosexual scholarship, or, even more so, mainstream acceptance of homosexual scholarship. Thus, I have written in the spirit of a student, one who has a long way to go before this argument is “complete,” and a teacher, one who always hopes to impart some new information.

While I examined several prominent artists and a few minor ones in some detail, a more complete project would require many, many hours in museums—notably, in museum storage. With a broader survey of the period, a comparison of homoerotic and not-so-erotic works would emerge. Presumably, the more homoerotic works would reflect homoerotic artistic desire and/or homoerotic theoretical or patronal connections. Yet, even determining homosexual desire requires much more research. Single European men who transplanted themselves in Italy abound in the annals of Neoclassical history, but biographical evidence of homosexuality is extremely rare. I’ve tried to provide examples where homosexuals hid their own proclivities in order to emphasize how this creates a barrier in research, but I’m equally aware that evidence has been destroyed or altered (notably, in the case of Girodet), and that no amount of research can resurrect the incendiary, and incinerated, remains of the past.

Despite all of this, I believe I have already presented enough evidence to call Neoclassicism a homosexual movement, in its disproportionate concentration of homoerotic themes and subjects, as well as its homosexual antiquarians, scholars, artists, theorists, and patrons. I have shown that imposing 20th-century interpretations of traditional gender roles and

“normative” sexuality onto Neoclassicism is outdated, sexist, and homophobic. Neoclassicism, in its search for perfect beauty, elaborated an aesthetic of visual pleasure. The body, freed by aestheticism from political and social restraints, remained gendered but not “gender-rolled.” Men were freed from “behaving like men” (as the supposedly gender-neutral “feminists” have put it) because their primary role was to visually delight viewers. Discarding their genderized societal roles along with their clothing, they offered their bodies as a site of desire and imaginative departure. Yet if the body remained anatomically gendered at all, it was to bespeak sexual desire. Given the homosexual origins and elaborations of Neoclassicism, eroticism, though an abstract concept, asserts itself as the only plausible motivation for the theorist to devise and the artist to interpret the male body as the most gratifying source of visual pleasure. Furthermore, in a society that has still not come to terms with its sexuality—has perhaps moved to an even more contrived view of sexuality than was commonly held in the 18th century—, the erotic interpretations of Neoclassicism displace political or social interpretations as the subject of primary academic interest.

In the end, sexual orientation (once it can be taken for granted that it exists) may matter less than opening up eroticism to something other than a predominantly male and exclusively heterosexual point of view. Eroticism, sexual practice, and attraction only coincide completely with orientation under the most restrictive circumstances, as evidenced by the natural bisexuality or communities and cultures without those types of restrictions—whether in hippy communes, Amazonian tribes, Arcadian landscapes, Spartan *agogai*, French ship cabins, American prisons, or Turkish harems. Thus, homosexuality and homoeroticism have to do with isolated practice and instances of attraction, as well as exclusive practice and orientation. The very nature of *homo-* anything inherently implies an exclusion—an exclusion of males among lesbians and an exclusion of women among gay males. As such, male homosexuality has proved as threatening to straight women as it has to straight men, and even feminists who decry the female reduction to

sex objects have been unable to come to terms with the type of sexual power male homosexuality reinvests in its own gender. For then, historically speaking, men have *all* the power. Due to these implications, I regret that my work excluded discussion of women (including homosexual women) to such a large extent. However, if nothing else, it encourages women to reconsider their role as exclusive primordial sex object. And sexuality is only one aspect of a richly diverse life. Since the gay community has fully embraced both traditional and non-traditional roles for women in society and often finds support and sympathy among women, I hope there is an implicit understanding that all work regarding gender and sexuality will ultimately be for the empowerment of all members of society, gay, straight, male, and female.

My goal in writing this thesis is to hasten a move outside of academia and into university classrooms, public museums, and general discourse. Exhibitions, museum labels and audio guides, classroom discussion, scholarly lectures, and presentations should all honor the homosexual origins and subtexts of the movement instead of discreetly brushing them aside. Hopefully, those involved in higher education are finally ready to accept homosexuality as a historical cultural influence. However, in order to promote these ideas, they require an inclusive and appropriate language, as well as access to good research. If nothing else, I hope my thesis gathered enough information in one place to close some gaps, and I hope it used language, in terms of formal discussions of art and social discussions of gender and sexual orientation, that future students can emulate.

Endnote 1

Terms

gay – may be synonymous with homosexual; may also refer specifically to gay men, as opposed to “lesbians” (in this essay, “gay culture” almost always means gay *male* culture)

homoerotic – suggesting or displaying eroticism or desire between members of the same sex; particularly used when sexual orientation is unknown or assumed not to be strictly homosexual

homosexual – same-sex (i.e. female-female or male-male) orientation or practice; orientation can occur without practice, but practice is not always a defining indication of orientation: heterosexuals, just as much as homosexuals, can engage in homosexual activity

LGBTQ – acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer; synonymous with “queer,” it is used as an inclusive term to emphasize the specific identities that may resonate more strongly with certain individuals

queer – used as both an umbrella term for all “non-normative” sexual orientations or practices (gay, lesbian, transgender, etc.) and a term that defies any one specific designation under the non-normative umbrella

Endnote 2

Following the Renaissance example listed in the footnote, In 1652, Antonio Rocco wrote a defense of sodomy, *L’Alcibiade Fanciullo a scola*, a “genially pornographic” work that “offers descriptions of male-male sex” along with its defense. (Fone, 128)

The German Friedrich August Braun pleaded for more leniency in the case of sodomites in his *Dissertatio juridica de mitigatione poenae in crimine sodomiae, von Milderung der Strafe bey dem Laster der Sodomiterey* (Frankfurt, 1750), which he presented in an inaugural address to the faculty of law of his university in 1739. (op. cit.)

- Vauvenargues “was one of the first to expound the principles of sexual freedom: ‘What does not offend society does not fall within the jurisdiction of the courts.’ He likewise rejected the concept of ‘against nature’ that Montaigne had already criticized.” (Blanc, 75, referring to: Luc de Clapiers, marquis de Vauvenargues, *Maximes* (Paris, 1767), 164)
- Voltaire said: “When not accompanied by violence, sodomy should not fall under the sway of criminal law, for it does not violate the right of any man.” (op. cit.)
- (the call for homosexual rights coinciding with that for equal rights for women in the 1790s, as well as anti-Caribbean slavery campaigns). Anonymous Pamphlet from French Revolution (Fone, 240-43); in fact, the Assemblée Nationale overturned all legal prohibitions on consensual sodomy.
- Anarcharis Cloots (whom Blanc calls ‘Anarchasis’ Cloutz), ‘a speaker for the human kind,’ portrayed himself as mankind’s apostle and decried antihomosexual slander, resuming Diderot’s materialistic arguments. “All that is can be neither against nor out of nature,” Bordeu remarked in *Le Rêve d’Alembert* (p. 100). “Nothing is antiphysical in the physical world,” Cloots confirms. (A. Cloots, *Écrits Révolutionnaires: 1790-1794*, ed. Michèle Duval (Paris: Champ libre, 1979), pp. 124-25.) He also refers to the **Ancients**:
 - Eh! because Achilles loved Patroclus; Orestes, Pylades; Aristogeiton, Harmodius; Socrates, Alcibiades, and so on, were they the less useful to their country? People speak much about **nature** without knowing it, fix its limits at random; they do not know or ignore that it is impossible to thwart it. (p. 124; qtd in Delon, p. 129)
 - As did Diderot, Cloots argues that homosexual passion can prompt political heroism (Delon, 129)
- The Marquis de Sade calls for liberty directly (the *Philosophy in the Boudoir* argues that there should be no criminal penalty attached to same-sex love, an “abnormality of taste”) and indirectly, in the way he himself exemplifies liberty by being a sort of “martyr” to the cause of freedom by announcing himself.
- Jeremy Bentham, *On Pederasty* (1785-1816)

