ARCHITECTURAL TRANSLATIONS:
GIUSEPPE BARBERI (1746-1809) BETWEEN ROME & PARIS

Volume I

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation considers the drawings of the Roman architect Giuseppe Barberi (1746-1809) in relation to broader contexts of architectural theory and culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Barberi was engaged with professional networks in which ideas were being generated and circulated, both in Rome and Paris, and he drew on various strands of these ideas and incorporated them into his drawings. Thus, his drawings are interpreted in this dissertation as visual repositories of these ideas.

The first chapter of the dissertation is an overview of Barberi’s career, the purpose of which is to provide the reader with a sense of the various types of enterprises with which he was engaged, his professional networks, and how greater cultural institutions and political events shaped his professional practice. The subsequent three chapters focus on small groups of his drawings executed in different periods of his career. The second chapter considers a group of drawings of poet improvisers from a Roman literary academy most likely executed in the late 1770s or early 1780s. The third chapter considers architectural sketches drawn in a Borrominesque style of the late 1790s, and the last chapter considers large presentation drawings for a massive theater complex in the form of a classical amphitheater designed for Paris in 1805. Each of these groups of drawings is interpreted in relation to broader architectural and cultural dialogues that were taking place around Barberi, dialogues which I reconstruct using archival sources, contemporary artistic production, and a range of eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century texts. Barberi’s drawings in the second chapter are interpreted as being part of contemporary discussions on poetic improvisation. Those in the third chapter illuminate
the eighteenth-century reception of Borromini, and those of the final chapter relate to
discussions on the status of the public building as a monument in Paris in the early
nineteenth century.

Throughout the dissertation, the transformation of ideas on architecture brought about by
the circulation of texts and the geographical transfer of people, mainly between Rome
and Paris, is a central concern. This dissertation brings to light the significance of
geographical and linguistic translation for Barberi’s contemporaries and demonstrates
how the analysis of specific instances of translation provides a tool with which to
approach the study of architecture of this period, an approach that values architectural
ideas and products as being part of dynamic cultural processes. Barberi, in his own
travels through Italy and France, his reception of architectural theory coming out of
linguistic translations, and his own translation of complex cultural issues into the visual
language of architecture, emerges as a key figure of this broader culture of translation.
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On a personal level, the boundless love of my mother, my father, and my sisters has sustained me over the past seven years. The more recent love of my partner, Tom, has been equally sustaining.
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Graph 1

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AASLR</td>
<td>Archivio dell’Accademia di San Luca di Roma, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAB</td>
<td>Archivio Storico dell’Accademia di Brera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADR</td>
<td>Archives départementales du Rhône, Lyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN</td>
<td>Archives Nationales, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APEFRL</td>
<td>Archives des Pieux Établissements de la France à Rome et à Lorette, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASMi</td>
<td>Archivio di Stato di Milano, Milan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASR</td>
<td>Archivio di Stato di Roma, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAR</td>
<td>Biblioteca Angelica, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIASA</td>
<td>Biblioteca dell’Istituto di Archaeologia e Storia dell’Arte, Rome</td>
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<td>BcFO</td>
<td>Biblioteca comunale, Forl</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Giuseppe Barberi (1746-1809) was a Roman architect of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. He practiced in Rome for the greater part of his life. At the end of the eighteenth century, however, he was forced to flee the city for political reasons and spent his last decade moving between various locations in France and northern Italy in order to find employment. In the summer of 1809, he was granted permission to return to Rome, where he died just a few months later in December.

Barberi is known today for his drawings, approximately two thousand of which are conserved in collections across North America and Europe. Only a small fraction of the drawings have appeared in museum catalogues and in a handful of articles devoted to the study of his career. These publications have stressed two aspects of Barberi and his drawings. First, his fluid sketching technique with pen and ink and his dramatic use of brush and wash for shading have been valued both as examples of technical virtuosity and as being unusual for a period in which architectural drawings are generally considered less ebullient or “baroque” in tone. Second, scholars have taken an interest in his professional and political affiliations. The shift from his being a loyal supporter of the Pope, Roman noble families, and others politically aligned with the Papacy and the French Monarchy for the greater part of his career, to becoming an open and zealous supporter of a French invasion of Rome at the end of the eighteenth century has received particular attention. Such studies treat Barberi's drawings on a rather superficial level, insofar as they consider and appreciate his work exclusively for its aesthetic appeal or treat it merely as visual evidence of various parts of his biography.
Over the past five years, I have examined almost all of Barberi’s surviving drawings. This dissertation focuses on a small selection of them. My approach differs from previous studies of Barberi in the stress I place on how his work fits into broader architectural, cultural, and political discourses which influenced his choice of subject matter. This allows me to analyze the manner in which he visually translated these discourses into his drawings. By approaching my study in this way, I recognize Barberi's drawings as constituting visual repositories of ideas on architecture and culture that were circulating at the time.

The form my work takes has a great deal to do with the types of sources I employ. I focus mainly on a range of published primary sources, including French and Italian architectural treatises of various editions, French and Italian periodicals, eighteenth-century re-editions and translations of earlier architectural treatises, published travel accounts and letters, and architectural dictionaries. While Barberi was himself not publishing such material, those around him were. I chose my primary source material based on what the individuals in his various professional networks were writing or reading, or at least that with which they will have been familiar. Using such material allows me to reconstruct an architectural, and greater cultural, dialogue that was taking place around Barberi. This, in turn, allows me to interpret Barberi’s drawings in light of contemporary discussions.

One of the reasons I approach my study of Barberi’s drawings in this way is to move beyond the limitations of connoisseurship, with its preoccupation on questions of attribution, dating, style, and technique. I am less interested in Barberi’s drawings as
objects to be appreciated unto themselves than in readings of individual architectural
drawings or groups of drawings in relation to broader cultural and architectural issues of
the period.

It is not my intention to argue that Barberi was a major figure in Rome in the late
eighteenth century and in Paris in the early nineteenth century or to suggest that his
architectural works were of great interest to his contemporaries. Barberi certainly never
came close to achieving the sort of prominence in Rome or in Europe more broadly as
some of his Italian contemporaries, such as Antonio Canova or Giovanni Battista
Piranesi. His importance for me lies not in his professional status or his success as
architect. Instead, Barberi’s significance lies in his engagement with various professional
networks in which ideas were being generated and circulated, both in Rome and abroad,
and his habit of drawing on various strands of these ideas and incorporating them into his
drawings. As an object of study, Barberi and his work provide a useful lens through
which to examine broader themes and concerns of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-
century architecture and culture more generally.

My study of Barberi consists of four chapters. The first chapter is an overview of his
career, in which I provide the reader with a sense of the various types of enterprises with
which he was engaged, his professional networks, and how greater cultural institutions
and political events shaped his professional practice. In the subsequent three chapters, I
analyze individual sets of drawings, pointing out how he responded to ideas circulating at
the time. Each of these chapters corresponds to drawings he executed in different periods
of his career: the second chapter considers a group of drawings of poet improvisers from
the Arcadian Academy in Rome most likely executed in the late 1770s or early 1780s, the third chapter considers architectural sketches drawn in a Borrominesque style of the late 1790s, and the last chapter considers large presentation drawings for a massive theater complex in the form of a classical amphitheater designed for Paris in 1805.

In the course of the three final chapters of the dissertation, I also explore broader thematic issues. In my investigation of Barberi’s drawings of poet improvisers, I consider perceptions and receptions of Rome’s past and present by foreigners and the reaction to such receptions on the part of Romans. In the chapter on Barberi’s Borrominesque drawings, I investigate eighteenth-century reception of Borromini, and how eighteenth-century translations of Vitruvius, Italian reception of French architectural theory, and the circulation of architectural texts in Rome more generally informed this reception. In the final chapter on Barberi’s drawings for a theater complex, I examine the evolution of a select group of terms in French architectural dictionaries and encyclopedia as a means to consider evolving notions of the monument and the rise of the public building to the status of a monument in France in the late eighteenth century, and then move on to consider how the proclamation of the French Empire in the early nineteenth century provided a further catalyst for change in the definition of the form public buildings that were intended to function as monuments should take.

These issues considered in each of my chapters demonstrate my interest in the transmission of ideas on architecture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and how these ideas were changing in response to movements of people and the circulation of ideas through print sources, mainly between Rome and Paris. It is these
aspects from which I derive my title of “Architectural translations” since the verb “to translate” connotes both a geographical transfer from one place to another and the linguistic transformation from one language to another. My dissertation brings to light the significance and omnipresence of geographical and linguistic translation for Barberi’s contemporaries and demonstrates how the analysis of specific instances of translation provides a tool with which to approach the study of architecture of this period, an approach that values architectural ideas and products as being part of dynamic cultural processes. Barberi, in his geographical displacements, his reception of architectural theory coming out of these linguistic translations, and his own translation of complex cultural issues into a visual architectural language, is a key figure of this broader culture of translation.
CHAPTER I

BARBERI’S CAREER: AN OVERVIEW

Barberi had an interesting, if not tumultuous, life. From his early career in Rome and his affiliations with various influential patrons and academies, to his involvement in the French-sponsored Roman Republic and his eventual exile from the city, to his itinerant existence in France and Italy in the last decade of life, Barberi was never boring. Moreover, while he encountered numerous setbacks at various points of his career, he never gave up. Even in the final months of his life when he had been allowed to return to Rome, after a decade pursuing various commissions across France and northern Italy with very modest success, he continued to seek state patronage and to attempt to insert himself into architectural circles.

In this chapter, I provide the reader with an overview of his career as an architect. The chapter proceeds chronologically and is divided into four sections. The breaks between sections correspond to major transitions in his life, most of which are accompanied by a geographical transfer from one place to another. The first section considers his career in Rome, up until the year 1796. The second section, which covers the short span of the years 1796 through to the fall of 1799, is about his political activity and his involvement with the French-sponsored Roman Republic of 1798-9. The third section begins with his exile from Rome after the fall of the Roman Republic and his move to France. The fourth and final section considers his move back to Italy and the last years of his life.
Barberi’s career in Rome up until the mid-1790s has been documented in detail by previous scholars. Due to the existence of these previous studies, I will present here only a select number of his projects in Rome in order to provide the reader with a sense of his architectural activity in this period. Relative to these Roman years, very little attention has been paid to the rest of his career. While scholars have indeed made reference to his activity with the Roman Republic, his projects in France and Milan, and his return to Rome shortly before his death in 1809, I discuss these periods in greater detail and present more information about his time in France than has heretofore been published. My overview of Barberi’s career is the most comprehensive of its kind published to date without question.


Barberi was born in Rome in 1746 and remained in the city until the closing years of the eighteenth century. His entrée into the profession of an architect in Rome began in 1762, when he was sixteen years of age. In that year, he entered the third class competition of the Accademia di San Luca’s Concorso Clementino, a competition for young painters, sculptors, and architects. Over the next three decades, he practiced as an architect in Rome. In that time, he does not seem to have executed any significant buildings. He did submit proposals for some important projects, such as the building of the Palazzo Braschi (figure 1) for the family of Pope Pius VI, and there was talk of his creating a new building for the Roman theater of the Tordinona (figure 2), but the commission for the Braschi palace was ultimately given to Cosimo Morelli and his theater designs came to nothing.

3 For the most thorough account of the archival records pertaining to Barberi’s life, see Rudolf Berliner, "Zeichnungen des Römischen Architekten Giuseppe Barberi," Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst 16/17 (1965-6).

4 For the record of Barberi’s participation in this concorso, see I pregj delle belle arti: orazione e componimenti poetici detti in Campidoglio in occasione della festa del concorso ai premi celebrata dall'insigne Accademia del Disegno di S. Luca (Rome, 1762). For the Concorso Clementino more generally, see Hellmut Hager and Susan Scott Munshower, eds., Architectural Fantasy and Reality: Drawings from the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome, Concorsi Clementini, 1700-1750 (University Park PA: Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University, 1981); Paolo Marconi, Angela Cipriani, and Enrico Valeriani, eds., I disegni di architettura dell'Archivio storico dell'Accademia di San Luca, 2 vols. (Rome: De Luca, 1974).

It is not surprising that he failed to execute a significant building in Rome. Unlike the first part of the eighteenth century, a period which saw the execution of a number of large-scale architectural projects, such as the Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps, the Porto di Ripetta, the Piazza S. Ignazio, and the renovations of the Lateran, S. Maria Maggiore, and S. Croce in Gerusalemme, there was relatively little building activity in city in the late eighteenth century. There were some notable projects, such as Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s facade for the church of S. Maria del Priorato 1765 and 1766, and the building of Carlo Marchionni’s Vatican Sacristy under Pius VI, executed between 1776 and 1784. The number of projects executed in the second half of the eighteenth century, however, particularly in the last quarter of a century, pales in comparison with that of the first half of the century and the preceding centuries.

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Kunstgeschichte 12 (1969). For Barberi's designs for the Tordinona, see Felice Giorgi, Descrizione istorica del Teatro di Tor di Nona (Rome, 1795).


In spite of the relative lack of opportunities to build in late eighteenth-century Rome, architects, Barberi included, were nonetheless active, but in other ways. Barberi’s more famous contemporary, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, serves as a prime example of the multifaceted nature of an architect’s practice in this period. Piranesi was active in printmaking, archaeology, the antiquities trade, interior decoration, theoretical debate, and so on. Most likely due to his relative lack of built work, several contemporary scholars have described him as an “architect manqué.” While these authors do not seem to have intended for this comment to be derogatory in nature, it nonetheless suggests that he somehow failed to become an architect in its proper sense. Piranesi, however, identified himself as an architect. Such a self-identification is documented in the portrait he included in his Opere Varie (figure 3) in 1750 and the perpetuation of this identification amongst his close contemporaries in the portrait his son Francesco included in the second edition of the Antichità Romane (figure 4) in 1784 after his father’s death in 1779. Piranesi’s self-identification demonstrates that, in late eighteenth-century Rome, being an architect did not simply entail executing buildings.

Barberi, like Piranesi, identified himself as an architect. He almost always included a reference to his professional status as an architect along with his signature in his letters,

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9 The portrait of 1750 was also included in the Antichità Romane of 1756.
of which there are a number preserved. While he also referred to himself as a painter and engineer on occasion, these professional designators in all but a few cases were accompanied by and listed second to his identity as architect. This is also how he was remembered in the inscription of his portrait in the Accademia di San Luca (figure 5), a painting presented to the Academy after he had been named an Academician in 1787.10 The ground plan and compass he holds in his hands in this portrait further confirm his identity as an architect.11 Barberi’s professional practice, like Piranesi’s, was multifaceted. In what follows, I examine some of his projects for ephemeral architecture, archaeology, and interior design.

Ephemeral Architecture

Barberi’s early commissions, those which seem to have brought him some degree of renown and through which he secured the patronage of influential figures, were projects for ephemeral creations. Rome in the eighteenth century was a city animated by temporary architecture, creations built up of such materials as wood and papier-mâché and erected only for a finite period.12 As John Moore has noted, such ephemeral works

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10 For the attribution of the portrait, see Antonello Cesareo, "Un ritratto inedito di Marcello Bacciarelli," *Neoclassico* 23/24 (2003). The portrait, attributed to Marcello Bacciarelli, is conserved at the Academy of St. Luke in Rome (n.473). For Barberi’s entry into the Academy, see AASLR, Libro de Decreti, n.54, 81v, meeting of 22 July 1787.

11 The ground plan he holds has not yet been connected with an actual project.

“gave visual expression to the religious and social life of the time through the spectacular transformation of streets, squares, palaces, and churches.”\textsuperscript{13} Elaborate ephemeral decorations were created for celebrations to honor the deaths of popes and foreign monarchs, the births and marriages of nobles and European royal houses, the possessi of the popes, along with the more regular festivities of the Roman carnival and the festival of the Chinea. In eighteenth-century Rome, the task of designing and overseeing the execution of these ephemeral works was undertaken by architects, and prominent architects at that. Carlo Fontana, Ferdinando Fuga, Alessandro Specchi, and Paolo Posi, are examples of well-known architects who worked with some regularity on such type of commissions.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{The Funeral Service for Louis XV at S. Luigi dei Francesi}

In 1774, Barberi was commissioned to execute the decorations for a funeral to be held at the French national church in Rome, S. Luigi dei Francesi, for the recently deceased king, \textit{in Rome, 43/44 (2000); John A. Pinto, "Nicola Michetti and Ephemeral Design in Eighteenth-Century Rome," in Studies in Italian Art and Architecture, 15th through 18th Centuries, ed. Henry A. Millon and James S. Ackerman (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1980).}


Louis XV.\textsuperscript{15} Such a service for the death of a monarch of one of the European royal houses would not have been an uncommon event in the city.\textsuperscript{16} Indeed, Marcello Fagiolo has documented forty-three memorial services for foreign monarchs as having taken place in Rome over the course of the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{17} The church in which the service was to be held was transformed through ephemeral decorations: its facade was lavishly decorated, a large catafalque erected in its interior, and the rest of the interior embellished with rich fabrics and set alight with candles.

The French ambassador to Rome, Cardinal François-Joachim de Pierre de Bernis, is said to have himself selected Barberi for the commission because he preferred his designs “à plusieurs autres présentés par différents artistes.”\textsuperscript{18} The favor of de Bernis was significant,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} Marcello Fagiolo, ed. \textit{Il Settecento e l'Ottocento}, 2 vols., vol. 2, \textit{Corpus delle feste a Roma} (Rome: Edizioni De Luca, 1997), 208. The service at S. Luigi was held on 28 July 1774. The other service, for which the architect Clemente Orlandi was in charge of the decorations, was held at the Lateran on 8 August.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Fagiolo, ed. \textit{Il Settecento e l'Ottocento}.
\end{itemize}
not simply because of his influence as a diplomat, but also because of his prestige as a patron of the arts.\(^{19}\)

The work on the actual execution of the decorations took approximately six weeks. A member of the congregation of S. Luigi described the work site saying, “plus de cent ouvriers travaillerent en diligence pendant plus de six semaines: notre cour et notre Maison en etoient pleines; et dès qu'on eut commencé a dresser la machine dans l'Eglise, tout office y fut suspendu: cela commença le 30 juin, les obseques se célébrerent le 28 juillet.”\(^{20}\) While the accounts of the expenses for the funeral do not reflect the existence of such a large work force, they do provide us with a clear sense of the range of expertise required for such a project: artists and artisans such as *pittori di figure, pittori d'ornati, scultori, pellicciari, festaroli, falegnami, indoratori, scarpellini*, and others, all took part in the actual execution of the decorations.\(^{21}\)

No visual record of Barberi’s final designs for the funeral decorations as executed has been preserved. Prints of the funeral of the French Dauphine at S. Luigi dei Francesi in 1711, however, provide us with some sense of what the interior of the church would have

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\(^{20}\) "Relazione del gran Funerale fatto nella Chiesa di S. Luigi per la morte di Luigi 15. nel 1774," APEFRL, Fonds ancien, Saint-Louis, Procès et divers, Liasse 24, n. 21.

\(^{21}\) For a list of the artists who participated on the project, see "Ristretto delle spese fatte per il Funerale, e Catafalco erette nella Ven.e Reg.a Chiesa di S. Luigi della Nazione Fran.se alla gloriosa Memoria di S. M. Cristianissima Lodovico XV di 28. Lug.o 1774," APEFRL, Fonds ancien, Saint-Louis, Procès et divers, Liasse 24, n. 21. For the roles of the individual artists/artisans, see Moore, "Building Set Pieces in Eighteenth-Century Rome: the Case of the China."
looked like when decorated for such an affair (figures 9 & 10). Barberi’s decorations were described in detail in diplomatic correspondence, in a pamphlet issued by the publishers of the *Diario ordinario*, and in a first-hand account preserved in the archives of S. Luigi. The focus of these accounts was the catafalque, which, unlike the catafalque for the funeral of the French Dauphine, was said to have been composed of a large pyramidal structure set on top of a quadrangular base painted to look like marble, its sides were covered with sculpted relief panels, large sculptural figures of virtues were set at its corners, it was surrounded by large candelabra, and a baldachin covered in velvet trimmed with fur hung above it. Barberi was lauded for his work. A contemporary observer claimed that the “superbe mausolée élevé dans le milieu de l'église et la belle décoration dont il est soutenu excitent encore la curiosité et l'admiration du public.”

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23 This form of the catafalque seems to be similar to others in Rome of the eighteenth century. For reproductions of various eighteenth-century prints of Roman catafalques, see Fagiolo, ed. *Il Settecento e l'Ottocento*.

A number of Barberi’s preliminary designs for the catafalque have been preserved (figures 6-8). This small selection of sketches reveals how the young architect was playing various permutations of combinations of architectural forms and sculptural figures, and, in the one drawing in which we see the walls of the nave and its ceiling, how he was taking the surrounding space of the church’s interior into consideration in his design.

A member of the congregation of S. Luigi described how the decorations were left intact within the church for two weeks following the service so that they could be further appreciated. Each night that the decorations were left in place, a group of eighteen Swiss guards was installed to protect them. This member of the congregation further noted that, when the catafalque was dismantled, “Le Card. fit ensuite transporter les 4. statues et les 8. bas-reliefs dans sa ville, qui est celle de Costaguti [sic] a porte pie, où les curieuse peuvent aller consulter un echantillon du bon gout qui regnoit alors.” The extended viewing and de Bernis’ preservation of fragments of the catafalque speak to the

25 These drawings were not of such a level of finish to lead us to think that they might have served as the basis for prints. For examples of drawings that were created in order to serve as the basis for commemorative prints, see Elisabeth Kieven’s discussion of Ferdinando Fuga’s drawings for a project for the funeral decorations of King Philip V of Spain S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli in 1746. Elisabeth Kieven, *Ferdinando Fuga e l’architettura romana del Settecento: i disegni di architettura dalle collezioni del Gabinetto nazionale delle stampe, il Settecento* (Roma: Multigrafica, 1988). 74-75.

26 “Relazione del gran Funerale fatto nella Chiesa di S. Luigi per la morte di Luigi 15. nel 1774,” APEFRL, Fonds ancien, Saint-Louis, Procès et divers, Liasse 24, n. 21.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.
perceived importance of the funeral decorations and this, in turn, speaks to the
significance of such a commission for Barberi at this early point in his career.

*Ruspoli celebration in honor of the Archduke Maximilian of Austria*

In the summer of the following year, Barberi received a second commission for
ephemeral designs, this time for the noble Roman family of the Ruspoli. Prince
Alessandro Ruspoli had planned a celebration at the family’s palace along the Via del
Corso (figure 11) and commissioned Barberi to transform the palace for the occasion.
The celebration was held to commemorate the presence of Archduke Maximilian Francis
of Austria, the brother of the Holy Roman Emperor and of Marie Antoinette, in Rome.
The Archduke’s visit generated a great deal of excitement in the city: his daily itineraries
were recounted in detail in the *Diario ordinario* and the Chigi, another noble family, also
planned an elaborate celebration at their palace for him. The fanfare that the
Archduke’s presence in the city generated provides some indication that the Ruspoli’s
party was a noteworthy event.

Barberi’s decorations, of which there are no visual records, were described in great detail
in an account published by the editors of the *Diario ordinario* and in a shorter note in the

29 For a history of the Ruspoli and their palace in Rome, see Carlo Pietrangeli, *Palazzo

30 For a record of the Archduke’s activities in Rome, see *Diario ordinario*, n.52 (1 July
1775), 18-24; n.54 (8 July 1775), 18-24; n.56 (15 July 1775), 9-22. The Chigi party was
held on July 2th. For a contemporary account, see *Descrizione della machina incendiata
in Piazza Colonna la sera del di 27. luglio 1775 in occasione di essere stato decorato il
Palazzo dell'Eccellentissima Casa Chigi alla presenza di S. A. R. l'Arciduca
Massimiliano d'Austria* (Rome, 1775).
The facade of the Ruspoli’s palace was said to have been adorned with “una superba Loggia adorna di finissimi intaglii dorati, di vaghe pitture, e sostenuta da quattro grandi Colonne dipinte a granito” and, within the garden space set within the palace’s walls, there was an elaborate tableau vivant of Mount Parnassus. The tableau vivant was described as “il Monte Parnaso, ornato in cima [...] con massi capricciosamente collacati in tutta la sua elevazione, e nella cima di esso la Statua di Apollo Citaredo, con all'intorno in vaga disposizione le nove Muse, coi lor vari simboli.”

For his design of the scene of Mount Parnassus, Barberi may have taken inspiration from prints the Chinea of 1733 since, in that year, a macchina representing the same scene had been created by Nicola Michetti (figure 12). Significantly, Michetti’s macchina also celebrated Habsburg power. Other permanent works in Rome, such as the Trevi Fountain or the Four Rivers Fountain, both just minutes away from the Ruspoli palace, may have also served as inspiration in terms of the combination of dynamically suggestive figures set upon and integrated into the form of a rocky outcrop. The Chigi’s decorations executed by the architect Pietro Camporesi were certainly reminiscent of these earlier

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31 For the detailed account, see Descrizione della festa data a S.A.R. l'Arciduca Massimiliano d'Austria nel Palazzo di Sua Eccellenza il Signor Principe D. Alessandro Ruspoli Cavalier del Toson d'Oro il di 10. luglio 1775 (Rome, 1775). For a shorter description, see Diario ordinario, n.56 (15 July 1775), 16-19.

32 Diario ordinario, n.56 (15 July 1775), 16.

33 Descrizione della festa data a S.A.R. l'Arciduca Massimiliano d'Austria nel Palazzo di Sua Eccellenza il Signor Principe D. Alessandro Ruspoli Cavalier del Toson d'Oro il di 10. luglio 1775, 7.

34 Fagiolo, ed. Il Settecento e l'Ottocento, 88-9.
models (figure 13).\textsuperscript{35} By drawing on familiar themes and compositional arrangements for similar kinds of tableau-vivant-type architectural creations, Barberi and his patron may have been staging a \textit{paragone}, inviting viewers to draw comparisons between Barberi’s creation and works in Rome of the eighteenth century, both permanent and ephemeral, and those of the previous century. Through such comparisons they may have sought to call attention to the talent of the architect and the taste of his patron.

While Barberi’s design can thus be set within the context of ephemeral and permanent architecture in eighteenth-century Rome more generally, his work was recognized as being praiseworthy in its own right. In the \textit{Diario ordinario}, Barberi was lauded as a “virtuoso Architetto.”\textsuperscript{36} Prince Ruspoli, too, seems to have appreciated Barberi’s work; he is said to have left Barberi’s work intact “per cinque giorni consecutivi” with “libero l'ingresso ad ogni Persona” so that the public could “godere del superbo Apparato del Giardino.”\textsuperscript{37} The author goes on to note that the decorations were also well received by this public: he writes, “è seguito con istraordinario concorso, ed affollamento, e con plauso universale, non meno al suddetto Signor Principe, che al Signor Giuseppe Barberj Architetto.”\textsuperscript{38}

\textbf{ARCHAEOLOGY}

\textsuperscript{35} For further information regarding the Chigi celebration, see Ibid., 218-19.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Diario ordinario}, n.56 (15 July 1775), 19.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Descrizione della festa data a S.A.R. l'Arciduca Massimiliano d'Austria nel Palazzo di Sua Eccellenza il Signor Principe D. Alessandro Ruspoli Cavalier del Toson d'Oro il di 10. luglio 1775}, 8.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
A second facet of Barberi’s career was his ongoing engagement with archaeology. Barberi’s study of the remains of the classical past started at a young age. The subject of the Accademia di San Luca’s third class competition of 1762 in which he had participated was the reconstruction of the Basilica of Maxentius (figures 14 & 15). While his reconstruction does not exhibit either the creativity or technical flare of some his later pen and wash drawings, it is nonetheless significant because it demonstrates that he was critically engaging with the city’s archaeological remains from a young age and that this engagement was a fundamental part of his training as an architect.

*The Excavation of the Abbé Rancoureil*

Barberi’s participation in the excavation of the *Palazzo de’ Cesari* on the Palatine, a site owned by the French Abbé Rancoureil, is the most well-documented example of his experience with archaeological excavations. At some point in 1774 or 1775, Rancoureil purchased a plot of land known as the Villa Magnani on the Palatine, an area that had previously belonged to the Spada family (figure 16). Shortly thereafter, excavations on the site commenced. The excavation and its progress were of interest to those in Rome and abroad. For example, in 1775, James Byres wrote to Charles Townley in England with new of the excavation, advising him that:

> The French Abbé that is digging in the Magnani Villa on the Palatine hill has discovered two handsome octagon rooms each ornamented with four niches, a door, two windows and a square recess opposite the door. They are neatly

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39 For a history of the excavations of this site, see Ridolfino Venuti, *Accurata e succinta descrizione topografica delle antichità di Roma*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Roma, 1803). 30-31. The site had previously been documented by Francesco Bianchini, whose findings were posthumously published in the text *Del palazzo de’ Cesari* (Rome, 1738).
plaistered with fine Stucco but no ornaments either Painting or Sculpture. He has found no statues but a fragmented Leda & swan of midling sculpture. Many fragments of beautiful columns and moldings of rare marbles.  

The next year, Gavin Hamilton updated Townley on the finds, noting that a sculpture of Apollo, now know as the Apollo Sauroctonon, “with several fine things was found lately on the Pallatine mount.”

The French architect Pierre-Adrien Pâris also recorded his observations of the excavations, naming both Rancourel and Barberi in his account. He described their activities as follows:

Il y fit faire des fouilles mais plus en vandale qu'en ami des antiquites. Voulant derober a la connoisaance du Gouvernement ce qu'il esperoit trouver de sculptures, &c, il faisait renverser les murs antiques sans penser seulement à faire lever des plans de ce qu'il detruisoit avec tant de barbarie.

Pâris thus speaks of their project with disdain, calling attention to what he perceived as a commercial interest, rather than an interest in the documentary procedures of

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41 Gavin Hamilton to Charles Townley, Rome, 29 March 1776, transcribed in Ibid, 2: 85. The Leda was later acquired by Hamilton and sold to Lord Shelburne; the Apollo was sold to the Vatican in 1778.


43 Ibid.
archaeology. He further denounced Barberi for a lack of archaeological knowledge, claiming that he was “peu versé dans les antiquités.”

Despite Pâris’s claim that little care was paid to the documentation of the architectural remains of the site, Barberi went on to publish reconstructed plans and sections of it in volumes of Giuseppe Antonio Guattani’s serial *Monumenti antichi inediti* from January to December of 1785 (figures 17 & 18). Each of the plates was accompanied by a lengthy descriptive and explanatory text. In this text, Guattani identified Barberi as both an “esimio Architetto” and “saggio Architetto” and further noted that excavation site had been “delineato dalla mano esperta, ed accurata del Signore Giuseppe Barberi Architetto.” To underscore the accuracy of Barberi’s plans, Guattani compares his work to that of Piranesi and his assistant, Benedetto Mori. Guattani begins his comparison by noting that Piranesi, due to his “eccessiva gelosia del proprietario [Rancourcil]”:

*mandò di notte alla sfuggita abili persona a disegnare quei luoghi non senza evident pericolo della vita. Conosciamo, anzi ci serviamo pe’ rami d’architettura, con approvazione del pubblico, del valente professore Signor Benedetto Mori, che d’ordine del sudetto Cavaliere, ripiena la tasca di pane per conciliarsi la*

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44 Ibid., 355.

45 *Monumenti antichi inediti*, January 1785, i-vi; April 1785, xxix-xxx; July 1785, li-lii; August 1785, lxxv-xxx; October 1785, lxxv-lxxx; November 1785, lxxxxiii-lxxxxvi, December 1785, xcv. Much of Guattani’s text was republished in the *Giornale delle belle arti e della incisione antiquaria, musica e poesia*, n. 13 (2 April 1785), 102-4; n. 23 (11 June 1785), 182-3; n. 36 (10 September 1785), 287-8; n. 41 (15 October 1785), 326-7; n. 46 (19 November 1785), 362-5; n. 47 (26 November 1785), 374; n. 48 (3 December 1785), 382-3; n. 49 (10 December 1785), 387-8; n. 50 (17 December 1785), 397-398; n. 51 (24 December 1785), 403-4.

46 *Monumenti antichi inediti*, January 1785, 5; July 1785, 51. Barberi was misidentified as “Filippo Barberi” in the first volume.
benevolenza di un fiero mastino, che vi si lasciava di guardia, andò colà più notti a delineare a lume di luna, o di candela.\textsuperscript{47}

Guattani goes on to explain that Barberi’s designs of the site were more “esatte, e complete [than those of Mori’s] per essere state fatte di giono, pacificamente, e con i necessarj confronti.”\textsuperscript{48} In this way, contrary to Pâris, Guattani recognized Barberi’s archaeological expertise.

In addition to the plans of the site, Guattani also published one of Barberi’s picturesque views of it (figure 19). The architectural fragments strewn in the foreground of the image draw attention to the archaeological wealth yielded by the dig and, thus, also to the potential commercial value of the undertaking. Through his insertion of active figures, Barberi animates the site. A narrative of the dig unfolds with the manual laborers at the lower right breaking into the soil and carting it away, and two finely-dressed gentleman at the upper right overlooking the dig and observing its progress.

\textit{The Column of Campo Marzio}

Barberi also sought to incorporate archaeological finds into his contemporary designs. Such is the case with a project for a fountain he presented to Pius VI in 1778, in which he incorporated a recently excavated column. The discovery of the column in January 1778 at the intersection of Via della Stelletta and Via Metastasio in the course of a construction project undertaken by the architect Giovanni Stern was reported in the \textit{Diario}

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Monumenti antichi inediti}, January 1785, 5.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
ordinario. Notices of the arduous process of its excavation over the course of a five-month period also appeared with some frequency in this same serial. Barberi’s presentation of his plan for the fountain to the Pope was also recorded in the *Diario ordinario*.

In July, Barberi, accompanied by Cardinal de Bernis, is said to have presented the Pope with an idea “per collocare, ed ornare la gran colonna ultimamente ritrovata,” a plan he represented in “un quadro, che contiene un disegno grande p.mi 13; il tutto colorito a guisa del vero.” While the whereabouts of this large-scale design are not currently known, ideas for its design are preserved in two sketches (figures 20 & 21). Barberi’s fountain seems restrained in its ornamentation when compared with some of his other sketches of fountains (figures 22 & 23), of which there are many. Although he includes the ornamental detail of heads of winds that spout forth water in his design for Pius’s fountain, undoubtedly allusions to the Braschi stemma, the plinth upon which the column

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49 Carlo Pietrangeli, *Scavi e scoperte di antichità sotto il pontificato di Pio VI*, 2nd ed. (Rome: Istituto di studi romani editore, 1958), 62-5. Pietrangeli notes that the column was of cipollino venato marble and of a height of approximately 11.7 m.

50 Ibid., 63-6.


53 Barberi makes a note of the column in the drawing as being the recently excavated cipolline column and includes the papal stemma in the drawing, which allow us to connect these drawing with this project.
is placed is far more restrained than the elaborate bases, basins, and sculptural figures of his other designs. This may lead us to conjecture that, while his drawings for Pius’s fountain were for an actual project, the other drawings are architectural fantasies. It may also lead us to speculate that, in this fountain for Pius, Barberi moves away from the Bernini-esque forms of the other drawings and towards neoclassical restraint, albeit still fairly ebullient in composition, especially when compared to the form in which the column was finally erected under Pius IX in the mid-nineteenth century (figure 24). Or it may lead us to consider that, in this particular design, Barberi’s intention was to focus attention on the column, this valuable archaeological artifact. While the heads of the winds call attention to Pius’ connection to the column, the column is nonetheless the focal point of the composition.

The presentation is one of many that Barberi is recorded as having made to Pius VI. In 1773, he presented the Pope with a painting of a machine built for carrying out excavations in the Tiber owned by Prince Altieri. Thirteen years later, Barberi followed up with a painting of Carlo Marchionni’s new Sacristy, the most important architectural project of the Braschi pope’s reign (figure 25). The Pope seems to have appreciated

54 Pietrangeli, Scavi e scoperte di antichità sotto il pontificato di Pio VI, 62.

55 For a notice of Barberi’s presentation of the painting of the excavation machine, see Diario ordinario, n. 8534 (11 December 1773), 4-5.

56 For a notice of Barberi’s presentation of the painting of the New Sacristy, see Memorie per le belle arti, December 1786, cclxxxi; Giornale delle belle arti n.47 (25 November 1786), 270. Barberi also made a note of the presentation of the painting to the pope in one of his caricatures: “Segnato il giorno di 17 Novembre 1786, che ebbi dal felice Regg.te Pio VI Sesto due medaglie [...]per il quadro dato da me alla sagrestia depinto a oglio.” Transcribed in D’Amelio, "Memorie pubbliche e private nelle caricature di Giuseppe Barberi," 89. For further notices of the painting, see "Memorie pubbliche e private nelle
Barberi’s professional skills, to such a degree that he awarded him the Ordine dello Speron d'Oro in February of 1791.57

INTERIOR DESIGN

The Piano Nobile of the Palazzo Altieri

Barberi’s most stable work in Rome seems to have been in interior design, particularly for the noble family of the Altieri, both at their family palace set on the piazza in front of the Gesù (figure 26) and at their residence in their feudal estate in Oriolo.58 While Barberi had become the family’s architect in 1775, his most significant project began in 1787, when he was commissioned by Prince Emilio Altieri to renovate rooms of the piano nobile of the Altieri’s palace in Rome, a project that was completed in 1794.59 Ten rooms of the piano nobile were to be given over to Prince Emilio’s son, Paluzzo, and to be


59 For a history of the interiors of the palace, see Schiavo, The Altieri Palace, 79-144. For the work undertaken by Barberi, see Schiavo, 110-144. N.B. I was not able to access the family’s archives in Rome.
redecorated in the creation of Paluzzo’s own apartment in honor of his upcoming marriage (figure 27).60

The renovation of these rooms was a project of a large scale, comparable in some ways to Antonio Asprucci’s redesign of interiors of the Villa Borghese (c. 1775-1800).61 Like Asprucci’s Villa Borghese commission, the redecoration of the Paluzzo’s apartment involved a sizable group of artists.62 In fact, a number of artists worked on both commissions: the painters Felice Giani, Christoph Unterperger, and, Anton von Maron, and the sculptors Carlo Albacini, Pietro Angeletti, and Lorenzo Cardelli, are all recorded as having taken part in both commissions. Of these artists, Albacini, Angeletti, and von Maron, were, like both Barberi and Asprucci, members of the Accademia di San Luca.63

60 Ibid., 118.


63 For the members of the academy between from the late 1780s through until the mid-1790s, see L pregi delle belle arti: celebrati in Campidoglio pel solenne concorso tenuto dall'insigne Accademia del Disegno in San Luca li 25. maggio 1789 (Rome, 1789); In lode delle Belle Arti: orazione e componimenti poetici; relazione del concorso e de' premj distribuiti in Campidoglio dall'insigne Accademia del Disegno in S. Luca nel di 29. maggio 1792 (Rome, 1792); Il centesimo secondo dell'anno MDCCXCV: co' pregi delle bell arti, celebrato tanto in S. Luca, che nel Campidoglio in occasione del solenne
Others members of the Academy, namely Antonio Concioli, Giuseppe Cades, Stefano Tofanelli, and Vincenzo Pacetti, also took part in Barberi’s Altieri commission. The participation of these artists in these projects allows us to recognize that the decoration of princely interiors was a type of commission in which esteemed artists took part.

In his role as family architect, Barberi was responsible for the overall design of the individual rooms and for overseeing their execution by artists and artisans. Barberi also took part in the execution of some of the painted decoration: he painted eight scenes of ruins for one of the rooms, the so-called Sala degli Specchi (figures 28-31). The incorporation of such scenes of classical ruins within a decorative interior framework is reminiscent of Charles-Louis Clériseau’s designs his “Roman House Project” for Catherine the Great of the slightly earlier date of 1773-87 (figure 32). While these rooms are rich in terms of an abundance of painted and sculptural decoration, they are nonetheless far more restrained in tone than those of Marchionni’s at Villa Albani, a project with which Barberi will have undoubtedly been familiar. Such is revealed in a comparison between a doorframe in Barberi’s Sala degli Specchi as it was executed (figure 30), or in one of his sketches of a similar type of doorframe (figure 33), and one from the Villa Albani (figure 34). The relative lack of decorative opulence of Barberi’s room may have been due to the patron’s wish to maintain a certain level of economy.

concorso clementino tenuto dall'insigne Accademia del Disegno di S. Luca nel di 2. giugno di detto anno (Rome, 1795).

Ibid., 119.

However, it may also have been an intentional show of restraint on the part of the patron and architect, and a conscious move towards something which more muted in tone.

The influence of the classical past, which one might detect in a “neo-classical” style, or in the subject matter of the painted scenes, or in the classical form of the sculpted decoration, seems ubiquitous in Barberi’s concept for these rooms. In addition to these other sorts of classicisms, Barberi also incorporated archaeological remains into the Altieri’s interior. In the Gabinetto Nobile (figure 35), Barberi had a mosaic that had been unearthed at Ostia in 1783, a depiction of the myth of Mars and Rhea Silvia (figure 36), set into the floor of the room. In 1802, the Pope’s archaeologist Carlo Fea recalls how “diversi pavimenti di mosaico, de' quali uno, rappresentante Marte, e Rea Silvia, fu cavato, e regalato da S. E. alla Casa Altieri, che lo conserva per terra in un ricco, ed elegante gabinetto.” Although Fea does not name Barberi, his characterization of the Gabinetto Nobile as ricco and elegante suggest that he approved of the overall decoration of the interior.

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66 For the mosaic, see Carlo Pietrangeli, "Un mosaico inedito del Palazzo Altieri con il mito di Marte e Rea Silvia," L’Urbe 8 (1943). For the digs at Ostia during this period more generally, see Ilaria Bignamini, "Ostia, Porto e Isola Sacra: scoperte e scavi dal medioevo al 1801," Rivista dell’Istituto nazionale d’archeologia e storia dell’arte LVIII (2003). Prince Altieri himself had taken part in excavations at this site in the early 1770s in the company of Jenkins; however, this mosaic had been discovered as part of a dig overseen by the Abate Monatanari and Lord Diego Norogans, the Portuguese ambassador to Rome.

67 Carlo Fea, Relazione di un viaggio ad Ostia e alla villa Plinio detta Laurentino (Rome, 1802), 42.
From these select examples of Barberi’s commissions, we can develop a sense of both the variety of the enterprises with which he was engaged and his networks of colleagues and patrons, and we can also recognize that he did achieve a certain level of prominence in Rome in the late eighteenth century. His career in Rome up to this point also serves as a foil for the rest of life. After a period of relative stability in Rome for a number of decades, his career and personal life became relatively unstable in the 1790s, and continued to be so until his death. In investigating the subsequent parts of his career, we see how he constantly adapted to new situations and surroundings, drawing on the experiences and the connections he had developed in Rome as a means to establish himself and his architectural practice.

The French Invasion of Italy and the Roman Republic

Barberi’s career took a dramatic turn at the end of the century as a result of his political activities. In the late 1790s, he became a supporter of the ousting of the papal government and the creation of a French-sponsored secular government, the so-called Roman Republic.68 The sons of G. B. Piranesi, the archaeologist Ennio Quirino Visconti, the sculptor Giuseppe Ceracchi, the painter Andrea Appiani, and the architect Giovanni Antonio Antolini, are examples of other figures from the field of arts and culture who also supported the French presence in Italy and with whom Barberi was affiliated. In his

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68 For brief overview on situation in Rome and Italy more broadly between 1790s and 1815, see Ronald T. Ridley, The Eagle and the Spade: Archaeology in Rome during the Napoleonic Era, 1809-1814 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3-8. For more general recent scholarship on the French in Italy at this time, see Michael Broers, The Napoleonic Empire in Italy, 1796-1814: Cultural Imperialism in a European Context (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
study of Canova, an artist who was not a supporter of the French cause in Rome, Christopher Johns wrote, “one suspects that many others who outwardly cooperated with the francophile regime did so only from fear or financial necessity. Canova was sufficiently rich to follow his conscience into a bitter exile.”\(^{69}\) Perhaps fear or financial necessity did prompt Barberi to align himself with the French and perhaps his actions during these years should be seen as opportunistic rather than being related to sincere political beliefs. Given Barberi’s ongoing professional relationship with Pius VI and with his long-standing patron Cardinal de Bernis, who had been relieved of his duties as ambassador by the National Convention in 1793, Barberi’s support of the overthrow of the papal government may indeed seem somewhat suspect. In the absence of new evidence, the motivations behind his actions during these years will remain unknowable. Whether or not his political sympathies were deeply felt or not, the fact remains that the change in the political fortunes of Rome and Barberi’s participation in these changes led to a dramatic turn in his career and his personal life.

While the Roman Republic was not created until the spring of 1798, anti-papal sentiment had been brewing in the city well before this point. For example, in May of 1794, a group of Romans was arrested under suspicion of having hatched an anti-papal plot.\(^{70}\) At this same time, news of a potential French invasion of Rome also called the security of the papal establishment into question. An awareness of such events was not limited to those

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engaged in political activities. The English architect Joseph Michael Gandy, for instance, with whom Barberi had become acquainted at the Accademia di San Luca, wrote a letter to his father in the fall of 1794 saying, “It seems from what is said here the French are determined to come to Rome.”

