

The Fortunes of Two Napoleonic Sculptural Projects

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AFTER WATERLOO, an essential feature of the restored monarchy's policy was the alteration and reuse of Napoleonic decorations. The Vendôme Column offered a monumental demonstration of Louis XVIII's frugality: the most absurd of its vicissitudes was the replacement of the statue of Napoleon on top with an enormous fleur-de-lis. Yet the bands of relief around the column, depicting Napoleon's victories, remained the same. Louis would not shame the French by obliterating all signs of their recent glorious past, but he stressed their French character over their Napoleonic motivation.

This article concerns two sculptural compositions, which originally commemorated key imperial events but which were altered to meet the circumstances of the new régime. Both give fascinating proof of the lengths to which Louis XVIII would go to eradicate Napoleonic motifs while preserving Empire designs.

The first is a magnificent bronze group (Figure 1), which caused general puzzlement when it emerged on the art market about twelve years ago.¹ It is clearly a military allegory. A young woman—a girlish Minerva—extends a laurel wreath in front of a man who points into the distance; little doubt that he is the victor indicating the place of battle. Fame bounds along behind (Figure 2), announcing the conquest with her trumpet. The ground is strewn with captured flags. But what of the hero? The laurel belt of his severely neoclassical tunic is decorated in the center with a five-pointed star, usually associated with Bonaparte, yet he wears an ample Louis XIV wig and holds in his left hand a baton decorated with Bourbon fleurs-de-lis. An inscription chased on the hillock at front,

DENAIN 1712 (visible in Figure 3), shows that he is intended to represent the Maréchal de Villars, who defeated Prince Eugène at Denain in 1712 during the War of the Spanish Succession.

The names of the sculptor Simon-Louis Boizot and the bronze founder Pierre-Philippe Thomire are boldly incised on the front of the circular base (Figure 3). The two are guarantors of high quality in neoclassical design and metalwork. On the right, the base bears twice the incised inscription *P.R. 752*, no doubt an inventory mark of the Palais-Royal.² This was the Paris seat of the Orléans dynasty, though Lucien Bonaparte lived there during the Hundred Days.

Simon-Louis Boizot was a prodigiously active sculptor,³ whether planning large-scale marble figures or modeling for smaller decorations such as gilt-bronze furniture mounts. Perhaps best known as director of the Sèvres sculpture ateliers, he produced the models for innumerable statuettes in *biscuit de*

1. It appeared at Coleman's Auction Galleries, Inc., New York, on Oct. 19, 1967, no. 633, as "Angel and two figures, signed Denain, 1712." James Parker of the Metropolitan Museum recognized its interest as a fine Thomire cast, but there was no time to raise acquisition funds or to do the necessary research. It was acquired a decade later from the original purchaser, Dalva Bros., in time to be shown in the Museum's exhibition "The Arts under Napoleon" in 1978, but too late to be included in the catalogue.

2. The base is also incised *5120* beneath the winged female figure. For the meaning of these numbers see the article in this volume by D. H. Cohen, "The History of the Maréchal de Villars Group," *MMJ* 14/1979 (1980), pp. 185–189, esp. p. 189.

3. For his career in general, see S. Lami, *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'école française au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1910) s.v.



FIGURE 1

Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751–1843) after a model by Simon-Louis Boizot (1743–1809), *Allegory of the Maréchal de Villars's Victory at Denain*. Bronze group, H. 32 in. (81.3 cm.). Executed in 1806 as an "Allegory of Napoleon at Austerlitz," modified in 1818. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Claus von Bülow Gift, Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Paterson Gift, Bequest of Louis Einstein, by exchange, Rogers Fund, and funds from various donors, 1978.55