- In 1818 by Shelley's "sometimes-ambivalent" "Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love," "invoked Plato's *Phaedrus* to plead that men 'ought not to be excluded by this prudery' from enjoying the form of beauty embodied in classical sculptures of Apollo and Ganymede." (Saslow, 172) Speaking of Shelley, we should remember that his close friend Keats wrote that "beauty is truth" in contemplation of a Grecian urn.
- The Code Napoléon, 1804, upheld these ideals of the Revolution. Incidentally, his chancellor Jean-Jacques Cambacérès, "whose discreet but hardly secret homosexuality exasperated both his boss and the public" ... (Saslow, 169)
- Although Rousseau was not tolerant of homosexuality, his credo was used by homosexual activities a century later (Saslow, 164)

Works Cited

- Althaus, Frank, and Mark Sutcliffe, eds. The Triumph of Eros: Art and Seduction in 18th-Century France. (exh. cat. organized by the State Hermitage Museum and the Courtauld Institute of Art) London: Fontanka, 2006.
- Argan, Giulio Carlo, et al. Canova (Exh. Cat. from the Museo Correr and Museo canoviano). Venice: Marsilio, 1992.
- Bignamini, Ilaria, and Andrew Wilton. Grand Tour: The Allure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century (exhibition catalogue). London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1996.
- Blanc, Olivier. "The 'Italian Taste' in the Time of Louis XVI, 1774-92, in Homosexuality in French History and Culture, eds. Jeffrey Merrick and Michael Sibal. New York: The Harrington Park Press, 2001. (co-published simultaneously as *Journal of Homosexuality*, Volume 41, Numbers 3/4 2001)
- Bloch, Ivan. Sexual Life in England, Past and Present. Hertfordshire: Oracle Publishing, Ltd., 1996 (orig. 1938).
- Chaussard, Pierre. "Sur le tableau des Sabines par David." Paris, 1800.
- Davis, Whitney. "Winckelmann Divided: Mourning the Death of Art History," in the Journal of Homosexuality (The Haworth Press, Inc.) Vol. 27, No. 1/2, 1994, pp. 141-59.
- Delon, Michel, "The Priest, the Philosopher, and Homosexuality in Enlightenment France," in Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality during the Enlightenment, ed. Robert Purks Maccubbin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Clark, Kenneth. The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form. New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964 (first printing, 1956).
- Crompton, Louis. Homosexuality and Civilization. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Crow, Thomas. Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

- Fone, Bryne R. S., ed. The Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature: Readings from Western Antiquity to the Present Day. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.
- Grigsby, Darcy Grimaldo. "La Nudité grecque," in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Jun., 1998), pp. 311-335.
- Grunchec, Philippe. Les Concours des Prix de Rome, 1797-1863, Vol. 1. (Exh. Cat., École Nationale des Beaux-Arts) Paris, 1986.
- Guégan, Stéphane. Ingres: Erotic Drawings. Paris: Flammarion, 2006.
- Honour, Hugh. "Canova's Studio Practice-II: 1792-1822," in The Burlington Magazine, Vol. 114, No. 829 (Apr. 1972), pp. 214+216-29.
- _____. Neoclassicism. London: Penguin Group, 1991 (orig. 1968, revised 1977).
- Irwin, David. Winckelmann: Writings on Art. New York: Phaidon, 1972.
- Kemp, Martin. "J-L. David and the Prelude to a Moral Victory for Sparta." The Art Bulletin, Vol. 51, No. 2 (Jun., 1969), pp. 178-83.
- Merrick, Jeffrey. "'Brutal Passion' and 'Depraved Taste': The Case of Jacques-François Pascal," in Homosexuality in French History and Culture, eds. Jeffrey Merrick and Michael Sibalís. New York: The Harrington Park Press, 2001. (co-published simultaneously as Journal of Homosexuality, Volume 41, Numbers 3/4 2001)
- Padiyar, Satish. Chains: David, Canova, and the Fall of the Public Hero in Postrevolutionary France. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.
- Pelzel, Thomas. "Mengs and Casanova: A Reappraisal of a Famous Eighteenth-Century Forgery," in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 54, No. 3 (Sep., 1972), pp. 300-315
- Potts, Alex. Flesh and Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Rave, P. O. "Eine Neuerworbene Bildnisbüste des Barons Philipp von Stosch von Edme Bouchardon." Berliner Museen, 7. Jahrg., H. 1. (Jun., 1957), pp. 19-26+1.
- Reed, Christopher. Art and Homosexuality: A History of Ideas. London: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Saslow, James. Pictures and Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts. The History of New York: Viking Penguin, 1999.
- Sibalís, Michael. "Male Homosexuality in the Age of Enlightenment and Revolution, 1680-1850," in Gay Life and Culture: A World History, Robert Aldrich, ed. New York: Universe, 2006.
- Solomon-Godeau, Abigail. Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1997.
- Trumbach, Rudolph. "Sodomitical Subcultures, Sodomitical Roles, and the Gender Revolution of the Eighteenth Century: The Recent Historiography," in Robert Purks MacCubbin, ed.

Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality during the Enlightenment. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, © 1985), pp. 109-19.

Walters, Margaret. The Nude Male: A New Perspective. New York: Penguin Books, 1978.

Waters, Sarah. "The Most Famous Fairy in History: Antinous and the Homosexual Fantasy," in The Journal of the History of Sexuality, Vol. 6, No. 2, Oct 1995.

Wildenstein, Daniel, et Guy Wildenstein. Louis David, Recueil de Documents complémentaires au Catalogue Complet de l'œuvre de l'artiste. Rouen: l'Imprimerie Rouennaise, 1973.

Winckelmann, Johann Joachim. Essays on the Philosophy and History of Art, Vol. 1-2, ed. by Curtis Bowman. Bristol, England: Thoemmes Press, 2001.

Worley, Michael Preston. "The Image of Ganymede in France, 1730-1820: The Survival of a Homoerotic Myth, in The Art Bulletin, Vo. 76, No. 4 (Dec., 1944), pp. 630-43.

Appendix:

Illustrations

All images included under the “Fair Use” doctrine for scholarship.



Fig. 1. Pier-Leone Ghezzi . *Stosch and the Roman Antiquarians*, 1725. Pen & Ink. Vienna, Albertina.



Fig. 2. Edme Bouchardon. *Philipp von Stosch*, 1727. Museum Dahlem.

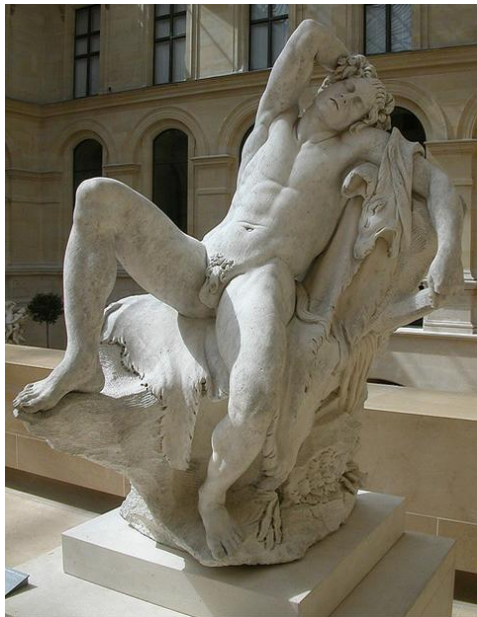


Fig. 3. Edme Bouchardon. *Copy of the Barberini Faun*, 1726-30. Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 4. *Achilles Among the Daughters of Lykomedes*, drawing with head modeled by Baron von Stosch.



Fig. 5. Edme Bouchardon. *Amour se faisant un arc*, 1750. Louvre, Paris.