The French under Napoleon entered northern Italy in the spring of 1796 and moved into the Papal States in the summer of that year. In 1796, while Barberi had not yet become an open supporter of the French, he was very aware of the potential for a French invasion of Rome. In annotations on a series of sketches from the summer through to the fall of 1796, he recorded news that he had gathered about faltering peace talks between the papacy and the French and the possibility of war. He was preoccupied with what might result from these talks, speaking repeatedly of an outcome of either “pace” or “guerra” and often appending the plea of “Iddio ci assista” to his accounts of the news. His requests for divine intervention suggest that such political instability was a source of anxiety. The political unrest of the time was also a personal issue for Barberi; one of his sons was

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72 See Giuseppe Barberi, “Palazzo Reale in Stile Borrominesco,” 1796, ms 202, BIASA. His comments on peace or war can be found on drawings dated 17 September 1796 (p. 9) and 18 September 1796 (p. 62). His requests for divine intervention can be found on drawings dated 18 August 1796 (p.7) and 18 September 1796 (p. 62).
politically active at the time and had been arrested in July of 1796 under suspicion of sedition.\textsuperscript{73}

It was only in the summer of 1797 that Barberi seems to have become actively and openly involved in the political changes taking place in Italy. In August of 1797, he left Rome for Milan where he became involved with a group of anti-papal sympathizers. Barberi’s activities in Milan were recorded in a number of letters by a papal informant, Gioacchino Gorirossi.\textsuperscript{74} In a letter of September 3, Gorrirossi notes how, upon his arrival in Milan, Barberi “si stringse subito in amicizia” with the painter Andrea Appiani and the sculptor Giuseppe Ceracchi.\textsuperscript{75} Ceracchi and Appiani were significant connections for Barberi to have made: Gorrirossi described Ceracchi as the “più arrabbiato spargitore di

\textsuperscript{73} Barberi writes: “il mio Figlio Leone...era carcerato la sera di 9 Luglio 1796 per sospetto di sedizione.” “Palazzo Reale in Stile Borrominesco,” 82. From a notice in the Milanese journal Giornale de' patrioti d'Italia, we know that his son was not released until June of the following year. See Giornale de' patrioti d'Italia, n.70 (29 June 1797), 187.

\textsuperscript{74} For Gorrirossi, see Maria Pia Donato, "Cultura dell'antico e cultura dei Lumi a Roma nel Settecento: la politicizzazione dello scambio culturale durante il pontificato di Pio VI," Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée 104, no. 2 (1992): 530. In a letter of August 18, 1797, Gorrirossi claims that Barberi had left Rome “per paura di essere arrestato,” which suggests that Barberi may have become politically active in Rome earlier that year. Gioacchino Gorrirossi to Cardinal Camillo Massimo, Milan, 18 August 1797, ASR, Miscellanea di carte politiche e riservate, b. 25, fasc. 889.

\textsuperscript{75} Gioacchino Gorrirossi to Cardinal Doria Pamphili, Milan, 3 September 1797, ASR, Miscellanea di carte politiche e riservate, b. 25, fasc. 889. In the following years, Appiani would go on to become one of the leading painters in Milan and an official painter of the imperial court when Napoleon became Emperor in 1805. Ceracchi would go on to be guillotined in Paris in 1801 after having been convicted of having plotted to assassinate Napoleon. For Appiani, see Angela Ottino Della Chiesa, "Appiani, Andrea," in Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, ed. Alberto M. Ghisalberti (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1960-). For Ceracchi, see Sandra Vasco Rocca and Marina Caffiero, "Ceracchi, Giuseppe," in Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, ed. Alberto M. Ghisalberti (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1960-).
calunnie contro Roma, ed è il più ben veduto” and noted that Appiani was hosting “congressi di quelli Rivoluzionari Romani” at his home in Milan, meetings which Gorri Rossi claims that Barberi attended.\textsuperscript{76} In the space of a year, Barberi thus had gone from being a timid observer of the changes taking place around him in Rome to an ardent supporter of an overthrow of the papal government.

Gori Rossi also recounts how Barberi had been introduced to Napoleon and how the young general had taken positively to Barberi.\textsuperscript{77} Although no further personal meetings between Barberi and Napoleon are recorded as having taken place, Napoleon’s actions would continue to shape Barberi’s career for the rest of his life.

While Napoleon himself returned to France, the French under General Alexandre Berthier were given orders in January 1798 to march on Rome.\textsuperscript{78} In February of that year, the French entered Rome, ousted the Papal government, sent Pius VI into exile, proclaimed the creation of a Roman Republic, and installed a secular government comprised of lay Romans and overseen by a group of French commissionaires. Barberi

\textsuperscript{76} For Ceracchi comment, see Gioacchino Gorri Rossi to Cardinal Doria Pamphili, Milan, 3 September 1797, ASR, Miscellanea di carte politiche e riservate, b. 25, fasc. 889. For comment about the meetings at Appian’s house, see Gioacchino Gorri Rossi to Cardinal Doria Pamphili, Milan, 13 September 1797, ASR, Miscellanea di carte politiche e riservate, b. 25, fasc. 889.

\textsuperscript{77} Gorri Rossi writes: “fù [Barberi] presentato al General, che lo accolse amorevolmente.” Gioacchino Gorri Rossi to Cardinal Doria Pamphili, Milan, 3 September 1797, ASR, Miscellanea di carte politiche e riservate, b. 25, fasc. 889.

\textsuperscript{78} For a more exhaustive study, see the writings of Formica, \textit{La città e la rivoluzione: Roma, 1798-1799}; David Armando, Massimo Cattaneo, and Maria Pia Donato, \textit{Una rivoluzione difficile: la Repubblica romana del 1798-1799} (Pisa: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, 2000).
returned to Rome shortly thereafter and was elected to a position in the republican government, as were both the sons of G. B. Piranesi, Francesco and Pietro, and E. Q. Visconti. Barberi was allotted one of four positions for *ediles*; the name of the position is undoubtedly an allusion to the Roman aediles of the classical past, those who were put in charge of overseeing the architecture of the city.

Barberi’s first and most significant commission of this period was the creation of an ephemeral triumphal arch erected as part of the decoration of a festival held on March 20, 1798 to officially ratify the constitution of the new Roman Republic, inaugurate the new secular government, and give thanks to the French Army for having brought ‘liberty’ to Rome. The festival, the so-called *Festa della Federazione*, began with a procession through Rome from the Forum to St. Peter’s and ended with a ceremony in the Piazza di S. Pietro. The processional aspect would have recalled both the triumphal processions

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79 Collezione di carte pubbliche, proclami, editti, ragionamenti ed altre produzioni tendenti a consolidare la rigenerata Repubblica romana (Rome, 1798).


81 For a detailed description of the various components of the festival, see E. Q. Visconti, "Piano della Festa della Federazione," in *Collezione di carte pubbliche, proclami, editti, ragionamenti ed altre produzioni tendenti a consolidare la rigenerata Repubblica romana* (Rome: 1798).
of antiquity and those of the papal *possesso* and would have served as a means by which the new government and their French overseers laid claim to the city.\(^{82}\)

Barberi’s arch was erected at the head of the Ponte S. Angelo. In its depiction by a number of artists of the time (figures 37 & 38), the arch can be seen to have been modeled on Roman triumphal arches of the classical past, such as that of Constantine, more so than the ephemeral arches of the papal *possesso*.\(^{83}\) In an account of the festival published in the Roman journal the *Monitore di Roma*, the arch was described as “una mole sontuosissima rappresentante un bell’arco trionfale immaginato dal fervido genio del più zelante tra i cittadini Giuseppe Barberi.”\(^{84}\) Barberi and his arch were similarly praised in another Roman journal, the *Banditore della verità*; an anonymous author describes the arch as “il frutto del fervido genio, e dell'anima veramente republicana del Cittadino Architetto Giuseppe Barberi.”\(^{85}\) Barberi was thus lauded in the contemporary press for both the greatness of his design as well as for his political spirit.

Barberi’s public displays continued to be reported by contemporary journals and chroniclers. In the month following the *Festa della Federazione*, Barberi presented a plan to transform part of the interior of the Palazzo Senatorio on the Capitoline Hill and to

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\(^{83}\) For a discussion of the images of Barberi’s arch, see Italo Faldi, "La festa patriottica della Federazione in due dipinti di Felice Giani," *Bollettino dei musei comunali di Roma* 2 (1955).

\(^{84}\) *Monitore di Roma*, n. X (24 March 1798), 81.

\(^{85}\) *Banditore della Verità*, n. 31 (22 March 1798), 123.
redo the palace’s stairway. The controversy over the plan became an issue of public interest. On April 11, Barberi’s version of the controversy was published in the *Monitore di Roma*. He explained to the readers of the journal that he had commenced the project because it had been accepted by the French authorities; he went on to accuse one of the Roman senators of having “pubblicamente spargeva, che il lavoro di Campidoglio era stato sospeso perché altro non era che una Mozione Barberiana.” The response of this senator was published in the same journal the following week: he claimed that “tutti si opposero a questi inutile ed esorbitante dissipazione” that the project involved. But it was not simply the expense that was at issue. People in Rome were also disgusted at the idea of Barberi altering the stairway that had been designed by Michelangelo. Giuseppe Antonio Sala, one of a number of Roman chroniclers of the time, claimed that Barberi had wanted to “gustare il grande scalone [...] fatto col disegno dell’immortale Michelangelo Buonarotti.” In the end, and not surprisingly, the project came nothing.

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88 Ibid.,125.

89 *Monitore di Roma*, “Giustificazione del Cit. Senator Colli,” n.xvii (18 April 1798), 144. Another senator had given a speech on the exorbitant nature of the project and had published his speech. See Antonio Brizi, *Discorso fatto in Senato dal cittadino senatore avvocato Brizi sulla inopportunità delle enormi spese ideate per le disposizione della gran Sala delle sedute in Campidoglio* (Rome1798).

Despite such public humiliation, Barberi did not shy away from the public limelight. In July, his actions once again attracted the notice of the Roman public. Barberi’s behavior at the Republican event of the *Festa per l'abbruciamiento del libro d'oro*, a festival in which ties to the papal government and the Roman nobility were publicly rejected, was recorded by a number of chroniclers.91 Sala, for example, recorded that “L’Architetto Barberi si fece avanti, e cavando di saccoccia una croce con un Diploma, il calpestò e gittolli sul fuoco”; Antonio Galimberti, another chronicler, identified the document which Barberi trounced with greater specificity as “la patente di cavaliere, che avea ricevuto dall'espulso Pontefice.”92 In addition to destroying the patent, Barberi also changed his name in order to avoid confusion with the papal “fiscale generale,” Giovanni Baberi, who had been arrested when the French troops had entered Rome.93 Barberi in fact rebaptized himself with the name Ctestifonte [Chersiphron], after the sixth-century BC Cretan architect.94 By renaming himself in this way and identifying himself with an architect of a pre-Christian era, Barberi underscored his detachment from the Christian Rome of the popes.

In the week following this festival, Barberi’s fortunes took a turn for the worse. On July

91 See Formica op. cit.
92 Sala, 17 July 1798, Rome, transcribed in *Scritti di Giuseppe Antonio Sala*, II:33. Antonio Galimberti, 17 July 1798, Rome, transcribed in *Memorie dell'occupazione francese in Roma dal 1798 alla fine del 1802*, ed. Luca Topi (Roma: Istituto nazionale di studi romani, 2004), 87. Francesco Piranesi, too, was described as having destroyed the patent of cavaliere he had received from the pope. Sala, 17 July 1798, Rome, transcribed in *Scritti di Giuseppe Antonio Sala*, II: 33.
93 Galimberti, 17 July 1798, Rome, transcribed in *Memorie dell'occupazione francese in Roma dal 1798 alla fine del 1802*, 87.
94 Ibid.
21, Galimberti recorded that Barberi had been accused of stealing from the church of S. Maria in Aracoeli. Galimberti speculated that Barberi and others had taken “il santo Bambino e la celebre culla esistente in quella chiesa [S. Maria in Aracoeli] per mandare questi monumenti a Parigi.”95 Sala, on the other hand, suspected that Barberi had transported the objects to his own home.96 As a result of this supposed theft, Barberi was dismissed from his position in the Republican government in mid-August, and arrested and imprisoned in the Castel S. Angelo the following week, as both Sala and Galimbert reported.97

Things got worse. At the end of August, Sala recorded that “Tesifonte [Barberi] dal suo Carcere è stato condotto alla propria Casa per il legale confronto della robba trovata nella medesima, e alla di Lui presenza è stato atterrato un pezzo di muro, dietro il quale vi era un nascondiglio con molte cose preziose da Lui occultate.”98 After this verification of his

95 Galimberti, 21 July 1798, Rome, transcribed in Memorie dell'occupazione francese in Roma dal 1798 alla fine del 1802, 89.


On 13 August 1798, Galimberti wrote: "Il cittadino già Barberi ora Cresifonte per le violenze usate e spolio barbaro come commissario nel soppresso convento e chiesa di S. Maria in Aracoeli fu dimesso dall'impiego di commissario e sottoposto a processo." Transcribed in Memorie dell'occupazione francese in Roma dal 1798 alla fine del 1802, 99. On 24 August 1798, he wrote: "Il cittadino Barberi per ora Cresifonte fu tradotto alle carceri." Transcribed in Memorie dell'occupazione francese in Roma dal 1798 alla fine del 1802, 105.

98 Sala, 30 August 1798, Rome, transcribed in Scritti di Giuseppe Antonio Sala, II: 120.
guilt and this public humiliation, Barberi was returned to his prison cell, where he remained for the next five months. In January of 1799, he stood trial and was, somewhat surprisingly, acquitted. However, as Barberi’s lawyer noted in a statement published following the trial, “L’Onore è un pregio, che perduto più non si riaquista interamente.” And, indeed, the fact that Barberi vanishes from the records of Roman journals and the reports of the chroniclers after this point, suggests that these events stained his reputation, at least for a time.

This Roman Republic, like Barberi’s career of the time, was unstable. In September 1799, King Ferdinand of Naples and his troops entered Rome and ousted the French and their Roman sympathizers.

**FRANCE**

The French, along with their Roman supporters, quitted Rome for France on September 30, 1799. Even though Barberi had been dishonorably discharged from the Roman Republican government, he was nonetheless part of this group, as were E. Q. Visconti and Francesco Piranesi. Barberi speaks of his exile from Rome in a letter of 1809: he

99 *Monitore di Roma*. n.xli (16 piovoso anno vii), 351.

100 *Monitore di Roma*, n.xli (16 piovoso anno vii), 350-1. The anonymous author notes that Barberi had been accused of “atti arbitrari, furti, e devastazioni, che si dicevan da ini commesse nelle amministrazione del convento, e Chiesa d’Aracoeli.”


writes, “dovetti abbandonar Roma mia Patria nel Mese di Settembre 1799 invasa della mista Armata di Napolitani ed Insorgenti e ritirarmi sotto le Bandiere Francesi comandate dall'in allora Generale Guarnier. [...] Da Civita Vecchia che fù il Centro della Nostra riunione mi trasferi in Francia.”

The group is thought to have left Italy for France on October 16, sailing from Civitavecchia, as Barberi describes, to Marseilles via Bastia, and then travelling on to Paris via Lyon. They had arrived in Marseille by the beginning of December, as can be determined by a notice in the *Décade Philosophique* of December 1, in which an anonymous contributor announced that the Piranesi brothers, “Les fils du célèbre Graveur Piranesi,” “viennent d’arriver à Marseille” and that Visconti, “l’un des plus habiles Antiquaires de l’Europe,” “et aussi à Marseille.”

No notice of Barberi’s presence in Paris, or France more generally, has surfaced from these early months after the immigrants’ arrival in Marseilles. However, it seems reasonable to assume that he continued along with Visconti and the Piranesi brothers to Paris. By the end of December, Visconti had been made head of antiquities at the Musée central des Arts, now the Louvre, and of the Piranesi brothers had been allotted a space

103 Giuseppe Barberi to Consulta di Stato nella Citta Imperiale di Roma, Milan, 8 July 1809, AN, F1e 169.

104 Ibid., 229-30.

105 *La Décade Philosophique, Littéraire et Politique*, n. 7 (1 December 1799), 431. The author also expresses eagerness at the arrival of the Italian immigrants, at least the Piranesi in Visconti, noting that it was hoped that the Piranesi would be reissuing a set of their father’s prints and that Visconti would be creating “un ouvrage important sur les statues antiques et autres monumens que possède aujourd’hui le Musée central des Arts,” statues which the author acknowledges had “ornaient autrefois les Musées du Pape.”
for their *calcographie* on the Rue de l’Université, n. 296. Given the warm welcome with which Visconti and the Piranesi brothers were greeted in Paris, it is likely that Barberi would have attempted to maintain contact with these his fellow exiles.

The establishment of the Italian immigrants in Paris was not without its problems. In a decree of May of 1800, all Italian immigrants were ordered to leave the city. The Piranesi brothers’ enterprise was recognized as being valuable, so much so that influential figures helped them to secure permission to be allowed to remain in Paris. Lucien Bonaparte, for example, then the Interior Minister, made a personal plea to the Minister of Police on behalf of the Piranesi brothers. He wrote:

> Les deux célèbres graveurs Romains Francois et Pierre Piranesi demandent, mon cher collègue, qu’on leur accorde la faculté de rester à Paris. Ils y ont établi une calcographie qu’ils peuvent devenir très florissante. J’ai encouragé leur entreprise par tous les moyens qui sont en mon pouvoir, parce que je la crois utile. [...] Je vous invite en conséquence à leur faire expédier des permissions de rester.

Lucien Bonaparte also informed the Minister of Police that the Piranesi “solicent la même faveur pour cinq Italiens dont je vous envoie les noms, et qu’ils disent être leurs employés dans la calcographie.” Barberi’s name was not on this list of the Piranesi’s

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106 Daniela Gallo, "I visconti. Una famiglia romana al servizio di papi, della repubblica, di napoleone," *Roma moderna e contemporanea* 2, no. 1 (1994): 88. For the specification of this location of the Piranesi’s establishment, see *Magasin encyclopédique* (1799), 286; *Nouvelles des arts* I (1801), 82.

107 Préfet of the Police to the Minister of Police, Paris, 27 June 1800, AN, F7 2243.

108 Lucien Bonaparte to the Minister of Police, Paris, 2 May 1800, AN, F7 2243.

109 Ibid. The names he lists are “Benoit Mori, Romain,” “Lamberti, Cisalpin,” “Martelli, Romain,” “Taurelli, Romain,” and “Joseph Alrichelli, Romain.” Benedetto Mori had worked alongside the Piranesi’s father in Rome.
employees. Instead, his name appears on a list of five hundred Italian immigrants who had registered with the Prefecture de Police in Paris; a large portion of these individuals, Barberi among them, were recorded as having been required to leave the city. Despite being listed as not having obtained permission to reside in Paris in this document, Barberi nonetheless somehow managed to stay. In a letter to Napoleon of September 25 of that same year, Barberi documents his own presence in Paris, providing his address as that of the Piranesi’s *calcographie*.

In this letter to Napoleon, Barberi expresses his dismay over the losses he had incurred as a result of his support of the French cause in Rome – he claims that at the fall of the Roman Republic, “Tout a été perdu pour lui [Barberi] en un moment.” Barberi details these losses as amounting to "une maison, évalué quatre mil écus romains; une bibliothèque, avec quarante-sept volumes de ses dessins estimés trois mille.” The Piranesi and Visconti had also written letters detailing their losses and requesting compensation. While there is no evidence that Barberi’s plea was answered directly by

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112 Ibid.

113 Ibid.

114 For the letters, see *Correspondance des directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome avec les surintendants des bâtiments*, vol. 17.
Napoleon, others were sympathetic with his situation. For example, in a letter of October 1800 to Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lucien Bonaparte expressed pity for Barberi, noting that he had been “réduit à une extrême indigence.”

Despite his seemingly chaotic state of affairs, Barberi managed to establish himself in Paris, to some degree at least, by the point of this letter to Napoleon. He advised the Premier Consul that he was both working “dans la calcographie Piranesi” and that he “va peindre 20 vues générale de Rome dans la maison de campagane du citoyen Hautefort.”

*Barberi and the Piranesi calcographie*

A number of *permis du séjours* which Barberi was granted by the Préfecture de Police from December 1800 through to July 1801 confirm that he had found work at the Piranesi’s establishment. Maintaining a close connection with the entrepreneurial

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116 Giuseppe Barberi to Napoleon, Paris, 25 September 1800, transcribed in *Correspondance des directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome avec les surintendants des bâtiments*, 17: 260. N.B. Barberi’s spelling was poor. Throughout the dissertation, while I do not alter the structure of his sentences, I do correct his spelling. Because his spelling mistakes are so numerous, I will not document each of these corrections individually.

117 The records of the Prefecture of the Police contain records of a series of Barberi’s short-term *permis du séjour*. The dates of the permits are as follows: 24 frimaire an 9 (5 December 1800), 18 ventose an 9 (9 March 1801), 12 germinal an 9 (2 April 1801), 11 prairial an 9 (31 May 1801), 11 thermidor an 9 (30 July 1801). In the permit of 5 December 1800, he is recorded as being employed at the Piranesi’s workshop. The
Piranesi brothers was a smart move on Barberi’s since theirs was a rapidly expanding enterprise in the early years of the nineteenth century. In 1801, they moved from the establishment on the Rue de l’Université to the Ancien College de Navarre on rue de la Montagne-Saint-Genevieve, where they opened an Académie des Beaux-Arts supposedly capable of admitting 300 students. In 1802, they also opened what Udolpho van de Sandt has described as a “boutique de vent de leur chalcographie sous le no 1354.Depot general des Beaux-Arts,” located at the palais de Tribunat, rue St. Honoré, n. 1354.

Barberi’s actual contribution to this enterprise over the period from the fall of 1800 through until the summer of 1801, possibly even longer, remains unclear. Aside from one single print that he created in collaboration with Francesco Piranesi (figure 39), no examples of his work with the Piranesi have surfaced. The print in question was executed to memorialize the signing of a treaty, the so-called Treaty of Mortefontaine, between French and American officials in the fall of 1800, an event which took place at

The address for all of the permits is given as Rue de l’Université, n.296. The address is listed on all of the subsequent permits. See “Permis de séjours accordés par la Préfecture de Police,” Paris, 1800-1801, AN, F7 3501.

118 Udolpho van de Sandt, "La chalcographie des frères Piranes: quelques avatars de la gravure au trait," Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français (1978), 208. Van de Sandt says the location at the Ancien College de Navarre was established in 1802, but I have found earlier sources. For an earlier reference to this location see, Nouvelles des arts I (1801), 306-7, 370. According to van de Sandt, the Piranesi moved to the Collège des Grassins, 2, rue des Amandiers Sainte-Genevieve (now rue Laplace) when the Ancien College de Navarre space was given over to the Ecole Polytechnique in 1805 (p.219, fn. 5).

119 Ibid., 208. Van de Sandt claims this location was established in 1803, but I have found earlier sources. See Nouvelles des arts II (1802), 387.

120 The print was mentioned by Van de Sandt. Both Barberi’s and F. Piranesi’s names are visible in the lower-left-hand corner of the image.
the estate of Joseph Bonaparte in Mortefontaine. The print was advertised in the
*Décade Philosphique* in March of 1801 – both Francesco Piranesi and Barberi were listed
as its creators. The advertisement also included a comment that Napoleon supported
the efforts of these artists and that Joseph Bonaparte had ordered a hundred copies of the
print for himself. Such comments were presumably included in order to encourage
other readers to buy copies of the prints for themselves.

This single print provides us with only a small glimpse into Barberi’s interactions with
the Piranesi brothers. His collaboration with the brothers, and the Piranesi’s enterprise in
Paris more generally, is a subject that deserves further research.

**Barberi’s Parisian Interiors**

In his letter to Napoleon, Barberi also spoke of painting views of Rome for a citoyen
Hautefort. He did not, however, provide many details as to the identity of this patron.

Given that Barberi simply noted the patron’s last name, he may have assumed or known
that Napoleon was familiar with this Hautefort. Such factors may lead us to identify his

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121 For a contemporary account of the event, see François-Marie-Périchou Kerverseau,
*Histoire de la révolution de 1789, et de l’établissement d’une constitution en France*, 20

122 *Décade philosophique, littéraire et politique*, n. 16 (1 March 1801), 448. “François
Piranesi et J. Barberi” are named as the artists responsible for the print. The print was
said to be available at the Calcographie of the Pirnaesi on rue de l’Université, n. 296.
This address was also listed in the lower-right-hand corner of the print itself.

123 Ibid. Joseph Bonaparte was described as having “accueilli favorablement la
présentation que les Artistes lui ont faite de ce dessin, et a souscrit pour cent
exemplaires” and Napoleon himself “a aussi encouragé les Auteurs avec cette bonté qui
le caractérise.”
patron as Charles-Victor d’Hautefort (b. 1779). Due to his connection to the government, he may have been affiliated with Napoleon. Furthermore, Talleyrand, the Foreign Minister, who was familiar with the Italian immigrants and their plight, could have facilitated some connection between Barberi and Hautefort. Like the identity of the patron, the location of his patron’s residence and the site of this commission have yet to be determined. Barberi did not mention a location in his letter to Napoleon. He did, however, include the name of the town in which he resided while he was carrying out the commission in a letter to his friend Giovanni Antonio Antolini, a letter that most likely dates to the spring of 1801. Barberi named his location as that of Villiers-la-Garenne, which was at the time a small village that lay a short distance to the northeast of Paris (figure 40). This information about his potential patron and this vague sense of the location of his patron’s residence are, however, just initial details of the commission. However, even if more precise information regarding the patron and the location could be obtained, the original residence in which these paintings were executed has almost certainly been destroyed.


125 Ibid.

126 Giuseppe Barberi to Giovanni Antonio Antolini, Villiers-la-Garenne, May 4th, BcFO, Raccolti Piancastelli, Sezione Carte Romanga, Busta 25/174 and 175. Barberi gives his address as Villiers-la-Garenne and also makes reference to “le citoyen Hautefort a Villiers.” Barberi did not note the year, but, given that it is addressed to Antolini in Paris and that Antolini came to Paris in 1801 to present his plan for the Foro Bonaparte to Napoleon, we can assume that the letter was of this date. For a record of Antolini’s presence in Paris in 1801, see Magasin encyclopédique, n.37 (1801), 121.
given that his area has since been redeveloped and absorbed into the greater metropolis of Paris.

Aside from this commission for Hautefort, Barberi found other work in Paris as an interior designer. At some point before the summer of 1802, he is recorded as having obtained a commission to redesign the interior and garden of the Café Frascati, a café that was located at the corner of Boulevard Montmartre and Rue de Richelieu (figure 41).127 In the 1807 edition of a guidebook to Paris, the Pariseum, edited by Francesco Piranesi, the café was described as the “rendez-vous de la belle société.”128 Two Italian travelers to Paris in the opening years of the nineteenth century had similarly spoken of the café’s seeming high repute, one describing it as a place “popolate di Signori e Dame vestite pomposamente” and the other celebrating it as “uno de' più brillanti e de' più maestosi caffè di Parigi.”129

One of these Italian travelers records Barberi’s authorship of the interior design. Writing in May of 1802, he notes that the interior was “in gran parte rinnovati in quest'anno” by the proprietor, who “si è servito dei disegni dell'opera del cittadino Barberi architetto


romano.”  The traveler also described the painted decoration of a number of the rooms in the café in some detail: two of the rooms were painted with views of the fountains of Rome, a third with various Roman temples, and a fourth with two paintings “per mano del Barberi,” one of “la piazza Navona inondata” and the other of “il Castello di Sant'Angelo col Vaticano.”

The traveler also provides a detailed description of the garden, the design of which Barberi had also been responsible. His description is as follows:

La figura del giardino è quadrilunga; il suo sfono è conterminato dalla fabbrica rotonda di un panorama dalla quale si è tirato un vataggioso partito col dipingerlo a Parnaso ove figurano Apollo e le Muse; appiedi del panorama è costruita una vaga grotta formata e sostenuta da tanti tufii a due ordini di portici, nella quale entrasi per tre aperture. [...] Alla diritta del Parnaso è dipinta la fontana Castalia, ove figura un arco di trionfo portante l'iscrizione Alla Gloria della Francia ed ornato da trofei ed altri emblemi allusivi all'argomento.

This description is interesting in part because it recalls Barberi’s designs for the garden of the Ruspoli palace in 1775. It is also of interest because it is one of the very few contemporary accounts of Barberi’s works for which we have an accompanying image (figure 42). This account, in fact, allows us to identify the heretofore unknown subject matter of the print. Given the name of the café and subject of the garden scene, it is likely that Barberi drew on Giacomo della Porta’s design for the Sala del Parnaso (figure 43) at the Villa Aldobrandini in Frascati, Italy, for his inspiration.

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130 Romani, Paris, 9 May 1802, transcribed in Memorie private e personali, 445-446.
131 Ibid., 446.
132 Ibid., 447-8
133 Ibid.
Aside from his work with the Piranesi and his interior design work, Barberi also attempted to insert himself into the architectural scene in Paris in other ways, namely through the participation in a number of government-sponsored architectural competitions.

In 1800, he submitted a proposal for a competition for the design of a national column for the Place de la Concorde. While the competition had called for a column, Barberi proposed an obelisk instead, a proposal that was not successful. Nonetheless, some years later in 1804, he submitted a second proposal for this same site, this time for a large fountain, which was to be fed by the waters of the canal de l'Ourcq. The canal itself was a large-scale infrastructural project that had been announced in May of 1802 in the Journal des bâtiments civils et des arts. This proposal, too, was unsuccessful.

In 1802, another state-sponsored competition was held, this time for the design of a triumphal arch to commemorate the Peace of Amiens and to glorify Napoleon as a peacemaker. Some years ago, a dealer in Paris offered for sale a drawing of a

134 Giuseppe Barberi, Proposal for the Place de la Concorde, AN, F13 630. For an overview of the concours and the development of the Place de la Concorde in the early years of the nineteenth century, see Solange Granet, Images de Paris: La Place de la Concorde (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), 84-97. While Barberi would have almost certainly included drawings as part of this proposal, the whereabouts of the drawings is unknown at this time.

135 Journal des bâtiments civils et des arts, n.180 (21 May 1802), 325-6

136 For Peace of Amiens concours, see Marc Gerstein, "Denon et la politique des concours," in Les vies de Dominique-Vivant Denon: actes du colloque organisé au Musée
triumphal arch that he identified as being by the hand of Barberi (figure 44), a drawing that might be related to this Peace of Amiens competition.\textsuperscript{137} The arch, of a quadrifrontal form, domed and framed by historiated columns and smoking altars, was far more grandiose in its conception than that he had designed for the *Festa della Federazione* and those that would go on to be erected in Paris later into Napoleon’s tenure as ruler, the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel and the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile. While I have not been able to study the original drawing because its whereabouts are unknown, from the photograph of it, it seems characteristic of Barberi’s style. It can be linked to the Peace of Amiens competition due to two elements of the inscription on the attic of the arch: first, Barberi dedicates the arch to Napoleon as peacemaker; second, he dates the arch to “an XI,” which is a date between September of 1802 and September of 1803. Given that the deadline for submissions for the *concours* was December of 1802, it is quite possible that the drawing was executed with the intention of submitting it for this competition.

**Outside of Paris**

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\textsuperscript{137} The drawing was offered for sale by the Parisian Galerie Daniel Garnier in 1998. A photograph of the drawing along with a letter from Daniel Garnier is preserved in the artist file on Barberi at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York.
Barberi managed to attract the attention of a significant patron during his time in Paris – Cardinal Fesch, Napoleon’s uncle. In fall of 1802, Fesch dispatched Barberi to Ajaccio (figures 45 & 46), Corsica, the birthplace of Napoleon, to take part in the urban renovation of the town. The transformation that the town underwent can be seen in a comparison between the layout of the town documented in a map of November 1800 (figure 47) and another in of 1808 (figure 48).

By the time Barberi arrived in Ajaccio, most of the planning, overseen by the chief engineer of Corsica, J. S. Petrucci, had already taken place. Petrucci was nonetheless pleased with Barberi’s arrival. In a letter to Fesch of September of 1802, he thanked Fesch for the “precieux present que” he had sent to his “pays en la personne du citoyen Barberi architecte.” Shortly after Barberi’s arrival in Ajaccio, Petrucci assigned him to the task of designing the new Maison Commune. Barberi wrote to Fesch about the

138 For Fesch, see J. Richardot, "Fesch, Joseph," in Dictionnaire de biographie française, eds. J. Balteau, M. Barroux and M. Prévost (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1933-).

139 J. S. Petrucci to Fesch, Ajaccio, 2 September 1802, ADR, 1 f 123 3. Petrucci mentionss Barberi’s impending arrival in Ajaccio. For Barberi’s presence in Ajaccio, see Fabio Benedettucci, "Giuseppe Barberi: studi per Ajaccio e altri disegni dal Museo Napoleonico," Bollettino dei Musei comunali di Roma 22 (2008); Gianluca Kannés, "Giuseppe Barberi: il "Plan d'embellissement de la ville d'Ajaccio" (1802 - 1804)," Il disegno di architettura 2 (1990). For the urban development of Ajaccio more generally, see Bernard Chevallier, ed. Napoléon et la Corse (Corte: Musée de la Corse, 2009).

140 For Petrucci, see the biography in AN, F14 2297 2.

141 Petrucci to Fesch, Ajaccio, 2 September 1802, ADR, 1 F 123 3.

142 Petrucci to Fesch, Ajaccio, 10 October 1802, ADR, 1 F 123 4.
project, presenting the cardinal with a design for the building (figure 49). A few days later, Barberi wrote a second letter to Fesch, on the back of which he executed a view of the piazza that was to be built overlooking the Bay of Ajaccio, the Place du Marché (figure 50). In this second letter, Barberi acknowledged that the design of the facades of the houses surrounding the piazza had already been designed by Petrucci, but reminded Fesch that the design of the fountain had yet to be determined. Barberi writes that his fountain would be “un monumento dovuto al eroe primo console.” One of the ways in which Barberi planned to transform this fountain into such a monument was through the use of the column that had been discovered in Rome in 1778, that which he had used in the proposal for the fountain for Pius VI. In his letter, Barberi assures Fesch that it would be simple for Cardinal Giovanni Battista Caprara, the Papal representative in Paris, to write to the Pope suggesting that the column be sent from Rome to Corsica as a “present to the city of Ajaccio.”

Despite Barberi’s efforts, neither of his two proposed projects were executed. However, he seems to have attempted to find other ways to make his time in Ajaccio

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143 Giuseppe Barberi to Fesch, Ajaccio, 30 October 1802, ADR, 1 F 123 5.
144 Giuseppe Barberi to Fesch, Ajaccio, 2 November 1802, ADR, 1 F 123 6.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid.
147 Ibid.
148 It is possible that Barberi may have been able to secure some commissions for domestic architecture in Ajaccio at the time. Further research would be necessary to determine whether he had managed to find such work.
worthwhile. For example, he created a series of picturesque views of Ajaccio, in one of which he represented the piazza and fountain of his illustrated letter to Fesch (figure 51). This is an imaginary view - the drawing is a depiction of the Place du Marché as Barberi imagined it would look like after the renovation of the town had finished. During Barberi’s stay in Ajaccio, parts of the residences set on the main piazza as well as those further along the avenue that led away from the piazza, all shown in his drawing, had not been built. This can be determined by looking at a survey map of the town from 1808 (figure 48), in which the areas in green represent structures that had yet to be executed.

Barberi may have thought that such a view of Ajaccio would be of interest to Fesch because it presented the town as it had not yet taken form. Fesch himself had left Corisca in 1799 and would have been familiar with the actual physical urban topography of Ajaccio only as it had existed before the renovations began.149 When Fesch was last in Ajaccio, the area presented in Barberi’s drawing of the Place du Marché was little more than an open space. Barberi’s awareness of Fesch’s ignorance of the appearance of the new topography of Ajaccio is evident in his decision to number the residences around the Place du Marché in his earlier drawing in his illustrated letter, a move that suggests that he needed to orient Fesch in his viewing of the drawing.150 Although Fesch may have

149 Fesch left Ajaccio in June 1799. For Fesch’s departure from Ajaccio, see Philippe Perfettini and Xavier Trojani, eds., Le Palais Fesch et l’urbanisme impérial (Ajaccio: Musée Fesch, 2005), 120.

150 On the drawing of the Place du Marché that Barberi had included in his illustrated letter to Fesch, he had numbered the various residences: “1” marked the houses to be set on the concave-end of the piazza, “3” marked Fesch’s own house on the left along the avenue beyond the piazza, and “4” the house of one of the Bonaparte’s relatives General Fiorella. Barberi to Fesch, Ajaccio, 2 November 1802, ADR, Lyon.1 F 123 6.
been familiar with the new layout of the city through maps or plans, the tangible reality Barberi created with his three-dimensional view would have been far different from the two-dimensional representations sent to him by the engineer Petrucci. Barberi may have hoped that such a vision of Ajaccio as it would take form would be of value to Fesch or to the other members of the Bonaparte family. Indeed, Barberi had presented a “Gran Veduta della Città di Ajaccio” to Lucien Bonaparte, a drawing which may also have been a fantasy of sorts.151

Barberi recorded the presentation of this drawing to Lucien Bonaparte in a letter to Fesch of March 1804.152 The letter is addressed from Paris and, thus, Barberi was back in the capital by this point.

Creuse

By June of 1804, Barberi had moved to Guéret, a town in the Department of Creuse, approximately 400 km south of Paris (figure 52).153 The Préfet of the department, Joseph Claude Louis Colaud de la Salcette, records Barberi as having been commissioned by the gouvernement to conduct a survey of Creuse and further notes that Barberi “s'occupe avec

151 Giuseppe Barberi to Fesch, Paris, 10 March 1804, Barberi’s letter to Fesch, ADR, 1 F 82.

152 Ibid.

153 Joseph Claude Louis Colaud de la Salcette to Ministre de l'intérieur, Guéret, 2 June 1804, AN, F13 1541. It is unclear whether the Préfet intended for the letter to be addressed to Jean-Antoine Chaptal (Minister of the Interior from November 1800 to August 1804) or to Jean-Baptiste Nompère de Champagny (Minister of the Interior from August 1804 to August 1807). For de la Salcette, see René Bargeton et al., eds., Les Préfets: du 11 ventôse an VIII au 4 septembre 1870; répertoires nominatif et territorial (Paris: Archives nationales, 1981).
zele des travaux dont le Gouvernement la chargé dans ce Département.”

Barberi himself described his role in a letter of a later date as having been that of “Geometra in capo nel dipartimento della Creuse.”

Given that two architects, two engineers, and four surveyors are recorded as working in Creuse in the *Annuaire des ponts et chaussées* of 1804, there may have been a fair amount of activity taking place in this area.

During his time in Guéret, Barberi was also continuing to work on other sorts of architectural plans. One of the proposals for the Place de la Concorde mentioned earlier, that for the fountain, was executed at this time. Thus, even though he was outside of Paris, Barberi was still trying to stay abreast of what was going on in the city. Given that the design of a fountain for the Place de la Concorde fed by the *canal de l’Ourcq* was a project that Napoleon would ask his architect Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine to consider in the spring of 1806, Barberi presumably had some continuing lines of communication with Paris or sources of information through which he was able to stay

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154 Ibid. De la Salcette writes that Barberi had been commissed to make an "arpentement du Dept de la Creuse."

155 Giuseppe Barberi to the Membri della Consulta Straodinaria di Governo, Rome, AN, F1e 169.


157 De la Salcette wrote a letter of introduction for Barberi. Joseph Claude Louis Colaud de la Salcette to Ministre de l'intérieur, Guéret, 2 June 1804, AN, F13 1541.
informed of what was going on in the city so that he could create projects that would be of interest to patrons like Napoleon.\textsuperscript{158}

The next spring, still in Guéret, Barberi executed drawings for a large-scale theater complex to be set in the area between the Place Vendome and the Boulevard des Capucines (figures 53-55), drawings which will be the subject of one of my subsequent chapters. Like the fountain for the Place de la Concorde, this design of a theater complex for Paris demonstrates Barberi’s continuing efforts to stay connected with the city.

\textbf{MILAN \& ROME}

\textit{Milan}

In 1805, Milan became the capital of the new Kingdom of Italy, and Napoleon was crowned as its king.\textsuperscript{159} These shifts in the political landscape of Italy may have precipitated Barberi’s departure from Paris in August of 1806.\textsuperscript{160} Milan may have also been a desirable location due to the architectural works planned for the city.\textsuperscript{161}


\textsuperscript{159} For a discussion of Milan at this time, see Letizia Tedeschi, \textit{Luigi Canonica 1764-1844: architetto di utilità pubblica e privata} (Milan: Silvana, 2011).

\textsuperscript{160} Barberi is recorded as having left for Milan on 18 August 1806. See AN, F7 2243.

will have certainly been very familiar with his friend Antolini’s large-scale project for the Foro Bonaparte (figure 56). Although Antolini’s plan went unexecuted, Milan was nonetheless a locus of urban development in the first decade of the nineteenth century. In addition to subsequent plans for the redevelopment of the city (figure 57), a number of monumental architectural works were undertaken at this time, such as Luigi Cagnola’s Porta Ticinese (1801-14) and his Arco del Sempione (1806-38), and Luigi Canonica’s Arena (1806-13). Thus, unlike Rome in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Milan of the early nineteenth century was a place where there were ample opportunities to create permanent architectural structures.

Soon after his arrival in Milan, Barberi presented his drawings for the Parisian theater to the members of the Brera Academy, a gift which the members of the Academy discussed at a meeting of November of 1806.¹⁶² Barberi’s design would clearly have fit in with the contemporary interest in architecture of a monumental scale. By presenting himself and his work to the Academy, Barberi seems to have been making an attempt to integrate himself into the city’s existing network of artists and architects. The Academicians at the Brera were a particularly significant group: the architects Cagnola, Canonica, Giocondo Albertolli, and Giuseppe Zanoja were the most prominent practitioners in the city.¹⁶³ Other

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¹⁶² Meeting of 13 November 1806, ABB, Adunanze, Carpi A III, Consigli Accademici.

¹⁶³ "Elenco degli Accademici appartenenti alla Reale Accademia di Milano," 13 Aprile 1806, Adunanze, Carpi A III, Consigli Accademici, AAB, Paris. The members of the academy are listed as follows: Giocondo Albertoli, Albertolli, Raffaele, Amati, Andrea Appiani, Giuseppe Appiani, Aspare, Benaglia, Giuseppe Bossi, Luigi Bossi, Cagnola,
Brera Academicians, such as the painter Andrea Appiani, with whom Barberi had become acquainted in 1797, were equally influential.

In addition to attempting to make contact with the existing network of architects in the city, Barberi also found a highly influential patron, Eugène de Beauharnais, Napoleon’s son-in-law and Viceroy of the Kingdom of Italy. On January 8, 1808, Beauharnais wrote to the Minister of the Interior in Milan, Lodovico di Breme, saying that it was his “intention” that “le projet de m. Barbieri pour l’ouverture et l’embellissement d’une place auprès di théatre de la Scala soit executé.”

A number of Barberi’s finished drawings for the project have been preserved (figures 58 & 59). In one of the plans, Barberi describes the project himself as follows:

Pianta nella quale si dimostra il piano per dare una piazza al gran Teatro della Scala, tutta porticata con Botteghe all’interno, e tre piani superiori, da quali si ricavano diversi divisi appartamenti. Il medesimo progetto aggiunge, volendo servirsi della Chiesa detta del Giardino, potrebbe servire questa per uso di Dogana pubblica, o Borsa. [...] Non puole negarsi, che il progetto sia comodo, ed utile, ed in tempo medesimo sia l’idea di un nuovo monumento, il quale potrebbe esser dedicato alla Maesta sua Napoleone il Grande Imperatore de’ Francesi e come dal mio bozetto la statua Equestre lo dimostra.

Castiglioni, Cattaneo, Cicognara, Landraini, Levati, Lunghi, Magistretti, Manfredini, Mazzola, Melzi, Moscati, Mussi, Pacetti, Schiepati, Stratico, Traballesi, Visconti, Zanoja. Becoming associated with the Academicians at the Brera was also significant because it was from among this group that the members of the Commissione d’Ornato, a commission formed in the spring of 1807 to review and approve all architectural projects undertaken in the city, were chosen. For the Commissione d’Ornato, see Giandomenico Romanelli, "La Commissione d'Ornato: da Napoleone al Lombardo-Veneto," in Le Macchine imperfette: architettura, programma, istituzioni nel XIX secolo, ed. Paolo Morachiello and Georges Teyssot (Rome: Officina, 1980).

164 Eugene de Beauharnais to Lodovico di Breme, 8 January 1808, ASMi Consiglio legislativo, 654. Transcribed in Tedeschi, Luigi Canonica 1764-1844, 76, fn 31.

165 AASLR, ASL 2118.
At the time, this area Barberi describes beside the Scala was occupied by the convent of S. Maria del Giardino (figure 60). The project would have thus involved a sizable adjustment to the city’s existing urban fabric and the transformation of a religious institution into a space of commerce and one intended to glorify a secular authority.

On January 28, a commission composed of the architects Zanoja, Cagnola, and Albertolli was given the task of evaluating the cost of the project. When the project was stalled by the commission and it had failed to commence by April, Beauharnais wrote to de Breme expressing his dismay, saying:

> Mon décret ne demandoit point à la Commission son avis sur la place à faire. [...] Mon décret dit expressément que la place sera faite et que la Commission me donnera: 1° son avis sur les rectificaïons qu’il pourroit être convenable de faire un project de Barbieri; 2° un devis exact des dépenses qu’entraineroient l’ouverture et les constructions de la place. Le ministre témoignera mon mecontentement à la commission pour avoir si mal rempli mes intentions.

Despite Beauharnais’s evident personal interest in the execution of the project, it came to nothing. Given that Barberi remained in the city for a number of years and had attracted this influential patron, it is not unlikely that Beauharnais commissioned Barberi to execute other projects. This, however, is a subject that requires further investigation.

