Reflections on Violence and the Crowd in the Images of the French Revolution
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When Lefevre d'Ormesson, Grand Maître of the King's Library made an inventory of revolutionary imagery in the fall of 1790, he arranged the prints in twenty-six categories, ranging from portraits (no. l) to something called "Pantins relatifs à la Révolution" (no. 26), which likely refers to the gameboards illustrating revolutionary events.[1] While eleven categories were devoted to satires of the clergy, royalty, nobility, and the like, only one, number three, was devoted to images of events, sub-categorized into twelve headings ranging from the Etats généraux to collections of prints of revolutionary events. In other words, in late 1790 only a small percentage of the known revolutionary images depicted actual events and an even smaller percentage of those depicted violence and the crowd. And this still holds true if we survey the thousands of images of the entire revolution available to us today.

Within this sub-category of images then, how were violence and the crowd configured by image-makers during the French Revolution?[2] While the representational strategies employed by the artists can quickly be summarized, of equal importance are the types of violence displayed. In these pictorial constructions of specific events, the images depicting violence and the crowd vary greatly in the portrayal of figures, actions, settings, ancillary details, and the like. A number of the images, such as those executed by the talented printmaker Pierre-Gabriel Berthault, after drawings by Jean-Louis Prieur, for a series entitled Les Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française [Images 1, 8, 25 and 26], provide a panoramic sweep of a scene with

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1 See the essay by W. McAllister Johnson, "Questions et Hypothèses sur la gravure pendant la Révolution," in Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Révolution française, Québec: Musée du Québec, 1989, p. 115 and appendix 9, p. 439 (henceforth, Hould, L'Image).
2 "Foule" is defined as "Presse, multitude de personnes qui s'entrepoussent." Interestingly enough, it was also defined as "oppression, vexation indue & violente." See Dictionnaire de l'Académie françoise, 2 vols., Nismes:

precise renderings of architecture, architectural ornamentation, clothing, weapons, vehicles, and the like.[3] The words in the series' title "Tableaux historiques," historical pictures, play on those of the highest ranking category of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, namely, history painting ("peinture historique") while the multiple details of everyday life within the prints connect them to another, very different academic category, genre painting. Other image-makers, working in a more popular style,[4] often more rustic and naive, produced illustrations either issued separately or for various publications; they also depicted panoramic views of a scene, as was the case in most of the illustrations of the taking of the Bastille [Images 3 and 13].[5]

Another visual strategy is that which I would call centripetal focus on figural action, where the space allotted the setting is constricted and the focus is on principal actors, as in Thévenin's Prise de la Bastille [Image 29], Le Supplice du Sieur Foulon [Image 2], or the anonymous Les Derniers moments de Louis XVI [Image 15]. In these works, the viewer is positioned close to the figures operating within the pictorial space, a strategy used by both the amateur artist of Le Supplice du Sieur Foulon and the other more technically accomplished image-makers. Significantly, whatever representational strategy is employed, the artist could be pro-revolutionary like Thévenin or royalist like the print-maker who executed Les Derniers

Beaume, 1786, vol. l, p. 540.

3 On the Berthault-Prieur series, see especially Claudette Hould, ed., La Révolution par la gravure: les Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française, Vizille, Musée de la Révolution and Paris, Réunion des musées nationaux, Paris, 2002. A brief synopsis of the series can be found in Maurice Tourneux, ed., Bibliographie de l'histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution française, 5 vols., Paris: Imprimerie nouvelle, 1890, vol. I, pp. 35-56. These prints, issued in 1791 and after, were part of a series entiled Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française, Paris: LÉditeur, 1817. On Prieur, see François-Louis Bruel et al, eds., Collection de Vinck. Un Siècle d'histoire de France par l'estampe 1770-1871, 8 vols., Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1909-68, vol. I, p. 190 which lists a further bibliography, and Warren Roberts, "The Visual Rhetoric of Jean-Louis Prieur," in Ian Germani and Robin Swales, ed., Symbols, Myths and Images of the French Revolution, Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1998, pp. 103-118.

4 Hould, "La Gravure en Révolution," in L'Image, p. 77 calls the first "la gravure dite savante" and the second "la gravure populaire."

5 On image 3, Démolition du Château de la Bastille, and image 13, Prise de la Bastille, see Premières Collections.

moments de Louis XVI.[6]

The third category, encompassing serial imagery, could be labeled episodic. Major and minor events are broken up into more minute incidents. Both setting and figures are more general than in the previous two categories. Included here would be the aquatints of the autodidactic artist, J.P. Janinet, such as Le Quatrième Evenement du Octobre 1789 [Image 5] or the anonymous illustrations for the newspaper, Les Révolutions de Paris, e.g., Les Massacres des prisonniers [Image 12].[7] Janinet's prints were amalgamated in a book entitled Gravures historiques des principaux événements depuis l'ouverture des Etats-Géneraux de 1789, with each image accompanied by a text of four pages. The fall of the Bastille, for instance, which was divided into six incidents, offered a more complete visual narration of the events of July 14, 1789.[8]

Fourthly, an artist might choose to minimize or eliminate the background and arrange the figures across the page in a frieze, as was done in the two prints entitled Journéé mémorable de Versailles [Images 6 and 7] and that entitled Le Retour triomphant des Héroïnes françaises de Versailles à Paris le 6 Octobre 1789 [Image 32], relying on the inscription to identify the event.

Musée de la Révolution française. Vizille, Saint-Martin-d'Hères, Daniel Munier, 1985, p.21, fig.11 and p. 20, fig. 8, respectively.

6 See Valerie Rousseau-Lagarde et Daniel Arasse, La Guillotine dans la Révolution, Vizille, Musée de la Révolution Française, 1987, fig.54, p. 57, where the artist is tentatively identified as English. It is the presence in the center foreground of the locks of the king's hair suggesting relics of the royal body with the misplacement of the casket signifying a mystical ascension that support the hypothesis of royalist leanings.

