

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: The Intersection Between Nationalism and Religion:
The Burghers of Calais of Auguste Rodin in the
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As a republican, Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) conveyed political ideology in his public sculpture, but due to his interest in religion and spirituality, his interpretations differed from contemporary artists. He grafted national myths and symbols onto Catholicism and its rituals to facilitate the sacralization of the Republic. Yet, the tension between Catholicism and republicanism in his work persisted because of his religiosity and his adherence to secularism. Rodin's conflict and compromise between the two fields were not only his personal dilemma, but also that of the Third Republic. This dissertation focuses on how Rodin internalized republican ideology in his public sculpture, and how he appropriated Catholic ritual to promote political messages.

In spite of the republican government's constant struggle to separate from Catholic domination, Catholicism was so deeply imbedded in French culture, Rodin recognized this complex paradigm which he co-opted to construct an ideological

matrix for his public work. Aware of the powerful social role of religion, the First Republic tried to create a new religion based on deistic tradition, *The Cult of Supreme Being*, to unite all French people who were severely divided by factions, languages, and regionalism. This precedent tradition further proved the importance of religion's social reach in constructing national sentiment.

Based on research in Rodin museums in Paris and Meudon in 2004 and 2007, this study examines how Rodin merged Catholic practices and contemporary social ideologies into the fiber of nationalist identity that served to reconcile political oppositions in France and to heal wounded civic pride after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. Similar to the public sphere proposed by Jürgen Habermas, Rodin's public sculpture suggests ideal democratic communicative field. *The Burghers of Calais* is a prime example of the republican ideal of heroic martyrdom. At the same time, its overall form, figural arrangement, and poignant expressions invoke the Catholic practice of pilgrimage, drawing the audience into the scene's emotional landscape. This interpretation of *The Burghers of Calais* as a religious and psychological catharsis paves the way for public sculpture to function as a healing tool to rebuild personal and national subjectivity.

THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN NATIONALISM AND RELIGION:

THE BURGHERS OF CALAIS OF AUGUSTE RODIN

IN THE FRENCH THIRD REPUBLIC

By

Jung-Sil Lee

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For Jesus Christ, My Lord

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Catholicism and Republicanism

Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) is a sculptor well known for his taciturn, quiet, and uncompromising character.¹ He is less well known as a devout Catholic and fervent republican, which were two distinct opposing streams in nineteenth-century France. Under the anticlerical Third Republic regime, Rodin worked within a republican secular ideology. Yet some of Rodin's work reveals the influence of Catholicism that persisted in his personal spirituality throughout his career. At the same time, the Republic attempted to suppress Catholicism from the minds and hearts of the French people. Accordingly—and paradoxically—Rodin rejected Catholicism in favor of republican practice and ideology. Given this contradiction, the effort to weave these two threads together should be made by examining Rodin's personal beliefs and practices in relation to political and religious currents at the national level.

Despite the Republic's condemnation of Catholicism, the government nevertheless embraced a Catholic revival throughout France to create a national spirit that would unify French people. To this end, the French Republic underwent the major

¹ Rodin's secretary, Rainer Maria Rilke, had a close connection with Rodin. As Rilke states, "Rodin had few friends and even fewer he could trust. Sheltered behind the efforts that sustained him, the work continued to grow, awaiting its time." Rainer Maria Rilke, *Auguste Rodin*, trans. Daniel Slager (New York: Archipelago Books, 2004), 37.

task of restoring Catholic medievalism as part of its efforts to generate an ideology of republican nationalism. Rodin worked to support this national political agenda while trying to reconcile it with his own spirituality in his personal life and work.

Therefore, this dissertation examines the intersection of Catholicism and republican patriotism in Rodin's career from the early years of the Third Republic to his death (1870 – 1917). Contrary to the common assumption that the secular ideology of the republic eradicated Catholic religious sentiments in public art, this study reveals that Rodin used Catholicism as a template for his fervent nationalism in some of his most significant public sculptures, notably *The Burghers of Calais* (fig. 1).² *The Burghers of Calais* is the monument dedicated to the city fathers of Calais who offered their lives to save the city from the English siege in 1347.³ According to the fourteenth-century *Chronicles of Jean Frossart*, King Edward III of England laid siege to the French town of Calais. After eleven months of suffering, the six burghers of Calais decided to offer themselves as hostages in exchange for the freedom of their city. Yet, the pregnant Queen Philippa pleaded to King Edward III to save their lives, believing that their deaths would be a bad omen for her unborn child.⁴

² The secular government had trouble with the ideological synthesis after the denial of Catholicism. For more on the decline of Christian belief and the cult of science, social religion, occult and neo-pagan religions, see Donald Geoffrey Charlton, *Secular Religions in France 1815-1870* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff, *Secular Ritual* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp, 1977).

³ I will refer to *The Burghers of Calais* as *The Burghers*.

⁴ The story and the origin of *The Burghers* will be discussed in detail at the chapter VI. B and the

The Third Republic focused on the story of *The Burghers* because of its patriotic theme and civic heroism. The narrative also conveys the importance of how unselfish sacrifices made by a few can save many. It is an instruction with a religious underpinning: the sacrifice of martyrs recalls the sacrifice of Jesus for humankind. The story relates to the Christian concepts of clemency, redemption, and even resurrection, since they were eventually saved. By sacralizing the figures within the work, its installation, and its physical and emotional relation to the audience, Rodin cleverly embraced religious transcendent meaning in his political work. This study will show how and why Rodin actively included Catholic rituals and practices in his work to propagate the republican ideology. Religious reception is not simply replaced by secular nationalism in his work. Rather, religion and nationalism overlapped and were creatively interwoven to serve a new political culture of the Third Republic.

Although the successive republican governments in nineteenth-century France discouraged artists to use Christian iconography in their art, many of them included and explored such themes for political purposes.⁵ Various republican artists before Rodin used religious iconography and rituals in their work. This study concentrates on

content of “The Siège of Calais in *The Chronicles* of Jean Froissart translated in English will be added in the appendix A.

⁵ James Leith, “On the Religiosity of the French Revolution,” in *Culture and Revolution: Cultural Ramifications of the French Revolution*, ed. George Levitine (College Park: University of Maryland, 1989). Leith asserts that “to comprehend the full depth of these emotions (of the French Revolution) it is useful to compare them to religious passions,” 171.

the precedent set by the First Republic, where I will focus on its secular rituals and works of Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825), and on the Third Republic, in which Rodin worked.

The republican artist appropriated many themes and images from Catholicism. One of these themes that this dissertation considers is the sacrificed martyr. The martyr represented an ideal republican leader, and this representation was recurrent during republican art production in the nineteenth century. It drew my attention and made me consider why republican artists appropriated Catholic iconography to propagandize republican leaders and political ideologies in the public sphere.

Rodin rarely tapped into explicit religious imagery; rather, his innovations lay in his subtle incorporation of Catholic ritual in relation to the public reception of his art. This was partly due to the fact that the Third Republic's complicated and contradictory political situation precluded specific representations of Christian themes. Nevertheless, Rodin used the heritage and practices of Catholicism to instill his public sculpture with a sense of the sacred and borrowed from its rituals to prompt similar participatory responses from his viewers.

Catholicism provided a conceptual framework for channeling Rodin's nationalism. Because Catholicism was deeply imbedded in French culture, Rodin saw in its traditions a paradigm that he could co-opt to construct an ideological matrix for

his public work. He transformed religious sentiments and practices into the tools of a nationalist identity that served to reconcile political oppositions in France and to heal wounded civic pride after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

Rodin's correspondence and interviews reveal the continuing impact of Catholic thought on his personal spirituality and ideas of national identity. He had been indoctrinated from infancy with the teachings of Catholicism. The sculptor acknowledged his religious views in his book *Cathedrals of France*, published in 1914, wherein he extolled Gothic Catholicism and the French "esprit" simultaneously.⁶ In the spirit of his own pilgrimage to the great Gothic cathedrals, he promoted the ritual practice of pilgrimage among the French as a means of strengthening their national identities.⁷ This connection between pilgrimage and nationalism has its roots in the First Republic, which fostered quasi religious patriotic events, such as *The Festival of the Federation*, examined in chapter III. Ritualized national pilgrimage—whether political or religious—helped French people to unite as one nation and promote their strong spiritual heritage.

⁶ Auguste Rodin, *Cathedrals of France*, trans. Elisabeth Chase Geissbuhler (Redding Ridge, CT: Black Swan Books Ltd.). "The Cathedral is a synthesis of our country. I repeat: the rocks, forests, gardens, northern sun, all these are condensed in this gigantic body. All of our France is in our cathedrals, just as all of Greece is summarized in the Parthenon," 14.

⁷ Rodin expressed his affection for Cathedrals in his book: "In my pilgrimages I have had but few companions. Those I had were neither architects, sculptors, poets, priests, nor men of State, but foreigners who were verifying the statements of Baedeker. Oh, why do you not recognize your true advantages? Why do you despise your good fortune? Come let us study! Come and receive true life from those who are no more, but who have left us such magnificent testimony of their souls!" *ibid.*, 19.

Method: Catholic Themes and Republican Virtues

This dissertation mainly focuses on *The Burghers*, and how Rodin developed a language of civic heroism out of religious precedents. He accomplished this even though the style of *The Burghers* was atypical and controversial due to the work's unidealized and expressive form and low placement in relation to the viewer. In modeling these medieval patriots, the artist drew on Catholic iconographies and practices such as martyrs and pilgrimage.⁸ The viewer identifies with *The Burghers* through the sculpture's underlying referents to the Christian medieval past and to the republican present. During this identification the viewers would transform their identities in a positive way, and to prove this, three theories will be discussed: Jürgen Habermas's public sphere; Victor Turner's liminal space; and Colin Turnbull's transformation.

By portraying *The Burghers* as equally important but individualized figures, Rodin transformed the sculpture into a democratic exemplum. He presented *The Burghers* as authentic and ordinary people, far from the grandiose heroic figures that the Calais commissioners expected from him. In so doing, Rodin created an

⁸ Although Rodin's *The Burghers* were not Christian theme, the practice of identifying political martyrs with Christian martyrs was pervasive at the time. Neil McWilliam notes that the Third Republic engaged in this practice with monumental sculpture: "...factions celebrated martyrs whom they claimed as spiritual mentors cruelly sacrificed by their opponents' forebears," "Monument, Martyrdom, and the Politics of Religion in the French Third Republic," *The Art Bulletin* 77 (June 1995): 186.

expressive rendering that revealed a profound sense of human vulnerability. This modest expression of personal sentiment was one of the main virtues of nineteenth-century republican philosophy, a value that Rodin tried to capture. Since the expression of personal convictions and sentiments was strictly limited during the monarchy, they became prime privileges during the republican era.

In relation to the freedom of personal expression, German philosopher Jürgen Habermas defined the “public sphere” of a democratic society as the field where the individual converses freely for the public will. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas explored the ideal public sphere in the practice of the republican government in Western Europe. According to him, the public sphere is “made up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state.”⁹ In other words, the participation of private individuals makes up the public sphere. This public sphere is required to “legitimate authority in any functioning democracy.”¹⁰

By applying Habermas’s model of the public sphere to Rodin’s public sculptures, I explore the work’s supposed ideal sphere, where private individuals

⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991), 176.

¹⁰ Paul Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 18.

participate to create the public sphere. I posit the work as a manifestation of the nineteenth century's redefinition of the public sphere because it emphasizes every individual's specific expression of sentiment as much as the common will. In Rodin's work, private emotional responses of the individual are elevated into a collective patriotism that becomes tantamount to the sacred.¹¹

Rodin eliminated the distance between the individual figure and the public subject, thereby inviting the audience into the sculpture's physical and spiritual space. Rodin intended to place the work directly on the ground so that his viewers could approach the figures at eye level, walk around them, and even touch them, which was contrary to contemporary sculptural form. The contemporaneous public sculpture typically isolated the subject from the viewer, physically and emotionally. Rodin was obviously thinking of public reception from the outset. This consideration is significant because the way in which a viewer interacts with the sculpture not only parallels but also recreates the ritual movement of pilgrimage.¹² In the same way that the individual burgher partakes of a group experience that heightens the intensity

¹¹ Habermas argues that the private realm no longer opposes the public realm; instead, it is one of the main components of the public realm in nineteenth-century Europe. Furthermore, he develops a more inclusive notion of *intersubjectivity* as an alternative to a limited, solitary, and enclosed self to construct a better society. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 390.

¹² Evan M. Zuesse defines ritual as "those conscious and voluntary, repetitious and stylized symbolic bodily actions that are centered on cosmic structures and/or sacred presences," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company; London: Collier Macmillan Publishers), 12 and 405.

beyond what each might feel in isolation, the audience participates in a group conversation, creating a sense of shared patriotism. Rodin intended his work to evoke an emotional and intellectual response among the viewers and thus build community solidarity by intersecting two major fields of the time: religion and nationalism.

Audience appreciation of this work prompted a quasi-sacred reaction among the French public. The audience would perform the circumambulation of the figures, interacting with them emotionally and physically. The sacred in this case refers not to a supernatural entity, but rather to people's emotionally charged interdependence and their societal arrangements to produce and maintain public solidarity.¹³ Victor Turner argued that ritual serves to create a sense of community among its participants, reinforcing those "communitarian values" which hold people together.¹⁴ The sculpture by Rodin provides a ritualized site where the participants create a sense of community and a positive self-identity.

Along with the physical and, above all, sensual understanding of *The Burghers*, Rodin intended that his observer's emotional reactions would lead to psychological

¹³ David Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 61-62. As Kertzer states, "It is by uttering the same cry, pronouncing the same word, or performing the same gesture in regard to some object that they become and feel themselves to be a unison."

¹⁴ Turner suggests that life in the structural realm is full of challenges and difficulties. He points out that when people experience conflict, conflict can affirm or test the hierarchical order of communities. As this crisis of social order escalates, people try to make the situation better by using ritual to bring the community together again. Ritual creates a unified "us." This social drama is played out again and again. Victor Turner, "Are There Universals of Performance in Myth, Ritual and Drama?" in *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*, ed. Richard Schechner and Willa Appel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 8-18.

self-transformation. I refer to this psychological shift as *liminal*, a term borrowed from Victor Turner and Colin Turnbull.¹⁵ To describe the state of being as neither this nor that, in the case of *The Burghers*, liminality refers to a state that is no longer strictly part of the audience, but one that mingles subliminally with the honored past heroes. Liminality also refers to the ambiguity of the ritual, where everyday reality is transformed into a symbolic realm, which thereafter affects the individuals' lived reality. In this way liminality acts as a catalyst for one's ensuing positive identity and ultimately changes one's social surroundings.

To understand better liminality in relation to *The Burghers*, I apply Turnbull's concept of "transformation," which explains how a subject rebuilds his or her identity through experiencing liminality, achieved through the appreciation of the work.

Turnbull asserts that "the transformation in a liminal state is to be experienced by direct, immediate and total involvement of the participant, rather than studied by an intellectual and conscious mind."¹⁶ It is only achieved at the moment that "the subjectivity and emotional involvement are no longer incompatible with objectivity and reason."¹⁷ Using his theory, I interpret the public's appreciation of the work and

¹⁵ Liminality means an "in-betweeness." Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Colin Turnbull, "Liminality: a Synthesis of Subjective and Objective Experience," in *By Means of Performance*, *ibid.* Turnbull fully developed the concept of liminality, a term coined by Victor Turner in *Ritual to Theatre: the Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publication, 1982).

¹⁶ Turnbull, 50-81.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

ceremony for the monument's unveiling as a rite of passage, a transformation from one state to another.

In Rodin's monument, political meaning is infused with Christian ritual so subtly that any political intention is subliminal—both on Rodin's behalf and that of the audience. At first glance, it is hard to relate Rodin's sculpture with a specific political ideology. Yet such an indistinctness of meaning is a consequence of Rodin's ambiguous attitude. Rodin did not replace religion with republicanism as an iconoclastic move; rather, he instilled the work with such a strong religious aura and ritualistic interactivity that the audience could receive the work's political meaning subliminally.

Rodin sought the social benefits that religious ritual may offer. As Mircea Eliade points out, all religious ritual has enormous social value: "Society can enhance itself by fusing transcendental symbolisms with its own norms, and ritual can be quite functional in overcoming tensions and divisions in the community."¹⁸ The Third Republic desperately needed this coalition, and for this purpose, Rodin utilized Christianity and its rituals, joining them to the nation's myths and symbols. Finally,

¹⁸ Mircea Eliade, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Religion* 12 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 412; Émile Durkheim also emphasized the social aspect of ritual in his book *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1965). However, some scholars such as Maurice Bloch do not agree with an empowering view of ritual, suggesting that ritual is highly formulized, repetitive, and constructed, "a kind of tunnel into which one plunges, and where, since there is no possibility of turning either to right or left, the only thing to do is follow" See *Ritual, History and Power: Selected Papers in Anthropology* (London: Athlone, 1989), 42.

I will demonstrate how the ritualization of *The Burghers* enabled the public to appropriate, modify, and reshape national values and identities. Rodin grafted the nation's myths and symbols onto Catholicism and its rituals to facilitate the sacralization of the Republic.

Previous Studies

Rodin scholarship can be roughly divided into three categories. The first group emphasizes the modernist (and anti-modernist) or formalist aspect of his work. The second group deals with iconography and specific subject matter, while the third group takes a socio-political and contextual approach. The last category currently has been annexed to theories and fields beyond art history. My study belongs to this third category, although it will also include analyses of form and iconography.

Claire Christian Black's dissertation, "Rodin, Michelangelo, and the Discourse of Modernity: A Study of Rodin Criticism" (1998) falls into the first group.¹⁹ Black examines the critical role of the image of Michelangelo in the early criticism of Auguste Rodin and repositions him as an anti-modernist sculptor. In a similar vein, Daniel Gene's "August Rodin's Carved Sculpture" (1993) explores Rodin's

¹⁹ Claire Christian Black, "Rodin, Michelangelo, and the Discourse of Modernity: A Study of Rodin Criticism" (PhD diss., Virginia Commonwealth University, 1998).

ideological and aesthetic preferences for marble and the indirect carving technique.²⁰

Jane R. Becker's "'Only One art': The Intersection of Painting and Sculpture in the Work of Medardo Rosso, Auguste Rodin, and Eugène Carrière, 1884-1906" (1998) addresses an affinity for molten forms, whether in a painted *sfumato* style, or in a sculpted *non-finito* aesthetic.²¹ By emphasizing the atmosphere, the author stresses, the three artists created a continuum of space and form that ignored the boundaries of each realm.

The second category of Rodin scholarship is the iconographic study of his works. Aida Audh's dissertation, "Rodin's *The Gates of Hell* and Dante's 'Divine Comedy': An iconographic Study" (2002) details *The Gates of Hell* in reference to Dante's text.²² "The Portraiture of Auguste Rodin" (1985) by Marion Jean Hare shows Rodin's artistic sources and choices in modeling portraits. He asserts that Rodin approached his portraits with a preconceived ideal, one that combined some Neo-classical precepts, contemporary aesthetic standards, his own personal preferences, and ideas drawn from works by Michelangelo.²³ Rosalyn Frankel

Jamison's dissertation, "Rodin and Hugo: The Nineteenth-Century Theme of Genius

²⁰ Daniel Gene Rosenfeld, "August Rodin's Carved Sculpture" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1993).

²¹ Jane R. Becker, "'Only One Art: The Interaction of Painting and Sculpture in the Work of Medardo Rosso, August Rodin, and Eugene Carriere, 1884-1906" (PhD diss., New York University, 1998).

²² Aida Audh, "Rodin's *The Gate of Hell* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*': An Iconographic Study" (PhD diss., The University of Iowa, 2002).

²³ Marion Jean Hare, "The Portraiture of Auguste Rodin" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1985).

in ‘The Gates’ and Related Works” (1986) also addresses the theme of creative genius both for Rodin and Hugo. This study demonstrates that Hugo’s thematic influence on many aspects of *The Gates* and concludes that Rodin selectively adapted Hugo’s most universal symbols.²⁴

The third category examines the socio-political context of Rodin’s work. The pioneering scholar in this field is Ruth Butler Mirolli, whose 1966 dissertation, “The Early Work of Rodin and Its Background,” studies his art in the Second Republic and the Third Empire.²⁵ She insists that in order to understand the full dimension of Rodin’s works, we must understand their social and historical context. Later, Butler wrote an article entitled “Nationalism, a New Seriousness, and Rodin: Some Thoughts about French Sculpture in the 1870s,” dealing with the context of French nationalism after the Franco-Prussian war.²⁶ This specific article inspired my interest in French nationalism in relation to Rodin’s public sculpture. The way in which she treats various political backgrounds around the work helped me form my own interdisciplinary approach to Rodin’s work.

²⁴ For example, analogous to Hugo’s *La Légende des Siècles*, *The Gates* constitute Rodin’s epic synthesis of religious, mythic, and personal symbolism. Rosalyn Frankel Jamison, “Rodin and Hugo: The Nineteenth-Century Theme of Genius in ‘The Gates’ and Related Works” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1986).

²⁵ Ruth Mirolli Butler, “The Early Work of Rodin and Its Background” (PhD diss., New York University, 1966).

²⁶ Ruth Butler, “Nationalism, a New Seriousness, and Rodin: Some Thoughts about French Sculpture in the 1870s,” in *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, Acts of the Twenty-fourth International Congress of Art History, Bologna, 1979.

Jane Mayo Roos's 1981 dissertation, "Rodin, Hugo, and The Pantheon: Art and Politics in the Third Republic," argues how much the complex political context affected the Pantheon and its decorations.²⁷ The Pantheon was alternately re-consecrated and re-secularized, according to the prevailing government's attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church. After Victor Hugo died in 1885, the building became a Pantheon for the final time. The Third Republic added two projects to the preexisting decoration; both programs clearly expressed a political point of view. The author discusses historical, artistic, and political factors that worked against the realization of monuments from Rodin, Falguière, and Dalou. Roos also contributed an article titled, "Steichen's Choice," to the exhibition catalogue *Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo* (1998).²⁸ Here she considers the political, social, and cultural background of Rodin's works, specifically highlighting Hugo's monuments.

Anne Norinne Bates's "The Sociology of Auguste Rodin" (1993) engages a cultural sociological approach to question how art comes to be valued. Her dissertation employs the perspective of social theorists such as Georg Simmel, who considers art as a social form. Bates points out that Simmel views art as a dynamic of culture, which also involves an interpretive analysis of the historical events, social

²⁷ Jane Mayo Roos, "Rodin, Hugo, and the Pantheon: Art and Politics in the Third Republic" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1981).

²⁸ Jane Mayo Roos, 'Steichen's Choice,' *Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo*, exhibition catalogue organized by the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation (London: Merrell Hoberton, 1998).

relations, and artifacts relating to Rodin. By applying Simmel's concept, she makes a substantial contribution to sociological theory. The emphasis on the necessity and importance of both a historical and ahistorical interpretation of Rodin's work is valuable to those who try to evaluate art work as a social and political product.

The work that most informs my study is Mary Jo McNamara's "Rodin's *The Burghers of Calais*" (1983).²⁹ McNamara attempts to find more precise answers concerning the remaining questions around *The Burghers* with regard to the commission, the studies of the individual figures, the composition, and the contemporary critics. After the introductory chapters that explain the forms and composition, she addresses the historical and political background, and sources for the monument. Relying on the archives of the Rodin Museum, McNamara examines several aspects of nationalism and religion of *The Burghers*, although she did not directly address the issues with these terms. In the first chapter she notes that the mystical fervor formerly associated with religion was now attached to nationalism, citing the poet Paul Déroulède: "Patriotism, which is also a religion, has its symbols and its rites, as it has its apostles and its martyrs."³⁰ She agrees with Albert Elsen's comparison of *The Burghers* to the image of suffering in a sixteenth-century head of

²⁹ Mary Jo McNamara, "Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1983).

³⁰ "Le Drapeau" July 21, 1883, in Paul Deroulede, *Le Livre de la ligue des patriotes*, ed. Henri Dloncle (Paris: Bureaux de la Ligue et du Drapeau, 1887), 52-53; McNamara, "Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*," 39.

Christ as the Man of Sorrows.³¹ She examines how the patriots were viewed as Christian martyrs, though she did not focus on how this overlap could intensify French nationalism, emotionally and spiritually.

Although contemporary critics noted that *The Burghers* held religious overtones, McNamara did not examine further the conceptual framework of nineteenth-century French religiosity and its relationship with republicanism: Why and how could “true martyrs” be associated with “civic heroism”? Specifically, under the apparent anticlerical French Third Republic, how could this overt connection between religion and nationalism be performed publicly? Catholic iconography was not simply replaced by secular nationalism; rather, Catholicism and republicanism were interwoven to create a new ideology. McNamara has neither approached *The Burghers* from the perspective of French nationalism nor in the light of Catholicism, much less their relationship in the sculpture.

In addition, she comments several times on the sense of movement of the figures inside and outside of *The Burghers*—“a choreographed gracefulness,” “a ballet-like motion,”³² “a medieval Dance of Death,”³³ citing the contemporary

³¹ Albert E. Elsen, *Rodin* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1963), 74 and 78; McNamara, “*Rodin’s Burghers of Calais*,” 117.

³² McNamara, “*Rodin’s Burghers of Calais*,” 134.

³³ *Ibid.*, 156.

critics' words, such as "sacrificial procession," "a lugubrious cortege," "a cortege of death and glory," "a climb to Calvary," and "pilgrims of martyrdom."³⁴ Yet, she does not connect this sense of movement to a form of ritual.

Furthermore, she cites Paul Clemen, a German critic who discussed *The Burghers* as Christian martyrs who offered a holy sacrifice. He emphasized the sense of movement of the figures and the audience's movement around them in order to appreciate each figure and its role in the composition.³⁵ Yet McNamara does not offer any reason why these political heroes could be perceived as religious analogues and what Rodin intended with this movement. To address this question, I will start by examining the precedent of the First Republic, where ritualized political practices were documented. In addition, I will apply several ritual theories to Rodin's work to address the intersection of politics and religion as a means of republican propaganda.

In terms of the conflation of politics and religion at the time, contemporary historian Boissy d'Anglas's work is an important study. Boissy d'Anglas justifies the necessity of religious sentiments and institutions for the life of the nation. He argues that despite having been endlessly oppressed, Israel retained its coherence as a nation only by retaining its religion.³⁶ He also emphasized the necessity of religion by

³⁴ Ibid., 182.

³⁵ Paul Clemen, "Auguste Rodin," *Die Kunst fur Alle* XX (April 15, 1905): 324; McNamara, 265-266.

³⁶ Compte François-Antoine Boissy d'Anglas, "Législation, morale publique, arts: essai sur les fêtes

pointing out the fact that the French monarchy had been abolished more easily than Catholic services because the people had a need for the emotions and values produced by religious ceremonies.³⁷ Concerning the political aspect of religion in d'Anglas's work, I agree that religious sentiment is necessary for a new regime to be represented in public presentation such as political ceremonies and public arts.

Closer to this political end was Theophilanthropy, a civic religion founded by Jean-Baptiste Chemin-Depontès with a goal to maintain “a rational form of Catholicism.”³⁸ Combining Rousseau's deism and Robespierre's civic virtue, Chemin wrote *The Manual of Theophilanthropy*, which blended Catholicism with the republican ritual, “*culte décadaire*.” The form of this new religion was highly syncretic and its texts mingled sacred and profane authors.³⁹ James Liversey asserts that the aim of Theophilanthropy was “to heal the wounds of the Revolution, to

nationales, suivie de quelques idées sur les arts et sur la nécessité de les encourager, adresse à la Convention nationale,” *La Décade Philosophique* 2, no. 10 (10 Thermidor, Year II), 27.

³⁷ Ibid., 74-75.

³⁸ Albert Mathiez, *La Théophilanthropie et le culte décadaire, 1796-1801: essai sur l'histoire religieuse de la révolution* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1904), 133: “remplacer le catholicisme par un culte raisonnable.”

³⁹ The constitutional Catholic clergy, in the national council, held at Notre Dame in 1797, protested against the new religion, and Henri Grégoire wrote in his *Annales de la Religion* (VI, no 5): “Theophilanthropism is one of those derisive institutions which pretend to bring to God those very people whom they drive away from Him by estranging them from Christianity... Abhorred by Christians, it is spurned by philosophers who, though they may not feel the need of a religion for themselves, still want the people to cling to the faith of their fathers.” Later sporadic attempts at reviving Theophilanthropism were made throughout the course of the nineteenth century. In 1829, Henri Carle founded “L'alliance religieuse universelle,” with *Le libre conscience* as its publisher, but both the society and the periodical disappeared during Franco-Prussian war. See Lynn Sharp, *Secular Spirituality: Reincarnation and Spiritism in Nineteenth-century France* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006), 30.

resolve all hearts by preaching mutual understanding and the forgiveness of all grievance, which would unite all sects in universal tolerance, by giving morality, the sanction above all criticism, and unite the people in a genuine fraternity.”⁴⁰

Many republican artists including Rodin had been exposed to Theophilanthropy’s doctrine, which was based equally on the Bible, and on republican ideology. Rodin was inspired by Christianity and republicanism, and simultaneously by other syncretic religions of the time. In his personal book collection preserved in the archives of the Rodin Museum in Paris, I found that he had three distinctive categories of books: Christian, syncretic religious, and republican.⁴¹ It is necessary to examine what Rodin’s actual religious view was, and how he integrated this with republican ideology, to understand how he incorporated these concepts in his work. I achieve this by examining his writing and other documents in the archives of the Rodin Museum.

There are precedents in the First Republic of syncretic religion, namely Catholic ritual and civic virtue. Specifically, the Cult of the Supreme Being is the most representative civic religion that influenced many republicans, including Jacques-Louis David. *La Fête révolutionnaire* (1976), by Mona Ozouf, examines the

⁴⁰ Chemin-Deponitès, *Qu’est-ce que la théophilanthropie?* Paris: Year X, 9, cited in “Dance like a republican: public culture, religion, and the arts,” in James Liversey, *Making Democracy in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University, 2001), 206.

⁴¹ A list of these books appears in the appendix B.

elaborate cyclic system of civic rituals intended to remap the time, space, and ultimately the moral identities of French citizens.⁴² Ozouf argues that the revolutionary festival is “the beginning of a new era,” and in her examination of the festivals of 1789-1799 she provides the crucible in which the constitutive features of modern French social and political identity were forged.⁴³ This institutionalized effort to establish a new religion emphasized the importance of religion in political and social domination, and also revealed the political dependence on Catholicism, which had dominated French society for centuries.⁴⁴

Two additional dissertations address French republican identity: Michael Scott Dorsch’s “Strong Women, Fallen Men: French Commemorative Sculpture Following the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1880 (Auguste Rodin, Alexandre Falguière, Louis Barrias, Marius Jean Antonin Mercié) (2001)” and Elizabeth Gray’s “Spectacular Performances: Art, the Artist and the Audience at the Musée Gustave Moreau, the Musée Rodin and the Musée National Jean-Jacques Henner (1999).”⁴⁵ Dorsch’s study

⁴² Mona Ozouf, *La Fête révolutionnaire: 1789-1799* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1976). The revolutionary festival has been studied by various scholars. In 1976 alone, in addition to Ozouf’s book, two major monographs appeared in France on the history of French festive life: Yves-Marie Bercé’s *Fête et révolte: des mentalités populaires du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1976) and Michel Vovelle’s *Les Métamorphoses de la fête en Provence de 1750 à 1820* (Paris: Flammarion, 1976).

⁴³ Ozouf, 282.

⁴⁴ Lois Anne Berdaus’s excellent work scrutinizes on Festivals and ceremonies sponsored by government to spread the ideals of the Revolution and its manifestation on contemporary art. “Forging a New Iconography: The French Revolutionary Festivals in Paris, 1789-1799” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2003); Claudette Hould provides valuable images and documents of the French Revolution, *Images of the French Revolution* (Québec: Musée du Québec, 1989).

⁴⁵ Michael Scott Dorsch, “Strong Women, Fallen Men: French Commemorative Sculpture Following

examines how sculptors modeling war memorials during the Third Republic frequently employed the trope of the strong woman and the fallen man as a means of mediating the humiliation of military defeat and solving the prevailing sense of a wounded male identity after the Franco-Prussian War. Dorsch argues that the monuments functioned on a therapeutic level. Gray observes how these artists, Moreau, Rodin, and Henner, were aware of the fact that the spectator's appreciation of the works could be interpreted as an entire cultural performance.⁴⁶

Regarding the historiography of *The Burghers*, there is an excellent work by Jean-Marie Moeglin titled *Les Bourgeois de Calais: essai sur un mythe historique* (2002). Through the analysis of historiographical documents on the story of *Froissart*, Moeglin connects *The Burghers* with Christian rites such as “the rite of peacemaking,”⁴⁷ and recognizes that the descriptions of *The Burghers* were related to Christian morality and ritual. He defines ritual as a “series of actions of individual or group that induce a transformation of self.”⁴⁸ The author points out three

the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1880” (Auguste Rodin, Alexandre Falguiere, Louis Barrias, Marius Jean Antonin Mercie) (PhD diss., New York University, 2001); Elizabeth Gray Buck, “Spectacular Performances: Art, the Artist and the Audience at the Musée Gustave Moreau, the Musée Rodin and the Musée National Jean-Jacques Henner” (PhD diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999).

⁴⁶ James Liversey also provides a helpful insight on the relationship between politics and culture, and between social life and public life, by focusing on the division of public and private categories to describe social space. See “Dance Like a Republican.”

⁴⁷ Jean-Marie Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais: essai sur un mythe historique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002), 321-326.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 325.

characteristics of ritual in relation to *The Burghers*: First, it reveals a merciful action, which puts more value on pity than revenge or justice; second, the ritual is not an anecdote or circumstantial story, but more of symbolic myth;⁴⁹ and third, the author insists that the representation of *The Burghers* should be treated as a historical construction.

Moeglin emphasizes the fact that Rodin mystified the figures to affect the audience. According to Moeglin, the accomplishment of the devised rite provokes a transformation of the audience through a “rite of passage.”⁵⁰ Moeglin’s major innovation, when it comes to the episode with *The Burghers*, lies in his study of how the behavior of the six burghers was understood during the middle ages, and how this understanding had been distorted subsequently. Moeglin’s ritual analysis helps me to build a case that *The Burghers* is a symbolic representation of Catholic ritual, which I will discuss further in the sixth chapter regarding the sources of the story.

In *Rodin: The Burghers of Calais*, Antoinette Le Normand-Romain extensively explains the background of the commission, the historical context of the work, the political situation of the city of Calais, and several more contextual aspects

⁴⁹ For example, he said that *The Burghers* may be seen as representations of Christ, who suffered on the cross. The author states that *The Burghers* sacrificed themselves for the well-being of their city in the same manner that Christ sacrificed himself for the redemption of humankind, *ibid.*, 97.

⁵⁰ Some social anthropologists distinguish between “ritual,” a stylized repetitious behavior that is explicitly religious and “ceremony,” which is merely social, even explicit in meaning; see Mircea Eliade, 405. I will expand more on this in the chapter VI. C.

common to my concerns, such as composition, spectatorship, and placement.⁵¹ She concludes that, “Rodin sought to share with spectators the feelings of human beings who were hardly different from them; these six characters with whom he asks them to identify, suffer; the oldest resigned, whilst the young ones regret to have to leave this life so soon.”⁵² Seemingly this search for a universal quality departs from specified French nationalism, but this concept of the universalized human being is one way the government of the Third French Republic regarded itself.⁵³

Due to the universalized significance of *The Burghers*, numerous castings were erected all over the world, in addition to the original in Calais. Three full-size bronze casts of *The Burghers* were made before Rodin’s death in 1917.⁵⁴ A 1903 cast was made for Copenhagen. The second, cast in 1905 by the founder Alexis Rudier for a Belgian collector, was erected in Castle Gardens in Brussels. The third, ordered from Rudier by another Belgian, Wouters-Dustin, was offered in 1910 to the National Art Collections Fund in London. Susan Beattie’s *The Burghers of Calais in London:*

⁵¹ Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, “Rodin and the Monument of the Burghers of Calais,” in *Rodin: the Burghers of Calais*, ed. Antoinette Le Normand-Romain (Paris: Musée Rodin, 2001), 10-64.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 34.

⁵³ The French notion that democracy is based on the ‘will of the people’ to live together allowed the concept to be universalized to include everyone who wanted to belong to the French nation. Regarding French republican universalism see “Republicanism and Universalism: Factors of Inclusion or Exclusion in the French Concept of Citizenship,” *Citizenship Studies* 7 no 1 (March 2003): 15-36.

⁵⁴ *Canadida Hofer. Douze-twelve.* (Calais : Musee des beaux arts de Calais, 2001). This catalogue discussed the installation of the twelve casts throughout the world. Since these versions were erected under different contexts and installations, this study mainly focuses on the casts in Calais and Paris.

the History of the Purchase and Sitting of Rodin's Monument, 1911-56 explores the debate about the monument's controversial placement in London.⁵⁵ This international dissemination of *The Burghers* is a crucial factor to understand the importance of republican ritual and its virtue realized in this work, especially since the group expresses a full spectrum of human emotions in the face of political oppression and death.

In *Rodin, l'artiste face à l'état* (1993), Rose-Marie Martinez deals with Rodin's political opinions, attitudes, and his interpretations regarding different political events, providing valuable information on the social context of his time and his response to it.⁵⁶ Yet it is rare to witness the analysis of Rodin's works that probe how contemporary social structure and political ideology are manifested formally and ideally in his works.

For the contextual understanding of the revival of French Medievalism, *Explorations of the Gothic Cathedral in Nineteenth-Century France* (2002) by Stephanie Alice Moore Glaser provides useful information.⁵⁷ She focuses on

⁵⁵ After Rodin's death, eight more versions were cast and erected in throughout the world. There is a recent dissertation that explores the growth of Auguste Rodin's phenomenal acclaim in Northeast Asia, China, Japan, and Korea by the urge to emulate the culture of the West. See Hyewon Lee, "The Cult of Rodin: Words, Photographs, and Colonial History on the Spread of Auguste Rodin's Reputation in Northeast Asia" (PhD diss., University of Missouri, 2006).

⁵⁶ Rose-Marie Martinez, *Rodin, l'artiste face à l'état* (Paris: Segquier, 1993).

⁵⁷ Stephanie Alice Moore Glaser, "Explorations of the Gothic Cathedral in Nineteenth-Century France" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2003).

representations of the Gothic cathedral in the nineteenth century, within the broad movement of Medievalism and Gothic Revival.⁵⁸ Drawing upon literature, the visual arts, and philosophical texts on Gothic architecture, and bringing together religious, political, literary, and architectural history, Glaser reconstructs French understanding of the cathedral against a background of development in foreign countries and broader context of Romanticism.⁵⁹

John Reinard Botha examines *The Burghers* in his psychoanalytic study, *A Psycho-educational Program for the Utilization of Visual Arts in the Facilitation of Stress Management in Young Adults* (2005).⁶⁰ He asserts that several chosen art works create an environment wherein participants can identify their afflicted emotions and may resolve their mental stress. He argues that the transformation of the identity of participants resolved their problems, which parallels my intention to prove the possible effect of *The Burghers* in relation to French audiences' psychology.

My dissertation is contextual in nature, since it will apply current ritual and

⁵⁸ More important information on the Medieval revival can be found in several works: Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowits, *Consuming the Past: the Medieval Revival in fin-de-siècle France* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003); William H. Swatos, Jr. and Luigi Tomasi, *From Medieval Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publisher, 2002); and Michael J. Lewis, *The Gothic Revival* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002).

⁵⁹ Albert Elsen points out that Rodin's romantic tendency was mixed with a realistic attitude since his generation was the beneficiary of the artistic freedom won by the great romanticists: "In Rodin's drawings and writings on the cathedrals there is a mixture of romantic and realistic strains, as when he combines a reverence for observed facts in terms of what was done, and emotional metaphors to convey to us his love of the life they expressed." *The Gates of Hell by Auguste Rodin* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985), 232.

⁶⁰ John Reinard Botha, *A Psycho-educational Programme for the Utilization of Visual Arts in the Facilitation of Stress Management in Young Adults* (Chicago, IL: Northwestern University, 2004).

social theories within a political and historical context to Rodin's public sculpture.

Furthermore, it will be a unique approach to Rodin's Catholicism and the religiosity of the Third Republic, which will enhance our understanding of *The Burghers* in the larger cultural structure of art production.

Chapter content

Following this introduction, the second chapter provides the theoretical and historical background for the dissertation by examining the conflation of nationalism and religion in French Republican history. French nationalism and its relationship to the Catholic Church have been studied in various fields, yet the function and meaning of Catholicism in the formation of French republicanism have been underestimated. I will argue how deeply related Catholicism is to French republicanism and more broadly, how religion is crucial in the formation of French nationalism.⁶¹ Central to the relationship is the fact that republicans used religion to consolidate their own power. Before full-blown nationalism, religious passion was one of the most popular emotions that could bring masses of people into the streets, and republican leaders understood that it could be used to foster nationalistic fervor.

⁶¹ One of the most recent contributions to this trend is Anthony W. Marx's *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (Oxford: University Press, 2003). Marx insists that the birth of nationalism dates to a time when religious intolerance ravaged Europe. Linda Colley, a historian and the author of *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), agrees that religion is central to the formation of nationalism.

Furthermore, there are several political strategies of religious appropriation for republicans. Catholicism, which had flourished in France since the medieval era, was the most prominent cultural and spiritual heritage for the French. Republicans wanted to unite different political stances, and Catholicism and medievalism offered an implicit framework to propagandize their ideologies without overt exposure of its religiosity. In this case, Catholicism is perceived not as an institution, but as a mind-set, culture, and everyday permeating ritual.

The third chapter examines religious overtones in the First Republic: its leaders created own cult, rite, and religion, although it was short lived. They replaced Catholicism with secular religion, but in many ways, it was unavoidably similar to Catholicism, appropriating familiar Catholic prototypes, symbols, and rituals. Robespierre, with the help of Jacques-Louis David, performed the secularized ritual, *The Festival of the Federation*, and later participated in the civic religion called the Cult of Supreme Being. David also created the image of republican martyrs as disseminators of republican philosophies. Significantly, the ritual or the iconographies are not far from Catholic martyrs' images or Catholic rituals.

Through this embracing of Catholicism, republicans attempted to build and inculcate a new political culture. Catholicism thus became a tool to encourage beliefs and habits supportive of a democratic public life. For this reason, many republican

artists appropriated Catholic iconography to spread the propaganda of republican ideology from the founding of the First Republic until the complete separation of Church and State at the beginning of the twentieth-century.

The fourth chapter illuminates that Catholicism and spirituality were continually present throughout Rodin's life. His obsession with Catholicism is manifested in the religious subjects and biblical themes through his consistent revelation of human limits and conflict. Through his book and his sculptures, Rodin practiced and promoted his spiritual pursuit of medieval architecture and pilgrimage. Accordingly, I will examine his medievalism in the context of the national medieval movement and pilgrimage revival in which the Third Republic tried to create its own political symbol and culture using the existing traditions.⁶²

In the fifth chapter, I will demonstrate how Rodin synthesized his patriotism and religious sentiment into his public works. First, I will investigate how Rodin was embedded in republicanism and which particular ideology he made the subject of his work. Rodin's republican philosophy also can be illuminated through the lens of Habermas's theory. Then, I will examine how Rodin's public sculpture represents his

⁶² Rodin defended his work as being in the spirit of French Gothic art and denouncing the academic pyramid formation. His preference for Gothic art is based on a larger sense of nationalism and a more personal sense of his religious inclination. See Ruth Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 32; Regarding the relationship between Catholic Gothic cathedrals and republican nationalism, see Stephanie Glaser, "Of Revolutions, Republics and Spires Nineteenth-Century France and the Gothic Cathedral," in *Signs of Change: Transformations of Christian Traditions and Their Representation in the Arts, 1000-2000* ed. Nils Holger Petersen, Claus Clüver and Nicolas Bell (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2004), 453-473.

political inclinations.

In the sixth chapter, I will focus on *The Burghers* to exemplify the conflation of republicanism and Catholicism in France. The Mayor of Calais, Omer Dewavrin, saw the monument as a reminder of the national conscience of the indomitable French spirit that had survived from the foreign occupation.⁶³ Summarizing the story about the commission, I will provide a historical and political context for the monument. After the survey of Rodin's sources of inspiration for the monument, I connect Catholic iconography, myth, and ritual to *The Burghers*: how the site and figures are ritualized and sanctified, how the work related to Catholic ritual and meaning, and how the audience's interaction with it recalls pilgrimage.

I propose that, in addition to the commemoration of the heroic citizens of Calais, the audiences perform their circumambulation in order to heal their wounds of political humiliation of the recent past—namely their defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. *The Burghers* functions as a monumental site of rite of passage, through which viewers perform and identify with these patriotic heroes. In doing so, viewers transform their past memory and glorify their present reality. From this perspective I argue that the monument had a therapeutic effect on its audience, enabling them to release their obsessions and fears of alienation and separatism following the war and

⁶³ Butler, *Rodin: the Shape of Genius*, 199-200.

their trials from everyday life. The ritualized appreciation provides emotional catharsis in which audiences confront personal anxieties and social tensions temporarily embodied in their psyche and ultimately reach reconciliation.

Rodin created ritualized environments where the audiences encounter the works actively and reclaim their identities. Rodin had been persistently concerned about the encounter with beholders, their existence, their gaze, their physical positioning, and movement in relation to his works. Rodin must have intended the beholder's conversion-like experience with his works. As Catherine Bell aptly points out, "performance models suggest active rather than passive roles for ritual participants who reinterpret value-laden symbols as they communicate them."⁶⁴ Rodin promoted republican ideology through the indeterminate, inclusive, and participatory aspects of his work. Through embracing Catholic ritual, Rodin could fabricate a more effective communication tool, which is his public monument.

This study contributes to the existing literature on Rodin's *The Burghers* by using an interdisciplinary approach to investigate the intersection of his republicanism and Catholicism. This approach introduces a novel and potentially far-reaching frame of reference by which to interpret Rodin's other public monument, and it opens new possibilities for the reception of Western public sculpture from his day to the present.

⁶⁴ Bell further asserts that "Ritual as a performative medium for social change emphasizes human creativity and physicality: ritual does not model people: people fashion rituals that model their world." *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 73.

One of the contributions of this study is to pave the way for a psychological analysis of the audience, emphasizing the transformation of subjectivity. This dissertation differs in character from the broadly established formalist and iconographic studies of Rodin's work, and it also tries to move beyond the one-layered political and social contextual studies. It embraces possible interdisciplinary approaches that have been developed in politics, sociology, religion, and ritual concepts.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Background: The Conflation of Nationalism and Religion

Historical Background of Republicanism and Catholicism

Catholicism was one of the most fundamental cultural currents in France for centuries. Prior to the French revolution (1789-1799), the Catholic Church had been the official state religion of France since the conversion to Christianity by Clovis I (496 CE), leading to France being called “the eldest daughter of the Church.”¹ After the revolution, the Catholic Church still had a significant influence on French society—for the devout monarchist and for the republican. This influence was not so much in the form of a national religion, but more in how it affected people’s everyday rituals, culture, and psychology. In this chapter, I will discuss the relationship between Catholicism and the French people as a matter of cultural and national identity.

French historian Pierre Nora aptly subdivided his series, *Les Lieux de mémoire*, into *La République*, *La Nation*, and *Les France*, indicating his own understanding of the multiple identities of France. While my study also recognizes the many identities and factions within France, I will focus mainly on that of the republican.² One of the

¹ Pierre Birnbaum writes that “France on the one hand, has seen its soul as residing in a privileged relationship with Reason, and its deep personality expressed in an unquestioning adherence to the ideas of the Enlightenment” and “on the other hand, has conceived itself as the eldest daughter of the Church, the Catholic nation par excellence.” Pierre Birnbaum, *The Idea of France*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (New York: Hill and Wang Publisher, 1998), 10-11.

² Pierre Nora’s three categories are France, nation, and republic: *Being French* is acquired by simple birth and growth on the land itself; *Nation* was what the French talked about when they tried to square this belonging with everything from informal public life through formal government; *Republic* was the solidly secular and democratic government, born in revolution and raised in an ideologically restricted world. See *Les Lieux de mémoire: la République* (Paris: Edition Gallimard, 1984-92), 8.

greatest tasks of republican leaders was to shape France as a “united nation and thereby abolishing local customs and beliefs.”³ This chapter traces the intertwining relationship between the republican state and Catholicism during the nineteenth century, despite the apparent conflict since the French Revolution.

