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THREE REVOLUTIONARY ARCHITECTS,
BOULLÉE, LEDOUX, AND LEQUEU

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PREFACE

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THREE REVOLUTIONARY ARCHITECTS, BOULLÉE, LEDOUX, AND LEQUEU

EMIL KAUFMANN

Déjà l'aurore s'empare du monde . . .
les arts se réveillent;
un nouveau jour commence.
Ledoux

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INTRODUCTION

As late as the 1920's the works of Boullée and Ledoux were discussed only if they had some local interest. Beyond this their works were referred to very briefly, at best, and the authors were commonly disparaged. In an article published in 1929 I attempted to direct attention to their historic significance. Subsequent publications of mine on Ledoux, including the first monograph, were followed by French biographies in 1934 and 1945. As to Boullée and Lequeu, my essays in the *Art Bulletin*, 1939 and 1949, seem to be the only biographical studies on these two men.

Continued research yielded much new material. Moreover, I will discuss the predecessors of these three men who were also highly interesting personalities, and enter another hitherto neglected field, that of eighteenth-century French architectural theory. Some of the treatises I have used are rare and not easily accessible, while others are too lengthy for the average reader. Therefore, selected passages which provide a deeper insight into the thought of the era and reveal the character of their authors have been assembled in my notes. The bibliography lists monographs and essays of general interest; further bibliographical references are included in the notes. Those interested in Ledoux will find here

sources that are missing in other biographies, just as they will find among the illustrations many designs not before reproduced.

This book ventures into unmapped territory. It attempts to lay the groundwork for an investigation of the architecture of the era which culminated in the French Revolution. Although the attempt here is to clarify the historical position of the architects by setting off their production against the general trends of their period, it does not pretend to say the last word on the development which it will discuss for the first time. I know that one can look at the extremely original works of these three architects from various angles. It is to be hoped that others will not limit themselves to pointing out the shortcomings of this attempt, but will carry on with independent and better interpretations based on a renewed scrutiny of their works, and of the treatises referred to in the text.

To begin with, I should like to make it clear that I do not regard as "revolutionary architects" those architects who were commissioned by revolutionary authorities in the years 1789-1799 to design public buildings, memorials or ephemeral decorations for revolutionary celebrations. The architects considered here did not

play any active role in the political scene; nor did they belong to the host of minor artists who pretended that they were abreast of the times when they affixed Phrygian caps or other petty emblems to thoroughly conventional designs. They were men imbued with the great new ideals set forth by the leading thinkers of the century, and strove unconsciously rather than intentionally, to express these ideals in their own medium. No broad-minded historian of the French Revolution will restrict himself to the deeds and misdeeds which occurred in the years of turmoil, from the destruction of the Bastille to the ultimate restoration of order. He will rather study how the concept of the individual's rights, and of a new order of society developed and took hold during the decades prior to 1789; how people began to defend the new ideas, failing temporarily, but paving the way for the future. Art history, likewise, must deal with the growth of ideas before commenting on their materialization.

Historians have believed that architecture and the fine arts in general remained apart from the eighteenth-century movement of reorientation and reorganization. This erroneous belief resulted from the fact that the protagonists of the architectural revolution fell into oblivion when the ideas for which they fought were discredited. Most contemporaries and the following generations were not able to distinguish between those attempts which were to become fruitful and permanent, and those which proved to be merely whimsical and transitory.¹ But there are other reasons why the great changes remained almost unnoticed up to recent times. In the first place, many of the actual buildings by the revolutionaries were, on the surface at least, conservative, adhering to Baroque² tenets or looking back to the remote past—above all, to antiquity and to the Middle Ages. Secondly, almost all of these buildings have been destroyed, so that it is only by turning to the writings and projects of the architects that one can learn about the aspirations of the era.

Along with the general unrest which was to lead to the political revolution, went a slowly-growing dissatisfaction with the established modes of artistic composition. This discontent caused the architects to search for, and finally find, new forms and, even more important, a new principle of composition. A brief outline

¹Lemonnier, Henry, *La mégalomanie dans l'architecture*, *L'Architecte* 5: 92-97, 1910, devotes two pages to Boullée ridiculing the artist: "de projets très poussés, dont quelques-uns déconcertent au premier abord . . . on devine ce qu'il pouvait faire du château de Versailles. . . ." He also finds that Boullée would not deserve mention at all, had he not enjoyed a certain reputation while alive, and been a member of the Institut de France, Benoît, F., *L'art français sous la Révolution et l'Empire*, 267, Paris, 1897, disparages Ledoux: ". . . avide d'inédit, il inventa des monstruosité." Only recently it seems, has opinion about these artists changed in their country.

²In this investigation the term "Baroque" will be used in a wider sense. It will serve to indicate certain basic compositional principles which were already decisive in the Renaissance, and reached their climax in the Baroque proper.

of the main architectural trends in the late eighteenth century may help to make this detailed investigation more easily comprehensible.

Well-balanced harmony within a hierarchical order had been a foremost aim of the Renaissance and the Baroque, even of the Baroque's last stage with all its sumptuousness and exaggeration. In the late eighteenth century, however, the chief aims were the expression of character, the creation of atmosphere, and the division of the composition into independent units. The French architects at the close of the century were not content with literary picturesqueness, but aimed at expressiveness, legitimately through form.

The forms which promised best to serve the double end of expressiveness and individualism were those of elementary geometry. Self-contained, these forms allowed the parts to be independent from each other. Moreover, they allowed the architect to give "character" to a building by differentiating the constituents in size, or by contrasting them in shape. The revolutionary architects also passed from the traditional to the geometrical forms because their attitude toward the material had undergone a profound change. The sensuous Baroque features with their flexibility expressed the Baroque trend toward animism (*All-Beseelung*). This trend accounts for the preference that was given to "living" forms, e.g., supports in the shapes of *Caryatides* and *Atlantes*, or furniture legs ending in claws, etc. The revolutionary architects began to pay more attention to the inherent properties of the materials and liked to present them without any disguise. Although some of their experiments were expressive of the excitement of the period, their goal was no longer outward show, it was restraint. Expressiveness and individualism were also the aims of the rising romantic movement. Revolutionary architecture differed in that its creators were hostile to revivalism of any kind, and in principle they rejected any imitation of the past. In reality, of course, the different currents crossed constantly and in many of the revolutionary works reminiscences of the Baroque, as well as traces of Romanticism are to be found. But the most advanced of the designs resemble in plainness and monumentality those of the twentieth century.

In architecture, just as in politics, the reactionaries were to triumph over the inspired, though not sufficiently realistic, modernists. But the temporary victory of the conservatives should not lead us to believe that the achievements of the progressives lacked significance. On the contrary, great events took place in eighteenth-century architecture—events which were as significant as the processes of transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, as momentous as the contemporaneous changes in philosophical thinking, in literature, and in social life. A glorious artistic tradition was abandoned, and the foundations of a new tradition were laid.³

³In my *Von Ledoux bis Le Corbusier*, 5, 39, 48, 59, Vienna, 1933, I pointed out that one should not see merely the sterile classicism about 1800, but realize that then certain new artistic

Revolutionary architecture in its entirety is not discussed in this book.⁴ More than a general survey of the period would allow, it presents the most original personalities in the reform movement, by recounting their lives and by discussing their achievements and the ideals for which they strove. Etienne-Louis Boullée, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, and Jean-Jacques Lequeu were not the only representatives of French revolutionary architecture. There were many more who shared the same ideals, who had the same contempt for the past, and the same hopes for an artistic renaissance. But the work of these three represents the height of the movement that ended the Baroque and presaged the architecture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Having lived in the atmosphere of growing political and social discontent, the revolutionary architects wished to realize, for the common good, the ideals of the time by contriving architectural schemes such as had never existed before. They did their part in the double task of the period: tearing down the old and building the new. Like others who served the same cause, they were not spared the ordeals of their times and were menaced by its fanaticism. In the end they themselves became disillusioned and reactionary.

principles rose to live on all through the nineteenth century. *Cp.* my review, *Art Bulletin* 30: 288, 1948, of Raval, Marcel, and J.-Ch. Moreux, *Ledoux*.

⁴In my forthcoming *Architecture in the Age of Reason* the transformation of architectural thought in the eighteenth century will be discussed, with special regard to French Revolu-
ti

Of the three, Boullée represents primarily the struggle for new forms; Ledoux, the search for a new order of the constituents; Lequeu the tragic ultimate stage of the revolutionary movement—despair, resignation, and return to the past. Because of the depth of Ledoux' thought and the wide scope of his building activities, his work will be presented more completely and more thoroughly than has been done in any previous publication.

Today Ledoux is recognized as a great architect. Twenty years ago it was difficult to bring out any publications on him. In general, people are reluctant to concern themselves with artists whose names they have never heard. Or, as François Blondel so brilliantly put it in the dedication of his *Cours d'architecture*: "nous n'avons point d'amour pour les choses que nous ignorons."⁵ Today, the revolutionary current in eighteenth-century architecture is an accepted historical fact. The increased knowledge of the period will remove what may be left of former doubts.

Many contemporary sources spoke, approvingly or otherwise, of the indomitable urge toward innovation, and of the innovators themselves. Thus we are provided with the background for a better understanding of the three architects. Prominent among the sources are the publications of Jacques-François Blondel, who was the founder of the most renowned school of architecture in the eighteenth century. We shall begin with him, for he was the first teacher of the eldest of our architects, Boullée.

⁵ Paris, 1675.

ÉTIENNE-LOUIS BOULLEE

I. THE TEACHERS

JACQUES-FRANÇOIS BLONDEL

Jacques-François Blondel's reputation is based on his activities as teacher and writer.¹ He himself felt that his principal merits lay in these fields. When his last hours approached, he asked to be taken to his school in the Louvre. There he wished to wait for death, and then

His architectural work, however, was to

illustrate the great change which took place in the eighteenth century. His early manner may easily be recognized in the designs of his first publication in 1737, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance*;² his late manner in the structures he erected at Metz between 1761 and 1771.

The most striking traits of the five *maisons de plaisance* are the plastic character of the architectural body as a whole and of its single features; the predominance of voids over walls; the lavishness of decoration. In these projects he almost reached the borderline where disintegration of Baroque composition begins (fig. 1). The portico of the Cathedral of Metz, however, has a different character.³ Here the wall is emphasized and a heavy parapet crowns the sides, but without the row of statues by which formerly buildings seemed to fade into the sky. The Corps de Garde and the Hôtel de Ville in the sa

Like his buildings, Blondel's writings contain principles of the Baroque, side-by-side with the germs of the tendency toward simplicity and "purity." One might surmise that this tendency merely formed part of the return to antiquity, which is generally considered a chief trait of late eighteenth-century development. However, extremely few statements in Blondel's volumi-

¹ About Blondel as the teacher of Boullée, see *Papiers de Boullée*, Paris, Bibl. Nat., Fonds français, ms. 9153, fol. 38, draft of an obituary; Villar, Notice sur la vie . . . de . . . Boullée, *Mémoires de l'Inst. Nat. des Sciences et Arts*, Litt. et Beaux-Arts III, Histoire: 43, an IX. Cf. Dezallier d'Argenville, A.-J., *Vies des fameux architectes*, 472, Paris, 1787; Prost, Auguste, *J.-F. Blondel*, 82, Metz, 1860. The first publication in which Blondel participated was *Architecture française*, Paris, Jean Mariette, 1727. Cf. Kaufmann, Emil, Contribution of J.-F. Blondel to Mariette's *Architecture française*, *Art Bulletin* 31: 58-59. Hauteœur, Louis, *Reprint of Mariette*, Paris, 1927, ignores Blondel's *Discours*, 1747 (s) does not know of the latter's share in Mariette's publication.

² Lenôte, G., J.-F. Blondel, *L'Architecte* 5: 8, 1910.

³ Blondel, J.-F., *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance*, Paris, 1737. The house which I illustrate is from 1: pl. 41.

⁴ Grosdidier de Matons, Marcel, *Metz*, ill., p. 51, Paris, 1929. Lejeaux, Jeanne, Blondel, *L'Architecture* 40: ill., p. 23, 1927.

⁵ Grosdidier, ill., p. 120. Lejeaux, ill., p. 26, 27. Lejeaux, *Place d'Armes de Metz*, Strasbourg, 1927. Same, Blondel, *Revue de l'art anc. et mod.* 42: ill., p. 275, 277, 1927.

nous writings suggest that this was true in his case. It is, moreover, interesting to note that in his early, more Baroque

tance of studying classical works,⁶ whereas in the late *Cours d'Architecture*—composed in the time of the supposed ascending "Classicism"—he declared that it made no sense to erect buildings in the manner of the Ancients.⁷ Studying their work, he pointed out, should teach one to think, but not in the same way that they thought. Each nation, he felt, had its own approach. What was right for one generation would not be right for those to come.⁸

It is, of course, not possible to draw a clear demarcation line between Blondel's early and his late periods. The opposed concepts crossed constantly, just as they were to do in the works and writings of his pupils, Boullée and Ledoux. The older architect, naturally, devoted more space to the older ideas, while the two younger men gave more attention to the modern views.

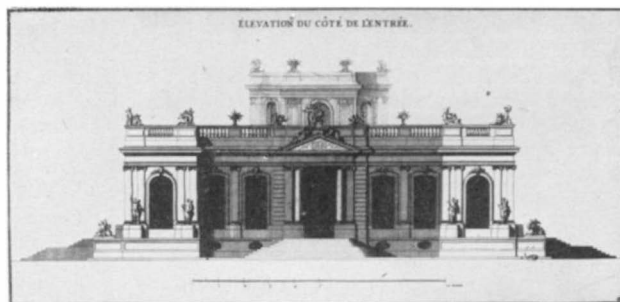


FIG. 1. Country house—Bâtiment à l'Italienne.

However, a mixture of contradictory ideas is not all that the work of these three architects had in common. Many of Boullée's and Ledoux' achievements seem to be removed from those of Blondel by centuries rather than by a generation. But on reading their respective texts there can be no doubt that the seeds of the revolutionary thinking of the later architects were planted in Blondel's school. If one is startled by the originality of Ledoux, one will perhaps be still more amazed to find a very similar boldness of thought in Blondel's cool,

⁶ Blondel, *Distribution* 1: xv, "à puiser dans l'ancienne Architecture les premiers élémens de cet Art."

⁷ Blondel, J.-F., *Cours d'Architecture . . . contenant les leçons données en 1750 et les années suivantes* 3: liv, Paris, 1771 f., "il seroit peut-être déraisonnable de vouloir aujourd'hui élever chez nous des édifices précisément dans le goût de l'antique."

⁸ *Ibid.*, lv, "Les Anciens . . . peuvent bien nous apprendre à penser; mais nous ne devons pas penser comme eux. Tous les peuples ont un caractère, une manière de sentir qui leur est propre. . . ."

academic treatises. His criticism of the moderns, however, provides us today with the clearest description of their style.

Blondel was extremely proud of his profession: Architecture, he prods, is a creative art,⁹ and is clearly to be distinguished from the process of building;¹⁰ the architect was to combine art with the techniques of construction.¹¹ Some of Blondel's passages are the very forerunners of Ledoux' enunciations:¹² There should not be a single moment when the architect ceases to think of his mission, not even in the hours of relaxation;¹³ he must ardently endeavor to discover the promise latent in the building site;¹⁴ he should be possessed by a thirst for knowledge of every description.¹⁵ A good architect should be interested in every aspect of life.¹⁶

Soon the reader will see how a new type of architecture developed in the eighteenth century. In Blondel himself we already find the new type of "enlightened" builder¹⁷ who was to be guided by "reason"; and we recognize in him the universally-minded architect who could claim to be the legitimate judge of the other arts.¹⁸ Blondel, an indefatigable worker, forever intent upon improvement,¹⁹ was predestined to be the leader of the younger generation.

My view of Blondel as a progressive teacher is based not only on many of his statements, which I shall discuss later, but corroborated by Pierre Patte, who edited the posthumous fifth volume of Blondel's *Cours*. Transitory and minor changes would hardly have prompted Patte to say:

He has succeeded, by his teaching, in preparing the revolution that came to pass in architecture in the last twenty years. We should not forget that we owe him this.²⁰

⁹ *Ibid.*, xiv, "L'Architecture est un Art créateur."

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 4: viii, "plus de véritable Architecture . . . et moins de maçonnerie." Cf. Ledoux, C.-N., *L'Architecture*, 15, Paris, 1804, "L'Architecture est à la maçonnerie ce que la poésie est aux belles lettres; c'est l'enthousiasme dramatique du métier; on ne peut en parler qu'avec exaltation."

¹¹ *Cours* 4: xxv, "il faut réunir la science au métier."

¹² *Ibid.* 3: xv, "Doué d'un heureux génie l'Architecte . . . se trouve appelé pour élever les merveilles que l'Architecture enfante."

¹³ *Ibid.*, xxiv, "Lors de ses délassements même, il faut faire en sorte que tout . . . tourne au profit de l'Art."

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xxv, "on parcourt d'un œil avide les environs. . ."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, xxvi, "c'est avec la passion de devenir un Architecte de mérite, qu'on s'éclaire avec tous, et en tout temps."

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, xxv, "tout intéresse, tout instruit."

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 5: Avertissement, by Pierre Patte, vi, "M. Blondel avoit pour principe d'éclairer par le raisonnement . . . tout ce qu'il enseignoit."

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 3: lxxiv, "L'Architecte, Juge-né de tous les Arts libéraux."

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 388, "la première pensée n'est jamais précisément celle à laquelle il faut s'arrêter. . ."

²⁰ *Ibid.* 5: vii, "Aussi a-t-il réussi à préparer, par ses instructions la révolution qui s'est faite depuis 20 ans dans le goût de notre Architecture."

It seems worth while then to study Blondel's writings to learn what had happened. Patte declares explicitly that Blondel was not a revolutionary, but only prepared the revolution. This characterization conforms with the picture we gain from Blondel's text. The "professor full of fight," as Georges Lenôtre dubbed Blondel,²¹ was a staunch defender of the old faith, but he had also much understanding of the new trends.

Blondel never tired of putting emphasis on the basic principles of the hierarchical Baroque, on gradation and concatenation,²² or, as he put it, "l'architecture pyramidale" and "les liaisons qui seules peuvent mettre d'accord les parties avec le tout."²³ As to the requirements of gradation he offered general comments as well as specific suggestions. He favored the predominance of the main *avant-corps*, and an "air of superiority" for the dominant part.²⁴ The liveliness of the plan and the "pyramidal" form, in his view contributed most to the excellence of the Luxembourg.²⁵ For this very same gradation he praised Palladio, but not for that classicality which so many critics, past and present, have ascribed to the Vicentine master.²⁶ He pointed out that just as within the single structure one part is to rule, so in a group is one building to be accentuated.²⁷ He warned against combining a basement with an attic, for two "subaltern" stories could never make a satisfying whole.²⁸ He found it quite unpardonable to adorn the basement with orders while leaving the higher-ranking main story bare and unadorned.²⁹ Attics, he held, should not contain rooms, but serve only as crowning features.³⁰ Orders deserved blame if used indiscriminately without regard to the rank of the stories.³¹ Similarly, he censured the over-ornamentation of Islamic art with its persistent repetition of identical motifs.³²

To him, concatenation and integration were as important as gradation. He incessantly pleaded for per-

²¹ Lenôtre, *Blondel*, 6, "le belliqueux professeur."

²² *Gradation* means the differentiation of the parts according to their rank; *concatenation* their formal unification. Both terms were used in these senses by Robert Morris, *Rural Architecture*, London, 1750.

²³ *Cours* 1: 386, 430.

²⁴ *Distribution* 1: 190, "air de supériorité." Similarly, 59, 113.

²⁵ *Cours* 3: 79, "chef-d'œuvre du côté de sa forme pyramidale, et par le mouvement que Debrosse a su donner à son plan." Cf. 4: 195.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 1: 387, "Palladio a entendu le mieux les formes pyramidales."

²⁷ *Ibid.* 4: 154, "prééminence au château sur toutes les dépendances."

²⁸ *Ibid.* 3: 244, "ces deux étages subalternes."

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 23, "un abus impardonnable."

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 235, "cet étage bâtard."

³¹ J.-F. Blondel in *L'Encyclopédie*, ed. Diderot and d'Alembert, Paris, 1762, *Plates*, Architecture, 1: 8, pl. 20, "deux ordres pratiqués l'un sur l'autre ne distinguent jamais l'étage supérieur d'avec l'inférieur."

³² *Cours* 4: liii, "ornements Arabes si peu faits pour aller ensemble."

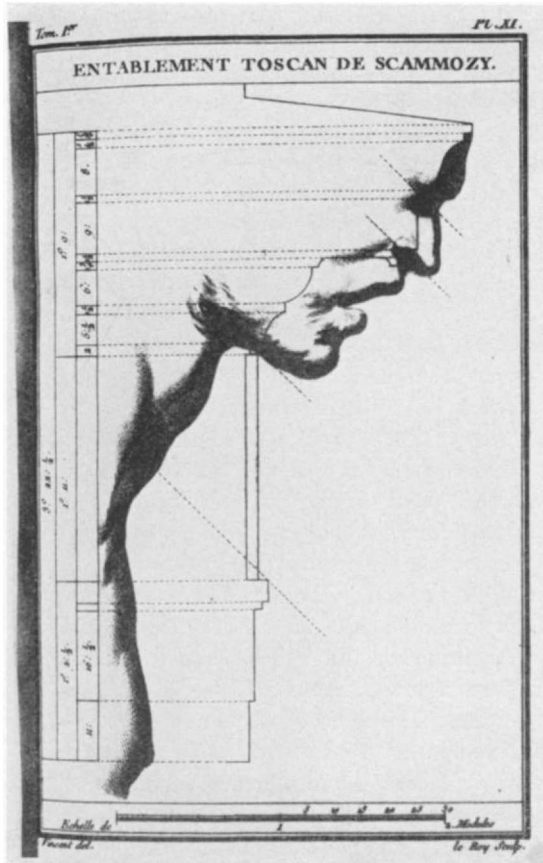


FIG. 2. Architectural profile—Entablement Toscan.

fect unity of the parts,³³ which could be attained by symmetry (“one of the chief beauties of architecture”),³⁴ or, still better, by spatial interrelationships. As the most efficient means of unifying the interior space, he recommended the *enfilade*, or the threading of rooms along an axis;³⁵ and he also suggested the use of mirrors on opposite walls to create the illusion of continuous vistas.³⁶

The *enfilade*, which had been used in France since the late seventeenth century, not only tied all of the rooms together, but also served to tie the interior to the exterior vista. Staircases were not to be placed in the center of the structure, lest they obstruct

³³ Blondel, J.-F., *Architecture française*, 1: 56, Paris, 1752, “les rapports du tout aux parties, et des parties au tout.” Similarly, *Distribution* 1: 126; *Cours* 1: 438; 3: lxx, 105; 4: 341, “l’unité que nous avons tant recommandée.” The recent *Réimpression of Architecture française* has a slightly different pagination.

³⁴ *Cours* 1: 408, “La symétrie . . . une des principales beautés de l’Architecture.”

³⁵ *Encyclopédie*, *loc. cit.*, 10, about a plan of his, “le premier mérite d’un plan consiste dans la beauté des enfilades principales.”

³⁶ *Distribution* 1: 27, “les glaces font entr’elles une mutuelle réflexion ce qui prolongue la vue et produit un très-agréable effet.”

vision.³⁷ Thus Blondel agreed with the Baroque conception of the house as a breathing organism, in which all of the parts communicated with each other, and with the surroundings.³⁸ He was fond of the open alleys which afforded the splendid views of Baroque parks.³⁹ Blondel regarded as particularly beautiful his projected Manor House for a Gentleman from Florence because one could enjoy the wide vistas from many of its parts;⁴⁰ the entrance to the park was to have been from the Grand Salon.⁴¹

In the fourth volume of his *Cours*, which came out as late as 1773, Blondel still exhorted his pupils not to forget the correlation of buildings erected on the same site,⁴² and to be careful about the correspondence of interiors with their environment.⁴³ He considered Pal-

³⁷ *Arch. française* 1: 39, “les escaliers situés dans le milieu de l’édifice masquoient l’enfilade de la cour avec celle des jardins.”

³⁸ *Distribution* 1: 58, “Il faut percer le milieu de son Bâtiment de façon qu’on puisse profiter de la vue des différents objets qu’on a assujettis au Bâtiment. . . .”

³⁹ *Arch. française* 1: 46, “prolonger le coup d’œil que forment les enfilades principales d’un parc.”

⁴⁰ *Distribution* 1: 11, 13.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴² *Cours* 4: 148, “l’art de faire marcher ensemble les issues, les dépendances et la distribution extérieure des façades.”

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 153, “l’art de rendre relatifs les dehors avec les dedans.”

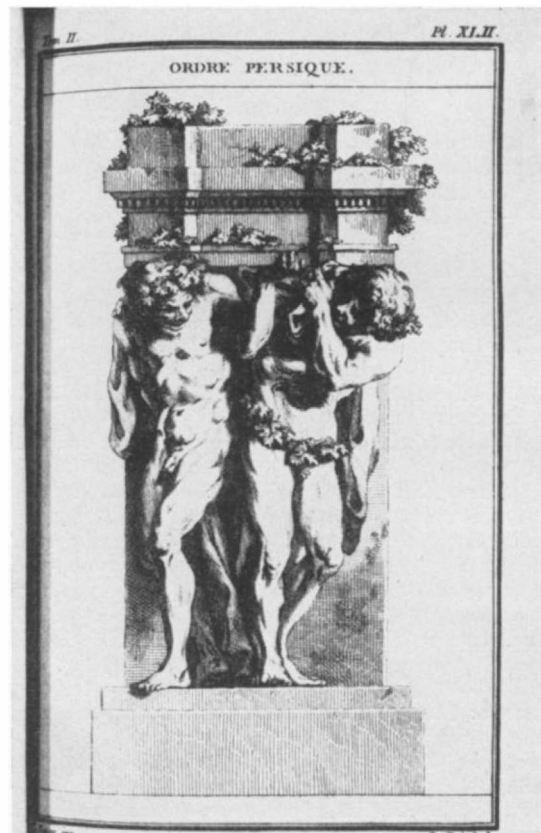


FIG. 3. Entablature bearers—Ordre Persique.

radio a model, not only because of his mastery of gradation, but also because of the pictorial quality of his composition;⁴⁴ he would never renounce the panoramic view.⁴⁵

Blondel's views on the relationship between architecture and sculpture, as set forth in *De la distribution*, were in accord with the general trend of Baroque thought. Sculpture was to be blended with architecture so that it would be impossible to sever them without destroying the whole.⁴⁶ This precept, too, stemmed from the desire for perfect unity. Blondel was speaking like any architect-sculptor of the Baroque period when he demanded that the wall between the openings should be adorned with reliefs.⁴⁷ He took pride in the design of his *Bâtiment à l'Italienne* because the plastic character of the body derived directly from the plan⁴⁸ (fig. 1). His criticism of buildings by other architects was based on this principle. He praised, for instance, the project for the Abbaye de Panthemont, by François Franque, because its walls tied the porch of the church to the adjacent monastery.⁴⁹ On the other hand, he found fault with the Tuileries for the lack of unity,⁵⁰ which partly resulted from the application of petty, disharmonious features.⁵¹ Broken cornices,⁵² and entablatures differing in design,⁵³ were a horror to him, and he found harmony imperiled when the single parts were in discord, or, as he put it, "quarrelling."⁵⁴ The description of the *Bâtiment à l'Italienne* in his earliest publication reads like an eighteenth-century treatise on the aims of the Baroque.⁵⁵

Despite Blondel's allegiance to the established system, new views gradually crept into the doctrine of this defender of the old, and, what is more, he himself was aware of the cracks in the old structure. He still shared to some extent, the belief that there should be a sort of kinship between architectural performance and nature, in particular the human body. The most renowned architects, he found, reached perfection only by imitating nature and conforming to the proportions of man.⁵⁶ This belief is illustrated in the plates of the

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 3: 431, "il accompagnait ses édifices d'avant-scènes toujours intéressantes."

⁴⁵ *Distribution* 1: 18, "afin que l'œil embrasse le plus d'objets qu'il est possible."

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 56, "que la sculpture semble se marier avec son Architecture . . . qu'on n'en peut rompre l'accord sans défigurer l'Édifice."

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 57, and still so in *Cours* 3: 21.

⁴⁸ *Distribution* 1: 181, "Ce Pavillon reçoit beaucoup de relief de la forme de son plan."

⁴⁹ *Encyclopédie*, *loc. cit.*, 8, "se lient heureusement."

⁵⁰ *Cours* 3: 75.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 77, "les niches trop petites et disparates entr'elles."

⁵² *Arch. française* 1: 72, 73.

⁵³ *Distribution* 1: 136, "désunion dans les entablemens."

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 162, "rien ne pêche plus contre l'harmonie . . . que de voir les arrière-corps d'une Façade disputer avec les avant-corps."

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁵⁶ *Cours* 3: 3, "les Architectes les plus renommés ne sont arrivés à ce degré de perfection, qu'en imitant la nature . . .

Tuscan capital.⁵⁷

To test the divergent precepts of Palladio, Scamozzi, and Vignola, Blondel drew human profiles over architectural "profiles" (fig. 2). The result might be a reminder of the classical saying: Man is the measure of all things. Yet several passages in *L'Architecture française* which seem to agree with the "profiles,"⁵⁸ have in reality quite another meaning. He gradually became aware that to force architectural features to conform to organic shapes was to use them in a manner contrary to their own nature. For a while he had shared the belief that all artists had held since the Renaissance. They appreciated matter for its sensuous beauty, yet did not want it to influence composition by its properties. According to their doctrine,

. . . la matière doit être comptée pour rien, la beauté des masses, la proportion des parties et la réunion du tout ensemble, sont les premières considérations qu'on doit avoir dans l'Architecture pour ce qui concerne l'ordonnance.⁵⁹

Notwithstanding his "profiles," Blondel on the whole had abandoned the anthropomorphic concept of architecture. He disapproved using *Caryatides* and *Persanes* as substitutes for columns. The Greeks, he realized, may have had some good, though not strictly artistic, reasons for their use—probably as commemorative of certain historical events—but to him they were "unbearable."⁶⁰ The ultra-naturalistic *Caryatides*⁶¹ and *Persanes*,⁶² which Eisen had designed for Blondel's book, illustrate all their physical strain in supporting the entablatures. They seem to have been added to the text as warnings rather than as models (fig. 3).

The notion of the "Natural" had acquired a new significance in the late eighteenth century. It no longer meant the imitation of organic nature, but rather the rational adaptation of the forms to their purpose, and their conformity to the material. This new point of view is reflected in a passage in Blondel's *Architecture française* dealing with the "natural arrangement" of the plan.⁶³ Obviously, the "natural" plan had nothing to do with a model taken from nature; it was the logical, or the practical, as opposed to the organic and ornamental plan of the Baroque. The same functional thinking prompted Blondel's remarks on pediments: the triangular alone were legitimate, since they followed the

et en cherchant à concilier ses beautés diverses avec les proportions . . . dans le corps humain." Similar views in *Encyclopédie*, 3rd ed., 1778, and its reprint by Sociétés Typographiques, 3:256, 1781, "Tout corps organisé est un édifice. . . . Tout bâtiment parfait doit réunir les mêmes perfections."

⁵⁷ *Cours* 1: 260, 261; pls. X, XI, XII.

⁵⁸ *Arch. française* 1: 24, "l'ordonnance la plus conforme à la nature . . . peut seule constater les règles du bon goût dans l'Architecture."

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 2: 235.

⁶⁰ *Cours* 1: 198, 199, "L'ordre Persique n'est pas plus tolérable." Similarly, 345; 2: 111; *Arch. française* 1: 74.

⁶¹ *Cours* 2: pl. XLI.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pl. XLII.

⁶³ *Arch. française* 1: 21, "l'arrangement naturel des pièces."

lines of the sloping roof. Decorative pediments, except in some cases, were to be avoided.⁶⁴ Remarks such as these are in no way incidental. The defender of the old had become an apostle of the new. This change in his thinking is mainly apparent in his late *Cours*. Suddenly he discovered a lack of consistency in the traditional structures, and he wanted to reinstate "la Logique de l'Art . . . qu'il paroît important de rétablir";⁶⁵ true style he believed would reveal the individual character of each structure.⁶⁶

As far as we know, the functionalist point of view was

rist Carlo Lodoli, and his adherents the *rigoristi*, who were so violently repudiated by Gianbattista Piranesi.⁶⁷ Yet it seems that the concept of architectural logic appealed more to the French than to the Italians. A certain measure of proof of this statement can be found in a rare booklet of 1702, the *Mémoires critiques d'architecture*, by Fremin, who was Président au Bureau des Finances à Paris. Fremin, who was not a learned architect, may be taken as a representative of the current taste in France. He was progressive enough to declare that the orders were the least part of architecture. And although he advocated unity, regularity, and the correspondence of the parts, he objected to profuseness of decoration and permitted ornamentation only if it was

The first consequence of the new point of view was the attack on ornament, especially the decorative rather than the interpretative.⁶⁹ In any case, it was to be applied with the greatest restraint.⁷⁰ The Spaniards and the Germans in particular were singled out as guilty of extravagance and confusion.⁷¹ While Blondel in the *Distribution* advocated the most intimate connection of architecture and sculpture, he stated in a lecture delivered in 1747, and in the *Cours*, that in architecture sculpture was as superfluous as any other kind of decoration. Architecture could well do without them; it required only solidity, practicality, and symmetry.⁷² (Symmetry

⁶⁴ *Cours* 3: 220-222.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 4: liv.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, lv, ". . . vrai style qui assigne à chaque Edifice le caractère qui lui est propre." Similarly, *Arch. française* 1: 24.

⁶⁷ Piranesi, G.-B., *Parere su l'architettura*, 15
Emil, Algarotti vs. Lodoli, *Jour. Amer. Soc. Archit. Historians* 4: 23-29, 1944. Wittkower, Rudolf, Piranesi's Parere, *Jour. Warburg Inst.* 2: 15
modernist." More about Lodoli and Piranesi in my *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

⁶⁸ Fremin, *Mémoires critiques d'architecture*, Paris, 1702, Avertissement, "les cinq ordres ne sont que la dernière et la moindre partie dans l'Architecture." 58
les Bâtimens n'y sont nécessaires que lors qu'ils y sont naturels."

⁶⁹ *Cours* 3: 191, "tout ornement qui n'est qu'ornement, est inutile et superflu." Similarly, xxxi, lxxvii.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 4: lvii, "un déluge d'ornements."

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 3: 423.

⁷² Blondel, J.-F., *Discours sur la manière d'étudier l'architecture*, 6, Paris, 1747, "la Sculpture . . . ôte à nos Edifices leur forme et leur repos. . . . On trouvera peut-être étonnant que

was to be the last remnant of the traditional concept from which not even the far more advanced Ledoux could depart.) Another source of the hostility against ornament was the new fondness for the plain and the calm, "le grand goût de la belle simplicité."⁷³ The demand for "simplicité mâle,"⁷⁴ or "noble simplicité,"⁷⁵ ap

of restraint, Blondel cited a house on the rue du Coq Saint-Honoré, by Franque,⁷⁶ which was of the type built around 1800 on the rue de Rivoli. The new aesthetics were summed up in "le style simple est préférable au st

A further factor in the architecture was the appearance of individualistic tendencies. These tendencies most probably were the very ground from which structural rationalism, as well as aesthetic purism, sprang. They appeared first under the aspect of Romanticism, but were to last long after Romanticism had passed. Previously the great codifications of architectural taste of the Renaissance and the Baroque had laid down a norm binding for all. Blondel was one of the first to declare: "Taste is a matter of the individual and is indeterminate."⁷⁸ This statement was a bold challenge at a time when the ancients were still the first, and almost the sole, authorities, and ties Blondel to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁷⁹

The demand for individualism was closely related to the newly arising requirements of character,⁸⁰ and Blondel thought that to be able to express the character of a structure, one must, above all, have grasped its specific significance. Architecture was not the only field in which the late eighteenth century tried to penetrate the "mysteries" of character.⁸¹ The very popular physiognomical studies were similar attempts in this direction. Whereas Renaissance architects had studied the measurements of the human body and had tried to apply these to architecture—Blondel's profiles are a late instance of these endeavors—architects now tried to instill human characteristics into the buildings. The era of

l'on attaque ici le goût dominant de notre décoration. . . ." *Cours* 3: 202, "l'Architecture se suffit à elle-même . . . n'a besoin que de solidité, de commodité et de symétrie." *Discours* was reprinted in *Mercur France*, 57

⁷³ *Cours* 3: lxxviii.

⁷⁴ *Distribution* 1: i, 93.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, xv, a. o.

⁷⁶ *Cours* 3: 454,

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 4: lvi.

⁷⁸ *Arch. française* 1: 23, "il paroît que le goût soit personnel et indé

274. David Hume, Of the Standard of Taste, in *Four Dissertations*, 232, London, 175

tions: The general principles of taste are uniform in human nature.

⁷⁹ *Cp.* note 20.

⁸⁰ *Cp.* note 66.

⁸¹ *Cours* 1: 132, "L'habile Architecte sait pénétrer dans les mystères de l'Art . . . pour ne pas confondre le caractère particulier qui convient à chaque édifice."

*architecture parlante*⁸²—"Narrative" architecture—was now inaugurated. It began with a passionate desire for a thorough-going reformation of the architectural body; it was to end in shallow symbolism.

Blondel dealt at length with the new goal of architectural character in the fourth chapter of the first volume of the *Cours*, entitled "Analyse de l'Art."⁸³ He did not intend to present a new body of doctrine, but merely to express his beliefs as an artist. His academic support of the modern movement must have impressed his pupils considerably more than the dusty time-honored precepts which he repeated almost by habit.

The second volume of the *Cours* presents the same views in a more condensed form: Every work of architecture was to express its purpose, and to be shaped accordingly.⁸⁴ Blondel added the stern warning that it was not sufficient to rely on symbolic sculpture;⁸⁵ that the architect must speak through the arrangement of masses, the choice of forms, and elegance of style.⁸⁶ In his condemnation of extra-architectural means, Blondel came somewhat closer to the point of view of the Rigorists, while the literary-minded Romanticists enjoyed narrating the character of the structure rather than visualizing it. His chapter "Programmes" tells the students how the new architectural ideal was to be put into practice,⁸⁷ but a detailed discussion here of this chapter would lead us too far afield.

The concept of giving each building personality by stressing its character had hardly yet been born, when the menace of exaggeration became evident. Blondel soon felt compelled to caution against displaying character for its own sake. He derided the senseless picturesqueness of sentimental landscape architecture with its artificial ruins, and the like.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, he himself indulged in dreams of the mysterious, grand, bold, terrible, and frivolous in architecture.⁸⁹

Blondel felt that architecturally, the most reasonable demand was for grandeur: that this held out the greatest promise of counteracting the over-ornamentation of the late Baroque.⁹⁰ Looking back to Italy, Blondel was fascinated by the grandeur of her architecture, and this he missed in France.⁹¹

⁸² *Etudes d'architecture en France, Magasin Pittoresque*, 388, 1852, "Ledoux était partisan de ce qu'on a appelé depuis l'architecture parlante."

⁸³ *Cours* 1: 373-447.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 2: 229, ". . . tous doivent avoir un caractère qui détermine leur forme générale et qui annonce le bâtiment pour ce qu'il est."

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 229, "Il ne suffit pas que ce caractère distinctif soit seulement désigné par les attributs de la Sculpture."

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 230, "la belle disposition des masses générales, le choix des formes, et un stile soutenu."

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 4: lxxxiv.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 3: xxxiv, ". . . ne plaire qu'aux Peintres de Ruines."

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 1: 422-430.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 3: 347, he praises St. Sulpice by Servandoni for "la suppression de toutes les petites parties."

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 426, "grandeur qu'on rencontre rarement dans nos productions Franç"

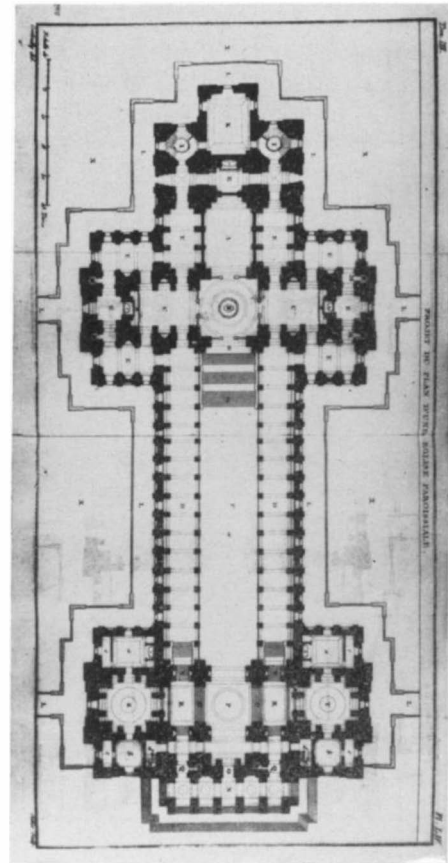


FIG. 4. Plan of a Parish church.

In a discussion of artistic concepts of the past, we must carefully consider how the various ideas changed their significance almost imperceptibly. One of the cornerstones of classical aesthetics was the category of *convenance*, which meant thinking of the decorum, or regard of th

venance meant the consideration of the proper atmosphere.⁹² It is not easy to disentangle in his lengthy treatises the crossing lines of his thought. More concise information about the new demand for Narrative Architecture can be found in Nicolas Lecamus de Mézières' *Génie de l'Architecture*.⁹³

How the demand for character affected the actual planning can be seen from Blondel's project of his Parish Church⁹⁴ (fig. 4), which was the predecessor to Ledoux' church of the Ideal City. Blondel admitted having been inspired by various French church buildings, first among them Hardouin-Mansart's Chapel of Versailles.⁹⁵ Thus, we may believe him to be sincere when he asserted that he was not influenced by

⁹² *Arch. française* 1: 22, note, "(la convenance) apprend que dans un édifice grave tout doit inspirer la tranquillité, le respect, . . ."

⁹³ Lecamus de Mézières, Nicolas, *Le Génie de l'Architecture ou l'analogie de cet art avec nos sensations*, Paris, 1780.

⁹⁴ *Cours* 2: 312, 3: 382; pl. LIV.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 2: 312, 3:

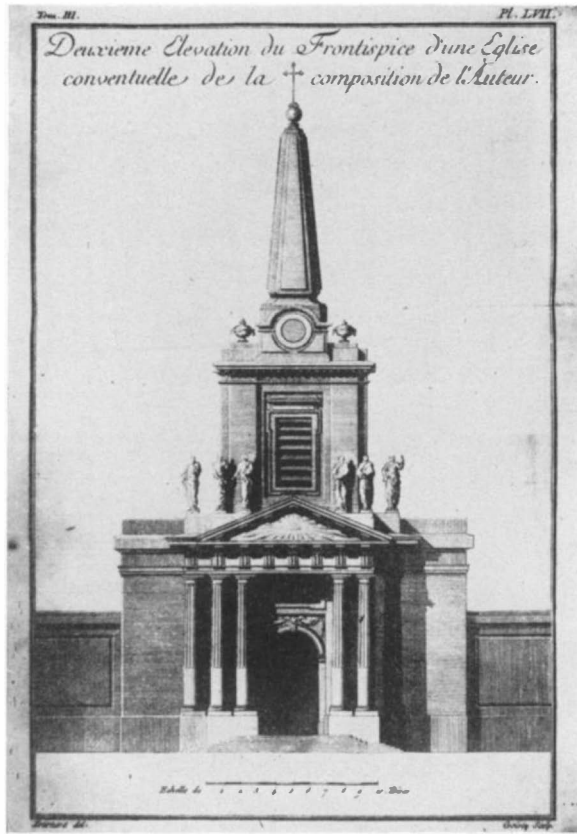


FIG. 5. Front of a Conventual church.

Saint-Amand en Flandres, near Valenciennes, built in 1624,⁹⁶ despite some similarity in his plan. We may the more believe him since he introduced a compositional motif of great significance in his Parish Church that distinguishes it from that of the Flemish church. In both, the sanctuary and the choir are raised above the nave some forty steps—"inégalité de sol qui produit nécessairement le plus grand effet."⁹⁷ Whereas the choir of Saint-Amand is situated in the transept, under the dome, and the altar is at the east end of the nave, Blondel inverted this order: his altar is situated in the transept, under the dome, and the choir follows in the nave beyond. Moreover, Blondel raised the side arms of the transept to the level of the sanctuary.⁹⁸ He sacrificed the continuity of the entire interior space, and preferred to center the church around the altar. His chief aim was to exalt the main feature as strongly as possible, by bringing it impressively close to the congregation.⁹⁹ The traditional arrangement with the sanctuary at the far end offers the entering visitor a continuous vista all through the main nave. Blondel disrupted the unity of the whole so as to let the altar speak with greater intensity than it could from its cus-

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 2: 312, note n, 3: 383, 4: xxxiii.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 3: 383.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 389.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 388, 389. *Cp.* notes 203 and pt. II, 326.

tomary distant place. The concept of blending the parts has been superseded by isolating and contrasting them; the Baroque pattern has been replaced by the Romantic.¹⁰⁰

Blondel expected the decoration, also, to conform to the atmosphere. He wanted the interior of a cathedral to express grandeur without the help of paintings or sculpture.¹⁰¹ The light was to be subdued, to inspire awe.¹⁰² Twilight he found most appropriate to add to the mysteriousness, and most conducive to introspection.¹⁰³ He was opposed to any illusionistic decoration of the dome that made it appear to open into the sky, preferring instead solid vaults¹⁰⁴ which would embrace the mystery and shut out the world.

The trend toward isolation of the parts is illustrated in his design for the front of the Eglise Conventuelle¹⁰⁵ (fig. 5). Here, substructure, tower, and spire are distinctly severed from each other. Each in itself might serve a distinct purpose, without any change in its form: the spire as an obelisk, the substructure as a temple. Contrariwise, if any part of a Baroque structure were removed from its context, it would become merely a fragment. Blondel, incidentally, stated that he would have preferred sober Doric forms to the richer Corinthian ordered by clients.¹⁰⁶

The craving for expressive architecture developed a predilection for commissions that were compatible with *architecture parlante*. There was, of course, little practical need of structures which, by their very nature, were likely to "speak." Yet we find many of them discussed in the "Programmes," where Blondel presented Mile posts,¹⁰⁷ Lighthouses,¹⁰⁸ Entrances to arsenals,¹⁰⁹ and Prisons.¹¹⁰ Soon such buildings became favorite subjects in schools and in competitions. The sympathetic response of the younger generation can be found in the designs for the Grands Prix.¹¹¹

Simultaneously, architecture was confronted with more realistic problems. Outstanding among these was the improvement of the private dwelling. Here the new ideals, especially those of simplicity, individuality, isolation, "naturalness," found a still better outlet. In his *Cours*, Blondel blamed some writers—Daviler, Boffrand, Briseux, and also himself in his earlier treatise, *De la distribution*—for not having dealt

¹⁰⁰ Later we shall see how the new compositional principles gained ground.

¹⁰¹ *Cours* 2: 327, 328.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 3: 307, 315.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 417.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 419.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 398; pl. LVII.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pl. LVII presents the front as Blondel would have had it.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 4: xcii.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, ciii.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, xcvi.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, lxxxvii.

¹¹¹ Cléemputte, P.-L., *Collection des prix que la ci-devant Académie d'Architecture proposoit et couronnoit tous les ans [1779-1789]* Paris, n. d.

sufficiently with the exigencies of the plan.¹¹² He was unable to point out the new direction to be taken, but to his students the reform of the plan was to become a very serious matter.

There is still another field which Blondel covered very thoroughly in the *Cours*, the vast field of utilitarian buildings.¹¹³ He wrote at length about Mints, Exchanges, Libraries, Judiciary Buildings, Markets, Reservoirs, etc. These "lower" categories were now considered worthy of the architect's efforts. In this crucial moment traditional formality became almost senseless. But the French revolutionary architects did not think of replacing it by the Ludovician Utopia of pure functionalism; they searched rather for some timely form.

We have seen Blondel, as an architect and as a writer, standing between two periods. His written work presents one more interesting aspect. It contains his comments on the contemporary situation of architecture, and a characterization of the generation growing up. The respective passages, especially those in the third and fourth volumes of the *Cours*, are very instructive and Blondel's views may be summarized as follows:

Not so long ago, it seemed as if the century was Rococo. Now, everything has changed, though one can hardly understand why it has. Formerly Greek and Roman architecture was held in little esteem, considered cold and monotonous. Now it has become fashionable to imitate the works of the Ancients and those of exotic nations. One goes even so far as to copy the Chinese bizarreries in decorating interiors, to ape the heavy style of ancient Egypt in building, and to expect other nations to follow the French example. The re-introduction of the Gothic seems not to be far off.¹¹⁴ In interior decoration, a distance of a century seems to separate current manner from that of only thirty years back.¹¹⁵ Only those architects are given credit who add some singular novelties to what has been customary, defying tradition and reason.¹¹⁶ The desire for change has stirred everyone.¹¹⁷ The new fashion does not con-

fine itself only to less durable objects such as furniture and china, but extends to architecture as well.¹¹⁸ "Incertitude" marks its production.¹¹⁹ The increasing number of "monstrous" designs is a menace to future development.¹²⁰ Therefore it is time to combat the spirit of independence and incertitude.¹²¹ Perhaps one could find the way out of the chaos by turning to Antiquity.¹²² The students should not listen to the seducers who try to make them believe that the art of the past is exhausted, and that, to be modern, one must be extravagant.¹²³ The fashion of the sunken tablets with bas-reliefs shows how eager the architects are for innovation. A well-known architect introduced these a few years earlier as an adornment above the windows of some public building; six months later, Paris was full of them.¹²⁴

Blondel continues, though it may be advisable for the beginner to follow the Ancients, the mature architect should adapt their forms to the modern exigencies and the available materials.¹²⁵ Architecture is creativeness, genius, the art of taste. This is why one breaks with the old canons.¹²⁶ The works of predecessors have merits of their own.¹²⁷ But the living have the right of criticism.¹²⁸ One should not discard all the rules,¹²⁹ but neither should one remain silent when architecture "degenerates."¹³⁰

Already the new reform spirit has infected the students. Each craves for a manner of his own.¹³¹ Full of enthusiasm, they forget the true principles of art

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, lvi.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 158, "l'incertitude à laquelle se trouve à présent réduite l'Architecture." Cf. Viel's views, note 341.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, lx, "ils osent assortir ensemble le genre ancien avec le genre antique, le gothique avec le moderne, et le pesant avec le délicat, inconséquences qui font éclore tant de productions monstrueuses. . . ."

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 4: lii, "Il est peut-être temps d'arrêter, s'il est possible, cette indépendance et cette incertitude qui se remarquent dans la plupart des compositions de nos jours. . . ."

¹²² *Ibid.*, liii.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, liii, "quelques-uns leur font entendre, que tout est épuisé et que, pour paroître neuf, il faille avoir recours à la singularité."

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3: 158.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 4: lxiv, "concilier ce qu'ils auront retenu de l'antique avec nos usages, nos matières et les commodités qui caractérisent aujourd'hui notre Architecture Française."

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1: 132, "l'Architecture est un Art de goût, de génie et d'invention; quelquefois même on peut et l'on doit s'affranchir de certaines règles."

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 375, "Plein de vénération pour les productions de la Grèce et de l'Italie."

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 3: lxvi, "Nous ne devons pas nous faire un scrupule de relever les défauts qu'on remarque dans plus d'un de nos édifices."

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, lxxviii, "Toutes les productions d'un Architecte . . . doivent être soumises aux mêmes règles."

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, lxxviii, "l'Architecture semble dégénérer, même par l'abus des règles: la plupart des Architectes s'en font à leur gré."

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, lxxix, "il n'y a pas jusqu'aux Elèves, qui ne se fassent un système d'indépendance."

¹¹² *Cours* 4: 107, 188.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 2: 389-449.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3: lviii, "Il y a plusieurs années qu'il sembloit que notre siècle étoit celui des Rocailles; aujourd'hui sans trop savoir pourquoi, il en est autrement. Alors le goût Grec et Romain nous paroissoit froid, monotone; à présent, nous affectons la charge de la plupart des savantes productions de ces Peuples; et . . . prétendons que les autres Nations s'assujétissent à faire usage de notre manière de décorer, soit que nous imitions, dans nos appartements, la bizarrerie des ornements de Pékin, soit que nous ramenions, dans l'ordonnance extérieure de nos édifices, le goût pesant des premières inventions de Memphis. . . . Il ne nous reste plus qu'à introduire le goût gothique. . . ."

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, lv, "Depuis environ 30 années, on a fait en France des changements si considérables, qu'il semble qu'il y ait au moins un siècle de distance. . . ."

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, lvi, "on mésestimeroit un Architecte, qui n'ajouteroit pas quelques nouveautés singulières . . . contre l'usage et la raison."

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, lvi, "notre inconstance."

and what they owe to the generations before them.¹³² It is the master's duty to keep them faithful to the basic precepts.¹³³ It is little wonder that the young architects, Blondel goes on, have no restraint¹³⁴ when everyone becomes a "slave to fashion";¹³⁵ they feel challenged to try out new paths and reject all basic rules¹³⁶ and the validity of tradition.¹³⁷ They surrender themselves to the torrent, produce chimaeras, and create the most extravagant things one can imagine.¹³⁸ Volatile and unstable, they become a threat to art as a whole.¹³⁹ In their productions they replace regularity, simplicity, and symmetry, with a mixture of features of questionable character,¹⁴⁰ and apply sculpture to architecture without any discrimination.¹⁴¹ The students should be cured of the madness of excessive decoration,¹⁴² and should be brought back to simplicity.¹⁴³ Inverted ornaments,¹⁴⁴ lack of symmetry and correspondence,¹⁴⁵ excessive contrasts, interpenetrating masses,¹⁴⁶ and all

¹³² *Ibid.* 1: 434, "nos jeunes Artistes confondent l'enthousiasme avec ce qu'on appelle le véritable esprit de l'art, sans réfléchir que la plupart de leurs compositions ne sont que le résultat des pensées d'autrui. . . ."

¹³³ *Ibid.* 3: 151,

au génie: plus expérimentés qu'eux, nous les rappelons aux préceptes."

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 236, "Nos jeunes gens . . . ne gardent plus aucune mesure."

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, xxxi, "on cède au torrent, on devient esclave de la mode."

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 7, "Il faut, à les en croire, oser se frayer une route nouvelle. Fondés sur un système d'indépendance, qui ne leur fait accepter ni lois fondamentales, ni principes reçus, ni convenance particulière; ils prétendent qu'il n'y a point de démonstrations convaincantes en faveur des proportions de l'Architecture; que ne rien innover est une timidité. . . ."

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 15

qui y ont recours." *Cp.* this with note 126, to see Blondel's vacillation between acceptance and rejection of modernism.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 15

simple . . . ils préfèrent toujours de s'abandonner au torrent . . . pour ne produire que des chimères, et déployer tout ce que leur imagination peut enfanter de plus extravagant."

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* 4: lxvi, "quelques-uns nés volages et inappliqués, attaquent toutes les parties de l'Art."

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 1: 434, "on ignore la belle simplicité, la régularité, et la symétrie. La plupart de nos jeunes artistes hazardent souvent dans leurs essais un mélange mal assorti."

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* 3: 15

que de placer deux renommées sur les côtés de l'archivolte, et d'élever . . . un amortissement composé de gradins, d'un attique orné de bas-reliefs, de festons . . . d'un Triomphateur traîné sur un char attelé de chevaux."

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 15

d'employer des colonnes, des statues et une quantité prodigieuse de sculpture. . . ." *Cp.* note 266.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, lxxviii, "les ornements trop multipliés sont une imperfection, une intempérance qui éloigne du grand goût de la belle simplicité."

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 15

(les agrafes).

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 15

symétrie et la correspondance que les Croisées doivent avoir les unes avec les autres."

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 34, "les jeunes têtes de nos jours ne montrent qu'un contraste outré." 1: 438, "pénétrer les corps les uns dans les autres."

sorts of exaggerations are vulgar and distasteful.¹⁴⁷ Picturesqueness in architecture is insanity.¹⁴⁸ All the "inventions" of the last thirty years are foolish:

Tel a été l'esprit de vertige que pendant près de trente années les hommes médiocres ont décoré du beau nom de génie et d'invention.¹⁴⁹

These were the symptoms of the architectural crisis which Blondel observed, and some of the remedies which he suggested. One might believe that he had in mind the latest phase of the Baroque when he criticized the lack of symmetry and simplicity,¹⁵⁰ and the incongruities in composition.¹⁵¹ But beside his remark that the era of the *rocailles* was past,¹⁵² there is further evidence that productions other than those of the Rococo must have aroused him. He illustrates a doorway in order to exemplify what architecture should *not* look like,¹⁵³ and points out its modernistic "faults," particularly the discrepancy between the small opening of the entrance and the huge mass of the whole.¹⁵⁴ Elsewhere he assails the oversized and disproportionate projects in vogue among the students,¹⁵⁵ and also objects to the modern, repellent heaviness.¹⁵⁶ He draws a clear demarcation between the "frivolous" furniture decoration of former times and the four-square solid furniture of modern times, which he dislikes.¹⁵⁷

It is obvious that Blondel was not so much opposed to the "license" and "abuse" of the Rococo, as to the revolutionary innovations: the shapeless, the extravagant, the megalomaniacal,¹⁵⁸ the ponderous.¹⁵⁹ The only modern tendencies with which he agreed were those of

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 4: ix, "ces contrastes . . . ces prétendues oppositions, en un mot . . . ces tours de force que le vulgaire applaudit."

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 3: 151, "tout ce que le dérèglement de l'esprit peut produire de pittoresque."

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 15

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 1: 434. *Cf.* notes 140, 145

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 438, "un assemblage bizarre." *Cf.* notes 138, 147.

¹⁵² *Ibid.* 3: lviii. *Cf.* note 114.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 149; pl. XXVII, "Porte dans le genre moderne . . . à-peu-près dans le genre de celles qu'on élève aujourd'hui le plus communément."

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 15 comparée avec la masse entière." Such disparity is criticized also on p. 15

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 4: lxx, "il leur paroît plus aisé d'arriver aux compositions gigantesques, qu'aux proportions de la belle Architecture."

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 1: 427, "des corps ridiculement lourds, qui ne laissent voir que des parties mal assorties, un genre soldatesque. . . ."

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 136, "N'avons-nous pas vu les ornements frivoles des dedans passer dans les dehors? abus qui a subsisté long temps. Aujourd'hui on applique le style grave des dehors dans l'intérieur des appartements: on donne à nos meubles, ce que l'expérience nous avoit appris à éviter, les formes quarrées dont les angles blessent l'œil, nuisent à la circulation des personnes assemblées dans nos demeures."

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 138, "tant de productions informes, tant de décorations extravagantes, gigantesques, qui annoncent la décadence du goût."

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 3: lxxviii, "ces formes pesantes et austères."

severity, restraint,¹⁶⁰ and "noble simplicity."¹⁶¹ He must have given much thought to the pros and cons of modern rigidity,¹⁶² and there must have been some argument between Blondel and the modernists on the question of the bare wall. He declares, almost angrily, that he knows very well that undecorated piers are popular because they are calm, but to him they are "dissonances," or gaps, undermining unity.¹⁶³

Blondel certainly was not prejudiced. He was full of doubt and afraid of the things to come. He was aware of the changes occurring in architecture but could not grasp their full meaning.¹⁶⁴ In his fear he saw the contradictory features combining to bring about the end of architecture: walls pierced by openings out of place; columns without "order"; crude apertures instead of framed windows and doors; accidental embellishments instead of decorative sculpture; exuberance instead of character; distorted forms; altered proportions; and complete confusion through the mixture of antique, Baroque, and modern elements. The downfall of "true" architecture seemed to him predestined and imminent.¹⁶⁵ There was neither rhyme nor reason for this condition:

On ne peut assigner à leurs compositions bizarres, un nom qui leur convienne, ni décider à quel particulier elles pourroient être propres.¹⁶⁶

Though I believe I have furnished ample documentation to present Blondel's position, I feel that in writing a new chapter of art history I should not pass over the opportunity to clarify further the condition of ferment in which architecture found itself in the eighteenth century. There is a highly interesting posthumous publication by Blondel, *L'homme du monde éclairé par les arts*, which his biographer, Auguste Prost, knew only by name.¹⁶⁷ It contains letters exchanged between two correspondents (probably fictional) holding divergent

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 15

a beaucoup gagné; il est certain qu'aujourd'hui nos jeunes Architectes sont plus sévères dans les dehors de leur façades. . . ."

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.* 1: 139, "cette noble simplicité."

¹⁶² *Ibid.* 3: 430, "Peut-être abusons-nous trop des ressauts . . . mais ne doit-on pas convenir aussi que cette continuité lisse, poussée à l'excès, ne présente plus qu'une composition froide?"

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 430, "Nous savons bien que quelques Architectes apèlent ces intervalles des repos dans l'Architecture; mais nous les appelons des dissonances, des disparités, des nus . . . qui nuisent à l'unité."

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, lviii, "sans trop savoir pourquoi." See note 114.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 120, "lorsqu'on osera tout se permettre . . . des colonnes et non des ordres; des ouvertures et non des portes et des croisées; qu'on préférera la richesse aux symboles; qu'on n'observera ni caractère ni style; qu'on défigurera les formes; qu'on altérera les proportions; . . . point de doute que l'on ne fera plus que de la Maçonnerie, mais jamais de véritable Architecture."

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 4: lxvii.

¹⁶⁷ Prost, 8.

views on architecture.¹⁶⁸ According to Bastide,¹⁶⁹ the editor, this book was written when Blondel, two years before his death, wished to present his ideas not merely to students, but to the world at large, thus hoping to contribute his share to the "intellectual revolution."¹⁷⁰ In this book, with which I can deal only briefly, Blondel voices his dislike both of the Rococo and what I call the Revolutionary Architecture; the former impersonated by Pinault [Pineau], Lajou, and Meissonnier, the latter by Ledoux and Delafosse. Here we see side-by-side the two currents in which the architectural "decay" of the eighteenth century became manifest, one at the beginning of the century, the other toward its end. The two currents, different as they were, had grown on the same soil and been nurtured by the same spirit of rebellion. Some passages leave the question open as to which of the two trends Blondel meant, e.g., when he censured unruliness, lack of proportion, and lack of interrelationship; or inveighs against senseless contrasts and faulty symmetry.¹⁷¹ This ambiguity is not caused by a lack of discrimination on his part, but rather is due to the fact that the two trends had some outer similarities, and basically the same motivation—insurrection.

In this publication we find, moreover, a telling characterization of the young generation and their works; and learn about the influence of the Abbé Laugier whose teachings will be discussed later.

Those artists whose immaturity must account for their imperfections are not aware that their oversized features are ridiculous, that their scale does not fit human measurements. . . . During the last fifteen years they have made progress only in depraving taste; their boldness has increased. They dogmatize, and are against anything contrary to their system. They regard their teachers as stupefied with habit. . . .¹⁷² They enjoy mixing up the Antique, the Gothic, and modern features in their fantastic designs.

¹⁶⁸ Blondel, J.-F., *L'homme du monde éclairé par les arts*, Amsterdam, 1774. One correspondent, e.g., 96, praises the Baroque church of St. Roch, while the other, 107, calls it "cet édifice trompeur."

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 1: 1, statement of Bastide, about the posthumous publication.

¹⁷⁰ Blondel, *L'homme* 1: xv, "Il espéra que des observations . . . pourroient insensiblement produire la révolution des idées et la perfection de l'art."

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 1: 24, "le renversement de toutes les Loix, le mépris de tous les usages, l'assemblage de toutes les bizarreries." 26, "aucune proportion dans les masses. Les parties sont sans relation." 27, "partout des contrastes sans nécessité . . . le faux goût a été préféré à une symétrie raisonnable et réfléchie."

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 25
jeunesse . . . ne considèrent pas que la hauteur démesurée . . . caractérise le ridicule et le mépris des règles, parce que cette grandeur gigantesque s'accorde mal avec les autres parties de l'Architecture, soumise nécessairement à la stature humaine. Le progrès du mauvais goût à cet égard, je dirai même de l'audace, augmente tous les jours depuis quinze ans." 25
dogmatisent; ils élèvent la voix contre tout ce qui n'est pas conforme à leur système; et leurs Maîtres, selon eux, sont plongés dans le sommeil de l'habitude."

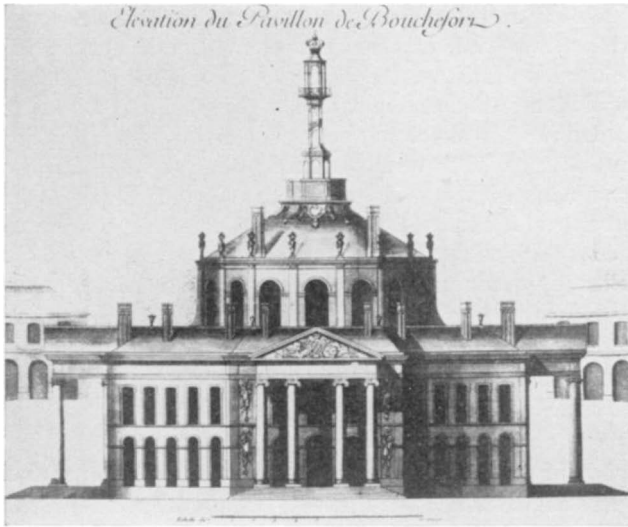


FIG. 6. Pavillon de Bouchefort.

. . .¹⁷³ They have read the essay of Laugier, but there is no reason in their reasoning.¹⁷⁴

Blondel's comparison of Meissonnier with Delafosse belongs to the great revelations of art history. He evidently understood that both the Rococo and the revolutionary architecture were equally hostile to tradition. He condemned Meissonnier's frivolity and Delafosse's heaviness.¹⁷⁵ Yet, although he did not agree with the new sternness and sobriety,¹⁷⁶ he recognized the superiority of the modern over the Rococo masters. He must have sensed that the modern conceptions contained greater promise. (Space does not allow me to deal with Delafosse in this book.)

GERMAIN BOFFRAND

What made Blondel despair, and what in retrospect appears to have been one of the tragedies of art history—the hopeless struggle for contradictory ends—made the young revolutionaries dream of unlimited possibilities. Yet they were not the first who went through this crisis. Before them a great old man, Germain Boffrand, had also grappled with the same problems. Chronologi-

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* 2: 10, "se plaisent à confondre dans une même façade, l'ancienne Architecture, l'antique la Gothique et la moderne . . . leurs ouvrages fantastiques."

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 13, ". . . nos jeunes Architectes sont raisonneurs, et ne raisonnent pas. . . Parce qu'ils ont lu l'essai du Père Logier [sic], ils se croient très-instruits." Blondel, J. F., *Discours sur la nécessité de l'étude de l'Architecture*, 88, Paris, 175

plein d'idées neuves et écrit avec sagacité."

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 48, "l'un est d'une frivolité choquante, l'autre d'une pesanteur assommante." I shall comment on the extremely interesting Delafosse in *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 1: 95
sont presque tous à la Capucine." 2: 112, however, he praises the modernism of Gondoin, and, 11, despite their shortcomings, the modern façades, "infiniment supérieures à celles qu'on éleva, il y a cinquante ans."

cally I should perhaps have dealt with Boffrand first, but it seemed best to discuss him after Blondel, since he was Boullée's second teacher.

Boffrand, too, pointed out the importance of unity and concatenation in his *Livre d'Architecture*.¹⁷⁷ (He used the word *enchaînement* just as his contemporary, Robert Morris, spoke of concatenation.¹⁷⁸) He still favored the high French windows which had been common in France since the seventeenth century. These windows have a dual effect: they reduce the façade to a framework of piers and narrow bands that separate the stories, and they create the most intimate interrelation between inner and outer space. The relationship between the parts and the whole seems to have meant as much to Boffrand as to any Baroque architect, but he frequently disregarded unification of the components. In the garden fronts of the Hôtel de Torcy,¹⁷⁹ and the Hôtel de Seignelay,¹⁸⁰ the main cornices of the wings have no continuation in the middle portion. Moreover, the front of the Hôtel Seignelay presents a strangely de-ranked rhythm with five bays in the center and two on each side.

The unrest exhibited in these features did not remain confined to the façades. It took hold of plan and mass as well. On the hunting lodge, Pavillon de Bouchefort, built for the Bavarian elector Max Emanuel, near Brussels,¹⁸¹ the chimneys are decorative motifs, competing with the bizarre beacon and the ornamental vases (fig. 6). The central cylindrical part including the salon, contrasts strangely with the octagonal substructure. Its four porches recall the Rotonda by Palladio. But there is not a vestige of Palladio's composure in Boffrand's work. The elements are in an uproar.

Continuing restlessness characterizes the façade of the Palace of Würzburg, which owes so much to Boffrand, and much excitement is also expressed in his design for the Palais de la Malgrange.¹⁸² Its roof is adorned with statues, trophies, vases, and chimneys; the openings prevail, the walls have almost disappeared. The structural ties are inconspicuous in the general agitation. In his book, Boffrand found it worth while to illustrate his second, and unexecuted, project for Malgrange¹⁸³ (fig. 7). This last was to consist of a circular salon from which four apartments radiated.¹⁸⁴ The upper part of the salon, emerging from

¹⁷⁷ Boffrand, Germain, *Livre d'Architecture*, 11, Paris, 1745, "un enchaînement et une liaison convenable . . . pour que toutes les parties soient relatives au tout." Boffrand bibliography in Mae Mathieu, *Pierre Patte*, 92, Paris, 1940.

¹⁷⁸ See note 22.

¹⁷⁹ Mariette, *Architecture* (see note 1), Reprint, 1927, 2: pl. 260.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pl. 264.

¹⁸¹ Boffrand, pl. V.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, pl. XV.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 55,

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pl. XIX, plan.

the substructure, is supported by buttresses.¹⁸⁵ This project is a landmark on the road from Baroque to revolutionary architecture. Its whimsical plan and elevation testify to the unquenchable desire for change which overpowered even the architect considered to be the Grand Master of the Rococo. The structural disintegration, more than the luxuriant decoration is indicative of the historical position of the design.

Yet, perhaps, there is really not a great deal of difference between Rococo and revolutionary architecture. But one step separated the two, and Boffrand's text indicates that he had already taken the step. He objected to the confusion of curves and straight lines,¹⁸⁶ and praised the noble simplicity and calmness¹⁸⁷ which soon became the battle cry of the art critics largely through the activities of Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Boffrand claimed that materials were to be treated according to their inherent nature. Like Lodoli, he disapproved of wooden forms forced upon stone.¹⁸⁸ And

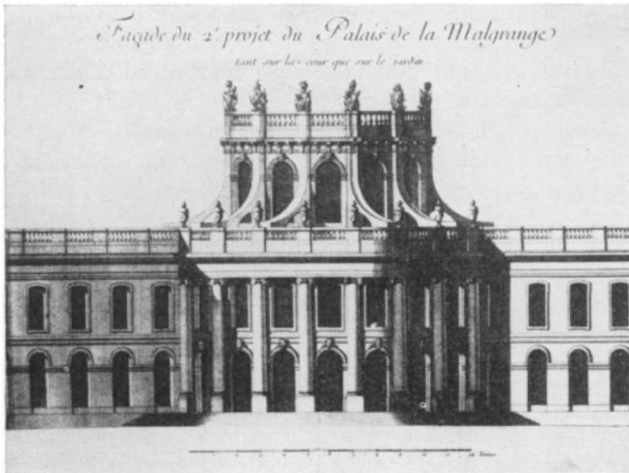


FIG. 7. Palais de la Malgrange, second project.

while his works merely indicated the symptoms of disintegration, his words disclose the awakening of a new architectural consciousness.

During this awakening noteworthy new ideas rose to the surface. Prominent was the concept of the true, or sound principles—"les véritables principes," or, as the Latin translation of the text puts it, "sana principia."¹⁸⁹ With the concept of soundness, two new categories of aesthetic appreciation appeared: the Natural and the Characteristic. Boffrand found that the beauty of an-

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pl. XX, elevation.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 9, "un mélange confus de lignes courbes et de lignes droites."

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 8, "on doit toujours conserver la noble simplicité." 9, "ce repos si désirable dans l'Architecture."

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 9, "(des) ornemens sans liaison au reste de la décoration . . . ont passé des décorations intérieures et des ouvrages en bois . . . aux ouvrages extérieurs et en pierre."

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 8. Dezallier, 427, "il s'est toujours roidi contre le mauvais goût d'ornemens."

tique sculpture, as well as of some contemporary works, derived from their being "the children of nature." And he added this attack against the classicists: "Works which are but copies of other works, will necessarily lack liveliness and beauty."¹⁹⁰ "Nature" was no nebulous notion to Boffrand. It was the sum of the individual properties. "Chaque chose doit être faite suivant la nature de l'édifice."¹⁹¹

The first stage of the struggle for a rational architecture had a Romantic hue. Boffrand felt that a structure should have meaning, and should express it.¹⁹² This was the new program of the *architecture parlante*, of an architecture which would speak to the spectator's mind rather than appeal to his eye. The first criterion Boffrand used in judging an architect was to determine whether the creator understood the character of his own building:

Un homme qui ne connoit pas ces différens caractères, et qui ne les fait pas sentir dans ses ouvrages, n'est pas Architecte.¹⁹³

To support his view, Boffrand, like so many authors of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, turned to a classical authority. From the works of Horace he picked the passage in which the poet wants poems to be not only beautiful, but also moving:

Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunt
Et quocunque volent animum auditoris agunto.¹⁹⁴

Architecture, like music, said Boffrand, should express joy and sorrow, love and hate, serenity and horror.¹⁹⁵

Boffrand stood between two epochs. He could not part entirely from the old ideal of a specific formality, yet he was already affected, and perhaps deeply moved, by the new ideal of expressiveness. Thus it happened that the concept of architectural unity achieved a dual meaning: it came to imply both unity of form, and unity of character. The concept of the visual unification of the parts joined with the concept of their spiritual unison:

Il faut dans un ouvrage suivre le même caractère depuis le commencement jusqu'à la fin, pour que toutes les parties soient relatives au tout.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 14, "les belles statues antiques et quelques-unes de notre temps sont les enfans de la Nature . . . celles qui sont copiées sur d'autres ouvrages, n'ont ni la même vie, ni la même beauté."

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 16, "L'Architecture est susceptible de différens genres qui rendent ses parties animées par les différens caractères. . . Ces édifices doivent annoncer au spectateur leur destination; et s'ils ne le font pas, ils pèchent contre l'expression."

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 26. About *architecture parlante*, see note 82.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 27. Quoted from Horace, *Ars poetica*.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9, "ces différentes lignes sont dans l'Architecture, ce que dans la Musique sont les tons, qui sur différentes cordes expriment la joie et la douleur, l'amour et la haine, les graces et la terreur."

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

Here I should like to refer briefly to the famous *Supplication aux orfèvres* by Charles-Nicolas Cochin, the younger, which appeared a few years after Boffrand's *Architecture*, revealing that Cochin was somewhat in advance of the great architect. Cochin's main point was a warning against the curves of the Baroque, or, in his words, "ces formes barroques,"¹⁹⁷ with a plea for straight lines and right angles: "Il n'y a que l'angle droit qui puisse faire un bon effet."¹⁹⁸

ABBÉ LAUGIER

Before dealing with the third, and last, teacher of Boullée, I should like to discuss the Abbé Laugier, whose writings, according to Blondel's report, were so avidly read by the young revolutionaries.¹⁹⁹ Laugier was not an architect, but his thought appears to have influenced the students more than did the teaching of their instructors.

The writings of Marc-Antoine Laugier exemplify the architectural trends of the mid-eighteenth century. He was more advanced than Blondel and nearer to the point of view of Lodoli.²⁰⁰ He was accused by certain contemporaries of merely reiterating the opinions of an earlier theorist, De Cordemoy, and while Laugier admits²⁰¹ having profited from De Cordemoy's *Nouveau traité . . .*,²⁰² their views were really quite different. Laugier, who had imbibed certain new ideas of the mid-century, had a deeper understanding of architecture than De Cordemoy, whose treatise is just another book on the orders, with some feeble disapproval of the exaggerations of the Baroque.²⁰³ The publications of Laugier, however, reveal a profoundly critical thinker, and a typical representative of the Enlightenment. Although Laugier was fully aware of the novelty of the principles he set forth, and of the boldness of his criticism, he was not afraid to state them,²⁰⁴ and felt free to castigate, without mercy, even

¹⁹⁷ *Mercure France*, Dec. 175

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁹⁹ *Cf.* note 174.

²⁰⁰ *Cf.* note 67.

²⁰¹ Laugier, Marc-Antoine, *Essai sur l'Architecture*, x, xxxvii, 16, 262, Paris, 175

²⁰² Cordemoy, L. G. de, *Nouveau traité de toute l'Architecture*, Paris, 1706. Schlosser, Julius, *Kunstliteratur*, 56 1925

servations he ignores.

²⁰³ Cordemoy, 103, 106, 110, etc. 184, approval of the newly arisen trend of erecting the high altar in the center of the church. For this problem, *cf.* Frezier, *Remarques sur quelques livres nouveaux concernant l'Architecture*, *Mercure France*, 36, 47, July 175

²⁰⁴ Laugier, *Essai*, v, "la nouveauté des principes, la hardiesse des Critiques, tout me faisoit craindre pour le sort d'un Ecrit, où . . . j'osois combattre des usages reçus et des préjugés dominans." Laugier was severely criticized by Frezier, 19-5 and La Font de Saint-Yenne, *Examen d'un Essai sur l'Architecture*, Paris, 175

the most respected works.²⁰⁵ His dogmatic self-confidence came from the conviction that he had found the true principles of architecture:²⁰⁶ Only a rational doctrine, he believed, would help art to progress.²⁰⁷ Laugier was one of the first, in the era of "classicism," to question the authority of Vitruvius. The Roman writer, he found, was too much concerned with practice to investigate the basis of architecture as an art.²⁰⁸ Laugier, on the contrary, was looking for the solid, immutable foundation from which the only true architecture could rise.²⁰⁹ In his opinion, all prejudice had to be overcome if this were to be attained.²¹⁰ The Greek orders themselves were to be tested as to how far they still fitted modern needs.²¹¹

Laugier still clung to some of the old tenets, however. He found fault with heavily projecting cornices because they disturbed harmony and unity,²¹² and he recommended gradation by differentiating the heights of the structural parts,²¹³ with the heavy parts below, and lighter ones above.²¹⁴ Yet he did not fail to observe the symptoms of decay in contemporary architecture:²¹⁵ the swelling of the columns,²¹⁶ broken entablatures,²¹⁷ statues in niches,²¹⁸ engaged columns,²¹⁹ and that great favorite of Baroque builders, the huge scrolls,²²⁰ As a panacea against these and similar follies, the "natural" made its appearance. Laugier still understood "natural" as the affinity to nature, ignoring Lodoli's great discovery, that every thing has a naturalness true to itself.

Though Laugier was imbued with new architectural ideals, he yet did not want the elimination of conventional forms. Thus it happened that in the last stages of the Baroque there arose a new theory in regard to columns, looking at them from a quite new angle, and

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 15

(Saint-Gervais, Paris), j'acquiers le droit de n'en épargner aucun autre."

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, xxxviii, "principes évidens." Similarly, 55.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, xv, "Il n'y a plus de progrès à espérer dans les Arts, si tout se borne à imiter les choses faites." Thus he concludes in *Observations sur l'Architecture*, 84, La Haye, 1765

porte que ce soit une nouveauté, pourvu qu'elle soit raisonnable."

²⁰⁸ *Essai*, xxxvi, "les vrais mystères de son Art."

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, xxxviii, "des préceptes invariables . . . pour qu'il n'en subsiste aucune (architecture) dont on ne puisse rendre une solide raison."

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 185, aveugle."

²¹¹ *Observations*, 92, "Les ordres grecs ont été inventés pour des pays dont les usages étoient différents des nôtres."

²¹² *Essai*, 40.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 42.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 5, entière."

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 52

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 53

les nomme-t-on des adoucissements destinés à raccorder l'Etage inférieur avec le supérieur d'une manière agréable."

finding a new justification for them. When the progressive architects began to favor pilasters, Laugier made a last attempt to salvage columns—the noblest of classical features—from the impending deluge. He saw great merit in the isolated column; it was “true.” With its entablature it revealed the real significance of the structural parts.²²¹ He considered interior columns as being merely decorative²²² and pointed out that inside entablatures made no sense.²²³ All capricious variations of columns, he condemned, especially the rusticated²²⁴ and the twisted.²²⁵ But the very worst that an architect could be guilty of, in Laugier’s opinion, was the *porte-à-faux*, i.e., insufficient, or seemingly insufficient, support of the upper parts. (The *porte-à-faux* had already been condemned by earlier authors.²²⁶) Consequently, Laugier would allow for only plain post-and-lintel architecture;²²⁷ doors and windows other than the straight, were to him “unnatural.”²²⁸

Laugier ultimately came to the conclusion that only the strictly necessary was beautiful; commodiousness engendered license, and arbitrary additions meant abuse.²²⁹ The remedy, and the path to beauty, were to be found in simplicity and naturalness.²³⁰ Thus a new purism arose, hostile to all superfluous ornament²³¹—to the “hors-d’œuvres” as Laugier called them²³²—and still more hostile to additions to historic buildings. Stylistic purity was a quite new concept. We know of its deplorable consequences during the nineteenth century, especially as it affected restorations. The Baroque was not averse to its own altars, baldacchinos, and statues in Gothic churches. The new purism did not admit of such conglomeration.²³³ Laugier made a pregnant statement when he spoke of the decorative additions to Notre-Dame de Paris: “le système d’Architecture a été dénaturé.”²³⁴

Hand in hand with the new ideals of truth and purity went a new contempt for sensuous beauty, another men-

²²¹ *Ibid.*, xviii, “des colonnes isolés . . . ne laisseront jamais de doute sur la vérité du spectacle d’Architecture qu’elles présentent.”

²²² *Observations*, 110, “la colonne y devient simple décoration.”

²²³ *Ibid.*, 110, “déplacés et contre nature.”

²²⁴ *Essai*, 21.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 48. *Observations*, 100. Cf. Kaufmann, E., *Architekturtheorie der französischen Klassik, Rep. f. Kunstwissenschaft* 64: 212 f., 1924.

²²⁷ *Essai*, 49.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 50, “Portes à plein cintre grimacent.” Similarly, 51, “Les Fenêtres en plate-bande sont plus naturelles.”

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 10, “dans les parties essentielles consistent toutes les beautés . . . dans les parties ajoutées par caprice consistent tous les défauts.”

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 22, “Tenons-nous au simple et au naturel.”

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 56, “Il est vrai que j’ôte à l’Architecture bien du superflu; que je la dépouille de quantité de colifichets.”

²³² *Observations*, 57.

²³³ *Observations*, 149, “d’allier des systèmes incompatibles.”

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 132, 136, “le décorateur doit dans une Eglise gothique . . . respecter, ménager, faire valoir l’Architecture.”

ace to the Baroque: the appeal to the eye became unessential to those who searched after the essential.²³⁵ Denouncing lavish ornamentation, Laugier wanted the interior of the church simple and grave, to make the deepest impression on the visitor without distracting him.²³⁶ He felt that the exterior of any building should be severe in appearance²³⁷ and should speak to the soul, stimulating noble and moving sentiments.²³⁸ Architecture, henceforth, was to be considered susceptible of emotions.²³⁹

From this attitude a new appreciation of medieval architecture arose. Laugier found in it those awe-inspiring qualities for which his contemporaries also began to yearn. In his criticism of its single features, he could not overlook the character of the Gothic building. He admired the contrasts of its masses, which began to mean more to him than “order.” He saw in the choir of the Gothic church the atmosphere of the forest.²⁴⁰

We know that the tendency to give buildings character did not do architecture much good. Laugier, too, knew this, and pointed out another way toward architectural progress. Geometry was to be the new point of departure.²⁴¹ In his suggestions for church plans, Laugier declared:

Toutes les figures géométriques, depuis le triangle jusqu’au cercle, peuvent servir à varier sans cesse la composition de ces sortes d’édifices.²⁴²

The new architect was to work undeviatingly with simple geometric forms.²⁴³ Laugier developed the idea of a triangular church, with a dome above the inscribed circle, entrance porches in the middle of each side, and circular sanctuaries in the three corners.²⁴⁴ Very soon architects were to follow this suggestion, among them, John Soane.²⁴⁵

Another of Laugier’s designs meeting the chief exigencies of simplicity and originality is a hospital in the shape of St. Andrew’s Cross.²⁴⁶ No wonder the circular Halle au blé by Lecamus de Mézières met with his approval.²⁴⁷

²³⁵ *Essai*, xl, “des beautés essentielles, indépendantes de l’habitude des sens, ou de la convention des hommes.”

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 156, “Il ne faut dans une église rien que de simple, de mâle, de sérieux; rien qui puisse faire diversion à la piété.”

²³⁷ *Observations*, 39.

²³⁸ *Essai*, 2, “un édifice construit dans toute la perfection de l’art . . . réveille dans l’âme des idées nobles et touchantes.”

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, xl, “susceptible de froideur et de vivacité, de justesse et de désordre.”

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 199. *Observations*, 27, 105.

²⁴¹ *Essai*, 56, “une légère teinture de Géométrie.”

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 206. 187, about variants of the Greek-cross plan.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 208, “pourvu qu’il ne sorte point des figures régulières.”

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 207. *Observations*, 185.

²⁴⁵ Bolton, A. T., *Works of John Soane*, 16, London, 1924.

²⁴⁶ *Observations*, 194, “une forme simple et point commune.”

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 196, “Ce bâtiment rond, parfaitement isolé . . . ayant au surplus la solidité et la simplicité requise, sera dans Paris un de nos plus agréables morceaux.”