FIGURE 2

Back view of Figure 1 showing Fame blowing her trumpet





FIGURE 3
Detail of Figure 1 showing inscriptions on base

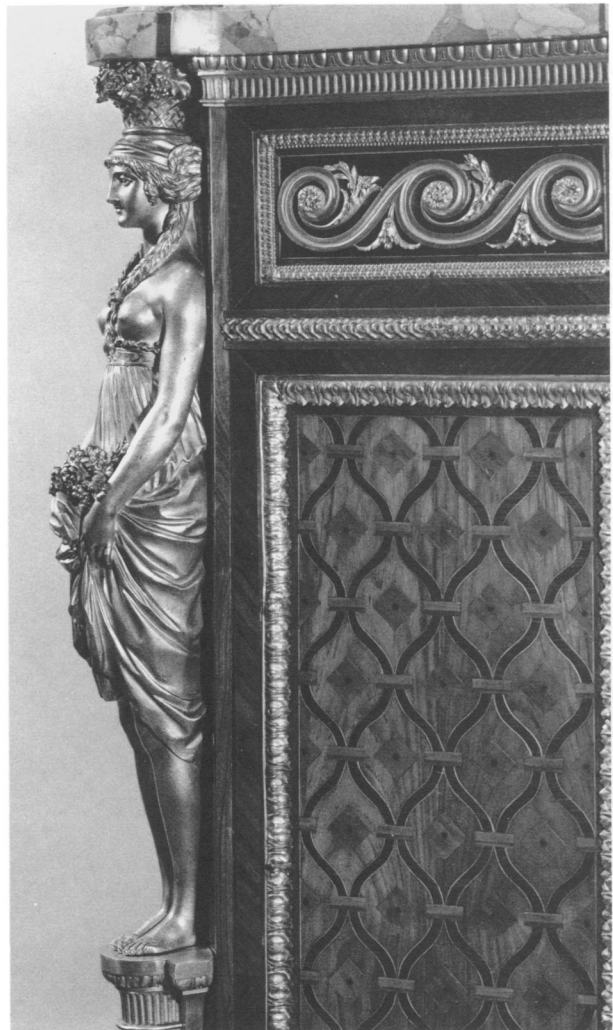
FIGURE 4
Corner caryatid of gilt bronze on a secretary by Guillaume Beneman. Executed by Thomire and others after a model by Boizot, 1786–87. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1971.206.17

Sèvres.⁴ He specialized in mellow classical draperies, pleasing but subdued ideal physical types, and circular, spiraling compositions. Although it maintains these principles, the bronze group is more advanced in its monumentality than any of the work for *Sèvres*.

Boizot is most closely identified with the reign of Louis XVI, but his work during the Empire was not negligible. He undertook the decoration of the Fountain of the Palm-Tree, raised on the Place du Châtelet to commemorate the Italian and Egyptian campaigns, and twenty-four sections of narrative relief for the Vendôme Column. He died in 1809.

For the casting of his bronze furniture mounts Boizot was used to working with the best founders, among them the great *ciseleur* Pierre Gouthière.

4. For this aspect of his career, see J. D. Draper, "New Terracottas by Boizot and Julien," *MMJ* 12 (1977) pp. 141–149.



Trained as a sculptor, Pierre-Philippe Thomire⁵ worked for a time under Gouthière before establishing his own commercial bronze manufactory in 1776. He and Boizot sometimes collaborated, particularly under Louis XVI. Gradually Thomire assumed Gouthière's leading role in the field, owing his rise in part to close links with such established figures as Boizot as well as to masterly control of his own fast-growing foundry.

In 1783–84, Thomire's first really important assignment was to cast the mounts modeled by Boizot for two large Sèvres vases now in the Louvre and in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence.⁶ In 1786, he cast from Boizot's model two sphinxes for a pair of andirons made for Marie-Antoinette's bedroom at Versailles.⁷ Such works involved payments to several different persons at different stages. For example, rules dating from 1776 established that the gilding of bronzes had to be carried out by members of the corporation of gilders, not by the corporation of founders and chasers.

A secretary in the Metropolitan Museum by the cabinetmaker Guillaume Beneman, made in 1786–87 for the king's *cabinet intérieur* at Compiègne, has superb gilt-bronze mounts (Figure 4) whose facture is minutely documented.⁸ Boizot was paid for the models of the exceptionally large corner caryatids. Their easy shapes and classical draperies can be seen to anticipate those of the female figures in the Museum's allegorical group. Thomire was one of two men paid for the relatively minor job of pointing up a plaster cast of Boizot's model. Boizot and Thomire are not known to have worked together again until after the creation of the Empire.