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168 In 1808, Barberi seems to have taken part in the initial stages of the planning of a botanical garden in Milan. See ASMi, Fondi Camerali, AG 24, Cartella 46 (Milano Menagerie). This file includes a letter by Barberi dated to 21 January 1808. Barberi’s private commissions may also have not been limited to Rome.
In the fall of 1809, Barberi returned to Rome. By this point, the city had become part of the French Empire. That is, while in 1801 the French had recognized the existence of the Papal States in a concordat with Pope Pius VII, in February of 1808 they, once again, moved to occupy Rome.\textsuperscript{170} In May of 1809, Napoleon issued a decree that the Papal States be incorporated into France.\textsuperscript{171} In June of that year, a temporary government of French overseers, General Miollis, Joseph-Marie de Gerando, Laurent-Marie Janet, Ferdinando dal Pozzo, and Ceare Balbo, was installed.\textsuperscript{172} In July, Barberi wrote to the members of this temporary government, the Consulta, from Milan, requesting permission to return to his native city.\textsuperscript{173} By Septmeber, he was back in Rome.\textsuperscript{174}

\textsuperscript{169} Barberi may also have been able to secure other private commissions in Northern Italy outside of Milan in this period. For example, a number of authors have suggested that he was involved in work at the Villa Manfrin in Treviso. See Margherita Azzi Visentini, \textit{Il Giardino Veneto tra Sette e Ottocento e le sue fonti} (Milan: Edizioni Il Polifilo, 1988), 216-19; Ennio Casagrande, "Tre album di disegni di Giuseppe Barberi per il parco di Villa Manfrin a Sant'Artemio," \textit{Arte veneta} 40 (1986); Luisa Tosi, Rita Sari, and Raffaella Frattini, eds., \textit{Villa Margherita: tra storia e memoria} (Treviso: Italprint, 1995). These studies are based on a group of albums of drawings in a private collection, which I have not been able to locate. There are also photocopies in the Fototek of the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome of another album of Barberi’s drawings from this period conserved in a private collection.

\textsuperscript{170} For an overview of this period in Rome, see Ridley, \textit{The Eagle and the Spade: Archaeology in Rome during the Napoleonic Era, 1809-1814}, 3-8.

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid., 248.

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., p.48.

\textsuperscript{173} Giuseppe Barberi to the “Consulta di Stato nella Citta Imperiale di Roma,” Milan, 8 July 1809, AN, F1e 169. In a letter of August of that year, still in Milan, Barberi expressed his joy over the change in the political authority of Rome saying, “Forse finalmente la bramata Aurora politica anche per Roma mia Patria, e quell' astro benefico,
Shortly after his return, he wrote to the Consulta again, and to De Gerando specifically, to ask for work.175 In particular, he asked to be “ammesso come Consigliere delle Arti nella Prefettura, o Architetto del Demanio, Corte Imperiale, e Feste Pubbliche.”176 Whether his application for such a post was taken into consideration by the government has yet to be determined. However, even if the Consulta had thought to give Barberi this position, his tenure would have been cut short by his death.

On November 23, 1809, the sculptor Vincenzo Pacetti wrote in his diary of having seen Barberi close to death. Pacetti wrote in his journal that “il Sig.r Giuseppe Barberi essendo vicino a render l’anima a Dio ha [sic] mostrato grandissima premura di vedermi prima di morire;” when the two met, he recalls how Barberi had “abbracciato [Pacetti] in quegli ultimi momenti di vita.”177 This seems to be the last record of Barberi’s living presence. He died shortly thereafter in December.178

174 Giuseppe Barberi, Milan, 4 August 1809, ASMi, Atti di governo, studi pm, 348.
175 Ibid; Giuseppe Barberi to Marie-Joseph De Gerando, Rome, 11 September 1809, AN, F1e 169.
176 Ibid.
177 Vincenzo Pacetti, 23 November 1809, “Giornale delle cose piu' importanti di pertinenza di Vincenzo Pacetti fin ora scritto in fogli volanti ma da quest'epoca in poi, tutti si riportano per alfabeto a seconda delle loro casate, o sieno cognomi rispettivi, questo di' 15 maggio 1803,” Museo Centrale del Risorgimento, Rome, ms b.654.5.
178 Following Barberi’s death, an inventory was made of his belongings. See “Inventario dei beni,” 19 December 1809, ASR, Trenta Notai Capitolini, Ufficio 1, Notaio Carlo Maria Sommaini, 757-767.
CHAPTER II

THE ARCADIAN IMPROVISER

In one of Barberi’s drawings, we see the bust of a female figure crowned with laurels set on a pedestal surrounded by the adoring mythical figures of Apollo, Roma Triumphans, and the Tiber (figure 61). The Tiber supports a placard upon which it is announced that this female figure, Corilla, improvised so well that she was crowned on the Capitoline. The silhouette of Michelangelo’s Capitoline buildings and the church of S. Maria in Aracoeli are visible in the far distance. The immediate space of the figures is a rustic landscape. In this drawing, Barberi re-imagines the poetic coronation of Maria Maddalena Morelli, a real historical event that took place on the Capitoline in the summer of 1776. Barberi re-envisions this event as a fictive tableau vivant set within an imaginary landscape. This is one of six drawings in which he memorialized poet improvisers from the Arcadian Academy, a literary academy founded in Rome at the end of the seventeenth century (figures 62-66).

Improvisation, the act of extemporaneous artistic creation, was associated with various forms of cultural production in the eighteenth century. Jean-Jacques Rossseau’s reference to musical improvisation in his Dictionnaire du musique (1768) and Joshua Reynolds’ mention of “Pittori improvvisatori” in a lecture of 1784 at the Royal Academy attest to an awareness of the existence of practices of improvisation in these particular

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179 For an introduction to improvisation in general and poetry specifically, see Angela Esterhammer, Romanticism and improvisation, 1750-1850 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
fields of cultural production across Europe. Improvisation was, however, also closely associated with poetic production. Indeed, Diderot’s single definition in the Encyclopédie for both the verb *improvister* [to improvise] and the noun *improvisteur* [improviser] refers only to poetry. He defined the terms saying that they pertained to the “talent de parler en vers, sur le champ et sur un sujet donné.” Moreover, he associated poetic improvisation with Italy in particular: he specifies that “Quelques italiens le possedent à un degré surprenant.” The particular association of poetic improvisation with Italy was by no means limited to Diderot. As Angela Estherhammer has documented in her recent book, *Improvisation and Romanticism, 1750-1850*, the Italian culture of poetic improvisation was a phenomenon of interest across Europe. The English verb “to improvise” is in fact thought to have entered the English language through travel accounts of British tourists who had witnessed and recorded their observations of Italian male and female improvisers, *improvvisatori* and *improvvisatrici*.

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182 Ibid.

183 Ibid.

184 Esterhammer, *Romanticism and improvisation, 1750-1850*. The tourist accounts cited by Esterhammer were very valuable in helping me to start to consider how to approach my study to Barberi’s drawings.

While Esterhammer’s book and other recent scholarly publications are evidence of a growing interest in poetic improvisation as a subject of inquiry, little attention has yet been paid to the practice of improvisation at the Arcadian Academy. In recent studies of the Academy, both Susan Dixon and Vernon Minor refer to the popularity of improvisation amongst the Arcadians. Authors such as Alessandra Di Ricco, Paola Giuliani, and Francoise Waquet have also undertaken research focused on a select number of improvisers affiliated with the Academy. But little has been published that presents a more comprehensive view of the culture of Arcadian improvisation. This is


189 For other sources that consider improvisation at the Arcadian Academy more generally, see A. Ademollo, *Corilla Olimpica* (Florence, 1887); Giulini, ""Monsters of Talent": Fame and Reputation of Women Improvisers in Arcadia"; Adele Vitagliano,
unfortunate, given that the Academy was a locus for those figures whom contemporary scholars have recognized as having been some of the most prominent improvisers of the eighteenth century: Teresa Bandettini, Francesco Gianni, Maria Maddalena Morelli, and Bernardino Perfetti. This chapter is an attempt to respond to this need.

Poetic improvisation was an immensely popular part of Arcadian culture in the mid-1770s, the point at which the poets in Barberi’s drawings were all active at the Academy.

In this chapter, I argue that Barberi’s drawings should be understood as his engagement with the evolving construction of the identity of the Arcadian improviser. In the late eighteenth century, the improviser’s identity was being formed by the Arcadians’ own textual, verbal, and visual discourses, which were themselves subject to the influence of perceptions of improvisation external to the Academy. Due to the ambivalent nature of responses to improvisation within the Academy and Italy more broadly, the Arcadian improviser’s identity was unstable, malleable, and multifaceted. I investigate the ambivalence embodied in two dualities of this identity: that between the improviser as a

Storia della poesia estemporanea nella letteratura italiana dalle origini ai nostri giorni (Rome: Ermanno Loescher, 1905). My argument draws on many of the same Arcadian sources as used by Giuli; however, unlike Giuli’s work, my study is not a defense of Arcadian improvisation, nor is it an attempt to legitimate the poetic valor of improvisation or the improviser, nor is it a study that focuses on issues of gender.

For the Arcadian affiliations of these poets, see Anna Maria Giorgetti Vichi, Gli arcadi dal 1690 al 1800: onomasticon (Rome: Arcadia, Accademia letteraria italiana, 1977). According to Giorgetti Vichi, Teresa Bandettini (Amarilli Etrusca) entered the Academy between 1772 and 1790, Francesco Gianni (Tirteo Megarense) in 1777, Maria Maddalena Morelli (Corilla Olimpica) between 1743 and 1766, and Bernardino Perfetti (Alauro Euroteo) in 1712. According to Ademollo, Morelli became an Academician in 1750. I use Giorgetti Vichi’s text throughout this chapter as my primary source for the Academy’s membership records. This being said, while her text is an incredibly useful source, there are nonetheless some errors, which is understandable given both the scope of the work and the available sources.
preeminent individual poet and the improviser as a member of a collective of poets, and that between the improviser as poet and the improviser as performer. I argue that, while the simultaneous embodiment of such dualities within the identity of the Arcadian improviser could not be maintained within the historical reality of Rome in the late eighteenth century, the imaginary Arcadian realm in which Barberi sets his compositions allows for the perpetual co-existence of these tension-laden pairings.

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part begins with an introductory discussion of poetic improvisation in Italy and at the Academy in the eighteenth century. With this general understanding of improvisation in place, I move on to consider the evolving construction of the identity of the Arcadian improviser in the late eighteenth century, with a focus on the two ambivalences of this identity mentioned above. My discussion of the tensions resident in the conception of the improviser as preeminent poet and as a member of a collective of poets focuses on the practices of the Arcadians in the 1770s, while my discussion of the tensions resident in the conception of the improviser as poet and performer considers how responses to improvisation external to the Academy affected the Arcadians’ visual fashioning of the improviser’s identity in the late eighteenth century more broadly. In approaching both of these issues, I am interested in how different facets of the identity of the Arcadian improviser were fashioned or founded on notions of sameness and difference through textual, verbal, and visual discourses of the late eighteenth century. I will consider types of traits or characteristics that made the Arcadian improviser recognizable or distinctive, and discuss how people came to associate these traits with the Arcadian improviser. The second part of the chapter
provides an extended analysis of Barberi’s drawings in relation to the issues presented in the first part of the chapter.

**PART I: POETIC IMPROVISATION AT THE ARCadian ACADEMY**

Evidence of the Arcadians’ early interest in improvisation can be found in Giovan Mario Crescimbeni *Comentari intorno alla storia della volgar poesia* (1702-11), a treatise on contemporary Italian literature. Crescimbeni was one of the fourteen founding members of the Arcadian Academy and became its first *Custode*, or figurehead. A short section of the first volume of the *Comentari* was devoted to a historical overview of improvisation in Italy. Crescimbeni begins the section by asserting that the practice can be traced back to the birth of Italian poetry, and he goes on to cite various sixteenth-century literary sources on improvisation, by which he demonstrates that it was part of a learned Renaissance culture. He then moves on to call attention to the high status of improvisation in his own day, noting that it had both “molto si è avanzato di stime e di reputazione” and that “nobilissimi personaggi e de’ letterati nulla mena eccellenti, che sovente godono di esercitarlo non solo in versi ed in ogni sorta di metro e di stile, ma in

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191 Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni, *Comentari di Gio. Mario de’ Crescimbeni ... intorno alla sua istoria della volgar poesia*, 5 vols. (Roma, 1702-1711). The *Comentari* was published together with Crescimbeni’s other texts, *L’Istoria della volgar poesia* (Rome, 1698), *La Bellezza della volgar poesia* (Roma, 1700), as *Dell’istoria della volgar poesia 6 vols.* (Venice, 1730-31). This Venice edition was reissued by the publisher Becket in London in 1803.

192 Ibid. 2: 147-9. A loose English translation of this section was published in the London journal the *Athenaeum*. See "On the improvvisatori of Italy," *Athenaeum; a magazine of literary and miscellaneous information*, August 1808.
prosa in ogni materia si erudita, come dottrinale. Even though the *Comentari* was not a text related specifically to the Arcadians’ own traditions, this comment is a valuable indicator of the Arcadians’ reception of improvisation. Given Crescimbeni’s position as the figurehead of the Academy at the time when the text when published, his own approval of improvisation suggests that it was valued within the Academy more broadly.

Crescimbeni, in fact, brings his reader’s awareness to a more widespread interest in improvisation amongst the Arcadians in this same text. He does so by describing evenings of improvisation held at the palace of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, a well-known patron of the arts in the early eighteenth century and an individual praised by Crescimbeni for his intelligence. Although Crescimbeni does not make explicit reference to the Arcadian affiliation of either Cardinal Ottoboni or to that of the poets he lists as improvising at these gatherings, Giovan Battista Zappi, Francesco del Teglia, Francesco Maria de’ Conti di Campello, and Pompeo Figari, they were all members of the Academy. In fact, Zappi and Figari were, like Crescimbeni, among its founding members. This account of the soirees at the Ottoboni palace thus serves as evidence of an interest in improvisation amongst a broader sphere of influential figures at the

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194 Ibid.

195 For the Arcadian affiliations of these individuals, see Giorgetti Vichi, *Gli arcadi dal 1690 al 1800: onomasticon*.

Academy in its early stages. The Arcadians both practiced and appreciated improvisation as part of contemporary literary culture.

The place of improvisation within the Arcadians’ culture was confirmed in Crescimbeni’s *Arcadia* (1708).197 Arcadia was his exposition of an idealized notion of Arcadian culture. The text took the form of a fictive narrative in which members of the Academy wandered through the mythical land of Arcadia.198 At one point in this narrative, the Arcadians discuss poetic improvisation: one claims that “Era già in Arcadia stimatissimo il poetare improvvisamente; ed io ho veduto esercitarvisi i più eminenti, ed i più scienziati Pastori.”199 One of the other Arcadians goes on to improvise and is praised by his fellow academicians.200 Through the insertion of such an episode, Crescimbeni documents and affirms the place of poetic improvisation within his idealized notion of the Arcadians’ literary culture.

While Crescimbeni included poetic improvisation within this idealized conception of Arcadian culture, Giuseppe Morei, the Custode between 1743 and 1766, confirmed its place within the context of the Academy’s actual practices. He did this by including a section on poetic improvisation in his *Memorie istoriche dell’Adunanza degli Arcadi*

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200 Ibid., 117.
(1761), a historical account of the Academy and its traditions. Morei documents improvisation as having been part of the Arcadians’ meetings. These meetings, held on a regular basis throughout the year, were occasions at which the academicians congregated and recited their compositions in front of an audience of their fellow Arcadians and distinguished guests. While these meetings moved between a series of temporary locations in the first decades of the eighteenth century, a permanent meeting place, a garden space with an outdoor theater known as the Bosco Parrasio, was realized on the slope of the Janiculum Hill in 1725-6 (figure 67). An idealized view of the Bosco executed by its architect (figure 68), Antonio Canevari, provides a sense of the organization of this space.

Morei describes poetic improvisation as being part of the meetings held in the part of the Bosco known as the Serbatojo. While the Serbatojo was not represented in Canevari’s plan, we know that it was a small building set at the rear of the garden the Bosco proper, behind the outdoor theater. According to the original statues of the Academy drawn up by its founders, the Arcadians’ meetings were to be held outdoors in the Bosco between the beginning of May and the beginning of October, and indoors in the Serbatojo for the

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202 For a discussion of the academy’s meetings, see Dixon, *Between the Real and the Ideal*, 22-23.

203 For a history of the Academy’s meeting place, see Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste*. 
remainder of the year. Morei begins his overview of the Arcadians’ performances of improvisation saying:

_Straordinaria ancora è stata sempre nel Serbatojo la frequenza del popolo, allorchè si sparge voce, che alcuni de’ più pronti Arcadi nel verseggiare sieno per cantare all’improviso sopra qualsivoglia soggetto venga loro proposto, e in qualsivoglia Metro; il che non può credersi quanto arrechi a ciascheduno di diletto insieme, e di meraviglia._

His references to Arcadian improvisers as the “più pronti Arcadi nel verseggiare” and to their ability to improvise on any subject “in qualsivoglia metro” suggest that, unlike the soirees at the Ottoboni palace, improvisation at the Academy itself was limited to poetic production. By claiming that people were drawn to the Academy’s meetings simply by rumors of an upcoming performance of improvisation, Morei encourages his reader to recognize that poetic improvisation was not only a part of the Arcadians’ culture, but a very popular part.

The mid-1770s seems to have been a particularly thriving period for improvisation at the Academy, a fact which can be gleaned from the accounts of their meetings conserved in the Academy’s archives. Since the authors of these records often specified the genre or type of poetry recited by the individual members at these meetings, the frequency of performances of poetic improvisation can be gauged (graph 1). The graphical

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204 Ibid.

205 Morei, _Memorie istoriche dell’adunanza degli Arcadi_, 84.

206 The data for this graph is taken from the information on the Arcadians’ meeting recorded in their Atti Arcadici, the volumes of which are conserved in the Academy’s archives in the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome. I consulted three volumes in particular: Atti Arcadici 5 (1773-1790), Atti Arcadici 6 (1773-92), and Atti Arcadici 7 (1790-1798).
representation of the frequency of these performances provides clear evidence of an interest in poetic improvisation in the late eighteenth century, with the peak in the mid-1770s demonstrating its popularity in that particular period.

The small number of studies related to improvisation at the Academy during this period focus almost exclusively on the career of one particularly prominent improviser, Maria Maddalena Morelli. Yet a substantial number of other improvisers were active at the Academy in the mid-1770s, the period in which Morelli was most active in Rome, and can be considered as constituting a collective. While the Academy encouraged the formation of such a collective, it also encouraged the creation of a distinctive persona for Morelli as the preeminent poet. The coexistence of the collective alongside the singular figure of the preeminent poet was unstable, as I will now go on to argue.

_The collectivization of the improviser_

Poetic improvisation was a practice in which numerous Arcadians took part. Simply by looking at a handful of eighteenth-century texts written by Arcadians, we can gather a fairly long list of poets who were recognized by the Arcadians as having been gifted improvisers. In _Arcadia_, Crescimbeni names Francesco Cavoni, Francesco del Teglia, G. B. Zappi, Fabio Ferrante, and Giulio Cesare Grazzini; in his _Memorie_, Morei adds the

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207 For Corilla see, Ademollo, _Corilla Olimpica_; Michele Feo, "Corilla Olimpica e l'improvvisazione aulica," in _L'arte del dire: atti del Convegno di studi sull'improvvisazione poetica (Grosseto, 14-15 marzo 1997)_ , ed. Maurizio Agamennone (Grosseto: Biblioteca comunale Chelliana, 1999); Giulì, "Corilla Olimpica Improvisatrice: Toward a Reappraisal of her Life."; "'Monsters of Talent': Fame and Reputation of Women Improvisers in Arcadia."

208 Crescimbeni, _L'Arcadia_, 116.
names Anna Parisotti Beati, Filippo Bruni, Anton Francesco de Felici, Giacomo Diolle, D. Niccola Gallio, Agostino Germisoni, Gaetano Golt, Padre Lucca, Pietro Metastasio, Eusebio Michilli, Maria Maddalena Morelli, Bernardino Perfetti, Domenico Ottavio Petrosellini, Giuseppe Petrosellini, Antonio Re, Paolo Rolli, Giovanni Santorio, Giuseppe Antonio Vaccari, Paolo Vannini, Pier Francesco Versari, and Abate Zucchi;\textsuperscript{209} and in an English account of the Academy published in 1792, the Arcadian Henry Tourner adds the names Matteo Berardi, Abate Casali, Fortunata Sulcker Fantastici, Giuseppe Giordani, and Baldasarre Rocchetti.\textsuperscript{210} The existence of these lists of improvisers whom the Arcadians thought worthy of note suggests that the Arcadians themselves conceived of improvisation as a practice in which numerous academicians took part.

In the 1770s, the Academy seems to have attracted a substantial number of improvisers. The poets Francesco Battistini, Matteo Berardi, Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi, Maria Maddalena Morelli, Giuseppe Giordani, Baldassare Rocchetti, Luigi Romanelli, Angelo Talassi, Leopoldo Tangerini, and Pietro Francesco Versari are all documented in the Academy’s records as having improvised in this decade (chart 1).\textsuperscript{211} Aside from Versari

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\textsuperscript{209} Morei, \textit{Memorie istoriche dell’adunanza degli Arcadi}, 84-85.

\textsuperscript{210} Henry Tourner, "Account of the Society of Arcadia," \textit{The Bee, or, Literary weekly intelligencer}, October 17 1792, 234-35.

\textsuperscript{211} This information is taken from the Academy’s manuscripts cited above.
and Morelli, who had both been part of the Academy since the 1750s, all of these individuals joined the Academy between 1769 and 1776.212

These poets performed alongside one another at the Arcadians’ meetings. It was in fact rare for only one improviser to perform, as can be seen in Chart 1. Instead, it was far more common for between two and four of these poets to take part in improvisations. The repeated appearance of the same improvisers at these meetings, performing alongside one another in groups of various permutations supports the idea that these poets should be seen as constituting a collective.

The performances of the individual improvisers were, moreover, interwoven, as one of the improvisers, Angelo Talassi, recounts in a letter of 1776.213 In speaking of the future possibility of performing at the Academy, he writes, “il Parrasio mi sentirà alternare i carmi estemporanei or coll’amabile De Rossi, or col facile Rocchetti, or col focoso

212 According to Giorgetti Vichi, Francesco Battistini (Megete Inopeo) entered the Academy in 1776, Matteo Berardi (Eurialo Crisantino) in 1772, Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi (Perinto Sceo) in 1773, Giuseppe Giordani (Rotilio) in 1777, Baldassare Rocchetti (Niso Scamandrio) in 1772, Luigi Romanelli (Corebo Ladonio) in 1769, Angelo Talassi (Linceo Bistonio) in 1774, Leopoldo Tangerini (Sincero Anfitoneo) in 1769. My own research has revealed that Giordani entered the Academy several years earlier and that his Arcadian name was Rutilio Alemonio. His name appears in the records of the meetings of the Arcadians in October 1773. See BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 33. He is also recorded as having recited a poem in honor of Pius VI in 1775. In the publication issued to commemorate the meeting at which this poem was recited, he is Rutilio Alemonio. See Triplice omaggio offerto dagli Arcadi al Padre Principe e Pastore Papa Pio VI (Rome, 1775), 111.

213 For Talassi’s career, see Donatella Capodarca, "'Europee novelle': lettere familiari, cronache, note di viaggio di un poeta improvvisatore del settecento," in L'immagine del quotidiano : letteratura di costume e pittura di genere tra '700 e '800, ed. Sandro Gentili and Isabella Nardi (Naples: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 2000).
The use of the verb *alternare* evokes a sense of a back-and-forth dialogue between the improvisers. The way Talassi passes from the name of one improviser to the next also suggests a certain fluidity in the alternations among poets. Rather than the improvisations being discrete performances with clear demarcations of a beginning and an end, Talassi’s words suggest that the utterings of the individual poets were woven together within a greater collective performance.

This interwoven quality or the back-and-forth of the poets is undoubtedly due to the mechanics of performances of improvised poetry. In the eighteenth century, it was common for performances of improvisation to begin with the proposal of a subject upon which the poets would each improvise in tandem. The Arcadian Tourner, who had been active at the Academy in the 1770s, describes the workings of performances of improvisation at the Academy in these terms: he writes, “Sometimes the poets will challenge one another in rhyme, and find out reciprocally a subject; at other times any of the company is invited to give a subject, which, if there be two or three improvisatori, is generally of the problematic kind, that each may choose an opinion, and thus form an agreeable contention.”

Tourner’s words are confirmed by the Academy’s own accounts, in which performances of improvisation are recorded as having almost always begun with the proposal of a subject by a member of the audience, quite often a distinguished member or visiting dignitary, upon which the poets would improvise.

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Tourner’s statement that “the poets will challenge one another in rhime” suggests these group improvisations were competitive in nature. Crescimbeni, too, had used the word disfida [challenge, or contest], to describe the group improvisations at Ottoboni’s palace. Other Arcadians had similarly made reference to group improvisations as contests. Metastasio, for example, had described them using such phrases as “poetiche improvvisi gare” and “cantare a gara.” Anton Maria Salvini, the Florentine literary historian and Arcadian, had traced such a type of contest, what he himself described as a gara poetica, back to Theocritus and Virgil. However, despite the fact that improvisations were described by the Arcadians as competitions or contests, the designation of a winner may not have been a prime concern for the audience. We might understand the function of the gara poetica as that of a catalyst of poetic creation. That is, through such a contest the individual improvisers were stimulated to perform to their utmost abilities, and the heightened level of the poetry produced would presumably enhance the audience’s enjoyment of the performance.

The Academy’s own accounts of the reception of the improvisers’ performances of the 1770s tell against understanding them as competitive in nature. In some instances, such a

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lack of competition is conveyed through the collective praise of the improvisers. An account of a performance by Berardi and Rocchetti, for instance, recounts that “i due poeti straordinarj ricossero gran plauso della numerosissima udienza.” Moreover, even when the word *gara* is used in the Arcadians’ accounts, it does not seem to necessarily suggest the existence of a rivalry amongst the poets: while Versari, Rocchetti, and Giordani are described on one occasion as having participated in a “festosa ed applaudita gara di graziosi e pellegrini concetti,” the author of the account does not single out a winner, nor does he praise the improvisers in such a manner as to suggest a hierarchical relationship amongst them.

The improvisers themselves also seem to have valued the collective nature of improvisation at the Academy. Talassi’s remark quoted above, in which he speaks of the prospect of performing alongside the other Arcadian improvisers in positive terms, demonstrates that he recognized that performances at the Academy were of a collective nature and that he valued this. Such a positive appraisal from Talassi is particularly significant given that, outside of the context of the Academy, he seems to have practiced poetic improvisation primarily as a solo performer. In accounts of Talassi performing abroad in Europe, in England, France, and Portugal, he is recorded as improvising by himself. Talassi is also one of the few improvisers who, on rare occasions, performed by himself at the Academy. Given that Talassi was thus accustomed to solo performance,

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219 Meeting of 6 May 1773, BAR, Atti Arcadici 6, 23v-24r.

220 Meeting of 30 September 1773, BAR, Atti Arcadici 6, 42v.

221 For further details, see Capodarca, "'Europee novelle': lettere familiari, cronache, note di viaggio di un poeta improvvisatore del settecento."
his recognition and affirmation of the collective nature of improvisation at the Academy suggests that the Arcadian practice of improvisation as a collective undertaking was valued by the improvisers themselves. Talassi’s comment is of further significance because his letter was addressed to the Custode of the Academy at the time, Gioacchino Pizzi. This suggests that concept of improvisation as a collective practice was part of a dialogue amongst the academicians.222

Another improviser of the time, Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi, spoke of the collegial rapport amongst the improvisers in greater detail. In a eulogy written in honor of the improviser Matteo Berardi, De Rossi writes of Berardi’s relationship with Baldassare Rocchetti.223 He notes how Berardi had decided “a non avere altri compagni nel canto fuori dell’amico Rocchetti.”224 Rocchetti is not simply described as Berardi’s friend, but, with De Rossi’s use of the phrase “compagni nel canto,” as his collaborator. De Rossi then goes on to describe how the academicians recognized this relationship.225 Upon entering the Academy, Berardi had been given the name of Eurialo and Rocchetti that of Filastrio; Pizzi, however, renamed Rocchetti as Niso so that the two improvisers would be named after Euryalus and Nisus, two characters from Virgil’s Aeneid who were known for their loyalty and steadfastness.

222 For a recent study on his custodianship, see Annalisa Nacinovich, "Il sogno incantatore della filosofia": L’Arcadia di Gioacchino Pizzi, 1772-1790 (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2003). Pizzi was custode between 1772 and 1790.


224 Ibid., 330.

225 Ibid., 331.
to have shared an intimate bond. In this act of renaming, Pizzi publicly sanctioned the partnership of the two improvisers.

De Rossi expands this camaraderie to include other improvisers. He speaks of how “il Rocchetti, il Romanelli, ed il valoroso Battistini erano i suoi [that is, Berardi’s] compagni nel canto.”226 Once again, with his use of the phrase “compagni nel canto,” De Rossi encourages his reader to understand the improvisers as being collaborators.

Although Talassi and De Rossi both experienced the Academy’s culture of improvisation first-hand in the 1770s, De Rossi’s text, unlike Talassi’s letter, does not date from this time, but was instead published in the early nineteenth century. While De Rossi’s reminiscences may be tainted by a certain nostalgia, the fact that he stressed the close and collaborative rapport amongst the improvisers allows us to recognize that their collective nature was significant for him in constructing a remembrance of improvisation at the Academy.

Indeed, the idea that the improvisers of the 1770s had existed as a type of community seems to have been perpetuated in the collective memory of the Arcadians into the mid-nineteenth century. This is reflected in a text published in the Arcadians’ journal, the *Giornale arcadico di scienze, lettere ed arti*, in 1843 by Francesco Fabi de’ conti Montani, who was the *sotto-custode* of the Academy at the time of the publication of the article.227 The text is a eulogy in honor of Francesco Gianni, an improviser who had

226 Ibid., 3.

joined the Academy in 1777, and who went on to achieve great fame at the end of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century in Italy and abroad. Fabi uses the eulogy to convey a sense of the close rapport of the improvisers of the 1770s. He writes of Gianni:

usava, è vero, all’arcadia, e all’accademia de’ forti: udava i precetti di un monsig. Leopoldo Tangerini, che dichiaratosi suo mecenate, avealo provveduto di mezzi a vivere: ascoltava volentieri que’ dotti, da cui imparare poteva: cimentavasi col Berardi, col Rocchetti, col De Rossi e col suo maestro medesimo nello improvvisare.

The collegial rapport of the improvisers here described evokes a sense of them having been a group, one that included Gianni alongside Tangerini, Berardi, Rocchetti, and De Rossi, and that existed at both the Arcadian Academy and the Accademia dei Forti, another Roman Academy that came into being in the late 1770s. The existence of this particular relationship within the context of Arcadia, however, appears to have been Fabi’s own creation. Gianni entered the Academy in 1777, at a time when Berardi was no longer part of the Academy, and when this group of improvisers no longer performed together at the Academy’s meetings. There is no record of Gianni having improvised alongside Tangerini, or Berardi, or Rocchetti, or De Rossi at the Academy. Rather than basing this sense of an Arcadian collective of improvisers on records of the Academy’s

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230 For the Accademia dei Forti, see "Di alcune antiche accademie di Roma," L’Arcadia. Periodico di scienze, lettere ed arti III, no. 6 (1891).
meetings, Fabi borrowed and augmented a statement from a biography of Gianni published earlier in the nineteenth century, in which the author claimed that Gianni “Frequentava, egli è vero, l’accademia dei Forti, ed i valenti improvvisatori Berardi, Rocchetti, de Rossi, oltre il Battistini.” In his revision of this passage and his assertion that such a collective had existed in Arcadia, Fabi appears to have been so keen to evoke a sense of an Arcadian community of improvisers that he rather freely reconstructed the earlier biography.

In sum, the improvisers performed in groups, their performances were interwoven, their performances were praised in a nonhierarchical fashion, and the collegial rapport of the improvisers was recognized by both the Academy and the improvisers themselves. These factors taken together suggest that the Academy and the improvisers took part in the formation of the identity of the improviser as being that of a member of a greater collective.

The individualization of the improviser

Yet this treatment of Arcadian improvisation as a collective practice was contemporaneous with the increased focused on the prowess of one particular individual, Maria Maddalena Morelli, creating the first important ambivalence in the Arcadian conception of the Arcadian improviser.

Morelli joined the Academy and was given her Arcadian name of Corilla Olimpica in the early 1750s. Following this first visit to Rome and her induction into the Academy, she moved to Florence where she developed her career and obtained the praise of both Italians and foreigners for her talents of poetic improvisation. Dignitaries and travelers from across Europe sought to see her perform. In the early nineteenth century, several years after Corilla’s death, Mme de Staël described Corilla as the “improvisatrice italienne, dont tout le mond a entendu parler,” a statement which speaks to the level of fame Corilla had achieved.

In 1775, Corilla made a second prolonged visit to Rome and was received at the Academy with much acclaim. When she appeared at the Academy for the first time that year, the author of the records of the meetings notes that she was “ricevuta con battimenti di mani, e con un plauso straordinario.” Even before her actual return, crowds are described as having flocked to the Arcadians’ meetings after rumors of a potential appearance had spread through Rome.

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232 For Corilla’s introduction to the Academy, see A. Ademollo, Corilla Olimpica (Florence, 1887), 58.

233 For further details on her career, see Giuli, "'Monsters of Talent': Fame and Reputation of Women Improvisers in Arcadia"; "Women Poets and Improvisers: Cultural Assumptions and Literary Values in Arcadia."; "Corilla Olimpica Improvvisatrice: Toward a Reappraisal of her Life."; Feo, "Corilla Olimpica e l'improvvisazione aulica."


235 Meeting of 12 January 1775, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 70.

236 Meeting of 5 January 1775, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 68.
Corilla went on to improvise with great frequency, more than any other improviser, at the Academy’s meetings over the next year and a half. These performances were frequently reported in the pages of the weekly Roman chronicle, the *Diario ordinario*, indicating that her presence at the Academy was a newsworthy event.\(^{237}\) She was unquestionably the star of poetic improvisation.

Although her presence at the Academy was contemporaneous with that of the collective of improvisers I described above and she performed alongside the other improvisers, she was actively displaced from their collective. Through acts of recognitions of her particular prowess relative to the other improvisers, recognitions which became progressively more pronounced, she was placed above and, thus, set apart from the collective. In making these distinctions between Corilla and the collective, the uniqueness of her persona within the Academy was stressed. Thus, unlike the improvisers whose participation in the culture of improvised poetry at the Academy served to shape their identity as members of a greater collective, Corilla’s participation served to emphasize her distinctiveness.

While on occasion Corilla improvised by herself at the Arcadians’ meetings, it was far more common for her to perform with the other improvisers. One such performance is described as follows:

\(^{237}\) Notices of her appearances at the Academy appeared in the following issues of the *Diario ordinario*: n.6 (12 January 1775), n.16 (25 February 1775), n. 32 (22 April 1775), n.112 (27 January 1776), n.118 (17 February 1776), n.126 (16 March 1776), n.134 (13 April), n.136 (20 April 1776), n. 144 (18 May 1776).
con la sua naturale meravigliosa virtù improvvisò [Corilla] per lungo spazio di tempo, essendo anche subentrati al canto il sig. Gio De Rossi, e il sig. Giuseppe Giordani [...] È indicibile la grazia, la pronerza e l'energia, con cui la valorosa Corilla rispondeva a tutti in vari metri, e tanto più recò stupore alla numerosissima udienza 238

Here Corilla is portrayed as the central focus of the performance, with De Rossi and Giordani relegated to the roles of auxiliary performers. The praise of the audience as described was reserved for Corilla alone. While she is not described as the winner of a poetic battle, her preeminent status is implied in the absence of praise for De Rossi and Giordani.

In accounts of other performances, Corilla’s prowess is recognized as being superior to that of the other improvisers in a more explicit manner. One representative account reads as follows:

> fu poi dalla medessima per lungo spazio di tempo improvvisato ora a solo, ora alternativamente co' sig.ri ab. Baldassare Rocchetti, dottor Angelo Talassi, Gio. De Rossi, e Giuseppe Giordani [...] Nel combatter la quale singolarmente si distinse la prelodata.239

Unlike the group improvisations of the other improvisers which were praised communally, the praise here is individuated and hierarchical. In performances such as these, the Arcadians’ *gare poetiche* became competitions and Corilla was the clear victor.

The distinction between the talents of Corilla and the other improvisers was discussed beyond the confines of the Academy. When an English visitor to Rome, John Moore, wrote of a friend having described one of her performances at the Academy alongside

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238 Meeting of 12 January 1775, BAR, Atti Arcadici 6, 88v.

239 Meeting of 9 February 1775, 92v, Atti Arcadici 6, BAR, Rome.
another Arcadian improviser, he recalls how his friend had thought that “though they were Arcades ambo, they were by no means cantare pares.” Moore’s friend borrows and augments Virgil’s statement “Arcades ambo, Et cantare pares, et respondere parati [Arcadians both, equal in the song and ready in the response],” in such a way as to stress the superiority of Corilla relative to the other Arcadian improviser.

Although the other improvisers in these accounts were marked as being inferior to Corilla, their presence nonetheless served an important function, as a foil to Corilla’s greatness. Their lack enhanced her prowess in the eyes of the audience.

Other more overt acts of recognition served to further elevate Corilla above the collective. In February of 1775, the Arcadians bestowed upon Corilla a crown of laurels at one of their meetings, an event that served to mark her unique poetic gifts. The Arcadians published the proceedings of the meetings and the British sculptor Christopher Heweston presented the Academy with a bust of Corilla as a “monumento perpetuo della coronazione” (figure 69). The act of coronation and the materials produced to memorialize this event called attention to Corilla’s existence as a solitary and supreme figure. Although she was a member of the Academy, the individuality of her identity was emphasized and celebrated. Heweston’s bust and the portrait of Corilla included in the published proceedings of the meeting drew attention to her singular persona (figure 70).

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242 Meeting of 6 May 1776, BAR, Atti Arcadici 6, 131v.
Her identity, through its visual embodiment and presentation in a unique figural form, is a reminder of her distinctiveness.

The coronation publicly marked Corilla’s poetic abilities as being at a level above her fellow improvisers. Even though such a hierarchical distinction was enacted, the improvisers Berardi, Rocchetti, Romanelli, De Rossi, Talassi, Tangerini all participated in this ceremony and recited poems in Corilla’s honor. In so doing, the collective took part in Corilla’s displacement from itself.

Corilla continued to rise above the collective. In August of 1776, the Arcadians crowned her as poet laureate on the Capitoline Hill, an honor which had been bestowed previously on only two poets, Petrarch and Bernardino Perfetti, a poet improviser from Siena, in 1725. Several notices of her coronation appeared in journals abroad, in Paris and in London. In one of the London journals, Corilla was described as being of “soaring genius” and the coronation as “noblest sight in the world.” Through such an act, due to its exclusive nature and its publicity, Corilla was publicly set well above both the collective of improvisers and the rest of the Arcadians. This was the climax of her individualization, the zenith of her recognition as preeminent poet. It was also the point at which the collective fractured.

243 Their poems are preserved in the pamphlet issued to commemorate the coronation.

244 For notices of the coronation abroad, see: The Selector, II (1776), 73-75; The London Magazine (Sept 1776), 504; The Town and Country Magazine (September 1776), 497; Mercure de France (October 1776), 214; Journale de politique et de litterature, n.25 (5 September 1776), 15.

245 The Selector, II (1776), 73.
Notices of disruption within the Academy appear in the Arcadians records shortly before the coronation. Gaetano Golt and Giuseppe Petrosellini, leaders of a dissenting faction of twenty Arcadians including the improviser Matteo Berardi, are noted as having put forth a protest.\(^{246}\) Some days later, Golt and Petrosellini are recorded as having circulated a letter to the Arcadian colonies asking them to break from the Academy.\(^{247}\) They also published letters expressing their disapproval of the Academy in the Florentine weekly serial, the *Gazzetta Mondiale*.\(^{248}\) Corilla’s name is not mentioned in these letters, but contemporary observers, both those within and outside of the Academy, recognized Corilla as being at the root of the crisis. For instance, in a letter written less than a month before the coronation took place, the Arcadian Alessandro Verri told his brother Pietro that the “i poeti d’Arcadia si sono divisi” as a result of their disagreements over Corilla.\(^{249}\) And Francesco Milizia, not an Arcadian, wrote of “una ribellione di arcadi contro il loro Custode” in a letter shortly after the coronation of 1776 took place, a rebellion which he himself understood to have “originato da una donna che arcadicamente è chiamata Corilla olimpica.”\(^{250}\)

\(^{246}\) Meeting of 12 August 1776, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 123.

\(^{247}\) Meeting of 8 September 1776, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 129.

\(^{248}\) The letters regarding the controversy appeared in the following issues of the *Gazzetta universale*, n. 60 (August 1776), 478; n. 66 (17 August 1776), 525-7; n. 67 (20 August 1776), 535-6; n.68 (24 August 1776), 543-4.


Although De Rossi was not a dissenter, and even though he had recited a poem in Corilla’s honor at her coronation in the Bosco, he seethes when he describes her Capitoline coronation in his eulogy of Berardi. He writes:

\[ \text{Venne però un epoca in cui la poesia estemporanea si rese serio argomento di dispute, e dissensioni fra’ letterati. Corilla Olimpica, che avea avuto dal ceto nostro pastorale il fregio di una corona di alloro, ambi a quella del Campidolgio, e l’ottenne. Questo avvenimento fu un mantice di discordie nel picciol mondo poetico. Partiti, fazioni, scritti, satire, proteste agitarono l’Arcadia, e la posero in uno stato di confusa rivoluzione.}^{251} \]

De Rossi identifies the Capitoline coronation as a source of intense disruption to what he describes as a “picciol mondo poetico.” His use of an abundance of vivid words – dispute, dissensioni, discordie, fazioni, and so on – heightens the reader’s sense of the intensity of this disruption. Although the poetic world to which De Rossi refers may have been that of the Academy more generally, it is far more likely to have been the sphere of improvisers, given that in his text De Rossi speaks almost exclusively of the improvisers, rather than other Arcadian poets more generally. Thus, from the standpoint of one of the improvisers, Corilla’s coronation, the climactic act of her individualization, was seen as the event that caused the breakdown of the collective.

At the same time, however, it is important to note that, had Corilla not entered the Academy, there most likely would not have been such a “picciol mondo poetico” of improvisers in the first place. Corilla’s presence stimulated an interest in improvisation at the Academy. As the author of the Arcadians’ records wrote, people flocked to the Academy when rumors of her return had spread through Rome. The frequent notices of

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her performances in the pages of *Diario ordinario*, and the absence of such notices of performances by the other improvisers without her, suggest that a public was interested in improvisation at the Academy because of Corilla. In the absence of such a celebrity, there seems to have been a corresponding lack of interest in performances of improvisation. Indeed, no collective of improvisers existed in the absence of a particularly celebrated improviser. In the chart of frequency of performances of improvisation, its rise in popularity corresponds to the presence of a particularly famous poet improviser at the Academy. That is, the peaks in the graph correspond to the arrival of Corilla Olimpica in the 1770s and Teresa Bandettini in the 1790s. Thus, although De Rossi brings our attention to the act of public recognition of Corilla’s prowess as fracturing the collective of improvisers, her fame also seems to have been necessary for the birth and initial continued existence of the collective of which he mourns the loss.

Yet, if De Rossi did not recognize the positive role played by Corilla in creating the collective of improvisers of the 1770s, he was nonetheless right that this “picciol mondo poetico” was no more. Corilla left Rome three days after the coronation and did not return to the Academy until 1794, and even then, she did not improvise. Berardi left the Academy after the coronation; Romanelli, Versari, and Tangerini are not recorded as having improvised at the Academy after the coronation; Rocchetti and Giordani improvised one more time in 1778; Talassi improvised twice in 1780, but by himself; De Rossi improvised, but only in the 1790s, and alongside a new generation of Arcadian improvisers. Indeed, after the coronation in August of 1776, it was not until the spring of 1778 that the next performance of improvisational poetry is recorded in the accounts of the Arcadians’ meetings. Moreover, performances of improvised poetry were infrequent
at the Academy for over a decade, until the advent of a new generation of improvisers at the Academy in the 1790s. Thus, Corilla’s coronation, the climax of her individualization, does indeed seem to have precipitated the end of the collective of the other improvisers, and the demise of the popularity Arcadian improvisation, at least for a time.

We will see in the next section of the chapter that the acts of Corilla’s individualization described above take on a different significance in relation to a second ambivalence in the Academy’s shaping of the Arcadian improviser’s identity – the Arcadian improviser as poet or performer.

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The Arcadians understood improvisation to be a poetic practice and the improviser to be a poet. These notions, however, were not universally accepted.252 Outside of the Academy, it was not uncommon for improvisation to be understood instead as a spectacle or a cultural curiosity, one lacking poetic merit.253 In this section, I argue that such a perception affected the Arcadians’ construction of another facet of the improviser’s identity. In particular, I interpret the absence of visual cues to performance in portraits of Arcadian improvisers belonging to the Academy as part of the Academy’s desire to legitimate the identity of the Arcadian improviser as a poet.

252 For perceptions of the improviser and improvisation in the eighteenth century more broadly see Esterhammer, *Romanticism and improvisation, 1750-1850*.

