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**FROM HOMER TO THE HAREM:
THE ART OF JEAN LECOMTE DU NOUÏ (1842-1923)**

Roger Diederer

**FROM HOMER TO THE HAREM:
THE ART OF JEAN LECOMTE DU NOUÏ (1842-1923)**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
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prof. mr. P.F. van der Heijden
ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties ingestelde
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door Roger Marie Herman Diederer
geboren te Heerlen

Promotor: Prof. Dr. D.L. Gamboni

Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen

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The first time I encountered a work by Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ was at the Cleveland Museum of Art, where I had the great pleasure of working for several years with Louise d'Argencourt on the collection catalogue of nineteenth-century European paintings. In getting to know the museum's splendid group of over 200 pictures, Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Dream of a Eunuch* (fig. 87) was certainly one of the most intriguing works to discover and investigate. The text I then wrote on this painting ultimately formed the seed for this book. After realizing how little had been published on Lecomte du Nouÿ, I continued to gather information about him with the idea of someday publishing a more extensive article. When I subsequently became a curator at the Dahesh Museum of Art, I there encountered another of the artist's works, *Judith* (fig. 121), and far beyond an article, the idea of a Lecomte du Nouÿ retrospective was born; my research on this artist continued stronger than ever.

I am deeply indebted to Prof. Dr. Dario Gamboni, who, while teaching at Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University, already encouraged me to develop my research on Lecomte du Nouÿ into a dissertation and, after his transfer to the University of Amsterdam, he enthusiastically agreed to be my advisor. His intelligence, dedication and kindness are inspiring and his guiding comments have greatly improved this book. It is a true pleasure and privilege to know him and his family. I would also like to thank, Prof. Dr. Ernst van de Wetering, Prof. Dr. Evert van Uiter, Prof. Dr. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, Prof. Dr. Christine Peltre and Dr. Jenny Reynaerts for agreeing join the dissertation committee. And in this context I must finally salute David Steinberg, who, while a colleague at the Cleveland Museum of Art, gave me much valued advice on how to formulate and develop an argument.

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Roger Diederer

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout his long life, Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ (1842-1923) remained faithful to the academic principles he had been taught during his formal training as a painter. Even though he created several images that made him a distinguished personality among his contemporaries, his fervent adherence to long established aesthetic values towards the end of the 19th century – when modernist concepts of individuality and originality in artistic expression slowly but surely began to prevail – caused his eventual demise into oblivion. Similar stories of artistic careers that moved from lifetime fame to present-day obscurity can be told of countless artists who matured in the second half of the 19th century. Painters such as Luc Olivier Merson (1846-1920) and Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836-1911), and sculptors like Eugène Guillaume (1822-1905) and Alexandre Falguière (1831-1900), to name only a few examples, remained truthful to the lessons of their teachers and never truly embraced the modernist criteria that ultimately triumphed and that are generally still valued today. In the second half of the 19th century, the often heated discussion between tradition-minded artists and critics and those seeking alternative means of expression found its most prominent arena in France, though the reversal of fame for many Victorian artists, for example, indicates that similar cultural shifts occurred throughout the Western world.

The ideas and motivations that caused these artistic transitions in the late 19th century are complex, and must be taken into account when studying the oeuvre of a painter like Lecomte du Nouÿ. The fact that artists of his persuasion once again receive serious consideration is a noteworthy phenomenon in itself, and may indicate how the pendulum of taste and critical attention is slowly starting to swing back. In recent years, artists such as Lawrence Alma Tadema (1836-1912), Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899), Jules Breton (1827-1906), Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret (1852-1929), Jean-Paul Laurens (1838-1921), Frederic Leighton (1830-1896), Ernest Meissonier (1815-1891) and John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), among others, have been the subject of serious publications and major exhibitions. Could it be that we have experienced saturation with the currently established pantheon of late 19th-century masters like Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890), Edgar Degas (1834-1917) and Edouard Manet (1832-1883)? Their artistic achievements and significance are not in the least being challenged here, but the study of 19th-century art has for too long been reduced to, and dominated by, artists who fit only the modernist aesthetic criteria. Of course, the best reason for the re-evaluation of particular academic artists would be

the realization that their work also, or once again, has the power to speak to a 21st-century audience, and even if their work still does not convince everybody from a purely artistic point of view, there most certainly is a historical perspective that is worth exploring and rediscovering.

A prolific portraitist, Lecomte du Nouÿ derived his primary inspiration from subjects related to classical history, the Bible, and his many travels abroad. Thus he essentially devoted himself to visualizing both a geographically distant present and a chronologically distant past. He studied for some eight years under the supervision of Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), whose artistic beliefs would always remain his guiding force. Concisely put, the academic principles that Lecomte du Nouÿ adopted stemmed from a reverence for ideal form – as epitomized by ancient classical and Renaissance art – with a strong emphasis on the representation of the human body that functioned as the central component in any narrative work of art. This concept went hand in hand with exquisite craftsmanship and skilful execution. Early in his career, Lecomte du Nouÿ enjoyed undisputed triumphs at the Paris Salon by receiving a gold medal in 1866 and 1869, a second-class medal in 1872, and the Legion of Honor in 1876, to name only the most significant French governmental distinctions. Indeed, the artist was truly a veteran of the Salon, as he exhibited at that venue almost every year between 1863 and 1923. By mid-career, however, his work received decidedly mixed reactions. There always remained true devotees and admirers, but most observers displayed far less enthusiasm for his art.

Writings generated about Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre by his contemporaries not only illustrate his tenuous position within the art world, but also provide a representative case study of the critical discourse among the adherents of the academic tradition, their modernist opponents, and the many voices in between.¹ In this book, Lecomte du Nouÿ's major works are broadly examined through these eyewitness accounts, which typically appeared in the critics' published deliberations about works displayed at the Paris Salons and the Universal Exhibitions. By quoting all texts on a particular painting that I have encountered during my research, this book proves that most of Lecomte du Nouÿ's works incited positive as well as negative reactions. Although certain criteria for approval or dismissal recur, it is revealing that the arguments could

¹ For a general discussion about the interaction between artists and critics in this period, see Sloane 1951, which provides many brief biographies of critics, as well as Bouillon 1990, which provides an anthology of French art criticism in the second half of the 19th century.

differ greatly even among critics who adhered to similar ideas about the course of contemporary art.

In order to define the parameters of the various critical approaches, it is instructive first to focus on two specific texts by authors who clearly represent the extremes. On the one hand, a passage from Jules Castagnary's Salon review of 1872 is worth paraphrasing extensively, as it illustrates concisely the growing attitude that traditional painters like Lecomte du Nouÿ were facing in the second half of the 19th century.² A staunch opponent of traditional academic values and an early supporter of Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), Castagnary was pleased to notice how few mythological and religious paintings hung at the 1872 Salon, and that the audience hardly paid any attention to them. He argued that once society had become enamored with nature and realities, all dreamlike and idealized representations looked insipid. People had lost interest in ancient rituals, and before long they would take issue with religious imagery too. The biblical, allegorical and mystical world was past, and Castagnary blamed the government for supporting such art, viewing commissions by the *Ministère de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts* as a legacy of the Imperial administration destroyed in 1871. (Lecomte du Nouÿ would receive precisely such a commission in 1873, specifically two altarpieces for the Church of the Holy Trinity in Paris, figs. 113/114.) Arguing that the Third Republic (1871-1940) should not support art that no longer represented the taste of the public, Castagnary urged the discontinuation of such subsidies. How better to initiate the separation of Church and State than through painting? He noted not only the retreat of mythological and religious subjects, but also of historical scenes set in antiquity, the Middle Ages, or the more recent past. He called them the refuge of two decomposing schools, the classical and the romantic: "The audience hardly stops in front of them, except when attracted to the strangeness of the scene, such as [...] *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*, [fig. 82] by Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ."³

Castagnary's jubilant account of the demise of traditional academic art is somewhat tempered by other reviewers' testimonies. The very painting by Lecomte du Nouÿ that Castagnary singled out, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*, did not just stop visitors in their tracks, it seems to have attracted enormous crowds and firmly established the artist's reputation. The work depicts a pharaoh having killed the messengers who brought him bad news, and the composition

² Castagnary 1892, II, p. 20-22; for French text see cat. 64. On Castagnary, see Bouillon 1990.

³ Idem.

became extremely well known through countless photographic and printed reproductions. Moreover, the image was reused in various other forms and thus became embedded in popular culture. For someone like Castagnary, however, this painting, indeed the whole of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre, represented everything abhorrent in contemporary art.

On the other hand, there were critics, and probably a larger portion of the Salon audience than Castagnary would have liked to admit, who admired Lecomte du Nouÿ's work and respected his unwavering adherence to the *beau idéal*, an aesthetic approach that built upon long established rules of idealized beauty and instilled art with edifying qualities. This other extreme of the critical spectrum is reflected in an introduction to a survey of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre, written as late as 1914 by the artist's decidedly conservative biographer, friend, and admirer, Guy de Montgailhard. In it the author first derided the modern schools (which had already invaded the museums and commercial galleries) as forming an attack on the elegance and good taste for which France had justly gained a reputation. How this differed, he argued, from art that was sincere, studied, worked out, and inspired by a search for Beauty and Truth. He was pleased, for the public's good and the honor of art, that there still existed artists who adhered to the cult of Beauty, and Lecomte du Nouÿ, of course, was one of them.⁴

The large number of critics who discussed Lecomte du Nouÿ's work on a regular basis, whether favorably or disparagingly, confirm his status within the artistic establishment. More

⁴ Montgailhard 1914, p. 40-41, the whole introduction reads: "Les amis des arts éprouvent, même lorsqu'ils feignent d'admirer, quelque lassitude à contempler stoïquement les oeuvres picturales ou sculpturales des écoles modernes. Tant d'outrecuidances, mêlées à un large fond de banalité, d'où émergent parfois des vigueurs maladroites et des idées mal conçues, laissent, après leur vision au concours des expositions multiples qui envahissent les palais nationaux ou les galeries privées, une impression quelque peu pénible pour notre renom national d'élégance, de bon goût et de bon ton. Et ceux qui signent ces oeuvres dites d'art le comprennent si bien qu'ils internationalisent leurs noms, afin de passer pour des étrangers, aidés sans doute par des exemples célèbres. C'est habile, si ce n'est pas très français; mais est-ce plus artistique?"

Tout autre est l'impression ressentie quand on se trouve en présence d'une suite d'oeuvres sincères, étudiées, travaillées, inspirées par la recherche du Beau et de la Vérité. Je sais qu'une certaine partie de la critique les traite de vieilleries à peine bonnes à orner les salles désuètes des musées de province. Mais que ces détracteurs, qui ont peut-être, jadis, parcouru le musée du Louvre, passent une heure dans l'hôtel du boulevard Haussmann où la plus merveilleuse collection française vient d'être offerte au public, et ils me diront si les toiles et les statues qui l'enrichissent tiennent du cubisme, du pointillisme, de toutes les erreurs visuelles à la mode, ou bien si elles évoquent seulement à nos yeux enthousiasmés l'image réconfortante de la Beauté vraie, interprétée par des talents simples, originaux et savants.

Pour notre bonheur, et pour l'honneur de l'art, il existe encore quelques artistes qui ont conservé bien intact ce culte du Beau que l'on chérissait autrefois et qui seul était à la mode, lorsque l'habileté ne remplaçait pas le savoir, quand on apprenait à dessiner avant de se mêler de peindre, et que les artistes essayaient d'avoir une idée sans bormer leur tâche à la recherche d'un simple effet. C'est dans cette catégorie – que les écoles modernes ont bien restreinte – que se place J. Lecomte du Nouÿ, le peintre éminent dont je vais détailler l'oeuvre, et qui sait manier l'ébauchoir avec

frequently than not, these writings allude to his indebtedness to Gérôme. This did not necessarily imply that his famous teacher was more accomplished, but that Lecomte du Nouÿ, who worked a generation later, painted very similar subjects. Or, as Gaston Schéfer put it, his and many of his compatriots' works all had "quelque chose de déjà vu."⁵ For Lecomte du Nouÿ, however, this was nothing to be ashamed of, and he had consciously placed himself in that position. A painter who claimed "Gérôme est mon maître et Raphaël mon Dieu"⁶ is not to be counted among his era's artistic innovators, and he did not want to be. By declaring his faith in Raphael (1483-1520), he also immediately aligned himself with artists such as Ingres (1780-1867), professing his allegiance to the neoclassical tradition. He favored meticulous painterly craftsmanship over the freer, suggestive brushwork originally championed by Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) and other romantics, and ultimately developed in various ways by the anti-academics and modernists. If today one compares Lecomte du Nouÿ's pictures with Paul Cézanne's (1839-1906) profoundly analytical compositions, or Claude Monet's (1840-1926) assiduous studies of nature, one would hardly guess that these three artists were contemporaries. Although Lecomte du Nouÿ rarely expressed (at least in print) his opinions of their work, they must have appeared to him as coarse and unfinished insults to a set of traditional artistic values that provided the "Artist" with professional and moral dignity.⁷ Moreover, their new approach contradicted his ingrained notion that narrative was the central component of any serious work of art.

Colored by our current, disproportionate emphasis on the more independent 19th-century artists and movements, we tend to ignore that most painters did not adhere to avant-gardist principles. Throughout the century, most French artists conformed to a more or less well-organized, state-controlled system of education, exhibitions and commissions.⁸ Even after 1880, when the Salons were no longer under the jurisdiction of the State but run by artists, these venues (no matter how imperfect in terms of viewing conditions and overcrowding) remained the crucial arena where most artists presented their work to the (buying) public, especially after State and Church patronage had diminished. The Salons' role was gradually but surely assumed by a developing network of dealers and galleries that functioned as intermediaries with private

autant de science que le pinceau. Ce préambule était nécessaire pour indiquer la place qu'il occupe parmi les artistes français et pour arrêter dans la lecture de ces lignes les admirateurs de nos baroques écoles d'art moderne."

⁵ Schéfer 1882, p. 177-78; for complete French text see cat. 172.

⁶ Guénin 1895, p. 113; for French text see cat. 279.

⁷ For an anecdote about his encounter with Édouard Manet in Venice, see Chapter II, p. 139 and note 188.

⁸ White & White 1993.

collectors. This changing landscape obviously suited the activities of independent artists, yet those holding on to more established ways also availed themselves of the new possibilities.

Lecomte du Nouÿ always remained a traditional academic painter, and he was an accomplished one. Some may deplore the fact that his style never truly evolved, yet this indicates that he acted out of a strong conviction. He consciously did not choose the path of modernism but opted to express himself with an elaborately finished technique that he applied to compositions that often feature stylized, even slightly mannerist, human figures. His art has been aptly defined as “Ingres faisant du Gérôme,”⁹ a characterization best validated by a picture such as *The White Slave* (L’esclave blanche; fig. 105). Although this work is clearly reminiscent of odalisques and harem scenes by both masters, Lecomte du Nouÿ created a distinct composition of his own that would never be mistaken for Ingres or Gérôme. Lecomte du Nouÿ rendered the woman in a somewhat awkward three-quarter profile and gave her an almost boneless body, yet he managed to convey her seductive radiance within a sultry environment that contributes to the lasting popularity of this picture. The writer Edmond Haraucourt astutely characterized the painter in the following terms: “One concedes readily that the art of Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ does not please the majority of people, but no one passes indifferently by his canvases; they impose a respect and a vague restlessness that emanate from things with which one communicates uneasily, things that one only penetrates after a long study. The painting of Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ recalls that of Ingres; it has its qualities and its shortcomings, the purity and the excessive neatness.”¹⁰

No matter what the verdict on Lecomte du Nouÿ’s art may have been in the past, it is difficult for a 21st-century audience to form any opinion at all. Few of his paintings are on display in public collections, and very little has been written about him since he died. Guy de Montgailhard published the only extensive account in 1906, seventeen years before the artist’s death.¹¹ That monograph is a trove of biographical information and includes a summary catalogue of the most important paintings, drawings and sculptures – ranging from Lecomte du Nouÿ’s first Salon exhibition of 1863 through that of 1906 (the year the book was published).

⁹ Henri Bouchot paraphrasing an anonymous source in his preface to Montgailhard’s biography of Lecomte du Nouÿ; Montgailhard 1906, p. ix.

¹⁰ Haraucourt, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 61-62; for French text see cat. 219.

¹¹ Montgailhard 1906.

Neither exhaustive nor without errors, the book fortunately does reproduce a great number of paintings, drawings, and some frescoes and sculptures. These photographs are often the only visual records of the artist's works; in most cases their present whereabouts remain unknown.¹² Many of the pictures discussed here probably linger in private and even public collections. Given these circumstances, Montgailhard's book remains indispensable to anyone studying the artist, yet it is relatively rare and can only be found in a few libraries. The present study therefore seems pertinent and will hopefully help to revive the interest in Lecomte du Nouÿ's art.

To introduce Lecomte du Nouÿ's career and oeuvre to a contemporary audience, the first chapter of this book offers an updated biographical account and a general survey of the development of his art. The artist has often, yet always summarily, been featured in modern art-historical literature devoted to Orientalism, but factual biographical errors, such as his death-date or his alleged obtaining of the *prix de Rome*, are continually repeated. Building upon Montgailhard's book with my own additional research, I have attempted to reconstruct Lecomte du Nouÿ's formative years, when he studied successively under Charles Gleyre, Émile Signol, and Jean-Léon Gérôme. The latter part of his career is treated more concisely, not only because it is less well documented but also because he remained relatively constant in his philosophical and artistic approach. Judging from extant photographs, the quality of his late works seems to lag severely, even measured against his own academic standards. One photograph from around 1918, taken in Lecomte du Nouÿ's studio, shows the old artist surrounded by several of his late pictures, most of which have not been traced (fig. 7). It is perilous to form an opinion solely on the basis of old reproductions, yet it cannot be denied that many of the late paintings seem to lack imagination. Not only do these works appear somewhat poorly executed, but few of them show the inventiveness in composition or subject matter that Lecomte du Nouÿ reached in his best early works, or they seem merely variations of previous successes.

The second chapter focuses on the three major categories (besides portraiture) that can be distinguished in Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre: his depiction of historical subjects (then often characterized as *la peinture archéologique*), his Orientalist works, and finally his religious paintings. Generated by archeological discoveries, there existed in the 19th century among

¹² There are also the important collections of photographs and prints at the Bibliothèque Nationale (Cabinet des Estampes) in Paris – here referred to as BN: DC 309, I-IV – as well as the photographs of his work at the Agence

scholars, artists, and the public at large an increasing interest in extinct peoples and customs. Gérôme was one of the main instigators of *néo-grec* painting, a particular approach to neoclassicism that Lecomte du Nouÿ favored as well. With the onset of colonialism and its pervasive economical, political, and social consequences, a similar curiosity was directed at contemporary foreign civilizations. The French focused particularly on North Africa and the Middle East. The resulting fashion for Orientalism in French arts not only encouraged the representation and documentation of exotic cultures, but also offered a convenient channel for artists and their audiences to project their personal ideas and fantasies. This striving for both a historical, representational accuracy and an exotic illusion – which at first seems rather paradoxical – converged in the Orientalist work of Lecomte du Nouÿ, as is well illustrated by *The Dream of a Eunuch* of 1874 (*Un rêve d'eunuque*; fig. 87). This and other works blend fact and fiction into intriguingly peculiar compositions, touching upon a variety of issues such as the appropriation of historical facts and literary sources, the perception of foreign cultures, race, sexuality, barbaric violence, despotism, and specific customs such as the consumption of hallucinatory drugs. The third distinctive category within Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre is religious imagery. A sizable number were inspired by his travels to the Middle East, in an era when contemporary peoples and settings there were thought to provide direct and visibly accurate evidence from Biblical episodes.

After a general assessment of Lecomte du Nouÿ's artistic status in his time, a chronological listing of all his known works is provided. Montgailhard's 1906 catalogue has not only been corrected and annotated, but is also expanded with other works that have since been recorded or located. While the 1906 catalogue records roughly 250 entries, I have been able to trace about 700 works, including many preparatory sketches and drawings and also works known to have been destroyed in the past. In addition, I have incorporated in this catalogue a large number of critical writings regarding individual works, whether positive or negative. In order not to merely paraphrase or cite isolated sentences in the main body of the text (at the risk of obscuring their context), the pertinent discussions are generally cited in their entirety and in their original language. Finally, a few fairly hard to find texts and documents with important information about the artist's work have also been appended.

This book is not an attempt to proclaim Lecomte du Nouÿ as one of the canonical painters of the 19th century. Instead, it is meant to encourage a modern audience to reconsider the artist as an intriguing academician in his own right, and to recognize that his art reflects the spirit of his era. He created some striking and original compositions that still have the power to speak to our imagination, and these works deserve to be placed in their broader artistic and historical context. Moreover, his oeuvre provides a fascinating case study of how late 19th-century academic art was positioned in its losing struggle with modernism, and how some painters tried to sustain certain traditional values that no longer seemed to speak to changing social and political circumstances. A wide-ranging body of criticism generated by Lecomte du Nouÿ's work clarifies the nature of that conflict, and the present study is intended to contribute to a more complex and profound, and thus more accurate, understanding of French art of the late 19th century.

Chapter One

JEAN LECOMTE DU NOUÿ (1842 – 1923): A BIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

I. YOUTH

Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ descended from a noble Piedmontese family that had settled in the French region of Languedoc late in the fourteenth century. His ancestors were primarily involved in the military or the legal profession, but his great-grand-uncle, Alexandre Hyacinthe Dunouy (1757-1841), was a painter who was active in Lyon, Naples, and Paris during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries¹ and his father was a musician. Jean Antoine Jules Lecomte—the son of Jules Louis Michel Lecomte (1814-?) and his wife, Félicité Alexandrine Dunouy (1817-?)—was born on June 10, 1842, in Paris at place Dauphine nos. two and four, in what was then the eleventh arrondissement. Eventually both of his parents' family names were combined, and Jean signed his first salon painting (1863), *Francesca da Rimini and Paolo* (fig. 13), as well as most subsequent works, with the surname Lecomte du Nouÿ.² This name change, which

¹ A landscape painter, he exhibited at the Salon from 1798 through 1833 and worked for several years at the Neapolitan court of Joachim (1767-1815) and Caroline Murat (1792-1839). He decorated various salons in the palais des Tuileries (destroyed in 1871) and the château de Saint-Cloud and produced etchings after his own painted oeuvre. Montgailhard 1906, p. 2, gives this artist's name as Hyacinthe-André du Nouÿ. However, the lexicons by Bellier/Auvray 1882, I: p. 482-3; and Bénézit, rev. ed. 1994, IV: p. 866, both give the first name as 'Alexandre-Hyacinthe.' Bellier/Auvray lists a death date of 1843, and Bénézit one of 1841. Montgailhard 1906, p. 2 gives some further anecdotal information.

Archives du Louvre (P7 1892 30 Janvier), correspondence between Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ and the Direction des Musées Nationaux. On December 18, 1891, Lecomte du Nouÿ writes from Paris (20 Blvd Flandrin) that he would like to offer a painting of his "arrière grand oncle Alexandre Hyacinthe Dunouÿ," who was the teacher of Achille Michallon (1796-1822), as the Louvre possessed none of his works. The Museum's response, dated January 30, 1892, was that the painting could only be accepted for the galleries in Compiègne or Fontainebleau, due to lack of space in the French Galleries of the Louvre, for which Lecomte du Nouÿ had intended it. The landscape with small figures (63 x 94 cm) was accepted on February 4, 1892.

The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (BN: DC 309, II, p. 31) keeps a print depicting Alexandre Du Nouy, not signed or dated, in the collection of prints and photos of works by Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ.

² The exact spelling of the artist's name – and more particularly, the placing of the diacritical mark on the u or the y – is a matter of confusion and inconsistency, as is the alternative use of "Dunouy" or "du Nouy." The artist's birth certificate gives it as "Jean Antoine Jules Lecomte" and names his mother as "Dunouÿ," written in one word, and that is the name he eventually added to his own family name. However, that name has since often been split into "du Nouy," and Guy de Montgailhard opted in his 1906 biography of the artist for "Lecomte du Nouÿ," a spelling that has been followed in most of the subsequent literature. Yet, the painter initially signed most of his paintings with "Lecomte du Nouÿ," placing the diacritical mark on

was made official in 1876,³ probably served to distinguish him from the painter Émile Lecomte (dates unknown) and perhaps also to create an aura of nobility. In addition to a sister, Émilie Lecomte (1848-?),⁴ Jean had a younger brother, Émile André Lecomte (1844-1914) (who also changed his name to Lecomte du Nouÿ), an architect who studied with Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814-79) and ultimately moved in 1875 to Romania, where he restored and designed many churches and other buildings.⁵

Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ outlived his first wife, Valentine Peigné-Crémieux (1855-76), as well as his second, Caroline Evrard (1851-92), with whom he had his only child, Jacques Théodore Jules Lecomte du Nouÿ (1885-1961), an architect and archeologist.⁶ Lecomte du Nouÿ's third and final marriage was to Térésa Marie Fisanne (sometimes written Fizanne, 1862-?), who survived him.⁷

In his 1906 book *Lecomte du Nouÿ* the artist's biographer, Guy de Montgailhard, recounted a wealth of anecdotes about Lecomte du Nouÿ's youth, which seem to have been drawn from a long friendship between the author and his subject. According to

the y. But even he himself was not consistent in this practice and also used "Lecomte du Nouÿ", or sometimes signed simply "du Nouÿ" or "du Nouÿ." As "Lecomte du Nouÿ" best indicates the change in pronunciation of the vowel in the last name, and his most important works bear that variant of the spelling, I have opted for that spelling in this book.

³ Paris, Archives Nationales, Lecomte Dunouy, Jean Antoine Jules, 20877 – 10 Juin 1842. Here the artist is officially authorized to add Dunouy to his father's name and call himself henceforth "Lecomte Dunouy."

⁴ A photograph of a portrait of the artist's sister by Lecomte du Nouÿ is kept in BN: DC 309, II, p. 45.

⁵ Popescu 1999, p. 287-308.

⁶ Paris, Archives du Louvre, Document of 24 Mars 1926, no. 3830, Jacques Théodore Jules Lecomte-Dunouÿ, Attaché à l'Institut Français d'Archéologie du Caire, demeurant 59 rue des Belles Feuilles. See also Aurillac: 82.13.215, appendix I.

⁷ Paris, Archives du Louvre, various documents regarding the artist and his third wife:

Document L-5 1942-20 Juin: Reply from the Directeur des Musées Nationaux et de l'Ecole du Louvre to Madame Lecomte du Nouÿ / 6, rue des Réservoirs / Versailles. Before the war, she had apparently requested that a painting by her husband be acquired for the Musée du Luxembourg. This request was denied, and the book by Guy de Montgailhard that she had presented for this purpose was being returned to her.

Document Lecomte du Nouÿ J.A.J. M-7 1926-29 Juillet: Several documents regarding the coffret (box) donated by the Queen of Romania to Lecomte du Nouÿ (repr. in Montgailhard 1906, p. 95). In his testament, he willed it to the "Musées des Souverains de la Galerie du Louvre." His widow contested this donation as the gallery no longer existed and as the Louvre did not want to accept it.

Document 1926-18 Mars: "Le Maire de Versailles a l'honneur de faire connaître, en réponse à la demande ci-dessus, qu'il résulte des renseignements ... que Mme Vve LECOMTE DUNOUY, âgée de 64 ans, habite Versailles depuis plusieurs années et actuellement 10 rue des Réservoirs, où elle paie un loyer annuel de 9.000 frs. Elle est veuve d'un artiste peintre décorateur et elle n'a pas d'enfants. La susnommée a fait un héritage de 140.000 frs. à la mort de son mari. Ce dernier, par testament en date du 31 Mars 1917, donnait lors de son décès, tous pouvoirs à sa femme de choisir et de garder par devers elle tous les objets mobiliers qui lui plairaient." M. Marquet de Vasselot, had visited and did not accept the objects for the Louvre.

Montgailhard, for example, the view of a sunset behind a church that Lecomte du Nouÿ saw as a four-year-old boy made such a lasting impression on him that as an adult, he set many of his paintings at that time of day. While that anecdote may be apocryphal, sunsets or star-studded skies do indeed form the backdrop for many of the artist's chimerical inventions.⁸

Lecomte du Nouÿ started drawing early, inspired by childhood trips to a zoological garden, and at age six, he made portraits of his uncle and father. His parents recognized their son's artistic talent and encouraged an education devoted to the arts, sending him for drawing lessons in the evenings with Mme Emerie Bouveret, a family friend. Like other aspiring artists of his era, the boy copied such images as a lithograph by Emile Lassalle (1813-71) of the turbaned head of a pasha, as well as works by Horace Vernet (1789-1863). He continued to draw throughout his youth, all the while aspiring to become a painter.