The formula of the Boizot-Thomire group is rooted in the late eighteenth-century French taste for commemorating great men and their deeds. In 1785, Thomire cast the models by a specialist in this genre, Robert-Guillaume Dardel. The Dardel-Thomire



FIGURE 5
Gilt-bronze figure of Fame, forming a handle of the Demidoff Vase. Cast by Thomire in 1819. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Frederic R. Harris Gift, 44.152

5. For Thomire, see J. Niclausse, *Thomire fondeur-ciseleur (1751–1843)* (Paris, 1947).

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 66–67, 120–121.

7. Accounts provided by Daniel Meyer in *Défense du patrimoine national*, exhibition at the Louvre, 1978, no. 24: Boizot received 120 livres for his model, Thomire 240 livres for casting and chasing.

8. F. J. B. Watson, *The Wrightsman Collection: I. Furniture* (New York, 1966) pp. 195–201. Boizot was paid 144 livres for his model of a woman “draped in the antique style,” Michaud 24 livres for the plaster mold; Thomire and Bardin together re-

ceived 97 livres for pointing up the plaster; Forestier was given 230 livres for casting it in bronze; Tournay and others chased this and the other bronzes for 1192 livres: Galle gilded them for 616 livres. A memorandum of 1786, relative to a table for the king's study at Versailles, now at Waddesdon Manor, shows Thomire receiving 100 livres just for the mounting of gilt bronze myrtle branches to frame the doors (Geoffrey de Bellaigue, *The James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor: Furniture, Clocks and Bronzes* [London, 1974] II, pp. 460–461). Experience of such odd jobs advanced Thomire's grasp of the dimensions of his trade and contributed to his later success.

statuettes, which represent the Grand Condé and Turenne, are in the Musée Condé at Chantilly.⁹ Both show the heroes in period dress, vigorously employed in battle. In our group, Boizot has by contrast chosen the loftier language of apotheosis and chaste, neo-classical dress and movements.

Thomire weathered many a political storm. He worked extensively for the *ancien régime* but is remembered chiefly as the bronze founder par excellence of the Empire and Restoration periods. He developed a large firm, known from 1804 until 1819 as Thomire, Duterme et Compagnie, afterward simply as Thomire et Compagnie. With the collapse of the guild system, the resources and varied training of an artist-entrepreneur allowed him to direct many functions formerly allotted to separate shops: modeling, casting, chasing, gilding, and fitting took place under his roof. For special commissions, there was still collaboration. The most famous work associated with Thomire's name is the cradle of Napoleon's son, the King of Rome, now at Vienna, which was designed by Pierre-Paul Prudhon; the metalwork was the joint effort of Thomire and the silversmith Odiot. A second cradle for the infant king, now in the Louvre, was entirely the product of Thomire's firm. It became, "by a caprice of fate and economy," the cradle of the duc de Bordeaux and was put to use decades later at the baptism of the Prince Imperial.¹⁰

Thomire resolutely carried Empire design into the Restoration period. Two gilt figures of Fame form the handles of the Metropolitan Museum's malachite vase made for Count Nicholas Demidoff (Figure 5), its pedestal signed by Thomire and dated 1819.¹¹ They show Thomire maintaining high standards of quality, but none of his figural casting surpasses that of the allegorical group, with its expert joinings and minutely varied cross-hatched tooling.

Thomire withdrew from his firm in 1823 and lived until 1843. At moments of peak activity during the Empire, it is estimated that he employed as many as seven to eight hundred workers.¹² It is no small sign of Napoleon's genius that he could keep large work forces such as Thomire's occupied.

In 1805, Napoleon won the climactic victory of Austerlitz. Momentarily diverted from war, the emperor's thoughts turned to encouragement of the industrial arts. In 1806, he organized a trade fair, the Exposition Publique des Produits de l'Industrie Française—this was not the first industrial exhibition

of its kind, three having been held during the Republic, but it was the largest for many years to come. The bronzes that Thomire exhibited in his stand won him the gold medal¹³ but are not listed in the official catalogue. It is known from numerous subsequent mentions, however, that they included a large group of Napoleon at Austerlitz, cast from a composition by Boizot.