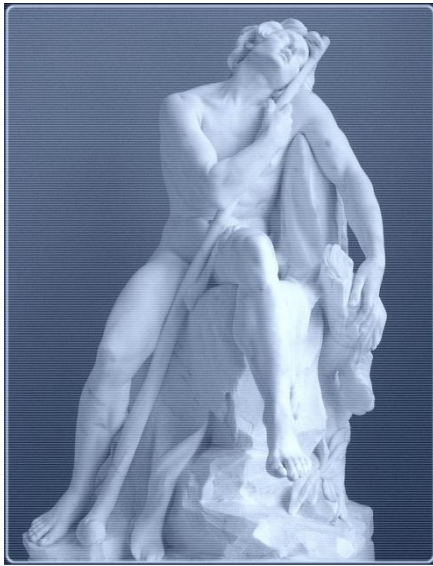


Fig. 6 Louis-Claude Vassé. *Berger endormi*. 1751. Paris, Louvre.



Fig. 7 Jacques Saly. *Jeune faune tenant un chevreau*, 1751. Musée Cognac-Jay, Paris.



Fig. 8. G-B. Tiepolo. *Death of Hyacinth*, c. 1752. (oil, 287 x 235 cm) Museo Thyssen- Bornemisza, Madrid.



Fig. 9. *Antinous as the Mythical Vertumnus*, found in Hadrian's Villa. Villa Albani.



Fig. 10-11. Anton Maron. *Portrait of Johann Winckelmann*, and det., 1768. Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar.



Fig. 12. A. R. Mengs. *Jupiter and Ganymede*, 1758-59. (fresco, 178.7 x 147 cm) Galleria Nazionale, Rome.



Fig. 13. A. R. Mengs. Parnassus, 1762. (fresco, c. 300 x 600 cm) Villa Albani.



Fig. 14. Det. of fig. 13.



Fig. 15. Apollo Belvedere, 1st c. BC Vatican Museums, Rome.



Fig. 16. A. R. Mengs. *Perseus and Andromeda*, 1777. (Oil on canvas, 227x153.5 cm) Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 17. Apollo Belvedere, mirror view of Fig. 15.



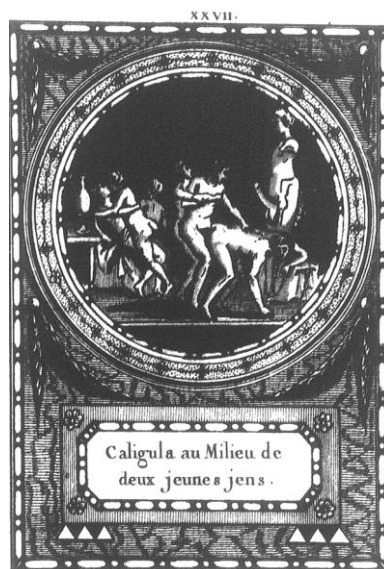
Fig. 18. A. Canova. *Apollo Crowning Himself*, 1781. J.P. Getty Museum, Los Angeles.



Fig. 19. Detail of Fig. 18.



Fig. 20 . Thomas Banks. *Death of Germanicus*, 1774. (marble) Holkham Hall, Norfolk, England.



Figs. 21-22. Plates VI (“Auguste qui se prostitue à son Grand Oncle César”) and XXVII (Caligula au milieu de jeunes gens) from “The Private Lives of the Twelve Caesars,” by Hancarville.



Fig. 23-24.. Jacques-Louis David. *The Intervention of the Sabine Women*, and det., 1799. Louvre.

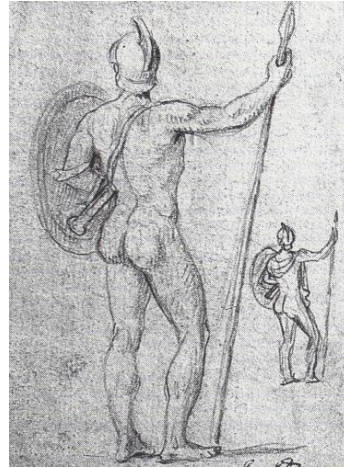


Fig. 25. J.-L. David, c. 1812-14 Studies for Leonidas. Lyon.



Fig. 26. Doryphoros (back view) Naples.

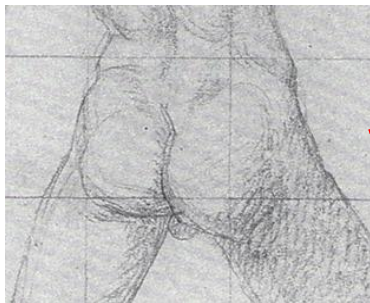


Fig. 27-28. J.-L. David. c. 1809. Étude d'homme nu, de profil à droite, tenant un bâton. Besançon.

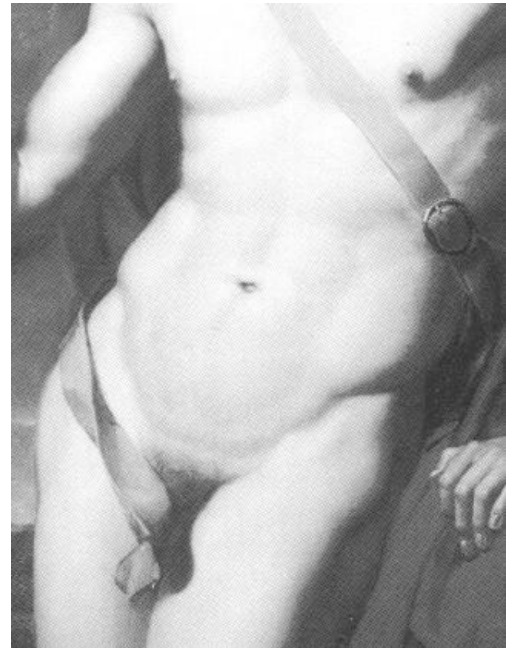
Fig. 29. Detail of fig. 23.



Fig. 30. Léon Pallière. *Telemachus and Odysseus Slaying the Suitors of Penelope*, 1812. (oil, 110 x 140 cm) École des Beaux-Arts, Paris.



Fig. 31. Michelangelo. *David*, 1504. Accademia, Florence.



Figs. 32-33. Anonymous (previously attributed to Drouais). *The Shepherd Paris*, and det., 1786-87. (oil, 177 x 118 cm) Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 34. Girodet. *The Sleep of Endymion*, 1791. (Salon de 1793) (oil, 197 x 260 cm) Louvre.



Fig. 35. Charles Meynier. *Adolescent Eros Weeping Over the Portrait of the Lost Psyche*, 1792 (Salon of 1795). (oil, 153 x 202 cm) Musée des Beaux-Arts, Quimper.



Fig. 37A. Charles-Antoine Coypel. *Hercules and Omphale*, det., 1731. Alte Pinakothek, Munich.



Fig. 37B. Charles-Antoine Coypel. *Painting Inspired by Genius*, det., c. 1730. (oil) Private Collection.



Fig. 37C. Banks. (Det. fig. 20)



Fig. 36. The Apollino. Uffizi.



Fig. 37D. Anonymous (formerly attrib. to Fragonard). *Morpheus*, c. 1770.



Fig. 37E. Nicolas Brenet. *Endymion*, 1756. Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts.



Fig. 37F. Paul Ambröise Slodtz. *The Fall of, Icarus* 1743. Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 37G. François-Xavier Fabre. *Death of Abel*, Salon of 1791. (oil, 144 x 196 cm) Musée Fabre, Montpellier.



Fig. 37H M. Nicolas Bernard Lépicié. *Narcissus*, 1771. Musée des Beaux-Arts, St. Quimper.



Fig. 37I. Charles Natoire. *Cupid and Psyche*, (oil on canvas) Hôtel de Soubise, Paris.



Figs. 37J-K. Nicolas Bertin. *Bacchus and Ariadne*, and det., c. 1710-15. (oil on canvas, 75 x 50 cm), Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, Saint-Étienne.