Although scholars have written in recent decades about French nationalism and its relationship to the Catholic Church, the function and meaning of Catholicism for French nationalist thinking has never been fully explained.⁴ This study addresses this oversight and will provide a new perspective to understand the importance of Catholicism in French national identity. I will argue that Catholicism provided a social framework and practical sources for the formation of a unified modern French nationalism, because Catholic religious sentiments and practices were deeply entrenched in French culture and philosophy, even in the secularized nineteenth century.⁵ This examination will in turn provide an expanded context to locate and

³ Robert Gildea emphasizes the regional diversity and disunity that existed before the Revolution of 1789 and continued far into nineteenth-century France, despite the state’s best efforts at centralization. See *Children of the Revolution: The French, 1799-1914* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2008).

⁴ See, for example, these scholars who address the relationship between French nationalism and religion: Pierre Birnbaum, *The Idea of France*; David Bell, *Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2001); Gordon Wright, *France in Modern Times* (New York: Norton, 1995); Theodore Zeldin, *France: Politics and Anger, 1848-1945* (Oxford, Oxford University of Press, 1977); Pierre Nora, ed., *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, vol. 3. trans. Arthur Goldhammer, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996-98); and Ralph Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism, 1789-1914* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

⁵ Alexander Stille, “Historians Trace an Unholy Alliance: Religion and Nationalism,” *The New York Times*, May 31, 2003. He discusses the new trend that the West is more open to looking at the role of religion in the formation of nationalism.

understand Rodin's public art production.

Secularism

One of the questions of this study is whether or not republicanism superseded Catholicism in nineteenth-century French society. Examining the relationship between republican ideology and Catholic faith is a key to understanding the complex context of Rodin's public works. Rodin continually expressed his interest in these two fields, and had embodied their ideals in his sculptures, which I will define and examine in the following chapters.

According to the current consensus among scholars of the formation of nationalism, religious sentiment is considered to be the prime enemy of nationalism, which is regarded as a distinctly modern phenomenon and a product of post-enlightenment culture.⁶ Secularism, or *laïcité*, is the assertion that governmental practices or institutions should exist separately from religion and religious beliefs.⁷ It refers to a belief that human activity and decisions, especially political ones, should

⁶ William Safran points out that the role of religion in nation-building efforts in the past applied largely to the pre-democratic age, and applies today to many non-Western societies that have not yet modernized. In the case of France, he writes, "Church establishments preferred monarchical forms of government as best suited to protect their privileges. Likewise, Jacobin republics viewed the Catholic Church as a reactionary and undemocratic interposition between the individual and the sovereign state." See *The Secular and the Sacred: Nation, Religion and Politics*, ed. William Safran (Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 2 and 8.

⁷ The term *secularism* was first invented by the British writer George Holyoake in 1846. Secularism described his views of promoting a social order separate from religion, without actively dismissing or criticizing religious belief. See Noah Feldman, *Divided by God* (Farrar: Straus and Giroux, 2005), 113.

be based on evidence and fact, unbiased by religious influence.⁸ This attitude was a fundamental component of French republicanism from the beginning, and even antedated the Revolution.

In his examination of the relationship between the Catholic Church and republicanism, political scientist William Safran agrees with Enlightenment intellectuals' criticism of church dominance in France, politically and socially: "To Voltaire, for example, religion was incompatible with reason and progress. To be sure, he directed his anti-religious feelings especially to the Catholic Church; because that Church was identified with absolute monarchy, with the Inquisition, and with other manifestations of intolerance, he called for the removal of its influence from public life."⁹

Although secularism is not a strict argument against Christianity, republicans promoted secularism and responded sharply against the Catholic Church during the process of the separation of Church and state. Safran continues, "Church property was confiscated, the Christian calendar was replaced by a revolutionary one, and Christianity itself was replaced by a 'religion of reason.' Indeed, *laïcité*, or secularity,

⁸ Barry A. Kosmin, "Contemporary Secularity and Secularism," in *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, ed. Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar (Hartford: Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture (ISSSC), 2007).

⁹ William Safran, "Religion and *Laïcité* in a Jacobin Republic: the Case of France," 54.

was to become one of the fundamental elements of Jacobin doctrine.”¹⁰

The ongoing conflict between the sequential French republics and Catholic Church has been widely studied and codified by historians.¹¹ Republicans regarded the Catholic Church as a non-democratic system due to its hierarchical character that regulated non-participants in its ritual. After the revolution, the highly in-egalitarian and pre-modern Catholic society was not conducive to what is now called the ‘republicanization’ of French society.

However, until the Revolution of 1789, ‘Frenchness’ was defined so thoroughly in terms of Catholicism that France was considered “the Catholic nation par excellence.”¹² France remained overwhelmingly attached to the Catholic faith—for its ceremonies and processions characterized French life and symbolized social

¹⁰ Ibid., 54.

¹¹ For more on the origin of the terms of ‘secular’ or ‘secularism’, see Barry Alexander Kosmin, Ariela Keysar, ed. *Secularism and Secularity*, 2. “The terms ‘secular,’ ‘secularism,’ and ‘secularization’ have a range of meaning. The words derive from the Latin, *saeculum*, which means both this age and this world, and combines a spatial sense and a temporal sense. In the Middle Ages, secular referred to priests who worked out in the world of local parishes, as opposed to priests who took vows of poverty and secluded themselves in monastic communities. These latter priests were called ‘religious.’ During the Reformation, secularization denoted the seizure of Catholic ecclesiastical properties by the state and their conversion to non-religious use. In all of these instances, the secular indicates a distancing from the sacred, the eternal, and the otherworldly. In the centuries that followed the secular began to separate itself from religious authority...Authors viewed the “new order of the ages” quite deliberately as a new era in which the old order of King and Church was to be displaced from authority over public life by a secular republican order.” See also the chapter by Nathalie Caron “Laïcité and Secular Attitude in France”(chapter II-9). Caron states, “As French political leaders like to emphasize, the French Republic rests on a secular ideal, called *laïcité*. It is the grammar which enables the different religions to talk to each other and the pillar of the French model of integration, the cornerstone of the republican pact,” 113.

¹² Birnbaum, 11. Joseph F. Byrnes views Catholicism and Frenchness as a matter of identity, see also *Catholic and French Forever: Religious and National Identity in Modern France* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University, 2005).

unity under the influence of the Church. Jacques Solé observes that this “simple, unaffected piety, attentive to civic duties of the kingdom, one nourished by Holy Scripture, concerned for the inner life of the layman” was the norm for French people, despite the Enlightenment.¹³ Catholicism was so deeply embedded in the experiences of French people that its heritage continues to this day, albeit in a more secularized form.¹⁴ The French Republics needed Catholicism not only for the power of its cultural heritage, but also because it was the most reliable and effective political tool to unite French people for republicans.

Catholicism as a Nationalist Tool

Recent studies have begun to examine the connection between Catholicism and nationalism. Anthony W. Marx, for example, considers the role of religion in the formation of nationalism. He argues that the birth of nationalism dates to a time when religious intolerance ravaged Europe.¹⁵ Linda Colley also concludes that religion is central to nationalism and like Marx, asserts that many political leaders used religion

¹³ Jacques Solé, *La Révolution en questions* (Paris: Panthéon, 1988), 23, cited by Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France 1780-1804* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 56.

¹⁴ Mark D. Taylor, ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 2. Taylor disagrees that modernization and secularization are inseparable. He insists that religious devotion and belief do not simply disappear but are turned inward, distinguishing the religious dimensions from modernity itself.

¹⁵ Anthony W. Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

to consolidate their own power, turning themselves into both political and religious leaders.¹⁶ According to Marx, “before full-blown nationalism, religious passion was the one popular emotion that could bring masses of people into the streets.”¹⁷ And Europe’s rulers understood that religion could be used to make or break a state.

Benedict Anderson defined a nation as “an imagined political community,” and as most nations have always been culturally and ethnically diverse, problematic, protean, and artificial constructs take shape very quickly and come apart just as fast—and the French Republic is one example of an invented nation.¹⁸ During the formation of French nationalism in the modern sense, republican rulers desperately needed a homogeneous sentiment to unite French people so that they could identify as one nation.¹⁹

The sentiment of French nationalism did not really exist before the Revolution.

Political leaders constructed it by promoting the idea of a shared language, history,

¹⁶ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (Yale University Press, 1992). She argues that Britons defined themselves as Protestants struggling for survival against the world’s foremost Catholic power. They defined themselves against the French as they imagined them to be, superstitious, militarist, decadent, and unfree, 5-6.

¹⁷ Marx, 27.

¹⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1991), 6; and Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Both of these books are helpful in demonstrating the unsoundness of any single notion of what constitutes nationalism and nationhood.

¹⁹ Philip Schlesinger writes in his essay on national identity, “National cultures are not simple repositories of shared symbols to which the entire population stands in identical fashion. Rather they are to be approached as sites of contestation in which competition over definitions takes place.” See “On National Identity: Some Conceptions and Misconceptions Criticized,” *Social Science Information* 26 (1987): 260-61.

and memory.²⁰ In 1878, Hippolyte Taine asserted in his preface, *The Origins of the Revolution in France*, “all of France’s traits” were “set and definitive.”²¹ These definitive traits were what the textbooks of the Third Republic taught: one people, one country, one government, one nation, one fatherland. This idea of unity is the illusion that historical studies expounded, an axiom most recently repeated by Albert Soboul: “The French Revolution completed the nation, which became one and indivisible.”²²

The reality was, however, far from a unified France; rather, opposed traditions and inescapable divisions gave rise to numerous conflicts that increasingly defined France.²³ The complex reality was shaped less by the opposition of Catholicism and Republicanism, and more by the contradictions within parties, languages, and regions.²⁴ Eugen Weber provides considerable evidence that underscores how much

²⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. 15-16: Anderson defines the nation as an imagined political community. “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of heir communion.”(15); “It is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”(16).

²¹ Hippolyte Taine, preface to *The French Revolution (1881)*, trans. John Durand, vol. II, second edition (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1892), v.

²² Albert Soboul, “The French Revolution in Contemporary World History,” University of California, Los Angeles, Department Colloquy, photocopy, (April, 1973), 4.

²³ Theodore Zeldin, *Conflicts in French Society: Anticlericalism, Education and Morals in the Nineteenth Century* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1970), 9-11.

²⁴ At the time many other languages existed in France, such as Breton, Catalan, Basque, Dutch, Franco-provençal, Alsatian, and Corsican. France would become more of a linguistically unified country by the end of the nineteenth century, and in particular through the educational policies of Jules Ferry during the French Third Republic. See “The Republicanism of Jules Ferry: Education,” in William Fortescue, *The Third Republic in France 1870-1940: Conflicts and Continuities* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 36-38.

France was an incompletely integrated nation.²⁵ He argues that this “national unity” is perceived as the expression of a general will; the general will of the French to be French, to achieve a state that was somehow historically foreordained.²⁶

Regarding a national unity, Pierre Fougeyrollas asserted that a unity of mind and feeling would be required to become a nation: “long before the Revolution formulated and perfected the terms of the social contract, the inhabitants of the land called France had achieved the spiritual unity that is the necessary precondition of nationhood: the community of feelings and ideas concerning certain fundamental problems, a certain identity in the way of conceiving the external world, of classifying its objects, of ordering its values, in short, a certain unity of spiritual orientation, a certain common spirit.”²⁷ The question was whether this united feeling and mind of France had really existed before the Revolution.

French philosopher Ernest Renan presented an equivalent concept of national unity. In a lecture in 1882, Renan criticized the German concept of nationhood, as defined by Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Willelm von

²⁵ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: the Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 95.

²⁶ Robert Gildea’s book also shows the struggles between classes and factions and the effort to secure the Republic and unify the nation. He tries to broaden his focus from the politics and regime change to the nation’s wider cultural and literary life in citing Ernest Renan’s 1882 lecture. See chapter 15, “Rebuilding the Nation: Shaping a National Consciousness,” 412-413.

²⁷ Pierre Fougeyrollas, *La Conscience politique dans la France contemporaine* (Paris: Editions Denoël, 1963), 316, cited in Weber, 95.

Humboldt.²⁸ They contended that there were four basic elements of nationhood: language, tradition, race, and state. Renan proposed an alternative list: present consent, the desire to live together, common possession of a rich heritage of memories, and the will to exploit the inherited land.²⁹ There exists understandable reasons why Renan would reject the German principles of nationhood; first of all, for French people, it would be hard to ignore the absence of a common language; second, France had been too severely divided to trace itself to one common political tradition; third, race was a dubious concept since France was ethnically diverse; and lastly, the state remained as an expression of political power, not of organic natural growth. Therefore, Renan, unavoidably had to promote alternate values to define French nationalism.

Renan's desirable list for being French was rooted more in psychological aspects. He recognized fully the spiritual component necessary in the formation of nationalism. Renan's conception of nationhood as a collective soul remains an enticing conceptualization, but dangerous if not viewed with the requisite amount of skepticism. For instance, Weber indicated the factual circumstances of France at the

²⁸ Johann Gottfried Herder, *Abhandlung über den Ursprung des Sprache* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966); *Essay on the Origin of Language*, trans. John H. Moran and Alexander Code (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1966); Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "Von der Sprachfähigkeit und dem Ursprung der Sprache," in *J.G. Fichte-Gesamtausgabe*, vol. I, ed. R. Lauth and H. Jacob (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1966), 3; Wilhelm von Humboldt, "über Denken und Sprechen," in *Wilhelm von Humboldt Werke*, vol. 5, ed. Andreas Flitner & Klaus Giel (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1981).

²⁹ Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (1882; repr., Marseille: Le Mot et Le Rest, 2007), 33. Understandably Renan's arguments were precipitated by the events surrounding the Franco-Prussian War, 1870/71.

time, which did not fit into Renan's ideal postulation: "In 1882 consent might be assumed from indifference, but 'there could be little desire to live together with people who might as well have come from another world.'" The heritage of memories was not held in common, but differed according to region and to social stock. And there was no inheritance in joint tenancy. The Republic under which Renan formulated his idea had inherited a territorial unit but a cultural jigsaw. It was up to the Republic to turn the legal formulas into actual practice."³⁰

The difficulty in attaining national unity, and consequently of French nationalism, was a serious matter. Moreover, the feeling of nationalism, if any, is limited to urban intellectuals. August Brun noted that "there is no patriotism in the countryside. Only 'the more enlightened' could conceive of the notion. Patriotism was an urban thought, a handle for an urban conquest of the rural world that looked at times like colonial exploitation."³¹ For France, one rare factor that transcended local and specific regionalism was Catholicism. Whether or not they were specifically Christian was not an issue because religious practices were interwoven with every part of life. Even after the Revolution, France remained overwhelmingly attached to the Catholic faith or practice in everyday life and habit, creating a sense of social

³⁰ Weber, 112.

³¹ August Brun, *L'Introduction de la langue française en Bearn et en Roussillon* (Paris: H. Champion, 1923); cited in Weber, 98.

identity. Catholicism functioned as a central core around which people either confronted or allied.

E. J. Hobsbawm recently asked whether the “nation” might be “an attempt to fill the void left by the dismantling of earlier community and social structure.”³² Nationalism in France might be an attempt to fill the spiritual emptiness after dechristianization but it must have a religious or emotional aspect. Since patriotic feelings at the national level did not exist, the state had to construct them. Likewise, the Republic had to create a deliberate and political central power compounded with a certain spirituality. The republican solution was to mix Catholicism and republicanism, thereby sacralizing the state so that it was more credible. Anne Thiesse states that “the nation is born of a postulate and an invention, but it only lives by collective acceptance of this fiction.”³³ Catholicism was thought of as the most acceptable cultural form for the republican.

Catholicism as a Cultural Identity

Under the circumstances, Catholicism remained a unique cultural cliché, as “the religion of the majority of Frenchman” by the mid 1870s. According to the

³² E.J. Hobsbawm, “From Social History to the History of Society,” *Historical Studies* 15 (1972): 23.

³³ Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La Création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe-XXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1999), 14.

official census, 35,387,703 of the 36,000,000 citizens in France were listed as Catholics.³⁴ The census indicates that the Church was an integral part of French life. The church presided over all the major occasions in a person's life—birth, marriage, death—and over the welfare of the community and the conduct of its members. However, very few French people might have outwardly demonstrated any religious conviction; many people practiced Catholic rituals out of habit, or fear. Religion provided efficacious and protective ceremonies in their lives.³⁵

Weber points out religious practices were interwoven with every part of life, but hardly in a manner that one would call specifically Christian. Many French people had lost their respect for Church rules and religious duties, and consequently displayed indifference and apathy in their religious practice.³⁶ Their Catholic rituals and ceremonies became fundamentally utilitarian, and focused more on the popular cult of saints, of healing agencies and other useful “superstitions.” As Weber states:

The chief function of saints on earth was healing, and every malady was the province of a particular saint. All pilgrimages are made to a source of healing.

³⁴ André Latreille and René Rémond, *Histoire du Catholicism en France*, 3 (Paris: La Periode Contemporaine, 1962): 3.

³⁵ Theodore Zeldin discussed not only the protective function of Christianity, but also its utilitarian function on a personal level. Zeldin cites Abbé Laurichess: “Christianity is law, rule, restraint. Confession is in Christianity the severest form of repressive force....In confessing, the woman cures herself of unhappiness, escapes from the servitude of the flesh and regains her personality....Confession is thus essential for the individual, for the family and for society. Society can only punish crimes-priests can prevent them.” *Etudes philosophiques et morales sur la confession* (1865), cited in Zeldin, 29.

³⁶ Weber, 343-345.

But we should add that the pilgrims as often seek protection and favors, too. Pilgrimage offered an excuse to leave the village, and with it, for a time at least, an inescapable fate. Pilgrimages were festive occasions involving food and drink, shopping and dancing. The most ancient pilgrimages coincided with great fairs; markets and sanctuaries went together. It's more a pleasure trip than a pious action.³⁷

After the Revolution, Catholicism persisted in various forms, either in less strict religious groups, or as a form of everyday ritual.³⁸ Whether it was viewed as a cultural or social concept, Catholicism provided a unique cultural bond that united people in various political positions.³⁹ Republicans saw this undeniable merit of Catholicism, specifically after the failure of building their own republican religion during the First Republic. The attempted transfer of sacrality itself could neither avoid appropriating Catholic terms and rituals, nor thoroughly replace Catholicism. Although political polarity had persisted throughout the Republics, the imposition of Catholicism within republican discourse was necessary to the effort of uniting France.

The Catholic revival around the turn of the century was an intellectual and middle-class affair, which was closely related to the formation of French nationalism. The French Republics had to deal with Christianity through the lens of national and cultural heritage. Regarding this, Stephanie Glaser examines how the Gothic cathedral

³⁷ Weber, 347 and 351.

³⁸ Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France, 1780-1804* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 165-166.

³⁹ See Joseph F. Byrnes, *Catholic and French Forever: Religious and National Identity in Modern France* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 47.

was part of the Catholic medieval revival during the nineteenth century, and as part of their unifying goals, the French Republics' burden of reestablishing the Christianizing discourse that fell after the Revolution.⁴⁰ Agreeing with her, I propose that the re-proclamation of Catholicism under the Republics should be examined with respect to this specific cultural and political context of reclaiming Frenchness.

Another opinion on French Catholicism, or more broadly medievalism, occurred during the end of the nineteenth century in relation to the anxiety of the age.⁴¹ Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowitz argue that “the medievalism of the fin-de-siècle is part of a much broader phenomenon of revivalism; it is one manifestation of a desire to escape the present by studying the past... The Middle Ages paradoxically appealed to a wide variety of social groups—Catholics, monarchists, republicans, cultural elite and working class—in a way that the eighteenth century did not.”⁴² The revival and recollection of the middle ages, they assert, occurs “in response to contemporary fears about increased individualism and a fragmented social

⁴⁰ Stephanie Alice Moore Glaser, 170-270: According to Glaser, during the nineteenth century, France was devoted to two major issues; first, the need to purge the Gothic cathedral of the negative symbolism imposed upon it by the Revolution and to construct for it new meanings, and second, the desire to claim the edifice as a national monument, even though it was held to be of foreign origin. See Chapter three.

⁴¹ Shearer West surveys millenarianism or ‘fin-de-siècle’ applying to a cultural malaise in late nineteenth-century Europe and artists’ response to it. West mentions millenarianism was largely a Christian concern until the late eighteenth century but after that it became absorbed into more secular views of history. “The Fin-de-Siècle Phenomenon,” in *Fin-de-Siècle* (Woodstock: The Overlook Press, 1994), 2.

⁴² Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowitz, *Consuming the Past: the Medieval Revival in fin-de-siècle France* (Hants, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1988), 8.

structure.”⁴³ I agree with their arguments that Catholicism acted as a momentous symbol of French cultural authenticity, where people could reunite into one homogeneous group no matter where they stood politically.⁴⁴

In many cases, Catholicism was interlocked with medievalism. The republican leaders’ desperate endeavor to promote the Middle Ages and the Gothic revival were partially intended to cure the trauma of defeat in the Franco-Prussian War.⁴⁵ The humiliating defeat of the War and the Paris Commune were followed by the Treaty of Frankfurt, which gave the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine to the German Empire. A souring sense of defeat and loss led to the myth of the lost provinces and the cry for revenge. The tragedy of the war and the exile of the refugees disseminated through medieval romance and popular song, fostering a national mythology that led to the “invention” of a tradition of French nationalism.⁴⁶

⁴³ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Emery, *Romancing The Cathedral: Gothic Architecture in Fin-de-Siècle French Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001): The author further examines in this book how a society that passed laws against monastic orders, Catholic education, and religious services glorified the cathedral as the ultimate symbol of the modern French nation and transformed it into a unifying symbol of the French nation, 11.

⁴⁵ The Gothic revival must be understood as a response to social, political, and economic developments. As Michael J. Lewis observes, “In the course of the revival the Gothic was attached to social movements of every sort – from political liberalism to patriotic nationalism, from Roman Catholic solidarity to labor reform. Like Marxism, which also drew lessons from medieval society, the Gothic Revival offered a comprehensive response to the Industrial Revolution.” See *The Gothic Revival* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002), 7.

⁴⁶ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger coined the term in their edited volume *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). The editors collected examples of many practices considered to be traditional and argued that they are recent inventions, often deliberately constructed to serve particular ideological ends. The French recollected the stories and recreated their national myth with clear intention.

Picturesque accounts of individual valor and sacrifice portrayed the war as a noble adventure, camouflaging the reality of its sordid moments. The concentration on isolated victories of individual soldiers and small combat units contributed to this sense of heroic adventure, effectively hiding the decisiveness of the defeat by the Germans.⁴⁷ This process of selective memory and historical revisionism were used by the French government to create a new national identity.⁴⁸ This process had been broadly used in republican political maneuvers that used religious protocols, as shall be demonstrated by this study of *The Burghers of Calais* by Auguste Rodin.

A mystical image of the nation as a spirit or soul proposed by Renan animated a people who shared a common heritage, such as a culture or a religion.⁴⁹ Fustel de Coulanges, arguing that Alsace should be part of the French nation, declared: “(French) Men know in their hearts that they are one people as long as they share a community of ideas, interests, affections, recollections, and hopes.”⁵⁰ Thus, for them, although the Alsatians were German by language, they were French by culture and spirit. This new concept of nationality with its emphasis on common

⁴⁷ Claude Digeon, *La Crise allemande dans la pensée française (1870-1914)* (Paris: Press de Universitaires de France, 1959), 63.

⁴⁸ Gothic medievalism can be viewed in the Romantic movement, which was an inherently international phenomenon, rather than national. Elizabeth Emery discusses how the renewed interest in the Gothic in France developed during the French Revolution, and how France restored national discourse out of Gothic edifice. “Consuming the Past,” 13-22.

⁴⁹ Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” in *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 52.

⁵⁰ Raoul Girardet, ed., *Le Nationalism français, 1871-1914* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966), 63-64.

heritage forced the government to unify many diverse contemporary cultures of France, where five different languages were spoken in the 1870s. In 1879 the republicans, having more firmly installed themselves in power, began the task of reshaping the national and moral conscience. They systematized civic and political education, and rewrote the textbooks for history and the French classics. The increasingly secular society seemed to replace the mystical fervor of religion with secular nationalism. As Raoul Giradet has argued, “Patriotism, which is also a religion, has its symbols and its rites, as its apostles and its martyrs.”⁵¹ But, the framework that they used still depended on Christian prototypes and rituals.⁵²

For a certain period, secular religion emerged to provide a new spiritual template for the Republics. On July 14, 1880, Bastille Day was celebrated as a national holiday for the first time with the ceremonial pomp of the old religious feast days. Joan of Arc, long the symbol of French patriotism as the “Madonna of the Fatherland,” was personified as a republic whose statues were erected in churches and city squares.⁵³ Throughout the century, Joan had been claimed by Catholics as a saint

⁵¹ Ibid., 78.

⁵² Joseph F. Byrnes, *Catholic and French Forever* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 47.

⁵³ Nora M. Heimann, *Joan of Arc in French Art and Culture (1700-1855): From Satire to Sanctity* (Hampshire, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005). Heimann shows how Joan of Arc, as a goddess of war, the personification of republicanism, and a royalist martyr, could be celebrated by the Church, republicans, feminists, and neo-Fascists alike, though the scope of Heimann’s argument is limited to the first half of the nineteenth century. See also Nora M. Heimann and Laura Coyle, *Joan of Arc: Her Image in France and America* (Washington D.C: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 2006).

and martyr, and at the same time by Republicans as a figure of military revolt and a victim of Church oppression. Joan of Arc was an exemplary symbolic figure standing at the intersection of republicanism and Catholicism. French nationalism did not simply replace Catholicism; rather, republican rulers understood and used the framework of religious practices and symbols as a powerful unifying tool. Religious images, in many cases, were recast as cultural and political products.⁵⁴

In conclusion, the French Republics had appropriated Christianity and its rituals as the most prominent cultural and spiritual heritage of French peoples to build a unified France. Moreover, to equate the republican authority with Christian power, the republican leaders paralleled the nation's myths and symbols with Catholic rituals. They used religious images and practices to construct a sense of cultural unity. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate in detail the appropriation of Catholic images and rituals by the early republicans.

⁵⁴ Similar to the French attitude toward Joan of Arc, conservative Catholics and Republicans alike began to promote the Gothic cathedral as the true image of the French nation and its faith: "The Catholics embraced the cathedral idealized by Chateaubriand: for them it represented the purity of medieval belief, the social harmony of French worshipers, and beauty of art dedicated to God. Republics, too, claimed the cathedral; they adopted Hugo's vision of a democratic Middle Ages in which a primitive Republic inspired religious belief. Once again, each faction claimed the cathedral for its own purposes." Elizabeth Emery, "Consuming the Past," 29 and 32.

Chapter Three: Religious Overtones in the First Republic

A. The Festival of the Federation

Festivals as a means of unity

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the first one who proclaimed the importance of festivals to people living under the republican form of government “as a mutual agreement of peace.”¹ He recommended that the festivals be held thirty-six times annually, one for each *décadi*.² In general, festivals offer a sense of belonging for religious, social, or geographical groups. Although the term “festival” derives from a religious context, numerous festivals have cultural or political significance due to their unifying character.³

¹ Jean-Jacques Rousseau states as early as 1758: “Ought there to be no entertainments in a republic? On the contrary, there ought to be many. It is in republics that they were born, it is in their bosom that they are seen to flourish with a truly festive air. To what peoples is it more fitting to assemble often and form among themselves sweet bonds of pleasure and joy than to those who have so many reasons to like one another and remain forever united? We already have more of these public festivals; let us have even more....It is in the open air, under the sky, that you ought to gather and give yourselves to the sweet sentiment of your happiness.” *Politics and the Arts: Letter to M d’Alembert on the Theatre*, trans. Allan Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), 126-127.

² The French republican calendar system was adopted in 1793 during the French Revolution. It sought to replace the Gregorian calendar with a scientific and rational system that avoided Christian associations. The twelve months each contained three decades (instead of weeks) of ten days each, and the year ended with five (six in leap years) supplementary days. The year began with the autumnal equinox and the day on which the National Convention had proclaimed France a republic, 1 Vendémiaire, Year I (Sept. 22, 1792). The other autumn months were named Brumaire and Frimaire; they were followed by the winter months Nivôse, Pluviôse, and Ventôse, the spring months Germinal, Floréal, and Prairial, and the summer months Messidor, Thermidor, and Fructidor. *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*, 2009.

³ The word *fest* derives from the Middle English, from the Middle French word *festivus*, and from the Latin word *festivus*. Festival was first recorded as a noun in 1589. Before it had been used as an adjective from the fourteenth century, its meaning was to celebrate a church holiday. A festival is a special occasion of feasting or celebration, which is usually religious. Festivals provide strength and a new vision that help alleviate fear and confusion and enables the community to look ahead with hope.

As a disciple of Rousseau, Maximilien Robespierre felt that festivals were a source of harmony and unity of all people, a belief that he expressed in the following passage:

Bring men together and you will make them better, for when men are brought together they will try to please one another, and they will only be able to please by those qualities that make them estimable. Give to their reunion a grand moral and political motive and love of honest deeds will enter with pleasure into all hearts, for men do not come together without pleasure...A system of well organized national festivals would offer at once the most gentle of fraternal ties and the most powerful means of regeneration.⁴

The Revolutionary festivals favored by Robespierre cannot only be traced back to Rousseau's letter to Alembert, they were also a logical outgrowth of the civil religion ideal in Book 4, chapter 8 of *The Social Contract*, in which he declared civil religion over Christianity.⁵ According to Warren Roberts, from the very beginning of the Revolution there were spontaneous festivals that grew out of popular gatherings in the countryside. He states, "Villagers mutilated or destroyed traditional symbols, tore pews out of churches, and pulled down weathercocks. Swept up in patriotic enthusiasm, they wore cockades, planted maypoles and liberty trees."⁶

See Sara Kärkkäinen Terian, "Crisis Rituals," in *Encyclopedia of Religious Rites, Rituals, and Festivals* ed. Frank A. Salamone (New York: Routledge, 2004), 102.

⁴ Maximilien Robespierre, *Oeuvres de Maximilien*, vol. 10, 458-459, cited in Warren Roberts, *Jacques-Louis David and Jean-Louis Prieur: Revolutionary Artists* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 270.

⁵ Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 3, ed. Raymon Gagnebin (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 465.

⁶ Warren Roberts, 276.

One response to popular festivals was the organization of national festivals by units of provincial National Guardsmen in an effort to keep forces of disorder in check. Out of these festivals in the provinces came the idea for a national festival to be held in Paris on July 14, 1790: the *Fête de la Fédération*, whose oath-taking ceremony was synchronized to coincide exactly with thousands of local festivals throughout France (fig. 3.1).

The idea of a national festival was partly derived from the revolutionary supporter, Boissy d'Anglas, who argued that an effective educational program would have to appeal to the emotions as well as to the mind. He urged the government to organize national celebrations in which new symbols and images would be used to develop the principles of revolution. He suggested that the Convention refine these methods in order to encourage a sense of brotherhood, to engender the desire to serve others, and to kindle the love of equality.⁷

A festival as a gathering together of the community is capable of producing a collective state of excitement. By providing government or institutional permission, a festival can offer a temporary release of enforced mores and restrictions, thereby promoting a feeling of communal safety and a belief in organization during non-

⁷ F-A. Boissy d'Anglas, *Essai sur les fêtes nationales suivi de quelques idées sur les arts et sur la nécessité de les encourager adressé à la Convention Nationale* (Paris, an II), 128, cited in James A. Leith, *The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France 1750-1799: A Study in the History of Ideas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 109-110.

festival times.⁸ Honoré-Gabriel Mirabeau (1749-1791) proposed that festivals would be devoted to “the cult of liberty, the cult of law,” and that people would celebrate them not by active persuasion, but by transcending reason. He said that the festival organizer could achieve this by appealing to emotions. He believed that reason was not enough to show the truth: “It is a question less of convincing him than of moving him, less of proving to him the excellence of the laws which govern him, than to make him love them by means of his lively and emotional feelings.”⁹ In appealing to people’s feelings and emotions, festival organizers relied on religious models and ritualistic environments.

Mona Ozouf, however, suggests that the new Republican ritual and its festival was an immense disillusionment. She states:

The festivals were merely a false celebration of peace and unanimity of feeling; they became a camouflage, a façade plastered onto a gloomy reality that it was their mission to conceal. This was, in an ironic twist, the very definition that the century had given to the traditional festival...they aimed at spontaneity, yet they were really a combination of precautionary and coercive measures. Their purpose was to bring together the entire community, but they never ceased to exclude some people and to engender pariahs.”¹⁰

⁸ See Michael Taussig, “Transgression,” in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 349.

⁹ Honoré-Gabriel Mirabeau, *Discours sur l’éducation nationale* (Paris: Lejay, 1791), cited in Robert Herbert, David, *Voltaire, BRUTUS and the French Revolution: An Essay in Art and Politics* (New York: Viking, 1967), 143.

¹⁰ Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 31.

Although Ozouf points to their eventual failure, she admits that even in the short run, festivals showed a religious impulse, a fascinating utopianism, and an unexpected union because “in the civic banquets citizens were placed without distinction of age, sex, or fortune.”¹¹ The national festival hoped to achieve a unity recognizing tensions and conflicts within France and within the Revolution. The absorption of differences was the core concept and purpose for these festivals.

The Festival of the Federation

The Festival of the Federation, the great national one, was held in Paris on July 14, 1790.¹² Ozouf more attentively studied The Festival of the Federation in the first year of the new regime to commemorate the first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. The Festival of the Federation was originally a military festival to mark the alliance of nation as a main agent in the National Guard, as Ozouf describes:

A procession of national guardsmen and regular troops, marching, often outside the town, to attend an open-air mass, stopped for speeches for the blessing of the flags, for the taking of an oath. The procession would then come back to the municipal building to draw up and sign the federative pact that had just been concluded. This was often followed by the lighting of a bonfire and, to finish everything off in style, a ball and fireworks. In this basic scheme the essential

¹¹ Ibid., 58.

¹² The term “federation” to be used to designate these early festivals signified the national unity of several groups and regions in one political and social estate of brotherhood. L. Trenard, “Federation,” in Samuel F. Scott and Barry Rothaus, eds., *Historical Dictionary of the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 377-380, cited by Lois Anne Berdaus, 57.

element is the expression of a desire for union.”¹³

A procession began at the Porte Saint-Denis in the north of Paris, proceeded along the rue Saint-Denis, moved along the rue Saint-Honoré, crossed the Place Louis XV, and ended up at the Champ de Mars in a day of continuous rain.¹⁴ A huge amphitheater had been created on the Champ de Mars, which formed a sort of outdoor cathedral, significantly lacking the cruciform plan and orientation of a traditional one (fig. 3.2).¹⁵ A mass was celebrated at the Altar of the Fatherland in the center, the real object of devotion was no longer the Christian God, but the new trinity of “Nation, Law, and King.” A crucifix surmounted the altar, and the low reliefs on the four sides were now devoted to Revolutionary allegories and inscriptions.¹⁶

Moreover, the Festival of Federation expanded the festival to all French regions and all deputies of the regions traveled to Paris to celebrate July 14. An elaborate system of symbolism was devised for the festival that included clasped hands, triangles, obelisks, pyramids, altars of the patrie, angels, compasses—motifs

¹³ Ibid., 41.

¹⁴ Roberts, 276-277.

¹⁵ *Fédération des français dans la capitale le 14 Juillet* (Paris: n.d.), 6-7, cited in James A. Leith, “Symbols in the French Revolution: The Strange Metamorphoses of the Triangle,” in *Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium in Memory of George Whalley*, ed. James Leith (Québec: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium, 1987), 172.

¹⁶ Regarding the detailed sculptural decoration of the Altar of the Fatherland and the triumphal arch that served as the entranceway to the field, see *Plan, allégories et inscriptions de l’Arc-de-Triomphe et de l’Autel de la Patrie, au Champ-de-Mars*. (Paris: de l’Imprimerie de LL Girard, rue de Hasard, 1790), Archives, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal-Arts et Spectacles, Paris. Collection Rondel, *Fêtes, Entrées, Sacres*. Document No. 699, cited in Lois Berdaus, 70-73.

taken from antiquity and Christian alike to assure the widest possible support.¹⁷

Oaths and speeches proclaimed the festival “completes the edifice of our liberty” and puts “the final seal on the most memorable of revolutions.”¹⁸

Ozouf summarizes several important contributions of this Festival to the French people.¹⁹ With aesthetic splendor and emotional excitement, the mere fact of coming together seemed at the time to be a prodigious moral conquest; the festival celebrated the passage from the private realm to the public gathering, extending private feelings of each individual to the common sentiment.²⁰ It allowed an emotional emanation that despotism had never allowed, that is to say the mingling of citizens delighting in the spectacle of one another and the perfect accord of hearts. At the same time, the image of the extraordinary journey that preceded the festival made possible the sense of the unified nation. A delegate from many provincials undertook a journey. Through completing this journey, they discovered that the old fragmented France was disappearing.²¹

¹⁷ For the symbols of Revolution, see James Leith, “*Symbols in Life*,” 105–117.

¹⁸ Ozouf, 32-33.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁰ Regarding this gathering at Champ-de-Mars, B. Poyet expresses, “Men mistrusted one another, having no common interest, hid themselves from one another, and did not know one another, gathering only within their own family, which was the rallying point; the politics of despotism helped to maintain this fatal disunion.” B. Poyet, “*Idées générales sur le projet de la fête du 14 juillet*” (Paris: Vve. Delaguette, n.d.), cited in Ozouf, 54.

²¹ Louis Blanc emphasized this united terrain of France through the journey: “Twelve hundred internal barriers disappeared; the mountains seemed to lower their crests; the rivers were now no more than so many moving belts linking together populations that had been separated for too long.” Louis Blanc,

The federative pilgrimage was the movement back and forth between the provinces and Paris, thus sacralizing French land in a manner that echoed Christian pilgrimage. Every deputy returned home as a transformed figure, from ordinary individuals to converted revolutionaries, which was typical of the federative pilgrimage.²² They came home laden with medals and diplomas conferred on them like devotional mementos by the municipality of Paris. Those “marks” were like a baptism given by Paris to the provinces, an affirmation of the homogeneity of a French territory cut out of the same piece of cloth.²³ Unity and assimilation of all into a nation were the goal of The Festival of Federation.

Ozouf also argues that the Festival presents a means to study the Revolution itself, its system of self-presentation. According to her, the festival was not the cultural mirror of the Revolution itself, but was the Revolution’s utopian vision.²⁴ In other words, the festival sought to weld the nation into a single unity by effacing social differences. The organizers insisted upon unity in the execution as well as the

Histoire de la Révolution française (Paris: Langlois et Leclerq, 1847-1862), cited in Ozouf, 56.

²² James Leith discussed the pilgrims’ quality in a more religious sense: “pilgrims visiting a holy city, birthplace of a new faith, who, when it was over, returned to their homes bearing consecrated objects – pieces of stone from the Bastille mounted in cases along with reproductions of the demolished building, engravings of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, likenesses of the King and Revolutionary leaders, and other such relics. James Leith, “On the Religiosity of the French Revolution,” in *Culture and Revolution*, 172.

²³ Ozouf, 57.

²⁴ The second half of *The Festivals and the French Revolution* analyzes the utopian features that Ozouf claims were common to all the festivals of the Revolution. She shows how all the festivals sought to transcend their historical moments by instituting notions of time, space, and identity which negated the divisions and contingencies of historical reality.

conception of the festival. Officials strove to insure the uniformity and simultaneity of celebrations throughout the nation.

With the same perspective of national unity, David Lloyd Dowd points out that the culmination of the federative festival was derived from the “Great Fear” of French people:

These popular gatherings which pledged mutual aid against a common enemy had spread from village to province to region and had gradually taken on a deeper significance. The participants swore to support the new order and to unite in the common cause of liberty. Mass was said, and the banners of the National Guard were blessed at these ceremonies... The Federation symbolized the new consciousness of patriotic allegiance to the nation and to the Revolution and promised that Frenchmen in fraternal union would defend the revolutionary cause with religious fervor.²⁵

Therefore, the Festival of the Federation was one of the primary means by which different faiths, ethnicities, and social classes were integrated into a sacralized unity, with the French Republic providing protection. Regarding the Republic’s secularizing endeavor, numerous historians have shown how after 1789 the republicans developed a secular political culture.²⁶ It was done sometimes through republican parody of Catholic rituals such as *The cult of Marianne* for the cult of

²⁵ David Lloyd Dowd, *Pageant-Master of the Republic: James-Louis David and the French Revolution* (Nebraska: University at Lincoln, 1948), 45-46.

²⁶ See, for example, Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne au combat: L’imagerie et la symbolique republicains de 1789 à 1880* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979); Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), James Leith, *Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium in Memory of George Whalley*; and Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

Mary, or sometimes through an iconoclasm that resulted in dechristianization, vandalism, and anti-clericalism. In any case, the republicans deployed secularization as a self-conscious rejection of royalist and Catholic rituals and symbols. Ironically, the presentation of rejection by the Republic always revolved around Catholic symbols, rituals, and prototypes.

The Appropriation of Christian Ritual

The appropriation of Christian ritual and iconography in the French Republic was extensive. James Leith asserts that the full depth of emotions experienced during the French Revolution has to be compared to religious passions. He states: “I am defining ‘religion’ as belief in something of ultimate value, something transcending everyday concerns. Belief in such a transcendental order usually involves creeds, symbols, rituals, sacred music, an eschatological vision, and special times and places devoted to what is considered of ultimate value. As we shall see, the Revolution evidenced all these characteristics.”²⁷

Leith continues to enumerate the religiosity and the religious aura felt by people of the Revolution in the Festivals of Federation in an amphitheater, “Several observers recorded the sense of religious awe that the sight of the vast enclosure

²⁷ Leith, “On the Religiosity of the French Revolution,” in *Culture and Revolution*, 171.

inspired. One does not feel that he is entering a field, but rather another world.”²⁸ The merit of this sacralization of space is crucial to make republicanism a means of *religious peacebuilding*, which I will discuss more in later chapters.²⁹

To imbue republicanism with the same degree of spiritual solidarity inherent in Christianity, republican leaders were obliged to camouflage their ideology with familiar Christian iconographies and rituals. The ubiquitous familiarity of these images would provide a reassurance for the public and a facilitation of acceptance.³⁰ Despite the Republic’s de-Christianization and efforts to secularize religious symbols from early on, political discourse remained charged with religious terms such as “Altar of the Fatherland,” “regeneration,” “saint,” “sacred,” “trinity,” “evangel,” “temple,” “sanctuary,” “martyr,” and “pilgrims.”

Republican ideology was grafted onto Catholic signs and practices in many

²⁸ Leith criticized Mona Ozouf’s discussion in *La fête révolutionnaire* on the transference of sacrality from the old faith to civic festivals. He claims that Ozouf failed not only to examine Revolutionary rhetoric at any length excluding the programs in the great art contest for a Temple to Equality and for Temples *décadaires*, but also to explore the religious associations connected to certain symbols or the frequent use of luminosity in Revolutionary iconography. He suggests the variety of evidence that exists about the religiosity of the Revolution and some of its implications. *Ibid.*, 171-172.

²⁹ The term *religious peacebuilding* describes the range of activities performed by religious actors and institutions for the purpose of resolving and transforming deadly conflict, with the goal of building social relations and political institutions characterized by an ethos of tolerance and nonviolence. See David Little and Scott Appleby, “A Moment of Opportunity?: The Promise of Religious Peacebuilding in an Era of Religious and Ethnic Conflict,” in *Religion and Peacebuilding*, ed. Harold Coward and Gordon Smith (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 5.

³⁰ See Joseph F. Byrnes, *Catholic and French Forever: Religious and National Identity in Modern France* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005): “Divorced from Catholicism, the national government needed its own religion substitute. Festivals were planned as ritualized celebrations (speeches, tableaux, parades/processions, and music) of a revolutionary myth (new nation, elect community, pantheon of political heroes) with strong resemblance to the Christian myths and rituals celebrating creation and redemption.” 47.

ways. Leith states that revolutionary symbols such as trees, mountains, and radiating light were appropriated from Christian symbols.³¹ Furthermore, the symbol of Equality—the central revolutionary symbol—was appropriated from the Christian symbol of the divine trinity. By the year of II, the Revolution had produced all the components of a substitute religion of reason. As Leith states, “There were dogmas—the Rights of Man and the Republican Constitution; there were festivals—processions through the streets, civic oaths, and communal feasts; there were martyrs—the trinity of Lepeletier, Chalier, and Marat; there were religious handbooks—republican catechisms, civic manuals, even political commandments and precepts; and there were, as we have seen, sacred symbols and gods and goddesses.”³²

To facilitate identification and familiar acceptance, revolutionaries ironically employed Catholic visual forms with which people were well acquainted. Among the Republican sacralizing ingredients, republican martyrs require closer examination because they informed the very notion of the sacrificial political martyr and exemplary citizen that would be found in Rodin’s *The Burghers*. Likewise, the notion of federative pilgrimage as a means of unifying the nation reiterates Catholic pilgrimage because of its healing capacity and ensuring a homogeneity, also found at

³¹ Leith, “Symbols in the French Revolution: The Strange Metamorphosis of the Triangle,” in *Symbols in Life and Art*, 105-18.

³² Leith, “On the Religiosity of the French Revolution,” in *Culture and Revolution*, 183.

the site of *The Burghers*.

B. Republican Propaganda: *The Cult of Supreme Being*

The First Republic and the Reign of Terror

Soon after the First Republic (1792-1799) was proclaimed in 1792, the radical Jacobins led by Robespierre unleashed the Reign of Terror (1793–1794), which persecuted perceived enemies of the revolution.³³ At least 40,000 people met their deaths under the guillotine after accusations of counter-revolutionary activities. Under this turbulent political context, the First Republic had to foster new emotional and sentimental bonds among the French people, who had been torn apart by different political divisions, factions, and bloody fights against each other. Republican leaders needed a tool that functioned as a spiritual linchpin to promote a sense of safety and security among the population. Because the Roman Catholic Church had collaborated with French kings in building their political and financial power, Catholicism was not a viable solution for the Republic.³⁴

³³ In the context of the French Revolution, a Jacobin originally meant a member of the Jacobin Club (1789-1794), but even at that time, the term *Jacobins* had been popularly applied to all promulgators of revolutionary opinions. In contemporary France this term refers to the concept of a centralized Republic, with power concentrated in the national government, at the expense of local or regional governments. Similarly, Jacobinist educational policy, which influenced modern France well into the 20th century, sought to stamp out French minority languages that it considered reactionary, such as Breton, Basque, Catalan, Occitan, Alsatian, Franco-Provençal and Dutch (West Flemish). Jacobins advocated egalitarian democracy and engaged in terrorist activities during and after the French Revolution of 1789. *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary*, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Jacobins.

³⁴ Nigel Aston discussed the power of Catholic Church among the French: “The law of the monarchy

Christianity had flourished in France since the medieval era, and it has been the most prominent cultural and spiritual heritage for the French. When France turned its attention to eradicating the monarchy, starting in 1789, it followed naturally that the Catholic Church would be the first target of attack. Yet, Robespierre soon realized that republican ideology or reason itself cannot be a “God” for the French. Other spiritual symbols had to be found to win the allegiance of the people to the new constitution.³⁵ Robespierre and Rousseau were afraid that without belief in some powerful being like the Judeo-Christian God, morals would collapse.³⁶

As a result, Rousseau and Robespierre resorted to a new civic religion, The Cult of Supreme Being, wherein Rousseau’s deism and Robespierre’s civic virtue would be combined.³⁷ Regarding the social aspect of religion, Emile Durkheim

accorded the Gallican Church (the most prestigious branch of the Roman Catholic Church in Western Europe) exclusive religious rights. Until 1787 to be a Frenchman was to be by definition a Catholic. At least in legal theory, France could be defined as a confessional state, where membership of the Church conferred rights of access to the life of the state as well. Belief in the veracity of the Christian faith was a given in French society, and the Church saw its mission as teaching the Catholic faith and encouraging its correct practice.....Those who did not belong to the Church were simply non-persons in the eyes of the law. It was the classic embodiment of Bishop Bossuet’s famous claim in the 1680’s that France possessed one faith, one church, one king.” Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France 1780-1804* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 7-8.