253 Ibid.
The improviser as poet

In his *Comentari*, Crescimbeni noted that improvisation was practiced by “nobilissimi Personaggi e de’ Letterati nulla mena eccellenti.” He thus encouraged his reader to recognize the improviser as a learned individual. He also conveyed a more precise sense of the improviser’s identity by recognizing Arcadian poets such as Giovan Battista Felice Zappi as improvisers. Such an identification encouraged his reader to associate the type of person who improvised poetry with the type of person who composed poetry in a traditional manner. In this way, by associating the persona of the improviser with that of a poet of a more conventional sort, Crescimbeni sought to establish the identity of the improviser as a poet.

The poetic coronations on the Capitoline Hill of two of the most famous Arcadian improvisers of the eighteenth century, Perfetti and Corilla, were far more significant acts through which the identity of the improviser was equated with that of a traditional poet. Before the eighteenth century, Petrarch had been the only poet to receive this honor. This particular act of poetic coronation thus served to link Perfetti and Corilla to Petrarch. In the publications that were issued to memorialize the coronations of Perfetti and Corilla, their relation to Petrarch was stressed. The identity of the improviser as poet was thus

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255 For the associations that were drawn between the coronation of the two improvisers and that of Petrarch, see Michel Giuseppe Morei, *Le vite degli arcadi illustri* (Rome, 1751), 5: 226; *Atti della solenne coronazione fatta in Campidoglio della insigne poetessa D.na Maria Maddalena Morelli Fernandez pistoiese tra gli arcadi Corilla Olimpica* (Parma, 1779), 1-3.
fashioned through its association with an established poetic identity of an esteemed pedigree.

The identity of the improviser as a poet was, however, not universally recognized. Although the reactions of foreigners to poetic improvisation were mixed, it was generally not recognized as a practice of great poetic merit.\textsuperscript{256} Such can be gleaned from travel accounts of the period. In her letters of travels through Italy of the late 1750s, the French poet Madame Du Boccage describes having seen an “improvisateur”; in the English translation of this text issued in 1770s, the term \textit{improvisateur} was translated as a person “who has the greatest talent at singing Italian poems by heart.”\textsuperscript{257} The English translator’s attempt at providing his reader with an accurate sense of the meaning of the term \textit{improvisateur} reveals an understanding of poetic improvisation as having involved the recitation of memorized verse, not extemporaneous creation.

The English traveler John Moore voiced other common misgivings about improvisation, noting that:

\begin{quote}
the Italian [language] is peculiarly calculated for poetry, and [...] verses may be made with more facility in this than in any other language. It may be more easy to find smooth lines, and make them terminate in rhyme in Italian, than in any language [...] Indeed I understand, from those who are judges, that those extempore compositions of the Improvisatori are in general but mean
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{256} Esterhammer, \textit{Romanticism and improvisation, 1750-1850}, ch.2.

productions, consisting of a few fulsome compliments to the company, and some common-place observations, put into rhyme, on the subject proposed.²⁵⁸

Like the belief that the improviser recited memorized verses, Moore’s claim that it was made possible by the very nature of the Italian language and that the extemporized productions lacked substance were common responses to improvisation.²⁵⁹ In fact, such comments seem to have been part of a standard repertory for tourist accounts of poetic improvisation.²⁶⁰

Given this lack of recognition of the poetic value of improvisation, it is not surprising that the improviser’s identity as a poet was unstable. While this can be inferred from Moore’s comments, other tourists were more explicit in their judgments. In describing an encounter with an improviser in Naples, the English tourist Christopher Hervey notes, “This personage called himself a poet.”²⁶¹ Here Hervey points to the improviser’s own self-identification as a poet. By using the word “call,” he suggests that such an identification was a pretension on the part of the improviser. Hervey himself goes on to describe improvisers as “extempory spouters” a term that does not connote any poetic merit on the part of the improviser, but rather recalls the idea of the improviser as someone who recites memorized verse.²⁶² And he does in fact go on to note that, the

²⁵⁸ Moore, A View of Society and Manners in Italy with Anecdotes Relating to Some Eminent Characters, III: 19.

²⁵⁹ Esterhammer, Romanticism and improvisation, 1750-1850, ch.2.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Christopher Hervey, Letters from Portugal, Spain, Italy and Germany, in the Years 1759, 1760, and 1761 (London, 1785), III: 354.

²⁶² Ibid., III: 355.
improvisers “assist themselves [...] by a sort of common-place poetry, which they take care to have in their head.”

Like Hervey, the French tourist Pierre Jean Grosley aimed his criticism at the improviser. He drew on the common dismissal of improvisation as being facilitated by the very nature of the Italian language as a means to discredit the improviser: he describes the skill of improvisation as a “talent qui fait moins l’éloge de ceux qui s’en parent, que d’une Langue assez abondante, assez facile, assez nombreuse pour se prêter & fournir à un pareil manège.” While Moore had spoken of the Italian language facilitating extempore productions, Grosely uses such a notion to explicitly discredit the poetical abilities of the improviser.

The improviser’s identity as a poet was no more firmly established amongst Italians themselves. Francesco Milizia, in posing his reader with the question “Quanti improvisatori non ha l’Italia, e quanto pochi poeti?,” called attention to the existence of a distinction between the improviser and the poet. Along a similar vein, the late eighteenth-century Venetian playwright Carlo Gozzi characterized improvisers, in general, as “rimatori all’improvviso,” not as poets.

263 Ibid.


265 Francesco Milizia, *Principj di architettura civile* (Finale, 1781), I: 463.

Such dismissals of the poetic identity of the improviser do not seem to have been written with reference to Arcadian improvisers, for the most part. In the eighteenth century, poetic improvisation was by no means a practice exclusive to the Arcadians. Instead, improvisers were recognized as both a typical and a common part of Italian culture, a character one encountered in towns and cities across the Italian peninsula. The experience of witnessing an act of improvisation was a common element of the journals of tourists from Northern European countries to Italy. Rather than appreciating improvisation for its poetic merit, it was often valued as entertainment or as a novelty of Italian culture. However, such generalized notions of improvisation as lacking poetic merit had the potential to destabilize the legitimacy of the Arcadians’ own practice and to discredit the poetic identity of the Arcadian improviser.

At a meeting of the Academy in 1775, we see the merit of improvisation being called into question; the author of the account of the meetings recounts that a French Abbé “mostrandosi incredulo sulla perogativa de’ poeti italiani d’improvvisare sopra qualunque soggetto venga loro proposto volle gli stesso done il tema.” The Abbé’s open questioning of the improvisers’ talents at this meetings suggests that the Arcadians would have been aware that the poetic valor of their improvisers was not universally recognized. Moreover, his desire to propose the subject of improvisation himself suggests that he may have either wanted to propose a particularly challenging subject to test the skills of the

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268 Ibid.

269 Meeting of 19 January 1775, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 71.
improvisers or, possibly, he may have thought that improvisation involved some sort of charlatanry or deceit and, thus, wanted to propose a subject to which the improvisers could not respond with a recitation of previously composed verse.

While this expression of doubt demonstrates that the Arcadians will have been aware that some questioned the poetic merit of their practice of improvisation in the 1770s, the incredulity on the part of foreigners seems to have gone on to become normalized, even in Arcadian circles. In a letter to his brother of 1794, the Arcadian Pietro Verri laments that “Non si può giustificare nè agli Stranieri, nè alla Posterità il merito d’improvvisare,” a comment made within the context of a letter related to his own interest in the performances of Corilla and Teresa Bandettini.²⁷⁰

The Arcadians were, in fact, most likely aware of the existence of doubts related to the poetic merit of improvisation at a much earlier date. In his writings, Crescimbeni seems to respond to potential issues of the improviser’s poetic legitimacy. For example, in his Comentari, he assures his reader that the improviser had of late become more respected. That he felt the need to bring attention to the contemporary improviser’s rise in esteem suggests that the status of the improviser was potentially of a questionable nature. In the same text, he also notes how improvisation, as he understood it, was subject to rules, rules with which “si chiude la strada all’improvvisatore di dire roba imparata a mente.”²⁷¹

Given that one of the frequent dismissals of improvisation amongst foreigners was that it


²⁷¹ Crescimbeni, Comentari, 147.
was simply memorized verse, Crescimbeni’s statement appears as a justification or a defense of improvisation, rather than merely an informative account of a particular facet of the practice.

Crescimbeni’s most potent defense of the legitimacy of improvisation seems to have been his effort to distance the Arcadian improviser from the popular practice of improvisation. To this end, in his Arcadia, he brought his reader’s attention to the existence of a type of improviser that was distinct from those affiliated with the Academy. He describes how improvisation had, in the course of time, “divenuta così popolare, ed abietta, come profanata, e adulterata da’ Capraj, e da Bifolchi, che i gentili Pastori si recano ora a vergogna il nome stesso, non che l’esercizio d’improvvisatore.”272 Having thus acknowledged the existence of both a type of popular practice of improvisation and the existence of the figure of the popular improviser, the unlearned laborers of the countryside credited with having defiled the practice, Crescimbeni goes on to make a claim as to the distinction between the popular practice and the popular improviser and that of the Arcadian practice and the Arcadian improviser. Crescimbeni speaks through one of the Arcadians of the narrative in making this claim: she says reassuringly to the Arcadian improviser, “non crediate [...] che io, mentre v’ho invitato ad improvvisare, v’abbia nel vil concetto, in cui tengo coloro, che per le ville, per l’aie, e per le vallee, e ovunque loro vien fatto, vanno co’ loro strambotti cercando d’esigere applauso dall’ignoranza.”273 The reader of Crescimbeni’s text is thus called on to recognize the

272 Crescimbeni, L’Arcadia, 116-117.

273 Ibid., 117.
existence of a distinction between the popular improviser and the Arcadian improviser. Such a statement appears to be an attempt to rescue the Arcadians’ own practice and its own improvisers from the generalized dismissals of the practice of the more widespread practice of improvisation.

Such distinctions between Arcadian and popular improvisers were not, however, either firmly established or recognized. The lack of a differentiation between the popular improviser and the Arcadian improviser is evident in an account of a performance by one of the Arcadian improvisers, Angelo Talassi, given by the English poet Robert Southey. Southey writes:

It was a strange loosely-connected rhapsody of rhymes: he complimented us all, talked of a Poet’s poor houses and poor supper, lamented the King of France, laughed at my Uncle for not bringing a wife, and told me that I should return there and marry one. This lasted about ten minutes, and, in a language so abundant in rhymes as the Italian, might have been continued as long as the Poet’s breath could endure. The defects of metre are disguised by toning, and they who admire the poetry of the South of Europe cannot complain if the effusions of the Improvisatore rise not above prose in dignity of sentiment.274

Having described Talassi’s performance in terms of characteristic dismissals of popular traditions of improvisation, Southey goes on to write of Talissi’s “professional trick.”275

According to Southey, Talassi’s “best passages were such as were easily introduced on any subject,” such that the words Talassi had improvised for Southey “were not the effusion of the moment,” but were memorized scripts that “were equally applicable to

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274 Robert Southey, *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Spain and Portugal* (Bristol, 1797), 540.

275 Ibid.
every young foreigner Talassi had been in company with.\textsuperscript{276} He thus implies that Talassi, too, took part in charlatanry of a sort – even if Talissi’s lines may have been of Talassi’s own making, they were nonetheless composed verse, not extemporaneous creation.

The diarist Hester Piozzi, who had seen Talassi perform in London in the early 1770s, characterized him in a similar manner reminiscent of the popular improviser. She writes:

\begin{quote}
Mr Talassi is reckoned in his own country a man of great genius; in ours he was, as I recollect, received with much attention, as a person able and willing to give us demonstration that improviso verses might be made, and sung extemporaneously to some well-known tune, generally one which admits of and requires very long lines; that so alternate rhymes may not be improper, as they give more time to think forward, and gain a moment for composition.\textsuperscript{277}
\end{quote}

While this passage may seem innocuous, its underlying attitude to improvisation is harsh. In suggesting that the lines of Talissi’s poetry were so long that they gave him time to compose, Piozzi, like Southey, dismisses the extempore nature of Talassi’s poetic production. Furthermore, by suggesting that Talassi was useful in providing the English audience with an example of improvised poetry, Piozzi characterizes Talassi as something of a cultural curiosity. The audience was not interested in Talassi’s poetry per se, but in witnessing his manner of performance, something with which they were not familiar due to its foreignness.

\textsuperscript{276} Ibid., 540-1.

\textsuperscript{277} Hester Lynch Piozzi, \textit{Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany} (London, 1789), I: 389.
Piozzi’s most cutting criticism, however, is her reference to Talassi having been considered a “great genius” in Italy. Talassi had indeed been described in the Arcadians records as “un egregio improvvisatore.”

Piozzi’s comments are thus significant not only because they deny Talassi’s own identity as a poet, but also, and more importantly, because they imply that the Arcadians themselves, and those in Italy more generally, were unfit judges of what it meant to be a poet.

Although she was the most celebrated of the Arcadian improvisers of her time, Corilla’s prowess was similarly called into question by some. For example, the French Count Claude-Camille-François d’Albon, who had attended Corilla’s coronation, noted that, although she had “acquis la plus grande célébrité,” “son mérite n’a pas répondu à l’idée que nous nous en étions faite.”

This echoes the way in which Piozzi acknowledged the esteem with which Italians held Talassi only to go on to dismiss his talent herself. Both Piozzi and Albon call attention to a supposed discrepancy between the actual poetic talents of the Arcadian improvisers and what they themselves deem to be their level of skill.

Albon’s text is of further interest because he goes on to recount the displeasure of the Roman people at the event of Corilla’s coronation. He suggests that they were “irrité de voir son nom à côté de ceux du Tasse & de Pétraque.”

While the Arcadians sought to

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278 Meeting of 10 November 1774, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 62.

279 Claude-Camille-François d' Albon, *Discours politiques, historiques et critiques sur quelques gouvernemens de l'Europe* (Neufchâtel, 1779-1781), II: 286.

280 Ibid., II: 286-7.
define the identity of the Arcadian improviser through an association with poets of an
established literary persona and through a disassociation from the common improviser,
the creation of the improviser’s identity in this manner was fragile, as others could ignore
or similarly employ such associations and disassociations to discredit the poetic
legitimacy of the Arcadian improviser.

A similar urge to create a clear distinction between the Arcadian improvisers and
Petrarch, and other Italian poets, is evident in the writings of Italians as well. Carlo Gozzi
recorded his observations of Arcadian improvisers as follows:

\[ M’inchinerò sempre per semplice urbana politezza alle incoronazioni di lauro ne’
Campidogli dei Cavalieri Perfetti, e delle Corille, ma adorerò sempre
cordialmente, e seriamente quelle de’ Virgili, de’ Petrarchi, e de’ Tassi
soltanto. \]^{281}

By calling attention to a distinction between the two Arcadian improvisers, Perfetti and
Corilla, and the three renowned poets, Virgil, Petrarch, and Tasso, Gozzi displaces the
improviser from the poet. The contrast between Gozzi’s disdain for the improvisers and
his worship of the poets heightens the magnitude of this distinction. By using the plural
form of these names, Gozzi’s comment pertains not to the individuals, but to their more
general type. People like Perfetti and Corilla are dissimilar from people like Virgil,
Petrarch, and Tasso. In this way, Gozzi attempts to deny the poetic identity of the
Arcadian improviser that the Academy had attempted to create.

Through these various examples of perceptions of the improviser in the late eighteenth
century, we see that the identity of the improviser was malleable and unstable. While the

\[ ^{281} \text{Gozzi, Memorie inutili, 209.} \]
Arcadians sought to define the identity of the Arcadian improviser through an association with poets of an established literary persona and through a disassociation from the common improviser, the creation of the improviser’s identity in this manner was tenuous, as others could ignore or similarly employ such associations and disassociations to discredit the poetic legitimacy of the Arcadian improviser.

The Arcadians’ portraits of their most prominent improvisers of the eighteenth century, portraits in which visual strategies mirrored those of the Arcadians’ textual and verbal discourses, provided the Academy with a means by which to affirm and memorialize the identity of the Arcadian improviser as being that of a poet. Such a representational strategy is evident in portraits of the three most prominent Arcadian improvisers of the eighteenth century, Perfetti, Corilla, and Teresa Bandettini, which were either produced by or belonged to the Academy. Although there are multiple portraits of these improvisers, I will focus on a small selection: the portrait of Perfetti included with his biography in the Le vite degli arcadi illustri (figure 71), the sculpted bust of Corilla by Christopher Heweston (figure 69) and the images of Corilla included in the publications issued in honor of her coronation (figures 70 & 72), and the portrait of Teresa painted by Pietro Labruzzi (figure 73).282 The portrait of Perfetti appeared in one of the Academy’s own publications and, thus, represents the image of the improviser that the Arcadians

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282 For the Arcadian portraits and reproductions of a number of the portraits, see Cecilia Pericoli, "La Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dell'Arcadia," Capitolium XXXV, no. 6 (1960); Fabrizio Antolini, "La vita culturale: Le accademie," in Arte, scienza e cultura in Roma cristiana, ed. Guglielmo Matthiae (Bologna: Cappelli, 1971). While some of the portraits are on display in the Biblioteca Angelica, far more are conserved at the Museo di Roma. Pericoli cites the existence of other portraits of Corilla and Perfetti, along with those of Francesco Gianni, De Rossi, and others.
themselves chose; and the portraits of Corilla included in the publications issued to memorialize her coronations are significant for similar reasons. Heweston’s bust of Corilla and Labruzzi’s portrait of Teresa are important because they were presented at meetings of the Academy with some fanfare: Heweston’s bust was praised by the Arcadians on the occasion of its presentation and a commemorative booklet was printed to memorialize the presentation of Labruzzi’s portrait of Teresa.²⁸³ The attention paid to these works suggests that they were representations of Arcadian improvisers that the Arcadians themselves valued. Public praise of them also suggests that the Arcadians were keen to draw attention to these portrayals. Furthermore, the portraits were housed in the Arcadians’ portrait gallery in the Serbatojo, the space in which the performances of improvisation took place. We might imagine that the placement of these works within the same space in which the improvisers themselves stood, and were viewed by an audience, reinforced the connection between the improviser in the flesh and the improviser as embodied in the portrait image. As the actual body and physical presence of the improviser informed the perception of the portrait, so too could the portrait inform the perception of the improviser.

²⁸³ The presentation of Heweston’s bust was described as follows: "In tal festosa occasione il celebre artefice inglese sig.r cristofaro heweston, già mosso dal genio liberale, che anima la sua nazione, nel giorno in cui corilla fu coronata dalgi arcadi, desiderò che fosse inalzato nella sala del servatojo un parlante busto di marmo da sui egregiamente scolpito, e donato all'adunanza per monumento perpetuo della coronazione dell'acclamata pastorella." Meeting of 6 May 1776, BAR, Atti Arcadici 6, 131v. The presentation of Labruzzi’s portrait was described as follows: "gl'arcadi collocarono nella sala del serbatojo magnificamente adobbata il ritratto del la celebre poetessa estemporanea sig.ra teresa bandettini, dipinto egregiamente dal sig. labruzzi, in una solenne adunanza celebrarono le lodi dell'illustre pastorella d'arcadia." Meeting of 2 March 1794, BAR, Atti Arcadici 7, 46r.
In his portrait in the *Vite*, Perfetti is displayed as a bust-length figure set within an oval frame flanked by fronds of oak and laurel, symbols of the Academy, below which an identification plaque is set. This general compositional format was standard for the portraits in the volumes of the *Vite*. In such portraits, the individual’s professional identity was conveyed primarily through the inscription on the plaque below the image of the sitter. Perfetti is described as a “poetae extemporaneo laureato,” while in the biography preceding that of Perfetti, the French cardinal Melchior de Polignac is described as a “philosopho et poetae” (figure 74), and in the biography before that, Francesco Arisi is described as a “historico et poetae” (figure 75). There is little to denote the individuals’ particular branch of literary expertise, aside from this textual reference of the identification plaque. None of the figures are presented with common markers of poetic identity, such as a writing utensil in hand or a lyre, nor are the philosopher and the historian represented with iconographic markers of these aspects of their literary identity. While iconographic markers of a sitter’s literary identity were not uncommon in the Arcadians’ painted portraits, such as in Camillo Loreti’s portrait of the poet Giacinta Orsini of 1773 (figure 76), a copy of Pompeo Battoni’s portrait that Cardinal Orsini had commissioned especially as a gift for the Arcadians, such visual markers were kept to a minimum in the portraits of the *Vite.*


This more general absence of iconography related to the sitters’ literary personae makes the inclusion of Perfetti’s laurel crown a notable exception. The laurel crown marks him as an exceptionally gifted poet, since poetic coronations were reserved for only the most highly esteemed poets. The symbol of the laurel crown is also a visual reminder of Perfetti’s relation to Petrarch as a poet laureate and, thus, serves to mark Perfetti not only as a gifted poet, but as the same type of poet as Petrarch. Given that this is the sole visual representation of an improviser in the five volumes of the *Vite*, the viewer is encouraged to understand the improviser as being a particularly gifted poet. The visual juxtaposition of Perfetti’s textual identification as “poetæ extemporaneo” and his visual representation as a poet laureate makes this clear.

The crown of laurels is also present in all three portraits of Corilla. The crown in the portrait produced to memorialize her Capitoline coronation functions in a similar manner as that in Perfetti’s portrait – it is a visual reminder of her connection to Petrarch. Heweston’s bust and the portrait included in the pamphlet issued to commemorate her coronation in the Bosco Parrasio of 1775 cannot likewise be understood as such strong visual testaments to her link with Petrarch. However, the laurel crown in these images still serves as a marker of her poetic identity due to the laurel’s status as a symbol of Apollo as the god of poetry and because, in the eighteenth century, the public act of bestowing a crown of laurels was a means by which a poet’s merit could be publicly acknowledged.\(^{286}\) Moreover, at this time, artists used the laurel crown to denote the poetic

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merit of their sitter. For example, the French sculptor Jean-Baptiste Defernex had
executed a bust of the French poet Mme du Bocage in 1766, in which she is shown with a
laurel crown (figure 77).287 Note that, unlike Giacinta Orsini, both Corilla and Mme du
Bocage are depicted with their laurel crowns on their heads, testaments to the event of a
coronation and, thus, to an act of public recognition of their poetic merit.

In the publication issued to memorialize her coronation at the Bosco, Corilla’s identity as
a poet is also conveyed through her visual association with Erato, the muse of lyric
poetry. Corilla is not herself presented as the muse, but her portrait is juxtaposed with an
image of Erato on the facing page (figure 78). The figure is recognizable as Erato through
the combination of the all’antica dress, her mantel, the flower in her hair, her seated
position on a stone seat, the particular position of her left arm, and the lyre in her hand,
characteristics which seem to have been drawn from the well-known classical sculpture
of Erato that had been in Roman collections in the early eighteenth century (figure 79).288

Late eighteenth-century viewers in Rome will have been familiar with this particular
classical model through its illustration in Paolo Alessandro Maffei’s Raccolta di statue
antiche e moderne of 1704 (figure 80) and with the more general iconography of this


288 Phyllis Pray Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, Renaissance Artists & Antique Sculpture: A
Handbook of Sources, 2nd ed. (London: H. Miller, 2010), 88. According to Bober, the
statue was part of a group of seated muses discovered at Hadrian’s Vila. It was part of the
Roman collection of Queen Christina of Sweden in the seventeenth century, passed into
the collection of Livio Odeschalchi in 1704, and was then purchased by King Philip V of
Spain c. 1724.
muse through her portrayal by such artists as Angelica Kauffmann (figure 81). The juxtaposition of the portrait of Corilla with this representation of the muse and the placement of Corilla’s name directly over the image are means by which Corilla comes to be associated with Erato.

In his portrait of Teresa, rather than merely juxtaposing the image of the poet with that of Erato, Labruzzi presents the improviser in the guise of the muse herself, once again with the roses, classical dress, mantel, and lyre. The insertion of Cupid and the particular manner in which Teresa’s particular grip of the lyre is represented emphasize the connection between the classical model of Erato and Teresa. Unlike the muse, Teresa is shown here with a writing instrument in her hand. In this way, Labruzzi invites his viewer to associate Teresa with the act of composition. The insertion of a writing instrument is intriguing since, unlike traditional poets whose production was a result of a process of composition on paper, the improviser’s poetry was declaimed extempore.

Moreover, improvised productions were not normally transcribed or published. Although Teresa did publish poetry that had not been created extemporaneously, her fame at the Academy was related to her skills of improvisation. When she appeared at Arcadian meetings, she improvised — she did not recite previously composed poetry. Thus, even though Teresa was renowned for her extemporaneous creations, Labruzzi’s iconography stresses that the improviser possessed the compositional talents of a traditional poet. Both

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Teresa’s guise as the muse Erato and her writing utensil serve to confirm that her identity is akin to that of a poet of a traditional sort.

These examples of portraits of Perfetti, Corilla, and Teresa are evidence of the Academy’s attempt to establish the identity of the Arcadian improviser as that of a poet.

*The improviser as performer*

The visual insistence on the identity of the Arcadian improviser as a traditional sort of poet becomes clearer when we recognize that there were ways that the artists of the Arcadian portraits could have represented the unique character of the improviser’s poetic production as an extemporaneous act that took place in front of a viewing audience.

Artists were exploring means of integrating evocations of performance within the genre of portraiture in the eighteenth century. The portraits of English actors such as Sarah Siddons by William Hamilton (figure 82), David Garrick by William Hogarth (figure 83), and Emma Hamilton by Angelica Kauffmann (Figure 84) attest to an interest in the representation of the talent of performance.290

Examples of portraits of performance of a closer resemblance to the Arcadian portraits exist. In the year that Heweston sculpted the bust of Corilla, the French sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon executed a portrait bust of the actress Sophie Arnould (figure 85), a

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work that was known in Italy.²⁹¹ Houdon encourages the viewer of the bust to recognize
that Arnould has been portrayed in the midst of a performance, signaled by the tilting of
her head, her expressive eyes and mouth, and the folds of the drapery of her costume.²⁹²
Heweston conveys no such interest in presenting Corilla in the midst of a performance of
improvisation.

In the same years that Labruzzi executed his portrait of Teresa, she was also depicted by
Angelica Kauffman (figure 86). While both artists present the improviser in the guise of a
muse, Kauffman, unlike Labruzzi, portrays Teresa in the midst of a performance, overtly
signaled through her raised arm and the dynamic posturing of her body. Moreover, in
Kauffmann’s memorandum of paintings, Teresa is described as having been depicted in
the midst of a performance.²⁹³ Given that Kauffman was Labruzzi’s colleague at the
Accademia di San Luca, it is unlikely that Labruzzi was unaware of the potential of
presenting Teresa in such a manner. Yet, like Heweston, Labruzzi did not avail himself of
these means. Given that there were means by which the artist could evoke the unique
nature of the improviser’s poetic practice, the fact that such means were not employed in

²⁹¹ The bust was described in the Gazzetta universale as follows: "Sig. Houdon noto
gia'...per il busto d'Ifigenia sotto la sembianza di madamigella Arnould, in cui ha fatti
comparne al naturale i tratti del di lei volto, e la forza dell'espressione, che dimostra al
celebre Attrice." Gazzetta universale, n.73 (10 September 1776), 577.

²⁹² Anne L. Poulet, ed. Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment
(Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2003), 97-99. Poulet explains that it is a
representation of Arnould in her role as Iphigenia in Gluck's Iphigénie en Aulide staged
in Paris in 1774.

²⁹³ In an entry of March 1794 in Kauffmann’s accounting of her paintings, Teresa is
described as being portrayed “in the act of reciting.” Victoria Manners and George
Charles Williamson, Angelica Kauffmann, R.A., Her Life and Her Works (London: John
Lane, 1924), 165.
the Arcadians’ own portraits of improvisers is striking. It points to the Academy’s desire
to construct and project the identity of the improviser as solely that of a traditional poet.

What makes the absence of allusions to performance in the Academy’s portraits of their
improvisers even more intriguing is the fact that the Academy seems to have valued
certain characteristics of the improviser’s performance, particularly those associated with
poetic enthusiasm, a type of divine inspiration. Perfetti, Corilla, and Teresa were all
praised by their contemporaries for their enthusiasm.294

In his treatise Dell’Enthusiasmo delle belle arti (1769), the Arcadian Saverio Bettinelli
claimed that enthusiasm was “quello che contraddistingue propriamente i veri poeti” and
that “non v’ha forse esempio piu’ manifesto dell’Entusiasmo quasi visibile quanto
nell’occasione d’improvvisare.”295 Given that enthusiasm, according to Bettinelli, was
both a characteristic of true poets and something that was made visible in the act of
improvisation, the visual manifestation of an improviser’s enthusiasm should be visual
evidence of his or her identity as a true poet. Indeed, Bettinelli presents us with a visually

294 Charles De Brosses describes Perfetti’s enthusiasm as follows: “cet homme
extraordinaire [Perfetti] déclamait comme un poète plein d’enthousiasme.” Transcribed in
Charles de Brosses, Lettres familières d'Italie: lettres écrites d'Italie en 1739 et 1740
(Brussels: Éd. Complexe, 1995), 130. For Corilla as inspired poet, see BAR, Atti
Arcadici 6, 101v (meeting of 14 April 1775), and 127v (5 April 5 1776). For Teresa as
inspired poet, see Adunanza tenuta dagli Arcadi il di 2 marzo 1794 giorno in cui fu
collocatone sala del Serbatojo il ritratti di Amarilli Etrusca sig.ra Teresa Bandettini
(Rome, 1794), 24. For an alternative approach to the study of enthusiasm, see Giulii,
""Monsters of Talent": Fame and Reputation of Women Improvisers in Arcadia," 323-326.

295 Saverio Bettinelli, Dell'entusiasmo delle belle arti (Milan, 1769), 7 and 48.
evocative description of the physical animation and movement of the improviser’s body in an enthusiastic state. He writes:

Io l’ho dunque veduto più volte star cheto prima, e svolgliato, incominciare languido, e incerto, urtando or colla rima, or co’ pensieri, ed è questa una prova, che non è l’Entusiasmo uno stato dell’anima usato, e ordinario, perchè fin allora puo’ dirsi ella restarsene in terra, e ad un piano medesimo con tutte l’altre. Ma eccoti, quando meno egli il penso, o tu l’aspetti tutto a un punto riaccendersi, ravvivarsi, levarsi, e prese un subito l’ale, e spiegatele mettersi a volo [...] s’alza la voce, affrettasi il gesto, e vibransi i moti.

Enthusiasm was thus made manifest in the animation of the improviser. Bettinelli describes a figure possessed. He provides his readers with the aural and physical cues through which they might recognize the improviser’s transformation. The spectator of the enthusiastic improviser could hear what Bettinelli seems to describe as either the crescendo of the improviser’s voice or possibly the raising of the voice’s pitch and the resonance or the vibrato-like quality of the improviser’s utterings. The spectator is also cued visually to this change through the animation of the improviser. Bettinelli’s allusions to wings and flying could be references to characteristics of the improviser’s voice, but equally to a sense of levity or buoyancy of the improviser’s body. The idea of the speeding up of the improviser’s gestures is suggestive of an increased intensity of his or her movement being made visibly apparent.

At Corilla’s Capitoline coronation, the visual manifestation of her enthusiasm was publicly praised. In a laudatory speech, the Arcadian Luigi Godard described the sight of one of her enthusiastic performances: “Chi non la vide star cheta prima e svogliata, incominciaren languida e incerta, indi in un punto accendersi, ravvviarsi, levarsi sull’ale, [...]

296 Ibid., 48-50.
affrettare il gesto e la voce, vibrare i moti.”297 Godard evidently drew on Bettinelli’s conception of enthusiasm in creating this description of the spectacle of Corilla’s enthusiasm. Undoubtedly, the allusion to Bettinelli was a means by which Godard could testify to Corilla’s poetic prowess, as he here describes a scene in which the visual evidence needed to judge an enthusiastic state according to Bettinelli was presented. Godard thus seems to refer to the visual signs of Corilla’s enthusiasm as a means of substantiating her identity as a true poet. Yet, this visually evocative textual portrayal of the dynamism of improviser’s body is at odds with the Academy’s static visual portrayals of Corilla and the other Arcadian improvisers.

Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Le Brun, a colleague of Labruzzi, Kauffmann, and Barberi at the Accademia di San Luca, provides us with a sense of what a portrayal of an inspired improviser might look like in her early nineteenth-century portrait of Mme de Staël as the improviser Corinne (figure 87), the protagonist of de Staël’s novel Corinne. While Vigée-Le Brun has omitted the overt gestures of Kauffmann’s portrait of Teresa, she nonetheless included clear physical cues as a means to convey the figure’s inspired state. The upward tilt of de Staël’s head and her heavenward gaze are the physical cues by which she alludes to the divine inspiration. While such cues are nowhere near so dramatic as Bettinelli’s description of the movement of the body of the inspired improviser, nor are they as overt as the gestures of Teresa in Kauffmann’s portrait, such physical cues were nonetheless part of a traditional representational strategy for a portrayal of divine inspiration. The heavenward gaze in particular had been used in

297 Atti della solenne coronazione fatta in Campidoglio della insigne poetessa D.na Maria Maddalena Morelli Fernandez, 49.
portraits of inspired sibyls, such as those by Domenichino in the seventeenth century (figure 88), Sebastiano Conca in the early eighteenth century (figure 89), and even Vigée-Le Brun herself in a painting of Emma Hamilton in the guise of a sibyl of 1792 (figure 90). The Arcadians were almost certainly familiar with such a means of representing inspiration. The late-eighteenth century poet Vincenzo Monti, who had been praised by the Arcadians for his enthusiasm, was portrayed in his Arcadian portrait with his gaze turned heavenward (figure 91), which we should assume was the means by which the artist sought to convey Monti’s nature as an inspired poet.298

Compared to these other images, the Arcadians’ hesitance or disinterest in portraying their improvisers as enthusiastic seems overt and intentional. The static postures, the arms at rest, and the strong forward gazes of Perfetti, Corilla, and Teresa in the Arcadians’ own portraits all encourage the viewer not to associate these figures with a physically dynamic performance.

We can return to Carlo Gozzi’s *Memories* to understand this absence of visual cues to enthusiastic performance, and to performance more generally. In his discussion of improvisation, Gozzi brings attention to a conflict between poetry and performance. He writes that the image of an improviser, one with his face on fire and his arm in the air, is the image of false poetry:

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298 Monti is described in an account of one of the Arcadians’ meeting as having recited a poem “scritto con molto entusiasmo.” Meeting of 29 March 1793, BAR, Atti Arcadici 7, 33v. Thus, while his recitation is not described as being enthusiastic, he was nonetheless associated with the idea of poetic enthusiasm.
Gozzi thus presents the physical spectacle of a performance of improvised poetry as a false and inadequate substitute for poetry itself. He implies that the visual presence of the physical spectacle of performance marks an absence of poetry. While the Arcadians would have not been familiar with Gozzi’s sentiments – for his Memorie are thought to have been written in the 1780s and were not published until 1797 – the marked absence of cues to performance in their portraits of improvisers may be indicative of an awareness on the part of the Academy that visual cues to performance could be interpreted along the lines of Gozzi’s text, as markers of an absence of poetic merit. Given that the physical manifestation of inspiration as described by Godard seems to echo Gozzi’s characterization of the improviser with his face on fire and arms in the air, Gozzi may have been pointing particularly to the physical manifestations of enthusiasm in his critique of improvisation.

The physicality of the spectacle of enthusiasm does seem to have had the potential to act as a substitute for or a distraction from the Arcadian improviser’s poetry. The English tourist Moore evokes a sense of his friend’s wonder at having witnessed a performance of Corilla’s enthusiasm. According to his friend:

299 Gozzi, Memorie inutile, 209.

300 Ibid., 24-30. The editor suggests that the memoirs were written between 1780 and 1784/5.
nothing could have more the air of inspiration, or what we are told of the Pythian Prophetess. As her first setting out, her manner was sedate, or rather cold; but gradually becoming animated, her voice rose, her eyes sparkled.301

Although the spectacle of Corilla’s enthusiastic display here described does not necessarily demean her merit as a poet per se, the fascination with the spectacle of her performance draws attention away from the poetry she was producing.

Characteristics of performance, particularly in terms of the improviser’s physical display, thus seem to have had a precarious place in the reception of Arcadian improvisation. While the visual manifestations of performance were praised by Arcadians like Godard, they were nonetheless characteristics of the improviser’s art that provided critics with a means to demean the practice of improvisation and to discredit the improviser’s identity as a poet. This helps us to understand the absence of cues to performance in the Academy’s images of its improvisers. In speeches and in text, the Arcadian improviser was defined as a poet and aspects of the improviser’s performance were accepted as part of this identity. In images, the Arcadian improviser’s identity as a performer was suppressed in order to evade conceptions external to the Academy of the mutual exclusivity of poetry and performance. While allusions to Petrarch or to Erato in the Arcadians’ portraits were unambiguous markers of poetic prowess, allusions to the physicality of an improviser’s performance could be construed in a way that would compromise the poetic legitimacy of improvisation and discredit the improviser’s poetic identity.

301 Moore, A View of Society and Manners in Italy with Anecdotes Relating to Some Eminent Characters, 20.
Let us turn to Barberi’s drawings of Arcadian improvisers and consider them in relation to the ambivalences of the Arcadian improviser’s identity discussed above.

At some point between 1772 and 1790, Barberi joined the Arcadian Academy. If he had not yet been granted membership by the 1770s, his most important patron of these years, Cardinal de Bernis, was a member. Furthermore, influential artists in Rome with whom Barberi had personal contact, such as Giovanni Battista Piranesi, and others, such as Anton Raphael Mengs, were also Arcadians at this point. Thus, at the very least, Barberi would have been aware of the Academy as a venue of social and artistic prominence in Rome. He will have been aware of the particular culture of improvisation due to its remarkable popularity at the time.

PART II: BARBERI’S ARCADIAN IMPROVISERS

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302 According to Giorgetti Vichi, Barberi entered the Academy as Aurindo Dedalico between the years 1772 and 1790. The second part of his name, Dedalico, is most likely a reference to Daedalus, which itself is most likely an allusion to Barberi’s profession as an architect.

303 According to Giorgetti Vichi, de Bernis entered the Academy in 1773 with the name of Lireno Cefisio.

304 For membership records, see Giorgetti Vichi. G. B. Piranesi entered the Academy as Salcindio Tiseio and Mengs as Dinia Sipilio. A number of Barberi’s fellow Academicans at the Academy of St. Luke were also Arcadians: Antonio Asprucci (Agatario Rodio), Andrea Bergondi (Eliseno Beotid), Tommaso Conca (Demofilo Imerio), Domenico Corvi (Panfilo Eracleate), Guy Head (Plistene Epireo), Thomas Jenkins (Euemio Cristano), Carlo Marchiannoni (Fidisco Macistanio), Anton von Maron (Melanto Sicionio), Vincenzo Pacetti (Telefane Foceo), Joseph Vernet (Venusio Nemeio), Joseph Marie Vien (Acroonte Dodoneo). Barberi’s acquaintances, Francesco (Alcindo Tiseio) and Pietro Piranesi (Varindo Pireneo), were also Arcadians.
Barberi’s interest in the culture of the Academy and of improvisation more specifically is demonstrated in a group of his drawings dedicated to Arcadians who were actively involved in the culture of poetic improvisation in the mid-1770s: Giuseppe Giordani, Gaetano Golt, Maria Maddalena Morelli (aka Corilla), Giuseppe Petrosellini, Baldassare Rocchetti, and Leopoldo Tangerini. These drawings engage with the issues of the identity of the Arcadian improviser discussed in the first part of this chapter. In his drawings, however, Barberi recognizes the Arcadian improvisers as both members of a collective and as unique individuals of a particular poetic status, and as both poets and performers. While such dualities were fraught with tension within the context of the historical reality of Rome in the late eighteenth century and while Barberi himself acknowledges such tensions, the mythic Arcadian realm in which Barberi sets the scenes of his compositions facilitates the coexistence of these ambivalent aspects of the Arcadian improviser’s identity.

The one figure most easily recognizable within the group of drawings is Corilla (figure 65). A bust evidently intended as a citation to that sculpted by Heweston is placed in the center of the composition. Barberi includes Corilla’s name on a plaque held by the figure of the Tiber to the left of the bust in order to ensure that the dedication is clear. In the plaque, he also makes mention of her coronation. We in fact see the coronation fictively reenacted in the drawing, with Roma Triumphans pictured in the act of placing the laurel crown upon the head of the bust. The silhouette of the buildings of the Capitoline Hill, with the outlines of Michelangelo’s buildings and the church of S Maria in Aracoeli, is clearly visible in the upper right-hand corner of the image.
In addition to Corilla, Barberi also choose to depict three of the lesser-known improvisers of the 1770s, Giuseppe Giordani (figure 66), Baldassare Rocchetti (figure 67), and Leopoldo Tangerini (figure 68).

Giuseppe Giordani is recorded as having participated in the Academy’s performances of poetic improvisation from 1773 until 1778. He was listed by Henry Tourner as being part of the group of the most talented poet improvisers of the second half of the eighteenth century. Barberi, noting in the inscription of his drawing that Giordani was “grande in tavola per improvvisare,” echoes Tourner’s praise. The words in tavola are possibly intended to bring our attention to the performance-like quality of Giordani’s improvisation, given that nelle tavole can mean “on (a) stage” in Italian. Although Barberi presents the improviser in the form of a bust, he nonetheless makes Giordani’s talent of performance clear through the pairing of this bust with a female figure who gesticulates on his behalf and the stage-like setting upon which the bust and figure are placed.

In spite of Tourner’s and Barberi’s interest in Giordani, references to an improviser by this name outside of Arcadian sources are scarce. Developing a greater sense of his career is also difficult because, while the membership records of the Arcadians often include a reference to the member’s profession or place of birth, details that facilitate the discovery of further biographical information, no such information is recorded in relation to Giordani. This improviser could potentially be linked to the Neapolitan composer
Giuseppe Giordani (d. 1798).\textsuperscript{305} Although an Arcadian affiliation has never been documented for Giordani the composer, he was active across the Italian peninsula in the second half of the eighteenth century and, thus, it is possible that he had some presence in Rome. Given that Barberi refers to him as a “poeta liricho,” a poet who sings his compositions accompanied by a lyre, the improviser Giordani most likely had some musical talent, which makes a connection to the composer more tenable. However, despite the improviser’s potential musical gifts, the connection between the improviser Giordani and the composer Giordani is tentative at best.

Baldassare Rocchetti (d. 1798), a poet hailing from the town of Camerino in the Marches region of Italy, also appeared in Tourner’s list of talented improvisers.\textsuperscript{306} After he joined the Academy in 1772, Rocchetti improvised at the Academy’s meetings of the 1770s with great frequency, only slightly less than Corilla. Although after Corilla’s Capitoline coronation he continued to participate in the Academy’s meetings and to recite poetic compositions, he ceased to improvise. In spite of this, his renown as a poet improviser continued. At his death in the summer of 1798, he was described by a contemporary chronicler as “Il cittadino Rocchetti celebre poeta ed improvvisatore.”\textsuperscript{307} Barberi echoes the praise for Rocchetti in the inscription of his drawing, noting that he “improvvisò

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
    \item Rossella Pelagalli, "Giordani, Giuseppe," in Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, ed. Alberto M. Ghisalberti (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1960-).
    \item Giorgetti Vichi, Gli arcadi dal 1690 al 1800: onomasticon, 193.
    \item Galimberti, Rome, 6 June 1798, transcribed in Memorie dell'occupazione francese in Roma dal 1798 alla fine del 1802, I: 67.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
benissimo al parnaso di roma.” In his drawing, Barberi reimagines the improviser on a stage of roughly-hewn rocks with his arm raised in the midst of a performance.

The third of these lesser-known improvisers is Leopoldo Tangerini (c. 1807). According to a nineteenth-century biographer, Tangerini hailed from a town called Cesare. In 1769, he joined the Bolognese branch of the Arcadians, the Colonia Renia. Although he was part of the Bolognese branch, he took part in the recitation and improvisation of poetry at the meetings of the Arcadians in Rome in the 1770s. He was not listed by Tourner as part of the group of talented improvisers, but his biographer was nonetheless keen to mention Tangerini’s talent of improvisation and his association with the greater collective of Arcadian improvisers, noting that the Academy was “ove fece conoscere il suo valore nella poesia, improvvisando in quelle pubbliche adunanze in giusa da stare appetto ai più felice poeti estemporanei di quell’eta.”

Barberi does not call our attention to Tangerini’s particular skill of improvisation. Instead, he notes that Tangerini “maestro fu del improvisatore Gianni romano.” With this phrase, Barberi memorializes Tangerini for his role as mentor to the Roman improviser, Francesco Gianni, the famous improviser of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century mentioned earlier. In his eulogy of Gianni, Francesco Fabi de’ conti Montani described Tangerini as Gianni’s mecenate, pointing to his role as a benefactor of the

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308 Antonio Orsini, Cenni biografici degli illustri centesi (Bologna: A. Forni, 1977), 139-40.

309 Ibid., 139.
young poet. The iconography of the drawing might also point to this relationship between Tangerini and Gianni. In part of the inscription, Barberi makes reference to Tangerini being a follower of Bacchus. The trees of grapes in the background and the dancing female figures, possibly intended to be recognized as maenads, visually echo the citation to Bacchus of the inscription. The central figure in the composition, a figure that appears to be that of Silenus, also fits in with this iconographical scheme, since Silenus was a follower of the god of wine. Although Silenus was a follower of the god, he had also acted as his tutor. Thus, Barberi may be likening the relationship between Tangerini and Gianni to that between Silenus and Bacchus.