Laugier did not tire of urging architects to leave the trodden paths, to form ideas of their own, to invent, to make something new.²⁴⁸ His charges of sterility and insipidity are the precursors of Ledoux' indignant and contemptuous fulminations against the uninspired.²⁴⁹

We also find Laugier to have been a modernist and a pioneer in the field of city planning. He was perhaps the first to see the defects of the plan of Paris.²⁵⁰ The most remarkable of his suggestions was the recommendation of a transverse road from the Porte Saint-Martin to the Porte Saint-Jacques.²⁵¹ Furthermore, he proposed the erection of monumental and dignified entrance gates to the capital,²⁵² such as were later carried out by Ledoux on the eve of the French Revolution. The concept of the Place de l'Etoile can be found in Laugier's first book, for which he suggested a large avenue lined with two or four rows of trees, terminating in a semi-circular piazza. In this square a Triumphal Arch was to be erected from which several streets were to radiate.²⁵³ He was proud of this scheme which posterity, he was certain, would carry out, as it did.²⁵⁴ In general, Laugier wanted decorative unity within the single blocks,²⁵⁵ although at the same time warning against too much uniformity and, in particular, against the monotony resulting from over-stressed rectangularity and parallelism (the gridiron plan).²⁵⁶ We must note with interest that his idea of isolating outstanding buildings antedated the theories of the nineteenth century by a hundred years.²⁵⁷ Much beauty was destroyed in old cities when these ideas were carried out and critics of the 1900's who found fault with these changes, were perhaps justified.²⁵⁸ Attempts to realize the new ideas in old surroundings were destined to be unsuccessful. Aesthetically satisfying solutions were not found until

²⁴⁸ *Essai*, 206, "Je ne puis trop les exhorter à se faire des idées propres, à inventer, à donner du neuf."

²⁴⁹ *Observations*, 179, "Nous ne variations point assez les formes de nos édifices, nous qui sommes variables en tout le reste . . . l'uniformité insipide régné dans leurs plans."

²⁵⁰ *Essai*, 209, "Nos villes sont un amas de maisons entassées pêle-mêle. Nulle part ce désordre n'est plus choquant que dans Paris."

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 213.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 214.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 219, "une grande avenue très-large, bordée d'arbres . . . aboutit à un arc de triomphe sur une grande place en demi-cercle percée de plusieurs grandes rues en patte d'oie."

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 220, "Ce que nous aurons commencé, nos neveux l'achèveront." Laugier may have been inspired by the projects of the competition of 1748, about which cf. Patte Pierre, *Monuments érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV*, 120, 187, Paris, 1765. Hegemann, W., and A. Peets, *American Vitruvius*, 78, New York, 1922.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 228, "Le même dessein doit régner dans toute l'espace qui n'est pas traversé par une autre rue."

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 223, "froide uniformité . . . un grand parallélogramme traversé par des lignes à angles droits."

²⁵⁷ *Observations*, 156, "il faudroit que les Eglises fussent des bâtiments isolés."

²⁵⁸ Sitte, Camillo, *Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, 34, Wien, 1901, "eine förmliche Modekrankheit, dieser Freilegungswahn."

the twentieth century, when new urban centers were developed.

Laugier's suggestions²⁵⁹ were not given serious consideration until 1793 when the Commission of Artists took up city planning.²⁶⁰ The modernization of Paris was at last realized under Napoléon III.

JEAN-LAURENT LE GEAY

Having studied the inception of the great change in architecture, let us now turn to Boullée's third teacher, Jean-Laurent Le Geay. It seems Boullée had proceeded, as if on purpose, from the less modern architects to this rather young artist, whose work foreshadowed the very outbreak of the architectural revolution.

With Le Geay's return from Rome,²⁶¹ Charles-Nicolas Cochin declared that a new era of improved taste had begun. Le Geay had received the Grand Prix of the Academy of Architecture in Paris in 1732 but had not left for Rome until five years later,²⁶² where he had remained from 1737 to 1742. In an obituary on the architect De Wailly, Andrieux, Secretary of the Academy, also remarked that the "renaissance of taste began with Le Jay," who knew how to impart grandeur to his schemes, and who helped to form the taste of the most famous modern architects, Boullée, Moreau, Peyre, and De Wailly.²⁶³ Joseph Lavallée, in his obituary on De Wailly, expressed the view that the builder of the Odéon in Paris derived from Le Geay's drawings—bizarre as they were—the idea of true architectural per-

²⁵⁹ *Observations*, 313, "Il faudroit aligner et élargir presque toutes les rues . . . percer de nouvelles. Il faudroit avoir la volonté de rendre notre Capitale aussi supérieure à toutes les autres par la perfection de son plan, qu'elle l'est par la beauté de ses édifices." See also 160.

²⁶⁰ Hegemann and Peets, 242.

²⁶¹ Cochin, C.-N., *Mémoires inédits*, ed. Charles Henry, 141, Paris, 1880, "On peut donner pour première époque du retour d'un meilleur goût, l'arrivée de Legeay architecte, qui avoit été pensionnaire à Rome. C'étoit un des plus beaux génies en architecture qu'il y ait eu; mais d'ailleurs, sans frein, et pour ainsi dire, sans raison . . . le grand Mogol n'auroit pas été assés riche pour élever les bâtimens qu'il projettoit. . . . Comme le goût de Legeay étoit excellent, il ouvrit les yeux à beaucoup de gens. Les jeunes architectes le saisirent autant qu'ils purent, peut-être plutost parce qu'il leur parut nouveau que par un véritable sentiment de ses beautés. On vit changer sensiblement l'école d'architecture au grand étonnement de tous les architectes anciens de l'Académie." This passage is of extraordinary significance for art history. It tells of the rise of a new epoch, and presents a forgotten artist of great influence.

²⁶² Acad. roy. d'architecture, *Procès-verbaux*, ed. Henry Lemonnier, 5: 96, 104, Paris, 1911 f. *Arch. art franç.* Documents, 5: 291, Paris, 1857. *Nouv. Arch. art franç.* 7: 377. *Correspondance Acad. franç. Rome*, ed. Montaiglon, Paris, 9: 324, 327, 382, 386, 1899; 10: 1, 1899, "un jeune homme qui a beaucoup de talent . . . dans (ses dessins) il y a du feu et du génie."

²⁶³ Andrieux, Notice sur . . . Dewailly, *M. Inst. Nat.* 3: Hist. 37. Villar, 44. Thieme-Becker, *Lexikon* 17, names as a further pupil, Jean-François Heurtier.

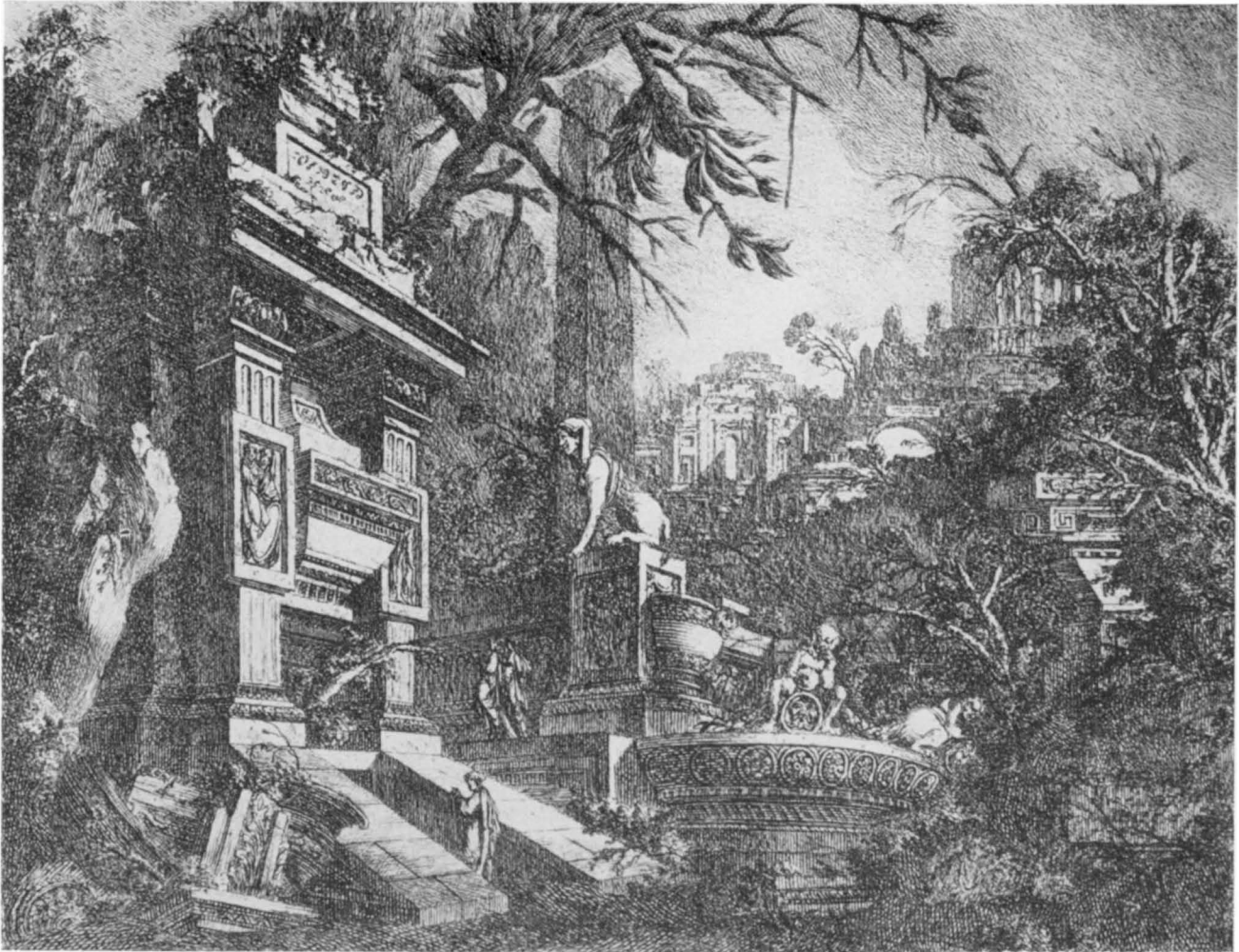


FIG. 8. Tomb among ruins.

fection.²⁶⁴ This brief reference to the oddity of Le Geay's designs reveals that Le Geay had not returned from Italy simply as a convert of Neo-classicism. There must have been other elements in his designs or in his ideas, which, according to Cochin, perplexed the old men of the Academy in Paris. Perhaps we can learn what these elements may have been from Le Geay's etchings published in 1767–1768, but created, probably, in his Roman years, as their subject matter, the Italian titles, and the Italianized Christian names, Giovan Lorenzo, intimate.

In spite of the differences of spelling—Le Geay, Le Jai, Lejay—I believe that the author of the etchings,²⁶⁵

²⁶⁴ Lavallée, Joseph, *Notice hist. sur Ch. Dewailly*, 7, Paris, 1799, "ce ne fut que chez l'architecte le Jai qu'il parvint à découvrir, à travers les exagérations de ce nouveau maître, le véritable point de perfection dans l'Architecture dont il avait le pressentiment."

²⁶⁵ Cf. Dussieux, L., *Artistes français à l'étranger*, 68, Paris, 1856. Thieme-Becker. Guilmar, D., *Maîtres ornemanistes* 1: 238, Paris, 1880. Dumont, G. P. M., *Recueil*, 1765, contains rather tame etchings by Le Geay. More interesting are the

the prize-winner of 1732, the teacher exalted in obituaries, was that architect who worked in Germany, chiefly for Frederick the Great. Charles-François Viel de Saint-Maux reports that Le Jai, architect to the King of Prussia, had numerous pupils in Paris.²⁶⁶ It is curious that an artist, distinguished in his youth as Le Geay was by the Grand Prix, later a famous teacher in the French capital and recognized outside of France, left no further trace behind him. Viel gives this ex-

latter's views of ancient Rome, and a view of the Hedwigskirche, Berlin, signed "J. Legeay del et sculp." About this church *cf.* Schmitz, Hermann, *Berliner Baumeister des 18 Jahrhunderts*, 20 f., 2nd. ed., Berlin, 1925.

²⁶⁶ Viel de Saint-Maux, C. F., *Lettres sur l'architecture des anciens et celle des modernes*, 2nd ed., 58, n. 29, Paris, 1787, "M. le Jai, Architecte du Roi de Prusse, fut étonné lorsqu'il revint à Paris de voir que ses élèves avoient mis des colonnes par-tout. Cet artiste qui étoit rempli de talens ne trouva aucune occupation à Paris . . . ni aucun élève, malgré le nombre de ceux qu'il avoit faits, qui fût lui rendre visite. M. Bézout, de l'Académie des Sciences, voyant combien il en étoit affligé, l'engagea à prendre une place de Maître de Dessin pour le paysage dans une Pension de province que tenoient les Bénédictins."



FIG. 9. Two tombs.

planation: Le Geay was shunned in Paris after his return from Germany. Nobody wanted his services; not even his pupils had any contact with him. Whether this was for some unknown personal reason, or because of his eccentricity as an artist, the sources do not say. Le Geay seems to have been a quarrelsome man who had left the services of the King of Prussia and the Duke of Mecklenburg because of some differences. To help the disheartened artist, Bézout, a member of the Academy of Sciences, procured a position for him as a drawing teacher in a boarding school conducted by Benedictine monks in the provinces. In 1786, from a castle near Narbonne, Le Geay appealed to the Duke of Mecklenburg for assistance so that he might spend his last years in Rome.

Even if Le Geay had not been the teacher of Boullée, we would feel impelled to comment on his etchings. They should not remain unnoticed in this introduction to revolutionary architecture, for they tell us much about the new trends. We find in them the evidence of a strong personality reminiscent of Gianbattista Piranesi. Was there any connection between the two architects? We know that Piranesi, after his arrival in Rome in 1740, suddenly changed his style, passing from the composed representations of his *Prima parte di architettura* to the dramatic manner of the *Carceri* and *Capricci*.²⁶⁷ We also know that he had many contacts with the artists of the French colony. It is very probable that the al-

²⁶⁷ Cf. Giesecke, Albert, *G. B. Piranesi*, 11, 75, Leipzig, 1912.

ready renowned Le Geay had influenced the younger Venetian architect and it may be that the famous Piranesi style could better be termed the Le Geay style. The etchings of both men are similarly fantastic. With all their excitement they are symptomatic of the crucial moment in architectural history reflected in the writings of the theorists.

Le Geay's *Fontane, Vasi, Tombeaux, Rovine* clearly reveal a state of restlessness. Some vases attract our attention not only by their extravagant forms, but even more by their disproportionate sizes.²⁶⁸ Often the whimsical effect results from an accumulation of incongruous features. In the Tomb among Ruins we see relief panels hung on fluted pilasters in a most inconsistent manner (fig. 8). Two Tombs are com-

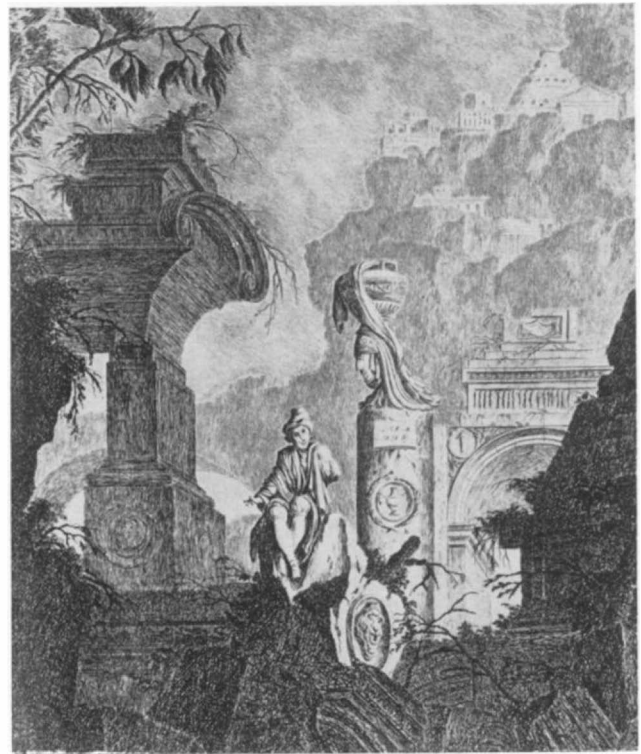


FIG. 10. Prophet lamenting Jerusalem.

posed of the most widely diversified features²⁶⁹ (fig. 9). In the etching Prophet Lamenting Jerusalem, several arbitrarily assembled architectural fragments appear in the foreground²⁷⁰ (fig. 10). In the Flight into Egypt

²⁶⁸ Le Geay, Giovan Lorenzo, *Fontane*, 1767, *Vasi*, n. d., *Tombeaux*, 1768, *Rovine*, 1768, the dates meaning the years of publication. Schoy, Auguste, *L'art architectural . . . de l'époque Louis XVI* 2: pt. F, pls. 12, 105, Liège-Paris, 1868. For easier reference I use the pencilled plate numbers in the copy of Cooper Union Museum, New York, which lacks captions. The descriptive names in my text have been given by me.

²⁶⁹ C. U. M. copy, pl. 10, Two Tombs; pl. 26, Tomb among Ruins.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pl. 2. The prophet seems to be Jeremiah wiping his tears with his cloak while sitting amidst the ruins of Jerusalem with "gates sunk into the ground" (*Lamentations* 2: 9).

the large head of the herm wears a pyramid instead of some lighter, more appropriate head-dress (fig. 11). In the etching, Christ at the Well of Samaria, a lever of extraordinary dimensions is depicted, apparently for the purpose of lifting the water bucket. Evidently the artist did not think of devising a practicable machine, but seems to have felt the need to visualize some unbalanced force. The lever most assuredly is far too big to be handled by the woman²⁷¹ (fig. 12).

Leaving Le Geay's weird visions, I should like to quote a last contemporary voice. In 1778 the architect François-Michel Lecreulx²⁷² noted that architecture had changed in the past fifteen years. Grandeur and boldness had become characteristic; decoration had



FIG. 11. Flight into Egypt.

become more severe; symmetry and regularity had been discarded.²⁷³ The artists, he writes, claim that only they can make the laws.²⁷⁴ In an attack on Laugier,

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pl. 4, Flight; pl. 3, Well of Samaria.

²⁷² Lecreulx, François Michel, *Discours sur le goût, appliqué aux arts et particulièrement à l'architecture*, Nancy, 1778.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 17, "le goût de l'architecture a changé sensiblement depuis quinze ans, on a remarqué plus de grandeur, plus de hardiesse dans les compositions . . . on en a substitué de plus mâles (ornemens) qui ont l'air pierre. . . . On a fait le procès à la symétrie et à la régularité; on a pris en dégoût les jardins de Lenôtre."

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 18, "Dans ce choc d'opinions, chacun a posé des principes différens. D'autre part des Artistes en ont conclu qu'il ne falloit jamais raisonner en matière de goût, que c'étoit un affaire de sentiment, qu'eux seuls, leur génie, leur imagina-

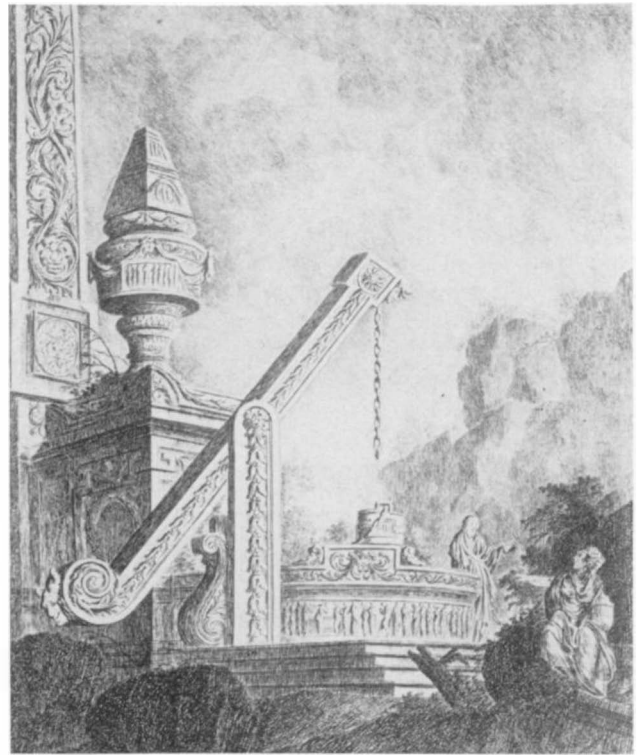


FIG. 12. Christ at the well of Samaria.

he goes on to say that Laugier may have amused the public, but the artists did not care for him.²⁷⁵ The discussion that follows on the leading revolutionary architects will reveal that Blondel knew better.

II. THE MAN

Etienne-Louis Boullée, born in Paris, February 12, 1728,²⁷⁶ was the son of Claude-Louis, *expert-juré des bâtiments du roi*,²⁷⁷ and his first wife, Marie-Louise, *née Boucher*.²⁷⁸ Boullée's life and activity seem to have been confined to the capital and its environs. That he was never in Italy we know from contemporary sources.²⁷⁹ The father wanted him to become an architect and to learn drawing, and with this in mind enrolled him in the studio of the painter Pierre. (This was undoubtedly Jean-Baptiste Pierre, for our source tells of his having died as First Painter to the King.²⁸⁰) The young Etienne took a fancy to painting and studied

tion, faisoient toutes les loix. Ce despotisme de quelques Artistes n'est pas nouveau." Cf. note 78.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 48, "Il amusa quelque tems les gens du monde, et ne fit pas un seul prosélyte parmi les Artistes."

²⁷⁶ *Papiers de Boullée* (see note 1), fol. 37, Notice. *Gaz. Nat. ou Moniteur Universel*, no. 150, 30 pluviôse an 7. Villar (see note 1), 43.

²⁷⁷ *Papiers*, fol. 38, probably the draft of an obituary stating that the father was an *architect expert*. *Procès* (see note 262) 7: 89, provide his full title.

²⁷⁸ *Papiers*, fol. 1, notaries' post-mortem protocol.

²⁷⁹ *Gaz. Nat.*; Villar, 44.

²⁸⁰ *Papiers*, fol. 38, "mort premier peintre du Roy."

it not only with Pierre, but also with Collins and with Laucet.²⁸¹ (The latter may have been Nicolas Lancret, for Boullée is reported to have been very young when he started painting.)

Despite his progress as a painter, Boullée was forced by his father to take up architecture and to attend the classes of Blondel. In 1746 he became a pupil of Boffrand, after that of Lebon, and Le Geay.²⁸² He regretted even to his old age, that he had to abandon his original vocation and is reported to have cultivated friendships with many painters. It is said that he persuaded a promising student to forsake architecture and to study painting with David, under whose guidance the young man became one of the foremost painters of his time. (Our source gives only his initial, G; it may have been Antoine-Jean Gros, or, perhaps, François Gerard, or Anne-Louis Girodet.²⁸³)

At the early age of eighteen Boullée began his own career as a teacher at the Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées. According to Villar, he taught with great enthusiasm and imparted his enthusiasm to the students: "Il s'attachoit à les pénétrer de la chaleur qui le transportoit lui-même."²⁸⁴ When several chapels of Saint-Roch in Paris were to be redecorated in 1753, he was called to do the architectural work.²⁸⁵ Some historians report that the sculptor in charge of the entire project, the famous Etienne-Maurice Falconet, made Boullée and the painter Jean-Baptiste Pierre his assistants.²⁸⁶ A contemporary writer relates that Jacques-Germain Soufflot, having recommended Boullée, was full of praise and when he saw the designs, "il y a trouvé du génie."²⁸⁷ In spite of Soufflot's favorable opinion, however, the parson of Saint-Roch asked for other designs. Boullée proceeded to make inferior drawings to emphasize the fitness of his original ideas for this project. When the inferior designs were accepted, he refused to carry them out, declaring that his aim was not to receive the commission. He was afraid that the second designs would not do him justice.²⁸⁸

We do not know what the final arrangement of the three chapels, of the Virgin, the Communion, and the Calvary, owes to Boullée. He may well be responsible

for the theatrical lighting which was by many considered undignified. One of his ideas was to have the light falling directly upon the praying Sainte-Geneviève as the central figure in a large painting.²⁸⁹ In his later works, and in his writings we find him particularly fond of such romantic effects.

In February 1762 Boullée submitted to the Royal Academy of Architecture a perspective drawing of a proposed Royal Mint (Hôtel des Monnoyes), to be erected on the Quai de Conti. The Academy was pleased with it and asked him to work out the plans and details.²⁹⁰ But it was Jacques-Denis Antoine who was finally entrusted with the work, six years later. In February, and again in June 1762, Boullée was a candidate for second-class membership of the Academy; he was admitted in August.²⁹¹ In 1764, according to the historian Gustave Maçon, he was called in by Louis Joseph, Prince de Condé, acting on the recommendation of Soufflot, in connection with the renovation of the Palais Bourbon.²⁹² Again Boullée was rejected and the commission was given to Gabriel Barreau.²⁹³ The only private residence by Boullée that won fame was the Hotel de Brunoy, built in 1772 between the rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré and the Champs-Élysées. Its appearance has been preserved for posterity in a great many engravings and has frequently been described, erroneously, as the achievement of another architect. From the Marquis de Brunoy the house passed to the American Leavenworth,²⁹⁴ about 1800. In 1773 the financier Beaujon bought the neighboring Hotel d'Evreux which for a time had been owned by Madame de Pompadour, and today is known as the Palais Elysée. Boullée remodeled the house and laid out a new gar-

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 23. Cochin, C. N., *Les misotechnites aux enfers*, 21, Amsterdam, 1763, is opposed to this style of decoration. Saint-Victor, J.-B.-M., *Tableau hist. et pittoresque de Paris* 1: 452, Paris, 1808-1811, "un effet presque théâtral, et peu convenable peut-être à un édifice sacré." Gourdon, Edouard, *Eglises de Paris*, Paris, n. d., 199, similarly condemning. Hénard, 459, quotes from a description by J. Cousin, *Saint-Roch* (without publication data), "A la base de ce Calvaire, Boullée [*sic*] érigea un autel en marbre bleu turquin surmonté seulement de deux urnes en marbre verdâtre d'où sortait une légère fumée."

²⁹⁰ *Procès* 7: 89.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 90, 103, 117, 118.

²⁹² Maçon, Gustave, *Les arts dans la maison Condé*, 124, Paris, 1903.

²⁹³ Legrand, Jacques-Guillaume, and Charles-Paul Landon, *Description de Paris et de ses édifices* 2: 69, Paris, 1806. Maçon, 124.

²⁹⁴ *Funerailles du Citoyen Boullée*. An account in the miscellaneous volume of the British Museum, 733, d. 3/4. Perhaps this the report which Baudin (Pierre C. L. Boudin) made to the Institut regarding the funeral, according to *Gaz. Nat.* Thiéry, L.-V., *Almanach du voyageur*, 357, Paris, 1784; *Guide* 1: 88. Villar, 48. Krafft, Jean Charles, and N. Ransonette, *Plans . . . des plus belles maisons . . . à Paris et dans les environs*, pl. 1, Paris, 1801. Legrand and Landon, 4: 39, ascribes the house to Belanger; Blondel, Spire, *L'art pendant la révolution*, 92, Paris, n. d., and Babeau, Albert, *Paris en 1789*, fig. 77, Paris, 1892, to Chalgrin. Fouquier, Marcel. *Paris au 18^e siècle*, 28, Paris, n. d.

²⁸¹ Villar, 43.

²⁸² *Papiers*, fol. 38, obituary, records how Boullée became Blondel's pupil. *Procès* 6: 62, Academy meeting, December 19, 1746, and 7: xiv, about Boffrand as his teacher. Villar, 43, names Blondel as the first teacher, Lebon (probably, Pierre-Etienne, listed in *Corresp. directeurs* 18: 116) as the second, Lejay (*sic*) as the third.

²⁸³ *Papiers*, fols. 38, 39.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 38, mentions the age as 18, Villar, 44, as 19.

²⁸⁵ Thiéry, Luc-Vincent, *Guide des amateurs et des étrangers voyageurs à Paris* 1: 166, Paris, 1787.

²⁸⁶ Dumolin and Outardel, *Eglises de France*, Paris et la Seine, 161, 164, Paris, 1936; Hénard, Robert, *Rue Saint-Honoré*, 457-460, with bibl., Paris, 1908.

²⁸⁷ *Année littéraire*, ed. Fréron, 7: 22, 27, 1759. L'abbé de la Porte, *L'observateur littéraire* 3: 173; 4: 57, 65, 66, Amsterdam, 1759.

²⁸⁸ *Année litt.* 7: 28.

den.²⁹⁵ In 1776 and 1777 he became a candidate for first class membership in the Academy, and was finally promoted in December 1780 as the successor to Soufflot.²⁹⁶

We find Boullée in 1776 architect of the Count d'Artois. In this capacity he was in charge of the interior arrangement of the Count's apartment in the Temple, and of similar work for the Countess in the Hôtel des Ecuries, at the corner of the rue de Bourbon (today, de Lille) and the rue des Saints-Pères.²⁹⁷ In 1780 he worked out a plan for the alteration of the prison of La Petite-Force between the rues de Sévigné and Pavée. Upon the request of the Minister of Finance, Necker, the Academy examined his designs and approved them. It is not known whether Boullée or Pierre Desmaisons carried out the structure as it is illustrated and described in Saint-Victor's topographical work.²⁹⁸ In 1780 Boullée took part in a competition for the remodeling of the Palace of Versailles. Neither his designs, which are still extant in the Bibliothèque, nor any others were used.²⁹⁹ In the early 1780's he built the following *hôtels*: Alexandre, often called de Colanges, after a later owner, between the rues de la Ville-l'Évêque and de Suresne; Demonville, rue d'Anjou; Pernon, Chaussée d'Antin; and Thun, at the corner of the same street and the rue de Provence.³⁰⁰ Prior to 1787 he designed a salon in the Hôtel de Tourolle, between the rues d'Orléans and Charlot.³⁰¹ When in the mid-eighties the Hôtel de la Compagnie des Indes, at the corner of rue Vivienne and rue des Petits-Champs, was transformed into the Bourse of Paris, Boullée added an arcade and side pavilions to the façade.³⁰²

Boullée had bad luck in the few large projects he hoped to be entrusted with. He did not receive the

commissions for the Mint; there was never a chance for him to realize the plans for Versailles, the Château of Saint-Germain-en-Laye,³⁰³ or the Church of the Madeleine.³⁰⁴ Neither did he succeed in a project that was particularly dear to him, the erection of a new building for the Royal Library. About 1780 the Count d'Angivillers asked Boullée to work out plans for such an edifice. It proved to be too large and the architect then devised plans for the adaptation of an already existing hall. He wanted to give it extraordinary monumentality by finishing it with a gigantic barrel vault, and by terminating it with triumphal arches at both ends. This project is described in his *Mémoire sur les moyens de procurer à la Bibliothèque du Roi les avantages que ce monument exige*, which appeared in 1785. There are several designs for it in the Bibliothèque Nationale. One of these, representing the entrance front, bears the date 1788. A model of the library was put on exhibition in 1790.³⁰⁵ A rather unimportant commission given by the Minister of Finance was for the improvement of the bridge near the Place Louis XV (de la Concorde).³⁰⁶

According to Michaud, *Biographie universelle*,³⁰⁷ Boullée built, or rebuilt, several châteaux in the environs of Paris: Château Tassé at Chaville (Seine-et-Oise); Château Chauvri at Montmorency (Seine-et-Oise); and Château du Péreux at Nogent-sur-Marne. I have not been able to find any trace of them.

During the Revolution, Boullée was the target of a malicious attack. In 1794, on the nineteenth of Germinal of the second year of the Republic, hostile and apparently envious artists posted a libel against an alleged faction among the *jury des arts*, headed by Boullée, "that foolish architect." He, as well as Ledoux, Le Roy, and the sculptor Dardel, was denounced as sympathizing with the Royalists.³⁰⁸ This we learn from a copy of the poster preserved among the papers of Lequeu in the Bibliothèque Nationale.³⁰⁹ The latter scarcely was the author of this attack; he may have

²⁹⁵ Thiéry, *Almanach*, 357; *Guide* 1: 82. Villar, 48. Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 46. Lefeuvre, Charles, *Anciennes maisons de Paris* . . . , pt. 19; 33, Paris, 1870. Swarte, Victor de, *Financiers amateurs d'art au 16e, 17e et 18e siècles*, 45, Paris, 1890.

²⁹⁶ *Procès* 8: 273, 277, 278, 315; 9: 30, 31.

²⁹⁷ Stern, Jean, *François-Joseph Belanger* 1: 107 f., Paris, 1930. *Allgem. Künstlerlexikon*, ed. H. H. Fuessli, Zurich, 1806.

²⁹⁸ Saint-Victor, 2: 658. Thiéry, *Guide* 1: 705. Villar, 47. *Funeraillles*. *Procès* 9: 23. For Desmaisons, cf. Dulaure, J. A., *Hist. de Paris et de ses monuments* 6: 211, Paris, 1821; 4: 217, Paris, 1846.

²⁹⁹ Boullée, *Architecture*, in *Papiers*, fol. 144, on his project. Villar, 47. For the competition, cf. Peyre, A. F., *Œuvres d'architecture*, Paris, 1818. Ganay, Ernest de, P.-A. Paris, *R. art anc. et mod.* 2: 261, 1924. Peyre and Paris were among the competitors. Dussieux, L., *Château de Versailles* 2: 70, Versailles, 1881. Nolhac, Pierre de, *Hist. de Versailles, Versailles au 18e siècle*, 113, Paris, 1918.

³⁰⁰ Thiéry, *Almanach*, 364-366, about the four houses. Thiéry, *Guide* 1: 89, 90, 145; Lefeuvre, pt. 23: 19, 2: 15, 22: 46; about Alexandre, Demonville, Thun. Fouquier, Alexandre, Demonville, *ills*. p. 38, 39.

³⁰¹ Thiéry, *Guide* 1: 608.

³⁰² Boullée, *Arch.*, *Papiers*, fol. 120, about this commission. Thiéry, *Guide* 1: 292, gives the date 1784; Villar, 47, 1788. *Funeraillles* mentions the transformation.

³⁰³ Boullée on this project, *Papiers*, fols. 86, 104-106. Villar, 47. *Cp.* note 410.

³⁰⁴ Villar, 47.

³⁰⁵ *Papiers*, fol. 37. Villar, 47. Boullée on the library, fols. 119-121. Boullée, *Mémoire* . . . , Paris, 1785. *Cp.* note 383.

³⁰⁶ *Papiers*, fol. 130.

³⁰⁷ Michaud, *Biographie universelle* 5: 242, Paris, n. d.

³⁰⁸ "Un espèce de foux en Architecture Boullé le septuagénaire en est le noyau; cet homme à tout disposé pour cela; démarques pressantes, propos séduisants. Défié vous de Dardel . . . et veillés sur le patelin le Doux; sur le phlegme charlant le Roy. . . . Des Artistes ont dit qu'il paroisoit que les opinions du party Boullé étoient pleinement académique et royalistes." Vignon, Pierre, *Sur la nouvelle salle dans le Palais des Tuileries*, a pamphlet of year 2, accuses Boulet (*sic*), Heurtier and Gisons of caballing. David, J. L. Jules, *Le peintre Louis David*, 150, Paris, 1880, names among the prospective members of the *jury des arts* Leroi (*sic*), Dardel and Boullée, but not Ledoux. Cf. Henry Lapauze, *Hist. de l'Acad. de France à Rome* 1: 458, Paris, 1924. *Cp.* my note 348 and part III, note 9.

³⁰⁹ *Bibl. Nat.*, Cab. Estampes, Paris, Ha 80.

simply kept the copy because it mentioned his teacher Le Roy.³¹⁰

Boullée, whose custom it was to attend the meetings of the Academy with great regularity, was also one of the nine academicians present at its final session on August 5, 1793.³¹¹ In 1795 he became a member of the newly-formed Institut de France, and was nominated Professor of Architecture at the Ecoles Centrales.³¹² On the seventeenth of Pluviôse of the year VII (February 6, 1799) the artist, who had remained unmarried,³¹³ died at his home in Montmartre, rue des Fossés, of a painful illness.³¹⁴ A note by a certain B—Boullée's pupil Bénard³¹⁵—"aux auteurs du Journal" gives the architect's last words: Je souffre beaucoup . . . je sens que je ne peu[x] pas revenir, et je voi[s] arriver la mort avec tranquil[l]ité." On the following day Boullée was buried. The funeral oration was pronounced by Baudin (des Ardennes), a member of the Institut.³¹⁶

Apart from these fixed dates of Boullée's biography, the sources give a clear picture of his personality. From the protocols of the Academy we learn that he took an eager interest in its activities, unlike Ledoux who rarely attended its meetings. As a member of various committees, we find Boullée continually busied with the Academy's problems. Education, technique, internal organization, public building, all these were matters for the Academy. A brief account of his participation in the routine of the Academy is interesting, and incidentally throws some light upon many of its functions. In 1763 Boullée suggested certain changes in the rules of admission for students. The Academy disapproved of these changes.³¹⁷ He was several times a member of the committee that chose the themes for the *Grands Prix*,³¹⁸ and among the jurors who decided on the distribution of the prizes,³¹⁹ or examined the work done

by the prize winners at Rome.³²⁰ He was called in when the ticklish question of the academic rank of Richard Mique, a protégé of the Queen came up in 1778.³²¹ Whether it was an inventor presenting a new varnish, or a new method of vaulting, or a new type of roof tile, Boullée was called.³²² In 1766, together with Soufflot, Le Carpentier, and Le Roy, he had the painful duty to inform Nicolas-Marie Potain that the latter's new book on architectural orders was not exactly what the times needed most,³²³ and he had to deal with a similarly painful matter when, in the stormy days of 1792, the engineer Debard hoped to win fame if the Academy would approve his novel order of columns.³²⁴ The Academy, the highest building authority in France, was, of course, called upon to pass judgment on more important matters than these; it was even appealed to from patrons abroad. Boullée was one of the academicians consulted in such major cases as the reorganization of the Louvre galleries in 1785,³²⁵ the examination of the condition of the Pont Rouge between the Cité and the Ile-Saint-Louis;³²⁶ the plans made by Philippe de la Guépière for the theatre of Stuttgart, 1763-1764;³²⁷ the layout of the Place Peyrou at Montpellier by François Franque, 1765;³²⁸ the designs for the Château of Coblenz by Michel d'Ixnard, 1779;³²⁹ the doming of the Paris Halle au blé, proposed by Jacques-Guillaume Legrand and Jacques Molinos, 1783;³³⁰ Ledoux' projects for Aix-en-Provence, 1785;³³¹ the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Rennes, 1785;³³² the designs for the Madeleine Church by Guillaume-Martin Couture, 1786;³³³ and those for an academy building at Bordeaux by Louis Combes, 1788.³³⁴

Villar credits Boullée with great conscientiousness in regard to all commissions, and with neither receiving nor giving favors. The obituary in the *Gazette Nationale* mentions that the contract for work at the Palais Bourbon was not awarded to Boullée because, in his scrupulousness, he declared that he could not figure out the probable expense in less than three months.³³⁵ The same necrologist lauds his brilliant fantasy and his uprightness: "l'imagination brillante

³¹⁰ Boullée would appear as a partisan of the Revolution, if it could be ascertained that he was the co-author of the leaflet in the British Museum, Boullée (*sic*) et Damoye, *Pétition présentée au Directoire exécutif et au Ministre des Finances* par les acquéreurs du ci-devant Château de Chantilly, n. p., n. d., claiming, 4, "ayant toujours donné des témoignages de patriotisme pendant la révolution, ayant lié notre existence à la cause sacrée de la liberté, nous avons cru pouvoir mieux que d'autres nous présenter pour l'acquisition d'un domaine que le royalisme, toujours espérant, sembloit envisager comme mis en réserve pour la contre-révolution."

³¹¹ *Procès* 9: xxx, 349.

³¹² *Papiers*, fol. 33, draft in Boullée's handwriting (*cf.* note 419). Michaud, *loc. cit.* Brault, Elie, *Les Architectes par leurs œuvres* 2: 167, Paris, n. d.

³¹³ Villar, 50.

³¹⁴ *Funerailles*.

³¹⁵ *Papiers*, fol. 37. B. identifies himself as the friend and pupil to whom Boullée assigned the usufruct of his works, and is, therefore, Bénard, whom Villar names as such. Villar, 51, quotes the last words slightly differently.

³¹⁶ *Funerailles*.

³¹⁷ *Procès* 7: 139.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.* 9: 155, 302, 321, etc.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.* 8: 301, 349, 358; 9: 162, 225, 234, 309.

³²⁰ *Ibid.* 8: 337, etc.

³²¹ *Ibid.* 8: 321-330.

³²² *Ibid.* 9: 52, 156, 207.

³²³ *Ibid.* 7: 241.

³²⁴ *Ibid.* 9: 323.

³²⁵ *Ibid.* 9: 170, 358.

³²⁶ *Ibid.* 9: 265.

³²⁷ *Ibid.* 7: 151, 176.

³²⁸ *Ibid.* 7: 231, 234.

³²⁹ *Ibid.* 8: 385, 386.

³³⁰ *Ibid.* 9: 117.

³³¹ *Ibid.* 9: 163.

³³² *Ibid.* 9: 144, 150.

³³³ *Ibid.* 9: 191.

³³⁴ *Ibid.* 9: 232. Here mention may be made of his suggestion, *Papiers*, fol. 134, that the Academy should work out an improved plan of Paris.

³³⁵ *Gaz. Nat.* Villar, 48, 49.

. . . cette énergie de l'homme libre et indépendant." I will not pause over other obituary items which appeared in his praise, but, considering his life and work as a whole, I am inclined to agree with Boullée's self-appraisal in *l'Architecture*:

Le vrai bonheur consiste dans l'amour de ses devoirs. . . . Cet ouvrage a été commencé et achevé sans autre motif que celui de satisfaire au besoin du travail que j'ai contracté toute ma vie. . . .³³⁶ Dominé par un amour excessif de mon art, je m'y suis entièrement livré.³³⁷

That he loved his art with a "*passion impérieuse*" appeared in a draft of an anonymous obituary recounting the architect's habit of getting up during the night and setting down on paper the ideas that had come to him in sleepless hours.³³⁸ That he was too advanced to be fully understood by his contemporaries was stated more than twenty years after Boullée's death not in one of the customary post mortem eulogies, but by a sober lexicographer: "Boullée fit révolution dans son art; mais il lui manquait un grand siècle et un grand empire."³³⁹

The invective in the poster of 1794 was dictated, to all appearances, by envy of Boullée and the men around him, with the probable purpose of denouncing them to the authorities. But we know of another attack, no less venomous, contained in a document of great value for art history; the pamphlet *Décadence de l'Architecture*, of 1800,³⁴⁰ by the architect Charles-François Viel de Saint-Maux, pupil of Chalgrin. Viel abhorred the modern ways, contrary to Blondel, who watched with much concern what was going on in architecture. In the critical spirit of the era Viel assailed the revolutionaries, though formerly he himself in his *Letters* (1787),³⁴¹ had inveighed against the established styles,

³³⁶ *Papiers*, fol. 47.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 70. Here, he speaks also of his "passion impérieuse." Fol. 125, "c'est à l'amour de mon art que je dois mon inspiration." His assiduity shows fol. 124, "j'ai crayonné longtemps avant d'être à peu près satisfait."

³³⁸ *Papiers*, fol. 39, "souvent il se releva la nuit pour jeter sur le papier une conception qu'il saisissoit dans les intervalles de son sommeil."

³³⁹ *Biographie nouvelle des contemporains* 3: 365, Paris, 1821.

³⁴⁰ Viel de Saint-Maux, C. F., *Décadence de l'architecture à la fin du 18e siècle*, Paris, an VIII-1800. *Papiers* fols. 21, 22, letter to Bénard, Sept. 23, 1813, names Viel as a pupil of Chalgrin.

³⁴¹ Viel, *Lettres* 2nd ed. (see note 266), from which the following passages are taken, contains seven letters, whereas the first ed., Bruxelles 1784, has only the six letters written between 1779 and 1784. Letter 1: 9, "on n'a vu que des dimensions de palmes ou de pieds dans les ordres d'architecture." 1: 14, "Ce livre de Vitruve a donc été commenté par des Ecrivains sans nombre, qui ont tout mis la plus grande importance à déchiffrer un ouvrage inintelligible, tandis qu'ils dédaignoient de consulter la nature, la raison et les Monumens eux-mêmes." 2: 9, "En effet, si l'on eût réfléchi, on eût vu que chez les Anciens tout étoit symbolique." 6: 6, "tout n'a paru que règles et proportions aux yeux des modernes." 6: 8, "Ce siècle même flotte encore dans une incertitude indécente sur tous les rapports de cette Reine des Arts." 7: 17, "Faut-il que (l'architecte) ne reconnoisse dans cet Art que lignes et matière, seuls principes

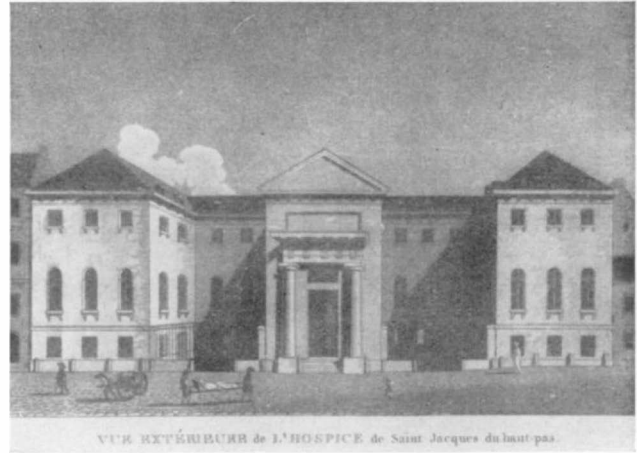


FIG. 13. Hospital of St. Jacques.

and some of the authorities of the past. He had been in sympathy with the revolutionary Le Geay and contrariwise had abused the late Blondel as a "charlatan" who sided with the Classicists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He had disparaged Vitruvius and his followers who preferred his unintelligible text to nature, to reason, and to the great works of the past. Viel had censured Leone Battista Alberti who represented, in his opinion, an architecture in which line—the Italian theorists would have said *il disegno*—and sensuous beauty of matter were emphasized, rather than plain simplicity, the consistent use of materials, and spiritual qualities. (Here we note the Romanticist contradicting the Rationalist.) Buildings should be symbols, according to Viel, not merely models of regularity and proportion. He had characterized his period by the significant word, already used by Blondel, *incertitude*. In his actual building, too, he was inclined toward the modern, as seen in his Hôpital Cochin (Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas) of 1780, with its gigantic portal³⁴² (fig. 13).

Towards the end of the century Viel reversed his position. Perhaps disillusioned, he turned reactionary; perhaps he was the villain in the drama of the revolu-

qu'Alberti admet dans l'Architecture?" 7: 19, L'Artiste doit s'élever contre la profusion des matériaux." 7: 26, "on doit au public une décoration extérieure, où la noble simplicité caractérise et l'Artiste et le sage emploi des matériaux." 7: 47, note 15, "Jean [*sic*] François Blondel, Artiste qu'on peut considérer comme le charlatan de l'Architecture. Cet Artiste finit par vanter notre Architecture en usage depuis deux siècles. Il y comprend la sienne, qu'on ne suit plus depuis quinze ou vingt ans."

³⁴² *Décadence* illustrates the hospital beside other works by Viel. Durand, J. N. L., *Recueil et parallèle des édifices*, pl. 30, Paris, 1800. Thiéry, L. V., *Le voyageur à Paris* 2: 25, 1790. Landon, C.-P., *Annales du Musée* 7: 19, 20, Paris, 1803, with the date; pl. 6. Saint-Victor 3: ill. opp. 367. Husson, Armand, *Etude sur les hôpitaux*, 16, plan, Paris, 1862. Simond, Charles (pen-name of Paul Adolphe van Cleemputte), *Paris de 1800 à 1900* 1: 455, ill., 3: 148, Paris, 1900. Schneider, René, in Michel, *Histoire de l'art* 7: fig. 289, and in *L'art français* 4: fig. 130, names the hospital erroneously Charité, ascribing it to Antoine.

tionary architecture—always against the successful. In any case, in the *Décadence*, Viel saw his task as passing judgment on the reformers of architecture. He attacked the modern exaggerations with vehemence. If nothing were left of late eighteenth-century architecture and architectural criticism but this publication by Viel, we should know that there existed an Architecture of the Revolution. The essay is an indictment: an enumeration and description of the sins committed, in Viel's opinion, by the modernists. Thus, the first prosecutor of the Architecture of the Revolution became, involuntarily, its first historiographer. Alarmed by what he termed decadence in the contemporary architectural scene, Viel wrote:

Jamais les causes générales et particulières de décadence de l'architecture n'agirent avec plus d'activité qu'aujourd'hui . . . jamais l'art de bâtir n'a été plus altéré qu'il est de nos jours.³⁴³

We cannot take up in detail here Viel's criticisms of the abuses by the moderns; the discrepancies and proportions,³⁴⁴ Exoticism and Gothicism.³⁴⁵ But I should like to stress that he was not aiming at the masters of the Rococo—detrimental as their methods seemed to him. Still in his *Principes* (1797) his attacks were directed merely against the Gothic and against Borromini, Guarini, Meissonnier, Lajoue and Oppenort, but now, in the *Décadence*, he was aiming at his contemporaries, at the architects of the Revolution.³⁴⁶ He did not refrain from pointing out the chief culprits. The end of the century, he remarked, had seen the rise of two upstarts: the one famous for his ruinous enterprises, the other for the multitude of designs engendered by a disorderly mind. Their evil spirit, Viel felt, had distracted others from the only meritorious study, Antiquity, and had brought about the abominable "revolution in building." They were guilty of having fostered a new type of architect, eager to play a role in society and proclaim that he alone knew the

³⁴³ *Décadence*, 5, 23.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 7, "un plan où les loix mêmes de la symétrie sont violées et sur lequel s'élèvent des constructions gigantesques surmontées par des parties de petites dimensions; là ce sont de foibles supports couronnés par de lourdes murailles, ailleurs les ordres y sont dénaturés; les profils y sont en opposition et en un discord complet avec l'ordonnance qu'ils enrichissent et entre leurs propres membres. Enfin, les formes gothiques viennent compléter la bigarrure de ces compositions à la mode . . . c'est sur un pareil fond que se trouvent adaptés des ornemens qui sont surpris de la place qu'ils occupent."

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 5, "Il faut, selon eux, étudier les édifices de tous les âges et qui existent chez toutes les nations."

³⁴⁶ Viel, *Principes de l'ordonnance . . . des bâtimens*, 74, 84, 89, Paris, 1797. *Décadence*, 8, "Le dix-huitième siècle est remarquable par deux périodes également fatales à l'architecture." The first "detrimental period" was that of "les Lajoue et les Oppenort," the second was to the contemporary era of a "true revolution," as the next note will show as well as a passage in *Principes*, 250, "Jamais, à la vérité, les arts n'ont éprouvé de plus violentes secousses que celles dont nous sommes les témoins, et l'Architecture y a été soumise particulièrement."

truly grand manner.³⁴⁷ These architects ruled in the juries and occupied places which they did not deserve. In spite of the praise bestowed upon them, the enlightened observer could find no trace of beauty in their works. Because of their sterility they could not attain perfection.³⁴⁸

The "ruinous" architect was obviously Ledoux; the maker of a "multitude of designs of unbridled fancy," Boullée. Soon we shall see that these two artists were anything but sterile.

The *Décadence* sheds more light on the architectural situation at about 1800 than any other written record. It tells of the great role the revolutionary architects played for a short time, and of the narrow-mindedness that was to delay the further development of architecture. Viel himself was to share the fate of those whom he assailed. He, too, fell into oblivion.

Boullée's obituary in the *Gazette Nationale* mentions as his particular friend the renowned painter Vien, the "Nestor of the arts."³⁴⁹ Boullée's friend and pupil, Bénéard, was given a life interest in the manuscript and drawings which Boullée bequeathed to the nation. (This may have been Joseph Bénéard, the prize winner of 1774, Charles-Joachim Bénéard who got the better of Ledoux in the competition for the theatre of Marseille, or the Bénéard who built the Timbre National.³⁵⁰)

³⁴⁷ *Décadence*, 8, "Le même siècle, vers sa fin a vu paroître deux architectes trop célèbres: l'un, par l'étendue de ses entreprises ruineuses; l'autre par la multitude de ses dessins, produits d'une imagination vagabonde et déréglée. L'esprit capricieux de ces deux artistes s'est emparé d'un grand nombre d'architectes, les a détournés de l'étude unique qu'ils dévoient faire du style pur qui distingue les bâtimens des anciens, et a opéré une véritable révolution dans l'ordonnance des édifices. De-là cette classe d'artistes, dont l'ambition sans bornes, pour jouer un rôle dans la société, les fait publier par-tout, qu'eux seuls connoissent la grande manière d'ordonner les édifices; qu'il faut se frayer de nouvelles routes" (Viel's italics). "Cet essaim d'architectes éphémères corrompent et altèrent les principes d'un art qu'ils prétendent avoir perfectionné."

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 9, "C'est une espèce de secte d'autant plus redoutable pour la décadence de l'architecture, qu'elle domine dans le tribunal qui décerne les prix ordinaires [Viel's italics] aux élèves. De plus, ses membres influent beaucoup dans les jury [Viel's italics] qui prononcent sur les projets des monumens soumis à des concours. . . . Ce succès des novateurs, et qui est si funeste à tous les arts, n'aura de durée que celle de ce siècle qui touche à sa fin." 14, "De nos jours, ceux architectes déjà signalés dans cet ouvrage, vivent au milieu du tourbillon de la société, pour y obtenir une célébrité mensongère . . . malgré le zèle actif de leur coterie, malgré les louanges immodérées dont les papiers publics accablent leurs ouvrages, l'observateur éclairé n'y découvre aucune trace du beau que ces artistes ne sentent point, que la stérilité de leur esprit et de leur imagination ne sauroit produire." 23, "c'est l'ignorance dans l'art de bâtir qui a produit cette aversion nouvelle contre l'une des plus grandes conceptions en architecture, l'invention des dômes. Cette antipathie ridicule n'avoit point de vogue, il y a vingt-cinq ans." 31, "ces êtres parasites . . . cette cohue de demi-savans, d'artistes médiocres . . . semble être quelque symptôme d'un siècle débordé."

³⁴⁹ Villar, 50.

³⁵⁰ See note 315. *Papiers*, fol. 2, protocol (see note 278), "un manuscrit écrit tout entier de la main du dit défunt intitulé *Essai sur l'art, légué par lui à la Nation.*"

Other pupils were Durême aîné and Louis-Joseph Mauugué; the distinguished Nicolas-Claude Girardin, a favorite of Boullée, who built the chapel of the Hôpital Beaujon; Mathurin Crucy, who realized the master's doctrine in his native town of Nantes; the architect Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, who, from his chair at the Ecole Polytechnique, taught Europe the new formulas of the revolutionary architects; and Durand's partner, Jean-Thomas Thibault; Perrard de Montreuil, the creator of the Rotonde du Temple; Antoine-Marie Peyre, who did some remarkable work on the Palais de Justice in Paris; and these great personalities: Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart, Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin, and Jacques-Pierre Gisors.³⁵¹



FIG. 14 Brunoy house.

III. THE ARTIST

Very few of Boullée's designs for buildings reached construction. Villar apologizes for him, saying that the architect left no monumental work worthy of him, but that only lack of opportunity was to blame.³⁵² Nevertheless, the anonymous obituary in the *Gazette Nationale* reveals that the artist was appreciated during his lifetime.³⁵³ Its author grasped Boullée's significance, as this passage points out:

³⁵¹ The names of the pupils are taken from these sources. Villar: Bénard; Girardin.—*Procès* (see 10: Index): Mauugué; Crucy (cf. Pierre Lelièvre, *L'urbanisme . . . à Nantes . . .*, Nantes, 1942); Gisors (cf. Edouard Joyant, *Les Gisors*, *B. Soc. Hist. Art franç.*, 270, 1937. About Crucy and Gisors cf. also *Corresp. directeurs* 13: 61, 460.—*Gaz. Nat.*: Durand; Chalgrin (for the latter see also *Papiers*, fol. 21, *Funeraillles*).—Michaud: Durême.—*Dictionary of the Architectural Publication Soc.*, London, 1856: Thibault; Perrard; Peyre.—About Brongniart, cf. his own publication on the *Bourse*, Paris, 1814; F. G. T. Jolimont, *Mausolées franç.*, pt. 6, Paris, 1821; J. Silvestre de Sacy, *Brongniart*, Paris, 8, 1940. About Durand, cf. A. Rondelet, *Notice hist. sur Durand*, Paris, 1835.—All the prominent students of Boullée will be dealt with in my *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

³⁵² Villar, 48.

³⁵³ "Sans avoir exécuté aucun monument, il s'était acquis une grande célébrité."

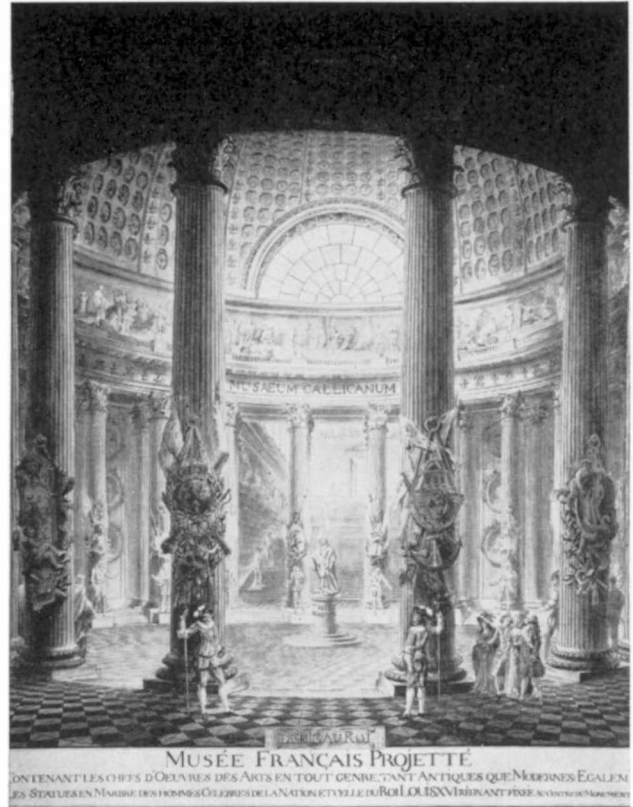


FIG. 15. Musée français projeté.

Born at a moment when architecture had fallen back into infancy, he had to overcome the taste of the day and to purge architecture from its ridiculous forms.³⁵⁴

The three private residences by Boullée, known to us through old engravings, seem not to be very original. The Hôtel Alexandre had a porch with four Ionic columns and a balcony in front of the attic.³⁵⁵ The Hôtel Demonville was a similar simple building with an hexastyle porch and with rich interior decoration. Its Salon à la Turque was designed to simulate a pavilion with a view into an Oriental garden.³⁵⁶ Even the Hôtel Brunoy, highly praised by contemporaries and represented on the first plate of the engravings of Krafft and Ransonette, seems at first glance to have little individual character³⁵⁷ (fig. 14). And yet the architect Nicolas Goulet was right in remarking that Boullée, in designing it, paid little attention to convention, but rather followed his own imagination.³⁵⁸ In each house the

³⁵⁴ "Né dans un temps où l'architecture était retombée dans l'enfance, il eut à vaincre le goût régnant, et à purger son art des formes ridicules et tourmentées que l'ignorance avait mises en usage."

³⁵⁵ Musée Carnavalet, Paris, etching, dossier 135 G. See note 300.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 135 F. See note 300.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 135 A. See note 294.

³⁵⁸ Legrand and Landon 4: 39, "on accusera peut-être (l'architecte) d'avoir moins consulté les convenances que cédé à la vivacité de son imagination."

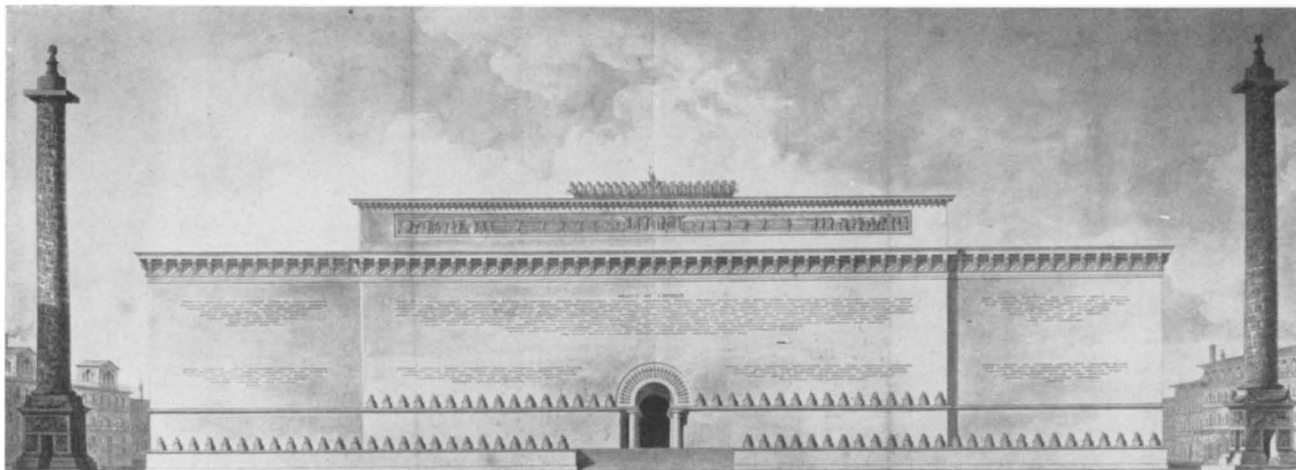


FIG. 16. Assembly hall—(Palais d'Assemblée Nationale).

central parts were surmounted by curious superstructures: on the Hôtel Brunoy a truncated, stepped pyramid topped by a statue of Flora, on the Alexandre house, an attic story with a central projection containing three windows; and on the Demonville house, above the main cornice, a short parapet contrasting with the extended horizontals of the mass. (According to the description given in Thiéry's guidebook, Boullée finished the Paris Bourse also with a small attic story.³⁵⁹) We find, moreover, on the three houses, porches with excessively high columns. The harmonious equilibrium of old had disappeared.

Boullée's uniqueness can best be seen in his drawings and the manuscript of his *Architecture* bequeathed by him to the nation. Both are preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Since in these drawings Boullée constantly sought new goals, let us take them

³⁵⁹ Thiéry, *Guide* 1: 292.

as a first starting point for discussion and later see how his ideas found expression in his text.

There is only one design in which we find Boullée tied to the *ancien régime* and baroque in style. It represents the sumptuous circular hall of a Musée Français, with the legend *Dédié au Roi* and the statue of Louis XVI in the center, inscribed on the pedestal REGI BENEFICO³⁶⁰ (fig. 15). Most of the projects, however, are distinguished by monumentality combined with simplicity. The unbroken long stretch of wall of the Assembly Hall, inscribed with the headline *Droits de l'homme*, is impressive by its solemnity. The free-standing tall columns on either side add greatly to the monumentality of the composition³⁶¹ (fig. 16). Truly

³⁶⁰ Bibl. Nat., Cab. Estampes, Ha 56
names given to the designs in this book are taken from the drawings or their mounts.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Ha 56

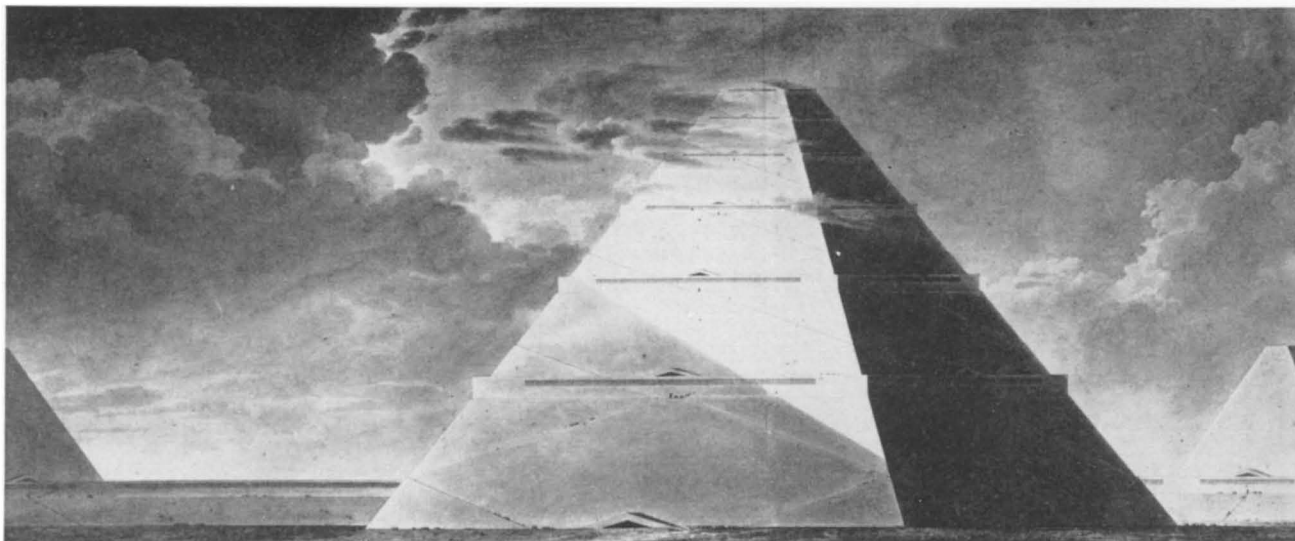


FIG. 17. Pyramidal cenotaph—Cénotaphe dans le genre égyptien.

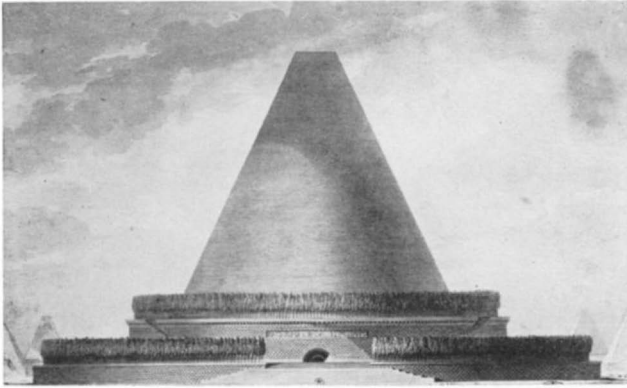


FIG. 18. Conical cenotaph.

grand are the pyramid of the Sepulchral Chapel (Chapelle des Morts);³⁶² the two Cenotaphs, one in the form of a truncated pyramid, the other of a truncated cone, the latter also being presented amidst eight small pyramids³⁶³ (figs. 17, 18, 19); the Memorial carrying a flame, composed of diminishing truncated cones above a podium of massive masonry, the Spiral Tower³⁶⁴ (fig. 20), and the enormous Circuses³⁶⁵ (fig. 21).

The most impressive of these designs is the proposed Newton Memorial, 1784, which consists of a sphere rising from a circular structure³⁶⁶ (fig. 22). This Memorial, as well as the conic Cenotaph is surrounded by rows of trees on different levels, probably to alleviate the sternness of the whole. The interior of this Memorial is empty, except for the sarcophagus: nothing is to distract the eye (fig. 23). The curvature alone, without beginning, without end, is to dominate. The lighting is to be effected through tiny star-shaped openings grouped like celestial constellations. With evident pride, Boullée wrote that all this was his own invention.³⁶⁷

³⁶² *Ibid.*, Ha 55, no. 28, Chapelle des morts, Kaufmann, E.-L. Boullée, *Art Bulletin* 21: fig. 7, 1939. I could not read the proofs of this essay. Apart from other errors, the translator took the class mark Ha for *Handschrift* and replaced it by ms.

³⁶³ B. N., Ha 55, no. 26, Ha 57, no. 20, both signed; Ha 57, no. 22, Cénotaphes avec leur enceinte, signed. *Papiers*, fol. 124.

³⁶⁴ B. N., Ha 57, no. 31, named *phare*, Kaufmann, fig. 4. Ha 57, no. 32, Tour tronç-conique. I call the former Memorial, the latter Spiral Tower.

³⁶⁵ B. N., Ha 55, no. 16, Cirque, 1er projet, signed. Ha 55, no. 17, Kaufmann, fig. 8. *Papiers*, fol. 113.

³⁶⁶ B. N., Ha 57, no. 6, Elévation du Cénotaphe de Newton, with clouds, signed and dated 1784. Ha 57, no. 7, with an illegible inscription, Kaufmann, fig. 1.

³⁶⁷ B. N., Ha 57, no. 8, Coupe du Cénotaphe de Newton, signed. *Papiers*, fols. 126-128, 138.

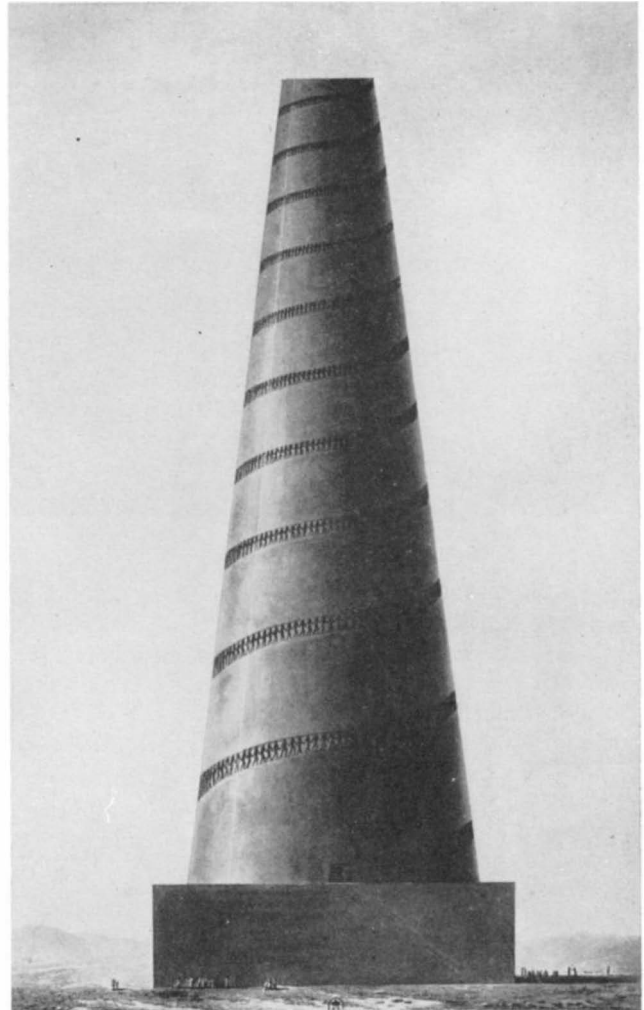


FIG. 20. Spiral tower—(Tour tronç-conique).

Boullée, it would seem, was interested in geometrical forms rather than intent upon copying ancient models, whether Egyptian pyramids or Roman amphitheatres. This predilection is even more apparent in the ground plans of his Opera House which is a cylindrical building with a domical vault³⁶⁸ (figs. 24, 25). (The Opera House was planned for the l'Emplacement du Carousel.

³⁶⁸ B. N., Ha 55, no. 6, Salle d'Opéra, parquet. Ha 55, no. 11, section, 13, elevation, with promenaders, Kaufmann, figs. 12, 13. Ha 55, no. 14, vue d'ensemble, with royal *cortège*. *Papiers*, fol. 103, Boullée remarks that he wanted to give his theatre "la forme la plus agréable." *Ibid.*, fol. 98, he mentions his former plan to erect his theatre in the center of the "jardin de la Revolution (ci-devant Palais Royal)."



FIG. 19. Nine cenotaphs—Cénotaphes avec leur enceinte.

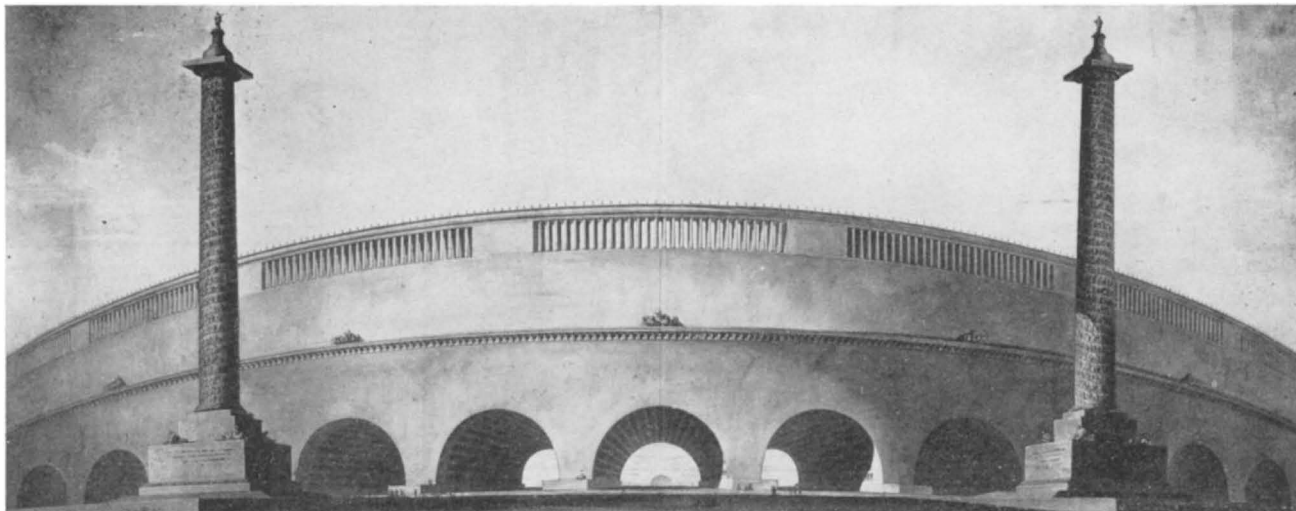


FIG. 21. Circus—Cirque, 1er projet.

In the perspective view we see the King and Queen leaving the theatre.)

The plans for remodeling the Palace of Versailles reveal the same geometrical trend. They were produced for the competition of 1780.³⁶⁹ Boullée thought at first only of changing the garden front³⁷⁰ (fig. 26). He

³⁶⁹ See note 299.

³⁷⁰ B. N., Ha 56, no. 18, Plan de restauration du palais de Versailles, 1er étage.

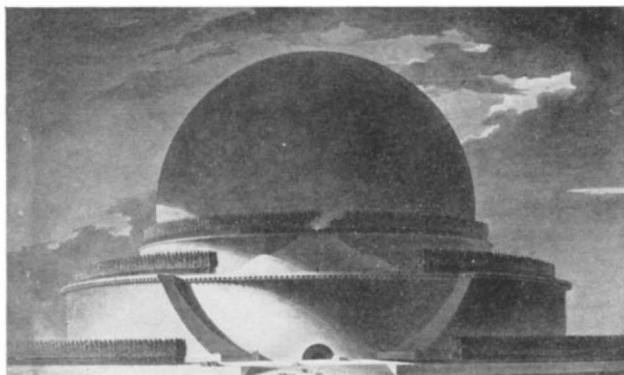


FIG. 22. Newton Memorial—Cénotaphe de Newton.

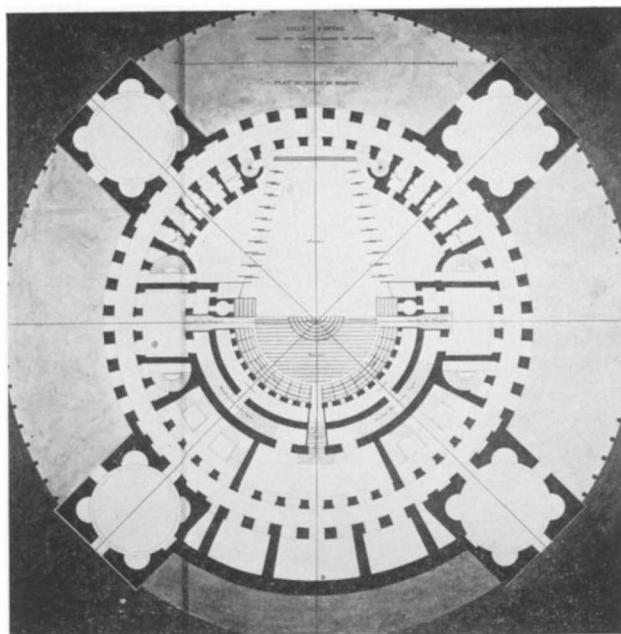


FIG. 24. Opera house. Plan of groundfloor.

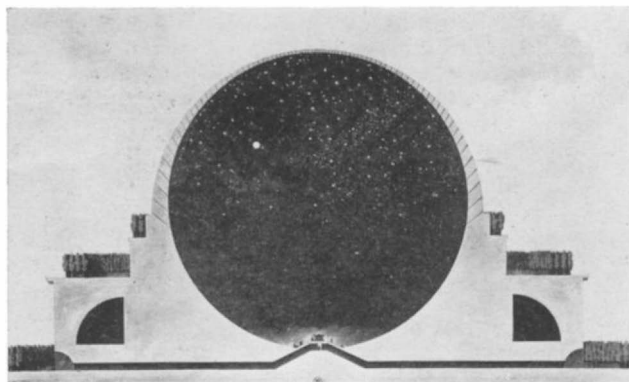


FIG. 23. Newton Memorial, Interior—Coupe.



FIG. 25. Opera house—Salle d'opéra.

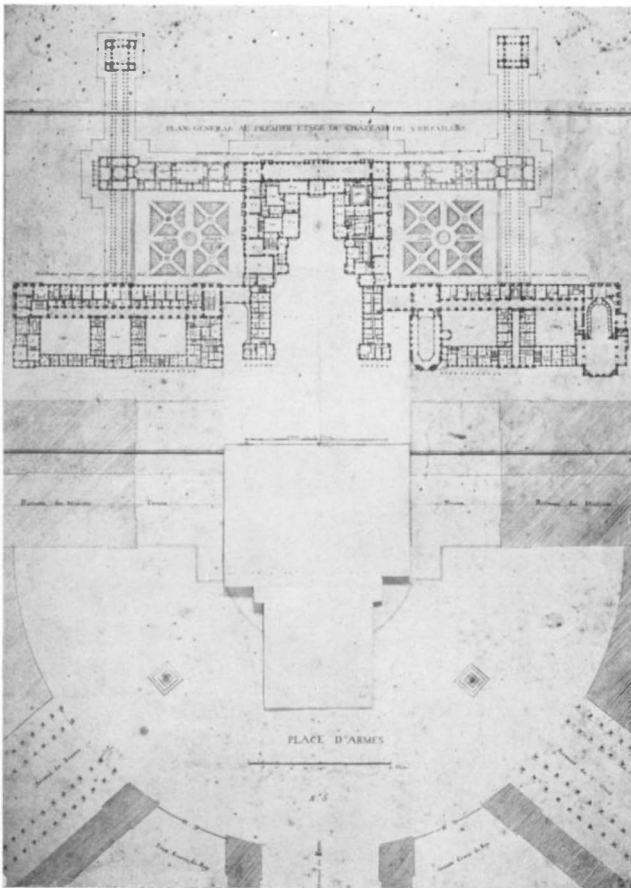


FIG. 26. Palace of Versailles, first project of restoration.

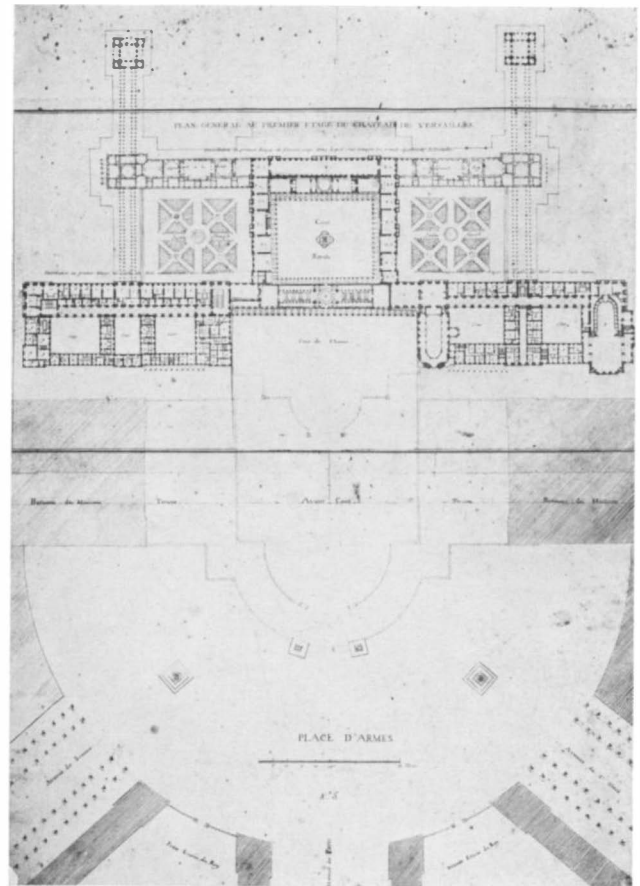


FIG. 27. Palace of Versailles, second project.

planned to prolong the Galerie des glaces in both directions with narrow aisles which, together with the old recessed wings of the palace and new outer colonnades, would have formed two square courts. The outer colonnades were to extend beyond the garden façade and terminate in cubic pavilions. On second thought, Boullée wanted also to change the front facing the Place d'Armes, by replacing the Cour Royale and the Cour de Marbre with a single oblong screened court³⁷¹ (fig. 27). To relieve the monotony of the long-stretched front he meant to add gigantic columns on each side of the palace, after the model of Trajan's column³⁷² (fig. 28). The "unsatisfactory and unimaginative

type," the Column of Trajan,³⁷³ became in Boullée's hands a means of bringing dramatic effect into the composition.

All of his other designs with classical features are not mere copies of earlier examples, but rather paraphrases with a personal note—the circular Opera House, the afore-cited projects for a huge circus intended for the Place de l'Etoile, the circular Public Library³⁷⁴ (fig. 29), the Triumphal Arch with Aisles (fig. 30), and the Triumphal Arch with Inscription (fig. 31) deviate noticeably from the conventional. In the case

³⁷³ Robertson, D. S., *Handbook of Greek and Roman Architecture*, 2nd ed., 293, Cambridge, 1945

³⁷⁴ B. N., Ha 55, sur le terrain des Capucines.

³⁷¹ B. N., Ha 56

³⁷² B. N., Ha 56

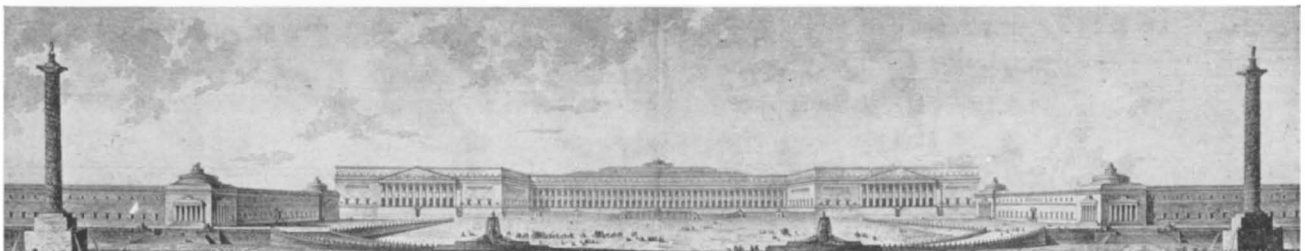


FIG. 28. Palace of Versailles, third project, view.

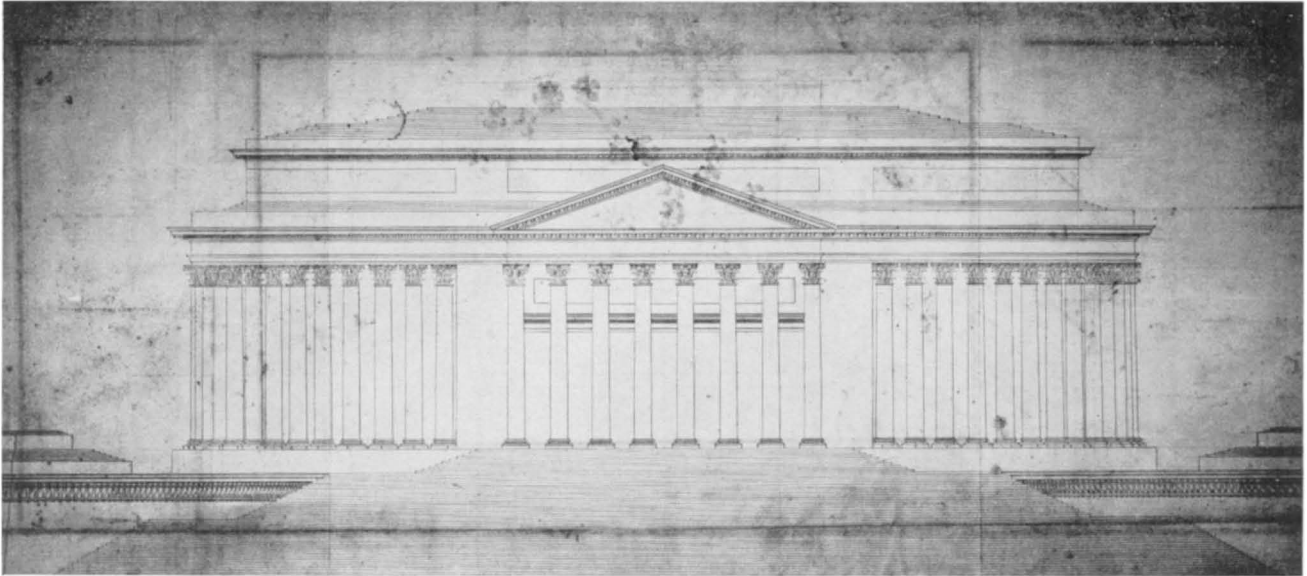


FIG. 29. Public library—Projet d'une bibliothèque publique sur le terrain des Capucines.

of the first arch the central thoroughfare is effectively repeated in the parallel aisles, whereas in the second arch we see the grandiose contrast of the flat trapezium front to the mighty vaulted gateway and the sculptural decoration on top and at bottom.³⁷⁵

Although still retaining traditional features, Boullée worked out modern patterns—modern, of course, for 1800. We find, for example, in the square plan³⁷⁶ as well as in the elevation³⁷⁷ of the Museum the new motif of repetition in the four porticoes echoing the cylindrical Temple of Fame (Temple à la Renommée), which emerges from the center of the cubic substructure

³⁷⁵ B. N., Ha 55, no. 34, Arc triomphal, with aisles. Ha 57, no. 34, with an inscription.