Thomire and his fellow entrepreneurs were assisted by other imperial measures. A system of loans was floated by a decree of 1807, sent from the emperor's camp at Osterode. Memoranda concerning Thomire's application for a loan took note of the fact that his manufactory, reduced to 211 workers, did 500,000 francs worth of business in 1806 but had a year's production unsold in storage. His firm was granted a loan of 140,000 francs.¹⁴ As collateral, Thomire put up several bronze furnishings that would revert to the imperial Garde-Meuble if he defaulted. Thomire drew up a list of these bronzes, headed by:

No. 1 A group in bronze representing His Majesty the Emperor holding a Victory in one hand and leaning on Minerva; behind is Fame publishing his conquests. Each figure measures 70 centimeters in height.¹⁵

It was valued at 12,000 francs. An added note stated that: "This object is one of those which were taken to the exhibition and which merited the vote of the connoisseurs." A letter, apparently undated, from Thomire to the emperor described this group originally shown in 1806:

A group in bronze by him [Thomire], made on commission, called the Battle of Austerlitz, representing Your Majesty guided by Minerva and hymned by the goddess of a hundred voices.¹⁶

9. G. Macon, *Les Arts dans la maison des Condé* (Paris, 1903) p. 97 and ill. on p. 119. The casts have chased inscriptions relating the joint enterprise of Dardel and Thomire, similar to that of the Boizot-Thomire bronze.

10. Niclausse, *Thomire*, p. 102.

11. P. Remington, "The Story of a Malachite Vase," *MMAB*, n.s. 3 (1945) pp. 142-145.

12. Niclausse, *Thomire*, p. 47.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 85, n. 1. It is unclear who, if anyone, commissioned the piece.



FIGURE 6
Detail of Figure 1, showing the torso of the Maréchal de Villars inserted in Napoleon's tunic

At the Salon of 1810, Thomire in his capacity of sculptor exhibited two busts, one of them a self-portrait, as well as his more ambitious Austerlitz group:

No. 1032 Allegory. It represents His Majesty the Emperor, holding in one hand an olive branch and in the other a Victory. He is supported by Minerva, and behind him one sees Fame publishing his exploits. The model of this group in bronze was made by the late M. Bochet.¹⁷

This "Bochet" was the same as our Boizot, as is made clear by the fact that in the same year, 1810, the jury awarding the *prix décennaux* mentioned the group designed by the recently deceased Boizot in an account of their deliberations. It was described as: "The Emperor raised on a hillock, having at his feet flags captured from the enemy at Austerlitz."¹⁸

Tantalized by the resemblance of the Maréchal de Villars composition to that offered by descriptions of the Austerlitz group, I gave the bronze a closer inspection and became convinced that the two were in fact one and the same. The torso does not fit precisely into the tunic; it jiggles slightly. This loose fit is visible in a detail (Figure 6) which shows the join along the diagonal of the tunic—the victor's hair does not quite meet his left shoulder. The upper edge of the tunic has been reworked. The arm with the baton also moves perceptibly. Consistent with the practice of Thomire and his period, the entire work was originally cast in parts which were then assembled and closely joined; arms and legs especially were cast in separate pieces. But the indications of refitting in the joints that are movable, coupled with the odd clash between Louis XIV subject and Empire dress and rhetoric, cinched the matter. It seemed a certainty that this was the Austerlitz group altered, with Napoleon's torso and arms actually cut out and the image of Villars inserted. The arms that once held an olive branch and a Victory were replaced by a right arm pointing to the battlefield and a left holding a field-marshal's baton. Saving the composition but suppressing Napoleon, Louis XVIII or his advisers had reached back to a royalist hero of a century earlier.¹⁹ The substitutions further appeared technically on a par with the rest of the group, as if they too had been wrought by the firm of Thomire.