Though Lecomte du Nouÿ was according to Montgailhard's reports supposedly a delicate child, he lived to be eighty-one years old. His appearance can be deduced from several of his self-portraits (fig. 1; cat. 211, and fig. 2; cat. 222) and a photograph taken by Nadar (fig. 3) (his Italian roots were evident to such extent that he was once mistaken for a native while traveling in the Piedmont), yet his artistic personality is perhaps best captured in a self-portrait in which he is seen drawing in an Oriental setting (fig. 4; cat. 165), and in three photographs taken in his studio (figs. 5-7).⁹

⁸ The Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie in Aurillac keeps a charming oil sketch depicting a cloudy sky against an orange sunset (inv. 82.13.297, see appendix I). The artist employed this atmospheric condition in several depictions that included imaginary apparitions of (female) figures in the sky, for example, in a small sketch of Venice (fig. 46).

⁹ A photograph of an 1886 plaster or terracotta bust of the artist by Gustave Deloye (born 1838) is reproduced in BN: DC 309, I, p. 3. See also Drouot 2003, lot 118, see appendix III, representing an 1869 bronze medal by Louis Maximilien Bourgeois of Lecomte du Nouÿ's head in profile. A drawn portrait of Lecomte du Nouÿ (1905) by Fernand Cormon is reproduced in Montgailhard 1906, p. 101.

II. THE FORMATIVE YEARS: 1861-72

Charles Gleyre's Atelier: 1861-63

In 1861, at the age of nineteen, Lecomte du Nouÿ started his professional artistic education by entering the private studio of the Swiss painter Charles Gleyre (1806-74) in Paris.¹⁰ The atelier had been run by Paul Delaroche (1797-1856), but when Delaroche stopped teaching in 1843, he encouraged Gleyre to take over. Delaroche had himself inherited the atelier from the Neoclassicists Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825) and Antoine-Jean Gros (1771-1835). An important historical document in this respect is a pair of paintings of portraits of the students in the Delaroche and Gleyre ateliers, painted over many years and by different hands.¹¹ Based on comparisons of the paintings with other portraits of the artist, I would suggest that Lecomte du Nouÿ is second from the left in the third row of the second painting (fig. 8). Gleyre's work represented the *juste milieu*: he did not adhere to the prevalent Neoclassical school or the Romantic school, but was of a more independent persuasion. Gleyre's and other private ateliers prepared students for passing the examination (*concours des places*) that enabled them to enter the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where Lecomte du Nouÿ was admitted to classes on October 9, 1861.¹² Admission to that hallowed institution allowed the young man to vie for the *prix de Rome*, the highly coveted honor that rewarded each laureate with up to five years of board and lodging at the Académie de France in Rome, which was housed after 1803 in the Villa Medici.

It is not clear why Lecomte du Nouÿ entered Gleyre's studio rather than that of, say, Thomas Couture (1815-79) or Léon Cogniet (1794-1880), but several factors may

¹⁰ The following assessment of Gleyre's teaching practice is based on Hauptman 1985, p. 79-119. Of further interest in this respect is Boime 1971, p. 58-65.

¹¹ For an extensive article on these two paintings, with an attempt to identify all the individuals, see Hauptman 1985, p. 79-119. Hauptman does not identify the head I here suggest might represent Lecomte du Nouÿ. A comparison with Lecomte du Nouÿ's portraits (figs. 1-3) reveals the artist's distinctive mustache as being a main characteristic for comparison. For another publication on these student portraits, see Bailey 1997, cat. 1, and a good detail reproduction on p. 90.

¹² In the artist's dictionary, Bellier/Auvray 1882, I, p. 959, it is mentioned that Lecomte du Nouÿ entered the École des Beaux-Arts on October 9, 1861. This date is confirmed by file 4084 "du Registre Matricule. École Nationale et Spéciale des Beaux-Arts", on microfilm AJ52 264, held at the Archives Nationales, Paris. This document notes all the contests at the École that students enlisted for, and which prizes they were awarded.

have played a role. When Delaroche asked Gleyre to succeed him in 1843, Gleyre's fame was based solely upon the painting *The Evening* (1843, also known as *The Lost Illusions*; fig. 9), which he had submitted to that year's salon. The painting was much admired: it won a second-class medal and was soon purchased by the French state. It was hung in the national museum of contemporary art, the Palais du Luxembourg, an important official recognition for any living artist, and one which suggested that the artist was just one step away from having his work shown at the Louvre itself. Yet Gleyre did not exhibit at the salon after 1849, when he was at the height of his fame. He also remained detached from the state-funded Académie des Beaux-Arts and never taught at the closely related École des Beaux-Arts, although he did at times serve as a member of its salon jury. It has been argued that the particular qualities of *The Evening* as well as Gleyre's independence must have persuaded Delaroche to appoint him as his successor.¹³

By 1861, when Lecomte du Nouÿ enrolled, Gleyre must have had a strong reputation as a private teacher, for his atelier was very popular. On principle, his students paid fees only for the studio rent and the cost of hiring live models. Gleyre gave each student individual attention and championed personal expression over the slavish following of a recognized artist or style. This approach was embraced by such young painters as Frédéric Bazille (1841-70), Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), and Alfred Sisley (1839-99), all of whom entered Gleyre's studio around 1862 and subsequently became leaders in the Impressionist movement.¹⁴ It may have been a combination of all of these elements that encouraged Lecomte du Nouÿ to study with Gleyre. Yet, apart from the reasonable fees and the master's pedagogical qualities, another reason Lecomte du Nouÿ found Gleyre appealing may have been that he had visited many countries in the Near East. Beginning in 1834, Gleyre had accompanied the American John Lowell, Jr. (1799-1836) for almost two years through Greece, Turkey, Rhodes, Egypt, and Sudan, all the while recording sites and people in a multitude of drawings and watercolors.¹⁵

Considering Lecomte du Nouÿ's future interest in Oriental subjects, it is plausible that as

¹³ Hauptman 1996, I, p. 162-63.

¹⁴ Hauptman 1985, provides fairly precise dates for when these artists entered Gleyre's studio. Renoir enrolled in the fall of 1861, Bazille in September 1862, and Sisley in October of that year. Monet is generally also listed as being a student of Gleyre beginning March 1863. However, Hauptman (p. 108) argues that Monet's exposure to Gleyre's instruction may not have lasted more than two or three weeks.

¹⁵ Hauptman 1996, II, sections 2-3.

a student he was already more attracted to the dreamlike, exotic character of Gleyre's *The Evening* (which Montgailhard described as "poetically archaeological"¹⁶) than he was to the master's advocacy of artistic independence, something that must have encouraged the future Impressionists.

In discussing Lecomte du Nouÿ's early atelier training, Montgailhard singles out, among the artist's fellow students, the now-forgotten François-Émile Ehrmann (1833 - 1910), Firmin Girard (1838-1921), and Albert Lambron des Pilières (1836-?) rather than the now rather more famous future Impressionists who studied with Gleyre. According to Montgailhard, Lecomte du Nouÿ was hard-working but insecure, and with good reason: his works seem to have been the laughing stock of his fellow students; he hesitated to submit his drawings of genre subjects (rather than the more highly esteemed classical studies) to Gleyre. He was eventually encouraged, however, when an artist's supplier bought his study of a black woman's head wrapped in a yellow scarf.¹⁷ This particular work has not been identified, but it is a reminder that models of various races were employed to pose for the students. Gleyre had already visited foreign lands, so he may have appreciated the importance of learning to render a range of different skin tones.

Montgailhard expressed surprise that the atelier of Gleyre—"this careful, timid, even classical painter"—was to become a breeding ground for the most "romantic" (that is, non-classical) ideas, and that these rambunctious, though hardworking, students nurtured sentiments of artistic revolt. Gustave Courbet (1819-77) had recently opened his own studio in 1861 and offered his students a cow as a life model, declaring: "That's nature!" For these "revolutionary" Gleyre students, as Montgailhard put it, "Delacroix was God, Hugo the verb, and their sketches resounded with spurs, armors, and swords."¹⁸ Gustave Doré's (1832-82) *Dante and Virgil in the Ninth Circle of Hell* (1861; fig. 10) was hailed for its daring composition, which apparently influenced all of Gleyre's students. Though unpracticed, Lecomte du Nouÿ attempted a picture with which to measure himself against Ary Scheffer's (1795-1858) famous *Francesca da Rimini and Paolo in Hell* (1835; fig. 11). Yet even after extensive research and study of Delacroix's

¹⁶ Montgailhard 1906, chapter II.

¹⁷ See cats. 346, 347.

¹⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 9: "Pour ces révolutionnaires, Delacroix était le dieu, Hugo le verbe, et leurs esquisses résonnèrent d'éperons, de cuirasses et d'épées."

Dante and Virgil (1822; fig. 12), Lecomte du Nouÿ apparently only represented the gloomy and horrific aspects of the subject, and he never exhibited the painting.¹⁹ After he left Gleyre's studio, however, Lecomte du Nouÿ returned to the subject of the doomed couple in what was to be his first salon painting. In the catalogue for the 1863 Salon, this picture was entitled *Francesca di [sic] Rimini et Paolo* (1863), and the artist was listed as "élève de MM. Signol et Gleyre" (pupil of Messrs. Signol and Gleyre; fig. 13; cat. 2).

According to Montgailhard, Lecomte du Nouÿ's second attempt at depicting this tragic story was painted while he studied with Émile Signol (1804-92). There are several explanations for why he may have left Gleyre's atelier to study with Signol. Art historian William Hauptman explains that Gleyre's studio was beset with problems of various kinds.²⁰ By early 1862, the master's eyesight had deteriorated tremendously due to an eye inflammation he contracted while traveling in Egypt. And although Gleyre's vision improved by the end of the year, the studio was also experiencing financial problems Lecomte du Nouÿ may have left, therefore, because of Gleyre's medical troubles, the precarious atelier situation, a desire to work with Signol, or a combination of all of these factors.

Émile Signol's Atelier: 1863-1864

Montgailhard hardly addresses Lecomte du Nouÿ's brief period of study with Signol except in the context of Lecomte du Nouÿ's second version of Paolo and Francesca, which apparently benefited much from Signol's advice. Signol won the *prix de Rome* in 1830 and resided at the Villa Medici from 1831 to 1835, when Gleyre was also in Rome.²¹ Signol and Gleyre undoubtedly met there, and Gleyre himself may have encouraged Lecomte du Nouÿ to study with Signol. Upon his return from Italy, Signol received many commissions for religious pictures in Paris churches and for history paintings for the museum at Versailles. In 1860, Signol was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts, filling the seat left vacant by Louis Hersent (1777-1860).²² But even though

¹⁹ Montgailhard 1906, p. 9.

²⁰ Hauptman 1985, p. 88.

²¹ Montgailhard 1906, p. 10-11.

²² On Signol, see Merson 1899; and, Foucart 1987, p. 262-263, figs. 226-27, 230-31.

Lecomte du Nouÿ was already working under his new teacher, I believe that he referred to a painting by Gleyre when he composed his *Paolo and Francesca* of 1863. Gleyre's *The Dance of the Bacchantes* (1849; fig. 14) had been exhibited briefly at the Salon of 1849.²³ The work won great acclaim but it had already been sold to Francisco de Asis de Borbón, the titular king of Spain, which meant that it was only shown for about one month before it disappeared from public view. Lecomte du Nouÿ was only seven years old in 1849, and even if he had been taken on a visit to that salon, he probably would not have remembered it vividly enough to faithfully copy parts of it. Nonetheless, there seems little doubt that the figure for his *Francesca* is derived from the central nude dancer in Gleyre's painting. Lecomte du Nouÿ must have known the composition through the two engravings made after it, or through studies and sketches for the painting that he could have seen while working with Gleyre.

The subject of *Francesca da Rimini* and *Paolo* had long been popular among artists inspired by Dante Alighieri's epic poem *La Divina Commedia* (The Divine Comedy, ca. 1300-20),²⁴ in which *Francesca* was forced to marry the loathsome *Giancotto*, though she loved his brother *Paolo*. Traditionally, artists depicted the couple in an amorous embrace, just before the jealous *Giancotto* brutally stabbed them. Ary Scheffer's innovative decision to represent the lovers in the second circle of Hell—where the souls of those whose passion prevailed over reason whirl through a tempestuous darkness—made his picture an icon of Romanticism. In 1863, twenty-eight years and many painted copies and engraved reproductions later, Scheffer's composition endured. After his 1861 *Dante and Virgil*, Doré exhibited a *Paolo and Francesca* at the Salon of 1863 (fig. 15).²⁵ The critic C. de Sault regarded this as the best of Doré's three submissions: the figures appeared to float convincingly in the air, and *Francesca* had a charming face, yet he regretted that her proportions were not more delicate and feminine, and that the work did not rival Scheffer's achievement.²⁶

²³ Hauptman 1996, I: p. 159-64; II: p. 306-11.

²⁴ For a well-illustrated survey of this subject in art, see Poppi 1994. The museum in Aurillac also keeps an undated oil-sketch by Lecomte du Nouÿ depicting *Dante and Virgil*, Aurillac: 82.13.295, see appendix I.

²⁵ Sold at Christie's New York, 22 May 1996 (lot 82), oil on canvas, 280.6 x 193.6 cm, reproduced.

²⁶ de Sault 1864, p. 57, "La Françoise de Rimini est de beaucoup le meilleur des trois tableaux de M. Doré; le groupe vole bien, et la tête de Francesca est d'un beau sentiment; mais on aimerait à lui voir des proportions plus délicates et plus féminines; et l'on regrette que M. Doré se soit exposé à ne pas égaler Scheffer."

Lecomte du Nouÿ's salon debut that year—*his* interpretation of the Paolo and Francesca theme—was not reviewed at all (the twenty-one-year-old artist must have been virtually unknown to the critics), but it was spoofed in a caricature by Cham (fig. 16). The obvious reference to Gleyre aside, Lecomte du Nouÿ understandably tried to formulate his own interpretation of Scheffer's composition, placing the figures vertically in the picture plane (as did Doré). Whereas the couple designed by Scheffer floats in a gracious diagonal, Lecomte du Nouÿ's group struggles somewhat to defy gravity. Keeping in mind the criteria with which de Sault judged Doré's picture, it is unlikely that critics would have given Lecomte du Nouÿ's work much credit. The particular pose of the female nude may have been suited to a dancing bacchante, as in Gleyre's picture, but the form did not adapt so well to that of an ethereal spirit.²⁷ Although Lecomte du Nouÿ suggested an upward movement with the ascending horizon line, the severe backward bending of Francesca's figure, with her long hair falling, slightly negates this sense of movement.²⁸ It was this very element on which the caricaturist Cham based the pun of his drawing and caption: "Francesca da Rimini no longer needs to fear for breaking her neck if she were to fall from this height, it has already happened!" In further emulation of Scheffer's painting, Lecomte du Nouÿ framed the two bodies within the bluish-green fabric of Paolo's garment. But this decision, which rendered the two bodies more voluminous than slender, was also somewhat counterproductive. Apart from these weaknesses in composition, though, the picture is well crafted and must have displayed enough redeeming qualities for the jury, as it was ultimately accepted for the 1863 Salon. That the young Lecomte du Nouÿ could gain such approval after a relatively brief training indicates not only his innate ability, but also his eagerness to advance his career.

²⁷ In this context it is telling to cite Clément 1886, p. 339, who explains Gleyre's tendency to paint his female subjects with thick legs. Gleyre's picture *La Charmeuse* (1868, Basel, Kunstmuseum) (see note 77) had been criticized for the thick lower legs of the female figure, yet Gleyre is to have replied: "Des jambes minces par le bas, disait-il, sont des jambes à cordonniers, des jambes à bottines qui font bien sur le trottoir quand il y a de la boue; c'est comme les grands yeux et les petites bouches une affection de fausse élégance. Dans l'extrême jeunesse, la jambe près du pied est épaisse et comme engorgée; du jarret au talon qui ne doit pas saillir, elle descend par une ligne presque droite. Dès que le mollet s'accuse fortement, que la cheville se dessine, s'étrangle et se décharne, c'est que la *décrépitude* commence; et ajoutait-il en s'échauffant, la *décrépitude* commence à vingt ans au plus tard. Ainsi prenez des modèles très-jeunes. Passé vingt ans, la femme n'existe plus pour l'artiste. Les formes n'ont plus la pureté, la chasteté qui permettent le nu. Voyez plutôt la Chloé du grand *Bain* de Prud'hon. C'est une fille de vingt ans; elle est délicieuse, mais presque indécente."

²⁸ A formal comparison for this pose could also be made with the girl in David's *The Lictors Bringing to Brutus the Bodies of his Sons* (fig. 74).

There is a more cynical explanation for the picture's admittance to the salon, however: Lecomte du Nouÿ's new teacher, Signol, served on that year's salon jury. He must have encouraged his pupil to present the work in public and may have even convinced his fellow committee members to accept it. That very year, a record number of the 5,000 works submitted were rejected, such a large number that Emperor Napoleon III felt obliged to appease the outraged artistic community by permitting the organization of the parallel *Salon des refusés*. With 2,217 paintings in the regular exhibition, and 680 in the alternative venue, the critics had ample material to discuss, in addition to Manet's shocking *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1863, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), which defied all pictorial and social conventions.²⁹ With so many works vying for attention, Lecomte du Nouÿ cannot have been surprised that his painting—an attractive but unassuming depiction of a traditional subject—elicited little response.

Academic Reforms

The artistic turmoil of 1863 went far beyond the issue of which artist was or was not admitted to that year's salon. The educational system of the École des Beaux-Arts had long been criticized, and in November of 1863, pedagogical reforms were finally instituted.³⁰ The Académie des Beaux-Arts, founded in 1803 as a successor to the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, controlled the salons. It was, and still is, one of five academies that form the Institut de France, the organization that oversaw the government's involvement with the arts and sciences in the nineteenth century.³¹ In addition to the official exhibitions, the Académie des Beaux-Arts also controlled the École des Beaux-Arts, where official art instruction took place, as well as its Italian outpost, the Académie de France in Rome, where winners of the *prix de Rome* resided for up to five years. Following a decree issued jointly in 1863 by the *surintendant des Beaux-Arts*, Alfred-Émilien Comte de Nieuwerkerke (1811-92), the secretary of the École,

²⁹ In the catalogue of the Salon des Refusés, Manet's painting bore the title *Le bain* (*The Bath*), but it soon became to be known as, *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* (*Luncheon on the Grass*).

³⁰ Paul Duro, "France, § XV, Art Education: p. 7. The Reforms of 1863," in: Turner 1996, 11: p. 672. For a more in depth account of the matter, see: Boime 1977, p. 1-39; and, Jacques and Schwartz 2001, p. 353-469. For an extensive contemporary account of the workings of the École des Beaux-Arts after the 1863 reforms, see Lemaistre 1889.

³¹ Damien 1999.

Prosper Mérimée (1803-70), and the architect and writer Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814-79), the École became disassociated from the Académie des Beaux-Arts, which consequently lost much of its power. The École, traditionally perceived as the bastion of Davidian classicism, was now subject to administrative changes and a restructuring of the coursework. Among many other innovations, three painting ateliers were introduced at the École, where students would be taught painting (as well as comparable ateliers for sculpture and architecture). Before then, the courses were only structured to teach drawing skills and students had to rely on private studios for instruction in painting. In 1871, however, the year Lecomte du Nouÿ was admitted to compete for the *prix de Rome*, the members of the Académie regained their jurisdiction over that crucial contest.

The three artists appointed to lead the newly created studios at the École were Alexandre Cabanel (1823-89), Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), and Isidore Pils (1813/15-75), all of whom were at liberty to select their own pupils. Each teacher represented a different style and was chosen in order to open up the curriculum. Cabanel, a favorite of Napoleon III and his court, was one of the most decorated artists of his age. After Ingres's death in 1867, he was seen as the foremost history painter in France. He infused Ingres's rigor with an almost eighteenth-century playfulness that attracted a more mainstream audience. Pils, meanwhile, was especially appreciated by the authorities for his military paintings heralding France's heroic exploits. And Gérôme offered his *néo-grec* variant of the classical idiom, a far cry from the grand history painting of David and Ingres. Appointing this painter of historical genre scenes was as bold a move as could be expected from the usually conservative members of the Académie, who sought, in the end, to safeguard the well-being and continuity of their institution. According to the painter Luc-Olivier Merson (1846-1920), it was in light of these reforms that Signol closed his studio and moved his students to the official ateliers at the École des Beaux-Arts.³²

While Lecomte du Nouÿ was still in Signol's studio, a fellow student by the name of Lehoux³³ strongly encouraged him to read a historical novel by Théophile Gautier

³² Merson 1899, p. 13.

³³ Refers most likely to the history painter Pierre-Adrien-Pascal Lehoux (1844-96), who is listed in Bénézit 1994 as a pupil of Alexandre Cabanel. The other Lehoux (Pierre-François) (1803-92), an Orientalist painter

(1811-72), *Le roman de la momie* (*The Novel of the Mummy*, 1856). This story of a pharaoh enamored with an Egyptian beauty must have struck a chord, as it became a significant source of inspiration for many of Lecomte du Nouÿ's later pictures. Perhaps paradoxically, he seemed attracted as much to Gautier's minute and scholarly descriptions of an ancient civilization as to the story's exotic and fantastic potential. As will be argued in the next chapter, these elements together would become important characteristics of Lecomte du Nouÿ's *néo-grec* and Orientalist pictures. Apart from the turbaned head he had copied in childhood, some of the earliest seeds of his interest in exotic subjects must have been planted by Gleyre, who had himself traveled extensively. Later, when Lecomte du Nouÿ showed *The Female Egyptian Musician* (*Musicienne d'Égypte*, 1860s, location unknown; cat. 345) to Signol, his teacher reportedly thought he was seeing a work by Gérôme.³⁴ Even if apocryphal, this story suggests that the kinship between Lecomte du Nouÿ and Gérôme was already established before he entered that master's studio in 1864. By then, Lecomte du Nouÿ knew where he wanted his career to go, and who better to follow than Gérôme (himself a student of Gleyre), who could teach him precisely what he wanted to learn?

Jean-Léon Gérôme's Atelier: 1864-72

The new ateliers at the École des Beaux-Arts opened on February 22, 1864, and Lecomte du Nouÿ belonged to the first group of thirteen students in Gérôme's class. In his 1906 biography of Gérôme, published two years after the subject's death³⁵, Charles Moreau-Vauthier (himself a student of Gérôme) oversimplified the origins of the reforms at the École, attributing them solely to financial issues. He contended that de Nieuwerkerke thought the government should provide students with free training, rather than obliging them to attend private painting studios with admission fees. The author described the opening of the new studio as follows: "The model during the first week in

and pupil of Horace Vernet, was already in his sixties when Lecomte du Nouÿ was in Signol's atelier, and would then not have been a fellow pupil as mentioned by Montgailhard.

³⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 10, 13.

³⁵ Moreau-Vauthier 1906.

Gérôme's atelier was an antique statue, *Germanicus*.³⁶ Among the thirteen students, the majority coming from the studio of Signol, were Lecomte du Nouÿ, Leyendecker, Blanc, Rixens, Lehoux, and Pelissier whom his comrades appointed as the *massier* [a student in charge of an atelier³⁷].³⁸ Even in Gérôme's class the students did not just paint historical subjects. Another student in this class seems to have been Louis Jacquesson de la Chevreuse (1839-1903), whose amiable likeness Lecomte du Nouÿ painted in 1864 (fig. 17; cat. 9). Apart from a dedication and signature by the author in the upper left corner, this portrait also bears the initials "JIG" in the lower left corner, indicating that Jean-Léon Gérôme countersigned the work in approval.³⁹ The 1864 Salon opened on May 1, and Lecomte du Nouÿ was again among the exhibitors. This time he acted a little more prudently, and rather than showing an ambitious history painting, he submitted portraits of the painter Adolphe Morin (1841-?), also a pupil of Gleyre, and Mme la baronne Morin (ca. 1864, whereabouts unknown; cat. 3 and 4). These works did not provide Lecomte du Nouÿ with the critical attention he was undoubtedly seeking, but an equally important reason to show portraits at the salon was to secure clients from among the immense number of visitors. Indeed, as a source of income, portraiture was to become an intrinsic part of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre.

Lecomte du Nouÿ was clearly not yet finished with his apprenticeship, and the period in which he studied under Gérôme turned out to be highly significant. Moreau-Vauthier described Gérôme as having addressed his first students in a firm yet amicable tone, stressing that they should work assiduously and scrupulously study nature by drawing, using color, and making oil sketches. One was never to start a picture unless one's craft had been completely and perfectly apprehended. This striving for the highest

³⁶ Haskel & Penny 1981, no. 42. The work is in the Musée du Louvre, but is also now mostly identified as Augustus. See also chapter II, p. 65 note 18.

³⁷ Lemaistre 1889, p. 12-13.

³⁸ Moreau-Vauthier 1906, p. 176: "Durant la première semaine de travail, le modèle, dans l'atelier Gérôme, fut un Antique, le *Germanicus*. Parmi les élèves, au nombre de treize, la plupart venus de l'atelier Signol, il y avait Lecomte du Nouÿ, Leyendecker, Blanc, Rixens, Lehoux et Pelissier que ses camarades nommèrent *massier*."

³⁹ One of Lecomte du Nouÿ's sketchbooks that is kept in Aurillac (inv. 82.13.352, p. 24, see appendix I) provides a rare description of an incident that he witnessed at some point in Gérôme's atelier. This text, on a page without any drawings, reads as follows: "Forain et Villeminot / Atelier Gérôme / Boulanger interim / porte monnaie de Diéterle / volé - Leirysky soupçonné / par Poilpor[...] pleure / et quitte l'atelier / Selon le modele declare / qu'on s'est trompé et disegne / Forain et Villeminot comme / les auteurs du vol. / Boulanger mis au courant / des faits a fait chaser / Forain de l'atelier."

standard was always integral to the student's conscience and search for truth.⁴⁰ Gérôme's advice defined the academic artist's quest for perfection and beauty, a concept known as the *beau idéal*. Only thorough training would enable the painter to convincingly re-create the perceptible world on canvas. Technical skill, however, was not an end in itself but only the tool with which the search for truth could be fulfilled. The goal was to depict *la belle nature*, the representation of natural forms in their purest and most beautiful manifestations. Montgailhard portrayed Lecomte du Nouÿ's early training with Gérôme in a flattering light. For two years in a row, the students of the rival ateliers singled out Lecomte du Nouÿ's work as the best by any of his class. An 1866 letter from the director of the École, the sculptor Eugène Guillaume (1822-1905), to Nieuwerkerke refers to Gérôme's enthusiasm for his pupil:

The young painter Lecomte du Nouÿ, a student from the atelier of Mr. Gérôme and recipient of a medal at the exhibition of the Champs Elysées, has been strongly recommended to me by his professor to solicit from you an encouragement that will permit him to continue his studies. Mr. Gérôme considers him one of the students from his atelier on which he has the highest hopes for the future. In compliance with the wish from one of our best professors, I therefore ask you kindly, in your efforts towards our young artists, to include Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ among those who merit your favors.⁴¹

In 1868, Gérôme himself wrote to Nieuwerkerke on behalf of his pupil, asking if it would be possible to re-hang a still life by Jean Siméon Chardin (1699-1779) in the Louvre, as Lecomte du Nouÿ had been commissioned to copy it, and the work was hanging too high. Gérôme assured his superior that Lecomte du Nouÿ was already a

⁴⁰ Moreau-Vauthier 1906, p. 176-77: "Il prononça une petite causerie d'ouverture qui, sur un ton cassant mais que l'on sentait amical, recommanda le travail assidu et persévérant, l'étude scrupuleuse de la nature par le dessin avant tout, par la couleur, par la composition des esquisses, pour n'arriver au tableau qu'après l'acquisition d'un métier aussi complet, aussi parfait que possible, et qui devait toujours s'entretenir dans la conscience et la recherche de la vérité."

⁴¹ Paris, Archives Nationales, Microfilm AJ52 264: 1321 Lecomte Dunouy 298 / Paris le 11 Juin 1866 / Monsieur Le Surintendant / Le jeune peintre Lecomte Dunouy, élève de l'atelier de M. Gérôme, et qui vient d'obtenir une médaille à l'exposition des Champs Elysées, m'est bien vivement recommandé par son professeur afin que je sollicite auprès de vous un encouragement qui lui permette de continuer ses études. M. Gérôme le considère comme l'un des élèves de son atelier sur lesquels il peut fonder le plus d'espérances pour l'avenir. Selon [?] les vœux de l'un de nos habiles professeurs je viens donc vous prier de vouloir bien, dans votre sollicitude pour nos jeunes artistes, mettre Mr. Lecomte au nombre de ceux qui méritent vos faveurs. / Veuillez agréer Monsieur le Surintendant / l'expression des sentiments distingués / avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être / Votre très humble serviteur / Le Directeur de l'école de Beaux-arts / Membre de l'Institut / Monsieur Le Sénateur / Surintendant des Beaux-arts.

worthy painter, but the request was not granted.⁴² These letters on behalf of the young artist imply that his teachers thought he had a promising future, but also that he was not a man of independent means and that he needed commissions in order to make a living.