The last two figures memorialized in Barberi’s drawings, Gateano Golt (d. 1795/6) (figure 69) and Giuseppe Petrosellini (1727- after 1797) (figure 70), did not improvise in the 1770s, yet they were nonetheless significant figures in the culture of improvisation in this period. They led the dissent against the Academy in reaction to Corilla’s coronation, as described earlier. Although their actions take on the appearance of a rejection of poetic improvisation at the Academy, they too had taken part in this culture. In his Memorie, Morei listed Golt and Petrosellini amongst the most notable poet improvisers at the Academy. Tourner also included them in his list of important improvisers. De Rossi also incorporated them into his narrative of the collective of Arcadian improvisers. In speaking of the advent of a new generation of improvisers of the 1770s, De Rossi wrote that “Erano allora in pregio come rari cantori d’estemporanee rime il Golt, il Casali, e il

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buon Petrosellini, che veneriamo come il Nestore della nostra Arcadia.” Thus, even though these more mature improvisers seem to have ceased improvising at the Academy’s meetings by the 1770s, De Rossi describes them in a manner that suggests that they were revered by the younger improvisers. The reference to Nestor is most likely an allusion to Homer’s *Iliad* and De Rossi’s means of suggesting that Petrosellini acted as a sage advisor or mentor to the younger poets in the way that Nestor was thought to have done for the Greek leaders.

Petrosellini is identifiable in Barberi’s drawing through the inscription that he “scrisse quantità di opere buffe.” Modern scholars have recognized Petrosellini for his prolific efforts as a librettist of *opera buffa*, a particular genre of comic opera that came into prominence in Rome in the late eighteenth century. Petrosellini had been a member of the Academy for some time by the 1770s, having been admitted between 1743 and 1766. After Corilla’s coronation, he left the Academy, returning only in 1784. While Barberi does not seem to allude to Petrosellini’s dissent in this drawing, he presents a strong condemnation of the act of dissent in his drawing of Golt.


313 Giorgetti Vichi, *Gli arcadi dal 1690 al 1800: onomasticon*, 95. Petrosellini’s Arcadian name was Enisildo Prosindio.

314 After the coronation, he is first recorded at a meeting of the Arcadians on 28 March 1784. See BAR, Rome, Atti Arcadici 5, 309.
Golt was a Roman poet of some note in the late eighteenth century. He was admitted to the Academy at some point between 1728 and 1742, and was a member of several other literary academies at the time. Barberi provides little information in his inscription to identify Golt aside from the phrase “la infida pur lo rapi.” According to Giuseppe Baretti’s English-Italian dictionary of 1760, *infido* can take on various meanings: unfaithful, treacherous, faithless, false, disloyal, perfidious, and infidious. Barberi seems to have transformed the adjective *infido* into a noun with the addition of a definite article. The phrase creates a sense of Golt having been enchanted by treachery personified. Such a characterization echoes the manner in which Golt was described in the Academy records. At one of the meetings following Corilla’s coronation, the author of the records noted that Golt “si era mostrato ribelle della madre comune, in cui si era prodotto, e da cui avea ricevuto qualche nome.” Thus, Barberi seems to have held the same view as the Academy regarding Golt’s actions. Like Petrosellini, Golt left the Academy after the coronation, returning only in 1784.

Although the Arcadians had a tradition of memorializing their members in visual form, Barberi’s drawings are unlike the Arcadians’ own portraits that we considered earlier.

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316 Giorgetti Vichi, *Gli arcadi dal 1690 al 1800: onomasticon*, 110. Golt’s Arcadian name was Euridalco Corinteo.


318 Meeting of 13 December 1788, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 371.

319 Meeting of 28 March 1784, BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 309.
Barberi’s drawings are also unlike other existent graphic memorials to Arcadians, such as those by Filippo Juvarra (figure 92). While the Arcadians are memorialized in figural form in the Academy’s portraits and in sculptured monumental form in Juvarra’s drawings, Barberi’s drawings are hybrids of these two forms in that his memorials incorporate a mix of dynamic figures and monumental forms. His compositions are, moreover, strikingly different from these other images due to the dynamic nature of the scenes and the prominence of the spatially ambiguous outdoor setting of each of the compositions. While I will return to the dynamic nature of the drawings later in this section, I now want to focus on the importance of the space of the drawings, a fictive Arcadian realm.

Arcadia is historically a name associated with two types of space. Giuseppe Gerbino aptly summarizes the natures of these spaces as follows:

The idealized setting of Western pastoral literature, Arcadia is the name of both a real and a fictional place. The real Arcadia is a mountainous and rather barren district in the central Peloponnesus. The fictional Arcadia is a verdant and fertile land inhabited by shepherds, nymphs, satyrs, and demigods...
The Arcadians’ Bosco took as its conceptual model the fictive realm of Arcadia, one that had grown out of literary traditions developed out of Virgil’s *Eclogues* and Jacopo Sannazaro’s *Arcadia* (1504).\(^\text{322}\)

Through the repeated insertion of iconographic markers associated with the Bosco, such as the lyre and the laurel, Barberi encourages his viewer to associate the spaces of his drawings with the Arcadians’ realm.\(^\text{323}\) Barberi’s reference to a “Parnaso di Roma” in the inscription in the drawing of Rocchetti is a similarly significant identifier of the space. Parnasus was the home of Apollo and the Muses and, according to Almut-Barbara Renger, “in figurative usage,” Parnasus “stands for the realm of poetry.”\(^\text{324}\) The Arcadians themselves referred to the Bosco Parrasio on occasion as the Romano Parnaso.\(^\text{325}\) By identifying the space of this drawing as he does, Barberi calls our attention to the space depicted, at least in the drawing of Rocchetti, as a realm of poetry belonging to the Roman Arcadians.

While Barberi invites the viewer to associate the spaces of his drawings with the space of the Roman Arcadians, he is clear not to suggest that what the viewer sees should be mistaken with the real space of the Bosco. He has made no attempt to record the

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\(^\text{322}\) See Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste*, 61-64.

\(^\text{323}\) For iconography of the garden, Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste*, 141-151.


\(^\text{325}\) BAR, Atti Arcadici 5, 280 (meeting of 18 August 1782) and Atti Arcadici 6, 118r (meeting of 14 September 1775).
Arcadian’s garden in terms of its physical actuality. While Antonio Canevari, the architect of the Bosco, had memorialized it in its idealized form (figure 68) and other artists, like the late-eighteenth century painter Jonas Akerström, took liberties in the portrayal of the Bosco (figure 93), both nonetheless included particular physical attributes of the real space, such as the form of the curved outdoor theater, which encourage the viewer to associate these pictorial spaces with the actual physical locality of the Bosco. In contrast, Barberi seems to have no wish for his viewer to understand the spaces of his compositions as being akin to the actual garden of the Academy, omitting any such recognizable characteristics of the physical actuality of the Bosco.

The coarse clumpings of foliage and the rough-textured ground in Barberi’s drawings further signal his desire to avoid a resemblance to the Arcadians’ well-tended garden. While this rustic quality was not characteristic of the physical space of the Bosco itself, it was, however, part of the Arcadians’ conception of the topography of the imaginary realm of Arcadia, as we see it represented by the Arcadians themselves. In a print by Girolamo Odam executed to accompany a compilation of the Arcadians’ poems, Apollo points to this realm, a space of rustic huts, coarse ground, and roughly-hewn stone (figure 94). Although Barberi omits the primitive huts, his spaces nonetheless make clear reference to such pictorial examples as Odam’s print in its rustic and spatially ambiguous character. The presence of deities, nymphs, and natural oddities like the tree of grapes in the drawing of Tangerini further demonstrate Barberi’s more general attempt to create spaces that are recognizable as mythical or unreal.
The presence of the fictive Arcadian realm in images dedicated to members of the Academy was not without precedent. We see such a realm represented in some Arcadian portraits of the eighteenth century, such as in Odam’s portrait of the Arcadian Francesco Maria Lorenzini (figure 95) and in the portrait of Giacinta Orsini discussed earlier. These examples are evidence of an acknowledged connection between the fictive Arcadian space and Arcadian identity. That is, within the context of these portraits, the visual juxtaposition of the fictive Arcadian realm and the figure of the sitter is used to affirm the sitter’s Arcadian identity. However, while in these portraits of Lorenzini and Giacinta Orsini the fictive realm is present, it is of secondary visual prominence to the figures represented, being set in the background of the images. This fictive realm takes on greater prominence in Barberi’s compositions, by being moved into the forefront of the image. This increase in visual prominence of this space invites us to look for a corresponding increase in its potential functionality. Rather than merely affirming Arcadian identity or serving as an additional iconographic marker of such an identity, as it does in these other images, the space in Barberi’s drawings takes on a more active and multi-faceted role in the construction of identity.

*The Arcadian improviser: member of a collective and a unique individual*

In the first part of the chapter, I argued that there were processes by which the Academy fostered the construction of the identity of the improviser as that of both a member of a collective and a preeminent individual, and that this duality could not be maintained. In his drawings, Barberi expresses an awareness of a hierarchical relationship amongst the poets, and an acknowledgement of the disruption within the Academy. Nonetheless, a
sense of unity or collectivism persists due to the placement of his memorials within a
communal Arcadian space.

Barberi presents each of the improvisers in a personalized manner, calling attention to the
particularities of their individual personae. In his constructions of these personae, Barberi
ranks the improvisers in terms of their individual talents. While he makes a reference to
improvisation in relation to Corilla, Rocchetti, Giordani, and Tangerini, he is clear to
designate the level of their individual skill. In the inscription in the drawing of Corilla,
Barberi writes that she improvised so well that she was crowned on the Capitoline. With
this statement, he confirms her status as the preeminent poet. In his inscription of the
drawing of Rocchetti, he says that he improvised *benissimo*. With the use of the
superlative form of *bene*, Barberi suggests that Rocchetti is extremely good, yet did not
improvise at such a level that he received a Capitoline coronation like Corilla. Gordani,
like Rocchetti, is described in very positive terms. Yet, although Barberi is positive, by
not using the superlative form in his statement of praise, he ranks Gordani below
Rocchetti. Tangerini is then set below the three other improvisers; although Barberi refers
to Tangerini as being part of the Arcadians practice of improvisation, he does not
recognize Tangerini as having had any particular sort of expertise of performance
himself. Thus, we see that Barberi is not only interested in the creation of individual
personalities, but also in enforcing distinctions amongst such personalities by means of a
hierarchical system. Such hierarchical distinctions echo the processes of individuation
described earlier.
While this hierarchy is created primarily through the inscriptions of the drawings, it is further enforced and heightened in visual terms. For example, Barberi amplifies Corilla’s elevation above the others through his choice of her Capitoline coronation as the subject for his drawing, albeit a fictive reimagining of the event, as I suggested earlier. Although the immediate setting is not the Capitoline Hill in its physical actuality, Barberi nonetheless encourages the viewer to associate the space depicted in his drawing with the actual space by including the profile of the Capitoline buildings and that of S. Maria in Aracoeli. The allusion to the physical space of the Capitoline serves a similar function as the symbol of the laurel crown as discussed earlier, since, like the discrete iconographic marker of the crown, the space of the coronation invites the viewer to associate Corilla with Petrarch. Evidence of Barberi’s contemporaries’ recognition of a citation to the space of the Capitoline having had the capacity to function in such a manner is provided in an eighteenth-century representation of Petrarch’s coronation (figure 96), in which an artist included a detailed rendering of the spatial setting of the Capitoline, albeit the post-Michelangelo space rather than the space as it existed in Petrarch’s own time. The specificity in the rendering of the Capitoline allows us to recognize that the site of the coronation, like the laurel crown, was part of Barberi’s contemporaries’ visual conception of Petrarch’s coronation. While poetic coronations took place and could be visually represented as having taken place in a variety of locations, the representation of such an act taking place on the Capitoline reminds the viewer to connect this act with the honor conferred on Petrarch. Thus, Barberi’s emphasis on site, albeit displayed in an imaginary

326 This image appeared in Francesco Petrarca, *Le Rime del Petrarca brevemente esposte per Lodovico Castelvetro*, 2nd ed. (Venice, 1756).
guise, is significant because it connects Corilla to Petrarch and, in so doing, heightens our sense of her preeminence, in an implicit hierarchical distinction from the other improvisers.

In addition to bringing the viewer’s attention to the hierarchical distinctions amongst the improvisers, Barberi also acknowledges the effect of such distinctions. He draws our attention to the tension and disruption created within the Academy as a result of the Capitoline coronation through his charged visual portrayal of Golt’s dissent. The iconography of the drawing echoes and amplifies the words of the inscription in which Barberi refers to Golt’s rebellion. More particularly, the iconography seems to resonate with the Arcadians’ own sentiments of Golt having rebelled against the Academy, the madre comune within which he had been brought up. While the notion of the madre comune, in its maternal connotations, is embodied by the grouping of figures in Barberi’s drawing, the she-wolf and the twin boys Romulus and Remus, the idea of rebellion is conveyed through the interaction of these figures. The intensity of this rebellion becomes clearer when Barberi’s portrayal is compared with a well-known representation of these figures, such as the grouping of these figures set alongside the colossal Graeco-Roman colossal statue of the Tiber (figure 97) or the eighteenth-century representation of this same grouping in reanimated form by the Arcadian Giuseppe Vasi in his panorama of Rome of 1765 (figure 98). In these scenes, the two babes sit placidly suckling at the she-wolf’s side; the she-wolf cradles the boys within the space of her legs and turns her head

327 This grouping could also be identified as the twins Lycastus and Parrhasius. For their relation to the Academy, see Minor, The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste, 142.
towards them with a watchful gaze. Barberi, on the other hand, displays the two boys at a much later stage, having already grown in the she-wolf’s care. The body of the she-wolf is now closed to the boys; her legs and the vulnerable part of her belly lie flatly along the plinth of the podium upon which she sits, erasing the physical intimacy of the conventional scene. Although the boys physically engage with the she-wolf, pulling on her neck and draping themselves across her back, there is no suggestion of a nurturing rapport. The manner in which they contort her neck is, in fact, somewhat violent. Rather than the she-wolf nurturing the boys, the boys treat the she-wolf in a menacing manner.

The dissonance of the scene amplifies our sense not simply of Golt’s treachery, but of the internal disruption the Academy, the maternal entity, experienced in the wake of Corilla’s Capitoline coronation.

While Barberi recognizes the hierarchical relationship of the improvisers and acknowledges the impact caused by this exaggerated individualization, a sense of collectivism and unity nonetheless persists within the grouping of the drawings as a whole. Most concretely, the individualization of the Arcadians is diminished through the drawings having been executed using the same materials and technique. Corilla’s drawing is of the same color, on the same substrate of the same size, and so on, as all of the other drawings. The sculptural and architectural assemblage of her drawing, set centrally within the near foreground space of the image, is also given the same visual prominence within the individual composition as those of the other drawings. Thus, the Arcadians are on par visually with one another when the set of drawings is considered as a whole. This similarity of materials, technique, and compositional organization also serves to unify the individual personae, as it allows for the viewer to recognize that the
drawings are part of a recognizable group, which implies a similar interrelatedness amongst the individuals memorialized within the drawings.

While a sense of communality is evoked through such visual and material repetitions, the Arcadian space of the compositions serves as an even more potent agent in collectivizing the individual personae represented in these drawings. Although the drawings themselves have discrete boundaries, the edges of the paper upon which they are executed, the space depicted in these drawings has no such physical boundaries. Although there are geographical indicators, such as the buildings of the Capitoline Hill in Corilla’s drawing, the topography of these drawings cannot be represented in quantifiable cartographic terms. Arcadia is by definition an imagined spatial topography, one without a physical existence. Since this imaginary Arcadian realm is not physical, there can be no physical demarcations as to where it begins and ends. Due to this lack of discrete boundaries, the spaces are not simply amorphous, but limitless, which serves to create a spatial fluidity amongst the spaces of the individual drawings. That is, while the landscape of each individual drawing appears distinctive, they must nonetheless merge with the spaces of the other drawings due to the boundless nature of this fictive realm. Thus, all of the individual personae simultaneously co-inhabit the same Arcadian space.

And Barberi implies that this coexistence is perpetual. Even though he acknowledges the existence of individualization and conflict amongst the Arcadians, the space of these drawings does not allow for the fracturing of the collective that took place in the Academy itself. This is intimated most evidently in the drawing of Golt. Although Barberi is clearly critical of Golt’s behavior, he nonetheless envisions the poet as
continuing to take part in the Arcadian collective. The inscription of the drawing of Golt begins with the words “Qui giace Golte,” which encourages the viewer to see the memorial as serving some sort of sepulchral function. But this is most likely not a memorial to Golt at his death in 1795-96, given that he rejoined the community of the Arcadians in the 1780s and would thus most likely not have been characterized in such a negative manner at his actual death. Instead, this is a drawing that most likely dates to the late 1770s or early 1780s and represents Golt’s death in Arcadia of 1776, a result of his dissent and his break with the Academy after Corilla’s coronation. We might understand Barberi’s reference to death as being intended along the lines of the phrase “et ego in arcadia,” famously interpreted by Panofsky as a reminder of the existence of death in the paradise that is Arcadia.328 Golt’s dissent was a type of death or disruption to the pastoral life of Arcadia. However, by setting Golt within an Arcadian space in this drawing, Barberi’s points to the perpetuation of his presence within this Arcadian space, even following this death.

The particular forms Barberi uses in the composition of Golt’s monument are also significant in terms of this idea that his presence was perpetuated in Arcadia. The particular combination of the pedestal upon which the figures sit and the pyramid is reminiscent of the designs for one of the Arcadians’ festivals held to honor their defunct members, the Giuochi Olimpici, a visual record of which exists in a sketch by Crescimbeni (figure 99). While Barberi’s arrangement of forms is not an exact replication of those in Crescimbeni’s sketch, there is nonetheless a noticeable resemblance. This

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resemblance is significant because these monumental forms functioned as a vehicle through which the presence of the deceased members endured in Arcadia. Through the borrowing of a form reminiscent of these practices, Barberi suggests that Golt’s presence and participation within the Academy persists. Thus, while in the historical reality of Rome after the Capitoline coronation, Golt and the other dissenters left the Academy, here in Barberi’s drawings Golt continues to coexist within the greater Arcadian collective.

The others, too, continue to be present in Arcadia in a similar manner. On all of the inscriptions except that of Corilla and Rocchetti, Barberi begins with the words “qui giace,” a cue to the poets’ Arcadian death. Like Golt, while there may not be bodily traces of the poets, an animated form of their presence continues to exist within the Arcadian space of Barberi’s drawings. For example, with the drawing of Giordani, while we do not see the poet himself improvising, the presence of his participation remains. The poet takes on a timeless guise of a portrait bust, one that performs through the gesticulation of the muse with whom it is paired. In this way, the collective of the improvisers that ceased to exist in the wake of Corilla’s coronation Capitoline coronation continues to exist within the imaginary realm of Arcadia in Barberi’s drawings. Thus, through the imaginary space of Barberi’s drawings, the duality of the identity of the Arcadian improviser as a member of a collective and as a unique individual is recognized, maintained, and perpetuated.
In the first part of the chapter I argued that, in the Arcadians’ portraits of their improvisers, cues to performance had the potential to compromise the improvisers’ identity as a poet. In Barberi’s drawings, however, the improviser is visually defined as both poet and performer in such a way that the persona of the performer does not compromise that of the poet. The space of Barberi’s drawings both creates and maintains a poetic identity, even with the presence of strong visual cues to performance. Cues to performance do not compromise the improviser’s poetic identity because the learned status of the performance is validated by the Arcadian space within which the performance is represented as taking place.

In Barberi’s drawings, aside from that of Corilla, there is a noticeable absence of the discrete iconographic symbols of poetry that were present in the Arcadians’ own portraits of improvisers – there are no writing implements, no allusions to a muse of poetry, and no laurel crowns. The symbol of the lyre is present in all of the drawings, yet is seems to be a marker of the surrounding space rather than a marker related specifically or solely to the improviser memorialized. Unlike Labruzzi’s portrait of Teresa, in which the poet herself holds the lyre so that the symbol is clearly intended to be understood specifically in relation to her individual persona, in Barberi’s drawings the lyre is physically displaced from the figures and, thus, is not necessarily related only to the poet, but pertains more broadly to the surrounding environment. In place of discrete markers of poetic identity, this poetic space serves as a vehicle through which the poetic identity of the improviser is conveyed.
As I mentioned earlier, other artists before Barberi, such as Batoni and Odam, had used the mythical Arcadian realm as a marker of poetic identity. In the Batoni portrait and its copy by Loreti, like the lyre and the crown of laurels Giacinta Orsini holds, the Arcadian space visible through the opening in the wall at the left-hand side of the composition serves as an iconographic marker of her Arcadian identity and her identity as a poet, the two being equivalent in this painting. Batoni, however, creates a clear spatial demarcation between Giacinta and this Arcadia. Odam, too, uses the frame surrounding Lorenzini’s image as a boundary between the individual figure and the surrounding Arcadian space; while the leaves of the flanking trees overlap the boundaries of the frame, its stark geometric shape, with the clearly delineated concentric circles, set against the amorphous organic forms of the background emphasize the spatial demarcation between Lorenzini and the space surrounding the portrait roundel. Barberi, on the other hand, immerses his memorials within an Arcadian realm. Thus, while Giacinta’s and Lorenzini’s personae may be visually linked to an Arcadian realm, the figures of Barberi’s drawings are completely absorbed by this realm. There is no distinction between their personae within the Arcadian realm and outside it because, as Barberi has depicted them, there is no part of their identity that is detached, divided, or displaced from this Arcadian realm, as is the case in both Loreti’s and Odam’s images.

Such a use of space can be likened to the insertion of the laurel crown as an allusion to Petrarch or poetry more generally as described earlier. When included in visual portrayals of the improviser, these discrete symbols verify the improviser’s poetic identity through the visual association with a recognized poetic tradition of an established merit. Barberi’s immersion of his memorials in a mythical Arcadian realm serves the same purpose, in
that it similarly creates an association between the individual and an existing literary
tradition of an established merit. This mythical space in which Barberi’s memorials are
set is the same realm that Crescimbeni’s Arcadians transverse in *Arcadia*, just as it is that
of Sannazaro, and that of Virgil. Through their presence in this particular mythic space,
the Arcadian improvisers become part of this literary heritage. Thus, through the space
that surrounds them, the improvisers’ identity as poets is established.

At the same time as the improviser’s poetic identity is conveyed, their identity as
performers is also stressed. Barberi evokes this facet of the improviser’s identity through
clear visual evocations of performance, the types of visual cues that were noticeably
absent in the Arcadians’ own portraits of improvisers. The roughly-hewn platform upon
which Rocchetti stands is easily identifiable as a stage. The other memorials, with their
raised platforms upon which figures gesticulating or engaged in movement are set,
encourage the viewer to recognize these as scenes of a dynamic and dramatic character.

Of all of the drawings, that of Rocchetti is particularly interesting in relation to the
portraits of improvisers I considered earlier in the chapter. Unlike the Arcadians’ own
portraits in which the improvisers sit demurely, Rocchetti here is pictured in the act of
declamation. The overt gesturing of his arms and the dynamic *contraposto* of his stance
draw our attention to his potential for movement. The way his gaze and his head turn to
follow the trajectory of his left arm, and the way in which the folds of his classical dress
direct our attention to the dynamic posture of his body, further encourage the viewer to
conceptually reanimate the motions of his performance. In carrying out such a
reanimation, the physicality of his performance is brought to our attention.
This movement is especially intriguing given that it is located in the body of the improviser. There is indeed a visual evocation of movement in Barberi’s other scenes – in Roma Triumphans’ action of crowning Corilla, the gesticulation of the muse in the drawing of Giordani, and the dancing of the nymphs in the drawing of Tangerini, for instance. However, in these instances, motion is displaced from the figural or sculptural form of the improviser. Unlike these other scenes, Rocchetti’s own body is moved in the act of performance. Thus, unlike the Arcadians’ portraits of improvisers, here there are visual cues to performance and, of similar significance, such cues are located in the body of the improviser.

In the first part of the chapter, I showed that such physical allusions to performance were noticeably absent in the Arcadians’ own portraits of improvisers, and furthermore that portrayals of the improviser’s performance, those in which the body is used to evoke the dynamic nature of a performance of improvised poetry, were avoided by the Arcadians because such cues had the potential to compromise the improviser’s poetic legitimacy. Although the Arcadians valued particular aspects of the improviser’s performance, such as that of enthusiasm, cues to performance in images could be construed in a way that might lead a viewer to misidentify the improviser as a popular performer or the improviser’s performance as a mere spectacle. In the context of Barberi’s drawing, the Arcadian space maintains Rocchetti’s poetic identity. I would argue that this is so because of the existence of a recognition of the correspondence between venue of performance and the status of the improviser.
Crescimbeni, in his *Arcadia*, created a correspondence between the social status of the improviser and his or her poetic abilities. He brought attention to the type of improviser who lacked poetic merit, what I have described as the popular improviser, as being agricultural laborers, *caprai* and *bifolchi*, persons of low social standing. He distinguished such types of people from the “gentili Pastori,” the individual Arcadians of Crescimbeni’s own elevated social realm, who possessed strong poetic abilities.  

Crescimbeni specifies that the agricultural laborers performed “per le ville, per l’aie, e per le valle,” spaces that were open, rural, and agricultural. The performance of Arcadian improvisation he described in this text, on the other hand, took place in the mythic realm of Arcadia. While this space was rustic in nature, it was not associated with physical labor undertaken for financial gain. The venue of performance thus seems to have provided Crescimbeni with a means to call his reader’s attention to and enforce the social status of the different types of improvisers, which in turn reflected their poetic merit. This same sort of correspondence was conveyed in his *Comentari*. Crescimbeni takes pains to bring his reader’s attention to the location of the performances of those improvisers with whom he was acquainted. Such performances took place in the palace of Cardinal Ottoboni, the learned patron of arts. By specifying the venue, the palace of a learned patron, Crescimbeni cues his reader to recognize that these improvisers had access to a space that was both socially exclusive and culturally refined. Thus, in these examples, there is an evident congruence between the improvisers’ status and the venue in which they performed. Given the correlation between status and poetic abilities, the

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330 Ibid., 117.
congruence between status and venue allows the venue to function as a marker of poetic abilities. That is, if the improviser is described as performing in a venue of an established high repute, the reader is cued to understand that the improviser himself or herself is likewise of a high status and, thus, in turn, of great poetic abilities.

Such a correspondence between status and venue can be carried over into a visual field. Although the representation of improvisers performing in situ seems to have been rare in the eighteenth century, two nineteenth-century images, one by Bartolomeo Pinelli (figure 100) and the other by Annibale Gatti (figure 101), provide examples of how the venue of improvisation could be used to express the relative status of the improvisers in visual terms. While both images are depictions of a performance in which a male figure with his arm raised in an act of improvisation stands before an audience, these are clearly different types of improvisers. Factors such as the dress of the improviser, that of his immediate audience, and the posture of the audience allow for the categorization of the relative status of the improviser. Like such markers of status couched in the bodies of the improviser and his audience, the space of performance, too, makes claims to the status of the individuals depicted. The genteel environment of the manicured garden corresponds to the elegantly dressed personages of Gatti’s composition. In Pinelli’s image, the disrepair of the surrounding buildings, the rough earthen terrain, and the untidy state of the table echo the dress and more general slovenly appearance of the improviser himself and the somewhat uncouth nature of his immediate audience. Pinelli stresses the humble nature of the environs and the immediate space surrounding the improviser through the insertion of a carriage of gentlemanly-dressed individuals. These refined spectators are not only set apart from the space of the improvisation, but exist within their own
insulated area, cocooned within the space of their carriage. In the creation of this
demarcated space of the carriage’s interior and its physical displacement from both the
improviser and the surrounding environs, Pinelli uses space as a means to define the
relative status of the individuals within the composition. This differentiation, in turn,
serves to affirm the humble status of the improviser. These images thus echo
Crescimbeni’s textual differentiation of types of improvisers based on the space they
inhabit.

In Barberi’s drawing of Rocchetti, this congruence between status and space again
functions as an indicator of poetic merit. Based on the equivalence of status and poetic
abilities, this Arcadian realm defines Rocchetti’s poetic abilities as being of a similarly
elevated level. This correspondence between status and venue is particularly significant
in the case of the drawing of Rocchetti due to his action of gesticulation. Such a visual
cue is ambiguous, as it is associated with popular and Arcadian traditions of declamation,
as Gatti’s and Pinelli’s images demonstrate. The Arcadian space of Barberi’s drawing,
however, does not allow for an interpretation of Rocchetti’s actions as being vulgar in
nature – such an interpretation would create a dissonance or incongruence because it
would run counter to visual cue presented by the Arcadian space. The Arcadian space
validates Rocchetti’s gesture as learned and, thus, confirms that Rocchetti’s performance
is equally learned, not a mere spectacle, and that he is a poet.

The mythic Arcadian space of Barberi’s drawings thus serves as both the means by which
the improviser’s poetic identity is defined and as a vehicle through which the
performance of the improviser is established as being of literary merit. Thus, within the
space of Barberi’s drawings, the improviser can be recognized as both poet and performer, without the recognition as performer threatening the recognition as poet.

**Conclusion**

By looking at Barberi’s drawings through the lens of ideas circulating on the improviser and improvisation within and outside of the Arcadian Academy, we come to appreciate both the cultural immediacy and potency of the subject of his drawings and we are able to recognize that he was engaging with the polemical issues in the Roman cultural sphere of the late eighteenth century. Moreover, when we have understood that the identity of the improviser was significant to the Academy and that the Arcadians themselves seemed to have used images as a means to legitimate the Arcadian improviser and Arcadian improvisation, Barberi’s drawings resonate even more strongly with the discourses on improvisation in Rome at the time. However, in looking at Barberi’s drawings in relation to other images of improvisers of the time, we are able to recognize the unique manner in which he uses Arcadian space as a way to construct the improvisers’ identity. Barberi thus draws on the cultural world around him for inspiration and at the same time translates these ideas within the pictorial spaces of his drawings in a unique manner. Although these are not architectural drawings per se, we might consider his sensitivity to space and its expressive potential to have come out of his experience as an architect.
CHAPTER III

BARBERI’S BORROMINESQUE PHYSIOGNOMY

In the margins of sketch of a church facade (figure 102), Barberi jotted down two comments, one on either side of the church: “segnavo Borromini quando ero fuori di mè” and “Idea fatto quando ero nella somma afflizione per il mio figlio Leone carcerato.”331 In this chapter, I consider the relation between this sketch and these comments in order to explore the relationship Barberi puts forth between the architecture depicted, his experience of inner disruption, and the seventeenth-century architect Francesco Borromini. This one drawing is part of an album of architectural sketches Barberi executed in 1796 in a manner he himself described as being that of a stile borrominesco.332 I argue that Barberi’s particular reception of Borromini grew out of the writings of his contemporary, the architectural theorist Francesco Milizia. Milizia had published a biography of Borromini in which linked what he saw as flaws in the composition of the Borromini’s facades to his inner mental turmoil. In order to develop this mode of critique, I suggest that Milizia brought together contemporary notions of architectural decorum with equally contemporary attitudes toward physiognomy. Barberi

331 Giuseppe Barberi, “Palazzo Reale in Stile Borrominesco,” BIASA, ms 202, 75.
332 For previous studies of Barberi’s borrominesque drawings, see Sergio Pace, "Disegni per un'accademia domestica: note sull'opera architettonica di Giuseppe Barberi (Roma, 1746-1809)," in '700 disegnare: incisioni, progetti, caricature, ed. Elisa Debenedetti (Rome: Bonsignori, 1997); "La malinconia dell'architetto: migrazioni del borrominesco tra Settecento e Ottocento, attraverso i disegni di Giuseppe Barberi (1746-1809) " in Architettura nella storia: scritti in onore di Alfonso Gambardella, ed. Gaetana Cantone, et al. (Milan: Skira, 2007). While Pace does explore ideas of the relation between Borromini, melancholy, and decorum, his study is brief and his exploration of these ideas is fairly limited. Other borromoniesque drawings by Barberi are conserved at the Cooper Hewitt Museum in New York.
draws on Milizia’s means of interpreting Borromini’s architecture, which he conveys through both the textual commentary and the composition of the facades he draws, but not as a means to critique Borromini. Instead, he re-employs it as a tool of self-expression, as a means through which to convey his own personal strife. As I will argue, when interpreted through the lens of Milizia’s criticism, the church facade Barberi depicts in this architectural sketch become his physiognomy, outwardly revealing his internal disruption.

The chapter consists of two parts: in part one, I investigate Milizia’s approach to Borromini; in part two, I analyze Barberi’s re-employment of Milizia’s mode of criticism of Borromini as a tool of self-expression, focusing my interpretation on this one sketch in figure 106, but also using other sketches from the album and Barberi’s written comments on them to develop my analysis.

PART I: FRANCESCO MILIZIA’S CRITICISM OF FRANCESCO BORROMINI

The Italian architect Francesco Borromini committed suicide.333 Before this event took place, he had suffered from bouts of melancholy. Those with even a beginner’s knowledge of the architect will most likely be familiar with such personal details. In the 1960s, Rudolf Wittkower offered an explanation for our contemporary interest in Borromini’s life, particularly in terms of the way in which it ended: he writes that the architect’s “suicide is probably the only one among artists which comes readily to mind

333 For a recent biography of Borromini, see Joseph Connors, "Francesco Borromini: la vita (1599-1667)," in Borromini e l’universo barocco, ed. Richard Bösel and Christoph L. Frommel (Milan: Electa, 2000).
even nowadays, perhaps not so much because his illness and death are especially well
documented, but because they seem consistent with the tragic life and strange
architecture” of Borromini. Wittkower thus claims that immaterial biographical details
that we read about “seem consistent” with, or should be recognized as having a sort of
correspondence with, the appearance of material architectural form.

This correspondence between Borromini’s life and his architecture, and its use as a means
through which to interpret Borromini’s work, is now so commonplace that it seems to
have augmented our perception of his historical reception. For example, borrowing
passages from the early eighteenth-century biography of Borromini by Lione Pascoli,
Philip Sohm writes: “Francesco Borromini, who, preceding his suicide, ‘twisted his
mouth in a thousand horrible grimaces’ and ‘rolled his eyes’” became “like his allegedly
distorted buildings.” Sohm draws these descriptive phrases of Borromini’s facial
expressions from a section of Pascoli’s biography in which no reference to the
Borromini’s buildings appear, and in which there is no clear evidence that the biographer
intended to imply that such a connection between these facial expressions and the
appearance of Borromini’s architecture existed. Sohm does admit that “Borromini in his
death throes did not literally resemble his buildings, but the architect and his architecture
are merged by means of an overlapping lexicon.” Pascoli, however, did not use

334 Rudolf Wittkower, Born under Saturn: The Character and Conduct of Artists
(London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), 140. For further discussion on Borromini’s
suicide, see Martin Raspe, "The final problem: Borromini’s failed publication project and


336 Ibid.
vocabulary or terminology of mental disorder of physical deformity in his descriptions of Borromini’s building. While Sohm suggests that Pascoli’s text is suggestive of some sort of physiognomic correspondence between Borromini and his work, it is in fact Sohm who extrapolates from Pascoli’s text and himself intuits an equivalence between Borromini’s facial contortions and his architecture.

Along the same lines, Christof Thoenes claimed that, for “theoreticians of the eighteenth century,” “it was only natural to associate it [Borromini’s architecture] with the distraught state of mind in which the architect had departed from this life.” While Thoenes is correct in suggesting that this physiognomic understanding of Borromini’s architecture was a phenomenon of the eighteenth century, it was not in fact “natural.” Instead, it was knowingly constructed as part of Francesco Milizia’s criticism of Borromini.

Francesco Milizia (1725-1798) was an architectural theorist of the second half of the eighteenth century. While he had been born and educated in the south of Italy, he settled in Rome in 1761 and remained there until his death. He is known principally for two major architectural works: a compilation of biographies of architects, first published

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with the title of *Le vite de’ più celebri architetti* in 1768 and subsequently in 1781 with
the title the of *Memorie degli architetti antichi e moderni*, and a treatise on civil
architecture, the *Principj di architettura civile*, first published 1781. Both texts went
through multiple editions and his compilation of biographies was translated into various
languages.339

Milizia’s reception in the twentieth century by architectural historians has not been
altogether positive. For example, while Hanno-Walter Kruft claimed that Milizia was
“the most influential Italian architectural theorist of the late eighteenth century,” he also
brought attention to the eclectic nature of his writings, noting that his “work contains
every conceivable theoretical position current in the second half of the eighteenth
century” and that his ideas consist of “completely heterogeneous currents of thought.”340
This heterogeneity that Kruft describes is due primarily to the wide range of sources from
which Milizia drew in preparing his publications. He borrowed liberally from the work of
Italian, French, and English theorists of the eighteenth century, integrating passages from
Marc-Antoine Laugier, Jacques-François Blondel, Francesco Algarotti, William
Chambers and others into his own publications, sometimes verbatim and usually without
citation.341 These borrowings themselves together with the nature of the amalgam

339 For a listing of Milizia’s texts, albeit with some errors, see William B. O’Neal,
"Francesco Milizia, 1725-1798," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 13,

340 Hanno-Walter Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory: From Vitruvius to the Present*

341 For Milizia’s borrowings from French sources, see Wolfgang Herrmann, *Laugier and
eighteenth century French theory* (London: A. Zwemmer, 1962), 193-5. For his more
general for sources for the *Principj*, see Etta Mae Arntzen, "A study of "Principii di
resulting in their incorporation within his own texts form the focus of twentieth-century criticism of Milizia: David Watkin claims that “the theories presented by Milizia are confused, compromising and eclectic,” Wolfgang Herrman argued that Milizia’s “borrowings are so extensive that it would be tiresome to mention them all” and that Milizia himself was “an exceptionally unoriginal writer,” and Emil Kaufmann that, “since the novel ideas Milizia set forth were not his own, it is no wonder that he contradicted himself so frequently.”

While Milizia’s theoretical work has not garnered a great deal of acclaim from contemporary architectural historians, he has nonetheless gained notoriety in the history of architecture for his criticism of Borromini. The harshness of his criticism has provoked varied responses. For example, Kruft speaks of Milizia having worked “himself up into frenzied tirades against Borromini,” Werner Oechslin of Milizia’s “giudizio estremizzato” of Borromini’s architecture, and Kauffman of Milizia having been “particularly hostile to Borromini.” Unlike such commentators, Tommaso Manfredi has assessed Milizia’s “caustici contrappunti critici” of Borromini in positive terms as the

architettura" by Francesco Milizia" (Columbia University, 1970). As Manfredi noted in his biography of Milizia in the DBI, Milizia himself recognized that his work was a composite of numerous sources: he described the theoretical section of his Vite as “una specie di Mosaico, i di cui pezzi presi tutti di pianta di quà e di là” (Vite, 78).


most “original” aspect of Milizia’s *Vite.*\(^{344}\) While such comments are evidence of an ambivalent reaction towards Milizia’s reception of Borromini, they nonetheless demonstrate that his critical response to Borromini has been viewed as noteworthy.

Milizia was, however, by no means the first person to publish an overtly negative appraisal of Borromini’s work in the eighteenth century.\(^{345}\) Before Milizia had issued his *Vite* in 1768, denouncements of Borromini’s architecture had already appeared in the first eighteenth-century edition of Augustin-Charles D’Aviler’s *Cours* (1710), Colin Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715-17), Scipione Maffei’s *Verona Illustrata* (1732), Alessandro Pompei’s *Cinque Ordini* (1735), Francesco Algarotti’s *Opere* (1764-65), and Johann Joachim Winckelmann’s *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764).\(^{346}\) Milizia makes specific reference to these particular works of D’Aviler, Campbell, Maffei, and Pompei in the *Vite,* and openly used Algarotti as one of his main sources.\(^{347}\) Moreover,

\(^{344}\) Manfredi, "Milizia, Francesco."


\(^{347}\) Francesco Milizia, *Le vite de' più celebri architetti d'ogni nazione e d'ogni tempo* (Rome, 1768). Milizia refers to D’aviler’s *Cours* on p.385, Campbell’s *Vitruvius*
Milizia was likely very familiar with the writings of Winckelmann, due to the affiliation that both men had had with the Spanish ambassador José Nicolás de with Azara. Milizia would thus have been aware of an existing hostility towards Borromini’s architecture within a contemporary European architectural discourse. Taking a critical stance towards Borromini was not novel, which both Milizia and his contemporaries will have understood.

What was novel about Milizia’s approach was that he used the details of Borromini’s troubled life to substantiate his critique of Borromini’s architecture. Milizia, like other eighteenth-century critics of Borromini, viewed the history of architecture in terms of a greater cultural cycle of rise and fall, with Borromini and his contemporaries being part of a period of cultural decadence. Due to the complex undulating forms and elaborate sculptural decoration of his architecture, Borromini’s work provided these writers with material evidence in architectural form of the deviant excesses of the more general culture of the time. These eighteenth-century critics took an interest in Borromini’s architecture as a product of his historical moment. They did not, however, express much concern for Borromini’s individual persona. Milizia criticism of Borromini was unique relative to that of these other authors because it was couched within a biography of the architect and, thus, was inherently personal.

Milizia was not the first person to have written a biography of Borromini, nor was he the first person to have taken an interest in the architect’s inner disturbance. Pascoli and the

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*britannicus* on p.491, Maffei’s *Verona illustrata* on p.210, Pompei’s *Cinque ordini* on p.422, and to Algarotti in general on p.5.
seventeenth-century biographers of Borromini, Filippo Baldinucci and Giovanni Battista Passeri, did indeed demonstrate an interest in the architect’s melancholy and suicide.\textsuperscript{348} However, while both Borromini’s personal life and his architecture were discussed within the context of these biographers’ texts, his architecture and personality were not conflated in the way we now understand them to be.

In his posthumously published biography of Borromini of 1728, Borromini’s earliest biographer Baldinucci, made mention of Borromini’s mental turmoil, referring to both his “umore malincolico” and his “ipocondria,” but such references appeared in a section of his text separate from that within which he discussed Borromini’s architectural works, and there is no apparent connection between the two.\textsuperscript{349} Indeed, given that Baldinucci was fairly positive about Borromini’s architecture, it seems unlikely that he would have wanted to connect them. Passeri, whose sixteenth-century text was published in 1772, also made reference to Borromini’s melancholy and suicide in his biography of Borromini, but, like Baldinucci, did not associate these characteristics with Borromini’s architectural production.\textsuperscript{350}


\textsuperscript{349} Baldinucci, \textit{Notizie de' professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua}, 6: 373.

\textsuperscript{350} Passeri, \textit{Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti che anno lavorato in Roma, morti dal 1641 fino al 1673}, 388.
Pascoli, whose biography of Borromini was published in 1736, seems to have been the first biographer to have made a connection between Borromini’s personality and his architectural production. He suggested that Borromini’s practice of architecture was influenced by his rivalry with Gianlorenzo Bernini. For example, he writes that Borromini, “per soperchio desio di voler negli ornati troppo innovare, usciva alle volte di regola.”351 While Pascoli here claims that the ornate forms of Borromini’s architecture were a response to an emotional stimulus, he does not suggest that these forms resemble his jealously, nor are they its visual equivalent. Pascoli also speaks of how Borromini’s melancholy influenced his graphic production, writing that, with the onset of his melancholy, Borromini drew “nuovi disegni di grosse fabbriche di capriccio.”352 This is similar to the previous correspondence between Borromini’s jealousy and his ornate forms in that, while Borromini’s inner state affects his architectural production, Pascoli does not suggest that the architecture of Borromini’s drawings resembles his melancholy.353

Milizia drew heavily on Pascoli’s text in the creation of his own biography of Borromini and was most likely influenced by Pascoli’s associations between Borromini’s personality and his process of architectural creation. However, while he may have been influenced by Pascoli, Milizia is far more explicit in making associations between


352 Ibid., I: 302.

353 Pascoli also makes no reference to such issues of Borromini’s jealousy, to his melancholy, or to his personality more generally within the context of his catalogue of Borromini’s individual buildings.
Borromini’s biography and his architecture. Milizia does not simply express an interest in the correspondence between Borromini’s life and his architecture, he connects the architect’s inner turmoil with the appearance of the buildings he created by implying that Borromini’s madness was imprinted on the facades of his architectural creations. In doing so, Milizia locates the personality or character of the architect in his architectural creations.

Milizia makes these connections in the context of the descriptive catalogue of Borromini’s buildings that he included as part of his biography of the architect. The earlier biographers had indeed all included a catalogue of Borromini’s works in their biographies. In their catalogues of Borromini’s works, the earlier biographers merely listed his individual works or provided factual or quantitative information about the buildings, such as their date of execution, patron, and so on. Milizia, on the other hand, included his own commentary along with a descriptive summary on the building’s appearance.

The two most intriguing passages from Milizia’s catalogue, in my opinion, are those of the facades of S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, also known as S. Carlino, and the Oratory of S. Filippo Neri. Milizia interprets the facades of these buildings from two standpoints: he reads them from a physiognomic perspective and criticizes them according to norms

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355 N.B. I have not included images of Borromini’s buildings at this point of my discussion because Milizia’s text was not illustrated and because I think that its critical efficacy rests partly on his comments not being set side-by-side with illustrations of Borromini’s architecture.
of architectural decorum. In what follows, I will discuss more general late eighteenth-century notions of physiognomy and architectural decorum before proceeding to look at how Milizia employs these analytical tools in his criticism of S. Carlino and the Oratory. Placing Milizia’s criticism in a broader context of these issues of physiognomy and architectural decorum allows us to understand how his criticism of Borromini was developing out of greater cultural and architectural concerns of the time.