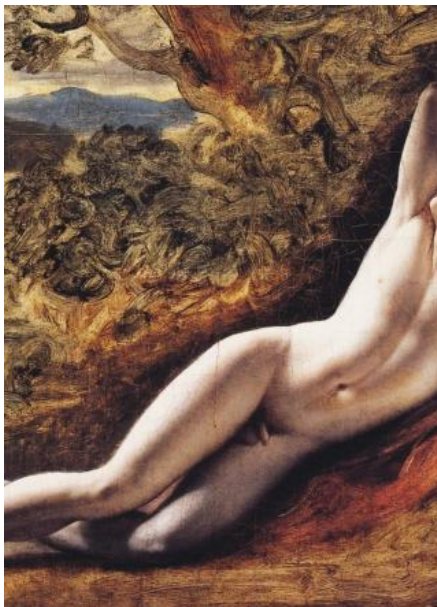


Fig. 37L. Girodet. Sketch for *Endymion*, det.



Fig. 38. Guérin. *Aurore et Céphale*, 1810. (oil, 255 x 186 cm) Louvre, Paris.

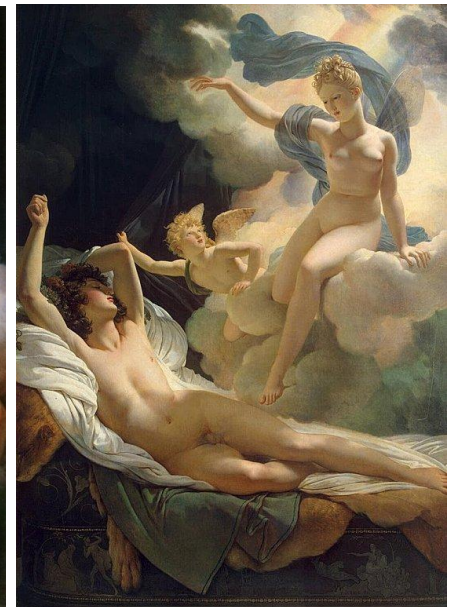


Fig. 39. Guérin. *Morpheus and Iris*, 1811. (oil, 251 x 178 cm) Hermitage, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 40. Antonio Canova. Paris, 1822-23. (orig. marble version, 1812) Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 41. Pallière. *Mercury*. 1815. (oil, 176 x 208 cm) Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux.



Fig. 42. Det. of fig. 46



Fig. 43. Det. of Fig. 45



Figs. 44-46. Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden. Various Untitled Photographs of Nude Youths, early 20th century.



Fig. 48. J.-L. David (attributed). *L'Enlèvement de Ganymède, after Michelangelo*. Feuillet 8-a.



Fig. 47. Michelangelo. *The Rape of Ganymede*, c. 1533. (black chalk, 35.5 x 27 cm) Harvard Art Museum, Fogg Art Museum.

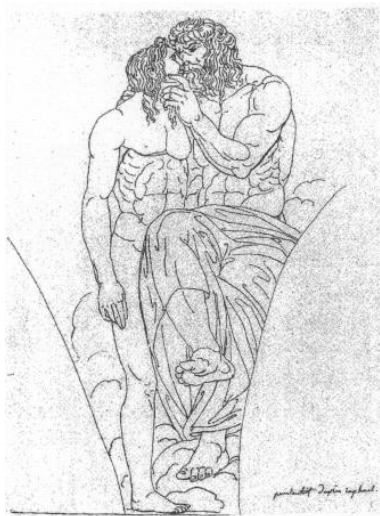


Fig. 49. J.-L. David. Calque 572, *Pendentif (Jupiter étreignant un éphèbe)*, d'après Raphael. (France, p.c.)



Fig. 50. Raphael (and Giulio Romano). *Jupiter Scolding Cupid*, 1518-19. Villa Farnesina.

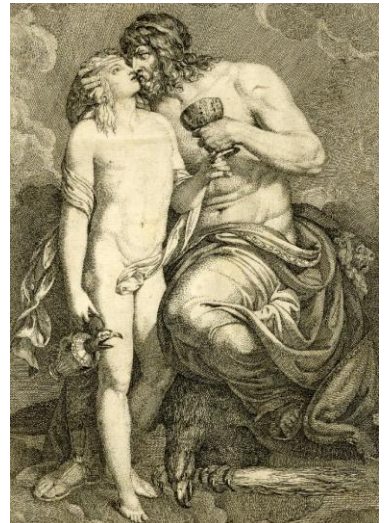


Fig. 51. Wilhelm Böttner. *Zeus Seated on an Eagle, Embraces Ganymede*, c. 1790-1800. (Etching)



Fig. 52. J.-L. David. *Drawing After the Antique Album 10, Sheet 6*.



Fig. 53. Copy of Marble Statue by Heliodorus, from Pompeii. Farnese Museum.

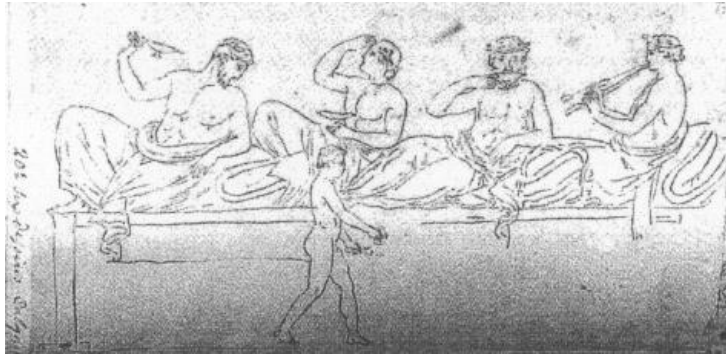


Fig. 54 J.-L. David. Sympotic Scene, Feuille 20-d de l'album 7 (Calques d'après des planches du second volume de d'Hancarville), c. 1775. Louvre.



Fig. 55 - Fig. 56. J.-L. David. Feuille 20 de l'album 7 : 20a, Lettre I décorée d'un jeune homme assis jouant avec une lionne, et 20b, Lettre I décorée d'un Ganymède donnant à boire... (calques d'après des planches du second volume de d'Hancarville)



Fig. 57. Ancient Vase.



Fig. 58. J.-L. David. Feuille 20-c, Trois personnages (calque, copie d'une planche d'Hancarville)

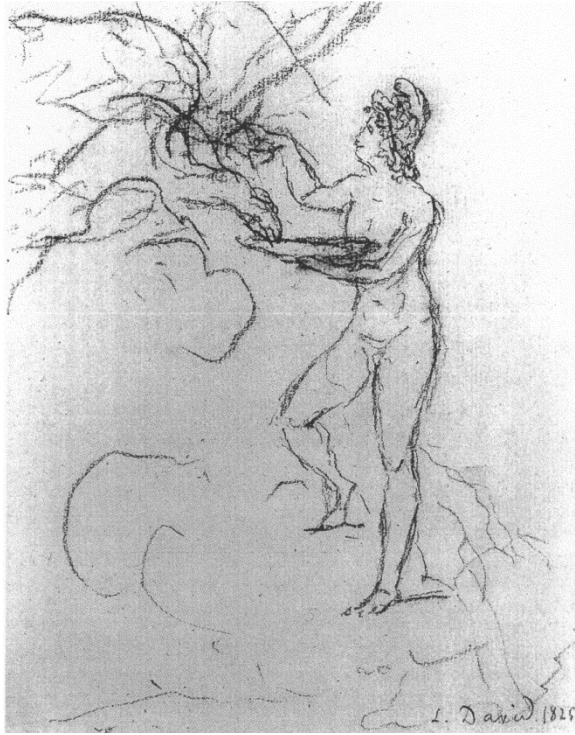


Fig. 59. J.-L. David. *Ganymede Feeding the Eagle*, Dessin 449 bis, 1825. (black chalk) Private Collection, Brussels.