Gérôme also chose several of Lecomte du Nouÿ's drawings to be reproduced in lithographic form for the so-called *cours de dessin* (or *cours Goupil*, named after the dealer/publisher Goupil & Cie), a widely disseminated drawing course for aspiring students comprising 197 lithographs by Charles Bargue (1826/7-83).⁴³ Montgailhard mentioned seven drawings (cat. 16) after the antique that were then lithographed by Bargue, as well as a drawing called *L'Antonello de Messine* (ca. 1865; cat. 17). The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris holds three plates from the *cours de dessin* with annotations in Lecomte du Nouÿ's handwriting, identifying them as his own contribution to the project. These belong to the course's first volume, which factures images after sculptures and plaster casts; they show a horse's head from the west pediment of the Parthenon (fig. 18),⁴⁴ the reclining figure of Theseus from the Parthenon (fig. 19), and the Belvedere Torso (fig. 20). The first annotation reads: "*Lithographié par Bargue d'après mon dessin. Lecomte du Nouÿ*," (Lithograph by Bargue after my design, Lecomte du Nouÿ) while the other two are simply signed "*Lecomte du Nouÿ*."⁴⁵ It is possible, as Montgailhard suggested, that the artist provided four more drawings after plaster casts. There is no lithograph after a work by Antonello da Messina in the second volume of the

⁴² Paris, Archives du Louvre (P18, 1868 31 Octobre), Letter from Gérôme to the Surintendant des Beaux Arts, Paris, Oct. 31, 1868: "Monsieur le Surintendant. J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser une requête pour un de mes élèves – le jeune homme a la commande d'un tableau de Chardin à copier – (c'est une nature morte de Chardin inscrite au livret sous le no 97). Il est très haut placé et je viens vous demander s'il ne serait pas possible de le lui descendre afin qu'il peut faire le travail ce qui sans cela serait impracticable. Celui pour qui je vous fais cette demande est M. Lecomte-Dunouy qui a du talent et qui déjà a plusieurs reprises a exposé des tableaux qui ont eu un succès mérité. Veuillez agréer Mr le Comte l'assurance de mon dévouement, J.L. Gérôme." The response in pencil on the same document, however, was negative: "j'ai le regret de lui dire que la dessus le règlement est formel et pour le grand danger qui en résulterait pour les tableaux [in pen: fait 2 Nov. 1868]."

⁴³ Montgailhard 1906, p. 14. See also, Ackerman, "The Bargue-Gérôme *Cours de dessin*: Goupil & Cie attacks a national problem," in: *Gérôme & Goupil* 2000, p. 55-66. The complete *Cours de Dessin* has been republished in Ackerman 2003.

⁴⁴ See also a red chalk drawing of a horse's head, Aurillac: 82.13.4, see appendix I.

⁴⁵ BN: DC 309, II, p. 110-112. See also BN: DC 309, II, p. 107-109, which contain three plates after drawings by Lecomte du Nouÿ for another drawing course: 1) (plate no. 2) female head, "étude pour la Chapelle St Vincent de Paul." In cartouche on plate: Les Maitres Contemporains / Lith. par F. Grellet / Publié et Imprimé par / Alp. Delarue Fils / 68, Rue J.J. Rousseau / Paris. 2) (plate no. 1) A head of a baby and a woman's head on one plate, details from the same painting. 3) (plate no. 72) two men's faces (one with laurel wreath) on one plate, inscribed: "d'après Lecomte-du-Nouÿ," no further reference.

cours de dessin, which contains copies after drawings by old and contemporary masters, but perhaps the drawing was ultimately not selected, or the subject was incorrectly identified.

For Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Greek Sentinel* (*La sentinelle grecque*, 1865; fig. 69; cat. 11), a painting which was shown at the Salon of 1865, the artist used a passage from Aeschylus's tragedy *Oresteia* (458 BC). The picture depicts a watchman standing under a starry sky on a rooftop, beside a tripod containing a fire. The artist placed a cartouche around the painting—apparently an unusual practice—with the text that had inspired him: "All year round, like a dog I guard, atop the palace of the Atreidae, facing the assembly of the stars of the night."⁴⁶ This small, generally well-received⁴⁷ work can be regarded as Lecomte du Nouÿ's first *néo-grec* painting (a term explored in chapter two) When Gonzague Privat⁴⁸ reviewed Lecomte du Nouÿ's career in 1877, he defined this picture as the artist's breakthrough work.⁴⁹

The First Journey to Egypt

After the Salon of 1865, Gérôme encouraged Lecomte du Nouÿ to visit Egypt with the painter Félix Clément (1826-88). Clément had first traveled there in November of 1862 to "study types and nature in this eminently picturesque country."⁵⁰ Prince Halim Pacha eventually commissioned several projects from Clément, notably works for his palace at Choubrah. Clément stayed in Egypt until 1868, though he returned to France several times. In 1865, for example, he came home to exhibit, among other works, his large painting *The Hunt for Gazelle in the Desert of Gatha by Prince Halim* (Istanbul, former residence of Halim Pacha),⁵¹ and when he returned to Egypt, Lecomte du Nouÿ

⁴⁶ Montgailhard 1906, p. 14-15.

⁴⁷ Montgailhard 1906, p. 16, claims that the work was mentioned in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* soon after the Salon had opened, yet I have found no mention of the picture in the journal's 1865 Salon review.

⁴⁸ For his earlier negative approach towards *néo-grec* art, see chapter II, note 41. On Privat, see chapter II, note 42.

⁴⁹ Privat 1877; for text see appendix V. See also chapter II p. 76.

⁵⁰ Moulin 1996, p. 12.

⁵¹ Reproduced in Moulin 1996, p. 12, 21.

accompanied him.⁵² For Clément, the Egyptian adventure ultimately turned sour, as the prince suffered financial reversals and failed to reimburse him for the extensive investments of time and materials he had already made. But for Lecomte du Nouÿ, now twenty-three, this first of many journeys abroad provided him with direct experience of a country he had learned about only secondhand, in Gautier's novel *Le roman de la momie*, for example. His representations of subjects drawn from Greco-Roman history and mythology, however, continued to play a role in his oeuvre, co-existing with his Orientalist themes. For example, while in Egypt, Lecomte du Nouÿ started a sketch for the classical *The Invocation to Neptune* (L'invocation de Neptune, 1866; fig. 70; cat. 26) there as well, which he then submitted to the 1866 Salon.⁵³ This picture, based on the Homeric hymns, allowed the artist to surpass his success with *The Greek Sentinel*, bringing him his first gold medal, an award that freed him from having to submit all his future entries for the Salon jury's consideration. Lecomte du Nouÿ's work was almost continuously shown at the salon until his death in 1923.

For the 1867 Salon, Lecomte du Nouÿ prepared two pictures that reflect his exploration of new artistic areas. From small *néo-grec* works he moved on to a biblical scene with life-size figures, *Job and his Friends* (Job et ses amis, 1867; fig. 108; cat. 30), thus presenting himself as a history painter. *The Dancing Fellah Woman* (La danseuse Fellah, 1867; fig. 21; cat. 31), on the other hand, is one of his first paintings inspired by his journey to Egypt.⁵⁴ The salon catalogue explains that the scene takes place in Kaphra, in Lower Egypt. In paying close attention to the local architecture, costume, and landscape, the artist creates the impression that he had actually witnessed this tantalizing campfire scene. Whether an Egyptian woman would have actually danced naked before a group of men in such a setting remains unclear, and the work should perhaps be assigned to the abundant category of Orientalist erotic fantasies intended for a western audience. On the other hand, one of Lecomte du Nouÿ's travel sketchbooks containing many

⁵² I would like to thank Hélène Moulin, conservateur du musée de Valence, for providing me information concerning the existence of a portrait by Lecomte du Nouÿ of Clément. The portrait was purchased in 1954 by the city of Donzère, yet its present location is unknown; see cat. 357.

⁵³ Montgailhard 1906, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 114-5, lists under the year 1866 two works called [Fr. Title] *A Gatekeeper in Cairo* (cat. 25), and [Fr. Title] *Pastophorus, a begging priest in ancient Egypt* (cat. 27), which may be his first easel pictures inspired by Egypt. The artist also made many drawings and oil sketches on his trips, such as a view of the Sphinx and Great Pyramids, dated 1865, see cats. 21-24.

Egyptian scenes includes a small scribble-like drawing of a female dancer wearing only a belt on her hip, very similar to a finished drawing of the same subject (*An Almek*; cat. 32).⁵⁵ The sketchbook drawing is annotated “*entièrement nue*” (completely naked), implying that the artist indeed witnessed this performance. Whether *The Dancing Fella Woman* represents reality is ultimately less important than the fact that it sets the tone for a whole group of later paintings by Lecomte du Nouÿ that relate in some way to the harem, all discussed in chapter two.

As both of the 1867 Salon entries are only known from black-and-white reproductions, it is difficult to assess them properly, but the critical response was generally negative. Only Privat, a personal friend of the artist, commented that *Job* evinced natural grandeur, and that *The Dancing Fella Woman* introduced grace to Lecomte du Nouÿ’s oeuvre.⁵⁶ The influential critic, art historian, and cultural administrator Paul Mantz reviewed both works harshly in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*.⁵⁷ After describing *Job* as boring, he argued that the painter treated all his subjects similarly, and that his talent lacked a certain emotion.⁵⁸ He also found the Orientalist picture merely a weaker repetition of Gérôme’s *The Almek* of 1863 (fig. 22) and sniped that Lecomte du Nouÿ’s dancer did not dance. Indeed, the almost straight contours formed by the woman’s proper left leg and upper body make her appear somewhat static. On the other hand, Lecomte du Nouÿ was more successful in suggesting a rapport between the dancer and her audience than Gérôme had been in *The Almek*. The lecherous grin and chuckles of the men at left leave no doubt about their thoughts.

Even though *Job and his Friends* hung in the salon’s gallery of honor —probably because of the gold medal the artist was awarded the previous year —Lecomte du Nouÿ had trouble finding a buyer for this picture.⁵⁹ This may have stemmed from the work’s aesthetic deficiencies, given its fairly static composition, but Privat blamed its large size

⁵⁵ Aurillac: 82.13.364, p. 34; see appendix I, and cat. 32.

⁵⁶ Privat 1877, see appendix V.

⁵⁷ Mantz 1867, p. 519-20; on Mantz, see Bouillon 1990.

⁵⁸ For other reviews of the work see cat. 30. Montgailhard 1906, p. 17 added that Lecomte du Nouÿ was inspired by Hippolyte Flandrin’s [Fr. Title] *Dante and Virgil in Hell* (1834-35, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts), yet, even he had to admit that Lecomte du Nouÿ’s picture did not “manifest any great personality.”

⁵⁹ He must have finally given it to his friend the painter Charles Toché, with whom he traveled to Venice in 1875. Montgailhard lists the work as being in Toché’s possession in his catalogue of works (cat. 30). See also the anecdote about this work in Privat 1877, appendix V.

and biblical subject, predicting that Lecomte du Nouÿ would soon return to smaller pictures such as *The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian* (*La folie d'Ajax le Télamonien*, 1868; cat. 43). Smaller works were in much greater demand among private collectors, and Privat claimed that his friend would henceforth embark upon large-scale projects only if they were commissioned, as were two altarpieces he was asked to paint for l'Église de la Sainte-Trinité in Paris (figs. 113 and 114). Yet as an artist rooted in the tradition of academic history painting, Lecomte du Nouÿ always yearned to create works of monumental proportions, and he made (and planned) several additional large-scale paintings that had not been commissioned. Selling them would always be difficult, and he often donated them to museums, a strategy that sustained the tradition of grand academic painting, not to mention his own reputation, at least from his point of view.

In 1869, Lecomte du Nouÿ received another award for his two salon entries, an allegory entitled *Love that Goes, Love that Remains* (*L'amour qui passe, l'amour qui reste*, 1869; fig. 23; cat. 48). This work—inspired by a love affair turned sour—depicts a female nude carried away by cupids, while a heartbroken young man is consoled by his mother and faithful dog. The critic, art administrator, and Louvre curator Georges Lafenestre praised the contrast between the cold-blooded Venus flying off to new adventures and the tender mother with her noble profile.⁶⁰ Elie Roy hailed Lecomte du Nouÿ as one of the great *néo-grec* painters and described this picture as an eternal poem of human deceptions.⁶¹ Montgailhard suggested that the work might have been inspired by Gleyre's *The Evening* (fig. 9), given the sense of melancholy, chagrin, and sentimental restlessness shared by both works.⁶²

Privat, however, abandoned his support for the artist, calling the painting “a sentimental bourgeois success, a mother's success.” Even Gérôme reportedly told his student: “It's well done, but it is not to be repeated.”⁶³ Jean Marie Marius Chaumelin was ruthless in his criticism of the work, observing that the female figure, whom he dubbed “Calypso,” was too ugly to be regretted by the young man.⁶⁴ The distinguished man of

⁶⁰ Lafenestre 1881, p. 103-4; for French text see cat. 48. On Lafenestre, see Bouillon 1990.

⁶¹ Roy 1869 (II), p. 377-78; for French text see cat. 48.

⁶² Montgailhard 1906, p. 18.

⁶³ Privat 1877, see appendix V; and Gérôme cited in Montgailhard 1906, p. 18.

⁶⁴ Chaumelin 1873, p. 228, 231, 302; for French text see cat. 48. A brief biography of Jean Marie Marius Chaumelin appears in Sloane 1951.

letters Jean Dolent (the pseudonym of Charles Antoine Fournier) argued, on the other hand, that the surprise was not that the woman had left the young man, but that she had loved him in the first place!⁶⁵ The future minister of fine arts, Paul Pierre Casimir Périer, who one year earlier had praised Lecomte du Nouÿ's *Ajax* effusively,⁶⁶ generally approved of the subject but suggested that Lecomte du Nouÿ had failed in its execution. He objected to the workmanlike "academic" handling of the woman, which rendered the man's sorrow unconvincing. In short, according to his critics, Lecomte du Nouÿ should have demonstrated here either more emotion or less ambition.

Although this picture contributed to Lecomte du Nouÿ's second gold medal, he did indeed paint the woman's head slightly too big for her body. One wonders, therefore, if the untraced variant he made of this subject in 1876 resolved some of his contemporaries' criticisms.⁶⁷ In more general terms, the composition of the flying female in *Love that Goes, Love that Remains* marks a transition between the earthbound representation of Francesca da Rimini in 1863 (fig. 13) and the more elusive but convincingly rendered chimerical woman in *The Dream of a Eunuch* of 1874 (fig. 87).

Lecomte du Nouÿ's other submission to the 1869 Salon was a woman's portrait, listed in the catalogue as "Portrait de M^{lle} E. T..." (1869; fig. 24; cat. 49). In 1906, Montgailhard recorded the subject of the portrait as "M^{me} Églantine Pujol,"⁶⁸ a change reflecting the sitter's new marital status. It is not clear whether she commissioned this picture or the artist offered to paint her in the hope of attracting new sitters at the salon, and since the artist himself donated the painting only five years later to the museum in Lille, she may never have owned it. Chaumelin criticized this portrait severely, as he had *Love that Goes, Love that Remains*, arguing that while it placed Lecomte du Nouÿ in the

⁶⁵ Dolent 1869, p. 66; for French text see cat. 48. On Dolent, see Bouillon 1990.

⁶⁶ Périer 1869, p. 116-118; for French text see cat. 48. His review of *Ajax* (see chapter II, note 55) was published under the name Paul Pierre (and there seem to be other variants of his name as well), also the name given for the author on the title page of this 1869 publication. He was briefly *Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux Arts*, from July 1, 1894- Jan. 26, 1895.

⁶⁷ Montgailhard lists a "variation" of this composition under the year 1876, see cat. 112, without much further elaboration. From Samuel P. Avery's diaries we know that he acquired a reduction of this work in 1872. Fidell Beaufort 1979, p. 104; see note 85 below for text. As Montgailhard is known to have misplaced other works chronologically in his catalogue, it is not clear whether this is the same work, or whether there were two more pictures with this title.

⁶⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 116.

portrait tradition of Ingres and Hippolyte Flandrin (1809-64), it was a banal and crude abstraction of life, as cold as a grisaille.⁶⁹

Flandrin's portrait of his wife (fig. 25), and even more so the two portraits of Mme Moitessier by Ingres (figs. 26 and 27) had indeed set crucial parameters for Lecomte du Nouÿ.⁷⁰ The portrait of Mme Églantine Pujol is more or less a synthesis of the two representations of Mme Moitessier, whom Ingres first depicted standing in a dark dress, one arm lowered alongside her body. In his second portrait of her, she is seated and wearing a vivid floral dress, holding one hand against her head with her fingers spread in a seemingly impossible way. Their elegant rendering and exquisite detail are what make both portraits supreme manifestations of Second Empire aristocracy. Lecomte du Nouÿ obviously aimed for a similar effect, combining Ingres's poses into a new composition, but Chaumelin was not entirely wrong in his criticism. Ingres can occasionally be faulted for compositional inconsistencies and anatomical oddities, but he always achieves a radiance and overall luxurious effect that compensates for such flaws. Lecomte du Nouÿ's technique and palette, which he had acquired mostly from Gérôme, prevented him from obtaining a similar brilliance, leading Chaumelin to compare it to a dull grisaille. Ingres used almost the same range of colors in his standing portrait of Mme Moitessier, yet her radiant skin tone, the flowers in her hair, the abundant jewelry, and the fleeting glimpse of a stark white lace handkerchief provide the accents necessary to bring the canvas to life. Lecomte du Nouÿ ultimately leaned more towards Gérôme, who himself clearly looked to Ingres for guidance in his own portraits. Whether he did it consciously or not, Lecomte du Nouÿ's portrait of Mme Pujol has a great kinship in tonality and execution with Gérôme's portrait of Mlle Durand of 1853 (fig. 28).⁷¹ On the other hand, Chaumelin's dismissal of the portrait was an extreme reaction to a work that has its merits. *Mme Églantine Pujol* epitomizes the characterization of Lecomte du

⁶⁹ Chaumelin 1873, p. 231, 329; see cat. 49. Périer 1869, p. 92; see cat. 49.

⁷⁰ That Lecomte du Nouÿ admired Ingres's work is once more demonstrated by two reproductions of Ingres's *Joan of Arc* (1851-54, Paris, Musée du Louvre; repr. in Tinterow and Conisbee 1999, fig. 215) and the portrait of Baronne James de Rothschild, née Betty von Rothschild (1848, Private collection; repr. in Tinterow and Conisbee 1999, cat. 132) that can be seen hanging in a photograph of Lecomte du Nouÿ's studio, beneath his own large *The God and the Mortal Woman* (cat. 232), see fig. 6. For further information on the portraits of Mme Moitessier, see Tinterow and Conisbee 1999, cat. 133, 134.

⁷¹ See also Gérôme's *Portrait of a Woman*, 1851, oil on canvas, 92.5 x 73.5 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago. See, Ackerman 2000, cat. no. 38, repr. p. 32.

Nouÿ's art as "*Ingres faisant du Gérôme*" (Ingres painting like Gérôme), which Bouchot did not interpret as in any way derogatory.⁷² Although Lecomte du Nouÿ's portrait may not have equaled the technical wizardry of Ingres, the salon jury awarded him his second gold medal.

At the Salon of 1870, the artist presented *The Charmer* (*Le charmeur*, 1870; fig. 29; cat. 54), a painting that Montgailhard says originated because an unidentified student of Courbet insisted that Lecomte du Nouÿ should paint a nude (*un morceau*).⁷³ For this unnamed advocate of realism, the invention, idealization, compositional complexity, and harmony of a picture would not have been of primary importance; rather, one simply had to "observe nature and paint."⁷⁴ Lecomte du Nouÿ accepted the challenge, but the meticulously finished result looks more like an embellished *académie* (a life study of the male nude that focuses on composition and ideal proportions) than an informal rendition of the body. His attempt to merely "observe nature" remains deeply indebted to his academic training: although the main compositional element is a young man in a nondescript forest, the painting still contains such customary references to antiquity as a double flute, an animal skin, and a staff.

Montgailhard cited a sculpture by Emmanuel Fremiet (1824-1910), surely the popular marble *Pan and the Bears* (1867; fig. 30), which depicts the god as a boy with human torso and goat legs who plays with two little bears,⁷⁵ as the direct inspiration for this picture. Several other compositions also come to mind, among them paintings by Lecomte du Nouÿ's friend Clément, who painted *A Boy Emptying a Bird's Nest* (1861, location unknown),⁷⁶ and by his former teacher Gleyre, *Minerva and the Graces* (1866; fig. 31), and its closely related *The Temptress* (*La Charmeuse*, 1868, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel).⁷⁷ Clément's work depicts a nude boy sitting beside a nest of birds, while Gleyre's *The Temptress* shows a naked girl playing a double flute for the

⁷² Bouchot's preface in Montgailhard 1906, p. ix.

⁷³ Henri Boucher defined the term "un morceau" as such in his review of *The White Slave*, cited in Montgailhard 1906, p. 129; for French text see cat. 196.

⁷⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 19.

⁷⁵ Chevallot 1988-89, p. 157-58, repr.

⁷⁶ *Le dénicheur d'oiseaux*, reproduced in Moulin 1996, p. 11.

⁷⁷ Both works by Gleyre are reproduced and discussed in Hauptman 1996, II, cat. nos. 872, 914. *La charmeuse* only depicts one standing female seen from behind, playing the double flute. This exact same figure appears as one of the graces in *Minerva and the Graces* (fig. 31). See also note 27.

birds in a tree (the figure derives directly from Gleyre's Minerva composition of two years earlier). Countless variants on this theme existed, including Jules Élie Delaunay's (1828-91) *The Flute Lesson* (Salon of 1859, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes), in which a nude shepherd teaches another boy to play the flute.⁷⁸ These artworks, probably all known to Lecomte du Nouÿ, convey the image of an idyllic Arcadia and present the truly academic version of the idealized nude, expressing innocence and purity.

The critic Dubosc de Pesquidoux argued that *The Charmer* could be seen as a pendant to Gérôme's famous *The Cock Fight* (1846; fig. 32).⁷⁹ And this time around the critic Chaumelin mocked the birds in Lecomte du Nouÿ's picture as borrowed from a Black Forest clock. But Lecomte du Nouÿ was far from alone in taking up the subject of a *charmeur/charmeuse* at the 1870 Salon, and Chaumelin appreciated *charmeur*-pictures by other artists,⁸⁰ so he must have particularly disliked Lecomte du Nouÿ.

The Franco-Prussian War (1870-71)

In an attempt to restore his declining popularity, Napoleon III (1808-73) declared war against Prussia in July of 1870. This proved to be a serious miscalculation, and the French were forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty in May of 1871. In September of 1870, after Napoleon III had lost the battle of Sedan, his Second Empire, established in 1852, ceased to exist, and the Third Republic was proclaimed in 1871. In Paris, however, a group of revolutionaries formed the Commune, with Courbet as the leader of their Art Commission. Soon afterwards, the president of the new republic, Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877), sent troops from his Versailles headquarters to besiege the Commune-held city. In addition to the political and social consequences of these events—thousands of people lost their lives and the city of Paris suffered much destruction—the artistic community was deeply affected. Lecomte du Nouÿ, as well as such artists as Degas, Manet, and Renoir, enlisted to fight against the Prussians; Regnault died during the final battle, and others fled Paris. Gérôme, Monet, and Tissot, for example, escaped to London, where

⁷⁸ Another painting that relates is Jean Baptiste Poncet's (1827-1901) *The Young Flute Player* (*Jeune joueur de flûte*, 1861, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon, inv. B-402).

⁷⁹ Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24; for French text see cat. 64.

⁸⁰ Chaumelin 1873, p. 430; for French text see cat. 54.

they invigorated that city's cultural life. Not surprisingly, there was no salon in 1871, and commissions of art all but ceased, though that did not stop artists from expressing themselves.⁸¹

In this context, Lecomte du Nouÿ painted a view of a snow covered Paris street in the winter of 1871, noting on the reverse that the temperature was a miserable -21.5° Celsius (fig. 33; cat. 75) at the time. The work contrasts sharply with the charming view of the village of Mallevall, in the Loire region near Saint-Étienne, which he had painted just one year earlier (fig. 34; cat. 61), yet both works are typical of the informal oil sketches Lecomte du Nouÿ made in Paris and throughout his travels. It may have been on the journey to Mallevall, for example, that he painted a touchingly simple view of the snow-covered Alps (ca. 1870; fig. 35; cat. 62). But no matter how appealing, such pictures were merely pleasant diversions for an artist with grander ambitions. The Franco-Prussian War, for example, inspired Lecomte du Nouÿ to paint a political allegory entitled *The Besieged City of Paris, Rescued by English Assistance* (*Paris secouru par la bienfaisance anglaise*, cat. 68). The meaning of this untraced picture remains somewhat obscure, and it was probably created on the artist's own initiative. Beneath two herald angels holding an open book inscribed "1871" is a woman sitting on a throne, holding a scepter and a dove as a lion rests at her feet. The scene includes a naked corpse and many suffering people receiving alms in the lower foreground. The central figure in the right foreground is a woman supported by two figures, just below the French *tricolore*, who holds a palm frond and seems to be wearing a city crown, probably an allegory of the distressed city of Paris. In the center of the composition, another figure holds a banderole with the text DIEU ET MON DROI, beside a crest. Lecomte du Nouÿ himself may have benefited from the assistance France received from the British during the war, which may have inspired him to create the composition.⁸²

Montgailhard asserted that Lecomte du Nouÿ's professional dry spell broke when an unidentified American collector commissioned one work and bought two more, one titled *A Woman from Bethlehem praying on the Terrace of her House* (*Bethlemitaine*

⁸¹ For two recent studies on this subject see Milner 2000, and Clayson 2002.

⁸² See also Aurillac: 82.13.129, appendix I. In a similar context, Lawrence Alma Tadema, submitted *A Staircase* (1870, Dahesh Museum of Art, New York) to a London exhibition as a lottery prize, whose proceeds benefited French peasants who had suffered from the Franco-Prussian War. See, Diederer 2001, p. 26-27.

priant sur la terrasse de sa maison; possibly cat. 77).⁸³ This must have been George A. Lucas, the well-connected Paris-based agent who roamed Europe acquiring works of art for the great American collectors of the Gilded Age. His diary of 1874 contains several brief entries recording visits to Lecomte du Nouÿ, from whom he bought a picture of a “house top” for 2,000 francs, paid in two installments.⁸⁴ He acquired the work for Samuel P. Avery, also a dealer and eventually an important collector as well. *A Woman from Bethlehem praying on the Terrace of her House*, may match Lucas’s cryptic description of the “house top” painting, but Avery’s own diary sheds further light on the situation. Two years earlier, on July 2, 1872, he communicated with Lucas, who had indeed bought three pictures from Lecomte du Nouÿ, one depicting a female figure, most likely the woman from Bethlehem mentioned by Montgailhard.⁸⁵ This earlier date also supports the notion that Lucas’s purchase improved the artist’s fortunes soon after the war. The fact that Lucas and Avery, who had the power to make and break artists’ careers, bought and ordered paintings from Lecomte du Nouÿ confirms his status as a member of the artistic establishment.⁸⁶

A Woman from Bethlehem praying on the Terrace of her House, as well as a composition depicting two Christian women praying in Jerusalem, called *At the Tomb of the Virgin* (*Chrétiennes au tombeau de la vierge, Jérusalem*, 1871; fig. 124; cat. 63), raise the question of whether Lecomte du Nouÿ had recently visited the Holy Land. But though he did travel around that time, there is no proof that he actually visited the Middle East. In 1871, however, the Secrétaire des Beaux-Arts, Georges Lafenestre—one of the few critics who had written kindly about *Love that Goes, Love that Remains* (fig. 23; cat.

⁸³ Montgailhard 1906, p. 34. This picture is likely identical to *Christmas Night in Jerusalem* (*La nuit de Noël à Jérusalem*), cat. 77, which Montgailhard lists in his catalogue under the year 1872. See photo BN: DC 309, I, p. 23, it depicts a woman standing alone on a terrace.