³⁵ See David Lloyd Dowd, *Pageant-Master of the Republic: James-Louis David and the French Revolution* (Nebraska: University at Lincoln, 1948), 45.

³⁶ An ardent supporter of Robespierre, Rousseau echoed this concern, “Look at most of the plays in the French theatre; in practically all of them you will find abominable monsters and atrocious actions, useful, if you please, in making the plays interesting...but they are certainly dangerous in that they accustom the eyes of the people to horrors they ought not to know and to crimes they ought not to consider possible.” Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts* 33 cited by Roberts, 271.

³⁷ Deists are the tenth- and eighteenth-century thinkers who held that the course of nature sufficiently demonstrates the existence of God. For them formal religion was superfluous, and they scorned as spurious claims of supernatural revelation. Their tenets stemmed from the rationalism of the period. *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition, 2008. Also see John Leigh, *The Search for Enlightenment: An Introduction to Eighteenth-Century French Writing* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers,

argued in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* that “the essential function of religion was to provide social solidarity. Religion was society’s way of making itself sacred; religion created the ‘emotional bonds’ that made people obey social rules willingly. No society could exist without this sense of its sacredness.” According to him, the time of the French Revolution was an especially dramatic example of this principle: “This aptitude of society for setting itself up as a god or for creating gods was never more apparent than during the first years of the French Revolution.”³⁸

The Cult of Supreme Being

To exploit the social cohesiveness that religion could offer, Robespierre organized a “Festival of the Supreme Being” to inaugurate a new religion in the summer of 1794 (fig. 3.3). In his keynote speech he explained his idea for a “civic religion” worshipping a deist “Supreme Being” while resisting the more extreme tendency of some to eliminate spirituality outright through an atheistic “cult of reason.” As Robespierre declared:

The eternally happy day which the French people consecrate to the Supreme

Inc., 1999): “Deists sought to affirm God’s existence by defending the rationality of religion and attacking the irrationality of Church beliefs, especially miracles, which disturbed the universality and coherence of the universe that Newton had shown to be governed by mechanistic laws. God was viewed chiefly as the Creator who, having initiated and legislated matters, had let the universe run its course,” 71.

³⁸ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. Joseph Ward Swain (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1915), 244-245.

Being has finally arrived. Never has the world he created offered him a sight so worthy of his eyes. He has seen tyranny, crime, and deception reign on earth. At this moment, he sees an entire nation, at war with all the oppressors of the human race, suspend its heroic efforts in order to raise its thoughts and vows to the Great Being who gave it the mission to undertake these efforts and the strength to execute them...He did not create kings to devour the human species. Neither did he create priests to harness us like brute beasts to the carriages of kings, and to give the world the example of baseness, pride, perfidy, avarice, debauchery, and falsehood to the world. But he created the universe to celebrate his power; he created men to help and to love one another, and to attain happiness through the path of virtue...Frenchmen, Republicans, it is up to you to cleanse the earth they have sullied and to restore the justice they have banished from it. Liberty and virtue issued together from the breast of the Supreme Being. One cannot reside among men without the other...Generous people, do you want to triumph over all your enemies? Practice justice and render to the Supreme Being the only form of worship worthy of him. People, let us surrender ourselves today, under his auspices, to the just ecstasy of pure joy. Tomorrow we shall again combat vices and tyrants; we shall give the world an example of republican virtues: and that honor the Supreme Being more.³⁹

Robespierre promoted the ultimate figure, the Supreme Being, who was believed to be watching over France. The cult represents an innovation in the “de-Christianization” of French society during the Revolution, in that Robespierre sought to move beyond the “cult of Reason” by Voltaire to a more theistic devotion to the Godhead.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the cult lacked virtually every quality that makes a

³⁹ Speech to the convention, May 7, 1794 *La Convention nationale*, 21 (Paris, 1842): 683-84. reprinted in *The Gazette Nationale* no. 262, (10 June 1794).

⁴⁰ Voltaire, a French philosopher, had spent most of the eighteenth century dissecting the intellectual underpinnings of religion and the corruption he found rampant in the Catholic Church. A rationalist and an elitist, Voltaire felt religion was a good way to keep the base impulses of the rabble in check, but he advocated a theory of Deism for the upper class. Deism is a philosophical approach to religion that concedes the existence of a creator god, but stipulates that it exerts no influence over human affairs or the physical universe. Voltaire believed the ultimate force of the universe was reason, the cognitive ability of the human mind. This credo was taken to the next natural level, atheism, by many of his

religion last, such as its own history, a preceding religion from which to draw, actual enthusiasm among the religion's members.⁴¹ As Francois Victor Alphonse Aulard outlines, it needs "A ritual structure grounded in some sort of mystical tradition, a charismatic spiritual teacher and a set of clearly drawn beliefs."⁴² The Cult of the Supreme Being stands as an extremely rare example of a theistic civic religion wholly manufactured by government officials, although it did not take long for the whole construction to collapse.

Lynn Hunt evaluates this revolutionary cult as an unsuccessful effort since "most French people retained their allegiance to Catholicism and never demonstrated much enthusiasm for cults of Revolutionary martyrs, the new Revolutionary calendar, or the often-printed Revolutionary catechisms. Revolutionary religion was overall too negative; it was dominated by the urge to purify and subtract, to efface reminders of the past, to root out superstition."⁴³ Nonetheless, revolutionaries had to not only discredit the old regime, but needed to turn to fundamental propaganda. Since the aim of the new religion was to legitimize and sacralize their new ideas and institutions,

contemporaries, who had been significantly shaped by their hatred for the institution of the church. For more on Voltaire's concept of Deism, see John Morley, *Voltaire* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1973), 95-97.

⁴¹ Nigel Aston states that late eighteenth-century France remained overwhelmingly attached to the Catholic faith and practice, and to those ceremonies and processions that characterized urban life and symbolized social unity under the dominance of the Church, see Aston, 56.

⁴² Francois Victor Alphonse Aulard, *Christianity and the French Revolution*, trans. Lady Frazer, (New York: H. Fertig, 1966).

⁴³ Lynn Hunt, "Foreword," in Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, xii.

revolutionary leaders believed it would operate more positively.

Moreover, it is far more valuable to examine the way of the “transfer of sacrality” from the Old Regime to the new, and to understand the cult and ritual of the Republic as a part of the process of creating a new culture since a new political regime requires new values and symbols.⁴⁴ As Leith proposes, “the French Revolution and the Republic involved depths of emotions and feelings, and cannot be understood fully in terms of class interest or struggles for power.”⁴⁵ He asserts that religious passions were among the ingredients of the formation of Frenchness. The attempt to create an aura of sanctity around republican institutions and ideals was clear in revolutionary religion. Also, the revolutionary symbols used in this new religion served to offer focal points around which French people could rally. They seem, therefore, more easily recognized and deciphered, and appropriated from the existing symbols of Catholicism.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ By using rituals and symbols, political leaders can legitimate and sanctify their power. Mary Douglas has emphasized the need for a symbolic center around which the members of society can unite. See *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970). For more on this point see Clifford Geertz, “Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power,” in *Culture and Its Creators: Essays in Honour of Edward Shils*, ed. Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 150-171.

⁴⁵ James Leith, “On the Religiosity of the French Revolution,” chapter for *Theophilanthropy*, another deistic sect, devised by Rousseau and Robespierre, but it is worth pointing out that there are several rituals other than The Cult of Supreme Being as a legal substitute of Catholicism during the time. See Lynn Sharp, *Secular Spirituality: Reincarnation and Spiritism in Nineteenth-century France* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006), 30.

C. Republican Martyrs painted by Jacques-Louis David

The idea that the state could use art to generate favorable feelings among the populace toward the regime was not a unique concept to the French Republics. Throughout the history of France, many thinkers and political leaders had agreed that the arts were not merely ornaments of the social structure, but on the contrary, the arts were a fundamental component of its base. Yet, as David Lloyd Dowd points out, the connection between art and politics had never been emphasized as strongly as it was during and after revolutionary France. As Dowd asserts, “They [the arts] were regarded as one of the most powerful means of attaching the people to the state by satisfying their spiritual needs, educating them, enriching their lives, and by stimulating their patriotism and encouraging a love of liberty. The contemporary political situation, the current cult of antiquity, and the philosophical speculation of the 18th century, all contributed to the development of the theory of a democratic, moralizing art which would serve as an auxiliary to the legislators.”⁴⁷

Without doubt, Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825) was the era’s most passionate artist who expressed the necessity of such propagandistic art projects during the First French Republic. David played an undeniably crucial role in shaping, idealizing, and spreading the legacies of the popular notion of revolutionary

⁴⁷ *Décade philosophique* I, no. 7 (10 Messidor): 401-411. Cf. *Journal de l’Instruction Publique* VII, no. 34: 32-50, cited in David Lloyd Dowd, *Pageant-Master of the Republic*, 80.

martyrdom and the cult of political martyrs. He was either a collaborator or an organizer of the revolutionary festivals. David's revolutionary fervor helped him to dream up spectacles that the Assembly desired: those that were educational, patriotic and strengthened national unity.

Albert Mathiez, one of the first historians to examine the revolutionary cults and secular religion, considers the cults to be the result of a desire to replace Catholic worship with a new cult capable of offering its participants a similar spiritual satisfaction.⁴⁸ New forms of worship, ritual, and feeling were widely spread out after the Revolution, blurring the difference between sacred and secular. Another historian, Albert Soboul, discusses the proliferation of ceremonies surrounding the busts of martyrs of the Revolution in 1793 and the phenomenon that some people actually thought of them as having similar attributes as traditional saints.⁴⁹ He proclaimed that the previous artistic representations were replaced by republican symbols and monuments.⁵⁰

David was an active participant in the Revolution, becoming a Deputy of the

⁴⁸ Albert Mathiez, *Les Origines des cultes révolutionnaires (1789-1792)* (Paris: Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Édition, 1904), 143.

⁴⁹ Soboul, "Religious Sentiment and Popular Cults during the Revolution," in *New Perspectives on the French Revolution: Readings in Historical Sociology*, ed. Jeffrey Kaplow (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1965), 340.

⁵⁰ James Leith, *The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France: 1750-1799* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 111-112: James Leith even more strongly asserts the social function of art: "most patriots now came to equate utility with goodness. It was a serious matter during a revolution thus to be accused of doing nothing to improve society. Under the circumstances, it was imperative for artists to prove that the visual arts could be useful to the republic."

Convention and even voting for the execution of Louis XVI. As the painter of Revolution, David wanted to demonstrate the new role of art, one that elevated it far beyond a mere graphic representation. With the line between art and politics blurred, David skillfully and intentionally carried his artwork to a new level wherein every aspect became politically charged with his Jacobin ideologies. He painted three “martyrs of the Revolution:” *The Death of Le Peletier*, *The Death of Marat*, and *The Death of Bara*. The first two of these paintings, which this study focuses on, were presented to the National Convention of 1793 in tribute to the slain deputies, and hung above the President’s chair of the Convention as two central altarpieces of revolutionary martyrdom.⁵¹

A strong republican and revolutionary activist, David participated increasingly in a radical political climate. Warren Roberts concisely details David’s shift in political ideology and involvement: “During the twenty-two months between cessation of work on *The Tennis Court Oath* and the fall of Robespierre, David had become involved in the politics of the Revolution as a Jacobin, a member of the Convention, a member of the Committee of General Security, the Committee of

⁵¹ Not all conceived the republican bloodshed positively, especially from the viewpoint of political rivals—English painters. William Pressly studies Johan Zoffany’s painting of the Revolution at Paris as an example of English anti-response to the Revolution. He examines the religious dimensions in Zoffany’s paintings, which, for the artist’s purposes, also appropriate Christian themes such as the Apocalypse, martyrs, sacrifice, and salvation. See the chapter “Religious Transcendence,” in *The French Revolution as Blasphemy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 142-154.

General Instruction, and the Revolutionary Tribunal.”⁵²

As Pageant Master of the Revolution, David orchestrated a host of festivals that were an integral part of Robespierre’s effort to galvanize public support for the Revolution and to forge the people into an indivisible Nation. David’s martyr portraits, in conjunction with his organization of festivals, centered visually and thematically on propagating the paramount ideal of revolutionary martyrdom. David depicted the highest form of republican commitment, patriotic sacrifice, and its sublime quality of revolution, which provided a strong foundational structure for his work during this time.

1. *The Death of Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau*

Revolutionary Martyr

Jacques-Louis David’s first martyr portrait was *Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau*. Formerly a marquis and member of the judiciary nobility, Louis Michel Le Peletier soon converted to revolutionary reforms and became a deputy, active in the move to suppress all privileges for the nobility.⁵³ On January 20, 1793, on the eve of the King’s execution, Philippe de Pâris, a former member of the king’s guard and ferment

⁵² Roberts, 258.

⁵³ Helen Weston, “Witnessing Revolution,” in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives* ed. Dorothy Johnson (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 123.

royalist, set out to assassinate the Duke of Orleans, whom he perceived as a traitor for supporting the king's execution. He failed to find the Duke in his habitual Palais Royal restaurant, but found Le Peletier instead. Le Peletier admitted that he had voted for the king's death, whereupon Pâris thrust his sword into Le Peletier's chest and killed him. Consequently, Le Peletier became a revolutionary martyr in opposition to the Royal or Christian martyr. Robespierre and his committees agreed to honor Le Peletier four days later by displaying his corpse at the place des Piques on a pedestal.⁵⁴

Before David painted this portrait, he proposed a competition for a marble bust of the martyred deputy. The bust was to capture the last impression made by Le Peletier's face when his body was carried to a hero's interment in the Panthéon on the day before.⁵⁵ In advance of that procession, David had been intent that the public impact made by the martyr's remains be as unforgettable as possible.⁵⁶ As illustrated in the anonymous artist's prints, the body of Le Peletier was put on view atop the

⁵⁴ David Andress, *The Terror: The Merciless War for Freedom in Revolutionary France* (New York: Macmillian, 2006), 151. The author describes this figure as "Christ of a pietà with the head of a Greek god."

⁵⁵ Thomas Crow, ed., *Emulation: David, Drouais, and Girodet in the Art of Revolutionary France*, (1995; repr., New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 156.

⁵⁶ "The ceremony originated at the Place des Piques (the Place Vedôme), with the cortege departing around 8:00 am. It made stops at several stations as it wound through the streets of Paris: before the meeting room of the Société des Amis de l'égalité et de la liberté; across from the Oratory; on the Pont-Neuf facing the Samaritaine; before the meeting room of the Société des Amis des droits de l'homme; at the crossroads of the rue de la Liberté; at the place St-Michel; and then, finally, at the Panthéon." *Ordre de la March...aux Funérailles de Michel le Peletier*, Archives, C.A.R.A.N., Paris, Doc. No. 94, 6-7, cited in Berdaus, 208.

pedestal at the center of the place Vendôme (fig. 3.4).

Classical garlands and incense burners surround an inscription bearing the words of patriotic defiance that Le Peletier was supposed to have uttered in his last moments. Treating the victim's flesh as a malleable form in an elaborate pictorial tableau, the artist arranged the corpse on an antique couch, lowered the toga in which it was wrapped, and propped the torso against a cushion so that the fatal wound would be exposed to the crowd. The lying-in-state culminated in the deputies arranging themselves on the steps, high above the heads of the crowd, to witness the president of the Convention placing a laurel crown on the head of their fallen comrade.⁵⁷ Laurel represented victory over death, and a civic crown symbolized the veneration of Roman history. Although various antique Greek elements were used in this print, the overall composition of the figures reiterates Christian iconography; a central altar situates the main figure surrounded by saints in a symmetrical arrangement, the figure's deification and glorification by suffering and sacrifice. He seems to represent a dying hero or Christian martyrs, and his sacrificial death was elevated as an act of the sublime.

David completed the funeral tableau of Le Peletier to record a memorable

⁵⁷ "The propaganda possibilities of the situation were not lost upon the members of the Jacobin Club. Believing themselves threatened with similar violence, Le Peletier's colleagues took measures to protect themselves and to arouse public opinion against the royalists by exalting their fellow regicide as a "Martyr of Liberty." *Journal des Jacobins*, debates, 342 (January 22, 1793): 3; *Premier journal de la Convention nationale*, 22 (January 22): 87-88, cited in Dowd, *Pageant-Master of the Republic*, 100.

republican martyr on canvas.⁵⁸ This may have been the origin of the life-sized painting, which he was able to present as a gift to the Convention on 29 March 1793, an astonishing two months from the day of the funeral. It was immediately hung above the President's chair of the Convention. Although the painted portrait is now lost, the drawing by Anatole Devosge after David (fig. 3.5) preserved the displayed body on the couch and cushions and transferred the painting to an indeterminate pictorial space where a sword of Damocles hangs by a thread above the body, the deputy's ballot for the king's death speared by the blade.⁵⁹

The sword of Damocles, in antique tradition, symbolized the threat of impending disaster. With regards to Le Peletier, the sword points to the gash on his side. In Devosge's drawing, the sword can be seen to pierce a single sheet of paper bearing the words of Le Peletier's infamous statement, "Je vote pour la mort du tyran." The combined effect of this imagery powerfully reinforces the notion that Le Peletier gave his life in order to free France from the tyrannical institution of the

⁵⁸ See Edmond Bire, *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris pendant la terreur* (Paris, 1895-8), II, 9: "David, avec un chevalet et une toile, prend place sur le piédestal de la statue de Louis XIV, où est exposé le corps de Le Peletier. Le peuple a eu ce spectacle du peintre copiant ce sanglant modèle." Cited in Crow, 156.

⁵⁹ In 1975, after the fall of Robespierre, the painting was returned to David who subsequently sold it to Michel Le Peletier's daughter, Mme. de Mortefontaine. In the years following the Revolution and contrary to her republican father, she became a staunch Royalist opposed to everything that her father and the Revolution had stood for, and subsequently everything associated with them. Ultimately, she destroyed the painting, along with all related works and copies that she could locate and purchase. Today the portrait exists only in the form of a torn engraving by P.A. Tardieu and a drawing by Anatole Devosge. See Roberts, 285.

monarchy. In this respect, David's use of the Sword of Damocles serves as a clear application of allegorical imagery to express and reinforce a radical revolutionary political message. Likewise, it echoes the Christian iconography of the Pieta: It recalls how Christ gave his life to save his people from sin, for many religious paintings shows Christ with a bloody gash on his side right after being crucified (fig. 3.6).⁶⁰

Regarding the unusually positioned sword, Donna Hunter analyzes it as a "double meaning structure."⁶¹ According to Hunter, agents of royal authority once wielded the sword to kill Jacobins, but after that incident, patriots or rather revolutionaries appropriated the sword to execute a king and his supporters. The patriots surely had qualms about their own right to dispense such terrible justice. Hunter shows that the sword in David's painting is precisely the sort of "single unity" that combines disparate and contradictory meanings.⁶² These meanings would have been tacitly conveyed and understood by the audience, for example: "I remind you (the regicides) of the risk you run, and I cause you to reflect on what it means to decapitate a King"; "I embolden you (all those the Jacobins would describes as

⁶⁰ The dying Jesus is basic symbol of peacebuilding in Christianity; Jesus presented himself as the fulfillment of a relationship between God and humans inaugurated at the creation, revealed through the law and the prophets, and aimed toward a condition of fullness. In republican terms, dying republican martyrs show the same symbol of a peacemaker to create a better society through their sacrifice. See Andrea Bartoli, "Christianity and Peacebuilding," in *Religion and Peacebuilding*, 154.

⁶¹ Donna M. Hunter, "Swordplay: Jacques-Louis's Painting of Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau on His Deathbed," in *Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography, and Art*, ed. James W. Heffernan (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1992), 170.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 171.

Patriots) to prosecute counterrevolutionaries”; “I threaten you (any one the Jacobins would describe as counterrevolutionary) with similar fate”; “I legitimate your (Jacobin) use of the sword, i.e. the guillotine.”⁶³ By legitimating their political power and violence, the Jacobins tried to oppress the counterrevolutionaries in a most ambiguous way. The intention of presenting the revolutionary authority was intensified by consecrating Le Peletier as a Christian martyr.

The National Convention first became aware of the *Le Peletier* project on March 29, 1793 with David’s speech, in which he described his forthcoming painting:

I shall have done my duty if one day I cause an aging patriarch, surrounded by his large family, to say, ‘Children, come and see the first of your representatives to die for your freedom. See how peaceful his face is-when you die for your country, you die with a clear conscience. Do you see the sword hanging over his head by just a hair? Well, children, it shows how much Michel Le Peletier and his noble companions needed to rout the evil tyrant who had oppressed us for so long, for, had they set a foot wrong, the hair would have broken and they would have all been killed. Do you see that deep wound? You are crying, children, and turning your heads away! Just look at the crown; it’s the crown of immortality. The nation can confer it on any of its children; be worthy of it.’⁶⁴

David presented the legacy of his painting in much the same manner as the father in his description passes on the legacy to his children. Clearly, David intended the ensuing legacy to extend and endure into the future. David implicitly associated a

⁶³ Ibid., 180.

⁶⁴ Antoine Schnapper, *David*, trans. Helga Harrison (New York: Alpine, 1982), 151, cited in Roberts, 285.

quality of timelessness with the ideals that would follow. Furthermore, by evoking a familial setting, David subtly suggested a direct relationship between the ideal of Le Peletier's heroism and that of family, in other words, the intersection between the republican public cause and civilian private interest, which might serve as a united metaphor for the people of France in a republican society.

Le Peletier's self-sacrifice facilitated a most noble cause: the freedom of the French people. Le Peletier's martyrdom stands as an even loftier ideal for having toppled such an entrenched institution, and for having brought freedom to France after more than a millennium of oppression of monarchy. David also spoke of the rewards that history would bestow upon Le Peletier for his martyrdom. His declaration, "when you die for your country, you die with a clear conscience," intended to inspire and motivate all French people to elevate their commitment in serving their country to comparable levels. This proposed republican commitment becomes all the more clear as David's patriarch asserts that such dedication and martyrdom bring to the true republican citizen a "crown of immortality." David's *Le Peletier* embodies several central qualities of an ideal republican—duty, dedication, courage, and anti-monarchical activism, and directly encourages one and all to strive for similar heights.

With the republican messages connected to the Christian doctrine on

immortality, the subtle allusions to Christ's dead body cannot be disregarded.⁶⁵ Due to David's restraint from including overt Christian references, David's rendering contains "no intimation of palm and crown, of saintly attributes and otherworldly recompense."⁶⁶ However, the mixture of antiquity and Christian iconography had been developed in visual art since early Christianity, especially in Eastern Rome.⁶⁷ David's *Le Peletier* effectively cultivated a symbiotic relationship between these two competing tendencies: Christian and pagan. In a sense, the work represents the strong will to unite these opposing political stances.⁶⁸ This tension of contradicting power climaxed in the image of the martyr. Tom Gretton expands the meaning of martyrdom to include a transfigured murder. He says,

A murder is a negation, of life and of the principles which that life embodies. A murder represented as a martyrdom negates the death that is its instance, so some of the sword's symbolic force, like that of the martyred body, comes from its contextual status as the negation of Pâris's act. But a martyrdom also transfers power from the killer to the victim. Thus, the raised sword is in some sense embodying the transfer of power from murderer to victim.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Anita Brookner, *Jacques-Louis David* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1980), 111.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁶⁷ The issue of distinguishing between Christian and antique symbolism had been discussed since the early stages of Christianity since republican pagan symbols had ensured the political legitimacy long after Christianity was accepted as a national religion. For the examples of the mixture of paganism and Christianity, see "Framing the Sun: the Arch of Constantine and the Roman Cityscape," Elizabeth Marlow, *Art Bulletin* 88, no. 2 (2006): 223-242.

⁶⁸ Dorothy Johnson captures the meaning of this painting as a legacy for the nation stating that "it is not the features of the hero that will be transmitted into posterity, but rather the patriotic meaning of his death." Dorothy Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David: Art in Metamorphosis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 100.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

The sword in the Le Peletier image is offered to the viewer to take up, as an extension of the martyr's last wish, the cause of ending tyranny. The term martyr, originally derived from the work *martus*, signifies a witness who testifies to a fact of which he has knowledge from personal observation. Later, the term designated a person who gladly suffers death rather than deny what they believed in, not only Christian belief but their faith.⁷⁰ As a witness and resistor to tyranny, Le Peletier's death was a testament to his deeply held republican views, thus transforming him into a political martyr.

2. *The Death of Jean-Paul Marat:*

Political Meaning of "the Friend of People"

David's second martyr portrait, *Jean-Paul Marat* (fig. 3.7), was presented to the Convention to hang as a pendant to the *Le Peletier* and may also be interpreted as a deified republican martyr. A journalist, Marat was one of the most radical and zealous supporters of the revolution. His aim was to eradicate royalists and Girondins alike. He published names of counterrevolutionary suspects in his journal, *L'Ami du Peuple* (1789), and had them brought to trial, which usually resulted in execution.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Maurice Hasset, *Catholic Encyclopedia: Martyr* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910).

⁷¹ With his journal, *L'Ami du Peuple*, Marat had an exceptional influence over popular sentiments. Joseph Clarke states: "The newspaper transformed him to the champion of social egalitarianism of the

After his death David transformed him into the icon of a revolutionary hero and sacrificial martyr.

Marat was assassinated by Charlotte Corday, a twenty-five-year-old woman from Caen, whose name appears clearly on the letter held in Marat's hand in the painting.(fig. 3.8) She was a Girondin and therefore devastated by the executions of so many like-minded supporters. On July 13, 1793, after repeated efforts to gain access to Marat's apartment, she eventually deceived him into believing that she would give him the names of suspects in Caen. Once Corday had access, she assassinated him. As Warren Roberts asserts, Corday imagined that the assassination of Marat would be exemplary, and it would bring an end to revolutionary violence.⁷² Conversely, this event transformed Marat into a revolutionary martyr, shielding the Jacobin government against charges of partisan extremism. David intensified this transformation because he represented Marat as divine, virtuous, and loyal to the Patrie.

When David undertook the project of Marat's portrait, he had been asked to create a means by which to propagate the revolutionary political legacy of Marat.

sans-culottes. The sans-culottes [working class radicals] related to Marat and his lifestyle, which was often verging on poverty, and to the manner of his speech which was often very plain." In *Commemorating the Dead in Revolutionary France, 1789-1799* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 176.

⁷² Roberts, 288.

Thus, Marat's death provided a vehicle for David and Jacobin revolutionaries to promote their radical nationalist ideologies through the commemoration of a republican martyr. During his speech of November 14, 1793, David conveyed the revolutionary political ideals and meaning of his painting. In his first sentence, David declared that "the people recall their friend," drawing an allusion to Marat's journal *l'Ami du Peuple*, which was used as a forum to express his political views.⁷³ "Le peuple" refers to Frenchmen, a title that suggests equality between French people and France's politicians.⁷⁴ "Le peuple" is both "the transcendental collectivity and the particular group which cannot look after its own interest, those who have nothing but a call on an unstable kin structure, a shifting neighborly solidarity, or a recourse to violence with which to confront hardship and bad luck."⁷⁵ That is the reason why David captured the moment when Marat, seated in his bath, was writing for the good of the people.

⁷³ Excerpted from Daniel and Guy Wildenstein, *Louis David: recueil de documents complémentaires au catalogue complet de l'oeuvre de l'artiste* (Paris: Fondation Wildenstein, 1973), in James Leith, *The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France*, 71.

⁷⁴ In 1694, the *Dictionnaire de l'Academie* defined the nation as "all the inhabitants of the same state, of the same country who live under the same laws and use the same language." R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA, 1992) cited by Michael Rapport in *Nationality and Citizenship in Revolutionary France: The Treatment of Foreigners 1789-1799* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 17. Brubaker argues though that the intentional 'nationalizing' tendencies in revolutionary ideology were never fully applied because the revolutionaries were realistic enough to understand the practical problems that they faced, such as the difficulty of uniting the French populace, which was linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse, 29.

⁷⁵ Tom Gretton, "Marat, l'Ami du peuple, David: love and discipline in the Summer of '93," in *David's The Death of Marat*, ed. William Vaughan and Helen Weston (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 46.

Regarding the concept of the people, there had been a significant shift from monarchical rule to a revolutionary regime. As Tom Gretton asserts, the ancient regime ideology of paternal love and monarchical discipline had not functioned very well by the second half of the eighteenth century. Gretton noticed the formation of a new social stratum, a so-called “bourgeois public sphere,” that is the business of ruling and being ruled is open to public scrutiny and debate, and that not only the king, but “public opinion” is legitimately able to identify a public interest.⁷⁶ Gretton suggests that the monarchical conception of “Le Peuple” entailed a contradictory pair of ideas: “Le Peuple” as the generality of subjects, and as the target of disciplinary authority. In this emerging discourse “Le Peuple” is the name given to all those who are members of the polity. The people for whom Marat was working and dying represent an ideally imagined and newly created democratic public.

Idealization of the Image of Marat

David had to produce a public image that would grant official legitimacy to Marat as a popular hero and martyr. He thought of it in terms of multiple and

⁷⁶ Gretton, 46. Thomas Crow uses a version of Habermas’s conceptual framework for a discussion of the impact of the idea on recent studies of the crisis of the ancient regime; see *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985). Arlette Farge, however, refutes the idea that the public sphere was only a bourgeois space, a legitimating abstraction. Her work established the vigor of a developed discourse among the poor and unruly concerning public affairs, and the intimate connection of that discourse with a language, and an acting out of violence. See Arlette Farge, *La Vie fragile: violence, pouvoirs et solidarités à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1992).

simultaneous forms of commemoration. The possibilities included the mortuary preparation and display of the body at the funeral, the funerary rites and burial, a painted representation at the moment of death in the bathtub, and an engraving of Marat's face as a type of death mask for which he drew the model, and an exhibition of the painting together with that of Le Peletier for public veneration, a eulogy, and a request for panthéonization.⁷⁷ All David's efforts went into constructing an idealized image of Marat.⁷⁸ He had to be shown as strong, hence the muscular arms; as ascetic and incorruptible, evidenced by the lack of decoration on the wall, a packing case for a desk, a darn in the sheet; as hardworking, explained by the presence of two quills; and as suffering for the cause of the Republic, which is why David presents him working in a bath draped with sheets that he used to soothe his debilitating illness and aggravating skin condition.

David shows Marat on the point of dying: this view of Marat, at the very moment of his death, presents a most intimate and vulnerable image of the slain martyr. Marat's nudity and vulnerability intensified the sense of intimacy between him and the viewer. Moreover, Marat is not totally dead—his right hand still holds the

⁷⁷ Archives Nationales, C 262, no. 578, cited in Dorothy Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David*, 101.

⁷⁸ Clark analyzes how much David idealized the martyr's body in the *Death of Marat*. T. J. Clark, "Painting in the Year II," *Representations* 47 (Summer 1994): 39, cited by Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines: The Art of Jacques-Louis David after the Terror* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 125.

quill—the artist has in fact preserved him as forever alive and speaking to the people of France as their friend.⁷⁹ The vulnerability and intimacy of Marat typified a republican civilian philosophy that suggests an egalitarian political message: making ordinary man a republican hero that can be found in a later republican artist like Rodin.

David transforms Marat into a heroic nude, though bearing the bloody traces of a violent death. The position of the body and the exposed wound recall not only the antique hero, but many precedents from Christian iconography, such as Christ as *the Man of Sorrow*, *the Deposition*, *the Pietà*, as well as that of numerous martyred saints (fig. 3.9). This elision of the boundaries between sacred and profane, heroic and mediocre, public and private, pagan and Christian, is one of the most fascinating stylistic and conceptual accomplishments of Revolutionary France. It fits into David's goal of a democratization and a sacralization of his work in both the artistic and political fields.

Christian Iconographic References

The Death of Marat is reminiscent of the figure of Christ being taken from the cross (fig. 3.10). It is to evoke powerful emotive associations from proponents of both

⁷⁹ Weston, 124.

the traditional Christian faith and the new revolutionary civic faith.⁸⁰ Michael Marrinan illustrates this notion: “By definition, an apotheosis implies that the honored person is transported or transformed from a human state of being to a divine state. But in *The Death of Marat*, the magisterial interpretation of David of a perpetual ‘coming and going’—between concrete matter and invisible spirit, between the vanishing moment and the eternal present—nowadays appears to be the brilliant solution to the problem of representing a secular saint for an age of secularity.”⁸¹

In achieving this balance between spiritual and secular faiths, *The Death of Marat* demonstrates its ability to adapt, ever so subtly, in accordance with the political climate of the period—an implicit compromise of the Revolution’s rejection of the Church. On the other hand, Anita Brookner asserts that David was a Theophilanthropist, the new syncretic devotion that proclaimed the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, one’s duty to one’s fellow men, and the venerable nature of all the major creeds. She continues:

It is tempting to suppose that the modest creed of Theophilanthropy may contain the explanation for David’s quietness of performance in the years 1795-99. A basic system of morality beloved of the eighteenth-century Utopians and

⁸⁰ Sophie Monneret mentions how David maintained the realistic setting, and at the same time he idealized the martyr in every way: wounded in the chest, head turbaned in linen, he rests in his bath like a Christ from a deposition. Sophie Monneret, trans. Chris Miller and Peter Snowdon, *David and Neo-Classicism* (Paris: Edition Pierre Terrail, 1999), 111.

⁸¹ Michael Marrinan, “Images and Ideas of Charlotte Corday: Texts and Contexts of an Assassination,” *Arts Magazine* 54 (April, 1980): 162.

sanctioned by the love of God would certainly appeal to the beleaguered and subdued recidivist. There was the added attraction of lack of dogma and ceremony: every morning one uttered a brief exhortation to God and every evening one examined one's conscience. Seasonal flowers and fruit were placed on altars as Theophilanthropic offerings. Emphasis was placed on virtue, brotherly love, and religious morality.⁸²

Although Theophilanthropy was blended with The Cult of Supreme Being, it is hard to deny that his Christian interest prevailed in his painting. David had appropriated Christian iconography continually to fulfill his republican ideology, which influenced successive republican artists such as David d'Angers and Rodin.⁸³ Thomas Crow emphasizes this aspect: "the fundamental grid of the composition is put to work stabilizing the body and conjuring up the cross. Marat's pose, the instruments of violence, the inscriptions, the plain wood of the upright box, the insistently perpendicular compositional order, all evoke Christ's sacrifice without leaving the factual realm of secular history."⁸⁴ David's painting of Marat is a condensation of classical beauty and religious spirituality.

⁸² E. and J. de Goncourt, *Histoire de la société française pendant le directoire* (Paris, 1879), cited by Anita Brookner 129.

⁸³ This study excludes the precedent artists of the Second Republic but for the discussion of the heroic sacrifice for the nation with a religious feeling expressed in the work of David d'Angers, see Jacques de Caso, *David d'Angers: Sculptural Communication in the Age of Romanticism*, trans. Dorothy Johnson and Jacques de Caso (Princeton: Princeton University, 1992), chapter 3, "The Throne and the Altar," 62-94.

⁸⁴ Thomas Crow, *Emulation*, 165-166.

The Pageant-master of the Republic

Marat was murdered on 13 July 1794, and his funeral was conducted in a quasi-religious atmosphere, which was designed and orchestrated by David. Dignified and noble for the funeral ceremony on July 16, 1794, the embalmed body of Marat was displayed for public viewing in the transformed former church of the Cordeliers (fig. 3.11). Marat's body was laid out on a bed, and his lower body was covered with a sheet, in the same manner for an ancient hero and not dissimilar to representations of Christian pietàs. In the funerary ritual David conceived of the corpse itself as a form of representation, an idea directly related to the art of funeral sculpture. David's using the body of Marat challenges traditional attitudes governing funerary rituals.

As Dorothy Johnson points out, "for David the public's encounter with and experience of the dead body took precedence over established funerary rites and commemorative practices for ordinary individuals in which the body was virtually occulted. The artist capitalized upon the impact of the gruesome sight of the corpse which would function as a didactic sign to inspire pity, horror, and veneration. He made the displayed body, in fact, into an awe-inspiring symbol of the meritorious qualities of the individual's life which ended abruptly in the midst of a final act of

virtue.”⁸⁵ David envisaged a dead body of Marat as an antique “hero,” and sacred saint who was martyred and who deserved to be worshiped by the people. The Church of the Cordeliers drew prospective devotees who venerated his memory by pausing to meditate at his tomb.⁸⁶

The National Convention voted to transport his ashes to the Panthéon and panthéonization finally took place on 21 September 1794. Regarding the political meaning of panthéonization, Jean-Claude Bonnet states in *La naissance du Panthéon*: “Thus the Friend of the People seemed, for a time, to be the only one to retain some degree of influence after the shipwreck...No doubt there is in it an illustration of the uncertainties and the contradictions of the thermidorian Republic at its beginnings. The panthéonization of Marat appears in effect as an out of focus event that is absolutely typical of the period. It was undoubtedly accepted as both a guarantee of revolutionary continuity and a symbolic revenge against Robespierre.”⁸⁷

Speeches on this occasion called for acts of revenge and self-sacrifice from those present, while incense was also burned and the crowds chanted, “Ô Coeur de

⁸⁵ Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David*, 103.

⁸⁶ The cult of the martyrs of liberty was an important element of French revolutionary culture. See Ashley Shifflett, *The Cult of the Martyrs of Liberty: Radical Religiosity in the French Revolution* (Ottawa: The University of Guelph, 2008).

⁸⁷ Jean-Claude Bonnet, *Naissance du Panthéon: essai sur le culte des grands hommes* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 290-91, cited by Michael Fried, “David/Marat: The Self-Portrait of 1794,” *David after David: Essays on the Later Work*, ed. Mark Ledbury (Williamstown: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007), 198.

Marat, Ô coeur de Jesus.” This chanting is crucial evidence of how the image of Marat was assimilated with that of Jesus, alluding to the notion that they shared the same sacrificial love for the people. Marat was buried in the garden of the Cordeliers club and his heart, placed in a porphyry urn, was suspended from the club’s ceiling. Many see the events of this funeral and the subsequent emergence of the cult of Marat as religious actions similar to familiar Christian rituals, despite the increasing push toward de-Christianization at this time. The funeral, however, was also modeled on ancient Roman republican funerary practice, underscoring its civic and secular character.⁸⁸ Therefore, the funeral rite shows another intersection of religion and republicanism in the same way that David expresses it in his painting.

During this time, David participated in the cult rituals and festivals as much as his artistic endeavors. He organized activities, such as ruling on the creation of a Central Museum. He orchestrated the first festival in April 1792. It was to commemorate the actions of the Swiss guards who had mutinied against their officers in 1790 and consequently sent to work as galley slaves. Now hailed as martyrs, they were liberated and feted, while their officers, regarded as aristocrats and counterrevolutionaries, were denigrated accordingly.⁸⁹ The most ambitious of the

⁸⁸ Helen Weston, “Witnessing Revolution,” in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, ed. Dorothy Johnson (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 124.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

festivals for which David was responsible for the choreography was the Festival of Fraternity for August 10, 1794, which was to commemorate and celebrate the first anniversary of the fall of the monarchy (fig. 3.12).

A print by Blanchard shows the five stations stopped by the ceremonial cortege (fig. 3.13). But David's speeches show that he had universal ideals in mind rather than the actual episodic nature of the progress of the Revolution and that he was thinking, as always, in allegorical terms for their representation. David was again combining the overarching ideals with propagandistic effect and religious ritual of pilgrimage where people perform a procession to encounter a saintly object and transform themselves. As Helen Weston asserts, "Festivals were expected to help people distinguish between vice and virtue, between the admirable and the abhorrent. These polarities were made visible primarily through allegorical figures—tyranny versus freedom, monarchy versus republic, aristocratic versus the people—not only at the time of festivals but through a flourishing print culture."⁹⁰ The orchestration of the festival in the First Republic is ritualized in a sense that ritual is a repeated performance, "a strategy for applying metaphors to people's sense of their situation in such a way as to move them emotionally and therein provoke religious experiences of

⁹⁰ A detailed ceremonial procession and its routine was described in Weston, *ibid.*, 126.

empowerment, energy, and euphoria.”⁹¹ By using religious aura and rituals, the First Republic could legitimize their political discourse and action, and tried to formalize and perpetuate their philosophy and exclusive reign.

⁹¹ James W. Fernandez, “Persuasion and Performance: On the Beast in Every Body and the Metaphors of Everyman,” *Daedalus* 101, no. 1 (Winter 1972): 54-56. Cited in Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimension*, 73.

IV. Rodin's Catholicism and Religious Subjects

A. Rodin's Experience of Catholicism

The Early Years: Conflict between Catholicism and Humanism

Born into a Catholic family, Auguste Rodin was christened in the medieval church of Saint Medard in Paris. His mother, Marie Cheffer Rodin, took him to mass at the Sainte Geneviève church.¹ A letter written by Rodin's sister, Maria Rodin (fig. 4.1), confirms that Auguste was a religious person in his early years. Maria was unusually affectionate toward her brother, even managing his life. An instance of this occurred when Rodin was twenty and had to draw a number in the national lottery that determined who would be taken for the imperial army. Maria prayed hard for her brother's exemption from the army, and vowed to honor that day. Even though the lottery draw was in Auguste's favor, he decided to leave the family and become independent. Maria reproached him severely: "Do not appeal to God, as you have in the past....You should return to religion; religion alone will bring you happiness. You have fled, separated yourself from the Faith."²

From this letter, we can surmise that Rodin had been a practicing Catholic but

¹ Dossier: *La Religion de Auguste Rodin*, Paris: Archives in Musée Rodin.

² Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 23.

that he no longer was so inclined toward religion. Maria wrote another letter right before she left the family to enter a convent.³ This time she encouraged her brother's faith, that he should never cause their parents pain, that he should attend Mass on Sundays, say his prayers before going to bed, and "never, never speak ill of priests."⁴ Ruth Butler suggests that this unusual relationship with Maria prevented Rodin from finding a real companion in his life: "Auguste idealized his sister, and his feelings were not without erotic overtones...Maria had been a total commitment, and in a sense no one could ever replace her."⁵ In 1862, Maria died two months after she entered the convent.⁶ With overwhelming grief, Rodin decided to follow her path by entering a Catholic order.

Rodin entered the The Society of the Blessed Sacrament founded by Father Pierre-Julien Eymard in 1863, exclusively for the worship of the Holy Eucharist. This community was far from a conventional religious retreat, for "it had been created in direct response to the poverty and ignorance of working-class Parisians...Father Eymard's guiding principle was that to save society we must revive the spirit of

³ Maria's entering into the convent was prearranged in her mind when she prayed for her brother. She wrote a letter regarding her decision to her aunt and uncle: "It was always the thought that my brother would get a bad number which would have had such terrible consequences for me. I put everything in God's hands, thinking that it might be according to his will....If it had turned out otherwise, it would not have been my vocation." *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁶ Butler found the community that Maria Rodin joined. It was the community of "Saint-Enfant-Jésus." See note 5 in chapter 2, *ibid.*, 519.

sacrifice, and to this end he preached a highly personal doctrine of suffering and self-abnegation.”⁷ The Society had a mission for the Parisian population of poor immigrants from the provinces that continued to crowd into the poorest districts of Paris.

After several months of religious practice, with its training and therapy, Rodin began to recover from the trauma of Maria’s death and emerged from his personal crisis.⁸ Father Eymard embraced an intimate and contemplative form of Catholicism, with an emphasis on social function, which was part of a new surge of popular piety.⁹ But this experience had left Rodin with decidedly ambiguous feelings toward the Church. Frederic Grunfeld, in his biography on Rodin, quoted several contradictory statements by Rodin about Catholicism. Rodin expressed a vague nostalgia for the monastic life: “I wish I could live in such peace.” Or “If you mean by religious the man who follows certain practices, who bows before certain dogmas, evidently I am not religious.” During an interview in 1915 with Ambroise Vollard for his burial place,

⁷ Frederic V. Grunfeld, *Rodin: A Biography* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1987), 38-39. Father Eymard spoke to the novice about social injustice and their devotion: “You have not been admitted into this society to become good and virtuous men, nor even to increase the amount of your merits, or to obtain greater glory in heaven...you are here solely to immolate yourselves, body and soul, to the service of your Eucharistic King.”

⁸ Rodin’s Catholic practice as a monk was only for six months from December 1862 to May 1863.

⁹ Ruth Butler describes new types of Christian art and Catholic practices at the end of the nineteenth-century and brings up Rodin who exemplifies this tendency: “Rodin is the best sculptor to lead us into viewing the dichotomy of the religious situation at the end of the century. His inclination toward personal religious feelings was genuine.” See “Religious Sculpture in Post-Christian France,” in *The Romantics to Rodin* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and George Braziller, Inc., 1980) 88.

Rodin stated that “I’ve always been a simple man. I just want a hole in my garden... and above everything, no priests! Otherwise I wouldn’t be a true heir of the French Revolution....I am not afraid of the devil.”¹⁰ However, Rodin’s commitment to The Society of the Blessed Sacrament was of the utmost importance in relation to his exposure to spiritual, political, and artistic fields. Rodin’s interest in the spiritual realm continued to manifest itself throughout his artistic career. Besides this brief monastic interlude, there are a few other hints about his religious life, notably his abundant personal collection of religious books.¹¹

Rodin made his first portrait sculpture in this community. He made a bust of Father Pierre-Julien Eymard (fig. 4.2) who permitted Rodin to work in a monastery garden to make his bust in 1862. Through this endeavor, Rodin may have found his true vocation as an artist.¹² After Rodin left The Society of the Blessed Sacrament, Catholic themes appeared throughout his work, such as biblical figures or stories,

¹⁰ Grunfeld, 40.

¹¹ About half of Rodin’s book collection is about religion, mainly Catholicism—its origin, its ritual, and its art, specifically medieval art, cathedrals, and guides to pilgrimage. Such books that Rodin remarked on include: *La Cathédrale de Reims 1211-1914*, *La Cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris*, *Description de la Cathédrale Reims à l’usage des visiteurs, XIXe siècle: Les Philosophes et les écrivains religieux*, *L’Eglise Abbatiale de Westminster et ses tombeaux*, *Notice historique et archeologique sur l’Abbaye de Saint-Jean des Vignes de Soissons: Guide pour le visiteur des ruines*, *La Cathédrale de Tours*, *Commentaire littéral sur tous les livres de l’ancien et du Nouveau Testament*, *Histoire artistique des Ordres Mendiant*, *Étude sur l’art religieux en Europe*, *Reflexions sur la miséricorde de Dieu*, *L’Art religieux de la fin du Moyen-Age en France*, *Le Saint Evangile de Jesus-Christ selon Saint Matthieu*, *Jesus, L’Apocalypse*. Some of his books are related to Spiritism such as *Les Grand initiés: esquisse de l’histoire secrète des religion*, Les Livres de Rodin, The archives of Rodin Museum, Paris.

¹² Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 35-36.

martyrs, heaven and hell, the fight of Good and Evil along with human desire, and pagan themes.¹³ He had struggled with his ongoing conflict between Catholic spirituality and humanistic consciousness, a conflict that was typical of his era.¹⁴

Rodin's Catholic Imagination

Rodin's Catholic imagination is most obvious in his single book, *The Cathedrals of France* published in 1914 (fig. 4.3).¹⁵ Charles Morice (1861-1919), a Symbolist writer and critic, helped Rodin to assemble and compile the sculptor's drawings and sketches of cathedrals, including scattered jottings on scraps of paper and the backs of old bills. Although the book was published in the last phase of Rodin's life, the drawings had been done during his early career on his various trips.

¹³ Rodin's *Gates of Hell* can be regarded as the manifestation of his conflicting interest. Antoinette Le Normand-Romain points this out: "They (*Gates of Hell*) show his (Rodin's) major sources of interest, his admiration for Gothic architecture and the Italian Renaissance, for Dante, Michelangelo and Baudelaire." *Rodin: The Gates of Hell* (Paris: Musée Rodin, 1999), 34.

¹⁴ The subject and direction of *Gates of Hell*, for example, was representing his tragic nature and it was not far from the fin-de-siècle pessimistic tendency. See Gustave Larroumet, "Rodin" *Le Figaro* (12th January, 1895): "Rodin has an obscure and deep sense of human suffering, of the fatality of the passions, of the burden of pain which a capricious decree has imposed on the world. He has nourished and aggravated this feeling: he wanted to bring out all that it contains of pity and despair." Cited in La Normand-Romain, *ibid.*, 20.