³⁷⁶ B. N., Ha 56, no. 26, Muséum, plan.

³⁷⁷ B. N., Ha 56, no. 28, Muséum, au centre duquel est un temple à la Renommée, signed, Ha 56, no. 31, interior, signed and dated 1789.

(figs. 32, 33). The interior, 1789, is striking by its boldness and dramatic lighting (fig. 34). The artistic effect will be greater when not merely single features are called into play, but when the masses themselves begin to speak with their stronger voices. Then a design results like the Métropole, planned on the Greek cross and crowned with a conventional dome above its center³⁷⁸ (fig. 35). What distinguishes this project is the dome towering high and lonely above the whole, totally unrelated to the four porticoes. The interior of the Métropole is remarkable by its extraordinary dimensions. Boullée represents it at nocturnal rites, and a second time at the celebration of Corpus Christi (fig. 36). The Opera house on a Square is a group of three structures. The central rotunda and the two independ-

³⁷⁸ B. N., Ha 56, no. 4, Métropole, no. 8, interior, Au temps des ténèbres, no. 9, Au temps de la Fête-Dieu.

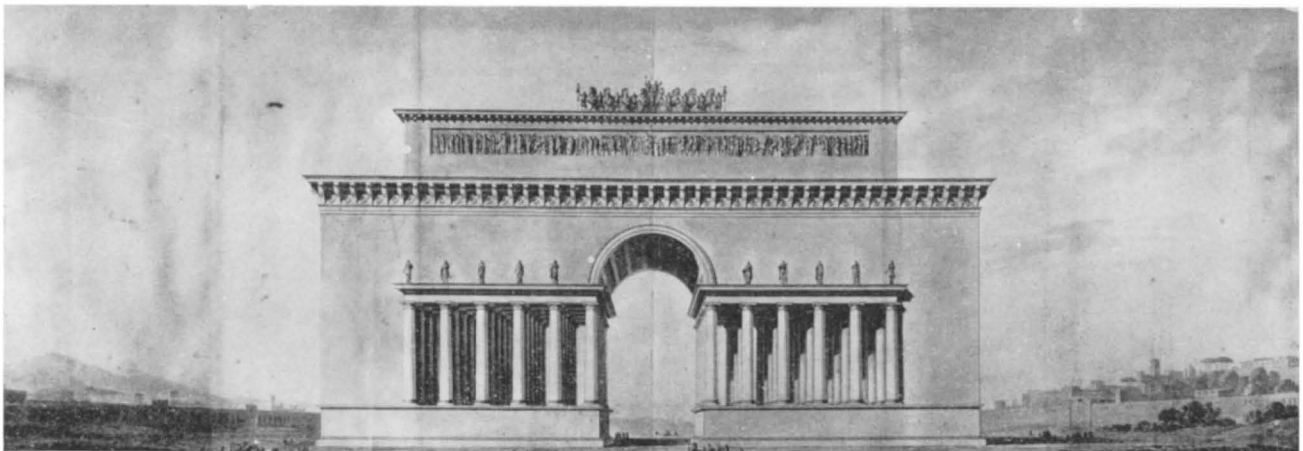


FIG. 30. Triumphal arch with aisles.

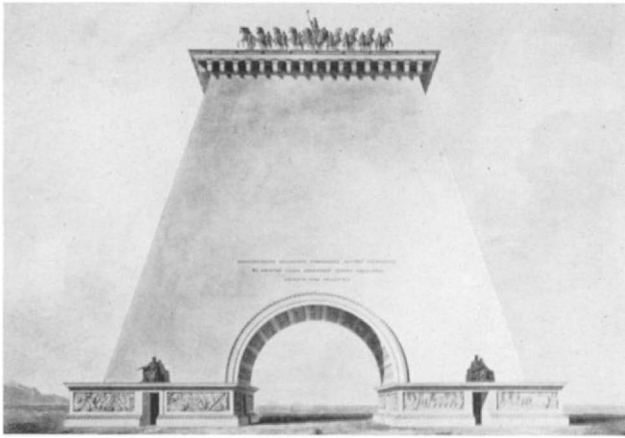


FIG. 31. Triumphant arch with inscription.

ent blocks are most starkly set apart and have nothing in common with each other³⁷⁹ (fig. 37).

Eventually the classical forms diminished in importance; modern patterns began to play the foremost role, supported, at last, by modern forms. These advanced designs no longer look like daring experiments, but like well realizable projects. The simple juxtaposition of the four tall prismatic projections is enough to impart artistic character to Boullée's City Gate with Four Towers³⁸⁰ (fig. 38). The elements here are independent and equivalent without any one part ruling. The motif of repetition, shown so vigorously in the verticals, reappears, subdued, in the horizontals of the duplicated roof line and the stepped bases. The enormous nude walls derive overwhelming grandeur from an almost primitive arrangement of the masses. The drawing of this gate also illustrates how Boullée translated his theory of architectural chiar-oscuro into practice. (I shall deal with Boullée's theory later.) The shadows cast

³⁷⁹ B. N., Ha 57, no. 4, called Palais sur une place, though it is, obviously, the Opera house. Signed. Cf. note 411.

³⁸⁰ B. N., Ha 55, no. 31, Intérieur de ville, with four towers, Ha 57, no. 28, Porte de Ville, with cannons, reproduced in Kaufmann, *Architekt. Entwürfe aus der Zeit der französischen Revolution*, *Ztschr. f. bild. Kunst* 63: 40, 1929. Ha 57, no. 29, Porte, with trophies. *Papiers*, fol. 130.

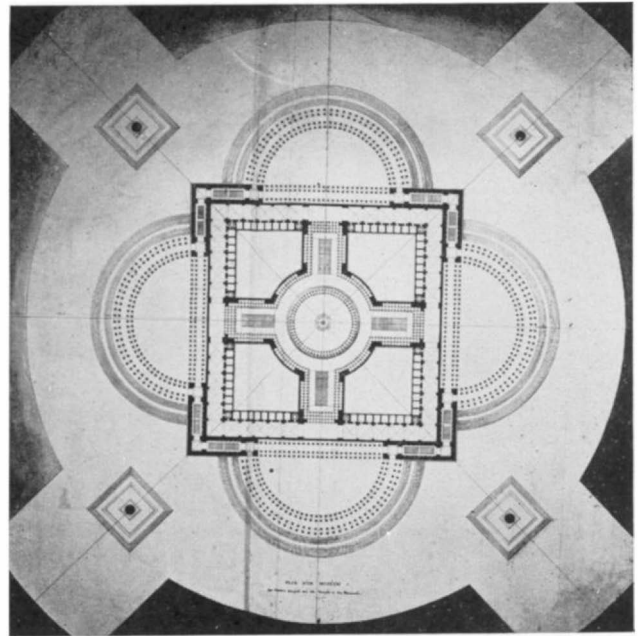


FIG. 32. Museum, plan.

by the four projections endow the flat surfaces with dramatic aliveness. In the City Gate with Cannons, the architect sets a frieze of warriors over the arch and places cannons in front of the side towers (fig. 39). The groups of people at the gate powerfully emphasize its magnitude. The frieze of the warriors may be interpreted as "Narrative" architecture. The warriors represent vigilance; they are the guardians of the city. In addition, the horizontal array has also a definite formal significance. The crenelated roof line, the brackets below it, the horizontal layers of the podium (to which the voussours of the mighty arch form a superb contrast) repeat, with varied intensity, the line of the ground. The concept of horizontalism reaches a climax in the frieze of the warriors.

The stressed horizontals, not the traditional features, are the chief characteristics of the Palace of Justice (fig. 40) and a Square Temple (fig. 41) which is beautiful

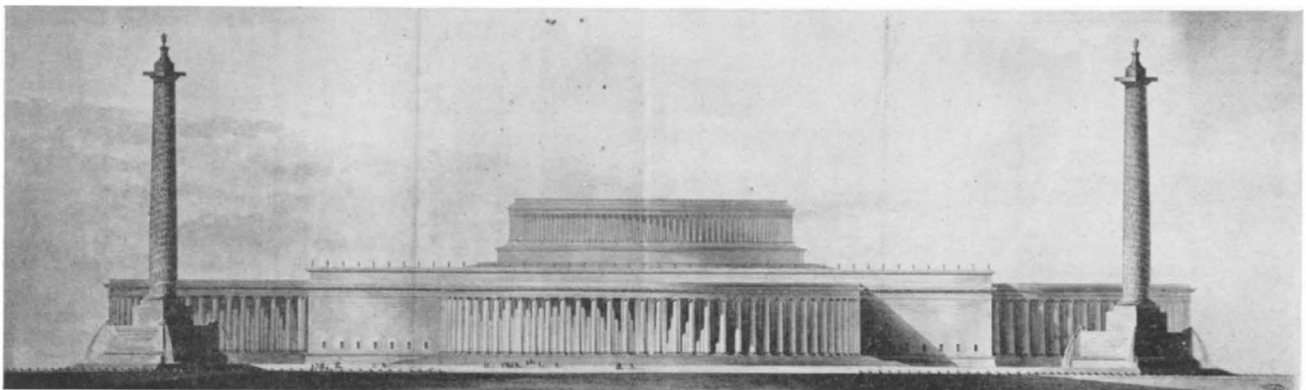


FIG. 33. Museum, view—Muséum destiné à contenir les statues des Grands Hommes.

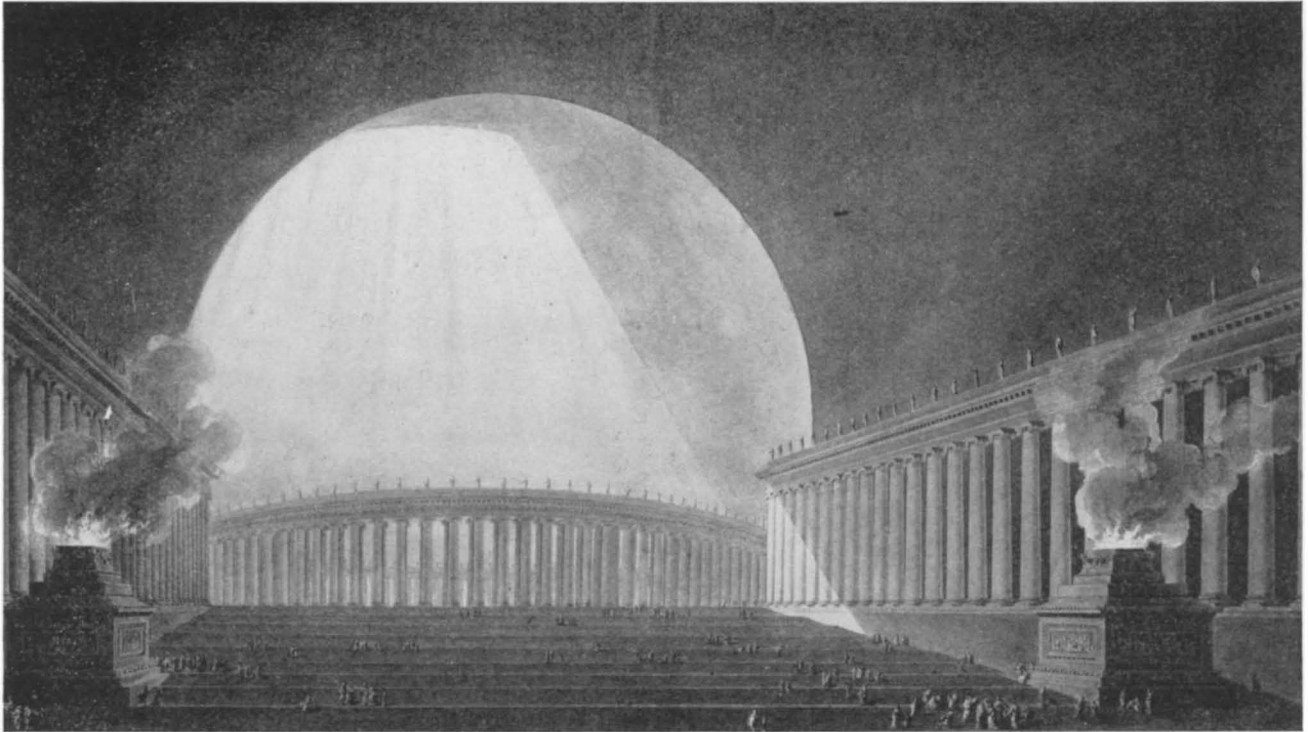


FIG. 34. Museum, interior.

though it lacks the conventional pediment.³⁸¹ In the Columned Cenotaph the pyramidal superstructure is contrasted with the prismatic substructure (fig. 42). Antagonisms of both size and shape are very impressive in the Sepulchral Chapel,³⁸² and in two designs for the Entrance to the Royal Library.³⁸³ The broad triangular

³⁸¹ B. N., Ha 56, no. 25, Palais de justice, signed. Ha 57, no. 25, Temple.

³⁸² B. N., Ha 57, no. 26, Cénotaphe entouré d'une colonnade. For Chapelle des morts, see note 362.

³⁸³ B. N., Ha 56, no. 37, Entrée de la bibliothèque, with the pedimented portal, signed. Ha 56, no. 45, with the globe and the date 1788, signed. See note 305.

front of the Chapel has only one ruling motif in the center, the huge vault above the entrance. On the library façade with the pedimented portal the latter is contrasted both with the small niches with statues and the long stretched cornices (fig. 43). The central motif of the other library façade (with the date 1788 on the wall) is the portal flanked by two Atlantes carrying a mighty globe, which is markedly set off the neutral background (fig. 44). There is, in all these, an antithetical effect: the flatness of the wall is opposed to the spatiality of the central motif.

Boullée intended to build the grand Interior of the

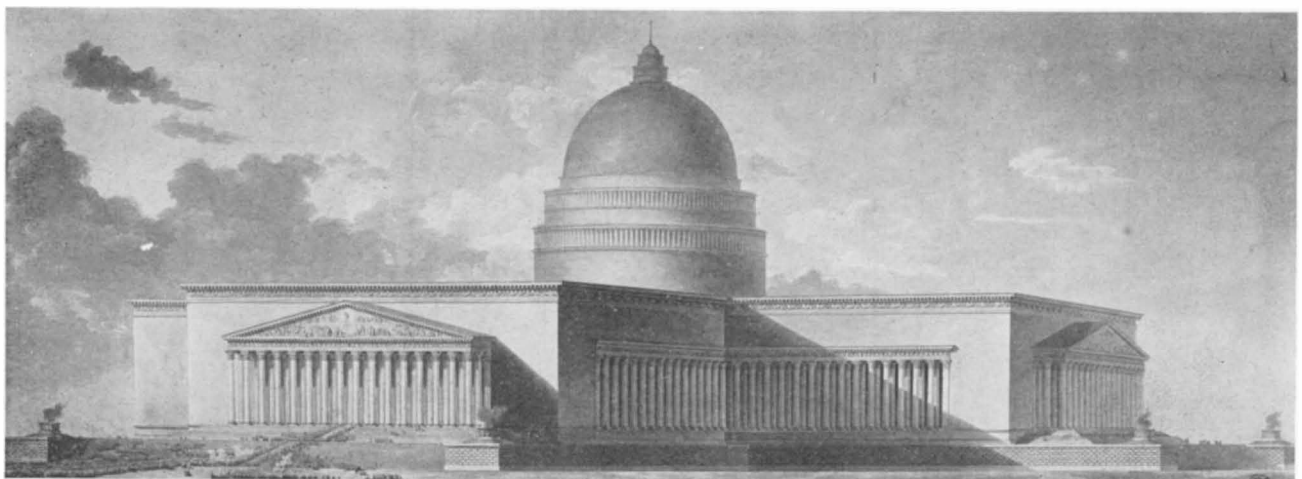


FIG. 35. Metropolitan church, view—Métropole.

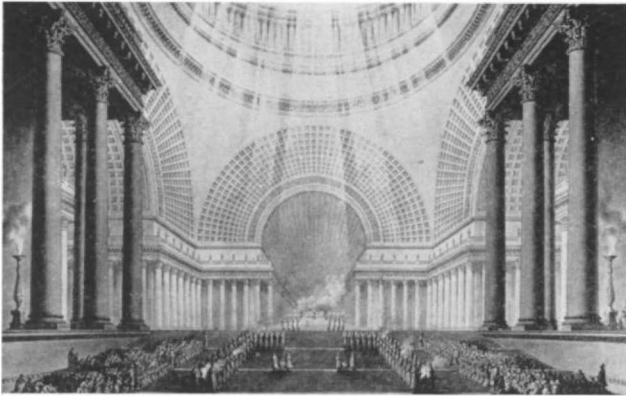


FIG. 36. Metropolitan church at Corpus Christi—Métropole au temps de la Fête-Dieu.

Library in three zones: the basic zone of the bookstacks in three receding steps echoing the semi-cylindrical ceiling; the intruding zone of Ionic columns in solemn array; and the lofty zone of the coffered barrel vault opening into an enormous skylight³⁸⁴ (fig. 45). The three zones are set off against each other in size and shape, and contrast in texture. The ground zone is agitated, its texture derived from the display of the books. The middle zone presents the rigidity and coolness of unfluted shafts. The top zone with its caissons is full of explosiveness which finds an outlet in the light-giving cleavage. Boullée populates the hall with readers in various poses, reaching for books or conversing. He wants to exalt the work of stone over the human activity—the enduring over the temporal. It matters little that the Library is full of practical shortcomings. The drawing is the direct expression of Boullée's artistic will; is an end in itself. We should look at all the designs of the revolutionary architects from this point of view: their true meaning is form for form's sake. It might be interesting to note here that in commenting on his Opera House, Boullée him-

³⁸⁴ B. N., Ha 56, no. 36, Salle de lecture, signed. *Papiers*, fol. 119, Boullée declares that he was inspired by Raffael's School of Athens; fol. 121, he comments, "une immense Basilique, éclairée par le haut . . . offrira l'image la plus grande et la plus frappante des choses existantes."

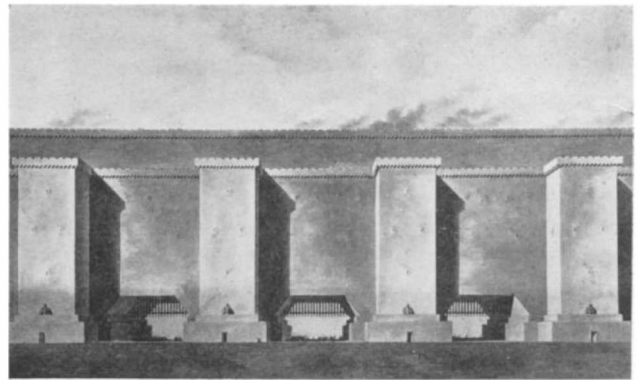


FIG. 38. City gate with four towers—Intérieur de ville.

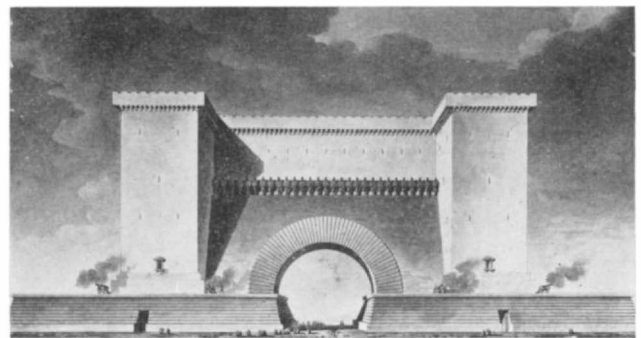


FIG. 39. City gate with cannons—Porte de ville.

self declared that the audience is to be "the chief ornament of the interior."³⁸⁵

The wide range of Boullée's imagination becomes apparent in projects as different as the Church of the Madeleine and Town Hall (Palais municipal). The former is a classicized edifice, somewhat similar to the Paris Panthéon³⁸⁶ (fig. 46); the Town Hall, designed in 1792, however, contains almost no reminiscences of the past³⁸⁷ (fig. 47). It consists of a low cube from

³⁸⁵ *Papiers*, fol. 104, "que ce fussent eux (les spectateurs) qui décorassent ma salle . . . en formassent le principal ornement."

³⁸⁶ B. N., Ha 57, no. 2, Projet pour l'église de la Madeleine.

³⁸⁷ B. N. Ha 56, no. 15, Palais municipal pour la capitale d'un grand empire. *Papiers*, fol. 109, provide the date.



FIG. 37. Opera house on a square.

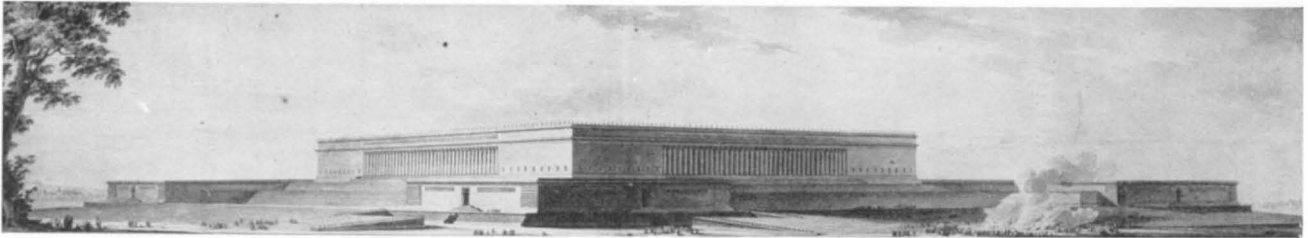


FIG. 40. Palace of justice—Palais de justice.

which a cylindrical superstructure emerges. The main motif is the contrast between these gigantic elementary shapes. Moreover, on the walls a second, more refined pattern appears. This consists of two rows of windows, one below the roof line, the other at a considerable distance down, very close to the ground. A resultant ten-

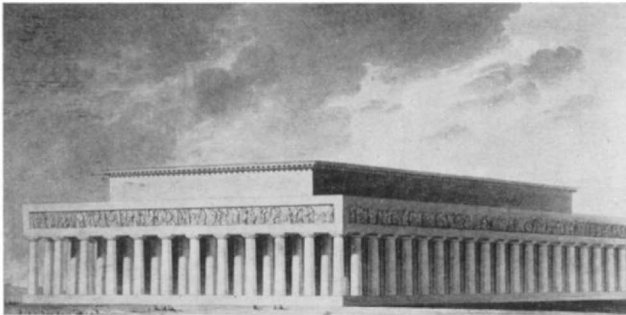


FIG. 41. Square temple.

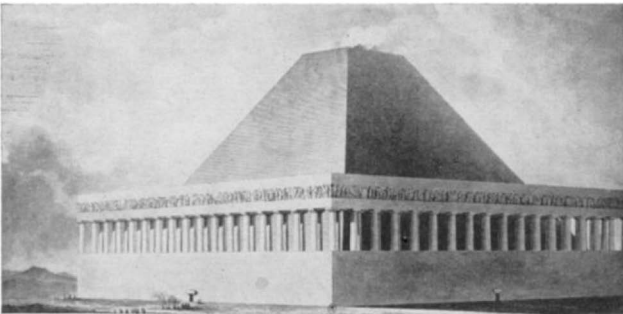


FIG. 42. Columned cenotaph—(Cénotaphe entouré d'une colonnade).

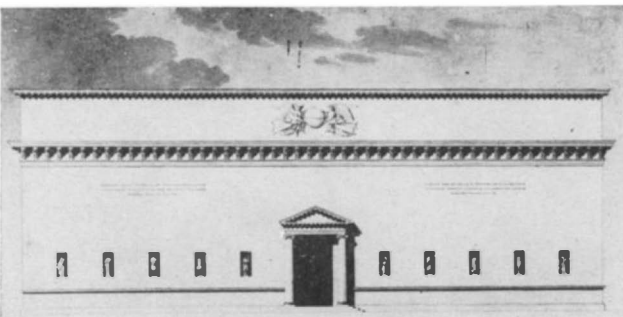


FIG. 43. Library with pedimented portal.

sion of surface is effected by this spacing of the two rows of openings.

The motif of tension in space is revealed in the Newton Memorial (fig. 23). The sarcophagus in relation to the vaulting is so small that no real impression of contrasted sizes can result. It is rather the skilful arrangement of the whole which produces the effect of an all-pervading tension. The tiny sarcophagus at the bottom is the only object in the immense room, and from any point of the infinite sphere the eye ever returns to it. The room becomes a vast magnetic field traversed by innumerable lines of force. By an extraordinarily simple compositional device, the void lives.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁸ B. N., Ha 57, no. 8. *Papiers*, fol. 127, "Isolé de toutes parts ses regards ne peuvent se porter que sur l'immensité du ciel. La tombe est le seul objet matériel."

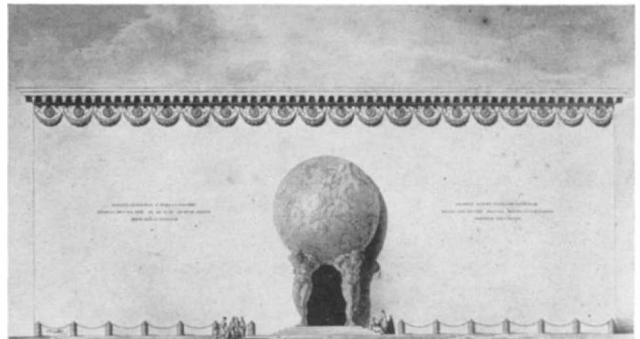


FIG. 44. Library entrance with Atlantes.

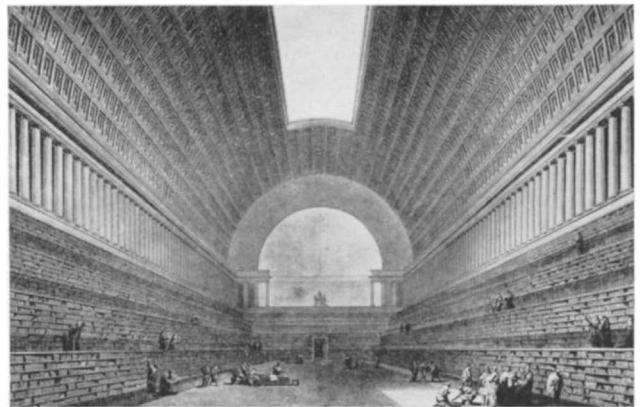


FIG. 45. Library interior—Nouvelle salle projetée pour l'agrandissement de la Bibliothèque Nationale.

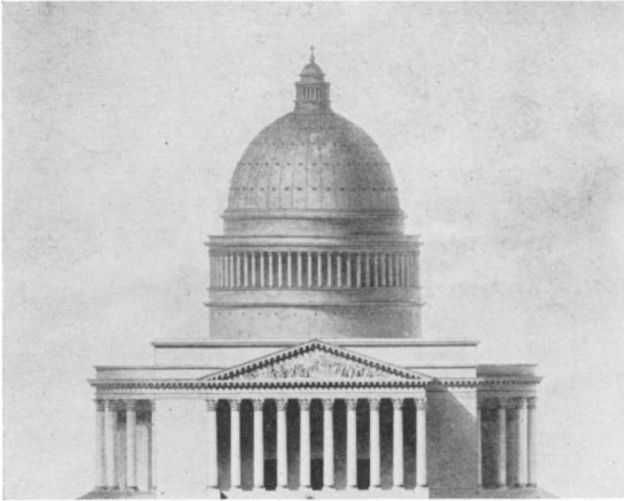


FIG. 45. Madeleine church, project.

In this interior of the Newton Memorial no longer is there that balance of power which was essential to classic and Baroque architecture, unifying and harmonizing the dominant and the subordinate parts. Here we have the irreconcilable contrasts of the small and the large, the finite and the infinite, the mortal and the immortal.

Plain elementary forms and austere composition are first in Boullée's designs. The touch of Romanticism results chiefly from the graphic treatment. The architectural form itself is not meant to express any mood, and is free from shallow symbolism. Both Boullée and Lecamus de Mézières (with whom I cannot deal more extensively here),³⁸⁹ are architecturally-minded in their buildings and literary in their doctrine. In analyzing Boullée's manuscript we shall find him an advocate of "Narrative" architecture. Yet though his text is full

³⁸⁹ See note 93. Work and thought of Le Camus will be dealt with in my *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

of passages reflecting the point of view of Romanticism, in his designs he was careful to retain the architectural forms untouched by sentimental accessories.

IV. THE THINKER

Boullée's *Architecture* forms only a part of the *Papiers de Boullée* of the Bibliothèque Nationale.³⁹⁰ These papers consist of one hundred and fifty folios as numbered by the notary Doulcet, who was in charge of the bequest. Several concern the death and the estate of the architect; others are obituaries, or drafts of obituaries; still others are miscellaneous notices of several sorts. The first hastily thrown together notations for the layout of the *Architecture* begin on little cards on folio 40. On folio 46 begins the first systematic draft of the *Architecture*, when Boullée starts to use foolscap. The pages are full of cancellations and corrections. Folio 52 is the start of a second draft, neatly written and seemingly intended as final. Yet its pages, too, like those of the first draft, are left half blank, obviously for the purpose of further alterations. The pages of folios 52 to 60 are numbered 1 to 16. (Folio 55 is not included for it does not belong to Boullée's draft.) The pages of the succeeding folios, which continue to folio 65, are unnumbered. Folios 66 and 68 are blanks. Folio 67 carries the legend that the manuscript which follows was written entirely by the deceased. The third, and final, version then begins with folio 69, titled and subtitled *Architecture: Essai sur l'art*, and with the quotation "Ed io anche son Pittore." The text actually begins on folio 70. It is very clearly, neatly written, and carefully ruled, without the wide margin allowed for correction.

Clues for dating Boullée's manuscript and drawings, only some of which are signed, are scant. On folios 104-105 Boullée remarks that the sketch for the Palais d'un Souverain at Saint-Germain-en-Laye was made

³⁹⁰ See note 1.

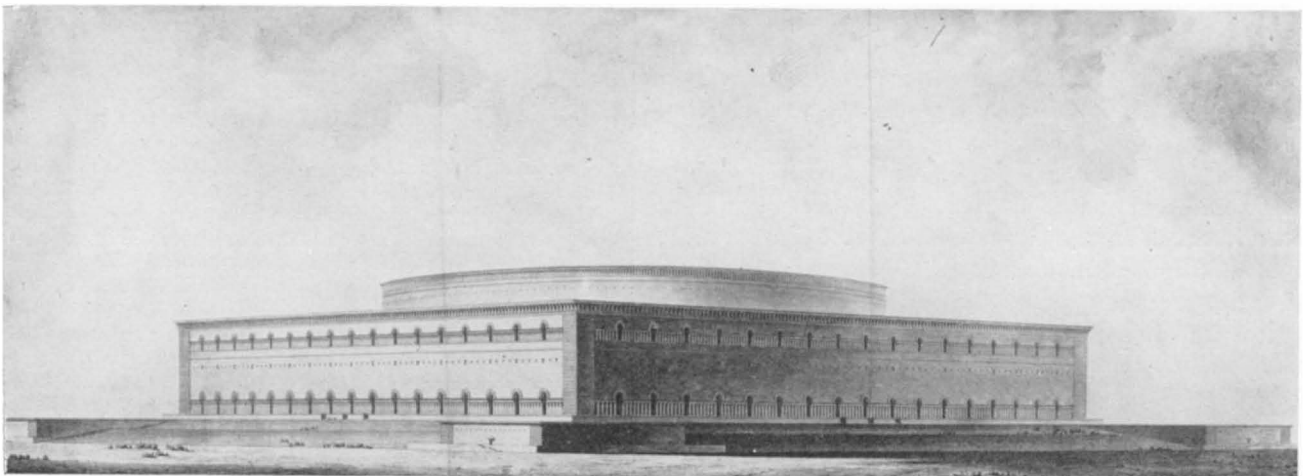


FIG. 47. Town hall—Palais municipal pour la capitale d'un grand empire.

long before there was any thought of the French Revolution, and he adds that the design, intended for Saint-Germain-en-Laie (*sic!*) could be used for some other purpose. On folio 109, in commenting on his drawing of the Palais Municipal, he notes his age as sixty-four, and thus dates this design in 1792. On the drawing of the entrance to the Royal Library the date 1788 can be read in an inscription the rest of which, probably intentionally, is illegible. Newton's Memorial is dated 1784; the interior of the Museum, 1789. The first draft of the *Architecture* must have been written in the 1790's, for on folio 47 there is a reference to the tragic events of the time: "attendant le moment fatal qui pouvoit me joindre au sort des malheureuses victimes déjà immolées je me suis livré à ce que j'appelle ici mes délassements." Boullée, like Ledoux, appears to have taken up the work on his text in the disturbed days of the Revolution. The second and third drafts were written in Boullée's last years. On folio 62 mention is made of the Institut, which had been founded in 1795, succeeding the Academy. On folio 54 Boullée refers to one of Napoleon's expeditions, which could only have been the Egyptian Campaign of 1798: "Je prends pour exemple l'expédition de Bonaparte. Ce grand général et les sçavans qui l'ont suivi apprendront au monde entier l'art de former un grand établissement."

Boullée's *Architecture* is mature in its calm reserve; it is the summation of his experience; it reveals what he regarded as essential and permanently significant in his designs. With him, as with Ledoux, the written word was not a program antecedent to his work, but a clarification following it. Boullée expressed his artistic convictions in a dry, dogmatic idiom; Ledoux in words consonant with his passionate temperament.

The text begins with a pedantic discussion of a difference of opinion between Claude Perrault and François Blondel, i.e., whether architecture should be a free creation of the imagination or should derive its fundamental principles from nature.³⁹¹ Boullée favored the closest relation to nature. However, we need not linger over this somewhat scholastic disquisition. It is only our interest to uncover first, his goals as a teacher; second, his attitude towards tradition; third, what specific currents of thought of the period are reflected in his composition; and last, and most important to us, how he himself intended to reform architecture.

As a teacher, Boullée, like Blondel, emphatically states that a clear distinction must be made between the art of architecture and the technique of building. Only by doing this can one comprehend why art has made little progress.³⁹² It was his belief that the textbooks up to this time had been gravely mistaken in paying little

³⁹¹ *Papiers*, fols. 40, 71, 77.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, fol. 40, "L'objet de cette partie est de ne plus confondre en architecture l'art proprement dit avec la science . . . ensuite de faire appercevoir ce qui jusqu'à présent a pu retarder le progrès de cet art."

attention to "art proper"—"l'art proprement dit."³⁹³ With much human warmth he calls his beloved craft the "beneficent art"—"l'art bienfaiteur."³⁹⁴ True architecture, he feels, springs from a creative inspiration,³⁹⁵ and the architect should strive for the sublime,³⁹⁷ and the architect-teacher must present more than hard and fast rules. He must teach his art as he himself conceives it.³⁹⁸

What was Boullée's attitude toward tradition? It is a far cry from those who, with superstitious awe persist in the sterile theory of the classical orders, to the artist to whom teaching was a mission with ever changing goals. The orders, of course, are no longer dealt with in Boullée's treatise. What is more: Boullée, who disdains traditional knowledge, likewise has little respect for the old masters. The past does not bind him. He believes architecture to be only in its beginnings.³⁹⁹ He is not afraid to declare that the great men of the age of Louis Quatorze, Perrault and the elder Blondel, had no idea of the fundamentals.⁴⁰⁰ Eventually, he even apologizes for having followed the conventional arrangement of Italian palaces, with the preeminent bel-étage above the groundfloor, and the emphasis on the center. Practical necessity was the consideration for recommending the obsolete scheme.⁴⁰¹ Had this necessity not hampered him, he would have chosen a quite different façade disposition. Instead of projections and recesses, he preferred large intervals between the single features. This appeared to him the right way to produce "movement,"⁴⁰² ("tension" would be a better term to distinguish between the Baroque and the revolutionary man-

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, fol. 72.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 52.

³⁹⁵

premiers pères n'ont bâti leurs cabanes qu'après en avoir conçu l'image. C'est cette production de l'esprit, c'est cette création qui constitue l'architecture."

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 83, "un art mécanique."

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 138, "porter l'art à la sublimité."

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 149, "dans les beaux arts il n'est pas possible d'instruire par une méthode suivie comme dans les sciences exactes. Chaque artiste saisit particulièrement les beautés de la nature selon ses facultés." On fol. 150, the text ends with the admonition, "ceux qui professent (les beaux arts) ne peuvent et ne doivent instruire que dans la partie où ils excellent et de la manière qui leur est propre."

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 70, "J'ai dédaigné de me borner à la seule étude de nos anciens maîtres . . . un art qui, d'après de profondes méditations me paroît être encore à son aurore." On fol. 137 is a harsh criticism of previous writers on architecture, as "les myopes qui m'ont précédé."

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 71, "ni l'un ni l'autre, de ces deux auteurs, n'ont eu aucune idée des principes constitutifs de leur art. Mon opinion pourra paroître révoltante, au premier abord. . ."

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 111, "à l'instar de différens Palais dans l'Italie . . . la nécessité et l'ordre m'en faisoient la loi."

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, fol. 110, "j'ai dessiné mes étages en y laissant de grands intervalles . . . je suis parvenu à lui donner du mouvement sans employer la ressource des avants et arrières corps."

ner). It is not good to tread in other's steps, Boullée thinks.⁴⁰³

The Greek temples he finds are without character; one looks like the other. Nor does Saint Peter's at Rome make any impression on him.⁴⁰⁴ The Colosseum seems to him majestic, but its decoration in bad taste.⁴⁰⁵ His own Arch with Inscription (fig. 31), however, is different from all arches of the past. I believe it surpasses in greatness François Blondel's famous Porte Saint-Denis, Chalgrin's Arc de triomphe de l'Etoile, and even many ancient arches.⁴⁰⁶ It means little that Boullée occasionally praises symmetry. The heritage of the past could not be entirely dropped at a moment's notice. Symmetry, especially, is so closely connected to the "architecture" of the human body, that it will forever appear to men "natural." Eventually, Boullée explains symmetry in a rationalistic manner,⁴⁰⁷ tually, he finds in it the greatest beauty.⁴⁰⁸

As to the major trends of the period, Eclecticism, fruit of the historical interests of the time, appears only sporadically in the *Architecture*. Boullée often thought of combining "Greek beauty" with Gothic construction.⁴⁰⁹ Rather conspicuous in his text are the trends towards individualism, or, equality of the elements, and toward expressiveness, or "Narrative" architecture. He explains that in designing the Palace of a Sovereign for Saint-Germain-en-Laye, he avoided exalting it over the adjacent houses of the noblemen by different decoration, or by different height.⁴¹⁰ He wants each structure to be complete in itself.⁴¹¹ Like Boffrand, he expects "character" to show in the building,⁴¹² and he, too,

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, fol. 110, "Ce n'est pas en se trainant sur les traces des autres qu'un auteur parvient à se faire distinguer, dans les beaux-arts."

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 142, "Leurs temples ont tous, à peu près, la même forme." On fol. 138 is the warning, "de ne pas rester . . . esclave . . . des anciens." Fol. 142, on St. Peter's, "On n'éprouve dans ce Temple aucune sensation relative à son étendue." Similarly, fol. 91. This was remarked by many; characteristic of Boullée is that he expects *emotion* from the structure.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 111.

⁴⁰⁶ B. N., Ha 57, no. 34.

⁴⁰⁷ *Papiers*, fol. 79, "La symétrie plaît, dit un grand homme (note: Montesquieu) parce qu'elle présente l'évidence, et que l'âme, qui cherche sans cesse à concevoir, embrasse et saisit sans peine l'ensemble des objets qu'elle présente."

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 105, "la symétrie, cette première beauté de l'architecture."

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 93, "les Goths ont suivi l'impulsion de leur génie . . . tandis que l'homme singe se déprave." Fol. 94, "Depuis longtemps, j'avois conçu le projet de réunir aux beautés de l'architecture grecque, je ne dirai pas les beautés de l'architecture gothique, mais des moyens d'arts connus et mis en œuvre par les seuls Goths."

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 105. *Cp.* note 303. The drawing of the Palace, Ha 56, no. 22, is damaged and cannot be reproduced.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 106, "J'ai conçu ce projet de manière que chaque Palais, vu séparément, présentât un ensemble qui peut plaire particulièrement." This is one of Boullée's most significant statements.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, fol. 84, "Les tableaux en architecture se produisent, en donnant au sujet que l'on traite le caractère propre d'où naît l'effet relatif."

cherishes the vague ideal of "poesy in art."⁴¹³ Soon we shall see how he hoped to attain these ends.

Boullée's more concrete concepts for the reform of architecture are revealed in the brief headings: "De l'essence des corps—De leurs propriétés—De leur analogie avec notre organisation."⁴¹⁴ The appearance of the architectural masses is the important thing for him—in other words, the architectural *form*. His statement that regular forms are most concordant with our human constitution⁴¹⁵

ing; the immediately following praise of the form of the exact sphere for its magnificent beauty—"magnifique beauté"⁴¹⁶—reflects the artist's basic convictions. Boullée never tires of emphasizing the majesty of the sphere, the grace of its outline, the regularity of its gradations from light to dark.⁴¹⁷ But it was not with the sphere alone that he tried to satisfy his demand for elementary forms. He saw new possibilities in all regular solids. Elementary geometry as the basis of architectural design was to find a champion in him:

Tired of the emptiness and sterility of the irregular forms, I have passed to the study of the regular. . . . These captivate by simplicity, regularity, and reiteration.⁴¹⁸

A further very interesting "Note" appears in folio 33 of the *Papiers*. This "Note écrite de la main de feu C^{en} [Citoyen] Boullée," as we read on a slip, folio 32, apparently was intended as a draft of a letter to a publisher, or a preface to his book, and reads:

The Citizen Boullée, a professor of architecture at the Ecoles Centrales, guided by the love of his art, has spent his lifetime to promote its progress. In studying nature he has developed a new theory of masses.⁴¹⁹

It would be doing the architects of the Revolution an injustice if one believed that they were occupied solely with experimentation and theories. The task of a Boullée was not merely to search out new forms but also, and primarily, to discover their artistic effect: "By analyzing the specific qualities of the solids, I have at-

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, fol. 43, "la Poésie de l'art," fols. 70, 107, 108, 110, etc., "Poésie de l'architecture."

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 77.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, fols. 77, 78.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 78. Fol. 79, "l'image de la perfection."

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 79, "la régularité la plus parfaite, la dégradation la plus douce, plus variée . . . le contour qui dessine ce corps est aussi doux aussi coulant qu'il soit possible."

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 78, "Fatigué de l'image muette et stérile des corps irréguliers je suis passé à l'examen des corps réguliers. . . . Pourquoi la figure des corps réguliers se saisit-elle au premier aspect? C'est que leurs formes sont simples, que leurs faces sont régulières et qu'elles se répètent."

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 33, "Le Citoyen Boullée, professeur d'architecture aux Ecoles Centrales, conduit par l'amour de son art a passé sa vie entière à faire des recherches sur ce qui pourroit en accélérer les progrès. Il a acquis par l'étude de la nature une nouvelle théorie des corps." The term "théorie des corps" must often have been used by Boullée; it reappears in Villar, 45. *Cf.* note 312.

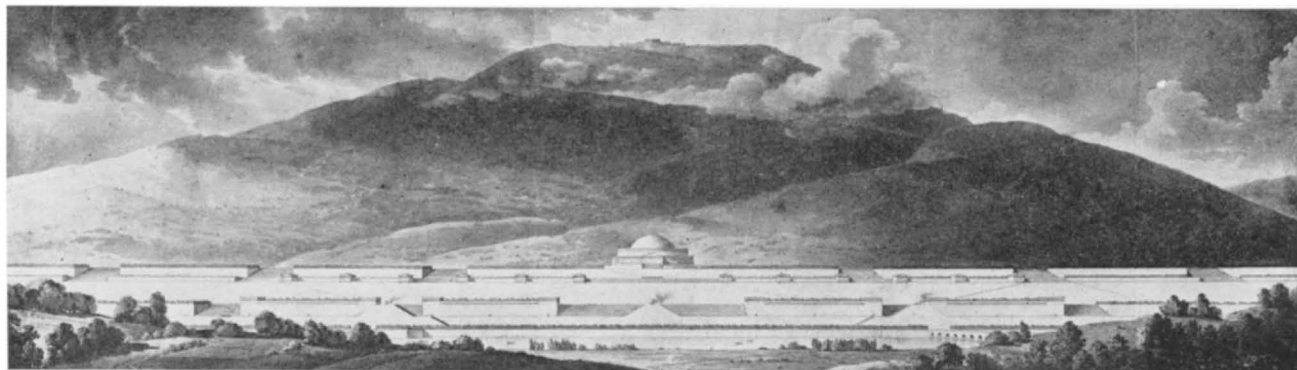


FIG. 48. Necropolis—(Grand monument funéraire).

tempted to find how they affect us.”⁴²⁰ The means which Boullée regards as especially appropriate are distribution of masses, illumination, monumental dimensions, and emphasis on the character of the building.

According to Boullée, the art of combining the masses effectively is the most important in architecture.⁴²¹ All effect is to be derived from the whole, but not from its details.⁴²² The masses should be grand, and full of movement,⁴²³ the “character” depends upon them.⁴²⁴ Yet how can movement be brought into the masses when the richness of the Baroque has been superseded by the austerity of stereometric forms? Villar informs us of the means which Boullée chiefly emphasized. The artist declared himself to be the “inventor of the architecture of shades and shadows,” i.e., disposing the masses so that their contrasting forms produce attractive lighting effects. I am left with the impression that Villar had learned the architect’s point of view from Boullée himself, rather than from similar statements in his manuscript.⁴²⁵ had occurred to Boullée, as he states, during a walk in the moonlight.⁴²⁶

Another appropriate means to give simple geometrical forms impressiveness, was through colossal dimensions. “Grandeur pleases because our soul yearns to

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 70, “je devois faire des recherches sur la théorie des corps, les analyser, chercher à reconnoître leurs propriétés, leur puissance sur nos sens. . . .”

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 47, “l’art de combiner les masses.”

⁴²² *Ibid.*, fol. 48, “nos émotions naissent de l’effet du tout ensemble et non pas des détails dont la beauté ajoute seulement aux premières impressions causées par les masses.”

⁴²³ *Ibid.* fol. 86, “que leurs masses aient un mouvement noble, majestueux.”

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 142, “c’est de l’effet des masses que provient l’art de donner du caractère à une production quelconque.”

⁴²⁵

l’inventeur. Il appelle ainsi l’art de disposer les masses des édifices, de telle manière que leurs saillies et le contraste de leurs formes produisent les effets de lumière les plus propres à charmer la vue.” *Papiers*, fol. 87, “Ce genre d’architecture formé par des ombres est une découverte d’art qui m’appartient. C’est une carrière nouvelle que j’ai ouverte.” Fol. 53, “L’art de nous émouvoir par les effets de la lumière appartient à l’architecture.” Fol. 93, “la lumière produit les effets.”

⁴²⁶ *Papiers*, fol. 126.

embrace the universe. Under all circumstances it excites our admiration.”⁴²⁷ Boullée was so thoroughly imbued with the idea of grandeur that his drawings were carried out on a huge scale. It was not always necessary that the absolute measurements should be exceptionally large, as are, for instance, the library hall—that “immense basilique.”⁴²⁸ It was enough for him when the buildings appeared on a grand scale—“*paraître grand.*”⁴²⁹ Extreme frugality of ornament adds to the impression of size. Thus in practice Boullée preferred smooth surfaces, and was thoroughly averse to vain profuseness, “les richesses stériles.”⁴³⁰

These demands were rather common about 1800, as a remark by Madame de Stael proves :

Toutes ces gradations, ces manières prudentes et nuancées pour préparer les grands effets, ne sont point de mon goût. On n’arrive point au sublime par degrés.

On another occasion she criticizes the neglect of practicality and the predilection for the superfluous, “cette négligence du nécessaire et cette affectation de l’inutile.”⁴³¹

The last point in Boullée’s doctrine—character—was to play an eminent role in the program of Romanticism. Boullée insisted that to impress the onlooker, buildings should show character,⁴³² but he does not content himself with plain symbolism, and demands for instance a city gate to be “l’image de la force.”⁴³³ He saw the goal of architecture in the “tableau expressif,”⁴³⁴ and wanted the building full of “poésie enchanteresse.”⁴³⁵

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 79, “L’image du grand nous plaît, sous tous les rapports, parce que notre âme, avide d’étendre les jouissances, voudroit embrasser l’univers.” Fol. 90, “L’image du grand a un tel empire sur nos sens . . . elle excite toujours, en nous, un sentiment d’admiration.”

⁴²⁸ From Boullée, *Mémoire . . . sur la Bibliothèque*, Paris, 1785. Cf. p. 455, above.

⁴²⁹ *Papiers*, fol. 90.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 108.

⁴³¹ Madame de Staël, *Corinne*, 1807; Bk. 4, cap. 3; 5, cap. 3.

⁴³² *Papiers*, fol. 84, “J’appelle caractère l’effet qui résulte de cet objet, et cause en nous une impression quelconque.”

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, fol. 129.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 108.

⁴³⁵

He anticipated Romanticism by praising the Gothic artists: "They introduced the magic into art."⁴³⁶ "Poésie de l'architecture"⁴³⁷ was to him a funeral building "half sunk in the ground";⁴³⁸ or a splendid court house rising above cavelike prisons to visualize crime subdued by justice.⁴³⁹

Boullée found that the "tableau expressif" could be achieved best by embracing nature in the composition. In his manuscript he tells of his plan for a church on the heights of Mont Valérien or Montmartre, high above the city, for the celebration of Corpus Christi, with scented gardens to frame it, and tree-bordered roads to lead off into fruitful fields. And he mentions another plan similarly conceived, for the Monument de la Reconnaissance Publique to be set in beautiful natural surroundings.⁴⁴⁰ The architect, he claimed, should "put nature on the stage."⁴⁴¹ The Newton Memorial was to stand in the midst of flower beds and cypresses; the great Necropolis placed in an heroic landscape⁴⁴² (fig. 48).

Boullée was fully aware that he aimed at discrepant

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 93, "Ils ont introduit la magie de l'art."

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 123.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 123. On fol. 87 Boullée explains "architecture ensevelie" with "proportions basses et affaissées et enfouies dans la terre . . . le noire tableau de l'architecture des ombres dessiné par l'effet d'ombres encore plus noires."

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 107, "Cet auguste Palais élevé sur l'ancre ténébreux du crime . . . tableau imposant des vices accablés sous le poids de la justice."

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 82, about both projects.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 84, "Oui, je ne saurois trop le répéter, l'architecte doit être le metteur en œuvre de la nature." Similarly, fol. 128.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, fol. 127, about the Newton Memorial. B. N., Ha 55, no. 25, Necropolis.

objectives. How could the elementary geometrical shapes be reconciled with picturesqueness? He lived in the illusion that he was able to reach the impossible, to reconcile the irreconcilable. This is the meaning of his confession at the end of his text:

I had to fear that in taking the way of picturesqueness I might become theatrical. But I was anxious not to renounce that purity which architecture demands. I believe I have circumvented the risk of ambiguity.⁴⁴³

In Boullée's work the old is dead. Hardly any vestige of Baroque forms and Baroque composition is traceable. Even the last stage of Baroque disintegration, the Rococo, is overcome. The elementary forms and simple patterns play a larger role in his designs than complicated or more refined solutions such as were the patterns of compensation and interpenetration which Ledoux favored. Boullée did not follow the various fashions of exoticism, nor was he affected by the functional doctrine of Carlo Lodoli. Interested chiefly in purely artistic problems, he concentrated on monumental projects, where practical concerns could not hamper his ideas.⁴⁴⁴ It was for Ledoux to probe the validity of the newly-discovered principles in buildings of every type: in sumptuous residences and in humble houses for workmen; in the most diversified utilitarian structures and in shrines to serve the humanitarian ideals of the revolutionary era.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, fol. 130, "J'avois à craindre, en employant les moyens pittoresques . . . d'être ce qu'on appelle *théâtral* [this word is underlined by Boullée] et de m'écarter de cette pureté qu'exige l'architecture, et sans laquelle toute production porte avec elle un vice insupportable, que je crois avoir su éviter."

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 110, "Les sujets stériles sont ceux d'habitations."

PART II

CLAUDE-NICOLAS LEDOUX

V. LIFE AND CHARACTER

L'artiste démontre son caractère dans ses ouvrages; les grands intérêts le développent; les événements, suivant la manière dont il en est affecté, l'exaltent ou l'anéantissent.¹

John Soane, whose work was the English parallel to that of Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, may be regarded as a true revivalist; Claude-Nicolas Ledoux as the incarnation of a revolutionary architect. In the case of both architects, the understanding of their characters and of their intellectual backgrounds is more important than any comparison of their work with works of the past. I shall therefore deal at some length with Ledoux' personality before entering upon his highly controversial achievements (fig. 49).

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux was born at Dormans on the river Marne on March 21, 1736.² When very young

¹ C.-N. Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation*, 24, Paris, 1804. Hereafter I shall refer to this edition, as L.; to the second of 1847, most copies of which have 300 plates and an *Avertissement* by Daniel Ramée, as L. R.

² J. C., *Notice rapide sur la vie et les ouvrages de C.-N. Ledoux*, Imprimerie des Annales de l'architecture et des arts, Paris, 1806. This was the main source for the first biography of the artist contained in my *Von Ledoux bis Le Corbusier*, Vienna, 1933, of all the later monographs and of the present book. Levallet-Haug, G., *Ledoux*, 5, Paris, 1934. Raval, M., and J.-Ch. Moreux, *Ledoux*, 13, 38, Paris, 1945, maintain without giving their source that J. C. was Jacques Céliér. Not wishing to be regarded as a plagiarist when I restate certain views of mine which meanwhile others have presented as theirs, I put side by side several passages from my, and from Raval and Moreux', books. More instances of their plagiarism are pointed out in my review, *Art Bulletin* 30: 289, 1948. "Es war um 1800 nicht anders als um 1500. Die Renaissance der Kunst und die Erweckung der Persönlichkeit . . . war das Werk Italiens . . . die Erlösung des bildnerischen Schaffens aus den barocken Bindungen die Tat Frankreichs . . . als Vorkämpferin unserer neuen Architektur" (p. 5). "De même qu'autour de l'an 1500 le réveil de la personnalité . . . avait suscité en Italie un prodigieux essor monumental, on ne peut nier qu'aux environs de 1800 . . . la mystique égalitaire (ait) influé sur l'orientation de notre architecture" (p. 17). "Die Krise . . . wurde fast ausschliesslich in ihren Auswirkungen auf philosophischem, sozialem und literarischem Gebiet erkannt" (p. 5). "il nous (!) semble qu'on n'ait pas suffisamment étudié les répercussions, sur le plan plastique, de la crise révolutionnaire de 89 ou que l'abondance des commentaires philosophiques, sociaux et littéraires les ait trop souvent escamotées" (p. 17). "Grenze zweier Epochen" (p. 6). "deux siècles se rejoignent" (p. 17). "von einer grossen Tradition losgesagt" (p. 12). "rompra avec l'orthodoxe tradition" (p. 44). "Motive des ästhetischen Zusammenschlusses und der sozialen Differenzierung" (p. 14). "cette dualité de l'esthétique et du social" (p. 24). "Sie bezogen die Landschaft in den architektonischen Verband ein" (p. 17). "La liaison entre le construit et le naturel" (p. 50). "Zwiespältigkeit des Gesamtwerkes" (p. 59). "l'ambivalence" (p. 14), etc.—Horst Riemer copied literally many passages from my essay in *Zeitschrift f. bild. Kunst* 63: 38-46, 1929, in the introduction to his paper on Schinkel. This

he went to Paris where he enrolled at the Collège Beauvais on a scholarship. Soon he devoted himself to the art of engraving, and made his living by selling his battle scenes. But before long he decided to become an architect and entered the school of Jacques-François Blondel, worked under Louis-François Trouard, and carefully studied Servandoni's work.³ In the obituary by J. C., a friend or pupil of Ledoux, it is emphasized that the architect had never been in Italy.⁴

The first known works of Ledoux were the novel decoration of the Café Militaire in Paris, which brought him sudden renown,⁵ drals of Auxerre and Sens.⁶ Beginning in the seven-teen-sixties he received an ever increasing number of commissions from prominent members of Parisian society, particularly Madame Du Barry. In 1771 Jean Charles Philibert Trudaine de Montigny, intendant général des finances, appointed him inspector of the Royal Saltworks in the Franche-Comté, which office he held for twenty-three years.⁷ In this post he was active in erecting at Arc-et-Senans, 1775-1779, office and factory buildings, as well as homes for the workmen.⁸ After having been rejected by the Royal Academy of Architecture in 1767 as second class member, he was finally accepted in 1773 and given the designation, as all such members were, Architecte du Roi.⁹ Two years later the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel admired the house which Ledoux had built for Mlle Guimard in Paris, and invited him to his capital. Here Ledoux was fêted by the court according to the report of Simon Louis du Ry, a former pupil of Blondel, and designed a triumphal arch, a palace, as well as a library, none of which was carried out. Discontented with the small remuneration he was receiving, he left Hesse-Cassel

plagiarism is reported in *Ztschr. f. Kunstgeschichte* 4: 189, 1935.

³ L. R., *Avertissement*.

⁴ J. C., 14.

⁵ *Année littéraire*, 6: 282, 1762, "un caffè dont les ornemens nobles et nouveaux font beaucoup de bruit . . . tout y est riche, grand, simple et respire la belle et saine Antiquité. M. le Doux, qui a imaginé cette décoration, annonce les plus rares talens." The decoration consisted mainly of columns composed by arms, and mirrors.

⁶ Bauchal, Ch., *Dictionnaire des architectes franç.*, Paris, 1887. Levallet, 7, 95.

⁷ L., 35, n. 1, "J'étois inspecteur-général des salines en 1771; la défaveur qui portoit sur la célébrité en 1793, n'empêcha pas d'acquitter la dette consolidée par 23 années de services rendus. Depuis, comme Aréthuse, j'ai voyagé sous terre. Quand, comment en sortirai-je?" The report of his travel to Lyon and Eastern France, 43, 44, is, at least partly, fictitious.

⁸ Polti, J., *Salines Royales d'Arc-Senans, Monuments histor. France* 3: 18, 1938.

⁹ *Procès* 7: 320, 321; 8: 167-169.

early in 1776.¹⁰ The German Emperor Joseph II in 1777, and the later Czar Paul I in 1782, on their visits to Paris were shown Ledoux' drawings.¹¹ They sub-

¹⁰ Gerland, Otto, *Paul, Charles, Simon du Ry*, 118, Stuttgart, 1895.

¹¹ L., 32, n. 1; 111. For the travels of the princes, see *Encycl. Brit.*, 14th ed., 13: 151; 17: 395.

scribed in advance to the publication which Ledoux was then preparing, and which was to keep him engaged almost to the end of his life.¹² At the request of Paul I,

¹² L., 1, "Dans la foule des occupations . . . au milieu des agitations dont on a fatigué ma constance; au sein des persécutions inséparables de la publicité des grandes conceptions . . . ; assujetti presque toujours à des calculs rétrécis . . . à



FIG. 49. Ledoux with his family. By Marguerite Gérard. Baltimore Museum of Art.

the engraver Johann George Wille sent to St. Petersburg 273 drawings by Ledoux, 1789. These arrived safely in St. Petersburg and pleased the prince.¹³ Unfortunately, it is not known what became of them, for they have never been located. Between 1775 and 1784 Ledoux built the Theatre of Besançon.¹⁴ In 1784 he was entrusted by the Ferme générale with the construction of the toll houses, the so-called Barrières de Paris. Wishing to create "magnificent propylea,"¹⁵ consider cost, and as a consequence the commission was taken from him in 1789 and transferred to the architect Jacques-Denis Antoine.¹⁶ Ledoux' last important commissions were the Palace for the Governor, the Courts, and the Prisons of Aix-en-Provence. The plans for these projects were approved in 1785.¹⁷ Work progressed very slowly, and in 1790 was finally discontinued because of the Revolution.¹⁸ In 1792 Ledoux was refused promotion to first class membership in the Academy.¹⁹ The political events made him suffer in many ways. In 1793 he was placed in jail²⁰ and barely escaped the guillotine, or, as he termed it, "l'hache nationale."²¹ Rival artists availed themselves of the opportunity to make him suspect. In a poster of the year II of the revolutionary era they warned against him as an intrigant.²² The outbreak of the Revolution deprived him of the last hope of receiving the accumulated payments for work done in the king's service.²³ It is not to be wondered that he welcomed the rising star of

des volontés versatiles qui neutralisent les élans du génie, je n'offrirai point à mes lecteurs de ces projets qui se perdent dans le vague des combinaisons imaginaires . . . j'ai rassemblé, dans une lecture de quelques jours, toutes les richesses des siècles qui nous ont précédés." The first announcement of *L'Architecture* I know of is in Thiéry, *Almanach*, 366, 1784.

¹³ Wille, Joh. Georg, *Mémoires et journal* 2: 159, 163, 167, 199, 201, 233, 234, Paris, 1857. J. C., 6, states that Ledoux worked for Lord Robert Clive(s) Governor of India, and other British aristocrats.

¹⁴ L., 218. Ganay, Ernest de, *Salle de spectacle de Ledoux à Besançon*, *R. art anc. et mod.* 52: 4, 17, 1927.

¹⁵ L., 16, "des bureaux de commis deviennent des Propylées magnifiques."

¹⁶ Frémy, E., *L'enceinte de Paris construite par les fermiers généraux*, *B. Soc. Hist. Paris*, 118, 1912. Vauthier, Gabriel, *Ledoux et les Propylées de Paris*, *B. Soc. Hist. Art franç.*, 69, 1929.

¹⁷ Berluc-Pérussis, L. de, *Ledoux et Chardigny à Aix, Réunion Soc. Bx-Arts départements*, ed. Ministère instruction publique, 26: 193, 1902.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 195. L., 33, n. 1.

¹⁹ *Procès* 9: 317. Raval, 35, ignoring this source, presents pure fiction: "Il déambule dans son atelier désert, attentif aux angoisses de sa femme malade. . . Soudain, un pli cacheté lui apprend son élévation à la 'première classe' de l'Académie." Nicolas Henri Jardin was preferred to Ledoux.

²⁰ J. C., 10.

²¹ L., 230, n. 1, "Je suis interrompu. . . La hache nationale étoit levée, on appelle Ledoux, ce n'est pas moi . . . c'étoit un docteur de Sorbonne du même nom."

²² ". . . le patelin le Doux." Cf. pt. I, n. 308.

²³ L., 33, n. 2, "Tout-à-coup des places obtenues par un long travail passèrent dans des mains sacrilèges: j'ai perdu le fruit de trente années de service honorables."

Napoleon, in whose honor he planned reliefs for the columns of the Barrière du Trône which were to record the Emperor's feats.²⁴ When almost all building activity ceased, Ledoux concentrated on the completion of his publication with true fanaticism. Originally he had intended to set forth the development of architecture through the ages, but his own achievement and his own tenets meant more to him than the accomplishments of his predecessors. So it came about that the one volume which was printed deals exclusively with his own projects and executed works, between 1768 and 1789.²⁵ The book appeared in 1804 under the pompous title *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'Art, des Mœurs et de la Législation*. Ledoux had to bear the expense of its publication out of the remnants of his own fortune, for no publisher had been ready to bring out the strange work with the fantastic projects for an Ideal City and the obscure text.²⁶ He himself composed the *Prospectus*,²⁷ and sent it out to learned societies and acquaintances. In a letter of March 28, 1803 he felt proud of its style and expressed the hope that the work, lavishly produced, would be a success.²⁸ It speaks well for his unbroken spirit in his last years, that he announced in the *Prospectus* the project for a second city.

The publication, which he considered as his legacy to posterity, is a fascinating work, quite unique in all the literature of architecture. The text of 240 folio pages was apparently written in the nineties—partly while Ledoux was in prison—and after 1800.²⁹ Daniel Ramée, son of Joseph Jacques Ramée,³⁰ one of those architects who spread the modern French ideas to the New World, published a second edition in 1847. This was an attempt to restore Ledoux to his rightful place, which "partiality, and superficiality of judgment" had

²⁴ J. C., 13. *Magasin Pittoresque*, 195, 1848, about the completion in 1845.

²⁵ 1789. L., 234, states that pl. 123 was designed 1773, pl. 110 (L.R., pl. 287) bears the year 1778. None of these important dates is recorded by Raval and Moreux.

²⁶ L., 32, "Après y avoir employé mes loisirs et les restes d'une fortune épuisée par l'ingratitude des temps, je me suis déterminé à mettre au jour la première partie de la collection la plus nombreuse que je connoisse; je me proposois de laisser cet ouvrage volumineux à ceux qui me succéderont."

²⁷ Ledoux, *L'Architecture . . . Prospectus*, 25, Paris, 1802.

²⁸ Berluc-Pérussis, 219, letter to the contractor Marigny, of March 28, 1803, "(mon prospectus) est écrit avec énergie et d'un bon ton. On l'imprime, et l'ouvrage est d'un plus grand luxe; je crois que cela fera beaucoup d'effet . . . si mon livre a quelque succès, nous le mangerons." The first words of the *Prospectus* tell of Ledoux' long inactivity, "Je m'éveille comme Epiménide, après un sommeil de douze années."

²⁹ Cf. notes 7, 18, 21. L., 176, has a reference to the death of Calonne, Oct. 29, 1802.

³⁰ Ramée built Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., 1813. Cf. Larrabee, H. A., *J. J. Ramée and America's first unified College Plan*, 5, New York, 1934. The spread of French architectural thought to the New World deserves serious investigation. Richardson, Edgar P., *Way of Western Art*, Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Press, 1939, deals with the problem perfunctorily, with a scant knowledge of the material.

denied him.³¹ Daniel Ramée's edition does not contain the text, nor all the plates of the 1804 edition, but complements it in the most fortunate way with illustrations of many executed works, and several unrealized projects. A survey of Ledoux' life serves as an introduction. It may well be that this collection by Ramée is identical with the designs which Ledoux, before his death, handed over to his trusted friend and pupil, the architect Pierre Vignon.³²

On November 19, 1806, Ledoux passed away.³³ His uncompromising personality does not seem to have attracted many students, in contrast to Boullée who was a successful teacher. I could trace only four of Ledoux' pupils: Pierre Fournerat who showed much promise in his beginnings;³⁴ Jean-Nicolas Sobre,³⁵ the master's fantastic approach; Louis-Ambroise Dubut and Louis-Emmanuel-Aimé Damesme,³⁶ both of whom followed the master's attempts towards a new form.

Ledoux tells little of his life in his verbose composition. His statements, moreover, must be received with much scepticism, for he was fond of fanciful embellishments of real occurrences. The text is often almost unintelligible, even to Frenchmen.³⁷ haps, than a sober report, it is the passionate outburst of a deeply disappointed man, the resentful remembrance

³¹ Ramée, *Avertissement*, on Ledoux, "un de ces hommes qu'une critique partielle et superficielle a jeté dans l'oubli . . . on s'aperçoit aisément qu'il a voulu inventer une nouvelle architecture."

³²

Arts, 6e, année, nr. 36: 591, Nov. 1, 1806, *Annonce* concerning the subscription of the subsequent volumes. *Ibid.*, nr. 41: 665, Nov. 20, 1806, *Nécrologie de C. N. Ledoux*. Par un ami des arts, names as the prospective editors Vignon, "ami et exécuteur testamentaire," Célérier and Damesme. This *Nécrologie* is not identical with the *Notice* of J. C. (note 2).

³³ *Mercur* France 26: 402, Nov. 1806, and *Nécrologie* give November 19 as the day of death, Levallet, 12, Raval, 38, say November, 18. *Nécrologie* adds that on the way to the cemetery of Montmartre the hearse was followed by twenty coaches and many pedestrians.

³⁴ *Procès* 8: 225, 230, 243.

³⁵

Fontaine, 27, Paris, n. d., states that Pierre Fontaine worked under Ledoux.

³⁶

1856, names Dubut as Ledoux' pupil, Damasme as his assistant at the *barrières*. Moreux, 67, knowing only those of Ledoux' circle whom he found in my publications, omits Fournerat and even Damesme. The latter, who followed the master more closely than anyone else, Dubut and Sobre will be discussed in my *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

³⁷

. . . et Ledoux, *Procès verb. Acad. Besançon*, 82, 1925, "rien n'est plus confus et brumeux." Ganay, E., *Salle de spectacle . . . à Besançon, Procès . . . Besançon*, 86, 1927, "un style si obscur." Levallet, 139, cannot find any sense in Ledoux' letterpress. In my review of Levallet, *Kritische Berichte* 1933/1935, 94, I remarked, "(Im) Text mit seinen dunklen Stellen . . . sind viele Sätze von grösster Klarheit." Moreux, with this view, says, "De ce discours proluxe . . . nous extrairons, malgré sa gangue phraséologique, quelques cristaux limpides."

of bitterly felt indignities.³⁸ Fervently defending his own views, he attacks without mercy other peoples' opinions.³⁹ Yet from the outcry of a wounded soul, out of the darkness of the writer's style, emerges into the light a new artistic creed.

Ledoux' *L'Architecture* . . . is both a confession and a legacy. He had been firmly convinced of his artistic mission long before he wrote his text. In a letter of August 24, 1775, directed to the governor of the province of Franche-Comté, Lacoré, he compared himself with the founder of a new faith: ". . . je sçais ce qu'il en coûte pour établir une nouvelle Religion."⁴⁰ The book reveals the architect's personality, and reflects the ideas of the era of Enlightenment, the philosophy of Condorcet, as well as the ideals of Rousseau. Of greatest significance is the new architectural program he sets forth. Many of his statements might serve as an introduction to an architectural textbook of our time.

Ledoux was a true representative of the late eighteenth century. Imbued with the humanistic erudition of his period,⁴¹ he was, nonetheless, an ardent propagandist of new aims, a fanatic and a fighter. When in 1784 he strove to receive the commission for Aix, he was confident of winning, even if he had to fight for it.⁴² Looking back on his life some years later, he complained that too often the circumstances forced him to give in.⁴³ Fully alive to the problems of his day, he did not confine himself to his professional field alone. In his opinion, the architect should be a leader of his community.⁴⁴ Ledoux would have liked to remodel everything. Religious, social, and economic topics, as

³⁸ L., 32, "la gloire que les hommes dispensent n'est jamais en proportion avec le travail qui la procure, elle est comme l'ombre, toujours plus longue ou plus courte que l'objet." 33, "Il vient un moment où l'horizon de la vie ne laisse entrevoir que le vuide du passé." 71, "Pour combler la mesure des maux, qu'obtient (l'artiste)? la permission de vivre." 71, n. 2, "L'artiste a fait un travail infructueux; on a payé l'ouvrier.—O posterité! me vengeras-tu?"

³⁹ L., 12, "J'attaquerai, oui, j'attaquerai les abus accrédités par la servitude des usages qui retardent la science de la distribution."

⁴⁰ Arch. du Doubs, Besançon, C 40.

⁴¹ L., 16, 148, etc. refers to classical authors.

⁴² Berluç-Pérussis, 198, Letter to Mignard, Sept. 14, 1784, "Je suis acoutumé aux tracasseries, je n'ai rien eu en ma vie qu'au fil de l'épée, et cependant tout m'a réussi . . . je me prépare au combat, et je me batray bien."

⁴³ L., 33, "Contrarié toute ma vie, sous tous les rapports, je n'ai rien fait que j'eusse voulu faire; j'ai commencé beaucoup de bâtiments que l'inconstance ne m'a pas permis d'achever. . . . Il semble que cette nation . . . ne puisse atteindre au-delà du provisoire. . . . Ce qui auroit le plus contribué à faire valoir mon ouvrage n'a pas été achevé." To this Ledoux adds a note, "La suspension du palais de justice, des prisons d'Aix a excité mes regrets."

⁴⁴ L., 17, "J'aurois rempli à peine la moitié de mon but, si l'Architecte qui commande à tous les arts, ne commandoit à toutes les vertus. 175, "L'Architecte creuse l'avenir . . . ; il voit par-tout le bien dans l'épuration du système social . . . l'homme de métier est l'automate du créateur; l'homme de génie est le créateur lui-même."

well as questions of hygiene, are dealt with, or at least touched upon in his text.⁴⁵

lege of the architect to concern himself with any issue: ". . . tout est de son ressort, politique, morale, législation, culte, gouvernements."⁴⁶

from prejudice, he did not disdain the experience of the craftsman.⁴⁷ He wanted to serve the highest ideals of the era,⁴⁸ and was concerned with the smallest details of architectural practice, even to the ventilation of the classroom and kitchen,⁴⁹ the convenience of the stable.⁵⁰ His mind was shaped by the leading thinkers of his day.⁵¹

cal vein, from Rousseau he drew the new appreciation of nature and the new ideals in education and physical culture.⁵²

no less to him than a work of art.⁵³ Human compassion, he claims, should extend even to the animal.⁵⁴ *L'Architecture* . . . is the outgrowth of a period of transition, full of contradictions, full of doubt, and full of promise.

⁴⁵ lui qui est né au même instant que le soleil, lui qui est aussi ancien que le sol qu'il habite?" 81, "Les arts d'agrément doivent marcher d'un pas égal avec l'économie politique. . . . De nouvelles habitudes entretiendront le corps et l'esprit dans les usages journaliers qui constituent la force et assurent la santé." Cf. notes 262–265, 369.

⁴⁶ L., 17.

⁴⁷ L., 96, "Qu'est-ce que l'art? C'est la perfection du métier. Le dessin n'appartient-il pas à toutes les classes? Celui qui prend la forme du pied, du corps, celui qui élégantise la chevelure, celui qui cizèle les métaux, celui qui construit les palais, celui qui retrace l'olympie sur les voûtes hardies qui étonnent nos sens; tout est ouvrier." 97, n. 1, "En causant avec l'ouvrier, j'en ai souvent tiré un grand parti."

⁴⁸ L., 63, "Ici la bienfaisance entraîne ma volonté." 102, "Pourquoi ne pas effacer les traces de la pauvreté?"

⁴⁹ school). Similarly, 102, 172.

⁵⁰ avec autant de négligence que l'on en met à la plantation de nos parcs . . . l'animal qui exigerait de nous des soins à raison des services qu'il rend."

⁵¹ celles qui assurent la salubrité aux habitants." These words recall a similar statement of Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*, 1748, others remind one of Rousseau, e.g., 118, "Déjà ce nouveau pacte social reflète par-tout son influence."

⁵² 41, "Egayons le présent, jettons des fleurs sur l'avenir. Déjà un doux vent caressait la terre encore souffrante; la forêt dépouillée se colorait; les oiseaux cimentoient leurs demeures. Au printemps de l'année, au printemps de mes jours, je vois des milliers d'hommes s'associer à mes plaisirs; je les vois élever des pierres immortelles." 78, "Déjà la fraîcheur du matin s'étendait dans la plaine. Déjà la musique des airs se faisait entendre. . . . L'oiseau précurseur du printemps éveillait le voyageur." 102, Ledoux recommande "des exercices salutaires."

⁵³ tons centénaires . . . vaut à lui seul le prix d'un édifice."

⁵⁴ ce que tu dois au monde animal?" 59, a protest against tormenting horses; 172, the expression of disgust with cock-fights.

Ledoux was never to carry out his novel ideas. Only in his designs and in his text could he lay down his progressive views, and cry out against convention.⁵⁵ temporaries ridiculed and spurned him, as the necrologist J. C. relates.⁵

that posterity would recognize in him the artist who redeemed architecture and would, in the end, do him justice.⁵⁷

la satisfaction d'avoir brisé les chaînes qui l'entravent [l'architecture]." ⁵⁸ Many passages reveal his passionate devotion to his work,⁵⁹

he complained that the lifetime of an architect was far too short. Never should he miss a single hour; he must dream in the night of his work in the coming day.⁶⁰ To him, the architect is a "rival of the Creator."⁶¹ In ecstatic moments he had dreams of moving mountains, of drying swamps, of transforming the face of the earth.⁶² No wonder then that in estimating costs, Ledoux disregarded financial limitations, and again and again met with opposition from his patrons.⁶³ Often unaccomplished projects as if he really had carried them

out.⁶⁴ He was faced with adversities all his life.⁶⁵ When his first project of the Saltworks was denounced to Louis XV as a product of mania—"comme une production conçue dans le délire"—he answered with three

⁵⁵ l'excite en l'agitant contre les ruines des chefs-d'œuvre antiques; l'art éclairé se ranime." 9, "je regarderai comme un devoir d'opposer à cette perfide lueur, la lumière vraie des principes destinés à éclairer notre âge." 14, "On perd la vue si on s'accoutume à voir par les yeux d'un autre." 21, "la méthode et la rectitude, le sublime des sots." 96, "un centre d'instruction souvent favorise la manière." 110, "la méthode engendre l'uniformité, perpétue la manière, la resserre dans le cercle étroit des conventions."

⁵⁶ "Tout s'opposait à ces vues anticipées qui prenoient sur le siècle vingt-cinq ans d'avance."

⁵⁷ de son nom." 138, "Racine, sifflé, acquiert l'immortalité."

⁵⁸ 132, "Voulez-vous avoir des idées justes? . . . percez le nuage qui couvre les vérités premières, pour remonter au principe."

⁵⁹ est impatient de faire murir les plantes qu'il a semées . . . et qu'il voudrait cueillir." 34, "celui qui aura sacrifié sa fortune et ses loisirs pour instruire les races futures." 76, "le sommeil n'est pas fait pour lui."

⁶⁰ L., 90, "Le terme de la vie d'un Architecte est si court qu'il n'a pas un moment à perdre. Il faut qu'il rêve la nuit ce qu'il doit exécuter le jour."

⁶¹ L., 95, "l'Architecte, ce Titan de la Terre." 8, "rival du créateur." 103, "Rival du dieu qui créa la masse ronde."

⁶² L. 18, "je transplanterai les montagnes; je dessécherais les marais."

⁶³ Cf the Trésor Royal, Aug. 28, 1789, calling Ledoux "un homme turbulent, et extrêmement dangereux par ses projets extravagants de dépense."

⁶⁴ Cf ⁶⁵ détournées ne conviennent qu'aux caractères peu soutenus, j'ai suivi celle que j'avois tracée."

other versions.⁶⁶ He had a passionate hatred of war and contempt for the chase.⁶⁷ Altogether he appears to have been a lonely man, despising public opinion,⁶⁸ and partaking little in the activities of the Academy.⁶⁹ It does him credit that he was objective enough to appreciate others' accomplishments, even when they were based on principles quite different from his own. He expressed his fullest admiration for the buildings of Jacques-Ange Gabriel on the Place de la Concorde.⁷⁰

Ledoux' bitterness was not entirely justified, for he was entrusted with many commissions, and there were many who expressed the highest esteem for his talents. His teacher Blondel praised his house for the dancer Guimard, and tells of the general praise for Madame Du Barry's Pavillon de Louveciennes. Ledoux' nomination to the Academy appeared to Blondel well deserved.⁷¹ The architect Nicolas Goulet admired Ledoux' inventiveness,⁷² and when in 1800 the curator of the Musée central des arts, Lebrun, was asked by Lucien Bonaparte to name the ten most prominent architects of France, he included among them Ledoux, characterizing him "Homme de génie; imagination ardente."⁷³

Ledoux' artistic development did not progress step by step like a carefully elaborated course in architecture. The outer world was in chaos; old and new ideas struggled for supremacy. Ledoux' inner world, too, was full

⁶⁶ J. C., 5. L., 40, "les délits de mon imagination."

⁶⁷ L., 159, "ces meutes auxquels on attache quelque gloire . . . une armée n'est souvent qu'un rassemblement de coupables envoyé par les dieux vengeurs pour châtier les humains." 212, "Quel misérable triomphe que celui que l'on remporte sur un animal timide."

⁶⁸ L., 23, "Qui pourra juger l'homme de génie, puisqu'il est toujours neuf? est-ce le grand nombre? l'opinion? Cette idolâtre qui se prosterne aux pieds de la divinité du jour, a besoin du temps pour épurer son culte." 150, "toujours isolé au milieu de la foule, il est indépendant du grand nombre; le sentiment intérieur lui suffit."

⁶⁹ This is seen in the protocols (*Procès verbaux*) of the Academy.

⁷⁰ L., 108, "Voyez les colonnes de la place de Louis XV. . . . C'est là, c'est dans ce fastueux édifice que brille le sentiment inépuisable de l'Architecture française."

⁷¹ Blondel, *Homme du monde* 2: 109 f. The Guimard House "étonne par son goût tout nouveau . . . met le comble à l'éloge de l'Architecte . . . M. le Doux. . . . Ses talents l'avoient fait choisir pour remplir une place vacante à l'Académie, je l'en crois très-digne . . . le pavillon de Luciennes [*sic*], qu'il vient de bâtir, est, dit-on, un autre petit chef-d'œuvre." 1: 254, Blondel appears to refer to Hôtel Uzès, finding fault with it and giving a vivid picture how "M. L * * *, jeune Architecte, ne manquant pas de génie," showed him around the house; he blames Ledoux who "se laisse entraîner au torrent, et néglige, ainsi que la plupart de ses émules, les convenances, les proportions . . . vous y verrez un ordre ridiculement colossal." (Here follows the quotation of pt. I, n. 172.) 1: 260, "le jeune architecte vous suit par-tout, lorsque vous venez examiner cet Hôtel, et s'applique à vous faire remarquer qu'il a observé des ornements dans le genre antique . . . qu'il a su enfin s'affranchir de la routine."

⁷² Legrand and Landon 3: 58.

⁷³ Fillon, *Artistes français en 1800, Nouv. Arch. art franç.* 1: 434, 1872, letter from Lebrun, commissaire du Musée . . . , Sept. 24, 1800, with similar praise for Chalgrin, Cellerier [*sic*], Raymond.

of the conflicting and over-lapping tendencies of the time. The works which sprang from this chaos throw new light upon the era itself, which in its artistic aspirations has been thoroughly misinterpreted up to the present.

Ledoux certainly made abundant use of conventional forms. Yet one cannot grasp the meaning of his work by hunting for similarities in the works of Palladio and Piranesi. He himself warned against the critics who confine themselves to comparisons.⁷⁴ He felt proud of having fought the copyists and of having shattered the prestige of the old doctrine and the old models. He wanted the creative mind to depend upon its own thinking, and exhorted the artist to dare in order to overcome the past.⁷⁵

The likeness between so many of Ledoux' works and those of the present time leaves no doubt that he anticipated the future. This does not mean that he originated modern architecture. No one alone ever created a new style. The new would have come into existence even had Ledoux never lived. While Carlo Lodoli was the first, or one of the first, to express the bold ideas of Functionalism, so was Ledoux among the first to visualize a new formal ideal. He believed that the principles which had guided him would last "longer than the pyramids,"⁷⁶ and would make him immortal. Most certainly, he was justified in the choice of the motto for the front page of his *Architecture*, the proud words of Horace, EXEGI MONUMENTUM.

VI. BUILDINGS ERECTED OR PROJECTED

Ignorez-vous ce qu'il en coûte à ceux qui osent changer la masse des idées reçues? ⁷⁷

No consistent development can be traced in Ledoux' dated works. Typical Baroque productions alternate

⁷⁴ L., 23, "La plupart des hommes instruits ne jugent que lorsqu'ils comparent: compilateurs exacts, ils s'appuient sur tous les exemples qui servent de boussole." 25, "Nulle situation n'est féconde pour l'homme stérile."

⁷⁵ L., 34, "j'aurai la satisfaction d'avoir fait tomber (les chaînes). . . . Alors l'Architecte cessera d'être copiste." 123, "L'Artiste bien organisé . . . s'élance au-devant des préceptes; il les dépasse." 137, "Les architectes étudient en Italie les différents monuments . . . au lieu de remonter au principe." 62, "Osez et vous réussirez. Osez; l'exemple que vous donnerez fera éclore de nouveaux préceptes qui épureront les anciens."

⁷⁶ L., 34, "Le principe qui m'a dirigé durera plus que les pyramides." Ledoux' work was still in very low esteem up to twenty years ago. Martin Henry, *Style Empire*, 7, Paris, 1925, "F. Belanger et Charles [*sic*] Ledoux ne sont pas des artistes de grande valeur." Michel, *Hist. de l'art*, 7, 1924, ignores the projects for the Ideal City, Ledoux' main achievement. Du Peloux, Charles, *Répertoire biogr. et bibliogr. des artistes du 18e siècle franç.* 1: 234, Paris, 1930, refers vaguely to Ledoux' "divers ouvrages sur l'architecture," not naming his *only* book. In 2, 1941, he lists a few French publications, but, significantly, leaves out all foreign ones. Mourey, Gabriel, *Tableau de l'art franç.* 3: 18, Paris, 1937, sees in Ledoux' work "une régression du génie français."

⁷⁷ L.,

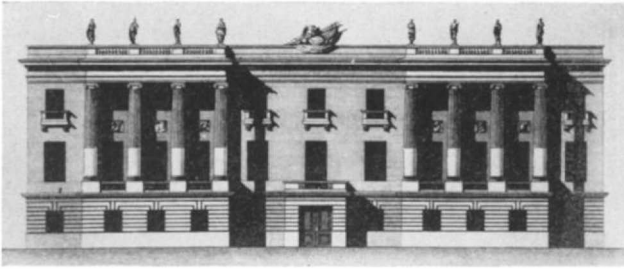


FIG. 50. Montmorency Palace. Alined fronts.