The entire hypothesis was recently confirmed when David Cohen unearthed the 1818 records of the royal Garde-Meuble, authorizing payment of 400 francs to Thomire for his "restoration of a three-figure group in bronze, allegorical subject, which has been damaged, representing the Maréchal de Villars."²⁰ In the article that follows David Cohen throws light on the "restoration," the movements of the group, and other circumstances. Thomire had made some repayment

17. *Livret* of the Salon of 1810, p. 121.

18. Lami, *Dictionnaire*, I, p. 92.

19. Villars was not an obscure hero. The sculptor Dardel showed in the Salon of 1781 "The Maréchal de Villars holding a sword in one hand and in the other the palm of victory, which he has wrested from the eagle of the Holy Roman Empire" (Lami, *Dictionnaire*, I, p. 219). His portrait, not greatly resembling the bronze head in the Museum group, is in *Portraits des grands hommes, femmes illustres, et sujets mémorables de France* (Paris, 1792) I, no. 8, signed by Sergent-Marceau and dated 1790.

20. See Cohen, "Maréchal de Villars Group," n. 32.

of the 1807 loan but he eventually defaulted and that is how the bronze was taken into the imperial—afterward the royal—Garde-Meuble.²¹

In ordering the change, Louis XVIII acquired an important work of art with imagery to his liking for only 400 francs. Perhaps he was aware of playing his part within the neoclassical scheme of things. The salvaging and reshaping of a predecessor's designs were sanctioned by at least one example from ancient history. Pliny the Elder describes the fate of the Colossus of Nero, commissioned from the sculptor Zenodorus:

After he had given sufficient proof of his artistic ability, he was summoned to Rome by Nero and there made that colossal image, 120 feet in height, which was intended to be a representation of that emperor but which now, since the infamous acts of the emperor have been condemned, is dedicated to and revered as an image of the Sun.²²

Juliette Niclausse, Thomire's biographer, hoped that, if it eventually resurfaced, the Boizot-Thomire "Allegory of Napoleon at Austerlitz" would enter a French museum. Happily for us, it turned up in New York instead. There is no denying the transmutation of our group, but its composition is of a size and splendor, its chasing of a refinement that make it the most important Empire bronze group in existence, quite apart from its richly layered history.

Under Napoleon, certain events other than battles were marked by artistic commemorations. In March of 1811, the long-awaited birth of Napoleon's son Napoléon-François-Joseph-Charles, immediately styled the King of Rome, occasioned a new, triumphant imagery. An enterprising thirty-year-old sculptor named Joseph-Antoine Romagnési exhibited a *Minerva Protecting the Infancy of the King of Rome* at the Salon of 1812.²³ Romagnési, born in about 1782, lived until

21. The value of the bronze was depreciated in the 1812 inventory of the Garde-Meuble, at 8000 francs. This apparently is what led Niclausse (*Thomire*, p. 84) to conclude that "another example of the same group was furnished in 1811 for the lesser price of 8000 francs." There is in fact no evidence of a second group.

22. Pliny, *Natural History* XXXIV, 45. From J. J. Pollitt, *The Art of Rome c. 753 B.C.—337 A.D.: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966) p. 144. The *Historia Augusta* adds that it was Hadrian who caused the change (Pollitt, p. 175).

23. *Livret* of the Salon of 1812, no. 1134. The same Salon contained representations of the King of Rome by the painters

FIGURE 7

Joseph-Antoine Romagnési (ca. 1782–1852), *Minerva Protecting the King of Rome*. Patinated plaster relief, 45½ × 29 in. (115.6 × 73.7 cm.). Signed and dated 1811. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 27.191.2

1852.²⁴ A pupil of Pierre Cartellier, he got his start during the Empire with a figure of Peace at the Salon of 1808, followed by a curiously titled *Love, the Principle of Life* at the Salon of 1810, and then the *Minerva Protecting the King of Rome* exhibited two years later. This last appears to be the plaster relief owned by the Metropolitan Museum since 1927 (Figure 7), which I encountered while reorganizing sculpture storage a few years ago. The relief was dark with soot, but cleaning revealed a pleasantly modulated honey-colored patination imitating stone. Roman reliefs such as those in the Palazzo Spada in Rome,²⁵ with their regularly developed low relief upon voided grounds, must have been the sculptor's formal inspiration.