¹⁵ Three French versions of this book were published. One version is composed of selected writings of Rodin with abundant photographs by Gérard Rondeau, and a preface by Serge Bonnet, *Les Cathédrales de France* (Reims: Editions de l'Atelier, 1996). The previous version has 134 pages with a preface by Charles Morice, *Les Cathédrales de France*, (Paris: Editions Denoël, 1983), which is based on the first version with one hundred drawings, *Les Cathédrales de France, avec cent planches inédites hors texte* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1914, 1921). This book was kept in print in different languages. A German translation, *Kurt Wolf Verlag, Leipzig*, undated, no translator named, reproduces thirty-two drawings in sepia or black and white. An English version, translated by Elisabeth Chase Geissbuhler, as eighty-eight reproductions (Boston: The Beacon Press English translation, 1965).

Those sketches inspired Rodin's later works.¹⁶ These notations with preliminary forms were prototypes that would develop into his masterpieces.¹⁷

Rodin was fascinated by the unifying concept of the cathedral. Morice emphasized this quality in his introduction: "Unity! This is what produces the incomparable splendor of Christian art, this indissoluble union of all of the elements that compose it. Architecture, painting, stained glass, sculpture, gold and silver work, tapestry, embroidery...it all originates from the One, it all comes down to the One."¹⁸ It provided a comforting response to fears about the fragmentation and dispersion of society, the loss of tradition under the political battles between Catholics and republicans, and the growing individualism and materialism of an increasingly secular French society.

As an artist Rodin believed this search for unity and harmony were to be

¹⁶ The earliest note may have been done during Rodin's two visits to the cathedral in Reims in 1871-1877. In 1877, he went to Beauvais, Senlis, Soissons, Laon, and Amiens. His book tells that on walking tours over the next five years his inspiration toward the cathedral deepened.

¹⁷ For the detailed history of the collection and publication of Rodin's written and graphic notation, see Elisabeth Chase Geissbuhler, "Rodin's Abstraction: The Architectural Drawings," *Art Journal* 26, no. 1 (Autumn, 1966): 22-29. She mentions the history of the illustrations in the Rodin collection in the Print Department of the Philadelphia Art Museum, volume 21594: "These sketches and notes were made by Rodin in a tour through France anticipating his work on *The Cathedrals of France*. Originally they were included in five small notebooks: Inlaid for their protection enabling a better study of the material and adequate binding. They were purchased in February 1926 from Claude Roger Marx of Paris, and were part of the Roger Marx collection of Rodin material owned by Roger Marx, critic and author, an intimate friend and admirer of the Great Sculptor," 23-24. Geissbuhler also admires the drawing itself having a quality of abstraction rendered by light and shade, the delicacy of line and form, 28.

¹⁸ Charles Morice, "Introduction," in *Les Cathédrales de France*, by Auguste Rodin (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1921). Morice sees the cathedral as "un lieu religieux, un lieu social, un lieu artistique" (91). He also particularly admires the cathedral for its "majestic symphonic unity" (131).

achieved by the wholeness of different forms, perfect proportion, and light, governed by nature's law. To realize this goal, Rodin expressed his belief in spontaneous, lyrical, and at times quasi-mystical tones in his book. Often he traveled on foot, trudging through rain or snow or sunshine, like a French migrant worker, or a medieval pilgrim. He even promoted these pilgrimage sites: "My aim—don't forget this—is to persuade you to tour for this glorious road: Reims, Laon, Soissons, Beauvais..."¹⁹ He did not explain in his book why he was promoting the pilgrimage: does this promotion derive from aesthetic or an religious belief?²⁰

Through this book we can assume that Rodin's Catholicism is not institutional and practical, but more a matter of culture and spirit. As his younger experience had prefigured, Rodin's attitude toward Catholicism was ambivalent and fluctuated. For him, Catholicism was the spiritual heritage of the French people. Along with the national revival of medievalism in the nineteenth century, Rodin turned his attention to the medieval era in order to find an idea of a true France and its origins. His religious feelings were moderate and expressed only in the disguised form of an interest in light, the ritual of mass, musical tone, and biblical iconographies in

¹⁹ Auguste Rodin, *Les Cathédrales de France* (Reims: Editions de l'Atelier, 1996), 12. "Mon but, ne l'oubliez pas, est de vous persuader de prendre à votre tour ce chemin glorieux: Reims, Laon, Soissons, Beauvais..."

²⁰ Ronald R. Bernier, in his book on cathedrals, assigns a chapter "Writing the Gothic." In that chapter, he analyzed Rodin's writing on cathedrals and classified Rodin's view as "Gothic as nature," "Gothic as memory," and "Gothic as History." He connects Rodin's remarks on the concept of nature by "Chateaubriand and Ruskin who deeply felt experiences of nature, like deeply felt experience of beauty in art, were essential to the spiritual life of man." See *Monument, Moment, and Memory: Monet's Cathedral in Fin de Siècle France* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 68.

sculptural decoration throughout the book.

His book makes clear that he admired the cathedrals of France not only because of their aesthetic and spiritual virtues, but also because of their symbolic meaning of national pride: “The French cathedrals were born out of the French nature...For me, when I mention of cathedrals, in present days, I am thinking of all the villages of France; in the past, of the genius of our ancestors; in the present and in the past, I am thinking of the beauty of the women of our country.”²¹ Rodin extolled Catholicism and the French *esprit* simultaneously. In the spirit of his own pilgrimages to the great Gothic cathedrals, he promoted the ritual practice of pilgrimage among the French as a means of praising and strengthening their national spirit, tradition, and identity.²²

The Last Days

During his last days, Rodin stayed in Meudon for a larger space to work and store his collection. While he was there, he acquired an oversized fifteenth-century carved oak crucifix from Brittany, and installed it at the foot of his bed (fig. 4.4). At

²¹ Auguste Rodin, *Les Cathédrales de France* (Paris: Editions Demoël, 1983), “Les cathédrales françaises sont nées de la nature française...Pour moi, quand je parle des cathédrales, au present, je pense a tous nos villages de France; au passé, je pense au génie de nos ancêtres; au present et au passé, je pense à la beauté des femmes de notre pays,” 149-150.

²² “Les oeuvres supérieures sont restées dans nos villes de province, qui ne sont pas encore internationalisées.” “Je propose qu’on institue des pèlerinages à toutes les oeuvres de plein air épargnées encore par la restauration: églises, châteaux, fontaines, etc.,” *ibid.*, 299.

18 feet high, the top ripped a hole in the ceiling, while the bottom of the cross protruded into the dining room below. Rodin may have gazed at the cross during his last days until his death. Arline Tehan notes Rodin's attachments to the cross: "During the Great War (1914-1918) when fuel was almost impossible to obtain and the big house was freezing, Rodin insisted on a fire in his bedroom, not for his comfort, but for the preservation of his crucifix. Contemplating it on waking and retiring, he mused, 'Some of us through pain, some through joy, we all go to God.'"²³

Tehan also describes an interview with Rodin about the greatest influence in his life, Rodin replies: "I was brought up by a pious Christian mother. See again how Christianity provokes and decides a great art."²⁴ Rodin confessed his ceaseless attraction to religion and its relation to his art during his last days.²⁵ His ardor for medieval architecture, his awareness of human limits, and his conflict between religious spirituality and human physicality are all manifested in his work, either in religious themes and Christian iconography or secular themes.²⁶ These factors are all

²³ Arline Tehan, "The Catholic Imagination of Auguste Rodin," *The American Catholic* (August/September 2001): 30.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ In the interview with the curator, Benedicte Garnier, Rodin also expresses his veneration toward Catholicism and the beauty of Gothic art. Benedicte Garnier, "Histoire du Christ en Croix de la Chambre de Rodin," in *Auguste Rodin: I la seva relacio amb Espanya Fundacio "La Caixa,"* 19 Sep. – 3 Nov. 1996 (La Conja: Museo Pablo Gargallo, 1996), 138-139.

²⁶ I did not assign a chapter for his religious themes, which are relatively few, but it shows in several categories: first, the religious figure, such as *St. John the Baptist* (1878) and *Head of St. John the Baptist on a Platter* (1887), second is the martyr, such as *The Martyr* (1885) and *Joan of Arc* (1882-1907), and the third relates to a religious concept, such as *The Gates of Hell* (1880-1917), although Tancock regards the last as more of a Baudelairian spiritual preoccupation than the theological ordering

evidence of his inclination toward Catholicism and spirituality, as seen in *The Burghers*, though not as a specific Christian iconography, but as reminiscent of martyrs and saints, and the act of pilgrimage.

B. National Pilgrimage Movement

Gothic Revival Movement

Rodin's appreciation of cathedrals and religion should be seen in the context of the widespread Gothic revival movement in France during the 1880s. The Gothic revival may be viewed as part of the resurgence of Catholic ritual and pilgrimage, and renewed interest in Gothic cathedrals. All of these components are gradually reclaimed by republican culture as it built French nationalism. Debora Silverman asserts that the aggressive anticlerical movement of the Third Republic "was actually met in the 1880s with a powerful explosion of a new robust and emotionalist popular piety that was deeply anticlerical while adapting Catholicism to old and new devotional currents. A parallel process of resurgence and reconfiguration takes place in elite culture."²⁷ She continues that "this range of creativity suggests the interaction

of Dante, Tancock, *ibid.*, 94.

²⁷ Debora Silverman, "Transcending the Word?: Religion and Music in Gauguin's Quest for Abstraction," in *French Music, Culture, and National Identity, 1870-1939*, ed. Barbara L. Kelly (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 151-152: She mentions Emile Zola's novel *Le Rêve* to Émile Bernard's and Maurice Denis's modernist calvaries. Rodin's *Cathedrals of France* and Debussy's prelude, "La Cathédrale Engloutie."

of older cultural legacies in new forms and the shared search by many avant-garde artists to find a replacement for the binding power and totality that had been provided by traditional religion.”

The religious revival occurs in both political fields: counter-republican and republican. They both adopt Catholicism for their purposes. For the Catholic, this renewal induced a strong reclaiming of their belief and the religion’s miraculous power: “the Marian apparitions and visions were tolerated and even sanctioned by the official clergy in their efforts to counteract republican anticlericalism and to recuperate dynamic popular forms into the center of a renovated Catholic church. The new mix of official and popular ecstatic devotion emerged in the unprecedented pilgrimage movement of the 1870s.”²⁸

The Republicans reacted to Christian and royalist enthusiasm toward the Gothic cathedral since 1830, and tried to bring the Gothic cathedral into harmony with the principles of the new liberal government and to legitimate the republican ideals it propagated such as freedom, social solidarity, and the nation.²⁹ Stephanie Alice Moore Glaser argues that the Gothic revival was an extremely serious endeavor, for

²⁸ Silverman, “Transcending the Word?” 154.

²⁹ France’s acceptance of the Gothic cathedral as the national spirit became possible in the 1845 by Viollet-le-Duc who claimed: “cette architecture. . . née chez nous, crée par nous, que tout l’Europe nous dispute et nous envie, qui n’a d’analogué nulle part, qui appartient exclusivement à un coin de notre territoire.” Viollet-le-Duc and Eugene-Emmanuel, “De L’Art étranger et l’art national,” *Annals Archeologiques* 2 (May 1845): 288-289.

the edifice was a heavily weighted symbol where political, religious, and aesthetic ideologies converged.³⁰ Indeed, it was a gravitational point for many discourses, even conflicting ones, for conservatives, liberals, Catholics, and non-believers alike considered the cathedral to embody their most cherished ideals.

Glaser states that the French understanding of the Gothic cathedral diverged into two principal movements: the first, referred to as “christianizing,” moved into the transcendental; the second, understood as “secularizing,” became increasingly nationalistic. The first movement is rooted in neo-Christian thought and became increasingly concerned with the cathedral’s moral or dogmatic symbolism, not the physical edifice. In contrast, the secularizing movement imposed upon the cathedral the positive Revolutionary ideals, placing the edifice within an intellectual construct that presented it as a symbol of the nation. Republicans completely historicized the edifice in order to prove the inextricable link between the Gothic cathedral and the French people, and to make it correspond to the French Revolution.³¹ Glaser placed Rodin in the complex double position of a republican, and at the same time, a neo-Christian.³²

³⁰ Stephanie Alice Moore Glaser, 7-8. She demonstrates how to reconstruct the meaning of the Gothic cathedral across literary, art historical, and architectural disciplines.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

³² *Ibid.*, 488-489.

Rodin's reception of the cathedral and Catholicism might be more complex than Glaser suggested. One of Rodin's close friends, Judith Cladel, witnessed his passion for cathedrals, where "his soul feels the sacred mystery," and are "the cradle of his artistic faith."³³ Rodin's diverse feelings about cathedrals is summarized in his reply to the question by Cladel:

I am pervaded by the marvel of this art; but I cannot as yet explain it to myself. The Gothic is the world foreshortened. Where am I to begin? For more than thirty years I have been accumulating and comparing my observations. Perhaps eventually I shall succeed in deducing the rule, *the law of divine intelligence*; but perhaps I shall not have sufficient time. The it will be the task of another, younger than myself, who will start his researches earlier, and who, besides, will have been informed by me."³⁴

Cladel also mentioned that Rodin's happy restlessness upon his return from each pilgrimage would be soon formulated in his mind and expressed in his work as "the law of divine intelligence."³⁵ Whether his was a spiritual, nationalistic, or artistic approach to cathedrals, Rodin participated eagerly in the Gothic revival movement. Glaser's assertion is convincing if we consider that Rodin appreciated the aesthetic

³³ August Rodin, *Rodin: The Man and His Art with Leaves from His Notebook*, compiled by Judith Cladel, trans. S.K. Star (New York: The Century Co., 1918), 182. Cladel further noticed that Rodin in his later days learned to penetrate its (Gothic art) principles and understand its methods, 183.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

³⁵ Cladel mentioned Rodin's application of Gothic principles into his unrealized project, *The Tower of Labor*. In this unrealized project, Rodin hoped to organize labor collectively, and to gather about him a legion of artisans to work together on a monument which should become in a certain sense the cathedral of the modern age. The subject of which was to be the glorification of labor, that triumphant force of our present civilization. *Ibid.*, 184.

value of the cathedral, and found in Christianity a sense of spirituality.

Pilgrimage as a National Integration

Rodin's attitude toward Gothic cathedrals and Catholicism was part of a national unifying project that Marcel Proust supported. Proust harshly criticized his contemporaries' disregard of the larger context of Gothic artworks in which they originally functioned.³⁶ Proust wanted to bolster Catholicism to argue for the aesthetic value of the cathedral itself, including the liturgy as an artistic form. He even argued for government support of religious services as performing arts or a total work of art.³⁷ When Rodin compared cathedrals to "a fastener that reunites everything," "the knot, the pact of civilization,"³⁸ Rodin is in agreement with Proust about the importance of the cathedral as a national spiritual and artistic symbol. Rodin advocated for them to be described as national treasures tantamount to the nation's survival: "The country cannot perish as long as Cathedrals are here. They are our Muses. They are our Mothers."³⁹

³⁶ Marcel Proust, "La mort des cathedrals," in *Le Figaro* (August 1904), cited in Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowitz. They also analyze the ways in which people tended to take individual works of medieval art such as stained glass and tapestries out of their religious context for use in private homes and entertainment venues in the fin-de-siècle. See especially Chapter 5, "From Cathedral to Cabaret: the popularity of medieval stained glass and tapestries," 111-141.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

³⁸ Rodin, *Les Cathédrales de France*, 214.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 63-4.

Along with the Gothic revival, the Catholic movement flourished, promoting public penitence, religious festivals, and pilgrimages. For instance, The Cult of the Sacred Heart was the French Catholic response to the Revolution and the secular republican ideal. The Cult of the Sacred Heart was becoming the dominant symbols of royal and Catholic counter-revolution. Gothic revival movement and related rituals also served one of the most effective tools for the Republic to unite the nation and to heal any affliction of divided France was to renew the spirit of pilgrimage.⁴⁰ A manual devoted to religious travel defined pilgrimage in 1899 as “a pious process performed through a public procession to a privileged sanctuary in order to enter into more intimate communication with God.”⁴¹

However, pilgrimage to the Sacred Heart in Montmartre for the contribution to the construction of a church had a significantly different function in that “there was no theophanic presence or at least not one that served as the pilgrim’s object of spiritual desire, contact with which served as metaphor for the healing the pilgrim sought.”⁴²

⁴⁰ Raymond Jonas demonstrates the political history of The Sacré Coeur de Montmartre that fulfilled a variety of symbolic and therapeutic imperatives. Archbishop Guibert wanted the monument to be a symbol of national union, of national reconstruction, of a national return to French values, understood as Catholic values (240). He describes the pilgrimages there, during the period of *la revanche*, imploring the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. See *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 215-220.

⁴¹ *Manuel du Pèlerinage Lorrain a Notre-Dame de Lourdes*, 12th ed. (Saint-Die: Imprimerie Humbert, 1899), 92. Cited in Emery and Morowitz, *Consuming the Past*, 144.

⁴² Jonas, 218.

Instead, it suggested more didactic and political function.⁴³ Pilgrims went out of their way to transform pilgrimage into a national experience by promoting pilgrimages to Paris and Montmartre from all over France: “With the temporary chapel, and the organized processions and site visits, pilgrims were given an experience of Montmartre that would make them feel part of a project larger than themselves...By participating in a penitential pilgrimage, they were told, they participated in a project of national spiritual renewal.”⁴⁴

In promotion of such pilgrimage, French political leaders suggested God’s mercy on France, restoring a moral order, the united nation and pride of Frenchness, which the Festival of the Federation had advocated during the First Republic. Rodin was aware of the function of pilgrimage and wanted to offer his public sculpture as a sacred site. Charles Morice indicates that “*The Burghers* contains the most beautiful Gothic figures, and the sculpture evokes a threshold of another cathedral.”⁴⁵ Rodin also kept identifying the cathedrals as part of French nationalism, “the French cathedrals are born out of French nature”. . . “The best works are left in our province, which is not yet international.” He also proposed that “we should initiate pilgrimages

⁴³ The Sacré-Coeur, Montmartre, was begun in 1874 as a memorial to the Franco-Prussian war. The church was not completed until 1919, after the First World War. See Michael J. Lewis, *The Gothic Revival* (New York: Thames & Hudson Inc., 2002), 172.

⁴⁴ Gabriel P. Weisberg, *Montmartre and the Making of Mass Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 106.

⁴⁵ Auguste Rodin and Charles Morice (preface), *Les Cathédrales de France* (Paris : Éditions Denoël, 1983), 133-134.

for all the work in ruin left out of restoration: churches, castles, fountains, and so on.”⁴⁶

Among Rodin’s book collection, *Cathédrales de France devant les Barbares*, extols ruins of cathedrals which were thought of as conserving the souls of France, and also praised Rodin’s *The Cathedrals of France* with its images of ruins.⁴⁷ The republic increasingly demanded a common history that would unite its regionally diverse inhabitants into a single group, whose members would identify their interests with those of French as one entity. The Gothic cathedral was a structure that reminded people of some obligation that they had incurred, such as a great public declaration that the group had pledged itself to honor.⁴⁸ The internalized communion between the viewer and the monument, common to the cult of ruins, is accomplished by means of the cathedral.⁴⁹

Standing in both camps, Rodin was eager to promote and communicate to his

⁴⁶ Ibid., 149 and 299.

⁴⁷ Jean de Bonnefon, *Cathédrales de France devant les Barbares* (Paris: Se vend à la Société d’Editions, 1915), 9.

⁴⁸ John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *The Necessity for Ruins* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 91.

⁴⁹ As Jonas suggested, “in an age of mass politics, crowds in public places...can be taken to embody “public opinion.” Pilgrimage was the most effective way for Catholics to generate such entities and to exercise similar pressures, to pose as a scaled-down version of the nation itself...Participation in pilgrimage to Montmartre implied participation in an energetic, collective, public, and patriotic undertaking...Through the practices of monument building, metaphor for moral reconstruction, and holy pilgrimage, metaphor for the re-Christianization of the public realm, the French episcopate and clergy used the Montmartre site not only to foster a new spirituality but also to inculcate Catholic France with a vision of France’s heroic Christian past, its decadent, secularized, post-revolutionary present, and a glorious future.” Ibid., 219-220.

contemporary audience that Catholicism and republicanism formed a harmonious unity, as shown in his sculpture titled, *The Cathedral(Two Hands)* (1908) (fig. 4.5). *The Cathedral* is made of two hands, which combines a unique gesture in the same sculpture. It consists of two right hands belonging to two different people. The inner space created by the composition echoes the interior of Gothic architecture. Hélène Marraud suggests that it might have been renamed *The Cathedral* from the original title, *The Ark of the Covenant*, when he published his book *The Cathedrals of France*.⁵⁰ Rodin's greatest ambition of uniting the Catholic spirit and patriotic republicanism was successfully manifested in these harmoniously joined hands.

For Rodin, the Gothic cathedral and medievalism stood larger than the structure itself: he admired the cathedral for its suggestive quality of decay and melancholy touched by romanticism, for the religious piety it expressed, for its superb engineering and the collective labor it necessitated, for its role as a patriotic national symbol, and for providing a refuge far from the dislocations and traumas of the industrialized and modern society in which he lived.

⁵⁰ Hélène Marraud, *Rodin: Revealing Hands* (Paris: Editions du Musée Rodin, 2005), 73.

Chapter V: Rodin's Republicanism and Public Sculpture

A. The Formation of Rodin's Republican Ideas

This chapter examines the political climate in which Rodin worked and how this climate shaped his own political ideas. The taciturn Rodin rarely verbalized his political opinion, but he expressed his republican ideologies through his sculptures.¹ Given the importance of his sculpture in relation to his political views, this chapter builds on the work of Rose-Marie Martinez, who offers the only comprehensive study to date that examines Rodin's political attitudes, particularly those people who helped him to succeed in the political scene.²

Understanding the development of his political ideas may first be approached by examining Rodin's social and educational background, as well as his circle of acquaintances who had influenced and supported him politically. These republican leaders saw his sculpture as the symbol of their liberal ideology and protected its realization. Yet, Rodin's republican work did not promote the one-sided political propaganda. His interest in the expression of personal emotions and human

¹ Rodin's interest in politics is evident in his abundant book collection, now preserved in the archives of the Musée Rodin. The collection contains a significant number of works on the theory of politics as well as religion, illustrating how much Rodin was simultaneously interested in both fields. Most of his books were either about political philosophy, specifically republicanism, or religious doctrines and practices, mainly those of Catholicism. See appendix B for the list.

² Rose-Marie Martinez, *Rodin, L'artiste face à l'État* (Paris: Séguier, 1993), 10.

spirituality requires more of a multi-layered interpretation of his concept of public sculpture.

Rodin's Social Class and Education

Auguste Rodin was born into a modest Parisian family. His father, Jean-Baptiste, moved to Paris with many other provincials in the first wave of industrialization. He came from a family of cotton-merchants, and obtained a subordinate post at the Prefecture of Police.³ Auguste's mother, Marie Cheffer Rodin, also was raised in a humble family; her father had been a lieutenant in the Armies of the Republic and later supported his family as a weaver, working at home before their emigration to Paris.⁴ Socially, the Rodin family fell midway between the proletariat and the petite bourgeoisie—a fairly widespread intermediate class in the mid-nineteenth century. Rodin's modest family background defined his political inclination toward middle-class to lower-class Parisian interests.

Rodin's educational background also helped him to form his ideas of the democratization of art. From 1854 to 1857, Rodin studied at the *École Spéciale de Dessin et de Mathématiques*, later called the *École des Arts Décoratifs*. It was also

³ Bernarard Champigneulle, *Rodin* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1967), 10.

⁴ Ruth Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 4.

commonly known as the “Petite École” to distinguish it from the École des Beaux-Arts, which, as the training ground for the great artists of France since the seventeenth century, was known as the “Grande École.”⁵ Rodin applied for admittance to the École des Beaux-Arts in 1857, 1858, and 1859—each time without success.⁶ The Grand École was the guardian of an academic tradition inherited from Greco-Roman classical antiquity, and for them Rodin’s naturalistic drawing and bold modeling did not adhere to the requisite conformism. Undeterred, Rodin trained as an artisan in the Petite École. Afterward, he attempted to unite fine and applied art to challenge the prevailing hierarchy of art at the time.⁷

Debora L. Silverman’s study deals with the Third Republic’s effort to unify applied art and high art to create a national cultural heritage.⁸ One of the official centers for craft innovation was the Central Union of the Decorative Arts, formerly

⁵ Champigneulle, *ibid.* He points out that “Most of the pupils in the Petite École went there to acquire a training which would enable them to enter the service of ornamental engravers, commercial artists, goldsmiths, jewelers, textile manufacturers, embroiderers, lace-makers, and so on,” 14.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷ The artistic union that abolishes the hierarchy between fine and applied art constituted one of the significant issues in the parliament around 1900, and part of its foundation derived from the defense of Rodin, see Pierre Vaisse, “L’esthétique du XIXe siècle,” *Le Débat*, 44 (Mars-Mai, 1987): 102, cited by Martinez, 21.

⁸ Silverman points out the state’s direct actions on behalf of craft modernism: “Among its initiatives during the 1890s were the patronage of innovative artists such as Emile Gallé, Auguste Rodin, Albert Bernard, Eugène Carrière, and Louis Ralize; the opening of a renovated museum, the Musée de Luxembourg, designed specifically to house new works of art in all media; participation in a national Congress of the Decorative Arts held in Paris in 1894; the issuing of new coinage; cooperation with the Japanese government in promoting Japanese applied arts in France.” See Debora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style: Studies on the History of Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 172.

the Petite École, where Rodin studied and afterward acted as a continuing member. Rodin's contribution to the Central Union's exhibitions and his commission for the Central Union museum confirmed his commitment to applied art and his lifelong affirmation: "I am an artisan."⁹ Rodin's humble family background, his educational history, and his belief in democratizing art enabled him to participate in the militant working-class movement at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ Rodin's interest in the militant trade unions and class-consciousness was not fully explored in his art work because, as Albert Boime states, as a more conservative and modest republican, Rodin could not easily step forward and develop his ideal into an art form.¹¹

Supporting Political Figures

Once Rodin was admitted into the Salon with his bronze *Saint John the*

⁹ Rodin's first major commissioned monument was to decorate a massive doorway for the Central Union's planned Museum of the Decorative Arts. Through his contacts with Antonin Proust, then president of the Central Union, and Edmond Turquet, the under secretary for the Beaux-Arts, Rodin had been selected to produce the portal to the new museum, which he entitled *The Gates of Hell*. See *ibid.*, 243.

¹⁰ Regarding the socialist response to Rodin's work, see Alain Beausire, "Rodin et le socialisme," *Quand Rodin exposait* (Paris: Editions Musée Rodin, 1988), 41-47: He mentioned that "Guy Desazars de Montgailhard affirmed Rodin's art touched more directly the working class (41); "Marius-Ary, socialist literate, wrote "Rodin social" published in *L'Echo de la semaine du 30 septembre 1900*, emphasizing Rodin's attachment to the lower class and their frank emotion and repudiation of the high class (42); "Camille Mauclair in her "L'Art devant le socialisme," designated Rodin's concern on popular people and their emotion. (43)."

¹¹ Albert Boime insists that Rodin was a conservative republican and that his struggle to make the worker heroic was qualified by his participation in the social hierarchy. According to Boime, Rodin's energetic efforts on behalf of labor reflected the social encyclicals issued by Leo XIII in 1891, who restated Catholic beliefs in private property, the sanctity of the family, and the social role of religion, but also recognized the right of workers to their own organizations and to decent living conditions. See *Hollow Icons: The Politics of Sculpture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1987), 106.

Baptist in 1881 (fig. 5.1), which was purchased by the state, galleries and salons where Parisian intellectuals gathered opened their doors to him.¹² During the first years of his success, Rodin frequented salons that had a liberalist tendency. These salons received Rodin as a symbol of liberty since he expressed a novel approach to art that was free from the traditional artistic canons: Rodin reversed normal academic practice in terms of a model's pose and gesture, with bold and realistic rendering.

Although St. John was a popular and codified subject in the Salon, Rodin approached the subject in a new way. For example, he first included an identifying attribute in his drawing, which was a cross supported against the left shoulder, but he removed the cross by the time of the 1881 Salon.¹³ John Tancock suggests that the possible reason for this omission was that it was treated as unnecessary and its line

¹² A "salon" is different from the Salon, or *Salon de Paris*, which was the official art exhibition of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. A salon is a gathering of the social, political, and cultural elites under the roof of an inspiring hostess or host, partly to amuse one another and partly to refine their taste and increase their knowledge through conversation and readings. The word salon first appeared in France in 1664 from the Italian word *salone*, the large reception hall of Italian mansions. Literary gatherings before this were often referred to by using the name of the room in which they occurred, like cabinet, *réduit*, *reulle* and *alcôve*. See *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: le XVIIe siècle*, revised edition by Patrick Dandrey (Paris: Fayard, 1996), 1149. The salon evolved into a well-regulated practice that focused on and reflected enlightened public opinion by encouraging the exchange of news and ideas. By the eighteenth century, the salon had become an institution in French society and functioned as a major channel of communication among intellectuals. For more on this point see Evelyn Gordon Bodek, "Salonières and the Bluestockings: Educated Obsolescence and Germinating Feminism," *Feminist Studies* 3, no. 3/4 (Spring-Summer, 1976): 186.

¹³ The figure of St. John was a popular subject, although he was mostly depicted in his youth. Rodin's decision to undertake this subject, according to Tancock, was due not so much to a desire to emulate his contemporaries, but more for the excitement caused by the sudden appearance in his studio of a model-to-be, a professional peasant from Italy. For more on this see John L. Tancock, *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin: The Collection of the Rodin Museum Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1976), 357.

produced a distraction of the figure's contours.¹⁴ Rodin, however, may have been more strategic by rendering a humanized saintly figure appropriate in a secularized republican political scene. With this work, the hostesses of radical salons recognized his liberal tendency.

Martinez observes that several salon hostesses introduced Rodin to important republican political figures and took him to political gatherings to obtain state commissions. Among the most important salons for Rodin's career, as Martinez points out, were those of Madame Juliette Adam and Madame Ménard-Dorian. Those two were the most famous liberal salons where the most influential republican figures frequented during the Third Republic.¹⁵

According to Martinez, Adam's Salon was the most liberal, and she ceaselessly supported Rodin's career. Her salon was frequented by Léon Gambetta and the other republican leaders against the conservative reaction of the 1870s.¹⁶ Her

¹⁴ Ibid., 363.

¹⁵ James F. McMillan observes that "In high society, the role of the salon and the hostess was also overly political, with no attempt made to disguise political affiliations. Under the Restoration, certain salons were known as centers of ultra-royalism...Others had a reputation for liberalism. The *ultra* salons were the most exclusive: those of the *liberals* were more open to talent. In each case, however, a common characteristic was that the salon was a vital meeting place and point of contact for political 'networking' as well as a school for the initiation of young men into the subtleties of politics. In the ultra salon's women were expected to reinforce the notion of social hierarchy and respect for monarchy: in the liberal salons, they identified readily with parliament and constitutional government...many (women) did not hesitate to urge the adoption of a particular policy or course of action." See *France and Women, 1789-1914* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 57.

¹⁶ Léon Gambetta was a French republican statesman who helped directly defend France during the Franco-German War of 1870-71. In helping to found the Third Republic, he made three essential contributions: first, by his speeches and articles, he converted many French people to the ideals of moderate democratic republicanism. Second, by his political influence and personal social contacts, he gathered support for an elective democratic political party, the Republican Union. Finally, by backing

leadership among literary figures and her political influence on the Government, and sometimes over the Government, was extraordinary: “she was sent out as a kind of official ambassador to persuade Germany...She founded in 1879 *The Nouvelle Revue*, in which she has quitted all the pleasanter paths of literature to devote herself seriously to political writing.”¹⁷ In her Salon Rodin met Edmond Bazire, who faithfully promoted Rodin’s success in his early years.¹⁸

Bazire introduced Rodin to Madame Aline Ménard-Dorian, whose salon was a meeting place of radical Parisians. There Rodin met Gustave Geffroy, who would become an ongoing supporter of Rodin’s work, especially *The Thinker*.¹⁹ And it was Geffroy who introduced Georges Clemenceau to Rodin.²⁰ Clemenceau was a radical

Adolphe Thiers, who was elected provisional head of government by the National Assembly of 1871, against royalists and Bonapartists, he helped transform the new regime into a parliamentary republic. Gambetta was briefly prime minister of France from Nov. 1881 to Jan. 1882. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 2009.

¹⁷ In “Salon for the Republic; Madame Adam and her part in their Reconstruction of Country Origin,” n.a *The New York Times* (Jan. 23, 1882): n.p. Archives in Musée Rodin: The article also mentioned that *The Nouvelle Revue* was a periodical with the aim of destroying Bismarck and the Bismarckian influence in Germany.

¹⁸ Bazire strongly supported Rodin in an article in *L’Intransigeant* of September 16, 1883, about *The Age of Bronze* and *Saint John the Baptist*, both exhibited in the Salon of 1883: “C’est la vie meme qui circule dans le corps agreste de ce Saint Jean, au torse nerveux, martelé par le jeûne et gonflé par le fanatisme. C’est la vie de l’ascète, qui le maigrit et l’illumine. Le geste tranquille, ces traits béats et presque hébétéés, la structure osseuse, tout exprime l’inconscience croyante d’un isolé, que l’extase a saisi...*L’Age d’Airain*...est non moins la manifestation d’un pétrisseur de la pensée et du bronze...Il est fort et il ne craint pas de laisser voir ses côtes, ni ses reins, ni ses nerfs...Ce païen n’est pas une imagination, puisée dans les récits de la fable. Il est de notre sang et de notre temps. Celui qui fit *L’Age d’Airain* et le *Saint Jean* s’appelle Auguste Rodin. Ah! S’il pouvait infuser dans les veines de ses contemporains un peu de la vigueur qu’il possède, ce serait la transformation de l’art...” *Correspondance de Rodin*, vol. 1, letter 44 (Paris: Éditions du Musée Rodin, 1985), 60.

¹⁹ Martinez, *ibid.*, 86-87. For more on Rodin’s connection with Geffroy, see the letter of 6 Dec. 1904. *Correspondance de Rodin*, tome II, (Paris: Edition du Musée Rodin, 1986), 139.

²⁰ The exact date of the first meeting is uncertain, but around 1886 Clemenceau frequented Rodin’s atelier located on rue de l’Université. Archives du Musée Rodin, dossier: Clemenceau.

republican deputy in 1871, and later, in 1902, became France's prime minister. Jeanne Laurent attributed Rodin's success to Clemenceau: "La promptitude et l'audace des reactions gouvernementales resteraient incompréhensibles si on ignorait l'intervention de Clemenceau."²¹ Since Clemenceau was a champion of Rodin, and propagated his radical republican ideology in the gathering of the salon de Madame Ménard-Dorian, it is certain that he contributed to the formation of Rodin's political views.

Republican Ideologies: The Least Divided Society?

Rodin started his mature career during the Third Republic,²² whose leaders' major issue was the reclaiming of its republican ideology. One of the proponents of this view was the historian Edgar Quinet, who interpreted the terrorist practices of the First Republic as a throwback to the despotism of the old regime, and who repudiated violent revolutionism. In this ideological shift, a new generation sought a more practical and ideal science of politics.²³

Young republicans like Jules Ferry and Léon Gambetta were spokesmen for

²¹ Jeanne Laurent, *La République et les beaux-arts* (Paris: Julliard, 1955), 25.

²² Rodin was born in 1840 during the July Monarchy (1830-1848), and produced several works such as *The Father Eymard* (1863) and *Man with Broken Nose* (1863-64) before going to Bruxelles to join Carrier-Belleuse. He came back to Paris in 1877 during the Third Republic and started to work as a mature artist for the Salon exhibition and for the official competition. See the biography documented by Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, *Tout l'art: monographie Rodin* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 150.

²³ For the revised republicanism, see François Furet, *La Gauche et la révolution au milieu du XIXe siècle: Edgar Quinet et la question du Jacobinisme, 1865-1870* (Paris: 1986), 7-97; *La Révolution, de Turgot à Ferry, 1770-1880* (Paris, 1988), 499-507; and Jean Eros, "The Positivist Generation of French Republicanism," *Sociological Review* 3 (1955): 255-273.

this new generation. They represented a new middle class of businessmen and professionals, stressed “the republican synthesis,” and focused less on ideas and more on alliance building.²⁴ Although Adolphe Thiers, the first president of the Third Republic, referred to republicanism in the 1870s as “the form of government that divides France least,”²⁵ the French republic’s incessant drive for unity was due to its diverse factions: republicans—either conservative or radical, monarchists, socialists, and Bonapartists.²⁶ To legitimize the republican system of embracing different classes and factions,²⁷ the Third Republic promoted its “unifying political culture,” emphasizing their common foundation, heroes, and values through different media — prominent among which were public monuments and sculptures.²⁸ Erecting a visual edifice was “a pedagogic device used by the dominant political ideologies to win over

²⁴ Philip Nord, *The Republican Moment: Struggles for Democracy in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 2. Nord succinctly explains the new ideology of the Third Republic, the theoretical background of civil society, and the endeavor of making new political culture.

²⁵ James McMillan, *Modern France: 1880-2002*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 11.

²⁶ June Hargrove, “Shaping the National Image: The Cult of Statues to Great Men in the Third Republic,” in *Nationalism in the Visual Arts*, ed. Richard A. Etlin (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1991), 49.

²⁷ David Held designates this inclusiveness as characteristic of republicanism: “republicanism and democracy basically have the same goal; a society sustained by civic virtue, in which people live a happy life devoted to public good and committed to civic duties. Yet they differ greatly in their approaches to the ideal society. Republicanism emphasizes the importance of a mixed government stabilized by incorporating the preferences of various social classes, while democracy focuses on the interests of “the majority,” which was regarded in pre-modern ages as a distinct class from monarch and aristocrats. See *Models of Democracy* (California: Stanford University Press, 1996).

²⁸ For French political iconography see James A. Leith, *The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France, 1750-1799*; Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell university Press, 2001).

the inhabitants,” helping them to create an imagined community of French people as described by Benedict Anderson.²⁹

Rodin participated in such a governmental artistic program that was intended to convey social and political messages. Ironically, the phenomenon of intense statumania was in part an indication of political crises. The anthropologist Myron J. Aronoff suggests that “Political myths tend to play a particularly crucial role in times of crises. At times of social disorder, or of a threat to social order, an important means of mobilizing collective action is through the use of myths to generate collective responses to collective commitments and responsibilities.”³⁰

The political crisis was partly due to the bitterness and a reluctance of reconciliation after the defeat of The War of 1870.³¹ While many sculptors created eloquent statues, Rodin produced the statue of republican figures or events in a very personal, expressive, and somewhat ultra-realistic manner. His art was differentiated from the idealistic or aggrandizing styles of contemporary sculptors in the Beaux-Arts

²⁹ William Cohen, “Symbols of Power: Statues in Nineteenth-Century Provincial France,” *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History* 31, no.2 (1989): 491. He traces the way in which the Republics manipulated the symbols of power by hope to establish legitimacy for the new regime; see also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

³⁰ Myron J. Aronoff, “Ideology and Interest: The Dialectics of Politics,” *Political Anthropology Yearbook*, vol.1, (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1980), 17-18.

³¹ June Hargrove, “Les Statues de Paris,” *Les Lieux de mémoire: II. la nation*, sous la direction de Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1984-92), 252: “La IIIe République était née dans la tourmente: la chute du second Empire, la défaite, les violences de la Commune. Le jeune gouvernement, qui devait lutter contre les factions en conflit, pensa d’abord à sa survie. Pendant dix ans, on s’occupa à Paris d’effacer les traces des combats.”

style.³² Rodin may well have understood the limits of contemporary artistic endeavors and the complexity of the political environment during the Third Republic, and choose to respond in his own way. From where does this different perception and style derive? The answer will be found in the way in which Rodin interprets national themes.³³

The Third Republic's unification project deliberately ignored the diversity of region and race as it promoted a desirable national identity of a "perfect Frenchmen." This notion was intended to shape a particular kind of citizen, as Philip Nord explains: "a conscientious human being who revered the philosophies and the revolutionaries of 1789, who valued liberty, laïcité, and the riches afforded by literacy and a vital associational life."³⁴ In an idealized civil society, individual citizens needed to reconcile their own particularities with the unified rhetoric of the Third Republic. Rodin astutely realized that his mission was to reduce this inevitable gap.

As Eliane DalMolin observes, "the very real French men and women of the

³² Wofram Kaiser asserts that French people's effort to illustrate their cultural superiority and their creation of a national identity are all myth. Despite all their hard work of fostering a united identity, the World Exhibition in Paris accentuated the existing divisions in France. "Vive la France! Vive la République?: The Cultural Constructions in Paris 1855-1900," *National Identity* 1, no. 3 (1999): 227-244.

³³ Some studies have scrutinized the political contexts surrounding Rodin's works, yet few have probed how contemporary social structures and political ideologies are manifested formally and concretely in his work. For two excellent works on the contexts of politics after the defeat of the Franco-Prussian War, see Ruth Butler, "The politics of public monuments: Rodin's Victor Hugo and Balzac," *Sculpture Review* 47, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 8-15; and Jane Mayo Roos, "Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo: Art and Politics in the Third Republic," *Art Bulletin* 68 (Dec. 1986): 632-656.

³⁴ Nord, 191.

period were complex individuals whose fragmented reality was often at odds with this comprehensive image of republican perfection.”³⁵ The contradiction of this particularity and the universalized generality is one of the main characteristics with which civil society and Rodin had to struggle. Political theorist Jürgen Habermas analyzes this problem in civil society by proposing the idea of “the bourgeois public sphere,” a realm in which “private opinions are exchanged between private persons unconstrained by external pressure to create a common will.”³⁶ Habermas’s theory will help to explain what the republican government’s ideal civil society was and what it was that Rodin attempted to realize in his public sculpture.

Habermas’s Theory on the Public Sphere

Barbara Hoffman says that “public art” mainly serves commemorative or functional purposes, broadening the appeal of public policies and institutions.³⁷ In this capacity, art focuses, interprets, and reinforces accepted social, national, and civic

³⁵ Roger Celestin and Elian DalMolin, *France from 1851 to the Present: Universalism in Crisis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 89. See chapter 3: “Scandal and Innovation in the Third Republic (1871-1899).”

³⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. For Habermas’s later use of the category of the public sphere, see Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 2, and *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987). For a critical secondary discussion of Habermas’s later use of the concept, see Nancy Fraser, “What’s Critical about Critical Theory? The Case of Habermas and Gender,” in *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (University Minnesota Press, 1989).

³⁷ Barbara Hoffman, “Law for Art’s Sake,” in *Art and the Public Sphere*, ed. W.J.T. Mitchell, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 114.

values through comprehensible forms and symbols. Furthermore, the artist uses the imagery, iconography, and formal structures that comprise the visual vocabulary of his or her society. Thus, committees and government institutions generally request the concept and nature of public art from the outset.

The expression of Rodin, however, offers a very original, personal, and complex interpretation of its subject than the one dictated by the commissioner of the work.³⁸ Because the results defied the expectations, Rodin's works continually displeased his commissioners, and conservative critics declared that his works were inappropriate and overly aggressive. While the expectation of the official commissioner and the artistic interests of Rodin have often contradicted each other, the competing interests can be explained through Habermas's conception of the public sphere.

Habermas's theory supports the complexity of intimate expression and political message in Rodin's public works. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas focuses on liberal democracy, civil society, public life, and

³⁸ Octave Mirbeau emphasized Rodin's personal genius and defended his expression: "Who but Rodin could have had the following adventure, one that so strikingly and definitely underscores the dishonesty and stupidity of the juries? In his *Age of Bronze*, there was such power in this work, such an elegant expression of the strength and beauty of the body, and forgive me the word, such a frank odor of humanity, that the jury decided the statue was nothing more than a cast from life and rejected it. The jury refused to accept that art could take so perfect, so true a form from nature, that man's genius could be creative enough to make a block of marble come alive in such a way, to give with so much intensity the shiver of flesh and the radiance of thought." Octave Mirbeau, "Chronique Parisiennes," *La France*, February 18, 1885, trans. John Anzalone. In *Rodin in Perspective*, ed. Ruth Butler (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, 1980), 46.

democratic theory, which are key issues in understanding the context of Rodin's work.³⁹ I will first explain Habermas's concept of the public sphere and building on that, I will redefine the notion of the public sphere found in Rodin's work.

Habermas emphasized political participation as the core of a democratic society, and as an essential element in individual self-development. The bourgeois public sphere, which appeared to form around 1700 in Habermas's interpretation, was to mediate between the private concerns of individuals in their familial, economic, and social life in contrast to the demands and concerns of social and public life.⁴⁰

Accordingly, Craig Calhoun states that the importance of the public sphere lies in its potential as "a mode of societal integration."⁴¹ Habermas defines the bourgeois public sphere as the gathering of private individuals to join in the debate of their

³⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 27. While Habermas made several crucial philosophical turns after his initial publication in the 1990s, he returned to issues of the public sphere and the necessary conditions for a genuine democracy in his monumental work, *Between Facts and Norms* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998).

⁴⁰ Dena Goodman also observes that "the eighteenth century was an historical moment when the relationship between public and private was assuming a new form. The public became nothing other than the collection of all individuals who constitute civil society in their positions as members of civil society," see "Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime," *History and Theory* no. 31 (1992): 14.

⁴¹ Craig Calhoun, "Habermas and the Public Sphere," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1997), 6. Calhoun's edited book provides a thorough dissection of Habermas's bourgeois public sphere by scholars from various academic disciplines, including Habermas himself. For instance, Nancy Fraser points out that marginalized groups are excluded from a universal public sphere, and claims that Habermas ignored women and the lower social strata of society, although she claims that groups formed their own public spheres. See the first chapter, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," 73-98. Also, for the aim of deepening and extending the Habermasian view and a consideration of other theories and frameworks which afford us different ways of considering the public sphere, see *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, ed. Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing/The Sociological Review, 2004).

shared public interests and to organize against oppressive forms of state power. The public sphere consisted of channels of information and political debate, such as newspapers and journals, as well as institutions of political discussion, such as parliaments, political clubs, literary salons, public assemblies, pubs and coffee houses, meeting halls, and other public spaces where socio-political discussions took place.⁴²

In the past, according to Habermas, individuals stayed primarily in the private realm. This private realm was understood to be one of freedom, one that had to be defended against the domination of the state. One of the aims of the public sphere of a democratic society is to eliminate any conflict between individual life and public display.⁴³ Because public display results in a loss of individuality, and it turns individuals to abstract concepts rather than real beings, people have frequently thought of publicity as something that distorts, corrupts, or, alienates individuals. In order to have continuity between the private and the public, the public sphere must be built into each individual's direct relation to it, as a meaningful reference point against which something could be grasped as information and discussion. Thus, the distinction between the public and the private is erased, and the subject is defined

⁴² As a space of rational discussion, debate, and consensus, the public sphere was transformed into a realm of mass cultural consumption, administered by dominant elites, and was "refeudalized" in Habermas terminology, see Habermas, *ibid.*, 142. The fusion between the economic and political spheres, a manipulative culture industry, and an administered society characterized a decline of democracy, individuality, and freedom. See Stephen Eric Bronner and Douglas Kellner, ed. *Critical Theory and Society* (New York: Routledge, 1989); and Douglas Kellner, *Television and the Crisis of Democracy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990).

⁴³ Michael Warner, "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, 377.

reciprocally vis-à-vis the continuum of private and public dimensions. The private realm no longer opposed the public realm in the context of the nineteenth century. On the contrary, it became one of the main components of the public sphere. The two realms intersected each other in creating a social web.

Rodin's sculpture did not exclude the private theme in favor of the nationalistic and public theme. Rather, he focused on the personal characteristics of each individual figure in his public works. Whether he made a figure heroic or mystified a past event, he never neglected the particular expression of each person or event. Ruth Butler points out that the misconceptions of Rodin's public sculpture were due to his personal and emotional treatment of the subject of his works.⁴⁴ For the commissioner and some audiences, Rodin's private expressions were an impediment to grandiose public national idioms. But because of his focus on individuality, the majority of his audiences admired his public work.

In order to understand what the concept of the public sphere implies, we must address what civil society means.⁴⁵ The originator of the modern concept of civil

⁴⁴ Ruth Butler, "Nationalism, a New Seriousness, and Rodin: Some Thoughts about French Sculpture in the 1870s," in *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture* (Acts of the Twenty-fourth International Congress of Art History, Bologna, 1979), 161-167.