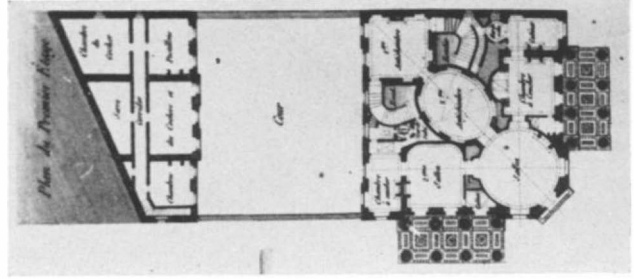


FIG. 51. Montmorency Palace. Plan.

with classicizing ones and with extremely progressive designs. So their arrangement in chronological order would not serve to disentangle the crossing currents. It seems best, therefore, to abandon the chronologer's sterile enumerations, and group the artist's works in stylistic sequence, according to our knowledge of the architectural development of the past two hundred years. For this is the span of time which in one way or another is reflected, or foreshadowed, in Ledoux' work. Parenthetically, may I remark that critics of my former publications were mistaken in asserting that I recognized only the modern Ledoux. I have constantly pointed out the intermingling currents in his work, summing up with the remark that he came from the frontier and

thus was at home on both sides of the border:⁷⁸ in the area of tradition and in the region which he was one of the first to explore. It seems hardly necessary to say that different currents can be traced in almost every design of Ledoux and that my classification is derived from the current most prevalent in each case.

⁷⁸ Kaufmann, *Von Ledoux*, 59, "Er war ein 'Grenzer,' der—und darum ist fast alle chronologische Mühe bei ihm überflüssig—immer wieder von einem Gebiet in das andere hinüberwechselte." Similarly Moreux, 55.



FIG. 52. Uzès house. View.

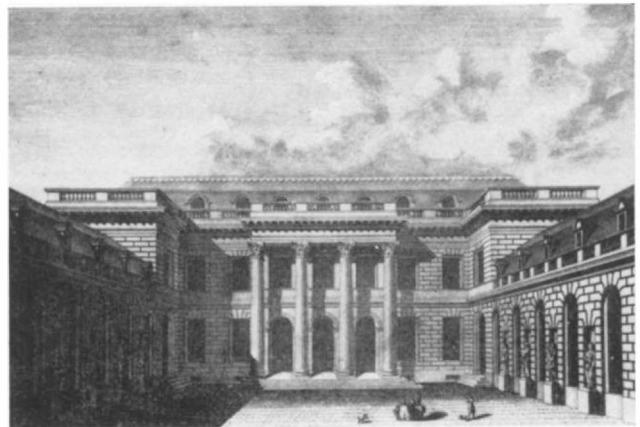


FIG. 53. Uzès house. Court.

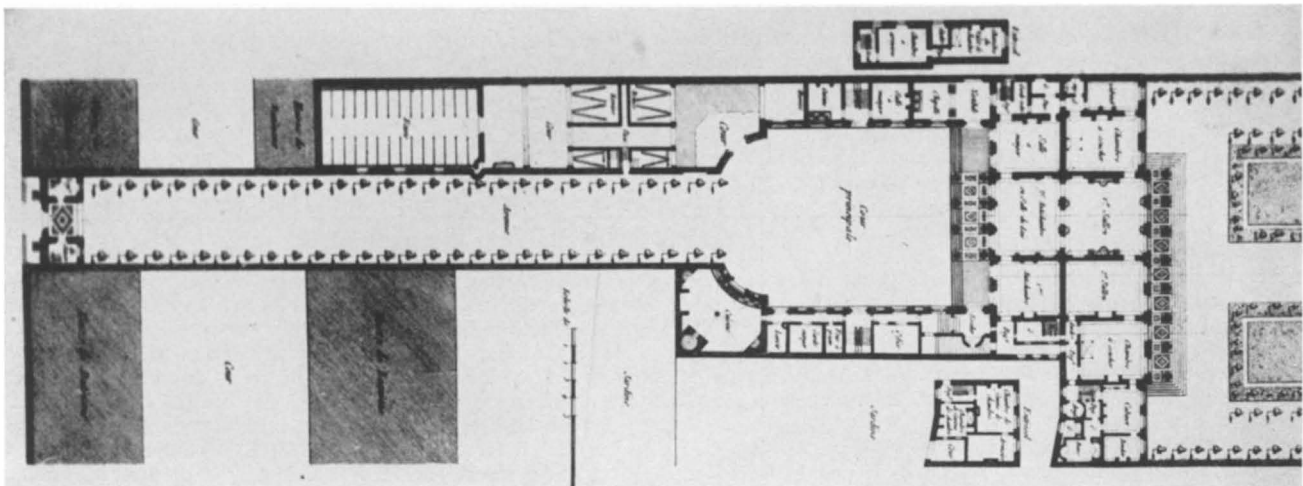


FIG. 54. Uzès house. Plan.

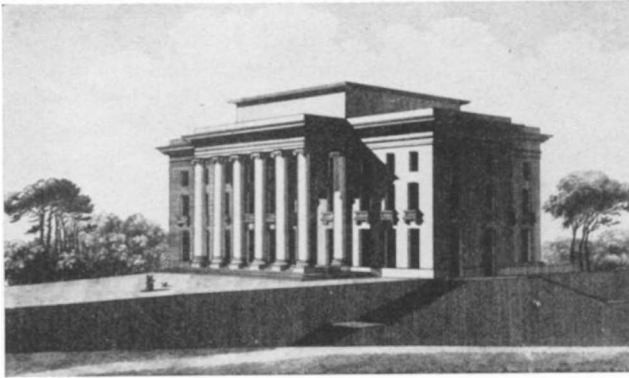


FIG. 55. Castle of Bénouville.

BAROQUE SURVIVALS

In 1770 Ledoux erected the Palace of the Prince de Montmorency, at the corner of the rue Basse-du-Rempart and Chaussée d'Antin⁷⁹ (fig. 50). Its two main stories were tied together by colossal Ionic columns and markedly set off against the rusticated basement. Thus we see on the façade both concatenation and gradation, and, as a further Baroque feature, statues on the roof balustrade. Ledoux did not need to borrow this feature

⁷⁹ L., 175, states 1770. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 360; *Guide* 1: 147. Krafft and Ransonette, pl. XL, dating 1772 in the text. L.R., pl. 159.

from Palladio, for it was very common in the eighteenth century and had often been applied by his teacher, Blondel.⁸⁰ The basic concept of the plan of this Palace was Baroque, too. Ledoux ingeniously adapted the conventional sequence of the main rooms to the corner lot: on each floor, the main axis coincided with a diagonal of the square plan; the principal entrance was situated in the corner (fig. 51).

The Hôtel d'Uzès was built between the rue Montmartre and the rue Saint-Fiacre a few years earlier, in 1767⁸¹ (figs. 52-54). Its plan was conventional, but contained only rectangular rooms. The house stood on a narrow, deep plot. From the monumental entrance, praised by a contemporary as "a wonderful composition," an alley led to the court and the house.⁸² The garden front extended on one side a good deal farther than the court front. When Courtonne built the Hôtel Matignon, 1721,⁸³ he was confronted with a similar situation. He solved the problem by centering each front around its main room, projecting the latter. Thus he

⁸⁰ Blondel, *Distribution* 1: ills., p. 1, 11; pls. 6, 42.

⁸¹ Thiéry, *Almanach*, 365, "remarquable par l'arc de triomphe qui sert d'entrée et par la décoration imposante de la façade . . . par Ledoux." *Guide* 1: 461. Krafft and Ransonette, pls. 75, 76, dating 1767 in the text. L.R., pls. 152-155, 204. *Procès* 9: 143.

⁸² Krafft, J. Ch., *Portes cochères*, 12; pl. 7., Paris, 1810.

⁸³ Blondel, *Arch franç.* 2: pl. 28.

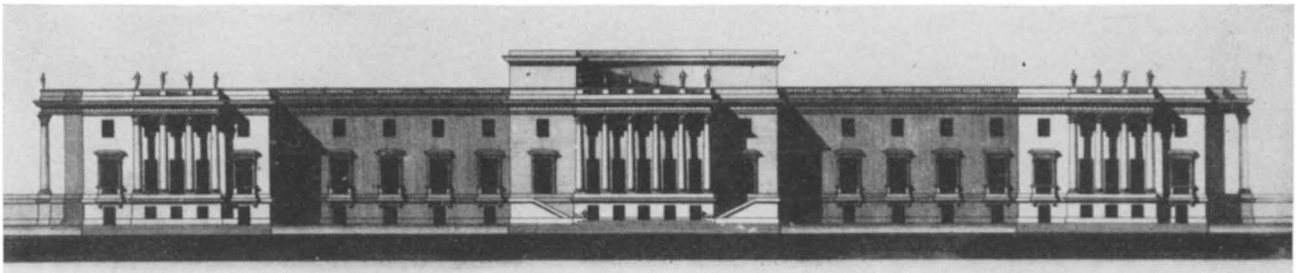


FIG. 56. Palace of Louveciennes.

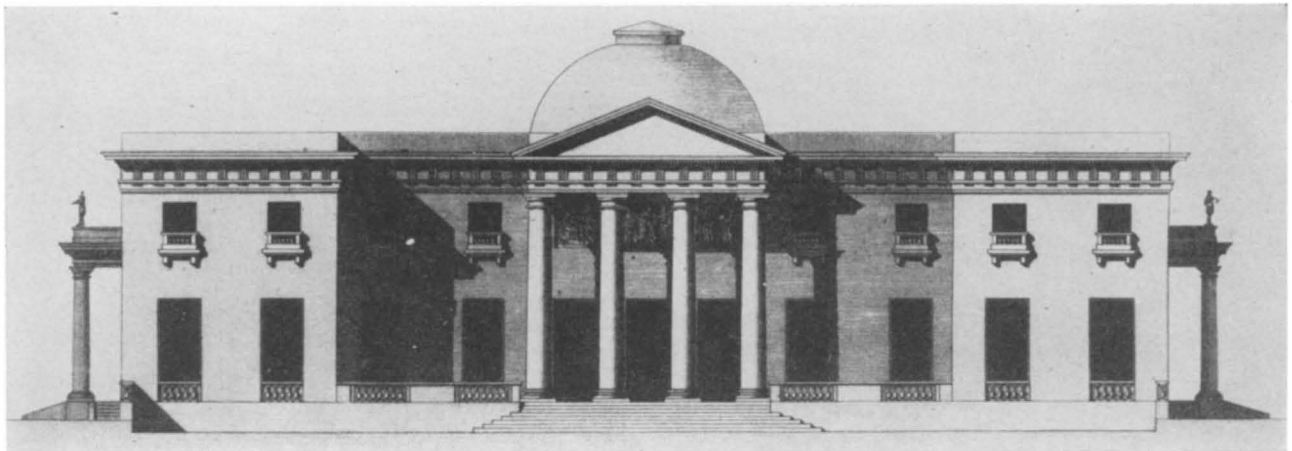


FIG. 57. Château of St. Vrain.

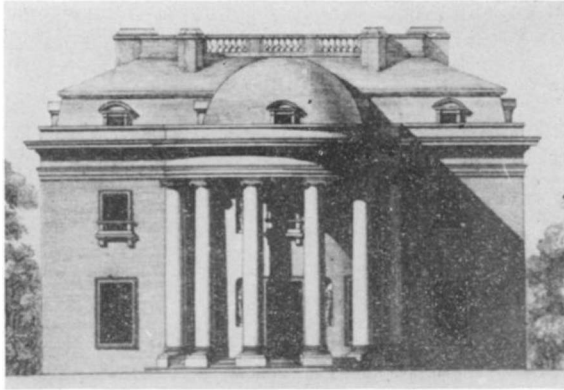


FIG. 58. Schemitt house.

obtained that unity of house and environment which was essential to the Baroque. Ledoux no longer cared about such intimate relationship, he simply veiled the façades with porticoes.

In the still extant blocklike Château of Bénouville, begun in 1768, Ledoux abandoned the Baroque scheme⁸⁴ (fig. 55). Here the staircase in the center

⁸⁴ L.R., pls. 93, 246-250. Soulange-Bodin, Château de Bénouville, *B. Soc. Hist. Art franç.*, 166, 1928. Planchenault, René, Château de B., *Bx-Arts* 16, April 1931. Palladio,

of the garden front disrupts the continuity of the main axis. Again, the central portions are screened by colossal porticoes. The chapel at Bénouville is a rotunda at the far end of one wing, with the altar in its center.

Still somewhat dependent on Baroque patterns were two never-completed residences for Madame Du Barry, the Château of St. Vrain⁸⁵ (fig. 57) and the Palace of Louveciennes, which was begun in 1773⁸⁶ (fig. 56). In both emphasis was laid on the central portions and end pavillions. But the masses were treated in a new way: they were shaped as aggregates of prisms. The Palace of Louveciennes was finished with straight roof-lines, whereas the Hôtel d'Uzès still retained a mansard roof.

So far, we have seen Ledoux clinging to traditional composition, and at the same time, tending to negate it. His Schemitt House⁸⁷ was another specimen combining the old, organic, with the new, geometrical, concept (fig. 58). The plan still shows the centralized arrangement with a vestibule and salon, but in the elevation,

Quattro libri dell'Architettura, Venice, 1570, Bk. I, xxv, is for the *enfilade*. Ledoux sought for new plan solutions.

⁸⁵ L.R., pls. 259-263. J. C., 4.

⁸⁶ L.R., pls. 267-269. On pl. 268 the caption: Bâtiment de Louvecienne. Fondé en 1773 et arreté à la mort du Roi.

⁸⁷ L.R., pls. 282, 283.

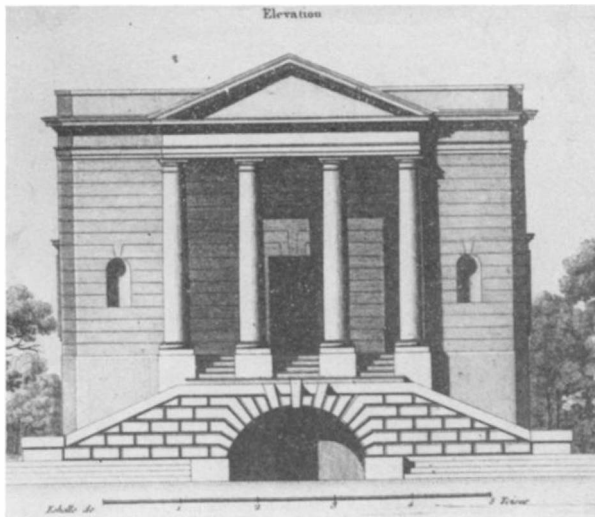


FIG. 59. St. Lambert house.



FIG. 60. House with a belvedere.

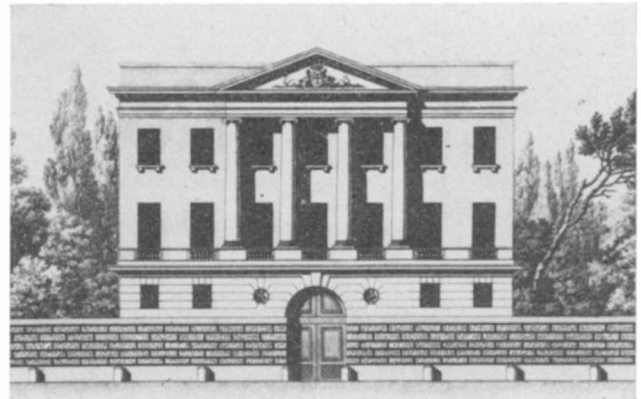


FIG. 61. Mannery house at Salins.

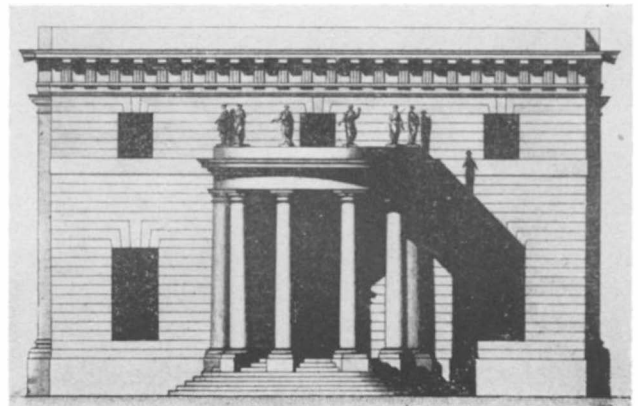


FIG. 62. House with a balcony.

geometrical shapes are set off against each other, with a cylindrical porch, a hemispheric dome, and a block-like body.

THE FASHION OF CLASSICISM

The still extant house of M. de St. Lambert, or de Mézières, at Eaubonne, 1776, represents a less significant phase of Ledoux' development⁸⁸ (fig. 59). Its temple-like elevation is a dull performance of revivalism. No trace of Ledoux' inventive mind can be found here except, perhaps, in the forceful design of the open stairs.

The house of the Chevalier de Mannery at Salins,⁸⁹ is a product of academic classicism (fig. 61). Soon we shall see how ardently Ledoux strove to rid himself of convention and to achieve new solutions.

THE RULE OF GEOMETRY

The Château of Maupertuis would have consisted of a central pile with loosely connected pavilions⁹⁰ (fig. 63). Various features would have distinguished it from Baroque works: the cylindrical belvedere contrasted with the triangular pediment, the almost frameless windows, and the undifferentiated row of arcades on the ground floor. Ledoux planned to add to the castle two very curious outbuildings, which it is doubtful that a patron

⁸⁸ Krafft, J.-C., *Recueil d'architecture civile*, pl. 8, Paris, 1805. L.R., pls. 278bis, 279. Levallet, 32. Raval and Moreux, 26, 53, try to exemplify here Palladio's influence, comparing the house with Villa Ragona which, 237, they mistake for Villa Foscari. Yet one should not overlook the difference between Palladio's pierced and Ledoux' massive walls, nor should one judge the former's houses taken from their context. *Anciens châteaux de France*, ed. F. Contet, ser. 2, Paris, 1914.

⁸⁹ L.R., pls. 280, 281. Raval, 25, "sans doute vers 1776."

⁹⁰ L.R., pls. 251, 252. Moreux, 54, assumes "vers 1780."

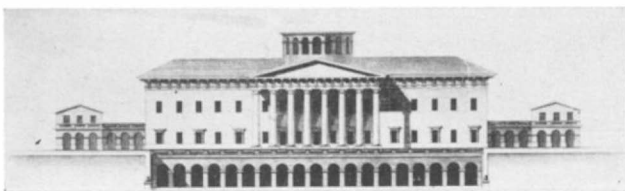


FIG. 63. Château of Maupertuis.

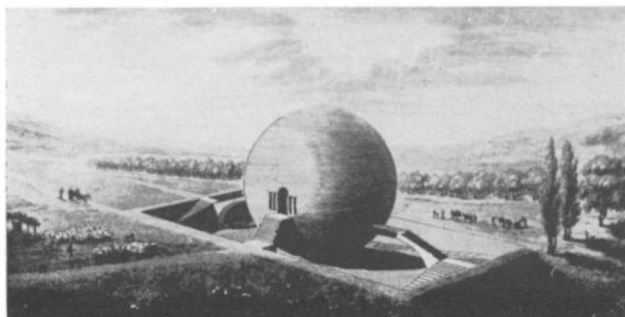


FIG. 64. Shelter for the rural guards.

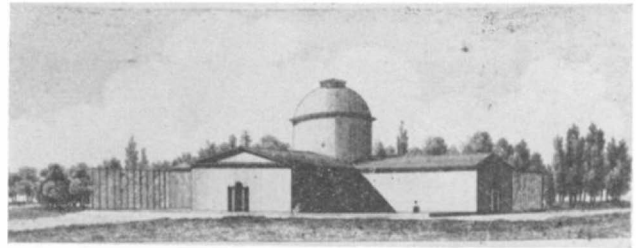


FIG. 65. Pheasantry.

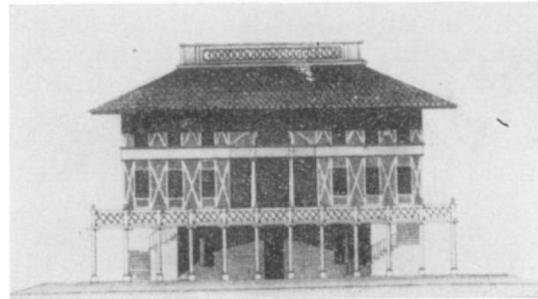


FIG. 66. Monument de popularité.

would have considered. The Pheasantry,⁹¹ designed on the plan of a Greek Cross (fig. 65), in the center is crowned with a hemispheric cupola above a massive drum; the crossarms are prisms with bare walls and Venetian doors. The Shelter for the Rural Guards (Maison des gardes agricoles) is one of the architect's most daring inventions⁹² (fig. 64). He worked out the designs for this Shelter methodically in perspective, plan, and section. It was to have been a complete sphere set in a sunken basin, accessible by four bridges. The ground floor was to contain stables and green-houses; the main floor bedrooms with the kitchen in the center; the top floor, storage rooms. In the Shelter, Ledoux shows an extreme instance of pure geometry.

In the still existing Hôtel de Halwil, which was the first house built by him, between 1764 and 1767,⁹³ at 28 rue Michel-le-Comte, in Paris,⁹⁴ the upper portion is markedly severed from the lower by the strong cornice; the receding center is clearly set off from the sides (fig. 69). The whole seems to disintegrate into single compartments. The rooms are arranged in the freest manner, their sizes and shapes depending exclusively on their practical purposes. The classicising fea-

⁹¹ L.R., pl. 253.

⁹² L.R., pl. 254. Anonymous, *Les bizarreries de Ledoux, Magasin pittoresque*, 27, 1859.

⁹³ L.R., pls. 156-158. Thiéry *Almanach*, 358, mentions the colonnades of the garden front; *Guide* 1: 594. J. C., 4, "Le premier hôtel qu'il bâtit pour le comte d'Halleville lui mérita les suffrages du public et des gens de l'art, et le fit rechercher par les riches propriétaires." Being Ledoux' first Paris house, it must have been erected prior to Hôtel Uzès of 1767.

⁹⁴ Thiéry, *Guide* 1: 594. *Vieux hôtels de Paris*, ed. F. Contet, ser. 15, pls. 35-42; 12, Paris, 1913, remark of H. Soulange-Bodin that the house was started by the family Hallwyl after 1764.

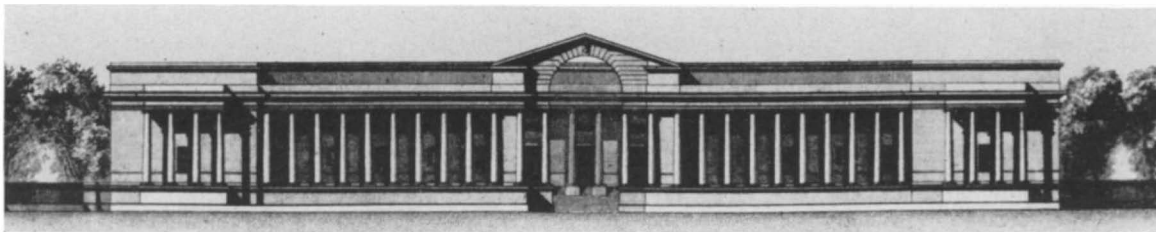


FIG. 67. Du Barry house, planned in rue d'Artois.

tures, such as the columns flanking the door, play a minor role in this building. A new simplicity and clarity has been reached in this house and in Antoine's *Hôtel de Fleury*, 1768,⁹⁵ which belong to the same stylistic phase.

The House of President Hocquart on the rue de Monsieur,⁹⁶ was a cube erected on a nine-partite square (fig. 70). The center was occupied by the very high circular dining room. On the outside the low dome above the dining room was contrasted to the cubic mass; four-columned pedimented porticoes were loosely appended to the fronts.

The staircase of the House of Mlle de St. Germain, on the rue des Porcherons, 1772⁹⁷ (fig. 71), inserted between the salon and the porch, disrupted the continuity of the rooms. On the exterior, the tendency toward cubism had definitely gained in strength. The central portion of the front receded markedly. The high four-columned porch projecting from the recess suggested a smaller block intruding into the larger one. The walls were nude, the windows unframed, the roof flat. The house was far more modern than Gabriel's *Petit Trianon* which, as early as 1765, emphasized the compact cube, but still showed Baroque gradation and concatenation, and even a certain plasticity in the decoration.⁹⁸

Baroque centralization, with a variant of the Palladian motif, characterizes the façade of the project of a *Monument de Popularité*. Here Ledoux was probably experimenting in his search for new solutions. Its framework is unique in Ledoux' work⁹⁹ (fig. 66).

(The term "Palladian motif" appears frequently in the following text. This is the name of a pattern, appearing chiefly in windows (also called Venetian windows) and portals, often used by Palladio, though not invented

⁹⁵ *Vieux hôtels*, ser. 7, 18; pl. 41.

⁹⁶ L.R., pls. 197-199. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 366, "rue de Monsieur, par Ledoux," *Guide* 1: 144. Levallet, 53, surmises 1775-1777. Moreux, 50, erroneously calls the dining room an antechamber.

⁹⁷ L.R., pls. 201, 209, 210. Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 25; with the date 1772 in the text. Legrand and Landon 4: 30, Lefeuve, *Anciennes maisons de Paris*, Paris, 1870, fasc. 15, 3, both dating 1772. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 366; *Guide* 1: 143.

⁹⁸ Kaufmann, *Entwürfe* (see pt. I, n. 380), 39. Ward, W. H., *Architecture of the Renaissance in France* 2: 422, London, 1926, with ill. of *Trianon*.

⁹⁹ L.R., pl. 235.

by him. It consists of two rectangular side lights and a taller, arched, central light.)

When Ledoux erected the residence of the Comte d'Atilly on the rue Poissonnière, in 1780,¹⁰⁰ he gave it the appearance of a block resting upon a podium. The steps ascending from the street to the porch were flanked by projecting aisles containing offices.

The house which Ledoux built for himself in 1780 on the rue des Petites Ecuries, and which later was occupied by the Comte d'Espinchal,¹⁰¹ resembled the house of Atilly very closely (fig. 72). It was distinguished by the semi-circular porch leading into the oval salon. Again the stairs were flanked by aisles with terraces above.

Maison Jarnac, rue des Petites Ecuries,¹⁰² looked like a variant of the Atilly House (fig. 68), but it was erected on a real podium which had a double aesthetic function: it separated the house most definitely from the environment, and repeated its plain cubic shape. By this very repetition the plain cubic form became artistically effective. The house was truly modern with its cool reserve.

In these houses and in the House with a Balcony on the rue Poissonnière,¹⁰³ the porches impart the idea of a small body opposed to the main mass (fig. 62). In the design of House with a Belvedere, also on the rue Poissonnière, standing in a park with statues,¹⁰⁴ the architect contrasts the main block with both the semi-circular porch and the cylindrical belvedere (fig. 60). Here, apparently, Ledoux aims at a new compositional

¹⁰⁰ L.R., pls. 202, 203, rue Poissonnière. A *Maison Ledoux* in the same street, illustrated and dated 1780, in Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 20, and Legrand and Landon 4: pl. 42, is identical in plan and area of the building (10½: 8 toises) with the Atilly House, while the elevation differs slightly, and Legrand (erroneously?) speaks of rue des Petites Ecuries, in his text. Raval and Moreux do not deal with the Atilly House.

¹⁰¹ L.R., pls. 205, 206, rue des Petites Ecuries, named in the Index, *Maison Le Doux*, habitée par le comte d'Espinchal. The same location in Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 32, as *Maison Ledoux* of 1780, and *Saint-Victor* 2: 316. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 366, *Guide* 1: 468, rue Poissonnière. *Guide* adds, "au coin de la rue des Petites Ecuries du Roi."

¹⁰² L.R., pl. 204, without location. In *Table des planches* (index) erroneously called Atilly. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 367; *Guide* 1: 468; and *Saint-Victor* 2: 316, give the location as rue des Petites Ecuries. *Guide* remarks that the houses of Espinchal, Jarnac, Tabari, "d'un genre neuf," were built by Ledoux.

¹⁰³ L.R., pls. 215, 216.

¹⁰⁴ L.R., pls. 199, view, 217, plans, elevation.

pattern, the antithesis of diversified elementary shapes. Moreover, he emphasizes the cylindrical form by presenting it twice: as a columnar screen below, and as a massive solid above. The belvedere reverberates the porch. While the ground plan with its gracious curves and its balance reminds one of bygone times, the contrasts in the third dimension foretell the compositional possibilities of the future.

Ledoux' devotion to elementary geometry manifests itself with particular intensity in the project of the cylindrical DeWitt House¹⁰⁵ (fig. 74). Here the large podium is crossed by a canal and thoroughfare (fig. 73). (We shall find this strange idea of a watercourse passing through a house again in the Château of Eguière

¹⁰⁵ L.R., out this significant "Heimkehr zu den primitiven, elementar-geometrischen Formen." Similarly, Raval, 27.

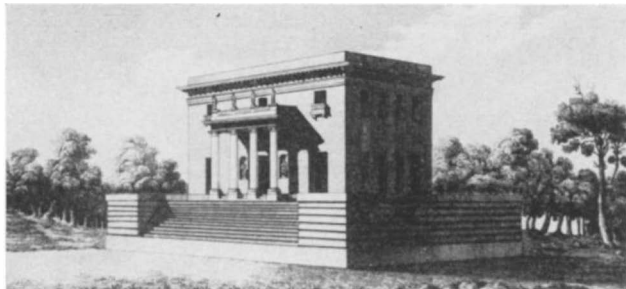


FIG. 68. Jarnac house.



FIG. 69. Halwil house.

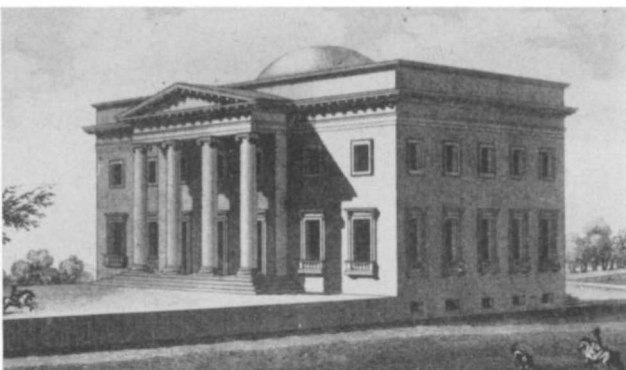


FIG. 70. Hocquart house.



FIG. 71. St. Germain house.

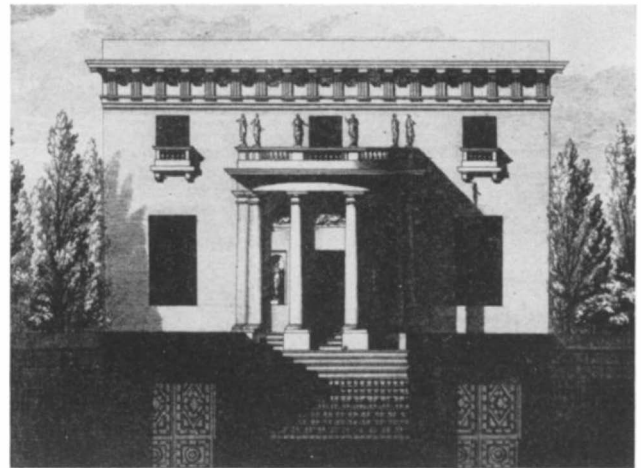


FIG. 72. Espinchal house.

(fig. 90) and the house of the Surveyors in the Ideal City (fig. 198.) Outside colonnades are inserted in the convex walls.

The most famous of Ledoux' residential buildings in Paris was that of Mme de Thélusson, finished in 1780 (fig. 77). Its renown was greatly due to the sumptuousness of the rooms, by which the patron, the widow of a rich banker, wanted to surpass the houses of her social rivals. The grandeur of the architectural accomplishment must have impressed contemporaries, as can be seen from the many comments and numerous engravings of the structure.¹⁰⁶ The house was situated in a park.

¹⁰⁶ L.R., pls. 160-167. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 367, "terminating rue d'Artois," *Guide* 1: 176. Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 71, with the date 1780 in the text. N. Goulet, in Legrand and Landon 4: 9; pl. 36, with the same date, "Chacun applaudit aujourd'hui au goût de l'architecte qui l'a bâti, il y a environ trente ans, et pourtant on peut se rappeler les clameurs du vulgaire à l'époque de sa construction . . . vue au travers de l'arc qui forme un cadre mâle et ferme à son élégante architecture . . . placée à l'extrémité d'une belle rue qu'elle termine par sa décoration pittoresque et théâtrale, elle embellit le brillant quartier de la rue de Provence, et l'architecte lui doit une grande partie de sa réputation."

pls. 193-196. Already

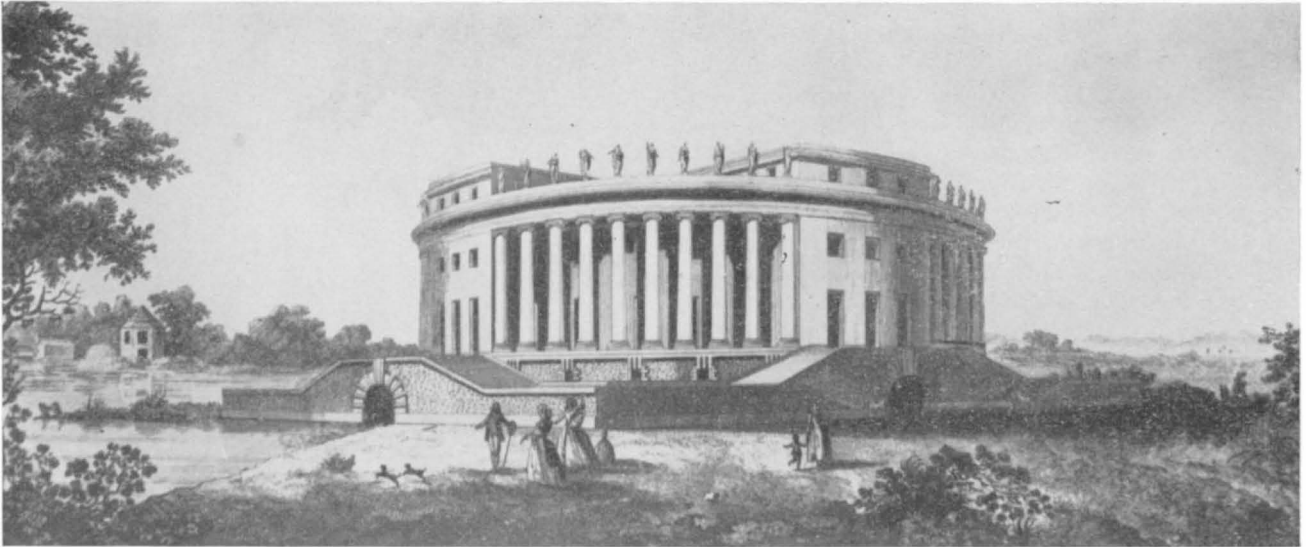


FIG. 73. De Witt house. View.

The main entrance on the rue de Provence was a monumental triumphal arch, imposing in its dimensions and its severity. Heavy rustication gave it a Cyclopean appearance. Beyond the powerful arch, one saw a sunken garden, and beyond that the main structure rising above artificial rocks, which could be reached by two pathways on either side of the parterre. The front of the house was as stern as the entrance. Baroque centralization still lingered in the traditional arrangement of salon and vestibule, and the through-going vistas (*enfilades*) (fig. 79). The court in the rear was closed in by a semicircular arcade and was terminated by a belvedere (fig. 78). Two outbuildings stood apart

from the main house and were formally independent of it.

NEW SURFACE PATTERNS

We have found in Ledoux' work the decline of the Baroque, the rather insignificant symptoms of classicism, and the two trends so characteristic of Boullée's work—the tendency toward grandeur and the introduction of elementary geometry. Before dealing with Ledoux' new compositional ideas let us see whether "Palladianism" really played an important role in his work. Daniel Ramée, who in the mid-nineteenth century found it worth while to bring out a new edition of *L'Architect-*

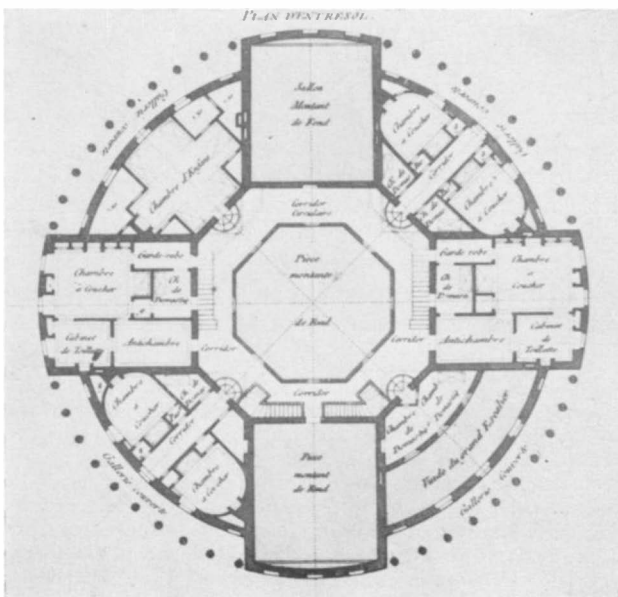


FIG. 74. De Witt house. Plan.

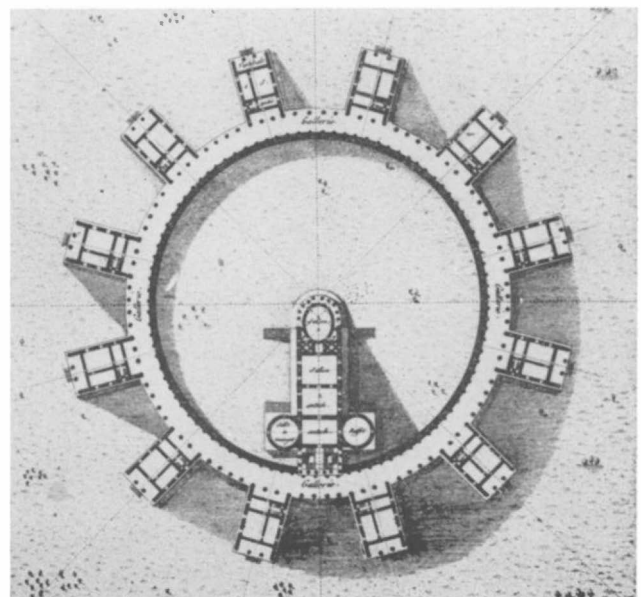


FIG. 75. House of Entertainment.

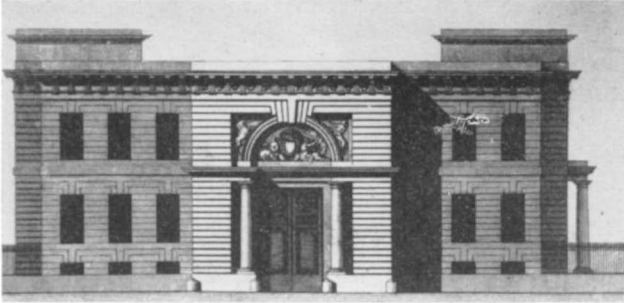


FIG. 76. Du Barry stables.

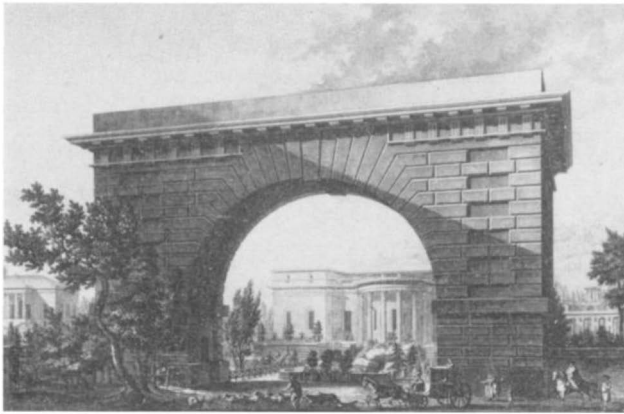


FIG. 77. Thélusson house. View.

ture, emphasized the inspiring influence of the Vicentine master on Ledoux.¹⁰⁷ Ramée's view was taken over by Ledoux' French biographers.¹⁰⁸ The similarity

¹⁰⁷ L.R., *Avertissement*.

¹⁰⁸ Levallet, 28, 32, 34, 42, clings to the vague and worn-out formulas "Palladian, classical" that save the trouble of forming own views on Ledoux' attainments. Raval and Moreux tried to give a better foundation to the old concepts. They see (22, 44, 50, 67) Palladio's heritage in some features, none of which is distinctive of his work. Ledoux did not have to refer to him for the widely used "Palladian" windows, roof balustrades with statues and the colossal order. Any observer not dependent on ready-for-use formulas can see that most of Ledoux' plans are as distinct from Palladio's as possible. The Greek cross in particular, so frequent in Ledoux' work, is exceptional in Palladio's. It is a far cry from the Palladian motif on the Basilica of Vicenza, plastic and exuberant as it is, and thus

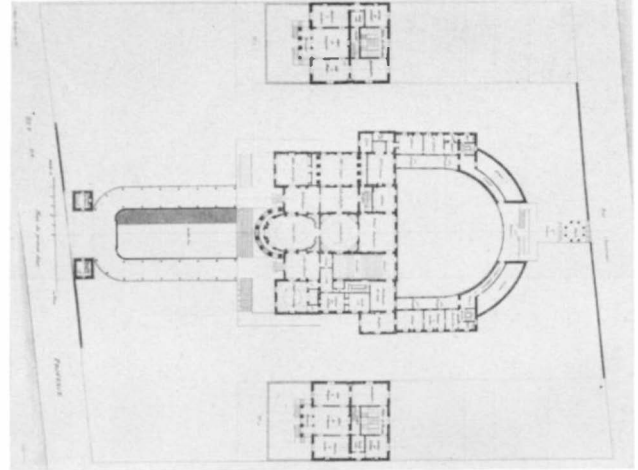


FIG. 79. Thélusson house, plan.

of some few single features in the works of Palladio and Ledoux seem to have misled these critics. One who is aware that Palladio's composition was in a wider sense Baroque¹⁰⁹ cannot overlook the fact that Ledoux was moving in a different direction. In many of his designs little is left of the gradation typical of the schemes of Palladio,¹¹⁰ who applied pediments chiefly to enhance the center of his houses,¹¹¹ and still less is left of the former concatenation.

thoroughly Baroque, to the atrophied motif of Ledoux and his variations of it. Ledoux' remark to which Moreux, 44, 67, refers, says merely that he preferred Palladio's roofs to the mansards. Discussing the castle of Eguière, 54, Moreux exclaims lyrically, "A-t-il pensé à la Brenta?" If the two authors had come across Ledoux' *Prospectus*, they would know how he thought of it: "Ces palais qui se reproduisent dans les eaux limpides de la Brenta . . . qu'ont-ils produit pour la classe nombreuse? Rien." And they might have observed his warning, "L'homme qui se traîne sur les traces des autres, se croit déjà un érudit. Celui qui est plein du sentiment de ses forces, n'emprunte de personne. . . ."

¹⁰⁹ Palladio liked it to make "the middle part higher than the sides" (II, 49, quoted from the edition by Isaac Ware) and he felt that the aisles "like arms come out of the fabrick" (II, 52), or "like arms tend to the circumference" (II, 55). Cf. my Introduction, note 2.

¹¹⁰ See the plates in Palladio's Second Book.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, 48. Very expressive in the original "rende la parte di mezzo più eminente." Similarly, 69, 77.

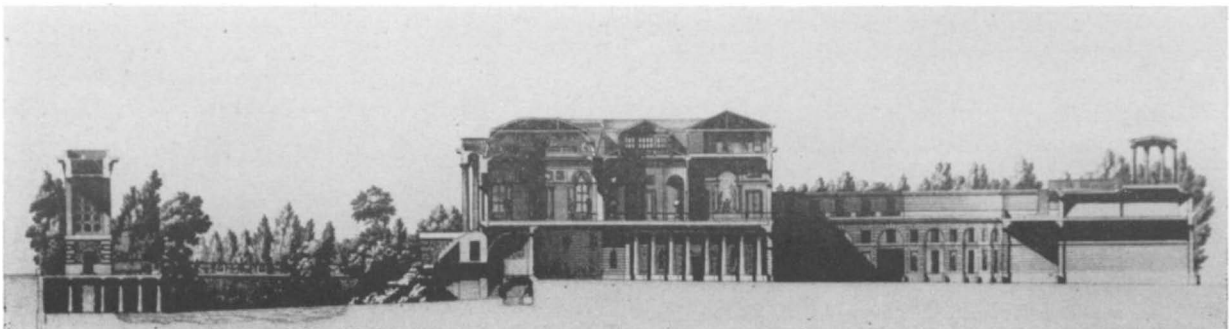


FIG. 78. Thélusson house, section.

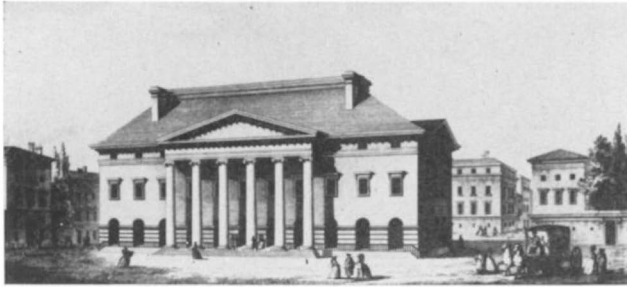


FIG. 80. Town hall for Neuchâtel.



FIG. 81. Theatre for Marseille.

As an example I might cite the residence which Ledoux planned for Madame Du Barry on the rue d'Artois¹¹² (fig. 67). Here we find the colonnades on the long-stretched front, which extinguish almost every differentiation.

The front of the d'Evry house, between the rues Ventadour and Sainte-Anne,¹¹³ likewise reveals a tendency to replace the old hierarchical order by plain juxtaposition of equivalent elements (fig. 82). The center is emphasized only in the pediment; rows of equal apertures appear in the stories below. The scheme for the Lauzon house at Chauvigny en Poitou,¹¹⁴ attempts to establish an entirely new arrangement of the façade (fig. 83). This house consists of three stories and a garret. The garret window and the entrance door below enhance the center but slightly. Just as Ledoux disrupted the main axis of several of his plans by interposing the staircase between the principal rooms, he now tears apart the vertical main axis by inserting a loggia all along the front of the third floor and replaces the old harmony of the fronts with a new principle. There is neither harmony nor balance between the stories. Instead, there is *tension*, the result of the uneven spacing of the rows of variform windows. In the well-balanced Baroque façades any possibility of tension had been forestalled.

¹¹² L.R., pls. 168-172. Like all the work for Mme Du Barry, designed in the early 1770's.

¹¹³ L.R., pls. 207, 208. In *Von Ledoux*, 13 f., 38, and my *Stadt des Architekten Ledoux, Kunstwiss. Forsch.* 2: 159, 1933, I spoke of the end "der barocken Hierarchie," and "der Rangunterschiede in der Architektur." Raval, 28, adopted this view, "Il ignore la hiérarchie des genres."

¹¹⁴ L.R., pl. 284.

Their parts were interrelated and never showed that condition of deceptive calm, with underlying unsettled conflicts, which was to become a main characteristic of twentieth-century architecture.

NEW WAYS OF SPATIAL COMPOSITION

In his search for new spatial solutions, Ledoux became the true precursor of the twentieth century. In ever varying attempts he wanted to present buildings: as aggregates of interpenetrating masses; or as crossings of volume and mass; or as piles of stepped off units (motif of contrasted sizes); or as assemblages of incongruous elements (motif of contrasted shapes).

The pattern of interpenetrating masses appears in many variations in Ledoux' works, beginning in feeble essays and ending in forceful, outspoken solutions. We may recall that this was one of the modern patterns which Blondel had condemned so explicitly.¹¹⁵

About 1783 Ledoux was asked to submit plans for the Town Hall of Neuchâtel (not carried out)¹¹⁶ (fig.

¹¹⁵ See pt. I, n. 146.

¹¹⁶ L.R., *Avertissement*, "vers 1783"; pls. 37-40. Levallet, *Hôtel de Ville de Neuchâtel, B. Soc. Hist. Art franç.* 1: 89, 1933.

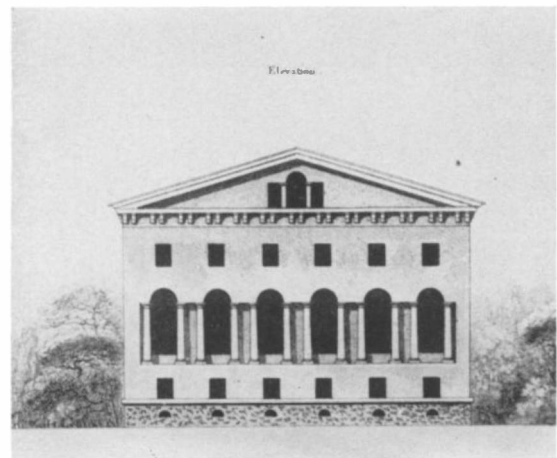


FIG. 82. Evry house.

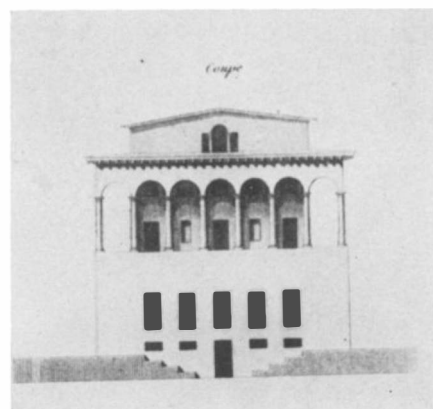


FIG. 83. Lauzon house.

80). He designed an oblong block with six-columned Ionic porches on each main front. The façades remind one of the Lauzon House, where the openings were spaced in such a way that the wall between them was full of tension. In Town Hall it is the spatial pattern which is the most remarkable element, rather than the surface pattern. Here we see the side pediments intimating the intrusion of a secondary block into the main body.

Virtual interpenetration of two blocks is even better visualized on the still existing Theatre of Besançon, 1775-1784,¹¹⁷ for the secondary block here is more emphatically projected (fig. 85). Ledoux' letters to Governor Lacoré,¹¹⁸ as well as his later comments on this project in the *Architecture*,¹¹⁹ reveal that at this time it was his intention to present something absolutely new in this theatre. The new ideas he advocated for the interior were not entirely his own, for he followed some suggestions of Blondel,¹²⁰ and rediscovered some advantages in the theatres of the An-

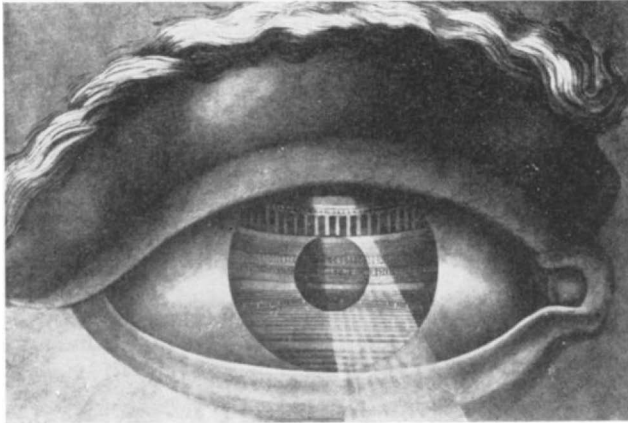


FIG. 84. Theatre of Besançon, glimpse of the interior.

cients¹²¹ which Cochin, Arnaldi, and Dumont had already pointed out.¹²² He gave the audience hall semi-circular form and replaced the boxes by amphitheatrical balconies; he provided seats in the parquet to eliminate the disturbance caused by people standing there;¹²³

¹¹⁷ L., 218, begin of work, 1775; pls. 113-122. L.R., pls. 72-81. See notes 14, 37.

¹¹⁸ Archives du Doubs, Besançon, C. 40.

¹¹⁹ L., 217-234.

¹²⁰ Blondel, *Cours* 2: 265, 266, "la salle devrait être circulaire ou elliptique . . . il seroit bien de supprimer ce qu'on appelle Loges, pour n'y pratiquer que des galeries continues, qui, dans leur hauteur, feroient retraites les unes sur les autres . . . de faire un parquet où seroient placés des gradins, moyen d'empêcher le tumulte . . . d'établir l'orchestre des deux côtés au lieu de le placer entre le Théâtre et la salle."

¹²¹ L., 224, "des cercles progressifs que nous applaudissons chez les anciens."

¹²² Cochin, C. N., *Voyage d'Italie* 1: 21; 3: 184, Paris, 1758. Arnaldi, Enea, *Idea di un teatro*, Vicenza, 1762. Dumont, G. P. M., *Parallèle de plans des plus belles salles de spectacle d'Italie*, Paris, n. d. Dumont's own theatre is dated 1763.

¹²³ L., 219.



FIG. 85. Theatre of Besançon.

and removed the orchestra from its place between stage and audience, making it invisible to the public.¹²⁴ Ledoux wanted these changes for both practical as well as aesthetic reasons. He preferred the uninterrupted sweep of the balconies to the "cage-like" boxes, and asked for restraint in decoration.¹²⁵ In front of the top ranks he arranged a row of columns similar to that in Palladio's Teatro Olimpico. One of his engravings, presenting the audience mirrored in a big eyeball, reveals his propensity for the unusual (*Coup d'œil du Théâtre de Besançon*)¹²⁶ (fig. 84). Reverting again to the exterior we note that Ledoux planned the sloping roof to be concealed by a parapet, for the northern climate did not allow for a flat roof, which he would have preferred.¹²⁷

About the time Ledoux completed the Theatre of Besançon, he designed another, the Theatre of Marseille for which not he but Charles-Joachim Bénard received the commission¹²⁸ (fig. 81). Ledoux' mighty porch of eight columns carries a quadriga over the entablature. Again, the spatial and surface patterns are of greater significance than the reminiscences of antiquity. On the side fronts, rows of small square windows above are contrasted with alternating Venetian windows and tall rectangles below. The lateral projections look like intersecting blocks. (The house presented by Louis Hauteceur as a theatre by Ledoux,¹²⁹ and mentioned by another French publication as a city gate by Lequeu,¹³⁰ was the home built by the architect Belanger for himself.)

¹²⁴ L., 220, "L'orchestre (in the old theatres) est placé dans la salle: quelle incohérence de conceptions!"

¹²⁵ L., 219; "des cages de bois"; 220, "la magnificence des lignes non interrompues"; 232, "La salle n'admet aucune décoration que celle des spectateurs." Cf. pt. I, note 385.

¹²⁶ L., pl. 113.

¹²⁷ L., 225, "une balustrade qui soustrait aux yeux des hauteurs destructives de l'ordre."

¹²⁸ L.R., pls. 82-88. *Procès* 9: 138, 201, about the projects on which the Academy passed judgment in 1784. The theatre was finished by Charles-Joachim Bénard in 1787.

¹²⁹ Hauteceur, Louis, *L'exposition d'architecture française de Strasbourg*, *Gaz. Bx-Arts* 1: ill. p. 155, 1922. Cf. Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 4. Jean Stern, *Belanger* 1: ill. p. 210.

¹³⁰ *Reproduction des grands ouvrages d'architecture du 18e siècle*, ed. Armand Guérinet, pl. 108, Paris, n. d.

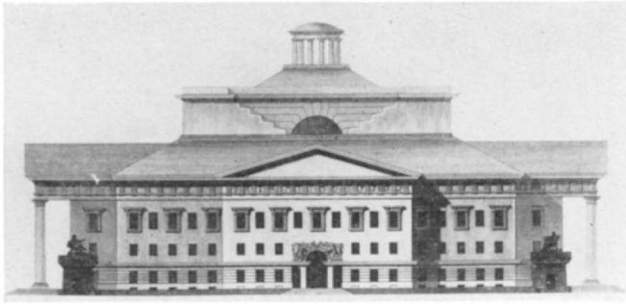


FIG. 86. Court house for Aix.

The pattern of interpenetrating blocks stands out with great distinctness in the Stables of Mme Du Barry, at Versailles, 1773¹³¹ (fig. 76), with blocks intruding on both the main front and the sides.

The concept of interpenetration can be perfectly realized on the Greek-cross plan. Ledoux had a predilection for this plan type, as can be seen in many instances, especially in the projects for Aix-en-Provence.¹³² The Palace of the Governor of Aix shows a central cylindrical dome emerging from the cross-shaped body¹³³ (fig. 87). Similarly, in the Courthouse, the upper masses seem to burst forth from the larger lower blocks¹³⁴ (fig. 86). In this huge pile we begin to see the great possibilities latent in the concept of interpenetration.

The plan of the Prisons of the city of Aix,¹³⁵ is a square with four inner courts (fig. 88). The architect intended to dramatize this structure by various contrasts: heavy towers project from the four corners, barrel vaults over the porches seem to intrude into the big cube. Two rows of tiny openings run along the bare walls, one high up, the other at a considerable distance below. Here we see tension on the surface, and antagonism in the masses. The overwhelming grandeur of this design discloses the character of its creator; the dramatic quality reflects the spirit of the period. There must have been greater forces at work behind this crea-

¹³¹ L.R., pls. 173, 174. Jarry, Paul, *Guirlande de Paris* 2: 1, Paris, 1931, gives the date.

¹³² *Procès* 9: 164. See note 17.

¹³³ L.R., pl. 43, 64.

¹³⁴ L.R., pl. 53.

¹³⁵ L.R., pls. 60-64.

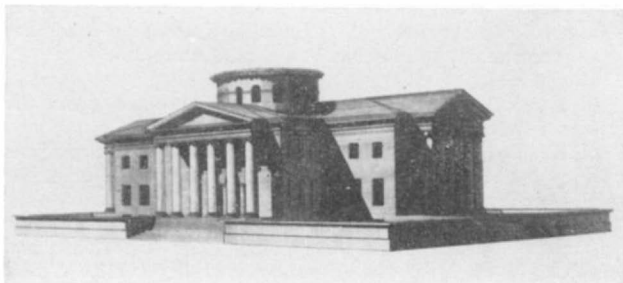


FIG. 87. Palace for the governor of Aix.

tion than mere archaeological curiosity.¹³⁶ It gave Ledoux much grief that he could not carry out the structures for Aix.¹³⁷ Posterity, too, cannot but regret that such an original, yet simple, and powerful work as the prisons remained unexecuted. A weak copy was the prison at Brussels by his pupil Louis-Emmanuel-Aimé Damesme, in 1813.¹³⁸

In the Episcopal Palace of Sisteron,¹³⁹ the pattern of interpenetration is expressed in an extremely strong way, without impairing the self-contained character of the whole structure (fig. 89). The edifice rises like an erratic block on the plain. Its cross-arms, ending abruptly in the porches, find neither response nor continuation in the environment. Nor is there any interrelation between the elements of the structure itself, the belvedere atop and the masses below.

The plan of the Château of Eguière¹⁴⁰ is a Greek cross, the angles of which are filled in with additional rooms (fig. 90). The curious thing about this house is that it is planned to sit astride a canal. The disposition of its masses alone was not enough for Ledoux.

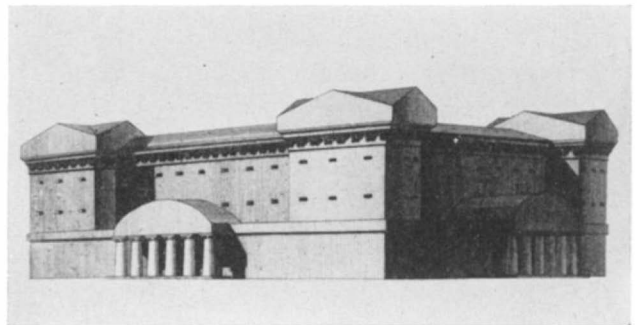


FIG. 88. Prisons for Aix.

He pierces the substructure by a watercourse—hardly for any practical reason, but surely so as to express with extreme intensity his cherished pattern of interpenetration: "Chacun a sa manière de sentir, de s'exprimer. L'homme élevé . . . ne compose pas avec le moment, il suit l'impression qui le domine."¹⁴¹

In the project of the Chapel of Bourneville,¹⁴² vaulted corridors cross the substructure. On their intersection, in the center of a circular hall, the altar is situated, lighted by the height of the dome. Obviously the artistic intention here is simply another version of interpenetration.

¹³⁶ Levallet, 110, classifies, "d'un style assyro-égyptien." Raval, 26, surpasses this simile by conjuring up the architecturally rather unknown entrances to Dante's Hell and the abode of the Minotaurus.

¹³⁷ Ledoux, 22, n. 1.

¹³⁸ Goetghebuer, P. J., *Choix des monuments des Pays-Bas*, 13, pl. 20, Gand, 1827.

¹³⁹ L.R., pls. 65-68. Levallet, 102, assumes that the Palace was carried out between 1780 and 1785.

¹⁴⁰ L.R., pls. 255-258.

¹⁴¹ L., 16.

¹⁴² L.R., pl. 296.



FIG. 89. Palace for Sisteron.

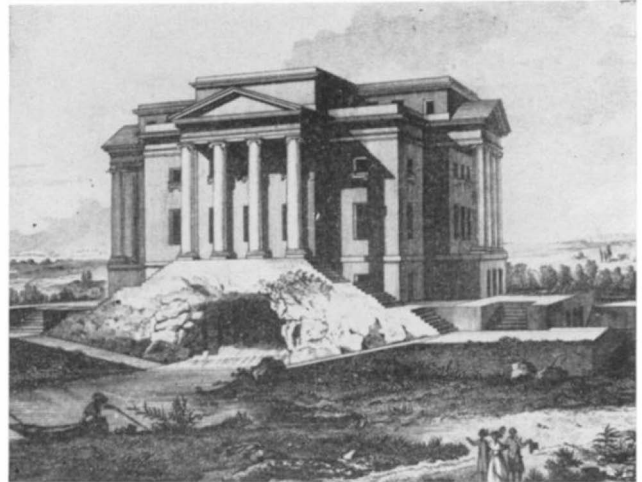


FIG. 90. Castle of Eguière.

The still existing Pavillon de Louveciennes, built for Madame Du Barry in 1771,¹⁴³ became famous for its interior decoration, to which many excellent artists contributed, among them the painters Fragonard and Vien, and the sculptors Felix Lecomte and Augustin Pajou.¹⁴⁴ (Some of Fragonard's panels representing the Romance of Love and Youth are now in the Frick Collection in New York) (fig. 91). The entrance hall, the dining room, and the salon are arrayed on a main axis in the traditional manner. The house itself is an oblong block with a protruding porch. The form of the semi-cylindrical entrance hall has a special significance, in that it hollows out the block and thus visualizes space (fig. 92). At about the same time Robert Adam favored niches screened with columns. I don't think there was an interdependence between the two architects.

In 1770 Ledoux erected on the Chaussée d'Antin the "Temple of Terpsichore," as a gift of the Maréchal de

¹⁴³ L.R., pls. 270-272. Krafft, *Recueil*, pl. 1. Cayeux, Jean de, Pavillon Du Barry à Louveciennes et son architecte Ledoux, *R. art anc. et mod.* 67: 223, 1935.

¹⁴⁴ Portalis Roger, Peintures décoratives de Fragonard et les panneaux de Grasse, *Gaz. Bx-Arts* 2: 483, 1885. Cayeux, *loc. cit.* 68: 35.

Soubise to the dancer Guimard¹⁴⁵ (fig. 93). Its plan was distinguished by the free asymmetrical disposition of the rooms. The upper part of the slightly projecting porch towered high over the building, like a smaller block superimposed on the main block. Its most conspicuous feature was the spherical vaulting above the entablature of the porch. Here the concept of contrasting volume with mass was unmistakably expressed. (Niche-like porches occur frequently in Neufforge's designs.¹⁴⁶) The elliptical theatre added to the house reminds one of the interior of the Theatre of Besançon.

The semicircular porch of the Tabary house, at the corner of the rue Poissonnière and the rue des Petites Ecuries,¹⁴⁷ opened in a huge Palladian motif (fig. 94). The void of the niche which played a minor role in the

¹⁴⁵ L.R., pls. 175-177. Krafft and Ransonnette, pl. 49, with the date in the text. Anonymous, Haus der Tänzerin Guimard, *Dtsche. Bauzeitung* 48: 569, 1914. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 365; *Guide* 1: 146. Bachaumont, Louis de, *Mémoires secrets*, 3: 287, London, 1784, gives the date 1768.

¹⁴⁶ Neufforge, J.-F., *Recueil d'architecture*, suppl. pls. CXXXIX, CXL, CXLVI, Paris, 1767.

¹⁴⁷ L.R., pls. 200, 201. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 367; *Guide* 1: 468. Saint-Victor 2: 316, rue des Petites-Ecuries.

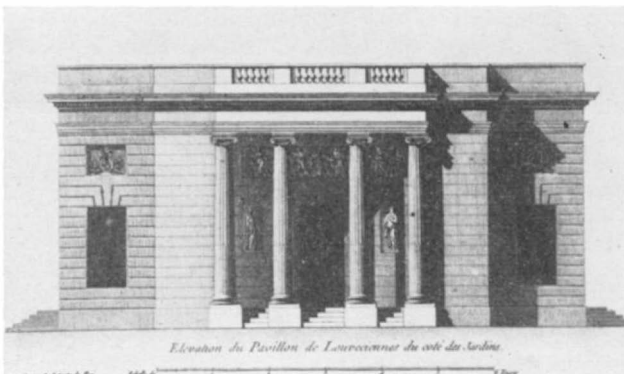


FIG. 91. Pavillon de Louveciennes.

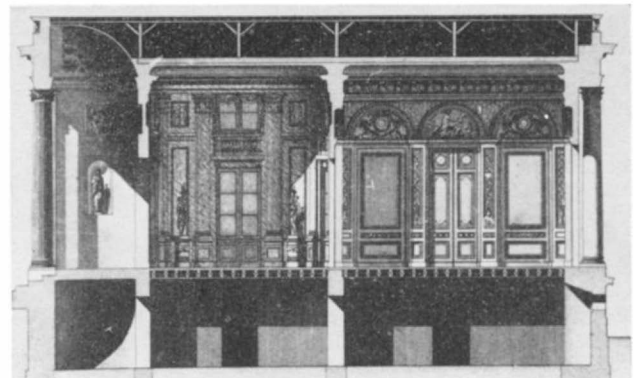


FIG. 92. Pavillon de Louveciennes, Section.

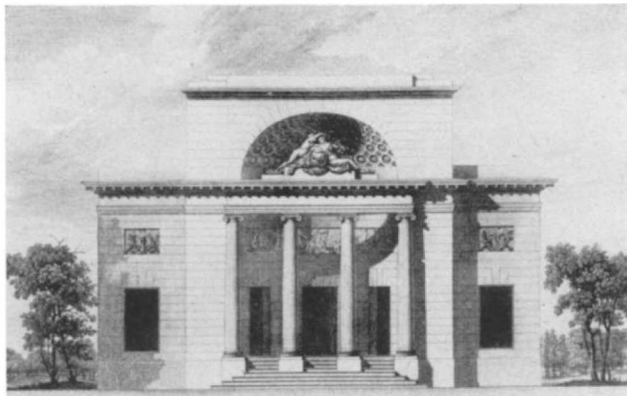


FIG. 93. Guimard house.

Pavillon de Louveciennes, played a greater role in the Guimard house: it is now the decisive factor.

In 1783, Ledoux designed the Storehouse for Salt at Compiègne (today Fish market)¹⁴⁸ (fig. 96). Its partly extant entrance is an enormous niche running up almost to the gigantic brackets under the cornices. Here, however, Ledoux dispensed with screening columns. He could achieve greater monumentality by presenting the niche openly. It is a simple matter to observe Roman reminiscences on the Guimard house, or to point out the Greek models of its columns. Such superficial observation will not lead to a better understanding of Ledoux, however. We must rather go behind the traditional forms to perceive his own architectural thought which is so clearly expressed in the new spatial and surface patterns.

Having seen how Ledoux grappled with the problem of bringing spatial effects into plain blocks,¹⁴⁹ we begin to comprehend the significance of a feature like the lunette over the portal of the Halwil house¹⁵⁰ (fig. 69) and the frequent application of sunken panels in general, about 1800. Today, glass construction permits the concept of volume versus mass to be presented far better than was possible in former times. Let us not fail to observe that this artistic ideal preceded the technical potential, just as eighteenth-century cubism preceded the era of concrete.

A further method for visualizing the third dimension was the superposition of blocks of diminishing sizes, the concept of the terrace house. An instance of this method is the project of the Lauzon house¹⁵¹ (fig. 83); a more outspoken example, the project of the château

¹⁴⁸ L.R., pl. 106, 107. Levallet, 75.

¹⁴⁹ In this connection I might refer to the garden front of Hôtel de Valentinois (later, de Mlle Mars). Thiéry, *Guide 1*: 143; Jarry, in *Vieux Hôtels*, ser. 18, pl. 1; and Lefeuvre, fasc. 15, p. 3, tell of Ledoux' work on the house, which, however, seems to be by Visconti, after Normand fils, *Paris moderne 1*: pls. 53-56, Paris, 1837, and Krafft, J.-C., *Choix des plus jolies maisons de Paris*, pls. 3-5, Paris, n. d.

¹⁵⁰ See n. 94.

¹⁵¹ See n. 114.

of M. de Barail¹⁵² (fig. 97). The latter is a four-storied, stepped building on a rectangular plan. The ground floor and a mezzanine formed one block carrying a terrace. Out of the center of this rise the second and third floors, topped by a belvedere. The aspect of the whole is that of a stepped building. One might again interpret the structure as an instance of reverberation of a large block by smaller ones, or as an instance of vertical interpenetration (telescopic effect). How we put it does not matter, the essential thing is to recognize the artist's idea. His intention was a pattern of antithetical elements. It seems obvious that Ledoux was not motivated by the "zoning" laws when he created this new form, and we are safe in concluding that he was inspired by an aesthetic ideal.

The square, subdivided into four courts, became one of the most popular plans for public buildings in the nineteenth century. On this concept of the sub-divided square, about 1783 Ledoux designed an office building for the Ferme Générale, between the rues de Grenelle

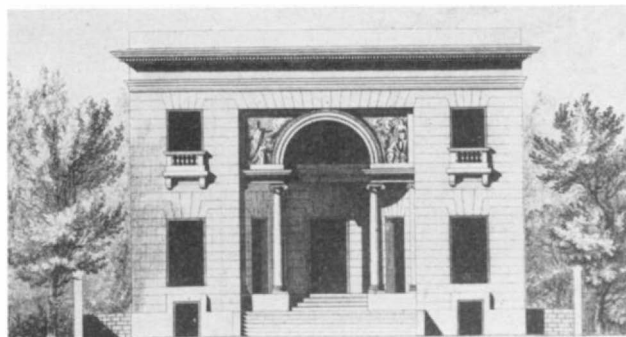


FIG. 94. Tabary house.

(today, rue Rousseau) and du Bouloi.¹⁵³ But he developed from this scheme something considerably more sophisticated (fig. 95). His primary idea was to set off the main body from a sturdy podium with monumental portals. The podium alone was a full square, while the upper three stories rose only above the central cross and there were only two side wings. This scheme recommended itself from a practical point of view. By giving up a few rooms, Ledoux obtained more light and air for all the others. Of greater interest is the artistic solution: interpenetration of masses (three structures crossing the central structure); interpenetration of volume and mass (the intruding courts); and the superposed belvederes.

¹⁵² L.R., pls. 264-266.

¹⁵³ L.R., pls. 95-100. *Avertissement* states that Ledoux was nominated architect of the *Fermes* in 1782. Thiéry, *Almanach*, 358, 1784, says, "D'après les travaux commencés par M. Ledoux pour la reconstruction entière de cet Hôtel, on peut juger que ce bâtiment présentera une masse imposante. La corniche . . . annonce un caractère mâle, ainsi que les portes d'entrée." *Guide 1*: 320.

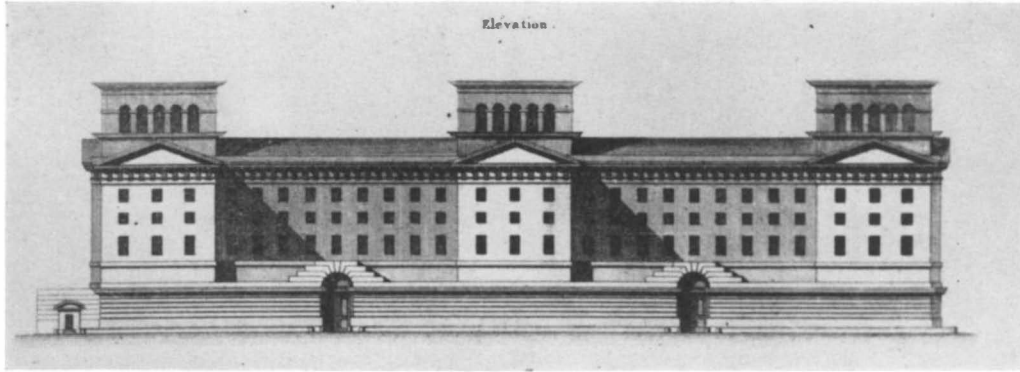


FIG. 95. Hôtel des Fermes.

Strange incongruities appear in the project of the Library of Hesse Cassel, 1775¹⁵⁴ (fig. 99). The Library is a cube with a superposed low block crowned by a columned, domed belvedere. The latter has so little connection with the main mass that, if it were re-

¹⁵⁴ L.R., pls. 89-93. Gerland, 118.

moved, the whole would rather gain. This accumulation of incongruous features represents the first stage of the process of decomposition, which soon was to affect the entire body. Ledoux had definitely parted from the traditional concept of unity.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Moreux, 44, remarks "unity" in *all* productions of Ledoux. But the latter's occasional praise of *unité* (L., 10) should not

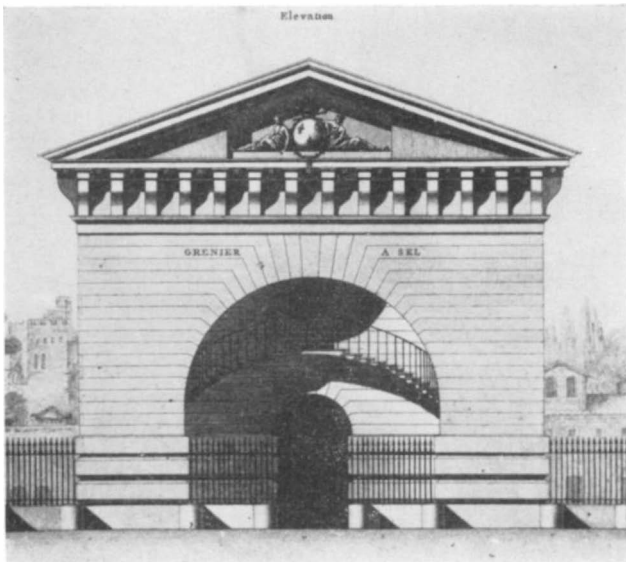


FIG. 96. Storehouse at Compiègne—Grenier à sel.

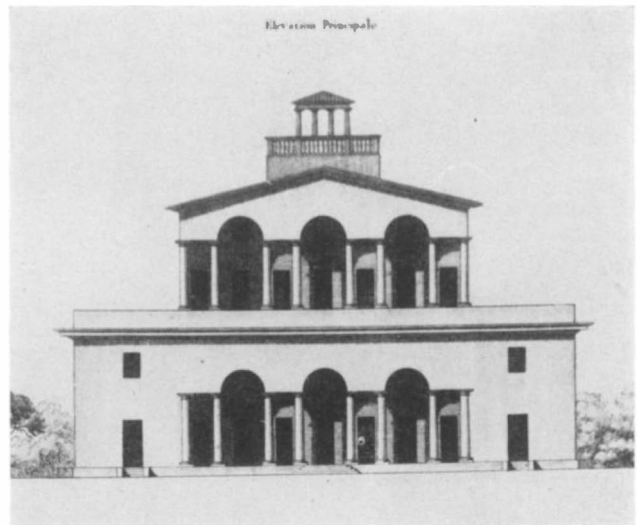


FIG. 97. Barail house.

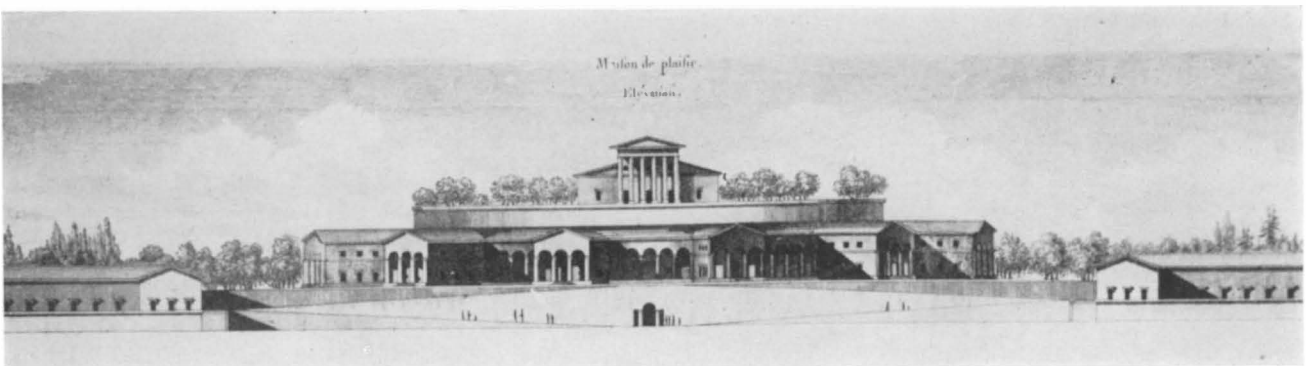


FIG. 98. House of Entertainment.



FIG. 99. Library for Hesse-Cassel.

The project for the Rural School of Meilliand¹⁵⁶ was planned as a Greek cross building on a square substructure (fig. 100). Whereas the Rotonda of Palladio,¹⁵⁷ or his Villa Trissini,¹⁵⁸ presented "integral wholes,"¹⁵⁹ the Rural School consists of unrelated upper and lower portions. The substructure, moreover, is not a compact mass but a vast open hall on arcades.

Decomposition of the whole is the chief characteristic of the project of a country house in the Parc de Bellevue¹⁶⁰ (fig. 101). The plain block opens in an arcade; oversized stairs are loosely appended to it; a columned belvedere is awkwardly set on top of the roof. The house is a piecemeal composition in which the elements have won more independence than the whole can put up with. Traditional buildings were com-

mislead us. He, and his progressive colleagues, passed from this concept to a new one, "die freie Vereinigung selbständiger Existenzen," as I said, *Von Ledoux*, 17, adding, 19, "Das ist ein hauptsächlichlicher Wesenszug des neuen Systems." Similarly Raval, 24.

¹⁵⁶ L.R., pls. 288–291. Pl. 288 is "Gravé par Picquenot and Ransonette l'an 3^{em}" (*sic*).

¹⁵⁷ Palladio, Bk. II, iii.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, II, xv.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, I, i, "uno intiero, e ben finito corpo."

¹⁶⁰ L.R., pl. 285. Levallet, 37, finds the belvedere on top "simply useless," while Raval and Moreux do not deal at all with this unusual and highly significant composition.

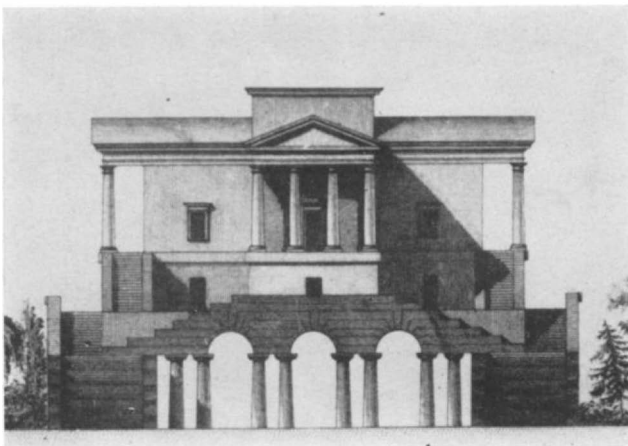


FIG. 100. School of Meilliand.

posed of ruling and subaltern parts. Here, every part represents insubordination.¹⁶¹ Architecture is in full revolution.

Discrepancy of upper and lower parts also characterizes the project of a house on the rue Neuve de Berry¹⁶² (fig. 102). Its basic idea is the unrelated juxtaposition of the cubic house with the semicircular substructure in front of it. Yet this whole complex with the dominant horizontals looks far more composed than the disrupted houses of Meilliand and Bellevue. The stage of temporary restoration of the old "order" was reached in architecture sooner than in politics. Further struggle for the new ideals in both fields belonged to the future.

THE IDEAL OF INDIVIDUALISM

Thus far we have traced the vicissitudes of Ledoux' development in his designs of single buildings. It now remains to deal with groups of buildings, and with his two greatest projects: the tollhouses of Paris, called *barrières*, and the Ideal City. In 1788, when Ledoux was asked by the Minister of Finance, Jacques Necker,



FIG. 101. House Parc de Bellevue.

to plan a Discount Bank on the rue d'Artois,¹⁶³ he submitted two schemes, neither of which was carried out. The first shows a central oblong block with a Tuscan porch, and two cubic houses on the sides, all in heavy rustication (fig. 103). Each could exist independently when taken out of the group. The second project presents a four-square building surrounded by a low colonnade and topped by a receding attic (fig. 104). Sentry boxes are placed symmetrically at some distance. The plan of the second project is very practical: the center

¹⁶¹ This design is the outcome of a trend which can be traced back in England much earlier than in France. Already Robert Morris, in *An Essay in Defence of Ancient Architecture*, 88, London, 1728, wrote, "There is a daily Application of combined Force to destroy that Beauty, Sweetness, and Harmony united in the Composition of Ancient Architecture." The English eighteenth century development will be discussed in my *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

¹⁶² L.R., pls. 211–214. Moreux, 51, believes that Ledoux took the plan from that of a curia in Piranesi's map of the Campus Martius, thus degrading the utmost original master to a second-rate copyist.

¹⁶³ L.R., pls. 101–105, with the location on pl. 103.

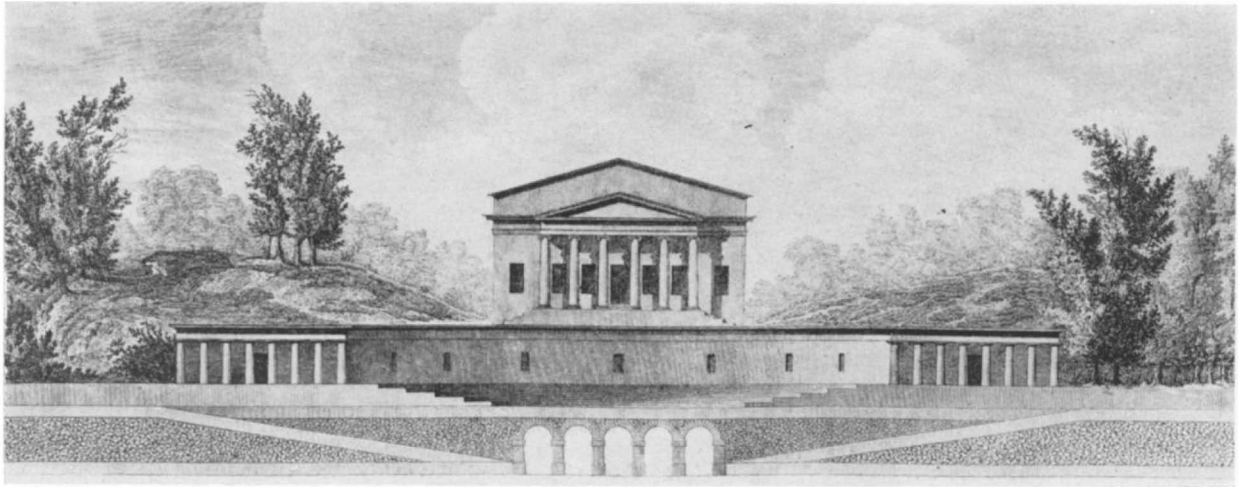


FIG. 102. House rue Neuve de Berry.

of the square is occupied by a circular hall for the transaction of business, communicating conveniently with the various offices around it.

From the simple juxtaposition of independent elements Ledoux proceeded to the grouping of equivalent units on variegated geometrical plans. The House of Entertainment (*Maison de plaisir*)¹⁶⁴ was planned as a circular colonnade from which twelve two-storied casinos would have projected radially, while the principal building was to be located within the colonnade (fig. 98). The complex was to be surrounded by a square garden with coachhouses in the four corners (fig. 75).

For the Farmhouse de la Roche Bernard, Ledoux made two plans, each based on the Greek cross. The

¹⁶⁴ L.R., pls. 238, 239. This design, missing in the 1804 ed., should not be considered as belonging to the *Ideal City*, nor should Moreux, 64, speak of the *megaron* form of the houses, for they have two stories, each with three rooms, and many windows.

one with the legend *Bergerie* is rather plain, with the main house in the center, and with outbuildings placed at different points of the cross-shaped court.¹⁶⁵ The other with the legend *Ferme parée* shows a complicated pattern of rectangular and polygonal forms.¹⁶⁶

The Gate of the Parc de Bourneville¹⁶⁷ is a further curious instance of Ledoux' experiments (fig. 105). Two small circular structures form the bases for tall columns, a central oblong house bridges the road between them.

In the Saiseval House, rue de Bourbon,¹⁶⁸ Ledoux expressed the interrelation of the three houses standing on a common podium, not in the old way of frames of reference, but merely by the repetition of the single

¹⁶⁵ L.R., pl. 297.

¹⁶⁶ L.R., pl. 300.

¹⁶⁷ L.R., pls. 292-295.

¹⁶⁸ L.R., pls. 189-192. Raval, 34, dates the house 1786, Moreux, 51, 1788. Today, this street is rue de Lille.