In all, there is a perfect conjunction of neoclassical style and motifs. The child, looking like a miniature of his father, stands upon a dais between the guardian Minerva and his customary attribute, the she-wolf of Rome. The steps of the dais are blazoned with the Bonaparte bees. Romagnési's composition is essentially one diagonal descending from Minerva through the heads of the infant and wolf, and reinforced by the outstretched arms of goddess and child.

The Museum's relief is signed and dated 1811 at lower right. A smaller relief (Figure 8) also in plaster, with the King of Rome nude but otherwise in the same attitude with his hand on the she-wolf's neck, is in the Napoleonic museum at Ile d'Aix.²⁶ It is said to have belonged to the king's governess, the comtesse de Montesquiou.

Callet, Constantin, Garneray, Gérard, Goubaud, Legrand, Menjaud, Parant, Prudhon, and Thibault, and by the sculptor Bosio.

24. G. Hubert, *Les Sculpteurs italiens en France sous la Révolution, l'Empire et la Restauration 1790–1830* (Paris, 1964) pp. 162–163, establishes the approximate birth date and gives other facts relating to this French-born sculptor of Italian descent.

25. A. J. B. Wade, "The Reliefs in the Palazzo Spada," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 5 (1910) pp. 165–200.

26. G. Hubert, *Musée Napoléonien: Fondation Gourgaud, Ile d'Aix* (Paris, n. d.) p. 55.



Thanks to carefully preserved official memoranda in the Archives du Louvre, the fate of Romagnési's bold design can be traced very accurately. Its story is another instance of Napoleonic achievement transformed and, in this case, dulled by Bourbon conservatism.

During the Empire, power to commission works of art resided in the Ministry of the Interior. At the time of the negotiations with Thomire, the minister was Crétet de Champmol; during the negotiations with Romagnési, the comte de Montalivet. The real au-



FIGURE 8
Romagnési, *The King of Rome with the She-Wolf*. Plaster relief. Musée Napoléonien, Ile d'Aix (photo: courtesy Gérard Hubert)

thority in all matters artistic, however, was Dominique Vivant Denon, created a baron of the Empire in 1812. The rise of this tastemaker was a godsend to French artists. He was first director of the Mint, then of the Louvre. By 1811, his additional duties were cited in the *Almanach Impérial*: Denon was "head of the museums of French monuments and of the French school at Versailles, the galleries of government palaces, the studios of chalcography, gem-engraving and mosaics," and charged with the "buying and transport of works of art, the supervision of modern works ordered by the government and of archaeological digs at Rome."²⁷ He exercised these powers in the most genial way, encouraging or gently discouraging talents of all sorts. To one hopelessly bad painter, for instance, he wrote: "I invite you to take the trouble of stopping by the office. We'll have a look together at your picture and it will give me pleasure to indicate to you what your friends should have told you."²⁸

By December 24, 1811, the sculptor Romagnési had presented a sketch of his composition to the minister, Montalivet, no doubt hoping to have his plaster relief commissioned in marble. Montalivet forwarded the sketch to Denon, asking his opinion.²⁹ The minister renewed Romagnési's petition a year later. Denon replied on December 8, 1812:

I have received the letter you did me the honor of writing on the 4th of this month, in order to request some information on a bas-relief which the sculptor Romagnési exhibited this year and whose subject represents Minerva protecting the infancy of the King of Rome.

This work, Monseigneur, is not without merit and I would applaud Your Excellency's design to have it executed; but I have the honor to ask you to observe that this sort of sculpture is hardly easy to exhibit; that a bas-relief in marble can only be placed in the architectural decoration of the palaces; and that then one would have to order the work in a proportion suitable to the room it must occupy. Without this precaution, Monsieur Romagnési's work would run the risk of remaining eternally in storage.