7 On Janinet, see L'Art de l'estampe et la Révolution française, Musée Carnavalet, Alençon: Imprimerie Alençonnaise, 1977, pp. 52-53 as well as Tourneux, Bibliographie de l'Histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution française, vol. 1, pp.58-59.

8 Included here were episodes such as Le gouverneur de la Bastille, après avoir fait baisser le pont-levis et laissé entrer un grand nombre de citoynes dans la première cour, les fait fusiller [The Governor of the Bastille, after having lowered the drawbridge and letting a great number of citizens enter the first courtyard, had them shot] and Le brave Maillard va chercher sur une planche suspendue au-dessus du fossé de la Bastille les propositions des assiégés [The brave Maillard on a plank suspended above the Bastille's moat observes the situation of the besieged] as well as the more traditional capturing of De Launay, the governor of the Bastille. For illustrations, see Michel Vovelle, La Révolution française. Images et récit 1789-1799, 5 vols., Paris: Messidor and livre Club Diderot, 1986, vol. I, pp. 154-55.

In employing these representational strategies, what types of violence did the artists

depict? First, what was the eighteenth-century understanding of the word "violence"? Turning

to the Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française (1786), we find a wide range of definitions that are

far more nuanced than we might expect, but for the purposes of analyzing the imagery selected

here, the following will suffice:

> Violence signifies...the force one uses against
> common rights, against the laws, against public
> liberty. To use violence. To act with violence. He
> has taken my furniture, my papers, and has carried
> them off with violence, by violence. To do
> violence. What violence! Do violence against
> someone. [Violence, signifie ... La force dont on use
> contre le droit commun, contre les Lois, contre la
> liberté publique. User de violence. Agir avec
> violence. Il a pris mes meubles, mes papiers, & les
> a emportés de violence, par violence. Faire des
> violences. Quelle violence! Faire violence à
> quelqu'un.][9]

As characterized here, violence could be associated with actions ("to use violence" and "to act

with violence"), with property ("my furniture, my papers"), with people ("do violence against

someone"), as well as activities "against the laws." But at the end of the definition of "violent,"

the idea of "against the laws" is almost turned on its head:

> Violent is said also of persons, sentiments and
> actions. A violent man. A violent mood. A violent
> action. A violent discourse. Violent passion.
> Violent and tyrannical government. [Violent, se dit

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9 Dictionnaire de l'Académie françoise, vol. 2, Nîmes: P Beaume, 1786, p. 672. The definition and those following remained virtually unchanged in subsequent editions, which I have traced through 1814. The entry began with the following: "Qualité de ce qui est violent. La violence des vents, de la tempête, du mal, de la douleur, d'un remède, &c. La violence de son humeur. La violence des passions." ["Quality of one who is violent. The violence of the winds, of the storm, of evil, of pain, of a remedy, etc. The violence of his mood. The violence of passions."] It also included "Impétueux, qui agit avec force, avec impétuosité. Remède violent. Vent violent. Tempête violente. Mouvement violent. Il se dit aussi d'Une douleur grande & aigue. Fièvre violente. Mal violent. Douleur violente." ["Impetuous, who acts with force, with impetuosity. Violent remedy. Violent wind. Violent storm. Violent movement. It is said also of a great and acute pain. Violent fever. Violent harm (or evil). Violent suffering."]

aussi Des personnes, des sentimens & des actions.
Un homme violent. Une humeur violente. Une
action violente. Un discours violent. Passion
violente. Gouvernement violent & tyrannique.][10]

Associated with people, actions, <u>and</u> sentiments, violence is here linked to the body that creates

laws, the government itself, a government that acts with force and—can one say?—against the

law. In summary, then, violence is also about people or government acting with force, strong

feelings, impetuosity, and is associated with a broad range of activities, which was portrayed in a

number of the selected images.

The types of violence portrayed can be placed in five categories: symbolic violence;

participatory violence; complicit violence; anticipatory violence; and ritualized violence, and can

be best defined through illustrative examples. It should be noted, however, that the categories are

by no means mutually exclusive, that an image might depict a single type of violence while

another might deliberately portray several types simultaneously. What follows are analyses of

sample images that fall within each category.

Symbolic Violence

Scarcely two months after the assault on the Bastille on July 14, 1789, Hubert Robert

exhibited at the Salon a small painting entitled <u>La Bastille dans les premiers jours de sa</u>

<u>démolition</u> (Paris, Musée Carnavalet) [Image 28], signed and dated July 20, 1789.[11] As in the

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10 Ibid.
11 Robert's painting, <u>The Bastille in the first days of its demolition,</u> is selected both because of its early date and
because we have some written reactions to the work. For a more extensive commentary, see Philippe Bordes,
"L'Art et le Politique," in Philippe Bordes et Régis Michel, eds., <u>Aux Armes & aux arts! Les Arts de la Révolution</u>
<u>1789-1799</u>, Paris: Adam Biro, 1988, pp. 107-108, ill. 86. See also Vovelle, <u>La Révolution française. Images et récit</u>
<u>1789-1799</u>, vol. I, pp. 172-173. The work appeared in the Salon livret (that is, the official catalogue) under number
36: "Deux Esquisses faites d'après nature; l'une est une vue prise sur la rivière, sous l'une des arches du Pont Royal,
dans le tems de la grande gelée de l'hiver dernier; & l'autre, représ la Bastille dans les premiers jours de sa
demolition" ["Two sketches made after nature; one is a view taken on the river, under one of the arches of the Pont
Royal, during the time of the great freeze during last winter; and the other represents the Bastille during the first

print <u>Demolition of the Bastille</u> [Image 3],[12] Robert chose an early stage of the events following

the momentous day of July 14th. Atop the walls of the prison, a group of people (numbering at

least fifty) smash the crenellations and topple the loosened stones into the moat below.[13]