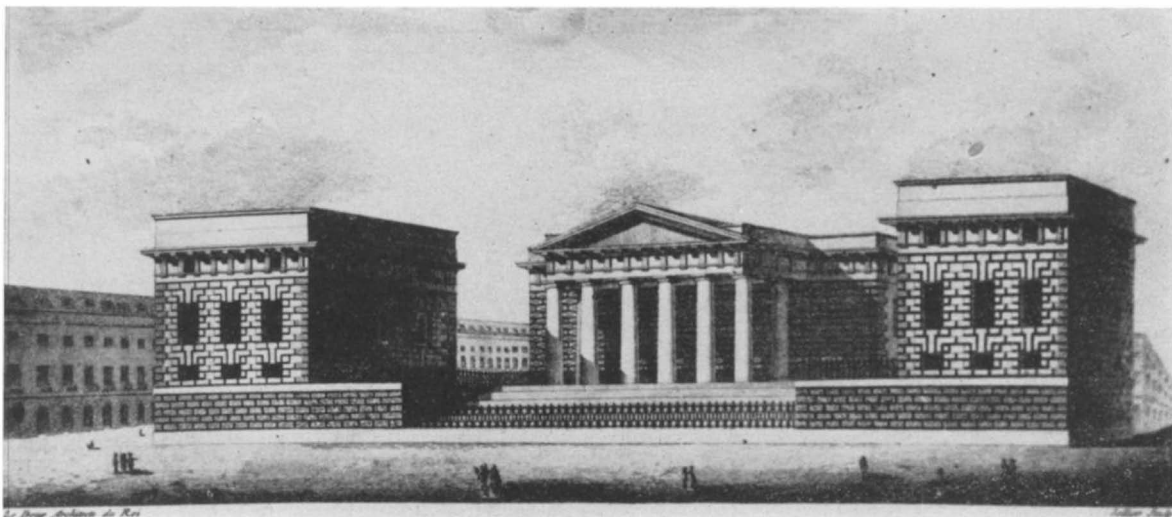


FIG. 103. Discount Bank, 1st project—Caisse d'Escompte.

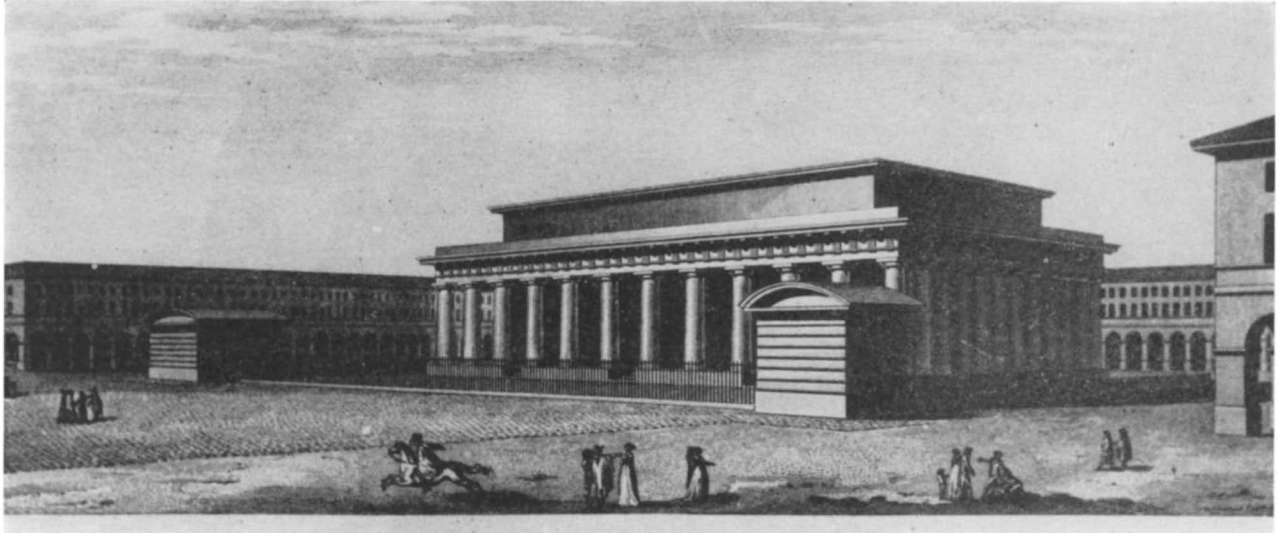


FIG. 104. Discount Bank, 2nd project.

features: porches, Palladian motifs, domes, and open stairs¹⁶⁹ (fig. 106). This extremely refined pattern of

¹⁶⁹ Many times, beginning with my essay in *Rep. f. Kunstwissenschaft* 64: 219, 1924, I pointed out the significance of the gridiron plan in Ledoux' and Durand's works, declaring this scheme to be a noteworthy new start in planning. Raval and Moreux accept this view. Yet they are mistaken in finding, 34, 51, the pattern on the Saiseval House, and praising it as a new solution. Looking closer at the layout, they could see that Ledoux did not think, here, of a checkerboard arrangement, of eight houses, but presents the group of three buildings with small coachhouses twice, in front and in the rear of the plot. There are not "huit blocs égaux." Ramée says, "se composant de trois pavillons," and the view reveals, unmistakably, an ensemble of three houses with the main accent on the central one. Raval and Moreux apply the concept they borrowed to the wrong place. Still more curious is that Moreux, 45, already finds the gridiron scheme in the sixteenth century. Were

repetition of independent motifs has its own history, which I plan to discuss in a forthcoming book on the entire eighteenth century development.

this correct, then he, 51, could not speak of Ledoux' "nouvelle solution." But the drawing he refers to has nothing to do with architectural planning. It is the well known figure of a man, reproduced in many Vitruvius editions, to demonstrate the theory of exemplary proportions. To make the point clearer, the draughtsman of the Cesariano edition, 1521, set the figure off against a system of coordinates. This superficial similarity makes Moreux think of a *plan craticulaire*, without questioning the meaning of the design. Moreover, the Renaissance theory to be set forth with this figure, is diametrically opposed to the concept of the gridiron plan. The latter means *geometrisation*, the former, tending toward *humanisation* or *organisation*, wants the architectural "body" related to the human body.

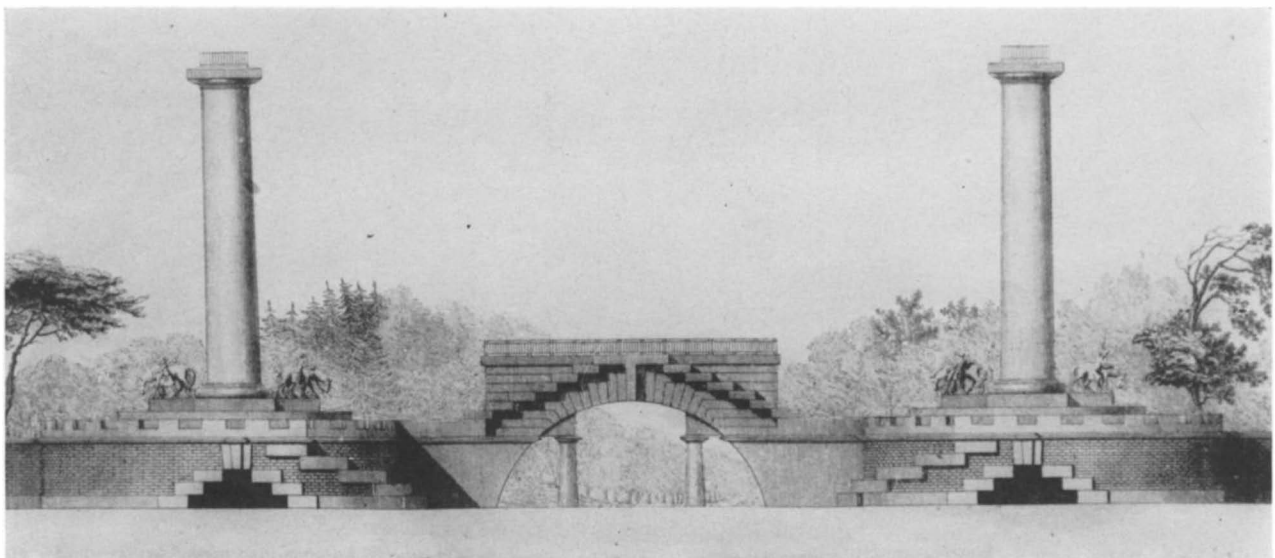


FIG. 105. Gateway of Bourneville.

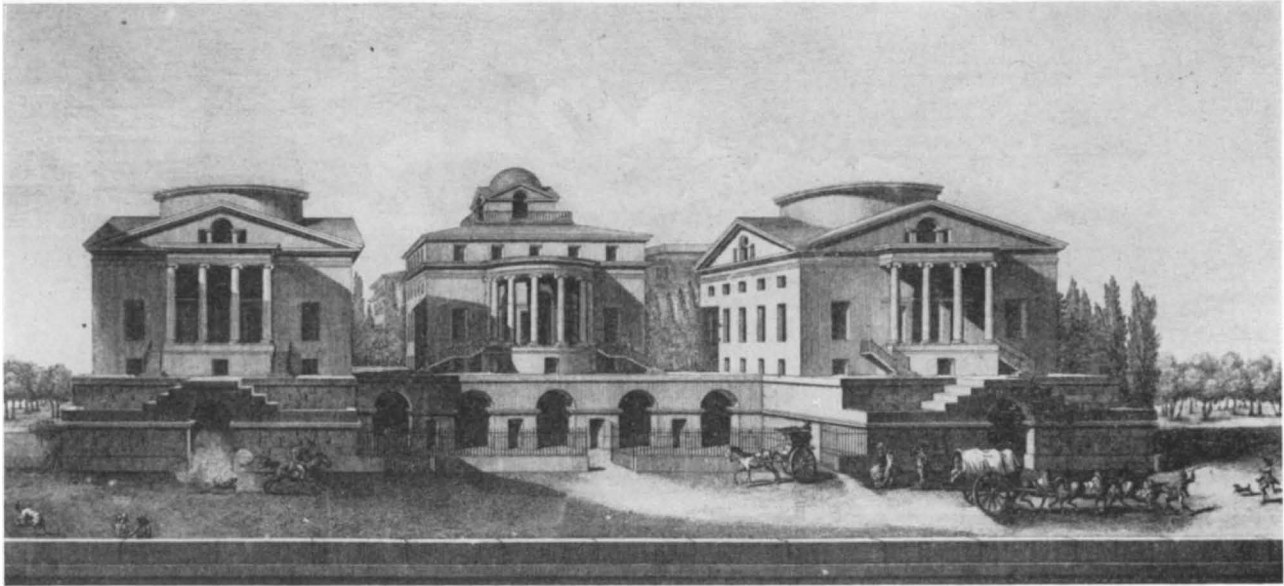


FIG. 106. Saiseval house.

The Commercial Building (Maison de Commerce), on the rue St. Denis,¹⁷⁰ was planned on a nine-partite square (fig. 107). Here again there is much reciprocity between the single features, but no formal interplay.

Ledoux' last opportunity to present his creative power came to him through a man of the New World. About 1787 the American Hosten asked him to build a private residence for him on a large corner lot on the rue Saint-Georges (fig. 109), and fourteen other houses to be rented.¹⁷¹ Rather than dwell on the single plans which prove Ledoux' inventiveness in practical solutions, I

¹⁷⁰ L.R., pls. 221-225. Raval and Moreux, 63, 193, erroneously believe this house to belong to the Ideal City. L.R., pls. 221-223 and index, give the intended location as rue Saint-Denis.

¹⁷¹ L.R., pls. 178-188. Krafft and Ransonette, pl. 10, illustrate house no. 15, dating it 1787. Raval, 35, states that Hosten bought the plot in 1792.

want to point out his final stage after a life of lasting endeavor to find a new architectural form. He strove to master the problem of the multiplicity of these houses, chiefly by the simple device of juxtaposition, and by the diversified treatment of the façades. These late designs have little in common with his previous experiments, nor with anything in architecture that came before or after him. Ledoux was a searcher to the end. The incertitude of the era did not allow him to reach a clear-cut formula. It is easy to find the negative characteristics of the designs; difficult to characterize them positively. They almost completely lacked Baroque gradation and concatenation, depending largely on the effect of contrasted arches and rows of rectangular openings (houses 4, 5) (fig. 111). There was much unrest in the façades, despite the monotony of the array

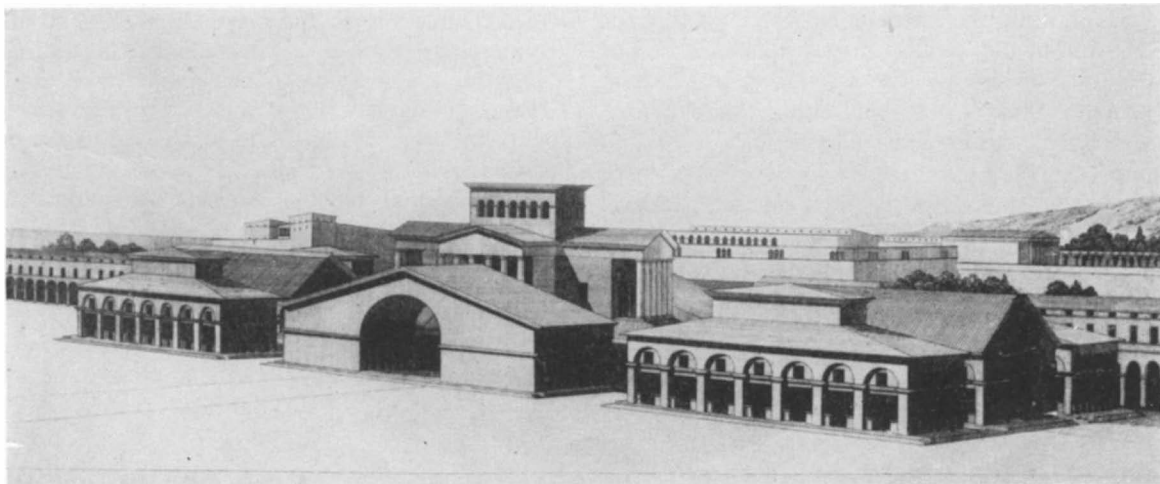


FIG. 107. Commercial building.

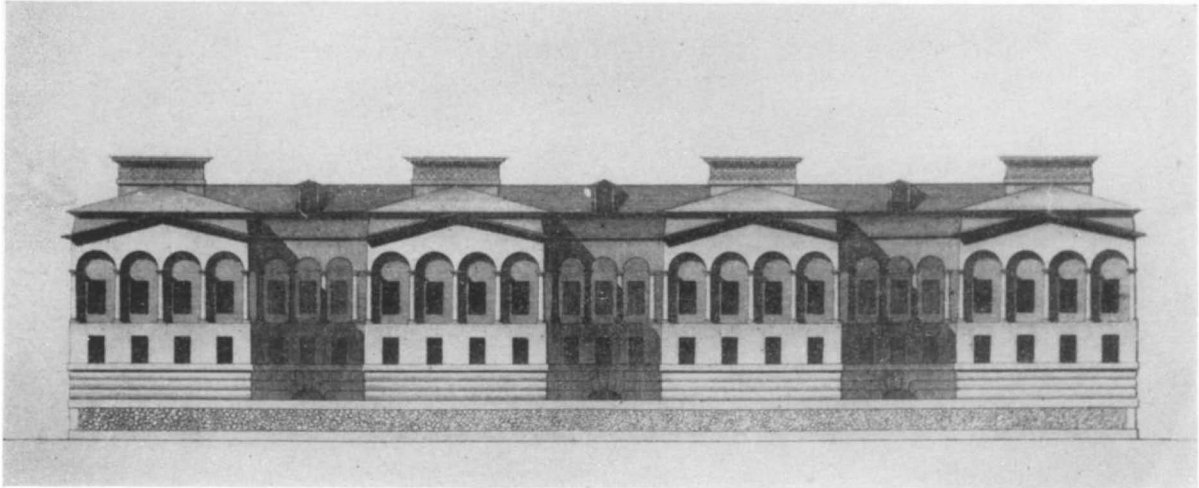


FIG. 108. Hosten houses, 11-14.

of equal apertures. Particularly characteristic were the houses Nos. 1, 2, 3 which, screened by two rows of columns, look like one building¹⁷² (fig. 110). Houses 11-14 showed by alternating projections, the pattern of rigid juxtaposition¹⁷³ (fig. 108).

This last known production of Ledoux serves to throw some light on his personality. Apparently he was aware that he had not attained his ultimate goal in finding a new form. Even so, he did not, like the Revivalists, turn back to the past as long as there was any hope to attain something new. The Hosten houses represent a last attempt and a last failure. The architect's life work ends with the confession: *Non possumus*. All his experiments were just as premature as those of the political revolution. Yet they were not in vain. While the precursor might fail, the revolutionary ideas lived on, challenging those who came after, to take up the struggle for their realization.

Now let us turn to a much earlier project which at first glance looks just as enigmatic as the Hosten houses, but in reality, was much sounder. It was a true link between the past and the future, a consistent step in the continuous line of the architectural development. The country house planned for the Princesse de Conti at Louveciennes,¹⁷⁴ was to be a bold and grand combination of contrasted masses and voids, erected on a sloping ground (fig. 112). On the lowest level were to be three rectangular courts, side by side; on the next level

¹⁷² L.R., pl. 188.

¹⁷³ L.R., pl. 183.

¹⁷⁴ L.R., pls. 273-277. The Princesse de Conti named in the engravings was, most probably, Louise Elisabeth who spent all her life at Versailles and died 1775. Cf. Capon, G., *Vie du Prince de Conti*, 377, Paris, 1907. Ledoux may have made the designs when he worked for Mme Du Barry. Levallet, 62, is not impressed by the great composition, "C'est un défi au bon sens . . . tout y est inutile." Raval, 33, believes that in it Ledoux tried to get rid of his "complex of failure." This is unlikely for up to the early 1780's he was successful and self-confident (cp. n. 42).

the hothouses; higher up the H-shaped main building; and at the far end, on the highest level, a huge columned niche. The voids would have been the three courts sunk into the rising ground, the courts within the H-form, and the spherical vaulting of the niche. The mass of the main building was to be somewhat relieved by arcades; that of the hothouses by a deep loggia. The single structures would not have been tied together formally, but brought into some unity only by their array on the central principal axis. This, and only this, is the Baroque heritage in the great project. In it Ledoux would have accomplished a strange, but truly monumental spatial composition. Showing both the consistency of the traditional layout and the soundness of cubism, it can be considered as a landmark on the crossroads of two architectural epochs—the Baroque and the modern.

I have attempted to trace the development of the architect, showing how he passed from Baroque formality, through rare classicizing performances, to pure geometry; how he aimed at bringing life into the rigid masses, and how in the large complexes he advanced from juxtaposition to more complicated patterns. Yet when the last great opportunity came with the Hosten commission, he had not won clarity at all. He was still hampered by that uncertainty which Blondel had remarked at the outset of the revolutionary movement,¹⁷⁵ and had nothing to offer but a new experiment.

VII. THE PROPYLAEA OF PARIS

La pierre sous la touche de l'art.¹⁷⁶

When the Ferme Générale asked Ledoux in 1784 to erect the tollhouses around the capital,¹⁷⁷ he gave the

¹⁷⁵ Cf. pt. I, n. 119, 341.

¹⁷⁶ L., 14.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. n. 16. Many *barrières* were known under different names. We follow Saint-Victor 3: 839-842, who illustrates forty-two *barrières* by Ledoux and shows their location on a

fullest proof of his inventiveness, not restricting himself to a uniform scheme, but shaping each tollhouse in a different and peculiar way (figs. 113, 120, 129). Some of these projects were too bold to be acceptable to the patrons.¹⁷⁸ While working on the tollhouses, which though commonly known as *barrières*, were called Propylaea of Paris by Ledoux,¹⁷⁹ he planned also several inns (*quinquettes*).¹ In 1787 the work done by him was considered too expensive and too extravagant. Public opinion was so aroused—"Le mur murant Paris rend Paris murmurant"—that the commission was taken from him two years later.

The *barrières* were badly damaged in the Revolution¹⁸¹ (fig. 128). A few years after their mutilation, the French National Convention decided that these relics of the monarchy—"des pierres . . . entassées par la tyrannie"—be transformed into memorials to honor the revolutionary victories and preserved as "monuments publics."¹⁸² Most of the *barrières* were finally

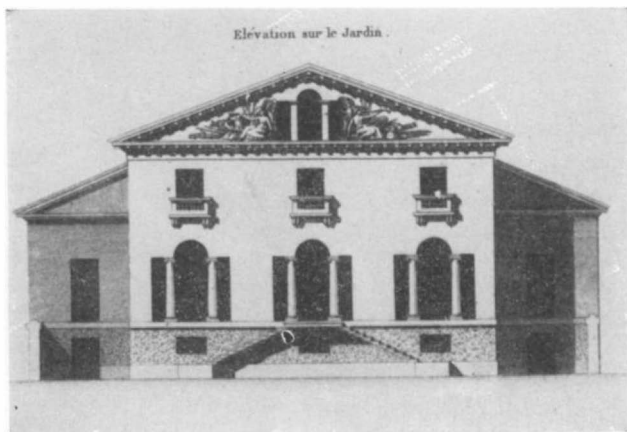


FIG. 109. Hosten's own house, 15.

destroyed in 1859. Today, only four are still extant: the almost unaltered Barrière du Trône** (or, de Vincennes), place de la Nation; the Barrière d'Enfer,*** terminating the Route d'Orléans; the Barrière de Saint-Martin** (or, de la Villette),¹⁸³ powerful still in its deterioration, and the small Rotunda in the

map, 1: 41. Occasionally we add other names from L.R.; the map of the Fermiers généraux, reproduced in *B. Soc. Hist. Paris*, 120, 1912; the map of Paris by Paul Verniquet, 1791; that in Legrand and Landon; that by Th. Jacoubet, which shows the plans of all the *barrières* as they were 1836; and from Louis Prudhomme, *Miroir hist. . . . de Paris* 1: 56, and map, Paris, 1807. In this text, asterisks refer to Saint-Victor's plates, reproduced in our figs. 113 (one), 120 (two), 127 (three).

The stars on these plates indicate that the respective *barrière* consisted of two identical houses.

¹⁷⁸ L.R., pls. 15, 16, 19-36.

¹⁷⁹ L., 16, 17, 176.

¹⁸⁰ L.R., pls. 226-233. L., pls. 83, 87.

¹⁸¹ L., 17.

¹⁸² *Décade philosophique* 1: 554.

¹⁸³ Jarry, Paul, *Rotonde de la Villette, Bx-Arts*, no. 2; 5, Dec. 1932.

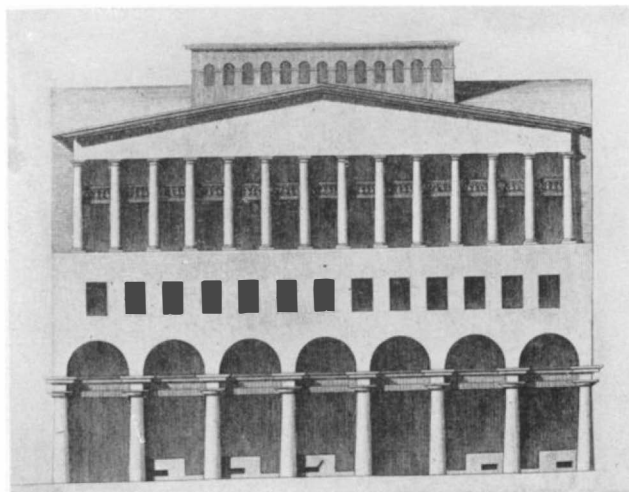


FIG. 110. Hosten houses, 1-3.

Parc de Monceau, also called Barrière de Chartres,¹⁸⁴ (fig. 114) which up to recent times was in a shameful state of degradation, and thus a witness to how little Ledoux was thought of in his country.

THE HERITAGE OF THE PAST

Anyone interested in the artistic significance of the *barrières*, rather than in factual data and insignificant similarities with ancient works,¹⁸⁵ will be richly remunerated in scrutinizing all the projects. Some are reminiscent of the Renaissance (Barrière de la Croix-Blanche,*¹⁸⁶ and the similar "Project V,"¹⁸⁷); nearly

¹⁸⁴ L.R., pls. 3, 4. Verniquet, "Barrière de Chartres."

¹⁸⁵ Levallet has gathered much valuable material about the executed *barrières*, but disregards the projects and the *quinquettes*. Raval and Moreux discuss but a few *barrières*, taking over Levallet's classification in four main types ("families").

¹⁸⁶ Saint-Victor 3: 839 bis (inserted plate).

¹⁸⁷ L.R., pl. 34.

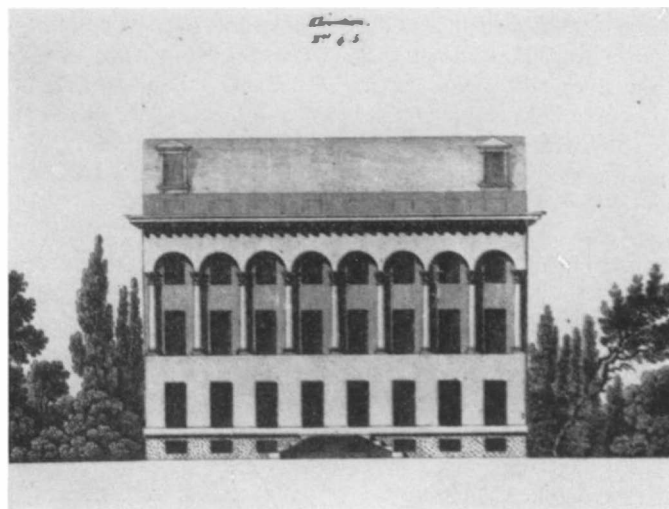


FIG. 111. Hosten houses, 4, 5.

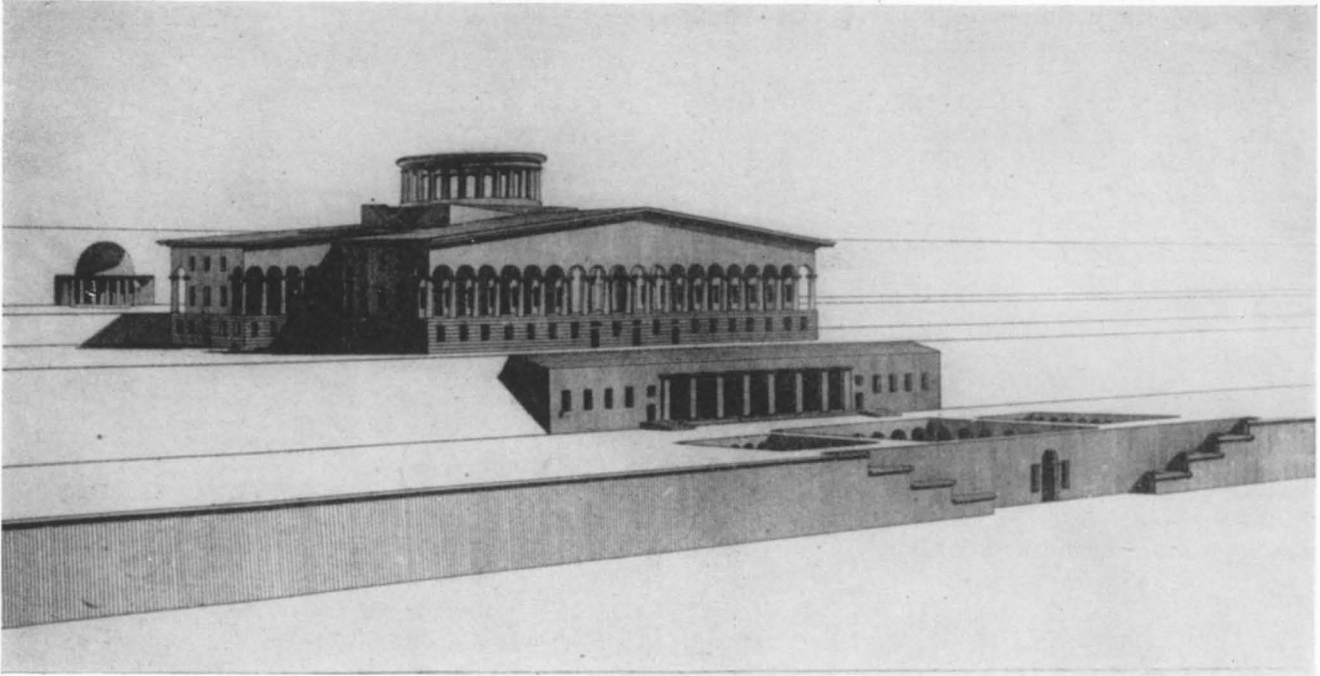


FIG. 112. House for the Princesse de Conti.

all are made up of classical features. Yet it is not enough to exclaim "Paestum" when confronted with the Barrière de Courcelles,* or "Cecilia Metella" in front of Saint-Martin.**¹⁸⁸ The "professeur circonscrit dans les cinq ordres,"¹⁸⁹ as Ledoux calls those who ever and again look for ancient models, will find it hard to grasp the artist's intentions.

Even those few *barrières* where Ledoux rather strictly follows ancient models deviate from the cliché in characteristic details. The project of the Barrière de Courcelles (rue de Chartres),¹⁹⁰ for instance, is distinguished by the application of doors and small double stairs to the side fronts which, though perhaps conditioned by practical considerations, impair the solemnity of the Greek temple scheme, dependent largely on the emphasis of the longitudinal axis. For this main axis, leading from the portal to the sanctuary, terminated the processional road. (It is, of course, irrelevant whether a cult made use of this road, or availed itself only of its inherent symbolism.) The project of the Barrière des Rats ** (or d'Aunai)¹⁹¹ is a simple peripteros. (In the execution, Ledoux applied columns ringed with square drums.) The project of the Barrière de Gentilly *** (or, de l'Oursine, or de la Glacière)¹⁹² is an amphiprostyle, with the oddity of the single window on

the ground floor and the small aperture on the mezzanine of each side wall. The Barrière Saint-Jacques *** (or, d'Arcueil) presents arcades instead of colonnades.¹⁹³ Project VII is a variant of the Roman Pantheon.¹⁹⁴ Except these and a few more temple-like *barrières*, such as those of Saint-Mandé,** Charenton ** (or, Marengo),¹⁹⁵ and Bercy,***¹⁹⁶ the vast majority differ widely from the models of antiquity. The *barrières* of Monceau *¹⁹⁷ and Montreuil **¹⁹⁸ present columns densely covered with rings, which impart to the traditional feature a new expressiveness. It does not lessen Ledoux' claim as an innovator that occasionally he designed a capricious thing like the cabin of the police-galley belonging to the Barrière de la Rapée,¹⁹⁹ surrounded by arcades with twin columns (fig. 116). The *barrière* itself shows cross-arms emerging from the cylindrical body.

Ledoux seemed particularly fond of ringed columns which remind us of those described by Sebastiano Serlio as of "cinte dalle fascie Rustiche"²⁰⁰ (Barrière de Chaillet,* better known as de l'Etoile, or de Neuilly, and many others). Yet there is a considerable difference between the Renaissance columns and those of Ledoux. Serlio's stone bands look as if they were of flexible

¹⁸⁸ Hautecœur, Louis, *Rome et la renaissance de l'antiquité à la fin du 18e siècle*, 140, Paris, 1912, "Ledoux dans ses barrières imite Poestum (à Courcelles), il unit au dorique des souvenirs de Cecilia Metella (à Saint-Martin)."

¹⁸⁹ L., 135.

¹⁹⁰ L.R., pls. 1, 2.

¹⁹¹ L.R., pl. 9. Saint-Victor 3: 840 bis, execution.

¹⁹² L.R., pls. 17, 18. S.-V. 3: 842 bis execution.

¹⁹³ S.-V. 3: 842 bis.

¹⁹⁴ L.R., pl. 36.

¹⁹⁵ S.-V. 3: 840 bis, both.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 842 bis.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 839 bis.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 840 bis.

¹⁹⁹ L.R., pl. 14.

²⁰⁰ Sebastiano Serlio, *Extraordinario libro di architettura*, text to plate I, Lione, 1551.

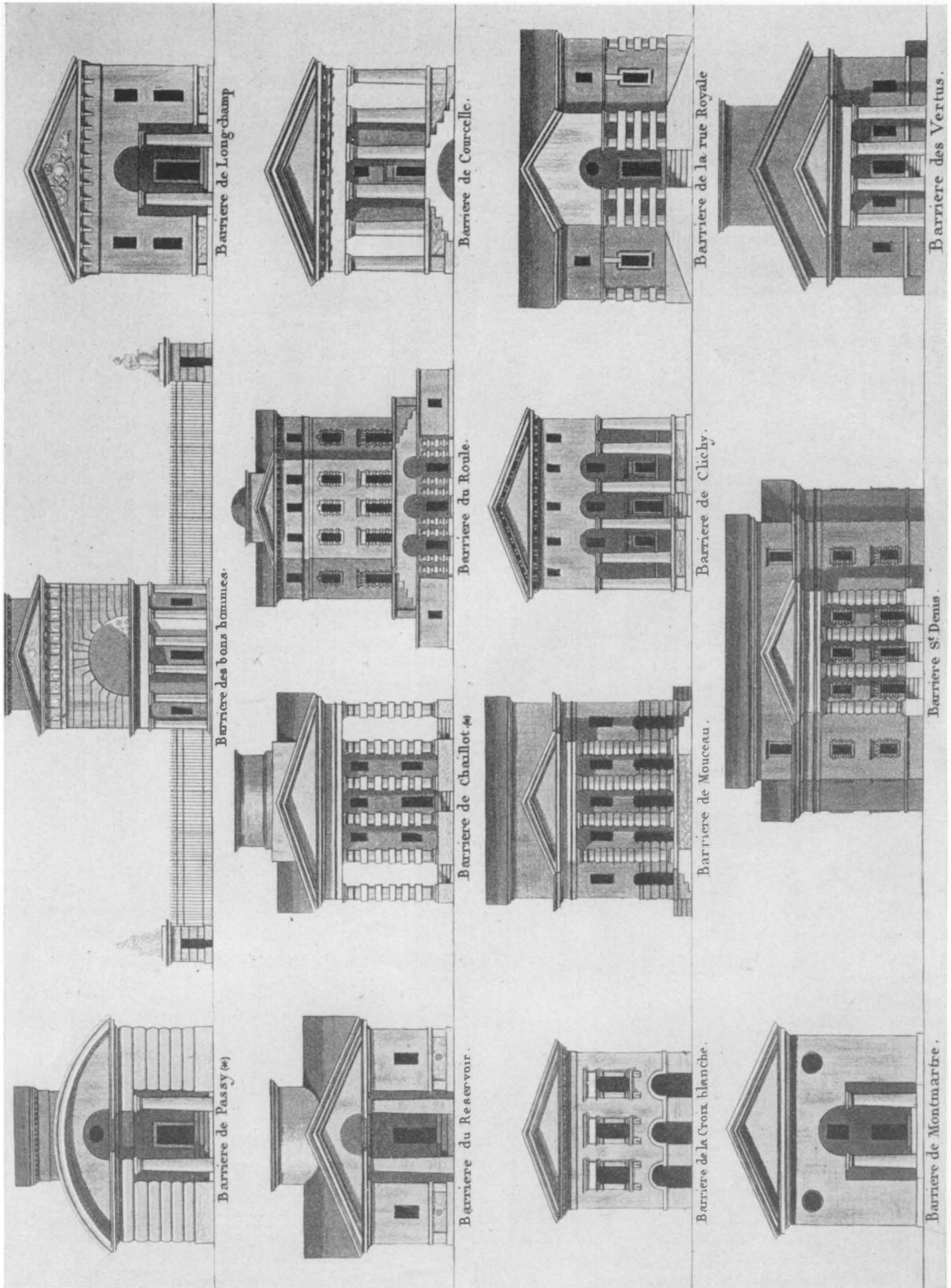


Fig. 113. Tollhouses of Paris.

matter. They tie the columns to the wall, as his plates show, and as he himself explained, "le pietre che legano, e traversano la colonna." Vignola, too, joined similar columns to the wall,²⁰¹ while Ledoux' square drums virtually tear the shafts apart, without establishing any connection with the wall. Eventually he presented twin columns held together by broad bands (Barrières de la rue Royale * or de Montmartre,²⁰² d'Enfer *** or d'Or-

²⁰¹ Same, *Regole generali di architettura*, fol. xiii, ill. fol. xiv, Venetia, 1537. Cp. Ammanati's courtyard of Palazzo Pitti, Florence, and Loukanski, G. K., *Vignole*, pl. VII, Palazzo Bocchi, Paris, 1927.

²⁰² S.-V. 3: 839 bis.

léans,²⁰³ and Mont Parnasse ***). Sometimes he created a vigorous pattern by duplicating the outline of the pediments (Barrière des Vertus,*²⁰⁴ de l'Observation,*** or Paillassons; des Fourneaux *** or Voierie,²⁰⁵). Often he inserts a heavy keystone in the tympanum (Des

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 842 bis, both.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 839 bis.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 842 bis, both.



FIG. 114. Rotonde de Monceaux.

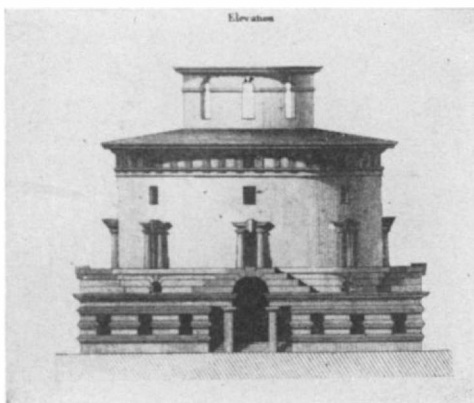


FIG. 115. Project VI for the *barrières*.

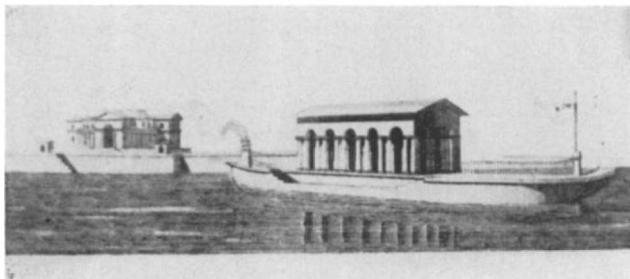


FIG. 116. Barrière de la Rapée, project.

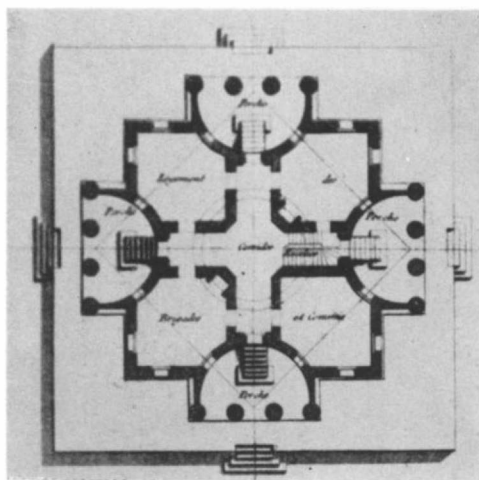


FIG. 117. Barrière de Picpus, plan.

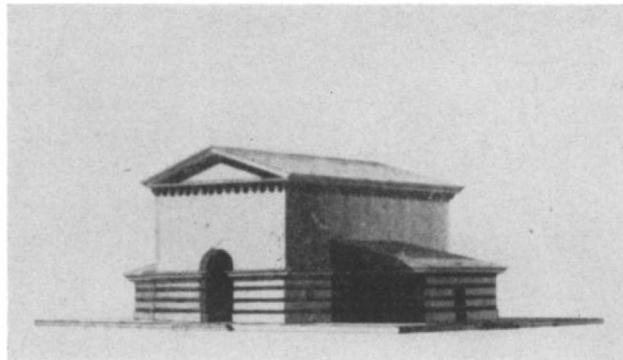


FIG. 118. Barrière St. Hypolite, project.

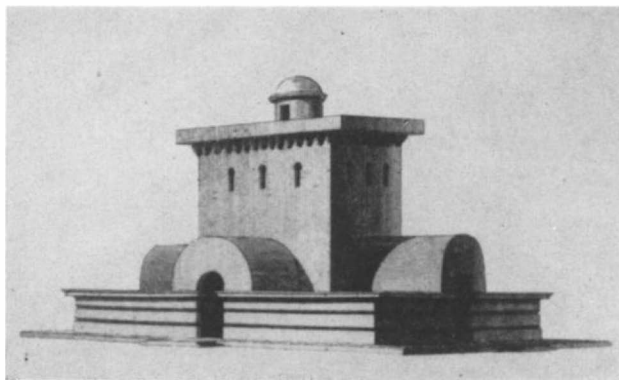


FIG. 119. Barrière de la Santé, project.

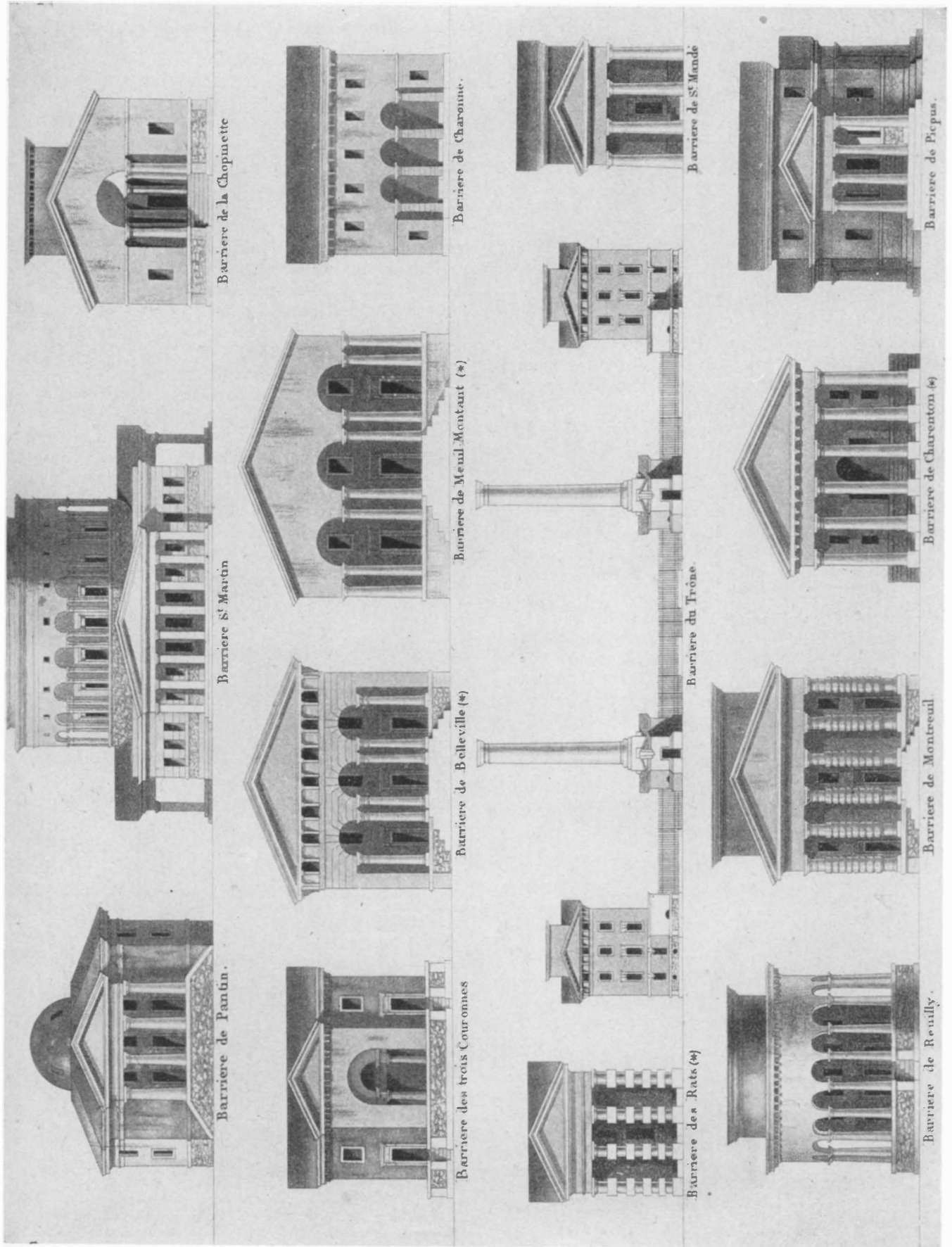


Fig. 120. Tollhouses of Paris.

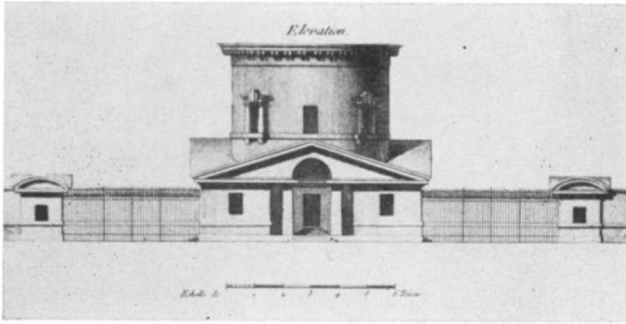


FIG. 121. Barrière Chemin de Chaillot.

Grenelle).²⁰⁶ Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor had already dramatized doors and windows by oversized keystones. But we should not infer that Ledoux copied them. It was the same spirit of revolt against tradition that inspired all progressive architects in the *Age of Reason*. Those gigantic keystones were no longer willing merely to perform their humble tasks; they asserted themselves in the boldest way.

To Ledoux the Palladian motif no longer meant what it had meant to Renaissance and Baroque architects; the expression of perfect gradation and concatenation; the symbol of the integral whole formed by the ruling central part and the subservient sides. Ledoux frequently changed the dynamics or the rhythms of the motif. In some cases he made the central arch protrude into the pediment (Passy,* or Sainte-Marie; Reservoir,* or de la Pompe de Chaillot;²⁰⁷ Vaugirard;*** Observation***²⁰⁸); in others he inserted three higher arches between the low rectangular sides (Clichy;*²⁰⁹ Charonne** or Fontarabie²¹⁰), or even five (Fontainebleau,*** or d'Italie²¹¹). This means that he proceeded from the well balanced rhythm of the Palladian motif to a pattern in which equivalence was more important

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 842 bis, both.

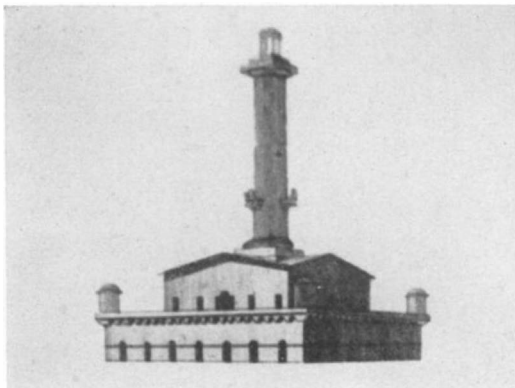
²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 839 bis, both.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 842 bis, both.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 839 bis.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 840 bis.

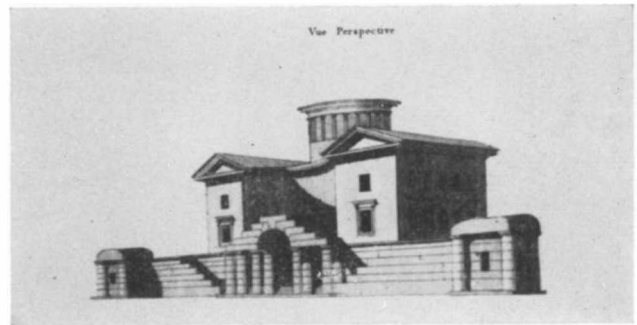
²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 842 bis.

FIG. 122. Project III for the *barrières*.

than gradation. A forceful variation of the motif presents twin columns between the arches (Belleville; ** Menilmontant; **²¹² Enfer; *** Bord de l'Eau, *** or Cunette,²¹³). All these transformations of traditional features reflect the unrest that had come over architecture.

MODERN COMPOSITION

Many of the patterns which we have discussed in the foregoing chapter appear also in the *barrières*. The Barrière des Bons-Hommes,* or de Passy, de la Conférence,²¹⁴ has a porch similar to that of the Guimard House. The Barrières de Longchamps,* de Montmartre,* or des Martirs,²¹⁵ resemble the Tabary house; the Barrière de l'Ecole Militaire ***²¹⁶ opens in a deep niche like the Storage House of Compiègne. A noteworthy feature of the Barrières des Bons-Hommes* (fig. 128) and de l'Ecole Militaire *** is the top-heavy upper part, which the architect Legrand has already observed.²¹⁷ The extant tollhouses of the Barrière du Trône present the contrast of the solid block to the void

FIG. 123. Project II for the *barrières*.

of the niche.²¹⁸ Interpenetration of voids into mass is visualized also in a project for the Chemin des Carrières,²¹⁹ resembling the Barrière du Reservoir.*²²⁰ The Barrière Picpus** exhibits in its plan the same basic idea:²²¹ semi-circular niches invade the cube on

²¹² *Ibid.*, 840 bis, both.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 842 bis, both. See n. 421.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 839 bis. Pugin, A., *Paris*, ill. opp. 150, "de Passy," London, 1831. Prieur, *Tabl. hist. de la rév. franç.* 1: 10, 2: 112, "de la Conférence," Paris, 1798.

²¹⁵ S.-V. 3: 839 bis, both.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 842 bis.

²¹⁷ Landon, C. P., *Annales du Musée* 5: 151, Paris, 1801, comment of the architect J.-G. Legrand on Bons-Hommes, "l'ordre . . . est un peu absorbé par la masse trop élevée qui le surmonte."

²¹⁸ Dimier, L., *Architecture française, 18^e et 19^e siècles* 3: pls. L, LI, Paris, n. d.

²¹⁹ L.R., pl. 26, with a cylindrical, 27, with a polygonal finishing.

²²⁰ S.-V. 3: 839 bis.

²²¹ L.R., pls. 10, 11. Moreux, 66, wants to show that this plan resembles a "Porticus A.—S. P. Q. R." [*sic*] in Piranesi's map of Campus Martius. Between the fragmentary plan he presents and that of the *barrière* there is only a very slight

each side (fig. omitted in the execution.²²² In the *Barrière de la Chopinette*,** near the end of the *Chemin Saint-Laurent*,²²³ Ledoux carved out of the block deep niches on the front and the back façades. In the *Barrière des Trois Couronnes*,** or *Ramponneau*,²²⁴ both intersecting masses and emphasized volume can be seen in the arms of the Greek cross and the deep porches. The *Barrière Pantin*,** or *du Combat du Taureau*, or *de la Boyauterie*, or *de Saint Louis*, was erected on a triangular plan, with bevelled corners and niches on each side.²²⁵

Contrasted cubic masses form the principal motif of the projects for the *Barrière Saint-Hypolite*, also called *des Groseillers*, and *de la Santé*.²²⁶ The former, planned on the Greek cross, presents a pedimented block to which lower blocks with slanting roofs on each side are added (fig. 118). The upper part of the wall is flat and unpierced, the lower has horizontal grooves. The *Barrière de la Santé* is composed of elementary

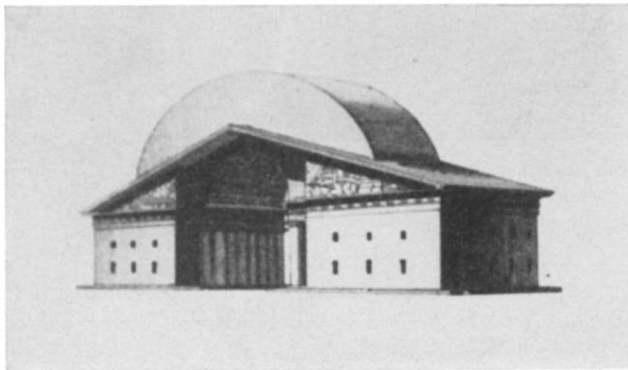


FIG. 124. Project I for the *barrières*.

geometrical shapes (fig. 119). From the prismatic podium a tall cubic tower rises, with three tiny aper-

similarity. There is, moreover, on the map nothing like a *Porticus A*. But there is the legend *Porticus a S. P. Q. R. amoenitati dicata*. Moreux, apparently ignoring that *a* is a Latin preposition, has read only half of the legend.

²²² S.-V. 3: 840 bis.

²²³ L.R., pls. 6, 7. S.-V. 3: 840 bis. Raval and Moreux, fig. 260, illustrate *la Chopinette*, but present, 66, its plan as that of *Belleville*. This latter denomination is wrong, according to the maps, though it appears in L.R., *Table* and plates. Moreux again finds a somewhat similar shape in the plan of a dock (*navalia*) in Piranesi's map, believing that Ledoux picked it out for an entirely different purpose. Yet Ledoux' greatness was being an *explorer*, not an *exploiter*.

²²⁴ L.R., pl. 8. S.-V. 3: 840 bis, altered.

²²⁵ Plan in Jacoubet's map. S.-V. 3: 840 bis, elevation. Moreux, 66, unaware that in the eighteenth century many designed triangular plans in France and England, turns to Piranesi's map and discovers a tomb as the inspiration of Ledoux. Since the latter's plan shows a completely different arrangement of some identical features, Moreux dubs it pompously "*Métathèse du Sepulchrum Agrippae*."

²²⁶ L. R., pl. 19, both. In *Von Ledoux*, 41, *Santé* has the wrong legend *Hypolite*.

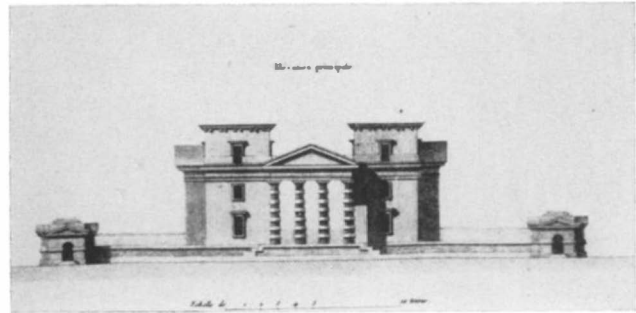


FIG. 125. *Barrière St. Denis*, project.

tures high up on each side, finished by a boldly projecting cornice.

capped by a hemisphere; the four crossarms projecting from the tower are covered with heavy barrel vaults. This project fascinates even twentieth-century observers, accustomed to monumental simplicity and bold contrasts.

Instances of interpenetrating masses are the *Rotunda of Monceaux*,²²⁷ and the tollhouses of *Reuilly*.**²²⁸ Their cylindrical bodies emerge from circular colonnades so that a telescopic effect results.

There are a few designs which show top-heavy cylinders rising from low substructures: the *Barrière Chemin de Chaillot*²²⁹ (fig.

the *Barrière Saint-Martin*. The architect Nicolas Goulet commented upon this last:

Cette architecture, pleine de force et de grâce, n'est ni égyptienne, ni grecque, ni romaine, c'est de l'architecture française: elle est neuve, et l'artiste n'en a puisé le goût et les formes que dans son imagination.²³²

Saint Victor praised it: "la plus belle de toutes."²³³

²²⁷ L.R., pls. 3, 4.

²²⁸ L.R., pls. 12, 13. S.-V. 3: 840 bis.

²²⁹ L.R. pls. 24, 25.

²³⁰ L.R., pl. 35.

²³¹ S.-V. 3: 840 bis. Legrand and London 3: pl. 14.

²³² Legrand and London 3: 58. This passage is by Goulet, according to 3: preface, but not by Legrand, as S.-V. 3: 842 says.

²³³ S.-V. 3: 842.

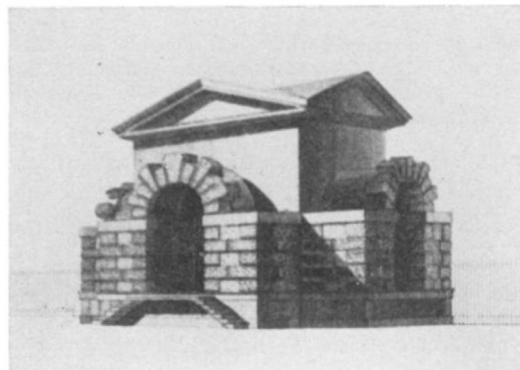


FIG. 126. *Barrière de l'Ecole Militaire*, project.

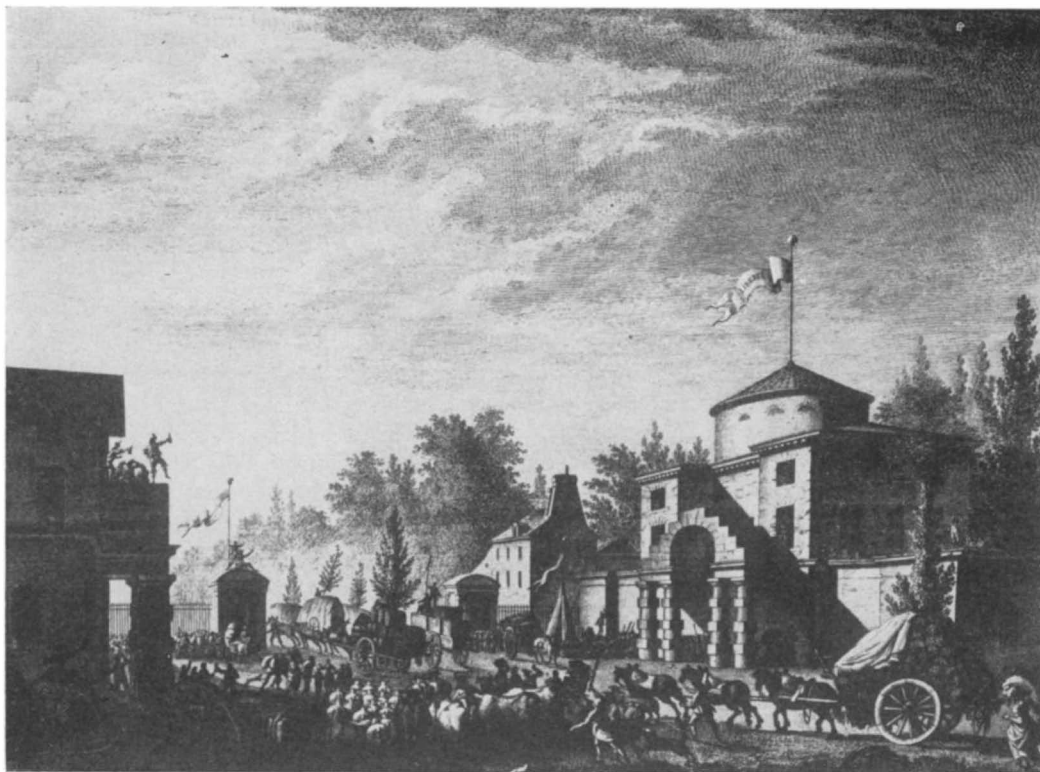


FIG. 127. Barrière du Maine, May 1, 1791, after the excise was abolished.

The Barrière du Roule* is less classical than most *barrières* with its disproportion, with the conflict of the verticals and the horizontals, and the contrast of disparate features—arches on rusticated columns below, oblong openings in smooth walls, above.²³⁴ “Project II”²³⁵ (f)

Maine***²³⁶ belong to Ledoux’ most dramatic designs. Both show a grand crescendo: the broad, rusticated substructure carries twin houses which are held together by a windowless wall, concave in the project, flat in the execution. The steps on top of the portal, practically of no use, point upwards to the belvedere crowning the structure (fig. 127). We may understand these grand compositions best from a passage in *L’Architecture* proclaiming Ledoux’ artistic program:

Souvent; très-souvent, j’offrirai cette ordonnance libre et débarrassée de ses entraves, cette ordonnance qui plaît avec de belles masses, et doit sa pompe à l’économie subsidiaire, à des oppositions bien entendues.²³⁷

“Project III,”²³⁸ a tollhouse surmounted by a rostral column, is a highly original assemblage of incongruous features (fig. 122). On the Barrière d’Ivry, too, ele-

mentary shapes are contrasted vigorously, the prismatic cross-arms to the cylindrical drum.²³⁹

Several twin-houses tell of the compositional dilemmas of the architect. The old concept of centralization is still recognizable in the project of the Barrière Saint-Denis,²⁴⁰ but the movement leading upward from the sentry boxes towards the central thoroughfare is suddenly interrupted: the central pediment, instead of rul-

²³⁹ L.R., pls. 15, 16.

²⁴⁰ L.R., pl. 5.



FIG. 128. Barrière des Bons-Hommes, set on fire July 12, 1789.

²³⁴ S.-V. 3: 839 bis. Plan in Jacoubet’s map.

²³⁵ L.R., pls. 30, 31.

²³⁶ Prieur 1: pl. 52, showing the *barrière* May, 1, 1791, after the abolition of the excise. S.-V. 3: 842 bis.

²³⁷ L., 14.

²³⁸ L.R., pl. 32.

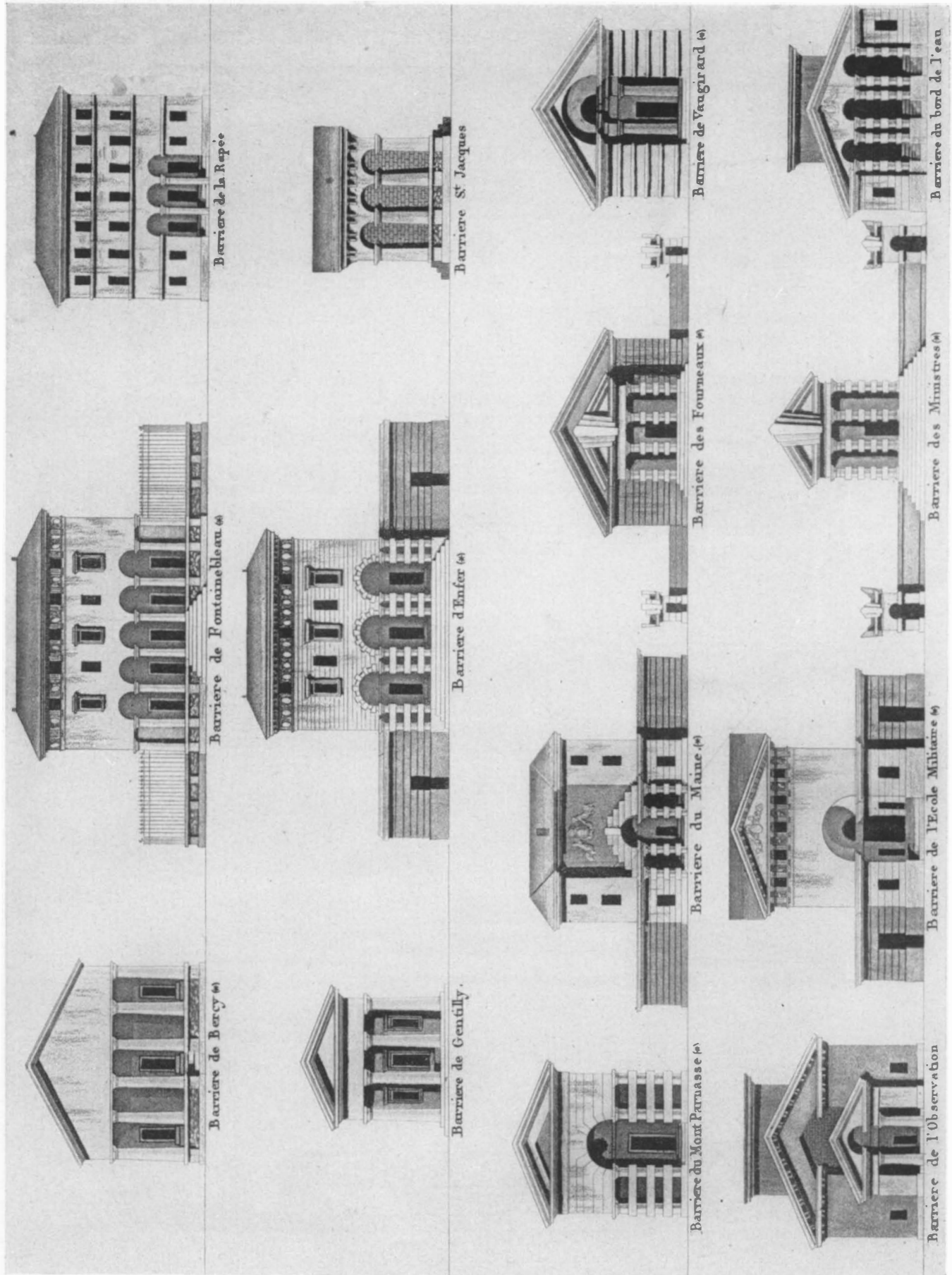


FIG. 129. Tollhouses of Paris.

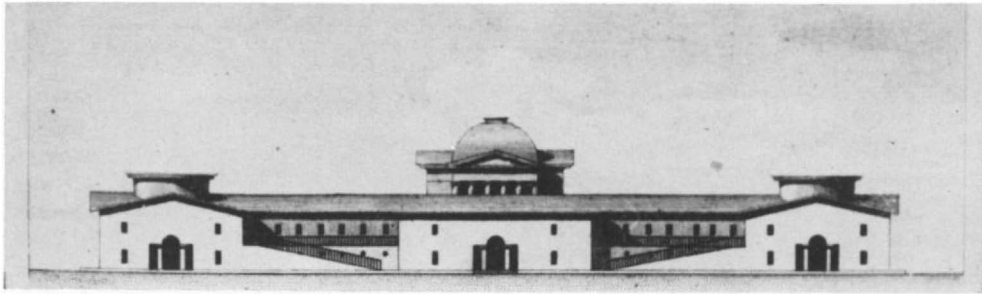


FIG. 130. Inn Poissonnière.

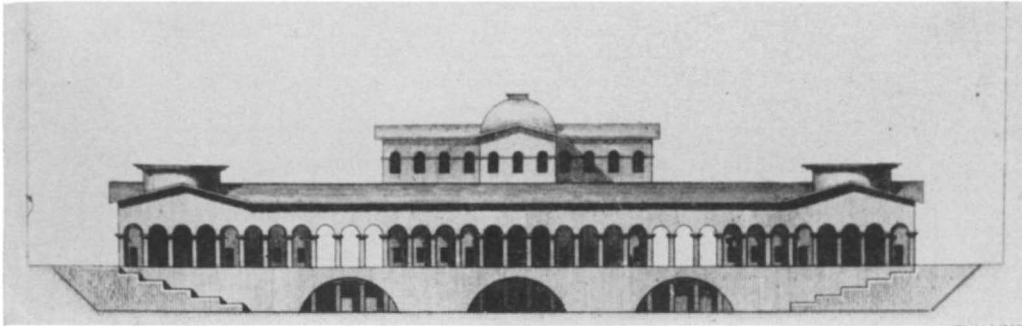


FIG. 131. Inn Rapée.

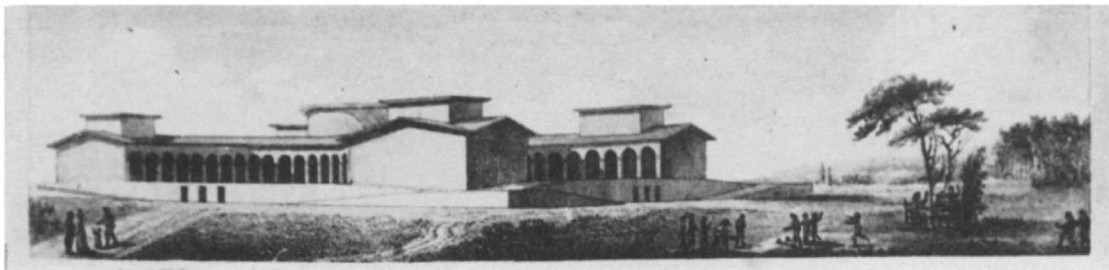


FIG. 132. Inn Chaillot.

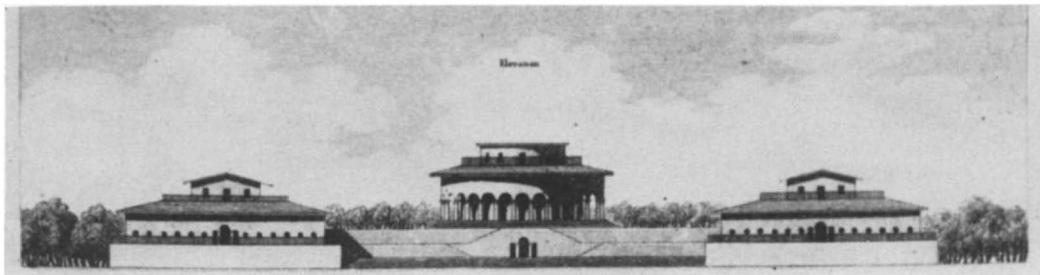


FIG. 133. Inn du Temple.

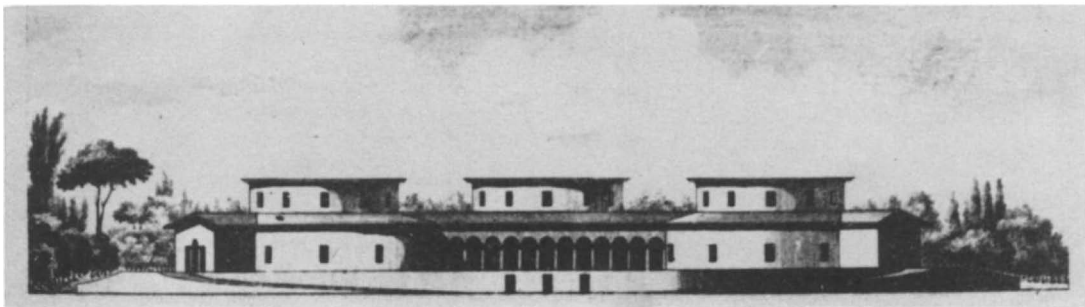


FIG. 134. Inn St. Marceau.

ing over the whole, is lower than the roofs of the sides (fig. 125). The Barrière Saint-Denis,* as it was carried out, was a sober classicizing edifice.²⁴¹ "Project I"²⁴² shows two houses held together by the common gable and the powerful horizontal cylinder sitting astride the roof (fig. 124). The conflict between the opposed principles of isolation and unification is evident. "Project IV" is similar.²⁴³ A high arch bridges the gateway between the two units. On the sides the central portion recedes on a semi-circular plan, creating an effective void in the mass.

The inns, which were to be erected on certain main roads of Paris,²⁴⁴ recapitulate in brief the architectural development in the eighteenth century in all its fluctuations. The plans are modern in the sense of 1800, i.e., geometrized. All are squares except the one for the faubourg Saint-Marceau; this is a triangle inscribed in a circle²⁴⁵ (fig. 135). The elevations differ widely in character. The inn for the faubourg Poissonnière presents Baroque gradation; the main accent is put on the central dome, secondary accents on the end-pavilions²⁴⁶ (fig. 130). In the inn, Quai de la Rapée, however, little is left of Baroque unity (fig. 131). It consists of three structures loosely connected by long-stretched arcades which veil the four-partite square of the court.²⁴⁷ Space-mass antagonism, visualized by plain stereometrical forms, shows in the Inn of Chaillot (fig. 132). A flat-roofed, unpierced cylinder replaces the upward-pointing dome. The traditional supremacy of the center has been abolished.²⁴⁸ The disintegration of the old scheme becomes manifest on the Inn for the faubourg du Temple (fig. 133). Here there is no longer any relationship between the center and the pavilions.²⁴⁹ In the inn, faubourg Saint-Marceau, gradation and concatenation are superseded by the simple juxtaposition of three cylinders rising on the corners of an equilateral triangle²⁵⁰ (fig. 134). This means absolute equality of the elements—none is exalted over the other—and equality of aspect from all sides. The pageant of the pictorial Baroque façade has gone. Stern geometry has replaced, for the moment, the concept of organization. The chronological order of these projects can be ignored. The rivaling concepts lived side by side, each striving to hold its ground.

One who faces the Barrières Saint-Martin** and du Trône** must be impressed by the vigorous treatment of the stone. Two unexecuted projects likewise mani-

fest that Ledoux was intent upon enhancing his composition by emphasizing the material; the porch of "Project II"²⁵¹ would have exhibited the full beauty of stone. The project of the Barrière de l'École Militaire,²⁵² would have shown porches composed of rough blocks set against the fronts (fig. 126). The execution of the latter was less powerful, drawing its principal effect from the deep entrance niche alone.^{***}

The double program of dramatized composition and exaltation of the material underlies most of the *barrières*, and most of Ledoux' entire work. It is laid down in the following passage from *L'Architecture*:

Je différencierai la décoration pour la présenter dans ses contrastes. La pierre, sous la touche de l'art, éveillera un nouveau sentiment, développera ses propres facultés.²⁵³

VIII. THE IDEAL CITY

Une ville s'élèvera. . . .²⁵⁴

PLAN

Ledoux in his *Architecture* illustrates two different projects for the Saltworks. In the first,²⁵⁵ he confines himself to the manufactory and the living quarters of the personnel; in the second, he adds the plan of the city which he would build around the Saltworks, naming it Chaux, after a nearby forest²⁵⁶ (fig. 140). Part of the second project was carried out between the villages of Arc and Senans, in the Franche-Comté. The still existing structures are in a ruinous condition. In 1926 the owner of the estate, afraid that the authorities in charge of the preservation of historical monuments might prevent him from tearing down some parts damaged by fire, decided to act before they made up their minds, and blew up a portion of the complex with dynamite.²⁵⁷ Ledoux still rated very low in his country at that time. Previously, ignorance had destroyed the majority of his buildings; now this main work of his was wrecked.

The plan of the First Project shows all the houses coherently arranged around a square court, with bordering alleys forming an outer square (fig. 136). Within the court, diagonal corridors serve as additional communications between the central pavilions. The pattern of the ground plan is strictly geometrical. However, the main front is, in all its plainness, basically

²⁴¹ S.-V. 3: 839 bis. The plan of the executed building in Jacoubet's map.

²⁴² L.R., pls. 28, 29.

²⁴³ L.R., pl. 33.

²⁴⁴ L.R., pls. 226-233.

²⁴⁵ L.R., pl. 231.

²⁴⁶ L.R., pl. 226.

²⁴⁷ L.R., pl. 230.

²⁴⁸ L.R., pl. 228, Ménilmontant; 233, 278, Chaillot.

²⁴⁹ L.R., pl. 227. This is the compositional stage of Boullée's Opera house on a square. Cf. pt. I, notes 379, 411.

²⁵⁰ Cf. n. 245 and fig. 135.

²⁵¹ L.R., pl. 31.

²⁵² L.R., pl. 23.

²⁵³ L., 14. Lacroix, Paul, *Le dix-huitième siècle*, 378, Paris, 1878, after having censured Ledoux' bad taste, remarks, "Ce qu'on admirait le plus dans les nouvelles barrières, c'était la coupe des pierres." This masterly stone cutting can be seen on the extant *barrières* and in the large plates of Dimier (see n. 218).

²⁵⁴ L., 1.

²⁵⁵ L., pl. 12. L.R., pl. 113.

²⁵⁶ L., 35; pl. 14. L.R., pl. 115.

²⁵⁷ Ganay, E. de, *Le Vandalisme: une œuvre de Ledoux détruite à la dynamite*, *B. art anc. et mod.*, 213, 1926.

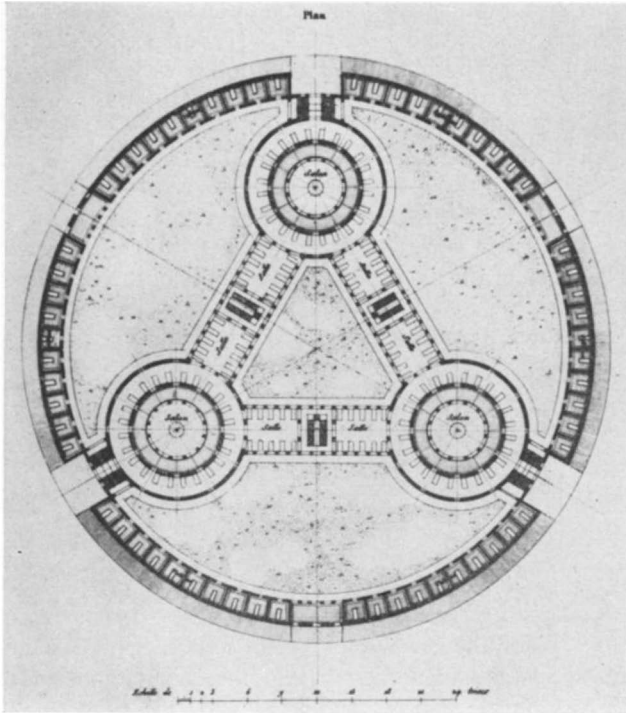


FIG. 135. Inn St. Marceau, plan.

Baroque²⁵⁸ (fig. 138). The two-storied center and pavilions project from the one-storied wings and are distinguished by quoined angles. The main entrance is marked by a portico of four large, ringed columns. The geometrical layout is masked by a conventional front with a dominant center and subordinated sides. The practical disposition is as follows: The forefront contains the gateway, flanked by the apartments of the director and the employees; the left corner pavilion houses the circular chapel with the altar in its center, that to the right, the bakery. The wings and the pavilion of the lateral fronts include the homes of the workers. The rooms destined for the fabrication are located in the rear. The center of the court is marked by a fountain.

The first plan was not satisfactory.²⁵⁹ Ledoux then made a Second Project, adding to the apartments and the workshops a number of buildings for common use, and fundamentally changing the general form (fig. 141). This time he decided on an elliptical arrangement.²⁶⁰ Its major diameter coincides with a stretch of the route leading from Besançon to the river Loue; the minor forms part of the road connecting the villages Arc and Senans. The house of the director rises in the center of the whole. On either side it is flanked by the factories; behind it the coach house has its place. In front, where the major diameter intersects the ellipse,

²⁵⁸ L., pl. 13. L.R., pl. 114.

²⁵⁹ L., 41, "Le Roi arrête le plan général en 1774, nouveau débats, nouvelles sollicitudes."

²⁶⁰ L., 77; pl. 16. L.R., pl. 117.

is the portico, inserted between the houses of the workers and employees. These buildings only were carried out. In the perspective view several other structures are shown: the city hall in the rear corresponding to the portico in front; the parsonage and the courthouse at the ends of the minor diameter; and the public baths on the perimeter of the first quadrant (fig. further projects for the Ideal City are illustrated in *L'Architecture*, but are missing in the map and in the perspective view.²⁶¹ In the latter, the picturesque buildings seen in the immediate surroundings are apparently embellishments on the engraving, among them two churches with *campanili*, and the château with a crenelated tower. They are of little interest, although probably not the engraver's but Ledoux' inventions.

Incidentally, a few words may be said about the hygienic considerations of the architect, which show him well ahead of his time. Anxious to make the houses conducive to health, as well as commodious, he provides orchards and kitchen gardens,²⁶² and has the bedrooms facing south, the pantry north.²⁶³ Imbued with the new ideal of raising the standards of the working class, he wants to promote in his city a new way of life,²⁶⁴ which will make the inhabitants healthier and happier.²⁶⁵ Ledoux was a good architect, firmly rooted

²⁶¹ L., pl. 15. L.R., pl. 116.

²⁶² L., 67, "Les ouvriers sont logés sainement, les employés commodément: tous possèdent des jardins légumiers qui les attachent au sol."

²⁶³ L., 79, "des chambres à coucher, au midi . . . l'écurie exposée aux vents d'orient, le garde-manger au nord."

²⁶⁴ L., 81. *Cp.* n. 45, 369.

²⁶⁵ L., 111, "chaque ouvrier a le secret des dieux; entouré des plus douces illusions, il est avec sa femme, avec ses enfants pendant les heures destinées au repos. . . S'il quitte ces re-

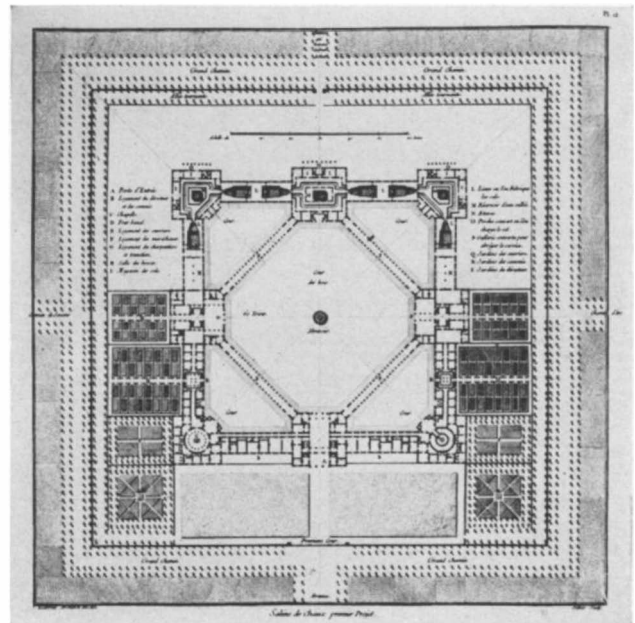


FIG. 136. Saltworks, first project—Saline de Chaux, plan.



FIG. 137. Gateway of Chaux—Porte de la Saline.

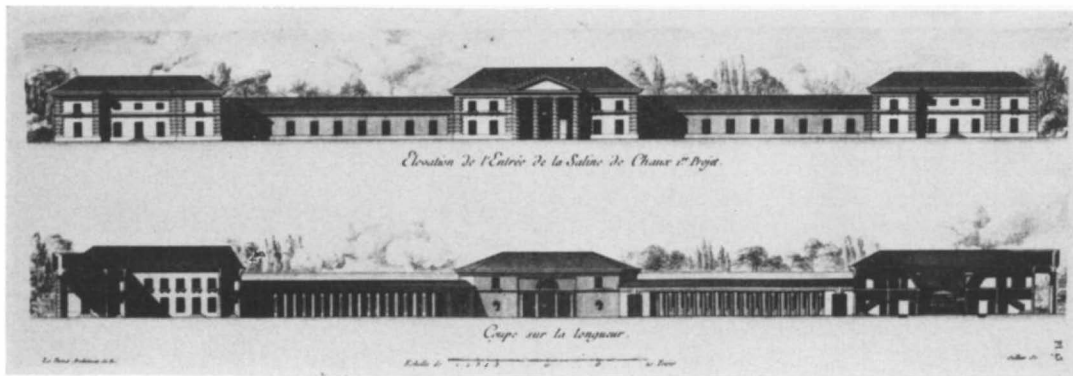


FIG. 138. Saltworks, first project, elevation.

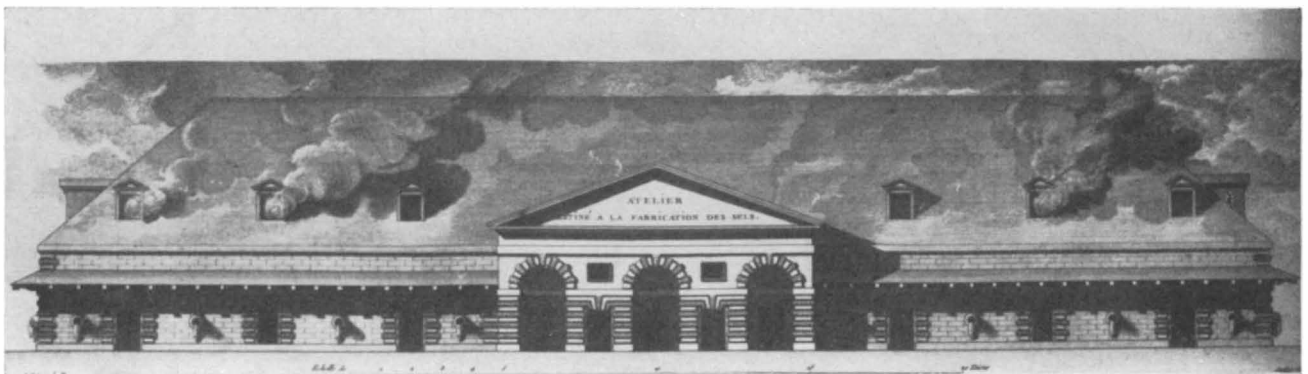


FIG. 139. Factory—Atelier destiné à la fabrication des sels.

in the soil, and not a mere dreamer as might be thought by those who do not fathom his depths. What reasons may he have had for passing from the first to the second project? Had Ledoux only the practical in mind? In *traités chéries*, c'est pour cultiver un champ productif qui remplit les intervalles du travail, amuse ses loisirs."

his text he declares that he conceived the first project without knowledge of the site;²⁶⁶ and that he wanted to avoid the risk of the living quarters and the fur-

²⁶⁶ L. 65, "On avoit conçu ce projet avant de connaître la carte du pays." 67, "La connoissance des lieux change les premières dispositions."

naces being under one roof.²⁶⁷ Accordingly, practical reasons would have prompted the change. But there is another passage in which he regrets having given up the convenient diagonal corridors of the original scheme,²⁶⁸ adding a significant remark: If the inner square were replaced by a circle, some practical advantages could be obtained, and besides, a "pure form" achieved.²⁶⁹ He praises the ellipse of the second project: "la forme est pure comme celle que décrit le soleil dans sa course."²⁷⁰ There is no doubt, in his second project, Ledoux was guided by a definite formal ideal.

Indeed, the practical necessities could well be satisfied in different ways. Whoever has seen the site at Arc-et-Senans, knows that the wide plain allows for several alternative layouts. Ledoux' reference to the peculiarity of the site is merely one of those explanations architects habitually advance. It is wiser to recommend a plan with practical advantages than with formal ideals.

Detached structures of Baroque complexes, such as the pavilions of the Château of Marly,²⁷¹ were related to each other even without direct contact. Their shapes, or tying lines such as alleys and canals, expressed their interrelationship. At Arc-et-Senans, the single units are aesthetically independent; each building—the director's house, the saltworks, the houses of the employees—might stand alone. Ledoux wanted both practical isolation and formal independence.²⁷² Afraid that this might result in harshness or abruptness, he thinks of the simple device which Boullée applied: trees or shrubs make the whole more pleasant.²⁷³

Contrary to other Utopian cities, Chaux was conceived for an actual site. Ledoux' aim was not for pictorial effect by blending architecture with nature. Neither was he strictly utilitarian. He wanted to combine his new formal ideal with the new ideal of the garden-city.