⁸⁴ Randal 1970, II, p. 390: Monday, Feb. 23, 1874, “At Lecomte Dunouy & told him Avery would take [Baud] Bovy picture at 2000 fs”; p. 391: March 17, “At du Nouys”; March 21, “At Lecomte du Nouy”; p. 392: April 11, “At Lecomte Dunouy & paid him on acct 1000 fs picture house top”; p. 393: April 20, “At Lecomte Dunouy & pd him 1000 fs final pay’t on picture house top.”

⁸⁵ Fidell Beaufort 1979, p. 104: July 2, 1872 “Lucas called went to Lecomte du Noy [sic] engaged picture of 3 figs. Men at a church door – moonlight, snow on ground 21 x 25 for 2500. [probably cat. 82] one, female figure 14 x 21 for 1800. also a reduction of Love going and Love remain[in]g – Several figures – about 3 ft long – for 3500 f.”; p. 172, June 24, 1873: “to Lecomte de Nouy image girl ready – ordered The siesta on house top at Cairo about 15 x 24 for 2000 f.” [see also chapter II note 118]; p. 230, June 22, 1874: “called on Du Nouy” [This last work must be the one mentioned in Lucas’s diary, see note 84.]; p. 272, Paris, Aug. 28, 1874, “to Dunouy and paid for picture of artist on buoy at Venice 2000.” [see cat. 93].

⁸⁶ Apart from the diaries by Lucas and Avery themselves (Randal 1970 and Fidell Beaufort 1979), see also Haskell’s review of their editions, Haskell 1981, p. 243-244.

48)⁸⁷—asked Lecomte du Nouÿ to visit Venice to copy a picture by Vittore Carpaccio (1460/6-1525/6) for the newly created Musée des copies.⁸⁸ It is not clear exactly when Lecomte du Nouÿ traveled to Venice, but it must have been after December 4, 1871, when the commission was awarded, until as late as 1873, since there exist several Venetian oil sketches dated August 1873 (fig. 45; cat. nos. 91, 91a-c). In 1871 the Directeur des Beaux-Arts, Charles Blanc (1813-82), initiated the then already somewhat outdated concept of a Musée des copies and immediately commissioned a great number of copies after masterpieces located outside of Paris. The museum finally opened in the Palais des Champs-Élysées in April 1873, but in the wake of President Thiers's death one month later, Blanc lost his post, and the museum closed in January 1874. A selection of the best copies, including Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Departure of the Ambassadors*, after Carpaccio, (1873; fig. 36; cat. 90) was installed in the École des Beaux-Arts, where they remain today.⁸⁹

One of the last pictures Lecomte du Nouÿ made under the direct guidance of Gérôme, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (*Les porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*, 1871; fig. 82; cat. 64), turned out to be one of his greatest triumphs. He exhibited it, along with a work from 1870, *Demosthenes Practicing his Declamation* (*Demosthène s'exerce à la parole*, fig. 75; cat. 58), at the Salon of 1872, where it immediately became a "*succès d'attraction*."⁹⁰ It was awarded a second-class medal and the government purchased it for the Musée du Luxembourg, then the foremost repository of contemporary art in France at the time. Based on Théophile Gautier's *Le roman de la momie*, it depicts, in a direct and graphic manner, the moment after a pharaoh has killed three messengers for bringing him bad tidings. According to Charles Moreau-Vauthier, Lecomte du Nouÿ had started the work in 1864, but did not finish it until 1870. Moreau-Vauthier considered it one of those pictures that "everyone should know and admire."⁹¹

⁸⁷ See note 60.

⁸⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 35. On the Musée des copies, see: Vaisse 1976; and, Duro 1987, p. 298, no. 93 is the work commissioned from Lecomte du Nouÿ. The commission was issued on December 4, 1871, for FF 8000. Originally, *The Reception of the Ambassadors* was commissioned, but it turned out that Édouard-Théophile Blanchard (1844-1879) was already copying that work (no. 26). Lecomte du Nouÿ consequently painted another subject from the cycle, *Les ambassadeurs d'Angleterre prenant congé du roi*. For copies of the same painting by Gustave Moreau (1858, Musée Gustave Moreau, inv. 13612) see, Tadié 1999.

⁸⁹ On the current collection of copies, see Schwartz 2002.

⁹⁰ Claretie, *L'art français en 1872*; for French text see cat. 64.

⁹¹ Moreau-Vauthier 1900; for French text see cat. 64.

The prix de Rome Competition

During his student years, Lecomte du Nouÿ had made several vain attempts to win the *prix de Rome*. To compete for this highly coveted government scholarship, which funded a five-year stay at the Villa Medici in Rome, an artist had to be of French nationality, male, under thirty years of age, and unmarried. He had to have met the entrance requirements of the École des Beaux-Arts and ideally, he had the support of a well-known art teacher. The competition was grueling, involving several stages leading up to the final one, in which ten competitors were sequestered in studios for seventy-two days to complete their final history paintings (there were separate competitions for sculptors, architects, composers, and engravers). The only time Lecomte du Nouÿ was admitted to the final round of the competition was in 1871, when he received the *deuxième accessit* (honorable mention) for *Oedipus's Farewell from Jocasta* (*Les adieux d'Oedipe à Jocaste*, 1871; fig. 37; cat. 67). Although Montgailhard erred in stating that the artist was awarded this honor in 1872 (he probably confused Lecomte du Nouÿ's attempt to win the 1871 *prix de Rome* with the medal for *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* one year later), he did provide a look behind the scenes of this important contest. The list of Lecomte du Nouÿ's competitors conveys an idea of the "formidable" competition he faced: Urbain Bourgeois (?), Théobald Chartran (1849-1907), Léon-François Comerre (1850-1916), Édouard Dantan (1848-97), Gabriel Ferrier (1847-1914), (Oscar-Pierre?) Mathieu (?), Aimé Morot (1850-1913), Édouard Toudouze (1848-1907), and Édouard Vimont (1846-1930). Though none of these artists are familiar today, Montgailhard claimed: "No year has ever been more abundant with future great painters for this famous concours."⁹² Montgailhard may have been simply assuaging his friend Lecomte du Nouÿ with this statement, but it also demonstrates how many nineteenth-century academic artists are completely unknown today.

Montgailhard also explained how Lecomte du Nouÿ went about his submission to the *prix de Rome*. That year's subject, of Oedipus's farewell to his dead mother, Jocasta, seem to have pleased the artist. The composition and execution went fairly easily, and after only six weeks he had completed the picture. However, then doubt set in, and he

⁹² Montgailhard 1906, p. 23. The 1872 subject for the *prix de Rome* was *Une scène du déluge* (A Flood Scene), and the first prize went to Gabriel Ferrier (1847-1914).

began to work on a new canvas. He submitted both pictures to the jury, but the jurors made him choose only one for submission. Lecomte du Nouÿ chose his second version, which prompted the director of the École, the sculptor Eugène Guillaume (1822-1905), to observe that the first would have won him the prize that Toudouze ultimately received.⁹³ Nonetheless, his effort was recognized when the government bought a picture for the Musée d'Arras, a work that was also shown at the Exposition Universelle of 1878, but that was destroyed in a fire in 1915. Its final composition is known only through a black-and-white photograph, which shows Oedipus kneeling beside the corpse of his mother, Jocasta, her face expressionless (fig. 37). His daughter Antigone, who has cut her hair as a sign of mourning, accompanies him and tenderly touches her father's shoulder.

It seems that the government ultimately bought Lecomte de Nouÿ's first version: a student traditionally made a preparatory oil sketch of his composition before beginning the final canvas that would be judged. To force them to stick to their original composition, students were required to make a tracing of the sketch, which would be approved by the professor and remain with the École. Lecomte du Nouÿ's tracing is still in the École's collection, and it shows a composition very similar to that in the photograph of the painting acquired for Arras (fig. 38).

Lecomte du Nouÿ surely regretted his failure to win the prize, a sentiment presumably addressed in a undated later sketch titled *The 41st Seat* (*Le 41^e fauteuil*).⁹⁴ The title refers to the fact that a maximum of forty individuals were elected to the Académie française, and the sketch shows a group of famous writers who had never been nominated standing outside the Académie's distinctive domed building. Lecomte du Nouÿ clearly identified with their exclusion from the highest level of state-recognized stardom. But despite his failure to receive the *prix de Rome* he had, by the age of thirty, become a fully-fledged artist ready to leave Gérôme's atelier and the École des Beaux-Arts.

⁹³ See also Privat 1877, appendix V.

⁹⁴ Aurillac: 82.13.201; see appendix I. The artist eventually reused this composition for *The Philosopher*, cat. 321.

III. THE MATURE ARTIST

The period from 1861 through 1872, when Lecomte du Nouÿ studied with various teachers, constituted his most formative phase. Virtually all of the artistic themes he explored then would remain in his repertoire, and he would treat them in a similar fashion for the rest of his career. He continued to paint portraits, subjects derived from the Bible, classical and contemporary literature, and compositions generated by his many travels. In addition, however, he also tried his hand at sculpture.

In 1873, Lecomte du Nouÿ received a commission from the city of Paris to paint altarpieces for l'Eglise de la Sainte-Trinité. He ultimately painted scenes showing *Saint Vincent de Paul Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith* (1876, fig. 113; cat. 111) and *Saint Vincent de Paul Helping the Inhabitants of Lorraine after the War of 1637* (1879, fig. 114; cat. 139). The latter also commented on contemporary events, alluding to the Prussian occupation of Lorraine since 1870. Lecomte du Nouÿ received the Légion d'Honneur in 1876 for the first altarpiece.

But he made a number of other paintings before presenting these altarpieces at the salon (he showed the first in 1876, the second in 1879). At the Salon of 1873 Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited what appears to be a charming genre scene in an Oriental city (1873, fig. 39; cat. 84); a pencil sketch with the same composition can be found in one of his travel books.⁹⁵ The title of the painting, *The Philosopher without Knowing It* (*Le Philosophe sans le savoir*), however, seems to define it as an allegorical scene, and suggests a literary source, perhaps a Middle Eastern fable. A young nude man drinks from a fountain in an Oriental city, while a woman and an old man observe him. As in *The Charmer* (fig. 29), the boy's nudity as well as the drinking water should probably be read as symbols of purity.⁹⁶ The critic Jules Claretie found the picture too dry and not coloristic enough for a good Orientalist work, and for once he found Lecomte du Nouÿ too close to Signol, rather than to Gérôme and Gleyre.⁹⁷ This lackluster assessment, however, did not prevent Elizabeth Gardner (1837-1922), the wife of Bouguereau and herself an accomplished

⁹⁵ Aurillac: 82.13.361, p. 53, see appendix I.

⁹⁶ There is no clear indication that the painting's title refers to the famous play by Michel-Jean Sedaine (1719-97) of the same title, which was first performed at the Comédie-Française in 1765.

⁹⁷ Claretie 1876, p. 109; for text see cat. 84. On Claretie, see Bouillon 1990.

painter, to acquire the painting in 1873 for the collection of Jonas and Susan Clark in Williamstown, Massachusetts.⁹⁸

At the Salon of 1874, Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited two rather different pictures. The catalogue listed one as *I Macellaj* [sic] (*les bouchers*) *de Venise (Souvenir de Voyage de 1873)* (The Butchers of Venice, Souvenir of a Voyage from 1873, 1874; fig. 40; cat. 101). Both the picture's subtitle and a pencil drawing in one of his travel sketchbooks imply that this composition was inspired by a trip to Venice, where he would have seen butchers transporting large slabs of meat on a gondola.⁹⁹ Yet, with this painting, Lecomte du Nouÿ also seems to have made an implicit reference to Gérôme's enormously famous *The Prisoner* (1861; fig. 41), as well as to his own *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82). Gérôme's painting shows a manacled prisoner lying in a small rowboat being transported over the Nile. It illustrates the fateful story of Jaafar El Barnekee, Vizier to the Caliph of Baghdad, Haroun Er Rasheed, who had ordered Jaafar to arrest the murderer of a young woman within a three-day period. Having failed in this mission, the Vizier himself became the victim of the despot whom he had so faithfully served. He is being rowed across the Tigris (even though the Temple of Luxor on the Nile appears in the background of Gérôme's painting) to his own execution, at which forty of his kinsmen will lose their lives as well.¹⁰⁰ Gérôme exhibited *The Prisoner* at the Paris Salon of 1863, the very year of Lecomte du Nouÿ's salon debut, and the painting was immediately seen as one of his masterpieces. Furthermore, Lecomte du Nouÿ was also commissioned to paint a copy of his teacher's painting in 1871 (cat.76).¹⁰¹

Although the settings of Gérôme's Oriental scene and Lecomte du Nouÿ's butchers rowing through foggy Venice are quite different, they clearly share a visual heritage. Lecomte du Nouÿ's boat is not a typical gondola, and his highly stylized integration of the picture's date and his own signature into the rear of the decorated vessel, gives it an Egyptian flavor. Further, the seated butcher who stares blankly at the slabs of meat while resting his head in his left hand, is reminiscent of the pharaoh in

⁹⁸ I would like to thank Bonnie Grad, Professor of Art History, Clark University, Worcester, MA, for providing me with information about this painting. She wrote an unpublished catalogue of the Clark paintings that are deposited at the Worcester Art Museum.

⁹⁹ One of the travel sketchbooks kept in Aurillac: 82.13.361, p. 2, contains a drawing with a very similar composition, and strongly suggests he witnessed this scene in Venice.

¹⁰⁰ Strahan 1881, n. p., text to the plate of *The Prisoner*.

¹⁰¹ See cat. 76 for a letter by Gérôme regarding this copy.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*, who overlooks an ancient city, with three corpses beside him. Like Gérôme's painting, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* departs from the customary notion of barbarism in the Orient, a topic that will be further discussed in chapter two. Lecomte du Nouÿ must have intended his Venetian butchers as a personal commentary on these two successful pictures, which avid salon visitors would certainly have recognized. Indeed, Claretie noted that the work brought him some success.¹⁰²

Lecomte du Nouÿ's other picture at the 1874 Salon could be regarded as his own, decidedly more sugary, version of Caravaggio's *Amor vincit omnia* (Love Conquers All, 1601-02, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin). Its listing in the salon catalogue as *Eros (Imité d'une pierre antique)* suggests that the composition was inspired by an ancient gemstone (fig. 42; cat. 83). Indeed, the painting's main figure in profile can well be imagined to derive from such an object, but given the painting's larger than life format, their character could not differ more strongly. The work also conveys a far more extravagant atmosphere than Lecomte du Nouÿ's earlier representation of a nude boy, *The Charmer* (fig. 29). This cupid arches his bow while seated on a cloud overlooking an ancient Greek city on a bay, which is depicted innocuously in the lower right corner of the composition. Behind him appear fragments of the zodiac with the Greek words for Dioscuri and Taurus and their respective symbols, Gemini and Taurus. Before its appearance in Paris, *Eros* was shown at the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873, which might explain why the scroll uncoiling from the little putti illustrates the verb "to love" in German, French, Italian, and English. During its Paris showing critic Dubosc de Pesquidoux described the painting in these terms:

Eros by Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ is a beautiful pink-toned boy with lascivious eyes holding a bow and quiver. He is surrounded by little boys with butterfly wings who serve as messengers. Caskets abundantly filled with jewelry and pearls serve as his artillery, one far more effective than the terrible cannons by Krupp. Urns, garlands, and cooing doves on a pillar complete this picture in which the Greek traditions and the lessons of Mr. Gérôme mingle with memories of Boucher.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Claretie 1876, p. 272: for French text see cat. 101.

¹⁰³ Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1874, 87; for French text see cat. 83.

Apart from such generic references to Caravaggio and Boucher, *Eros* seems to refer most specifically to Édouard Toudouze's *Eros and Aphrodite* of 1872 (fig. 43).¹⁰⁴ Both works were presented to the public at the Salon of 1874 and they share a certain exuberance and fantastical atmosphere. Toudouze's painting features Aphrodite reclining on a fur-lined shell, pulled by giant blue butterflies whose bridles are held by a blindfolded Eros. It was to Toudouze that Lecomte du Nouÿ had lost the *prix de Rome* competition in 1871, and *Eros and Aphrodite* was the laureate's *envoi de Rome* of 1872. The works that *pensionnaires* (the resident students) at Rome's French Academy sent back to Paris to demonstrate their artistic progress were usually exhibited first at the École des Beaux-Arts. Lecomte du Nouÿ must have seen Toudouze's work there and he may have decided to create a painting of similar scale and character that would measure up to it, if not outdo it. Even though Lecomte du Nouÿ omitted the figure of Aphrodite, there are several similarities between the two paintings that seem too specific to be merely coincidental. Both pictures contain the vague outlines of an ancient coastal town at the bottom of the composition. The unusual butterfly wings Lecomte du Nouÿ gave to his putti must refer to the butterflies in Toudouze's picture, and the extravagant parrot wings of Lecomte du Nouÿ's Eros certainly upstage those of Toudouze's Cupid.

In photographs, Lecomte du Nouÿ's *Eros* (with its cooing doves and mischievous putti) may seem an overtly saccharine image, yet it is striking when seen in person. Lecomte du Nouÿ apparently wanted to prove that he could work on a large scale (something Gérôme hardly ever did) and that he could manipulate and apply paint without his accustomed smoothness and polish. Reproductions inadequately convey how certain areas of paint, especially the boy's parrot wings and the headband studded with roses, are built up in heavy impasto on the canvas. Surrounded by a massive frame, the picture exudes a formidable power.

Shortly after he painted *Eros*, the artist produced *The Dream of a Eunuch* (Un rêve d'eunuque, 1874; fig. 87; cat. 92), in which he treated the theme of love far less conventionally. The painting relates to a fascinating group of works depicting the eunuch Cosrou, a subject derived from Montesquieu's *Les lettres persanes* (The Persian Letters, 1721). These pictures, which reveal a great deal about Lecomte du Nouÿ's art, both

¹⁰⁴ On this painting, see Bonfait 2003, p. 357, 370-71, 559-60, cat. 198.

practically and intellectually, are discussed extensively in chapter two. More reminiscent of *Eros* is a much later composition that Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited at the Salon of 1891, *The God and the Mortal Woman* (Le dieu et la mortelle, fig. 6; cat. 230), as well as a related (possibly preparatory) pastel from 1889 bearing the inscription *Antiope - Jupiter* (fig. 44; cat. 223). In both works, a sensual, mortal woman embraces the immortal Jupiter in a scene that also depicts a putto carrying a flower and ring. The catalogue of the 1891 Salon provided the public with the following information: "*Le Dieu et la Mortelle*.

"Relevez-vous, jeune mortelle, / Vous lirez l'amour dans mes yeux." (*Philemon et Baucis. – Dédié au maître musicien Gounod.*) (*Fragment d'un triptyque sur l'Amour.*),"

confirming that Lecomte du Nouÿ intended this as part of a triptych on the theme of love.¹⁰⁵ The critic Véron interpreted this painting, which was dedicated by the artist to the famous composer Charles Gounod, as depicting the muse who implored divine inspiration.¹⁰⁶ Montgailhard, on the other hand, saw the woman as representing earth, and the god as transforming everything he touches.¹⁰⁷ For this composition, Lecomte du Nouÿ had obviously be inspired by Ingres's famous *Jupiter and Thétis* (1811, Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence), once more placing himself in the lineage of that great master.

Although he had visited Venice before, that city would represent a recurring theme in Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre after 1874. In addition to the historicized scene of butchers in a gondola mentioned earlier (fig. 40), the works inspired by this singular city ranged from charming informal sketches (fig. 45; cat. 91c) to finished easel paintings. Lecomte du Nouÿ returned to Venice in 1875 for about ten months, accompanied by the painter Charles Toché (1851-1916).¹⁰⁸ Lecomte du Nouÿ's infatuation with the city culminated in a large triptych that he exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français of 1910

¹⁰⁵ The God and the Mortal Woman. "Raise yourself, mortal girl, / You will read the love in my eyes." (Philemon and Baucis. Dedicated to the master musician Gounod.) (Fragment of a triptych on love.) *Philemon and Baucis*, given as the painting's source in the Salon catalogue, is a story by Ovid. Philemon, an old man, and Baucis, his wife, entertained Zeus and Hermes in disguise as hospitably as their poverty would allow, after the gods had been repulsed by the rich. For this Philemon and Baucis were saved from a deluge, and their dwelling was transformed into a temple of which they were made the first priest and priestess. They were also granted their request to die at the same time, and were then turned into trees whose boughs intertwined.

¹⁰⁶ For the French text see cat. 230.

¹⁰⁷ Montgailhard 1906, p. 77, repr. before p. 97.

¹⁰⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 45-46, mentions that they met Manet in Venice. As Manet was there only in October 1875, Lecomte du Nouÿ's trip must have occurred that same year. On this encounter with Manet, see also chapter II, part V, *Lecomte du Nouÿ: an Assessment*.

as *Venise* (ca. 1910; cat. 319). In a photograph of Lecomte du Nouÿ's studio, this work can be seen hanging in an elaborate Neo-Renaissance frame (fig. 7). Its left wing depicts Alfred de Musset (1810-1857) and George Sand (1804-1876), who consummated their stormy love affair in Venice, while the central canvas shows a self-portrait of the artist at work with Venice in the background, beneath an apparition of three female figures in the sky. This element may have had its first trial in a small sketch showing the vague contours of a woman holding the moon, her head crowned by a star that glitters like a jewel (fig. 46). The right wing of the triptych portrays a woman holding a fan while standing behind a balustrade; this is presumably the artist's wife, though it is not clear which one.¹⁰⁹

On August 1, 1876, the artist married Valentine Peigné-Crémieux (1855-76), the granddaughter of the famous French Jewish statesman Isaac Adolphe Crémieux (1796-1880). In 1878, Lecomte du Nouÿ painted an imposing portrait of this influential politician (fig. 47; cat. 134), which seems heavily indebted to the marvelously penetrating likeness of Count James-Alexandre de Pourtalès Gorgier by Delaroche (1846; fig. 48). Holding a quill in his right hand, Crémieux rests his left arm upon a pile of official documents, one inscribed with the year 1870. After disappearing from public life in 1864, Crémieux played an important role in the government that replaced Napoleon III, and his name remains attached to the law of 1870 that gave French nationality to the Jews of Algeria. Crémieux fought passionately for things in which he believed, and the bronze statuette of the ancient orator Demosthenes stands appropriately on the mantle beside him.¹¹⁰ A staunch Republican, he also believed in the separation of Church and State, free and compulsory basic education, the dissolution of the Assembly of Versailles, and a general amnesty for those condemned for their involvement in the Paris Commune.¹¹¹

Lecomte du Nouÿ's marriage to Valentine Peigné-Crémieux and his consequent association with her prominent family may have influenced his frequent portrayal of Jews during later trips to North Africa and the Middle East. Unfortunately, their life together

¹⁰⁹ The artist's autograph inscription "Madame du Nouÿ" on a photo of the Venice triptych indicates that the right wing depicts his wife (Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, microfilm Ne 63 Fol., Collection Laruelle, Tome 132). Another photo of the painting can be viewed on www.roger-viollet.fr. The predella contains several small portraits of Venetian painters and some allegorical scenes.

¹¹⁰ See cat. 109: Crémieux owned a drawing of Demosthenes by Lecomte du Nouÿ.

¹¹¹ See Dominique Lobstein's text on this painting on the website www.histoire-image.org/index.php; and, Sigal 2003, p. 103.

lasted only a few months: Valentine fell ill at the beginning of their honeymoon in Italy and died soon afterwards.¹¹² Though close scrutiny of the actual painting, which has not been located, is not possible, it could be that the right wing of the 1910 Venice triptych is a posthumous homage to Lecomte du Nouÿ's first wife, especially as the left wing depicts George Sand and Alfred de Musset as an amorous couple.¹¹³

After Valentine's death, Lecomte du Nouÿ visited the northern French cities of Lille and Arras, until the warmer climate lured him south towards Bordeaux. From there he boarded a ship for Lisbon and finally ended up in Tangiers, a journey that must have occurred in the summer of 1877.¹¹⁴ He encountered a scripture-reading session in Morocco that inspired the 1882 Salon picture *The Rabbis Commenting the Bible on Saturday* (1882; fig. 126; cat. 172). This voyage also inspired various other pictures that Lecomte du Nouÿ would exhibit many years later.¹¹⁵ The titles of the artist's works catalogued by Montgailhard for 1877 and after confirm the strong impression made by this trip: *The Jewess of Tangiers* (cat. 120), *A Temple Guard in Jerusalem* (cat. 121) and *At the Gate of a Mosque* (cat. 122). Yet Lecomte du Nouÿ's lifelong infatuation with the Middle East is perhaps most touchingly rendered in the 1881 self-portrait that shows him sketching in the company of a local (fig. 4; cat. 165).

Around 1878, Lecomte du Nouÿ moved into a former studio of Gérôme's in the so-called *Boîte à thé*, a large complex in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs that housed nine studios and had once constituted the epicenter of the *néo-grec* movement.¹¹⁶ Among his fellow residents were the painters Auguste Toulmouche (1829-90), who had first built a studio there and who was also a former Gleyre pupil; the painter Émile-Antoine Bayard (1837-91); Louis Claude Mouchot (1830-91), a painter of Venetian and Egyptian views; the printmaker Charles Albert Waltner (1846-1925), who also owned several of Lecomte

¹¹² She lies buried on the Montparnasse cemetery, and her tombstone, sculpted by Lecomte du Nouÿ, reads: VALENTINE LECOMTE DU NOUY / NEE PEIGNE-CREMIEUX. NEE 31 MARS 1855, MARIEE 1er AOUT 1876, MORTE 15 OCTOBRE 1876. At the Salon of 1875, he had already shown a historicized honeymoon in Venice, see cat. 97.

¹¹³ If the picture was indeed painted around 1910, when shown at the Salon, the artist was not married at that time. The inscription on the photo (see note 109) antedates 1910, and even though he may have known her already by 1910, he only married his third wife in 1914.

¹¹⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 44, 49.

¹¹⁵ Montgailhard 1906, p. 50.

¹¹⁶ Montgailhard 1906, p. 53. See also chapter II p. 63, and note 15.

du Nouÿ's works;¹¹⁷ and the sculptor Augustin Moreau-Vauthier (1831-93).

Montgailhard claims that Lecomte du Nouÿ painted his famous *The Gate of the Harem, Souvenir of Cairo* (La porte du sérail, 1876; fig. 101, cat. 116) in this artistic environment. Yet the 1877 Salon catalogue that features this picture gives the artist's address as "Rue des Beaux-Arts, 9." It was not until the Salon of 1878 that such catalogues began to provide Lecomte du Nouÿ's address as "Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, 70 bis."

It is not clear when the artist relocated from his studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs to a house at Boulevard Flandrin 20, an address recorded in the catalogue of the Exposition Universelle of 1889¹¹⁸ though it may have been related to his second marriage, which occurred in 1882. Montgailhard describes this *hôtel* as filled with trinkets: "at his place, there is not a piece of furniture or an object that isn't old, foreign, or beautiful." Wooden latticework screens divided the ground floor into such areas as an Arab salon, a library, and a music room. A large studio was located on the top floor, which was also filled with objects.¹¹⁹ A Romanian journalist, Lucile Kitso, described Lecomte du Nouÿ's home as follows: "we enter a beautiful salon, whose walls are covered with pictures by the master. Through the open doors, we perceive a series of reception rooms, furnished with large divans draped with fabrics from the Orient, and further, a garden [...]"¹²⁰

In 1881, Lecomte du Nouÿ painted two female portraits, one of which depicts the elderly Madame Evrard seated with her glasses in one hand and her embroidery in the other (cat. 156).¹²¹ The sitter was the mother of Caroline Evrard (1851-92), the artist's second wife, who is featured in the other portrait (cat. 159). In 1891, Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited a portrait at the salon depicting himself, Caroline, and their son, Jacques (1885-1961) (fig. 49; cat. 231). Caroline died in 1892, and the artist married a third time, in

¹¹⁷ See cat. nos. 19 and 20.

¹¹⁸ Most of the Salon catalogues for the years 1878 through 1889 that I have consulted do not record artists' addresses, and therefore provide no indication when Lecomte du Nouÿ would have moved. Furthermore, in various documents related to the artist's death in 1923, the house number is given as 30, which could mean that he also moved once within the Boulevard Flandrin, or that the numbering there changed at some point.

¹¹⁹ Montgailhard 1906, p. 103-4.

¹²⁰ Guénin 1895; for the French text see cat. 279. Kitso 1900, for the French text see appendix VI.

¹²¹ After viewing it at the 1883 Salon, a critic called this small work more finished than a Holbein, and characterized it as pure 'Ingrisme' pushed to the extreme. For the French text see cat. 159.