Physiognomy

Physiognomy, as it is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary, pertains to two issues: “Physical appearance” and “The study of appearance.” In the second half of the eighteenth century, the concept of physiognomy and the Italian term fisonomia had such associations. This is apparent in Giuseppe Baretti’s translation of the English term “physiognomy” in his Dictionary of the English and Italian languages (1760). He translates it as both “Physiognomy [looks] fisonomia, aria, effigie” and as “Physiognomy, s. [an art which teaches to guess the natures, conditions, or fortunes of persons by a view of their face, body, etc.] fisonomia, s. f. art, per la quale dalle fattezze del corpo e da lineamenti e aria del volto si pretende conoscere la natura degli uomini.” Thus, in the eighteenth century, like today, the term “physiognomy” and the Italian term fisonomia were understood to pertain to both the physical appearance of a human being and the practice of assessment of the nature, or character, of that human


357 Giuseppe Baretti, A Dictionary of the English and Italian Languages, s. v. “physiognomy.”
being based on characteristics of his or her physical appearance. With Milizia’s analysis of Borromini’s facades, I will argue that both of these associations come into play. That said, it is his use of physiognomy as the study of appearance and its application to architectural formal analysis and criticism that seems to me to be particularly significant.

Physiognomy was of interest to a broad European reading public in the late eighteenth century. The popularity of Johann Kaspar Lavater’s physiognomic treatise, *Physiognomische fragmente* (1775-78), demonstrates such an interest. Multiple editions of the text were published in German, French and English in the 1780s. By the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, just under sixty editions had been published, in English, German, French, Italian, Russian, and Dutch. Despite an Italian translation not having been published until 1803 in Milan, people in Rome were reading Lavater’s treatise or were at least familiar with his work well before this point. References to his writings appeared in the Roman journal the *Efemeridi Letterarie* in 1779 and a full review of the French translation of his treatise was published in another Roman journal, the *Memorie per le Belle Arti*, in 1785. While the various editions and translations

358 For a recent study of physiognomy in European culture of this period, see Melissa Percival and Graeme Tytler, eds., *Physiognomy in Profile: Lavater's Impact on European Culture* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).


360 Ibid., p.86. Graham has documented the publication of “sixteen German, fifteen French, two American, two Russian, on Dutch, one Italian, and no fewer than twenty English versions” were published before the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century.

361 *Efemeridi letterarie*, n.ix (1779), 206; *Memorie per le belle arti*, n.1 (February 1785), xxii- xxvi.
speak to a broad interest in physiognomy at the time, references to Lavater in Roman journals are evidence of an interest in physiognomy in the late eighteenth century in Rome. While the *Vite* predates Lavater’s publication and it is not certain that Milizia will have read Lavater before the *Memorie* was published in 1781, an awareness of Lavater’s popularity is nonetheless significant for understanding Milizia because it demonstrates that he was writing at a time when ideas about physiognomy were in circulation in Rome and when understanding objects from a physiognomic standpoint seems to have been in vogue. Furthermore, references to and reviews of Milizia’s texts appeared in the same journals, the *Efemeridi Letterarie* and the *Memorie per le Belle Arti*, in which reviews of Lavater were being published.362 Thus, the same people who were interested in Lavater were interested in Milizia. This allows us to understand that Milizia’s readers will have been sensitive to or aware of the physiognomic overtones of his writings.

Milizia began to use the term *fisonomia* in his writings in 1781. In his *Memorie*, he claimed that “La facciata è agli edifizi quello, che la fisonomia è agli uomini.”363 This analogy provides him with as a means by which to illustrate and substantiate the architectural principle of a building’s facade needing to reflect the internal organization of its plan. The use of the term *fisonomia* in this context was something that Milizia most likely took from J.-F. Blondel, who, in his definition of the term *façade* in the *Encyclopédie* of 1756, wrote that “L’on peut dire que la façade d'un bâtiment est à

362 Reviews of Milizia’s work appeared in *Efemeridi letterarie*, vol. x and vol. xii, and the *Memorie per le belle arti*, 1785.

l'édifice, ce que la physionomie est au corps humain: celle-ci prévient en faveur des
qualités de l'âme; l'autre détermine à bien juger de l'intérieur d'un bâtiment." While
Milizia’s particular use of the term *fisonomia* is thus not original, its appearance in his
text is nonetheless significant for my study because it demonstrates that he both
understood the concept of physiognomy as pertaining to the existence of a
correspondence between external appearance and inner composition and that he was open
to the adaptation of ideas of human physiognomy to explain architectural concepts.

In his *Principj*, also first published in 1781, Milizia used the term *fisonomia* in a more
precise manner: he writes, “Si può dire in generale, che la facciata è agli edifici quello,
che la fisonomia è agli uomini, o come gli ornamenti esteriori, che distinguono i ceti delle
persone in civile, in plebeo, in grande.” Here, as in the *Memorie*, he uses the term
*fisonomia* and the human-architectural analogy as a means to illustrate and to give
credence to an architectural principle. However, although there are these similarities
between his use of the term here and that in the *Memorie*, the claims he makes in this

364 *Encyclopédie; ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, s.v.
"Façade," by Jacques-François Blondel. Milizia’s physiognomic interest, and his desire to
interpret architecture in relation to the human more generally, was most likely influenced
by his reading of Blondel and Blondel’s anthropomorphization of architecture. Milizia,
for example, spoke at length of Blondel’s proposal that the profile of the entablature of
the Tuscan order should be understood in relation to the profile of a human face
(*Principj*, 1781, 168-71.) Blondel’s anthropomorphization of architecture was, at the
same time, part of a much older tradition that had its origins in Vitruvius’ discussion of
the orders. While Milizia, following Algarotti, refuted the human origins of the orders in
his writings and avoided making the sorts of literal connections between the appearance
and form of human face, its components, and the human body and architectural facades
as put forth by Vitruvius and others in the eighteenth century like Blondel, he nonetheless
perpetuated a tradition of interpreting architectural form in relation to human beings,
albeit in a more abstract manner.

365 Milizia, *Principj di architettura civile* (Finale, 1781), II: 205.
case are actually quite different. Unlike his comment in the Memorie, he does not simply state that there is a correspondence between a person’s or a building’s external appearance and their inner nature, but rather that their appearance can be assessed in order to determine this inner make-up. Thus, physiognomy here is the assessment of external appearance as a means to determine a human’s or a building’s internal nature. Moreover, with regard to architecture, this assessment does not yield information about the composition of the layout of a building’s plan, but instead reveals some more abstract idea of character or status. Furthermore, ideas of the character of the human and the building are fused in this phrase due to its ambiguity. While Milizia suggests that a person’s exterior reveals their social status or character as being either civile or plebeo or grande, he does not provide the types of characters that a building’s exterior can express. In this lack of resolution, as well as with the framing of the reference to the building’s “ornamenti esteriori” with the reference to physiognomy of men and their associated character types, Milizia encourages his reader to resolve this ambiguity for themselves by adopting the human characters for the building as well. Human and architectural character are not simply related here, they become equivalent.

While these examples of Milizia’s use of the term fisonomia are evidence of his understanding of certain concepts related to physiognomy, they are not examples of Milizia carrying out a physiognomic reading of an individual or an architectural edifice. Even though Milizia did not use the term fisonomia in his earliest text, the Vite of 1768, it was in this text that he began to partake in physiognomic readings of individuals and objects. For example, in his biography of Pietro da Cortona, Milizia conflates the architect’s appearance with his character. He writes:
Milizia had gleaned this passage from Pascoli’s biography of the architect. Pascoli wrote:


While these passages are strikingly similar, Milizia alteration of Pascoli’s phrase underscores the relationship between Cortona’s appearance and his character. Pascoli’s juxtaposition of phrases pertaining to Cortona’s appearance and his character implies a connection between the two; Milizia’s addition of the words *come* and *così* concretely link Cortona’s appearance and his character. In Milizia’s phrase, Cortona’s appearance is presented as having been determined by his character.

While Milizia and Pascoli invite their readers to recognize the existence of a correspondence between Cortona’s external physical appearance and his inner character, what we might consider to be a conventional type of physiognomic correspondence, there was another strand of the physiognomic tradition in the genre of the artist’s biography in which an artist’s work of art acted as an equivalent to or surrogate for the artist’s body in the determination of his character. That is, like the artist’s own body, visual characteristics of an artist’s work could be seen to correspond with his character.

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366 Milizia, *Vite*, 341.

Giovanni Pietro Bellori alludes to such a correspondence in his biography of Caravaggio, when he writes:

\[ Tali \text{ modi del Caravaggio acconsentivano alla sua fisonomia ed aspetto: era egli di color fosco, ed aveva foschi gli occhi, nere le ciglia ed i capelli; e tale riuscì ancora naturalmente nel suo dipingere [...] Ma elgi trascore poi nell'altre oscura, tiratovi dal proprio temperamento, come ne' costumi ancora era turbido e contenzioso. }^{368} \]

Bellori thus presents a three-fold correspondence between Caravaggio’s character, his physical appearance, and characteristics of the appearance of his work. The physiognomic correspondence here thus expands, moving from a mere relation between the artist’s external physical appearance and his inner character to encompass the artist’s work as well.

That Bellori thought to incorporate the appearance of the artist’s work within this physiognomic correspondence between the artist and his own physical appearance may have been due to his acceptance of the proverb “ogni dipintore dipinge sé.”\(^{369}\) According to Frank Zöllner, “the proverb ‘every painter paints himself’ refers to an artist who creates himself involuntarily in his work.”\(^{370}\) Zöllner further suggests that early modern

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\(^{369}\) In the case of Caravaggio, Baldinucci had also brought his reader’s attention to this feature of the artist’s work, writing that he “volle avverare in se medesimo quel proverbio che dice, che ogni pittoire dipinge se stesso.” Transcribed in David M. Stone, "Self and Myth in Caravaggio's *David and Goliath*," in *Caravaggio: Realism, Rebellion, Reception*, ed. Genevieve Warwick (Newark DE: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 44, fn 9.

biographers stressed that “features of an artist’s character” could “be found in his works of art.” Bellori’s words are a strong testament to the existence of a recognition that an artist’s work could be endowed with a physiognomic potential.

While Milizia did not explicitly articulate his recognition of such a belief in the physiognomic potential of works of art or architecture in his biography of Borromini in the *Vite* or in its republication in the *Memorie*, it was implied, particularly so in his descriptions of the facades of S. Carlino and that of the Oratory, as I will now go on to discuss.

Milizia described the facade of S. Carlino saying:

*Il delirio maggiore del Borromini è la Chiesa di San Carlino alle quattro Fontane. Tanti retti, concavi, e convessi, con tante colonne sopra colonne di diversa sagoma, e finestre e nicchie e sculture in si poca facciatina*

Milizia’s use of terminology of mental disturbance and the way he constructs his description of the facade in such a way that it mirrors this disturbance facilitates his reader’s ability to make connections between Borromini’s inner turmoil and his architecture. Milizia’s use of the specific term *delirio* is important, given that, in standard eighteenth-century Italian dictionaries, the term was used solely in relation to human mental disturbance and it was only defined in this literal sense: Baretti defined the Italian term *delirio* as the “mancanza di senso causata da malattia” and translated it into English as “delirium, raving, the state of being light-headed”; in the *Vocabolario degli*

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371 Ibid.

Accademici della Crusca, delirio was defined as “Il delirare, L’esser fuori di sè.”

While Milizia almost certainly intended for the term to have a figurative meaning in his comment, as a derogatory term capable of expressing his disdain for the building more generally, it is important to recognize that he drew on a term that was used to categorize the mental turmoil of a human individual and was not defined in a figurative sense.

Descriptors of mental disturbance such as malinconia, ipocondria, frenesia, and smanie had indeed appeared in of the biographies of Baldinucci and Pascoli. However, these terms were not used with reference to or as descriptors of Borromini’s buildings. Instead, they were reserved for sections of these biographers’ texts in which Borromini’s personal life was discussed. However, even while these earlier authors did not make connections between Borromini’s illness and his individual buildings, their usage of these terms was nonetheless significant - Milizia’s readers’ acceptance of his use of the term delirio in the context of his biography of Borromini, albeit with reference to Borromini’s architecture, would presumably have been facilitated by these previous biographers having normalized the use of these terms of mental instability within the context of a biography of Borromini more generally.

Milizia himself incorporated numerous descriptors of mental disturbance into other sections of his biography of Borromini, sections pertaining to Borromini’s personal life.

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374 Pascoli uses the terms malinconia (p.302), ipocondria (p.303), and frenesia (p.303); Baldinucci uses the terms maliconico, ipocondria, and smanie (p.68); Passeri uses the terms delirio (p.388) and maliconico (p.388).
He described Borromini, the individual, as *un vero pazzo* and as *matto*. He also used the terms *malinconia, ipocondria,* and *frenesia* in his narrative of the personal events that led up to the architect’s suicide. The term *delirio* as applied to S. Carlino resonates with its literal meaning of human delirium because it appears in the same text in which Milizia used these other descriptors of human mental disturbance in their literal sense, albeit in a separate section. By using the same lexicon of terms to describe Borromini’s mind and his building, Milizia encourages his reader to recognize an equivalence between the characteristics of Borromini’s mind and the facade of S. Carlino. S. Carlino becomes a concrete manifestation of Borromini’s madness.

The correspondence between Borromini’s mental turmoil and the appearance of S. Carlino is underscored by Milizia’s description of the composition of the facade. The description of facade takes the form of a list of architectural features: right angles, convex and concave curves, columns, windows, niches, and sculptures, are all listed, but in no apparent order, and not one element is given a specific location on the facade. In constructing his list in such a manner, Milizia implies that the facade itself is lacking clear structure and organization.

Milizia’s description also evokes a sense of crowding. The number of descriptors packed into the list emphasizes the facade’s abundance of architectural elements. The repeated use of *tanto* reinforces this sense of profusion. The repetition of *e* in “e finestre e nicchie e sculture” serves as a crescendo, bringing us to a climax of super-abundance at end of the phrase. This evocation of a profusion of elements is then set against the smallness of

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375 Milizia thus does what Sohm seems to have interpreted Pascoli as having done.
the facade, which is emphasized through his use of the diminutive form of the word
_facciata_, upon which the elements are situated.

When paired with the statement that S. Carlino was Borromini’s delirium, these
classics of disorder and crowding come to be endowed with physiognomic
potential. That is, they become the outward physical signs through which Borromini’s
delirium is made visible. By analyzing the composition of the facade of S. Carlino in this
way, Milizia partakes in a physiognomic analysis in which the architectural features of S.
Carlino and their compositional arrangement stand in for the features of Borromini’s own
face.

The physiognomic evocation is similarly apparent in Milizia’s description of Borromini’s
facade of the Oratory of S. Filippo Neri. He describes the facade of the Oratory saying:

_L’Oratorio de’ Padri della Chiesa Nuova ha anche la facciata mista d’orbicolato
e di retto: qui è tutto sconvolto, e alla rovescia, com’era il cervel del povero
Architetto, che per far cose nuove impazzì in gocciolatoi ondulanti, i quali in
vece di facilitar lo scolo dell’acqua la ritengono; in modanature delicate sotto
un grave peso, in modanature di strana e nuova forma, in risaltar il solo
architrave del soprornato, in prominenze, in contorsioni, in delirj d’ogni fatta.
Ciò nondimeno in questa bizzarria traluce non so che di armonioso, e di vago,
conveniente per altro, come disse il Bernini, piuttosto ad un Casino di Villa, che
ad un sacro edifizio di Città._\(^{376}\)

Milizia’s description of the Oratory facade changed rather dramatically between the first
version published in the _Vite_ of 1768 and the revised version published in the _Memorie_ in
1781. The section of the text in bold was added in the revised edition. This addition is
significant because it demonstrates that the evocation of a correspondence between the

\(^{376}\) Milizia, _Memorie_, 206.
external appearance of Borromini’s architecture and his inner character became increasingly more important for Milizia.

In his assertion that the facade of the Oratory is like “il cervel del povero Architetto,” Milizia makes an explicit connection between the exterior appearance of the facade and the architect’s inner self. The facade and the architect’s mind are dually characterized as sconvolto, crooked or bent, and alla rovescia, backwards. With these terms, Milizia shifts his lexicon. Instead of descriptors of mental illness being used to characterize physical features of the facade, descriptors of a physical deformity are used to characterize Borromini’s mind. Later in the description, however, Milizia turns back to a lexicon of mental illness, describing Borromini as having gone mad (impazzi) in the composition of the facade and claiming that the facade is full of deliria of every sort (delirj d’ogni fatta). Once again, while the verb impazzare/impazzire seems to be used in a figurative sense as a term of derision, Milizia chooses a verb that was associated primarily with mental illness in its literal sense: the Academicians defined the verb impazzare as “divenir pazzo, perder l’uso della ragione;” for Baretti, impazzire was equivalent to the Italian devenir pazzo and translatable as the English “to grow mad” among other things. By moving back and forth between lexicons of mental illness and physical deformity, applying one to describe the other, Milizia conflates the two. In this way, the physical deformities of the facade of the Oratory, the ill-functioning rain gutters, the moldings are ill-suited to their place on the facade, and so on become the visual signs of Borromini’s madness. Thus, as with the facade of S. Carlino, Milizia invites his reader to understand the facade of the

Oratory from a physiognomic perspective, in which the features of the facade, which stand in for those of the architect’s own face, become the outward signs of the architect’s inner turmoil.

In these two examples of Milizia’s descriptions of S. Carlino and the Oratory, we see Milizia interpreting Borromini’s architecture from a physiognomic standpoint, creating a correspondence between the external features of these facades and Borromini’s inner turmoil. These facades, and their compositional features, act as surrogates for the architect’s own face, providing Milizia as physiognomist with external physical characteristics that can be linked to Borromini’s inner turmoil. This correspondence between the external appearance of these facades and Borromini’s inner nature, albeit unconventional, constitutes Milizia’s physiognomic interpretation of Borromini’s architecture.

Decorum

In these same descriptive accounts of S. Carlino and the Oratory, Milizia critiques Borromini’s architecture from a second standpoint. He faults Borromini for his breaks with conventions of architectural decorum.\(^{378}\) Since notions of architectural decorum, the idea of some type of appropriateness in architecture, are relative and vary with respect to period and region, Milizia’s particular sense of decorum must be considered before we can move on to examine his criticisms of Borromini’s lack of decorum.

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\(^{378}\) For a discussion of terminology related to decorum in architecture, see Werner Szambien, Symétrie, goût, caractère: théorie et terminologie de l'architecture à l'âge classique, 1550-1800 (Paris: Picard, 1986).
Milizia’s terminology and his definitions related to the notion of architectural decorum go through modifications throughout his writings. The two predominant terms he uses to encompass this idea are *decoro* and *convenienza*. While the term *convenienza* takes precedence in his writings of the 1780s, he nonetheless maintains that the two terms are equivalent in some way. For example, in the *Principj* he writes that *convenienza* “viene anche chiamata decoro, costume, o proprietà.”

While the purview of decorum expands in the course of Milizia’s writings from the 1760s onwards, a statement of that which constitutes his earliest conception of decorum appears in the both the *Vite* and the *Memorie*, the two works in which his biography of Borromini was published. The clearest statement resembling a definition of decorum in the *Vite* follows:

*Deve osservarsi il decoro, il quale fa uso conveniente della Simmetria ed Euritmia, e di quella giusta relazione, che deve essere tra un edificio e chi lo deve abitare, tra gli ornamenti e la qualità della fabbrica, adattandole i propri ed i più convenevoli alla sua magnificenza, mediocrità, o semplicità.*

In the *Memorie*, this same definition appears in a modified form as:

*È necessaria la convenienza, ossia il decoro, che faccio un giusto uso della simmetria, e della euritmia, e di quella relazione, che deve passare tra un edificio e il suo destino, tra gli ornamenti e la qualità della fabbrica, adattandole i più propri e più confacenti alla magnificenza, la mediocrità, la semplicità.*

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381 A similar definition appears in the *Principj*, I: 38.
While *convenienza* replaces *decoro* as the principal term used in these definitions, the basic elements of this general notion of appropriateness in architecture remain fairly consistent. According to this basic definition, decorum, in its broad sense, involves appropriateness in three matters: symmetry, eurhythmy, and the creation of an appropriate correspondence between the building and either its final use or its proprietor, a correspondence achieved through the building’s ornament and quality of the building in a manner consistent with the building’s level of grandeur.

Milizia’s definition seems to be an amalgam of eighteenth-century Italian and French interpretations of Vitruvian notions of decorum. For the majority of the components and structure of the definition, Milizia draws on Berardo Galiani’s definition of *decoro* as it appeared in the introduction to his eighteenth-century Italian translation of Vitruvius. To Galiani’s definition, Milizia adds concepts associated with French notions of *bienséance*.

Galiani’s Italian translation of Vitruvius of 1758 was a text that Milizia praised highly in his *Vite*. In his introduction to the translation, Galiani defined a number of key architectural terms that arise in the course of Vitruvius’ text. He defined *decoro*, his translation of Vitruvius’ term *decor*, as “la quale insegna far debito uso della Simmetria, e dell’Euritmia, e degli ornati, adattando i propri e convenevoli a ciascun edificio” and noted that it was regulated by nature (*natura*), or custom (*consuetudine*), or the building’s


function (*statuto*).\(^{384}\) Milizia thus seems to have derived his own definition of *decoro*, as the just use of symmetry and eurhythmity, and the appropriate use of ornamentation, from Galiani. He also incorporated the need for ornamentation to be regulated by the building’s function in his second definition of decorum as *convenienza* in the *Memorie*, which is also in accordance with Galiani’s definition.

Significantly, Galiani’s own definition of decorum was not the same as that in Vitruvius’ own text. Vitruvius’ definition of the term as it appears in Galiani’s translation is: “Il Decoro è un raffinato aspetto dell’opera, composto di cose approvate dalla ragione: questo si regola o dallo Statuto, che in greco si dice Thematismos, o dalla Consuetudine, o dalla Natura.”\(^{385}\) Although Galiani retains Vitruvius’ sense that decorum is a matter of the governance of the appearance of an edifice through the regulation of particular aspects of its composition, he is explicit where Vitruvius is vague regarding which aspects of the appearance must be controlled in order to achieve such an appropriateness. Galiani made decorum dependent on symmetry, eurhythm, and the ornamentation of the facade, even though such a relation was not present in Vitruvius’ own definition of the term. In his adherence to these aspects of Galiani’s definition of decorum, Milizia’s own definition of decorum can be seen to follow eighteenth-century Italian interpretations of Vitruvian theory, rather than Vitruvius’s text itself.

Milizia also follows Galiani in the definition of some of the constituent parts of his definition of decorum. According to Milizia, symmetry (*simmetria*) is the just proportion

\(^{384}\) *L'architettura di M. Vitruvio Pollione*, xiv.

\(^{385}\) Ibid., 9-10.
of the individual components of the facade and the just proportion of each of the
individual parts in relation to the facade as a whole. Eurhythmy (euritmia) is what we
would now consider to be a symmetrical relationship of the two halves of the facade
about the central vertical axis, and also pertains to the maintenance of order, unity,
simplicity, variety, contrast, progression of the facade. While such definitions are at
odds with both our contemporary sense of Vitruvian symmetry and eurhythmy and were
also at variance with French architectural terminology of the time, they are in line with
Galiani’s own interpretation of these terms.

The reference to the “qualità della fabbrica” in Milizia’s definition of decorum does not,
however, seem to resonate with any of the aspects of Galiani’s terminology. The term
qualità is ambiguous in Milizia’s definition and remains undefined in his writings. In his
Dictionary, Baretti translated the Italian term qualità into English in two ways: as either
“quality, condition, nature, kind,” or, alternatively, as “quality, noble birth.” According

386 Milizia defines symmetry as follows: “La simmetria consiste in una proporzionata
quantità di misure, che le parti debbono avere fra loro, e col tutto. Che un portone, per
esempio, abbia la sua altezza proporzionata alla sua larghezza, e che queste sue
dimensioni sieno proporzionate alla grandezza di tutto l’edifizio, questo è ciò che forma
la simmetria, la quale dunque è lo stesso che la proporzione.” Milizia, Memorie, xlii.

387 Milizia defines eurhythmy as follows: “L’uniforme corrispondenza delle parti simili,
che sieno tali e tante da un lato, come dall’altro, e similmente disposte, affinché il tutto
faccia un grato aspetto; come il portone nel mezzo della facciata, di qua e di la’ uqual
numero di finestre di simile grandezza, figurea e decorazione, un braccio ugalmente
lungo, e ugualmente disposto che l’altro” Milizia, Memorie, lxi.

388 For Galiani’s definition of simmetria see, L’architettura di M. Vitruvio Pollione, xiii-xiv. For his definition of euritmia see, xiv and p.9, fn2. Galiani’s interpretation of these
terms, moreover, remained current in Rome until the end of the eighteenth century. See
Giambattista Vinci, Trattato teorico-pratico di architettura civile (Rome, 1796), 90-93.

389 Giuseppe Baretti, A Dictionary of the English and Italian Languages, s. v. “qualità.”
to this definition, the idea of the *qualità* seems to pertain to issues of type or character, and of rank or level of dignity. In the context of Milizia’s definition, *qualità* could pertain to the genre or type of the building. However, Milizia’s claim that a building must reflect an appropriate level of grandeur, ranging from magnificence to simplicity, suggests that his sense of *qualità* might similarly pertain to an issue of rank or level of dignity. Thus, Milizia’s conception of *qualità* may encompass both aspects of Baretti’s sense of the term.

While Milizia’s use of the term *qualità* may be ambiguous and does not seem to correspond with Galiani’s Vitruvian terminology, it does resonate with currents in French architectural theory of the eighteenth century, specifically with the theories of Marc-Antoine Laugier, an author from whom Milizia is known to have liberally borrowed in the preparation of his *Vite*. Laugier had used the French term *qualité* in his definition of the term *bienséance*, a French term that had been used since the seventeenth century for Vitruvius’ term *decor*, in his *Essai sur l’architecture* (1753). Laugier defined the term as follows:

*La bienséance exige qu’un édifice n’ait ni plus ni moins de magnificence qu’il n’en conveint à sa destination; c’est-à-dire que la décoration des bâtiments ne doit pas être arbitraire, qu’il faut qu’elle soit toujours relative au rang & à la qualité de ceux qui l’habitent, & conform à l’objet que l’on a eu en vue.*

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390 Claude Perrault had translated Vitruvius’ *decor* as *bienséance*.

Laugier’s definition of *bienséance* and the way in which he employs the term *qualité* seem to correspond with the parts of Milizia’s definition of decorum that pertain to rank or dignity of the building as expressed through its appropriate level of grandeur.

Laugier’s sense of decorum as expressed in his definition of the term *bienséance* is strikingly different from both Galiani’s definition of *decoro* and from the definition of *decor* in Vitruvius’ text. However, be this as it may, this particular idea of appropriateness in architecture in terms of the just correspondence between the rank of the proprietor and the grandeur of the buildings was nonetheless a concept of appropriateness in architecture as discussed by Vitruvius. Rather than being part of his definition of *decor*, Vitruvius considered this particular facet of appropriateness in his definition of the term *oeconomia*, which he outlined as follows:

The other level of allocation obtains when buildings are designed differently according to the habits of the heads of families, or the amount of money available, or to suit their prestige as public speakers. Urban dwellings ought to be set up in one way, and rustic holdings, where harvest must be gathered, in another; the homes of moneylenders, certainly otherwise, and still otherwise the homes of those who are fortunate and sophisticated. For those powerful men by whose counsel the republic is governed, dwellings should be designed to accommodate their activities, and in every case the allocation of buildings should be appropriate to every different type of person.

In incorporating elements of Laugier’s notion of *bienséance* to bear on his own definition of decorum, Milizia thus adds another facet of Vitruvian concepts of appropriateness into

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392 As Rowland has noted, while this idea of a building needing to express the prestige or rank of its proprietor was essentially an aspect of decorum, it was not included as part of the notion Vitruvius described as decor. Ingrid D. Rowland, *Ten Books on Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 151.

393 Ibid., 26.
his own theoretical framework. Milizia’s notion of architectural decorum was thus Vitruvian at its foundation. It was, however, an amalgam of different strands of eighteenth-century interpretations of Vitruvius, partly Italian and partly French.

Milizia’s move from the use of the term decoro in the Vite to that of convenienza in the Memorie most likely also came about as a result of his familiarity with contemporary French architectural theory, particularly with that of J.-F. Blondel. While Blondel, like Laugier, used the term bienséance in relation to ideas of the status of the proprietor, he also used the term convenance in such a way that it absorbed both the associations of Laugier’s bienséance as well as more broader concerns associated with Vitruvian notions of decorum as discussed above. Milizia’s adoption of the term convenienza was potentially a means by which he could call attention to his own familiarity with contemporary French theory or as a means to underscore the way in his own sense of architectural decorum differed or was broader than that of Galiani’s term decoro.

Looking at the foundation of Milizia’s concept of decorum allows us to recognize that decorum was an issue with which architects of the eighteenth century were grappling and a concept they were attempting to define. By bringing in such concerns into his analysis of Borromini’s architecture, Milizia sets his criticism of Borromini’s work within the context of contemporary discourses on architectural theory. By incorporating ideas of decorum within his biography as a means to critique Borromini, however, he was doing something unique.

While Milizia seems to have incorporated several different strands of contemporary thinking on the idea of architectural decorum into his theoretical framework, in turning to
look at Milizia’s criticism of Borromini’s breaks with decorum, we see that the faults to which he points have mainly to do with Galiani’s concept of appropriateness. In the facade of S. Carlino, while above I argued that the disorder and crowding were reminiscent of or evocative of Borromini’s mental turmoil, these same criticisms also signal inappropriateness in terms of eurhythmy, particularly in terms of a lack of order (*ordine*) and simplicity (*semplicità*).

To achieve a sense of order in a facade, Milizia claimed that “tutte le cose, che si presentano alla vista, sieno disposte in una maniera facile da distinguersi.” To facilitate the reader’s understanding of the lack of order of S. Carlino, Milizia put himself in the position of an observer and recounted his impression of the facade. When he observes that the facade is composed of “Tanti retti, concavi, e convessi, con tante colonne sopra colonne di diversa sagoma, e finestre e nicchie e sculture in si poca facciatina,” he sees something that is lacking clarity of composition. In his vagueness with respect to the number and position of the individual forms, and in the random sequence in which he lists the individual forms, Milizia suggests that the components of the facade are not disposed in such a manner that they are easy to distinguish. Milizia thus describes the facade of S. Carlino as lacking order.

S. Carlino also lacks simplicity. Milizia defined this term in the *Memorie* saying, “La semplicità non è contraria alla ricchezza, ma alla complicazione delle ricchezze affollate.” Although Milizia does not explicitly state that S. Carlino breaks with his

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395 Ibid., lxiii.
notion of simplicity in the context of the text of his biography of Borromini, it is implied in his evocation of the super-abundance of a wide variety of architectural forms and their crowding within the space of the facade. Moreover, Milizia faults S. Carlino for its lack of simplicity in a later publication: in his Principj, he writes, “la confusione all’incontro, e l’innaturalezza, che si vede in Roma nella facciata Borrominesca di S. Carlino alle Quattro Fontane, è contraria alla bella semplicità.” This statement appears in the context of Milizia’s definition of the term semplicità in the Principj and serves as his sole example of a deviation from this facet of eurhythmy. Thus, S. Carlino does not merely lack simplicity, but is a prime example of such a lack. While this statement did not appear in the texts of the Vite or the Memorie, we nonetheless see that Borromini’s lack of simplicity in the composition of S. Carlino was a problem for Milizia.

Milizia was far more explicit with the breaks of decorum in the facade of the Oratory. When he writes that the composition of the facade is “conveniente per altro, come disse il Bernini, piuttosto ad un Casino di Villa, che ad un sacro edifizio di Città,” he makes a clear statement that the facade has not been designed in such a way that it reflects its given function or type, what Milizia referred to as the building’s destiny (destino). Milizia gleaned this idea from Maffei’s Verona Illustrata: Maffei wrote, “Della facciata de’ Padri della Chiesa nuova fatta in Roma dal Boromini, disse il Bernino, che bella sarebbe stata per un casino di delizia, non già per l’abitazione de’ Filippini.” In moving from Maffei’s designation of the very specific function of the building as the lodgings of

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396 Milizia, Principj, I: 320.

397 Maffei, Verona illustrata, 3: 186.
the Filippini to a more general notion of the building’s type, a sacred edifice within an urban context, Milizia simplifies the nature of the comparison as being between different generic types of buildings and, thus, focuses his reader’s attention on the discordance of the building’s type as expressed through the composition of the facade as it appears to be - as opposed to what it should be.

Milizia thus analyzed the facade of S. Carlino and that of the Oratory from a physiognomic standpoint and from the standpoint of the conventions of architectural decorum. The simultaneity of the projection of these two types of analyses within the context of the same descriptions has the effect of conflating notions of physiognomy and decorum. Such a conflation has the effect of endowing Borromini’s breaks with decorum with some sort of physiognomic potential. This interpretation of Milizia’s text does mesh with other concepts of decorum expressed by Milizia in the Memorie. As I stated earlier, Milizia’s notion of decorum expanded in his writings following the Vite. Rather than the single statement of his initial concept of the term in the Vite quoted above, the notion of decorum became more multi-faceted and multiple concepts, including the initial concept from the Vite, appeared in the Memorie. For example, at one point in the Memorie, Milizia writes that “La convenienza nell’architettura può definirsi l’uso della ragione nello scegliere, e nell’applicare alle fabbriche tutto quello, che è necessario per renderle perfette.”398 That decorum is here defined as the architect’s use of reason in the composition of the facade allows us to grasp how breaks with decorum could take on a physiognomic potential. Since Milizia characterized Borromini, the individual, as being

398 Milizia, Memorie, lxv.
mentally disturbed, we might extrapolate from this to suggest that such a disturbance impaired his ability to make rational decisions, the type of rational decisions needed to compose a façade in a manner in accordance with rules of architectural decorum. Thus, breaks from decorum could be interpreted as markers of a lack of rational thought. In this way, Borromini’s breaks with decorum, external physically manifest signs of Borromini’s inner irrationality, become traits through which his facades can be understood from a physiognomic perspective.

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Milizia’s critique of Borromini is of interest unto itself due to the unique manner in which he incorporated various strands of architectural and non-architectural contemporary thought. His ideas are of further importance due to the influence of his work and his particular approach to Borromini. Although he has not been given credit as an originator of a physiognomic approach to the understanding of Borromini’s architecture, my preceding argument calls attention to the need to reevaluate the importance of his contribution to this facet of the study of Borromini’s historical reception.

Unlike today, in late eighteenth-century Rome, Milizia’s authority as an architectural theorist was recognized. The repeated references to Milizia’s writings throughout Angelo Comolli’s *Bibliografia Storico-Critica Dell'Architettura Civile*, published in Rome between 1788 and 1792, are evidence of his prominence in the city in the late eighteenth
century. The favorable reviews of Comolli’s text in a number of Roman periodicals of the time suggest that Comolli’s opinion was valued by his contemporaries, which in turn adds give weight to his positive evaluation of Milizia.

Even where Comolli does not cite Milizia explicitly in his Bibliografia, his influence can be detected. For example, Comolli criticizes S. Carlino in a way that strongly resonates with Milizia’s criticisms of Borromini. He writes:

*Se Borromini avesse saputo la storia del penitente S. Carlo Borromeo, o avesse almeno scorasa superficialmente al vita di questo gran santo, crediamo, che nella chiesa alle quattro fontane, detta di S. Carlino, avrebbe così fatti servire di ornamento que’ tanti capricci, che più che a una chiesa consagrata a un santo, e grave Arcivescovo convengono a un gabinetto di una galante madama.*

Comolli borrows on Milizia’s approach to the criticism of the Oratory, calling attention to the inappropriateness of ornamentation for a building of a given type, but here he applies the criticism to S. Carlino. Given that Comolli seems to have known Milizia’s texts well, having both reviewed them and having used to them as more general reference sources on a repeated basis, it should not be surprising if he were to have been influenced by Milizia’s mode of criticism. Comolli’s interpretation of the facade of S. Carlino, in the way it echoes Milizia’s criticism of Borromini, is significant because it serves as

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400 Comolli’s text was reviewed in the *Efemeridi letterarie*, n.xvii (1788), 353-4; n.xviii (1789), 57-9; n.xx (1791), 185-6; and in the *Memorie per le belle arti*, n.4 (1788), 249-53 and 285-7.

evidence of Milizia’s criticism of Borromini having been absorbed into the architectural discourse of Rome in the late eighteenth century.

Milizia’s prominence within architectural circles in Rome continued well into the last decade of the century. In his *Saggio d’architettura civile*, published in Rome in 1795, the architectural writer Giambattista Vinci listed Milizia alongside Jean-Louis de Cordemoy, Laugier, and Algarotti as his four examples of influential figures of eighteenth-century architectural theory.402 The following year, in 1796, Vinci published a second text on civil architecture, the *Trattato teorico-pratico di architettura civile*. While he did not make explicit reference to Milizia in this second publication, much of the text seems to have been drawn directly from Milizia’s writings, albeit in a condensed and paraphrased version. Vinci’s esteem for Milizia and adherence to Milizia’s theories is significant because Vinci’s texts, like Comolli’s *Biografia*, were favorably reviewed in a number of Roman periodicals; this allows us to recognize that Vinci’s opinion was valued by his contemporaries and, in turn, that his designation of Milizia as one of a highly select group of influential architectural theorists of the eighteenth century is a useful indicator of Milizia’s prominence in Rome in the last decade of the eighteenth century.403

Vinci’s *Trattato teorico-pratico di architettura civile* is of particular significance for my study because, in January of 1796, the Academicians at the Accademia di San Luca asked

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403 Vinci’s texts were reviewed in the *Efemeridi letterarie*, n.xxiv (1795), 12930 and in the *Annali di roma*, n. 19 (1796), 145-51.
Barberi to review and approve it for publication. Given that Vinci’s text was, for the most part, a reworking of Milizia’s earlier writings, Barberi was thus engaging with Milizia’s ideas in 1796, albeit in second-hand form. Barberi would most likely have been familiar with Milizia’s writings prior to reviewing Vinci’s text. Barberi and Milizia could certainly have come into contact in Rome at some point during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, especially given that they both received patronage from the Altieri family. Even if the two were not familiar on a personal basis, it seems highly unlikely that Barberi would not have been familiar with Milizia’s writings given his prominence as an architectural theorist amongst Barberi’s contemporaries in late eighteenth-century Rome.

The timing Barberi’s review of Vinci’s text in 1796 and his engagement with Milizia’s ideas nonetheless seems significant. Just months after he had reviewed Vinci’s text, Barberi started to execute a series of architectural sketches in which he repeatedly makes reference to Borromini. In the next section, I investigate how Barberi reemploys Milizia’s criticism as a tool of self-expression.

404 Meeting of 10 January 1796, AASL, Libro de Decreti, n.55, 34r.

405 Milizia’s *Vite* was dedicated to Prince Emilio Altieri. The dedication was written by the publisher and the text was published anonymously. However, while Milizia did not write the dedication and the book was not published under his name, the dedication to Altieri is nonetheless relevant because it is evidence of a link between Milizia and the Altieri family.

406 For Milizia’s reception, see Manfredi in DBI.
PART II: BARBERI’S RECEPTION OF MILIZIA’S CRITIQUE OF BORROMINI

From the summer of 1796 until the late fall of that year, Barberi executed a group of roughly one hundred architectural sketches. The sketches are bound within a single volume, and divided into two sections: the first section is called *Palazzo reale in stile borrominesco* (figure 103) and is made up plans, sections, elevations, details, and a perspective view of a royal palace (figure 104); the second section is called *Li pentimenti ed altri studi* (figure 105) and is made up of a miscellaneous assortment of facades of churches, places of leisure, windows and doorframes, and altarpieces. Although Borromini’s name does not appear in the title of the second section, Barberi makes reference to the architect in written annotations in the margins of the drawings. In what follows, I will focus on one of these drawings (figure 102), using the other sketches from the album and the written commentary Barberi included on them to develop my analysis, and will argue that the facade in this drawing outwardly reveals Barberi’s internal disruption. To this end, I will show how Barberi knowingly reemployed Milizia’s critique of Borromini. In the commentary of the drawings, Barberi links desperation, architectural production, and Borromini in a way that echoes Milizia’s criticism of the architect. But Barberi links these things to himself as well. Furthermore, Barberi’s church facade exhibits breaks with decorum similar to those described by Milizia in his analysis of S. Carlino and the Oratory. In creating drawings that are Borrominesque in this way, the composition of his church facade can be interpreted as Barberi’s physiognomy, as an outward physical manifestation of his inner strife.
In the drawings as a group, there are clear formal allusions to Borromini’s architecture: the dynamic interplay of concave and convex forms of such buildings as S. Carlino (figure 106) is echoed in Barberi’s church facade (figure 102); the individualistic formal arrangement of component parts of particular buildings such as the campanile of S. Agnese (figure 107) is clearly referenced Barberi’s own campanili (figure 108); and the rich and complex sculptural decoration of interiors such as S. Ivo (figure 109) is evident in some of Barberi’s designs of windows and doorframes (figure 110). While none of Barberi’s designs are replications of any of Borromini’s individual buildings, they are nonetheless reminiscent of characteristic aspects of Borromini’s buildings in Rome.

Contemporary scholars have claimed that the act of borrowing from Borromini’s formal vocabulary was not uncommon in European architecture of the eighteenth century. Such works as Paolo Posi’s drawing of a church for the Concorso Clementino of 1728 (figure 111) and prints from Gaetano Chiaveri’s Ornamenti diversi di porte e finestri (figure 112) are two of the many examples scholars have put forth as examples of borrominismo of the eighteenth century.⁴⁰⁷ And, indeed, one can detect a formal similarity between the steeped profile of Posi’s cupola and that of Borromini’s S. Ivo (figure 113) and between the ornamental richness of Chiaveri’s door and a print of one of Borromini’s doors from the Collegio di Propaganda Fide that Domenico De Rossi included in his Studio di architettura civile of 1702 (figure 114). Giovanni Battista Contini, according to Pascoli, had counseled his students in the early eighteenth century to stay away from such

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Borrominesque characteristics, what he saw as “little curves, scallops, and arcs,” which he felt should “be left to cabinet makers, carpenters, carriage men, sedan chair makers” and other artisans, since he thought such forms were “better adapted to use by them [these artisans] than by architects.”  

Compilations of prints that sought to document Borromini’s works, like those of De Rossi and Sebastiano Giannini’s *Opera del caval. Francesco Boromino* (1720-25), and those that presented readers with creative extrapolations of Borromini’s works, like the work of Chiaveri or Ferdinando Ruggieri’s *Studio d’architettura civile sopra gli ornamenti di porte, e finestre* (1722-28), undoubtedly kept Borromini’s formal vocabulary in circulation, and presumably helped to maintain an interest in it well into the eighteenth century in Rome and abroad. Milizia openly reviled those who created prints after Borromini, those he himself described as “studiosi di Borromini” whose “ornati fantastici si spacciano nella calcografia romana, come per promover la peste nell’architettura.”  

Milizia’s likening of the spread of Borromini’s architecture to that of a contagious disease resonates with his human-architectural analogies as a means to substantiate his criticism that I spoke of earlier in the chapter. When we look at Barberi’s drawings, we may see him and his architecture as having been infected by this *borrominismo*.

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Barberi’s formal imitation of Borromini was not, however, consistent throughout the bound volume of sketches. A drawing such as one of the facades that was part of the theater of the royal palace (figure 115) lacks those characteristic Borrominesque features described above, and seems especially un-Borrominesque in its planar wall surface, the muted architectural decoration, and the strong rectilinearity of the overall composition. This absence of formal traits characteristic of Borromini’s architecture, those that appear in Barberi’s other sketches, serves as a cue to the viewer that what constitutes Barberi’s conception of the Borrominesque is not solely, or principally, concerned with architectural form or its composition unto itself. Through an analysis of the comments Barberi jots down in the margins of his sketches, it becomes apparent that his reception of Borromini does not come out of the positive appraisals of the so-called borroministi and their formal borrowings, but instead out of Milizia’s critique of Borromini discussed in the last section.

Like Milizia, Barberi was openly critical of Borromini’s architecture. This he makes explicit in the written annotations included in the margins of his drawings, such as one in which he writes, “il decoro borrominesco mi comparisce ridicolo.” Like Milizia, Barberi was also interested in the connection between Borromini and mental turmoil: he makes the claim in the comment of another drawing that “ognuno vede il Borromino nel caso dei disperati.” Like Milizia, Barberi was also keen to make connections between Borromini’s inner turmoil and the appearance of architecture. His comment that “ognuno


411 Ibid., 76.
vede” Borromini’s desperation is evidence of such a desire. Removed from an architectural context, this comment might seem to pertain to Borromini’s own physical appearance and the resemblance of this appearance to that of desperate individuals. However, the visual juxtaposition of the comment and the facade depicted in Barberi’s drawing (figure 116) encourages the viewer to connect Borromini, in his desperation, to architecture. That is, Barberi encourages the viewer to understand that the desperation with which he associates Borromini is in some way visually manifest in the architectural form of his facade. This, too, resonates with Milizia’s interpretation of Borromini. The use of ambiguous language to blur distinctions between the architect and his architecture is yet another characteristic of Milizia’s interpretation of Borromini that Barberi seems to have borrowed here.