Fig. 60-61. Pierre Julien. *Ganymede*, 1785. (front and back view) Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 62. Jean-Pierre Granger. *Ganymede*, Salon of 1812. (176 x 112 cm) Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux.



Fig. 63. Benjamin West. *The Death of Hyacinth*, 1771. Swathmore College, Philadelphia.



Fig. 64. Andrea Appiani. *Apollo and Hyacinth*, c. 1799-1800. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milano.

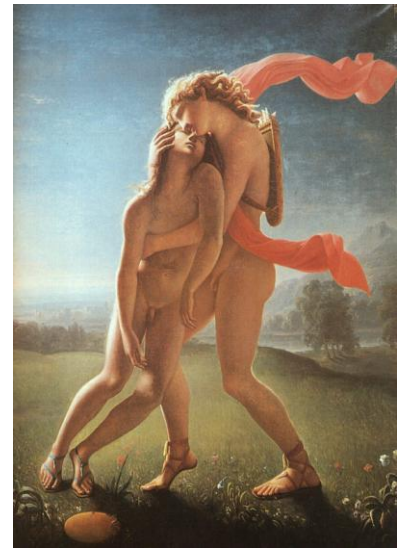


Fig. 65. Jean Broc. *The Death of Hyacinth*, 1801. Musée de Poitiers.

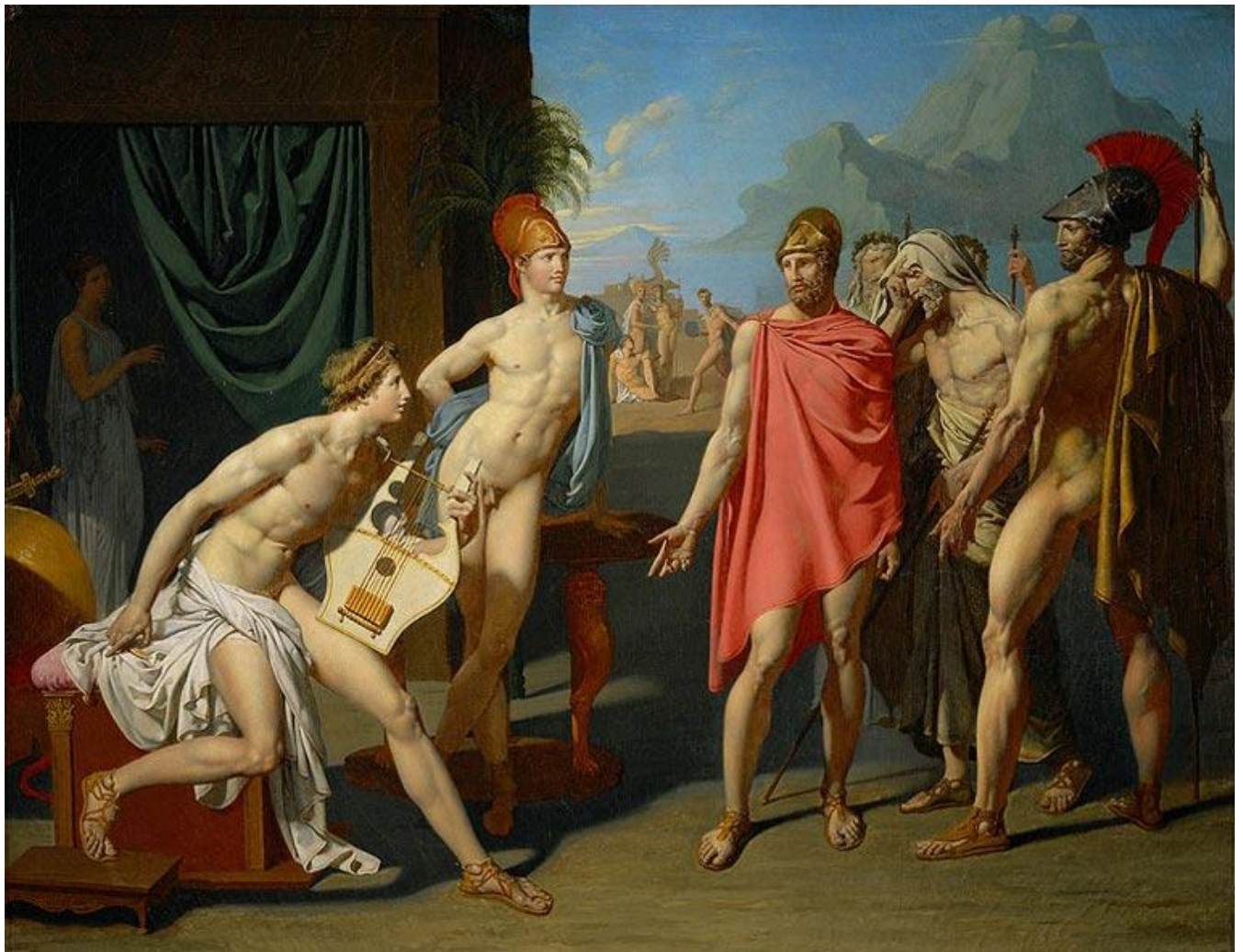


Fig. 66. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. *Envoys of Agamemnon*, 1801. (oil, 110 x 155) École des Beaux-Arts, Paris.



Fig. 67. Ingres, det. fig. 66



Fig. 68-69. Michelangelo. *The Doni Tondo*, c. 1507. Uffizi, Florence.



Fig. 70. Ingres, det. fig. 66.

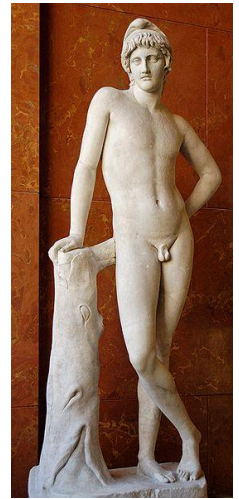


Fig. 71. Youth in Phrygian Bonnet (Paris), 2nd c., Roman copy of Greek orig. (discovered by Gavin Hamilton at the Villa Hadriana in 1769)



Fig. 72. Gavin Hamilton. *Achilles Lamenting the Death of Patroclus*, 1763. Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh.



Fig. 73. Ingres. *Alexander and Hephaestion*, undated. (pencil on tracing paper, 22.7 x 20.6 cm)
Musée Ingres, Montauban.