1914, to Térésa de Fisanne (born 1862). An inscription by the artist on a photograph of the painting *Madrigal* (cat. 310) refers to “Madame Lecomte du Nouÿ,” implying that the woman portrayed is Térésa de Fisanne (although it would have been painted before they married).¹²²

Sculptures

Lecomte du Nouÿ's initial foray into sculpture is represented by the tomb he created for his first wife, Valentine Peigné-Cremieux, after her death. Montgailhard lists four sculptures depicting “*Valentine du Nouÿ*” created in 1877 (cat. 125-128); one was identified as “*Pour le tombeau*,” (for the tomb) and another as “*Pour son tombeau au cimetière Montparnasse*” (for her tomb in the Montparnasse Cemetery; in situ).¹²³ In addition to following in the long tradition of tomb sculpture, Lecomte du Nouÿ also addressed the concepts of immortality and eternity by making sculptures alongside his more fragile paintings in order to commemorate his wives. Montgailhard suggests that a sculpture submitted to the 1895 Salon — listed in the catalogue as “*Portrait de Mme L.-D. N...*”—bore the features of his second wife, Caroline, and was created under the same sad circumstances.¹²⁴

Lecomte du Nouÿ also made a number of sculptures that were the result of commissions, among them one from the Romanian royal family for a commemorative plaque in honor of the Austrian emperor's visit to Romania in 1896 (cat. 267). Three years later, he made a plaque showing the profiles of the Russian Tsar and the King of Romania (cat. 280). In addition to an allegory of triumphant Romania (cat. 330), Lecomte du Nouÿ created a large bronze monument to Prince Barbo Stirbey (Salon of 1908) that was eventually erected in the city of Craiova (cat. 316). At the Salon of 1903, Lecomte du Nouÿ showed the preparatory plaster (cat. 301) of a marble (which he showed at the Salon of 1905), called *The Iron that Provides Bread* (*Le fer qui donne du pain*, 1905; fig. 50; cat. 308), which depicts a bare-chested peasant hammering a scythe, while seated on sheaves of wheat. The work bears the inscription “*Pour l'oeuvre de vie internationale*”

¹²² Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des estampes, microfilm Ne 63 Fol. Collection Laruelle Tome 132.

¹²³ Montgailhard 1906, p. 122. See also note 112.

¹²⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 87-88. See cat. 245.

and was conceived during the negotiations among the French President, the King of Italy, and the Austrian Emperor to promote an international agricultural league. The marble was eventually acquired by the French government and exhibited at the Ministry of Agriculture.

At the Salon of 1913, Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited a large marble group called *The Divine Singer (Orpheus)* (Le divin Chanteur; cat. 325), which was originally made for the music room of the Queen of Romania. It seems never to have arrived there, however, and in fact was considered for installation in the Paris Opéra. However, the successor to architect Charles Garnier (1825-1898), Joseph Marie Cassien-Bernard (1849-1926), wrote to the artist informing him that there was no space for such a large sculpture in the foyer of the Opéra, though Cassien-Bernard appreciated Lecomte du Nouÿ's work.¹²⁵ The statue now adorns the grand interior staircase of the town hall of Versailles.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's nationalist sympathies emerged in a sculpted allegory of the establishment of the French border with Germany along the river Rhine, called *Victorious France* (La France victorieuse; cat. 366), which pays homage to the victorious swords of Caesar, Louis XIV, Napoleon, and General Floch. It was to have been erected on the left bank of the Rhine, facing Germany, but was only executed in a large (2.30m) plaster model that has since been destroyed. Reminiscent of the implied subject matter in one of Lecomte du Nouÿ's altarpieces for l'Église de la Sainte Trinité (fig. 114; cat. 139), which dealt with a dispute over the Alsace and Lorraine regions, this sculpture also touched upon Franco-German animosity. In contrast to most of these fairly straightforward allegorical representations, Lecomte du Nouÿ's most touching sculpture is perhaps *For Liberty* (Pour la liberté; fig. 51; cat. 286), which he showed at the Salon of 1901. It depicts the naked corpse of the Parisian street urchin Gavroche, a character in Hugo's *Les Misérables* (1862), who died on the barricades during the Revolution of 1830, while claspings the flag for which he fought. The open book beside him reads: "Feu! L'enfant tomba et sa petite grande âme s'envola..." (Fire! The child fell and his great little soul flew away...). The sculpture closely resembles the artist's painting *Dying for the*

¹²⁵ Los Angeles, Getty Research Library, Special Collections, ID number 89-A168, call number 890058: letter dated April 9, 1913, addressed to "Mon cher Maître." It is not evident who this "Maître" is.

Fatherland (1892; fig. 54; cat. 236), which depicts a naked soldier fallen on the battlefield.

Romania

In 1895, Lecomte du Nouÿ planned a trip to Constantinople by way of Bucharest, where his brother André had been appointed architect to the crown. He may have planned the journey to distract him from his sorrow at the death of his second wife, Caroline. (After the death of his first wife, Lecomte du Nouÿ had acted similarly, traveling to North Africa in 1877.) André Lecomte du Nouÿ introduced his brother to the Romanian royal family, who commissioned several works from the artist. Consequently, what was intended as a brief reunion with his brother developed into a sojourn of several months and led to several subsequent visits. The works he produced there include a sensitive plein-air sketch of the Carpathian Mountains, dated 1897 (fig. 52), and at least two pairs of large state portraits of the royal couple (cats. 256 and 257, and 258 and 259). The Romanian government also commissioned several church frescoes, which Lecomte du Nouÿ executed in a neo-Byzantine style (cat. 283). These frescoes gave him an opportunity to realize his ambition of creating large-scale pictorial programs. Together with a few of his easel paintings and some drawings, a substantial part of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre remains in Romania and deserves further scrutiny.

Queen Elizabeth of Romania seems to have appreciated Lecomte de Nouÿ's company as much as his artistry (he painted several portraits of the queen alone, such as cat. 269), not to mention his musical talents, which he probably inherited from his musician father. In her memoirs, Princess Marie, the wife of the heir to the throne, who was herself somewhat less impressed by this "Frenchman of advanced age," wrote:

The queen could not live without the excitement of discovering unusual people and encouraging their talents. That would not have been a problem if Aunty had been content to praise her protégés to the skies for her own pleasure. But she insisted we must all be enraptured by them, which amused me sometimes. At a certain moment she favored a Frenchman of advanced age, in whom she thought to have discovered a musical genius, even though he was really a painter. She assured us that he not only knew all operas by heart, but that he could also sing all their roles whether they were for a tenor, baritone, or

bass. Aunty, who was a great musician and a true artist herself, invited us in a circle around this pretentious individual who screamed in all kinds of tones. Burning with sincere enthusiasm, she saw in this sad gentleman a prodigy, listened to him with her arms crossed and lost in ecstasy, while we had to leave the room periodically for fear of bursting out in laughter.¹²⁶

Napoleon and Nationalism

At the Romanian court Lecomte du Nouÿ also met Princess Charlotte of Saxony-Meiningen, the sister of the German emperor Wilhelm II (1859-1941) and an ardent admirer of Napoleon Bonaparte. She asked Lecomte du Nouÿ to paint the picture *Bonaparte Annotating the Commentaries of Caesar* (Bonaparte annotant les Commentaires de César, 1897; cat. 264). This depiction of Napoleon was not unique within Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre: in 1869, he had executed his first Napoleonic subject, *The Supper at Beaucaire*, which served as the model for an illustration in the Larousse encyclopedia (cat. 35). Some twenty-five years later, he reworked the same canvas before showing it at the Salon of 1894 (*Le souper de Beaucaire*, fig. 53; cat. 244). Apart from offering a tribute to the young Bonaparte, Lecomte du Nouÿ must also have conceived the painting as an artistic homage to Rembrandt (1606-69).¹²⁷ The artist employed a tonal range of golden browns and strong chiaroscuro, infusing this scene from the life of the young general with an almost religious quality, reminiscent of Rembrandt's *Supper at Emmaus* (ca. 1628, Musée Jacquemart André, Paris). The subject relates to a 1793 pamphlet published by Napoleon under the same title, after he had witnessed a bloody battle for the liberation of Avignon from occupying National Guardsmen from

¹²⁶ I would like to thank Gabriel Badea-Păun for providing me with this citation, from his book Badea-Păun 2004: "La reine ne pouvait vivre sans la surexcitation de découvrir des êtres rares et d'encourager leurs talents. Cela n'eût présenté aucun inconvénient, si Aunty s'était contentée d'élever aux nues ses protégés pour son plaisir personnel. Mais elle exigeait que nous nous extasions tous devant eux, ce qui m'amusait quelquefois. A un certain moment elle protégeait un Français, d'âge mûr, en qui elle s'imaginait avoir découvert un génie musical, bien qu'il fût peintre de son métier. Elle nous assurait qu'il ne se contentait pas de connaître par coeur tous les opéras, mais qu'il pouvait en chanter tous les rôles, aussi bien celui de ténor que celui de baryton et de basse. Aunty, quoique bonne musicienne elle-même et véritable artiste, nous invitait à faire cercle autour de cet individu prétentieux qui gazouillait ou hurlait sur tous les tons. Brûlant de sincère enthousiasme, elle voyait dans ce triste sire un être prodigieux, l'écoutait les mains croisées, perdue d'extase, tandis que nous étions obligés de quitter parfois la chambre de peur d'éclater de rire."

¹²⁷ Through one of Lecomte du Nouÿ's sketchbooks we know that he has visited Amsterdam, where he is likely to have seen Rembrandt's work, if he had not already seen it in Paris. Aurillac: 82.13.352, p. 13, appendix I.

Marseilles. The pamphlet recorded the conversation over dinner at an inn where Bonaparte shared the table with various businessmen attending the fair at Beaucaire. In the heat of the argument, Bonaparte stood up and ardently defended the Jacobin point of view, urging the men of Marseilles to accept a republican solution to the conflict.

Five years later Lecomte du Nouÿ painted *The Dictation at Austerlitz* (La dictée d'Austerlitz; cat. 279) and subsequently exhibited both works together at the Exposition Universelle of 1900. Finally, in 1920 he revisited his hero with *Imperial Destiny, Napoleon on Saint Helena* (Le destinée impériale, 1821; cat. 338), possibly conceived as a centennial commemoration. A photograph of Lecomte du Nouÿ's studio (fig. 7) shows this painting second to the right of the artist, with another apparently Napoleonic picture on the second easel to the left of him.¹²⁸

Lecomte du Nouÿ is not known to have written much about his political ideas (apart from certain informal scribbles on sketches and drawings, see appendix I), yet his numerous Napoleonic scenes reveal his strong sense of patriotism, which is further confirmed by his decision to fight during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) and by various other works with nationalistic and military themes. In a late picture exhibited at the 1892 Salon as *Dying for the Fatherland* (Pour la patrie, fig. 54; cat. 236), a male nude, positioned somewhat awkwardly in the composition, is lying face down on the *tricolore*, his sword still in his hand and his helmet and armor lying beside him. The position of the body was prepared in a drawing (fig. 55),¹²⁹ in which the man's right hand can already be seen holding the sword, and the forward movement of his upper torso implies that he lies on a mound in the battlefield. In the finished painting, however, the man's face is turned more toward the viewer, a compositional change that contradicts the strong upward position of his right shoulder. Unless the artist simply failed to depict an anatomically convincing corpse, he may have sought to render here the last desperate struggle to live; though the left arm seems already lifeless, the man's feet, but not the lower part of his legs, seem to touch the ground.

Montgailhard had discussed this work with the painter, and notes that he had criticized its cold mythological approach and questioned the representation of a modern

¹²⁸ A preparatory sketch for this latter composition is kept in Aurillac: 82.13.218, see appendix I. Another close-up photo of the artist standing next to the 1921 painting is kept at Roger-Viollet, RV 632 837.

¹²⁹ The museum in Aurillac also keeps several preparatory drawings, see cat. 236.

soldier lying naked on the battlefield. The artist defended himself, claiming that, in the true academic tradition, he had not wanted to depict any one soldier, but rather to represent every man who had died fighting for his country—thus the timeless nude, evoking an ancient Greek warrior. A historical photograph of this painting in Montgailhard's book clearly depicts a battle in the background, featuring warriors in identifiably nineteenth-century uniforms probably like those worn during the Franco-Prussian War (fig. 54a).¹³⁰ Yet this battle scene is no longer visible in the painting today. The discrepancy suggests that the artist took his friend's criticism to heart and painted a generic landscape over the battle scene. In doing so, he concentrated the viewer's attention completely on the nude, strengthening his objective of honoring every fallen soldier, rather than depicting a specific battle scene. Lecomte du Nouÿ's commitment to such iconography is underscored by his marble sculpture of 1900, *For Liberty* (fig. 51; cat. 286), which reveals a similar approach.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's late works clearly reveal his personal convictions, but from an artistic point of view they are often less compelling. *The Guardians of the Great City, Dedicated to the Heroes of the Air* (*Les veilleurs de la grande cité*, depicted in fig. 7; cat. 333), for example, which contains a similar patriotic message, is a weaker work. Two nude male winged figures on clouds hover above Paris while one embraces a propeller plane. The artist obviously intended to honor the fighter pilots who defended Paris during World War I; he had been in Paris when the church of Saint Gervais was bombed in 1918 (depicted in fig. 7; cat. 334). The composition contains all the elements of a traditional historical allegory, but the work fails to capture the impact either of a horrific war or modern industrial society (despite the presence of the planes). It is in works like this that the shortcomings in Lecomte du Nouÿ's academic approach become most evident. Moreover, the artist, now well into his seventies, was probably no longer physically able to paint his figures with the precision and finish required by academic convention.

¹³⁰ Montgailhard, 1906, p. 77-78, repr. after p. 136. The museum in Aurillac also keeps three preparatory drawings for a fallen soldier in the painting's background (visible in the Montgailhard reproduction near the right bent elbow of the main character), inv. 82.13.36, 82.13.37 and 82.13.130, see appendix I, and cat. 238.

Large-Scale Paintings

Throughout his years as a mature painter, Lecomte du Nouÿ continued to paint and exhibit portraits and Orientalist scenes. Yet, he always sought recognition as a history painter in the grand academic tradition, the genre that once bestowed the greatest prestige upon artists. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, these works came to be viewed by many as an outmoded means of expression. Even a traditionalist like Lecomte du Nouÿ must have felt a need to somehow reinvent the model that he had been taught at the École des Beaux-Arts. The limited critical and commercial success of his first large-scale work, *Job and his Friends* (1867; fig. 108; cat. 30), did not prevent him from trying his hand at further large-scale narrative paintings. His next grand composition, *Eros* (1873; fig. 42; cat. 83), for example, seems to have been motivated by his personal rivalry with Toudouze (fig. 43). Ideally, artists created such large-scale works for a specific commission, so that they could be assured of payment and a destination for their finished canvasses, like the two altarpieces Lecomte du Nouÿ painted for the church of the Trinity in Paris (1876 and 1879; figs. 113 and 114). In short, the challenge to be true to his calling was often as formidable as the size of the canvas Lecomte du Nouÿ wished to create.

Judith Gautier, the daughter of the writer Théophile Gautier, described Lecomte du Nouÿ's predilection for the grand gesture as follows: "He is inspired by Homer, the Bible, and Victor Hugo, and he only proceeds in series, polyptychs or triptychs, which take him many years to complete."¹³¹ A good example of how the artist sought to demonstrate that he had mastered *la grande peinture* is his monumental Homeric triptych from 1881 (fig. 80; cat. 160), a reworking of a composition he had executed earlier, on a much smaller scale (fig. 77; cat. 105). In the mid-1880s, Lecomte du Nouÿ embarked upon an ambitious series of pictures that he envisioned as a tribute to the great Romantic poet, novelist, dramatist, and artist, Victor Hugo (1802-85).¹³² Having already honored Homer, Lecomte du Nouÿ now sought to create an epic project of no less than twenty canvasses illustrating all of Hugo's major literary achievements. He ultimately completed

¹³¹ For the French text see cat. 160.

¹³² For an extensive treatment of Hugo and his impact on French culture and society, see *La gloire de Victor Hugo* 1985, as well as Barrielle 1985.

only four, each bearing the title of the novel that inspired it. At the Paris Salon of 1884, he exhibited *The Toilers of the Sea* (*Les travailleurs de la mer*, 1884; fig. 56; cat. 181), listed in the catalogue as a "*fragment d'un pentaptique*", implying that the series was to contain five pictures. The following year, he exhibited two more works at the salon, *The Orientals* (*Les Orientales*, 1885; fig. 57; cat. 186) and *Contemplations - At Present* (*Les contemplations - Aujourd'hui*, 1885; fig. 58; cat. 191), listed respectively as the second and third works in the series. A year later, the Paris dealer Tripp organized a major exhibition of Lecomte du Nouÿ's work in which he united these pictures with the fourth work, *Contemplations - Past Times* (*Les contemplations - Autrefois*, 1885; fig. 59; cat. 197). Although this painting does not appear in the Paris salon catalogues of these years, Tripp's exhibition pamphlet lists it as the first in the series.¹³³ It is impossible to assess their artistic significance, however, because after this 1886 exhibition, Lecomte du Nouÿ donated the ensemble to the museum in Caen, where they were destroyed by a fire in 1944.

Hugo's *Les contemplations* (published in 1856) is a collection of lyric verses in two volumes—one titled *Autrefois* (Past Times), the other *Aujourd'hui* (At Present)—written after his exile to Jersey in 1852. The painting illustrating volume one (fig. 59) depicts the author as a young man holding writing paper and quill, receiving inspiration from Venus, pictured as the muse seated beside him. In the other work (fig. 58), a bearded Hugo, seated next to a grave, has a vision of a young woman being carried off into the sky. *The Toilers of the Sea* (fig. 56) is based upon Hugo's 1866 novel, set on Guernsey, in which the character Gilliatt Clubin fights a giant octopus. This memorable subject was treated by many illustrators, François Chifflart, Gustave Doré, and of course Hugo himself,¹³⁴ among them, as an image of torment in which the battle between man and the elements is rendered in a truly Romantic spirit. Judging from a photograph of Lecomte du Nouÿ's work, he made an intense and forceful depiction of struggle and anguish. It seems that he was again inspired by a classical source, the famous *Laocoön* sculpture (1st century A.D., Vatican Museums, Rome), though Montgailhard likened the

¹³³ See appendix IV.

¹³⁴ *La gloire de Victor Hugo* 1985, p. 610-12; and, *Shadows of a Hand* 1998, p. 132.

painting to the work of the Spanish painter Jusepe de Ribera (1591-1652),¹³⁵ and he contrasted it with the fourth picture in Lecomte du Nouÿ's series, *The Orientals* (Salon 1885, fig. 57). In this last picture, derived from Hugo's collection of lyrics titled *Les Orientales* (1829), Lecomte du Nouÿ infused an exotic setting with strong doses of sexuality and violence. This formula would recur in several of his other paintings, including *Ramses in His Harem* (1885; fig. 102; cat. 201), *The Sadness of Pharaoh* (1901; fig. 104; cat. 290), and *The White Slave* (1888; fig. 105; cat. 219), all of which will be discussed in chapter 2.

The Tripp exhibition catalogue (appendix IV) also mentions two studies related to Hugo's satirical poems *Les Châtiments* (The Punishments, 1853), possibly preparatory works for another large composition within the series as originally conceived. Lecomte du Nouÿ's ambitious project of illustrating a writer's entire oeuvre is reminiscent of similar British endeavors. The London-based Shakespeare Gallery (1789) was initiated by the engraver John Boydell (1719-1804) in order to stimulate history painting in England by persuading famous artists to illustrate the bard's works, and the Milton Gallery (1799), in which Henry Fuseli (1741-1825)¹³⁶ mounted his own tribute to Milton. Both projects closed soon after they opened, however, and it is more likely that Lecomte du Nouÿ had in mind the success of the Doré Gallery, where Gustave Doré showed twenty enormous biblical paintings to large crowds, first in London from 1868 through 1892, then in various North American cities, until 1898.

Montgailhard argued that Lecomte du Nouÿ never finished his Hugo project because he feared becoming repetitive, but it might well be that the artist was not encouraged by the public reactions to the project when it was exhibited at Tripp's. The project's practical and physical complexity may have been factors, but Lecomte du Nouÿ may also have sensed that there no longer existed a receptive audience, let alone clients, for such a dramatic gesture. (Indeed, Doré started his gallery in London because his project was far less appreciated in France.) In 1896, the critic Henri Jouin praised the artist for abandoning this gargantuan endeavor. Although he acknowledged the picture's overall quality, especially the savage reality Lecomte du Nouÿ had evoked in *The Toilers*

¹³⁵ For the influence of Spanish painting on the work by Lecomte du Nouÿ, see also the discussion on *The Begging Homer*, chapter II.

¹³⁶ For an extensive account on the relation between painting and literature in British art, see: Altick 1985.

of the Sea, he argued that Hugo had died too recently for the painter to have the final word on his literary achievements.¹³⁷ Lecomte du Nouÿ had contemplated other major projects, such as illustrating the poems of Virgil, and an enormous fifty-meter long depiction of the legend of the Romanian master mason Manole, who had built the Church of Curtea-de-Argès,¹³⁸ but none were realized. In his own way, Lecomte du Nouÿ aspired to revive an art of epic proportions and at the same time stake out his position as a history painter. Shifting his attention from the ancient Homer to the contemporary Hugo probably served his efforts to invigorate and modernize traditional academic painting as it faced ever-greater opposition. But the project's failure suggests that he was waging an uphill battle, if not an impossible one.

In this biographical overview, it has become evident that Lecomte du Nouÿ was unwavering in his commitment to his initial artistic convictions. For him, art was about eternity, not about the here-and-now or trends and fashion. After the artist's death on February 19, 1923, *Le bulletin de l'art ancien et moderne* ran a brief obituary that characterized him as a painter, sculptor, *médailleur*, and musician. Again, his allegiance to Gérôme was cited.¹³⁹ He presumably died of old age at eighty-one, after a long and prolific career. He had suffered personal tragedies—his first two wives died young—yet professionally he had achieved a considerable degree of success. His reputation, however, did not long outlive him, and it was already much diminished toward the end of his life. In a 1919 letter from the Musées Nationaux, his proposed donation of ten copper plates to the *chalcographie du Louvre* (where such plates are kept and prints are still being sold today) had been declined: “under the impression that the portraits and genre pieces that were offered did not fit in the series that are in demand by the public.”¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Jouin, *l'Oeuvre d'art* (September 25, 1896); for the French text see cat. 181.

¹³⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 100. On Manole see the special issue “Roumanie” of *L'Art et les Artistes*, no. 4 (January 1917), p. 22-26.

¹³⁹ *Le bulletin de l'art ancien et moderne*, no. 696 (March 1923), p. 40. The full necrology reads: “J. Lecomte du Nouÿ. – Peintre, sculpteur, médailleur et musicien, cet artiste exposait régulièrement aux Artistes français, surtout à la peinture, des compositions traitées selon le goût de son maître Gérôme. Il avait passé de longues années à la cour de Roumanie, où l'on goûtait ses talents. Il était chevalier de la Légion d'honneur.”

¹⁴⁰ Archives du Louvre (1919.13 Oct) Letter of the Direction des Musées Nationaux: “estimant que les portraits et les pièces de genre qui lui étaient présentés ne rentraient pas dans les séries qui sont demandées par le public et les amateurs.”

There are several questions regarding Lecomte du Nouÿ's biography that remain to be answered. It is not clear, for example, whether he taught many students. A photograph of the artist in his studio shows an unidentified man behind an easel (fig. 5), who seems to be an apprentice or an assistant, yet the literature leaves this subject mostly untouched. Only once does Montgailhard refer to a student of Lecomte du Nouÿ, Charles Toché (1851-1916), who spent time with him in Venice.¹⁴¹ Toché is listed as having owned *Job and his Friends* (cat. 30), but he ultimately pursued an Impressionist style rather than following his teacher's path. The only other clue that Lecomte du Nouÿ had students is a dedication on a preparatory drawing for *The Begging Homer* (fig. 66, lower right image; cat. 160), which reads: "*Etudes pour Homère / A mon eleve et cher ami / Georges Sauvage / Du Nouÿ*" (Studies for Homer / To my pupil and dear friend / George Sauvage / Du Nouÿ).¹⁴² Born in Caen, Georges Sauvage (dates unknown) was also a portraitist and history and genre painter who exhibited at the salon from 1874 through 1913. It remains unclear whether Lecomte du Nouÿ actively chose to limit his teaching, or whether the lack of students resulted from a fading artistic reputation. Lecomte du Nouÿ's conservative approach and artistic convictions may have alienated younger artists, though it could be argued that his fondness for traveling prevented him from accepting many pupils.

Another open question relates to Lecomte du Nouÿ's working method. He clearly made many preparatory drawings and sketches for his paintings, but it is less obvious whether he used photographs as well. Current research shows that many late nineteenth-century painters relied heavily on photographs to create their compositions.¹⁴³ Yet, among Lecomte du Nouÿ's many sketchbooks, sketches, and studies in the Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie in Aurillac that derive from the artist's studio, there is only one photograph,¹⁴⁴ a portrait of a young Egyptian boy wearing a turban, an image which cannot now be linked to any of his surviving paintings.

¹⁴¹ Montgailhard 1906, p. 45-46.

¹⁴² See cat. 160, related works. Lecomte du Nouÿ also made a portrait drawing of Sauvage, see cat. 207.

¹⁴³ Recently this aspect was extensively explored in two monographic exhibitions of 19th-century painters, Thomas Eakins and Pascal Adolphe Jean Dagnan-Bouveret. See Sewell 2002, and Weisberg 2002.

¹⁴⁴ Aurillac: 82.13.375, see appendix I. The fact that this collection contains only one photograph, however, is not necessarily representative for how many photographs the artist actually possessed during his lifetime.

Building upon this general outline of Lecomte du Nouÿ's career, chapter two will provide an in-depth discussion of the artist's most distinctive works. These can be divided into three general groups: *néo-grec*, Orientalist, and religious.

Chapter Two

FROM HOMER TO THE HAREM: JOURNEYS ON THE MAP AND IN THE MIND

I. THE NÉO-GRECS OR FAIRE DE L'ARCHÉOLOGIE

Although the academic tradition faced growing challenges during the second half of the nineteenth century, historical paintings were still widely produced. While more avant-garde artists like the Impressionists presented images of contemporary life in loose, fluid brushstrokes, a substantial number of their colleagues continued to illustrate historic events, real or imagined. The public forum for the art of Lecomte du Nouÿ and other painters working in this more traditional manner remained in the salons and International Exhibitions, held not only in Paris but throughout Europe and the United States; meanwhile, the artists of the avant-garde, individually and in groups, organized their own shows in dealers' galleries and at other venues.¹

While history painting remained fundamental and vital to artists who continued to work in the academic tradition during this period, it too underwent numerous transformations. For example, contemporary critics of the salon exhibitions invariably discussed the subcategory of *la peinture archéologique* (archeological painting) or *néo-grec* painting, terms that were used almost interchangeably. Depending on the writer, this art form was seen either as an admirable renewal of painterly tradition, or a tenacious obstacle to artistic progress. In any case, the ubiquity of the genre made it impossible to ignore.

To fully comprehend Lecomte du Nouÿ's brand of history painting in the classical tradition, one must turn to Gérôme, whose 1846 painting *The Cock Fight* (*Combat de coqs*, or, *Jeunes Grecs faisant battre des coqs*; fig. 32) was one of the works that launched the so-called *néo-grec* style, a painting that will be further discussed later in the chapter. Seven years later, the female sculptor and writer Claude Vignon (1832-88) attempted to define some of the elements of this style in an extensive salon review that included a

¹ For two comprehensive assessments of the development of the major French art institutions, see: White & White 1993, and: Mainardi 1993. For the relationship between painters and the French government during the Third Republic, see, Vaisse 1995.

chapter titled *l'École Néo-grecque*. In addition to Gérôme and Charles Gleyre, she reported on such exhibitors as Gustave Boulanger (1824-88), Ernest Gendron (1817-81), Jean-Louis Hamon (1821-74), Félix Jobbé-Duval (1821-89), Henri Picou (1824-95), and Isodore Pils (1813-75):

Here is the archeological school, of the pure, austere, and skillful line; it is the kind of painting that is slightly cold perhaps, sometimes dry and without color, but when handled by truly talented artists it can give us some delightful creations. The school has two very distinct tendencies, of which each had already some nice triumphs; one of these tendencies, the one that is above all archaic, has found its expression in *Stratonice* [1840, Chantilly, Musée Condé] by Ingres, and maybe even more in *The Greek Interior* [L'intérieur grec, 1850, private collection] by Gérôme as well as in his *Cock Fight* [fig. 32]. The other, that knows to combine the cult of line with a certain softness in execution, a lot of grace and delicacy, is mainly manifested in the works by Gleyre, and those by Picou, and Hamon. As one can see, there are the science of line and the poetry of line; and sometimes these unite in a masterpiece such as *The Evening* [Le soir, fig. 9] by Gleyre [...].²

The narrow traditional definition of history painting as the solemn representation of noble and didactic subject matter, one championed by David and the Academy, was, from the mid-nineteenth-century, being redefined by a group of young artists. In their work, they went beyond the mere depiction of historical, mythological, and biblical subjects and the narrative emphasis shifted from the universal truth contained in mythology and religion to the anecdotal experience of specific individuals. Like the earlier Troubadour painters, who presented informal and personalized stories set in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Gérôme became one of the main exponents of genre scenes set in Greek and Roman antiquity.