Dramatically composed, Robert's painting shows the northwest tower slightly left of center with

the Bastille's short, northern side in shadow on the left and its long side, half-illuminated by the

sun, spreading towards the right, where smoke billows back and frames the Bastille. In the

foreground, a scattering of observers, set off against the white dust rising from the broken stones,

view the on-going demolition, with the falling white blocks of stones vividly contrasting with the

aged brown walls of the fortress.[14]

The painting's presence at the Salon was scarcely recorded even though one critic

observed that the Salon opened "amongst the tumult of arms, in the middle of the most

astonishing revolution" ["parmi le tumulte des armes, au milieu de la révolution la plus

étonnante"].[15] The few critical responses to Robert's painting that exist range from admiration to

rejection. One writer mentioned that Robert's buildings "offers one very faithful image"

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days of its demolition"]. Implicit in this pairing is the idea of cause and effect: the hard winter creating a shortage of grain and high prices of bread that would lead ultimately to the storming of the Bastille. William Olander, "Pour Transmettre à la postérité: French Painting and Revolution, 1774-1795," Unpublished Dissertation, New York University, 1983, pp. 112-114, 116-7 mentions the work's early date and states that the painting was presented to Lafayette.

12 <u>Sous les pavés, la Bastille. Archéologies d'un mythe révolutionnaire</u>, Paris: Caisse Nationale des Monuments historiques et des sites, 1989, p. 128 shows a drawing by Louis Moreau taken at a similar moment as that made by the printmaker of image 3. The demolition at this stage is past the crenellations and upper two floors, that is, at a much later stage than that pictured by Hubert Robert. Compare the seventeenth-century print of the Bastille (p. 95), which clearly shows the arch centered on the long wall beneath those two floors, to image 3.

13 These were men presumably in the employ of Pierre-François Palloy. On Palloy and his role in the destruction of the Bastille, see Guillaume Monsaingeon, "Le citoyen Palloy: détruire les murs, construire le mythe," in <u>Sous les pavés, la Bastille</u>, pp. 127-134. During the demolition, which was completed in April 1791, the Bastille became a tourist site (p. 129).

14 One member of the Comité permanent, Dusaulx, reported on his July 15th visit to the Bastille. On the interior, he found an enormous stone to which was attached a huge chain, subsequently removed by two other deputies. See <u>L'Oeuvre des sept jours</u>, published in Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, <u>La Bastille est prise. La Révolution française commence</u>, Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1988, pp. 139-169, and for the visit, p. 164. As the stones were cracked, the whiteness of the limestone blocks became visible.

["offrent une si fidelle image"],[16] while another critic felt that "he ought to have taken a harsher stance in his view of the Bastille" ["il auroit du prendre un parti plus sèvere pour sa vue de la Bastille"]. In fact, "he could have frightened instead of making an agreeable painting" ["il pouvoit effrayer, au lieu d'en faire un tableau agreeable"].[17] The "agreeable" denotes Robert's style, which was distinguished by "sharp and truthful effects, picturesque sites and a facile touch" ["les effets piquans et vrais, les sites pittoresques, et la touche facile"].[18] The first author praised the truth of the work, and presumably appreciated the "agreeable" part of the painting while the other wanted a more political painting that would convey the horror of the prison. What was unremarked was the artist's use of an exaggerated Piranesian scale to suggest the sublime and, accordingly, the terrible.[19] As Burke had stated in his treatise on the sublime, "Greatness of dimension is a powerful cause of the sublime.... ...an(sic) hundred yards of even ground will never work such an effect as a tower an(sic) hundred yards high...."[20]

Robert's painting representing the destruction of the Bastille was presumably first sketched on the spot.[21] Given its swift execution, what is depicted could be read as a continuing symbol of violence, a reminder of that day in July when the Bastille was "taken" (prise, part of

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15 L'Année littéraire, 1789, no. 40, lettre II, p. 19
16 [L.H. Lefebure or Carmontelle], Vérités agréables ou le Salon vu en beau par l'auteur du Coup de Patte, Paris, 1789, in the Collection Deloynes, Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale (henceforth C.D.), vol. XVI, no. 415, p. 8
17 Les éleves au Salon: ou l'Amphigouri, Paris: Chez Leconte, 1789, in the C.D., vol. XVI, no. 416, p. 196. This was mentioned by Bordes, "L'Art et le politique," p. 108.
18 L'Année littéraire, 1789, no. 40, lettre XII, p. 268.
19 Hubert Robert not only collected Piranesi prints but the two artists were together in Rome and Cora. On this subject, see Piranèse et les Français 1740-1790, Rome: Edizione dell'Elefante, 1976, pp. 304-326, esp. 304-305. On Piranesi, see Roseline Bacou, Piranesi. Etchings and Engravings, Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975.
    The position of the Bastille, its closeness to the frame, recalls Piranesi's Tomb of the Curiaci Brothers at Albano (ill. in Bacou, p. 85) while the small scale of the figures atop the building recall those at the Mausoleum of Hadrian in Piranesi's Foundations of the Mausoleum of Hadrian (ill. in Bacou, p. 91.)
20 Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, 4th ed., Dublin, 1767, pp. 102-103.
21 There are other early prints and drawings by Laurent Guyot dated 25 Juillet and 26 Juillet, that are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and listed in Bruel et al., eds., Collection de Vinck, vol. II, p. 89, nos. 1661, 1662.