⁴⁵ Habermas states that the new concept of the public sphere appeared at a particular moment in the development of civil society in Europe—the late seventeenth to the eighteenth century. For the discussion of the transition to "civil society," see Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's work in which they described a democratic political civic culture as the surest antidote to the temptations of totalitarianism. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five European Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

society, Georg W.F. Hegel, whose philosophy influenced Habermas's theory, offers an explicit definition of civil society in his *Philosophy of Right*: "In the course of the actual attainment of selfish ends—there is formed a system of complete interdependence, wherein the livelihood, happiness, and legal status of one man is interwoven with the livelihood, happiness and rights of all. On this system, individual happiness, etc., depend, and only in this connected system are they actualized and secured."⁴⁶

The Hegelian view of civil society helped Habermas to form his vision of the public sphere: "The core of civil society comprises a network of associations that institutionalizes problem-solving discourses on questions of general interest inside the framework of organized public sphere."⁴⁷ Habermas's indication of the communicative aspect of the public sphere located in civil society was a key contribution to the democratic society.⁴⁸ This civil society mediates between individuals and the state. Habermas ideally sees the public sphere as an arena where people, having chosen not to focus their attention exclusively on private affairs, may

⁴⁶ Georg W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, trans. T.M. Knox, (Oxford: Galaxy Books, 1979), 123.

⁴⁷ Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1966), 367.

⁴⁸ Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato define the civil society as "a sphere of interaction between economy and state, composed above all, of the intimate sphere, the sphere of associations, social movements, and forms of public communication." See *Civil Society and Political Theory: Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), ix.

rationally discuss, in a manner that is not distorted by the power of either the market or the state, issues upon which the common good depends.⁴⁹ The ultimate aim of Habermas's public sphere, therefore, was to transform society into one that is more intimate, interactive, communicable, and democratic.

I argue that Rodin's public sculpture provides an arena in which he characterized the communicable quality of the public sphere in conjunction with private matters and public idioms—a seemingly incongruent combination that frequently caused misunderstanding around his work. The coexistence of public and private spheres in Rodin's work, however, needs to be read as a distinctive expression of a new form of subjectivity of the republican citizen. In relation to Rodin's work, subjectivity may refer to “inter-subjectivity.”⁵⁰ The notion of inter-subjectivity replaces an isolated solitary subject, and a limited and enclosed self, but expands an experience of communication with others outside of self.⁵¹ It is the communicable “inter-subjectivity” that leads to the elucidation of a model of communicative rational democratic society.⁵²

⁴⁹ David Harrington Watt, “Habermas and the Public Sphere,” *Sociological Analysis* 53, no. 4 (Winter, 1992): 467.

⁵⁰ John Smith, “The Transcendence of the Individual,” *Diacritics* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 82.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁵² For the intersubjectivity theory of Habermas see Roger Frie, *Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity in Modern Philosophy and Psychoanalysis: A Study of Sartre, Binswanger, Lacan, and Habermas* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997); Nick Crossley, *Intersubjectivity: The Fabric of Social Becoming* (London: SAGE Publications, 1996); and Kathleen M. Haney, *Intersubjectivity Revisited: Phenomenology and the Other* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994).

Habermas confessed that his political theories were born out of his personal failure in terms of communication, and his awareness of the dependence and vulnerabilities of human beings. In a lecture delivered in Japan, he emphasized the intersubjective structure of humankind: “In the process of growing up, the child is able to form the interior of a consciously experienced life, only through simultaneous externalization vis-à-vis other participants in communication and interaction. Even in expressions of the most personal feelings and most intimate excitations, an ostensibly private consciousness thrives on the electricity with which it is charged by the cultural network of public, symbolically expressed and intersubjectively shared categories, thoughts, and meanings.”⁵³ Rodin provides his work as a public sphere where the audience and the artist’s concerns and emotions intersect and communicate. It differs from the traditional public sculpture that usually delivers a message in a didactic and one directional communication. While Rodin expresses republican political messages and ideology in his work, he did not omit his personal interpretations and voices of the particular figures and events. In that sense, Rodin’s public work is the artistic embodiment of the idealized public sphere.

⁵³ Jürgen Habermas, “Public Space and Political Public Sphere – the Biographical Roots of Two Motifs in My Thought,” Commemorative Lecture, Kyoto, Nov. 11, 2004. 4.

B. Rodin's Republican Public Sculpture

1. Reclaiming French National Identity

Image of the Republic

Constructing French national identity was an urgent issue for the Third Republic following the defeat of the Franco-Prussian War and the sudden collapse of the Second Empire.⁵⁴ The government commissioned myriad public sculptures that conveyed a more serious and nationalistic tone to proclaim the greatness of France and to heal the populace's wounded pride.⁵⁵ Commemorative sculptures were erected throughout public spaces to restore confidence to the nation.⁵⁶ Rodin had made several sculptures with republican themes before he officially achieved national commissions. One of the first among them was *Bellona* (1879) (fig. 5.2), submitted for the competition for a bust of the Republic.⁵⁷

In *Bellona*, Rodin depicted the Republic as an ancient Roman war goddess with her major attributes—a strong helmet covering her large head. The journal *La*

⁵⁴ Ernest Alfred Vizetelly witnessed the disastrous situation at the time and said that French patriotism should turn for consolation, particularly, in creating the positive national identity. See *Paris and Her People under the Third Republic* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1919), 39-40.

⁵⁵ Ruth Butler, "Nationalism, a New Seriousness, and Rodin," 161-167.

⁵⁶ For the various attitudes and categories of public sculptures during the Third Republic, see June Hargrove, "Shaping the National Image."

⁵⁷ According to Ruth Butler, "Napoléon III had doubled the size of the city by incorporating towns on the periphery. In the new republicanized state, every *mairie*-the town hall-of the twenty arrondissements of Paris required an image of the Republic. Rodin competed for the Thirteenth Arrondissement." See *The Shape of Genius*, 133.

France declared it “A work of singular originality,” but one which the jury could not accept.⁵⁸ Instead of a typical Republic personification, it represents a sullen *Bellona* with a dramatic physiognomy.⁵⁹ Since the commonly used image for the Republic was *Marianne* with a Phrygian cap—an allegory of liberty and reason—the city was hard to accept a warlike image.⁶⁰ Regarding the mood of the sculpture, Maurice Agulhon has pointed out that what French people most wanted at the time was “the calming power of Reason rather than on the fervent call to permanent battle.”⁶¹

Rodin’s interpretation of *Bellona* related to his personal emotion. Judith Cladel states that the baleful glance of *Bellona* was inspired by the appearance of Rose Beuret (fig. 5.3), Rodin’s mistress, during one of their violent arguments that became

⁵⁸ Regarding the title, John L. Tancock explains that “Rodin himself was fully aware of the difficulties inherent in the personification of such an abstract idea...The bust of *Bellona* was originally intended to represent the Republic, but it was evidently soon recognized that the belligerence of the bust made the title of *Bellona* much more appropriate, and it has been known by this title ever since.” See his *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin*, The collection catalogue of the Rodin Museum, Philadelphia, 1976, 585.

⁵⁹ Albert Elsen, *Auguste Rodin: Readings on His Life and Work* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 46.

⁶⁰ Marianne is a national emblem of the French Republic and an allegory of Liberty and Reason. She symbolizes the triumph of the Republic. There are many precedent images of Marianne in previous Republics. Albert Boime examines those images and concludes that the Marianne image “had a dual aspect, on the one hand, it represented a deified image of force and power; on the other, its incarnation in a female body emphasized qualities of charity and sustenance, that is, the maternalistic protection of the people.” A later example could be found in Honoré Daumier’s depiction of *Republic* (1848)(fig. 5.4) as a mother nursing two children, Romulus and Remus, and the former example would be found in Francois Rude’s angry warrior in *Departure of the Volunteers* (1792) (fig. 5.5) on the Arc de Triomphe. Rodin’s *Bellona* belongs to the former and earlier tradition, which was not popular since the Second Republic. Albert Boime, “The Second Republic’s Contest for the Figure of the Republic,” *Art Bulletin* 53 (1971): 76.

⁶¹ Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle: Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 187.

increasingly frequent as time went on.⁶² Rodin did not omit the personal feeling of the model for his bust for The Republic.⁶³ His desire to include private feelings, expression, and the life-world of the model or the artist himself was an unfamiliar attitude for public sculpture at the time. Albert Elsen also points out that Rodin humanized and revitalized the traditionally aloof and stoic image by giving it a depth of expression. He further adds, “similar humanization of the heroic subject is found in Rodin’s *Spirit of War* from his *Call to Arms* and in his *Burghers of Calais*.”⁶⁴ Rodin’s portrayal of the Republic from a personal and humanized perspective is more faithful to the Habermasian concept of republican representation.

Likewise, when Rodin described *La France* (fig. 5.6) he merged a national theme with his personal feelings. *La France* is personified with Camille Claudel, Rodin’s student and mistress, serving as his model (fig. 5.7). Rodin initially rendered this portrait of Camille Claudel as Saint George (1889). Interestingly enough, he made the two similar heads of Claudel into two reliefs.(fig. 5.8, fig. 5.9) René Chéryu,

⁶² Judith Cladel, *Rodin: sa vie glorieuse, sa vie inconnue* (Paris: Bernard Grassert, 1936), 237.

⁶³ Ruth Butler mentions that Rodin emphasized three elements of Rose Beuret’s personality—a powerful torso, strong features, and an elaborate casque covering the hair: “*The Republic* [of Rodin] has an extraordinary quality of concentrated power, a perfect image of resilience and force, just what the republican bureaucrats should have wanted, but didn’t.” Ruth Butler, *Hidden in the Shadow of the Master: The Model-Wives of Cézanne, Monet, and Rodin* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008), 256.

⁶⁴ Albert Elsen and Rosalyn Frankel Jamison, *Rodin’s Art: The Rodin Collection Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts Stanford University*, ed. Bernard Barryte (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 55-58. Elsen states its various display of emotion depends on the angle: “From the front and under harsh lighting, *Bellona* bears a fierce, scowling, almost violent expression. At other times the figure seems to pout. In general lighting in the terra-cotta version and from certain three-quarter or profile points of view, the face has a melancholy look,” 58.

Rodin's secretary at the time, recalled it shortly before a visit to Rodin's studio by Edward VII: "He placed the head in relief against a plaster plaque, on which there is the indication of a vault, and calling the work *La France*. Immediately later, perhaps the next day, he took a second cast repeating the same process, but turned the profile to the right and called it *Saint George*."⁶⁵

There is no other record of Rodin's intention for the work, but he may have been attempting to please Edward VII by relating St. George church located in Windsor castle in England.⁶⁶ Another possibility is that it recalls *Monument to Bonchamps* (1825) by David d'Angers (1788-1856).⁶⁷ David d'Angers placed two personifications beside the figure of Bonchamps (fig. 5.10). On one side, *Religion Weeping* (fig. 5.11) holds a cross, and on the other side *France in Mourning* (fig. 5.12) holds the banner decorated with the fleur-de-lis. Rodin must have visited the Church of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil in Loire where this monument has been located and also where imprisoned republican soldiers were held during the Vendean War. Although

⁶⁵ Cited in Tancock, 601.

⁶⁶ Rodin may have had a political intention by presenting the statue of France as a symbol of reconciliation between the Christian monarchy and the militant republic. For the reconciliation funerary cult see Suzanne Glove Lindsay, "Mummies and Tombs: Turenne, Napoléon, and Death Ritual" *Art Bulletin* 82 (September 2000): 488-499.

⁶⁷ For a more detailed description, see Jacques de Caso, *David d'Angers: Sculptural Communication in the Age of Romanticism*, trans. Dorothy Johnson and Jacques de Caso (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992): The monument was intended to glorify the monarchical government's assertion of its legitimacy, also to express its desire to be conciliatory and a united nation of France. Bonchamps, a vanquished individual's plea for clemency was supposed to appeal to any parties. David represented him in the last heroic moment during the counter-revolutionary insurrection. Before he dies, he was crying "Pity for the prisoners! I wish it, I order it" and thereby saves the republican prisoners from being put to death. Then, he became a hero as a symbol of reconciliation and the work is steeped in religious sentiment focusing his sacrificial deed and his generosity for enemy," 63-66.

the monument commemorated the monarchy, Rodin absorbed and sustained the dual nature of nationhood in his psyche. On one hand he rendered *La France* as female and republican, and on the other he rendered *St. George* as male and Catholic: secular and sacred, sensualistic and spiritual, republican and Catholic, the duality of Rodin's life was represented in these reliefs.

In 1912 he received a commission from the states of New York and Vermont to honor the French explorer Samuel de Champlain with a monument personifying France, which was to be placed on the shores of the lake he discovered.⁶⁸ For the personification of France, Rodin returned to the features of Camille Claudel, despite the fact that his relations with her had ceased almost ten years before. In this bust, titled *La France*, Rodin brought Claudel's stern and sublime beauty into harmony with the militant helmet (fig. 5.13). Here, Rodin resisted depersonalizing his work, intersecting his private view with a national theme: it demonstrates that he thought that she had ideal features for the personification of France.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Alsen, *Rodin's Art*, 151.

⁶⁹ Angelo Caranfa, *Camille Claudel: A Sculpture of Interior Solitude* (London: Associated University Press, 1999), 12: Angelo Caranfa regards Rodin's personalized expression from a Symbolist perspective: "Rodin's art is basically an art of sublimation, rather than representation; it shows a tendency to generalize by transposing his insatiable sexual desire into aesthetic creations and religious feelings." I don't agree with this interpretation but it is true that Rodin made Camille Claudel sublime as a personification of France.

National Heroic Figure

With *Head of Sorrow (Joan of Arc)* (fig. 5.14) (1882), Rodin wanted to generate a strong audience response to the idea of national heroism. Initially, *Head of Sorrow* was part of the group of *Ugolino and His Sons*, created while he was working in Brussels in 1876.⁷⁰ A second version of this theme dates from 1882, and Rodin used a head that was to appear on many occasions in his later work.⁷¹ The same head was used in 1913 when Rodin proposed to make a monument to Joan of Arc in the United States (fig. 5.15).⁷² In this project the head emerged from a much larger marble base, and on the surface it appeared that the fire scarred her face during her martyrdom.

Joan of Arc was the most popular political symbol of the era, for both liberals and conservatives: liberals emphasized her humble origins and her fight against foreign occupation while conservatives stressed her support of the monarchy or nationalism.⁷³ According to Nora Heimann, Joan's image became more than

⁷⁰ Elsen, *August Rodin*, 33. Elsen said that Rodin was not satisfied with it and destroyed all but the body of the principal figure.

⁷¹ Tancock, 158-160. One version that Rodin recreated in 1905 was the head, purchased on the occasion of a visit from the great Italian tragedian Eleanora Duse, and was titled *Anxiety*.

⁷² Saint Joan of Arc (1412-1431), also known as the Maid of Orleans, is a national heroine of France and a Catholic saint. After leading the French army she was captured by the English and burned at the stake when she was nineteen years old. Twenty-four years later, the Holy See reviewed her case, found her innocent, and declared her a martyr. She was beatified in 1909 and later canonized in 1920.

⁷³ For example, Nora Heimann analyzed the way in which Voltaire used Joan of Arc to lampoon Catholic-inspired superstition and she did a vast investigation of the adaptation of her image in the first half of the nineteenth century. Nora Heimann, *Joan of Arc in French Art and Culture (1700-1855) From Satire to Sanctity* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 13-43.

political; for example, she was the embodiment of romantic tragedy by the German romantic poet and playwright Johann Christoph Freidrich von Schiller.⁷⁴ Rodin's Joan of Arc appears rooted in this romanticized adaptation that emphasizes her personal feeling and pain.

The *Head of Sorrow* in the Philadelphia museum reveals the pain and agony that Joan endured while being burned alive. If we take Le Normand-Romain remarks, "If this image is derived from Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* or *The Martyr* (fig. 5.16), it should be seen as an expression of extreme pleasure rather than pain." She adds that "the interpretation of sorrow has always been retained."⁷⁵ Although Rodin conveyed her personal pain, he viewed *Joan of Arc* as a national emblem of resistance against foreign occupation, and assimilated her death as a sublime act of heroic sacrifice, as much as a religious sublime. Rodin emphasized personal expression of pain within a nationalistic discourse. In that sense, Rodin dramatically altered the standard for contemporary sculptures of *Joan of Arc* that showed stereotyped eloquent heroes by envisioning her as a national martyr and at the same time as a religious martyr. The public issue of patriotism was highlighted with personal pain and feeling.

⁷⁴ Ibid., see chapter 2: "The Maid in an Age of Revolution and Romantic Tragedy: The Provocation and Legacy of Schiller's *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*," 44-72. She criticized Schiller's recasting Joan's life as a series of emotional, romantic conflicts with would-be lovers.

⁷⁵ Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, *The Bronzes of Rodin: Catalogue of Works in the Musée Rodin* (Paris: Edition de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2007), 676.

The vulnerable emotion in Rodin's work was even more emphasized when he dealt with another republican sculpture, such as *Scene from the French Revolution* (1879) (fig. 5.17). This relief sculpture was part of the entry into the competition for the monument to the Republic for the place du Château d'Eau. These two bas-reliefs were shown at Rodin's one-person exhibition in 1900 for the first time and were described as "the enrollment of the volunteers and an assembly discussing."⁷⁶

Despite its overt republican theme, the densely arranged figures made the relief difficult to read, and consequently, he did not win the competition.⁷⁷ The relief lacks a central or prominent figure, along with the freedom of expression, which point to Rodin's modern artistic interpretation of republican ideology. The forms are not clearly defined, giving the relief a greater sense of physical and visual weight. Rodin rendered each figure equal to the next, thus celebrating the lives of ordinary people, as well as their equality and liberalism. Neil McWilliam indicates that the republican rulers extolled a more "democratic" celebration of the public by an ordinary "many," "instead of commemoration of the one 'great man.'"⁷⁸ It is a realization of the

⁷⁶ *Rodin en 1900: L'exposition de l'Alma, Musée du Luxembourg*, 12 mars – 15 juillet 2001 (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2001), 104-105.

⁷⁷ The winner was the sculptor Léopold Morice and on the base of Morice's monument are twelve reliefs depicting certain incidents in the history of the revolution and climactic moments in recent history. The subject of these reliefs include: Oath in the Jeu de Paume; Capture of the Bastille; Renunciation of Privileges; Festival of the Federation; Abolition of the Monarchy and Proclamation of the Republic; Battle of Valmy; Volunteers Enrolling; Combat of the Avenger; Resumption of the Tricolor in 1830; Provisional Government of 1848; Proclamation of the Third Republic, September 4, 1870; and National Holiday, July 14, 1880. Tantock, *ibid.*, 237.

⁷⁸ Neil McWilliam, "Race, Remembrance and 'Revanche': Commemorating the Franco-Prussian War

egalitarian democratic representation in art and a processional ritual that had been initiated by realist Gustave Courbet's (1819-1877) *A Burial at Ornans* (1849-50) (fig. 5.18).⁷⁹ Rodin's denial of banal idealization is partly due to the time's tendency toward increasing individualism.

2. Eulogy of Individualism

In the late nineteenth century, artists and writers turned to "individualism" as a major artistic expression influenced by two tendencies: Symbolism and republican ideology.⁸⁰ Roger Marx, a leading art critic and one of the most enlightened supporters of the visual arts during the Third Republic, promoted genuine liberalism in art, celebrating the artistic expression of "individualism."⁸¹ Marx defended such

in the Third Republic," *Art History* 19, no. 4 (December 1996): 473.

⁷⁹ The rise of democratic and egalitarian values tied by positivism in the nineteenth century influenced art in terms of contents and forms. See Michael Paul Driskel, *Representing Belief: Religion, Art, and Society in Nineteenth-Century France* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 1992), 8. Linda Nochlin regards the additive composition of *A Burial at Ornans* as "compositional egalitarianism" and "pictorial democracy." *Realism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), 48.

⁸⁰ Nicholas Green scrutinizes the Republic's promotion of individual value and views it as a part of political domination program: "This combined an abstract stress on the ideal self-reflective ego with a set of practical procedures for conforming individual, ethical choice to the demands of the 'higher good' or society as a whole – re-enter the notion of corporate identity." "Monuments, Memorials and the Framing of Individualism in Third Republic France," *New Formation* 11 (Summer 1990): 129.

⁸¹ The concept of "individualism" was first used by the French Saint-Simonian socialists to describe what they believed was the cause of the disintegration of French society after the 1789 Revolution. Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, or social outlook that stresses independence and self-reliance. Individualists promoted the exercise of one's goals and desires, while opposing most external interference upon one's choices, whether by society, or any other group or institution. See Koenraad W. Swart, "Individualism in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (1826-1860)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23, no. 1 (1962): 77-90; and Steven Lukes, "The Meanings of Individualism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32, no. 1 (1971): 45-66.

Symbolists as Auguste Rodin, Odilon Redon, Paul Gauguin, Gustave Moreau, Fantin-Latour, and Félicien Rops.⁸² He was also a major proponent of the idea that all the arts should be regarded as equal, which was one of the basic tenets of the Art Nouveau movement at the end of the century. In bridging idealism and realism, he elaborated on a liberal critical system that led artists to more concrete social subjects—such as egalitarianism and individualism.

Little is known about the relationship between Rodin and Marx, except for the fact that Rodin cast Marx's portrait and that Marx collected some of Rodin's works, especially the drawings of cathedrals. Marx remained a dedicated advocate of Rodin's Symbolist work.⁸³ Moreover, in his book *L'Art social*, Marx defined how art reflected the social conditions of its era, and he outlined the artistic mission for the nation and the society.⁸⁴ In this regard, Marx and Rodin shared the same concept of the democratization of art, its social function, and national propagandistic role, ideas that are expressed in Marx's writings and portrayed in Rodin's sculptures.

One of the shared concepts of both was how authentic individualism, which

⁸² Roger Marx, "Le Salon de 1888" *Le Voltaire* (1 May, 1888), 2. cited in *1890-1897, L'Art symboliste et republicain, Roger Marx, un critique aux côtés de Gallé, Monet, Rodin, Gauguin*, Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Musée de l'Ecole de Nancy, 6 May – 28 August, 2006 (Ville de Nancy: Editions Artlys, 2006), 104.

⁸³ These drawings of Rodin that Roger Marx had purchased compiled later as a book, *The Cathedrals of France*. Marx collected two marble sculptures of Rodin: *Masque de la Douleur pour la porte de l'Enfer* and *Le Désespoir*; and three drawings for the *Gates of Hell: Enlèvement, Virgile portent Dante évanoui, Femme tenant un enfant*, catalogue no. 40 – no. 44. Ibid., 109-111.

⁸⁴ Roger Marx, *L'art social* (Paris: Fasquelle, 1913), 190. "L'importance de l'art s'en atteste par son action sur le développement des industries et sur la propriété matérielle du pays – si bien que ses destinées se trouvent intéresser à la fois l'esthétique, la sociologie et l'économie politique."

was illuminated as one of republican ideologies, differed from the pretentious monarchical concept of the human being. Erik Ringmar argues that the theatrical quality of life in the Old Regime deprived people of their individuality.⁸⁵ This type of social construction created the impression of a public mass as distorting, corrupting, or alienating individuals.⁸⁶ In contrast, the civilian in republican society conceived of a person as an individual, a unique personality with an interior life that was exclusively his or her own: an autonomous individual, a creature of scientific reason but also of emotions and sentiments. This self-awareness of their unique qualities was acknowledged and promoted in republican society, in which all humans were meaningful members on an individual and voluntary basis.⁸⁷

Authentic Expression

Along with individualism, republican civil society showed that human beings

⁸⁵ Erik Ringmar, "Nationalism: the Idiocy of Intimacy," in *British Journal of Sociology* 49, no. 4 (Dec. 1998): 541.

⁸⁶ In his commemorative lecture, Habermas explained how he developed the philosophy of communication and the ideal public sphere through his experience that other people did not understand him very well, and that they responded with annoyance or rejection during his schoolboy days. He mentioned further his critical inquiry against Martin Heidegger, Carl Schmitt, Ernest Jürgen or Arnold Gehlen: "They all joined in despising the masses and the average, on the one hand, and in celebrating the peremptory individual, the chosen one, the extraordinary person, on the other – with a concomitant rejection of idle talk, the public sphere and what they termed the inauthentic. They emphasized silence instead of conversation, the chain of commands and obedience instead of equality and self-determination." Rodin's individualism is far from Heideggerian meaning but the democratic egalitarian individualism of Habermas. Jürgen Habermas, "*Public Space and Political Public Sphere—the Biographical Roots of Two Motifs in My Thought*," 4 and 8.

⁸⁷ W. H. Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 210-216.

could live “authentic” lives.⁸⁸ In that society, individuals revealed their real selves to others, and forged relationships based on intimacy and trust. The public sphere had become as intimate and true as the interaction that took place in the company of friends, which Habermas referred to as the “ideal public sphere.” Rodin promoted not only authentic individualism, but also equality, and freedom of the individual—all supposed to be found in a republican society.

The pursuit of equality and freedom in Rodin’s art was realized not only by his interest in the decorative arts and liberal sculptural expression, but also in his choice of subject matter and its treatment; his subject choices were far from the officially acknowledged stereotype. For instance, the model Rodin chose for his first major work, *The Mask of the Man with the Broken Nose* (1863-1864) (fig. 5.19), was a poor old neighbor named Bibi, who had a broken nose. Truman Barlett observes that Rodin’s main interest resides in the shape of this figure: “the sculptor was more than ever powerfully influenced by the increasing domination of his feeling for pure sculpture—the question of lines, masses, and effects; of drawing his model, in the severest sense of the term. The subject, as such, occupied no place in his mind.”⁸⁹

However, as Le Normand-Romain maintains, we cannot ignore the “implicit

⁸⁸ Ringmar, 542.

⁸⁹ Truman Bartlett, “Auguste Rodin, Sculptor,” in *August Rodin, Readings on His Life and Work*, ed. Albert Elsen (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 21.

tenderness that bound the artist to his model.”⁹⁰ While Barlett’s concerns focus on Rodin’s formal interpretation, Le Normand-Romain points out Rodin’s affection for his subject.

In agreeing with Normand-Romain, I see this work as an integration of the social and aesthetic circumstances of the time. Rodin uplifted the ordinary or lower-class unidealized male figure into a classical and dignified rendering.⁹¹ In his approach to authentic realism, Rodin exalted the old laborer without disguise or mystification. It is a democratic display of beauty that aggrandizes the lower-class unsophisticated model, and at the same time, a sublimization of that figure: a unification of the low class and the high class in political and artistic terms.

Rodin’s interest in expressive individual figures, or a specific fragment, persisted throughout his life, even in his classic collection and antiquities. Rodin was an ardent admirer of antiquities, but his collection was evaluated as “humbled classical art, collected as such, broken, and fragmented. Not the perfected masterpieces of Graeco-Roman sculpture, but a damaged marble statue that greets you every morning, or a Gallo-Roman bowl that you can take in your hands and caress

⁹⁰ Le Normand-Romain, *The Bronzes of Rodin*, 417.

⁹¹ Many Rodin scholars including Judith Cladel agree with the fact that *The Mask of the Man with the Broken Nose* has classical references, particularly the model’s resemblance to an ancient Greek shepherd. Cladel, 91.

and then fill with a plaster figure, if so inspired.”⁹² Rodin saw any flaw as part of nature, and declared in his writing that nature was the only source of inspiration: “The antique and nature are linked by the same mystery.”⁹³ Rodin regarded *The Man with Broken Nose* as the integration of natural expression and the classical sublime.

“The true to nature” idea became a persistent interest for Rodin. In his bronze sculpture titled *The Age of Bronze* (1875-76) (fig. 5.20), Rodin was even accused of casting from a live model, because it was so deceptively realistic. The model was a young Belgian soldier, Auguste Neyt, and Rodin tried to capture all the particularities of the model and the exact contours of his form. Rodin defended himself by calling upon witnesses, as well as providing photographs and molds of the model as evidence.

Initially exhibited without a title, and later dubbed *The Vanquished One*, and still later *Man Awakening to Nature*, it ultimately became known as *The Age of Bronze*, in reference to the third age of humanity as described by the Greek poet Hesiod.⁹⁴

Following the suggestion of Rousseau, Rodin applied the title of *The Vanquished One* because most Frenchmen felt vanquished in one way or another during the 1870s.⁹⁵

⁹² Bénédicte Garnier, *Rodin: Antiquity is My Youth, A Sculptor's Collection* (Paris: Musée Rodin, 2002), 5.

⁹³ Auguste Rodin, “Vénus – A la Vénus de Milo,” *L'Art et les Artistes* no. 10 (March 1910): 248.

⁹⁴ Véronique Mattiussi, “Youth and Education,” in *Rodin*, trans. Deke Dusinberre (Paris: Flammarion, 2004), 19.

⁹⁵ Ruth Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 104-105. She explains how Rodin got in touch with Rousseau, who was a critic for the Brussels daily, *L'Echo du Parlement*, and showed his statue and discussed what would be an appropriate title. Rousseau suggested “everything is clearly and logically explained by the title: *Le Vaincu*, and it is sufficient to add that the raised hand was to have held two

Again, the honest acceptance of truth and the authentic expression of reality were the goals of Rodin's work. The figure seems to represent the painful awakening of individual consciousness as a true civilian.

Tancock points out that "the expressiveness of Rodin comes as a gift, as a reward for the sculptor's submission to Nature, the abnegation of his own personality in the desire merely to record what he has seen while circling the model and registering the complexity of the human form through delineation of its contours."⁹⁶

Yet Rodin's record is far from "a servile copy,"⁹⁷ or "an exaggerated muscle."⁹⁸

Rodin tried to capture the authentic self of the model that he could observe. Neyt states that Rodin was "ever calm and simple, he had taken a liking to me, would tell me about his ideas, asking my opinion when he had designed some subject or other."⁹⁹ Rodin's relationship with his subjects had been built during the long period of creation in an interactive and intimate way.

Republican society was intended to be more democratic and egalitarian, as

spears." Rodin accepted the title although he did not add spears into the figure.

⁹⁶ Tancock, 348.

⁹⁷ Rodin said "...il pourra contater à quel point une interpretation artistique doit s'éloigner d'une copie servile." *L'Etoile Belge*, Brussels (January 29, 1877), quoted in Judith Cladel, 116.

⁹⁸ Article by Auguste Neyt published in *Gand Artistique*, Ghent, no. 4 April 1922, quoted in Robert Descharnes and Jean-François Chabrun, *Auguste Rodin* (Lausanne: Edita, 1967, Paris: La Bibliothèque des Arts, 1967), 49. Neyt states that "Rodin did not want any exaggerated muscle, he wanted naturalness."

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

well as be a society in which men and women could live “authentic” lives. The genuine expression found in Rodin’s work could actually function as a persuasive linchpin for the ideal of a true civilian society of the Third Republic. Through his sculpture, Rodin promoted not only the authentic expression of individualism but also the authenticity of republican ideologies.

Civic Heroism of Sacrifice

For the ideal civilian society, Habermas emphasized the communicative public sphere as one in which relationships among citizens become more intimate and interactive.¹⁰⁰ The public sphere depends on the republican notion of civilian virtue, which was designed to avoid any rupture between individual life and official public display.¹⁰¹ Republicanism manifests the unity and common values of the private and the public spheres. Thus, the distinction between the public and the private is erased, and the subject is defined reciprocally vis-à-vis its private and public spheres.

In Rodin’s *La Défense; The Call to Arms* (1879) (fig. 5.21), we can see the integration of the private sphere of the subject and the public sphere of national cause,

¹⁰⁰ Habermas conceives of civil society within the communicative structures of ordinary people in everyday life. “What is meant by civil society today, in contrast to its usage in the Marxist tradition, no longer includes the economy as constituted by private law and steered through markets in labor, capital and the commodities. Rather, its institutional core comprises those non-governmental and non-economic connections and voluntary associations that anchor the communication structures of the public sphere in the society component of the life-world.” Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, 366-367.

¹⁰¹ Michael Warner, “The Mass Public and the Mass Subject,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, 377.

which distinguishes it from other public commemorative sculptures.¹⁰² In other words, Rodin gave the personal feeling and expression of the subject in his work as much importance as the cause of it. Regarding its iconography, Neil McWilliam indicated that the theme of sacrifice was undeniably prevalent, with a typical combination of female allegory and victorious warrior, despite the fact that the public repudiated pathetic commemoration of military failure.¹⁰³

The purpose of the commission of this public work was to elicit patriotic feelings from Parisians. The Municipal Council of Paris wanted to commemorate the courage of citizens in the defense of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. They wanted to interpret the heroism of Parisians as laying the groundwork for the birth of a New France. The monument would be erected at the rond-point de Courbevoie, which had once been adorned by a statue of Napoleon that had been thrown into the Seine in 1870.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² See the article by Neil McWilliam on the war memorial as an outcome of the complex collaboration between central government, local authorities and independent groups, such as veterans' organizations. Neil McWilliam, "Race, Remembrance and 'Revanche': Commemorating the Franco-Prussian War in the Third Republic," *Art History* 19, no. 4 (December 1996): 473.

¹⁰³ McWilliam mentions that "it is Christian Deposition imagery as humanitarian sentimentalism. Their confusion of gender roles, which transferred the symbolic attributes of masculinity from passive, feminized young men to monumental, virile females, apparently ratified male vulnerability, acquiescing to defeat by embracing the collective emasculation which it represented," *ibid.*, 486.

¹⁰⁴ Georges Weill (ed.), *La Perspective de la defense dans l'art et l'histoire*, exhibition catalogue, (Nanterre: Archives departementales des Hauts-de-Seine, 1983), 123. "There was another reason as well for the choice of the site. In 1870, Leon-Michel Gambetta, as Minister of the Interior in the Government of National Defense, had ordered the statue of Napoleon at Courbevoie be taken down and dumped into the Seine, leaving an empty base. The council planned to replace it with an allegorical statue to commemorate the resistance offered by the town to the German siege, and to memorize the pursuit for liberty by French people."

Although most competitors portrayed the same iconography consisting of a female allegory juxtaposed with a male combatant, Rodin demonstrates an original expression of the subject. Ruth Butler analyzes the difference between Rodin and another competitor: “Carrier-Belleuse’s (fig. 5.22) *La Défense de Paris* (1879-80) showed the allegory of a crowned city beside a guardsman, as if they faced the foe together in a realistic manner.¹⁰⁵ The winner of the competition was Louis-Ernest Barrias. His *La Defense de Paris* (fig. 5.23) (1879-80), shows an allegorical figure of Paris wearing the uniform of the National Guard and holding the flag of the city of Paris. At her feet is a soldier who holds his rifle. To offer a clear meaning, Barrias portrayed the two figures leaning on the cannon with realistic details such as the military uniform, rifle, and buttons. He emphasized the soldier’s hardships while depicting the figure of Paris as strong, alert, and calm.

In contrast to Barrias’s work, Rodin’s *La Defense de Paris* is a furious Marianne whose attitude and gesture express a bellicose mood. Rodin made her a fighting winged Genius, with open mouth, arms stretched out into a V-shape with clenched fists.. With a Phrygian bonnet, she is recognizable as the Republic. The dying warrior leans against her lower body, his twisted left arm holding a broken sword. The allegorical figure of *Liberty* looks as if she is crying, hurling two clenched

¹⁰⁵ Ruth Butler further analyzes the difference of the three finalists: Ernest Barrias, Alexandre Lequien, and Mathurin Moreau. *The Shape of Genius*, 127-128.

fists into the air and furiously flapping her strong wings. Even though this image was influenced by two of the most popular images in sculpture in France based on the theme of modern war—Rude’s *La Marseillaise* (fig. 5.5) and Merciér’s *Gloria Victis* (fig. 5.24)—his group was given no consideration among the finalists.¹⁰⁶

Ruth Butler explains that this failure should be understood by the way Rodin treated the subject matter and his stylistic approach.¹⁰⁷ She argues that the finalists were more politically attuned to the image that the judges wanted, which was a more peaceful figure. She further asserts, “when the Republic had finally solidified, Rodin’s aggressive treatment of the subject was not suitable for the government’s goal.”¹⁰⁸ Instead of the emphasis of realistic entourage, attributes, clothing and weapons for the actual event, Rodin focused on noble sacrifice and a glorious death whose source could be found in the Christ in the Pietà of Michelangelo (fig. 5.25).¹⁰⁹

Beyond that refutation, I will focus more on the soldier rather than the allegorical figure in relation to the political implication. Most competitors such as

¹⁰⁶ Louk Tilanus declares the compositional affinity with *Gloria Victis* in its dynamic posture, and the similarity with the female figure in *La Marseillaise*: “Rude’s *Marseillaise* was to be placed along the continuation of the avenue des Champs-Élysées on the other side of the Arc de Triomphe—on the rond-point de Courbevoie. This clearly shows Rodin’s desire to associate his creation with Rude’s pugnacious Marianne of the Revolution.” Louk Tilanus, “The Monument of La Défense: Its Significance for Rodin,” *Gazette Des Beaux-Arts* 125 (April 1995): 263.

¹⁰⁷ Ruth Butler, *The Romantics to Rodin* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and George Braziller, Inc., 1980), 332.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 332.

¹⁰⁹ Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 132.

Carrier-Belleuse and Barrias rendered their soldiers as figures with a strong will to fight at any time, and their eyes reflect that intention, glaring pointedly, presumably fixed on the enemy. On the other hand, Rodin's soldier is a dying warrior with a broken sword. He digs his sword into the ground and the hand of his hooked left arm seems incapable of loosening itself from his hip, a helpless and hopeless gesture. He is dying poignantly, and moreover, he reveals an authentic expression of physical pain: the heroism of sacrifice emphasized through the expression of corporeality.¹¹⁰

Rodin's empathy with the subject, and his obvious unwillingness to bow to official taste, formed his personal artistic statement. Rodin expressed the pain in such a way that the viewer could feel more vividly the physicality of the figure. The blunt limbs, the roughly modeled surfaces, and the unarticulated face of the warrior are very close to a skeleton, and the viewer could sense easily the smell of death.¹¹¹

The Municipal de Paris may have wanted to focus on the heroic deeds of Parisians, not the real and plausible incident and its factual consequence in the Franco-Prussian war. They tried to mystify "La Defense" and to cover the fact that so

¹¹⁰ Raphaël Masson observes that "In the sense of heroism by sacrifice, and the warrior's iconography seems to be borrowed from the Christ of Michelangelo's *Pietà*. An official jury could hardly accept this parallel between a secular, republican history and the Passion story, even if it is more than likely that the specific allusion to the *Pietà* went unnoticed at the time." See "Rodin, Sculptor of Public Monuments," in *Rodin*, 90.

¹¹¹ Through multi-sensory dimensions the viewer can access the story more vividly. See Lindsay, "Mummies and Tombs," 385: "It 'extracted' dramatic historical events from physiological evidence and encouraged the reader to engage with this mummy vicariously through visceral empathy...using the empathic, multi-sensory, sentimental idiom of sensibility, Lenoir aimed for intimate linkages and living immediacy across time."

many citizens had actually died. This could be the main reason for the rejection of his work by the committee, which comprised part of the ruling class. Nonetheless, the demystification of the event, the authentic expression of feeling, and the overt revealing of personal pain, matched the basic philosophy of the Third Republic: the search for truth. This non-ostentatious expression of personal sentiments and the notion of individuality within civilian society were revealed in this work. In spite of its national subject matter, Rodin's *Call to Arms* intersects with individual subjectivity, the private sphere of Rodin's or the warrior's, and simultaneously the national subjectivity of the French people, which is the public sphere.

Rodin's harsh realism reflected what the republican government promoted in its ideology. His dynamic and expressive works did not conform to the idealized serenity of academic art at that time, yet they summed up the classical spiritual sublime with this agonizing dying man. In other words, he was not really interested in giving a realistic description of the actual defense of Paris. Instead, he held grander conceptions of the universal idea of the death of the hero and the fury of a French nation under siege. This objective to appeal to every human being was fundamental to the ideology of the Third Republic.¹¹² Rodin later designated this sculpture "not only

¹¹² "Rodin's *La Défense* would be better understood years later, when it was erected in Verdun in 1920, in front of the gate of Saint-Paul to commemorate the bloody battle of the First World War." *Exposition Marianne et Germania 1789-1889: Un siècle de passions franco-allemandes*, Matin-Gropius-Bau de Berlin, du 15 Septembre 1996 au 5 Janvier 1997, Musée du Petit Palais de Paris, du 8 Novembre au 15 Février 1998, 266.

for the French history but also for the history of all civilization.”¹¹³ Rodin deeply believed that the republican political belief in which the most personal expression and emotion were expressed could touch the people most effectively, as if the people believed that they were part of the narrative and could engage in the event more personally. This emotion is similar to what they might experience during a religious ritual. The reception of this work was powerful enough to appeal to the people and to make them participate in a national discourse created by the work. The universalism of this work represents the highly complicated French nationalism of the Third Republic.

3. Intimacy and Republicanism

Republican Hero: Victor Hugo

Victor Hugo (1802-1885) was one of greatest national heroes of the French intellectual community in the last half of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁴ He was honored not only for his humanistic literary achievements, but also as one of the Republic’s most riveting heroes.¹¹⁵ I will focus exclusively on the sculptural representation of

¹¹³ Tilanus, 268.

¹¹⁴ June Hargrove points out the fact that cultural and humanitarian heroes gradually gained precedence over the political and military figures that had dominated the first half of the century. See “The Public Monument,” *The Romantics to Rodin* (LA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and George Braziller, Inc. 1980), 30.

¹¹⁵ Hugo’s first book of poems, published when he was only twenty years old, went through five editions and was the harbinger of a stupefying productivity that stretched across almost all of the nineteenth century. *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) and *Les Misérables* (1862) became his most enduring

Victor Hugo created by Rodin in this section because the work exemplifies Rodin's republican ideology, in which he demonstrated his concept of intimacy in public sculpture. While many other sculptors at the time produced portraits that exalted Hugo, and the government deified him through panthéonization,¹¹⁶ Rodin kept his personal position as a faithful observer and admirer of this genius as a writer, and concluded that Hugo was not a divine hero, but a struggling limited man. Yet this weakened and humanized rendering of Hugo enabled the audience to approach the hero more easily.

Hugo was an active republican supporter. He fought against Louis-Napoleon's empire, which had established an anti-parliamentary constitution.¹¹⁷ As a result of declaring Louis-Napoleon a traitor to France, Hugo had to relocate to Brussels in 1851, and later settled on the island of Guernsey, where he would live in exile until 1870.¹¹⁸ Hugo ended his exile as the Franco-Prussian War reached its climax, and he

creations. Mary L. Levkoff, "The Monuments to The Burghers of Calais, Victor Hugo, and Honoré de Balzac," *Rodin: A Magnificent Obsession* (London: Merrell in association with the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation), 63. Also, Hugo was among the first to defend the merits of Gothic architecture, which had been roundly condemned by the advocates of Neo-classicism. Patrice Béghain, ed. *Guerre aux démolisseurs!: Hugo, Proust, Barrès* (Vénissieux: Paroles d'aube, 1997).

¹¹⁶ Hugo was a unifying national heroic icon who appealed to a wide public. He worked to democratize the written word, expressing an intense humanitarianism in language accessible to a popular audience. Thus, by the second half of the century, he was probably the most widely read writer in France. Jane Mayo Roos, "Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo," *Art Bulletin* 68 (Dec. 1986): 636.

¹¹⁷ Before Hugo fled to Belgium he was already working for the public interest. As Mary Levkoff observes, "Hugo was elected to the legislative assembly, where he delivered fiery harangues against the government's lack of assistance for the poor, voted to abolish the death penalty, and defended a free press, universal suffrage, the right of private inheritance, and the provision of public, non-sectarian education to everyone," Levkoff, 64.

¹¹⁸ During his years on the island of Guernsey, he continued to rail against the stifling of the press,

returned in glory as a hero who had unflinchingly maintained his integrity and his commitment to humanitarian ideals and individual liberty. In 1885, when he passed away, a million mourners lined the route that took his body across the city from a vigil beneath the Arc de Triomphe to the Panthéon (fig. 5. 26).¹¹⁹ It was the first state funeral for a private citizen in France (fig. 5. 27).

After Hugo's grandiose state funeral in 1885, the government commissioned Rodin to sculpt a monument to Hugo.¹²⁰ Hugo's sepulcher was set in the Panthéon (fig. 5.28, 5.29). The site itself alludes to the specific political meaning of this monument of Hugo. As Jane Mayo Roos investigates the Panthéon's detailed history as secular republicanization,¹²¹ it was an appropriate burial site for Hugo, who was a

capital punishment and the inflexible penal code, the sordid conditions of prisons, slavery in the United States, and the misery of child labor. See further assessments of his political life in Eugenia W. Herbert, *The Artist and Social Reform: France and Belgium* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 46-49; and Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945. II: Intellect, Taste and Anxiety* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 800-803.

¹¹⁹ Jeanine Pariser Plottel discusses how Hugo was deified as a national icon and the process of eloquent funeral orchestration. See "Rodin's Victor Hugo," in *Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo*, exhib. Cat., Los Angeles, Portland, Oregon, New York, and Jacksonville, Florida, (London: Merrell Holberton, 1998), 23-26.

¹²⁰ In 1889 a relative of Victor Hugo, Edward Lockroy, had been appointed Minister of Fine Art, and announced that a series of nearly one hundred commemorative sculptures would be commissioned for the Panthéon. However, he had to resign soon and as a successor he appointed Gustave Larroumet, one of Rodin's admirers. He assigned the Hugo monument to Rodin instead of Dalou. Jean Mayo Roos, "Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo," 640; and Jean Mayo Roos, *Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo* (London: Merrell Holberton), 65-66. Her work gives much detailed information about the commission and context, the political aspects of its later episodes.

¹²¹ In 1806, Napoleon I attempted to reconcile the building's conflicting history, just as he sought to reconcile the legacies of monarchy and republic in many other areas. He turned the building back to the Roman Catholic Church, but decreed that it remain a Panthéon, a burial place for the great men of France. Under the Bourbon Restoration, the Panthéon was fully reconstituted as the Église St. Genevieve. After the July Revolution, the citizen king Louis-Philippe secularized the building, making it again the Panthéon and returning the remains of Voltaire and Rousseau to the crypt. The building remained the Panthéon throughout the July Monarchy and the first three years of the Second Republic. But in the coup d'état of 1851, Louis-Napoleon decreed that the Panthéon become the Église St-

deeply anti-clerical and humanitarian person. He was representative of the liberty of the Third Republic.¹²²

In 1883 the journalist Edmond Bazire introduced Rodin to Hugo.¹²³ However, Hugo was already satisfied with his portrait done by Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (1788-1856) (fig. 5. 30), and he did not have any wish to sit for Rodin. Rodin barely received Hugo's permission to sketch him from a distance and without a formal sitting.¹²⁴ This may have provided Rodin with the opportunity to observe Hugo in a private and a casual manner (fig. 5. 31). Rodin praised "his power of observation, intelligence, and character," admired his "political convictions, literary achievement, and perseverance," and was influenced by his opinion on Catholic Gothic

Genevieve, and the building maintained its status as a national basilica through the Second Empire until the Commune of 1871. During the Paris Commune, it served as a center for the insurgents. In the Third Republic, an anti-clerical trend became dominant. It was the death of Victor Hugo that provided the impetus for the secularization of 1885 and brought about the final change in the building's designation. Roos, "Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo," 634.

¹²² Even though Hugo was a Catholic, when he was young he became a non-practicing Catholic, and expressed increasingly violent anti-Catholic views. He even started to practice Spiritualism during his exile, and later years settled into a Rationalist Deism similar to that espoused by Voltaire. Hugo's Rationalism can be found in poems such as *Torquemada* (1869), *The Pope* (1878), *Religions and Religion* (1880), *The End of Satan* (1886) and *God* (1891).

¹²³ Rodin met Bazire in the Salon de la Madame Juliette Adams, and he was a strong supporter of Rodin afterwards. See chapter V. A. "Supporting Political figures," in this dissertation. Bazire was one of the editors of the newspaper *L'Intransigeant*, and organized the celebrations in honor of Victor Hugo's eightieth birthday. Bazire also advised Rodin that to prove his innocence after the scandals and accusations surrounding *The Age of Bronze*, he should create portraits of well-known figures such as Hugo. Tancock, 504.