The most important period for *néo-grec* painting was between 1847, when Gérôme exhibited his *Cock Fight* (fig. 32), and 1863, when he married and moved away

² Claude Vignon, *Salon de 1852* (Paris 1852), p. 109-110: "Voici l'école archéologue, de la ligne pure, austère et savante; c'est la peinture un peu froide peut-être et quelquefois sèche et sans couleur; mais aussi quand cette peinture est maniée par des artistes d'un véritable talent, quelles délicieuses créations ne nous donne-t-elle pas? Elle a d'ailleurs deux tendances bien distinctes dont chacune a déjà pu compter quelques beaux triomphes; l'une de ces tendances, celle qui est surtout archaïque, a trouvé son expression dans la *Stratonice* d'Ingres et plus peut-être encore dans l'*Intérieur grec* de Gérôme et dans son *Combat de Coqs*. L'autre, qui sait allier au culte de la ligne une certaine mollesse d'exécution, beaucoup de flou, de grâce et de délicatesse, s'est manifesté surtout dans les tableaux de Gleyre et dans ceux de Picou et d'Hamon. Il y a, on le voit, la science de la ligne et la poésie de la ligne. Quelquefois la science et la poésie se réunissent et enfantent un chef-d'œuvre, comme le *Soir de la vie*, de Gleyre [...]" On Vignon, see Bouillon 1990.

from his colleagues.³ This period roughly coincides with that of the Second Empire (1852-71), during which the decorative arts were also dominated by Greco-Roman ornament. In Paris, this taste for the antique culminated in the *Maison pompéienne* (the Pompeian House), built in 1856-58 by the architect Alfred Normand for Prince Joseph Napoleon Bonaparte (1822-91), for which Gérôme painted some decorative interior panels (figs. 78, 79).⁴

Gérôme's *Cock Fight* represents an intimate, non-moralizing genre scene set in ancient times, rather than a heroic narrative intended to convey an edifying message. The influential writer, critic, and adherent of *l'art pour l'art*, Théophile Gautier, extensively praised this work by the then 23-year-old unknown Gérôme, who had elevated an ordinary subject to the scale and artistic standard of a history painting.⁵ As art historian Gerald Ackerman argues: "This unorthodox attitude toward the ancients would beguile its critics by careful, exquisite painting, fine detailing, and excellent coloring, and, of course, amuse them by its parody of the genre painting of the realists. Nudity and a faint or even overt eroticism would add a tender, piquant quality; and wit in invention and execution would keep the critic from taking himself too seriously."⁶

Besides Gérôme, other important early *néo-grecs* were Gleyre (Lecomte du Nouÿ's first teacher), Henri Picou (1824-95), Jean-Louis Hamon (1821-74), and Gustave Boulanger (1824-88). After 1847, some of these artists shared quarters in a building in the rue de Fleurus called *Le chalet*. A somewhat disdainful assessment of their activities came from Champfleury (pseudonym for Jules Husson), a critic, collector, and advocate of such artists as Gustave Courbet and Richard Wagner. In an article, he referred to the group as *l'École Gérôme*, and observed with irony that: "In the evenings, citizen Picou

³ Ackerman 1990. For a survey of *néo-grec* painting see also Whitely 1972, chapter III.

⁴ Ackerman 2000, p. 237, cat. nos. 84-85; and see note 68. On the *Maison pompéienne* (or, Palais pompéien) see also Gautier 1866.

⁵ Théophile Gautier, "Salon de 1847, Jeunes Grecs faisant battre des coqs," *L'Artiste*, ser. 4, vol. 9 (June 6, 1847), p. 221: "Félicitons-nous de ce que le jury ait laissé passer, par distraction apparemment, au Salon de 1847, un charmant tableau plein de finesse et d'originalité d'un jeune homme dont nous entendons parler pour la première fois, et dont c'est le début si nous ne nous trompons: nous voulons dire les *Jeunes Grecs faisant battre des coqs*, de M. Gérôme. Ce sujet, tout vulgaire en apparence, a pris sous le fin crayon et le pinceau délicat de M. Gérôme une élégance rare et une distinction exquise; c'est nest pas, comme on pourrait le croire au choix du thème adopté par l'artiste, une toile de petite dimension, comme cela est habituel pour de semblables fantaisies. Les figures sont de grandeur naturelle et traitées d'une façon tout historique. Il faut beaucoup de talent et de ressources pour élever une scène si épisodique au rang d'une composition noble et que ne désavouerait aucun maître." On Gautier, see Bouillon 1990, and Guégan 1997.

⁶ Ackerman 1990, p. 176.

sung melodies in the atelier that he had deciphered from an Etruscan manuscript; the head of the school, citizen Gérôme, dissolved into tears and said to his little friends: "Aren't we Etruscan? Yes, we really are!"⁷ The title of Champfleury's article, *L'École du calque* (The School of Tracing Paper), revealed his derisive attitude toward these artists. According to Champfleury, Ingres had encouraged them to study by tracing the bas-reliefs on the Pantheon: "Henceforth, members of the atelier in the rue de Fleurus sacrificed every morning to their own resemblance at the altars of the illusion, tracing and retracing. This method made them even more Etruscan than the vases bearing that name."⁸ Champfleury obviously believed that these artists were mere copyists who lacked any sense of originality or individuality. The critic Gautier, was, however, a significant ideological supporter who believed that Gérôme and his friends had reinvigorated and popularized history painting. His promotion allowed them to continue their work with a significant degree of popular success. The epicenter of the *néo-grec* movement relocated around 1855 from the rue de Fleurus to a studio complex known as *la Boîte à thé* (the tea caddy, a name derived from two Japanese figures decorating the building's façade) at 70^{bis}, rue Notre Dame des Champs.⁹ Here they continued to organize regular gatherings, lively events frequented by various bohemian actors, musicians, and writers. The building became an important artistic and intellectual center.

Lecomte du Nouÿ himself credited Gérôme as a pioneer of the *néo-grec*: "Thanks to him, antiquity obtained a new life, he created the *néo-grec* genre, which was for many of us an abundant source of success."¹⁰ Lecomte du Nouÿ remained loyal to his teacher's innovations, and some thirty years later, two critics still related his works to Gérôme's

⁷ Champfleury, "L'École du calque," cited in *Le Réalisme* (Paris 1973), p. 129: "Le soir, le citoyen Picou chantait à l'atelier des mélodies qu'il avait déchiffrées sur un manuscrit étrusque; et le chef de l'école, le citoyen Gérôme, fondait en larmes, et disait à ses petits amis: 'Sommes-nous étrusques? Le sommes-nous!'" On Champfleury, see Bouillon 1990.

⁸ Idem, p. 129-130: "L'école Gérôme avoua que le pinceau ni la palette n'avaient jamais Sali les mains de ses adeptes, et qu'ils se contentaient d'admirer les vases étrusques. Cela ne suffit pas, dit M. Ingres; je vais vous donner quelques préceptes qu'il faut mettre immédiatement à exécution... Tous les matins, vous sacrifierez à votre ressemblance sur les autels de l'illusion; ensuite, vous calquerez des bas-reliefs du Panthéon. Vive M. Ingres! cria l'école Gérôme. M. Ingres fondit en larmes et pressa sur son Cœur toute l'école comme un seul homme. Depuis, les membres de l'atelier de la rue de Fleurus sacrifièrent tous les matins à leur ressemblance sur les autels de l'illusion, calquèrent, recalquèrent et décalquèrent. Cette méthode les rendit plus étrusques que les vases de ce nom."

⁹ For a more extensive description of the studio when Gérôme lived there, see Moreau-Vauthier 1906, p. 125-28. See also Whitely 1972, p. 151. For a photograph of the building see, Milner 1988, p. 213 fig. 268.

¹⁰ Montgailhard 1906, p. 27: "Grâce à lui, l'antiquité revivait d'une nouvelle vie; il créait le genre néo-grec, qui fut, pour beaucoup d'entre nous, une source abondante de succès."

little revolution. Edmond About, editor of *Le XIXe siècle* and a member of the conservative *Conseil supérieur des beaux-arts*, reviewed Lecomte du Nouÿ's small 1876 triptych, *The Begging Homer* (Homère mendiant, fig. 77) as follows:

This intimate and tight work, as if sheltered in its little frame, inspires true devotion. It rejuvenated me some 20 years, reminding me of the studios at the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, in this noisy yet studious house, where Gérôme, Hamon, Picou, Isambert, four painters with quite unequal talents, reinvented Greek antiquity together. It was quite a bit modern, this antiquity of Gérôme and his friends: in their Athens there was a great deal of Pompeii and a dash of Paris. But what faith! What fire! What taste and grace!¹¹

The critic Dubosc de Pesquidoux similarly referred to the artist's predecessors in his discussion of Lecomte du Nouÿ's eight works at the 1878 Exposition Universelle:

Lecomte du Nouÿ preserves the *néo-grec* traditions more faithfully than his teacher Gérôme. A long time ago, this small sect generated a strong agitation by reacting in their own way against the Romantics, a reaction that has succumbed to its own success. Lecomte du Nouÿ is one of the few disciples who adhere to the basic ideas, but not without modifying them according to his personal inspirations. Each of his pictures, based on purely ancient sources, is an original and piquant resurrection of vanished worlds. The artist retains from his master the somewhat dry precision, the slightly gray tonality, and the archeological science combined with picturesque research; all these qualities are acquired, wanted, and systematical. Less secure and less luminous than Gérôme, less quintessential and precious than Hamon, the two first leaders of the group, Lecomte du Nouÿ has like each of them a grand taste and a correct feeling for ancient times.¹²

Although Lecomte du Nouÿ did not belong to the original core group of *néo-grecs* (he was born almost a full generation later), Dubosc de Pesquidoux described him as a *néo-grec* painter with some justification.¹³ Many of the works the artist presented at the 1878 Exposition Universelle, such as *The Charmer* (fig. 29; cat. 54), *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82; cat. 64), *The Begging Homer* (fig. 77; cat. 105) and *Eros* (fig. 42; cat. 83), are somewhat unconventional historical subjects that fall into this stylistic

¹¹ About, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 120; for the French text see cat. 111. See also note 71. On About, see Bouillon 1990.

¹² Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24; for the French text see cat. 64.

¹³ See also Privat 1877, appendix V, in his review of *The Greek Sentinel* (cat. 11).

category.¹⁴ Further, in 1878 Lecomte du Nouÿ also moved to one of the ateliers at the *Boîte à thé*.¹⁵ If the *néo-grec* spirit in that building had rather faded by that date, the communal ambiance Gérôme and his fellow-artists had enjoyed there probably still prevailed among the many artists who still worked there. In the last instance, however, while the *néo-grec* was an important characteristic of his work, Lecomte du Nouÿ cannot be strictly classified as a second-generation *néo-grec* painter. The term seems too limited given that his Orientalist pictures were ultimately more prevalent in his total oeuvre. Yet, as will be argued later, these *néo-grec* paintings sprang from roots similar to those of his many Orientalist scenes.

Archeology

The development of the discipline of archeology, a crucial source of inspiration for *néo-grec* artists, was assisted by a series of significant events from the eighteenth century onward. A series of more or less scholarly excavations, most famously those at Herculaneum (1738) and Pompeii (1748), were often followed by lavishly illustrated scholarly publications describing the sites. The nineteenth century saw the development of further scientific knowledge of geology and a widening acceptance of the theory of evolution.¹⁶ The latter freed scholars from explaining human history according to the Biblical concept that the world was created only a few thousand years before the birth of Christ. Equally important—particularly for the new discipline of Egyptology—was Napoleon's expedition to Egypt (1798-1800), and the decoding of hieroglyphics in 1822 by Jean François Champollion (1790-1832). Another French pioneer in the field of Egyptology was Achille Constant Théodore Émile Prisse d'Avennes (1807-79), who, from 1836 through 1844, made drawings of Egyptian and Islamic monuments and published many illustrated books containing his observations, among them his famous *Les monuments égyptiens* (1847). Montgailhard recounts that Lecomte du Nouÿ visited

¹⁴ On the other hand, the artist had also submitted the more traditional history picture *Oedipus's Farewell to Jocasta* (fig. 37), the Orientalist *The Dream of Cosrou* (fig. 88), and a somewhat bizarre genre scene *The Butchers of Venice* (fig. 40).

¹⁵ See also chapter I, p. 44 and note 116. The catalogue of both the 1878 Salon and the Exposition Universelle list his address as rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, 70 bis, whereas the 1877 Salon catalogue provides the address as rue des Beaux-Arts, 9.

¹⁶ For a general survey of the history of archaeology see Schnapp 1996.

Prisse d'Avennes, who lived in a house filled with Egyptian artifacts and gladly shared his knowledge. He also allowed the artist access to the plates for his books, illustrations which had a considerable influence on Lecomte de Nouÿ.

The cours d'archéologie at the École des Beaux-Arts

In addition to personal access to one of the great scholars of his time, Lecomte du Nouÿ had other means of learning about the classical past. The most important of these, perhaps, was the curriculum at the École des Beaux-Arts. The chief goal of the academic program at the École was to teach students how to draw, and ultimately how to paint, the human body; it was only in the accurate representation of the human figure that an appropriate narrative could be conveyed. To this end, students were also expected to study history, mythology, and the Bible. During the *prix de Rome* competition, for example, candidates had to begin their work as soon as they were informed of the particular subject to be treated. Once in the confinement of his individual studio, the competitor could no longer research or discuss the subject with anyone. It was therefore important to have internalized an extensive historical repertory in order to avoid mistakes that could disqualify one's composition. To instill this knowledge, the École offered an extensive library, and everyone was required to attend a variety of classes. Students of painting not only followed courses in drawing, anatomy, and perspective, but also in aesthetics, the history of art, history, and archeology.

The *cours d'archéologie* was taught in the amphitheatre of the École, a horseshoe-shaped auditorium decorated in 1841 with an imposing wall painting by Paul Delaroche (1797-1856) titled the *Hemicycle* (L'hémicycle). It depicts seventy-five famous artists on either side of three enthroned figures of antiquity—the painter Apelles, the architect Ictinus, and the sculptor Phidias. At their feet a personification of Glory prepares to award the laurel wreaths of fame to a new generation of artists (detail fig. 60). This enormous painting was Delaroche's reply to Ingres's *The Apotheosis of Homer* (1827, fig. 61), and it was in the presence of this august work of art that students received their principal training about the civilizations of the past. In 1889 Alexis Lemaistre (dates unknown), a painter who had studied at the École, described the various courses taught,

and after citing many examples of the historical subjects covered, he mentioned that in the month of June there were two sessions devoted to costume:

Models were chosen, whose type comes as close as possible to that of the people represented; the professor orders a model to mount the table, and in the blink of an eye, re-dresses them in a tunic or a toga [...] and there is Cicero at the tribune, or Marius at the ruins of Carthage [...]; and under applause of the whole amphitheatre, there is Ramses with the straight tunic, glass beads, and the ibis head in his hair, or Vercingétorix [...]. With every appearance, the students have a few minutes to make sketches. The course we just described is the ideal course that the knowledgeable professor would certainly like to continue. Unfortunately, the École, above all anxious to teach the students the nude, has restrained this education: only the Greek, Egyptian, Assyrian, and ancient Roman civilizations are brought in front of the painters' and sculptors' eyes. One only teaches them how to clothe the antique, and they would have to search elsewhere if they were to dress their figures in satin, velour, or brocades.¹⁷

The Role of Sculpture

Ancient sculpture—or at least the plaster casts made from it—also played a significant role in the understanding of classical art. Unlike painting of the time, ancient sculptures had survived the centuries in great numbers, and their well-proportioned human forms came to represent the very essence of the academic ideal. Ancient sculpture served two main didactic purposes: it not only demonstrated perfect classical proportions, but also provided many pieces of the historical and mythological puzzle. For example, when Lecomte du Nouÿ attended Gérôme's first class at the École in 1864, the model was the antique statue of Germanicus.¹⁸ Though Gérôme presented the work primarily as a form to be drawn, he may also have discussed the Roman general's military deeds. Further, plaster casts made tireless models and were readily available in different sizes. Their light tone and three-dimensionality provided ideal surfaces for catching the variations of light and shade a draftsman needed to convey volume. Like most artists, Lecomte du Nouÿ is known to have purchased casts at the *atelier de moulage* of the

¹⁷ Lemaistre 1889, p. 155-156.

¹⁸ See also chapter I, note 36. The sculpture is now believed to represent Augustus.

Louvre, including one of the *Venus of Milo* and of Michelangelo's *Dying Slave*.¹⁹

Photographs of the artist in his studio show these life-size casts with many other smaller statues (figs. 5-7).

Beyond anatomy, proportion, and historical information, sculptures also provided a formal source of inspiration for artists. As mentioned earlier, Lecomte du Nouÿ's figure of Gilliat fighting with the monster in his painting *The Toilers of the Sea* (*Les travailleurs de la mer*, fig. 56) is reminiscent of the famous ancient marble sculpture of the *Laocoön*. The painter also seems to have used an alabaster portrait of Pharaoh Amenophis IV in the Louvre as the model for pharaoh's face in *Ramses in his Harem* (fig. 102; cat. 201, and fig. 103).²⁰ In addition, the plaster sculpture of *The Blind Belisarius Resting* (1791, fig. 62) by Antoine Denis Chaudet (1763-1810) might well have inspired the poses of the blind Homer and his young guide in both of his Homer paintings (figs. 77, 80). The bust of the blind Homer, the so-called Hellenistic blind type (fig. 63), which still exists in at least twenty-two copies after a Greek original, obviously influenced the facial features of the blind Homer in Lecomte du Nouÿ's paintings.²¹ Since the Renaissance this head inspired many artists; Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) eloquently described its emotional impact:

This sunken blindness, the inward bound vision strengthens the inner life ever more and completes the father of poets. Well-developed from endless speaking are these cheeks, these speaking-muscles, these trodden paths on which gods and heroes descend to the mortals; the willing mouth which is only the gate of such visions, seems to jabber like a child, and has all the naiveté of the first innocence; the hair and beard hides and honors the size of the head. Aimlessly, passionless rests this man, who is there for himself, and the world that fulfills him is his preoccupation and his reward.²²

Lecomte du Nouÿ must have known this bust from the copy in the ancient sculpture department at the Louvre.²³ When he needed to represent the poet's face in his Homer painting, where better to turn than to this famous image? William Bouguereau

¹⁹ Rionnet 1996, p. 365. Lecomte du Nouÿ is recorded as having purchased the two plasters on November 25, 1878.

²⁰ Judith Gautier, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 60-61; for the French text see cat. 201.

²¹ On the ancient bust see, Richter 1984, p. 174, repr.

²² Schefold 1943, p. 142. See also the exhibition catalogue *Goethe und die Kunst*, Frankfurt, Schirn Kunsthalle (1994), cat. nos. 9-10.

²³ Louvre 1922, p. 26 no. 440, plate IX.

(1825-1905) made the same choice in his painting of *Homer and his Guide* (1874, fig. 64), as had many other artists. This bust of Homer was also one of the sculptures reproduced in the first volume of Charles Bargue's drawing course for art students (Goupil's *Cours de dessin*). Here the bust is rendered twice on a single sheet—once in a schematic and rudimentary form and again in a highly finished version (fig. 65). As Lecomte du Nouÿ provided several drawings after classical sculptures to be lithographed by Bargue for his course, one wonders if the Homer bust reproduced in Bargue's book might have been yet another of his contributions to the publication.²⁴ Even if he did not provide this particular drawing, he must at least have known all the plates that were finally involved in the publication. However, the Musée de Grenoble possesses a preparatory drawing of the Homer head in Lecomte du Nouÿ's 1881 triptych, showing the same slight three-quarter view as in the final painting (fig. 66). This suggests the artist studied from a sculpture or cast that he could view from an angle, rather than from the *cours de dessin* plate, which provides a strictly frontal view.

But there were other historical objects, too, that artists used to evoke extinct civilizations, and Lecomte du Nouÿ's work contains a range of such references. Judith Gautier has noted that the scepter with rock crystals in Hector's hand, shown in the right wing of the 1881 Homer triptych (fig. 80), was based on an object discovered by archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann during his excavations of Troy. In the same area of the painting there appears a carved relief of Athena, which Lecomte du Nouÿ apparently adapted from a Hellenistic coin.²⁵ Moreau-Vauthier informs us that the artist had discovered the lanterns depicted near the corpses in his painting *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82) while visiting the Boulacq Museum in Cairo.²⁶ Similarly, his large painting of *Eros* (fig. 42) was, according to the catalogue of the Salon of 1874, inspired by an ancient gemstone. While we do not know the exact object Lecomte du Nouÿ used, such small ancient objects typically contain a figure in profile, like the painted eros. Yet little of the precious character of that object survives in Lecomte du Nouÿ's grandiose picture, a reminder that historicist compositions always tread a fine line between academic evidence and artistic inventiveness.

²⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 114. On the *cours de Dessin*, see also chapter I, p. 24 and note 43.

²⁵ Chevillot 1995, p. 208.

²⁶ Moreau-Vauthier 1900, p. 22; for the French text see cat. 64.

Another example of how the imaginary and scholarly converged in the work of Lecomte du Nouÿ is demonstrated by one of the artist's later, for him more atypical history paintings, *The Gallic Coast Guard* (Les gardes-côtes (Ancienne Gaule), 1888, fig. 67; cat. 218). Praised by the critic Alboize for the "type of his rude ancestors" and the painting's wild barbaric aspect, the work shows four men and a dog guarding the rocky shore in pre-historic times.²⁷ Lecomte du Nouÿ defined the Northern French locale by giving much attention to the rough sea and heavy mist, which the sun barely manages to pierce. The men's bearskin clothes, the wooden shields and a spear complete the historical setting. Montgailhard catalogued the painting in 1906 as belonging to the Musée archéologique de Saint-Germain-en-Laye (now called the Musée des Antiquités Nationales), to which it was donated in 1895 by Albert Le Roy, Conseiller Municipal of that city.²⁸ This specific destination for the work seems to have been preconceived, implying that this illustration of early French history functioned primarily as a museological document rather than as a work of art in its own right. Only later was it transferred to an art museum, first the Louvre and presently the Musée d'Orsay. The painting is also a rare foray into Gallic times,²⁹ as Lecomte du Nouÿ usually chose more recent episodes, such as Napoleonic subjects or the Franco-Prussian War, when depicting French history.³⁰

"Archeologists" and Modernists

In 1876, when Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited the first of his two Homer triptychs (fig. 77; cat. 105), the writer Edmond About called it "quite a bit modern, this antiquity of Gérôme and his friends."³¹ About was referring to the novelty of the painting's subject, as it was not a conventional depiction of a mythological theme, but a representation of the historical figure of Homer in a common genre scene. That same year, the critic Gabriel Marc analyzed several other painters with a predilection for reviving ancient cultures in a

²⁷ J. Alboize, *L'Artiste* 1889; for text French see cat. 218.

²⁸ Paris, Archives du Louvre (P8 1895, 23 Mars), six letters regarding the donation of "Un tableau de M. Lecomte-du-Nouy représentant une scène préhistorique." Also, Montgailhard 1906, p. 64.

²⁹ See also cat. 179.

³⁰ A rare exception is a picture called *Les Guei-Apens*, or *Les Nervi* (1873, location unknown), which is set in the Middle Ages (cat. 82).

³¹ See also notes 11 and 71; for text see cat. 111.

historically accurate manner, calling them the "archeologists." Although Marc saw these painters as the representatives of a new school, the concept, as we have seen, had existed for several decades. Despite the fact that Lecomte du Nouÿ's name is not singled out in Marc's discussion, the text still sheds light on this painter's style of work and his artistic convictions:

ARCHEOLOGISTS. We have to note a new school that has accomplished its work alongside the modern idealists, of whom Jules Breton [1827-1906] seems to be the incontestable master. We will call it the school of the archeologists. This word suffices to indicate the differences of their methods. While Breton and his pupils try to express truth in its beauty and find their style in rural scenes, the archeological painters like Gustave Moreau [1826-1898], [Lawrence] Alma-Tadema [1836-1912], Hector Leroux [1829-1900], [Henri Paul] Motte [1846-1922] and many others, restore antiquity as it would have been, and therefore study ancient documents, vases, the works of art in our museums, the discoveries of Pompeii, and everything that can bring them on the track of customs, clothing, and apparel of the times that they want to revive. First of all they are scholars and some of them are also excellent painters. They are no longer pleased with the conventions of the school of David. The Greek columns, the tripods with three branches and the eternal drapery with straight pleats no longer suffice them. They need bizarre temples with unknown architectural elements, dresses beset with stones as the one of Salomé by Gustave Moreau, ancient ceremonies like the funeral of Themistocles by Mr. Leroux, or the most astonishing corporal punishments such as the prisoners of war being devoured by Baal in Babylon [*The Moloch Baal Devouring the Prisoners of War in Babylon* (fig. 68)]. Mr. Motte, the ingenious author of this latter painting, has placed himself for several years among the painters of this order. His large strange scene, in which slaves, warriors, women, and elephants march in a long procession in a special landscape towards the immense mouth of a granite monster, strikes the imagination and reveals a deep study, a foolproof patience, and a real talent for composition and color. But we permit ourselves a criticism that applies to this whole school. Life, movement, and passion are lacking from these works. The detail has until now absorbed the attention of their authors. They have amassed precious materials, and through research they have reconstituted the monuments, the aspects, and the costumes of distant ages; in a certain way they have rediscovered the envelope, the exterior of antiquity. Yet they fail to know how to animate it and make it alive. One painter will come by, who, using all his accessories, will depict purely, in a sumptuous and real décor, or in a true Oriental landscape, Homer's heroes fighting before Troy, or the somber dramas of the family of the Atridae. He will have at his disposal all the elements that constitute the local color. He will only add something, a sigh, a spark, a nothing, genius.³²

³² Gabriel Marc, "Au Salon de 1876," in: Marc 1889, p. 90-91: "Archéologues. Nous devons signaler une école nouvelle qui accomplit son oeuvre à côté de celle des idéalistes modernes dont Jules Breton nous semble le maître incontestable. Nous l'appellerons l'école des archéologues. Ce mot suffit pour indiquer la différence de leurs procédés. Pendant que Breton et ses élèves cherchent à exprimer la vérité dans sa beauté et trouvent le style dans les scènes champêtres, les peintres archéologues comme Gustave Moreau, Alma-

Here Marc delivered a thoughtful view of the state of contemporary art in the second half of the nineteenth century. He proclaimed Jules Breton the leader of the "modern idealists," probably because of the artist's socially aware depictions of rural life; this is quite an alternative perspective on an artist who is these days generally viewed as a thoroughly traditional painter. In contrast to the "idealists," the critic then singled out painters who aspired to revive antiquity, yet who also wanted to depart from the formal and generic principles of Neoclassicism, as David had defined it. Marc again selected a surprising group of representatives, including artist who are familiar today, like Moreau and Alma Tadema, as well as others, like Leroux and Motte, now all but forgotten. Yet even the pairing of the former seems unusual, as Moreau is now perceived as a singular symbolist whose works are far removed in style and spirit from the more straightforward, meticulously painted classical genre scenes of Alma Tadema. What united all the artists placed in this category by Marc, however, was their scholarly interest in their subjects. They all carefully researched ancient civilizations through surviving material and expanded upon this knowledge by infusing compositions with a multitude of unusual details most often rendered in a painstakingly illusionistic style. This strategy did not always receive unequivocal praise, and the artists were sometimes reproached for burying the main theme in minute details.