the title of any number of prints), alluded to here by the smoke and fire reminiscent of the burning carts of hay which the crowd had set on fire on the 14th. Indeed, some might have regarded the figures atop the parapets as participants remaining from the charge on the Bastille of July 14th, that is, as some of the original violators of persons and property. Others might have been reminded of the visits of representatives of the National Assembly as well as those of various citizens/tourists atop the walls of the Bastille who wanted to share in the destruction of this site of "despotism" as well as the fight for freedom.[22] While the painting does not record violence against people, as do the many scenes of July 14th itself, it does document the attack on property and the continuing assault on royal authority embodied, so to speak, by the fortress itself. Criticized as too agreeable and hence too ambiguous, the painting, like the print Demolition du Château de la Bastille [Image 3], nevertheless, operates visually within the realm of symbolic violence.[23]

Participatory Violence

The rubric of "participatory violence" applies to numerous revolutionary images, including many of those dealing with the July 14th attack on the Bastille.[24] In participatory violence, people are shown in acts of violence against other persons and/or against property. Of those works depicting the actual attack on the Bastille, Charles Thévenin's etching, Prise de la

22 Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink and Rolf Reichardt, trans. Norbert Schurer, The Bastille: A History of a Symbol of Despotism and Freedom, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997, p. 73 mention that the Bastille became "a *double symbol* (their italics): dungeon of despotism and symbol of victorious fight for freedom."
23 See Lüsebrink and Reichardt, The Bastille and the brief essay by Michèle Menard, "Le Château, la forteresse, dans l'imagerie révolutionnaire," in Michel Vovelle, ed., Les Images de la Révolution française, Paris: La Sorbonne, 1988, pp. 291-97, esp. 293 where she states that the Bastille becomes a "symbole de la liberté conquise." Olander, "Pour Transmettre à la postérité: French Painting and Revolution, 1774-1795," p.116, states that the Robert painting is "symbolic in its centralized, almost hieratic, presentation of the crumbling towers, whose weight and mass convey the feeling of what an enormous undertaking it was—expressed the dominant ideology of 1789: an optimistic, if naive, faith in the Revolution."
24 The print, Foundation of the Republic, 10 August 1792 [Image 10], can also be categorized as an image of participatory violence.

<u>Bastille le 14 Juillet 1789</u> (Paris, Musée Carnavalet),[25] completed in 1790—the painting [Image

29], which reverses the print, was exhibited Salon 1795—is unquestionably the most powerful,

in large part because the violent action is privileged over the rendering of the building itself, an

example of the centripetal focus on figural action. As in the case of so many history paintings

produced by the artists of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, it is the human figures that engage our

attention. Against a background of armed insurgents marching into the courtyard of the Bastille,

a succession of violent acts are performed. In the painting, a cannon explodes on the right (a

threat to property and man); a soldier is about to have his throat pierced by the bayonet of an

insurrectionary; the marquis de Launay, governor of the Bastille, is pulled and menaced by

several men, identified as the grenadier Arné and the clock-maker Humbert.[26] These episodes

are balanced on the left by the effects of violence: a dying officer, posed like Benjamin West's

Wolfe, slumped over a sprawling corpse.[27] Behind two standing officers who urge restraint is a

wounded, disheveled man, assisted by another officer. Rather than focusing on a single

confrontation with de Launay, as might have been the case in an academic history painting,

Thévenin chose to combine multiple incidents to suggest the tumult of the attack on the Bastille.

Through the powerful corporeality of the insurgents' figures, their menacing expressions,

and their decisive movements, the twenty-six-year-old Thévenin, a student of the academician

François-André Vincent and a future winner of the Prix de Rome in 1791, was able to convey the

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25 For an illustration of the print, see Hould, <u>L'Image</u>, plate 16a, p. 174. Thévenin's painting (a reverse of the print) is discussed in <u>La Révolution francaise et l'Europe 1789-1799</u>, 3 vols., Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1989, vol. 2, p. 393, also no. 503, p. 396. The painting was exhibited at the Salons of 1793 and 1795. While Olander, "Pour Transmettre à la Postérité," pp. 277-81 discussed both painting and print, he was interested in Thévenin's career strategy. Thévenin went on to become a member of the Institut de France in 1816, Director of the Academy of France in Rome from 1816-1822 and later a Conservator at the Cabinet des Estampes at the Bibliothèque Nationale. See Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, <u>Allegemeines Lexikon der Bildenenden Künstler</u>, Leipzig, W. Engelmann, 1939, vol. 33, p. 17.
26 Hould, <u>L'Image</u>, p. 175. Arné and Humbert were honored by several prints. See Bruel et al., <u>Collection de Vinck</u>, vol. I, pp. 83-85, nos. 1645, 1646, 1647, 1650.

sense of urgency, of force, and of the action of the crowd, as well as the sense of time: past, present, and future.[28] According to the Moniteur of March 7, 1790, "the terrible and true expression which reigns throughout" ["l'expression terrible et vraie qui règne partout"] convinced the viewer that the artist was a "witness and actor in this scene" ["témoin et acteur dans cette scène"].[29] But it is not only through terrible expressions that the artist suggested that he was a first-hand viewer of the struggle within the Bastille, it is the very composition itself with its shallow foreground that stresses the proximity of the scene to us as beholders and thereby makes us close witnesses to the action in the second courtyard of the fortress.[30] A review that appeared in the Journal de Paris on March l, 1790 gives us some idea of the contemporary reception of the work: "it appears to us to merit esteem both from the point of view of art and that of the subject it represents" ["elle nous paroît mériter de l'estime du côté de l'art & du sujet qu'elle représente"].[31] In appreciating the print for both its artistic merit as well as its subject, this reviewer clearly understood how Thévenin adapted academic principles to elevate the action of a contemporary event. When the painting was exhibited at the 1795 Salon, one critic lauded the work for possessing "the merit of great picturesque machines" ["le mérite des grandes machines pittoresques"], the term "grandes machines" referring to the large-scale history paintings that usually adorned the walls of the Salon.[32] And we note that in keeping with