¹²⁴ Rodin's letter to Hugo says: "Allow me to count on a moment you will grant me from time to time. I shall not abuse your kindness or cause you any fatigue, and the bust will get finished without your perceiving it." Quoted in Frederik Lawton, *The Life and Work of Auguste Rodin* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1906; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 83.

monuments.¹²⁵

Rodin's Intimate Portrayal of Hugo

Rodin produced the sculptures of Victor Hugo on several occasions and in various media from 1883 until 1897. But he rejected the conventional view of the great writer. Instead, he modeled a likeness copied from nature rather than the stereotypically idealized form established by his contemporaries. Rodin created a series of marble and bronze busts of Hugo that showed less heroic and meditative features, with an unconventional base (fig. 5.32). A bronze portrait, with a vibrant and lifelike quality, was exhibited at the 1884 Salon with great success (fig. 5.33). But, Hugo's family disliked the bust because it was not fully idealized. Without notifying Rodin, they invited Jules Dalou to make the death mask of Hugo (1885) (fig. 5.34).¹²⁶

Rodin's perception of Hugo derived from his experience observing him for his sketches. Rodin said: "I thought I had seen a French Jupiter; when I knew him better he seemed more like Hercules than Jupiter."¹²⁷ Jeanine Parisier Plottel interprets

¹²⁵ Tancock, 504. Rodin also owned Hugo's *Souvenirs politiques et littéraires* (Paris: Société d'Éditions), in Rodin's book collection 5084 N, The Musée Rodin. Also in the interview about medieval cathedrals in 1904, Rodin credited Hugo with helping him learn to love the Gothic monuments and recalled Hugo's role in saving the Tour Saint-Jacques from demolition. Auguste Rodin, "Gothic in the Cathedrals of France," *North American Review* 180, no. 2 (February 1905): 219-29.

¹²⁶ Tancock, 506.

¹²⁷ Henri-Charles-Etienne Dujardin-Beaumetz, "Rodin's Reflections on Art," in Elsen, *Auguste Rodin: Readings on His Life and Work*, 169.

these words to indicate Rodin's growing attitude of intimacy toward Hugo: "Jupiter as the primal god, and Hercules as a mere man."¹²⁸ Rodin's intimate portrayal of Hugo was also manifested in his monument. Rodin was chosen for a *Monument to Victor Hugo*, which was to be placed in the left transept of the Panthéon.¹²⁹ For this, Rodin picked a moment in Hugo's exile. Rodin rendered Hugo seated on the rock of Guernsey, and behind him, in the volute of a wave, the three muses of Youth, Maturity, and Old Age breathing inspiration into him.¹³⁰ It was the most dramatic and harsh time of Hugo's life, and the most isolated place that offered the viewer to ponder his personal struggles.

Rodin's first project for Hugo monument (fig. 5.35) (1889-90) portrayed him in this time with an intimate way: Hugo was shown nude, seated on a rock, his left arm touching the ground, and his right hand raised and touching his lips in a curiously childish gesture. Hugo's body was not proportioned adequately. His unconscious countenance was far from the ideally depicted great hero of France with his head awkwardly attached to his body. Rodin perceived and portrayed him far from the mythical figure of France. As Ruth Butler points out, this study exemplifies "the

¹²⁸ Plotel, 28-29.

¹²⁹ Alexander Falguière, was to execute a colossal group of *The Spirit of the Revolution*, Jules Dalou a group of *The Orators* of 1830, and Antonin Mercié a group of *The Generals of the Revolution*. Jean-Antoine Injalbert was to create a *Monument to Honoré Gabriel Mirabeau* for the right transept. For the detailed process of the construction of the Victor Hugo monument, see Cécile Goldscheider, "Rodin et le Monument de Victor Hugo," *La Revue des Arts* Paris, no. 3 (October, 1956): 179-84.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

expression of profound human compassion.”¹³¹ Indeed Rodin regarded Hugo with complex feelings and humanistic struggle.¹³² Rodin’s approach to the subject was so personal and complex to understand that they thought it was not at all suited for a monumental classical interior of the Panthéon.

Rodin took an informal and highly personal approach to his subject. Roos described this work as: “Designed for a low base and intended to be seen at close range, his study shows the poet in a moment of outward serenity and relative physical calm; all energy has been turned inward and Hugo’s deep reflectiveness seems to allow the viewer access to the writer’s inner life.”¹³³ Rodin was concerned with the emotional interaction with the audience, whose manner is realized in *The Burghers*. Roos underscores the interactive nature of the work and Rodin’s awareness of its communicative function. Rodin portrayed Hugo as a real and approachable “ordinary” man. Although allegorical figures that surrounded Hugo appear to blow a breath of inspiration onto him, Rodin refused to render Hugo as “larger than life” through

¹³¹ Ruth Butler, *The Shape of Genius*, 241.

¹³² “*The Monument to Victor Hugo* was supposed to be paired with a *Monument to Mirabeau* by an academic sculptor, Jean-Antoine Injalbert. Injalbert designed his group in the traditionally idealized Beaux-Arts style, with a complicated composition, multiple recognizable allegories, and a standing, clothed protagonist. The committee viewed Injalbert’s favorably, while they saw in Rodin’s work a “lack of clarity and confusing silhouette.” Antoinette Le Norman-Romain, “Le Monumnet à Victor Hugo,” in *Exhibition: Victor Hugo vu par Rodin*, du 4 Octobre 2002 au 27 Janvier 2003, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d’Archéologie (Paris: Somgy Edition, 2002), 64.

¹³³ Roos, “Rodin’s Monument to Victor Hugo,” 646.

rhetorical gestures and an idealized body.¹³⁴

The committee rejected the work because of its size and disharmony with the other monument.¹³⁵ The true reason of denial, however, was that Rodin portrayed this national hero vulgarly. What Rodin attempted to reveal was the inner “truth” of the model by his gesture and physiognomy. The portrayal of Hugo’s gloomy face reminds us that he is not a god-like innate genius. Rodin might say that even a great figure like Hugo could be disappointed, sad, and even frustrated about his bad luck. Making this public figure more intimate diminished the psychological and ideological distance between him and the audience. Likewise, the presentation of this heroic figure with his personal details showed the ideal public sphere where the two spheres intersected without conflicts.

Rodin was asked to complete another project that was conceived in a “more decorative fashion”¹³⁶ (fig. 5.37). The second project titled *Apotheosis of Victor Hugo* (1890-91) showed Hugo standing crowned by *the Genius of the Nineteenth Century*.

¹³⁴ This monument strikingly recalls *Plaster Cast of a Fallen Man with Vessel* by Michele Amodio (1870 albumen print) in terms of its unheroic and drooping body shape (fig. 5.36). This print was based on a discovered cast portraying victims of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, AD 79. In the exhibition catalogue *Pompeii and the Roman Villa: Art and Culture around the Bay of Naples*, National Gallery of Art, Oct. 19, 2008 – Mar. 22, 2009; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, May 3 – Oct. 4, 2009 (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2008), catalogue no. 128.

¹³⁵ “Monsieur Rodin et la commission des Travaux d’Art,” *Le Temps*, Paris, July 21, 1890. quoted in Tancock, 414.

¹³⁶ Rodin understood what the state wanted him to make: “On me demande un autre projet, conçu d’une façon plus décorative; je vais essayer de la faire.” Roos, “Rodin’s Monument to Victor Hugo,” note 8, 421.

In a letter of December 28, 1890, to Gustave Larroumet, Rodin wrote: “a descending figure of Iris resting on a cloud crowns him too or rather their hands unite and hold flowers, some laurels, above him. Lower down I am making a powerful figure which is raising its head and contemplating him in his apotheosis; that is the crowd that gave him an unforgettable funeral, it is *all of us, Vox Populi (People’s voice)*.”¹³⁷ Even though the “apotheosis” itself recalls a distinctively Catholic act or a pagan ritual, Rodin combined its ritualistic aspect with a secular republican voice, realizing a fusion of sacred and secular, Catholic and republican.

By inclusion of people, Rodin recalled the interdependence with the public: Hugo’s fame would not have been achieved if the public did exist to exalt him. Rodin’s second project also did not please the committee. Roos interprets Rodin’s failure as the monument’s threatening, troubling, and transgressive quality: “an aesthetic surprise comes as an unpleasant shock if we desire that our government remain stable and predictable and if we fear an alteration to the status quo.”¹³⁸ However, Rodin may have believed that his monument could appeal to ordinary people by evoking the life of Hugo, and the equality and fraternity represented through the depiction of people. Hugo is portrayed no more than an ordinary and

¹³⁷ Cladel, *Rodin*, 183.

¹³⁸ Roos, *Rodin’s Monument to Victor Hugo*, 81.

accessible figure, alluding that anybody could be like him. The psychological distinction between the hero and ordinary people is tremendously diminished in Rodin's work.

As an evidence for this, the public's response was different from that of the committee. The audience welcomed his work enthusiastically. The exhibition of the Hugo monument at the Georges Petite gallery was a great success. The press praised Rodin, describing his work as "moving, eloquent, grandiose and intimate."¹³⁹ Among this different expectation between the committee and the audience, Rodin stood on the side of the public rather than on the authority of the committee. Rodin created the public sphere without sacrificing the private sphere: *The Monument of Hugo* was a success among the People because they could identify themselves with this great French man, therefore creating a united identity as a proud French people.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Butler, *The Shape of Genius*, 247.

¹⁴⁰ In this case, the public was limited to bourgeois middle class, and not really included the lower working class, which was also a limitation for a model of Habermas's public sphere. See Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy" *Social Text*, 25/26 (1990): 56-80.

Chapter Six: Republicanism and Catholicism in *The Burghers of Calais*

They are voluntarily bound to the same sacrifice but each of them plays the role suited to his individuality given his age and position

- Auguste Rodin –

Rodin's *The Burghers of Calais* (1884-1895) (fig. 6.1) is a hauntingly expressive group of defeated men. Antoinette Le Normand-Romain points to its unusual character: "it is rare that we pay homage to those who have yielded to a foreign conqueror, unless it is to incite them to take revenge."¹ There is no tone of revenge and anger though, but rather a glorification of their sublime sacrifice to save their compatriots. Fascinated by this subject of defeated men, Rodin dispensed with an idealized rendering and depicted them with emotional and individualized expressions, in the same manner of his previous republican works.

Based on this particular rendering of the monument, this chapter will argue that the monument stands at the intersection of republicanism and Catholicism during the Third Republic. Rodin created what he thought to be a harmonious unification of these two positions, and summarized his political views, patriotism, and Catholic spirituality. To grasp his intention for the work, this chapter consists of the three

¹ Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, "Rodin and the Monument of the Burghers of Calais," in *Rodin: The Burghers of Calais*, 11.

sections: the first will provide a political and social context of the idea and commission of the monument; the second will survey the literary and visual sources of the story of *The Burgbers*; and the last section will examine the relationship between the monument and the audience, and how the audience transforms their emotional state through experiencing the monument as if in pilgrimage.

A. Commission and Context of *The Burgbers of Calais*

1. The Political Context of Calais

The city of Calais had wanted to pay homage to the heroism of the burghers who, in 1347, after a siege that had lasted one year, carried the keys of the town to the victorious King of England.² On September 26, 1884, the municipal Council of Calais decided to erect a monument to the medieval heroes of this historic event and voted to start a national subscription drive to raise funds for its erection.³ The hero, Eustache de Saint-Pierre, with his five companions, saved the city from destruction during the Hundred Years War. The theme reminds the people of Calais of two important roles of the city: first, Calais had performed a vital role of defense in French history; and second, the sacrificial patriotism of the burghers has been handed over to

² For the detailed history of the various versions of the surrender of Calais see Jean-Marie Moeglin, "Edouard III et les Six Bourgeois de Calais," *Revue Historique* n. 592 (October-December 1994): 229-267.

³ McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin's Burgbers of Calais*, 7.

the current civilians of Calais. The defender and the patriot are two role models that the Third Republic has reclaimed and sustained.

The episode of the burghers provided an exemplary model in the evolution of the Third Republic's plan for national integration, which was one of its major political goals. This single monument expresses three different levels of integration pursued by the Third Republic: one, unifying France as one nation by eliminating various regionalisms; two, merging republicanism with Catholicism; and three, reconciling medievalism and modernism. Rodin also held these goals as he created his other monumental sculptures. To understand the political nature of the monument and how the Calaisians pursued those levels of integration, it would be helpful to examine the history of the city.

Located along the North Sea coast, the fishing village of Calais developed into a significant port when the Count of Flanders assumed control of it in 997 and the Count of Boulogne fortified it in 1224 (fig. 6.2, 6.3).⁴ During medieval times the town was part of a Dutch-speaking area that extended into present-day northern France. The town's ferry trade drew the interest of England, whose king Edward III besieged the city for eleven months following the Battle of Crécy in 1347. The French

⁴ Mériaux Delattre, *Région du Nord: Flandre, Artois, Boulonnais, Picardie, guides géologiques régionaux* (Paris: Masson, 1973). The Romans, Spanish, English, and Germans all had taken control of Calais in various times throughout history.

Duke of Guise had ended English hold on Calais in the sixteenth century.⁵ As Eugen Weber describes the process of national assimilation and appropriation of provincial history and culture to consolidate the unified heritage, the Republican government likewise appropriated the legend of the burgers of Calais, who had been identified as regional heroes, to serve as a symbol of national identity.⁶

Mary Jo McNamara has provided a detailed history of the commission of *The Burghers*.⁷ According to her study of the political context of Calais, the importance of the city's identity became more crucial at the point of merging with the neighboring city of St. Pierre in 1884. She cites E. Coulon's analysis: "the history of Calais had overshadowed the town of St. Pierre that had grown up outside its medieval city walls. But in the early nineteenth century, the lace industry, angered by Calais' hostile attitude towards industrialization, had moved to St. Pierre, where it enjoyed tremendous prosperity under the Second Empire."⁸ The conflict between the two

⁵ Timothy Baycroft surveys the integration of French Flanders into the French state from the French Revolution to the present. See the fourth chapter of his book where he outlines French republican politics of national integration as manifested in Pas-de-Calais, along with a brief description of republican festivals. *Culture, Identity, and Nationalism: French Flanders in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: The Boydell Press, 2004).

⁶ See Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*. He discusses how French national integration came with modernization of rural France, which I have shown in Chapter II.

⁷ McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais* (1977):7-15; and Mary Jo McNamara, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais* (1983), see chapter I "The Commission," 20-74.

⁸ E. Coulon, *Calais: Son histoire, son port, sa plage, son casino, ses monuments, ses dentelles* (Calais: Bonnet, Denquin & Chauveau, 1923), 68-69, cited in McNamara and Elsen, 7. For the historical process of the lace industry of Calais, see "Nottingham's prosperity; Returns from the Seat of the Lace and Hosiery," *The New York Times* (January 1883): n.p. "The lace industry of Calais became an important craft industry of France in the 16th century, and was handmade by craftspeople in their homes or small workshops. After the revolution and industrial revolution, a machine to make lace was

cities can be summarized as the increasing hostile force between medievalism and modernization during the republican administrative process.⁹

McNamara further compares the characteristics of the two cities: “St. Pierre became a turbulent city of British immigrant workers and a stronghold of socialism. In contrast, the citizens of Calais were French, bourgeois, and ardently republican. Those families of Calais, who had lived there for centuries, wished to preserve the traditions of their ancient city. Its foundations, charter, and important civic buildings were late medieval.”¹⁰ However, Calais’ wealth waned after the War of 1870 with its outmoded port producing less revenue and its old city walls hindering its growth. Calais had no other choice but to change itself for future progress. From the point of view of the city of St. Pierre, the unification offered benefits such as a stronger tax system, increased funds, the possible upgrade of a harbor system, and better municipal services, all of which would have made the new unified city a stronger and more effective industrial center.¹¹ The two municipal councils finally agreed to unite the cities and to initiate civic projects such as a large central square, a town hall, a

invented in England by John Leavers, and brought to Calais from Nottingham in 1816. English skilled immigrants built opened lace factories in St. Pierre while in Calais the industry is still in the hands of family businesses.”

⁹ Roger Gould surveys the conflict between the central Parisian urbanization process, provincial protest to it, and the emerging class struggles that followed the process. See *Insurgent Identities* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 187-194.

¹⁰ McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin’s Burghers of Calais*, 12.

¹¹ Nelly Mulard, *Calais au temps de la Dentelle* (Calais: Les Cahiers de Vieux Calais, 1936), 136, cited in McNamara and Elsen, 8.

railroad station, a post office, and a hospital.¹²

In order to join the two cities physically, however, the walls of Calais would have to be torn down and new buildings erected in their place. Calais began to modernize by widening its roads, installing sewers and gas lines. But, as McNamara points out, “the citizens were furious that the city walls – the most visible symbol of their ancient past – were to be destroyed and denounced the plan for their demolition.”¹³ Under the circumstances, the municipal council decided that before the unification they erect a monument for the city, which could be a reminder of Calais’ historic past and at the same time serve as a symbol of a modern and unified new city. The monument was to be a symbol of this specific regional integration and at the same time function as a symbol of old Calais, different from the newly merged Calais, which, as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi explains, would enable Calais to distinguish itself from the city of St. Pierre.¹⁴

The Municipal Council decided to erect a monument that would not only symbolize the traditional city of Calais and its integration with St. Pierre, it would

¹² McNamara also points to the construction of a tunnel under the English Channel that would link Dover to Calais, and would establish Calais as a major connecting point on the railroad line between London and Paris. This access would give Calais the possibility of becoming the largest tourist center of northern France. *Le Patriote* (January 25, 1884) and (July 5, 1885), 2, cited in McNamara, *Rodin’s Burghers of Calais*, 24.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 24-27.

¹⁴ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 36. He explains, for example, that the cross is a concrete expression of the unity of all Christians, but it also underlines the separation between the latter and the followers of Islam or any other religion.

also symbolize the universality of the French Republic. Accordingly, the monument would express a medieval theme through modern expression of form, connecting it simultaneously to conservative Catholicism and republican liberalism.¹⁵ Therefore, from the beginning, the project had to satisfy the complex demands of harmonious unification. The monument was a way to affirm the identity of Calais' medieval past and at the same time to build the icon of a republican hero in a new era.

2. The Commission and Rodin's Models

The Commission of The Burghers of Calais

In the spring of 1884, the Municipal Council decided to erect a monument to Eustache de Saint-Pierre. The task of organizing the project was handed over to Mayor Omer Dewavrin. The passionate republican Dewavrin envisioned the monument both as a reminder of Calais' past and as a symbol of its progressive future. McNamara notes that "its subject matter would remind the public of the important role Calais had played in French history, while its form, designed by an eminent Parisian sculptor, would publicize Calais as a modern city."¹⁶ Writing to the senator

¹⁵ Albert Boime emphasizes the royalist quality of the monument: "The souvenir booklet published to commemorate the unveiling of the monument was illustrated with royal and Catholic symbols (fig. 6.4, 6.5) redolent of the medievalizing fantasies of the political and cultural right wing," *Hollow Icons: The Politics of Sculpture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1987), 103, 104.

¹⁶ Under-prefect of Boulogne-sur-Mer to Omer Dewavrin, October 28, 1884. cited in McNamara and Elsen, 9.

of Pas-de-Calais, he asked that the city be allowed to keep “the name that immortalized the devotion of Eustache de Saint-Pierre and his companions.”¹⁷

Through skillful politics the mayor succeeded in giving the new unified city the name of Calais, which ensured for him Calais’ initiative in the process of the merging.

The theme of the burghers of Calais drew the attention not only of Calaisians but also of the republican government, because it was a subject that could be adapted to the royalist and republican alike.¹⁸ The episode recalls a Catholic ritual of public atonement that was common in the middle ages, but the sacrificing of oneself for one’s fellows was also an act of civic heroism.¹⁹ The story of burghers itself can be related to both Catholic ritual and republican ideology. It was a flexible theme subjected to different interpretations and consequently used for various projects that supported republican ideology.²⁰ Therefore, the perpetuation of the city’s identity through the heroic burghers was the main objective of the monument. We also must consider how it exemplified a heroic sacrifice for the nation, which was the main

¹⁷ Dewavrin to Senator Wallon, January 1, 1885, reprinted in *Le Journal de Calais*, January 24, 1885, 2.

¹⁸ Mari-Pierre Demarty wrote a journal article about the exhibition of *The Burghers* in the centennial ceremony of its erection and emphasized its universal merit to unify the different factions. Marie-Pierre Demarty, “Le Retour des Bourgeois,” *Nord Littoral*, Samedi, 7 (October, 1995), review for L’Exposition “Les Bourgeois de Calais, Fortunes d’un Mythe” (Calais: Musée de Calais, The Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, 6 Oct. – 3 Dec. 1995).

¹⁹ I will discuss the Catholic ritual of atonement in the subsequent section on literary sources.

²⁰ Annette Haudiquet, the curator of the centennial exhibition of *The Burghers* in Calais, points out that abundant variation of the iconography and verbal versions of the story had been handed down by the time Rodin started to work on the monument. Annette Haudiquet, “Avant-Propos,” *Les Bourgeois de Calais, fortunes d’un mythe et ses représentations*, exhibition catalogue, Calais and Paris, 1977-1978.

reason why the central government provided financial support for this project.²¹

The Mayor, a dedicated republican and zealous patriot, recognized the monument's didactic possibilities and the dramatic tone served as an especially relevant political tool for the Third Republic to legitimize its military failure. Calais had lost the war against Edward III, just as France had lost the war against Germany in 1870. In 1347 Calais had been besieged by foreign troops until its citizens began to die of starvation, and its release was given only after total surrender, just like the humiliating surrender of France to Germany.²² Moreover, after the war, Calais, like Alsace-Lorraine, became a foreign territory. But in spite of two hundred years of English government, Calais had remained French in language and in culture.²³ Thus, Dewavrin saw the monument as a reminder of the national conscience of the indomitable French spirit that had survived foreign occupation once and would

²¹ Ardent republicans were unwilling to accept the Treaty of Frankfurt and formed the League of Patriots in 1882 under the leadership of the poet Paul Déroulède. Their goal was to revise the treaty and regain the lost provinces by concentrating its efforts on encouraging patriotic and military education—efforts that spread rapidly among many republicans. See Paul Déroulède, *Le Livre de la ligue des patriotes*, ed. Henri Deloncle (Paris: Bureaux de la Ligue et du Drapeau, 1887), 289.

²² Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey Brereton (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1968), 104.

²³ Alsace-Lorraine was annexed by the newly created German Empire in 1871 by the Treaty of Frankfurt after the Franco-Prussian War. This region was German territory around the tenth century, and later became part of the Holy Roman Empire. They gradually became part of France between 1552 and 1798, right before the War of 1870/1. At the end of World War I the territory reverted to France with the Treaty of Versailles of 1919. Again, the area was annexed by Nazi Germany in 1940 but reverted to France in 1945 at the end of the World War II, and has remained a part of France since. Therefore, the diverse nature in language, race, and culture is very similar to Calais, along with its midway location between two countries.

survive it again.²⁴ It represented a celebration of heroism, not in victory, but in defeat, echoing the recent experience of the republican state.

The monument committee's first task was to publicize the public subscription, then send all the municipalities and major government officials of France patriotic appeals for funds, along with copies of Froissart's account. The painter Alphonse Prosper Isaac, a native of Calais and established in Paris, was entrusted with guiding the committee in the choice of a sculptor. Under the advice of Jean-Paul Laurens and Leon Gauchez, Isaac recommended Rodin as a sculptor of the monument.²⁵

The First Maquette

Dewavrin visited Rodin's studio in Paris in October 1884 and gave Rodin a copy of the publicity circular with the excerpt from Froissart.²⁶ That same day Rodin began the first maquette that represented all six burghers compactly grouped on a tall

²⁴ Not all French cities supported the project due to the rumor that challenged the authenticity of the story, along with the treason charges against the main figure, St. Eustache. The city of St. Pierre strongly opposed the project not only because of the rivalry between the two cities, but also because many of its citizens were socialists who scorned the republicans' passionate nationalism that resided in Calais. Deriding the religious overtones of Calais' patriotism, *Le Patriote* regretted that Calais no longer owned a piece of the rope from Eustach's neck, such a "precious relic." *Le Patriote*, October 29 and 31, 1884, cited in McNamara and Elsen, 13.

²⁵ Gustave Coquiote mentioned that Gauchez, director of the review *L'Art*, suggested Rodin's name. Gustave Coquiote, *Le Vrai Rodin* (Paris: Editions Jules Tallandier, 1913): "Gaucher dit sans préambule à Rodin qu'il a songé à lui commander un Eustache de Saint-Pierre, pour la somme de quinze mille francs. Il a pris des renseignements: 'Rodin n'est pas riche; c'est pourquoi, brave homme, il a forcé la somme qu'on donne habituellement aux autres sculpteurs, pour une figure grandeur nature!'" 132.

²⁶ After this first meeting their collaboration was going to last for ten years. See Le Normand-Romain, *Rodin: The Burghers of Calais*, 14.

pedestal, on which he traced a triumphal arc, conveying the notion of collective sacrifice (fig. 6.6). Rodin wanted to represent all six burghers together instead of glorifying the single figure of Eustache de St-Pierre. For Rodin, the subject itself “imposes a heroic conception and the set of six figures sacrificing themselves has a communicative emotion and expression. The pedestal is triumphal and has the rudiments of an Arch of Triumph, to bear, not a quadriga, but human patriotism abnegation, virtue.”²⁷ From the outset, Rodin conceived of the monument’s unusual instructive function and its capacity for communication with the audience. To draw the audience’s attention to the story, Rodin did not describe the scene or the issues involved in it through the use of pretentious language, rather Rodin wanted to make “the spectators share in the emotion felt by the burghers.”²⁸

Among the whole narrative, Rodin choose the moment when Eustache departs to offer his life in deliverance for his fellow citizens. Dewavrin was immediately captivated by Rodin’s idea for the statue. Although the critics envisioned an exaltation of an individual, Rodin was chosen in January of 1885.²⁹ There seems to be several crucial factors for the committee to explain this decision. First, Rodin’s maquette

²⁷ Rodin wrote a letter to Dewavrin, 20 November 1884, in A. Haudiquet, 42.

²⁸ Le Normand-Romain, *Rodin: The Burghers of Calais*, 15.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 15. “Other sculptors, Emile Chatrousse and Laurent Marqueste had sent sketches of the burghers too, but Rodin’s sketch on burghers was chosen and confirmed the commission for the price of 15,000 francs.”

honoring all six men equally satisfied the demands of both the republicans and the socialists. Its democratic quality of the collective sacrifice seemed to appease the civilians of St. Pierre, where socialist and egalitarian views had flourished. The leftist newspaper, *Le Patriote*, praised the work for its commemoration of not one hero, but for the heroic ordinary many. Likewise, its non-academic style, non-hierarchical composition, and genuine expression of figures without any allegorical expression seemed very modern, fitting their initial aim to have a symbol of a modern city. It was also suitable to the Third Republic, which made an effort to break with the royalist past of France and move the country in the direction of a modern nation for common people.³⁰ Furthermore, it satisfied Rodin's nationalistic zeal.³¹

The figures form a close-knit group with Eustache de St-Pierre leading the way with his arm. The group gives a very compact impression of an overall cubic form since its members are very close to one another and the same height.³² All the

³⁰ Rodin's originality was praised by local newspapers such as *Le Guetteur de St. Quentin*: "The project which would appear the most original to us is that of M. Rodin, Paris sculptor, whose maquette groups the six burghers of Calais on the same pedestal in diverse attitudes. It would be a truthful monument which would offer the virtue of not leaving in oblivion any of those who sacrificed themselves in 1347 for the safety of their fellow citizens." (November 28, 1884), reprinted by Roger Marx's in *Journal d'Art* (November 28, 1884).

³¹ Some years later, Kaiser Wilhelm II asked Rodin to make a bust of him, Rodin declined. He did not want to portray an 'enemy of France.' Ruth Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 487.

³² Rodin made several statements about the composition of *The Burghers*. Rodin wanted to design all the figures at the same level, on equal footing. This may have been to realize the republican ideology of equality. Another purpose was to contest the conventional pyramid form, which was too immobile, and instead create a cubic form reminiscent of the Gothic era: "I am directly opposed to this principle which has prevailed in our era since the beginning of the century and which is itself directly opposed to the previous great eras of art, and which gives to the works conceived in this spirit, a coldness and lack of movement, mere convention." Rodin's letter to Dewavrin, August 1885, Haudiquet, *ibid.*, 55.

burghers are encircled or tied together by a rope around each of their necks. The atmosphere of the model is pathetic but triumphant in the face of a difficult fate. Once Dewavrin had seen Rodin's model, he assured Rodin in a letter that "you have rendered the idea in the most thrilling and heroic fashion...Everyone who has seen the group is gripped by it."³³ On 24 January 1885, Dewavrin confirmed the commission of the monument to Rodin for the price of 15,000 francs.³⁴

The Second Maquette

According to the contract that Rodin signed, he was obliged to produce a second maquette at a third of the actual size, which Dewavrin hoped could be presented at the Salon.³⁵ The new model, which was finished by late July 1885, differed in several respects from the first one (fig. 6.7).³⁶ The high pedestal had been removed and the figures stood directly on the ground. Not only did Rodin make the figures equal in height, he also placed them nearly on the same level as the spectators.

³³ Judith Cladel, *Rodin, sa vie glorieuse, sa vie inconnue* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1936), 154.

³⁴ McNarmara, *Rodin's Burgers of Calais*, 55.

³⁵ The contract was between Omer Dewavrin and Auguste Rodin, both in Calais and Paris "...complètement finie et soignée de la même façon que les œuvres admises aux salons annuels." Ibid., note 93, 72.

³⁶ The controversy arose with the second maquette. Two newspapers (*L'Echo de Nord*, July 29, 1885, 2, and *Journal de Calais*, July 29, 1885, 1) praised the simplicity of lines, the harmonious grouping, and the arrangement of the draperies of the burghers; however, *Le Patriote* and some committee members objected to the fact that Rodin chose a cubic composition over that of a pyramid, so favored by the Academy (*Le Patriote*, July 30, 1885).

Rodin later explained to Paul Gsell what it was that he wanted to convey:

I have not shown them grouped in a triumphant apotheosis; such a glorification of their heroism would not have corresponded to anything real. On the contrary, I have, as it were, threaded them one behind the other, because in the indecision of that last inner combat which ensues between their cause and their fear of dying, each of them is isolated in front of his conscience. They are still questioning themselves to know if they have the strength to accomplish the supreme sacrifice – their soul pushes them onward, but their feet refuse to walk. They drag themselves along painfully, as much because of the feebleness to which famine has reduced them as because of the terrifying nature of the sacrifice...If I have succeeded in showing how much the body, weakened by the most cruel sufferings, still holds on to life, how much power it still has over the spirit that is consumed with bravery. I congratulate myself on not having remained beneath the noble theme I have dealt with.³⁷

Rodin's comment exposed his human vulnerability. When he mentioned "indecision," "inner combat," and "their fear," he echoed the republican emphasis on authentic humanism and its genuine expression: the search for truth. Rodin stressed the idea of individualism, stating that "each of them is isolated in front of his conscience." This also exemplifies the ideal public civilian sphere proposed by Habermas because it is reminiscent of a public sphere where each individual

³⁷ Paul Gsell, "Chez Rodin," *L'Art et les artistes*, no. 109 (April, 1914, special issue, Rodin, L'Homme et l'Oeuvre): 67-68: "Je ne les ai pas groupés en une apothéose triomphante: car une telle glorification de leur héroïsme n'aurait correspondu à rien de réel. Au contraire, je les ai comme éparénés les uns derrière les autres, parceque, dans l'indécision du dernier combat intérieur qui se livre entre leur dévouement à leur peur de mourir, chacun d'eux est comme isolé en face de sa conscience. Ils s'interrogent encore pour savoir s'ils auront la force d'accomplir le supreme sacrifice- leur âme les pousse en avant et leurs pieds refusent de marcher. Ils se traînent péniblement, autant à cause de la faiblesse à laquelle les a réduits la famine, qu'à cause de l'épouvante du supplice...Et certainement, si j'ai réussi à montrer combine le corps, meme exténué par les plus cruelles souffrances, tient encore à la vie, combine il a encore d'empire sur l'ame éprise de vaillance je ne plus me féliciter de n'être pas resté au-dessous du noble thème que j'avais à traiter."

expresses his or her feelings, emotions, and responses, freely and openly in front of the great cause of sacrificial patriotism. This monument expresses an intimate and private communication among the individuals or with the audience, rather than being led and proclaimed by one powerful political figure or an artist. Visually it depicts the Third Republic philosophy of fraternity and equality, where each individual is important and has equal political rights and is free to demonstrate them—theoretically. This factor fascinated the Parisian republican leaders and the Calaisians.

In defending the second maquette with a low pedestal, Rodin praised his work as being “the spirit of French Gothic art and denouncing the academic pyramid formation.”³⁸ He chose to place his sculpture “in the expression of the era of Froissart,” attributing to medieval sculpture a “sublime” air of purity, strength, and naiveté with a “Gallic soul.”³⁹ As author of *Les Cathédrales de France*, Rodin praised Gothic art as well as Catholic ritual and pilgrimage, which I will discuss later in this chapter.⁴⁰ Rodin’s apparent predilection for Catholic taste seemed to contradict the secularized republican devotion in art, yet to Rodin Catholicism and medievalism were fundamental to the French national spirit: “...in those days a discerning taste

³⁸ Rodin to M. Forest, editor of *Le Patriote*, August 2, 1885, cited in McNamara and Elsen, 15.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁰ I will deal with the related Catholic ritual in next sub-chapter, VI, B. Catholic pilgrimage in relation to the way of appreciation for the monument will be discussed in Chapter VI, C, “The Transformation of the Audience: Ritualized Monument as a Pilgrimage Site.”

ruled our land: we must become French once more! Initiation to Gothic beauty is initiation to the truth of our race, of our sky, of our land.”⁴¹ Rodin’s Gothic medievalism merged with patriotism, and its union was thematically and formally revealed in the production of *The Burghers*.⁴²

Rodin fought harsh criticism in defending what he wanted. He also scoffed at the idea of changing the shape of his statue into a pyramid, which he said was an “outmoded, useless convention, and immobile.”⁴³ A few months later the Municipal Council accepted Rodin’s second model. In 1886, however, a series of bankruptcies shook Calais and most of the money for the monument was lost.⁴⁴ The project was disbanded until 1893, when Dewavrin was reelected as mayor. A national lottery was held to raise money, and the mayor hounded Rodin to finish the statue and have it cast in March 1895. A final conflict between Rodin and the Committee for the Monument emerged over where to put the statue in Calais, and whether or not it should have a pedestal.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Rodin, *Cathedrals of France*, 20. Rodin’s sense of nationalism, which favored French Gothic art over the classical Italian tradition, was shared by others in the years after the Franco-Prussian War, including literary nationalists. Weber, 12-13.

⁴² Butler, *The Shape of Genius*, 32.

⁴³ Rodin to Dewavrin, August 1885, n. 35, 55, cited in Le Norman-Romain, *Rodin: The Burghers of Calais*, 22.

⁴⁴ Le Norman-Romain mentions that Rodin had to face this ill fate, and in exchange had a total freedom of execution, as the disappearance of the funding released him from the restrictions that the committee was trying to impose on him, *ibid.*, 26 and 30.

⁴⁵ The delayed completion of the monument and its installation was documented in detail in “The Burghers of Calais by Auguste Rodin: A Monument in the Town,” by Annette Haudiquet, 65-78.

3. The Completion of the Monument

The individual figures of the burghers had been completed by the end of 1888, and Rodin exhibited them in the joint exhibition with Claude Monet at the Gallery Georges Petit in Paris in 1889 (fig. 6.8). Since Rodin had not decided on the final arrangement of these figures, the monument was not conceived as a fixed compact group. Instead, the figures were to be placed one behind the other randomly.⁴⁶ The catalogue of the exhibition written by Gustave Geffroy describes Rodin's effort to assemble the figures, seeking arrangements and harmonies.⁴⁷

The monument was successfully inaugurated on 3 June 1895 (fig. 6.9) while the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts exhibited the isolated bronze figure of Eustache de Saint-Pierre. Roger Marx, a faithful supporter of Rodin, wrote an enthusiastic critique: "Mr. Rodin has set *The Burghers* in the diversity of their character and their age. He has revealed individual feelings by the position of the head, the contraction of the facial muscles, the tension in the hands, the overwhelmed or haughty bearing. He wants the deed to be incarnated both in its tangible truth and in its moral beauty and the incomparable authority of the glorification has no other

⁴⁶ E. H. Ramsden, "The Burghers of Calais: A New Interpretation," *Apollo* (March, 1970): 235.

⁴⁷ Gustave Geffroy, "August Rodin," *Claude Monet-August Rodin*, Galerie Georges Petit (Paris, 1889), 50, reprinted in *Monet-Rodin: Centenaire de l'Exposition de 1889* (Paris: Musée Rodin, 1989), 60: "Rodin est seul, travaillant à assembler des groupes, cherchant des arrangements et des harmonies. Regardez l'homme et comprenez l'oeuvre."

origin than this desire.”⁴⁸

As Marx eloquently praised the monument by naming it as “the plastic public cult of national glories, from Joan of Arc to Eustache de Saint-Pierre,”⁴⁹ the background of the commission of *The Burghers* shows that the monument represented not only patriotic sentiments of the Third Republic and Calais, but also of the Catholic spirit and national ritual, which art critic Félix Jeantet first identified:

For Rodin, like the Gothics in their most beautiful figures of the late thirteenth century or in the statues of the Cathedral at Reims, moral expression is entirely made up of gesture; The Gothics were not naïve as they appeared to some, in reality they were faithful observers of all that happened around them, and their seeming naïvete is nothing more than a thoroughly knowledgeable simplification, a synthesis that is in itself a true sacrifice to the moral expression....In shaping his *Burghers of Calais*, Rodin has lived the life of the “Grands Ymagiers” of the ancient tombs and cathedrals. Like them, he has created more than a sculpture or a group of six figures. His vision has recreated the full extent of a true, tragic, and simple drama...And he has done it with such boldness, with such newly found modernity.⁵⁰

In arguing that Rodin had created a tragic Gothic drama, Jeantet suggests that Rodin and the Symbolists were inspired by the work of late medieval sculptors, and in turn simplified their art in a synthesis of spiritual expression and modern form.

⁴⁸ Roger Marx, “Les Salons de 1895,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* no. 2 (1895), 114-115.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁵⁰ Félix Jeantet, “Exposition des oeuvres de Rodin,” *Le Blanc & Noir* (June 1889), reprinted in *Rodin in Perspective*, ed. Ruth Butler (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 75.

Rodin's inclination toward the Gothic spirit and ritual will be explained by surveying the sources of the story of the monument.

B. The Sources of *the Burghers of Calais*

1. Literary Sources

Rodin's main source of inspiration for *The Burghers* was the late medieval account of the siege of Calais in *The Chronicles* by Jean Froissart (1337-1405).⁵¹

Froissart was a great medieval writer, the first war reporter, and a journalist. He was born in Valenciennes, Hainaut, currently a French region but then was an independent country. He went to England to serve Queen Philippa in 1361 as a clerk, and at her death in 1369 he moved to the Netherlands, where he started to write *The Chronicles*.

It describes the long rivalry between England and France, today known as the

Hundred Years' War.⁵² Yet Froissart based his passages on an older chronicle by Jean

Le Bel (1290-1370), a knight and soldier in Liege, modern-day Belgium. Jean Le Bel

served in the English army for Edward III's campaign in Scotland in 1327. He wrote

True Chronicles, which recorded the reign of Edward III, although the work had been

⁵¹ Jean-Marie Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 37-48. Moeglin mentions that Froissart produced three different versions of *The Chronicles*, and the relationship between these is still somewhat unclear in historical research. The most common version is the second one. I am going to use English translation. Jean Froissart, *Froissart: The Chronicles* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968, reprinted 1978) see the chapter of "The Siege of Calais," 97-110.

⁵² Froissart, see introduction, 9-11.

fragmented.⁵³

For a long time Jean Le Bel was only known as a chronicler through a reference by Froissart, who quoted him in the prologue of his first book as one of his authorities.⁵⁴ Although Jean Le Bel is known to have first told the story of the six burghers, Froissart recounted the story of the burghers of Calais with great liveliness, emphasizing the excitement of the battles, the Christian devotion of the burghers, and the mercy of the English king and queen.

According to Froissart's book, Edward III led a campaign through northern France and laid siege to Calais in 1346. As the siege continued for eleven months, the people were weakened by hunger. The French King Philip VI had abandoned them. Sir Jean de Vienne, the governor and military commander of Calais, negotiated with Edward III and begged the king's mercy. Edward's answer was "...six of the principal citizens are to come out, with their heads and their feet bare, halters round their necks and the keys of the town and castle in their hands. With these six I shall do as I please, and the rest I will spare."⁵⁵ And the richest citizen of the town, Eustache de Saint-Pierre stood and said: "Sirs, it would be a cruel and miserable thing to allow such a

⁵³ Ibid., 13. Jean Le Bel was the first person to use interviews to confirm and supplement his facts.

⁵⁴ A fragment of his work was discovered in 1847 and the whole of his chronicle preserved in the library of Chalons-sur-Marne, was edited as *Les Vraies chroniques de Messier Jehan le Bel* in 1863 by L. Polain. Jean Le Bel gives as his reason for writing a desire to replace a certain misleading rhymed chronicle of the wars of Edward III by a true relation of his enterprise down to the beginning of the Hundred Years' War. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 16, 1911, 350.

⁵⁵ Froissart, 104.

population as this to die, so long as some remedy can be found. To prevent such a misfortune would surely be an act of great merit in Our Saviour's eyes, and, for my part, I should have such strong hopes of receiving pardon for my sins if I died to save this people that I wish to be the first to come forward."⁵⁶

His indicating of "our Saviour," along with "hopes of receiving pardon for my sins," are ambiguous words that could refer to God or the victor, Edward III. After Eustache de Saint-Pierre, Master Jean d'Aire followed. Then Master Jacques de Wissant, and his brother Master Pierre de Wissant, and a fifth and a sixth followed, for whom there were no specific names.⁵⁷ They went to the camp of Edward III and knelt before him to beg for his mercy. The queen interceded for them and persuaded the king to release them. There is a discrepancy between Frossart's description of the burghers and Rodin's portrayal of them. Frossart's passage states that "each carried the keys of the town and castle," but in Rodin's version, only one burgher, Jean d'Aire, held the key to the city.

Recently, Historian Jean-Marie Moeglin challenges the story's authenticity by suggesting that the episode with the burghers be treated as "a historical myth." As he

⁵⁶ Ibid., 106. A medieval French version of this quotation follows: "Quant sires Ustasses de Saint Pière eut dit ceste parole, cescuns l'ala aouer de pité, et pluseurs homes et femmes se jettoient à ses piés tenrement plorant; c'estoit grans pités dou là ester, yaus oïr et regarder."

⁵⁷ The remaining names were discovered in 1863 in the Vatican Library by Kervyn de Lettenhove. Rodin did not have any specific names for the two burghers. He only referred to one of the burghers in his sculpture, Eustache de Saint-Pierre. The other five names were assigned by curator Georges Grappe at the Musée Rodin in the third edition of the catalogue in 1931. Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 273.

summarizes in his preface to *Les Bourgeois de Calais*: “The reader who will follow me throughout this study till its end will come to know that the burghers of Calais were not heroes. They were just like other burghers, and to be fair one ought to send them back to the anonymous mass from which the genius of Jean le Bel, Froissart, and Rodin have singled them out.”⁵⁸

Moeglin accepts the previous study of Louis-Georges-Oudard-Feudrix de Brequigny (1714-1794), who challenged the patriotism of Eustache de Saint-Pierre. Brequigny studied various documents in the London archives and demonstrated that the English King replaced Calaisians with Englishmen but let a few of the original citizens of Calais remain in the city. One of these citizens was Eustache de Saint-Pierre, who also received quite a bit of property from the English King after the siege was over as a reward for his loyalty.⁵⁹ The skepticism toward Eustache’s patriotism extended widely, with people judging him as “a traitor to his country and passed over to the side of the victors.”⁶⁰ Yet the temptation to treat Eustache as a traitor was countered by the more intense desire to invent a French national hero.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 9.

⁵⁹ Louis Oudart Feudrix de Bréquigny, “Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de Calais: second mémoire,” in *Mémoires de littérature tirés des registres de l’Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres depuis l’année 1767 jusques et compris l’année 1769* (Paris: L’Imprimerie Impériale, 1774), 528-540, cited in Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 193-201.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 225. See also Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, ed. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 7: “It is clear that plenty of political institutions, ideological movements and groups – not least in nationalism – were so unprecedented that even

On the other hand, Moeglin asserts that such episodes were not unusual during the middle ages. He states that it was a common ritual for those who were defeated in a siege to present themselves to the victors in a public display of humiliation and atonement, an act which would spare them their lives. The emphasis on their apparent civic heroism was a subsequent and purposeful misinterpretation of the event.

Moeglin supports his thesis by providing other examples of the same ritual: “the accomplishment of this ritual gives the defeated or guilty the implicit but not explicit assurance that the victor will abstain through his own will from acts to which his victory gives him the right—to put them to death or reduce them to slave.”⁶² Public humiliation restored the grandeur of the victor, who played a role like God in dispensing mercy.

Moeglin indicates that this ritual of public humiliation and atonement was of religious origin but had been appropriated for political purposes. For example, he points out that the ritual of humiliation with the rope around the neck had already appeared in the Old Testament.⁶³ The first book of Kings describes how the king of Syria, Ben-Hadab, was crushed and forgiven by the King of Israel, Achab, invoking the clemency of the conqueror:

historic continuity had to be invented, for example by creating an ancient past beyond effective historical continuity, either by semi-fiction or by forgery.”

⁶² Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 225.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 80.

The rest fled behind the walls of Aphek, but the wall fell on them and killed another 27,000. Ben-hadad fled into the city and hid in a secret room. Ben-hadad's officers said to him. "Sir, we have heard that the kings of Israel are very merciful. So let's humble ourselves by wearing sackcloth and putting ropes on our heads. Then perhaps King Ahab will let you live." So they put on sackcloth and ropes and went to the king of Israel and begged, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, please let me live!" The king of Israel responded, "Is he still alive? He is my brother!" The men were quick to grasp at this straw of hope, and they replied, "Yes, your brother Ben-hadad!" "Go and get him," the king of Israel told them. And when Ben-hadad arrived, Ahab invited him up into his chariot!

Ben-hadad told him, "I will give back the towns my father took from your father, and you may establish places of trade in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." The Ahab said, "I will let you go under these conditions." So they made a treaty, and Ben-hadad was set free."(1 Kings, 20: 30-34)⁶⁴

Given that the original author of the story of the burghers, Jean le Bel, served as a Canon for the Catholic service in his later career, he may have emphasized the mercy of God rather than the patriotic heroism for the country.⁶⁵ Moeglin further asserts that knowledge about the medieval ritual of public humiliation and atonement had been forgotten by the sixteenth century, until Paul Emile (ca 1460-1529), an Italian historian, seized upon it and came to play a key role in magnifying the element

⁶⁴ *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation (Seoul: Agape Publishing Co., Ltd, 2003), 551-552.

⁶⁵ Michel Winock discussed French people's "certain idea of France," an idea that was part myth and part historical truth—that "the history of France is miraculous." "Despite France's divisions, cleavages, and perpetual intestine warfare, France is the country that has dominated the world because it has been blessed by Providence. The "eldest daughter of the Church"(for Catholics), this land blessed by the gods (for pagans), this sanctuary of the Revolution and the Rights of Man (for the Left), this "queen" and "godmother" of nations (according to Michelet and Péguy) belongs in the category of the sacred. Michel Winock, "Joan of Arc," in *Realms of Memory: the Construction of the French Past*, directed by Pierre Nora, ed. Lawrence Kritzman, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 476.

of civic heroism in the story. While Jean le Bal and Froissart had originally cast the burghers as martyrs or religious heroes, Emile, in a 1520 work, reinterpreted the burghers as secular heroes, citizens dying for their country.⁶⁶

This episode became an example of how the idea of Christians dying for the glory of God was transformed into citizens dying for the glory of their country.