Tadéma, Hector Leroux, Motte et beaucoup d'autres, reconstituent l'antiquité telle qu'elle devait être et pour cela étudient les documents anciens, les vases, les objets d'art de nos musées, les découvertes de Pompéi et tout ce qui peut les mettre sur la trace des mœurs, des costumes et des parures des âges qu'ils font revivre. Ce sont des savants d'abord et plusieurs sont aussi d'excellents peintres. Ils ne se contentent plus des conventions de l'école de David. Les colonnes grecques, les trépieds à trois branches et l'éternelle draperie aux plis droits ne leur suffisent plus. Il leur faut les temples bizarres aux architectures inconnues, les robes constellées de pierreries comme celle de la Salomé de Gustave Moreau, les cérémonies anciennes comme les funérailles de Thémistocle de M. Leroux, ou les supplices les plus étonnants, comme celui des prisonniers de guerre dévorés par Baal, à Babylone. M. Motte, l'auteur ingénieux de ce dernier tableau, s'est classé depuis plusieurs années parmi les peintres de cet ordre. Sa grande scène étrange où les esclaves, les guerriers les femmes et les éléphants défilent en longue théorie, dans un paysage spécial, jusqu'à la bouche immense du monstre de granit, frappe l'imagination et révèle une étude approfondie, une patience à toute épreuve, un talent réel de mise en scène et de coloris. Mais on nous permettra une critique qui s'applique, du reste, à toute cette école. La vie, le mouvement, la passion manquent à ces oeuvres. Le détail a jusqu'à présent absorbé l'attention de leurs auteurs. Ils ont entassé des matériaux précieux, ils ont reconstitué à force de recherches les monuments, les aspects, les costumes des âges reculés; ils ont en quelque sorte retrouvé l'enveloppe, l'extérieur de l'antiquité. Il leur manque de savoir l'animer et la faire vivre. Un peintre viendra qui, se servant de tous ces accessoires, représentera au naturel, dans un décor somptueux et réel, ou dans un vrai paysage oriental, les héros d'Homère luttant devant Troie, ou les sombres drames de la famille des Atrides. Celui-là aura à sa disposition tous les éléments qui constituent la couleur locale. Seulement il y ajoutera quelque chose, un souffle, une étincelle, un rien, le génie."

The “*fini*”

The high finish employed by most archeological painters was not merely a random aesthetic preference, but was based on a deeply rooted theoretical significance. In 1878 Dubosc de Pesquidoux argued that all of Lecomte du Nouÿ's characteristics were “acquired, wanted, and systematical.”³³ Art historian Albert Boime has explored the related concepts of correction and *fini* (degree of finish) in the context of the academic artist's education as a draftsman.³⁴ The classical ideal was best expressed in the perfectly rendered model; the *néo-grec* painter did not merely represent the human figure, however. He also included in his works ancient objects and architecture in order to construct a credible overall composition. Essentially, the visual recreation of the historic past called for intricate craftsmanship in order to make it more convincing to the viewer. The stone ruins of ancient civilizations were thus reconstructed and reanimated on canvas. Other elements that typified archeological paintings of this period, such as their often explicit depiction of barbaric violence, were also well served by meticulous craftsmanship. For example, the “most astonishing corporal punishments” presented in the Motte painting mentioned by Marc (fig. 68)³⁵ conveyed more power in an apparently well-documented setting. The literally incredible nature of the subject, it was presumably reasoned, would best be anchored in a context of scientific truth; this would assist the viewer in suspending his initial disbelief and allow him to approach the work instead in a spirit of awe. A typical salon exhibition contained thousands of paintings and artists had to vie for attention. One way of doing so was to create violent, even gruesome, depictions intended to evoke emotions in the viewer of the kind stirred by horror movies today.

³³ Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24; for French text see cat. 64.

³⁴ Boime 1971, p. 33-34: “Conceptually, the correction was linked to the notion of perfection rooted in the admiration of antiquity. Correcting a drawing meant more than the adjustment to the lines to the model; it implied the adherence to classical proportions. Correction therefore denoted perfection – a criterion in drawing analogous conceptually to the *fini*, and therefore an intellectual preoccupation. Just as the *fini* served to demonstrate an artist's knowledge of archeological details, so the ‘correct’ drawing demonstrated the draughtsman's knowledge of classical works. This explains the Academic horror of strict observation of the model; when a pupil copied a figure's ‘defects’ he committed a double sin in terms of Academic criteria: admitting ignorance of antiquity and rejecting the concept of correction.”

³⁵ See note 32. For another of Henri Motte's pictures that perfectly fits this category see his *César s'ennuie* (*Cesar is bored*, 1882, oil on canvas, 229 x 328 cm, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Narbonne), which depicts the emperor being carried around, passing both imprisoned Christians as well as caged lions. Reproduced in Lepage 2002, no. 19, p. 36.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82) is a perfect example of how sensational historical representations and traditional academic craftsmanship might effectively converge, and how such pictures often succeeded in capturing the attention of a large audience.

Progress in Art

As we have seen, Dubosc de Pesquidoux believed that the *néo-grecs* were rebelling against the Romantics, while Marc suggested that the "archeologists" were rejecting the conventions of the school of David. It seems, however, that the specific interest of these artists in the revival of ancient cultures represented a general reaction against previous artistic schools. The *néo-grecs* sought to communicate with contemporary viewers with their flamboyant approach to historical subjects as well as by the replacement of grand themes with more accessible genre scenes, making their paintings "quite modern" in About's eyes.³⁶ Also significant in this respect are the words Lecomte du Nouÿ expressed after the death of his revered teacher Gérôme.³⁷

Paraphrasing Lecomte du Nouÿ, for him, progress in art developed as if it were a succession of links within a chain, an evolution of alternating ideas, artistic schools, or formulas. He viewed Gérôme as the artistic heir of Paul Delaroche. It was Delaroche who had taught his pupil Gérôme (from 1840-43) to offer the public interesting and well-chosen, yet unfamiliar scenes, and to distill all their picturesque and dramatic potential by means of careful research. For example, Delaroche's *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey in the Tower of London in 1554* (1833, National Gallery, London) demonstrates how the artist created dramatic tension in his composition: it depicts the moment just before the protagonist's decapitation. Lecomte du Nouÿ then argued that, after Delaroche, Gérôme had nothing to contribute of his own to Romantic painting, and that he could not, and would not, imitate his teacher. Gérôme's own classical background drew him back to ancient art as a source, but he went to it with a desire to transform it. Gérôme thus invented a modern and lively historical genre that resonated better with his middlebrow

³⁶ See notes 11 and 71, for the French text see cat. 111.

³⁷ Montgailhard 1906, p. 25-27.

clients than the manner associated with purely academic formulas. In order not to be perceived as a *pompier* one had to revive an epoch with extinct individuals and know all the intimate details of the milieu in which they lived. *Artiste pompier* was the pejorative term applied to those who painted classical figures wearing helmets resembling those of a fireman (*pompier*). These artists supposedly worked in a neoclassical mode without inventiveness, and the term *artiste pompier* eventually came to be used for most artists working in the academic tradition.³⁸ It is telling in this context that Lecomte du Nouÿ, who, in this day and age would almost certainly be considered the quintessential *pompier*, would have been greatly offended by this characterization.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's discussion of Gérôme's contribution to the evolution of art in the mid-nineteenth century raises the question of his own position within the larger artistic chain. Should he be considered the next transforming link after Gérôme, or as part of the same unit? Even though Lecomte du Nouÿ flourished a generation later, most contemporary critics would have argued for the latter because his name was so closely associated with that of his teacher.³⁹ If, on the other hand, Lecomte du Nouÿ's work indeed represented some kind of break from that of Gérôme, what distinguished it? And can this distinction be compared to that between Gérôme and Delaroche? In addition to certain stylistic differences, it might be argued, Lecomte du Nouÿ's continuing attempts, successful or not, to paint large-scale narrative paintings are what set him apart from Gérôme. Gérôme seems to have been satisfied with creating small- to medium-size easel paintings, a strategy necessitated by his meticulous, time-consuming technique. Yet Lecomte du Nouÿ's interest in creating large history paintings can hardly be regarded as a significant departure from his master's philosophy, and ultimately remains fully within the boundaries of their shared academic approach to art. Moreover, when Lecomte du Nouÿ formed his ideas about artistic evolution, it was his very adherence to academic principles that prevented him from representing a distinct and innovative voice that might speak for a new generation. It seems, in fact, that he never sought such a role. What was important to him, however, was to be perceived as something more than a superficial

³⁸ For two extensive discussions of the subject see Thuillier 1984, and Lécharny 1998.

³⁹ Lecomte du Nouÿ's admiration for Gérôme would never wane, as can also be witnessed by Carpeaux's bust of Gérôme, seen standing on top of a clock in his studio taken late in his life (fig. 7).

painter, or a *pompier*, but rather, in his most ambitious works, at least, as an artist able to convey profound ideas.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, critics increasingly began to use the notion of artistic progress as a qualifier; and the concept of originality gradually took precedence over the traditional academic values of emulation and continuity. Thus, innovation became an intrinsic factor in the assessment of art, and each advancement in this regard was viewed positively by critics. When Gaston Schéfer, for example, wrote his assessment of Orientalist painting in 1882, he was already tired of the genre. This, he argued, was a natural result of the "bitter but necessary law of progress."⁴⁰ Nonetheless, no matter how loud the voices of these champions of originality and progress were in the intellectual debate, the audience for art in general inevitably represented a wide range of tastes, enabling traditional artists to continue in their ways. Similarly, the introduction of *néo-grec* painting had taken place some thirty years before Marc wrote his 1876 assessment of the "archeologists," again indicating how influential the *néo-grec* phenomenon had been on a great number of artists. And although some *néo-grecs* may have perceived themselves as distinctly of their time, especially in contrast to the previous generation of grand history painters, for many critics their degree of innovation was not significant enough. Consequently, some attacks against the *néo-grecs* were fierce, and already in 1865, the painter-critic Gonzague Privat berated them for their conservatism:

As long as one only addresses ancient art as a tradition or an education, modern art can only gain from it; but if one returns to it as the principal goal of all research, if one requires it to the detriment of nature, if one still searches the ruins where it is still alive in order to find a more or less subtle subject, a more or less banal word-puzzle, a somewhat cold charade, instead of expressing what one has in one's head and one's heart, the art of our time will be stationary.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Schéfer 1882, p. 177-78, for the French text see cat. 172; see also notes 106, 182.

⁴¹ Privat 1865, p. 10: "Tant que l'on ne s'adressera à l'art antique que comme à une tradition, à un enseignement, l'art moderne ne pourra qu'y gagner; mais lorsqu'on recourra à lui comme au but principal de toutes recherches, lorsqu'on le requerra au détriment de la nature, lorsqu'on fouillera les ruines au milieu desquelles il survit encore, afin d'y trouver un sujet plus ou moins subtil, un logogriphe plus ou moins banal, une charade plus ou moins froide, au lieu d'exprimer ce que l'on a dans la tête et dans le coeur, l'art de notre époque sera stationnaire."

This dismissal of historical painting, however, is far removed from Privat's laudatory assessment in 1877 of Lecomte du Nouÿ's art, including many paintings that conform entirely to the *néo-grec* characteristics.⁴²

The concept of progress in art has so far emerged in these writings in different guises. Lecomte du Nouÿ's own analysis referred to Gérôme's development of *néo-grec* painting as a reaction against Delaroche. For Chaumelin, progress meant a parting from traditional academic conventions, and Privat specifically accused the "archeologists" of obstructing the advancement of modern art by not expressing emotions or feelings and caring too much for trivial details. Georges Lafenestre saw progress yet another way, interpreting it in terms of advanced technical skills. In his review of the 1868 Salon, he named Lecomte du Nouÿ but otherwise did not discuss his picture of *Ajax* (cat. 44). While discussing how the past, as well as specific historical masters, had inspired living artists, Lafenestre grouped Lecomte du Nouÿ with such other painters as Alma Tadema, Leroux, and Louis Frédéric Schutzenberger (1825-1903), describing them as artists who "interpret familiar antiquity, often with spirit, sometimes with grandeur."⁴³ By contrast, however, Lafenestre divided imitators of medieval art into two groups: the mechanical ones, producing with maniacal rigor the most bizarre aspects of an "infantile and imperfect art," and those who intelligently represented the historic past by applying all means at their disposal, thanks to the subsequent "progress in art." In other words, Lafenestre recognized a gradual progress in technical skills and was not too bothered by the fact that artists looked back to history for inspiration and subjects. That was undoubtedly Lecomte du Nouÿ's approach, and several of his *néo-grec* works will now be discussed in greater detail, and in relation to their critical reception.

⁴² See Privat 1877, appendix V. A painter/critic Gonzague-Privat is listed in the artist's dictionary by Bénézit as born in Montpellier in 1843 (unknown death date). He studied with Barrias, Dauzats, Lazarges and Dehodencq. He exhibited at the Salon and wrote reviews that were mainly published in *L'événement*, and in 1873 founded *L'Art français*. If this is indeed the same Gonzague Privat as the one who wrote the booklet *Place aux jeunes! Causeries critique sur le Salon de 1865* (Paris 1865) from which the above quote derives, then he had drastically changed his mind about the *néo-grec* painters. In the 1877 article, he clearly praises Lecomte du Nouÿ's work executed in a *néo-grec* style, and claims to be a personal friend of the artist. It should also be noted that Lecomte du Nouÿ painted a portrait of a certain G. Privat de Fressenel, and of Mlle Cécile Privat de Fressenel, and Léonce Privat de Fressenel. Could these have been relatives of the critic, and would that indicate a personal friendship or at least an acquaintance with Lecomte du Nouÿ? See cats. 212, 238, 239.

⁴³ Lafenestre 1881, p. 40; for the French text see cat. 43.

The Greek Sentinel (La sentinelle grecque, ca. 1865)

Lecomte du Nouÿ conceived his first *néo-grec* painting, *The Greek Sentinel* (cat. 11), after reading Aeschylus's trilogy, the *Oresteia* (458 BC). While the whereabouts of this painting are presently unknown, Guy de Montgailhard's book on the artist includes an original engraving by Lecomte du Nouÿ with the same composition (fig. 69). Montgailhard also provided anecdotes concerning the genesis of this work, recounting that Gérôme's young student immediately knew how he wanted to compose his subject and started an *ébauche* (the preliminary stage of a painting).⁴⁴ His fellow students enthusiastically encouraged him to finish it, yet the artist was reluctant to spend the little money he had on hiring a model. Three friends then agreed to pose for him—Louis Loustaunau (1846-98) for the hands, Lehoux for the arms, and a third to model the clothing.⁴⁵ At the 1865 Salon, the picture drew some attention and Privat called it Lecomte du Nouÿ's breakthrough work:

It was quite a revolution in the *néo-grec* art, this little Greek guard, and the blow had an even stronger impact as the hand from which it came was trying for the first time. The public surrendered without second thoughts to this refined and frank art that spoke high and strong and seemed to delight in analysis, without risking being lost in minute detail. In fact, such fear would be puerile. So marvelously treated were the accessories, they retreated discreetly against the poetic theme that the artist had singled out, and did not call for attention until the mind was fully aware of the grandeur of this microscopic composition. The poet could say: "See here, the men from the divine bard of Ionia!" The archeologist would find the thousand chiseled details that revived antiquity only to his eyes, and the average man, who doesn't see as far, or as close, would conclude that Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ was simply an excellent painter whose work one would have to look for conscientiously at the next Salon. From this moment on he had made his mark.⁴⁶

Gautier praised the little work as "a pleasant invention, full of poetry and style. The size of two hands, but the equivalent of a history painting."⁴⁷ The archeologist Léon Heuzey, who had taught "*l'histoire et les antiquités*" at the École des Beaux-Arts since

⁴⁴ Montgailhard 1906, p. 15-16.

⁴⁵ On Lehoux, see chapter I note 33. It is tempting to relate this passage to a detailed sketch for a hand surrounded by drapery in a private collection in Paris, see cat. 355.

⁴⁶ Privat 1877; see appendix V.

⁴⁷ Gautier 1865, p. 887; for the French text see cat. 11.

1863, provided Lecomte du Nouÿ with some detailed criticism of the armor.⁴⁸ But this occurred after the fact, of course, and did not prevent the work from being bought by a certain Duc de Mouchy.⁴⁹ The painter, photographer, and critic Maxime du Camp (1822-94) larded his review with the exact passage from the *Oresteia* that had inspired *The Greek Sentinel*: "God, I beg of you, free me of these chores; let me rest from this tiresome wake! All year round, like a dog, I guard atop the palace of the Atreidae, facing the nightly assembly of the stars. Regulators of the seasons for the mortals, brilliant kings of the world, torches of the heaven, I see them, these stars, when they disappear and when they rise. Incessantly I look for the flame signal, this bright fire that has to announce that Troy has fallen." Du Camp greatly approved of this subject and had been waiting for a painter to translate it into a magnificent painting. Ultimately, however, it was not the small size of Lecomte du Nouÿ's picture that prevented it, in his view, from being truly important. Rather, its weakness lay in the artist's excessive interest in what he called "*bric-à-brac*", and his insufficient exploitation of the psychological richness of the subject: the guard's weariness, boredom, and apparently melancholy assessment of his own destiny. Nonetheless, du Camp judged it a promising attempt by the young artist:

There is here a preoccupation with archeological truth that deserves to be lauded; but as Lecomte du Nouÿ was in the mood for research, why did he stop halfway, and why did he engrave the bird consecrated to Minerva and emblem of Athens, on this stone merlon that belongs to a palace of Argos? The Argian half-wolf should have been there instead of the cute Athenian. It will be said: "This is of no importance"; I know it. Art is no science, I know that too, and I'm not confusing them. Still, it would have been fairly easy to be exact, the painting would have gained some archaic flavor, which would not have harmed it. Be it as is, in spite of these minor details this canvas is still honorable, and reveals in the author a curious and distinguished spirit. In all, it is rather a vignette than a painting; it's a translation of Aeschylus *ad usum Delphini*, but it is already something to be infatuated with such a poet; if it is not a result, it's a good promise to keep in mind, and something to reckon with.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 16. On Heuzey see Peltre 1997, p. 265.

⁴⁹ This was probably Antoine de Noailles, duc de Mouchy (1841-1909).

⁵⁰ Du Camp 1865, p. 668-669; for the French text see cat. 11.

The Invocation to Neptune (L'invocation à Neptune, 1866)

Lecomte du Nouÿ had his first official success with *The Invocation to Neptune* (fig. 70; cat. 26), which was awarded a gold medal at the Salon of 1866. This honor meant that his future Salon submissions did not have to be scrutinized by the jury. Gautier was deeply impressed by this little picture that had been inspired by the Homeric Hymns:

There is nothing to equal the mysterious solemnity of this antique scene. The statue of Poseidon, in the stiff style of Aegina, is seen from the back, trident in hand, and occupies the foreground so that we are facing the family who is sacrificing to the god in order that he will look kindly on the absent one, exposed to the perils of the sea. A young woman, clad in long white draperies, her hair held with a band, holds out a branch, and in calm but fervent attitude pronounces the sacramental words. Further back, an old woman in a cap decorated with strange designs seems to be repeating the words of the hymn. One is the wife, the other is probably the mother of the traveler; other members of the family, young people already growing up, are also beseeching help. Mr. Lecomte-Dunouy has a rare, deep feeling for the Antique. Although the small size of *The Sacrifice to Neptune* will mean that it will escape the attention of the crowd, it is nevertheless one of the most serious of the Salon.⁵¹

The critic and influential art official Charles Blanc (who would become *Directeur des Beaux-Arts* for a second time from 1870 through 1873) also described this painting as a "small work full of grandeur". He further appreciated how the artist had "guessed the religious poetry of ancient sacrifices," and how he had represented the magnificence of the interior of the temple, in spite of the fact that ignorant viewers would assume that such spaces would have been coldly symmetrical.⁵² Indeed, it was the artist's skill in infusing life into antiquity that attracted people to such pictures in the first place.

Lecomte du Nouÿ might have been inspired here by a work from his former teacher Charles Gleyre, who was an important figure in the *néo-grec* movement. Gleyre's painting *Hercules and Omphale* (1862, fig. 71) is also dominated by several large columns and a smaller one supporting a statue, architectural elements that serve as a

⁵¹ Gautier, cited in English translation from *Tradition and Revolution* 1993, p. 148.

⁵² Blanc, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 115; for the French text see cat. 26. On Blanc see, Bouillon 1990.

backdrop for the main characters in the foreground. Even if he did not know the work, a comparison of the two pictures demonstrates the ways in which Lecomte du Nouÿ tried to venture beyond such straightforward compositions.⁵³ He abandoned the straight parallel placement of figures seen in Gleyre's painting and heightened the drama by introducing an unseen light source that reduces the Neptune sculpture to a silhouette, casting strong shadows and a gloomy atmosphere over the rest of the composition. The smoke spreading from the tripod and the fraction of one person's face visible through a cloth covering on her head give the finishing touches to this beautifully mysterious picture. A similarly haunting atmosphere is present in two small studies of heads, in which the artist created dramatic expressions by means of starkly contrasting light effects, one depicting an old woman wearing a veil (fig. 72; cat. 352), and the other a grisaille of a bearded man (fig. 73; cat. 353). In a broader comparison, *The Invocation to Neptune* recalls David's *The Lictors Bringing to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789, fig. 74), which shows similar compositional characteristics and treatment of light, especially in the left background. Inevitably, however, Lecomte du Nouÿ's mystery did not seduce everybody. The critic Félix Jahyer called the painting very ordinary, and found in it "all the procedures of the école, the academic process, polished painting, and even that copied without grandeur."⁵⁴

The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian (La folie d'Ajæx le Télamonien, ca. 1867)

Another of Lecomte du Nouÿ's early *néo-grec* pictures is *The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian* (cat. 43), which he exhibited at the 1868 Salon. Its present location is unknown, and a reproduction does not seem to exist. At the time, however, it was commented upon by several critics. Périer praised its concept and "the intense energy of terror and emotion that fills this grand little frame," elements that made up for some dryness in the execution. He called it a picture without equal and an honor to its author and the whole school of Gérôme. One only needed to imagine it much larger, and it would be the most beautiful of grand history paintings, not only from the 1868 Salon but

⁵³ Even if Lecomte du Nouÿ did not know the work directly through his contact with Gleyre, the painting was also exhibited at Goupil's in 1863, where he could have easily seen it. See Hauptman 1996, II, p. 436, no. 808.

⁵⁴ Jahyer 1866; for the French text see cat. 26.

also in general!⁵⁵ There were, however, some entirely negative reactions as well. Apart from providing extensive descriptions of this now-unknown composition, they illustrate the divergent views that shaped the discussion of contemporary art during this period. In his positive review of *Ajax* in *L'Artiste* Henry Houssaye argued that Lecomte du Nouÿ had managed to combine two scenes from the story in one painting, and for once he had even trumped Gérôme in the clever way he conveyed "barbarity and primitive rudeness":

[There was] the scene where the hero, leaving his tent, perceives his fatal illusion, and the scene where he, alone at the seashore, will strike himself with his sword. So Ajax is in his tent, one destined to withstand the winds and rain of a nine-year siege, solidly constructed with planks and wooden joists, covered with skins and rough linen fabrics. At his feet lie the bloody heads and corpses of the butchered sheep, calves, lambs, and rams. The son of Telamon looks mournfully at the victims of his insanity. He leaves his delirium; ashamed of his mistake he amply covers his head with his wide chlamys as he feels unworthy of the sunlight. He searches for his sword on the ground in order to pierce his chest and cries in a grievous voice: "*Unfortunate! I let these cursed Atridae escape from my hands to throw myself on calves and bleating lambs, and I bathed in their blood!* (Sophocles, *Ajax*)." [The phrase in italics was also published in the Salon catalogue.] Behind him rises Athena, all in arms, lit by a supernatural glow, majestic as Hera, implacable as Erinyes. Still annoyed by Ajax's blasphemy, the goddess furiously followed him until the hour of his passage; she touches his head with her finger to push him even further ahead in his despair, to dedicate him to the punishment of the somber Tartar. In the background, near the gate, a group of Salamisian warriors sadly watch the delirium of their king, and the captive of Ajax, Tecmessa, sits on a stool, shattered by grief. Once one has seen this canvas, one remembers it for a long time. It is impossible to better understand and express the grandeur, poetry, and the tragedy of Sophocles's drama. Like Gérôme, Lecomte du Nouÿ not only possesses a knowledge of antiquity but also a feeling for it. Although his manner of painting is derived from that of Gérôme, he remains powerfully original; his work contains a barbarity and primitive rudeness that the painter of *King Candaulus* [1859, Museo de Arte, Ponce, Puerto Rico] and *The Gladiators* [1859, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven] has never expressed. If the Greeks of Agamemnon were to be reborn, they would want to be painted by Lecomte du Nouÿ; if the Greeks of Pericles were to be reborn, they would want to be painted by Gérôme. If one searches for an artist worthy of illustrating the *Iliad* he is found in Lecomte du Nouÿ. We don't want to leave *The Madness of Ajax* without again admiring these Salamisian warriors; there are some seven or eight, and each has a different type and is profoundly accentuated; each expresses a different sentiment, either of sadness or amazement. The captive is adorably beautiful in her attitude of tiredness and sorrow. However great the majesty of Athena, we prefer Ajax and the other figures to the goddess. The bluish glimmer that envelops her

⁵⁵ Périer 1868, p. 47-48; for the French text see cat. 43. On Périer see also chapter I, note 66.

gives her the diaphanous aspect of a specter. One believes her to have been illuminated by electric light. Such effects are usually left to the operators of fairy-tale theaters.⁵⁶

Jules Joly Grangedor, an advocate of traditional aesthetics and a photographer of antiquities, seconded this view and saw nothing outmoded about the subject, calling it a commentary on a literary text of a "completely modern taste."⁵⁷ He commended Lecomte du Nouÿ for conveying in such a small space both his sincere aspirations and a grand design—the traditional measuring rods for evaluating history paintings. Yet he criticized the goddess's marble-like appearance, which he felt was better suited to a white phantom in a medieval legend than to a classical figure. He warned that when the impossible and the conventional meet in a heroic composition they should not clash with verisimilitude and illusion, which he saw as necessary to any complete representation of real life. Lecomte du Nouÿ, and many other artists like him, needed to distinguish between the beauty of form and its pure picturesque character. Gautier, on the other hand, termed the depiction of the enraged goddess truly superb and of a highly poetic quality.⁵⁸

Outright disparagement came from Marius Chaumelin, whose deeply felt objection to some of Lecomte du Nouÿ's later works was cited in Chapter One. He argued strongly against the widespread taste for archeological painting, and he undoubtedly represented the opinion of many in avant-garde circles. His criticism, centered here on Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian*, is worth quoting at length. Not only does it give a very different description of the work, but it also puts the *néo-grec* genre in a broader cultural context by establishing parallels with literature and the performing arts:

The heroes of antiquity are not better treated than those of the First Empire [referring to Napoleonic subjects he had previously discussed]: the cripple Scarron would applaud the travesties that inflict the fantasy of our archeological painters. For us, more surprised than astonished by such irreverence, we ask ourselves how it is possible that the Society of Dramatic Authors allows painting to so encroach on theater. Still, she would not know how to hide: the painters cunningly pillage the popular pieces. Lecomte du Nouÿ, for example, has appropriated one of the most extravagant types of *la Belle Hélène* [the 1864 Jacques Offenbach operetta]. Lecomte du Nouÿ is the best pupil of Gérôme: like his

⁵⁶ Houssaye 1868, p. 323-324; for the French text see cat. 43.

⁵⁷ Grangedor 1868, p. 512-14; for the French text see cat. 43. On Grangedor, see *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité* (supplement to the *GBA*), (December 10, 1871), p. 5-6.