While Barberi’s reception of Borromini thus mirrors and was most likely derived from Milizia’s interpretation of Borromini, Barberi’s drawings and their accompanying textual commentary do not function primarily as a critique of Borromini. Instead, Barberi’s uses Milizia’s theoretical construct of Borromini’s architectural physiognomy as a tool of self-expression through which to convey his own personal distress. To this end, Barberi likens himself to Borromini, a likening clearly evident in the textual commentary of the sketches. For example, on one drawing he writes “Ridi Fortuna ma una volta ti pigalia però per li capelli e fermerò la tua rota [...] o mi arroterai da disperato, come il Borromino che io cerco d’imitare.” Barberi thus acknowledges his relation to Borromini in their

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412 Ibid., 33. Barberi is explicit about the sources of his inner disruption. The commentary of the drawings brims with lamentation. He repeatedly speaks of his problems with his wife (whom he had earlier interned in a monastery for her infidelity), his financial problems (which had plagued him for years), his chronic physical illness (of bleeding

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shared experience of desperation and, in his statement that he sought to imitate Borromini, that this was a relation he himself sought to foster. To underscore this kinship, Barberi described himself using terminology of mental turmoil that had been used to characterize Borromini. He speaks of his own malincolia and, by writing “ero fuori di mè” when the definition of delirio at the time was “L’esser fuori di sé,” of his own delirium.\(^{413}\) In this way, Barberi calls attention to his resemblance to Borromini in their shared experience of inner turmoil and to the similarity of the specific nature of the inner turmoil they experienced.

There are other comments in the drawings of this album in which it becomes clear that Barberi’s imitation of Borromini extended into his architectural practice. For example, in the drawing of the church facade (figure 102), he writes “segnavo Borromini quando fuori di mè.” In another, he writes “Campanile in stile borrominesco sengato quando avevo le Massime afflizioni.”\(^{414}\) These comments are evidence of Barberi’s attempt to link his emotional experience, his architectural process, the product of this architectural process, and the relation of these to Borromini.

Like Borromini, Barberi’s architectural process was connected to his emotional distress. The following comments in four of his drawings serve as clear examples of this:

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hemorrhoids which were so bad at one point that he could not work and was losing his sight due to the loss of so much blood), the arrest of his son (for sedition), and the political unrest in Rome (with the advance of the French army into Italy and the faltering peace talks between the papacy and the French). Barberi’s lamentations seem excessive and unending.

\(^{413}\) Ibid., 83 and 75.

\(^{414}\) Ibid.
Barberi’s repeated coupling of references to his acts of creation and his experience of personal despair are evidence of his desire to conjoin his process of composition and his experience of inner turmoil. His use of the specific conjunction quando to link the two is significant because it suggests that his process of composition and his experience of inner turmoil were taking place simultaneously. Moreover, the repetition of the structure of these comments suggests that Barberi was conscientious of the way in which the relationship between his emotional experience and his drawings was conceived.

Milizia, however, did not merely claim that Borromini’s mental turmoil was connected to his process of composition. Instead, he encouraged his reader to recognize that Borromini’s mental turmoil affected his process of composition in such a way that his mental turmoil was imprinted on his architectural productions. In the comments listed above, Barberi points to his own presence in the pictorial content of the drawings as if to suggest that he, too, had left an imprint on the facades of his drawings. His words “immaginato” and “idea fatta” are references to his conceptual process of composition and, thus, call attention to his status as the conceptual originator of the architecture depicted in these sketches. What we see on the page is Barberi’s conception made...
visually manifest in architectural form. As Milizia used his biography of Borromini to encourage his reader to recognize the presence of Borromini’s persona in the facades of his buildings, Barberi similarly uses these written annotations as a means of acknowledging the presence of his own persona in the facades of his sketches.

Barberi’s use of the verb *segnare* in a number of his annotations is another means by which he calls attention to his own presence in the pictorial content of the drawings. Previous scholars have assumed that he used the verb *segnare* as a short form for *disegnare*.\(^{415}\) By paying closer attention to the eighteenth-century meanings of the verb *segnare*, however, we may come to recognize that his use of this particular verb may have been intentional. Baretti included the following definitions for the verb *segnare* in his *Dictionary*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{*segnare* }[\text{contrassegnare, far qualche segno}] & \text{ to mark, to sign, to put a sign or mark upon.} \\
\text{*segnare* }[\text{mostrare}] & \text{ to show, to direct.} \\
\text{*segnare* }[\text{far segno, dimostrare}] & \text{ to make a sign, to show [sic] by signs.} \\
\text{*segnare* }[\text{cavar sangue}] & \text{ to let blood, to bleed [sic].}\(^{416}\)
\end{align*}
\]

Of these various definitions of *segnare*, two seem to be potentially quite significant in our developing understanding of Barberi’s drawings: *segnare* as an act of marking and *segnare* as an act of bloodletting.

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\(^{415}\) Busiri Vici, "Giuseppe Barberi architetto romano giacobino", 7. Busiri Vici makes a comment about the annotations in Barberi’s drawings more generally, saying that the “parola ‘disegnato’ è sempre abbreviata in ‘segnato’.”

Segnare as an act of marking is significant in the context of Barberi’s drawings due to the connection between this verb, or its associated noun segno, and the concept of architectural character.417 Milizia made an explicit connection between segnare as marking and architectural character in the definition of the term carattere that he included in his Dizionario delle belle arte del disegno (1797): he wrote, “carattere è segno, improntato su qualunque materia colla penna, collo scalpello, con qualsiasi strumento per sitinuger le cose.”418 In fact, the connection between segnare as marking and the term carattere more generally seems to have been established in Italian parlance of the eighteenth century well before the publication of Milizia’s Dizionario: in the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca, carattere was defined as the “segno di chechessia impresso, o segnato;” one of Baretti’s translations of carattere was “carattere, s.m. [segno di che che si sia, impresso o segnato] character, mark, print.”419 This connection between segnare as marking and carattere is significant because the concept of architectural character in the late eighteenth century was one that gave theoretical credence to the notion that an architect could in some way be transferred on to the architecture he produced. Milizia articulated such a precept in his Principj of 1781 when he claimed that “Ciascun artista trasporta, e spiega nelle arti il suo proprio

417 For an introduction to the idea of architectural character in the eighteenth century, see Szambien, Symétrie, goût, caractère.

418 Francesco Milizia, Dizionario delle belle arte del disegno, s.v. “carattere.” Milizia’s definition was drawn from the definition of caractère included in the first volume of Antoine Quatremère de Quincy’s Encyclopédie méthodique published in 1788.

In light of Milizia’s claim that an artist’s *carattere* could be transferred to his work, and thus that the work would bear a mark of the artist, and due to the established connection between the term *carattere* and *segnare* in the Italian language, we might consider that Barberi used the verb *segnare* as a means to call attention to his act of having marked himself on the architecture of his drawings.

The idea that the *segnare* connotes bloodletting could also be quite significant in the context of the drawings due to the therapeutic associations of the practice of bloodletting. Barberi’s process of drawing could be likened to a type of figurative bloodletting. We could make a visual analogy between the flow of ink from Barberi’s pen and the blood from his body. References that Barberi makes to his own physical bleeding in the written annotations of his drawings make this analogy more plausible. On a number of occasions, he writes of bleeding from his hemorrhoids: in one comment, he writes “ero malato di premisi a sangue emorroide per cui ero in casa fin da 4 giorni;” in another, he writes “ancora andavo sangue. Lasso di lavorare perchè mi si è stracciato la vista forse dal gran sangue che ho fatto dalli vasi emorroidali.” Indeed, bleeding from hemorrhoids does not seem to have been out of the ordinary for men in Europe in the eighteenth century. In the definition of the term *hemorrhoidal flux* in the *Encyclopédie*, the author writes,


421 Giuseppe Barberi, “Palazzo Reale in Stile Borrominesco,” 11 and 33

“Les hommes sont plus sujets que les femmes aux hémorroïdes [...] le besoin de ce flux de sang est suppléé dans celles-ci par les menstrue.”

Hemorrhoidal bleeding in men was thus not only not uncommon, but was considered to be akin to female menstruation, a part of the natural cycle of the body.

Barberi’s references to bleeding from his hemorrhoids are significant in the context of his Borrominesque drawings due to the fact that hemorrhoidal flux was thought to be therapeutic, in that it helped to relieve and prevent chronic health problems such as melancholy and delirium. The author of the Encyclopédie entry explains:

> En effet, Hippocrate, Galien, Celse, Hildanus, Forestus, Alpinus, & presque tous les plus grands observateurs praticiens, s’accordent à regarder le flux hémorrhoidal comme très-avantageux dans bien des circonstances, & très-efficace pour délivrer de bien des maladies chroniques, telles que la mélancolie, les vapeurs, les vertiges, la manie même, & la folie habituelle, la jaunisse, la gravelle, la goutte, le scorbut.

Given this particular therapeutic potential of hemorrhoidal flux, we might consider that when Barberi writes of his own bleeding he will have understood this to be a clear allusion to his attempts to overcome his melancholy and his delirium. Furthermore, when Barberi makes such comments as “segnavo Borromini quando ero fuori di mè,” we might interpret this as both an allusion to this same sort of therapeutic bloodletting and to his act of drawing. The potential for this verb to resonate simultaneously with both meanings of

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423 Encyclopédie; ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, s.v. “Hemorrhoidal flux.”

424 “Les hommes sont plus sujets que les femmes aux hémorroïdes, sur - tout considérées comme critiques; parce que le besoin de ce flux de sang est suppléé dans celles - ci par les menstrues.” Ibid.

425 Ibid.
bloodletting and drawing allows for a conflation between the two acts. In this way, the act of drawing as a type of bloodletting takes on a therapeutic value.

The idea that Barberi might bleed Borromini is also intriguing in relation to contemporary understandings of hemorrhoidal flux. The Encyclopedists were clear to point out that bloodletting purged “plusieurs exemples d’écoulement de différentes humeurs excrémoneticielles, corrompues”.426 When Barberi writes “segnavo Borromini,” he identifies Borromini as the corrupted substance purged from his body. Given that Borromini’s architecture was a known contagion or a source of architectural disease as Milizia had claimed, and that the architect himself more generally had become an object embodied with associations of melancholy and delirium, it seems easy to grasp how Barberi would have spoken of expelling Borromini from his body as a way to relieve his own sickness. And we see those corrupted substances on the surface of the pages of Barberi’s drawings. There are indeed no pools of blood or ink from this figurative bloodletting. Instead those corrupted substances are the Borrominesque architecture on the page.

While the verb *segnare* may connote both marking and bloodletting, the meanings yielded from these two interpretations of the term are not incongruous. That which is marked on the facades of Barberi’s drawings is his character – in his comments, he made clear that his character at that time was one of melancholy and delirium. The corrupted substances of Barberi’s figurative bloodletting onto the surfaces of his drawings are of the same nature – they are the excrement or byproducts of this melancholy and delirium

426 Ibid.
purged from his body. The interpretation of *segnare* from these two different viewpoints results in the presence of the melancholy and delirium, or inner turmoil more generally, being transferred on to his sketches and embodied within the architecture there depicted.

But we might ask how such delirium and melancholy is recognizable in the architecture of Barberi’s sketches. In the first part of the chapter, I argued that Milizia linked Borromini’s breaks with decorum to the architect’s mental turmoil. Given that Barberi’s commentary seems to strongly resonate with Milizia’s interpretation of Borromini in other ways, it seems likely that he might have followed this part of Milizia’s interpretation of Borromini as well. Moreover, Barberi himself makes reference to Borromini’s decorum in the written annotations of two of his drawings, and in both of these instances he links this decorum to own inner turmoil.\(^{427}\) Due to Barberi’s own acknowledgement of a connection between decorum and his inner turmoil, it seems reasonable we look to the decorum of the architecture of his drawings for signs of his inner turmoil.

Barberi breaks with conventions of decorum in his sketch of a church facade (fig. 102) are indeed reminiscent of the type of breaks with decorum to which Milizia called to his

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\(^{427}\) In one comment, cited above, Barberi wrote, “segno questo stile in questo tempo per passarmi la malinconia giachè il decoro borrominesco mi comparisce ridicolo;” in another comment, Barberi’s second reference to Borromini’s decorum is similarly significant: he writes, “E ora di Pensare al decoro Borrominesco, giaché nella propria Esenssa siamo vacillanti e ci troviamo fra fucili cannoni e bajonette vicine è il perché lo sa chi penssa come è il Boromino che nel'decoro tutte andava egregiamente bene.” Barberi, “*Palazzo Reale in Stile Borrominesco,*” 9.
reader’s attention in his criticisms of S. Carlino and the Oratory.\textsuperscript{428} This church facade is indecorous, both in terms of Barberi’s use of eurhythmy, in its problems with simplicity and order, and problems with the function of the building being clearly expressed in the building’s facade.

Milizia used his description of S. Carlino to draw his reader’s attention to Borromini’s lack of simplicity and order: he described the facade saying that it was “Tanti retti, concavi, e convessi, con tante colonne sopra colonne di diversa sagoma, e finestre e nicchie e sculture in si poca facciatina.” Such a description could also be applied to Barberi’s church facade. While Milizia conveys such criticisms through text, Barberi expresses these same types of breaks in visual form.

To underscore S. Carlino’s lack of simplicity, Milizia used his description of the facade to create an evocation of a profusion of architectural elements, a profusion which was emphasized by the individual features having been crowded within the space of the facade. In examining Barberi’s church facade, we become aware of how he visually implies a lack of simplicity in a similar manner, particularly through the creation of an impression of overabundance and crowding.

\textsuperscript{428} With reference to this drawing, Elisabeth Kieven wrote that Barberi’s architecture was itself delirious: she wrote, “Apparentemente senza senso e senza ragione, tutto sembra aver abbondanato la situazione di equilibrio, anche l’architettura è “fuori di sé.” I have just finished explaining how Barberi’s commentary encourages us to make this type of claim. However, while Kieven suggests that Barberi’s architecture exhibits the architect’s inner turmoil, she does not describe where we see or how we can locate this delirium. For Kieven’s comments, see Kieven, "Borrominismo nel tardo barocco,” 397.
Barberi brings our attention to the abundance of curvature through his means of combining concave and convex forms. He ensures that the pattern of the curvature of the profiles of the various tiers of the facade does not correspond. That is, the profiles of the various tiers of the facade alternate from convex to concave and the pattern of curvature of the lower tier seems at odds with that of the upper tier. This juxtaposition of sinuous profiles that do not correspond emphasizes the presence and abundance of different curved forms, and their seeming superfluity. In this way, Barberi’s drawing visually echoes Milizia’s claim that S. Carlino was made up of “tanti...concavi, e convessi.”

As in Milizia’s description of S. Carlino, the profusion of Barberi’s facade goes beyond the curved forms and extends to a profusion of architectural features more generally. While the actual facade of S. Carlino has an abundance of complex sculptural forms, Barberi limits himself to standard features of a typical church facade: pediments, windows, doors, cornices, columns, frontispieces, campanili, and so on. Although these individual features may not exhibit the same sort of decorative complexity as the individual forms of S. Carlino, there is nonetheless an excess of architectural features, an excess which is set off by the noticeable absence of unadorned surface area of these facades.

This crowding of Barberi’s facade becomes apparent when it is compared with another church facade to which bears some resemblance, such as the facade of S. Agnese (figure 107), which Milizia had attributed solely to Borromini. Like S. Agnese, Barberi’s church is a two-tiered facade with campanili on either side of the central cupola. There are further similarities in the individual details: the campanili are of a similar composition,
the central doorway is flanked by columns and surmounted by a large triangular pediment, this central bay is flanked on either side by a minor entryway and then, beyond that, by a forward-projecting window. This general composition for a church facade had become quite common by the eighteenth century: Juvarra’s *dono accademico* to the Accademia di San Luca (figure 118), Bernardo Antonio Vittone’s *dono accademico* (figure 119), or the Concorso Clementino projects of 1713 (figure 120) and 1716 (figure 121), are evidence of this type of composition having become standard in the academic practice in Rome. The striking difference between Barberi’s facade, and these facades of similar composition, especially S. Agnese, is its crowding. Although there is very little open space on the facade of S. Agnese, even less is evident in Barberi’s facade. Take for example the unadorned space between the paired columns flanking the central doorway of S. Agnese. Into these same spaces, Barberi has squeezed sculptural niches. The spaces between the cupola and the *campanili* of S. Agnese have also been eliminated so that the central section of Barberi’s second tier is tightly wedged in between the two *campanili*. The attic storey and balustrade dividing the first and second levels of S. Agnese is also a place for pause in the overall design of church’s facade. Barberi eliminates this pause, turning the sparsely ornamented attic storey of S. Agnese into a distinct storey unto itself with prominently projecting columns, sculptural niches, and distinctive windows. This augmentation, the adjustment from the attic storey to a storey unto itself, eliminates that space of S. Agnese which is relatively less unadorned. This comparison calls attention to Barberi having filled the surface area of his facade with an abundance of architectural features.
Barberi further emphasizes this crowding of the facade through the lack of clear vertical axes. In S. Agnese, there are three clear axes of vertical emphasis: the central vertical axis and the two vertical axes up through the *campanili*. All three axes are clearly delineated through the vertical alignment of windows and columns in-line with axis. The central vertical axis is given prominence by the relative height of the central doorway, the paired columns on either side, the triangular pediment, the mass and upwardly-projecting conical shape of the cupola, and the towering height of the lantern in relation to the *campanili*, all of which focus the viewer’s gaze along the central vertical axis. There is no such sense of clarity in Barberi’s design. On the lower tier, the vertical thrust is carried up through the central vertical axis, while, in the second tier, the vertical thrust is transferred and divided between the two *campanili*. The lack of vertical thrust up through the central axis is exaggerated by the presence of the two *campanili*, which surge above the dome. Barberi’s vertical alignment of windows from the ground tier up through the *campanili*, echoed by the alignment of the columns to the right of these windows, further draws our attention to the upward thrust of the *campanili*. The lack of clear vertical axes, which would draw the eye upwards, has the effect of making the overall facade seeming compact or compressed. This in turn, emphasizes that the compressed nature of the features on the facade. This lack of clarity in the designation of clear vertical axes also demonstrates a clear disregard for order.

Barberi further accentuates the crowding through the overall proportions of his facade, which can be illustrated with a second comparison, a comparison with a sketch by Juvarra for the church of S. Brigida in Naples (figure 122). While Juvarra’s church facade exhibits a similar decorative abundance as Barberi’s, in terms of a liberal application of
doors, windows, curves, pediments, cornices, and so on within the space of a relatively small facade, Juvarra’s facade does not seem crowded to the same degree as Barberi’s does. This is so because, relative to Barberi’s facade, the overall proportions of Juvarra’s facade and the clear axes of vertical emphasis diminish the potential for the facade to seem crowded. The ratio of height to width of the individual tiers and the overall facade is noticeably smaller in Barberi’s church facade than that of Juvarra’s, which makes Barberi’s facade appear somewhat squat in comparison; this squatness has the effect of making the individual features that are positioned within the individual tiers appear cramped. It calls to mind Milizia’s statement that the profusion of ornaments were cramped with a “si poca faccinata.”

Another of Milizia’s criticism related to Borromini’s breaks with decorum was that he had composed the facade of the Oratory in such a way that the function of the building was not clearly expressed. He claimed that Borromini had created a building that appeared to be a secular place of leisure rather than a sacred edifice. While at first glance Barberi’s church facade is recognizable as a church, he nonetheless obscures the expression of the function of the building. Barberi draws attention away from the center of the facade through the lack of a clear and sustained emphasis on the central vertical axis. This has the effect of diminishing the viewer’s focus on the central doorway, the main point of entry into the interior space of the church. Barberi plays with proportions of the individual components of the facade as a means to further draw attention away from the central doorway: the windows on the bays flanking the ends of on the first tier of the facade are jarringly larger the door; the proportionately large size of the windows draws the viewer’s eyes to them, and away from the main entry point into the church. While
such plays with proportion do not make this building appear not to be a church, they do serve to disguise the central entry point into the church. Given that a church was a space into which people enter to take part in worship, the clear delineation of the main entry of the church is a significant part of the composition of the facade related to the building’s function. In this way, Barberi compromises the building’s expression of its function.

Other distortions of accepted proportions further undermine the identity of Barberi’s facade as belonging to that of a church. In his writings, Milizia had stated that the facades of churches should be square.429 While the churches I have used as comparisons were certainly not square, their height was noticeably greater dimension than their width. Barberi not only created a church that was wider than it was tall, but he also emphasized the breadth of its width through strong horizontal lines of the facade. While the vertical emphases of his church diverge in parts, the horizontal lines of the cornice along both the first tier and the second tier continues across the entire width of the facade. Thus, through the proportions of his facade, proportions that are not suited to a church facade, Barberi complicates the recognizability of the facade as a church.

Barberi does something similar with the proportions of the dome. In his Principj, Milizia had suggested that a \textit{cupola} of a church needed to be twice or three times as high as its width.430 From the other examples of church facades of a similar composition to S. Agnese, it seems clear that, while architects may not have adhered to such a strict rule of proportion as that presented by Milizia, they did generally build domes with a height of a

\footnote{Milizia, \textit{Principj}, I: 302.}

\footnote{Ibid., I: 302.}
greater dimension than their width. Compared to these other examples, Barberi’s dome seems exaggeratedly stunted. As with his other plays with proportion, the blatantly unconventional proportions of the dome hinders the recognizability of the facade as a church facade.

CONCLUSION

Through the commentary of his drawings and his exaggerated breaks with those facets of decorum to which Milizia had drawn his reader’s attention in his biography of Borromini, Barberi sought to imitate Borromini and, in doing so, to use his architectural compositions as a tool of self-expression. By looking at how Barberi’s conception for his Borrominesque drawings comes out of Milizia’s criticism of Borromini, we come to recognize that Barberi’s drawings are part of a greater theoretical discourse that was taking shape in Rome in the late eighteenth century regarding the reception of the baroque. By looking at how Milizia’s criticism on Borromini comes out of broader European architectural discourses on decorum and eighteenth-century reception of Vitruvius, and even broader cultural discourses on physiognomy, we see how Barberi’s drawings become an instance, albeit an idiosyncratic instance, of the way such discourses were circulating, being refracted, and informing architectural thinking on both a macro level (in the case of the discourses themselves) and on a micro level (in the case of Barberi’s particular translation of these discourses, second-hand through Milizia).
CHAPTER IV

BARBERI’S IMPERIAL MONUMENT

In 1805, Barberi envisioned a massive theater complex for a location in central Paris, a building of a diameter of over two hundred meters which he claimed could accommodate thirty thousand spectators (figures 53-55). It was not, however, a mere theater - it was also a monument to the newly founded French Empire. Barberi invites his viewer to recognize his building as such by using a Roman amphitheater for its exterior form and by referring to it as a bâtiment public in the inscription on one of the drawings. The concepts central to Barberi’s theater complex are best understood, therefore, not in relation to contemporary discourses on theater architecture, but in relation to ongoing discourses on the idea of the monument, a growing recognition of the commemorative potential of public buildings, and a new interest in the symbolic potency of imperial building types that was developing around the time of the proclamation of the French Empire in 1804.

In the first part of this chapter, I investigate developments in the concept of the monument in Paris in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century with the aim of demonstrating that, by the opening years of nineteenth century, public buildings had come to be recognized as a monuments of commemorative value and that, after the proclamation of the Empire, the use of imperial building types as models for public buildings was acknowledged as a means by which to justly commemorate the grandeur of the newly formed Empire. In the second part of the chapter, I interpret Barberi’s theater
complex as his response to this broader contemporary discourse on the monument and as his attempt at creating an imperial monument.

PART I: THE MONUMENT IN EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY PARIS

In the opening years of the nineteenth century, the term *monument* was applied to a variety of objects. Such variation in usage can be gleaned from texts circulating in Paris in these years. Take, for example, a selection of publications being offered for sale at the Piranesi brothers’ *calcographie* in which the term *monument* was used. The Piranesi brothers themselves described the objects illustrated in their father’s prints, a complete edition of which they were in the process of reprinting and selling, as “monumens.”\(^{431}\)

The brothers also published a collection of prints of the antique sculptures of the Louvre’s collection in 1804, the title of which was *Les monumens antiques du Musée Napoléon*.\(^{432}\) The brothers also had on display prints of Giovanni Antonio Antolini’s vast urban project for central Milan, the *Foro Bonaparte*, a project which contemporary journals in Paris had described as a “un monument durable a la memoire du vaniqueur de Marengo.”\(^{433}\) The objects illustrated in the second edition of Charles-Louis Clérisseau’s *Antiquités de la France* (1804), another text being sold by at the Piranesi’s shop, were

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\(^{433}\) *Nouvelles des arts*, vol. I (1801), 81-2. Potential subscribers of the prints were advised that they could view Antolini’s prints at the Piranesi calcographie at rue de l’université, n. 296. These prints were eventually made available in Antolini’s *Descrizione del Foro Bonaparte* (Parma, 1806).
also described as monuments in the preface to the new edition. Jacques-Guillaume Legrand, the editor of the re-edition of the Antiquités, had another one of his texts on offer at the Piranesi’s print shop, the Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes (1800-1801), a publication on which he had collaborated with Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand and in which both authors had referred to the buildings described and illustrated using the term monument. In this small selection of texts on offer at this one print shop, the term monument was thus used to describe a range of objects of various forms, antique and modern, architectural, archaeological, and sculptural.

The variance of the forms of objects to which the term monument was applied in this selection of texts might lead us to presume that the term was vague, broad, and indistinct, and could thus be used indiscriminately. This in turn might lead us to doubt whether the idea of the monument or the term monument itself had particular associations or a precise meaning for those in early nineteenth-century Paris. This, however, does not seem to have been the case. While the term did have multiple connotations, there does at the same time seem to have been a marked interest in giving precision to the definition of the term monument and the broader concept of the architectural monument. We can come to

434 Charles-Louis Clérisseau, Antiquités de la France, ed. Jacques-Guillaume Legrand, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1804). The new edition included a historical text by Legrand and 21 new plates, many of which were done by Louis-Pierre Baltard. The work was listed as being for sale at the Piranesi’s shop in Annales de la calcographie, n. xii (1806), 191 and in the Journal de l’Empire, 25 July 1806, 4.

435 Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand and Jacques-Guillaume Legrand, Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes, remarquables par leur beauté, par leur grandeur ou par leur singularité, et dessinés sur une même échelle (Paris, 1800-1801). In a review of the text published in the Journal des bâtiments civils et des arts civilles et des arts, n.74 (26 May 1801), 1-8, it was noted as being sold by the Piranesi.
recognize this interest by looking at how the term *monument* and the broader concept of
the monument were presented in architectural dictionaries of the late seventeenth century
through until the early nineteenth century. Such an examination reveals two significant
concerns: first, throughout this period, the monument, at its core, was understood to be a
commemorative object; second, expectations regarding the form a monument could take
shifted in the course of the eighteenth century so that, by the opening years of the
nineteenth century, public buildings, architectural entities not recognized in the late
seventeenth century as having a commemorative value, came to be acknowledged as
monuments.

In his *Dictionnaire d’architecture, ou Explication des termes d'architecture* of 1693,
Augustin-Charles d’Aviler defined the term *monument* as follows:

> Monument, s’entend en Architecture, de tout bâtiment qui sert à conserver la
> memoire du temps, et de la personne qui l’a fait faire, ou pour qui il a été élevé,
> comme un Arc-de-triomphe, un Mausolée, une Pyramide, etc.\(^{436}\)

D’Aviler here defines both the function and the form of an architectural monument. The
monument, in being a building intended to conserve the memory of something, serves a
commemorative function. In terms of the form such a monument might take, d’Aviler
proposes that it is any building that serves a commemorative function. The examples of
monuments d’Aviler lists, a triumphal arch, a mausoleum, and a pyramid, however, run
counter to the seeming inclusive understanding of the physical form of a monument
presented in the earlier part of his definition. This is so because the types of structures
that he lists were those primarily associated with a commemorative function. In the

\(^{436}\) Augustin-Charles d' Aviler, *Dictionnaire d’architecture*, s.v. “monument.”
definitions of the terms *piramide* and *mausolée* in his dictionary, d’Aviler was clear to point out that they were objects used in the commemoration of death.\(^{437}\) The triumphal arch is slightly more complicated. In his definition of the *Arc-de-triomphe*, d’Aviler writes, “c’est une Porte de Ville” that “sert autant pour un Triomphe au retour d’une Expedition victorieuse, que pour conserver à la posterité la memoire du Vainqueur.”\(^{438}\) This definition, in some ways, seems to encourage the reader to identify the triumphal arch as having had a dual function as both a city gate, a pragmatic function, and as a marker of triumph, a commemorative function. However, with his use of the verbs *être* and *servir*, d’Aviler created a more nuanced distinction between what the object was and how it functioned or what it did. The triumphal arch was a city gate, but it served to commemorate victory. Thus, even in this case where we have an object that might be understood to have some sort of utilitarian or pragmatic function, d’Aviler acknowledged that its function was commemorative in nature. D’Aviler’s definition of the term *monument* allows us to recognize that, at the close of the seventeenth century, monuments were not merely architectural structures that served a commemorative function. Instead, they were those types of structures with which a commemorative function was the primary concern.

\(^{437}\) In his definition of the noun *piramide*, d’Aviler writes that pyramids were erected “pour quelque evenement singulier; mais comme elles sont le symbole de l'Immortalité, elles servent plus souvent de Monumens funeraires;” he defines the *mausolée* as “un magnifique Monument funeraires composé d'Architecture et de sculpture avec Epitaphe, élevé à la memoire d'un Prince. Ibid., s.v. “mausolée” et “piramide.”

\(^{438}\) Ibid., s.v. “Arc-de-triomphe.”
D’Aviler’s definition of the term *monument* is important to consider because his dictionary was an influential publication. In the late eighteenth century, Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy described d’Aviler as having had “la première idée d’un Dictionnaire d’architecture” and that the first edition and subsequent editions had “passé, jusqu’à ce jour, pour être le meilleur et le plus étendue de tous ceux qui ont été faits sur l’architecture.” Moreover, the basic components of d’Aviler’s definition were maintained by architectural writers well into the late eighteenth century. While the wording of subsequent definitions of the term *monument* changed in some ways, two essential components of his definition remain unchanged: the monument continued to be defined as a physical entity that served a commemorative function; the monument also continued to be understood not as any building that served a commemorative function, but as particular sorts of buildings that were associated primarily with a commemorative function.

A selection of definitions of the term *monument* from the mid to late eighteenth century illustrates the perpetuation of d’Aviler’s concept of the monument. In his *Discours sur la nécessité de l’étude de l’architecture* of 1754, Jacques-François Blondel began his definition of the term *monument* as follows:

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439 Antoine Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie méthodique. Architecture* (Paris, 1788-1825), I: 171-2. The chronology of the publication of the *Encyclopédie Méthodique* is as follows: the first part of volume 1 (pp. 1-320) was published in 1788 and the second part (pp. 321-730) in 1790; the first part of volume 2 (pp. 1-358) was published in 1801 and the second part (pp. 361-744) in 1820; the first part of volume 3 (pp. 1-344) was published in 1825 and the second part (pp. 345-664) in 1828. See Laurent Baridon, "Le dictionnaire d'architecture de Quatremère de Quincy: codifier le néoclassicisme," in *L'encyclopédie méthodique, 1782-1832: des lumières au positivisme*, ed. Claude Blanckaert and Michel Porret (Genève: Droz, 2006), 718.
Monument. Sous ce nom l'on entend tout ouvrage d'Architecture et de Sculpture destiné à conserver la mémoire des grands hommes; tel que les Obelisques, les Mausolées, les Arcs de triomphe, etc.\textsuperscript{440}

In 1765, Louis de Jaucourt began his definition of the term \textit{monument} in the \textit{Encyclopédie} as follows:

\begin{quote}
Monument, s.m. on appelle monument, tout ouvrage d'Architecture & de Sculpture, fait pour conserver la mémoire des hommes illustres, ou des grands événemens, comme un mausolée, une pyramide, un arc de triomphe, & autres semblables.\textsuperscript{441}
\end{quote}

In 1770, Roland de Virloys began his definition of the term \textit{monument} in \textit{Dictionnaire d'architecture civile, militaire et navale, antique, ancienne et moderne} as follows:

\begin{quote}
Est, en general, tout edifice élevé pour conserver la memoire de quelque personne illustres, ou de quelque action remarquable, ou de quelque evenement extraordinaire: tels sont les Eglises baties pour l’exécution de quelque voeu, les arcs de triomphe, les figures equestres et pedestres, les pyramides, les obelisques, les tombeaux, etc.\textsuperscript{442}
\end{quote}

While these are not word-for-word transcriptions of d’Aviler’s definition, there is nonetheless a clear consistency in this two-part conception of the monument in terms of what it did and what form it was supposed to take. According to each of these three authors, the monument was a commemorative object; all three authors reuse d’Aviler’s phrase “conserver la memoire” in conveying this idea. The examples of monuments the authors provide are also those d’Aviler and his later editors had listed, with the exception


\textsuperscript{441} \textit{Encyclopédie; ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers}, s.v. “monument.”

\textsuperscript{442} Charles François Roland le Virloys, \textit{Dictionnaire d'architecture, civile, militaire et navale, antique, ancienne et moderne}, s.v. “monument.”
of the equestrian or standing figures mentioned by Roland de Virloy, a form easily understood as being primarily commemorative in nature, and the temple, which is the only building that seems to be at odds with the other building types in that its interior served another function, as a space of communion for religious observers. This consistency of the way the term *monument* was defined and its maintenance over a relatively long period suggests that the idea of the monument was both quite precise, and that there was some consensus about what a monument was in architectural parlance, and that this concept was fairly stable.

However, despite the seemingly static nature of the definition of the term *monument*, the concept of the monument was nonetheless shifting in French architectural terminology throughout the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century. By the early years of the nineteenth century, the public building, too, alongside those conventional forms discussed above, came to be recognized as a type of monument. The transformation of the public building into a monument is apparent in the same sources cited earlier. However, rather than taking place within the term *monument*, this shift took place in definitions of the terms *bâtiment* and *édifice*. Unlike the term *monument* and its seeming stability throughout the eighteenth century, the terms *bâtiment* and *édifice* were unstable and in flux. In the fluctuating and overlapping meanings of these terms as they were defined by various authors, the idea of the public building as a monument emerged.

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443 In the 1710 edition of d’Aviler’s dictionary of terms, revised by Alexandre-Jean-Baptiste Le Blond, d’Aviler’s list of structures that could be categorized as monuments expands to include *stèles, styles, obelisques, colonnes,* and *obêles*. See *Dictionnaire d’architecture*, 2nd ed., s.v. “monument.”
In the late seventeenth century, neither the term *bâtiment* nor the term *édifice* were explicitly connected to the French term *monument*. This can be determined by looking at the terms as they were defined by d’Aviler. He defined the terms *bastiment*, which is the spelling he used for the term *bâtiment*, and *édifice* as follows:

_Bastiment, se dit de toutes sortes de lieux elevé par artifice, soit pour la Religion, pour la magnificence ou pour l’utilité._

Edifice, se dit pour Bâtiment; mais on ne s’en devroit servir, que pour signifier les lieux d’habitation, parce que ce mot dérive du Latin Aedes, Maison.

Neither of these terms bears a conceptual tie to the term *monument* as defined by d’Aviler or the other authors listed above, particularly so due to lack of commemorative value of both the *bâtiment* and the *édifice*. The *bâtiment* does, however, move closer to the monument in d’Aviler’s subdefinitions of the term *bastiment*, one of which is *bastiments publics*, which he defines as follows:

_Bastimens Publics, ceux qui servent ou à la Religion, comme les Temples, Eglises, Hopitaux, Sepultures, etc ou à la seureté, comme les Muraillles, Tours Bastions et autres parties de l’Architecture Militaire: ou a l’utilité, comme les Ponts, Chaussées, Ports, Aqueducs, Basiliques, Marches, etc ou enfin à la Magnificence, commes les Arcs de Triomphe, Obelisques, Amphitheaters, Portiques, etc._


While in some ways this definition is similar to his more general definition of the term *bastiment*, there is a significant shift brought about by the type of structures he includes as examples of magnificent public buildings. There is an overlap between the structures he defines as *bastimens publics* and those that he had included in his definition of the term *monument* in the first edition of his dictionary – d’Aviler categorizes the triumphal arch as both a monument and as a magnificent public building. The dual categorization of the triumphal arch as both a *monument* and a *bastimens publics* creates an overlap between these two terms, which serves to link the monument and the public building. The public building, however, still lacks a commemorative potential.

In the course of the eighteenth century, subsequent authors went on to present alternative definitions for the terms *bâtiment* and *édifice*, some elements of which were in agreement with d’Aviler’s definitions and others that contradicted them. The various transmutations of these terms reveal how the idea of the public building as a monument of commemorative potential came to the fore. The most significant changes to d’Aviler’s concepts of these terms was brought about by Blondel. He began his definition of the term *bâtiment* in an *Encyclopédie* entry of 1752 as follows:

*Bâtiment, s. m. on entend sous ce nom tous les lieux propres à la demeure des grands & des particuliers, aussi bien que les édifices sacrés, places publiques, portes de ville, arcs de triomphe, fontaines, obélisques, &c.447* – les Theatres & les Academies estoient pour la Commodity publique.” See Claude Perrault, *Abregé des Dix livres d'architecture de Vitrue* (Paris, 1674), 157-8.

The categorization of the triumphal arch and the obelisk as bâtiments in this definition and as monuments in his definition of the term monument cited earlier creates a link between the bâtiment and the monument, similar to that created by d’Aviler between the bastimens publics and the monument. However, Blondel, unlike d’Aviler, seemed keen to disassociate the bâtimens public from the monument. Almost certainly following d’Aviler, he defined various subcategories of the term bâtiment, one of which was the bâtimens publics, which he described as those buildings “qui sont destinés à rendre la justice, ou à l'usage du public.” While Blondel is somewhat vague in defining the purpose of the bâtiment public, he is clear not to provide examples of the public building that he himself had categorized as monuments. Given that Blondel was not only familiar with d’Aviler’s definitions, but seems to have borrowed from d’Aviler in creating his own, his definition of bâtimens publics appears to be a means of disassociating the idea of the public building from both the more general term bâtiment and from concepts related to the term monument. Thus, in some ways, Blondel seems to attempt to distance the public building from the monument.

Blondel continued to complicate the relationship between the building and the monument in his definition of the term edifice in the Encyclopédie, which was published in 1755. He defined the edifice as follows:

Edifice, s. m. s'entend en général de tout monument considérable, tel qu'une église, un grand palais, un hôtel-de-ville, un arsenal, un arc de triomphe, &c. quoique le mot latin oedes, dont il est dérivé, signifie maison, qui désigne plutôt

448 Ibid.
Unlike d’Aviler, Blondel does not recognize the *edifice* as a domestic structure. Quite the contrary, he explicitly states that the *edifice* is not a domestic building. *Edifice* is instead for Blondel a term that pertains to grandiose types of buildings. As with his definition of the term *bâtiment*, he associates the term *edifice* with structures that were known to be monuments, specifically the triumphal arch. The dual categorization of the triumphal arch has the effect of linking the *edifice* to the monument, as in the examples of d’Aviler’s *bastimens publics* and Blondel’s *bâtiment*.

Significantly, Blondel also incorporates the term *monument* into this definition of the term *edifice*. Through the use of the term *monument* in this definition, Blondel makes explicit his recognition of the existence of a connection between the term *edifice* and some notion of the monument. The presence of the term *monument* in the definition is of further importance because it endows the *edifice* with a commemorative value. This is so because Blondel’s definition incorporates the term *edifice*, the term *monument*, and the example of the triumphal arch. As I explained earlier, the dual categorization of the triumphal arch as both a *monument* and a *bastiment public* in d’Aviler, and a *monument* and a *bâtiment* by Blondel, created a link between the monument and these other categories of buildings. The presence of the triumphal arch in these definitions of *bastiment public* and *bâtiment* did not, however, necessarily endow the public building or the building more generally with a commemorative potential. By incorporating both the

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term *monument* and the example of the triumphal arch in his definition of the term *edifice*, Blondel does endow the *edifice* with a commemorative potential. Within the context of d’Aviler’s *bastiment public* and Blondel’s *bâtiment*, the triumphal arch was recognized as a magnificent object. In the context of definitions of the term *monument* throughout the eighteenth century, on the other hand, the triumphal arch was recognized as a commemorative object. The triumphal arch was thus a *bastiment public/bâtiment* in its magnificence and a *monument* in its commemorative value. The presence of the term *monument* makes the triumphal arch resonate with its commemorative associations in Blondel’s definition of *edifice*. Thus, by placing the term *monument*, the term *edifice*, and the example of the triumphal arch in the same definition, Blondel’s *edifice* comes to take on a commemorative valence. But he recognizes this commemorative value in the *edifice*, which is not necessarily a public building.

Blondel’s interest in developing the commemorative potential of the *edifice* is similarly evident in the definition of the term he included in his *Discours sur la nécessité de l’étude de l’architecture* of 1754, which began as follows:

*Edifice. Sous ce nom on entend moins un bâtiment destiné à l’habitation, qu’une grande place, un Hotel de Ville, une Bourse, une Bibliotheque, et tout autre bâtiment dont l’intérieur servant de depot public, annonce par ses dehors une ordonnance qui, embellissant la Capitale, illustre le gout de la Nation, où ces édifices sont érigés.*

In this definition, Blondel explains how the *edifice* can be understood as a commemorative object. By shifting the valuation of a building’s exterior from its passive characteristic of magnificence to its active ability to embellish, Blondel endows the

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450 Ibid., 19-20.
building’s exterior with agency. In its act of embellishing, the building’s exterior reflects the society in which it took shape. In its capacity to transmit and conserve through its material form the society in which it became manifest, he explicitly recognizes the *edifice* as a commemorative object.

While these definitions seem to suggest that Blondel was grappling with how to appropriately define the terms *bâtiment* and *edifice*, I do not want to make the claim that the definition of these terms was a central concern of architectural theorists. Roland de Virloy, for example, did not seem concerned with the need to re-evaluate them. In his dictionary of 1770, he presented a single definition for the two terms and claimed that they were synonymous: he defined the term *edifice* as “Batiment. Nom general qu’on donne à toute sorte de construction d’architecture, qui a de l’elevation.” The *edifice/bâtiment* for Roland de Virloy was thus a building in its most generic sense. Not only did he not recognize a distinction between the two terms, but he also did not associate this generic building with a commemorative potential. Thus, while the comparison of d’Aviler’s and Blondel’s definitions suggests that the terms *bâtiment* and *edifice* were going through a process of re-evaluation, and furthermore that ideas of the building were moving towards the concept of the monument, these were not concerns with which every architectural theorist in France in the eighteenth century was preoccupied. That being said, the reevaluation of these terms continued to attract the attention of theorists into the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Quatremère, for example, took up a number

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of Blondel’s ideas and went on to complete the transformation of the public building, not simply the building or *edifice* in its generic sense, into a monument.

In 1788, Quatremère defined the term *bâtiment* in his *Encyclopédie méthodique* as follows:

*Bâtiment, s.m. Nom general que l’on donne aux ouvrages de l’architecture, mais particulièrement aux lieux destinés à l’habitation. Le mot de edifice, qui en est synonyme, comporte une acception plus noble et plus distinguée. Le mot de bâtiment ne saurait convenir aux arcs de triomphe, aux fontaines, portes publiques, etc. Celui de edifice emporte avec lui l’idée de monument.*

Like Blondel, Quatremère claims that the *bâtiment* is a domestic structure, he calls attention to the distinction between the *bâtiment* and the *edifice*, he uses the term *monument* in relation to the *edifice*, and includes a triumphal arch as an example of an *edifice/monument* and, in so doing, endows the *edifice* with commemorative potential in the way described earlier. Unlike Blondel, Quatremère is far more explicit in his categorization of the *edifice* as a monument. While Blondel incorporated the term *monument* into his definition of the *edifice*, Quatremère includes a complete phrase simply for the purpose of defining the *edifice* as a monument.

Quatremère's understanding of the term *bâtiment* in relation to that of the *edifice* and the *monument* is, however, complicated by his definition of the *bâtiment public*, which he, like both d’Aviler and Blondel before him, included as part of his definition of the term *bâtiment*. He defined it as follows:

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452 Quatremère, *Encyclopédie méthodique*, s.v. “bâtiment.”
The bâtiment public thus differed from the simple bâtiment in that it was intended for public use, not domestic use. However, while Quatremère thus follows Blondel’s definition of the bâtiment public, there are other elements through which he counters it. For example, Quatremère includes the hotel-de-ville and the bourse as examples of public buildings; these were types of buildings that Blondel had categorized not as bâtiments publics, but as edifices. By recategorizing buildings that Blondel had cited as examples of the edifice in his definition of the term in both the Encyclopédie and his Discours, Quatremère blurs distinctions between the idea of the bâtiment, the bâtiment public, and the edifice.

Quatremère, however, resolves this ambiguity surrounding this group of terms – the bâtiment, the bâtiment public, and the edifice – and their relation to the monument by developing the idea of the edifice public. Both Blondel and d’Aviler had used the term edifice public in their works, but they did not define it as they had done with the terms bâtiment, bâtiment public, and edifice. The idea of the edifice public is introduced in Quatremère’s entry for the term edifice, which appeared in the part of his Encyclopédie méthodique published in 1801. Quatremère began his definition of the more general term edifice as follows:

Edifice, s.m. Quoique, d’apres son etymologie aedes qui signifie maison, ce mot sembleroit ne devoir se dire que des batimens d’habitation, cependant l’usage lui a donné dans la langue francoise une acception plus relevée. Bâtiment se dit de
Quatremère reiterates his and Blondel’s earlier claim of the distinction between bâtiment and the edifice, the former being associated with domestic use and the later being associated with the monument. The most significant step here is that Quatremère gives further precision to the relation between the monument and the edifice, by saying that the monument should be understood as being especially closely associated with the edifice public.