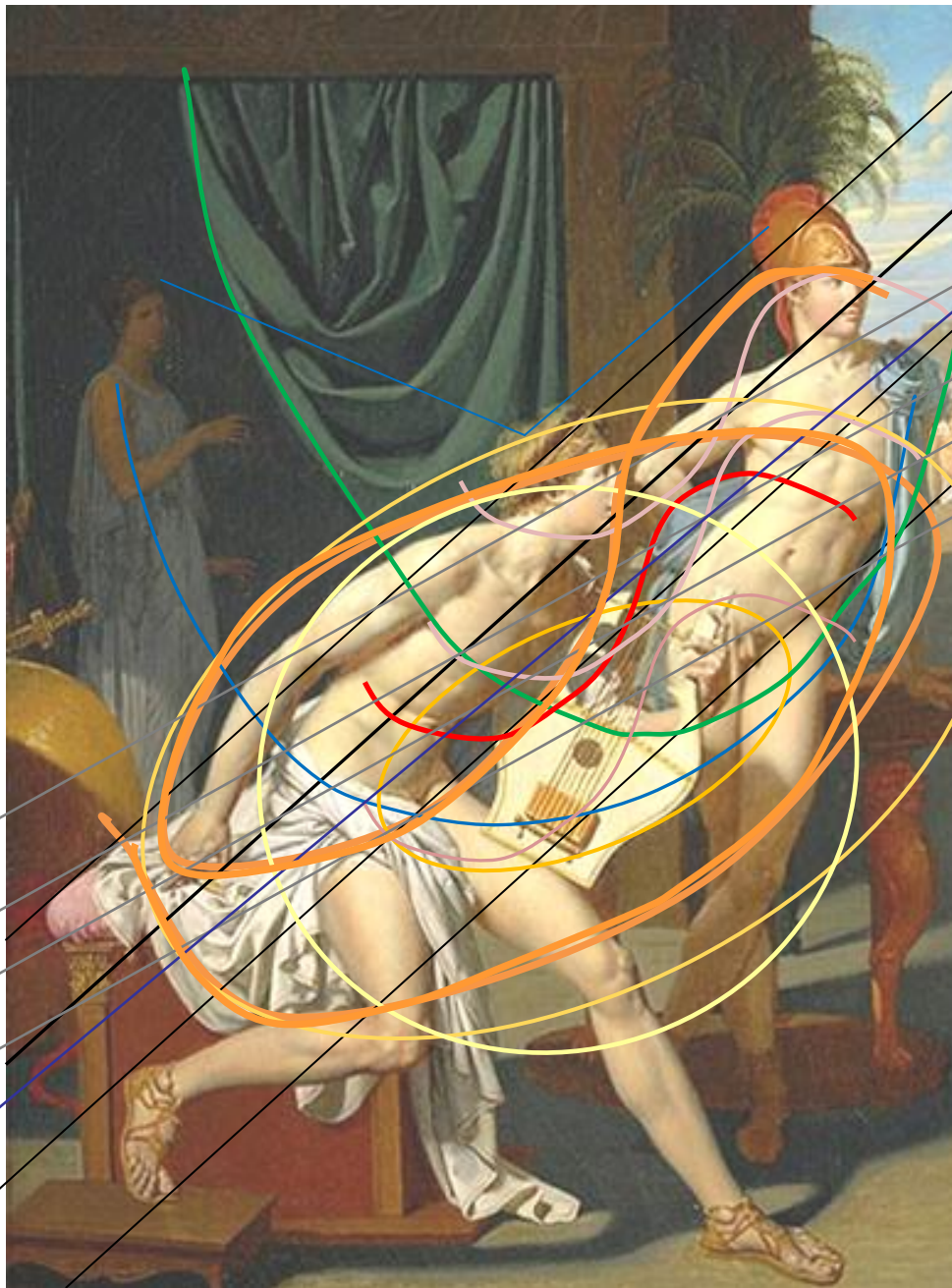


Fig. 74

There are many ways in which Ingres has created a unity between the bodies of Achilles and Patroclus. Looking at the diagonal lines (in black), one can see where he roots the composition of the two figures with a straight diagonal thrust. Slightly off-parallel – but not off-harmony – other diagonals (in gray) line up the arms and, along the same axis, farther down, the genitals. Rotating the same line a bit, a line can be drawn from Patroclus’s hip to Achilles’ distended chest. But the arabesques—in stark contrast to the rigid V shapes of the right side of the canvas—are what truly beautify and visually entwine the two figures. The orange line traces just some of the curvilinear movement of the eyes around the rounded contours of the two bodies. The red serpentine line in the center illustrates the hook that binds the two figures. It is repeated (in pink) in several places to show the unification of faces, of chest, and of pelvis. The yellow oval shows how Ingres has filled the empty space between the figures, actually linking them more closely with the intermediary lyre between their mid-sections. Flesh meets flesh as Achilles’s hand stands out in relief against Patroclus’s thigh. A larger oval (in lighter yellow) shows how this central area extends to an encircling unification of the two bodies. At the center, a perfect circle (in lightest yellow) adds to the sense of harmony and balance. The green and blue U shapes illustrate how the curtain forms part of an arc that visually cuts Briseis off from the male couple (green) or puts Achilles between his two loves (blue). However, Briseis’s straight posture, echoing Patroclus’s columnar legs, and her dark skin exclude her from the enlacing lines of the two men’s pale flesh.

David's Various Embrassades :

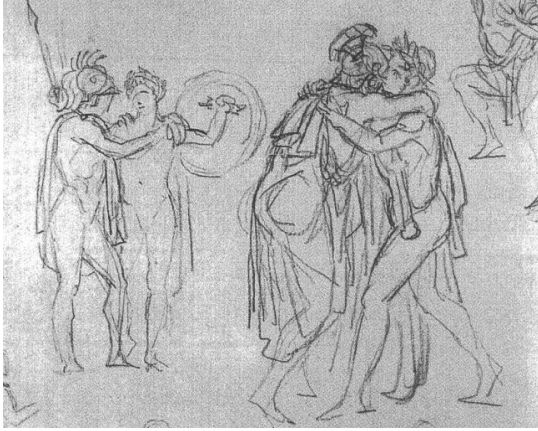


Fig. 75. J.-L. David, dessin 312, Guerrier nu, vu de dos, la jambe gauche repliée en arrière, etc. (recto), et Deux études de deux guerriers antiques, etc. (verso) (Princeton, University Art Museum)



Fig. 76. J.-L. David, dessin 221, Deux hommes vus en buste, s'embrassant, un guerrier à cheval embrassant une « femme » (recto), det

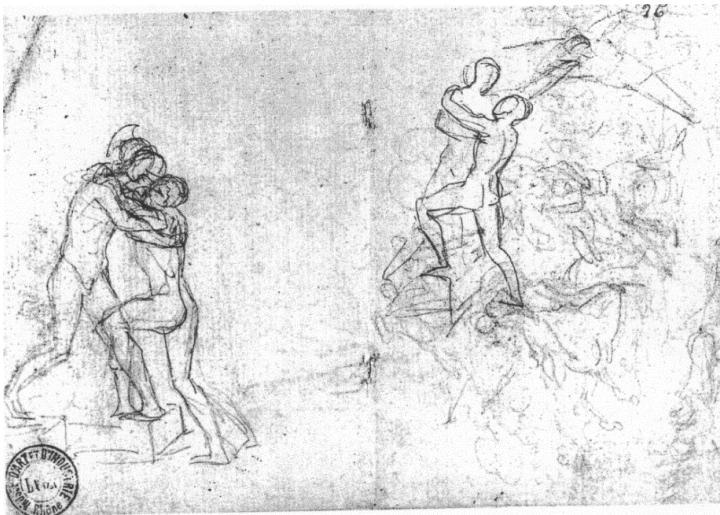


Fig. 77. J.-L. David, Dessin 262, Hommes nus s'embrassant et Une scène de bataille, c. 1802. Lyon.



Fig. 78



Fig. 79

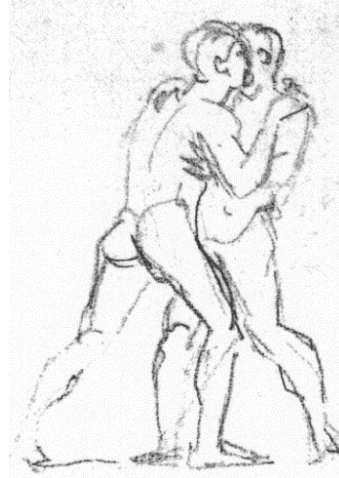


Fig. 80

Fig. 78. J.-L. David. Dessin 248, Deux guerriers s'embrassant (étude pour *Léonidas*) (crayon noir)

Fig. 79. J.-L. David. Dessin 1466 (recto ; Folio 31), Deux guerriers nus, casqués, s'embrassant (pierre noire)

Fig. 80. J.-L. David. Dessin 308, Deux hommes nus s'embrassant, etc. (det. of verso) Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

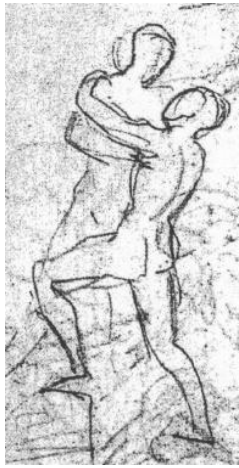


Fig. 81



Fig. 82

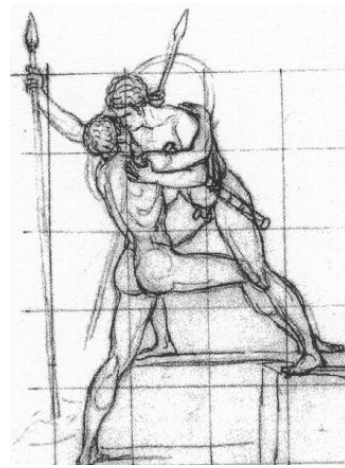


Fig. 83

Fig. 81. J.-L. David. Dessin 262, Hommes nus s'embrassant et Une scène de bataille, c. 1802. Lyon.