²⁶⁷ L., 67, "L'artiste sentit qu'il devoit tout isoler; que les habitations . . . les fourneaux devoient être à l'abri de l'adhérence."

²⁶⁸ L., 66, "La ligne diagonale inscrite dans un carré, sembloit réunir tous les avantages: elle accéléroit tous les services."

²⁶⁹ L., 66, "Un cercle inscrit dans un carré n'auroit-il pas produit les mêmes avantages? Sa forme est pure . . . elle n'a pas l'inconvénient des angles obtus qui morcellent les développements, des formes acérées qui blessent le goût . . . mais la ligne droite n'est-elle pas la plus courte?" Here we remark that incertitude typical of the era.

²⁷⁰ L., 77.

²⁷¹ Blomfield, R., *History of French Architecture* 1: pl. LXXX, London, 1921.

²⁷² L., 68, "Les élévations ont les mêmes défauts que le plan. Une façade aussi étendue, aussi peu élevée devoit être isolée dans toutes ses parties." ⁷⁰, "Remontez au principe . . . partout l'homme est isolé."

²⁷³ L., 68, "des plantations utiles rompent la monotonie des lignes."

To sum up, the first project is still a complex derived from the basic concept of Baroque building, which may be defined as follows: One part is to rule over the others and form with them an indivisible whole. The concept which underlies the second project was to become law in the future: Let the elements be free and of equal right. The momentous years which advanced the freedom of the individual brought freedom to the architectural elements as well. The second project foreshadows the nineteenth century also in that it combines traditional features with a new composition. Though disguised by garments borrowed from the past, the architectural whole already conforms to a new formal ideal. In proceeding from one project to the other, the artist gave up the time-honored old pattern and moved on to its successor.²⁷⁴

It may be of some interest to compare the second project of Chaux with an almost contemporaneous structure, the Royal Crescent of Bath, erected by John Wood, Jr., about 1770.²⁷⁵ The crescent, too, is on an elliptic plan, but its single buildings are moulded into a compact mass and its main front is on the concave, inner side of the ellipse. It embraces the site in front, just as the colonnades of Héré de Corny, built in the 1750's, embrace the hemicycle of Nancy.²⁷⁶ The main front of Ledoux' not much later complex is, however, on the convex side; the houses withdraw from the entrance, avoiding contact with the surroundings instead of seeking it.

As a city planner, Ledoux foresaw the nineteenth century. A precursor of Haussmann, the creator of modern Paris, he wrote: "Je présenterai les chemins destinés à désobstruer l'intérieur de la ville; ces magnifiques boulevards, sans exemple pour l'étendue. . . ." ²⁷⁷ In the second project of Chaux he abandoned the principle of the differentiation of the buildings according to their rank at the moment when the ideal of social hierarchy vanished: "Pour la première fois on verra sur la même échelle la magnificence de la guinguette et du palais." ²⁷⁸

Ledoux did not want civic art to be strictly utilitarian, he did not want the city to be simply an agglomeration of houses; he wanted it to be the crown of all architectural endeavors:

. . . j'ai placé tous les genres d'édifices que réclame l'ordre social, on verra des usines importantes . . . donner naissance à des réunions populeuses. Une ville s'élèvera pour les encendre et les couronner.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁴ The observation that the change from the first to the second project marks the fateful moment of transition from Baroque to post-Baroque architecture, was contained already in *Von Ledoux*, 16, 17. It was adopted by Raval, 24.

²⁷⁵ Green, M. A., *Eighteenth century architecture of Bath*, ill. p. 147, Bath, 1904.

²⁷⁶ Blomfield 2: pl. CLXV.

²⁷⁷ L., 18.

²⁷⁸ L., 18.

²⁷⁹ L., 1.

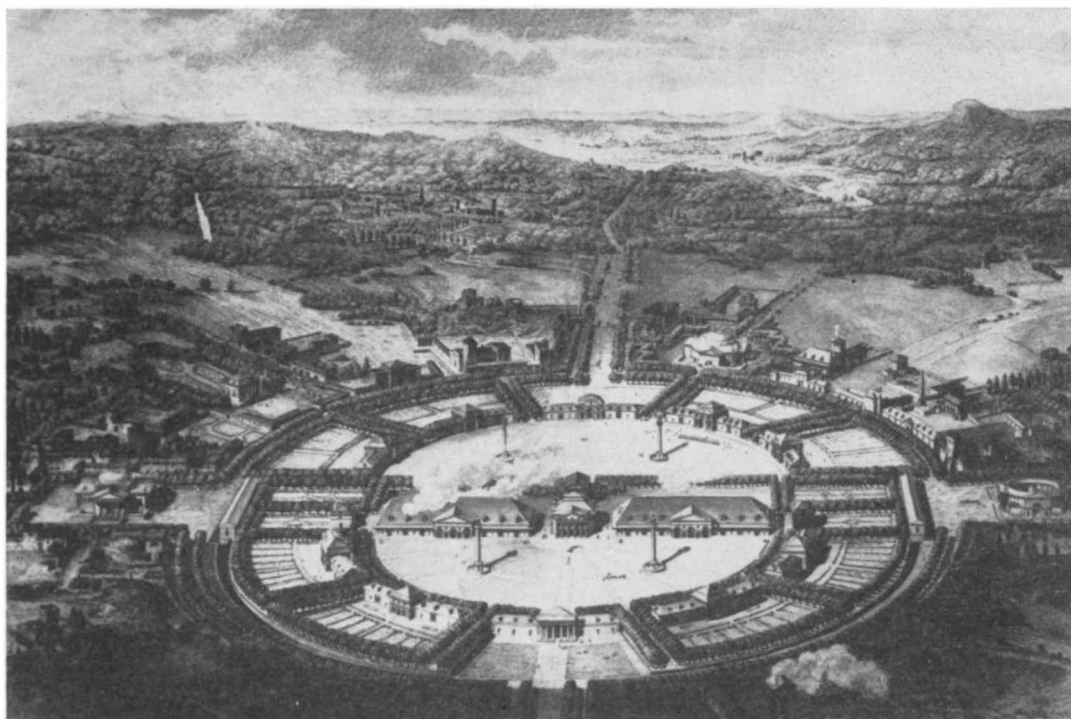


FIG. 140. The Ideal City of Chaux.

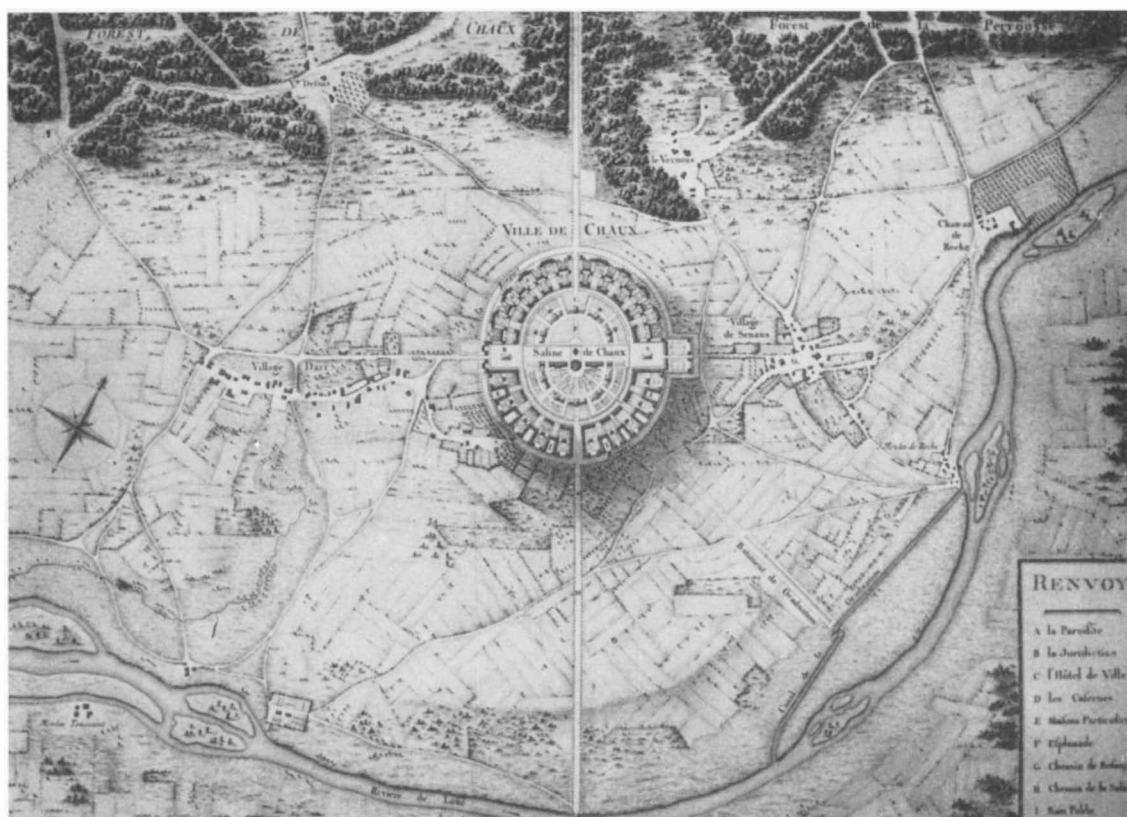


FIG. 141. Chaux, second project.

UTILITARIAN BUILDINGS

. . . ici c'est une ville naissante qui demande ce que la nécessité prescrit.²⁸⁰

The buildings of practical purpose are to be dealt with first, since from them grew the project of the Ideal City. It is significant and symptomatic that an architect who was a member of the Royal Academy and a favorite of the upper circles of society devoted himself to utilitarian projects. The changed attitude towards the architect's function was a revolution in itself. It was to widen the field of the architect's activities to an extent never heard of before.²⁸¹ No longer did designs of an humble structure lower the architect's prestige. Now it depends on him to ennoble his "lower" task: "Les projets les plus simples prennent la teinte de l'âme qui les conçoit."²⁸² The utilitarian building received full attention, for life and all its activities in the growing modern city were now to center around the worker.²⁸³

The Gateway leading into the precinct of the Saltworks (fig. 137) carried, according to the engraving, the inscription:

SALINE DU ROI BATIE SOUS LE REGNE
DE LOUIS XVI L'AN MDCCLXXVI²⁸⁴

It was to house the room of the guards, the prison, and the bakery. With all the traditional apparatus of columns, entablature, etc., the porch of the Gateway has a character of its own. Its blocklike mass emerges from lower wings, its back wall is shaped as a grotto in un-hewn rock. Thus three non-homogeneous elements are combined: classical features, pseudo-natural Romantic finishing, and the new cubism. The spirit of independence, which created this modernized version of classical models, appears also in many passages of Ledoux' text. Ledoux rejects the impotent teachings of the past,²⁸⁵ and refuses obedience to authority.²⁸⁶ He rebukes the copyists who exploit others' ideas,²⁸⁷ and is

²⁸⁰ L., 101.

²⁸¹ L., 25, "Est-il quelque chose que l'artiste puisse dédaigner? les thermes de Plutus, le hangard du négociant, la grange du cultivateur doivent porter son empreinte. Le grand appartient essentiellement aux édifices de tout genre."

une grande maison et celui qui en construit une petite n'ont ils pas un droit égal sur le talent de l'Architecte?" 198, "s'il est véritablement Architecte, il ne cessera pas de l'être en construisant la maison du bûcheron." 210, "l'Architecte de l'humanité."

²⁸² L., 6.

²⁸³ L., 3, "Tous les arts, toutes les conditions, trouvent des demeures qui leur sont propres." 127, note, "Dans cette ville naissante l'activité met tout le monde à l'aise."

²⁸⁴ L., pl. 35. L.R., pl. 120.

²⁸⁵ L., 20, "l'impuissante leçon du passé." 95, "le cercle usé du répertoire de l'école."

²⁸⁶ L., 192, "a-t-on besoin d'autorités quand la nature des lieux commande?"

²⁸⁷ L., 207, "Il assemble dans ses portefeuilles le luxe de l'Asie, les caprices gigantesques des Goths orientaux; il établit un magasin de goût au centre d'une ville naissante."

horrified by the spectacle of the arts feeding on ruins.²⁸⁸

In the intermingling of disparate traits a certain picturesque results which in itself is a momentous symptom of the longing for freedom from the rules.²⁸⁹ Impressive instances of picturesque architecture are the Factory,²⁹⁰ flanking the House of the Director and (fig. 139) particularly the lateral fronts to the entrance of the Furnaces (Salle des bosses)²⁹¹ (fig. 142). This entrance consists of a sturdy, squat lower portion and a disproportionately high triangular, sloping roof. The latter opens in three Venetian windows, which in liveliness form an effective contrast to the surface behind them. There is, moreover, on the walls of the ground floor, the dramatic contrast of smooth ashlar, the rustication of the quoins, and the framing of the doors. The vigorous exploitation of the material is an outstanding characteristic of all the structures erected at Arc-et-Senans. Blondel, in his earlier years, had maintained that "matter does not count."²⁹² His pupil Ledoux holds that the material should be emphasized.²⁹³ Side-by-side with this modern tendency appears the Romantic trend—*Architecture parlante*²⁹⁴—in the urns seemingly pouring forth the precious fluid, to tell us of the saline, the source of the city's wealth (figs. 137, 139, 142).

Ledoux carefully designed each type of building needed in the growing city. The Houses of Commerce form a row of isolated units screened by arcades in front²⁹⁵ (fig. 145). The Horse Pond²⁹⁶ (fig. 146), the Fountain, the Building for the Evaporation of the saline water (Bâtiment de Graduation),²⁹⁷ are architecturally of less interest. Commenting on the fountains, Ledoux inveighs against Baroque animism and illusionism, as "les tromperies de l'art."²⁹⁸ He ridicules theatrical statuary, e.g., a Thetis pressing the water from her hair, or a Neptune whose mighty trident brings forth from the rock a poor rivulet. All this is to him bluff, "Tout est imposture."²⁹⁹ What had seemed "natural" to the Baroque, was bad theatre to the revolutionary.

The Bourse of Chaux is a peripteral temple rising on a high stepped podium³⁰⁰ (fig. 144). It is astonishing

²⁸⁸ L., 20, "on est saisi d'effroi quand on voit les arts se précipiter sur ces corps à demi brisés qui entraînent leur ruine."

²⁸⁹ Cf. pt. I, n. 148, about picturesque.

²⁹⁰ L., pl. 44. L.R., pl. 132.

²⁹¹ L., pls. 47, 48. L.R., pl. 133.

²⁹² See pt. I, n. 59.

²⁹³ L., 128, "il faut tirer parti de la nature, des matériaux, les mettre en valeur." 112, Ledoux asks for "l'emploi raisonné des matériaux."

²⁹⁴ Cf. pt. I, n. 82.

²⁹⁵ L., pl. 25. The section looks like a warehouse rather than a home.

²⁹⁶ L., pl. 49. L.R., pl. 130.

²⁹⁷ L., pl. 9. L.R., pl. 112.

²⁹⁸ L., 125.

²⁹⁹ L., 125, "Là on voit Thétis se presser les cheveux, pour en exprimer les eaux. . . Ici c'est Neptune qui frappe de son avare trident un réservoir d'où coulent quelques pouces d'eau. . . Tout est imposture."

³⁰⁰ L., pl. 50. L.R., pl. 71.

to find this classicizing design in the work of an artist who so violently upbraided the imitators and so ardently strove for architectural rebirth. Ledoux' Bourse, like that of Brongniart in Paris, already reveals the end of the era of revolutionary *élan* and the rise of the morbid style of the Empire. According to his text, Ledoux planned the Bourse in the center of the Ideal City, but it does not appear on the map, nor in the perspective view of the city. Similar discrepancies occur frequently in *L'Architecture*, owing perhaps, to the fact that his designs and the text originated at different times. In his comments on the Bourse, Ledoux discusses economic problems, condemning speculation and defending honest trading.³⁰¹

Ledoux' interest in his city manifests itself in visions of the life of its prospective population, the "peuplade laborieuse, dans le plus beau lieu du monde."³⁰² He shows the church approached by solemn processions,³⁰³ and the market with its buzzing activity.³⁰⁴ The Market, situated in the outskirts of Chaux, is planned on a square, subdivided into nine rectangles (fig. 149). The raised central structure is contrasted with the lower

³⁰¹ L., 126, "dans une ville que la philosophie fonda, c'est le rassemblement d'hommes choisis, qui traitent de bonne foi, soit en matières réelles, soit en échanges. On n'échange pas l'or contre le malheur."

³⁰² L., 42.

³⁰³ L., pl. 72. L.R., pl. 140.

³⁰⁴ L., pl. 79. L.R., pl. 145.

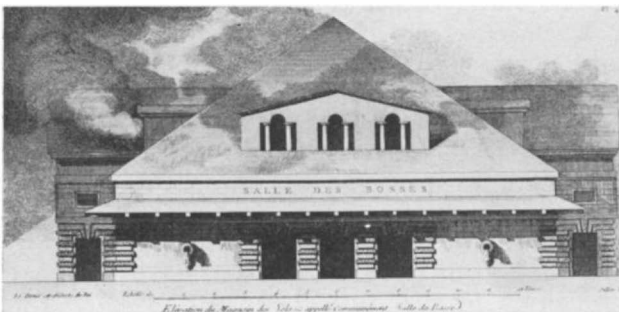


FIG. 142. Furnaces—Fourneaux de la Saline.

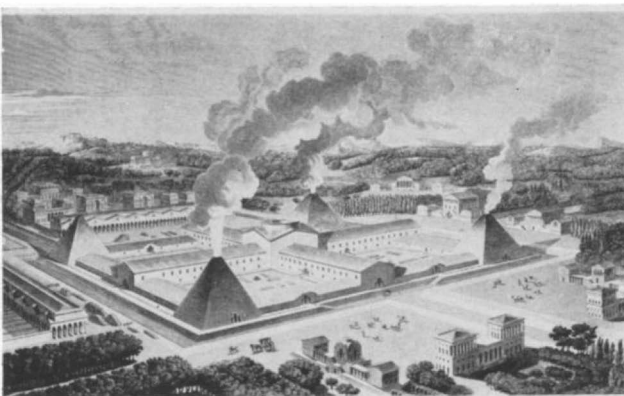


FIG. 143. Gun foundry—Forge à canons.

buildings in the corners,³⁰⁵ without any formal reciprocity between them. Here we see again the system of independent pavilions which we found in the second project of Chaux, and in the schemes for the Discount Bank.³⁰⁶ This system appears also in the Gun Foundry (Forge à canons),³⁰⁷ where the main accent has been shifted from the center to the pyramids in the corners (fig. 143). It is characteristic of both the Market and the Foundry that the single elements do not form into pictorial *ensembles*, contrary to the Baroque complexes where the parts of the house, foreground and background, building and nature, are blended into a whole. No longer is the center the "heart" from which all "circulation" goes out and to which it returns; it is merely the crossing-point of the main axes. The con-

³⁰⁵ L. 164, "La forme pyramidale (this term is not descriptive, but is to convey the impression of the whole) étincelle au milieu des toits assourdis qui la font valoir; des masses offrent des effets constants."

³⁰⁶ See n. 163.

³⁰⁷ L., pls. 124, 125. L.R., pls. 149, 150.

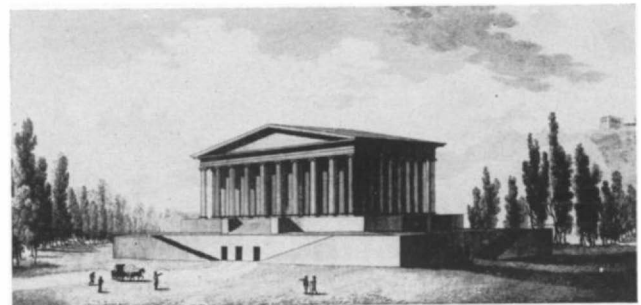


FIG. 144. Exchange—Bourse.

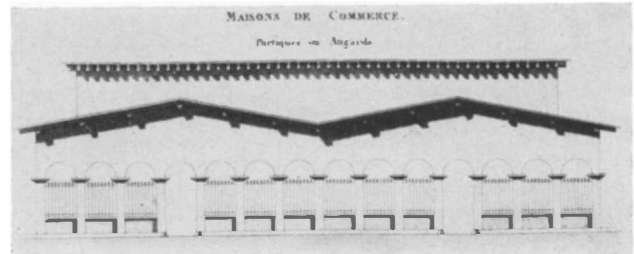


FIG. 145. Houses of Commerce—Maisons de commerce.

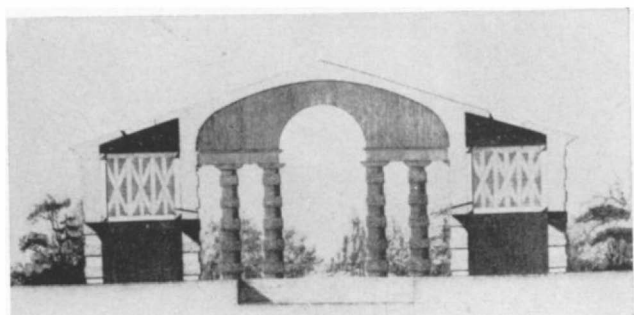


FIG. 146. Horse-pond—Abreuvoir.

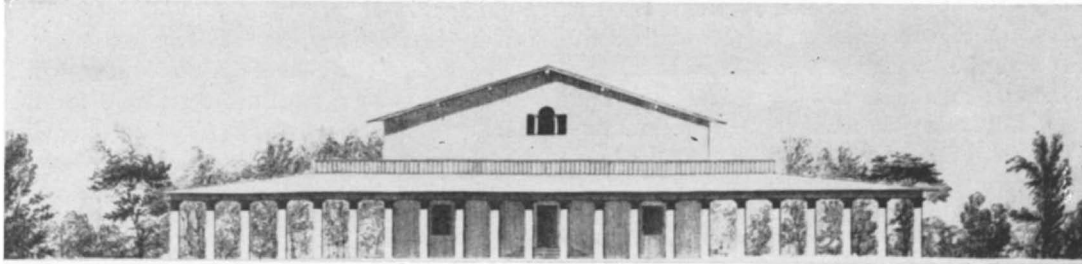


FIG. 147. Carpenter's house—Logement du charpentier.

cept of a main block in the center of a square appears also in the Carpenter's house standing in a rectangular court closed in by crude arcades³⁰⁸ (fig. 147).

Now, let us turn to a very humble building which shows that the doctrine of pure functionalism had also entered the thoughts of the Master of Dormans, the doctrine which had already been so fervently propagated by Carlo Lodoli about 1750. Ledoux must have been proud of his extremely plain little Grange (Grange parée)³⁰⁹ (fig. 168). He puts the following words into the mouth of the granger whom he introduces as the imaginary builder: "ce petit édifice . . . porte l'empreinte de mes facultés: tout ce que vous avez vu est motivé par la nécessité."³¹⁰ There is no "art" in the house, or in its setting,³¹¹ for to the granger art is waste.³¹² The inclination towards the ideal of functionalism,³¹³ and the hostility against decoration,³¹⁴ are

³⁰⁸ L., pl. 7.

³⁰⁹ L., 48, "la masse est carrée," pl. 5.

³¹⁰ L., 49.

³¹¹ L., 48, "La situation, favorisée par la nature, ne devoit rien à l'art."

³¹² L., 50, "A quoi bon toutes ces impostures? tous ces outrages de l'art absorbent les produits."

³¹³ L., 65, "Le sentiment apprécié d'un plan est à l'abri de toute domination. Il émane du sujet, il doit s'adapter à la nature des lieux et des besoins."

³¹⁴ L., 91, "Tout détail est inutile, je dis plus, nuisible, quand il divise les surfaces par des additions mesquines ou mensongères." 25, "des ornements de mode qui fatiguent les yeux et corrompent la pureté des lignes . . . ces hors-d'œuvre qui atténuent la pensée principale." 45, "des constructions qui doivent joindre la solidité apparente à la solidité réelle." 46, "ces lignes mollement prolongées; ces formes brisées à leur



FIG. 148. Bridge across the Loue—Pont de la Loue.

reflected in several other passages of *L'Architecture*. Were they merely borrowed from Lodoli, or were they Ledoux' own? Obviously, Ledoux was familiar with the current ideas of his time. The main problem is how he reacted to these ideas, not how much or how little he owed to others. The quest for the "creator" of a style need not preoccupy the historian too much, for the problem of precedence, apart from being practically insoluble, is secondary. Important is the recognition of the ideas at work in the particular period. The great artist is not a man taking one detail from here and another from there. He is rather like a focal point in which rays from all directions converge, are assimilated, and finally emerge in a new form. Ledoux' main objectives were to overcome the past and to present the new individualism. (The trend toward the latter is clearly stated in a passage on the Recreational Building.³¹⁵) Whatever "rays" reached him, he bent them to his own will, whether he preached the Lodolian creed or the principles of geometrization. Either way appeared promising to him who called himself "l'architecte puriste,"³¹⁶ and he incessantly inveighed against the "savants de convention."³¹⁷ With the self-will of a great personality he always worked toward his own ends. So it was possible for him in one breath to advocate both functionalism and, suddenly, pass to geometrization.³¹⁸

One of the most striking instances of Ledoux' artistic intentions is the Coopery (Atelier des cercles)³¹⁹ (fig. 171). It is a plain cube, the four fronts of which are formed by gigantic concentric circles inscribed in fram-

naissance, qui s'écrasent sous le poids du faux goût; ces corniches qui rampent comme les reptiles du désert, et épousent tous les vices." 108, "des surfaces tranquilles, peu d'accessoires." 118, "Moins on divise les surfaces, plus elles paroissent grandes." 204, "Etablissez de belles masses, préparez d'heureux contrastes . . . soyez avare de ces accessoires que la mode commande."

³¹⁵ L., 172, "On peut voir dans les plans et élévations l'esprit qui a dicté cet établissement; tout est isolé, tout est aperçu." Cf. n. 272.

³¹⁶ L., 140.

³¹⁷ L., 52.

³¹⁸ L., 135, "Il faut composer avec la place, et obtenir d'elle le caractère qui appartient au sujet; toutes les formes que l'on décrit d'un seul trait de compas, sont avouées par le goût. Le cercle, le carré, voilà les lettres alphabétiques que les auteurs emploient dans la texture des meilleurs ouvrages."

³¹⁹ L., pl. 88.



FIG. 149. Market—Marché.

ing squares. After having met the functionalist Ledoux in the Grange, we find him here an extremist of geometrical formalism. In these two designs, the wide span of the era itself is reflected—an era avid for the unheard-of, wherever it could be found. The Grange not only recalls Lodoli, but also Rousseau, and the Coopery may be interpreted as a document of a new formalism, as well as an outstanding instance of “Narrative” architecture. Ledoux did not content himself with the simple apposition of shallow symbols, like the many who put lyres on the walls of a theatre, or Mercury’s caduceus on a commercial building. Eventually we find him applying fasces to one of his stern cubes.³²⁰ But in the Coopery he goes beyond the literary sign-board symbolism and transforms this entire building into a fantastic pattern representative of its purpose, which he himself finds pregnant with meaning.³²¹ Parenthetically I want to point out here that Ledoux was deeply interested in the pseudo-scientific physiognomical studies of the era.³²²

The Bridge across the Loue is supported by piers in the form of ancient galleys (fig. 148). Yet the presentation of classic shapes was not at all Ledoux’

³²⁰ *Cp.* below the descriptions of the Pacifère and the Panaré-téon.

³²¹ L., 179, note, “un édifice qui s’empreint de l’émanation du sujet qui l’autorise.” The concept of Narrative Architecture appears also 118, “il faut que le caractère de l’édifice ne soit point équivoque.”

³²² L., 61, “l’habitude de tout analyser et de juger les hommes sur les formes extérieures.”

main end. He explains that he wished to surpass various famous bridges of the past—Pisa, Florence, London, and others—by greater purity of design.³²³

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Aussi verra-t-on que ma cité possède des Maisons de frères.³²⁴

The Church of the Ideal City rises on a plan in the form of a Greek Cross³²⁵ (fig. 150). Porches of eight columns each are added to all four sides; above the center a low saucer dome finishes the whole. The horizontals prevail, contributing greatly to the reposeful character of the sanctuary. This self-contained, static church is a far cry from the cathedrals of the Baroque, with their dynamics, their domes with ascending ribs, and their Latin-cross plans which make the nave look like an extended arm. Yet even the Greek cross seems to Ledoux not to be sufficiently restrained. He girds his church with a low stone screen adorned with narrative reliefs. In the four corners of this sacred precinct are cemeteries planted with cypresses (one each for men, women, boys, and girls). Contrary to Baroque structures with their inviting gestures, the Church of Chaux does not communicate with the outer world. The churches of the counter-reformation promised ecstatic delights; Ledoux’ church promises peace and quiet.

³²³ L., 45, 46; pls. 3, 4. L.R., pls. 108, 109.

³²⁴ L., 3.

³²⁵ L., pl. 72. L.R., pl. 140.

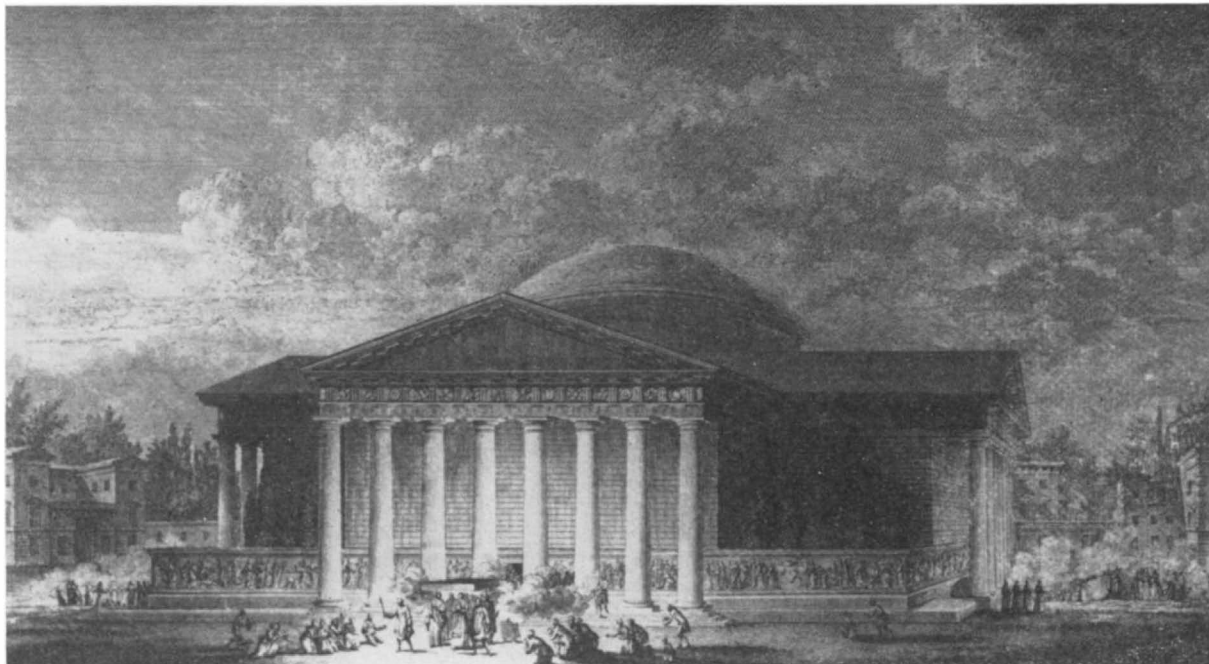


FIG. 150. Church—Eglise de Chaux.

The bare, windowless walls are reminiscent of the Paris Panthéon after its transformation in the Revolution. Only very low, narrow doors, hardly perceptible from the outside, lead into the church of Chaux. Its interior, no doubt, was influenced by the Parochial Church of Blondel. Ledoux, too, places the main altar in the center,³²⁶ high above the level of the entrance doors. Thus the worshipper is compelled to look upwards from the moment he steps into the church. He will then ascend the stairs in the eastern or western cross arm, and during the service will stay in one of the two other cross-arms on the level of the altar, and is himself now lifted above the plane on which everyday life proceeds. Utilizing Blondel's ideas, Ledoux imparts extraordinary solemnity to the room which, to a great extent, is achieved by the unpierced walls. Light falls from the height of the dome alone, sublimating and exalting the altar while the vaulted cross-arms are dipped in mystic darkness torn by the flicker of the torches. Ledoux tells of his intentions quite explicitly.³²⁷ There is no point in comparing this great combination of Romantic expressiveness and the austeries of cubism with the Roman Pantheon.

The wish to separate neatly all the parts of the Church controls the disposition of the crypt and the cemeteries.³²⁸ Only subsidiary stairs connect them in-

³²⁶ Cf. Cochin, *Misotechnites*, 93, and pt. I, n. 99, 203, about the location of the altar.

³²⁷ L., 152, "Ne semble-t-il pas que ces voûtes obscurcies par des flambeaux oscillants contrastent avec les ombres décidées qui rembrunissent les plafonds."

³²⁸ L., 157, "Mais si on peut faire éclore séparément tant d'avantages en divisant les motifs, pourquoi les confondre dans un seul établissement?"

ternally with the upper church. The extremely sensitive architect disliked the idea that the worship by the living and the rites for the dead be performed in the same, or in contiguous rooms. The "incense of joy and that of sorrow should not mingle."³²⁹ Directly from outside, below the raised aisles for the congregation, steps lead down into the crypt, from which the cemeteries can be entered. In this whole arrangement we find once again "Narrative" architecture in a refined and elaborated form. The visitor approaching the crypt will have the sensation of the earth opening wide. Suddenly he will pass from bright daylight into the darkness of the nether world.

The architect does not say to which denomination the church is dedicated. He mentions rather vaguely side altars consecrated to the virtues and the most momentous events in human life, birth and marriage.³³⁰ It may be of interest to note that he recommends cremation for hygienic reasons.³³¹

Much the same ideas guided Ledoux when he conceived the Chapel of the Director's House³³² (fig. 159). Two stories are combined into a single room. From the lower story, steps lead up to the altar placed in front of a niche. But the altar cannot be approached from its own level. Thus, it is radically separated from the worshippers assembling in the opposite tribune. The niche, the tribune, and the loggias on either side open in Pal-

³²⁹ L., 155, "pourquoi confondre la fumée de l'encensoir commun qui répand ses parfums sur le dieu du jour, avec les sombres vapeurs qui enveloppent les cérémonies funèbres."

³³⁰ L., 157.

³³¹ L., 154.

³³² L., pls. 63, 64. L.R., pls. 125, 126.

ladian motifs. The composition is largely based on the contrast of these openings to the almost empty room. Such opposition of voids was the main motif also in one of the most remarkable interiors of the French Revolution, the Hall of the National Convention in the Tuileries by Boullée's pupil, Jacques-Pierre Gisors.³³³ Ledoux' Chapel calls to mind the chapel in the Palace of Versailles by Hardouin-Mansart. This architect of Louis XIV had placed the tribune on the second floor above the entrance, so that the king looked down upon the altar at the far end of the first floor. Ledoux, however, assigns to the altar the most exalted and most exclusive position. In the execution, he had to simplify his design. *L'Architecture* illustrates both his first project and the one carried out.³³⁴ The lighting of this Chapel is similar to that of the Church:

Only upon the spot where the priest is to stand, is the light to be thrown. You may believe that the Deity has descended from Heaven and has filled this place with all His majesty and splendour. . . . My chief aim was to eliminate diffused light, and to avoid any trifling accessories, so as to induce the faithful to contemplation and devotion. I had to arrange everything in a manner to exalt the sanctuary. The light falling upon the minister, should announce the Divinity; the dimness all around tell of human insignificance. . . . I had to call to mind the heavenly spheres . . . and to show the infinite distance parting man from God, which human imagination in vain attempts to penetrate.³³⁵

In designing the Church, Ledoux was still dependent on his teacher and on tradition as well. Yet when he designed buildings to glorify the humanitarian ideals of his time, he abandoned almost completely the forms of

³³³ Cf. pt. I, n. 308. Prieur 2: pl. 115. Gisors' Hall will be illustrated in my *Architecture in the Age of Reason*.

³³⁴ L., pl. 71.

³³⁵ L., 142, "l'autel est au centre . . . le ministre est seul aperçu, seul éclairé; on croiroit que la divinité elle-même descendue des cieux occupe la place dans toute sa majesté, dans tout son éclat. Voyez l'Ancien Testament . . . voyez les Mahométans . . . aucune figure, aucun ornement ne décorent leurs mosquées, elles ne contiennent que des sentences morales et pieuses. . . . Pour mettre en évidence ces combinaisons il falloit annoncer les soixante marches qui conduisent à l'autel, assourdir les surfaces des murs, détruire les lumières divergentes, les accessoires qui atténuent l'impression des grandes lignes, pour inviter les fidèles au recueillement. Il falloit que tout contribuât à faire valoir l'objet principal; que la lumière qui frappe sur le sacrificateur, fut l'image de la grandeur et

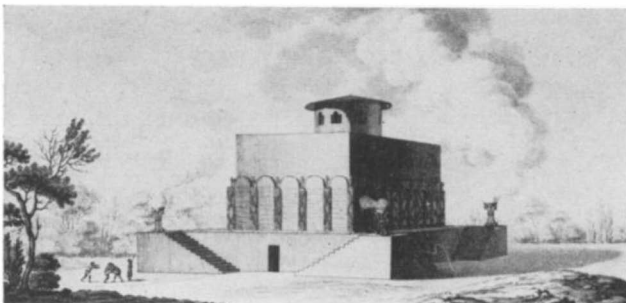


FIG. 151. Pacifère.

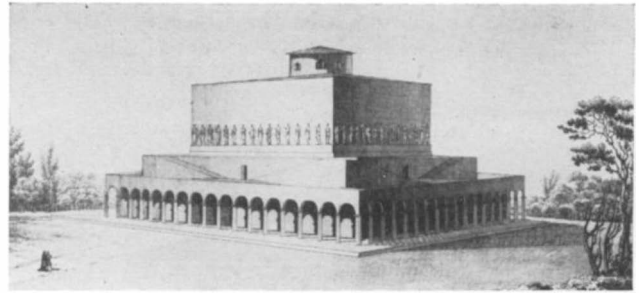


FIG. 152. Panarétéon.

the past, and attempted to realize as fully as possible the artistic ideals of the Revolutionary era. In his city two buildings above all others are destined to serve the new ideals: the Panarétéon dedicated to the new ethics; and the Pacifère representing the new rights. In his enthusiasm Ledoux speaks out loudly: "I have erected a temple to Happiness. In my blind enthusiasm I have piled stone upon stone, wishing to create a monument worthy of the great idea which has carried me away."³³⁶

The Pacifère, or Conciliateur,³³⁷ is a mighty cube rising on a sturdy podium³³⁸ (fig. 151). The Panarétéon, with equally unbroken surfaces, is a terraced building³³⁹ (fig. 152). The simplicity and straightforwardness of both do not call for explanation or justification in the twentieth century. Ledoux, however, felt he had to justify the novel form with its symbolic meaning. To him, the cube of the Pacifère is the symbol of justice;³⁴⁰ the cube of the Panarétéon, the visualization of steadfastness.³⁴¹ Even more significant is his remark that the building which he has conceived is as simple as the law for which it stands.³⁴² To make his cubes more palatable to his critics, he refers to the Greek who called an honest man a "square one."³⁴³ Paving the path to the future, he appeals to the past for support. He does make some concessions to contemporary taste by adding statues of the Virtues and Graces to the austere walls of

de la majesté suprême, que la teinte mystérieuse qui l'enveloppe représentât le néant des nations . . . il falloit élever les degrés qui rappellent les hauts cieux, les hautes montagnes, et mettre entre l'homme et la divinité cette distance incommensurable que l'imagination parcourt et ne peut atteindre."

³³⁶ L., 113, "J'élevois un temple au bonheur. Dans mon aveugle enthousiasme j'amoncelois des pierres les unes sur les autres, et je voulois en former un monument digne de la grande idée dont se repaissoit mon imagination."

³³⁷ L., 113, n. 1.

³³⁸ L., pl. 40.

³³⁹ L., 184; pl. 92. L.R., pl. 242.

³⁴⁰ L., 115, n. 1, "La forme d'un cube est le symbole de la Justice, on la représente assise sur une pierre carrée."

³⁴¹ L., 185, n. 1, "La forme d'un cube est le symbole de l'immuable . . . voilà ce qui a déterminé la masse de cet élévation." Ledoux' explanations were changing; his formal will was firm.

³⁴² L., 114, "l'édifice que mon imagination a conçu . . . sera simple comme les lois qui doivent s'y prononcer."

³⁴³ L., 185, n. 1, "les Grecs appelloient un homme carré celui que l'on ne pouvoit jamais détourner de la vertu ou de ses devoirs."



FIG. 153. Public Baths—Bains de Chaux.

the Panarétéon, the House of Virtue,³⁴⁴ and fasces to the Pacifère, the Hall of Justice. These sculptural decorations are set against the walls, not blended into them in the Baroque way. The new manner of affixing the decoration—the *appliqué* technique—became very popular in the early nineteenth century both in architecture and in furniture. The difference of the materials on small objects added to the effect: brass ornaments were affixed to mahogany or ebony, white reliefs were contrasted to the bluish fond on Wedgwood's ware.

Ledoux eventually resorts to inscriptions to interpret his productions. It is characteristic of the universalism of the period that he borrows his edifying proverbs and moral sentences from the wise sayings of both Antiquity,³⁴⁵ and the Orient.³⁴⁶ Tripods on the podium of the Pacifère emit incense clouds, to create atmosphere. Again we see Romanticism vying with the modern forms. Architecture, Ledoux says, should have emotional qualities in order to equal poetry:

Si les artistes vouloient suivre le
caractère chaque production, ils acquéreroient autant de
gloire que les poètes; . . . il n'y auroit pas une pierre qui,
dans leurs ouvrages, ne parlât
pourroit vraiment dire de l'
de
esprit, un visage.³⁴⁷

Ledoux thinks of the Pacifère as a court of arbitration. Its main purpose is not to punish, but to reconcile, to re-establish peace among the members of a family, or, better still, to prevent dissension.³⁴⁸ foreground of the engraving appear to disagree with the modern concepts of justice. They prefer settling their disputes as their forefathers did, by wrestling and kick-

³⁴⁴ L., 185, contains the explanation of the statues.

³⁴⁵ L., 114, "Sur ces parois ne seront pas gravés les articles sanglants du code des Dracon, mais les principales maximes des moralistes anciens et modernes."

³⁴⁶ L., 186, "les intervalles sont remplis d'inscriptions d'apologues indiens, orientaux, remarquables par un sens juste et profond."

³⁴⁷ L., 115.

³⁴⁸

et se préviennent ou se terminent leurs divisions. On y donne un frein à l'immoralité, et des chaînes aux passions des cités perverses." 114, "là viendront ceux qui n'attendent pour rentrer dans les bornes du devoir que les conseils d'un arbitre sage et conciliant."

ing.) The Panarétéon is a school where the virtues are taught and man's duties discussed.³⁴⁹

The massive walls of Pacifère and Panarétéon do not even allow a guess at the disposition of the interior. The ideal of geometry has got the better of the Baroque principle of animation; restraint has superseded outward show. The exterior of the Baroque château clearly expresses the differentiation between the lordly *grand salon*, the private apartments, and the mezzanine of the servants. The blocks of the revolution are mute. As soon as the architects will renounce the petty devices of "Narrative" architecture, the purposes of their structures will no longer be reflected in the outside. Costume and manners also developed a new reticence; after 1800 dress became more and more uniform; profession or trade would no longer be displayed by attire. People of the Baroque, and the Romanticists, too, liked to exhibit their feelings openly and often excessively, but mankind since has become increasingly reserved. Ledoux himself urges the new attitude in his text: "Let us not reveal our sentiments in public, let us keep them in the secrecy of our hearts."³⁵ These words are contained in Ledoux' comment on the project of the House for Four Families.



FIG. 154. Hospice.

But the new feeling for restraint is clearly enough expressed in Pacifère and Panarétéon,³⁵¹ and their symbolism, indeed, is only a justification of the modern form.

The Pacifère and the Panarétéon are crowned with cylindrical belvederes. The problem how to combine cylinders with prismatic masses occupied Ledoux intensively, as we know from the *barrières* and the Palace of the Governor of Aix, and appears once more in the Parsonage and the Public Baths. In these last, the architect resorts to the pattern of interpenetration. Again one may trace these two designs back to some classical models, again the main interest lies in the original new solutions. The Parsonage, illustrated in the View of Chaux, to the right, (fig. 140), is a rotunda inserted into a square substructure.³⁵² The Public Baths are surrounded by a low square wall, like the Church

³⁴⁹ L., 184, "école de morale où l'on enseigne les devoirs de l'homme."

³⁵⁰ L., 99, "On n'est pas tenu d'exposer au grand jour, dans la place publique, le sentiment qui nous domine. Il faut le renfermer dans le secret de son âme."

³⁵¹ L., 185, "il en est ainsi des degrés de la perfection; ils sont insensibles."

³⁵² L., pl. 15. L.R., pl. 116.

of Chaux. Their cylindrical bodies seem to be penetrated by cross arms³⁵³ (fig. 153). The discussion of the Baths gives Ledoux the opportunity to set forth some of the ideas that have guided him. He accounts for the unpierced walls by referring to that privacy which is particularly required in a building for the sick. We take from his words that he must have been vehemently criticized for his predilection for unbroken surfaces.³⁵⁴

credo:

. . . la décoration d'un édifice du sujet, l'effet dépend du choix des masses pyramidales, des plans, des contrastes qui produisent des ombres, . . . il faut élaguer les croisées coûteuses et oisives, les corniches sans motifs, les accessoires de mode . . . tout ce qui n'est pas indispensable, fatigue les yeux, nuit à la pensée et n'ajoute rien à l'ensemble.³⁵⁵

It is obvious that in this passage he does not give a hard and fast rule by which he worked and expected others to work. But to us these words reveal, unmistakably, the double impact of Romanticism and Functionalism on his thought.³⁵⁶

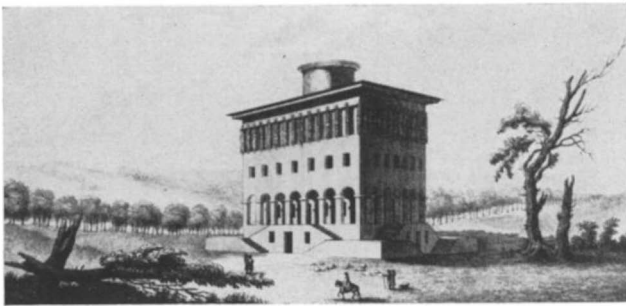


FIG. 155. Union house—Maison d'union.

At a great distance from the city, in a stretch of woods, the Hospice was to be located³⁵⁷ (fig. 154). It would shelter the worthy traveler, and contribute to the improvement of mankind by separating the sheep from the goats. Not every one would be allowed to continue on his journey; whoever aroused suspicion would be put on trial and, if found guilty, be condemned to forced labor.³⁵⁸ The Hospice is a two-storied stepped house

³⁵³ L., pls. 80–82. L.R., pls. 146–148.

³⁵⁴ L., 169, ironically, "Comment! Point de croisées apparentes; aucun développement; aucune trace de la distribution intérieure. Que de contradictions! On n'a rien vu de pareil! Quelle extravagance!"

³⁵⁵ L., 169.

³⁵⁶ L., 169, "la décoration d'un édifice destiné à la guérison des maladies contagieuses doit être courbé sous l'humiliation d'un emploi avili par l'opinion, et s'effacer aux yeux dans la crainte d'être aperçu."

³⁵⁷ L., pl. 11. L.R., pl. 94.

³⁵⁸ L., 64, "Le but de cet établissement est d'épurer l'ordre social, par l'attrait de la bienfaisance; de changer les inclinations vicieuses, par l'exemple du travail, et d'assujettir la licence aux lois de la subordination. Les bons et les méchants sont également reçus pour la première nuit; mais dès le lendemain les

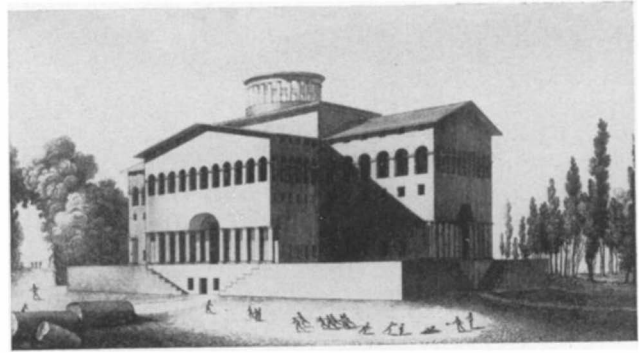


FIG. 156. Educational building—Maison d'éducation.

built around a square court; the central portion of each front opens in arcades. Although Ledoux declares that he was inspired in this design by the caravansaries and in the general layout has included a pagoda and a bazaar, the Hospice seems to show no Oriental characteristics.

In no way should we derive the cubic inventions of Ledoux from Oriental models. Instead of looking around for fortuitous analogies, let us attempt to grasp the formal ideals of the architect. Even when he used some model, he had a definite reason for choosing it to accord with his artistic goal. What is important is not where his work comes from, but where it leads. Contrary to general opinion, the late eighteenth century in the arts cannot be considered altogether as the last stage of a great tradition. Its true significance, in fact, is that it was a most significant beginning. This is how Ledoux himself understood his era and sensed the great awakening in his time: "Déjà l'aurore s'empare du monde; . . . les arts se réveillent; un nouveau jour commence."³⁵⁹

The ideal of comradeship has found a home in Union House (Maison d'Union)³⁶⁰ (fig. 155). It would have been a shrine of Rousseauism, a meeting or club house.³⁶¹ Separate rooms are assigned to each profession. Architecturally, it is a four-storied block, rising on a podium, topped with a cylindrical crowning. The disposition of the façades is remarkable: here, once more, is that tension which results from the peculiar distancing of the rows of openings. (On the first floor are arches; on the second small rectangular windows; on the third niches separated by symbolic fascies.)

bons continuent tranquillement leur voyage; les autres sont interrogés . . . condamnés à seconder nos travaux."

³⁵⁹ L., 86. In this new artistic era, I pointed out in *Von Ledoux*, 6, 48, 63, the Master of Dormans was one of the first. Raval, 18, overenthusiastically calls him "le premier de nos grands bâtisseurs modernes," and in *Bx-Arts*, no. 315, 1939, "ce précurseur de l'urbanisme moderne." Yet, to be on the safe side, he, 17, remarks "qu'il est hasardeux d'établir une filiation directe."

³⁶⁰ L., pl. 43.

³⁶¹ L., 117, "une maison pour assembler des vertus morales . . . l'agriculture, le commerce, la littérature, les arts trouvent des salles de réunion, des bibliothèques, de vastes promenoirs. . ."

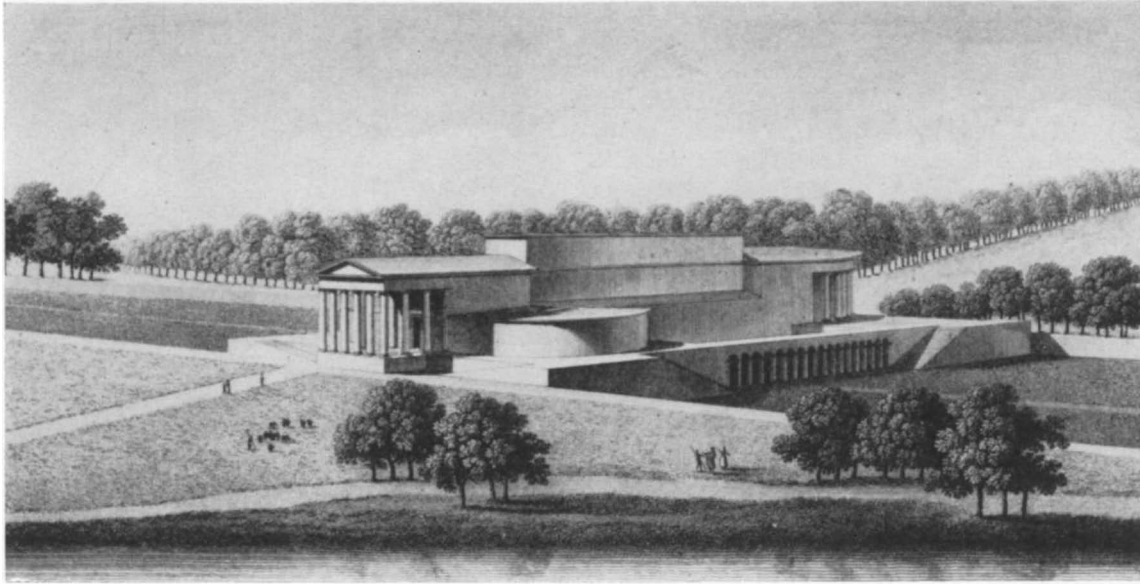


Fig. 157. Oikema.

The plan of the Educational Building (Maison d'Education) is the Greek cross within a square³⁶² (fig. 156). The latter is expressed only on the ground floor (the concept of the Church and the Public Baths!), while the upper stories are formed by intersecting bodies (motif of interpenetration). The center is occupied by the chapel running up through the three stories, and topped by a monopteral belvedere. This belvedere is distinguished from Baroque domes by its shape, its inconspicuousness, and the lack of formal affinity to the structure. In the nineteenth century cupolas were similarly placed on prismatic blocks, and could be removed without any harm to the whole. Often even an aesthetic improvement might result from such an amputation.

The Oikema, the House of Passion, or, one might say, the Temple of Immorality, is to contribute to the improvement of youth by a curious method (fig. 157). Confronted with vice (in the "Atelier de corruption"), youth, in its innate goodness, will be revolted by the ugliness of vice and turn to the path of virtue which in the end will lead to the "altar of Hymen."³⁶³ The Oikema is very advanced in its architectural form.³⁶⁴ The prostyles are about all that is left of Hellenic architecture in the design. Elongated nude walls and horizontal lines dominate, low semi-cylindrical blocks are attached to each side. To mitigate the severity of the composition, Ledoux applies natural decoration. He

fancies the Oikema in a blossoming dale full of fragrance,³⁶⁵ not afraid that so much charm will make the place attractive rather than repellent and has an obvious explanation for the lack of windows. The exterior should not give away the interior: "ces murs tranquilles cachent les agitations du dedans."³⁶⁶ As always, the practical considerations are not the motive of the architectural form. The architect could have added statues or any sort of decoration, had he not been fond of the bare walls which are enhanced by the contrasted columns of the porches and the arcades of the basement. The interior is divided into halls, galleries, a salon and a number of cubicles. The educational experiment which Ledoux had in mind is as daring as the architectural form which he has devised.

The modern architect, Ledoux finds, should design recreational buildings to promote a healthier and more pleasant life. He wants gardens to be added to the houses of the workers,³⁶⁷ and expects the community to provide a Gymnasium (Portiques)³⁶⁸ (fig. 160) Its halls should afford a place for exercise and play, and for mental relaxation as well.³⁶⁹ With his hygienic suggestions, and with the novel form of this design, Ledoux

³⁶⁵ L., 200, "le vallon est entouré de prestiges séducteurs; un vent doux caresse l'atmosphère; les variétés odoriférantes de la forêt, le thym, l'iris, la violette . . . soufflent leurs parfums sur ces murs; le feuillage qui les abrite répand le frais et s'agite en murmures. L'onde amoureuse tressaillit sur la rive et l'écho éclate en sons délicieux . . . c'est là où les plaisirs promis par Mahomet ont fixé leur séjour."

³⁶⁶ L., 202.

³⁶⁷ See note 262.

³⁶⁸ L., pl. 31.

³⁶⁹ L., 102, "C'est sous ces voûtes . . . ouvertes au septentrion, pour rafraîchir l'air, que la foule trouvera la salubrité et corrobora ses poumons . . . ces voûtes consacrés à la méditation, aux jeux. . . Cf. n. 45, 263.

³⁶² L., pls. 105-108. L.R., pls. 218-220.

³⁶³ L., 2, "L'Oikema présente à la bouillante et volage jeunesse qu'il attire la dépravation dans sa nudité, et le sentiment de la dégradation de l'homme ranimant la vertu qui sommeille, conduit l'homme à l'autel de l'Hymen vertueux. L'Atelier de corruption lui découvre les sources empoisonnées qui altèrent la vigueur de la morale . . . renversent les empires." Similarly, 203.

³⁶⁴ L., pls. 103, 104. L.R., pls. 240, 241.

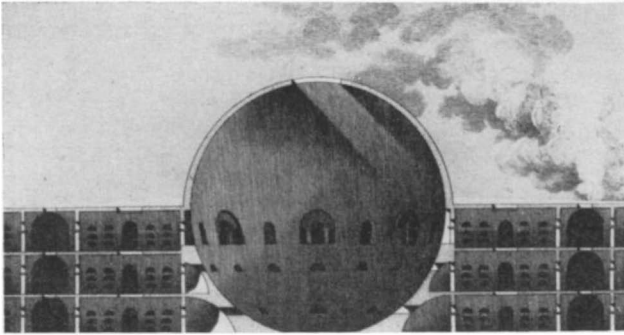


FIG. 158. Cemetery—Cimetière de Chaux.

feels himself to be ahead of his time: "Ici le temps déploie ses archives précoces; je vois de nouveaux produits de l'art fondés sur la nature."³⁷⁰ He points out that the artistic effect of the Gymnasium depends on the contrast of the rows of openings to the wall.³⁷¹ The pattern on the upper floor is a precursor of the window bands of our century. We see it in a more outspoken form on the Casino (Maison de jeux),³⁷² destined for ball playing, dancing, and chess. (Card games are forbidden for the sake of morals³⁷³ (fig. 189).)

From the city of the living, we must now turn to the city of the dead.

Apart from the four Cemeteries adjoining the Church of Chaux, Ledoux planned another large necropolis (fig. 158). In it subterranean galleries after the model of the Roman catacombs lead in three stories to a spherical hall with a diameter of about eighty yards. Its lower half opens into the galleries in alternating large Palladian motifs and small arched windows. The vaulting of the upper half contains no apertures, nor any kind of decoration which might disturb the calm surfaces. Only in the zenith is there a skylight, so that even on the brightest day dimness reigns under the silent dome. The hall is not intended for funeral ceremonies, it has

³⁷⁰ L., 102.

³⁷¹ L., 102, "Que d'effets les Architectes pourroient tirer de ces arcs multipliés qui offrent à la combinaison, des contrastes, des oppositions."

³⁷² L., pl. 112. L.R. pl. 237. Cf. p. 529 on the Casino.

³⁷³ L., 216.

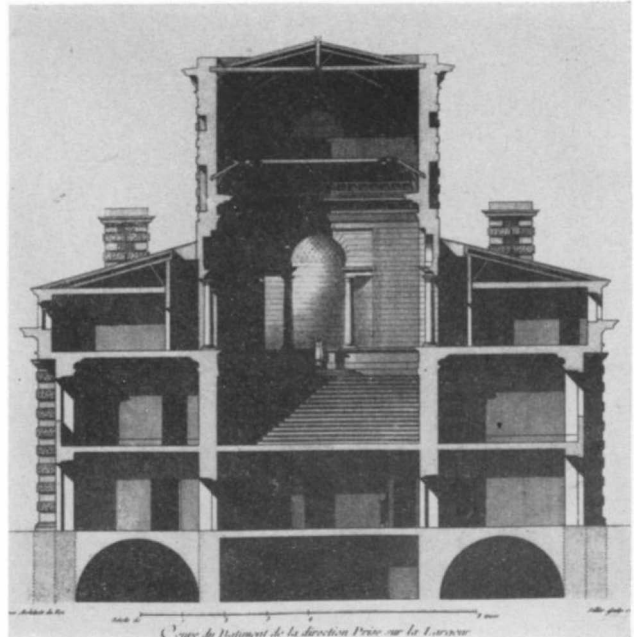


FIG. 159. Chapel.



FIG. 160. Gymnasium—Portiques.

no practical purpose. There is no place in it where one can stand. But it may give the mourner looking into it from the galleries, a glimpse of immensity and a glance at Heaven's light. This must have been the effect at

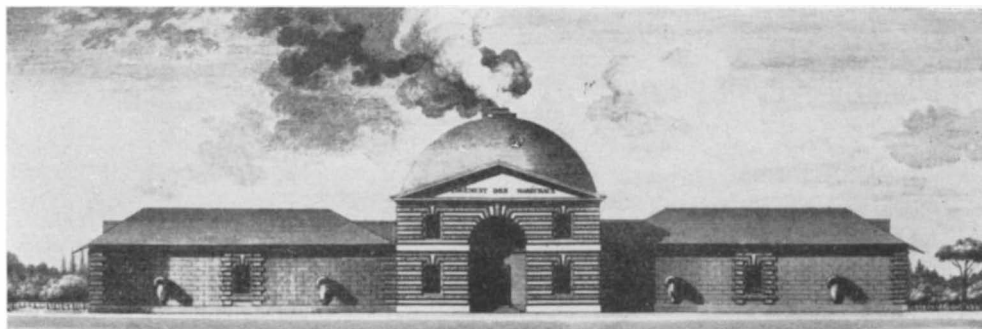


FIG. 161. Workmen's houses—Bâtiment des ouvriers.



FIG. 162. House of the treasurer—Maison d'un caissier.

which Ledoux aimed.³⁷⁴ The outside was impressive as the interior. The upper half of the gigantic globe towers high and lonely over the plain, an austere symbol of infinity. Around the edifice there is nothing but a wide empty space. No tree, no lawn, no lively stream relieves the gloom. Whoever approaches it shall face an image of nothingness, a vision of the void—"l'image du néant."³⁷⁵

We know from Boullée's work that the pure sphere appeared particularly dignified to the revolutionary architects, for structures connected with death and eternity. Ledoux finds the spherical form as grand and as meaningful as the pyramids, the shape of which he compares to the tapering flame.³⁷⁶ The fires of the crema-

³⁷⁴ L., pl. 99. L.R., pl. 141. L., 194, "vous verrez les cérémonies religieuses occuper le centre de l'édifice, le ciel les éclairer." Once more the text differs from the engravings. The latter appear to be closer to the creative act, whereas the former is a subsequent justification of the artist's boldness—or carelessness—not to think of the ceremonies.

³⁷⁵ L., 195, n. 2, "L'artiste sentira qu'ayant couvert d'une voûte immense l'étendue des terres excavées par l'extraction de la pierre . . . l'image du néant pouvoit offrir aux yeux ni bois, ni prés, ni vallons, ni fleuves, encore moins les bienfaits du soleil qui vivifie la nature."

³⁷⁶ L., 194, "l'idée de la flamme qui s'effile . . . en détermina la forme (des pyramides). Croyez-vous que l'idée de la terre lui cède en grandeur? cette machine ronde n'est-elle pas sublime?"

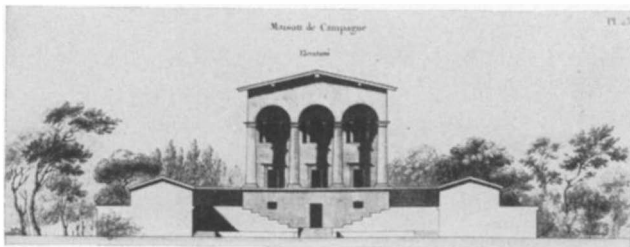


FIG. 163. House of a councillor—Maison d'un conseiller.

tory chapels make him think of finality.³⁷⁷ Yet he feels confident that true merit will be resurrected from the ashes.³⁷⁸

Characteristic of Ledoux' wandering fantasy is an engraving showing the planets moving in the sky. Its caption "View of the cemetery" probably means the place where the souls find rest, the cemetery of the spirit beyond the cemetery of the body.³⁷⁹

In the designs of his places of worship, and his other community buildings, Ledoux emerges as a true representative of the era of the Revolution, as a reformer and a visionary.

RESIDENCES

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When in 1773 Ledoux projected the houses for the people of the Ideal City—some hundred and fifty in number, if we can believe him—he planned all of them as detached buildings: "toutes variées, toutes isolées."³⁸¹ We do not know much of the chronological order of

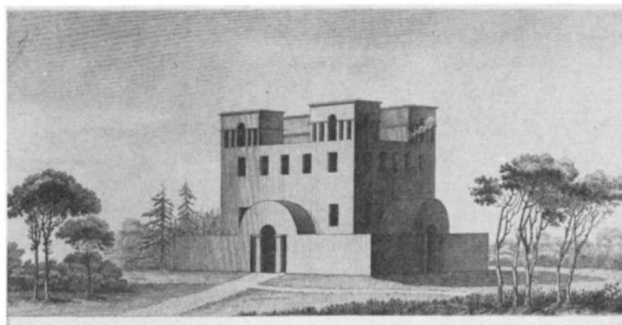


FIG. 164. Writer's house—Maison d'un homme de lettres.

those illustrated in *L'Architecture*. Though they were most certainly conceived within a short time, all the varieties of eighteenth-century development appear in them. Ledoux was not the "creator" of any of the different trends, but he was affected by them and capable of expressing the new revolutionary ideas in the most positive way. The work he left behind him is an epitome of the architectural history of his period, of its aims and its doubts.

The Baroque tradition was alive in many of his executed buildings, but only meager vestiges remain in the projects for the Ideal City. There is not a single instance of the pure wing type among them, not one

³⁷⁷ L., 194, "le noir séjour où finit la grandeur. . . . Oui, c'est là où l'on retrouve l'égalité. Avancez, vous allez voir ce vaniteux fantôme se dissiper, vous trouverez des chapelles ardentes, des brâsiers dévorateurs de la matière."

³⁷⁸ L., 194, "C'est ici où le mérite va renaître de ses cendres. . . . Je puis donc, et je respire encore, m'identifier à ces substances immortelles."

³⁷⁹ L., pl. 100. L.R., pl. 142, with the caption *Elévation*.

³⁸⁰ L., 105.

³⁸¹ L., 234.

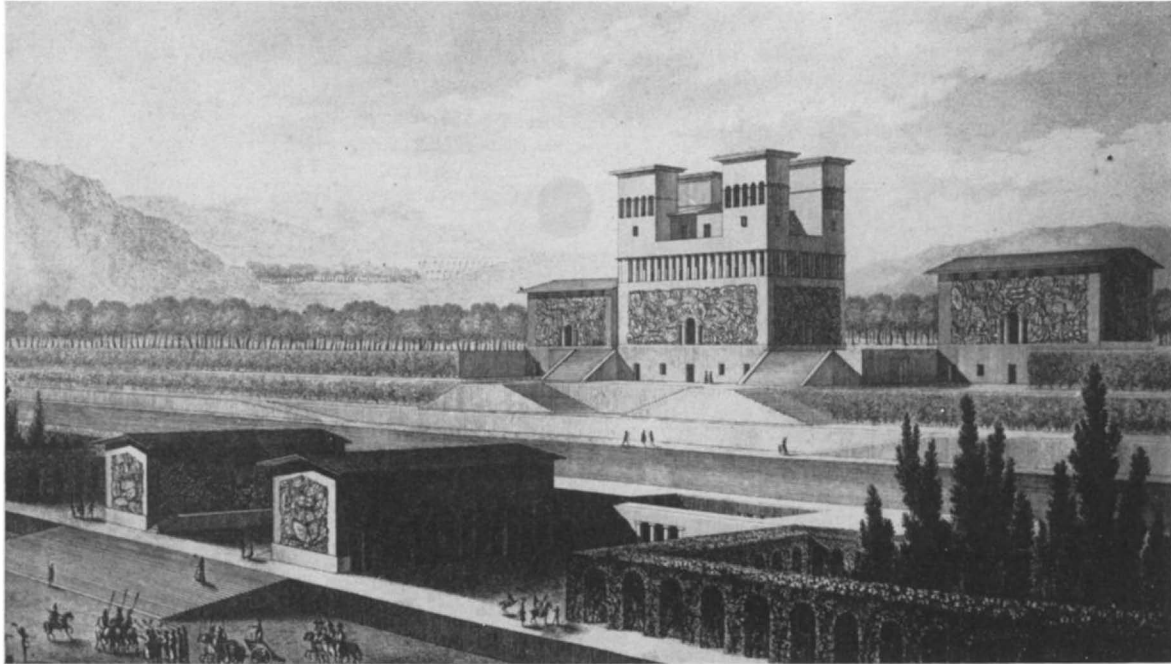


FIG. 165. Hunting lodge—Retour de chasse.

with the typical sequence of salon and vestibule on the main axis. Nothing is left of the differentiation of the stories, nor of that "organization" which consisted in mimicking organic shapes, such as "wings," or "arms." The House of the Treasurer (Caissier),³⁸² which would have been one of the most sumptuous residences of the city, shows in its exterior that the concept of the ruling center has not been quite forsaken, although the plan intentionally deviates from the schemes of the past (fig. 162). It is a square with a four-columned porch in front, and an elliptically-columned vestibule supporting a terrace, in the rear. The through-going main axis no longer coincides with the axis of the staterooms. Consequently, the old equilibrium of the plan is lost. We still find some classical decorations such as the heavy cornice, the statuary on the terrace, and the colossal pilasters on the side-fronts. But the elliptical vestibule, partly projecting from the house and partly intruding into it, is an instance of that interpenetration which was to become a favored pattern of the rising new architecture. There is still a remainder of the gracefulness of the Louis XV style and yet there is in it much of the harshness of geometrical architecture.

At first glance, the Hunting Lodge (Retour de chasse), planned for the Prince de Baufremont, and dated 1778 in the engraving,³⁸³ seems to be Baroque in its general layout (fig. 165). But on closer view we note significant changes. The composition lacks in binding power. Although the building masses seem to be grouped in a manner very similar to Baroque disposi-

tion, and, although the main house rules over the outlying buildings, each block is independent from the other, and from its natural setting. Each is a solid entity, with straight and rigid edges. None makes an attempt to come into contact with its neighbor. Now, the elements make no effort even to acknowledge each other. The reliefs, composed of trophies, are flat, and the roofs of the four-corner towers also are flat.³⁸⁴ The Venetian doors are inconspicuous whereas the window bands on the upper stories play a marked role. Old and new features mingle in the complex, the latter having obviously got the better of the former.

The buildings of the Saltworks show Classicism and Romanticism interfering with the new compositional ideal. The portico of the House of the Director,³⁸⁵ has almost entirely lost its traditional character, for the shafts of the columns disappear behind the square drums ringing them (fig. 166). Likewise, the Venetian windows of the upper story are ineffective in the rustication. Compositionally, the Director's House is thoroughly modern. The upper story is superposed on the lower, one block on top of the other.³⁸⁶ Ledoux contrasts the masses in shape and size. From this very arrangement he expects greatest impressiveness.³⁸⁷ The

³⁸² L., 214, "on n'y voyoit pas ces applications illusaires . . . fragiles, désapprouvées par l'immensité de l'air qui dévore tout ce que la proportion néglige."

³⁸⁵ L., pl. 60. L.R., pl. 127.

³⁸⁶ L., 135, "Le couronnement produit une masse qui contribue à le faire *pyramider*" (Ledoux' italics). 151, "On obtint des corps isolés, des saillies prononcées, des ombres décidées; ce n'étoit pas tout perdre."

³⁸⁷ L., 134, "Le couronnement, dans sa contenance altière, ordonne à tout ce qui l'approche, de baisser la tête."

³⁸² L., pls. 85, 86.

³⁸³ L., 212; pls. 110, 111.

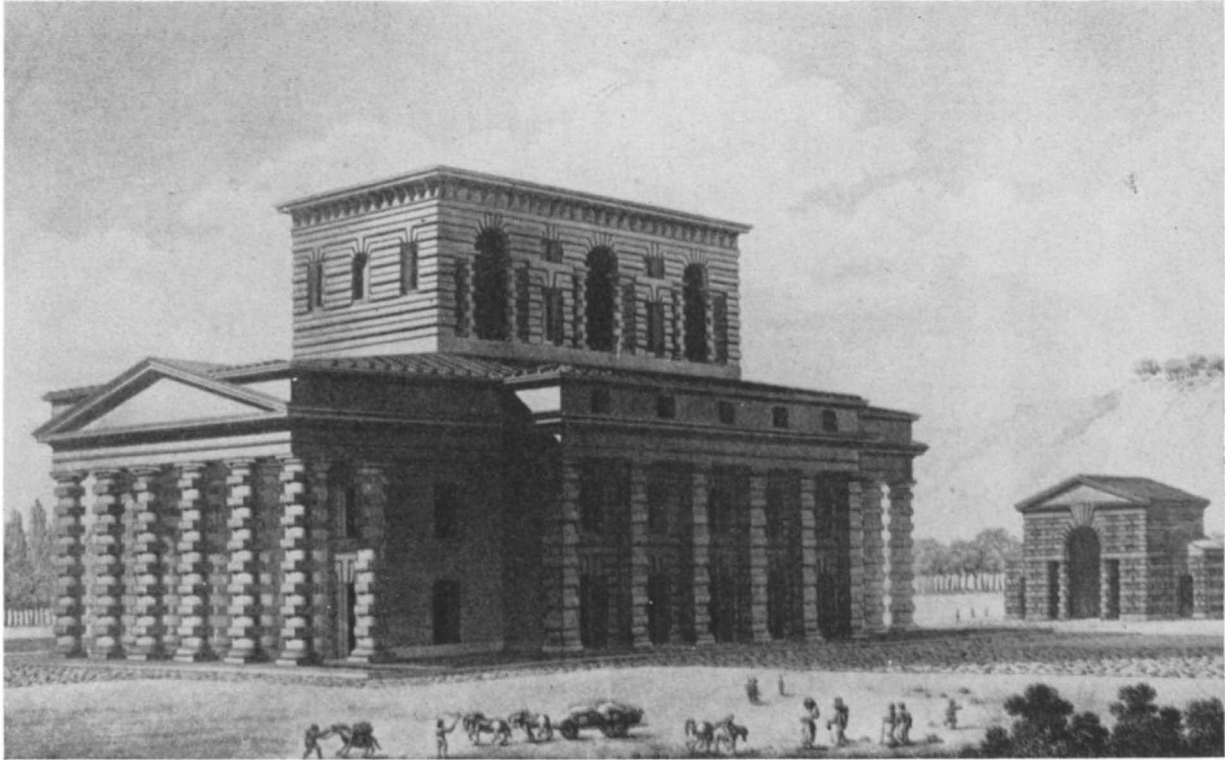


FIG. 166. Director's house—Maison du directeur.

vigorous rustication with its heavy shadows is a means to obtain picturesqueness.³⁸⁸ An interesting passage in his text reveals that, like Boullée, he thought of light effects, which, literally, over-shadow all the details and he exclaims: “quelle magie! que de merveilles!”³⁸⁹

Historians who confine themselves to the enumeration and description of the traditional features in the Director's House may point out that several of the characteristics were not new at all, and that I force modernistic traits on Ledoux. To this there can be no better answer than that which the architect himself provides. He remarks that there had been rusticated orders long before him, but for these there were quite different underlying reasons.³⁹⁰ He is fully aware of being an innovator and anticipates that his modifications of the traditional forms will be attacked as “abuses”;³⁹¹ he

³⁸⁸ L., 134, “Les assises carrées et rondes des colonnes . . . produisent des ombres tranchantes, des effets piquants; ces combinaisons de l'art changent les contrastes à mesure que le soleil s'étend dans sa course méthodique.” 135, “Les saillies produisent des ombres piquantes; c'est un moyen de substituer des forces à la foiblesse produite par l'éloignement.”

³⁸⁹ L., 205, “l'Architecte entoure son édifice de pâles fantômes; la flamme d'un volcan s'élève, éclaire les masses et fait oublier les détails . . . quelle magie! que de merveilles!”

³⁹⁰ L., 136, “Inigo Jones, et d'autres Architectes qui ont employé de petits ordres à bossages, sans pourtant avoir les mêmes motifs.”

³⁹¹ L., 135, “J'entends le professeur, circonscrit dans les cinq ordres, crier après l'abus. . . . Les règles de la grammaire sont

draws a clear demarcation between the still fashionable Rococo and his new manner, as exhibited at Arc-et-Senans: “. . . c'étoient les premiers poids qui surchargeoient le sol élégant de la France.”³⁹²

When Ledoux started to build his city, he was for progress, and against stagnation.³⁹³ His transformations of classical models had the definite purpose of making them more powerful,³⁹⁴ and his surface treatment was guided by the desire for picturesqueness, “des effets prononcés.”³⁹⁵

characterize the structures at Arc-et-Senans and many projects for the Ideal City, as well as Ledoux' literary style, were to become common traits in Romantic literature, and markedly affected the costume of the Directoire era, to recall only the make-up of the *Merveilleuses* and the *Incrovables*.

violées, tout est perdu; des colonnes angulaires; a-t-on jamais rien vu d'aussi ridicule?”

³⁹² L., 136. The partisans of the former elegance were shocked by the heaviness of Ledoux' works, 136, “Les sens commandées par ces jolies palmettes, ces légères toiles d'araignées, ces contours ingénieusement tourmentés . . . en étoient révoltés.”

³⁹³ L., 109, “D'où vient la stagnation? pourquoi avons-nous accredité une tradition rétrograde?”

³⁹⁴ L., 109, “l'entrecolonnement se resserre pour ajouter à sa puissance ce que la proportion commande.”

³⁹⁵ L., 113, “que de variétés vous trouverez répandues sur la surface inactive d'un mur . . . de hautes assises profondément refendues, des nuds dégrossis ou rustiqués, des cailloux apparents, des pierres amoncelées sans art, souvent suffisent pour offrir des effets prononcés.”

The only buildings of Chaux with some faint reminiscence of Baroque composition are the Houses of the Workmen³⁹⁶ (fig. 161). In these the central portion is emphasized and lower wings are loosely added. But the chief goal is to impress with the heavy rustication, the deep entrance niche running up through both stories, and as Ledoux points out, the chiaroscuro effects.³⁹⁷ The House for the Overseers (Commis employés à la surveillance) is of similar shape, but stands free³⁹⁸ (173). The House of a Councilor of Besançon presents a portico of three arches running up to the height of the second story.³⁹⁹ The effect of this portico is like that of the niche in the houses of the workmen (fig. 163).

Ledoux advises those who are not inventive enough to create something new, to keep strictly to the cubic forms, instead of imitating the past.⁴⁰⁰ We have seen him making ample use of prisms and other elementary forms. The House of the Lumbermen (Atelier des bûcherons, gardes de la forêt) is a pyramid composed

³⁹⁶ L., pl. 39. L.R., pl. 137. One house carries the inscription Logement des Maréchaux.

³⁹⁷ L., 112, "La moitié de ces édifices est couverte d'ombres transparentes. L'autre offre une lumière piquante. . . . Les fonds sont empreints de couleurs languissantes: Quel tableau!"

³⁹⁸ L., pl. 53. L.R., pl. 135.

³⁹⁹ L., pls. 22, 23.

⁴⁰⁰ L., 89, "Si vous n'avez pas les facultés de l'invention, la maison carrée . . . vous offre un bon exemple. . . . En littérature, peinture, sculpture, c'est l'économie, bien entendue, qui prépare la richesse. Les contrastes, les oppositions l'assurent."



FIG. 167. First house of the lumbermen—Atelier des bûcherons.

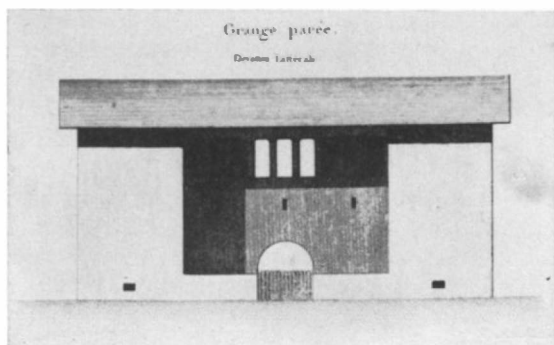


FIG. 168. Grange—Grange parée.

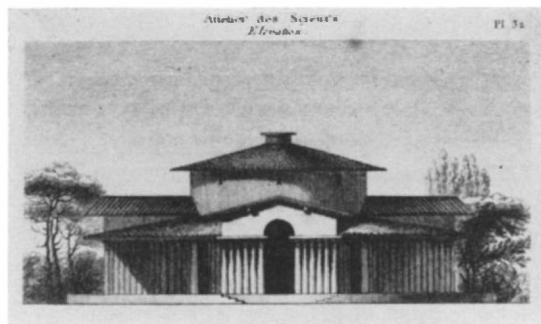


FIG. 169. Hut of the woodcutters—Atelier des scieurs de bois.

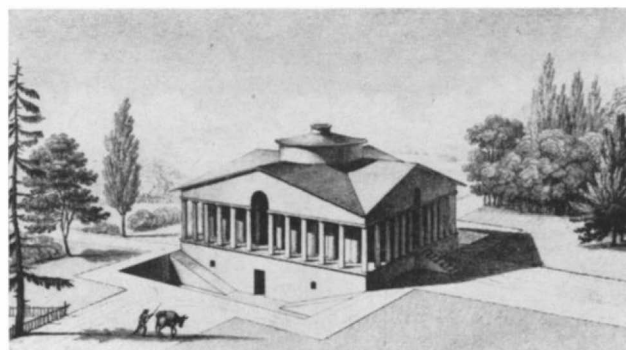


FIG. 170. Second house of the lumbermen.

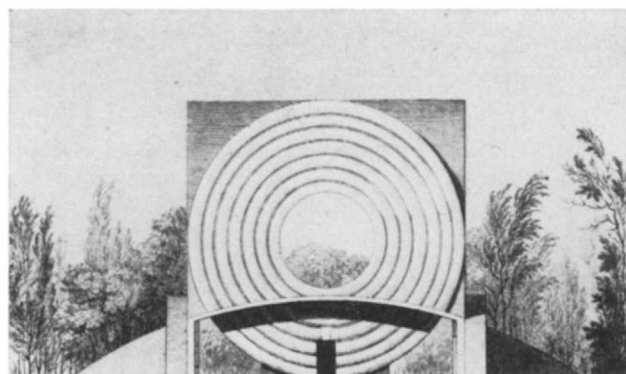


FIG. 171. Coopery—Atelier destiné à la fabrication des cercles.

of logs and rises upon an original substructure⁴⁰¹ (fig. 167). Each of its four sides opens in a Venetian door. The architect knew how to harmonize this traditional motif with the pyramid; the roofs atop the entrances, and single windows above serve as mediators between the discrepant elements. The second House of the Lumbermen is a cube with low gables and arcades (fig. 170). Ledoux saw in these little houses truly artistic achievements, "le sentiment de l'art."⁴⁰²

The Hut of the Woodcutters (Atelier des scieurs de bois) is interesting in its plan⁴⁰³ (fig. 169). Three

⁴⁰¹ L., pls. 101, 102, with both houses of the Lumbermen.

⁴⁰² L., 198. Ledoux affirms architecture as an art also 204, "l'art du chimiste ne donne pas la couleur, c'est un présent des dieux inspireurs."

⁴⁰³ L., pl. 32.

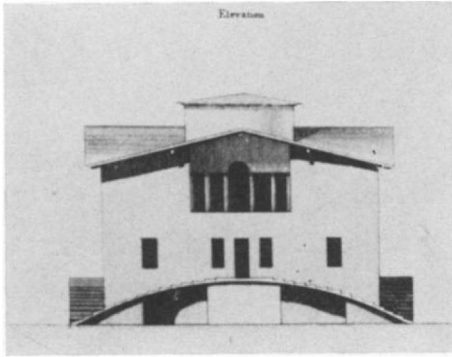


FIG. 172. House of 1773—Maison approuvée en 1773.

wings radiate from the central circular body; upright logs clad the walls; a low conical roof tops the rustic house.

Anxious to free himself from the conventional forms—"le cercle étroit des conventions"⁴⁰⁴—he invents the cylindrical House of the Broker (Agent de change)⁴⁰⁵ (fig. 174). This house shows that the architect was not swayed by emotions as he was when creating the Coopery and the Shelter of the Rural Guards, but carefully searching once more for some new mode of composition. The massive cylindrical body is contrasted with the sturdy prismatic podium, and is echoed in the flatroofed belvedere. From the latter, small superstructures depart in opposite directions. The house is full of antagonisms, each element—podium, body, belvedere, superstructures—strives to assert itself. Different sizes and different shapes battle against each other. The same happens on the surface with its rectangles, arches, and Venetian windows. The ground plan, too, is the invention of one eager to find some novel pattern. "L'uniformité des plans et des élévations est ennuy-

⁴⁰⁴ L., 110.

⁴⁰⁵ L., pl. 37.

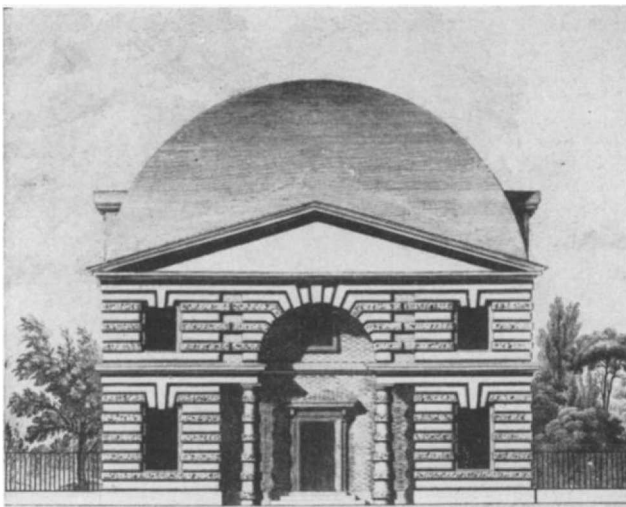


FIG. 173. House of the overseers—Maison des commis employés à la surveillance.

euse."⁴⁰⁶ The salon and the dining room are arranged on the main axis, but separated by a narrow corridor. Within the geometrical pattern, each room is as self-contained as is the entire structure.

In most of the houses discussed so far, we observed Ledoux' determination to break away from tradition and to find new formal solutions. The House of the Broker in particular, exemplifies his keenness to apply new patterns, in the second and third dimensions. We now come to deal with designs in which he attacked, separately, the problem of surface composition, or the problem of spatial arrangement.