Afterwards, the theme of dying for one's country merged with the theme of civic heroism, rooted in antiquity, and became popular in seventeenth-century French historiography.⁶⁷ The interpretation of the episode with the burghers of Calais in terms of civic heroism had persisted up to the time of Rodin. Assimilating the act of dying for the nation with the act of dying for God became *exemplum virtutis*, and had persisted during the First and the Second Republics, as seen by the republican martyrs portrayed by Jacques-Louis David and David d'Angers.⁶⁸ While the committee complained that the burghers of Rodin showed a moment of humiliation, with ropes around their necks, and declared that it would be better to choose the moment when Eustache first volunteers, still wearing his own clothes, Rodin envisioned Eustache as

⁶⁶ Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 129-131.

⁶⁷ Corneille glorified dying for the county in his famous *Cid* (1636): "Dying for the country is not a sad fate. It is immortalized by an honorable death." Cited by Moeglin, *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, 169.

⁶⁸ Francois Mezeray recites the version and describes the burghers with an emphasis on their pride rather than on a supplication for life. See *Histoire de France depuis Faramond jusqu'à maintenant*, tome 1, Paris, 1643, 795-796, cited by Moeglin, 151-153.

a savior of his people, himself victimized just like Christ.⁶⁹

It is uncertain if Rodin read the whole story of the original version of *The Chronicles*. Rodin had a copy of Froissart in which no markings or annotations appeared, but certainly he read the excerpts from Froissart published in the circular for the subscription drive, since he wrote to the mayor on November 1884: “I saw the remarks that you made in the excerpts from Froissart.”⁷⁰ There is no doubt that the story had a tremendous emotional impact on him.⁷¹ What Rodin found especially gripping was the scene with the six burghers who volunteered to sacrifice themselves for the people of Calais. “I was enflamed by this tale,” Rodin wrote.⁷² Judith Cladel states that Rodin had not only read Froissart but also other “Old Chronicles.”⁷³ This may well be true since Rodin deeply admired the Middle Ages and its productions. The books that lined his bookshelf demonstrated his fervor for medievalism.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ The basic Christian injunction to peacemaking derives from the dying Jesus. See *Religion and Peacebuilding*, ed. Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith (Albany: State University of New York, 2004), 153-154.

⁷⁰ Auguste Rodin to Omer Dewavrin, November 26, 1884, Musée Rodin, *Inventaire de la lettre 6* (Paris: Musée Rodin). “J’ai vu les remarques que vous m’avez faites dans l’extrait de Froissart.”

⁷¹ Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 90.

⁷² Gustave Coquiott, *Rodin à l’Hôtel de Biron et à Meudon* (Paris: Librairie Ollendorff, 1917), 103.

⁷³ Judith Cladel, *Rodin* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937), 86.

⁷⁴ For the detailed book collection of Rodin see the appendix B. The collection includes *La cathédrale de Reims 1211-1914*, *La cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris*, *L’Église abbatiale de Westminster et ses tombeaux*, *La Cathédrale de Tours: histoire et description*, *Commentaire littéral sur tous les livres de l’ancien et du Nouveau Testament*, *Chansons gauloises*, *La Vallière Duchesse de réflexions sur la miséricorde de Dieu*, *Jeanne d’Arc*, *La Pucelle d’Orleans*, *Les Grands initiales: esquisse de l’histoire secrète des religions*, *Le Siege de Calais*, *Cathédrales de France devant les Barbares*. All are in the Archives of Musée Rodin, Paris.

Among his collection was the romantic version of *The Siege of Calais* (1765) by Pierre-Laurent Buiette de Belloy, which was enormously popular. Rodin might have known the religious overtones in this episode which convinced him of the need to build a new civic heroism based on it without any sordid suspicion about the story of the burghers.

2. Visual Sources

Rodin created his image of the burghers of Calais from various visual sources. Christian Beutler asserts that Rodin's real source of inspiration for *The Burghers* is not *The Chronicles of Froissart*, but Ary Scheffer's (1795-1858) painting, *Le D vouement de six bourgeois de Calais* (*The Dedication of the Six Burghers of Calais*) (fig. 6.10) that drew an honorable mention in the Salon of 1819.⁷⁵ Its iconography was faithful to the story of Froissart but the composition recalls the familiar Christian iconography of the *Passion of Christ* (fig. 6.11). Here Scheffer replaced Christ with Eustache de Saint-Pierre, and the woman in the foreground resembles a fainted Virgin Mary while the woman next to her recalls a classically rendered Mary Magdalene. The man standing behind the two women wearing a large coat desperately holds his head with his left hand in a manner that echoes the gesture

⁷⁵ Christian Beutler, "Les Bourgeois de Calais de Rodin et d'Ary Scheffer," *La Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (Janvier, 1972): 41.

of Saint John the Evangelist under the cross. Beutler describes this painting as, “The union of patriotism and of the Christian faith, the union of throne and altar were established without restriction under the restoration of Louis XVIII, and this painting was supposed to correspond to the official concept of power over the respective functions of the state and the church.”⁷⁶

Beutler asserts that Rodin saw this painting, which had been exhibited in the Conference room of the Palais-Bourbon since 1830. He analyzes the formal similarities between Scheffer’s painting and Rodin’s sculpture, such as the composition of the grouping, their costumes, their bare feet, the ropes around their necks, and the collective movement in one direction.⁷⁷ Antoinette Le Normand-Romain also said that Scheffer’s work may be the direct antecedent of the Rodin group in terms of the iconography.⁷⁸ She focuses more on Scheffer’s desire to exalt the burghers as they leave the town under the watchful eyes of a crowd in tears. The ritual of humiliation appears as the rope around Eustache de Saint-Pierre’s neck, causing a few reservations: “I will always be somewhat repulsed when I see six Frenchmen in only shirts, with halters around their necks, walking in great pain, before a King of

⁷⁶ Ibid., 44. “L’union du patriotisme et de la foi chrétienne, du trône et de l’autel, était sans restriction rétablie sous la restauration de Louis XVIII et le tableau devait correspondre aux conceptions officielles du pouvoir sur les fonctions respectives de l’État et de l’Église.”

⁷⁷ Ibid., 44-45.

⁷⁸ Le Normand-Romain and Haudiquet, *The Burghers of Calais*, 11.

England.”⁷⁹ This rope is faithfully shown in the earlier versions of this scene.

In 1819, the Count de Forbin, Director of the royal museums, commissioned a bust of *Eustache de Saint-Pierre* (1820) from Jean-Pierre Cortot as an offer to Calais (fig. 6.12). In the same manner as Scheffer’s image, this stone statue also contains the rope around his neck, even though it does not show any religious symbolism.⁸⁰

Annette Haudiquet asserts that Cortot’s bust is related to Scheffer’s painting in terms of the costume and the rope around the neck, although Cortot’s portrayal is more serene and classical. This bust was inaugurated during the Fête de la Saint-Louis after the religious ceremony and with political patriotic applause.⁸¹ There is little possibility that Rodin’s *Eustache de Saint-Pierre* came from Cortot’s bust because of their distinct formal differences of depiction.⁸²

Horst W. Janson focused on the manner of Rodin’s sculptural installation and found “a striking similarity to *The Tomb of Philippe Pot* (fig. 6.15), sculpted around 1480 in Dijon, probably made by Antoine Le Moiturier, and currently in Musée du

⁷⁹ Etienne Jouy, “Salon de 1819,” *La Minerve française*, août 1819, 360, cited in Haudiquet, 62.

⁸⁰ During the inauguration ceremony speech this work was praised in a nationalistic tone: “respirant l’amour de la Patrie et des sentiments vraiment français.” Cited by Dominique Viéville, *Auguste Rodin: Le monument des Bourgeois de Calais (1884-1895)* (Paris: Edition Musée Rodin, 1977), 145.

⁸¹ Annette Haudiquet et Hélène Heyriès, “Autour du monument des Bourgeois de Calais,” *Guide des sculptures monumentales à Calais* (Calais: Musées des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, 1999), 20.

⁸² McNamara mentions two more visual precedents of the depiction of the burghers of Calais as a possible influence on Rodin’s work: *Débouement des Bourgeois de Calais*, engraving by Domenico Marchetti after a drawing by Tommaso de Vivo (1810-44) (fig. 6.13); and *The Surrender of Calais*, engraving by J. B. Patas after drawing by Antoine Borel from *Tableaux des Français* (fig. 6.14), c. 1780. McNamara and Elsen, 28.

Louvre since 1889.”⁸³ Janson admits that Rodin at least may have seen the reproduction as a lithograph or a photograph.⁸⁴ Janson further emphasized the fact that the arrangement of each individual burgher was similar to the tomb sculpture. He may be correct in his assessment given that Rodin collected Gothic sculpture including *The Figures of Weepers* (fig. 6.16).⁸⁵ Rodin sketched the *Mise au Tombeau* (fig. 6.17), inspired by Dutch group entombment portraits, which were composed of a compact group of people expressing various degrees of despair.⁸⁶

Janson assumes that Rodin might have frequented the Musée de l’Artillerie, where groups of medieval armored knights appear as if alive and ready to leave for combat.⁸⁷ The visitor could walk around them, stand next to them at eye level, and feel they are participants in the moment. The tomb sculpture and the installation of a medieval group of figures without a pedestal might have led Rodin to experience a ritualized environment and to consider how his sculptural figures on a low pedestal would create a similar experience for the audience.

⁸³ M. Aubert, *Musée National du Louvre, description raisonnée des sculptures, I, Moyen Age*, Paris, 1950, 241-245, cited in Horst W. Janson, “Une Source négligée des Bourgeois de Calais,” *Revue de l’Art* (Mai, 1969): 70.

⁸⁴ The tomb of Philippe Pot was copied in many paintings, including *Devant le Tombeau de Philippe Pot* by Charles-Edouard de Beaumont and another by Alfred Stevens, *ibid.*, 71.

⁸⁵ Rodin acquired few anonymous Gothic sculptures, including *Weeper from the tomb of Jean de Berry in the Sainte Chapelle at Bourges*, a mid fifteenth-century work. See Bénédicte Garnier, *Rodin: Antiquity is my Youth* (Paris: Musée Rodin, 2002), 20-21.

⁸⁶ August Rodin, *Mise au tombeau* based on the bas-relief of Germain Pilon in the Louvre, Musée Rodin, cited in Le Normand-Romain, *Rodin: The Burghers of Calais*, 34-35.

⁸⁷ Janson, “Une source,” 71.

Rodin certainly received his inspiration for *The Burghers* from Gothic sculpture, architecture, and specifically Gothic cathedrals.⁸⁸ Elisabeth Chase Geissbuhler also asserts that the abstract qualities created by the contrast of light and form in Rodin's architectural drawings were fundamental to the development of his master sculptural works. *The Burghers* shows the fluctuating lines and forms and creates a unity and a dramatic wholeness that can be found in most Gothic cathedrals.⁸⁹

C. The Transformation of the Audience

1. The Ritualized Monument as a Pilgrimage Site

Rodin, as a republican artist, grafted the nation's myth of Froissart onto Catholic rituals with *The Burghers*.⁹⁰ This chapter will show how concerned Rodin was about the audience's interaction with his work, and the way in which the audience would appreciate his work. His ultimate goal for *The Burghers* was to evoke

⁸⁸ Raphaël Masson discusses Rodin's architectural inspiration in "Sources of Inspiration" in Raphaël Masson and Véronique Mattiussi, *Rodin* (Paris: Flammarion, 2004), 186-193.

⁸⁹ Elisabeth Chase Geissbuhler, "Rodin's Abstractions: The Architectural Drawings," *Art Journal* 16, no.1 (Autumn 1966): 22-29.

⁹⁰ It is difficult to define religion and ritual from one perspective, but for this study, I follow the definition of Mircea Eliade. He showed several approaches to religion, defining it as "a feeling of absolute dependence" or "presence of an awareness of the sacred of the holy." For my purpose, one of the important features of religion proposed by him is sacred place and the objects within. The presence of special religious areas is set apart from ordinary space by physical, ritual, and psychological barriers. Ritual, on the other hand, is conscious and voluntary, repetitious and stylized symbolic bodily actions that are centered on cosmic structures and/or sacred presences. Mircea Eliade (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 12 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 283, 284, 288, 405.

effectively this medieval patriotic narrative so that the audience would identify with them, and thus ensure their communal identification. Through his vast scope of reading on religion and his experience in the monastery, Rodin would have been familiar with Catholic ritual and Christian doctrine.⁹¹ Although he did not articulate the role of religion in the creation of his republican work, he understood Catholicism as a powerful tool to unite the diverse French populace in creating a national cultural identity.⁹²

The social theorist Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) defined religion as a necessary tool for a coherent society.⁹³ He saw ritual as the means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group. Ritual for him functions to “strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member;

⁹¹ Rodin was surely interested not only in Catholic theology but religion in general. He had abundant books on religion: N. Jobelon, *The Real Origin of Religion* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton Kent & Co., LTD, 1902). This book was dedicated to the explanation of the initiation of rites and the praising of Freemasonry as a revival of ancient universal religions. Rodin also had books dealing with theosophy and other various religions. J. Yarker, *Antiquities of Masonry*; Schure Edouard, *Les Grand Initiés: esquisse de l'histoire secrète des religion*; Rodin also read a book about the merging power of religion with politics, Roselia Rousseil, *Dieu et Patrie: Poesies*. Also Gaston Berdet wrote about Rodin's religious vision and spiritual life, “L'Aura de l'Oeuvre d'Art,” *La Journée du Batiment*, Montpellier (18 Mai 1954): n.p. in dossier “Sur le Religion de Rodin,” Archives de Musée Rodin.

⁹² Many recent studies on religion and ritual have emerged. For the different approaches and topics of religion, see *The Blackwell Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. Robert A. Segal (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2009). In chapter 7, Roderick Main deals with “Psychology of religion,” and explains the effects of religion; how religion contributes to people's happiness, physical and mental health at the individual level, and the effects of religion on political involvement and social integration at a social level, 163-164.

⁹³ Émile Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. J. W. Swain (New York: Free Press, 1915, 1965). He argued that religious beliefs are representations that express the nature of sacred things, while rituals are “rules of conduct” governing how people should act in the presence of sacred objects. He concluded that such ideas of the sacred as God or the ancestor, are none other than collectively projected representations of the social group itself. As a social phenomenon, he asserts that religion is a set of ideas and practices by which people sacralize the social structure and bonds of the community, 52.

it does so not by means of a conscious act of affiliation but the experience of the collective representation as a simultaneously transcendent and immanent commonality.”⁹⁴ Rodin’s *The Burghers* is the medium through which shared history and belief were experienced, expressed, and legitimated in the intersections of sacred and secular, Catholic and republican. I argue that experiencing *The Burghers* is a ritualized act that perpetuates the belief in French Republican ideology.

One of the major Catholic rituals that most attracted Rodin was that of pilgrimage, which he promoted in his book, *The Cathedrals of France*. I will relate Catholic pilgrimage to *The Burghers* because the work and the audience’s reaction to it reflect the characteristics of pilgrimage in many significant ways. Pilgrimage is defined by the medieval studies scholar, Richard Barber, as “the journey to a distant sacred goal . . . a journey both outwards, to new, strange, dangerous places, and inwards, to spiritual improvement, whether through increased self-knowledge or through the braving of physical dangers.”⁹⁵ For the anthropologist Simon Coleman, this definition presents limitations, so he provides an alternate definition, which is applicable to any religion so long as three elements are present: place, movement, and

⁹⁴ Stephen Lukes, *Émile Durkheim: His Life and Work: A Historical and Critical Study* (New York: Penguin, 1977), 471, cited in Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.

⁹⁵ Richard Barber, *Pilgrimages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1991), 1.

motivation.⁹⁶ According to him, the center of pilgrimage is a site—a shrine, a part of the landscape, or a town—that draws to it not only pilgrims but also historical, theological, and mythical associations and resonances.⁹⁷ The second element is forms of movement, not only the journey to the site, but also the movement at a site, such as circumambulation. The third element of pilgrimage is that of motivation, such as physical and psychological healing from one’s impairments, or repentance and an expression of sacrifice, which emphasizes the redemptive benefits of suffering associated with Christ.⁹⁸

I adopt Coleman’s three elements to recast *The Burghers* as a pilgrimage site.⁹⁹ First, I will analyze *The Burghers* as sanctified martyrs and as a sacralized site; second, I will demonstrate the audience’s physical action or reaction in relation to the

⁹⁶ Simon Coleman, “Pilgrimage,” in *The Blackwell Companion to the Study of Religion*. See his co-edited books on pilgrimage: with Mike Crang, *Tourism: Between Place and Performance* (New York: Berghahn, 2002); with John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, British Museum Press, 1995); with John Elsner, *Pilgrim Voices: Narrative and Authorship in Christian Pilgrimage* (New York: Berghahn, 2003); and John Eade, *Reframing Pilgrimage: Culture in Motion* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

⁹⁷ Recently a growing number of scholars have broadened their notions of what constitutes a pilgrimage. They have demonstrated a growing interest in secular centers and even traditional tourist locations as pilgrimage sites. For example, G. Rinschede and S. M. Bhardwaj designate four types of pilgrimage within the United States: nationalistic shrines such as national monuments and battlefield memorials; environmental sites such as national parks; popular culture sites; and explicitly religious sites. See *Pilgrimage in the United States* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1990), cited in Ken Butigan, *Pilgrimage through a Burning World: Spiritual Practice and Nonviolent Protest at the Nevada Test Site* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), 165-166.

⁹⁸ Coleman, 386, 388, 389.

⁹⁹ For the methodology I will incorporate Durkehimian perspectives of pilgrimage as a ritual means of integrating disparate sections of society, Gross’s characterization of pilgrimages as legitimating oppressive ideologies, and refer to the Turners, who propose that pilgrimage provides a ritual means of reversing conventional social structures. See D. Gross, “Ritual and Conformity: a Religious Pilgrimage to Northeastern Brazil,” *Ethnology* 10 (1971): 129-148; Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978).

monument as a ritualized performance; and last, I will show the meaning and motivation of this performance in terms of the installation and expression of the monument.

The Burghers as Sanctified Martyrs

Initially, *The Burghers* was to be a monumental work. Rodin presented his first maquette with a rectangular and high pedestal (fig. 6.6). The pedestal was divided into three levels that were separated by horizontal projections. Three triumphal arches were inscribed roughly on the first level. The second level was left for the relief sculpture, and the burghers stood upon the shallow last level. His drawing for the first maquette showed one more level beneath the lowest register that supported the base and added an architectural quality to the pedestal (fig. 6.18). This drawing clearly recalls *The Altar of the Fatherland* in the center of the amphitheatre during the Festival of the Federation in 1790 (fig. 6.19). The altar of the First Republic was composed of three levels and had sacralizing inscriptions and images in low-relief, in the same manner as Rodin's drawing.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ James Leith, *Space and Revolution: Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France, 1789-1799* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 48. "An inscription of the oath made to the Nation, the Law, and the King accompanied the figures. The two pillars facing to the right as one entered the arena depicted six Victory figures with an inscription commanding the people to reflect on three sacred words: the Nation, 'c'est vous,' the Law, 'c'est encore vous, C'est votre volonté,' and the King, 'c'est le gardien de la loi.' Finally on the two pillars facing to the left were four female Spirits who emphasized in their inscription the equality of all mortals by birth and before law."

On the other hand, Mary Jo McNamara describes the burghers as the shape of a Gothic cathedral: “within this cubic shape the figures stand in a roughly circular arrangement, each within his ‘niche’ of space. The morning sun lights up the deepest recesses of this space, but in the evening the ‘niches’ dissolve in shadow and fill with mist like the porches of Gothic cathedrals.”¹⁰¹ Patriotic heroes became sacred by the religious architectural aura created either by Catholicism or republican cult.

As Rodin said, “the idea seems to be completely original from the point of view of architecture and sculpture.”¹⁰² The architectural structure for this monument was an important frame for him. In it he emphasized the heroic nature of the sacrifice made by the six burghers by isolating them from the viewer high above the ground. For this, McNamara asserts Rodin’s intention: “by evoking the high pedestals and triumphal arches of the victory monuments of ancient Rome, Rodin suggests that *The Burghers* were equally triumphant in their heroism.”¹⁰³ The maquette is, on the other hand, viewed as “reminiscent of *The Breton Calvaries* at Pleybem (1450-1650), whose tall and narrow pedestal was often pierced by arches.”¹⁰⁴ It is clearly acknowledgeable of the implications of political and religious meanings in this type of

¹⁰¹ McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin’s Burghers of Calais*, 46.

¹⁰² *Rodin’s letter to Omer Dewavrin*, 20 November, 1884: “L’Idée me semble complètement originale, au point de vue de l’architecture et de la sculpture,” reprinted in *Auguste Rodin: Le Monument des Bourgeois de Calais*, 41. The Archives of Rodin Museum,

¹⁰³ McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin’s Burghers of Calais*, 25.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

high pedestal; either derived from the arch of triumph or the Calvary (fig. 6.20).

Because of its resemblance to *The Breton Calvary*, *The Burghers* may be understood as Christian martyrs or saints, in addition to the religious origin of the theme as I demonstrated in the previous subchapter. The contemporary critic Roger Marx first noted that its form suggests the Calvary monuments of Brittany.¹⁰⁵ Many churches in Brittany have a Calvary, a group of sculptured stone figures depicting the death of Christ. It is a type of monumental sculpture that comprises a single central cross set within a raised square base at each corner of which a statue of one of the witnesses to the crucifixion is placed. In the same manner, Rodin expressed his will to depict the burghers on the corners of his square pedestal, even though it was not realized due to the change of design for the second maquette.¹⁰⁶ It is evident that Rodin treated the burghers as Christian saints by depicting them in the place traditionally assigned for the saints or martyrs in the form of a Calvary monument.¹⁰⁷

Calvaries played an important role in the Breton pilgrimage known as the

¹⁰⁵ Roger Marx noted that Rodin's burghers recalled the Calvary: "Tel défilèrent les six Calaisiens lorsqu'on les vit quitter pour jamais, la ville (...). L'instant choisi est celui où ils gravissent leur douloureux calvaire et où les victimes s'acheminent vers l'immortalité, pareil à des martyrs," cited in Catalogue of *Roger Marx: Un Critique aux côtés de Gallé, Monet, Rodin, Gauguin*, 77.

¹⁰⁶ Rodin's letter to Dewavrin, 23 November 1884: "J'ai mis un groupe sur la face, lequel est l'emblème de la population de la ville à son sauveur. Sur les côtés 2 bas-reliefs mais je préfère l'esquisse plâtre qui a encore besoin d'étudier. Eustache St. Pierre n'est pas assez apparent et reconnaissable." In McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais*, 43.

¹⁰⁷ In her study on Gauguin, Debora Silverman mentions the ritual of pardon and pilgrimage in Brittany: "Gauguin may have witnessed some of the important pilgrimage processions that were renowned in the region, and some scholars maintain that he based his painting on a specific ceremony called a *pardon*, in which villagers circled the local church on their knees in an annual public ritual of repentance and reconciliation." "Transcending the Word?" 155.

“Pardon,” forming a focal point for public regional festivals.¹⁰⁸ For this, the Calvary forms part of an outdoor pulpit or throne. As its name indicates, a “Pardon” is a communal penitential ceremony. It is a religious procession that takes place after mass, and is dedicated to the local saints in Breton villages. It draws pilgrims from many other regions.¹⁰⁹ Moeglin connects *The Burghers* to two Catholic rituals that incorporate public humiliation: the rituals of Reconciliation and of the Pardon.¹¹⁰ Moeglin emphasizes *The Burghers*’ humble appearance, walking to the majesty, wearing the cloth of sac, striking a penitential attitude, holding the rope around their necks, which was a typical attribute expressed in the Pardon ritual. Given that the Pardon has practically remained unchanged over the centuries,¹¹¹ Rodin may have experienced the ritual and ceremony while he was traveling in Brittany.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ A.P. Harris, “Brittany’s Church Towns,” *New York Times* (Oct 16, 1994): n.p.

¹⁰⁹ Two Breton Pardons, to which very large pilgrimages are annually made, are that of St. Jean-du-Doigt near Morlaix, and that of Ste-Anne d’Auray in Morbihan. The latter is regarded as the most famous pilgrimage in all of Brittany, and attracts pilgrims from Tréguier, Léonnais, Cornouaille, and especially from Morbihan. The procession of Ste-Anne d’Auray is especially striking and draws all those whom the intercession of St Anne has saved from peril and danger. It is not a pretext for feasting or revel, but a reverent and religious gathering where young and old commune with God and His Saints in prayer. Thomas O’Hagan, “Pardon of Brittany,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), vol. 11.

¹¹⁰ Moeglin surveyed the Catholic history of the Pardon ritual and related it to *The Burghers*, 327-336. For more on penitential ceremonies, see G. Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (London: Ithaca, 1992); M.C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (New York: Ithaca, 1995); and M. De Jong, “Power and Humility in Carolingian Society: The Public Penance of Louis the Pious,” *Early Medieval History* no. 1 (1992): 34.

¹¹¹ Geoffrey Koziol studied the relationship between political power and the ritual of humble supplication deployed in everyday routines. He states that “Ritual was not propaganda out of touch with political reality or a static tableau depicting an ideal. It was part of political reality—a currency of power, a measure of perceptions, a test of strength,” 307.

¹¹² Ruth Butler indicates that Rodin’s sojourn in Brittany was for slightly less than a month in 1887,

The Cross in the Calvary does not represent death, but the promise of eternal life. The Bible says that if Jesus died on a cross, he rose alive on the third day afterwards, preparing the path for all those who believe in Him. Through the appropriation of the Calvary monument, Rodin may have considered the meaning of the sacrifice of *The Burghers*, and the promised reward for their patriotic action. Frossart's story of *The Burghers* encouraged this interpretation; Eustache de Saint-Pierre volunteered to save the populace of Calais in the hope of receiving pardon for his sins "by an act of great merit in Our Savior's eyes." Here, the English king is assimilated with the savior. Also, the clemency that conferred to the burghers by the English king saved their lives and gave them new lives, which recalls transcendental religious meaning of "redemption," "resurrection," or "having eternal life."

Many contemporary critics saw *The Burghers* as Christian martyrs.¹¹³ The patriotic poet Marc Bonnefoy had called *The Burghers* "martyrs of charity, voluntary victims" in his popular poem published in 1882, "Les Bourgeois de Calais." He writes "What imitators of Christ, offering themselves in sacrifice, they walk with a firm step

and McNamara writes that Rodin was one of the first major artists to show interest in the folk art of Brittany without specific reference. She also agrees that Rodin's first visit to Brittany happened in 1887, considering his relationship with the Symbolists who were largely attracted by the region of Brittany and his frequent trip route. Ruth Butler, *Rodin: the Shape of Genius*, 209. McNamara, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais*, 158.

¹¹³ The German critic, Paul Clemen called them "martyrs who offered a holy sacrifice," "Auguste Rodin," *Die Kunst Für Alle*, XX (April 15, 1905): 324. Roger-Milles called them "pilgrims of martyrdom," "Rodin," *Le Figaro Illustré* no. 192 (March 1906): 68, cited in McNamara, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais*, 265, 270.

to meet death.”¹¹⁴ The assimilation of patriotic sacrifice with Christian martyrs was not a new concept in Rodin’s time.¹¹⁵ Rodin sacralized his republican heroes, *The Burghers*, and recast them as glorious Christian martyrs. Here, the Christian ideal for redemption and the attainment of eternal life were added to political sacrifice through assimilating love for God with love for brother.¹¹⁶

The Audience’s Ritualized Performance

Rodin depicted *The Burghers* as a walking group. The work captures expressive movement, which draws the audience walking to view the figures closely, thereby creating more movement. Rodin clearly intended to make six figures as a continuous one-directional procession rather than two unconnected and abrupt rows. When Rodin exhibited the burghers as individual figures in the exhibition at the Georges Petit Gallery in 1889, he was concerned with the arrangement of the

¹¹⁴ Marc Bonnefoy, “Les Bourgeois de Calais,” in *La France Héroïque*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Fischbacher, 1882), 58. “Qu’imitateurs du Christ, s’offrant en sacrifice, ils marchent d’un pas ferme au-devant du supplice...”

¹¹⁵ The secular version of the Christian reverence for preserved saints and martyrs forms part of post-Baroque France’s cult of *Grands Hommes* and introduces an obscure kin to the funerary festivals after the 1790s. Suzanne Glover Lindsay notes that part of France’s complex response to its past during and after the Revolution, which was derived from the veneration of its intact historic dead, shaped some of the most notable funerary projects of the nineteenth century, especially those for the mummy that haunted France of the 1840s, focusing on the importance of physicality and multisensory experience to the events. See “Mummies and Tombs: Turenne, Napoleon, and Death Ritual,” *Art Bulletin* 82, no.3 (Sep. 2000): 476-502.

¹¹⁶ Pierre Nora. *Les Lieux de Mémoire, II*, La Nation, 11-43.

figures.¹¹⁷ For the final monument, the figures are grouped around the centrally placed Eustache de Saint-Pierre. They stood individually with their own space and represented a walking scene like a choreographed half circle (fig. 6.21). Although the figures all move forward, they seem to project themselves and their gazes in random directions. In the second arrangement, Rodin formed a more circular shape (fig. 6.22). The composition of the group became an enclosed circle hindering the full frontal perception of the figures. This composition urges the audience to follow that directional movement to view the whole figures, and with this arrangement the audience can hardly locate the front of the work.

The Burghers possessed a dance-like gracefulness in their body lines and gestures although the bodies seem weighted. They create a fluid movement from one figure to the next. The figures themselves walk forward, indicated by the exaggerated contrapposto, except for the stern posture of Jean d'Aire. Three of them—Eustache de Pierre, Andrieu d'André, and Jacques de Wissant—even lean their torsos forward so that their shoulders are posed over their lower bodies, further enhancing a sense of movement. Rodin's intention can be found in his two nude studies for Eustache de Saint-Pierre, one after Jean-Charles Cazin and the other after Pignatelli, who had

¹¹⁷ E. H. Ramsden, "The Burghers of Calais: A New Interpretation," *Apollo* 91 (March, 1970): 235. Ramsden states that "the monument was not conceived as a compact group, nor were the figures ever intended to be seen except singly...there are also various contemporary references to the powerful effect of the figures when seen in profile or in silhouette, *walking in procession*."

modeled for the *St. John the Baptist Preaching* (fig. 6.23). Rodin changed the study not only to express the aging man with an emaciated body, but also to add more movement and an expression of death in the figure.

Consequently, the figures' movement prompted the audience's movement as they walked around the work to appreciate it. This sequential perception of the monument requires the passage of time.¹¹⁸ With the traditional pyramid of figures, a viewer could grasp the whole monument from one frontal position and in one moment of time; with Rodin's cubic figural ensemble, which purposely lacked a clear frontal perspective, the viewer was forced to move around the sculpture, "experiencing it sequentially and reading it as a kind of six-act play."¹¹⁹

Traditionally the narrative in sculpture was depicted as one scene in which audiences perceive it all at once. In fact one of the main objectives of academic sculpture was to integrate sequential narrative components into one scene to be viewed from the front. Rodin's *The Burghers* betrayed this neo-classic decorum of the frontal view. In a letter to Robert Louis Stevenson, Rodin referred to *The Burghers* as "my novel,"¹²⁰ which implied the successive narrative deployment of his monument.

¹¹⁸ Rosalind Krauss provides examples of modern sculpture that convey the temporal experience. She states that the history of modern sculpture is incomplete without discussion of the temporal consequences of a particular arrangement of form. Rosalind Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1983), 4.

¹¹⁹ McNamara, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais*, 207.

¹²⁰ Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, 211.

His own interpretation of the story recreated the full extent of “a true, tragic, and simple drama.”¹²¹ To tell the story, Rodin’s figures are acting, moving, and crying out to the audience, a process that unfolded temporally. Its tragic and theatrical quality makes the figures powerful and larger than the ordinary, full of “magnitude,” which transferred to the audience.¹²²

The audience’s new form of experiencing time and the meditation of the medieval past through performing the designated pathways recalls a ritualistic performance. The circular arrangement forced the audience to read the episode in circumambulating motion, which is a remarkably common practice in pilgrimage throughout the world.¹²³ The audience would become a pilgrim who removes oneself from everyday life and thus be exposed to powerful symbols and experiences, or even

¹²¹ Felix Jeantet, trans. John Anzalone, “Exposition des oeuvres de Rodin,” *Le Blanc and Noir*, June 1889. Review of the Monet/Rodin Exhibition at Georges Petit and Rodin’s work at the Exposition Universelle (1889), cited in Ruth Butler, ed., *Rodin in Perspective*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, 1980), 74.

¹²² Kirsten Hastrup studied theatre as a ritualistic view and concludes that “magnitude” is what makes theatre. Kristen Hastrup, “Theatre as a Site of Passage: Some Reflections on the Magic of Acting,” in *Ritual, Performance, Media*, ed. Felicia Hughes-Freeland (New York: Routledge, 1998), 29-45. For the actions in tragedy and its magnitude, see Rüdiger Bittner, “One Action,” in *Essays on Aristotle’s Poetics*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992). “It is true that actions in tragedy are usually larger than actions in life: they have more complications and weightier consequences, and involve individuals of higher rank. But that they are large is what makes them worth putting on the stage. It does not make them different in kind,” 98.

¹²³ “Circumambulation is the movement around a holy object. The completion of a circle of protection, or of community, creates an integrity that is otherwise difficult to obtain in this world. The application of this in religions is diverse: examples include the Hajj; the Prayer Wheel in Tibet, the stupa and Bo tree in Buddhism; the respect shown the Adi Granth on entering a gurdwara; the Hindu ‘following the sun’ around the sacred fire and, in the temple; the seven circuits around a cemetery before a burial by Sephardi and Hasidic Jews; in witchcraft the magic circle would be a circumambulation; in Christianity, the circumambulation of Jericho in the Old Testament; and in the Catholic church, a priest circumambulates an altar while censuring it with a thurible.” John Bowker, *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 224.

attempt to merit the reward of Heaven.¹²⁴ On their return to the mundane world, they will have changed their mind and feeling in some way.¹²⁵

Rodin chose to represent a specific moment from the narrative, the instant when the burghers take their first step toward the gate to leave the city, the most psychologically complex part of the narrative. He proceeded to analyze how the silhouette of the monument would be perceived in different orientations, and remarked that if it were seen against trees, it would not be set off correctly. Since that was the case, he would return to his “idea of having it very low to let the public penetrate into the heart of the subject, as in the ‘*mises au tombeau* (entombment groups)’ where the group is virtually on the ground.”¹²⁶ As I have already shown, Rodin’s inspiration from tomb sculpture led him to place the statue in the same manner as church entombment sculptures of the middle ages. It required that the audience “walk into the episode, and into the heart of the subject.”¹²⁷ This inference

¹²⁴ On the change of the pilgrimage boundary, see Lutz Kaebler, “The Sociology of Medieval Pilgrimage: Contested Views and Shifting Boundaries,” in *From Medieval Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism: The Social and Cultural Economics of Piety*, ed. William Swatos, Jr. and Luigi Tomasi. (Westport: Praeger Publisher, 2002), 51-52.

¹²⁵ Victor Turner’s concept of *rites of passage, the liminoid*, is an initiation that happens during a pilgrimage, and the concept of *communitas* will be discussed in the next subchapter, “Transformation of subjectivity.” See Turner and Turner, 2-3.

¹²⁶ “These sculpted groups of the entombment of Christ are now generally called *tableaux vivants*: well known examples from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries can be found in France in Solesmes, Tonnerre, and Chaource, in addition to examples in northern Italy.” *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, Exhibition catalogue, (*Paris: Musée Rodin and Calais: Musee des Beaux-Arts de Calais*, 1977), 76, cited in Mary Levkoff, “The Monument to The Burghers of Calais, Victor Hugo and Honore de Balzac,” in *Rodin, A Magnificent Obsession* (London: Merrell Publisher in association with the Iris and Gerald Cantor Foundation, 2001), 88, note 37.

¹²⁷ Catalogue cite, letter of 8th December, cited in Dominique Jarrasse, *Rodin: La Passion du Mouvement*, (Paris: Terrail, 1993), 30.

to the tomb sculpture, on the other hand, connects the figures to the medieval death ritual.

The Burghers' dance-like arrangement drew my attention to Rodin scholar, Albert Elsen, who traced the origin of the composition to Rodin's small dry point titled *La Ronde* (fig. 6.24).¹²⁸ The word 'Ronde' designates simultaneously a dance in a circle form and an accompanying song. Elsen mentions that most of the old Rondes have a ritual origin and French folklorists, such as Saintyves, Sébillot, and Van Genep, agreed that the Ronde was the product of old magical-religious intent.¹²⁹ Elsen concludes that the Ronde inspired Rodin's desire to create a modern version of the medieval images of *La Danse Macabre* (*The Dance of Death*) which is depicted in his study for the tomb project. (fig. 6.25).¹³⁰

The Dance of Death, also called *La Danse Macabre* in French, is a late-medieval allegory on the universality of death: *The Dance of Death* unites all, no matter one's station in life. It consists of the personification of death leading a row of dancing figures from all walks of life to the grave in skeletal shape (fig. 6.26). It has its illustrated sermon texts, and became well known during the fourteenth century

¹²⁸ Albert Elsen, "Rodin's 'La Rond,'" *The Burlington Magazine* 107 (June, 1965): 293.

¹²⁹ P. Saintyves, *Rondes enfantines et quêtes saisonnières: les liturgies populaires* (Paris: 1919), 10-11, cited by Elsen, 293.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 297. Elsen also mentions the probable influence of *The Dance of Death* in the tympanum section of Rodin's *Gates of Hell*, Alber Elsen, "*The Gates of Hell*" by Auguste Rodin (California: Stanford University Press, 1985), 137-138.

when recurring famines, the Hundred Years' War, and the Black Death generated a widespread fear of death. The possibility of sudden death increased the religious desire for penitence.¹³¹ Similar to the popular medieval mystery play, *The Dance of Death* was didactic, reminding people of the inevitability of death and advising them strongly to be prepared all times for it. Rodin probably thought of this ritual for his burghers' production because of the combination of its penitent theme and its dance-like movement. Whether it can be read in relation to a Catholic pilgrimage or a dance of death ritual, *The Burgers* should be seen as undetermined ritualistic arena where embodied performance transforms the audience.¹³²

The Meaning of Expression and Installation: Interaction with the Audience

If we postulate *The Burgers* as a ritualized site as a part of pilgrimage, the monument might have the third element proposed by Coleman, that is a motivation,

¹³¹ The French term *danse macabre* most likely derived from Latin *Chorea Machaboeorum*, literally "dance of the Maccabees," 2. Maccabees, a deuterocanonical book of the Bible in which the grim martyrdom of a mother and her seven sons is described, was a well-known medieval subject. It is possible that the Maccabean Martyrs were commemorated in early French plays. In this play the ostensive penitential sermons were presented. Charles Herbermann and George Williamson, "Dance of Death," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 4 (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1913).

¹³² Nick Crossley asserts that ritual can invoke an imaginative intentionality, effecting a "magical" transformation of situation: "Deities, monarchs, high art, and all of the sacreds of culture require, for their proper appreciation, an imaginative "attitude" or "intentional stance," and it is ritual, as a body technique for modulating emotional and imaginative intentions, which is able to call up this attitude." And he further emphasizes the importance of an "embodied act" to perform ritual saying, "Pascal argued that he did not kneel and pray because he believed in God but rather believed in God because he kneeled and prayed. The ritual frames the experience which, in turn, shapes the belief. Pascal is able to believe in God because, by way of the ritual of prayer, he "experiences" God." "Ritual, Body Technique, and (inter)subjectivity," in *Thinking through Rituals: Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Kevin Schilbrack (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 44-45.

particular symbols or meanings to be internalized by the audience.¹³³ This section will examine what motivates the audience to look at the monument and what their expectations from it are. Given that the committee of the city of Calais was republican, and that “there are a decreasing number of collective beliefs and sentiments which are both collective enough and strong enough to take on a religious character,”¹³⁴ the city of Calais required a strong symbol to ensure and promote their political ideology and institution.

Rodin individualized the figures, giving each a distinctive mien and character. Each figure was emphasized through his peculiar facial expression, gesture, and personality. Rodin experimented repeatedly with different models of hands and heads for each figure until he arrived at the certain archetypes to express the varying psychological states of men as they confronted what they believed would be a fatal end.¹³⁵ The individual’s different acknowledgment of death, shame, despair, and regret is effectively conveyed. Their distinct forms and their movement in different

¹³³ Simon Colman, “*Pilgrimage*,” 389: “no matter what theological orthodoxy might state, the actual motivations for going on pilgrimages are myriad and cannot be encapsulated by such all encompassing phrases as “exteriorized mysticism” as defined by Victor Turner.”

¹³⁴ Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. G. Simpson (Glencoe: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1893, 1964), cited in Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff, *Secular Ritual* (Assen. Amsterdam: Van Gorcum & Comp. 1977), 6.

¹³⁵ Hélène Marraud observes the different expression of hands of *The Burghers*: “These hands are out of proportion, accentuating their emotional power. Open hands to illustrate the feeling of resignation of Jean de Fiennes, hands clutching the keys of Calais held by Jean d’Aire, the tired, drooping hands of Eustache de Saint-Pierre, and the desperate hands of Andrieu d’Andres raised to his face.” *Rodin: Revealing Hands*, 11.

directions emphasized their individuality. The various directions and gestures convey their individual response to the same situation. The audience could respond to each figure's internal state, such as the resolution of Jean D'Aire, the painful agony of Eustache de Saint-Pierre, the sad resignation of Pierre de Wissant, the hesitation of *Jean de Fiennes*, and the frustration of *Andrieu d'Andres* (fig. 6.27-6.32). Rodin depicts a shared sacrifice yet focuses on their personal expressions and individual responses.

This contradiction is typical of a democratic society in which everyone is equal, but not necessarily the same.¹³⁶ Linda Zerilli points out that true universalism does not propose "sameness" of response under the similar situations.¹³⁷ Her characterization of universalism underscores that *The Burgher's* individual figures express not only various patriotic responses, but also universal human feelings. Because these figures expressed various human emotions, the audience could identify and empathize with them. In this way, the patriotic message becomes more persuasive and intimate. The political leaders used the monument as an efficient and cleverly fabricated communicative tool to unite the audience, in this case, French people.

¹³⁶ For the republican ideologies and its subtle meanings see Jean-Claude Caron, *La Nation, l'État et la démocratie en France de 1789 à 1914* (Paris: Armand Colin Éditeur, 1995); "Les Trois Grâces Républicaines: Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité," 217-223; and "La Citoyenneté, de L'Universalité à L'Individualité," 233-240.

¹³⁷ Linda M.G. Zerilli, "The Universalism which is not One," in *Diacritics* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 15.

Rodin's intention in this work may be determined through its placement.

Rodin emphasized the need for an open space large enough for the audience to interact: "the monument must be placed in the middle of a square, in a large place, not in front of an architectural monument."¹³⁸ Furthermore, in his final monument, he took out a rectangular pedestal and placed the compact figures as low as equal height to the viewer.¹³⁹ He wanted to eliminate the physical boundaries created by a pedestal between his figures and the beholder. An equal sight level would allow the viewer to sympathize with the subject and to invoke within him or her, the sorrow, despair, and hopelessness of the burghers' sacrificial pain. The audience is able to be among them, to share their physical and mental experience, psychologically and physically.

Rodin invested these six figures with equal importance, rather than in Eustache de Saint-Pierre alone. Even though Eustache de Saint-Pierre's action functioned as a trigger of patriotic action for others, Rodin thought that the others had the same amount of patriotism. Instead of a hierarchical presentation, he wanted to keep each at the same height. This reflects a democratic sense of public sculpture and permits a more intimate relationship among the figures rather than being led by one powerful political figure. In this regard it is a republican form, in which each

¹³⁸ Robert Descharnes and Jean-Francois Chabrun, *August Rodin* (Chartwell Books Inc., 1967), 115.

¹³⁹ The last casting of *The Burgers* was located in Seoul, Korea and its installation is one of the closest to Rodin's intention in terms of a low pedestal and having a large shrine without visual distractions around the monument. (fig. 6.33). See Kevin Kennon, Ruth Butler, Kohn Fox, and Mario Gandelonas, *Rodin Museum, Seoul* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001).

individual is important and has equal political rights and intentions. The interaction derived from the figures' equal height extends to the equal relationship with the audience. Rodin wanted his burgers to be directly viewed by the audience:

I did not want a pedestal for these figures... In this way they would have been, as it were, mixed with the daily life of the town: passersby would have elbowed them, and they would have felt through this contact the emotion of the living past in their midst; they would have said to themselves: "Our ancestors are our neighbors and our models, and the day when it will be granted to us to imitate their example, we would show that we have not degenerated from it."...But the commissioning body understood nothing of the desires I expressed.¹⁴⁰

Rodin emphasized the audience's direct physical and psychological encounter with *The Burgers* in everyday life. The audience would conflate their emotions and feelings with these medieval figures through physical proximity and touch the audience's emotion, giving them the opportunity to apply its meaning to their own lives. Moreover, the audience would experience the transformation of their identity positively, which is one of the major purposes of ritualized action. I will next connect the audience's experience to the ritual theory of liminality proposed by Victor Turner, which, in turn, explains the audience's quasi-religious transformation of the self.

¹⁴⁰ Paul Gsell, 67-68. "Je ne voulais aucun piédestal à ces statues. Je souhaitais qu'elles fussent posées, scellées à même les dalles de la place publique, devant l'hôtel de ville de Calais, et qu'elles eussent l'air de partir de là pour se rendre au camp des ennemis. Elles se seraient ainsi trouvées comme mêlées à l'existence quotidienne de la ville: les passants les eussent coudoyées et ils eussent ressenti à ce contact l'émotion du passé vivant au milieu d'eux ; ils se furent dit: 'Nos ancêtres sont nos voisins et nos modèles, et le jour où il nous sera donné d'imiter leur exemple, nous devons montrer que nous n'avons pas dégénéré de leur vertu!...Mais la commission officielle ne comprit rien aux desirs que j'exprimai.'"

2. Transformation of the subject

Pilgrimage as a Rite of Passage

Although Rodin's *The Burghers of Calais* is a secular work, nineteenth-century audiences responded to it as if they were on pilgrimage, thus transforming it into a ritualized site.¹⁴¹ In this section I will clarify the way in which the audience reacted to the monument by incorporating various ritual theories on rites of passage. As I have shown earlier, *The Burghers* ought to be experienced in time as well as in space. Whenever the viewer steps around the monument, he or she sees only one whole figure with two partial adjacent figures: for instance, Jacques de Wissant can be seen through the space between Pierre de Wissant and Jean de Fiennes (fig. 6.34). The only way for the audience to grasp all the figures is through sequential movements. Through a successive performance the audience may meditate the meaning and messages of each figure. The very action of walking around the monument resembles, I argue, a ritual-like performance.

¹⁴¹ According to Marx Gluckman, ritualization is an extended concept of the notion of ritual beyond a narrow connection with organized religious institutions and formal worship, see "Les Rites de Passage," in *Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962), 20. Murray Edelman views ritualization as a process to which a conflicted relationship is subjected in order to facilitate both the escalation and resolution of a struggle that otherwise would destroy it, see *Politics as Symbolic Action* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1971). Catherine Bell notes that Eric Hobsbawm speaks of ritualization to describe the process of "inventing traditions" in modern societies. Common to most of these perspectives is an appreciation of the emergence of ritual forms for the purpose of social control and/or social communication. See Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 88-89; and Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, 4.

For my analysis I draw from the work of Lisa Schirch, who defines ritual in three ways: First, ritual is a symbolic and physical act that communicates through symbols, myths, and metaphors, allowing for multiple interpretations; second, ritual often takes place in differentiated space; and third, ritual aims to form or transform people's worldviews, identities, and relationships.¹⁴² Since I have already touched upon the first two definitions in the previous section, I will focus on the third.

The journey into the monument's space, let alone the possible journey to the site, resembles the Catholic ritual of pilgrimage, which Victor Turner defines as "a lengthy, laborious bodily act, involving some idea of a connection with a long-dead spiritual figure at the end of it."¹⁴³ The audience of *The Burghers* would sense the sacrificial ancestor's body and spirit in the same way that pilgrims expect spiritual revelation or influence from the encounters with dead saints as a result of their physical movement.