Fig. 82. J.-L. David. Dessin 231, Groupe de guerriers ... (crayon noir) Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

Fig. 83. J.-L. David. Dessin 1860 (recto ; Fol 18), Deux hommes nus tenant des lances, s'enlaçant, l'un monté sur une estrade (pierre noire)



Fig. 84



Fig. 85



Fig. 86

Fig. 84. J.-L. David. Preparatory Drawing from Sketchbook, c. 1810.

Fig. 85. J.-L. David. Dessin 1379 (Folio 11), det verso, Deux hommes nus, vus en buste s'embrassant.

Fig. 86. J.-L. David. David, dessin 1796 (recto ; Folio 19), Deux hommes s'embrassant.



Fig. 87.



Fig. 88

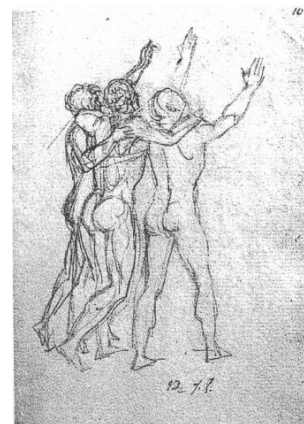


Fig. 89



Fig. 90

Fig. 87. J.-L. David. Dessin 1527 (recto ; Folio 38), Deux hommes nus dont l'un passe son bras sous la taille de l'autre.

Fig. 88. J.-L. David. Dessin 1868 (recto ; Fol 26), Étude pour *Léonidas* : Deux hommes nus armés.

Fig. 89-90. J.-L. David, dessin 1378, Trois hommes nus se tenant par les épaules (recto), et Trois guerriers nus vus de dos et se tenant par les épaules, brandissant leurs épées (verso)

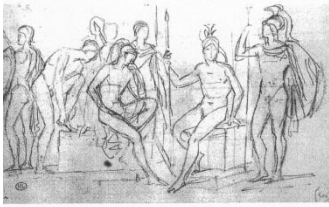


Fig. 91 David, dessin 1779 (Folio 2), Étude d'ensemble pour Léonidas (recto), et Deux soldats casqués se tenant par la main (verso) (pierre noire)



Fig. 92 J.-L. David. Dessin 1779 (Folio 2), detail, verso. (See fig. 88)

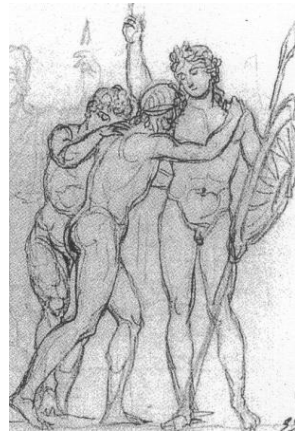


Fig. 93 J.-L. David. Dessin 1782 (Fol 5), Groupe de trois jeunes hommes nus, l'un armé d'un lance et d'un bouclier) (det, recto)



Fig. 94 J.-L. David. Nude Youth with Man in Helmet, Study for *Leonidas*, c. 1812-14. Lyon.

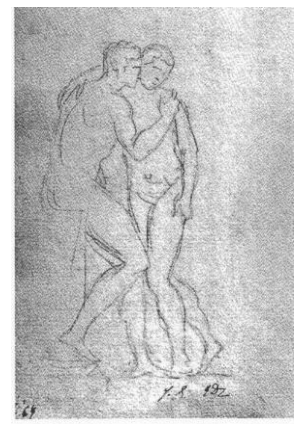


Fig. 95 J.-L. David, Dessin 1411 (Folio 43), Deux hommes nus enlacés (recto)

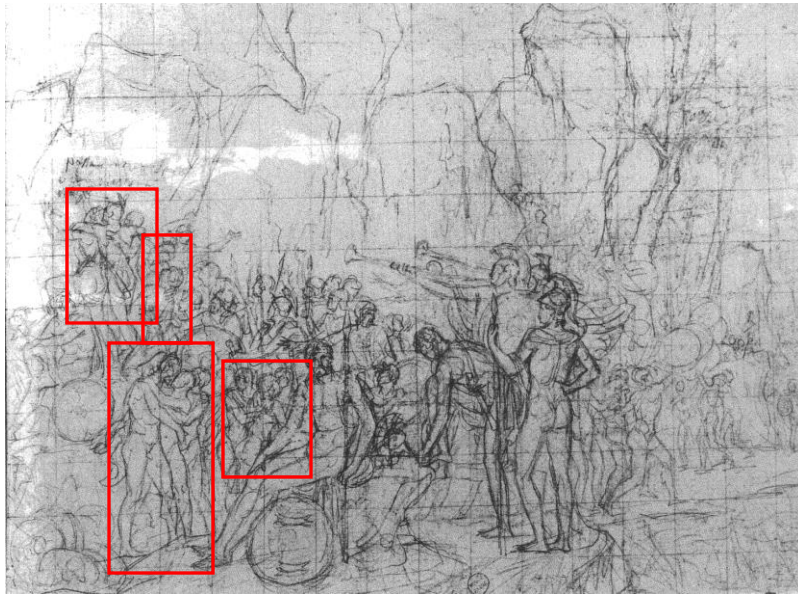


Fig. 96. J.-L. David. Leonidas at Thermopylae, Première Pensée. And det. (Fig. 97), (drawing on gridded paper) Musée Fabre, Montpellier.