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27 Bordes, "L'Art et le politique," p. 108.
28 On this concept of embodying several moments of time in a work, see the discussion below of Prieur's drawing of Bertier de Sauvigny. Vincent himself did an ink neoclassical study of nude figures within the courtyard of the Bastille. See Vovelle, La Révolution française. Images et récit 1789-1799, vol. 1, p.161.
29 Quoted in Hould, L'Image, p. 175.
30 The setting is described in the catalogue of 1795 Salon: "Le lieu de la scène est dans la 2e cour, entre les deux pont-levis." ["The place of the scene is in the second courtyard, between the two drawbridges."] Hould, L'Image, p. 81 mentions that several announcements in newspapers for prints mentioned the truthful and objective accounts by the artists and guaranteed on-site reporting.
31 Journal de Paris, March 1, 1790, No. 60, p. 240.
32 "Beaux-Arts. Exposition publique des ouvrages des artistes vivans, dans le Salon du Louvre, au mois de septembre, année 1795...," Magasin encyclopédique, C.D., vol. XVIII, no. 469, p.452.

academic decorum, blood has no place in either the print or painting.

That sense of proximity to the action is equally present in the print entitled <u>Torture of Foulon</u> [Image 2] by an unidentified artist. The execution of Joseph-François Foulon, the recently created Finance Minister, who was unsympathetic to the financial burden that the increased bread prices had placed on the people, occurred on July 22, 1789.[33] Dragged to the place de Grève and the rue Mouton, Foulon was beheaded, after three failed attempts to hang him. The crowd then paraded the head on a pike with the mouth stuffed with hay (an allusion to Foulon's own declaration about making the people eat hay).

The moderately skillful, anonymous printmaker had some familiarity with academic compositional practices[34] but went beyond academic decorum by showing the beheaded body with its bloody neck facing the viewer. (In fact, an Academy artist would probably have selected the moment before Foulon's death.) This engraving, as well as Pierre-Gabriel Berthault's print after the drawing by Jean-Louis Prieur of the same subject [Image 25],[35] is a good illustrations of both participatory and complicit violence. While some members of the crowd, both male and female, are actually performing the stoning and the dragging, others remain passive observers, followers, or simply supporters of these gruesome activities. In the anonymously-executed print, the stoning of that degraded body, while real, also alludes to the stoning of St. Stephen, and as such, may well indicate disapproval of this execution. The politics of the printmaker is presently

33 On Foulon see Bruel et al., <u>Collection de Vinck</u>, vol. II, p. 405-406, no. 2872, as well as nos. 2873-2876. No. 2876 is the same as image 2. See also the discussion in Hould, <u>L'Image</u>, p. 181.
34 See, for example, the illustration of Nicolas-Bernard Lépicié, <u>Zeal of Mattathias</u> (Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts), in Robert Rosenblum, <u>Transformations in late eighteenth-century Art</u>, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, fig. 62 and p. 64. The work, exhibited at the l783 Salon, shows Mattathias triumphant as he has killed "a king's officer who had come to enforce a sacrifice," as well as "a Jew whom he finds guilty of idolatry."
35 On the Berthault-Prieur print, see Hould, <u>L'Image</u>, pp. 180-81. The Berthault-Prieur print is much more panoramic, and the action is seen from the Place de Grève. Foulon is not yet dead as the crowd attempts to hang his body.

unknown but potentially could be recovered since the small print (0.144m x 0.087m) displays a "No.2" in the left corner and "page 20" in the right suggesting that it was one of several illustrations to a pamphlet or a book, as yet unidentified.

Similar combinations of active and passive actors can be found in any number of images, including several other Berthault/Prieur prints, such as Pillage de la Maison de St. Lazare [Image 26][36] which depicts the crowd who invaded that religious establishment on July 13th, ostensibly for grain. But the activity has extended beyond securing the bags of grain, visible on the right in the street. Men and women within the building throw out mattresses, tables, and other furnishings, which are being removed by some people in the street below, while others, on the left, simply observe the destruction. Indeed, they seem to be awaiting their turn to share in the spoils. That combination of participatory and complicit actors is equally visible in the print by Isidore-Stanislas Helman after Charles Monnet's drawing entitled Journée du Ier Prairial de l'an III [Image 16], originally plate number 12 of a series entitled Principales journées. With the viewers on the second floor of the National Convention observing the tumult below, the ground floor is invaded by a crowd of men and women demanding "bread and the constitution," their threats punctuated by the gesture of one holding up the dismembered head of deputy Féraud to the Convention president, Boissy d'Anglas.[37]

Complicit Violence

A print such as La Journée mémorable de Versailles le lundi 5 Octobre 1789 [Image 7] (the date was actually October 6th),[38] showing a synecdochical representation of the crowd, a group of eight or nine armed men and a woman returning from Versailles, is an example of

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36 For a discussion, see Hould, L'Image, p. 171.
37 See Ibid, p. 303 and pl. 90.

complicit violence alone. Whatever violence has happened is referenced by the Swiss Guards' heads held aloft. The decapitations have occurred "off stage" at Versailles. Impetuosity or "violence of passions" might be applied to this exuberant group, which parades across the print. It is possible that these figures are not those responsible for the actual murders, but the presence of the bloody heads makes the image a celebration of past violent acts, with the revelers complicit in those.