The first instance is what I propose to call the House of 1773 which, according to Ledoux, was one of the 150 projects approved in that year⁴⁰⁷ (fig. 172). The modernity of some of its features—modernity in the sense of the twentieth century!—with the fact of its exact date, make it a landmark in architectural history. The bare wall and the frameless openings alone would not justify my terming it modern, were it not that the entire composition is so advanced. The entrance group

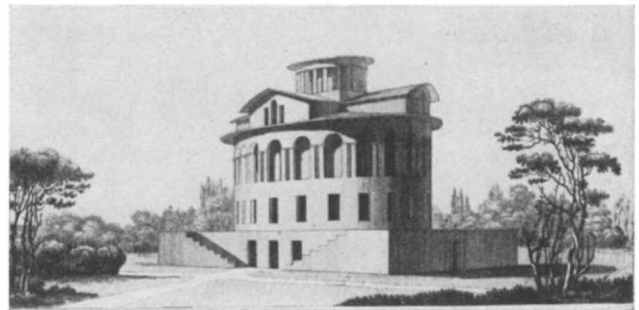


FIG. 174. Broker's house—Maison destiné à un agent de change.

of a square-headed door flanked by rectangular windows—a degenerate descendant of the Palladian motif!—is challenged by the competition of two distant, rather small side-windows. In the center of the upper floor, an enlarged Palladian motif appears, with two compartments on each side of the central arch. Obviously the point of departure of the whole façade is the Baroque idea of centralization. But the conventional balance of the stories is completely abandoned. The enlarged Palladian motif above has greater weight than the rudimentary motif below. To mitigate this inconsistency of the heavier over the lighter, the architect has sacrificed the supremacy of the lower central group by adding the lateral windows. Yet the latter are, for obviously practical reasons, too small to compensate fully for the big motif above. They are therefore put at a considerable distance from the entrance and thus work like a light load at the end of a lever. In other words, weight is compensated by distance. The pattern of compensation is rare in Revolutionary architecture, but became ex-

⁴⁰⁶ 110.

⁴⁰⁷ L., 196, 234; pl. 123.

tremely popular in our century in building, painting, and the minor arts. It is a pattern thoroughly alien to the hierarchical scheme of the Baroque. Still another effect in the façade is reverberation. The ruling enlarged Venetian window is echoed by the entrance group; and the rectangular apertures of the center find a remote, very feeble resonance in the lateral windows. There is, of course, some interplay between the patterns of compensation and reverberation. One may make the distinction between them clearer by putting the difference this way: Compensation is a pattern of different sizes; reverberation is (chiefly) a pattern of similar shapes. It is noteworthy that Ledoux conceived this little house at about the time he built the Baroque Palais Montmorency. It makes a great difference whether an architect works on a commission or is free to follow out his problems in his own way.

A variant of the pattern of compensation appears on the House of the Engineer (*mécanicien*)⁴⁰⁸ (fig. 175). Three large, slightly framed rectangular openings below are contrasted with a row of tiny arched windows on the second story and the huge Venetian door of the base-

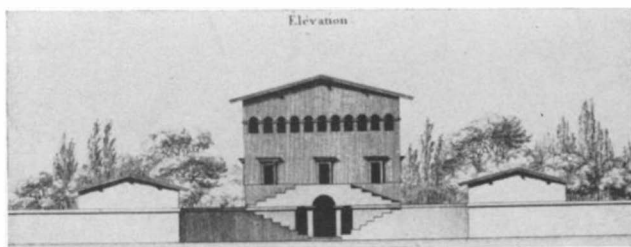


FIG. 175. House of an engineer—Maison d'un mécanicien.

ment. Similar, and very attractive, is the House of Two Art Dealers (*Artistes, marchands de nouveautés*)⁴⁰⁹ (fig. 177).

The Casino, already briefly dealt with earlier, presents another instance of disturbed balance (fig. 189). Its front is built up in three tiers, the broadest of which is in the middle.⁴¹⁰ Very characteristic also is a design which I should like to name the Country House with the Novel Façade⁴¹¹ (fig. 178). Here the main accent is on the top floor. This was a bold innovation in the eighteenth century, but it has become a common feature in ours.

The Memorial (*Temple de mémoire*)⁴¹² is dedicated to the glorification of womankind: "Ledoux, au pied de ces autels, vous rend grace par ces inscriptions solennelles; en pensant à vous il fut heureux"⁴¹³ (fig. 195). The mother from whom life springs appears to Ledoux to deserve monuments, not the bloodstained conqueror.⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰⁸ L., pl. 20.

⁴⁰⁹ L., pl. 108.

⁴¹⁰ Cf. above, p. 523.

⁴¹¹ L., pl. 98.

⁴¹² L., pl. 75.

⁴¹³ L., 161.

⁴¹⁴

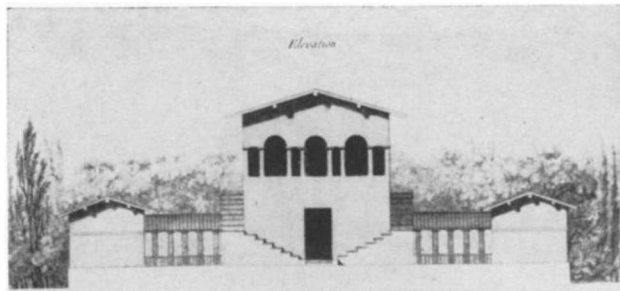


FIG. 176. House with the Palladian row—Maison d'un employé.

The house is a cube flanked by four columns with reliefs, reminiscent of the column of Trajan. More interesting than the spatial composition of contrasted shapes is the surface arrangement. Rectangular and arched apertures alternate, combining in Palladian motifs or variants of it. In writing of this monument Ledoux is acrid in his sarcasm directed against the copyists:

On va chercher bien loin, chez les Perses, les Assyriens, le dans indépendant des préjugés classiques; elles vous serviront mieux que la vieille tradition.⁴¹⁵

The House with the Barrel Roof, destined for an employee, presents a "maimed" Palladian motif (the central arch has the full size of a door, while the side compartments are only small windows), as the only feature on the bare front⁴¹⁶ (fig. 180). The arch echoes the semi-circular outline of the roof; the narrow side compartments echo the rectangular door of the basement. The stairs and the side roofs form a pattern of reduplicated slanting lines. Such compositional use of the stairs occurs in many of Ledoux' designs, as for instance, in the Broker's House, the House of the Lumbermen, the terrace of the Hunting Lodge, and the Educational Building. The Palladian motif as the main feature of the façade can be found in a House on the Moun-

⁴¹⁵ L., 161, note.

⁴¹⁶ L., pl. 17.

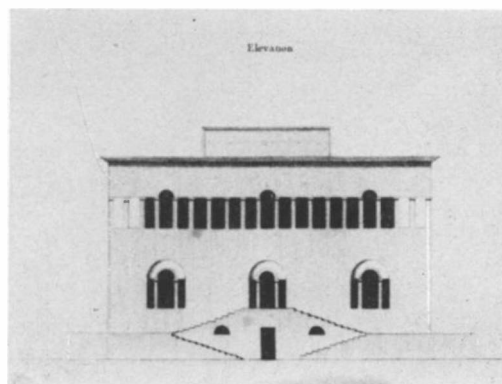


FIG. 177. Art dealers' house—Maison de deux artistes, marchands de nouveautés.

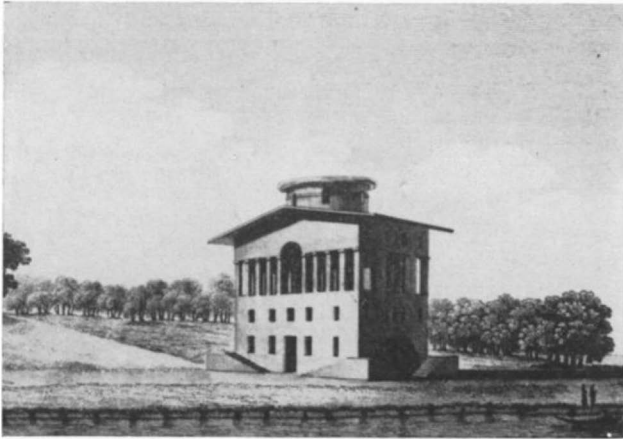


FIG. 178. House with the novel facade—Maison de campagne.



FIG. 179. House with the T-pattern—Maison d'un employé.

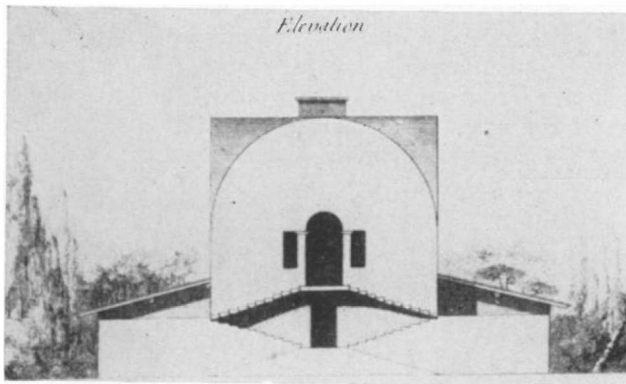


FIG. 180. House with the barrel roof—Maison d'un employé.

tain, near the Bridge⁴¹⁷ (fig. 148), or in the extremely original Tripartite House in the foreground of the Gun Foundry, and on its corner pyramids⁴¹⁸ (fig. 143). Commenting on the House with the Barrel Roof, Ledoux emphasizes that no matter what the purpose or the rank of the structure, it is worthy of the architect's skill:

⁴¹⁷ L., pl. 4. L.R., pl. 109. This original invention resembles the House with the Barrel Roof, n. 416.

⁴¹⁸ L., pls. 124, 125. L.R., pls. 149, 150.

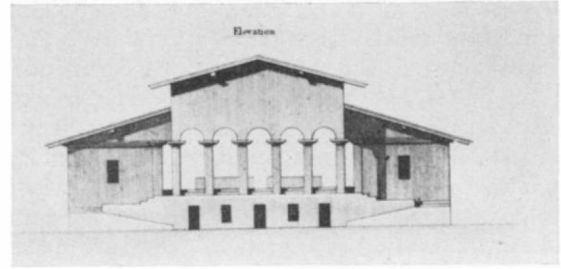


FIG. 181. Recreational building—Edifice destiné aux récréations.

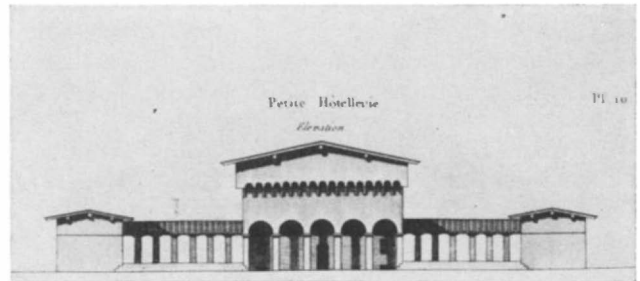


FIG. 182. Little inn—Petite hôtellerie.



FIG. 183. House with three Palladian motifs—Maison d'un commis.

“L’Architecte de la nature ne connoit ni les palais, ni les chaumières.”⁴¹⁹

The new distribution of weight has symptomatic value, even if we do not take it as the expression of a general trend, but as a strictly artistic phenomenon. The transformations of the Palladian motif, too, have deep significance. Originally this motif meant the supremacy of the central portion, and the integration of all its parts; it was a true symbol of Baroque order. Ledoux again and again deprived the motif of this meaning by various modifications. After the “maimed” Palladian motif we find another house of an employee, the House with the T-Pattern—what might be called the “degenerated,” or even “decapitated” Palladian motif⁴²⁰ (fig. 179). At first the power of the motif was concentrated in the high central arch; now, the central door is not higher than the lateral windows, and instead of two lateral windows, there are four to counteract the superiority of the central

⁴¹⁹ L., 80. 81, “un édifice peu intéressant par lui-même, peut accélérer le progrès de l’Architecture, s’il développe des idées puisées dans la nature.”

⁴²⁰ L., pl. 30. *Cp.* above, p. 528, on the Palladian motif.

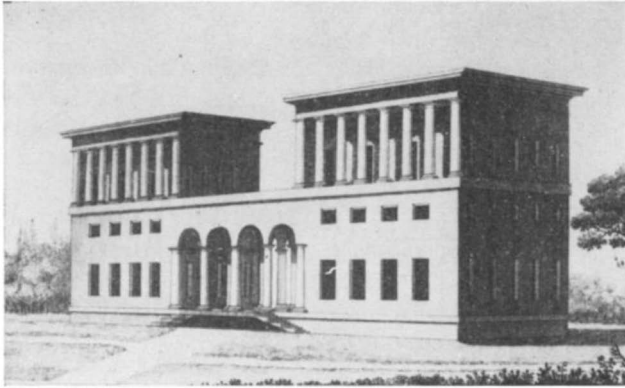


FIG. 184. House of two cabinet makers—Maison de deux ébénistes.

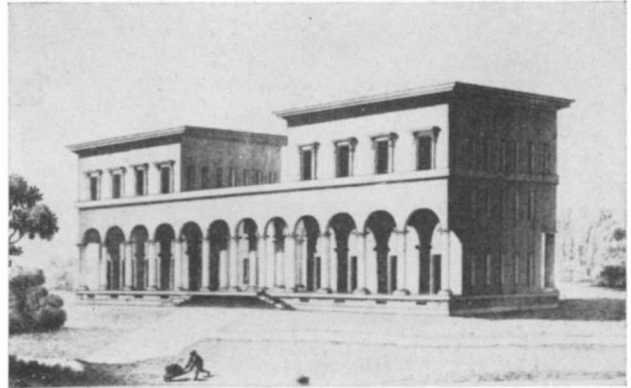


FIG. 185. House of two merchants—Deux maisons de négociants.

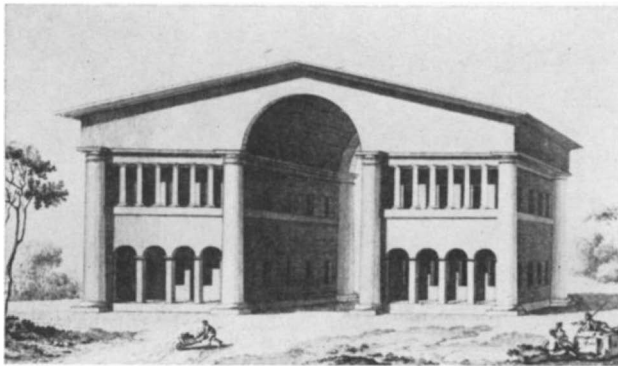


FIG. 186. House of the modiste—Maison d'une marchande de modes.

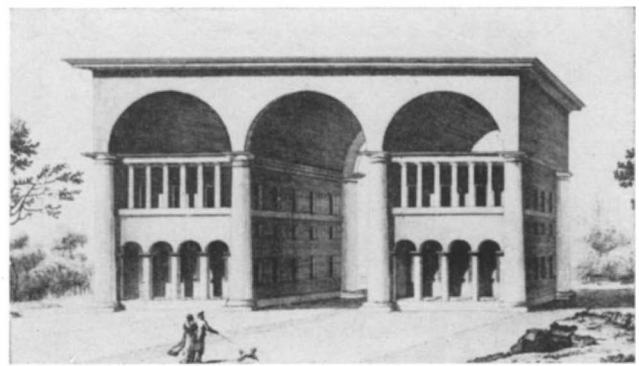


FIG. 187. House of two artists—Maison destinée à deux artistes.

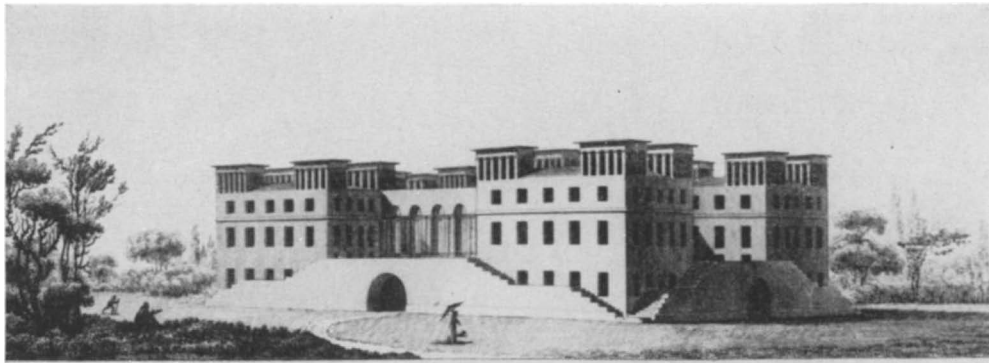


FIG. 188. House of four families—Maison d'un père avec trois enfants.

portion. Two more houses of employees, the House with Three Palladian Motifs (fig. 183), and the House with the Palladian Row ⁴²¹ (fig. 176), as well as a Little

⁴²¹ L., pls. 42, 84. The Palladian "Row," as I would call it, is a series of Palladian motifs (rAr) in which there is between the arches, instead of two rectangles (rArrAr etc.) only one (rArAr), as in pl. 84. Pl. 123, the House of 1773, presents the enlarged Palladian motif (rrArr). Variants of the latter show on pl. 46, Merchant of Besançon (rrrArrr), on the *barrière* of Fontainebleau (rAAAAAr), and still more deviating from the basic form, on pl. 75, Memorial of womankind. Ledoux, eager for innovation, changed now the rhythm, now,

Inn (Petite hôtellerie) ⁴²² (fig. 182), show end-pavilions loosely connected with the main pile.

Generally, Ledoux was more interested in spatial composition than in surface decoration. Rather simple solutions to the problem of combining independent blocks are the Recreational Building ⁴²³ (fig. 181), the House

e.g. in the "maimed" and the "degenerated" motif, the very form of the classical pattern.

⁴²² L., pl. 10.

⁴²³ L., pl. 83; 172, note, "dans les plans, élévations . . . tout est isolé."

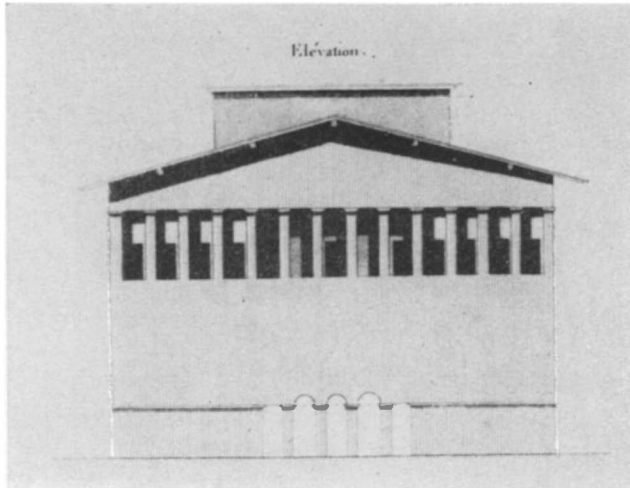


FIG. 189. Casino—Maison de jeux.

of Two Cabinetmakers⁴²⁴ (fig. 184) and the House of Two Merchants⁴²⁵ (fig. 185); the House of the Modiste⁴²⁶ (fig. 186) and the House of Two Artists⁴²⁷ (fig. 187); and two houses in front of the gun foundry⁴²⁸ (fig. 143). The houses of the Cabinet-makers and that of the Merchants consist of oblong blocks and superimposed smaller blocks. The House of the Modiste and that of the Artists show independent blocks connected by tall arched gateways.

The Writer's House⁴²⁹ (fig. 164) and the House of Four Families⁴³⁰ (fig. 188) are more refined instances of cubic composition. In both the cube is the basic motif of the spatial pattern; both present the pattern of reverberation in the third dimension. The body of the Writer's House is reiterated in the belvederes and in its podium. In the case of the House of Four Families, we see four cubes and sixteen belvederes. A fine artistic

⁴²⁴ L., pls. 26, top; 27. In *Kunstwiss. Forsch.* 2: 150, pl. 20, erroneously, as in L., 94, *Kaufleute*, instead of *Kunsttischler*.

⁴²⁵ L., pls. 26, bottom; 27.

⁴²⁶ L., pl. 94.

⁴²⁷ L., pl. 95.

⁴²⁸ L., pl. 125. L.R., pl. 150.

⁴²⁹ L., pl. 69.

⁴³⁰ L., pl. 29.



FIG. 190. House with roof terraces—Maison de campagne.

effect results from the open stairs of this house. Both houses have unframed windows and flat roofs.

Ledoux' comments help to clarify what he intended when designing the two houses: He aimed for serenity and grandeur, believing architecture without ornamentation to be the architecture of the future:

. . . il n'est pas nécessaire que l'ordonnance constamment le ordres exige . . . de grands repos grandissent la pensée et consolident la construction . . . pourquoi . . . des ornements somptueux qui . . . n'ajoutent rien à la pureté des lignes. Enfin l' élaguera ces chevilles oiseuses qui pourraient altérer la pureté du style.⁴³¹

Ledoux seems to have been haunted by the pattern of reverberating prisms—as he was haunted by the general unrest of his era. Under this double compulsion he de-

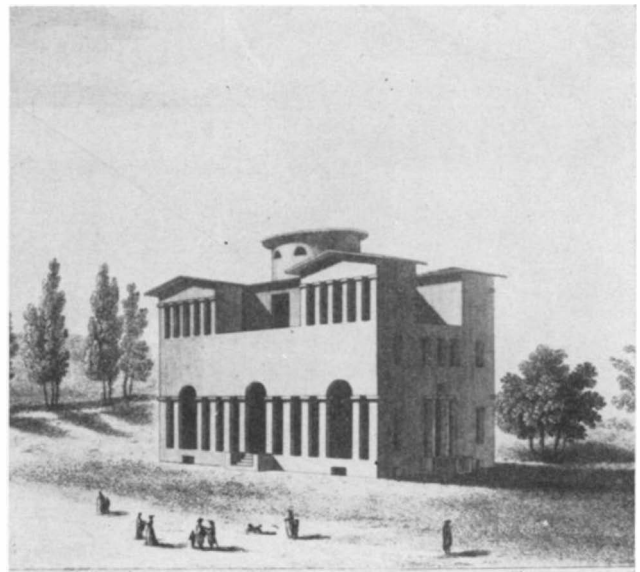


FIG. 191. House with the cylindric crowning—Maison de campagne.

signed three other houses of similar composition, full of excitement and drama. One of these designs is the House of Four Belvederes; the four roof turrets are oversized and their walls are pierced by huge Palladian motifs⁴³² (fig. 196). The projecting roof above the main floor adds to the unrest and is another example of unbalance. The second house may be named the House with the Cylindrical Crowning, since a cylinder is wedged between the belvederes, a bold intruder tearing apart the unity of the whole⁴³³ (fig. 191). Finally, the Farm (Cour de Service)⁴³⁴ shows the belvederes grown into corner turrets (fig. 192). This house is full of antagonisms, with its contrasting masses, contrasting

⁴³¹ L., 147, 99, 149.

⁴³² L., pl. 55.

⁴³³ L., pl., 24.

⁴³⁴ L., pl. 65.

directions, and contrasting surface arrangement. Here are the foreshadowings of modern cubism and modern purism mingled with revolutionary unrest.

The rigid elementary forms could be made expressive and more appealing by several different methods. The simplest method, embellishment by decoration, was not in harmony with the steadily increasing functional feeling. Another method, extraordinary dimensions, suited the Romantic sentiment, but was impractical. Ledoux abhorred the first, and understood that the second was suitable only in monumental architecture. Not willing to confine himself to this restricted field, he had to find the way to enliven normally dimensioned residences.

Juxtaposition in twin houses was the first pattern he tried. Then he proceeded to the pattern of reverberation in the Houses of the Writer and of Four Families. From this refined scheme he turned to the dramatic ac-

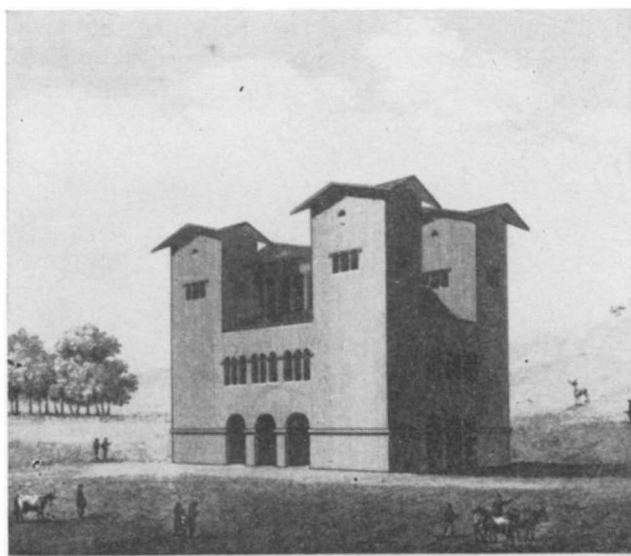


FIG. 192. Farm house—Cour de service.

centuations in the Farm and the House with Four Belvederes. This last method is liable to undermine both unity and grandeur, as may be seen in the proportions of the Farm and the House with Four Belvederes. At last, Ledoux has found a pattern of elementary geometrical forms which grants the rights of the individual parts and is full of dramatic life—the pattern of interpenetration.

It is difficult to determine whether Ledoux proceeded in the order I have presented here. If the complex solutions were not the latest achievement in his career, they became the most important and successful for the future development in architecture. This much we can assert with some certainty in the twentieth century.

The design which I should like to call the House with Roof Terraces⁴³⁵ consists of a prismatic body with inserted high loggias on each of the four sides, and a

⁴³⁵ L., pl. 18.

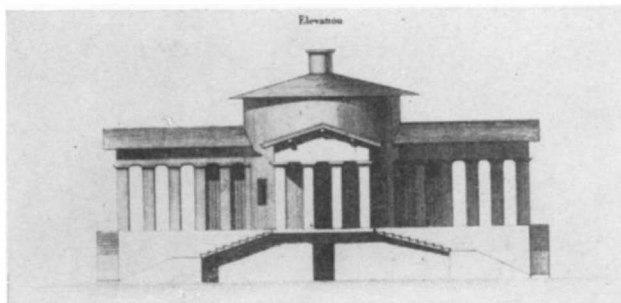


FIG. 193. House of the foresters—Logement des gardes de la forêt.

cylindrical turret emerging from the center (fig. 190). The loggias and the turret look as if wedged into the body, effecting a tremendous spatial tension. Upon the plain nine-partite square—the cool gridiron scheme—the structure rises, filled with the conflict of rivaling elements. In its dramatic quality it surpasses the Country House with the Cylindrical Crowning⁴³⁶ (fig. 191).

Many passages scattered throughout the text of *L'Architecture* explain the intentions of Ledoux when he designed these houses. They conform to the formula "assez et rien de trop,"⁴³⁷ or to the fuller version of this precept:

On aura fait quelque chose pour le
on agrandit les surfaces, si on offre des effets inattendus,
dans les situations les plus communes, si on supprime les
détails qui atténuent la pensée, si on a suivi les loix que la
solidité exige.⁴³⁸

Ledoux' final objective is grandeur.⁴³⁹ Practicality, he believes, is best achieved through simplicity. The superfluous is offensive.⁴⁴⁰ There are no decorative ac-

⁴³⁶ L., pl. 24.

⁴³⁷ L., 87.

⁴³⁸ L., 94. 82, "le goût se trouve partout où la pureté des lignes est présente."

⁴³⁹ L., 94, "paroitre grand, produire des effets piquants avec des plans tranquilles."

⁴⁴⁰ L., 105, "la décoration, offrant des masses simples, n'aura rien à redouter des habitudes du jour." 122, "le superflu est incommode."

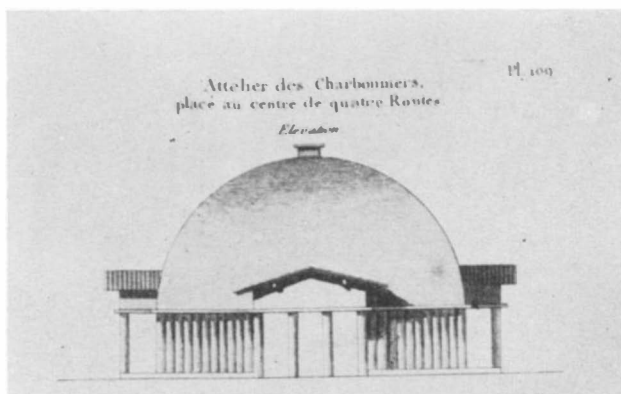


FIG. 194. House of the charcoal burners—Logement des charbonniers.

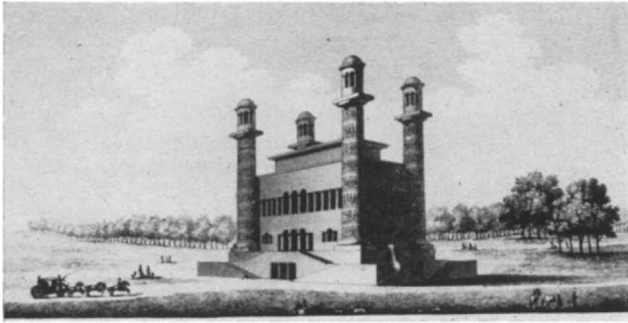


FIG. 195. Memorial in honor of womankind—
Temple de mémoire.

cessories on the House with Roof Terraces, even the columns have been transformed into square piers.⁴⁴¹ Its basic idea is the presentation of antagonistic masses: “. . . la vue perspective vous offrira la disposition des masses de bâtiments qui contrastent entre elles.”⁴⁴² This was the type of architecture which Ledoux preferred and which he taught his students, as we know from the obituary by J. C.:

II

masses fussent toujours grandes et plus imposantes par leur dispositions, que par la recherche abusive des détails.⁴⁴³

Of Ledoux' pupils, Louis-Ambroise Dubut appears to have best understood the master's ideas. For this reason, and because his work is the true link between the older revolutionaries and the nineteenth century, I feel I should briefly comment on his achievements.⁴⁴⁴ Hardly less daring than Ledoux in his boldest experiments, Dubut designed the telescoping, cylindrical

⁴⁴¹ L., 92, n. 2, “les pilastres carrés font la fonction de mur-plain, et cependant offrent dans les interlignes des ombres qui les dessinent.”

⁴⁴² L., 82, 28, “les seuls effets que l'on puisse tirer des corps; des saillies bien combinées, des ombres portées, cet isolement enfin qui offre en tout sens le contraste des masses.” 154, “des masses contrastées qui assurent des effets pour les élévations.”

⁴⁴³ J. C., 13.

⁴⁴⁴ Dubut, Louis-Ambroise, *Architecture civile*, pls. XLVII, V, III, XLVIII, XVII, LXXIII, Paris, 1803; 2nd ed., 1837.

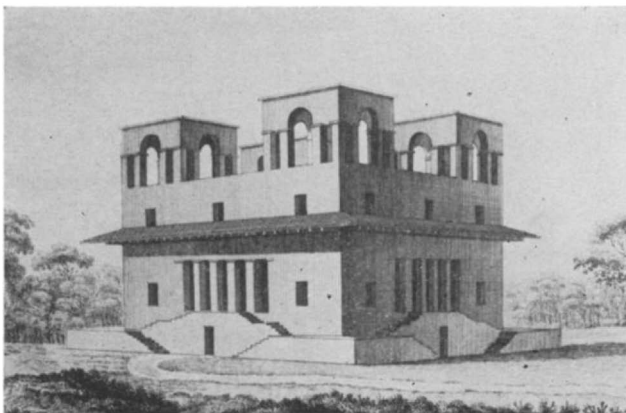


FIG. 196. House of four belvederes—Maison de campagne.

House of a Scientist, or House 28 (fig. 201). (Here he gives his project a name, or thinks of a definite purpose, although as a rule he distinguishes the houses by numbers, concerned apparently only with formal problems.) He was still to some extent heir of the Baroque when he conceived House 3 with a dominating main block and lower side pavilions; yet instead of harmonizing the elements, he bestowed the center with overwhelming power (fig. 202). Thus, this group is an outstanding instance of disturbed balance. The single forms mattered little to the architect when occupied with House 2 (fig. 203). He wanted to find new surface patterns and applied to the body first a Gothicizing, then a Renaissance façade. The plans reveal how anxious he was to overcome the traditional scheme of centralization and open vistas. Masking the struggle for a new composition with forms borrowed from the past was to become typical of nineteenth-century architecture. Calm juxtaposition characterizes House 24 (fig. 204); interpenetration of blocks, House 10, planned on the Greek cross (fig. 205). To people of our time these solutions

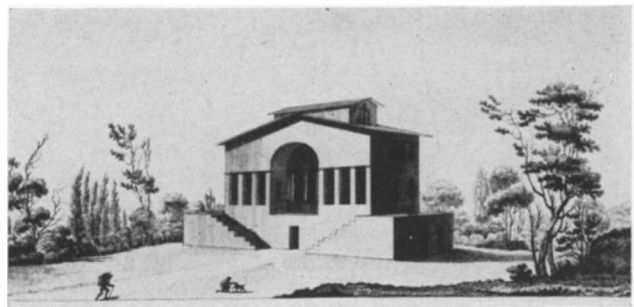


FIG. 197. House of a merchant of Besançon—Maison d'un marchand de Besançon.

look rather tame, but compared with Baroque productions they were extremely advanced. This is particularly true of the stepped House 41, which represents one of the commonest types of our century, the terrace building (fig. 206). What seems important to me is not the mere fact that there was such a stepped house already about 1800, but that the type originated long before practical regards recommended it. The art of architecture went ahead of city planning, in creating new forms.

A further instance of interpenetration of masses is the House of the Foresters (Gardes de la forêt)⁴⁴⁵ (fig. 193). The House of a Merchant of Besançon,⁴⁴⁶ with its deep niche, presents volume pervading mass (fig. 197). Thus it reminds us of several *barrières*,⁴⁴⁷ the entrance of the Public Bath⁴⁴⁸ (fig. 153), the Parson-

⁴⁴⁵ L., pl. 97.

⁴⁴⁶ L., pl. 46; 121, “Les élévations offrent des masses progressives, des contrastes; les jardins sont pittoresques.” Here follows a passage inspired by functionalism, “L'art préside au logement de la fourmi et de l'éléphant.”

⁴⁴⁷ L. R., pls. 7, Belleville; 10, 11, Picpus; 26, Carrières.

⁴⁴⁸ L., pl. 82. L.R., pl. 148.

age⁴⁴⁹ (fig. 140), and the Houses of the Workmen⁴⁵⁰ (fig. 161).

The House of the Surveyors of the River (*Maison des directeurs de la Loue*) consists of a low prismatic block with open stairs on each side, and a superimposed horizontal semi-cylinder⁴⁵¹ (fig. 198). Ledoux makes the river pass through the building so that the mightily vaulting is set astride the rushing waters. The composition may, of course, be interpreted as *architecture parlante*, as the symbol of human rule over nature. Man's mastery of the flood is visualized so vividly that one might easily suppose some present-day expressionist had devised it for a hydraulic power plant. However, now familiar with the architect's inclination to dramatize form, we understand that the floods are to produce an uproar which stone alone cannot bring about. The house is full of contrasts: the vaulting versus the stepped substructure; the void of the tunnel versus the massive masonry; the rigid edges versus the gushing waters. There is tension between the tiny apertures and the large lower ones. There is reverberation of the double outline

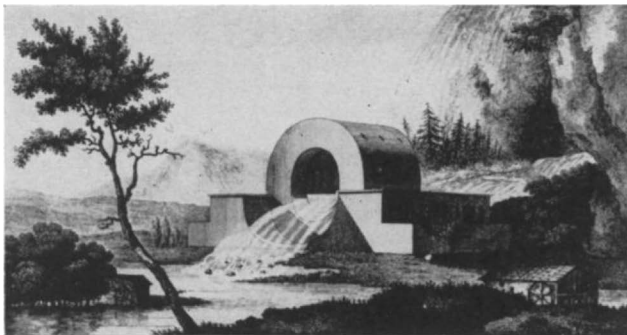


FIG. 198. House of the surveyors of the river—*Maison des directeurs de la Loue*.

of the semi-cylinder and the curves over which the cataract falls. The open stairs, ascending in opposite directions, enact a drama for themselves.

It would prove but little understanding of architecture as an art, to ridicule this design because of its practical defects: the disturbance caused by the rushing water and the inadequacy of the small upper windows. It is among those inventions which have a higher purpose than satisfying the miserable lower necessities of life. We must look at it as a "great picture,"⁴⁵² and as the reflec-

⁴⁴⁹ L., pl. 15. L.R., pl. 116.

⁴⁵⁰ L., pl. 39. L.R., pl. 137.

⁴⁵¹ L., pl. 6. L.R., pl. 110.

⁴⁵² L., 50, 51, "Déjà j'entends les architectes de portrait crier à l'extravagance; accoutumés à retracer servilement ce qu'ils voient, rarement ils s'occupent de la conception d'un vaste tableau." 52, "on voit ces savants de convention lutter contre les éléments qui impriment à nos sens les idées premières. Ah! donnez nous des modèles qui parlent aux yeux, ils frapperont plus que les préceptes." These passages, accompanying one of the most original and most powerful inventions of Ledoux, attack the conventionalists and proclaim the rights of the ele-

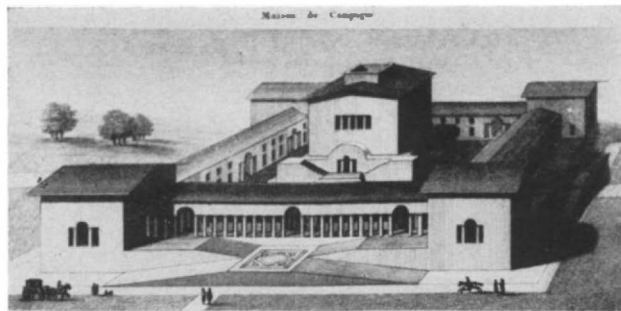


FIG. 199. Tenement—*Maison de campagne*.

tion of an outstanding period in an outstanding mind. It tells of the desire for innovation and for a new order of the elements; of the struggle after form for form's sake, and grandeur for grandeur's sake. It may teach us that architecture can and should be more than the plumber's domain.

All of Ledoux' designs are not as great as the Surveyor's House. Often the sentimentalism of the period tinges his most serious attempts at a new artistic form. Such sentimentalism found vent in the petty fabrics of the "English Gardens," which made extensive use of logs, rocks, straw, and moss in order to conform with the natural surroundings. This side line of Romanticism does occasionally crop out, as in his grotto in the Gateway of Chauv, in the Houses of the Woodcutters and the Lumbermen, and in the House of the Charcoal Burners (*Atelier des charbonniers*)⁴⁵³ (fig. 194).

Ledoux' reaction to the humanitarian ideals of his day shows in the engraving of the Home of the Poor (*L'abri du Pauvre*), where the good intention must compensate for its poor artistic quality. It represents a naked man under a tree, sheltered only by Heaven's goodness.⁴⁵⁴

Rousseau's Utopianism inspired two large complexes destined to promote happier ways of life: the Tenementary forms, as well as those of the creative, independent architect.

⁴⁵³ L., pl. 109.

⁴⁵⁴ L., pl. 33.

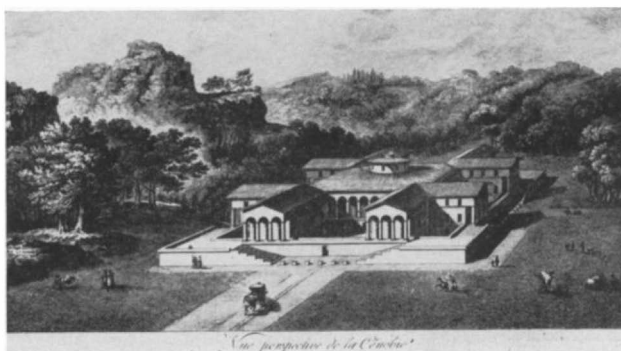


FIG. 200. Cénobie.

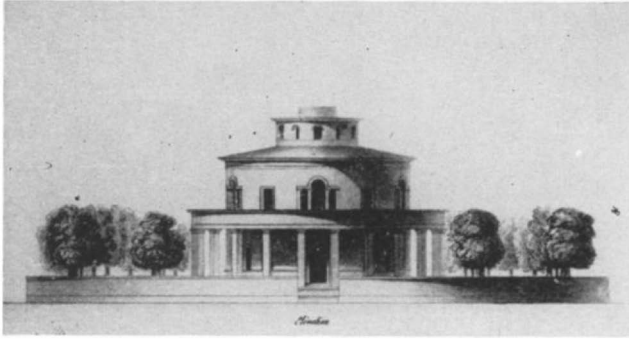


FIG. 201. House of a scientist, 28.

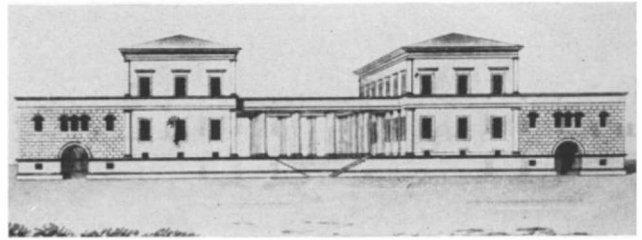


FIG. 204. House 24.

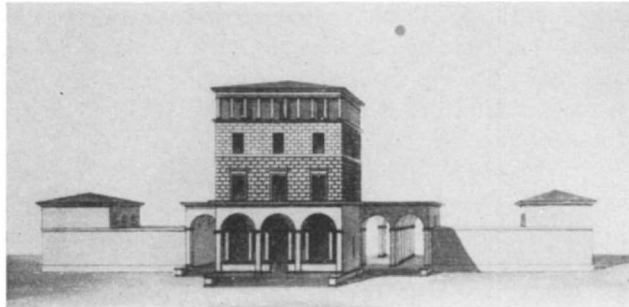


FIG. 202. House 3.

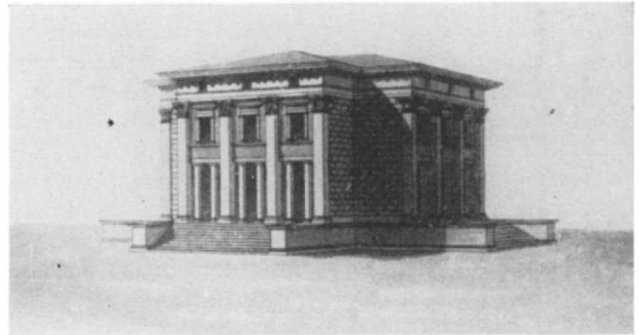


FIG. 205. House 10.

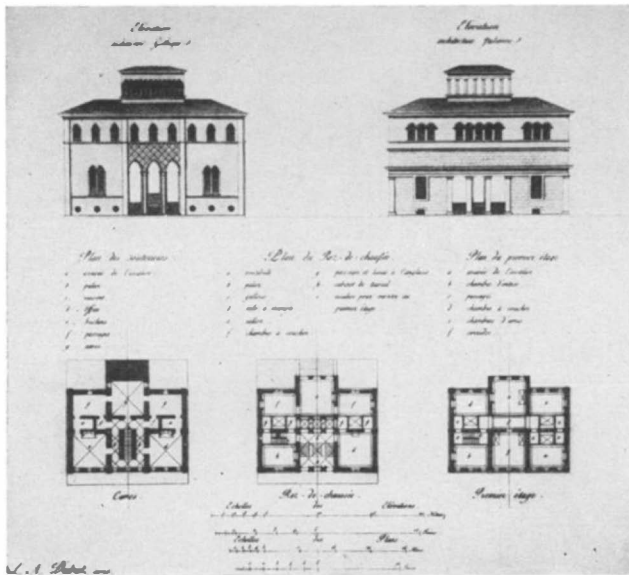


FIG. 203. House 2.

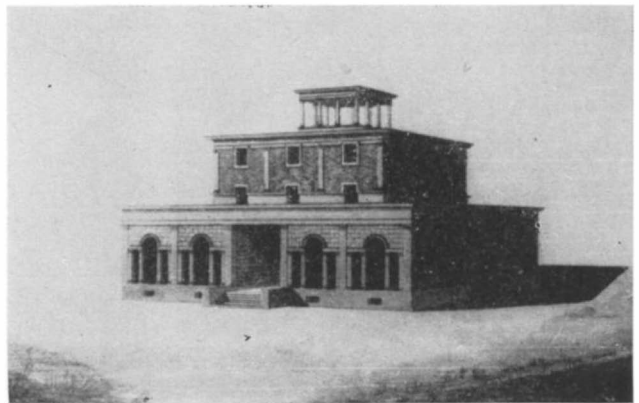


FIG. 206. House 41.

Ledoux here did not forget his greater artistic ends: restraint in decoration, variety in the plans, “piquant” elevations.⁴⁵⁷ He had no model when he created this house; its idea, he says, came to him from his knowledge of the longings of the human heart:

Ici ce n'est pas l'Architecture qui forme l'Architecte, c'est l'Architecte qui puise, dans le variété des ses sujets.⁴⁵⁸

ment⁴⁵⁵ and the Cénobie.⁴⁵⁶ The apartments of the Tenement are arranged around a square court (fig. 199). With few exceptions, the windows open into this court, so that the inhabitants can live undisturbed by the noise of the outer world. The main building in the center of the square contains service rooms common to all. Despite his concern with the practical disposition,

The Cénobie—the House of Communal Life—is thought of as an idyllic dwelling, sheltered by extended woods, where people, tired of sophisticated urban life, may return to “natural” conditions (fig. 200). This “azyle du bonheur, de la félicité” should be above all a refuge for artists desiring to mature their ideas in

⁴⁵⁵ L., pl. 21.

⁴⁵⁶ L., pls. 89–91. L.R., pls. 243–245.

⁴⁵⁷ L., 86, “les détails sont inutiles . . . En variant les plans, les élévations seront plus piquantes.”

⁴⁵⁸ L., 86.

solitude.⁴⁵⁹ In its beautiful surroundings sixteen families would find happiness, living on the yields of their fields, their orchards, and their vineyards. They would enjoy peace and freedom under patriarchal rule and worship in an enlightened mode, unless some "philosopher" intruded and interfered with their innocent ways. If Rousseau's ideas never were realized in actual life, they have become true in Ledoux' vision.⁴⁶⁰ Architecturally,

⁴⁵⁹ L., 180, "Jeunes artistes, ouvrez ce grand livre pour étudier les contrastes, vous éprouverez dans la solitude des sensations qui s'empreindront de teintes sombres; c'est-là que vous méditez sur les grands événements de la vie. Ne vous y trompez pas; ils sont liés plus qu'on ne croit aux produits de l'art."

⁴⁶⁰ L., 181, "Seize familles vivoient ensemble dans le calme des bois; elles avoient chacune un appartement complet; tous les besoins de la vie isolée: des jardins légumiers . . . des vergers, des prés, des champs cultivés, d'autres réservés aux pâturages; des vignes, des pressoirs; les communs, le salon de rassemblement, la salle à manger; tous les accessoires qui assurent l'aisance et la commodité étoient réunis. Les chefs de famille gouvernoient par la confiance. . . . La religion les attachoit aux lois du pays; ils trouvoient dans son exercice consolant la vie douce et tranquille, l'espérance du bien et les alarmes du vice. Le culte étoit celui que la raison laisse à nos propres lumières; ils exprimoient leur reconnaissance au Créateur, et vivoient dans l'accomplissement des devoirs imposés par la Divinité: entourés de toutes les vertus, ils n'avoient aucune idée du mal.—Un philosophe moderne, un économiste paroît; le bonheur fuit, l'inquiétude commence, chacun s'agite; la lecture d'un nouveau système social occupe les esprits: les idées se croisent, se multiplient à raison des conceptions différentes . . . ils prennent l'art de raisonner pour la raison elle-même." Having given this picture of a Rousseauian idyll, its illusions, and its ill fate brought about by the rationalists, Ledoux wonders where in the world he might find satisfying conditions. Everywhere something is wrong; only in Switzerland there is liberty. About France he prefers to keep silent.

the Cénobie presents projecting and interpenetrating masses:

. . . c'est la projection des masses, la saillie du corps qui donnent le caractère décidé. . . . On peut juger, par les ombres portées sur les nuds des murs, ce que le jeu des masses peut offrir; c'est le seul effet que l'on puisse tirer d'un plan qui a pour baze la stricte économie.⁴⁶¹

While the House with Roof Terraces shows masses forcing their way into the main block, and the House of the Surveyors presents a huge cylinder driven into the substructure, the Cénobie is calm and serene. Ledoux knew of the struggles of his era and he knew about its hopes. He expressed both in his architectural work.

In reviewing the manifold productions of Ledoux we become aware that he saw some distinct artistic goal ahead of him, yet did not in the least reach a definite, teachable formula. He tried to approach his ideals with untiring efforts, sometimes inspired by the past, more often foreseeing the future. Boullée, although hardly less affected by the diverging trends of contemporary thought, succeeded in working out a doctrine of strict cubism, tinged with a Romantic hue. It is understandable that the architect who could present some new architectural "truth" had more students and followers than the searcher, never content with his findings. But to posterity, the work of Ledoux with its overwhelming richness, tells more of the aspirations of his era, than the work of any other architect.

⁴⁶¹ L., 183. This quotation may conclude our anthology from the unique book of a unique artist.

PART III

JEAN-JACQUES LEQUEU

IX. LEQUEU'S LIFE

Jean-Jacques Lequeu was born at Rouen on September 14, 1757.¹ His father, Jean-Jacques-François seems to have been a cabinet maker or a designer of furniture, with some interest in landscape architecture and in architecture itself. Scattered among the collection of drawings by his son in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris are several by the elder Lequeu: a mantelpiece, signed and dated 1745;² a sideboard (*buffet*) with Rococo carving, signed and dated 1750;³ two portals for the palace of an archbishop, dated 1766; the layout of a garden;⁴ the elevation of a monumental terrace building (fig. 207) representing, apparently, the temple of

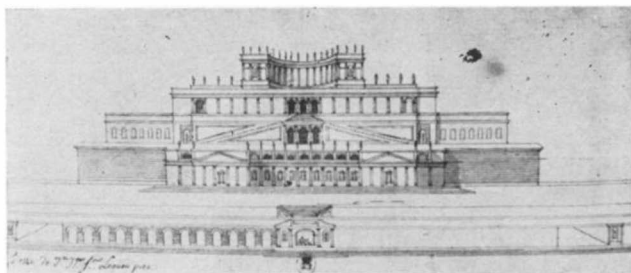


FIG. 207. Reconstruction, Fortuna temple of Praeneste.

Fortuna at Praeneste,⁵ and others. The younger Lequeu was to follow the father in his various activities but with this difference, that architecture played the major role in his life, interior decoration the minor.⁶ As a pupil of the school of design at Rouen, he was awarded prizes in 1776 and 1778.⁷ The director of the school, the painter Jean-Baptiste Descamps the elder, was favorably impressed by Lequeu's ability and wished him to carry on his architectural studies in Paris. Descamps persuaded the artist's uncle, a priest, to grant the young man a two-year pension and Lequeu went to the capital in 1779.⁸

¹ According to a letter of application directed by Lequeu to the Minister of the Interior, kept among Lequeu's drawings in the Bibl. Nat., Cabinet des Estampes, Paris, Ha 80. The letter appears to have been written in the year X (1801/2).

² B. N., Ha 80b, 61.

³ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Ha 80a, 40, the portals; Ha 80b, 4, the garden.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Ha 80a, 21, top. Cf. Durand, *Recueil*, pl. 4; Burger, Fritz, *Villen des Palladio*, pl. 45, Leipzig, 1909, the latter's reconstruction of the temple.

⁶ Cf. Molinier, Emile, *Hist. gén. des arts appliqués* 3: 204-209, Paris, 1896. Same, *Mobilier français du 17e et 18e siècle*, 54, Paris, n. d.

⁷ *Précis analytique des travaux de l'Acad. roy.* 4: 45, 49, Rouen.

⁸ Letter of Descamps, Aug. 19, 1778, B. N. Ha 80, "Sr. Le Queu mon élève . . . a fait le meilleur prix depuis notre Etablissement [here follows a blank] il dessine bien il a du Génie et une bonne conduite."

On the day following his arrival he sought to present himself, with several letters of introduction, to Jacques-Germain Soufflot, but the aging architect of the Panthéon was ailing and could receive him only a few days later. Then Soufflot recommended him to the architect, and friend of Boullée, Julien-David Le Roy, the renowned editor of *Ruines . . . de la Grèce*, who accepted him as a student of the Royal Academy. Soufflot also permitted him to work in his own studio together with his nephew, François Soufflot, who had just arrived from Rome.⁹ Lequeu never forgot Soufflot's benevolence.¹⁰ In his later days he donated a collection of engravings of Souf-

⁹ B. N., Ha 80, Letter of Lequeu to Descamps, 1779. Letter of application (see n. 1). In his manuscript, *Papiers*, fol. 113, Boullée calls Le Roy his friend.

¹⁰ B. N., Ha 80, Letter of Descamps to Lequeu, Feb. 12, 1780 "faites toujours vos efforts pour mériter les bontez dont M. Soufflot vous honore." About Lequeu's work under Soufflot, cf. Mondain-Monval, Jean, *Soufflot*, 420, n. 3, Paris, 1918, where also a drawing of the church of Ste. Geneviève, by Lequeu is illustrated.

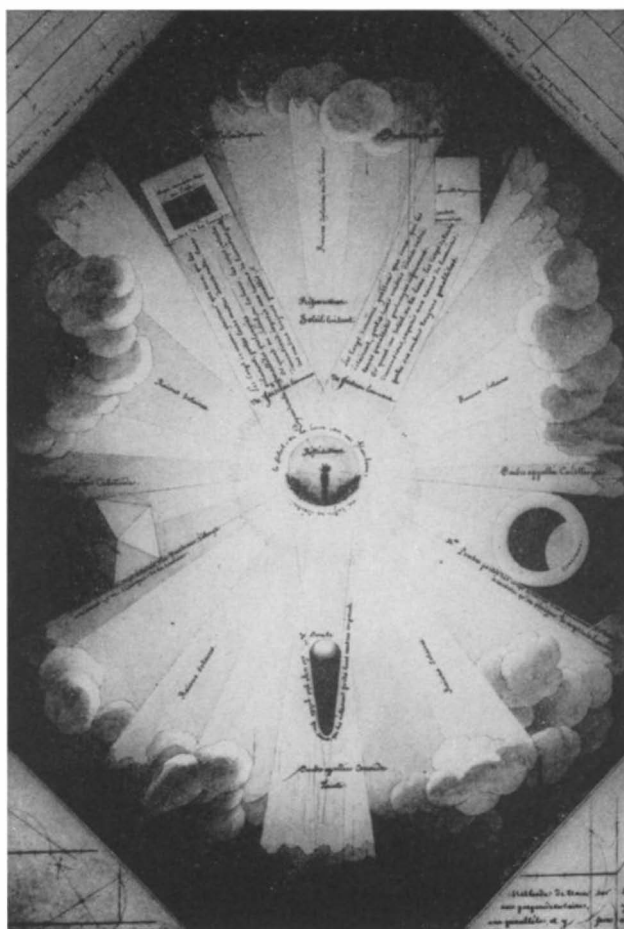


FIG. 208. Drawing instruction—Méthode de tracer.

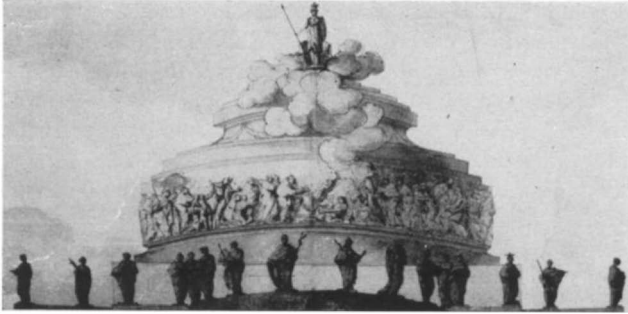


FIG. 209.—Monument to Athena.

flot's works to the Bibliothèque Imperiale, with a dedication in which he names himself Soufflot's pupil, and a brief handwritten record of the great architect's life.¹¹ Most certainly Lequeu called on other artists also to whom he appears to have been recommended by Descamps, such as the engraver and secretary of the Academy of Painting, Cochin, the sculptors Caffieri and Gois, several painters and the architect, Franque.¹²

In the first years of his stay in Paris, Lequeu continued to devote himself to teaching architectural design just as he had already done at Rouen. A handwritten announcement of his lessons ("Avis aux amateurs") and many painstakingly carried out drawings dated from 1777–1784 inform us about this side of his activities¹³ (fig. 208). In 1779, perhaps still before his journey to Paris, he tried his hand at a large architectural project, a town hall for Rouen, which later brought him recognition in his native town¹⁴ (fig. 214). It must have been in the early seventeen-eighties that he made the Italian tour with the Comte de Bouville. He mentions it in a little note, and several drawings also testify to this journey. One carries the legend "al campidoglio," another "Nella villa Medici," and a third, "Candelabre antique à Ste. Agnèse." The "Progetto . . . del Grande Padiglione Italianamente" (*sic*) is dated 1783.¹⁵ Back home, in 1786, Lequeu, though living in Paris, was nominated *adjoint associé* of the Académie Royale des Sciences, Belles Lettres et Arts de Rouen.¹⁶

In a further note, and also in an application submitted to the Minister of the Interior in 1801,¹⁷ Lequeu states that he built the Casino of Madame de Meulenaer in

1786.¹⁸ In this application he declares he also erected a *Maison de plaisance* for the Comte de Bouville in the same year¹⁹ (fig. 215). (In a drawing he calls this house "Temple du silence," dating it 1788.²⁰) About this time he was still employed by Soufflot, "dit le Romain" (as he describes him to distinguish him from the architect of the Panthéon). When the younger Soufflot carried out the Hôtel Montholon on the Boulevard Montmartre,²¹ Lequeu was "a draughtsman and inspector" under him, providing also designs for furniture.²²

I could not ascertain whether our architect executed the Church of the Capuchin Nuns of Marseille, which

¹⁸ B. N., Ha 80a, 12 verso, attached, *Résumé sur les Dessins cy-joints pour le recueil . . . de Mr. Kraft*, referring to the work for Meulenaer, Bouville, and the Italian tour. Kraft, *Recueil*, the Meulenaer house, pl. 55, plan, 56, elevations, 57–60, interiors. Cf. n. 45.

¹⁹ Kraft, *Recueil*, pls. 37–39, also with the surname Temple du silence, and the location, "près de Portenort."

²⁰ B. N., Ha 80a, 5. According to *Résumé* the house was not completed because of the death of the count.

²¹ Letter of application. Füssli, *Allg. Künstlerlexikon*, 1810.
²² Molinier, *Histoire* 3: 204 f. illustrates some of the furniture; *Mobilier*, 54, assumes that Lequeu [*sic*] himself built the house in 1799. Kraft and Ransonette, pl. 67, ascribe it to Soufflot le Romain, dating it 1786.

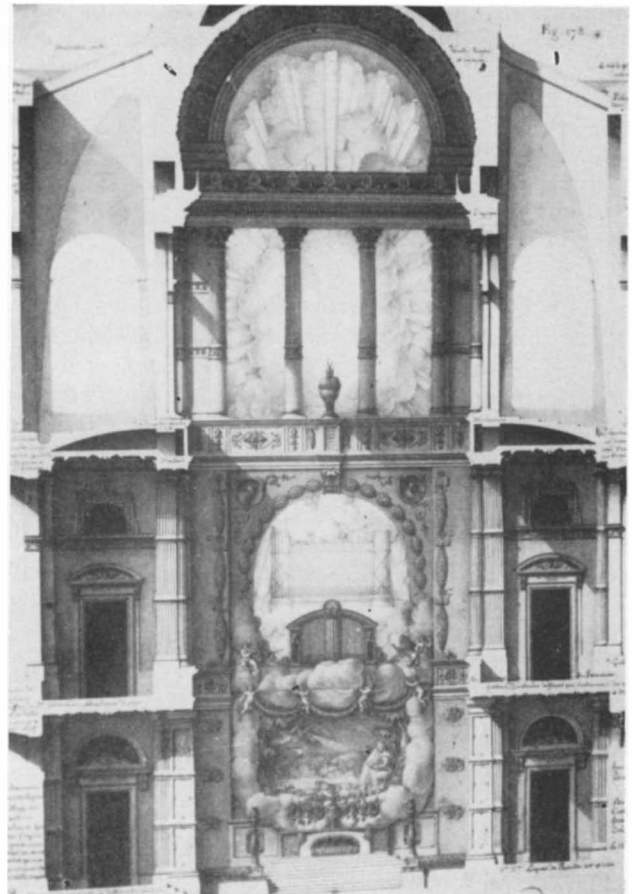


FIG. 210. Chapel of the Emperor—Chapelle de l'un des quatre palais de l'Empereur.

¹¹ B. N., Ha 41.

¹² B. N., Ha 80, unsigned note.

¹³ B. N., Ha 80. A letter attached to Ha 80a, 25, names as a pupil of 1778 the son of the Rouen attorney Thouret, who till his death by the guillotine was a friend of Lequeu.

¹⁴ B. N., Ha 80a, dated. B. N., Ha 80, 5, an official certificate and a letter, both signed by Descamps, Aug. 30, 1786, state that Lequeu was an *adjoint associé* of the Academy of Rouen. In the afore mentioned application, Lequeu says of his city hall project, "qui me valait un titre à l'académie royale de cette ville."

¹⁵ B. N., Ha 80a, attached to 12, the note; 24, Padiglione. Ha 80b, the other Italian drawings.

¹⁶ See n. 14.

¹⁷ B. N., Ha 80, the note. For the application, see n. 1.

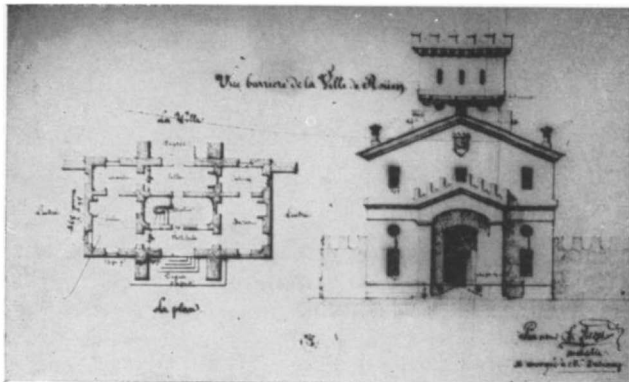


FIG. 211. Barrière for Rouen.

he illustrates in a drawing dated 1788²³ (fig. 260). In the application of 1801 he lists as further achievements the project for the parochial church of St. Germain-en-Laye and one for a hospital at Bordeaux in 1788. He also states that he was the Chef de l'un des ateliers publics in the faubourg Saint-Antoine in 1790 and 1791 and that he took part in the preparations for the first great revolutionary festival, the Fête de la fédération on the Champ-de-Mars, on July 14, 1790.

The era of political upheaval brought about an important change in Lequeu's career. He had to give up the free profession of an architect, and became a civil servant, for he had lost all his property,²⁴ and the general situation, of course, was unfavorable to building. He entered the office of the *cadastre* in the first year of the Republic (1793),²⁵ and remained employed there until the office was discontinued in 1801.²⁶ Yet in the beginning of his new career in the year II, his art was to do him a good service in a highly critical moment. He must have aroused suspicion. To prove his genuine republican feelings, he produced an odd drawing, titled "Porte du Paris,"²⁷ and submitted it to the Committee of Public Safety (fig. 251). The latter was pleased with the extravagant composition and the drawing went on exhibition in the Salle de la liberté.²⁸ Later, Lequeu wrote on the back of this life-saving drawing the remark, "Dessin pour me sauver de la guillotine" and the ironical comment, "Tout pour la patrie." In the same year II and the same place he exhibited also the project of the Monument in Honor of Illustrious Men²⁹ (fig. 238),

²³ B. N., Ha 80a, 15.

²⁴ Letter of application.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, and Certificate of the Commission d'employés of 13 thermidor an I, B. N., Ha 80.

²⁶ Letter of application, and attest of the Ecole Impériale des Ponts et Chaussées, Nov. 12, 1813, B. N., Ha 80.

²⁷ B. N., Ha 80, 74.

²⁸ B. N., Ha 80, 74, appended note, "Renvoyé par le Comité de Salut publique au Comité des Inspecteurs pour faire enregistrer et exposer, 25 thermidor, an II."

²⁹ B. N., Ha 80, 75a (prefixed sheet), Monument à la gloire de nombre d'hommes illustres. Both were exhibited in prairial an II. 75b (main sheet), Monument en l'honneur de plusieurs citoyens sur la place de l'Arsenal, was exhibited in the same hall, in vendémiaire an II.

to which he had added the timely verses: "Ne pleurons pas sur eux, n'accusons point le sort; C'est pour la liberté qu'ils ont bravé la mort."³⁰ However, the strictly anti-Revolutionary gloss on this drawing most certainly was written when there was no more risk in siding with the conservatives. It refers to the victims of the Terror, "Ce temps où on immolait des victimes humaines à la liberté." The patriotic plan of the year I, "Monument destiné à l'exercice de la Souveraineté du peuple" (fig. 277) may just as well have been inspired by enthusiasm as by fear.³¹ In the year IX Lequeu entered the competition for the erection of commemorative columns in the *départements*, and in the year XI he took part in another held in the Galerie d'Apollon in the Louvre.³²

The change of profession had not changed Lequeu. He retained the unbridled mind he had before. The dated designs of the seventeen-eighties and those of the seventeen-nineties are equally extravagant. This however is not true of his non-architectural drawings rang-

³⁰ B. N., Ha 80, 75a.

³¹ B. N., Ha 80a, 4.

³² B. N., Ha 80, Letters by Lequeu and the Ministry of the Interior.

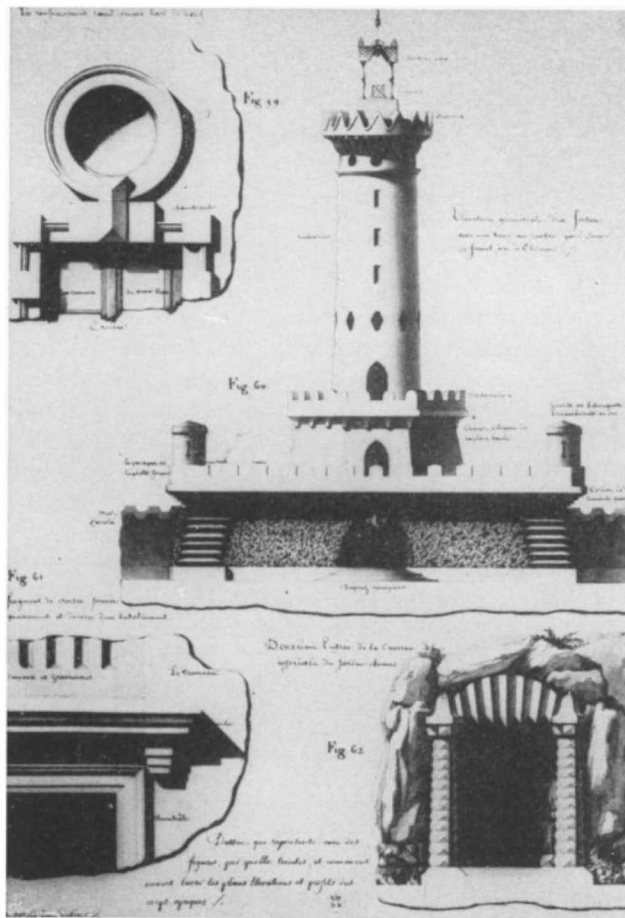


FIG. 212. Small fort—Fortin.

FIG. 213—Infernal grotto—Entrée de la caverne infernale du jardin chinois.



FIG. 214. Town hall—Hôtel de Ville.

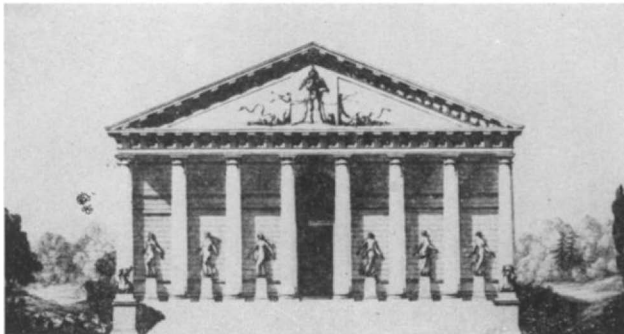


FIG. 215. Temple du silence.

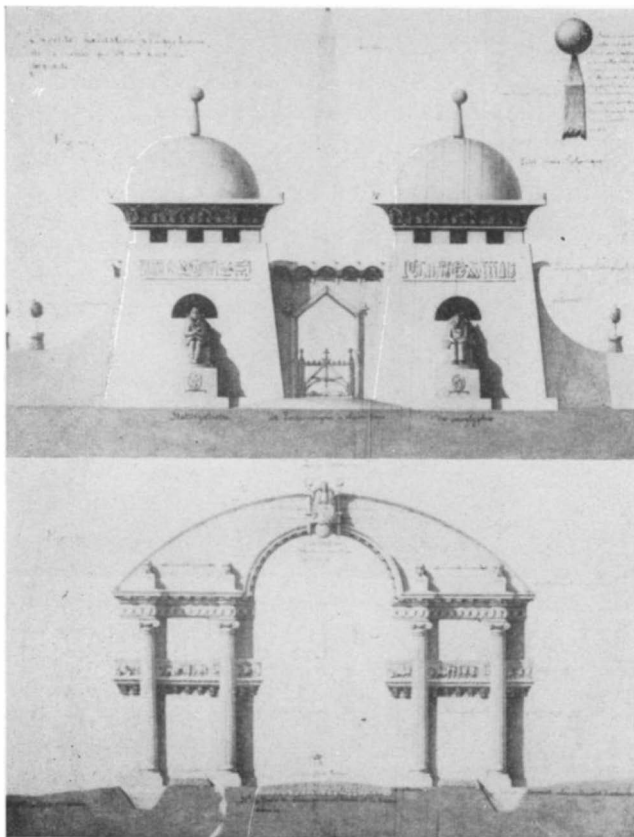


FIG. 216. Egyptian house—Habitation à l'égyptienne.

FIG. 217. Arch—Arc triomphal du chemin des triomphateurs du cirque.

ing from delicate Rococo pastels and animated studies after classical sculptures to intimate sketches from nature. They cannot be dealt with in this context; I am preparing a separate essay on them.

Among Lequeu's drawings is a copy of that poster of the year II in which Boullée, Le Roy, Ledoux, and the sculptor Dardel were violently attacked.³³ The placard, addressed "Aux citoyens du concours"—the participants in a competition—informs us that the four artists were regarded as belonging to a group with reactionary aims, or, as the slanderer would make believe, to a faction. There is no indication that Lequeu was the author of the libel. His interest in it certainly was only due to the fact that it was directed against his former teacher Le Roy.

In 1801 Lequeu's application for another position met with success. He was appointed a cartographer in the Department of the Interior. First he worked on maps of Paris, and later in the Bureau of Statistics, on maps of the French Empire. In 1815 he projected a Mausoleum on the Place de la Concorde, in memory of the martyrs who had been beheaded there, including a bust of Louis XVI, and planned to embellish the Chamber of Deputies and the bridge leading to it. Still in the same year he

³³ B. N., Ha 80. See pt. I, n. 308.

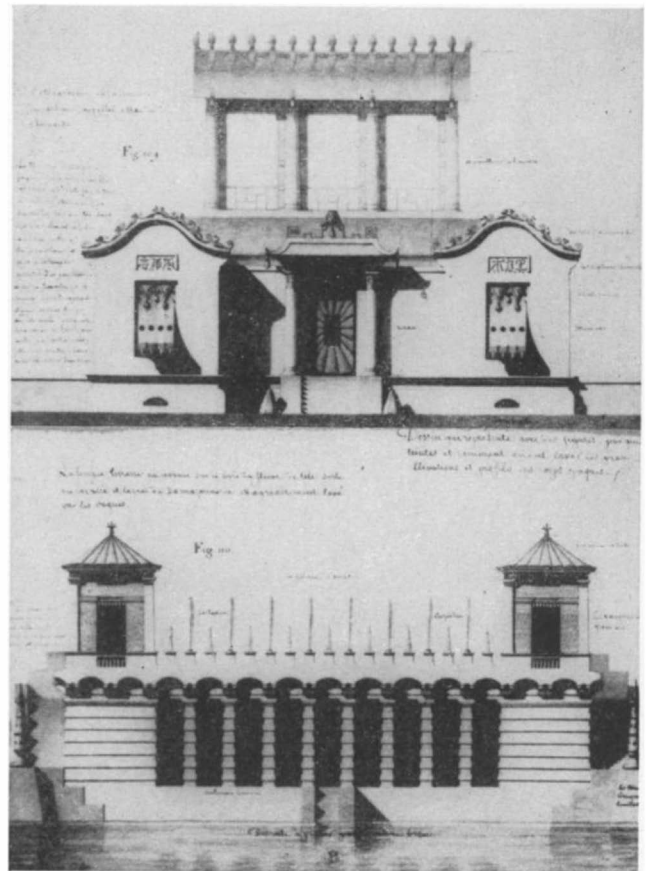


FIG. 218. Chinese house—La demeure du jardinier, appelée Maison chinoise.

FIG. 219. Terrasse sur le bord du fleuve.

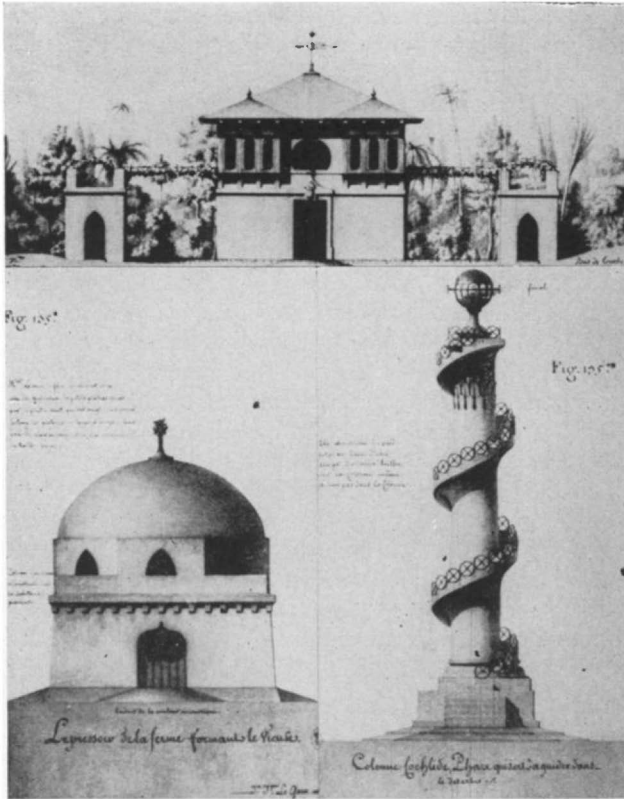


FIG. 220. Turkish house—Habitation turque du bûcheron.

FIG. 221. Wine press—Espressoir de la ferme.

FIG. 222. Beacon—Colonne cochlide, phare.

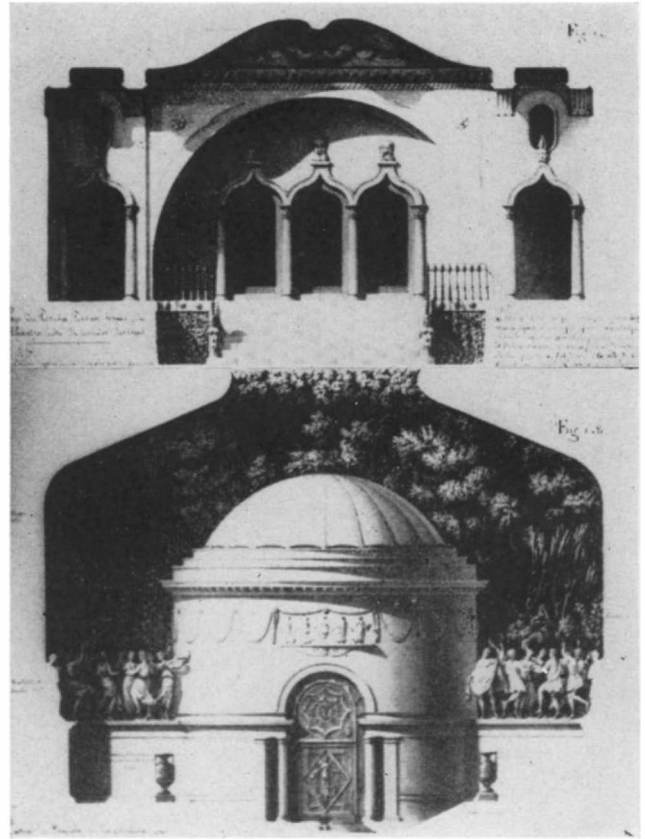


FIG. 225. Persian porch—Porche Persan du théâtre.

FIG. 226. Temple of Terpsichore.

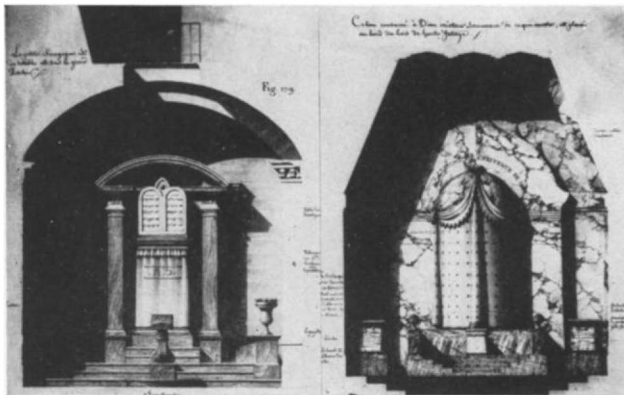


FIG. 223. Petite Synagogue, sanctuaire.

FIG. 224. Sanctuary of the Creator.

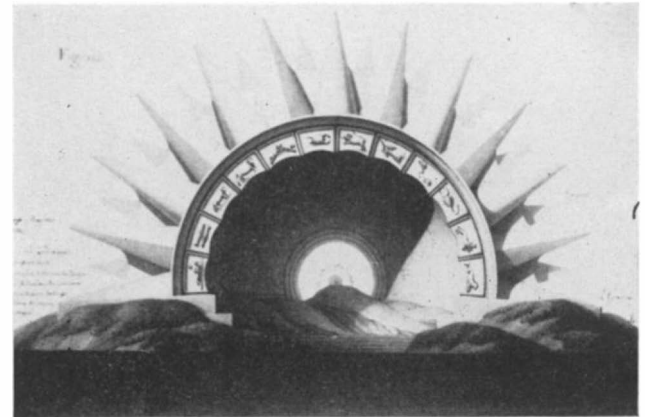


FIG. 227. Persian sanctuary—Lieu des oraisons Persanes.

retired with a pension.³⁴ Then began the last, tragic years of the aged artist. Want, frustration, and loneliness lay heavily on him, as we know from advertisements announcing the sale of his drawings. Two of these ap-

³⁴ B. N., Ha 80, 21, verso attached note, on a letterhead of the Ministère de l'Intérieur, dated Jan. 15, 1815, "Entrevue de Mr. le Journaliste des Feuilles des Arts avec M. Le Queu architecte," about the Mausoleum. *Ibid.*, Ha 80, Certificate of retirement, dated Sept. 30, 1815.

peared in 1817,³⁵ one in 1822, and one in 1824.³⁶ He must have been forced to part with a good deal of his property. In 1817 he offered for sale ninety-three architectural drawings, besides maps, and his portrait, possibly the one dated 1792, now forming the frontispiece of

³⁵ *Galignani's Messenger*, 4, Paris, May 22, 1817. *Journal de Paris politique, commercial, et littéraire*, suppl. 193; 362, July 12, 1817.

³⁶ *Journal de Paris*, suppl. 212: 400, Aug. 20, 1822. *Bulletin de Commerce*, Paris, Dec. 16, 1824.

the first volume of his designs in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.³⁷ The title page of this volume reads *Architecture civile* de Jean-Jacques Lequeu, and on the bottom, "Donné par lui-même à l'honneur de la Bibliothèque Royale." Lequeu never composed a continuous text, but added merely brief comments to the drawings. These, he asserts in the advertisement, were exhibited in the Louvre, though unfortunately they were not listed in the catalogs. In 1822 and 1824 he was anxiously concerned that not a single word of the textes he had composed for new advertisements should be omitted from print.³⁸ In 1822 he wanted to sell also "eight or nine" plays he had written, one of which was *Le faux Démétrius*. It is pathetic to read of his fear that no one would be interested in the works of an unknown artist, and that some prospective buyer might not find where he lived, for his neighbors hardly knew him.³⁹ A note probably written in his last years, is full of complaints about "injustices et ingratitude." In another note he bitterly assails his colleagues, "acteurs d'intrigues, faiseurs d'architecture Parisienne."⁴⁰ The design of his own tomb bears his portrait in relief, with the inscription "J. J. DE QUEUX." This unusual spelling, if it is not by another hand, reveals the artist's absent-mindedness; the caption, however, his life-long sufferings: *Sépulchre de l'auteur, frère de Jésus; il a porté sa croix toute sa vie.* One of his latest designs is the

³⁷ B. N., Ha 80. The "Plan de la Ville de Paris" beside his portrait, if alluding to his cartographic work, must be a later addition to the drawing.

³⁸ The announcement of 1822 begins, "M. Lequeu nous invite à insérer sans y changer un mot la notice suivante. . .," that of 1824, similarly, ". . . à insérer *textuellement* l'annonce suivante."

³⁹ Announcement of 1824, "Son domicile actuel est rue des Deux-Portes St. Sauveur, no. 8 . . . et au premier escalier côté gauche. Il avertit le public qu'il est peu connu dans l'enclos de cette cour." This is the more curious as he states in a draft to the announcement of 1822 that he had lived in the same house since 1786.

⁴⁰ B. N., Ha 80, both.

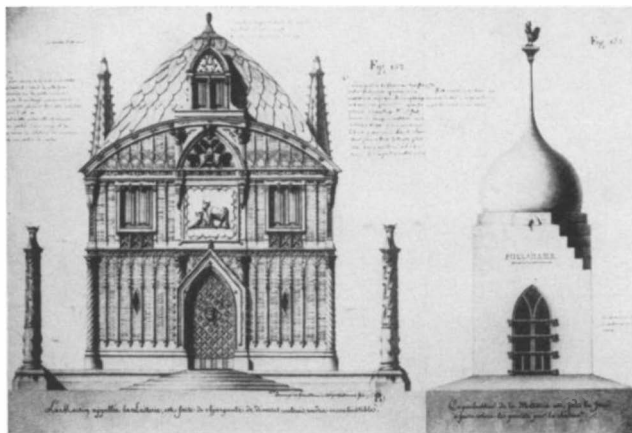


FIG. 228. Dairy—Laiterie.

FIG. 229. Hen-house—Poulailler.

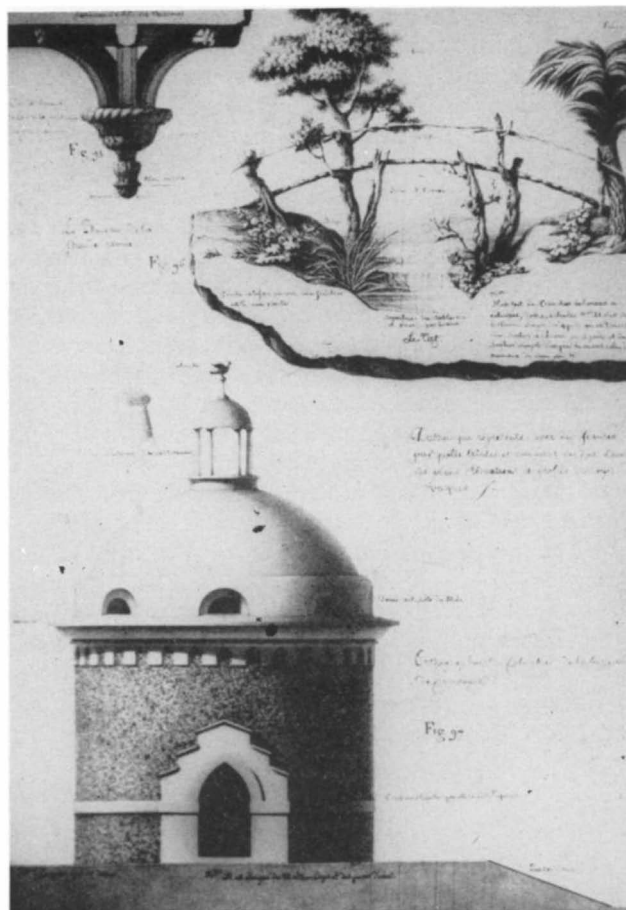


FIG. 230. Pigeon-house—Colombier.

project of a Théâtre Royal, "Fait par J. J. Lequeu de Rouen, 1^{er} Décembre 1814." Like the previous advertisements also that of 1824 had, we may say, fortunately, no success. For then Lequeu decided to donate all his drawings and a copy of the treatise on Chinese building by Chambers to the Royal Library, according to the latter's inventory of 1825.⁴¹ In or after this year Lequeu died. Yet even if he lived for several more years, there is no doubt that by 1824 his career as an artist had been long since finished.