In view of Your Excellency's benevolent disposition in favor of this artist, I have the honor to propose to you,

27. G. Hubert, *La Sculpture dans L'Italie napoléonienne* (Paris, 1964) p. 89.

28. J. Chatelain, *Dominique Vivant Denon et le Louvre de Napoléon* (Paris, 1973) p. 159.

29. Archives du Louvre S³⁰, Dec. 24, 1811, from Montalivet to Denon. This and the following letters were cited by Hubert (*Les Sculpteurs italiens*, p. 163, n. 1) but have not been published.



FIGURE 9
Romagnési, *Minerva Protecting France*. Marble statuette, H. 44 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (114 cm.). Signed and dated 1817. Musée des Augustins, Toulouse (photo: Musée des Augustins)

FIGURE 10
Detail of Figure 9 (photo: Musée des Augustins)



Monseigneur, to have Romagnési execute the same subject in the round, 80 centimeters in proportion, and for the sum of three thousand francs not including the marble with which he will be furnished.

This group, Monseigneur, would be easily placed in the apartments of the Imperial Palaces, and the subject, which is perfectly suited to sculpture, could only be agreeable to Their Majesties.³⁰

30. Archives du Louvre, Correspondance du Musée Napoléon, 5e registre, fol. 246, Dec. 8, 1812. Although it languished in storage for many years, the plaster model was not in fact doomed to rest there "eternally": it figured in "The Arts under Napoleon" exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in 1978 (no. 196) and in the Museum's loan exhibition at the Athens Pinakothek in 1979, "Memories and Revivals of the Classical Spirit" (no. 80).

Montalivet acknowledged this fatherly advice³¹ and Romagnési received word to proceed with a group in the round instead of in relief.³² As soon as his new model was finished the block would be delivered. Accordingly, on October 5, 1813, Denon notified the minister that the plaster model was ready and asked him to direct M. Bersant, Conservateur des Marbres du Gouvernement, to deliver marble block no. 396 to Romagnési for the execution.³³ Days later, Denon returned the sketch to the minister, observing that Romagnési wished to finish the marble group in time for the next Salon.³⁴

The Bourbon Restoration in 1814 momentarily halted Romagnési's plan, but he showed resourcefulness. He completed a marble bust of Louis XVIII in time for the Salon of 1814, along with a bust of the king's brother, the future Charles X.³⁵ And he still had the marble block that had been earmarked for his King of Rome composition. It was not wasted. In the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse is a marble figure of Minerva protecting a figure of France, signed and dated 1817 on the right side of the base (Figure

9).³⁶ The pose of Minerva is reversed, and she now raises her shield to protect a mere statuette, a seated personification of France wearing a robe covered with lilies (Figure 10).

Baron Denon's idea of developing the relief into a fully three-dimensional group was sound, as it allowed Romagnési to demonstrate his skill at beautifully turned surfaces. Indeed, Romagnési carved the sleeve of the marble Minerva with a finesse worthy of his teacher Cartellier. The stance in itself is impressive, but the sweeping gesture of the raised shield is overpowering, out of proportion to its purpose. The confident language of the relief, with its antique fervor, has given way to a bland patriotism, showing France in all too much need of protection.

Romagnési was hardly the first artist forced by political circumstances to vary his course midstream. It is uncertain whether he invented the change of imagery or whether it was dictated by the restored régime, which may have claimed possession of the marble block. In either case, the vitiated result is perfectly in accord with the state's impoverishment.

31. Archives du Louvre S⁶, Dec. 22, 1812.

32. Archives du Louvre, Correspondance du Musée Napoléon, 5^e registre, fol. 254, Dec. 28, 1812, from Denon to Romagnési, stipulating that the marble group was to measure 84 cm. in height including the plinth, and that the price of 3000 francs was payable in thirds.

33. Ibid., 6^e registre, fols. 56–57, Oct. 5, 1813.

34. Ibid., 6^e registre, fol. 66, Oct. 19, 1813.

35. Lami, *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'école française au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 1921) IV, p. 181.

36. Gift of the government, in the museum as early as 1828. *Catalogue des collections de sculpture et d'épigraphie du Musée de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1912) p. 397, no. 997.