The frieze format of the print suggesting the movement of the crowd from left to right also suggests order. More importantly, by choosing to focus on a fragment of the crowd of women, national guardsmen and ordinary male citizens who marched back to Paris with the king in tow, rather than on the carriage with the royal family within,[39] this artist actually presents a re-ordering of the world. Pictured no longer is a hierarchy of groups or individuals, as in earlier prints of city processions or religious pageants.[40] The royal family is ignored. Rather this print privileges a group of unknown individuals, citizens and guardsmen alike, who intermingle on their return to Paris. That the role of women, so prominent in the October days, is reduced to a single participant, who turns her back to the viewer, certainly testifies to the printmaker's own bias, not shared by all who represented the event.[41]

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38 Parisian women actually departed for Versailles on October 5, 1789 and returned the following day.
39 Berthault/Prieur, for instance, did represent such a scene, which they entitled Le Roi arrivant à Paris le 6 Octobre. For an illustration, see Vovelle, La Révolution française. Images et récit 1789-1799, vol. I, p. 250.
40 See especially Robert Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre and other Episodes in French Cultural History, New York: Vintage Books, 1985, chapter 3, "A Bourgeois puts his World in Order: The City as a Text" and his illustrations "A Procession honoring the Spanish Infanta in Paris in 1722," p. 106 and "A Procession of Dignitaries in Toulouse," pp. 110-111.
41 See, for instance, the anonymous engraving, Triomphe de l'armée parisienne réunie au peuple le 6 octobre 1789, and the anonymous drawing, Retour de Versailles avec les gardes nationaux, illustrated in Vovelle, La Révolution française, vol. I, pp. 248-49. Both Barbara Day-Hickman and Joan Landes in other essays in this forum discuss another print illustrating the return to Paris, Image 6. Day-Hickman reads Journée mémorable de Versailles as an ironic commentary deriding the triumphal parade of "public women" while Landes reads this as a glorification of the "modern Amazons." Years ago in an oral presentation, I agreed with Landes, but reviewing both Day-Hickman and Landes' accounts, it is evident that the work is ambiguous. It could be read as a sexualization, and thereby

Anticipatory Violence

The category of Aanticipatory violence≅ includes works such as Prieur's drawing, <u>Bertier de Sauvigny, intendant de Paris, est conduit au supplice, 23 juillet 1789</u> (Paris, Musée Carnavalet) [Image 31].[42] The whole notion of anticipatory violence revolves around the theory that an artist can indicate more than one moment in an image. Repudiating the artistic credo of the single instant promulgated earlier in the century by DuBos: "A painting only represents an instant of a scene" ["Un tableau ne représente même qu'un instant d'une scène"],[43] the revolutionary artist accepted the beliefs of contemporary theorists who proposed that several moments could be expressed in a single image.[44] Picking up on ideas suggested by Pernety in the 1750s, Watelet, an honorary member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, declared clearly in 1792:

> It is that the human spirit which, in a continual
> movement, passes ceaselessly from past to present,
> and from the present to future, is not able to fix well
> the representation of an instantaneous action
> without mixing previous ideas and especially
> subsequent ideas into the conception that it has
> focused on. [C'est que l'esprit humain qui, dans un
> continuel mouvement, passe sans cesse du passé au
> présent, & du présent à l'avenir, ne peut fixer la
> representation bien faite d'une action instantanée,

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trivialization, of the political actions of women during the October days. Yet, given the sans-culotte in the center of the print who enthusiastically waves a branch and spreads out his arms and who visually seems to push away the aristocratic couple witnessing the "triumph," I am inclined to support my original opinion and view the work positively as the triumph of "nos modernes Amazones."

42 For an illustration, see <u>La Révolution française. Le premier empire. Dessins du Musée Carnavalet</u>, Paris: Musée Carnavalet, 1982, p. 135, no. 120 and Vovelle, <u>La Revolution française. Images et récit 1789-1799</u>, vol. I, p. 188. This never became part of the <u>Collection complète des tableaux historiques de la Révolution française.</u> See also Roberts, "The Visual Rhetoric of Jean-Louis Prieur," pp. 107-109, which I read after reaching my own conclusions. Roberts (p. 109) states that in this work "Prieur has succeeded, as an artist, in capturing the ritualistic dimension of a Paris <u>journée</u>." Of course, had events been different, had Berthier de Sauvigny not been massacred, a totally new category, something called "arrested violence," may have been needed to describe the print.

43 Jean-Baptiste Du Bos, <u>Réflexions critiques sur la poesie et sur la peinture</u>, 6th ed., 3 vols., Paris, 1755, vol. I, p. 387.

44 See the Thévenin as well as <u>A Memorable Day at Versailles</u> above.

sans mêler à l'idée qu'il prend, des idées antérieures
& surtout des idées postérieures.][45]

Embedded in any image, according to Watelet, are the past, the present, and the future.

In the Prieur drawing, Foulon's son-in-law, Bertier de Sauvigny, is paraded through the streets of Paris by a crowd, one of which "offers" him Foulon's decapitated head.[46] While the presence of that head denotes the past, the inexorable movement of the crowd from left to right in the frieze-like arrangement of a pageant; the position of Bertier in the cart towering over his captors but surrounded by the points of bayonets; his ironic (but deliberate) placement between the large wheel of the cart (an allusion to breaking over the wheel) and the sculptural figure of a saint in the niche to his right; and even the head of Foulon again are all signifiers of Bertier's present _and_ future. Although he fought back, Bertier would eventually be hung, bayoneted, his entrails and heart removed, his head cut off and mutilated.[47]

Ritualized Violence

Isidore-Stanislas Helman's print after Charles Monnet's drawing of the execution of Louis XVI, Journée du 21 Janvier 1793 [Image 14], is a good example of ritualized violence.[48] As Paul Connerton remarked in How Societies Remember,