Turner further explains pilgrimage as "a kinetic ritual, replete with actual objects, 'sacra,' and is often held to have material results, such as healing."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Lisa Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding* (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2005), 16-17. She incorporates anthropologist Bobby Alexander's definition of ritual as social change. Alexander suggests that "Ritual is a planned or improvised performance that effects transition from everyday life to an alternative framework within which the everyday is transformed." See *Televangelism Reconsidered: Ritual in the Search for Human Community* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1994).

¹⁴³ Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, xx. Turner adds, rather oxymoronically, that pilgrims seek "the body of the spirit," xiii.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, xiii.

Pilgrims expect to have been healed when they return to their original point of departure. Yet, he distinguishes pilgrimage from “the affliction ritual,” from which participants always expect a miraculous cure. A pilgrim, on the other hand, does not expect a corporeal remedy. If a miraculous healing does occur, it is attributed to “the grace of God,” often believed possible by the mediation of the pilgrimage saint.¹⁴⁵

The same paradigm is found with *The Burghers*, where the six burghers could have been treated as martyrs or saints, and functioned as mediators to cure the audience’s emotional wounds, disorder, and imbalance. The healing was achieved during a processional appreciation of the monument. Ritual theorists refer to this type of transformation as “a rite of passage.”

The French folklorist Arnold Van Gennep (1873-1957) first noticed how societies conceptualized rites of passage—the transitions that people have to make between well-defined states and statuses.¹⁴⁶ Van Gennep explained that all rites of passage are marked by three phases: “separation, limen or margin, and aggregation.”

He mentioned that:

The first phase comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or group, either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from a relatively stable set of cultural conditions; second, during the intervening *liminal* phase, the state of the ritual subject becomes ambiguous,

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 14.

¹⁴⁶ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), cited in Turner and Turner, 2-3.

he passes through a realm or dimension that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state, he is betwixt and between all familiar lines of classification; in the third phase the passage is consummated, and the subject returns to classified secular or mundane social life.¹⁴⁷

Through a rite of passage, the ritual subject is again in a stable state, has rights and obligations of a clearly defined structural type, and is expected to behave in accordance with the customary norms and ethical standards appropriate to his new settled state.¹⁴⁸

The steps of a rite of passage may be applied to the appreciation of *The Burghers*; audiences would become initiates who removed themselves from everyday life, and expose themselves to powerful symbols of patriotism in ritualized space. On their return to the mundane world, their interior state or identity would have changed. Calaisians would have realized this change when they felt their feelings of instability and conflict had eased. The feeling of instability came from merging with the neighboring city of St. Pierre, for so much their republican identity was connected to their direct ancestors, the citizens of Calais.¹⁴⁹ The burghers of Calais in the past

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹⁴⁸ Schirch noted a rite of passage as a change of concept of identity. Identifying oneself and others in multiple ways confirms the nature of each individual as a complex mixture of sameness and diversity and even good and evil, thus allowing people to rehumanize their visions of themselves and others. See "Ritual Reconciliation: Transforming Identity/Reframing Conflict," in *Reconciliation, Coexistence, and Justice in Interethnic Conflicts: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

¹⁴⁹ Roger Gould creates the term "participating identity," which refers to the social identity an individual assumes during a given instance of social protest to specific normative and instrumental appeals. In this sense, it is natural that the city identity of Calais was newly established and claimed at this moment of turmoil in merging, which had not been far from the Parisian insurgent identity. Roger

provided Calaisians a universal model of citizenship and patriotism, which in turn promoted and strengthened their identity.¹⁵⁰ This adjusting phase of status or identity of the performer can be redefined as “liminal.”¹⁵¹

By identifying liminality,¹⁵² or in-betweenness, Van Gennep paved the way for future studies of all processes of social or individual change. Building on Van Gennep’s work, Turner developed an understanding of rites of passage as “transformed from traumatic experiences or disorienting lonely episodes into commemorations that acknowledge change, and designated its status as *liminal* which take our crises and transitions into our own hands, ritualize them, make them meaningful, and pass through and beyond them in a spirit of celebration, to begin a new uncluttered phase of our lives.”¹⁵³ After The War of 1870 and its attendant trauma, the audience could identify with the pain of the burghers. Their empathetic

V. Gould, “Collective Action and Network Structure,” *American Sociological Review* 58 (1993): 182-96, cited in Roger V. Gould, *Insurgent Identities: Class, Community, and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 13.

¹⁵⁰ Refer to the discussion of “transforming identity through rites of passage” in Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding*, 127-128.

¹⁵¹ Victor Turner describes rites of passage as “liminal.” See *Celebration: Studies in Festivity and Ritual* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982), 26.

¹⁵² The term “liminality” comes from Latin *limen* meaning a threshold. Victor Turner defined it in his earlier work as “the state and process of mid-transition in a rite of passage. During the liminal period, the characteristics of the liminars (the ritual subjects in this phase) are ambiguous, for they pass through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, 249-250; The liminal state has been “frequently likened to death; to being in the womb; to invisibility, darkness, bisexuality, and the wilderness.” See Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 94-96.

¹⁵³ Turner, *Celebration*, 26.

reception of the sacrificial and heroic acts of their ancestors transformed the site into a sacred shrine. The burghers, their story, and the site became meaningful to their lives, which helped them reconcile political defeat.¹⁵⁴

Turner's later definition of liminality is more relevant to *The Burghers*. In this interpretation he warns against simply equating a pilgrimage with a rite of passage.

While initiation is liminal, and involves transitions between social states, pilgrimage is more likely to be *quasi-liminal* or *liminoid*:¹⁵⁵ "pilgrimage constitutes a voluntary form of release and is thus part of the wider genre of leisure activities that include the arts and sports."¹⁵⁶ This redirection of liminality of pilgrimage gives us a clue to comprehend the appreciation of *The Burghers* in terms of a larger cultural activity.

During pilgrimage, pilgrims are expected to have a similarly exciting feeling despite their different statuses and classes, and that particularly shared feeling is called *communitas*, a term coined by Turner referring to a kind of dialectic between

¹⁵⁴ During the Franco Prussian War, the French general Louis Leon Faidherbe, following the battles of Bapaume and Saint-Quentin, beat a safe retreat from the fortified towns of Arched and Lille. This action of Faidherbe saved Calais from German invasion. While Calais did not have direct exposure to the War of 1870, the railroad installed in 1848 between Paris and Calais provided abundant information about the war. *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. (1911).

¹⁵⁵ Liminoid, or quasi-liminal are terms describing the many genres found in modern industrial leisure that have features resembling those of liminality. These genres are akin to the ritually liminal, but not identical to it. They often represent the dismembering of the liminal, for various components that are joined in liminal situations split off to pursue separate destinies as specialized genres—for example, theater, ballet, film, the novel, poetry, music, and art, both popular and classical in every case, and pilgrimage. Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 253.

¹⁵⁶ Coleman, "Pilgrimage," 391.

the individual and the group.¹⁵⁷ A *communitas* is “a relation quality of full, unmediated communication between definite and determinate identities.”¹⁵⁸ This homogenization among individual participants happened during The Festival of the Federation in The First Republic, and it was an effective political tool to equalize various social statuses, where every hierarchy of society was eliminated temporarily.¹⁵⁹ Therefore, the inauguration ceremony, centenary ceremony, and the other commemorative celebrations surrounding *The Burghers* offer a similar *communitas*. It demonstrates Habermas’s notion of a public sphere in which a private matter is discussed, dissolved, and incorporated into the greater public issue.

Rodin’s *The Burghers* provided an arena in which the audience experienced *liminoid* in voluntary form, and participated in *communitas*, solemnly and playfully. The monument successively brought about ceremonies as well as non-ritualized acts around it, such as shops for the reproductions of the image and for souvenirs.¹⁶⁰ It is a more vulnerable, flexible, *liminoid* site: the experience of *The Burghers* situates the

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 391.

¹⁵⁸ Victor Turner, “Variations on a Theme of Liminality,” in *Secular Ritual*, ed. Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff (Assen/Amsterdam: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1977), 46.

¹⁵⁹ “The festival celebrated the passage from the private to the public, extending to all the feeling of each individual “as by a kind of electrical charge.” Ozouf, *ibid.*, 54.

¹⁶⁰ Jurica Pavicic, Nikisa Alfirevic, and Vincent John Batarelo examine non-religious, secular and touristic motivations for pilgrimage claiming that a tourist is half a pilgrim, and a pilgrim is half a tourist. Tourism and pilgrimage can be identified as opposite end points on a continuum of travel. See “The Management and Marketing of Religious Sites, Pilgrimage and Religious Events: Challenges for Roman Catholic Pilgrimages in Croatia,” in *Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Management: An International Perspective*, ed. R. Raj and N.D. Morpeth (Cambridge, MA: CAB International, 2007), 53-54.

audience both in the ritual of pilgrimage and art appreciation, the Catholic faith and republican patriotism.

Transformation of the Subject – Toward Psychoanalysis

The Burghers evokes an ambivalent response from the audience as they appreciate it: it is at once comforting and disquieting, reminding the audience that challenging moments are common to humanity throughout time.¹⁶¹ The monument touches the audience's feelings, emotions, and souls, which is why I view it as a possible psychoanalytic tool. According to Richard R. Niebuhr, "pilgrims are persons in motion seeking something we might call completion, or perhaps, clarity... These physical passing through apertures can print themselves deeply into us, not in our physical sense alone but in our spiritual sense as well, so that what we apprehend outwardly becomes part of the lasting geography of our souls."¹⁶² Regarding the spiritual power of pilgrimage, Ellen Badone adds that "pilgrims exist in an interstitial border zone, a metaphorical space between cultures where social actors have the

¹⁶¹ Young-Mason analyzes all emotional aspects of *The Burghers*. She says Rodin's artistic technique and insight on emotion offers the health care professional rich intellectual material. Jeanine Young-Mason, "Visual Clues to Emotional States: Rodin's Burghers of Calais," *Journal of Professional Nursing* 6, no. 5 (Sep-Oct, 1990): 289-299.

¹⁶² Richard R. Niebuhr, "Pilgrims and Pioneers," *Parabola* 9, no. 3 (1983), cited in Jean Dalby Clift and Wallace B. Clift, *The Archetype of Pilgrimage: Outer Action with Inner Meaning* (New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1996), 1-2.

potential to reformulate meanings and negotiate identities.”¹⁶³ These ideas of pilgrimage focus on its transformative power, and likewise can apply to *The Burghers* in that the audience transforms his or her identity. Transformation differs from a simple change, which is a mere transition. Transformation is a process wherein an individual begins with their original status, passes through a liminal stage, then returns to their original status, but with a different perception of the self.

Transformation aims for a more inclusive, integrative, and positive totality of self.

Colin Turnbull approaches liminality as the synthesis of subjective and objective experiences in the context of the specific ritual. Unlike most anthropologists who objectively examine rituals, he participates fully in the Molimo ritual performance so that he can experience a transformation, not a mere transition.¹⁶⁴

“Transition,” as Turnbull states, “may be an accurate description of what takes place from a purely objective, material, rational point of view, and it may well describe what takes place at certain stages of such rites, but that does not mean that it in any way describes the overall process as it is experienced by the individuals concerned.

Their experience is one of transformation.”¹⁶⁵ He participated in the Molimo ritual

¹⁶³ Ellen Badone and Sharon R. Roseman, ed. *Intersecting Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 181.

¹⁶⁴ Colin Turnbull, “Liminality: a synthesis of subjective and objective experience,” in *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*, ed. Richard Schechner and Willa Appel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 73-74.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

not as a mere observer, but as a total participant, to experience what the ritual meant to him and to transform himself. His total participation paved a way for a liminality study, where subjectivity is no longer incompatible with objectivity.

Liminality for Turnbull is integrative of all experience. In the liminal state, “disorder is ordered, doubts and problems removed, the ‘right’ course of action made clear with a rightness that is both moral and structural since the inevitable discrepancies between belief and practice in the external world are among the many problems ordered and removed in the liminal state.”¹⁶⁶ By applying the concept of Turnbull to Rodin’s monument, it is apparent that audiences were invited to experience these medieval figures’ personal emotions and statuses, rather than being merely informed objectively. The monument’s setting and composition are designed to draw this total participation and subjective reception of the audiences.¹⁶⁷

Due to the monument’s transformative quality, current psychoanalysis utilizes *The Burghers* to facilitate their therapy projects.¹⁶⁸ John Brinard Botha, in his psychological study, tried to prove how using the visual arts benefits stress

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 80.

¹⁶⁷ Paul Vitry, “Le Déplacement des “Bourgeois de Calais,” *Beaux-Arts: Revue d’Information Artistique* no. 3 (Février, 1925): 33-34.

¹⁶⁸ The application of a psychological view to Rodin’s work was already prefigured in Debora Silverman’s study on Rodin. Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style: Studies on the History of Society and Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), especially see “Chapter Thirteen: Art Nouveau in the Salon, II: *Psychologie Nouvelle* in the Works of Emile Gallé and Auguste Rodin,” section on “Auguste Rodin: Artisanal Tradition and Neurotic Tension,” 243-269.

management.¹⁶⁹ Botha demonstrated how a viewer's full participation in art appreciation enabled the viewer to achieve a more ideally balanced self identity. He used *The Burghers* to experiment with his patients' response to the art work, and to investigate the degree to which art may cure their mental abnormality. Even though Botha did not use the terms *liminal* or *transformation*, what he meant by *interactive viewing*¹⁷⁰ explains the integrating appreciation of intuition, emotion, perception, and cognition:

Rodin refused to ignore the negative aspects of humanity, and his works confront distress and moral weakness as well as passion and beauty. In *isomorphic facilitation* it is a very useful tool to confront most participants with this work for primary responses about their personal feelings and emotive responses to this work of art. It encapsulates the possibilities of eliciting despair, anger, frustration, hope, being challenged or even the act of resignation. The *Burghers of Calais* is a good example of a single work that makes allowances for a variety of visual and emotional responses.¹⁷¹

The Burghers is not reality itself, nor does it reflect the exact circumstances of the audience-participant's personal story; rather it approximates the actual emotional

¹⁶⁹ John Reinard Botha, *A Psycho-educational Programme for the Utilization of Visual Arts in the Facilitation of Stress Management in Young Adults* (Ed. D.diss., Kirkland, WA: North-West University, 2004).

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁷¹ The term or word *isomorphic* is derived from the Greek words *iso* and *morphic* which imply the same or similar form. In using the term *intervention* it should also be read synonymously with the term *facilitation*. *Intervention* in the context of this thesis can be interpreted in the sense of "interference with," by which it is meant to imply the way in which active and/or positive intervention is brought about in order to facilitate change. *Isomorphic facilitation* therefore indicates the active confrontation of the participant to a set of predetermined interventions, with *participant* in this sense intended to imply the person who is unable to cope or manage healthy stress levels, *ibid.*, 106-107.

experiences of the participant. Through an empathic “*einfühling*” with the figures of the monument, the participant is led to retell their own traumatic experiences. The work functions as a catalyst to induce the repressed emotion of the participant. This study shows a possibility of its healing power, and anticipates its future use for the psycho-therapy.

Likewise, whenever audiences walk around the monument, these constantly changing viewpoints and figures touch senses of the audience, and let them ponder their identity between the own life and those from the past.¹⁷² Present audiences encounter past heroes at the monument more than rationally, as Albert Elsen aptly indicates: “To take in the entirety of *The Burghers of Calais* from any single point of view makes unremittingly exhausting demands upon one’s senses and feelings. More than in any other work of Rodin’s, the surfaces of *The Burghers* demand to be felt as well as seen. Rodin wanted children to play on the sculptures and the patina of the bronze to result from daily handling by the passerby.”¹⁷³

This tactile and visual interaction with *The Burghers* may be applied to therapeutic work, as advocated by Manolis Andronikos: “the human life embedded within an artifact as a form of ‘poetic archaeology’ with a *therapeutic aim*, anchoring

¹⁷² Champignuelle, *Rodin*, 88.

¹⁷³ Albert Elsen, *Rodin*, 83.

us to other human beings within the relentless, anonymous flow of history.”¹⁷⁴ The encounter between the audience and the monument instills positive identities, both as citizens of Calais and of France. At the same time, the work enables the positive transformation of the subject during each ritualized appreciation of the work. Rodin created this interactive ritual-like environment for his monument. He may very well have understood the possibilities of religious experience and ritualized practice to unify people as a community, and as individuals, to harmonize their body, mind, and soul.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ C. Nadia Seremetakis, “The Memory of the Senses,” in *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, ed. Nadia Seremetakis, Boulder, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), 139.

¹⁷⁵ Steven Brena, *Pain and Religion: A Psychophysiological Study* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1972), 131.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion: Inauguration Ceremony as a Republican Fête

On June 3, 1895, in the plaza between the new postal office and the Place de Richelieu of Calais, *The Burghers* was erected on a five-foot-tall pedestal and surrounded by an ornate iron grill. This was far from Rodin's original intention (fig. 7.1).¹ Rodin wanted his monument to inspire the citizens of Calais by virtue of its genuine expression accompanied by a personal empathy, not by its rhetorical assertion of abstract values. To reach his goal, he insisted that the monument be installed on a low pedestal, in order that the figures would be closer to the audience since this placement would alter the audience's perception. Then the viewer could interact with the work more intimately by moving around the monument as if he or she were a pilgrim at a revered Catholic site.

By adding a quasi-religious aspect to the monument, Rodin placed the audience at the juncture of the sacred and secular realms. This intersection echoed the successive republican governments' attempts to sacralize their regimes by appropriating Catholic images and rituals to mitigate the worsening oppositions between political factions. Republican secular rituals highlighted and promoted their

¹ It was not until 1924 that the monument was placed on a lowered pedestal with shortened railings, as Rodin had desired, and moved in front of the rebuilt Hôtel de Ville. See Annette Haudiquet, "The Burghers of Calais by Auguste Rodin: a Monument in the Town," in *Rodin: the Burghers of Calais*, 72.

ideologies in public celebrations, such as the Festival of the Federation, which was intended to bolster French unification.² Throughout the Republics, political fêtes and ceremonies had been a means through which different faiths, ethnicities, and social classes were integrated into a consummate polity. The inauguration ceremony of *The Burghers* can be viewed as another political fête that produced a new cultural space, in which Catholics and royalists celebrated *The Burghers'* medieval story, along with impassioned republicans.³

The inauguration ceremony was part of a series of official festivities in Calais which drew a crowd of some 100,000 people (fig. 7.2). The Chamber of Commerce and the monument committee spent several months preparing for the ceremony, which took place during the Pentecost weekend of June 2 and 3.⁴ The festivities included lectures on Eustache de Saint-Pierre, a torch-lit parade, an international gymnastics competition, a music festival, a ball, a performance of the play *Le Siège de Calais*, and a fireworks display. The national government was represented by the Minister of the Colonies, Emile Chautemps, who gave one of the official speeches.⁵ The minister

² The Festival of the Federation was seen as an absorption of differences during the First Republic, producing a collective state of excitement. Ozouf, 31.

³ Albert Boime considers Rodin as more of a monarchist than a republican because of this positive reception of some royalist citizens of Calais, but the greatness of his monument lies in this communion of different political factions. He notes: "The souvenir booklet published to commemorate the unveiling of the monument was illustrated with royal and Catholic symbols redolent of the medievalizing fantasies of the political and cultural right wing." See *Hollow Icons*, 102.

⁴ N. a., "Les fêtes de Calais," *L'Impartial de St.-Pierre*, April 27, 1895, 1.

⁵ The ceremony was also marked by the praise of French colonialism, with allusions to Calais as a

told the audience that “Your celebration, citizens of Calais, is a national celebration. The burghers of whom you are legitimately proud, belong to France...One’s fatherland is not just a group of interests; it is first and foremost *a community of memories*. What makes it a fatherland is the same as what makes a family, namely to have the same pleasures and hopes, to have suffered the same pains.”⁶ Following the minister’s speech, there were loud cries of “Vive la Republique!” and three full rounds of applause. This inauguration proclaimed the ritualization of the monument, and preliminarily announced the ongoing ritual at that site. Thereafter, France’s rite of reconciliation and unification would be a regular practice, positing *The Burghers* as saviors of their nation.

The sanctification of the monument and its site was particularly significant in the context of the Third Republic, which failed to achieve political unity and to produce a successful leader. This Republic desperately needed a ‘sacra,’ which would appeal to large numbers of people, revive their common memories, thus strengthening social bonds.⁷ The heroic story of *The Burghers* became an “invented tradition,” in that the Republic created an ongoing myth and tradition comprised of a set of

major port for colonial commodities. For this, the government was represented by the minister of colonies, Boime, 102.

⁶ N.a. *La Justice* June 5, 1895.

⁷ Michel Winock provided the characteristics of nationalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with a truly unified ideology for France. See “Joan of Arc,” in *Realms of Memory*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), 463.

ritualized practices “which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, and automatically implies continuity with the past.”⁸ The narrative of patriotic sacrifice is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization of the citizens of Calais, characterized by the reference to the past to perpetuate republican society.⁹

Legitimizing the current political regime required clear and substantial references to the past. Rodin’s burghers recall medieval stories and rituals as a precedent model for republicans. As the author of *The Cathedrals of France*, Rodin viewed cathedrals and medieval culture from a nationalistic perspective, thus promoting pilgrimages to French cathedrals: “I propose that we should initiate pilgrimages for all the work in ruin left out of restoration: churches, castles, fountains, and so on.”¹⁰ Rodin’s medievalism was a response to the larger national pilgrimage movement and to his own religious inclination throughout his life.

In his public sculpture, Rodin developed personal and intimate expression, without being disguised by pretentious mystification, in order to express authentic human feelings. His genuineness and faithful inclination toward nature allowed the

⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, “Inventing Traditions,” 1.

⁹ Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff discussed the way in which collective rituals traditionalize new material as well as perpetuate old traditions. *Secular Ritual*, 7-8.

¹⁰ Rodin, 149, 299: “Les cathedrals sont nées de la nature française.”; “Je propose qu’on institue des pèlerinages à tutes les oeuvres de plein air épargnés encore par la restauration: églises, châteaux, fontaines, etc.”

audience to actively and emotionally interact with his work. Rodin's predilection toward public art relates to Jurgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere, and helps explain how he effectively promoted the republican ideologies of equality, liberty, and fraternity.¹¹ The public sphere shown in Rodin's work is exactly the ideal social framework proposed by republican leaders in nineteenth-century France. Seamlessly, the private sphere peacefully merged with the public sphere where Rodin transformed a national concern into a very private matter, and further encouraged his audience to respond both emotionally and rationally.

Rodin contributed to the reunification of the French people in the Third Republic through democratic and modern representation. Rodin's work deeply penetrated the subjective feelings of his audience, which were integral to the framework of the national collective identity. Because Rodin endowed *The Burghers* with universal and humanistic expressions, the monument has been recast and installed throughout many countries and contexts, thereby expanding nationalistic reception of the work to international responses.¹²

¹¹ Jean-Claude Caron, "Les Trois Grâces Républicaines: Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité," *La Nation, L'État et La Démocratie en France de 1789 à 1914* (Paris: Armand Colin Éditeur, 1995), 218.

¹² Due to the group's universal humanistic character, *The Burghers* were copied in bronze before and after his death all over the world: Calais, Place de l'Hotel de Ville (1895); Venice, Musée Museum of Modern Art in Ca'Pesaro (plaster, 1901); Brussels, Copenhagen (1903); Brussels, Belgium, Castle Gardens (1906); London, Victoria Tower Gardens (1912); Philadelphia, Rodin Museum (1925); Paris, Musée Rodin (1926), Basel, Kunshaus (1942); Washington, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (1943); Tokyo, National Museum of Western Art (1953), Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum of Art (1968); New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (1985); Seoul, Samsung Rodin Museum (1996).

Through his writings, Rodin expressed his concern for the audience's extreme sensitivity, while in the presence of the monument. *The Burghers* required the audience's bodily performance, which would in turn lead to his or her transformation. Each performance of appreciation completed and renewed the meaning of the work. Moreover, those with no connection to Calais or France would still experience feelings of empathy, while appreciating the work. The participant's psychological transformation was demonstrated in John Reinard Botha's psychoanalytic study and Jeanine Young-Mason's psychological work. Equally, Ruth Harris analyzed *The Burghers* from the perspective of the 'unconscious,' in keeping with French psychiatrists and neurologists who were deeply indebted to religious iconography and experience, despite their vehement anti-clericalism.¹³

My work paves the way for future studies on *The Burghers* and its relationship to neuro-art history, ritual studies, psychoanalysis, and sociopolitical approaches, as well as furthering the understanding of art and healing of individuals and communities. This study focused on how a public monument positively transforms both the individual and the community, in everyday life. Ultimately, Rodin's *The Burgher of Calais*, was ritualized to the extent that enabled the audience to appropriate and reshape both national values and personal attitudes and biases. Given the French

¹³ Ruth Harris, "The Unconscious and Catholicism in France," *The Historical Journal* no. 47 (May 2004): 331-354.

social context at the time, and Rodin's personal religious obsession, he then drew from Catholicism and its rituals to create this monument. He believed that Catholicism offered a frame of consolidation and a therapeutic tool that could heal the adversity and crises experienced by French people in the wake of the 1870/71 War, while adhering to republican ideology.

Figures



Figure 1.1 Auguste Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, in the Sculpture Garden at the Hirshhorn, Washington, D.C. 1989

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Figure 3.1 *Taking the Oath of the Federation on July 14, 1790*, color printed aquatint by Louis Le Coeur, after Jacques-François Swebach-Desfontaines. 33.7 x 27.2 cm. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, Est. Rés. PCG Le Coeur, 14544. (Hould, Images, #135)

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Figure 3.2 Festival of the Federation held in Paris on July 14, 1790, colored etching, artist unknown, after Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Cloquet, 31.5 x 48cm. Private Collection, Montréal. (Hould, Images, #133)

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Figure 3.3 View of the Mountain erected on the Champ de Réunion. For the festival of the *Cult of Supreme Being*, Anonymous colored engraving, June 8, 1794. Musée Carnavalet. Photo: Bulloz. 1987. (Ozouf, *Festivals*, p. 113)

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Figure 3.4 Ceremony to Honor the Memory of Lepeletier de Saint-Fargeau, 1793. Etching from *Les Révolutions de Pais*. Vizille, Musée de la Révolution française. (Crow, *Emulation*, #114)

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Figure 3.5 A. Devosge, *Drawing after David's Le Peletier de St. -Fargeau*,
Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts. (Johnson, Jacques-Louis David, #49)

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Figure 3.6 Annibale Carracci, *Pieta*, 1599, oil on canvas, 156 x 149 cm, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples

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Figure 3.7 Jacques-Louis David, *The Death of Marat*, 1793, oil on canvas, 165 x 182 cm. Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique. (Crow. Emulation, #118)

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Figure 3.8 Jacques-Louis David, *The Death of Marat*, detail, 1793, Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique. (Weston, David's The Death of Marat, #25)

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Figure 3.9 El Greco, *Pieta*, 1587-97, oil on canvas. 120 x 145 cm. Stavros Niarchos Collection, Paris

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Figure 3.10 Correggio, *The Deposition of the Cross*, 1525

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Figure 3.11 *Funeral of Jean-Paul Marat in the Church of the Cordeliers, 1793. Black chalk heightened with white on paper, Versailles, Musée Lambinet (Crow, Emulation, #116)*

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Figure 3.12 *The Festival of the Supreme Being*, 1794, etching and dry point. 29.5 x 41.5 cm. Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. (Monneret, David, p. 119)

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Figure 3.13 National Monuments built for the Festival of Fraternity held on August 10, 1793, colored aquatint, published by Blanchard. Diameter of the four corner medallions: 6.8 cm; that of the fifth in the centre: 8.1 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Est. De Vinck, 4911. (Hould, Images, #66)

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Figure 4.1 Anonymous, Auguste Rodin with his sister Maria, circa 1859, albumen print. (Delclaux, Rodin, #2)

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Figure 4.2 Rodin, *The Bust of Father Eymard*, 1863, bronze, Musée Rodin, Paris

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Figure 4.3 Frontispiece of *Les Cathedral of France*, Paris: Armand Colin, 1914
And one of the plates inserted in the book. 28.7 x 23.5 cm. (Masson
and Mattiussi, Rodin, p. 197)

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Figure 4.4 Anonymous, *Christ in the Cross*, c.1426, Musée Rodin, Meudon,
Rodin's bedroom

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Figure 4.5 Rodin, *The Cathedral (two hands)*, 1908, stone, 64 x 29.5 x 31.8 cm

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Figure 5.1 Rodin, *St. John de Baptist Preaching*, 1880, Bronze, 202 x 103 x 97 cm. (Masson and Mattiussi, Rodin, p. 138)

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Figure 5.2 Rodin, *Bellona*, 1879, bronze, Philadelphia Museum of Art.
(Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #107)

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Figure 5.3 Rose Beuret in her late thirties. Photograph by E. Graffe and A. Rouers. Musée Rodin. (Butler, *The Shape of Genius*, #57)

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Figure 5.4 Honoré Daumier, *Republic*, Esquisse présentée au concours ouvert en 1848 par la Direction des Beaux-Arts, Musée d'Orsay, 1906

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Figure 5.5 François Rude, *Departure of the Volunteer of 1792(Marseillaise)*, 1833-36, Arc de Triomphe at Etoile, Paris

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Figure 5.6 Rodin, *Study for "La France,"* 1904, bronze, 49.8 x 45.7 x 31.8 cm.
Musée Rodin. (Elsen, Rodin's Art, #36)

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Figure 5.7 César, *Portrait of Camille Claudel*, 1884, albumen print,
5.5 x 10.3 cm. (Masson, Rodin, p. 54)

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Figure 5.8 Rodin, *La France*, 1904, bronze, height 25 1/4 inches.
Bethnal Green Museum, London. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #110-1)

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Figure 5.9 Rodin, St. George, 1889, plaster, height 18 1/2 inches. Musée Rodin, Paris. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #110-2)

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Figure 5.10 David d'Anger, *Le Monument de Bonchamps*, 1819-1825, marble, height 130 cm, Church of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil. (De Caso, David d'Angers, #38)

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Figure 5.11 David d'Anger, *Religion Weeping*, details of Monument to Bonchamps, relief, marble. (De Caso, David d'Angers, #41)

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Figure 5.12 David d'Anger, *France in Mourning*, details of Monument to Bonchamps, relief, marble. (De Caso, David d'Angers, #42)

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Figure 5.13 Rodin, "*La France*," (in course of execution, showing text of inscription in chalk). (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #110-3)

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Figure 5.14 Rodin, *The Head of Sorrow (Joan of Arc)*, 1882, bronze,
17 x 19 1/2 x 21 1/4 inches. Philadelphia Museum of Art.
(Tancock, *The Sculpture*, # 9 front and side)

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Figure 5.15 Rodin, *Head of Sorrow (Joan of Arc)*, 1907, marble, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #9-5)

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Figure 5.16 Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa (detail)*, 1645-52, marble, Cornaro Chapel, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #9-3)

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Figure 5.17 Rodin, *Scene from the French Revolution*, 1880, black wax,
8 x 15 x 1 1/2 inches. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #9-30)

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Figure 5.18 Courbet, *Burial of Ornans*, oil painting, 1849. oil on canvas, 315 x 668 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris

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Figure 5.19 Rodin, *The Mask of the Man with the Broken Nose*, 1863-64, bronze.
10 1/4 x 6 7/8 x 9 3/4 inches. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #79)

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Figure 5.20 Rodin, *The Age Bronze*, 1875-76, bronze, 175.3 x 59.9 x 59.9 cm.
Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford
University. (Elsen, Rodin's Art, #3)

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Figure 5.21 Rodin, *Call to Arms (La defense)*, 1879-80, bronze,
113 x 57.8 x 40.6 cm. Musée Rodin

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Figure 5.22 Albert Carrier-Belleuse, *La Défense de Paris*, 1879-80, plaster,
Paris, Hôtel Carnavalet. (Butler, Rodin, #50)

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Figure 5.23 Louis Ernest Barrias, *La Défense de Paris*, 1879-80. plaster model, Paris, Dépôt des Oeuvres d'Art de la Ville. (Butler, Rodin, #49)

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Figure 5.24 Antonin Mercié, *Gloria Victis*, 1872, bronze, Paris, Musée d'Orsay

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Figure 5.25 Michelangelo, *Pieta*, 1499, marble, 174 x 195 cm. St. Peter's Basilica

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Figure 5.26 Victor Hugo's Funeral Procession at the Arc of Triumph, May 31, 1885, Paris, Maison de Victor Hugo. Photo Bulloz.
(Lottel, Rodin's Monument, #3)

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Figure 5.27 Hugo's funeral cortège at the Pantheon, 1885, photograph.
Photo Bulloz. (Roos, Rodin's Monument, #33)

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Figure 5.28 Exterior of the Pantheon, 1830, engraving. (Roos, Rodin's Monument, #28)

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Figure 5.29 Interior of the Pantheon, 1823, engraving. (Roos, Rodin's Monument, #29)

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Figure 5.30 Pierre Jean David d'Anger, *Bust of Victor Hugo*, 1837, plaster, Paris, Maison de Victor Hugo, Photo Bulloz. (Roos, Rodin's Monument, #9)

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Figure 5.31 Rodin, *Head of Victor Hugo*, drypoint, 22.2 x 40.5 cm.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Photo by Steve Oliver.
(Roos, Rodin's Monument, #26)

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Figure 5.32 Rodin, *The Bust of Hugo*, 1883, plaster. 22 1/4 x 10 x 11 1/2 inches.
(Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #87a)

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Figure 5.33 Rodin, *The Bust of Hugo*, 1984, bronze, 43.2 x 26 x 27.3 cm.
Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Collection. (Roos, Rodin's Monument,
#22)

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Figure 5.34 Jules Dalou, *The Death Mask of Hugo*, 1885, terra-cotta, height 15 inches, Maison de Victor Hugo, Paris. (Tancock, *The Sculpture*, #87-7)

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Figure 5.35 Rodin, *First project for the Monument to Victor Hugo*, 1889, plaster, height 39 inches, Musée Rodin, Paris.(Tancock, *The Sculpture*, 71-1)

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Figure 5.36 Michel Amodio, Plaster Cast of a Fallen Man with Vessel, c 1870, albumen print, 29.5 x 39.7 cm. Department of Image Collections, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington.
(Mattusch, Pompeii, #128)

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Figure 5.37 Rodin, *The Apotheosis of Victor Hugo*, 1890-91, bronze,
111.8 x 51.4 x 61 cm. Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. (Tancock, *The
Sculpture*, 71)

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Figure 6.1 Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, 1889(cast in 1926), Paris, Musée Rodin

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Figure 6.2 Map of Calais from Baedeker's Northern France, 1905.
(McNamara and Elsen, Rodin's Burghers of Calais, #C)

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Figure 6.3 *The Siege of Calais*, woodcut, 1596. (McNamara and Elsen, Rodin's
Burghers of Calais, #D)

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Figure 6.4 Title page of *Live d'Or des Bourgeois de Calais*, Calais, 1895.
(Boime, *Hollow Icons*, #42)

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Figure 6.5 Illustration from Livre d'Or des *Bourgeois de Calais*, Calais, 1895.
(Boime, Hollow Icons, #43)

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Figure 6.6 Rodin, *The first maquette of The Burghers of Calais*, November 1884, plaster cast, 61 x 38 x 32.5 cm, Musée Rodin. (Masson, Rodin, p. 91)

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Figure 6.7 Rodin, *The second maquette of The Burghers of Calais*, 1885.
(Elsen, Rodin's Art, #60)

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Figure 6.8 Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, Gallery George Petit, 1889.
(*L'Art Français*, 6 juillet 1889, reproduced in the catalogue of
Monet-Rodin, p. 45)

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Figure 6.9 Inauguration of *The Burghers of Calais*, engraving by H. Dochy after photography by Lormier, from *Le Monde Illustré*, Musée Rodin. (McNamara and Elsen, Rodin's Burghers of Calais, #J)

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Figure 6.10 Ary Scheffer, *The Patriotic Devotion of six Burghers Calais*, Salon of 1819, oil on canvas, 347 X 456, Versailles, Assemblée nationale. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #5)

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Figure 6.11 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Coup de Lance*, drawing, c. 1630, Flanders.
(Loverance, *Christian Art*, p. 39)

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Figure 6.12 Jean-Pierre Cortot, *Eustache de Saint-Pierre*, 1820, stone,
93 X 77 x 47 cm, Calais, Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle.
(Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #4)

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Figure 6.13 *Dévouement des Bourgeois de Calais*, engraving by Domenico Marchetti after drawing by Tommaso de Vivo, 1810-44. (McNamara and Elsen, Rodin's Burghers of Calais, #P)

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Figure 6.14 *The Surrender of Calais*, engraving by J. B. Patas after drawing by Antoine Borel from *Tableaux des Français*, c. 1780. (McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais*, #Q)

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Figure 6.15 *Tomb of Philippe Pot*, Burgundian, fifteenth century, The Louvre.
(Janson, Une Source, #3)

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Figure 6.16 *Anonymous, Weepers from the tomb of Jean de Berry in the Sainte Chapelle at Bourges, middle of the 15th century, alabaster, 41 x 12.8 x 11.4 cm. Musée Rodin, Co. 914. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #38)*

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Figure 6.17 Rodin, *Mise au tombeau based on the bas-relief of Germain Pilon in the Louvre*, graphite, brown pen and wash drawing on ruled cream paper, 13.7 x 19.3 cm., Musée Rodin, D. 2036
(Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #39)

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Figure 6.18 Rodin, Letter to Prosper-Adrien Isaac with sketch of the monument,
19 November 1884, Calais, municipal archives.
(Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #7)

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Figure 6.19. Altar of the Fatherland in the Center of the Amphitheatre,
Festival of the Federation, 1790, engraving. (Leith, Space and
Revolution, #42)

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Figure 6.20 *Breton Calvary at Pleybem*, sixteenth or seventeenth century,
Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques des Sites.
(McNamara and Elsen, *Rodin's Burghers of Calais*, #N)

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Figure 6.21 Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, George Petit Gallery, 1889, first arrangement. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #35)

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Figure 6.22 Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, George Petit Gallery, 1889,
final arrangement. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #31)

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Figure 6.23 *Eustache de Saint-Pierre: nude study after Jean-Charles Cazin, 1886; nude study after Pignatelli, 1886-87, bronze. (McNamara and Elsen, Rodin's Burghers of Calais, #8 and 9)*

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Figure 6.24 Rodin, *La ronde*, 1883, drypoint, second state and in green ink. 9.5 x 14.2 cm. Minneapolis Institute of Arts, (Alsen, La Ronde, #2)

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Figure 6.25 Rodin, *Study for Tomb Project*, reproduced from Octave Mirbeau: *Les Dessins d'Auguste Rodin*, Paris, Musée Rodin. (Alsen, La Ronde, #11)

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Figure 6.26 Michael Wogemut, *The Dance of Death*, 1493. (Hartmann Schedel, *the Liber Chronicarum*)

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Figure 6.27 Rodin, *Jean d'Aire*, character of the second maquette, 1885, plaster cast, 69 x 22.5 x 24 cm, Musée Rodin. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #8)

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Figure 6.28 Rodin, *Euchtache de Saint-Pierre*, 1887, bronze, 215 x 77 x 113 cm.
Musée Rodin. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #51) (Le Normand-
Romain, Rodin, #51)

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Figure 6.29 Rodin, *Jacques de Wissant*, 1887, bronze, 211 x 120 x 68 cm.
Musée Rodin. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #52) (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #52)

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Figure 6.30 Rodin, *Pierre de Wissant*, 1887, bronze, 214 x 106 x 118 cm.
Musée Rodin. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #53)

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Figure 6.31 Rodin, *Jean de Fiennes*, character of the second maquette, 1885, plaster cast, 69 x 22.5 x 24 cm, Musée Rodin. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #10)

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Figure 6.32 Rodin, *Andrieu d'Andres*, Rodin, Jean d'Aire, character of the second maquette, 1885, plaster cast, 69 x 22.5 x 24 cm, Musée Rodin. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #9)

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Figure 6.33 Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, 1996, Seoul, Rodin Museum

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Figure 6.34 Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, 1885, plaster cast, Musée Rodin, second maquette, partial view. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #18a)

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Figure 7.1 Anonymous, Mrs. W. Robinson in front of *The Burghers of Calais Monument*, 1902, gelatino-silver print, 8.6 x 8.6 cm. Between Place de Richelieu and Postal Office. (Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #41)

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Figure 7.2 M. Meyes, *The Inauguration of the Burghers of Calais Monument*, 3
June 1895, albuminised paper, 14.6 x 19 cm. Musée Rodin.
(Le Normand-Romain, Rodin, #40)

Appendix A

“The Siège of Calais (1346-47)” from Froissart’s *Chronicles*

Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, translated and edited by Geoffrey Brereton
(Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), 106-108.

‘My lords, I do not want to be alone against you all. Walter, go back to Calais and tell its commander that this is the limit of my clemency: six of the principal citizens are to come out, with their heads and their feet bare, halters round their necks and the keys of the town and castle in their hands. With these six I shall do as I please, and the rest I will spare.’

‘My lord,’ said Sir Walter, ‘I will do as you say.’

He went back to Calais to where Sir Jean de Vienne was waiting and told him what the King had said, adding that was the most he could obtain. ‘I am sure that is true,’ said Sir Jean. ‘Now I must ask you to be so good as to wait here while I report all this to the townspeople. It was they who sent me here to talk with you and they, I think, who must give you the answer.’

Sir Jean left the battlements and went to the market-place, where he had the bells rung to summon the people together. They all came, men and women, eager to hear the news, thought they were so weak with hunger that they could scarcely stand. When they were nothing more could be hoped for and asking them to consult together and give their answer quickly. When he had finished speaking they began to cry out and weep so bitterly that their lamentations would have moved the stoniest heart. For a time they were unable to say anything in reply and Sir Jean himself was so moved that he also was weeping.

At last the richest citizen of the town, by name Master Eustache de Saint-Pierre, stood up and said:

‘Sir, it would be a cruel and miserable thing to allow such a population as this to die, so long as some remedy can be found. To prevent such a misfortune would surely be an act of great merit in Our Saviour’s eyes and, for my part, I should have such strong hopes of receiving pardon for my sins if I died to save this people that I wish to be the first to come forward. I am willing to strip to my shirt, bare my head, put the rope round my neck, and deliver myself into the King of England’s hands.’

When Master Eustache de Saint-Pierre had said this, his hearers were it ready to worship him. Men and women flung themselves at his feet weeping bitterly. It was indeed a pitiful scene.

Then another greatly respected and wealthy citizen, who had to beautiful daughters, stood up and said that he would go with his friend Master Eustache de Saint-Pierre. His name was Master Jean d' Aire. A third, called Master Jacques de Wissant, who owned a rich family estate, offered to accompany them. Then his brother, Master Pierre de Wissant, and a fifth and a sixth, said they would go, too.

These six burghers stripped to their shirts and breeches there and then in the market-place, placed halters round their necks as has been stipulated and took the keys in their hands, each holding a bunch of them. Sir Jean de Vienne mounted a pony --- for he could only walk with difficulty --- and led them to the gates. The men, women and children of Calais followed them weeping and wringing their hands. Sir Jean de Vienne had the gate opened and closed behind him, so that he stood with the six burghers between it and the outer barriers. He went to where Sir Walter Manny was waiting and said him:

‘Sir Walter, as the military commander of Calais and with the consent of the poor people of this town, I deliver you up these six burghers. I swear that they have been and are to this day the most honourable and prominent citizens of Calais, by reason of their personal characters, their wealth and their ancestry, and that they carry with them all the key of the town and citadel. And I beg you, noble sir, to intercede with the King of England not to have these good men put to death.’

‘I do not know,’ said Sir Walter, ‘what the King will decide to do with them, but I promise you that I will do all I can.’

The barriers were then opened and Sir Walter Manny led off the six burghers, in the state I have described, straight towards the King’s quarters, while Sir Jeans de Vienne went back into town.

Appendix B

The Selected List of Rodin's Book Collection (in Musée Rodin in Paris)

- 6867 RG. *La Cathédrale de Reims 1211-1914*. Paris, 1915.
- 4954 N. Aristote. *La Politique*. Paris, s.d.
- 6812 RG. Aubert Marcel. *La Cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris, Notice historique et archéologique*, Paris, 1909.
- 5490 G. B. Chanoine. *Description de la Cathédrale de Reims à l'Usage des visiteurs*, Reims 1904.
- 4976 N. Barbey d'Aurevilly Jules. *XIXe Siècle...: Portraits politique et littéraires*. Paris, 1897.
- 1979 N. Barbey D'Aurevilly. *XIXe Siècle: Les Philosophes et les écrivains religieux*. Paris, 1899.
- 7011 RG. Bérnier Robert. *Balzac Socialiste*. Paris, 1892.
- 6834 RG. Biver Paul. *L'Eglise abbatiale de Westminster et ses tombeaux, Notice Historique et archéologique*. Paris, 1913.
- 5491 G. Blanchard Fernand. *Notice historique et archéologique sur l'abbaye de Saint-Jean des Vignes de Soissons: guide pour le visiteur des ruines*. Soissons, 1905.
- 5489 G. Boissonnot Chanoine. *La Cathédrale de Tours: histoire et description*, Tours, s.d.
- 5792 RE.n. Calmét Augustin R.P.D. *Commentaire littéral sur tous les livres de l'ancien et du nouveau Testament*. Paris, 1708/31.
- 7458 RG. Crepaux. *Chansons gauloises, homage à Rabelais*. Paris, 1889.
- 6933 RG. Gillet Louis. *Histoire artistique des ordres mendiants. Étude sur l'art religieux en Europe du XIII au XVIIIe*. Paris, 1912.

- 5084 N. Hugo Victor. *Souvenirs Politiques et littéraires*. Paris, s.d.
- 5713 RE. *La Vallière Duchesse de Réflexions sur la miséricorde de Dieu*. Paris, 1744.
- 4546 B. Mâle Emile. *L'art religieux de la fin du moyen-âge en France*. Paris, 1908.
L'Art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France. Paris, 1910.
- 6974 RG. Méllerio André. *Rome: La question d'art et la question politique*. Paris, 1901.
- 7699 PG. Mougenot Léon. *Jeanne d'Arc*. Paris, 1890.
- 3962 M. Riotor Léon. *L'Art et l'Idée: essai sur Puvis de Chavannes*. Paris, 1896.
- 7771 RG. Rosny. J.H. *Le Bilatéral: Moeurs Révolutionnaires Parisiennes*. Paris, 1887.
- 7768 RG. Rousseil Rosélia. *La Naissance de Jeanne d'Arc*. Versailles, 1909.
- 5813 RE. SACY. Isaac-Louis Lémaistre de. *Le Saint Évangile de Jésus-Christ selon Saint Matthieu*. Paris, 1696-97.
- 5814 RE. Isaac-Louis Lemaistre de. *Les Actes des Apôtres*. P. 1700.
- 5807 RE. Isaac-Louis Lemaistre de. *Jesue, Les juges et Ruth*. P. 1711.
- 5806 RE. *Cantique des Cantiques*. 1721.
- 5815 RE *L'Apocalypse*. 1729.
- 5802 RE. *Jérémie*. 1760.
- 7752 RG. Schuré Edouard. *Les Grands Initiés: Esquisse de l'histoire secrété des religion*. P. 1902.
- 5711 RE. Voltaire. *La Pucelle d'Orléans*. Londres, 1790.
5087. N. Jobelon. *The Real Origin of Religion*. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton

Kent & Co., LTD. 1902.

4991. N. M. Belloy Drumont de. *Le Siège de Calais*. Paris, 1769.

5128. N. Oeuvres Politiques de Machiavel. Traduction Péries. *Avec une étude, des notices et notes par M. Ch. Louandre. Le Prince les décades de tite-live*. Paris. G. Charpentier et Cie., Éditeurs.

7677. RG. Alexandre Picot, *Marianne. Pièce en un Act, en Vers*. Représentée pour la première fois. Sur le théâtre national de l'odéon. Le 22 septembre 1892. Centenaire de la proclamation de la République. Alexandre Picot, Paris: Paul Ollendorff, éditeur.

7769 RG. Rosélia Rousseil. *Dieu et Patrie: Poésies*. Paris: Alphonse lemerre, éditeur. 1890.

6816 RG Jean de Bonnefon. *Cathédrales de France devant les Barbares. Illustrations d'après nature par Gautier de Soucy*. Paris: Se vend a la Société d'Éditions. 1915.

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