As he proceeds further on into his discourse on the edifice public, he writes:

Les édifices publics doivent d’abord se distinguer par la solidité. Il faut que ce que fait un gouvernement s’annonce comme durable [...] Les monuments qu’il eleves deviennent en quelque sorte la mesure de sa puissance et de son genie.455

Quatremère here incorporates the idea of the monument as a commemorative object into his concept of the edifice public. Public buildings are defined as commemorative markers of the greatness of a society’s government, both in terms of the government’s longevity and its power. He makes the commemorative function of the edifice public all the more explicit as he proceeds further into his discourse. He writes:

Les édifices publics forment pour les yeux l’histoire apprenante et exterierne du gout de chaque generation. Or chaque generation, comme chaque individu qui en fait partie, desire de laisser de soi, et de l’époque de son passage sur la terre, des souvenirs qui rappellent non seulement son existence, mais que cette existence fut heureuse, riche, puissante, et favorisée par la nature ou les dons du genie [...] les

454 Quatremère, Encyclopédie méthodique, s.v. “édifice.”

455 Ibid.
edifices publics représentent la nation elle-même, en tant qu’ils attestent le degré de gout, de richesse, de capacité où cette nation est parvenue.\footnote{Ibid.}

Quatremère explains how the edifice public should be understood in relation to an individual’s and a society’s desire to be commemorated. The public building provides an object through which commemoration takes place. The edifice public allows a society to perpetuate the memory of its character and its status for perpetuity through its continued existence. Quatremère here establishes the edifice public, not simply the edifice as Blondel had done, as a monument of commemorative potential within a theoretical framework.

Quatremère would continue to recognize both the public building’s identity as a monument and its commemorative potential in his entry on the monument published in 1820.\footnote{Quatremère, Encyclopédie méthodique, s.v. “monument.”} In this entry, Quatremère claimed that, generally speaking, a monument was an object “construit pour servir à éterniser le souvenir des choses memorables” or one that was “concu, élevé ou disposé, de maniere à devenir un object d'embellissement et de magnificence dans les villes.”\footnote{Ibid.} He thus maintains that the monument is a commemorative object and one that was associated with embellishment. He moves on to claim that any building could potentially be seen as such an object, and that, in certain times even private dwellings were understood to have been monuments, if they were
grand and rich. Quatremère himself, however, had a much more precise sense of the form a monument should take:

*Le mot de monument, l'idée qu'il exprime, et le luxe ou la magnificence qui s'attachent à cette idée, conviennent surtout à ces grands établissements d'utilité publique. [...] Les palais de justice, les hotels-de-ville, les maison d'instruction publique, les sieges d'administrations, les theaters, les lieux d'assemblees publiques, doivent être mis au rang des edifices que leur nature place parmi les monumens les plus importans.*

Thus, subsequent to his entry of the term *edifice* in 1801, Quatremère retained the belief that public buildings were important monuments. Moreover, Quatremère does not make mention of conventional forms of monuments (triumphal arches, columns, pyramids, obelisks) in this definition, so that it seems that, not only did the public building become a monument, but it usurped the place of those conventional monumental forms.

This discussion the terminological evolution of the terms *batiment* and *edifice*, and Quatremère’s validation of the *edifice public* as a monument in 1801, demonstrate that this was a period of quite a dramatic shift in the concept of the monument.

*Monuments, public buildings & imperial building types*

While in the previous section, I discussed the concept of the public building as a monument and how it developed in architectural terminology in the course of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, in this section, I want to move on to

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459 Ibid. He writes that the term “peut convenir et s'appliquer a' tous les genres de batimens. C'est ainsi qu'on a vu, dans certains temps, de simples partiuliers faire de leurs maisons des monumens publics, et qui sont encore reputés tels, par la grandeur et la richesse qui y furent deployées.”

460 Ibid.
consider how the theoretical concept of the public building as a monument was incorporated into architectural design in the opening years of the nineteenth century, specifically in the period after the proclamation of the French Empire. In theory, public buildings were considered monuments of commemorative value because their forms were marked by the society that erected them. In architectural design c. 1804, I am interested in how the historical associations of building types could be used to give precision to the commemorative nature of public buildings. In what follows, I propose that the imperial associations of certain building types were recognized as being means through which a public building could embody or be imprinted by, and thus commemorate, the newly founded French Empire.

Well before the proclamation of the French Empire, certain building types had come to be associated with the Roman Empire, as opposed to being associated with the classical past or the Romans more generally. The author of the entry on Rome in the *Encyclopédie* acknowledges such an awareness of the historical specificity of certain building types when he writes:

> Entre les restes de l'ancienne Rome, la grandeur de la république éclate principalement dans les ouvrages nécessaires, comme les grands chemins, les aqueducs & les ponts de la ville. Au contraire la magnificence de Rome sous les empereurs, se manifeste dans les ouvrages qui concernoient plutôt l'ostentation ou le luxe, que l'utilité publique; tels sont les bains, les amphithéâtres, les cirques, les obélisques, les colonnes, les mausolées, les arcs de triomphe, &c. car ce qu'ils joignoient aux aqueducs, étoit plutôt pour fournir leurs bains & leur naumachie, & pour embellir la ville par des fontaines, que pour quelque besoin effectif.461

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461 *Encyclopédie; ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, s.v. "Rome."
The author makes a distinction here between different epochs of the classical Roman past, the Republic and the Empire, and associates these periods with particular kinds of architectural work. While d’Aviler had linked some of the same specific public building types to magnificence (amphitheatres, baths, obelisks, triumphal arches) and others to utility (roads, aqueducts, and bridges), the author of the Encyclopédie article does not simply link particular building types to magnificence and others to utility, but further associates these groupings of building types with particular historical epochs. This places an emphasis on the historical origins of groups of building types, rather than the origins of an individual building type. This excerpt from the Encyclopédie thus introduces us to the idea of the imperial building type.

After the proclamation of the French Empire, such an awareness of the imperial building type was used to envision contemporary public buildings that were not simply monuments, but imperial monuments. A project for a bathing complex presented at the Salon of 1804 by the architect J. B. G. Gisors (figure 123), which he titled the Thermes de Napoleon, serves as an example of this.\(^{462}\) While the design of bathing complexes was not uncommon at the time - the architect L. Goust had presented a proposal for a bathing complex at the Salon of 1802 and Durand included a plan for a bathing complex in his Précis of 1802-05 (figure 124) - Gisors’ plan was different. He created a building that was modeled on the baths of the Roman Empire - his contemporaries both recognized the imperial character of his plan and acknowledged that, because of this imperial character, his project could function as a monument to the newly founded Empire.

\(^{462}\) Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure, des artistes vivans, exposés au Musée Napoléon, le 1er jour complémentaire, an XII de la République française (Paris, 1804), 103.
Gisors did not replicate a particular imperial bathing structure from the classical past, which we can come to recognize by comparing his plan and elevation with those of the Roman imperial baths illustrated in the *Recueil* (figure 125). Instead, he borrowed the form of the thermal windows and other motifs, such as the apse-like space at the rear of the baths and its relation to the rectilinear components of the plan that flank it on either side, from the plans of the bathing structures of the Roman Empire. While such formal allusions might seem meager, they become quite striking and pronounced when Gisors’ plan is compared with that of Durand, in which there is a noticeable absence of such formal allusions.

The name of Gisors’ plan, *Thermes de Napoleon*, was another means by which he called attention to the identity of his project as an imperial building type. Goust had given his project the title of “bains d’eaux minéraux” and Durand had described his simply as “bains.” In his study of the etymology of the term *bains*, Quatremère had claimed that, while the term *bains* could be applied to public baths of the classical past more generally, the term *thermes* was reserved for only those baths built by Roman Emperors.463 In light of Quatremère’s terminological distinctions and relative to the terminology used by his contemporaries Goust and Durand, Gisors’ use of the term *thermes* seems to be another means by which he sought to identify his project as an imperial building type. Furthermore, given that imperial baths were named after the Roman Emperors who were responsible for their construction, Gisors naming of his baths as the *Thermes de*

Napoleon seems to be yet another attempt to underscore the identity of his project as an imperial building type.

The viewers of Gisors’ project recognized its imperial identity and its potential as a monument. For example, in the Nouvelles des arts of 1804, a reviewer likened Gisors’ baths to “ceux de Titus, d’Antonin, de Dioclétien” and observed that his baths were “semblables à ceux où les empereurs romains allaient.”464 Such comments are evidence of the viewer’s awareness of Gisors’ allusions to the baths of the Roman Empire. The reviewer also suggests that the baths, set across from the Jardin des Plantes, “décoreraient l’entrée de Paris d’une manière digne de cette capital.”465 The reviewer’s comments resonate with Quatremère’s discussion of the edifice public in terms of the public building’s nature as a monument of commemorative value. Quatremère had spoken of the public building as being an object that reflected the state of the society in which it took form. The reviewer calls attention to the way in which Gisors’ project fulfils this need commemorative function when he claims that baths would embellish Paris in “manière digne de cette capital.”466

Legrand also published a review of Gisors project in the Annales du musée of 1805. He began his review by saying:

465 Ibid.
466 Ibid.
Les bains, ces monumens de magnificence et de somptuosité, si multipliés chez les Romains, sont à peine connus chez nous par quelques essais, ou par des projets dans els concours académiques.\textsuperscript{467}

By beginning his review in this way, Legrand called attention to the baths as a building type. Rather than focusing on Gisors’ project in its particularity, he invited his reader to consider it in terms of its historical origins and in relation to its genre. While Legrand here refers to bains and to the Romans in general, he shifts his terminology in the next sentence, a shift that calls the viewer’s attention to the distinction between bains and the Romans in general, and thermes and the Roman emperors in particular. He speaks of “thermes admirables” of which “les empereurs romains se faisaient une gloire d’attacher leur noms,” and goes on to list of examples of Roman baths: he lists the “les thermes d’Auguste et de Livie, d’Agrippa, de Claude, de Néron, de Tite, de Domitien de Trajan, d’Adrien, D’Antonin, de Caracalla, de Septime et d’Alexandre Sévère, de Gardien, de Gallien, d’Aurélien, de Dioclétian, et Maximien, les plus magnifiques de tous, de Constantin, etc., etc.”\textsuperscript{468} By providing this long list of examples, and adding the “etc., etc.,” Legrand calls attention to the profusion of the thermes in Imperial Rome and, thus, implicitly underscores the identity of the thermes as an imperial building type. Furthermore, with his reference to the emperors making the thermes to which they attach their names and that the thermes were objects associated with fame or glory or splendor, Legrand recognizes the thermes as commemorative objects.

\textsuperscript{467} Annales du musée, vol. 9 (1805), 59.

\textsuperscript{468} Ibid.
Legrand recognizes this same commemorative potential in Gisors’ project; he writes, “Nul doute qu’un tel édifice ne pût honorer celui qui voudrait l’ériger à la gloire de son siècle; il pourrait aussi porter avec dignité le nom thermes de Napoléon.”\textsuperscript{469} With this statement, Legrand makes clear that this building would be capable of commemorating the society in which it took form. Due to the juxtaposition of his discussion of the connotations of the imperial baths of Rome with that of his comments on Gisors’ project, Legrand underscores that this commemorative potential derives from the historical associations of the thermes as an imperial building type. Gisors’ project thus serves as an illustration of what a public building as a monument was c. 1804 and how its commemorative value derived from its identity as an imperial building type.

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These concepts related to the idea of the monument in Paris in the early years of the nineteenth century provide the context for understanding Barberi’s theater complex. The network of ideas I have created in the course of my discussion in this first part of this chapter is that with which Barberi was familiar. Barberi was working with the Piranesi brothers in Paris in the opening years of the nineteenth century and, thus, he was connected with the Piranesi’s professional network – most significantly, he will most likely have been familiar with the work of Legrand, Durand, and Quatremère. He probably knew Legrand, since Legrand, too, was working with the Piranesi brothers. Legrand in fact refered to Barberi in his biography of G. B. Piranesi and made mention of

\textsuperscript{469} Ibid., 60.
Barberi’s presence in Paris. Knowing that Barberi was connected with the Piranesi workshop and Legrand allows us to connect him with their greater network – Legrand was reading Quatremère and collaborated with him, Legrand also collaborated with Durand and their *Recueil* was sold at the Piranesi’s workshop. Thus, through this small group of mutual associations, we can grasp that, if Barberi was not familiar with all of these individuals on a personal basis, he would almost certainly have been familiar with their ideas through his activity at the Piranesi’s establishment. The Piranesi brothers, Legrand, and Durand, also all exhibited their works at the Salons and, thus, Barberi would most likely have been familiar with the greater exchange of ideas related to public buildings as monuments taking place in Paris in these years.

With this knowledge in place, we can go on to look at Barberi’s theater complex in the form of an amphitheater designed for Paris in 1805 as an example of an imperial monument – a monument that, like Gisors’ baths, was a public building modeled on a building type that had strong imperial associations at the time and was thus capable of functioning as a potent commemorative marker of the new imperial status of the French society and of Paris as the new imperial capital.

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PART II: BARBERI’S IMPERIAL MONUMENT

In the spring of 1805, Barberi created three large-scale drawings of a theater complex: a plan, elevation, and section (figures 57-59). The overall plan of the theater is that of a circle, within which Barberi set four individual auditoria, one for each of the most popular genres of theater at time: opera buffa, opera, comedy, and tragedy. In the margins of the plan, Barberi wrote that the theater should be set within the space between the Boulevard des Capucines and the Place Vendome (figure 126). While this area is now densely populated with buildings, in 1805, it was almost completely undeveloped (figure 127), aside from a convent belonging to the Capucine order, which had been seized at the time of the revolution. The dimensions of Barberi’s plan correspond almost exactly to the area that was available at the time (figure 128) and, thus, we can assume that he was both familiar with this space and that he had it particularly in mind when he envisioned his theater complex. This site was valued by his contemporaries, a belief clearly articulated by an anonymous commentator in the *Décade philosophique* in

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471 Barberi gives the date of execution in the drawing of the section as ventose an 13 (February/March of 1805) and notes that the drawings were executed in Guéret, a town in France south of Paris.


473 In the drawing of the plan, Barberi writes that “Le present projet a eté immaginé pour l’eriger dans l’emplancement entre la Place Vendome et le Balouard nommé les Capucins a Paris.”

474 In 1807, the Rue de Napoleon was cut through the space and the surrounding land was parceled and sold off. For further details of this site, see Jacques Hillairet, *Dictionnaire historique des rues de Paris*, 10th ed. (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1997), II: 152.
1798: the author claimed that the site was, “par sa position, sa forme, et son étendue, un des plus beaux de Paris.” Proposals for theaters for this same site by prominent architects of the late eighteenth century, such as Étienne-Louis Boullée (figure 129) and Charles de Wailly (figure 130), demonstrate that architects, too, recognized the value of this particular location.

Barberi’s theater complex was, however, unlike any of the theaters that existed in Paris at the time both in terms of its scale and its exterior form. A comparison of the plans of theaters in Paris at the time with that of Barberi’s demonstrates how his would have dwarfed these others (figure 131), at least in terms of its overall size. Moreover, in terms of its exterior form, while there was some variety in the form of the theaters of Paris, not one bore such an overt resemblance to a classical amphitheater (figure 132). It is through the exterior form of Barberi’s theater complex, this shell of a classical amphitheater, gutted and repurposed, that Barberi signals to his viewer that what he created was not a mere theater. Instead, it was an imperial monument. In what follows, I will argue that Barberi created this theater complex in the form of an amphitheater so that it might function as a commemorative object, in much the same way that Gisors’ thermes were conceived.

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475 Décade philosophique, 20 March 1798, 559-60.


477 The individual auditoria of his theater were roughly comparable in size to those of the Parisian theaters.
In 1805, Paris was not in urgent need of a new theater. Fifteen new theaters had already been built in the city between 1781 and 1798. There also does not seem to have been a lack of venues for the four specific genres Barberi included in his plan: opera, comedy, tragedy, and opera buffa. At the time, these genres were associated with particular theater companies: opera was performed by the Académie Impériale de Musique, tragedy by the Théâtre Français, comedy by the Théâtre Français and the Odeon troupe, and opera buffa by a company of the same name. In 1805, each of these companies had a theater.

Despite the seeming abundance of theaters, however, there was a concern that Paris lacked a theater worthy of the city. Legrand articulated his recognition of such a lack in 1804. In a review of a new theater in St. Petersburg published along with illustrations of the theater in the Annales du musée (figure 133), he claimed that “Un semblable monument manque encore à France, malgré le vingt théâtres dont Paris est encombré plutôt que décoré.” The focus of his criticism of Parisian theaters is on the shortcoming of their exterior form. Legrand does not say that the theaters of Paris fail to meet

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478 Ibid., 194-5.

479 For the relation between genres, theater companies, and theater buildings, see Nicole Wild, Dictionnaire des théâtres parisiens au XIXe siècle: les théâtres et la musique (Paris: Aux Amateurs de livres, 1989).

480 Ibid.

functional requirements of venues in which theatrical performances can be staged, but rather that they were inadequate as embellishments for the city.

Legrand connects this notion of the theater as an urban embellishment with the term *monument*. This association of the term *monument* with the theater seems congruent with Quatremère’s notion of the public building as a *monument*. In his discussion of the *édifice public*, Quatremère had claimed that public buildings, those that had an exterior that embellished and an interior that was a place in which the activities of the public were enacted, were monuments. Moreover, in his entry on the *monument* of 1820, he would go on to list the theater as one of those public buildings that was capable of functioning as such a *monument*. In associating the term *monument* with the notion of the theater as a building type that needed to embellish the city in which it was set, Legrand’s comment, and his conception of the theater, seems to mirror Quatremère’s more general discussion of the public building.

While Legrand thus brings our attention to the theater as a *monument* and the capacity of its exterior to embellish, he does not make an explicit connection between the theater as a monument capable of embellishing a city and if or how this relates to the idea of the theater, as a monument, serving a commemorative function, which was an essential component of Quatremère’s concept of the building public as monument.

Legrand had, however, expressed his recognition of the theater’s commemorative value in his earlier writings. In his discussion of theaters in the *Recueil*, he wrote:

*Rien n’a plus nui chez les modernes au caractère de l’architecture que ce rhibillage fréquent et cet usage économique de Monumens qu’on pourrait appeler*
Here he acknowledges that theater’s exterior form, and that of other public buildings, was endowed with a commemorative value. Such an acknowledgment is conveyed through his association between the form of a theater, and other public buildings, the term *Monumens*, and the state of the society in which these things take form. In the first sentence, by using the term *Monumens* with reference to various sorts of public buildings, Legrand acknowledges the identity of public buildings as monuments of some sort. In his second sentence, by including the statement that administrators should pay attention to the glory of the nation within the context of this comment about the exterior form of public buildings, Legrand implies that there is a correspondence between the glory of the nation and the exterior form of its public buildings. If the exterior form of the public building is associated with the glory of the nation in a particular period, the continued existence of the building conserves the memory of that glory for perpetuity. In this way, the public building as a monument in this context functions as a commemorative object. Legrand thus seems to have understood that the theater, as a building type within the greater context of public buildings, served a commemorative function – it was a monument that marked and preserved the state of the society in which it took form.

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482 Durand, *Receuil*, 41.
In these two different texts, the review of the theater of St. Petersburg and the historical overview of theaters in the *Recueil*, Legrand identifies the theater, as a building type and as a monument: in the review of the St. Petersburg theater, he associates the term *monument* with the notion of the theater as an embellishment of a city; in the *Recueil*, he associates the term *monument* with the notion of the theater as a public building endowed with commemorative value. While Legrand does not make a connection between the theater as monument as an embellishment and the theater as monument as a commemorative object, these texts demonstrate that the term *monument* as applied to the theater could resonate in both of these ways. Given that Quatremère’s notion of the public building as a monument encompassed these two aspects, Legrand may have conceived of the theater as monument along these same lines. That is, he may have understood that a theater’s exterior, the part of the theater that embellished a city, was related to its function as a commemorative object. Whether or not he held such a belief remains unresolved. However, it is clear that he both identified the theater, as a building type, as a sort of monument and that he believed that Paris was lacking such a monument.

The term *monument* had been used by others to describe theaters. Legrand’s comment is not significant because he was the first to apply the term *monument* to the theater as a building type, but rather because his comments were made at a time when the discourse on public buildings as monuments was developing and that, at least in the case of the comment in the *Recueil*, his comment about the theater as a monument was made with reference to public buildings in general, which suggests that he understood the theater in relation to this greater discourse on public buildings.
Barberi’s theater complex: an imperial monument

Barberi cues the viewer of his theater drawings to recognize that his theater, too, should be understood as being part of the broader discourse of public buildings as monuments. He does so in part by referring to his theater complex as a *bâtiment public* in the inscription of the plan. While in the first section of this chapter I argued that Quatremère preferred the term *edifice public* for the public building as monument, the term *bâtiment public* would also have most likely resonated with commemorative value due to the continuing lack of clear distinctions between, and the overlapping meanings of, the terms *bâtiment* and *edifice*. By identifying and categorizing his theater complex in this way, Barberi encouraged the viewer of his drawings to recognize his theater complex as a monument.

Barberi’s choice of exterior form was, however, an even more potent means through which he called on his viewer to recognize the identity of his theater complex as a monument and, more specifically, as an imperial monument. His decision to use the exterior form of an amphitheater for a theater venue was a bold move: on the one hand, it was a blatant break with contemporary norms of theater architecture; on the other hand, due to the imperial connotations of the amphitheater, it was very much in line with the interest in imperial building types, which, as I argued in the first part of this chapter, was developing at the very moment when Barberi executed his designs.

483 In the inscription of the plan, with reference to his own project, he writes, “Les Emplacements destinés pour les Bâtiments Publics doivent être tant qu’il est possible au centre des villes.”
In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century in Paris, there were prevailing norms and certain expectations concerning the types of exterior forms that were understood to be appropriate for a theater venue. While there was some variety in the exterior forms of Parisian theaters, architects and theorists took pains to define what exterior form a theater should take, as I will now go on to show.

In his critique of contemporary theaters in the *Recueil*, Legrand was not precise as to the exact form a theater could or should take. Instead, his words suggest that he understood that there needed to be a recognizable correspondence between a building’s exterior form and its associated function. Such a conviction corresponded to (or came out of) notions of architectural character or, according to Quatremère’s sense of character more precisely, to a building’s relative character, a subset of character whereby the function of a building needed to be expressed or made recognizable in the building’s exterior form. For Legrand, it was not that a theater needed to have one particular form, but that its form needed to be recognizable as belonging to that of a venue in which theatrical performances took place or, on the other hand, that a form that was associated with another function could not be used as a theater.

In eighteenth-century France, the rectangular prism with a temple front had, through its repeated use, come to be recognizable as a form that a theater could take. Many of the most famous theaters in France, such as the Claude Nicolas Ledoux’s theater at Besançon (figure 134) and Charles de Wailly’s Odeon in Paris (figure 135) took this form.\(^{484}\) The

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\(^{484}\) For an overview of eighteenth-century theater architecture in France, see *Daniel Rabreau, Apollon dans la ville: le théâtre et l’urbanisme en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Centre des monuments nationaux, 2008).
theater in St. Petersburg that Legrand had praised also took this form. Although these theaters differ in proportions and in the forms of temple fronts set along the front of the buildings’ facades, they nonetheless share the more general compositional aspect of this combination of the rectangular prism and temple front. That these prominent architects choose such forms suggests that such an exterior form was both recognizable and acceptable as a theater.

There were, however, others of the opinion that the form contemporary theaters took was not acceptable. In the first volume of his Encyclopédie méthodique of 1788, for example, Quatremère wrote: “l’exterieur de nos theaters ne presente aucune sorte de difference avec les maison voisines” and that architects “ne mettent pas ordinairement une si haute importance à cette connexité exacte entre les formes exterieures & celles de l’interieur.” He thus claimed that contemporary theaters were not in fact recognizable as buildings in which theatrical performances took place because of the generic nature of their exterior form. Furthermore, he stated that architects needed to pay greater attention to the correspondence between the theater’s exterior forms and its internal layout.

In his entry on the term theatre in his Encyclopédie méthodique, included in the section published in 1828, Quatremère continued to express his disdain for the exterior form of contemporary theaters. Moreover, unlike his earlier denouncement of 1788, he became more explicit and precise in defining what a contemporary theater should look like. He writes:

485 Quatremère, Encyclopédie méthodique, s.v. “caractere.”
Il est assez surprenant que l'idée ne soit encore venue à aucun architecte, dans la construction dispendieuse de quelques-uns de ces édifices modernes, de chercher à concilier la forme extérieur du théâtre antique, avec les convenances du théâtre moderne. Je veux dire la forme circulaire, qui est le véritable type élémentaire du théâtre.  

He thus claims that the exterior form of contemporary theaters should be based on the form of theaters of the classical past.

Architects at the time were familiar with the exterior form of the classical theater Quatremère here describes. They would have developed such a familiarity through first-hand experience with the remains of classical theaters, such as that of Marcellus in Rome, those on French soil such as that of Orange, and others in the Mediterranean region, or through having seen illustrations of these remains circulated in drawings and prints, such as those of Piranesi (figure 136), or through having seen reconstructions of these theaters, such as those by Piranesi (figure 137) and Durand (figure 138), and others.

While a theater with an exterior form reminiscent of that of the classical prototype had not been built at the time Quatremère published his denouncements of contemporary theaters, and would not be built until Gottfried Semper’s first Dresden theater of 1835-41 (figure 139), a number of architects in Paris in the early nineteenth century had envisioned theaters with exteriors clearly modeled on the classical prototype of the theater. Durand’s in the Recueil (figure 140) and Louis-Pierre Baltard, a collaborator of both Legrand and Durand, in 1811 (figure 141), are some examples. While these architects did not create exact replications of the exterior form of the classical prototype, there is nonetheless a clear resemblance between the exterior form of their theaters and

486 Quatremère, Encyclopédie méthodique, s.v “theatre.”
those of the existing examples of classical theaters, particularly those of the Romans, who, unlike the Greeks, built some of their theaters as free-standing structures rather than building them into an existing hillside. The rear curved exterior form with tiered arcades in the adaptations of these early nineteenth-century architects are clearly modeled on the generic form of the Roman classical theater as it had appeared, albeit with some variation, in such publications as Piranesi’s and the Recueil cited earlier. Durand had, in fact, claimed that he had kept his theater as close to the classical model as much as possible, changing only those aspects that would necessary in order for it to be suitable to the French climate.

While Barberi’s theater complex does in some ways resemble Durand’s theater in its curved and tiered arcaded exterior, it is not a modern adaptation of the classical theater. Barberi makes this clear in a number of ways. Unlike Durand who described his own theater as a close adaptation of the classical theater, Barberi describes his as a “grand cercle dans l’interieur du quel se trouve quatre grandes salles de spectacles.” Thus, while Barberi asserts that several auditoria have been set within the interior of his building, he is clear not to categorize the building as a theater. While it is a building that functions as a venue in which theatrical performance were to take place, the exterior form of the building was not a theatre.

487 From inscription in his drawing of the elevation. In the section, he similiarly describes the building as a circle: he describes it as a “gran cercle ou reste demontrés dans le diametre du même le theatre du grand opera avec celui de l’opera buffa, dans le demi diametre traversale celui de la comedie.”
In his drawings of the plan and the elevation, Barberi visually asserts that his building, both in terms of its exterior and its interior, should not be mistaken with that of a classical theater: the profile of the plan of the building is a complete circle unlike any classical theater, there are four individual auditoria set within the overall plan unlike any classical theater, and the individual plans are elliptical unlike the semi-circular plans of classical theaters. Barberi also fractures the link between the exterior form of his building and the auditoria set within the interior; the curvature of the individual auditoria is not mirrored in the exterior as it was in the theaters of the classical past and in the modern renditions of the classical theater. Contrary to the words of Legrand, Durand, and Quatremère, Barberi thus creates an exterior form that would not have been easily recognizable or identifiable as a building in which theatrical performances took place. He also disregards his contemporaries’ call for a building’s exterior form to reflect the layout of the interior. In this way, Barberi departs from an emulation of the classical theater, as well as from more general architectural conventions of relative character of the time.

The most significant of these deviations is that of the overall plan being a continuous circle. This is significant both because it clearly sets Barberi’s building apart from the classical theater prototype, and the modern adaptations of this prototype, and because it links his building to another classical prototype – the amphitheater. While Barberi did not describe the building as an amphitheater, his specification of it as “un grand cercle” seems to encourage the viewer to recognize the structure as being an amphitheater. This is so because his contemporaries seem to have understood the continuous perimeter of a building as having been one of the unique or characteristic traits, if not the most important characteristic trait, of the amphitheater. While Barberi’s plan takes the form of
a circle, those of the classical past were most often of an elliptical form, at least all of those illustrated in the *Recueil* (figure 142). Barberi’s may have substituted the circle for the oval as a means to update the amphitheater’s form to suit contemporary tastes. Durand, for example, expressed a particular preference for the circle due to its economical use of space.\(^\text{488}\) Barberi will also have been familiar with large-scale urban projects in which the circle was used, such as Antolini’s Foro Bonaparte (figure 60) or Andrea Memmo’s project for the Prato della Valle, a plan of which Francesco Piranesi had printed in Rome in 1786 (figure 143).

Despite the substitution of a circular plan instead of that of an oval, Barberi’s desire to create a close adaptation of the exterior form of a classical amphitheater and the relative archaeological specificity of his design become clear when his building is compared with examples of other modern adaptations of this building type, such as the late-eighteenth century designs of Boullée (figure 144) and Bernard Poyet (figure 145). While, like Barberi, Boullée and Poyet each created a plan of a continuous circumference and Poyet, like Barberi, created a facade of tiered porticos, both architects, unlike Barberi, have erased all of the architectural ornament from the building’s surface. Boullée, in fact, claimed, that such “decoration did not seem” to him “to be in keeping with good architecture.”\(^\text{489}\) Barberi, evidently valued this aspect of the amphitheater’s surface, and was quite precise in rendering the details of the orders of each tier (figure 146).

\(^{488}\) Durand, *Precis*, 85.

Barberi also seems to have used the scale of his building to further strengthen the connection between his building and the amphitheatres of the classical past. Barberi had claimed that the capacity of his theater was thirty thousand.\footnote{In the inscription of the drawing of the elevation, Barberi writes, “Cet emplacement pouroit contenir trente mille personnes.”} In the historical text on amphitheatres that Legrand wrote to accompany the second edition of Clérisseau’s Antiquités of 1804, he noted that the capacity of the Colosseum was eighty thousand and that of Nîmes was twenty thousand.\footnote{Clérisseau, Antiquités de la France, 87.} While the estimated capacity of Barberi’s amphitheater may not have corresponded to one classical amphitheater in particular, it was nonetheless in the range of capacities classical amphitheatres were known to have. This closeness of capacity is all the more striking when we consider that Boullée had suggested that his amphitheater could accommodate three hundred thousand spectators, well beyond the capacities of classical amphitheaters, and the large-scale theater proposed that Charles de Wailly had proposed for site of the Capucines, a theater his contemporaries had described as “un des plus vastes que l’on connaisse,” was said to have a capacity of 3,000 spectators, a fraction of the capacity of the smallest classical amphitheatres known at the time.\footnote{Boullée, Treatise on architecture, 101. For more on de Wailly’s plan, see Daniel Rabreau, "Un forum au coeur du Paris révolutionnaire. Le Projet de théâtre des arts de Charles De Wailly 1798," L’ivre de pierre 1(1977).}
The diameter of Barberi’s building, of approximately 220 m, also seems to be allusion to classical amphitheaters.493 Legrand had noted the transverse diameter of the Colosseum was 554 pieds (180 m), that of the amphitheater at Capua was 520 pieds (169 m), and that of the amphitheater at Pola was 430 pieds (138 m).494 Although Barberi’s theater would thus have been larger than these amphitheaters, the dimensions are nonetheless in a similar range. This similitude of dimensions becomes striking when we consider that Charles de Wailly’s theater for the site of the Capucines measured just 67 by 42 meters.495 Given that his contemporary Legrand had sought to document the capacities and dimensions of classical amphitheaters, Barberi would have expected his contemporaries to recognize his references to such quantitative characteristics as a means through which to create a connection between his own building and the amphitheaters of the classical past.

Barberi’s archaeological impulse made evident in his design is significant because it demonstrates that he was making an overt attempt to keep his amphitheater, at least in its exterior form, close to that of the classical prototype. This unto itself is significant because he chose to use the exterior form an amphitheater and to repurpose its interior for use as a theater venue at a time when his contemporaries were very aware and sensitive to

493 Barberi’s provides a scale in toise on his plan. The scale of 21 toise on the plan measures approximately 24.2 cm. The diameter of Barberi’s building in the drawing measures approximately 130 cm. Thus, the diameter of the building in real space would have been approximately 112.8 toise. Given that 1 toise is equal to 1.949 meters, the diameter of the building in real space in meters would have been approximately 220 meters. Please note that this is an approximation.

494 1 toise = 6 pieds = 1.949 m.

distinctions in the classifications of building types and the nuance of relative character. Legrand, in his claim that buildings associated with other functions should not be used for theaters, had underscored the importance of a theater’s relative character. While the amphitheater was indeed understood at the time to have originated in classical times through the back-to-back placement of two theaters and it was a venue associated with spectacle of some sort, the amphitheater and the theater were nonetheless recognized as being distinct building types due to the different types of spectacles with which they were historically associated. Durand, Legrand, and Quatremère pointed out that, unlike the theater, the amphitheater was a building in which bloody spectacles took place: Durand described it as a place where there were spectacles that “consisted in fights between gladiators and wild beasts,” Legrand described it as “espace où l’on célébrait les Jeux et les Exerices trop souvent cruels qui attiraien un peuple féroce,” Quatremère described it as a venue that “étoit destiné aux combats des gladiateurs des bêtes féroces, & à plusieurs autres genres de jeux ou de spectacles.” Barberi’s theater complex thus seems to break with both the existing conventions of the relative character of theaters, and with conventions of relative character more generally; not only does he use a building that was not suited to be a theater nor recognizable as a theater, he uses a building that was strongly associated with another particular function.

The sharp dissonance created by the incongruity of the exterior form of the amphitheater and the functionality of the theater can be seen to have served to draw attention to the nature of the exterior form as an amphitheater. Moreover, the additional contrast between

496 Durand, Précis, 164; Legrand, Recueil, 41; Quatremère, Encyclopédie méthodique, s.v “amphitheatre.”
Barberi’s archaeologically informed rendering of the amphitheater’s exterior and his complete disregard for the interior of the classical amphitheater, signaled through its complete absence, demonstrates that his interest lay not in the amphitheater as a whole, but in its exterior shell. The viewer’s heightened awareness of Barberi’s focus on the exterior form of the amphitheater in turn can be seen to have underscored the building’s status as a commemorative marker, given that it was through the public building’s exterior that its commemorative value was expressed, as I argued in the first part of the chapter. By focusing his viewer’s attention on the exterior shell of the amphitheater in this way, Barberi encourages the viewer to give his or her primary attention over to the building’s exterior form. This focus on the building’s exterior form in turn facilitates the viewer’s recognition of the building as a monument first and foremost; its function as a venue in which theatrical performances, while significant due to the fact that theaters were important public buildings, becomes a secondary concern.

Barberi’s break with existing norms of theater architecture and conventions of relative character embodied in his concept become completely reasonable when considered within the context of the greater discourse on the use of imperial building types at the time when Barberi created his designs in 1805. In that particular moment, the amphitheater may have been not only acceptable due to its status as an imperial building type, but highly valued.

In the first part of the chapter, I included a quotation from d’Aviler in which he had classified the amphitheater as a magnificent public building. The author of the entry on Rome in the Encyclopédie had classified the amphitheater more precisely as one of the
building types associated with the “magnificence de Rome sous les empereurs.” Barberi’s contemporaries, too, acknowledged the amphitheater’s imperial associations.

In his entry on the *amphithéâtre* included in the first volume *Encyclopédie méthodique* of 1788, Quatremère writes of the development of the building type of the amphitheater as follows:

*On doit rapporter aux Etrusques l’origine des Amphithéâtres, & l’invention des jeux de gladiateurs. C’est d’eux que les Romains empruntèrent ce goût qui dégénéra en fureur chez ce peuple guerrier, & qu’ils communiquèrent à tous les peuples soumis à leur puissance. [...] Ainsi l’on ne trouve des restes d’Amphithéâtre que dans l’empire Romain, & ceux qui existent en Grèce n’y furent construits qu’après que celle-ci fut devenue tributaire de Rome.*

Although Quatremère here acknowledges that the building type of the amphitheater originated in the society of the Etruscans, he closely links it to the Roman Empire.

While he associates the early origins of the amphitheater, as a building type, with the Etruscans and with the Romans more broadly, he associates the material remains of amphitheaters, those with which he and his contemporaries had become familiar, with the Roman Empire. With his claim that amphitheaters were set across the imperial domain, Quatremère also implies that these amphitheaters served a commemorative function as markers of imperial power.

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497 Ibid.

498 Ibid. Quatremère describes the Etruscan amphitheater by saying that they “ne furent qu’un vaste fossé creusé en terre; les spectateurs étoient assis tout au tour sur des gradins de gazon.” He went on to say how the Romans had been the first to build the amphitheater of permanent materials.
Quatremère becomes more explicit relative to the commemorative potential of the amphitheater further into his discussion. He writes, “Rien ne donne une plus haute idée de la puissance des Romains, & de leur grand savoir dans l’art de bâtir, que ces restes prodigieux & nombreux d’Amphithéâtres, qu’ils élevèrent dans la plupart des grandes villes soumises à leur domination.” In speaking of these remains of amphitheatres, Quatremère identifies the amphitheater as a marker of power and dominance. Given that Quatremère had stated that “on ne trouve des restes d’Amphithéâtre que dans l’empire Romain,” we can infer that this power and dominance is specifically that of the Empire.

For Quatremère, these associations of power and dominance were not positive. This is made clear in his effort to dissociate the form of the amphitheater and its function from the Greeks, peoples whom he clearly admired. To this end, he claims that the remains of amphitheatres that “existent en Grèce n’y furent construits qu’après que celle-ci fut devenue tributaire de Rome” and later that “sans doute il ne connut & ne dut point connoître les jeux sanglans de l’Amphithéâtre, ce peuple [the Greeks] inventeur de tous les arts qui peuvent embellir & améliorer l’espéce humaine.” Quatremère’s disdain for the amphitheater can be explained by the date of publication of his text. When it was published in 1788, the idea of imperial power would not have had the sorts of positive connotations as it assumed later close to the time of the proclamation of the French Empire. Closer to the time of the proclamation of the French Empire, and to the date of

499 Ibid.
500 Ibid.
execution of Barberi’s drawings, however, there was a pronounced interest in the amphitheater specifically due to the imperial associations of its exterior form.

In the 1804 edition of Clérisseau’s *Antiquités de la France*, Legrand included his own text of twenty-three pages on the history of both the amphitheater at Nîmes and of amphitheaters more generally.\(^{501}\) Like Quatremère, Legrand associated the early origins of the amphitheater with the Etruscans and its later development with the Romans. He writes:

*Les Romains emprunterent des Etrusques ce genre de spectacle, et celui des monuments propres à celebrer les jeux de gladiateurs; ils furent, chez ces anciens peuples, d’abord consacrés à la religion, et creusés seulement dans le terrain, dont les talus se revêtaient de gazon; on y substitua ensuite des gradins de bois, et enfin on les érigea en pierre, quelques uns même furent revêtus de marbre avec la plus grand magnificence.*\(^{502}\)

Although in the quotation above Legrand merely refers to “Les Romains” in general as the originators of the amphitheater of permanent materials, he, too, seems to have associated the amphitheater specifically with the Roman Empire. He makes this clear by reminding his reader that the amphitheater at Nîmes was built by the Emperor Antoninus Pius and by then moving on to list the amphitheaters of the emperors Tiberius, Caligula, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and Trajan, and others, being sure to bring his reader’s attention to the emperors’ patronage.\(^{503}\) Through this repeated linking of individual

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\(^{501}\) Legrand’s text on amphitheaters can be found on pages 75 to 98 of *Antiquités de la France*.

\(^{502}\) Clérisseau, *Antiquités de la France*, 90.

\(^{503}\) Ibid.
amphitheatres to this list of Roman Emperors, Legrand underscores the identity of amphitheater as an imperial building type.

Unlike Quatremère, Legrand valued the imperial associations of the amphitheater. He calls on the people of Nîmes to restore their amphitheater, saying:

En rétablissant ce monument antique vous pourrez le consacrer à excercer, des pompes et des fêtes à ordonner, des courones à distribuer, et des victoires à celebrer? quel lieu plus propre à rassembler le peuple, à le donner en spectacle à lui-même, soit dans des assemblées nombreuses, soit dans des cérémonies augustes? C’est par les monuments qu’une nation se peint à la postérité: et si par vos soins celui de Nîmes reprenait sa forme et son éclat, la grandeur des Romains serait aussi la vôtre.504

In his use of the phrase “la grandeur des Romains serait aussi la vôtre,” Legrand conveys his positive evaluation of the past society that Quatremère openly reviled in his earlier text. Furthermore, he expresses a desire to associate his contemporary French culture with that of the Roman Imperial society in which the amphitheater at Nîmes had been erected. His particular interest in the evocation of the Roman’s grandeur is inline with the commentaries on Gisor’s imperial baths. Furthermore, his comment that “C’est par les monuments qu’une nation se peint à la postérité” helps us to be aware of his sense of the commemorative potential of the amphitheater.

The significance of Legrand’s comments here in the Antiquités de la France is that he openly and overtly values the amphitheater’s imperial associations and, furthermore, that he acknowledges that, by using this form, the contemporary French society can take on the grandeur of the Roman imperial past through association. The commemorative

504 Ibid., 89-90.
potential of the amphitheater as an imperial building type thus comes to be valued, in the way that the imperial baths had, as I argued in the first part of the chapter. Given the strong approval with which the imperial associations of Gisors’ baths were received, we might recognize that the amphitheater’s imperial associations, too, would have been recognized as being of even greater value after the proclamation of the Empire. By using the amphitheater’s exterior form, Barberi creates a commemorative marker for Paris as an imperial capital.

**CONCLUSION**

When we consider Barberi’s design in relation to its historical moment, and within the context of a growing interest in imperial architecture and the recognition of the commemorative potential of imperial building types, we can understand that Barberi’s design responds to contemporary trends in architectural thinking in Paris. This last example demonstrates that Barberi, throughout his career, was constantly engaging with the ideas circulating around him. Without the awareness of the interests and ideas of his close contemporaries, the concepts or the subject matter of the drawings I have studied may seem uninteresting or unengaging. However, once we have developed a better sense of the intellectual activity of his milieu, Barberi’s subjects come alive and we are able to appreciate both his attempt to engage with contemporary discourses and his own unique manner of translating architectural theory and contemporary cultural and theoretical debates into pictorial compositions.
CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have sought to examine the drawings of Giuseppe Barberi in light of issues of architecture and culture that were of concern to his contemporaries. To this end, in the first chapter I presented the reader with an overview of the wide range of activities, individuals, and institutions with which Barberi engaged and then, in the subsequent three chapters, I carried out focused studies on small groups of Barberi’s drawings, seeking to situate them within broader discourses. Due to my emphasis on context, Barberi and his drawings may seem of secondary importance to the greater discourse. This is as it should be. Barberi was neither a central figure nor was he himself generating ideas about architecture that were subsequently absorbed by his contemporaries. His drawings are significant because they serve as examples of larger trends of reception and how this reception could be translated into a language of space and architectural form.

The idea of translation as a transformation of a concept over time mediated by ever-changing differences in language and cultural norms has been a central theme throughout the dissertation. In each of the last three chapters, I discussed the continual re-evaluation and redefinition of certain concepts taking place in Rome and Paris in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Using three specific cases, I have investigated how responses to ideas being circulated in visual and textual material served as catalysts for the transformation of these same ideas. In the second chapter, I considered how the Arcadians’ notion of improvisation and the improviser can been seen to have been forming and evolving in response to written accounts of improvisation outside of the Academy. In the third chapter, I showed how Milizia’s writings on Borromini were
responses to eighteenth century reception of Vitruvius and Borromini in French and Italian architectural texts and the genre of the artist’s biography. In the fourth chapter, I analyzed how the writings of Quatremère and others on the idea of the public building as monument were developing out of eighteenth century architectural terminology.

One of the advantages of such an approach to the study of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century architecture is that it provides a way of transcending regional or national boundaries. It challenges geographical strictures by valuing the fluidity and permeability of such boundaries. Rather than focusing on the national identities of architects and viewing their architecture as a product of their nation, I propose that greater insight could be gained into European architecture of this period if more attention were paid to the patterns of circulation of visual and textual material on architecture, both published and unpublished, across Europe and to the travel patterns of European architects.

My approach values architecture as a social practice. I see networks of architectural thought being part of broader cultural and political networks, and shifts in architectural thought mirroring shifts in these more expansive networks. By drawing on a variety of architectural and non-architectural period texts from Italy, France, and England, I have sought to situate discussions of architecture within a broader realm of the Republic of Letters. In so doing, the transmission and transformation of architectural ideas becomes part of a greater pan-European intellectual exchange. Examined through the lens of such discourses, Barberi’s drawings, and the formal language of architecture and the graphic
language of drawing more generally, take on the status of visual translations, distillations of complex value systems, of greater cultural exchange of this time.
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ARCHITECTURAL TRANSLATIONS:
GIUSEPPE BARBERI (1746-1809) BETWEEN ROME & PARIS

Volume II

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Frequency of Performances of Improvised Poetry at Meetings of the Arcadian Academy (1773-1796)

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Chart 1: Performances of individual improvisers at the Arcadians' meetings during the 1770s