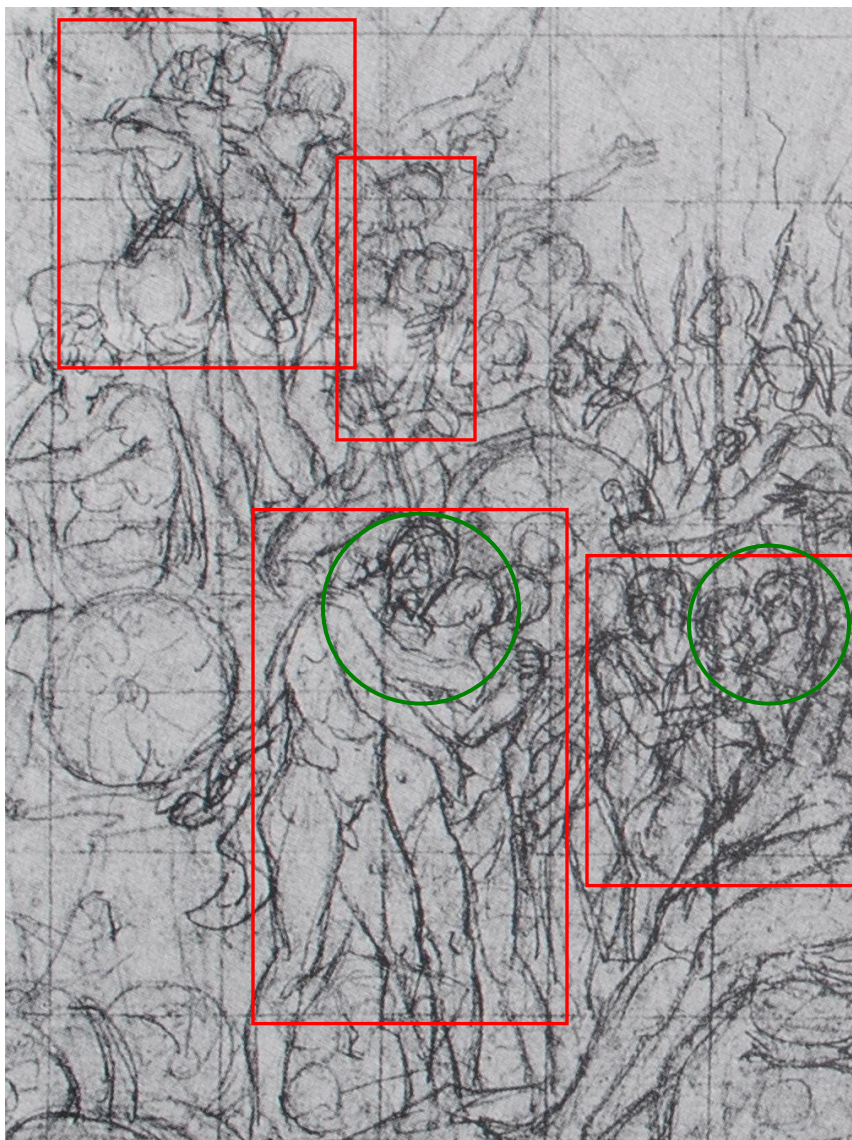




Fig. 98. Leonidas at Thermopylae, c. 1814. (black chalk drawing, 40.6 x 54.9 cm) Metropolitan Museum.



Fig. 99. Det., fig. 98.



Fig. 100. Det., fig. 98.

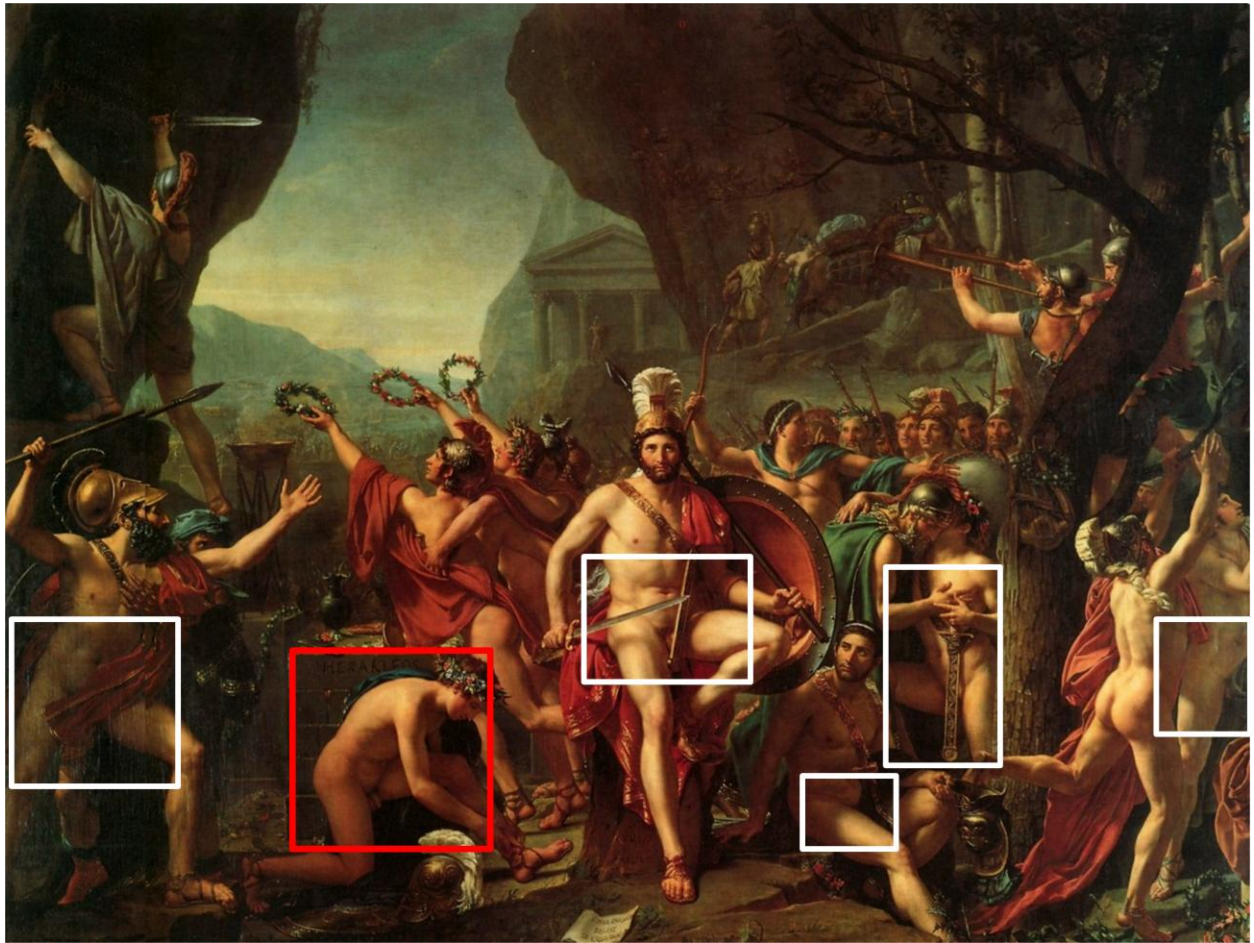


Fig. 101. J.-L. David. *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, 1814. Louvre.



Fig. 102. J.-L. David, *Sappho and Phaon*, 1809. Hermitage, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 103. Det. Fig. 111



Fig. 104. J.-L. David, *The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis*, 1818. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.



Fig. 105. Det., Fig. 114



Fig. 106. J.-L. David. *Apelles Painting Campaspe before Alexander*, c. 1817. (oil on wood) Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.



Fig. 107. J.-L. David. Paris and Helen, conceptual drawing, c. 1786. Stockholm.



Fig. 108. J.-L. David. Mars and Venus, conceptual drawing, c. 1824. Fogg Art Museum.



Fig. 109. J.-L. David. *Paris and Helen*, 1788. (57 ½ x 71 ¼ in) Louvre, Paris.

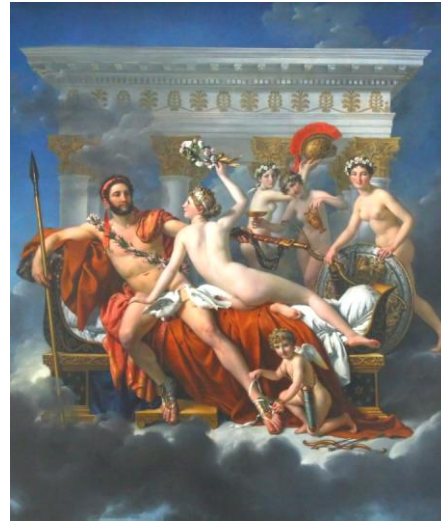


Fig. 110. J.-L. David. *Mars Disarmed by Venus and the Three Graces*, 1824. (10' 1½" x 8' 7¾") Musée Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.



Fig. 111. Benjamin West, *Thetis Bringing the Armor to Achilles*, 1804. (oil, 27 x 20 in.) Los Angeles County Museum of Art Gift from the family of Bernice West Beyer, M.88.182.



Fig. 112. Benjamin West, *Thetis Bringing Armor to Achilles*, (oil 1806. (Oil, 20 x 27 ¼ in.) New Britain Museum of American Art, Charles F. Smith Fund, 1942.10.



Fig. 113. Ajax, from Winckelmann, *Monumenti antichi inediti*, Rome, 1767, pl. 142