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45 Charles Watelet and Pierre-Charles Levesque, Dictionnaire des arts de peinture, sculpture et gravure, 5 vols., Paris: L.F. Prault, 1788-92, vol. II, p. 223. Dom Antoine-Joseph Pernety, Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture et gravure; avec un traité pratique des différentes manières de peindre, Paris: Bauche, 1757, p. 77. See also my article, AApproaches to Narrative and History: The Case of the Donation of September 7, 1789 and its Images,≅ Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture, vol. 19, 1989, pp. 413-32, esp. pp. 416-18.
46 On Bertier, see Bruel et al., Collection de Vinck, vol. II, p. 407, no. 2877. Bertier was arrested in the outskirts of Compiegne and brought back to Paris.
47 A drawing attributed to David's student, Anne-Louis Girodet, Decapitated Heads of marquis Delaunay, Foulon, and Bertier de Sauvigny, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes is illustrated in Thomas Crow, Emulation. Making Artists for revolutionary France, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 120, pl. 90. This shows not only the defaced head of Bertier de Sauvigny but also his heart on a stick.
48 On the print, see Rousseau-Lagarde and Arasse, La Guillotine dans la Révolution, p.49 and fig.44 as well as Hould, L'Image, p. 277 and pl. 75. This print was the eighth plate of a series entitled Principales journées de la Révolution.

The ceremony of his [Louis XVI's] trial and execution was intended to exorcise the memory of a prior ceremony. The anointed head was decapitated and the rite of coronation ceremonially revoked. Not simply the natural body of the king but also and above all his political body was killed. In this the actions of the revolutionaries borrowed from the language of the sacred which for so long the dynastic realm had appropriated as its own.[49]

This ritual aspect of the royal execution is particularly symbolized by Helman/Monnet in the placement on the right of the empty pedestal that formerly supported Bouchardon's statue of Louis XV (torn down on August 9, 1792) as a compositional counterbalance to the guillotine and the enacted violence on the left. Together they become the embodiment of a voided kingship.[50]

The moment represented in Helman's print, namely, the display of the head—the executioner held it up while he circled the scaffold twice[51]—deliberately emphasized the ritual of sacrifice.[52] (One cannot help wondering whether the revolutionaries recalled the description in Tacitus's Annales (I:LXI) when the German [Gallic or Celtic] Arminius destroyed the troops of

49 Paul Connerton, How Societies Remember, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 9. See especially Michael Walter, Regicide and Revolution: Speeches at the Trial of Louis XVI, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974, introduction; Susan Dunn, The Deaths of Louis XVI. Regicide and the French Political Imagination, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994; and Antoine de Baecque, Glory and Terror. Seven Deaths under the French Revolution, trans. Charlotte Mandell, New York and London: Routledge, 2001, pp. 86-119, who devotes a chapter to the execution of Louis XVI and also makes the same point (p. 91): "By thus sacrificing Louis XVI, the Republic immolates the sacredness with which the body of the king was still invested."
50 Image 11, Le plus grand des Despotes renversé par la Liberté, shows the dismantling of the statue of Louis XIV in the Place Vendome, but in August 1792, other statues of Henri IV, Louis XV in various sites were also destroyed. See Hould, L'Image, pp. 254-55 and the catalogue La Révolution française et l'Europe 1789-1799, vol. II, pp. 430-432, where the remaining fragments are shown. The destruction and debates about it are discussed in Edouard Pommier, L'Art de la liberté, Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1991.
51 De Baecque, Glory and Terror, p. 100.
52 See Susan Dunn, The Deaths of Louis XVI. Regicide and the French Political Imagination, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, chapter one, "The Cult of Human Sacrifice." Dunn mentions the work of Marcel Mauss and Henri Hubert, Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function, 1898; reprinted Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964. See also Walter Burkert, Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual, Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1979, esp. pp. 59-77, "Transformations of the Scapegoat." Burkert states: "The process can be brought into a nearly perfect Lévi-Straussian formula, the scapegoat being the mediator who brings about the reversal from common danger to common salvation: the situation 'community endangered' versus 'individual

Varus and displayed the severed Roman heads on trees.)[53] Above all, Helman's print stresses the ritual aspect of this execution by the ordered lines of 80,000 "men, national guards, and policemen" who controlled the space and served as a barrier between the people and the execution in the Place de la Révolution;[54] by the absence of women; and by the stern decorum of the crowd, mostly young men, before us but behind the troops, a number of whom appear to shout as they view the severed head. (They are said to have cried, "'Long live the nation! Long live the Republic!'").[55]

While the authorities wanted the citizens of Paris to act with propriety to prove "that an act of justice in no way resembles vengeance,"[56] there were, nevertheless, signs of vengeance at the ceremonial execution itself. The fédérés of Marseilles, the principal victims of the August 10th assault on the Tuileries, were placed immediately in front of the scaffold.[57] Earlier at the trial of Louis XVI, cries of vengeance had resounded among the deputies, with the Girondins, who considered the execution unnecessary for the establishment of a republic, repudiating the Jacobin exhortations. One Girondin, Joseph Guiter, viewed regicide as a "misguided form of human sacrifice" to freedom and equality.[58] Hence, for contemporary viewers of the print, the troops and the public spectators in the image, that is, those attending and witnessing this

distinguished' is turned into 'individual doomed' versus 'community saved'....(p. 67).
53 Mentioned in Marvin Chauncey Ross, Arts of the Migration Period in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore: The Walters Art Gallery, 1961, p. 121.
54 One notices something similar in the prints showing the execution of Damiens, who tried to assassinate Louis XV. See L'Exécution de Damiens illustrated in Claudine Boulouque, "Les exécutions en Grève," in Michel Le Moêl and Jean Dérens, La Place de Grève, Paris: Délégation à l'Action artistique, n.d., p. 151.
55 From the Journal de Perlet, quoted in de Baecque, Glory and Terror, p. 100. The figure of 80,000 in the Place de la Révolution is also taken from de Baecque, p. 94.
56 Notice of mayor Chambon, quoted in Ibid, p. 94.
57 Ibid, pp. 102 and 104.
58 Dunn, The Deaths of Louis XVI, pp. 21-23. What also comes to mind is the summary beheading of some of Caesar's enemies in his account of the conquest of Gaul. See Julius Caesar, The Conquest of Gaul, trans. by S. A. Handford, Middlesex: Penguin, 1951, p. 161, where Indutiomarus, chief of the Treveri, is beheaded and p. 254, where Gutuater, leader of the Carnutes, is flogged and his head cut off. Eighteenth-century Frenchmen, well-

spectacle of the display of the severed trophy-head, would have been regarded as complicit in the execution.[59] In that, they are little different from those complicit in the murder of Foulon or Berthier de Sauvigny; the revelers returning from Versailles; or even the spectators at the May 6, 1777 execution of the poisoner Antoine-François Derues on the Place de Grève.[60]