Those frantic outbursts and the somewhat confused text of an undated note scribbled on a letterhead of the Ministère de l'Intérieur with *Année 181* (*sic*) might confirm one's first reaction to Lequeu's drawings, that he was abnormal from the beginning. Should we leave him to the psychologist and exclude him from art history? It is not necessary to have recourse to the simple generalization that all artistic creation is beyond the normalcy that makes and marks every-day life. Rather

⁴¹ B. N., Ha 80, 33, the tomb; 45, Théâtre Royal. The inventory lists the calf-bound volumes of Lequeu's drawings under the numbers 7123-7131, the volume *Traité des édifices, meubles, habits etc. des Chinois* par Chambers, under 7131. To each item the remark, "Donné par l'auteur [in the case of 7131, "par M. Le Queu"] en 1825" is added.

should we refer to such great figures accepted by art history in spite of their deranged mental condition as El Greco, Borromini, Van Gogh. What counts is not whether abnormality is more or less manifest in their production but whether their presentations have the qualities of any normal work of art. We can find in Lequeu's drawings the same will to master form, the same trend toward abstraction, the same desire to express human feelings, and the same wish to enhance the "normal," or, the banal, as in any less eccentric achievement worthy to be considered art. The question whether he was sane in his early years can be answered by pointing out some characteristics of the designs. The handwriting is calligraphic, minute rather than extravagant. The comments are clear, most of them sober and technical. Later, he makes sarcastic remarks which prove sound reasoning. The attitude of his environment is likewise elucidating. Descamps, Soufflot, and Le Roy regarded him as a gifted student whom they liked to encourage and to assist. His patrons had similar opinions. Nor would he have been employed for twenty-two years in republican and imperial offices, had he not behaved like a normal person. Almost all of his known works originated before the end of his civil service career and long before the possible outbreak of insanity in his last years.

I believe that not a personal condition, but the general unrest of the period must account for his production in the first place. Lequeu's dream-architecture marks the end of the period at the beginning of which stand the architectural dreams of Le Geay. Though Lequeu wandered beyond the regular bounds, his fantasies are more than extravaganzas. They are works of art in which we recognize the man, and through which we apprehend the period. Building for patrons after classical canons must have been for Lequeu in his early years just as boring as delineating charts and maps in his advanced age. Classicism was the field in which the unoriginal, the minor spirits, felt at home. The independent minds strove to free themselves from the old heritage, in one way or another. They laid down their novel ideas in passionate words, or in ecstatic designs which must be looked upon as expressions of evolution. To measure their inventions by the standards of a perfected, stable style or tradition would be to misjudge their position and significance in the history of art. They are neither to be judged by any aesthetic canons of mature style, nor to be approached with any expectation of practical utility or even possibility. If ever there was such a thing as *l'art pour l'art*, we find it in the outbursts of the revolutionary architects. Unlike the artists at the end of the nineteenth century, they were not out to discover some novel

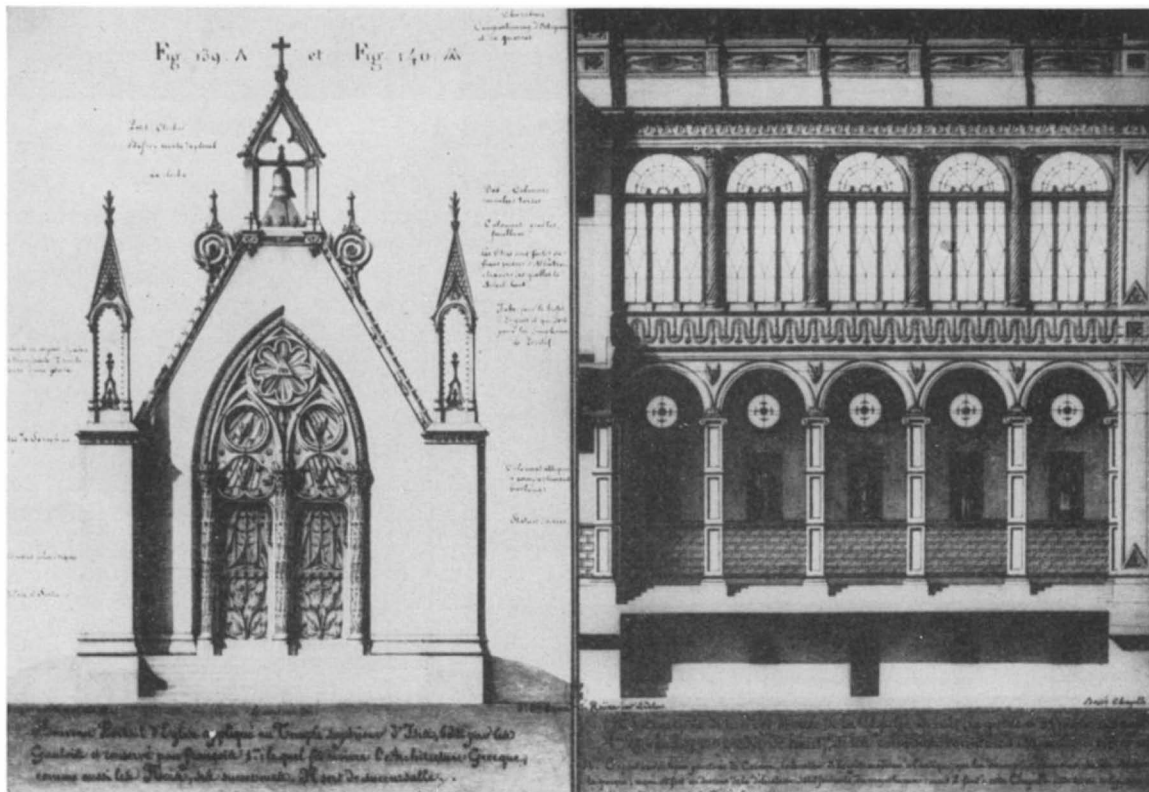


FIG. 231. Temple of Isis—Portail d'Eglise appliqué au Temple d'Isis bâti par les Gaulois et conservé par François I.

FIG. 232. Duke's chapel—Nef d'entrée de la Chapelle Ducale.

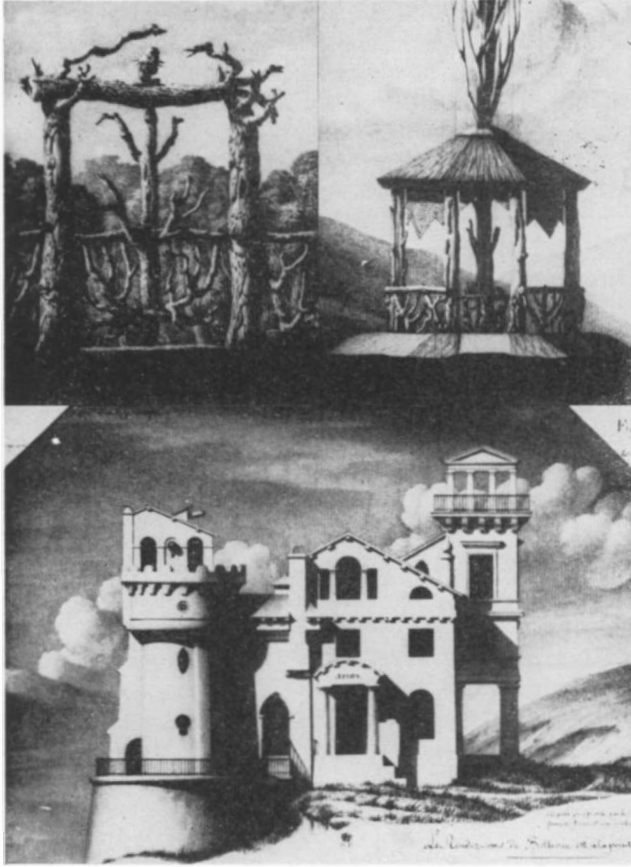


FIG. 233. Hermitage.

FIG. 234. Arbour.

FIG. 235. Rendez-vous de Bellevue.

art. They were less artificial than those who belonged to the *art nouveau* movement. Boullée, Ledoux, and Lequeu had to speak out because they were swayed by the emotions and the needs of the moment. The transition from a stabilized tradition to diametrically opposed goals brought about an uproar in any field. Contrary to other historians, art historians were not aware of the crisis of the close at the eighteenth century. They registered

see the seers. Like the heroic architecture of Boullée and the reform work of Ledoux, Lequeu's fantasies reflect the main trends of the period, its passion for grandeur, its will to innovation, and its yearning for the unheard-of.

The fact that Boullée's, Ledoux', and Lequeu's fantasies—at least part of them—originated long before the political revolution broke out gives one much to think. Let us remember that the dawn of the Renaissance came prior to the Reformation, the symptoms of the Baroque came earlier than the absolute monarchy, and *art nouveau*, with all its excitement, preceded the political cataclysm of the twentieth century. Architecture—the archcraft—allows men, when they build their sanctuaries or their homes, and still more when they merely dream of

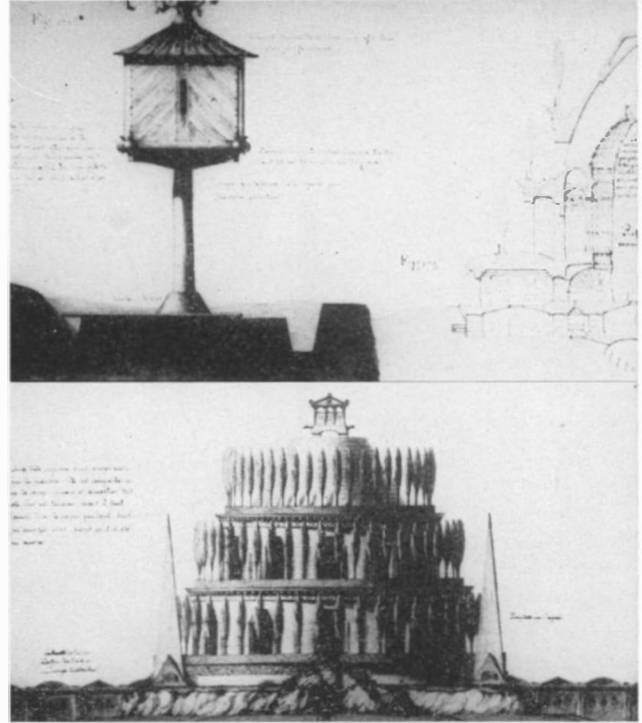


FIG. 236. Look-out of the game keeper—(Poste du garde-chasse).

FIG. 237. Tomb monument—Sépulture près Voorhout.

them, to express their yearnings long before they dare to reform their social institutions. Modern historians hold that

nineteenth and twentieth centuries originated about 1700.⁴² They became formative in architecture much earlier than in life. This is what the drawings of the revolutionaries make evident.

X. LEQUEU'S WORK

In Lequeu's development one can distinguish three phases: As a youth he followed the main currents of the time

Neo-classicism; and shared the Romantic interest in medieval architecture. In his second phase his strong individuality began to assert itself with great intensity. Less bold than Ledoux, he availed himself almost exclusively of forms of the past and did not think of presenting undisguised geometrical shapes. But he transformed his models in the most daring and most unorthodox ways, and created designs unparalleled in architectural history. In his third and last stage, the impetuosity of youth is gone and with it the revolutionary enthusiasm. We cannot, of course, expect a clear demarcation line between each of these phases, but perhaps can say that he passed from the first stage to the second in the 1780's, and that the last stage began about

⁴² Cf. Hazard, Paul, *La crise de la conscience Européenne 1680-1715*, Paris, 1935.

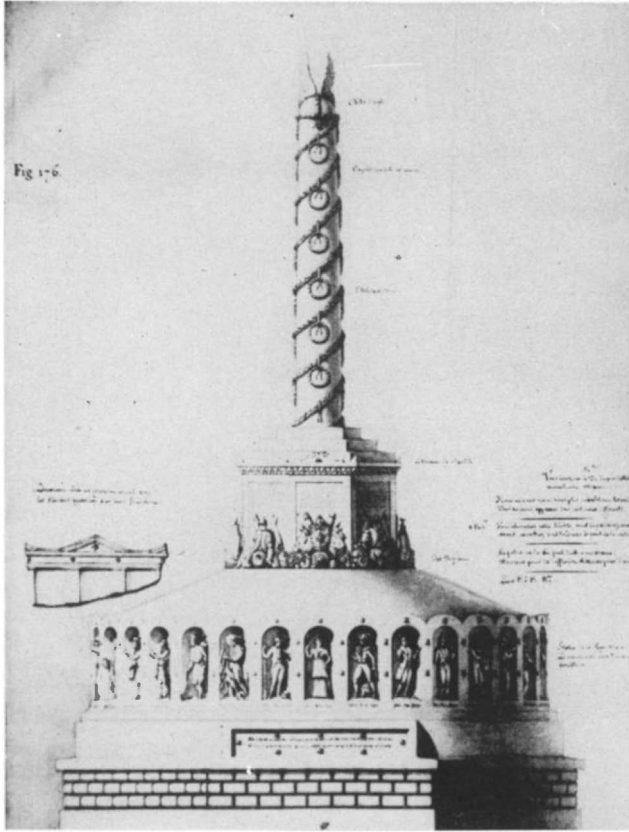


FIG. 238. Monument à la gloire de nombre d'hommes illustres.

1800. In each phase there were high and low tides, moments in which he rose high above the fashions of the day and moments when he lagged behind; moments of ecstasy and moments of despondency. Even in his most fantastic designs he added sober instructions for the students. When, on the other hand, he wanted to explain some abstract subject, he presented his diagrams in an artistic form. For instance, a sheet for the instruction in light and shade has become, in his hand, a specimen of Romantic art full of vigorous contrasts⁴³ (fig. 208).

BAROQUE AND CLASSICISM

The Monument to Athena which he conceived when still a student at Rouen in 1776, is typically late Baroque,

⁴³ These are the drawings which are reproduced in this book, with the numbers of our illustrations in parentheses. From Ha 80: 2 (208), 77a (210), 21 (212), 21 (213), 35 (216), 35 (217), 37 (218), 37 (219), 48a (220), 48a (221), 48a (222), 52b (223), 52b (224), 56 (225), 56 (226), 45b (227), 59a (228), 59a (229), 32 (230), 52a (231), 52a (232), 55 (233), 55 (234), 55 (235), 71a (236), 71a (237), 75a (238), 54b (239), 54b (240), 43b (241), 76 (242), 76 (243), 22 (244), 22 (245), 25 (246), 25 (247), 49a (248), 30 (249), 72a (250), 74b (251), 31 (253), 73b (254), 44b (255), 28b (256), 74 (258), 47 (259), 57 (261), 46 (262), 46 (263), 67 (264), 67 (265), 27 (266), 27 (267), 75b (269), 72b (272), 71b (274), 73a (275), 54a (276), 43a (278), 68a (279), 68a (280), 43b (281), 38a (282), 42a (283), 62 (284). From Ha 80a: 21 (207), 33 (209), 60 (211), 23 (214), 5 (215), 27 (252), 35 (257), 74 (258), 15 (260), 34 (268), 33 (270), 38 (273), 4 (277). From Ha 80b: 10 (271).

or, Rococo in character (fig. 209). It is composed in sweeping curves and rich decoration. The frieze in high relief consists of a multitude of figures hiding almost completely the wall to which they are applied. Clouds efface the architectural lines of the upper part of the structure. There is much movement and plasticity in the design but there is no trace of the stern classicism which at that time already had become fashionable. The design might make a good model for a decorative piece in porcelain, but, if carried as an outdoor monument, the bulky substructure and the comparatively tiny figure of the goddess would hardly produce a pleasant effect.

Not much later the pompous, overdecorated chapel of Sainte-Geneviève in the Emperor's Palace must have originated. Lequeu noted on the back that it was shown to Soufflot and the King (fig. 210).

Quite different is the design of a *barrière* for Rouen (fig. 211). An inscription on it states that it was sent to Descamps, "Par nous Le Queu architecte et envoyée à M. Descamps." From this self-confident, almost childish enunciation, and from the immature character of the drawing itself, we may infer that it was made when Lequeu was a student under Descamps, or even at an earlier moment when he wanted to show his hand to the master. The *barrière* in the "castellated" style is a prod-

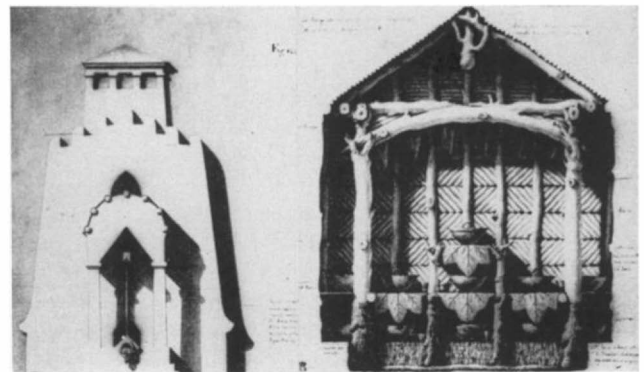


FIG. 239. Pompe à feu.

FIG. 240. Dairy, interior.

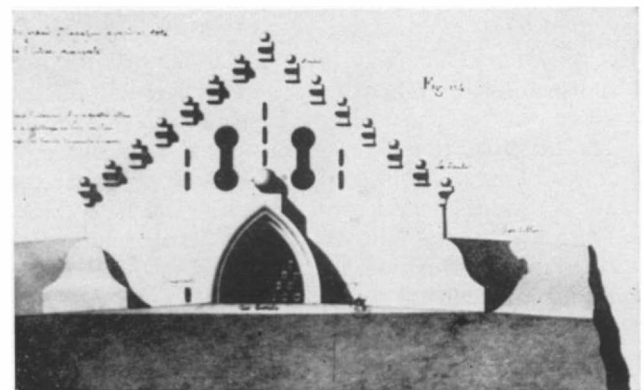


FIG. 241. Powder magazine—Magasin à poudre.

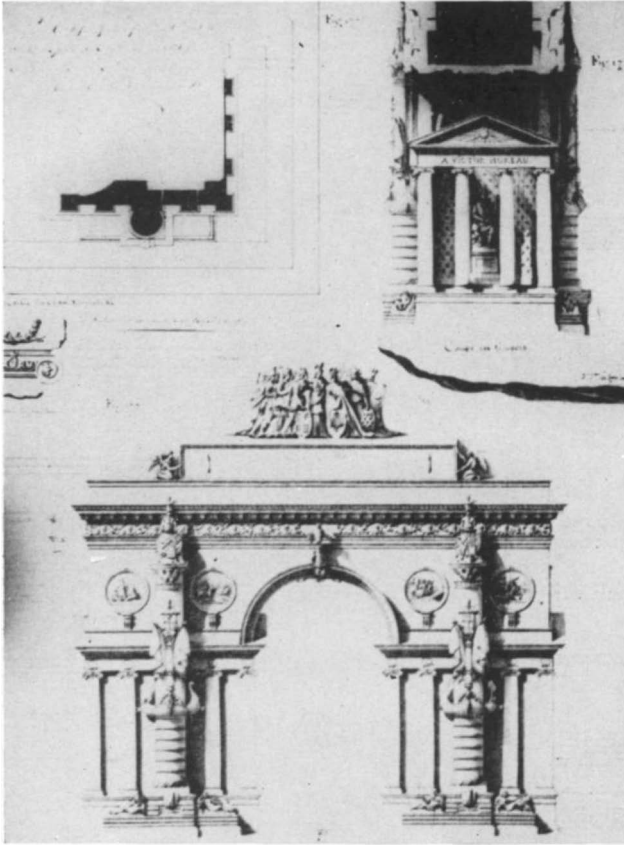


FIG. 242. Memorial to Victor Moreau.

FIG. 243. Arch of the brave—Arc en l'honneur des braves de la patrie.

uct of early Romanticism. The porch of the plain house is

mented tower rises above the roof. The Small Fort (Fortin) is likewise derived from medieval castles. The plasticity of its rendering points to a later date (fig. 212).

In 1779 Lequeu made a design for a Town Hall (fig. 214). He evidently hoped that his project might be accepted to replace the scheme which Antoine Mathurin Le Carpentier, a member of the Paris Academy of Architecture, had worked out for Rouen in 1758.⁴⁴ According to Lequeu's own statement the Royal Academy of Rouen approved of his design which belongs to the type of cool, impersonal

The elongated structure consists of a rusticated ground-floor with arched windows and a second story with straight-headed openings. The central Doric portico runs up to the height of the Mansard roof; slightly projecting end-pavilions frame the whole; a dome with a spire terminates the composition. The arrangement is,

⁴⁴ Le Carpentier's project is illustrated in *Encyclopédie* (see pt. I, n. 31), pl. 22; Patte, Pierre, *Monumens érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV*, 180 pl. XXXVII, Paris, 1765; Blomfield, Reginald, *History of French Architecture*, 2: 183; pl. CXCIX, London, 1921; *Procès 6*: xxi, about the project of A. M. Le Carpentier.

basically, Baroque, but all Baroque liveliness has gone. There is no movement in the front, and the single elements appear to be frozen. Lequeu's project differs from Le Carpentier's chiefly in two ways. It lacks the latter's rich decoration, especially the columns of the second story; and the central portion is considerably altered. The old-timer Le Carpentier was still intent upon unification. To this end he used the two-story pattern both in the center and on the sides. Lequeu, however, disrupts the continuity of the front by adding the colossal portico. His dome is less conspicuous than that of the former master, who exalted the crowning feature

main floor of the building. Though Lequeu's design is based on that of his predecessor it reveals unmistakably a changed attitude toward composition.

In the Casino of Terlinden at Sgrawensel, built for a certain dowager Meulenaer in 1786, the main entrance is on the short side of the rectangular plan, like ancient temple.⁴⁵ But the porch is followed by the

⁴⁵ Cf. note 18. Krafft, *Recueil*, pl. 58, illustrates the Memorial.

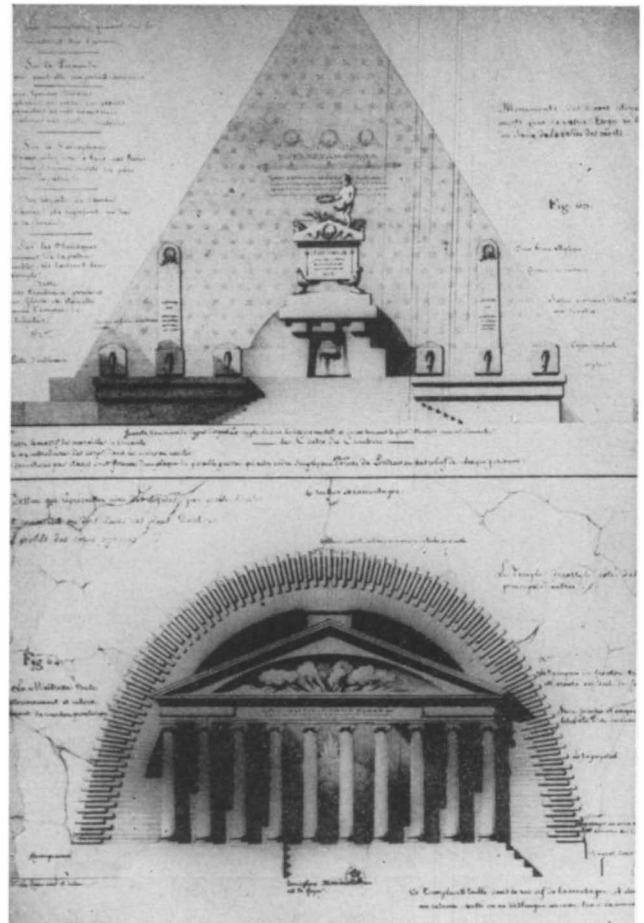


FIG. 244. Monument des braves citoyens morts pour la patrie.

FIG. 245. Temple to the Unknown God.—Temple du Dieu inconnu.

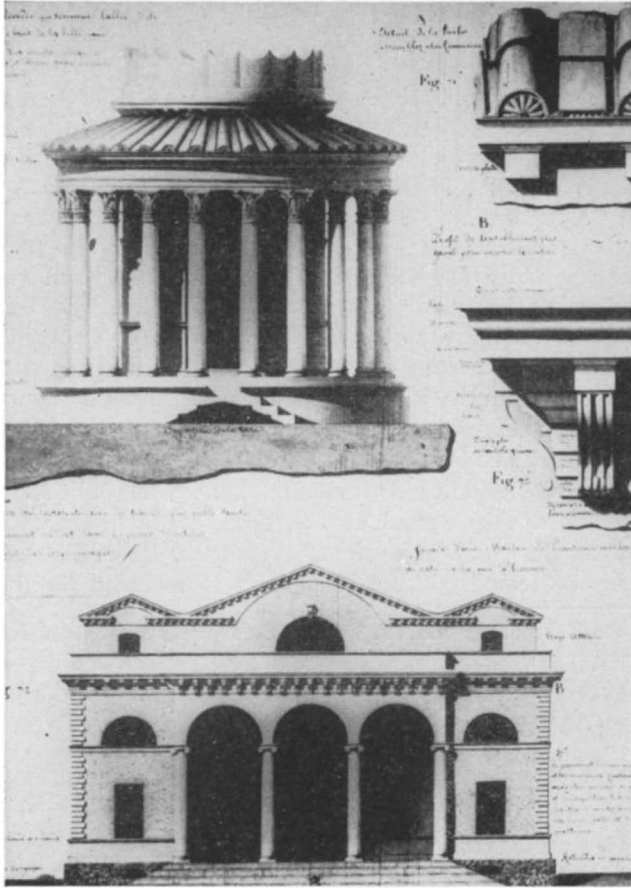


FIG. 246. Belvedere.

FIG. 247. Maison de plaisance.

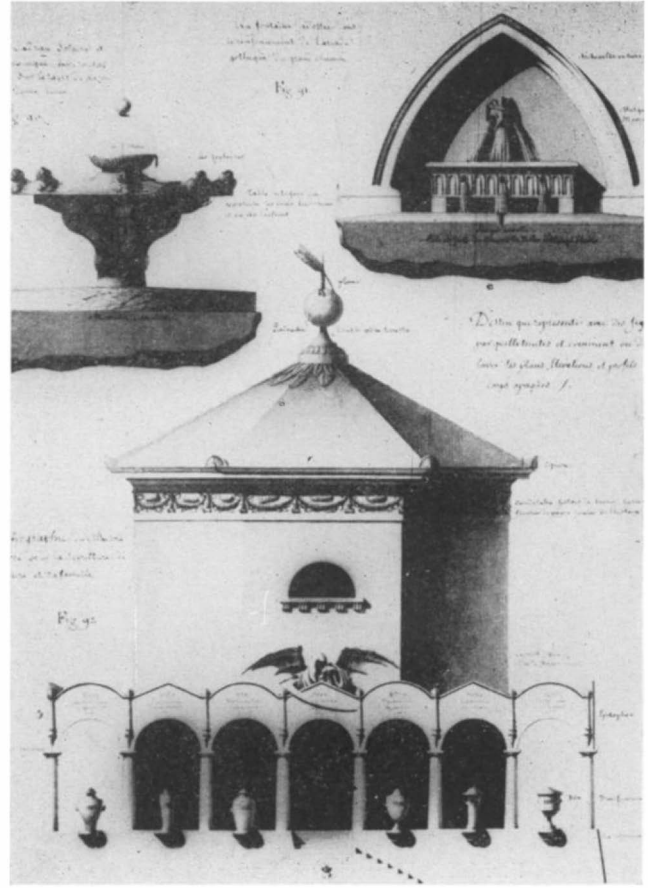


FIG. 249. Mausoleum of Voltaire.

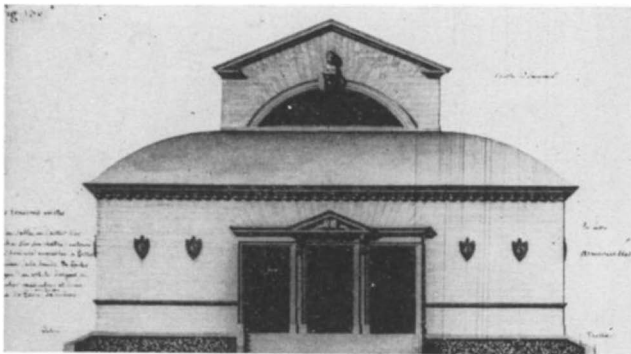


FIG. 248. Tribunal seigneurial.

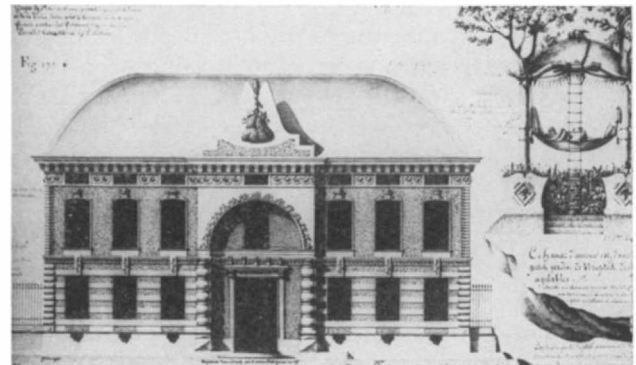


FIG. 250. Inn of the enchanted garden—Guinguette du petit bois admirable.

staircase, behind which the rooms are lined up in two rows. The plan is definitely lacking in centralization, or orientation around a dominating element, and this is contrary to truly Baroque plans. A structure that was supposed to imitate a classical temple did not, of course, permit a centralized arrangement. The architect was not free in designing the plan. Yet it is significant that the patron himself followed the new fashion. In the era of the Baroque the formal pattern was imperative and no

patron would have wanted a house deviating from it. Whoever was responsible for the temple-dwelling of Terlingen, its interior indicates that the loose arrangement of the rooms was satisfactory at that moment. The interior decoration was strictly Louis Seize, stiff and rather closely following Greek models. A Memorial in the garden, erected to enshrine the bust of a woman, foreshadows Lequeu's later inventions. It shows various odd details, such as the upright wreath on top of

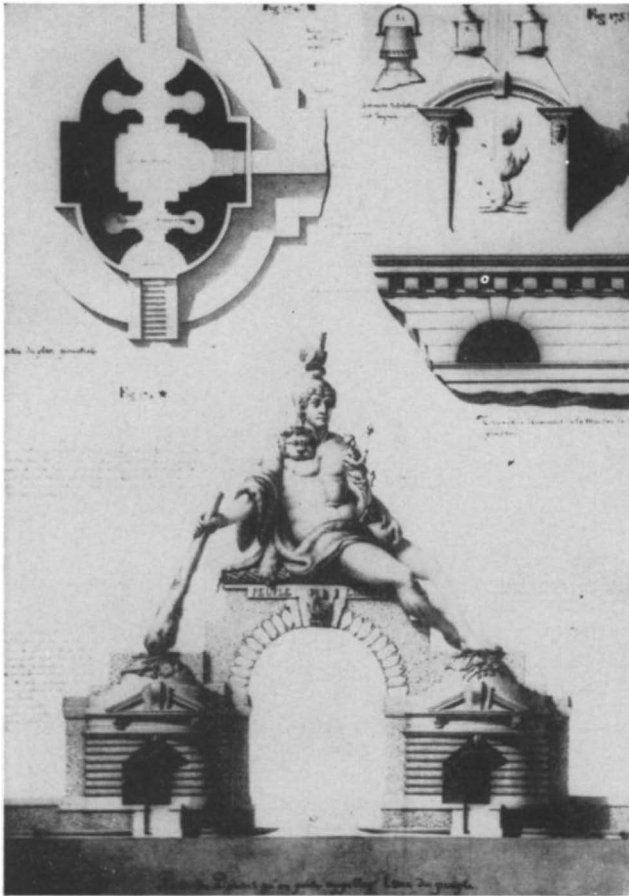


FIG. 251. Porte du Paris.

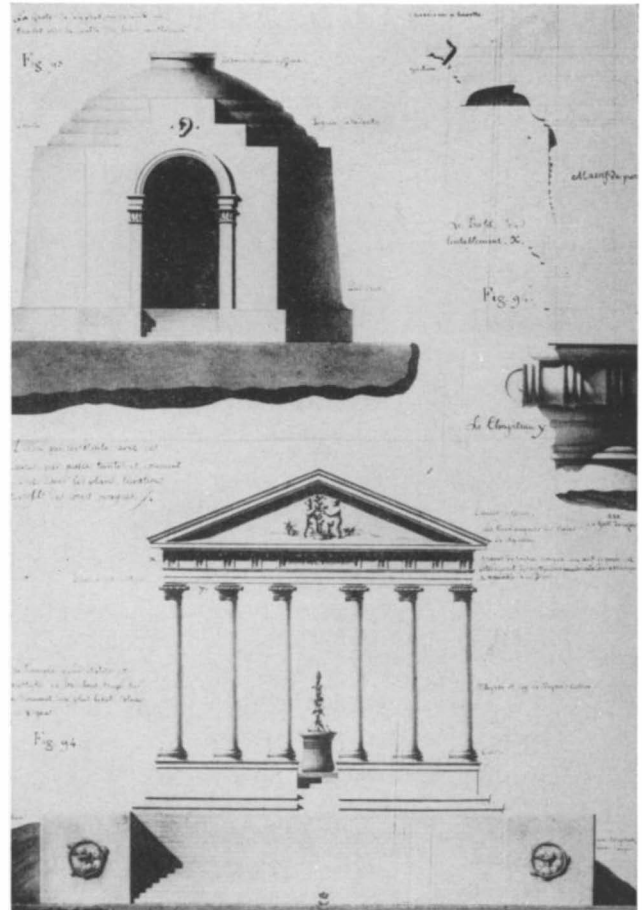


FIG. 253. Grotte de Cypris—Temple de Bacchus.

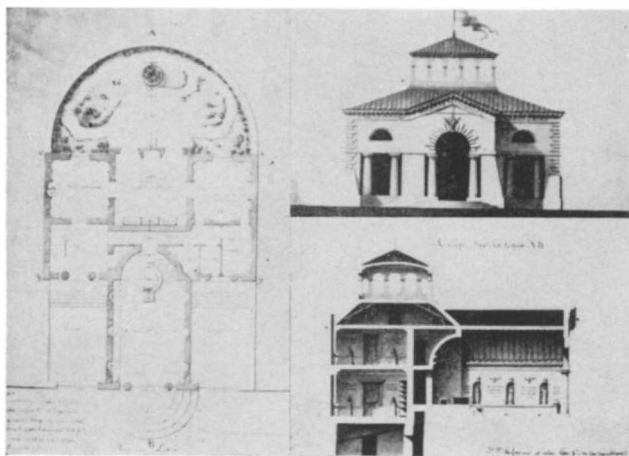


FIG. 252. Justice of the peace—Justice de paix.

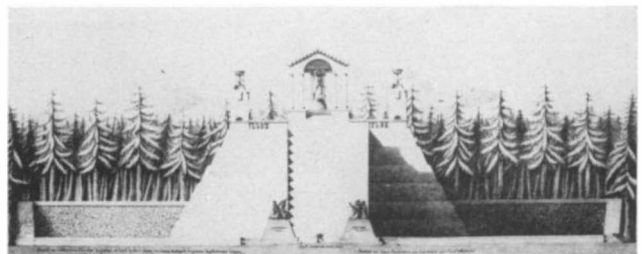


FIG. 254. Temple au Dieu des Armées.

EXOTICISM

the framing arch, and the bird-wings affixed to its sides.

The House of the Comte de Bouville near Portenort, called "Temple du silence," resembles the Casino of Terlinden outside and inside⁴⁶ (fig. 215).

⁴⁶ Cf. note 19. Lequeu's drawing differs in some details from Krafft's engraving.

If we are now to discuss the designs of Lequeu's revolutionary period, we can save ourselves the trouble of looking for the right words. Jacques-François Blondel, also born at Rouen, provides us with the most appropriate comments. He was, as we will recall, a renowned teacher and artist of acute insight. His judgment can be appropriately brought to bear even on the work of those who came one or two generations after him. We may now benefit from earlier having dealt rather extensively with his views. Of course, he did not know the designs of Lequeu, for he died in his school in the Louvre at about the time when his young fellow-citizen

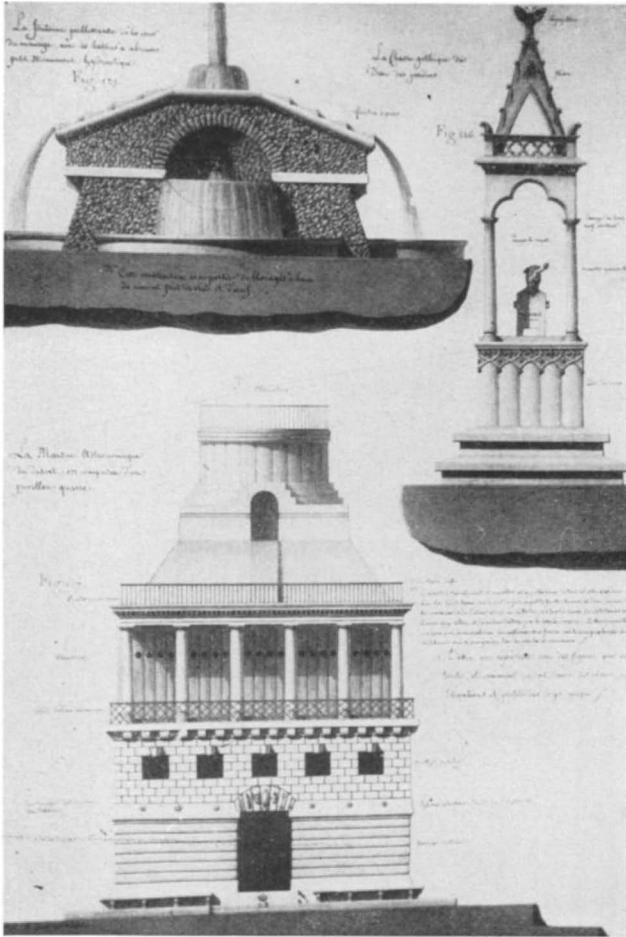


FIG. 255. House of the astronomer—Maison astronomique.

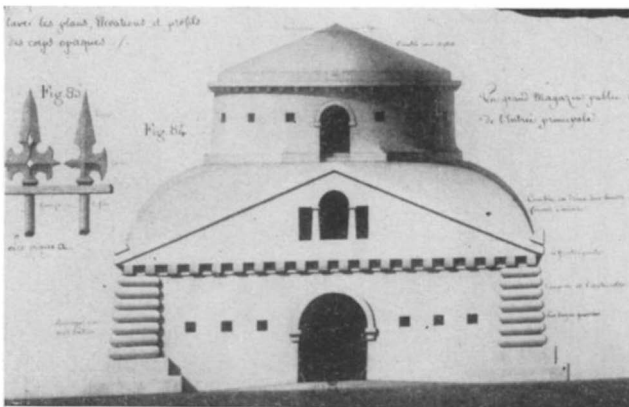


FIG. 256. Public warehouse—Magasin public.

started studying architecture. However, it means much that many passages of Blondel could be illustrated with the drawings of Lequeu, and that the latter's strange designs can be explained with Blondel's comments. The two men had more in common than any mere outer connection which might have tied the work of the one to the words of the other. It means that the trends which Blondel had observed about 1750–1760 were still alive

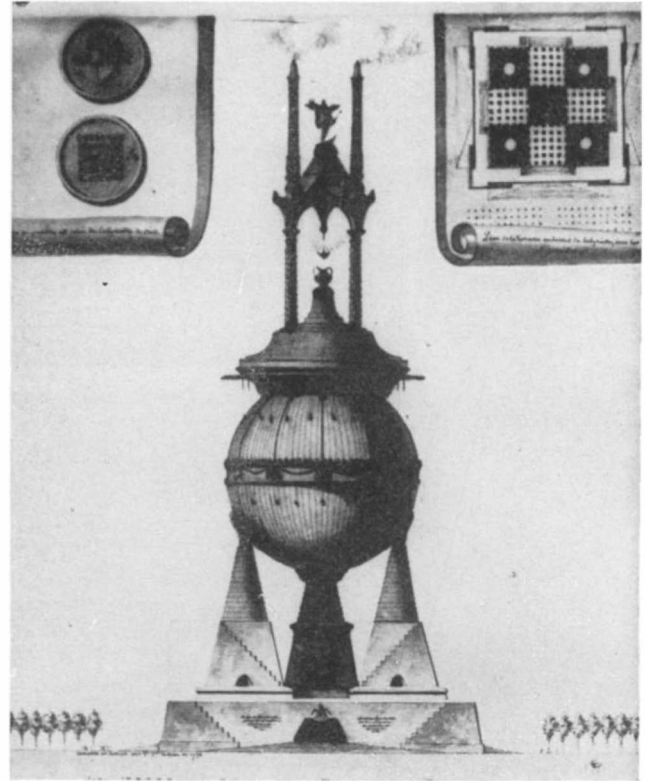


FIG. 257. Tomb of Porsenna.

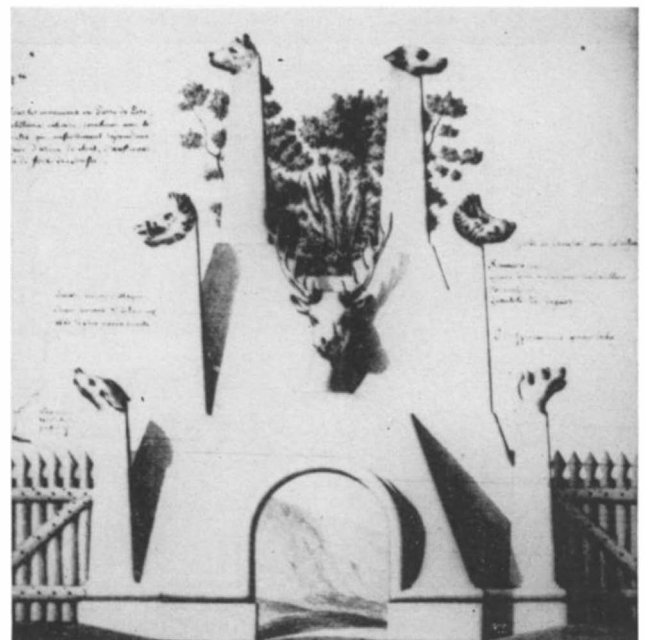


FIG. 258. Entrance to the deer forest—Porte du parc de la chasse.

about 1780–1790. If nothing were left of the architectural thought of the period—neither the inventions of Boullée and Ledoux, the doctrine of Laugier, nor Viel's acrid criticism—Blondel's text and Lequeu's fantasies

together could testify to the vitality of the great movement of the architecture of the French Revolution.

We find in Lequeu's designs the confusion of borrowed styles so disapproved by Blondel. There is an Egyptian House, (fig. 216), a Chinese House (fig. 218), a Turkish House (fig. 220), a Little Synagogue (fig. 223), a Persian Porch (fig. 225), a Persian Sanctuary (fig. 227), a Hen House, with Oriental motifs (fig. 229), the Winepress (fig. 221), and the Pigeon-House (fig. 230), mixtures of Oriental and geometric shapes. There are several gothicizing projects, such as the Dairy (fig. 228), and the front of the Temple of Isis (fig. 231). The details of the latter, especially the decoration of the portal, are far more personal than the sober copies of most of the Gothicists. Yet the absurdity of mixing up different styles, indiscriminately, appears in the legend: *Portail d'Eglise appliqué au Temple supérieur d'Isis, bâti par les Gaulois et conservé par François 1^{er}; le quel fit revivre l'Architecture Grecque.* The Duke's Chapel was obviously inspired by Venetian Renaissance buildings that structures destined to stand in free nature should

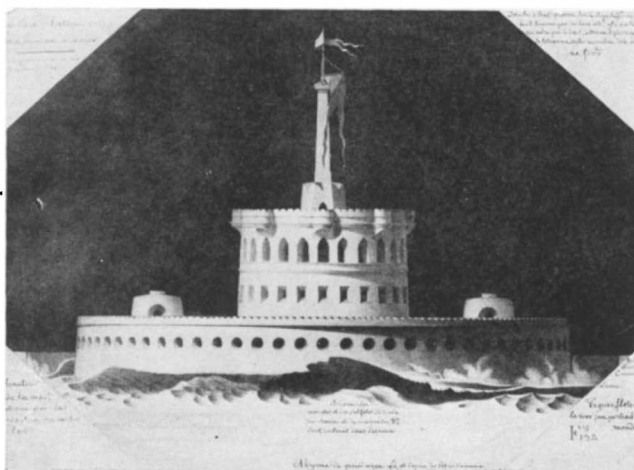


FIG. 259. Castle on the sea—Le vieux château.

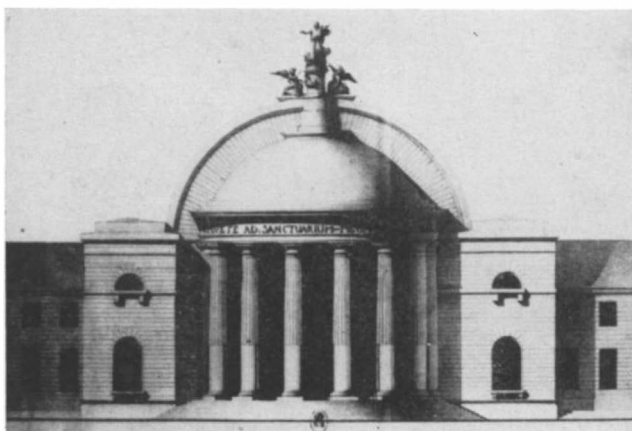


FIG. 260. Church for Marseille—Eglise des Capucines de Marseille.

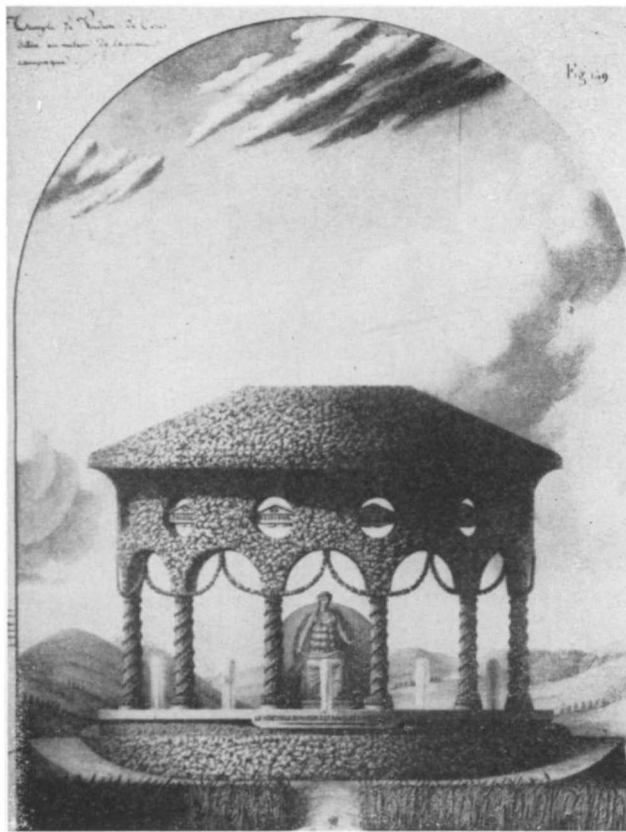


FIG. 261. Temple of Ceres.

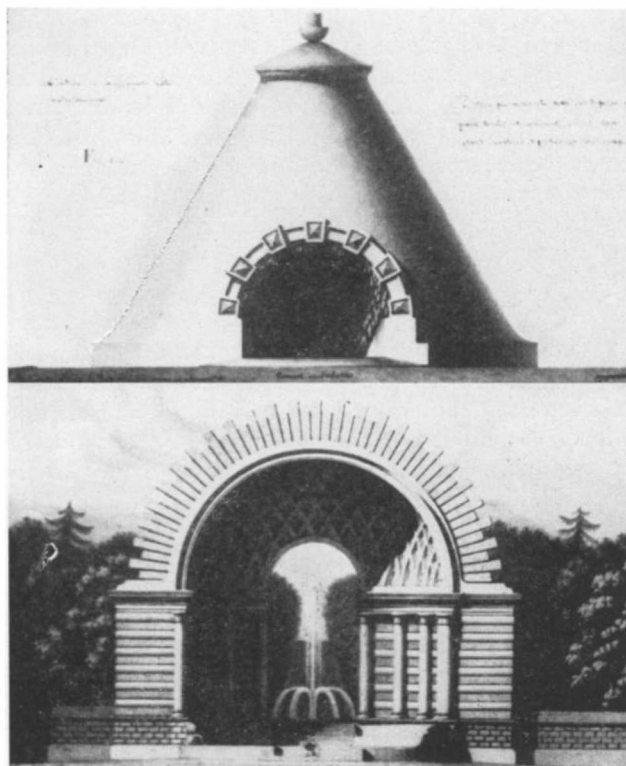


FIG. 262. Ice house—Glacière.

FIG. 263. Nymphée.

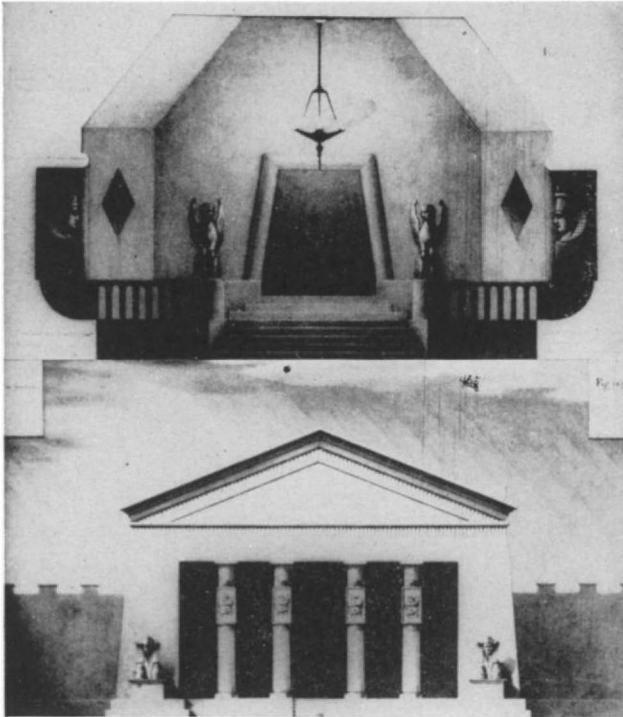


FIG. 264. Entrance to the abode of Pluto—
Demeure de Pluton.

FIG. 265. Temple of wisdom—Temple de la sagesse.

look as if belonging there: For example, the Hermitage (fig. 233), the Arbour (fig. 234,) and the Look-out of the Gamekeeper (fig. 236) are made up by knotty trunks or clad with bark. Each of these designs might be regarded as just a playful pastime of the Romantic Mood, but the fact that such different realms simultaneously entered the consciousness of mankind may teach us that there was a great awakening about 1800, uncertain of its reform architecture.

THE SEARCH FOR NEW FORMS

We find in Lequeu's projects other excesses which Blondel had condemned. Overabundance of statuary characterizes the Monument in Honor of Illustrious Men, dated an 2 de la République (fig. 238); columns transformed into bizarre shapes without any "order" appear in the Entrance of the Infernal Grotto (fig. 213); distorted forms on the Pompe à feu⁴⁷ (fig. 239); and the Powder Magazine (fig. 241). In the last two designs the roof lines are transformed into features of great expressiveness: mute matter here speaks of restive elements. The winding stairs of the Beacon (Colonne cochlide) also have become a fanciful, oversized pattern (fig. 222). Lequeu knew how to raise the ordinary to something extraordinary. His capricious metamorphoses of every-day features are far more stimulating than the

insipid works of the Classicists, and his variations on classical themes in artistic value surpass the most "correct" duplications of the unimaginative copyists. His Arch for the Triumphal Road (fig. 217), the Memorial to Victor Moreau (who died in 1813) (fig. 242), and the Arch in Honor of the Brave (fig. 243), have little in common with the classical precedents. The Memorial to the Citizens Who Died for Their Country is not a pedantic imitation of Egyptian or Greek motifs, but a mixture of both with much of Lequeu's own (fig. 244). Likewise, the Belvedere (fig. 246) and the Rural Retreat (fig. 247), both of 1785, show how freely he handled traditional features and how free he felt to change traditional composition. The desire for innovation also speaks out clearly in the Seigneurial Tribunal (fig. 248). The Mausoleum of Voltaire is a polygonal pavilion approached by curiously shaped arcades (fig. 249). The remarks on the drawing are very specific, as was usual with our architect, though there was no need to add the explanatory words *plume* and *globe terrestre* to the neatly delineated symbols on top of the structure. But this was Lequeu: the phantastic, the imaginative artist

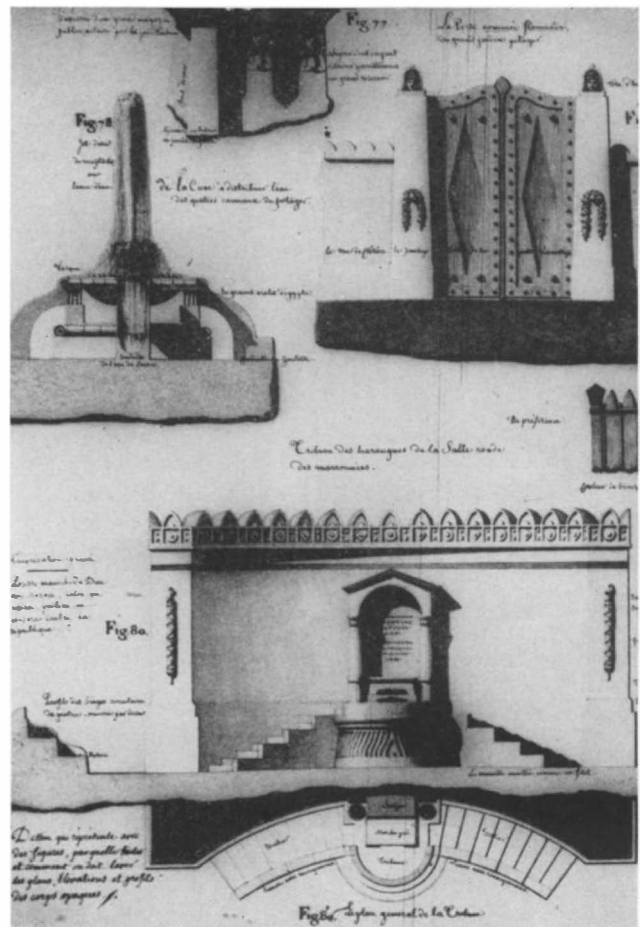


FIG. 266. Porte flamande

FIG. 267. Tribune of the revolutionary orators—
Tribune des harangues.

⁴⁷ Kaufmann, Boullée, *Art Bulletin* 21: 217, fig. 3, 1939.



FIG. 268. Symbolic order.

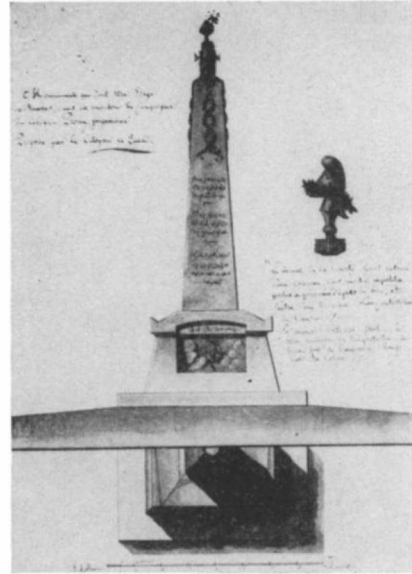


FIG. 270. Obelisk—Monument (pour) la maison de campagne du citoyen Prouy; (crowned by the) Bonnet de la liberté.

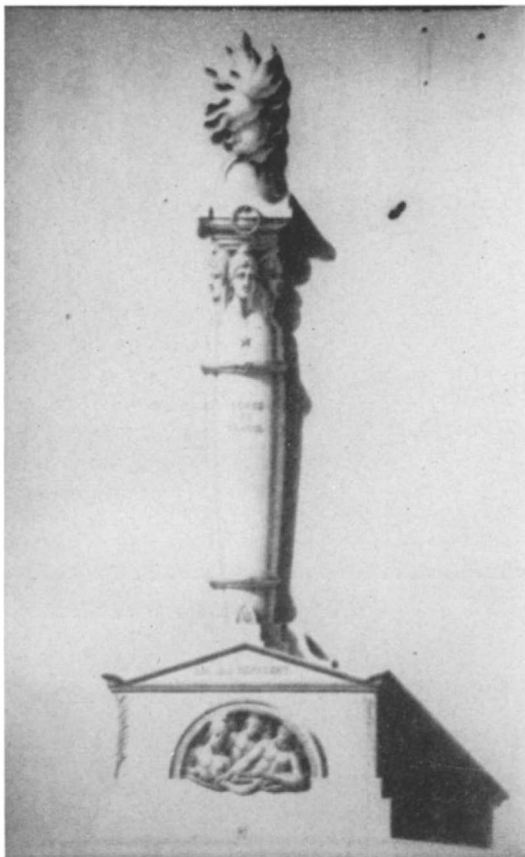


FIG. 269. Monument of deserving citizen—Monument en l'honneur de plusieurs citoyens sur la place de l'arsenal.

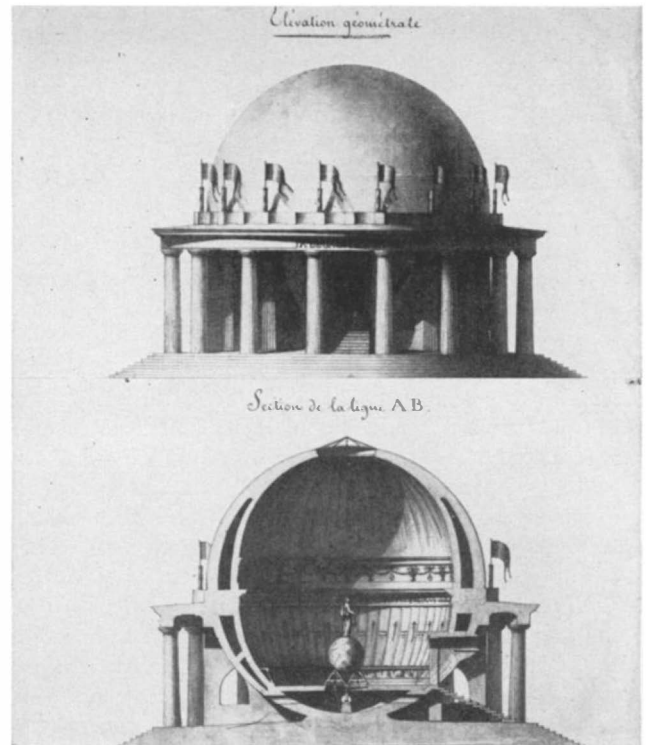


FIG. 271. Temple de l'égalité.

and the pedantic cartographer. Nice inventions are the sun dial and the fountain in a niche on the sheet with the Mausoleum. The Inn of the Enchanted Garden (Guinguette à l'

conventional houses in many regards, but is "normal" all in all architecturally (fig. 250). In this particular case the comparative artistic discipline is the more astonishing as Lequeu's wild and perhaps ever unfulfilled dreams appear to have centered around Bacchus and Venus when he made this drawing. On the lower margin he lists dozens of names of wines to be put on

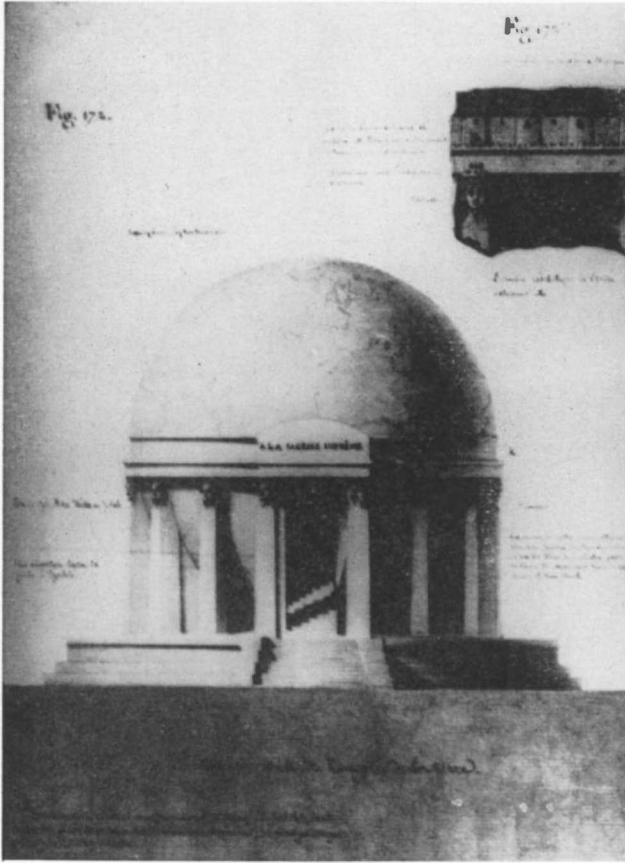


FIG. 272. Temple de la terre.

the signs of the Inn and tells of the delights of the garden by depicting a love scene on the right margin.

TOWARD A NEW COMPOSITION

The drawing which saved his life, *Porte du Paris*, or "Arc du Peuple," presents an assemblage of incongruous elements, or, as Blondel would have said, *un mélange mal assorti* (fig. 251). It is a massive gate upon which the gigantic figure of the Free Nation rests, represented as a Heracles with a Phrygian cap. The house of the Justice of the Peace, dated *an 2 de la République*, shows openings out of proportion with the façade (fig. 252). These two drawings originated from different motives. The former was to make fun of people who had menaced the artist's life, the latter is a serious project; yet their compositional concept is identical. The unruly Lequeu, one of those who disdained the rules handed down by the generations, felt urged to discard the "regular" proportions. If these drawings were stigmatized as insane, then most of our great twentieth-century architecture would be too. The remarkable fact is that the discovery of the immense artistic possibilities in disproportionality goes back to the era of the French Revolution.

The Grotto of Cypris (fig. 253), the Temple of the God of the Armies (fig. 254), the House of the As-

tronomer (fig. 255), the Public Warehouse (fig. 256), and the Tomb of Porsenna (1791) (fig. 257) would have appeared "monstrosities" to Blondel. Most of these designs combine a classical background with unclassical composition. Lequeu took the general layout of Porsenna's Tomb from the description in Pliny's *Natural History* (XXXVI, 19), which he quotes on the margin of his drawing. He was very free in the details. Instead of the five pyramids carrying the metal globe, he presents small cones on truncated pyramids; and instead of the pyramids on top of the globe he adds a canopy on slender columns. The main effect of Lequeu's Tomb is derived from the contrast of the giant globe to the other features. Lequeu may have known original Etruscan work. But if we compare his Tomb with bowls on high stands of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., we notice significant differences.⁴⁸ The Etruscan

⁴⁸ Cf. Martha, Jules, *L'art Etrusque*, figs. 301, 307, etc., Paris, 1889. Giglioli, Giulio Q., *L'arte Etrusca*, pls. XI, XVI, Milan, 1935. Tarchi, Ugo, *L'arte Etrusco-Romana*, pls. XCII, XCIII, XCIV. Richter, Gisela M. A., *Handbook of the Etruscan collection*, figs. 6, 9, N. Y., Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1940. For Etruscan work with plastic heads of animals *cp.* Giglioli, pls. XIII, XLII; Tarchi, pl. C, etc.

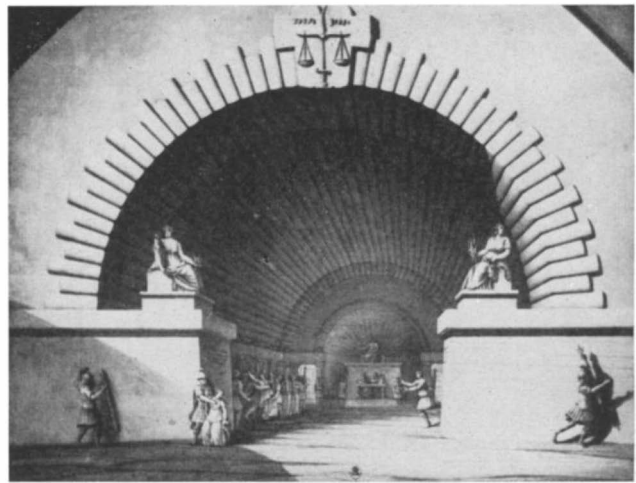


FIG. 273. Court hall—Lieu des assemblées.



FIG. 274. Palais champêtre.

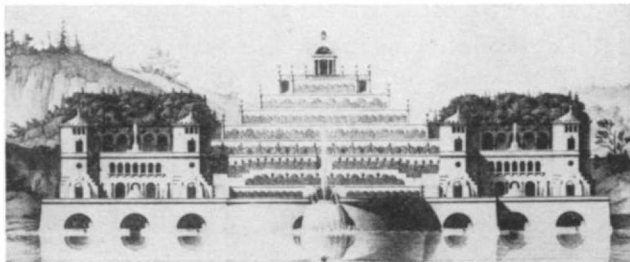


FIG. 275. Island of love—L'île d'amour.

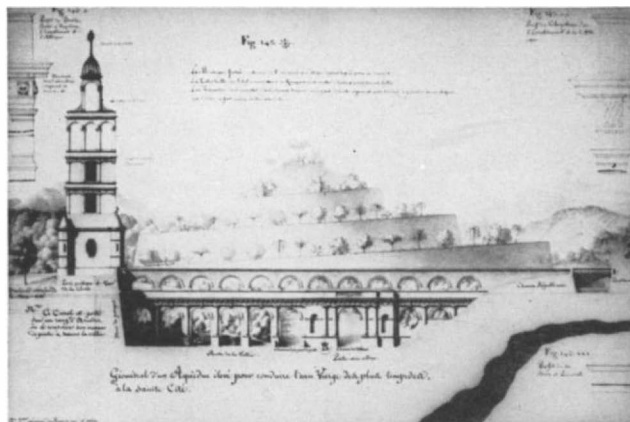


FIG. 276. Holy city—Aqueduc pour conduire l'eau vierge à la Sainte Cité.

products show supple, almost organic shapes with lavish sculptural decoration in harmony with them. Lequeu, however, builds up his Tomb of rather geometric forms. Even if we were to find Etruscan objects more like his design than the ordinary bowls on high stands, we should not be satisfied that we had discovered his true model. We would still have to ask why the architect copied these particular objects and not the "organic" type. His aim now was to create an agglomerate of inorganic shapes rather than a compact plastic body such as his early Monument to Athena. The composition of the Tomb is typical of the new time, as is the fantastic element in it, although it differs widely from the usual Romantic productions.

A further very curious invention is the Entrance to the Deer Forest, decorated with plastic heads of a stag, boars, and hounds (fig. 258). Again early Etruscan objects appear to have been Lequeu's inspiration. In this extravagant composition he is a classicist turning to a primitive stage of ancient art. "Narrative" architecture is carried far in the Cowshed in the form of a cow with a jug on her head and in that antler-shaped gate.

The new compositional principle of independence of the elements appears in the imposing Castle on the Sea (fig. 259). This consists of a low cylindrical substructure, a tall cylindrical house, and a polygonal superstructure forming the base of a square spire. It is a "castellated" building free of pettiness. Here we face

Romanticism in austere grandeur. This work of architecture is the perfect counterpart of the restless waves.

From the point of view of its artistic meaning, the compositional principle of the Tomb of Porsenna and the Castle on the Sea appears again in the apparently totally different Church of the Capuchin Nuns of Marseille of 1788 (fig. 260). This is also an agglomerate of elementary geometrical forms; a spherical dome, a hemicylindrical portico, and flanking prisms, with a halo-like crowning arch.

IN THE STYLE OF THE STAGE

Many of Lequeu's designs might very well serve as theatrical decorations of that higher type which aims at mood and expressiveness rather than at realistic representation. The Temple of Ceres is unobtrusive "Narrative" architecture, the delicate work of a skillful decorator (fig. 261). The Temple to the Unknown God is a cave carved out of rock and framed by a rusticated arch in which a pedimented Ionic portico has found place. In the dim interior of the cave we discern a globe topped by a flickering flame⁴⁹ (fig. 245). The Nymphée is a vaulted, niche-like structure built around a fountain, in the midst of the woods (fig. 263). The Temple of Terpsichore is flanked by platforms on which

⁴⁹ Kaufmann, *Art Bulletin* 21: 225; fig. 17.

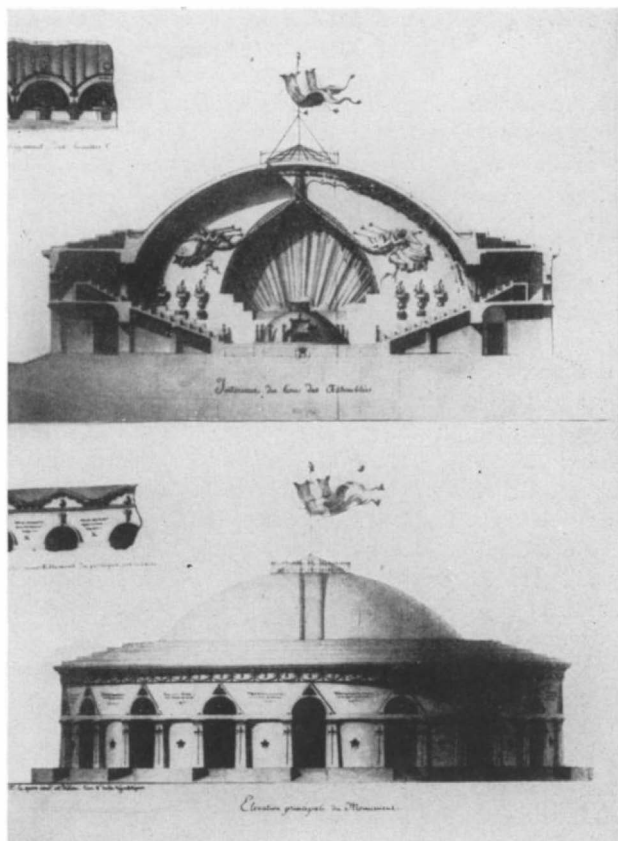


FIG. 277. Monument to the sovereignty of the people.

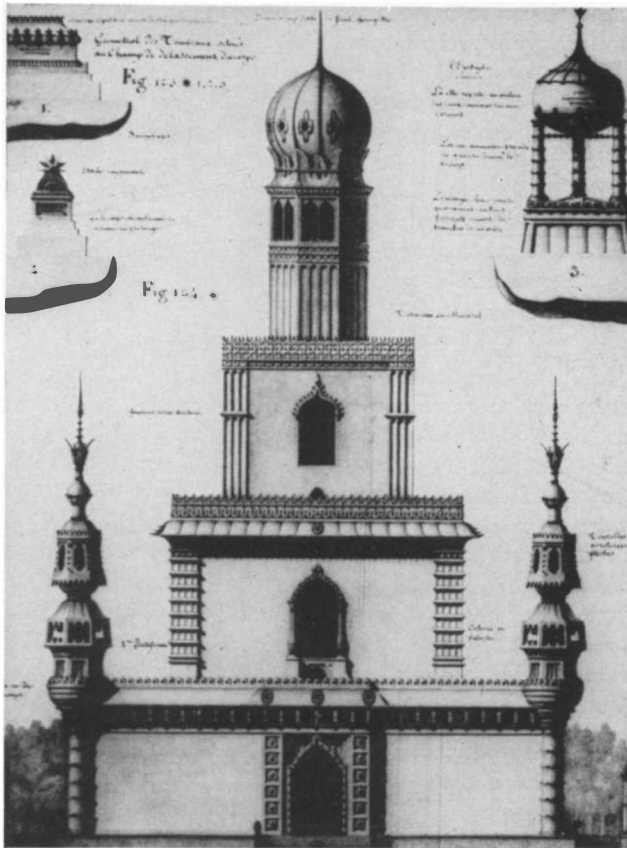


FIG. 278. Pagode Indienne.

dancers perform (fig. 226). The drawing with the Entrance to the Abode of Pluto, conceived in delicate colors, and with dramatic lighting, is in its plainness and monumentality a precursor of scenic decoration of our time, and is of superior artistic quality⁵⁰ (fig. 264). The Porte Flamande, dated *an* 1, serving as the entrance to a garden, belongs, with its severe design, to the noblest inventions by Lequeu (fig. 266). The Interior of the Dairy is transformed into a pattern composed by the jugs and the posts carrying the roof (fig. 240).

Lequeu attempted later to symbolize his era in several designs which, as all productions prompted by non-artistic motives, were quite poor. In the Symbolic Order (*Ordre symbolique de la Salle des Etats d'un Palais National*), dated 1789, the entablature is carried by enchained enemies of the people "*seigneurs aristocrates et leurs complices subalternes*" (fig. 268). The Temple of Wisdom (*Temple de la sagesse*), too, is rather bad literature, than fine arts (fig. 265).

The Monument of Deserving Citizens, planned for the Place de l'Arsenal, unhappily combines classical features and revolutionary symbols (fig. 269). These two designs are *architecture parlante* at its lowest. The Obelisk for the estate of the Citoyen Prouy, conceived by the "Citoyen Le Queu" is somewhat better, for the symbolism here is less obtrusive and the will to artistic form more conspicuous (fig. 270).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 225; fig. 16.

STRUGGLE FOR GRANDEUR

Setting aside eccentricities, theatrical fantasies, and weak symbolisms, Lequeu created many designs of refined simplicity and striking grandeur. The Temple de l'Egalité is composed of a globe emerging from a circular portico (fig. 271). In the interior a small globe topped by a statue stands near the base of the larger one. Its tiny mass is effectively contrasted to the immense void. This design was devised in the year II of the Revolution to glorify a revolutionary ideal. It is a veritable product of the stormy time, not confused or bizarre, but simple and grand. The equally dignified Temple de la Terre is similar in shape and artistic qualities⁵¹ (fig. 272). It bears above its entrance the legend *A la Sagesse Suprême*. Two notes on the verso manifest how tenaciously Lequeu strove for success and how easily he changed his political views. When he exhibited it in the year II, he saw in it a means "pour rétablir . . . l'éternelle égalité." Much later he offered the design to the Minister of the Interior as a Chapel of St. Louis in the Père Lachaise cemetery, "parce qu'il est véritablement inutile s'accommoderont jamais avec leurs semblables." The

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 212; fig. 2.

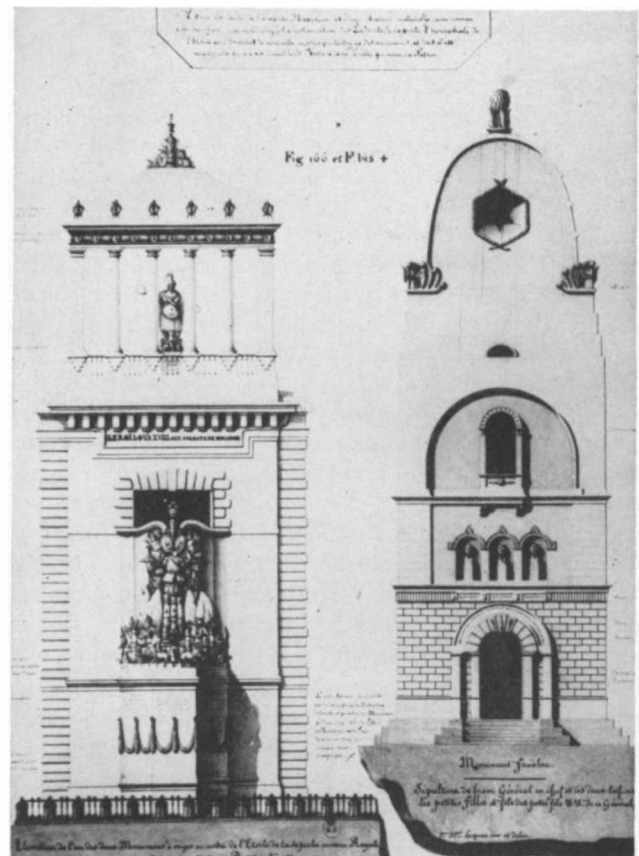


FIG. 279. Soldier's Memorial—Monument à ériger au centre de l'Etoile de la superbe avenue Royale (qui) conduit au Pont de Neuilly.

FIG. 280. Funeral Monument—Sépulture du brave général.

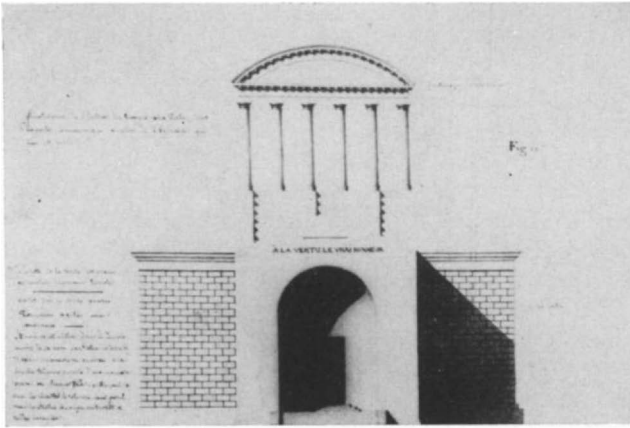


FIG. 281. Temple of Virtue—Temple à la Vertu.

feeling of grandeur which strikes us in the spherical forms of the two temples shows with still greater intensity in a mighty vaulted Court Hall, dated *an* 3 de la République (fig. 273), which calls to mind the interior of Boullée's Library.⁵² Recalling the trivial symbols of many works about 1800 we become aware of Lequeu's superior ability to express the significance of the structure by strictly architectural means.

The elementary forms have in themselves the quality of grandeur which agreed so well with the intentions of the revolutionary architects. Often the artists present the impressive basic forms with a minimum of decoration. The pure, primitive shapes suffice to sublimate both "great" structures like the Castle on the Sea and humble utilitarian buildings like the Ice House (fig. 262). The monumentality of all these designs may well have been derived from the same sense for greatness which inspired many of the leaders of the French Revolution. The architects, too, wished to build in a new and grand manner. The Tribune of the Revolutionary Orators (Tribune des harangues), dated *an* 1, is great and plain with reticently applied classical features (267). The contrast of the boldly advancing tribune and the curved wall behind it is grand. On the margin we read the revolutionary curse, to be engraved on the wall of the canopy in the center: "Périsse maudit de Dieu avec sa race, celui qui agira, parlera ou pensera contre la république." I do not know whether these strong words were originally those of the then revolutionary architect, or whether he just found them suitable.

Grandeur and fantastic beauty mark several large projects. One of these architectural dreams is called Palais champêtre (fig. 274). Trees and trellis clad with foliage mitigate the sternness of the stonework, similar to Boullée's thought to plant trees on the Cenotaph of Newton.⁵³ A pile of primordial scale is the Tomb Monument near Voorhout (Sépulture des plus Illustres et des plus Savants Hommes près Voorhout)⁵⁴ (fig.

237). This is built up by receding cylinders and a massive conical dome topped by a temple. Tall flanking obelisks and cypresses planted on the terraces add dramatic accents. According to a note on the back of this drawing, Lequeu submitted it to the Président des Etats Généraux . . . des Pays-Bas in 1785.

The Island of Love is another great dream of the architect-poet (fig. 275). Stepped terraces crowned by a temple are flanked by lower houses. In the extraordinary variety of architectural features and in the marginal description of the fountains and the flowers, the birds and the beasts of the park, we recognize Lequeu's exuberant fantasy which distinguishes him from the austerity and the restraint of Boullée and Ledoux. Somewhat morbid and perhaps even somewhat infantile, he appears in this house from fairy-land almost like one of the common-run Romanticists. Yet we must give him credit for his great inventiveness and his comparative independence from his models. The whole is strictly symmetrical, whereas asymmetry is stressed in two other designs. The one is the aqueduct with the Sainte Cité in the background⁵⁵ (fig. 276); its tower to the left has no counterpart to the right. The other is the Rendez-vous de Bellevue (fig. 235), the most extraordinary of Lequeu's inventions. The deep unrest of the period which so ardently strove to overcome the old and to attain the new becomes manifest in this fantasia. It is

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 225; fig. 15. Placed at the beginning of the road to the Holy City, the tower seems to the onlooker to be counterbalanced merely by the distant hills.

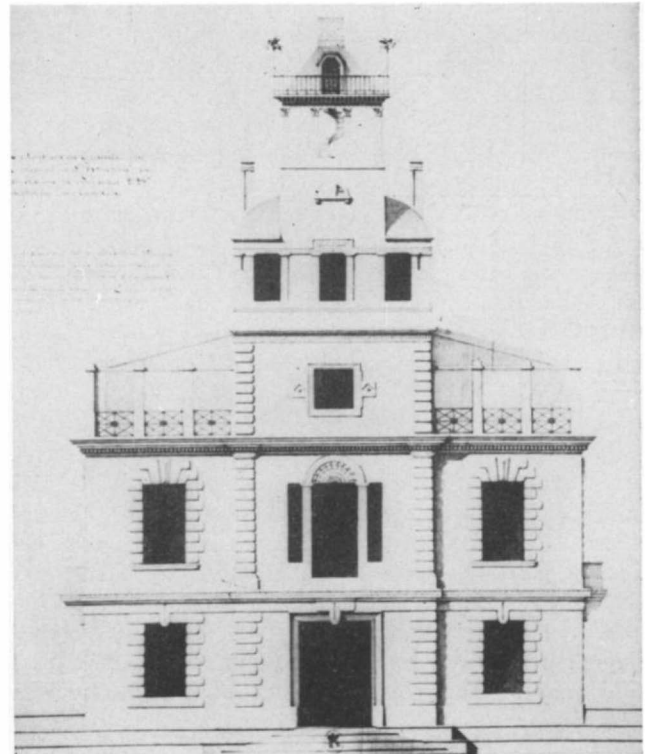


FIG. 282. Casino—Casin à partie.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 221; fig. 11.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 212; fig. 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 226; fig. 20.

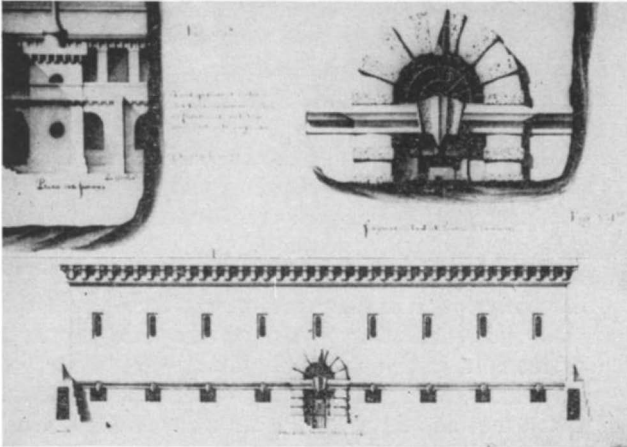


FIG. 283. Ecclesiastical Prison—*Prison de la juridiction des choses spirituelles et temporelles.*

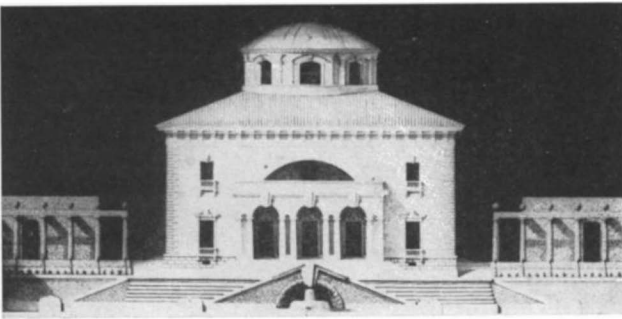


FIG. 284. Pavillon Romain.

hardly inferior in artistic quality to the Castle on the Sea, but unlike the latter, it is asymmetrical. Thus a further characteristic of the conventional art has been given up, and now contrasts both in size and shape mean more than balance. The simultaneous appearance of forms of diversified origin is also a significant symptom. A Greek temple on top of an attached tower, a *donjon* carrying ing door, and plain frameless windows appear side by side. A mixture of incoherent tures, the Rendez-vous struggled for innovation, and again and again turned to the past, haunted by weird dreams.

WHEN THE TEMPEST STILLS

Lequeu's post-revolutionary phase reveals that there was a road from fantastic inventions to a more realistic but nonetheless, artistic architecture. The circular monument to the Sovereignty of the People, dated *an I de la République* presents all the beauty of elementary shapes (fig. 277). The Indian Pagoda is one of Lequeu's most advanced compositions (fig. 278). Although it seems to be just one of the Romantic excursions into far-away countries, it already foreshadows the

stepped houses of the remote future. On the way to this future stand two late designs: The Soldiers' Memorial (fig. 279), bearing the name of Louis XVIII, and the Funeral Monument (fig. 280). In these designs the architect once more availed himself of various features of the past. Although they are still somewhat restless, they have much of that severity which architecture in our own time was to reach after long and strenuous efforts. The concept of unrelated blocks appears also in the Terrace on the River (fig. 219) and the Temple of Virtue (fig. 281). The Casino (fig. 282) is a terrace building

far cry from the plasticity of the Athena Monument, one of his earliest inventions. The Ecclesiastical Prison is of utmost sobriety (fig. 283). The date MCCCC on the roof should certainly read MDCCC. There is less tension here and less vigor than in Ledoux' Prison of Aix. Architecture is beginning to calm down. The strong portal with the oversized keystones calls to mind similar forms on Ledoux' *barrières*. The Roman Pavilion is an instance of the return to the Renaissance which became characteristic of the nineteenth century (fig. 284). This is

From the ultimate stage of the Baroque with its marked exaggeration of forms and its affections; from classicism and exoticism, Lequeu passed to the preternatural. Anticipating the twentieth century, Boullée and Ledoux restored the elementary forms to their rightful place in architecture. Moreover, Ledoux showed his progressiveness in his attempts to find a new order of the elements. Lequeu was destined to introduce into building the emotional and the irrational in a higher degree than the two older artists. His weird fantasies reveal much of his era to one who is interested in the velopment of artistic ideas rather than in practical improvement.

looked back to remote times and remote regions, he was nonetheless a forerunner of a significant current in the early twentieth century. Here and there similar unrest and similar incertitude inspired strange performances; here and there expressiveness counted more than formality; then, as now, great and dignified works emerged from the turmoil. It is not my intention to imply any direct connection between 1800 and 1900; I am concerned only with the continuity of ideas.

Le Geay and Lequeu, who died in the dark, Boullée and Ledoux, who ended in doubt, all were seers of far-away goals. None left examples for easy imitation. But their vision most certainly ushered in that "new day" which Ledoux so hopefully awaited.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Ledoux, *Architecture*, 86. Cf. the motto of this book, and the quotations pt. I, note 399, pt. II, note 359. About the spreading of the new architectural concepts to Germany *cp.* the elucidating article of Nikolaus Pevsner, "Schinkel," *Jour. Roy Inst. Brit. Arch.* 59: 89-96, Jan. 1952.

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