What was different, however, were the shouts of the crowd after the royal execution (depicted by Helman), symbolizing, to use Susan Dunn's terms, "the myth of a phoenix-like republic rising from the blood of the dead king."[61] In that sense, Helman's image incorporates ritualized violence; participatory violence (the three executioners); complicit violence; as well as symbolic violence, the violence of a new government and some of its representatives.[62] The definition of "violence," we must recall, included "violent passion," something that is transmitted by the printmaker in the connection between the display of the king's head and the upraised arms and the visible, rather than aural, shouts of the people and the troops.

Having examining the types of violence represented in these images, as well as the various representational strategies the artists used, we might well ask how these prints contribute

schooled in the classics, would certainly have been familiar with this text.
59 On the various reactions to Louis XVI's execution, see Daniel Arasse, La Guillotine et l'imaginaire de la terreur, Paris: Flammarion, 1987, pp. 79-84. Arasse devotes chapter 2 to "La mort du Roi."
60 For an illustration, see Bruel, Collection de Vinck, vol. I, pl. XXI, opposite p. 584.
61 Dunn, The Deaths of Louis XVI, p. 20.
62 What was not depicted, at least explicitly, were the actions of the people following the moment depicted by the artist, when they eagerly tried to get drops of Louis' blood on a handkerchief, cloth, sword, or to collect pieces of his hair: parts of a tyrant or parts of a martyr, depending on the interpretations of the collectors. See de Baecque, Glory and Terror, pp. 106-107, 114 and La Famille royale à Paris de l'histoire à la legende, Paris: Musée Carnavalet, 1993. See, however, Image 15, where the locks of Louis XVI's hair are visible left of center beneath the platform of the guillotine. Thus, in this symbolic patricide, the people acquired "parts" of Louis, a symbolic mutilation, if not actual as in the case of Foulon.
        Villeneuve's print, Manière à réflection pour les jongleurs couronnées, showing a hand holding up head dripping blood, alludes to this symbolic violence. On this image and others, see Annie Duprat, Le Roi décapité. Essai sur les imaginaires politiques, Paris: Cerf, 1992. See also the illustration and entry in French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799, Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989, pp. 194-95, ill. 90; Ronald Paulson, "The Severed Head: The Impact of French Revolutionary Caricatures on England," pp. 55-65 in the same exhibition catalogue; and the brief discussion in de Baecque, Glory and Terror, pp. 101-102.

to our historical knowledge of specific historical events. One of the basic problems of visual images is their relationship to the concept of narrative. Unlike the various written accounts, reports, and memoirs of events which can discuss a series of events over time, the image-makers, despite what Watelet promoted, were reduced to showing a single moment, or several consecutive moments, within one image, such as the fall of the Bastille, and the execution of Louis XVI. Such a time constraint, with, at best, a compression of several moments into a single visualization, restricts the information that can be conveyed. Nevertheless, it is clear that images such as the prints by Berthault/Prieur [Images 1, 8, 25 and 26] and Helman [Images 14,16 and 27], as well as drawings by Prieur [Image 31] provide us with invaluable information about setting, costume, the articles of everyday life, the behavior of the crowd, physiognomy of specific individuals, and the like,[63] which is impossible to get from the written accounts of the time, and that knowledge can be supplemented with similar information from other images, for example, Janinet's prints (see Image 5). Still other works have to be treated gingerly as a source. As Claudette Hould has pointed out, one of the first popular prints of the attack on the Bastille was executed by Nicolas Dupin for the Révolution de Paris, which appeared only in October 1789, and which was subsequently adopted as a model by other printmakers for their own images of the event,[64] and this, like some memoirs, conveys only a certain amount of information, much of it inaccurate.

At the same time, the ubiquity of these images offers a different perspective on "historical knowledge." For their prevalence tells us not only that the printmakers thought that

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63 Hould, "Les Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française: mémoire et révision de l'Histoire," in Les Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française, p. 38, compared the Helman prints to those by Berthault and noted that the architectural detail in the Helman is more cursory and inexact.
64 Hould, L'Image, pp. 176-77.

such images had commercial value and would sell[65] but also that their popularity came from their

symbolic value, souvenirs or "memory triggers" of a momentous event, which operated to

perpetuate symbolic events.[66] As in the case of written accounts of these events, these

visualizations are constructions, subject to the personal/political interpretations of their authors.

They are subject also to the multiple readings of their audiences, including those in this forum.

Hence, some images may be interpreted as ambiguous (Robert's Bastille [Image 28]); as possibly

ironic (Journée mémorable de Versailles [Image 6]); or even reinterpreted as tragic (Helman's

execution of Louis XVI [Image 14]). Regardless of the intent of the author, images, just like

texts, will always have multiple interpretations, which are affirmed, contested, refined, and

reframed.

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65 On the production and commerce of the images, see Ibid, pp. 78-83.
66 Lüsebrink and Reichardt, The Bastille, have thoroughly analyzed the symbolics of the taking and dismantling of the Bastille.