⁵⁸ Gautier 1868, p. 628; for the French text see cat. 43.

master, he graces himself with literature; "Of the old authors he had all the intelligence / And he knows Greek, madam, as well as anyone in France. Greek! O Heaven! Greek! – Greek! What a delight!" If we remember correctly, Lecomte du Nouÿ made his debut at the Salon of 1865, with a translation of Aeschylus *The Greek Sentinel*, drawn from the *Oresteia*; the following year, he received a medal for *The Invocation to Neptune*; today he tackles Sophocles, and in a small picture, on which frame he inscribed a passage of this poet, he unfolds the following scene: Ajax, son of Telamon, the invincible Ajax, has just massacred in his room—where he has gathered them—innocent calves and bleating lambs, that he mistook for the Atridae; all of a sudden he realizes his mistake and, taken by a justified disgust, he widely opens his eyes, tremblingly drapes himself in his coat and presses himself against the wall; a gigantic woman, white and gloomy as the statue of the Commander [from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*], carrying a spear in her hand, a helmet on her head, and an owl on her shoulder—you will have recognized Minerva—descends from the ceiling in the midst of fireworks, and presses her heavy hand on the forehead of the Telamonian. The kinsmen of the latter, his friends and slaves, placed in the rear coulisse, look stupefied at these events...; they wait to see the hero disappear through a trapdoor. Lecomte du Nouÿ would like us to believe that he discovered in Sophocles this slaughterer in a room, this giantess who performs a *pose blanche*, these fireworks and these anodyne supernumeraries. We don't fall for it. The extras and accessories are taken from the comic theater; the Minerva is perhaps a papier-mâché caryatid detached from some temple of wisdom—from the palace of the legislative body, for example—but certainly, the Ajax is the martial idiot that we have seen in *la Belle Hélène*. This whole scene is a heroic joke. The author of *The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian* will forgive us the somewhat crude frankness of these observations: he is young, he draws well, and will know how to free himself of this meager and smooth touch that he borrowed from his master; he has a laudable ambition, enough elevate himself above banality; he read in Horace that the ivy crown that edifies wise foreheads, *doctorarum ederae praemia frontium*, gives man immortality, and that, in order to not be confused with the masses, there is nothing to do but frequent the sacred forest, to watch the nymphs and satyrs dance, and to evoke the shades of the heroes... All that is certainly quite nice, but even the slightest grain of life, some reality, would be better. And why do we import Atridae, Ajax, Ulysses, Achilles, and other antediluvian men, for whom we would not have enough ropes or gallows if they were to come back today! For too long did these heroes drag their buskins and bestial passions on the scene. Literary Romanticism has banished it from the theater. So where do those who keep a remnant from the classical domination of painting still come from? "It's David's fault!" cry those long-haired painters who eagerly forget that Delacroix has painted Bacchus, Orpheus, Ariana, Medea, Andromeda, and many other gods, half-gods, and heroes from antiquity. No, my friends, it is no more the fault of David than that of Delacroix. It is the fault of the inconsequent audience that yawns at a tragedy from Racine and tolerates the tragedy by the first smearer that comes along. It's the fault of the attested critics who carefully describe these tragic-comic pictures, and who pretend that it's great art. It's the fault of the amateurs who buy such rubbish, only to relegate them into a corner of their room and to never look at them again. It is the fault of Alexandre Dumas fils, who is to have bought Fromentin's *Centaurs* [Salon 1868, Musée du Petit Palais, Paris], he who knows very well that Marco is worthy

of Laïs, that not every rake has ram's feet, and that on the racetrack one still sees some man-horses.⁵⁹

Chaumelin not only had little positive to say about the painting and its author—although he did recognize the author's technical ability—he also faulted anyone who created a receptive environment for such works. To Chaumelin, Lecomte du Nouÿ's historicizing paintings represented all that was despicable in the art of his time, not only in painting but also in literature and in theater; he called upon everyone to move ahead rather than stare back into the past.

Painting and the Theater

Like many other art critics in this era, both Houssaye and Chaumelin employed theatrical references in their reviews. Parallels between painting and the stage were drawn into their discussions of works by Lecomte du Nouÿ and other artists working in the same manner. Indeed, most French critics of the period wrote not only about painting and sculpture, but also reviewed concerts, plays, and operas. Many wrote fiction, too, and Jules Claretie even became administrator of the Comédie-Française. In short, nineteenth-century critics saw closer connections between the various artistic disciplines than critics generally do today. Theatrical analogies in art reviews were easily understood by readers, and were used by critics to underscore the illusionary elements of the historical scenes with which artists tried to lure viewers. Theatrical references in reviews, however, sometimes hinted at the often inferior quality and execution of illusionary stage sets. Yet beyond the obvious parallel between easel paintings and painted backdrops there was also a link to certain subjects; many operas and plays presented the same narratives as salon history paintings. Chaumelin, however, viewed compositions by Lecomte du Nouÿ and his circle as the equivalent of the light entertainment provided by an operetta.

Most significantly, perhaps, some critics also acknowledged that specific painted compositions and theatrical productions could successfully create wonderful illusions for audiences eager to be seduced, yet perfectly well aware of the artifice inherent in them. This evident link between narrative painting and the performing arts eventually

⁵⁹ Chaumelin 1873, p. 124-26; for the French text see cat. 43.

encompassed the art of cinema. Many directors of early silent films, especially when creating historical costume dramas, were directly inspired by the work of artists like Gérôme (for example, Enrico Guazzoni's [1876-1949] 1913 gladiator movie *Quo Vadis?*).⁶⁰ One can argue that, when academic painting eventually succumbed to modernist aesthetics and abstraction, the narrative convention evolved in film, which has continued the tradition of visual storytelling on a two-dimensional surface.

Demosthenes Practicing his Declamation (Démostène, au bord de la mer, s'exerçant à la parole, 1870)

In 1872, at the first salon organized after the Franco-Prussian war (1870-71), Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited not only his sensational *Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82) but also the more modest painting *Demosthenes Practicing his Declamation* (fig. 75; cat. 58). Demosthenes (384-322 B.C.), the greatest of Athenian orators, supposedly overcame his speech disorder by speaking with pebbles in his mouth and accustomed himself to the racket of the popular assembly by declaiming on the seashore against the noise of wind and waves.⁶¹ Surprisingly enough, it is with this rarely treated subject that the artist's style and artistic approach can be directly compared to one of the great French painters of an earlier generation, Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863). Delacroix first incorporated Demosthenes within a larger decorative project for the Chamber of Deputies in the Palais Bourbon in Paris, which he finished in 1847. Then he reworked the subject into an easel painting in 1859 (fig. 76);⁶² Lecomte du Nouÿ is likely to have seen one or both versions. When Gautier reviewed Delacroix's painting at an 1860 exhibition, he was most impressed with the rendition of the natural elements: "One of the best marine paintings I have ever seen. It is apparently a study from nature, to which the artist later added the classical figure to make the painting. The sea ripples, breaks, foams, crashes, and does its best to present the voice of the orator."⁶³

⁶⁰ Blom 2001, p. 19-28.

⁶¹ Lecomte du Nouÿ also depicted a small bronze statue of Demosthenes in the portrait of Adolphe Crémieux (fig. 47) as a symbol of the sitter's great oratory skills.

⁶² Delacroix 1998-99, p. 241-42, cat. no. 97, repr.

⁶³ Idem, cited in English translation.

Whether or not he was conscious of Delacroix's versions of the subject, however, Lecomte du Nouÿ took a very different approach. For him this was not an excuse to paint the dramatic effect of rough waves pounding on the shore under a gloomy sky, but rather an attempt to make a convincing likeness of a person known to posterity only through written sources. The challenge lay especially in re-animating a personality whose dramatic gestures had ensured the lasting reputation of his oratory skills. This image, like all of Lecomte du Nouÿ's historical compositions, had to open a window on the past. In keeping with his academic training, the artist included carefully depicted details of anatomy and drapery and suggested a context with the outlines of an ancient city in the background.

Understandably, most of the critical attention at that year's salon went to Lecomte du Nouÿ's more outrageous submission, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82), and only Georges Lafenestre discussed *Demosthenes* seriously. After praising Lecomte du Nouÿ's technique, he compared him to Gérôme, who had taught him well. Lafenestre's only reservation was that perhaps the highly finished technique of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* did not completely suit Gautier's florid literary style. When he subsequently discussed *Demosthenes*, he argued that:

Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ shows himself no less able in his *Demosthenes practicing his Declamation* at the seashore, but there too [he] battles a tremendous memory, that of Eugène Delacroix, who treated the subject twice, in a freer rendition with the sympathetic passion of an emotional poet and the ardent imagination of a great painter. Erudition that takes no lively, colorful, expressive form is a sterile quality. Some painters are like women; it is not bad when they are knowledgeable, but if that knowledge kills the emotion, enthusiasm, simplicity, nature and charm, then the hell with science. A little foolishness is a thousand times more preferable.⁶⁴

In this misogynistic analogy, Lafenestre points to what he sees as Lecomte du Nouÿ's lack of emotional power, an element so clearly expressed by Romantic artists like Delacroix. The critic regretted the countless shallow historicizing scenes being churned out by a tremendous number of artists, whatever era they tried to re-create. In order to succeed with historical genre painting, he claimed, one needed the genius of a Gerard Terborch (1617-1681) or an Ernest Meissonier (1815-1891), two champions of genre

⁶⁴ Lafenestre 1881, p. 266-268; for the French text see cat. 64.

painting with enormous technical skill, even though Terborch did not depict historical subjects. One cannot dispute such a viewpoint, which should in fact be applied to all artists, regardless of their style. Not every Romantic painter could rise to the level of Delacroix, nor could every Impressionist rival Monet. Within the parameters of Lecomte du Nouÿ's chosen manner, however, while he was perhaps not entirely equal to Gérôme either in technical or compositional skill, he certainly came close. Ironically, this quality earned him the opposition of some critics who felt he was not original enough.

The Two Homer Triptychs

Given the character of his subsequent works, Lecomte du Nouÿ seems to have been unaffected by the attacks of critics like Chaumelin.⁶⁵ He painted several more *néo-grec* pictures, with considerable success, before shifting to Orientalist themes (a path taken by Gérôme before him). Almost a decade after *The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian*, Lecomte du Nouÿ seems to have risen to the challenge presented to him by Houssaye in *l'Artiste*— that he illustrate Homer's *Iliad*.⁶⁶ Careful analysis of Lecomte du Nouÿ's two triptychs showing the begging Homer yields further insights into his approach to archeological painting, and also clarifies his position in the art world of his time. The larger-than-life-size second version of this subject generated an enormous number of reactions, illustrating then current debates about contemporary art, and about history painting in particular.

The Begging Homer (Homère mendiant, 1875)

According to mythology, Homer, the blind and destitute ancient Greek poet, wandered from town to town guided by a shepherd boy, reciting verses and playing his lyre to survive. Rather than depicting a glorious moment of performance, as a more traditional history painter might have done,⁶⁷ Lecomte du Nouÿ focused on the very

⁶⁵ See note 59.

⁶⁶ See note 56.

⁶⁷ For a more traditional depiction of the subject see Paul Jourdy's painting *Homer Reciting His Poems* (1834, Paris, École des Beaux-Arts); repr. in Grunhech 1984-85, p. 87.

human aspects of Homer's poverty, an approach in keeping with the painter's *néo-grec* taste. The location of the 1875 triptych is unknown, but its composition was recorded in a photogravure published by Goupil & Cie (fig. 77; cat. 105). Although he clearly invented his composition, the artist turned for inspiration to Ingres, and probably to Gérôme as well. In 1827 Ingres had painted his famous *Apotheosis of Homer* (fig. 61), and in 1858 Gérôme included Homer in a decoration for the grand Pompeian House of Prince Napoleon; as in Lecomte du Nouÿ's work, one panel depicted Homer, and the other two the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* respectively (figs. 78, 79).⁶⁸ Ingres's large canvas originally adorned one of the ceilings in the nine new galleries at the Louvre, known as the Musée Charles X and dedicated to the display of Egyptian and Etruscan antiquities. Ingres showed Homer enthroned before a temple, flanked by personifications of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and receiving tribute from forty-six great historical figures. The most concrete link between Ingres's and Lecomte du Nouÿ's paintings is established by the two personifications. The latter distinguished his treatment of the theme from that of Ingres by shifting each personification to a separate wing and transforming them into more monumental, standing figures.

Given the similarity of other elements of Lecomte du Nouÿ's version to that of Gérôme, it is reasonable to assume that he was familiar with his master's painting of this subject (figs. 78, 79). As a subtle reference to Ingres, he retained the attributes of the personifications: the *Iliad* holds a sword and the *Odyssey* an oar. Like Ingres, Lecomte du Nouÿ also used Greek script to identify individual figures. However, he not only isolated these figures in separate wings, he also expanded their allegorical significance. The *Iliad*, for example, tramples the head of Hector, raising a sword before an altar dedicated to Troy (the *Iliad* ends with the funeral of the Trojan hero, Hector.). The sun above reads *ΦΟΙΒΟΣ* (Phoebos, meaning bright, or shining) in reference to the god Apollo. The *Odyssey*, on the other hand, appears veiled in the palace of Odysseus, under the crescent moon of *EKATH* (Hecate), the goddess of sorcery active at night. He also shows Penelope, faithfully awaiting her husband's return, refused to marry any of her suitors

⁶⁸ On the Pompeian House, see note 4; for the Gérôme paintings, see Ackerman 2000, p. 237, cat. nos. 84-85. The *Homer* is recorded as being lost, but was described by Gautier in *L'Artiste* of 1858, p. 18. Gérôme also painted *Le Siècle d'Auguste* (1855, Amiens, Musée de Picardie), which is clearly related to Ingres' 1827 painting (see Ackerman 2000, cat. nos. 64, 64.2).

until she finished the perpetual work on her father-in-law's shroud, depicted in the basket behind her. The three receding columns on the right wing of the painting are also reminiscent of those in the temple of Ingres's *Apotheosis of Homer*.

In the central panel showing the mendicant Homer, Lecomte du Nouÿ's composition differed most distinctively from Ingres's precedent. Rather than glorifying Homer by having him tower over his disciples, the artist depicts the poet in a more personal and humble, even intimate, manner. The shabbily dressed old man rests against a wall, turning his blind eyes upward and clutching his cane. His companion, exhausted after a long day of guiding his master, sleeps comfortably at his side, holding the bowl in hope of alms. Allegorically, the boy can be read as the genius of poetry leading the blind poet, a common representation of inspiration.⁶⁹

When About reviewed Lecomte du Nouÿ's 1875 Homer triptych, he claimed it transported him back to the epicenter of the *néo-grec* movement, the *Boîte-à-thé* studio:

This intimate work, tight and as if sheltered in its little frame, inspires true devotion. It rejuvenated me some 20 years, reminding me of the studios at the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, in this noisy yet studious house, where Gérôme, Hamon, Picou, Isambert, four painters with quite unequal talents, together reinvented Greek antiquity. It was quite a bit modern this antiquity of Gérôme and his friends: in their Athens there was a great deal of Pompeii and a dash of Paris. But what a faith! What fire! What taste and grace! This revolution behind closed doors has not been sterile; there still remain masterpieces. The antiquity of the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs lives again in the painting by Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ, in its allegorical figures draped as Rachel [⁷⁰], symbolizing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in the ingenious and delicate group of the old man and the child, in the terraces, in the porticoes and frontons of the Greek city asleep, in the ingenious arrangement, in the delicate drawing, in the sobriety of colors, in the finish, to thus say superfluously, in painting. A small work of long breath, a work of ardent and delicious patience, which one does not create for a dealer, nor for an amateur, nor for the success at the Salon, but for oneself, *per suo diletto*, or for the beautiful eyes of a woman one loves.]⁷¹

⁶⁹ See, for example, the marble relief of this subject by the American sculptor Edward Sheffield Bartolomew (1822-1858) made in Rome in 1851 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), discussed and reproduced in Tolles 1999, no. 38. A compositional and thematic kinship between Lecomte du Nouÿ's Homer paintings and David's *Belisarius* (1781, Lille, Musée des Beaux Arts, and a smaller replica in the Louvre) could also be established.

⁷⁰ As discussed earlier, critics often made reference to the theater. The Rachel mentioned here was the hugely famous dramatic actress who died in 1858 and was portrayed by countless painters. See Régine Bigorne, "Visions of Antiquity," in: *Gérôme & Goupil* 2000, p. 103, and, Anne Chossegras, "Rachel, une héroïne antique, une larme d'orient," in: *Orientalistes* 2001, p. 73-84.

⁷¹ About, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 120; for the French text see cat. 111, and note 11. On the *Boîte-à-thé* studio, see note 9.

In the two lines critic Charles Yriarte devoted to this painting in his 1876 Salon review, he described Lecomte du Nouÿ as "a real talent," and made the somewhat common observation that he ought to put greater distance between himself and his three teachers: Gleyre, Gérôme, and Signol.⁷² Dubosc de Pesquidoux saw the 1875 Homer triptych as another example of a carefully handled painting that "pleases the public because of its novelty, and the artists and those well educated because of the effort and knowledge that the painter reveals."⁷³ Another, unidentified, critic could not find anything positive to say about the triptych, calling it one of those puzzles that appear annually at the salon: "Lecomte du Nouÿ has set himself the task of chilling down Ingres, and he has tried to adapt the solemn figures of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in the manner of Gérôme, two beautiful images that he has ruined for us. That is inexcusable, and what is even worse is that he has followers. Mr. Motte and [Gustave] Courtois [1853-1923] while following his unfortunate examples, begin to make indecipherable rebuses."⁷⁴ With this attack on Motte we come full circle, as Marc praised this ally of Lecomte du Nouÿ an "ingenious author" when discussing his *Moloch Baal Devouring the Prisoners of War in Babylon* (fig. 68) it in the context of the "Archeologists."⁷⁵

The Begging Homer (Homère mendiant, 1881)

In 1881, Lecomte du Nouÿ revisited *The Begging Homer*, this time using a much bigger format and introducing many compositional changes (fig. 80; cat. 160). Lecomte du Nouÿ's large pictures were materially expensive, consumed a great amount of time, and were more difficult to sell than easel paintings. Yet he was determined to make this triptych and sustain the legacy of his idol Ingres and to underscore his own significance as an artist. This painting is without doubt the finest surviving example of Lecomte du Nouÿ's large-scale history paintings (his Victor Hugo cycle of the mid-80s, fig. 56-59, was lost in a fire), and it is a key to understanding his artistic accomplishments.

⁷² Yriarte 1876 (I), p. 720; for the French text see cat. 105.

⁷³ Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 25; for the French text see cat. 64.

⁷⁴ Anonymous 1876, p. 2; for the French text see under cat. 111.

⁷⁵ See note 32, where Motte's painting is reviewed quite positively.

In addition to being much larger than the 1875 triptych (fig. 77; cat. 105), the most notable variation in the artist's 1881 treatment of the subject appears in the wings. These still depict the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but their positions are reversed. At first glance, the 1881 *Odyssey* much resembles its predecessor, but this time the female figure is more specifically identifiable as Penelope. Still dressed in white and with her face covered, she holds a portrait of Ulysses, as well as the bow that only he could string, as opposed to the more generic oar that appears in the first version. Argus, Ulysses's loyal old dog, also alludes to Penelope's faithfulness. The artist had employed similar symbolism in *Love that Goes, Love that Remains* (fig. 23), and in an 1864 painting titled *The Loyal Dog* (*Le chien fidèle*, cat. 7). The *Iliad* on the right wing of this later Homer triptych, on the other hand, represents a complete departure from the first version: it is a vigorous scene showing the corpse of Hector lying before the Trojan throne, naked except for the pectoral armor of Patrocles. The scepter in his hand was apparently inspired by a Trojan object excavated by Schliemann around 1870.⁷⁶ Above the corpse hovers the goddess of war with her torch, while the gods observe the drama from Mount Olympus.

One explanation for Lecomte du Nouÿ's reversal of the two wings may be his retaining of the three receding columns, which visually reinforce the ornate gilt frame that holds the triptych's canvasses within two sculpted, inscribed columns. The inscription carved on the left-hand column, *Batpaxomyomaxia* (combat of the frogs), refers to a parody of the *Iliad* from a later date called the *Batrachomyomachie* (the war between the frogs and the rats). The inscription on the right reads *YMNOI* and *ΕΠΙΓΡΑΜΜΑ* (hymns and epigrams).⁷⁷

The central panels of 1875 and 1881 depicting Homer seem similar at first glance, yet careful comparison reveals important changes. The well behind Homer and the entire pavement in the earlier version have been replaced in the later one by an urban landscape with rough soil. A wildly dramatic sky over the Acropolis has superseded the serene sunset of the first version, and a torch-lit interior at left introduces some warm tonal contrasts. A lyre constructed from a pair of antelope horns and a turtle's carcass has taken

⁷⁶ Judith Gautier 1886; for the French text see cat. 160.

⁷⁷ See *Polyptyques* 1990, cat. no. 35.

the place of the elaborately decorated wooden instrument,⁷⁸ and Homer's smooth walking stick has become a rough tree branch. These changes seem to indicate Lecomte du Nouÿ's desire to create a greater sense of "authenticity" and ruggedness in the second version that is better suited to the subject. Of greatest importance, however, is the transformation of the figural group. The positions of Homer and his young companion have hardly changed, yet their seemingly smooth garments in the first version have been transformed into animal skins and roughly woven rags in the second, and, significantly, these cover much less of their bodies. All of these elements, especially the meticulous rendition of Homer's wrinkled skin, gave the 1881 triptych a much grittier atmosphere than its predecessor's. The transformation from the smaller 1875 painting to this enormous salon machine epitomizes Lecomte du Nouÿ's evolving attitude toward the status of contemporary history painting in the grand manner. The work remains firmly grounded in the academic tradition, but is also distinctively *néo-grec* as its main canvas depicts what is essentially a genre scene.

Lecomte du Nouÿ first exhibited this large triptych at the 1882 Salon; four years later both versions appeared together in a solo exhibition at Galerie Tripp in Paris.⁷⁹ At the Salon, the critic Eugène Montrosier was less than overwhelmed: "Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ presents us with the larger second version of a triptych that we saw at the Salon several years ago. He very uncommonly praises the misery of the old Homer and his eternal glory. But, as Bassecourt from *Les Faux Bons Hommes* said, one senses too much the pupil of Gérôme. A lot of work and learning, an effort not without grandeur; but warmth, passion or life, none."⁸⁰

The anonymous critic of *l'Événement*, could not guess if this salon exhibit would cause a sensation, but called it a strong and honest work, of the kind that traditionally brought great acclaim to its creator. In the central panel, he argued, the artist ventured into total realism, evocative of seventeenth-century Spanish painting. In the two wings "the palette cedes to the *dessin*. We leave Ribera in order to find Ingres, two masters with

⁷⁸ A similar wooden lyre is being offered to Homer in Ingres' painting (fig. 61), as well as in Gérôme's 1848 *Anacréon, Bacchus et l'amour* (Toulouse, Musée des Augustins), repr. in Ackerman 2000, cat. 19.

⁷⁹ See appendix IV.

⁸⁰ Montrosier 1882, p. 27-28; for the French text see cat. 160. Bassecourt [sic for Bassecourt] mentioned in this review is a character in the comedy by Théodore Barrière and Ernest Capendu *Les Faux Bonshommes* (published in 1856).

whom Lecomte du Nouÿ fraternizes through the sole power of his talent.”⁸¹ The depiction of the figure of Homer bearing all the signs of his venerable age is indeed strongly reminiscent of Juan de Ribera’s famous saints and hermits. In the same context, the critic Charles Clément praised Lecomte du Nouÿ’s conception and execution, but could not quite identify the corpse represented in the *Iliad* wing. His main objection, however, was Lecomte du Nouÿ’s rendering of Homer as a figure lacking grandeur or beauty. To Clément it seemed unnecessary for the artist to have “stressed all the ugliness and deformities produced by old age and the miseries of life.”⁸² He also felt that Lecomte du Nouÿ had been unable to resist the influence of Léon Bonnat’s (1833–1922) popular *Job* (fig. 81) of 1880. Bonnat, whose predilection for the realism of Spanish Old Masters like Ribera is well known, depicted the biblical figure virtually naked, emphasizing his aged, heavily veined skin.⁸³ At Galerie Tripp, Clément opened his review by thanking God that there were still painters able to resist the pervasive current of ugly realism.⁸⁴ Naturally he favored the smaller triptych as being more focused and unified and felt that secondary areas in the larger one had received too much attention.

Like the large *Eros* (1873, fig. 42), the painted surface of the 1881 triptych also contains significant areas of boldly applied paint. This may not be too surprising given its size but it is important to stress that this is not a minutely painted work with an enamel-like surface. Lecomte du Nouÿ’s decision to represent the Greek poet in an unflattering realist manner confirms that he was not operating in a vacuum; indeed he was very aware of current aesthetic trends, including the fashion for Spanish painting and “ugly realism” practiced by such artists as Bonnat and Théodule Ribot.⁸⁵ As usual, critical responses ranged from Clément’s plaudits to objections that such an academic work was too old fashioned. Some, like the publicist and art writer Ernest Chesneau, were less troubled by this anachronism:

I prefer Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ. He certainly comes a century too late [...], and yes, it all betrays the routine of the contests at the Ecole, but with an energetic, stubborn conviction that pleases me. Its only fault is that it happens after the fact. In 1802, this Homer would

⁸¹ Anonymous, *l'Événement*, *Salon de 1882*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 125; for the French text see cat. 160.

⁸² Clément 1882, page not known; for the French text see cat. 160.

⁸³ Tinterow 2003, p. 83, 467, cat. 92.

⁸⁴ Clément 1886; for the French text see cat. 160.

⁸⁵ Tinterow 2003.

have ravished the admirers of Girodet-Trioson and Firmin-Didot would have entrusted the painter with an important part in the famous illustrated edition of the Greek classics, next to Gérard, Girodet, Ingres, and Percier. I would add that Lecomte du Nouÿ would have held his place with dignity.⁸⁶

By contrast, Houssaye, rather than being concerned about stylistic correctness or the timeliness of the subject, perceived Lecomte du Nouÿ's chief error as his theoretical approach. This view again raises the problematic status of "archeological" painting. As Houssaye argued:

Here is finally the large triptych in which Lecomte du Nouÿ represented the sleeping Homer flanked by the personifications of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Ingres had conceived Homer in the non-personal and grandiose character of the god of poetry. Lecomte du Nouÿ, whose serious and original talent we like, erred according to us in representing Homer as the real and living figure that comes from the old wives' tales of the false Herodotus and the pseudo Plutarch. A discussion about the very problematic existence of a single poet as the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* would be here out of place. Nonetheless, let's say that the symbolic Homer by Ingres is truer than the Homer by Lecomte du Nouÿ. We do not know a begging Homer, a blind Homer, a Homer beaten by the inhabitants of Cumae and attacked by the dogs of the shepherd Glaucus, instead we revere the ideal Homer of the apotheosis.⁸⁷

Houssaye thus challenged Lecomte du Nouÿ's representation of Homer as a human being of flesh and blood, raising the still unresolved question of whether the poet actually existed, and if so, whether he really would have been the sole author of all the verses in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. This reproach reflects the critic's concern for historical accuracy, which the painter surely shared to a certain extent. When Louis Énault, in a laudatory review of the triptych, called Lecomte du Nouÿ "an informed man, well lettered, and a passionate erudite," he was certainly thinking of the artist's ability to revive ancient times convincingly.⁸⁸ The wide-ranging discussion of this Homer's "correctness" is reminiscent of Grangedor's questioning of Lecomte du Nouÿ's depiction of Minerva in *Ajax* (cat. 43), which he thought anachronistic. The scholarship underlying works of academic art was an important issue for historical genre painters of Lecomte du Nouÿ's generation, even if exacting accuracy was not a goal in itself.

⁸⁶ Chesneau 1882, p. 218; for the French text see cat. 160. On Chesneau, see Bouillon 1990.

⁸⁷ Houssaye 1883, p. 216-17; for the French text see cat. 160. Also partly cited in Chevillot 1995, p. 209.

⁸⁸ Énault 1882, cited from Montgaillard 1906, p. 56; for the French text see cat. 160.

II. VIA A DISTANT PRESENT TO A DISTANT PAST

The archeological correctness that Lecomte du Nouÿ and his peers sought was always contentious. They created visual reconstructions based on the latest scholarship, yet were well aware of the inherent limitations facing them. One reason that Orientalist subjects became so appealing for these painters is that they avoided some of the problems of correct historical representation. Montgailhard noted that Lecomte du Nouÿ's fascination with Egypt was first aroused by reading Gautier's *Le roman de la momie* (1857), "which taught him to cherish this gigantic and unforgettable land of Egypt before knowing it." Of course, the artist had long admired the Egyptian pictures of his teacher Gérôme. Montgailhard argued that: "Before having been in Egypt, du Nouÿ could do archeology and paint sincere pictures of this legendary country. After his voyage, it was impossible to start again. Because the environment, the types, the physiognomies, the matter itself, are so different and special that it is impossible to make realistic paintings without working in the places themselves. And for those who can see, little has changed in this immobile country. One still finds there the gestures, the habits, the costumes, and even the plants in the gardens identical to those represented on the monuments from Ramses's times."⁸⁹

This observation addresses two important issues related to both archeological and Orientalist painting during this period. Firstly, it was thought impossible to make truthful historical paintings of a foreign character in France; unfamiliar environments could not be accurately recreated on canvas outside their original setting. Thus, even though Lecomte du Nouÿ continued to paint such pictures, he knew he was not rendering absolutely truthful compositions. While his urge to visit Egypt grew from a desire to learn about extinct cultures, actual exposure to Egypt almost defeated that effort because it revealed the virtually insurmountable complexities of truthful representation. Secondly, the Middle East was thought to have retained the relics and culture of past centuries more than other regions. In that respect, going there was perceived as a journey back in time, one that allowed a blurring of the distinction between geographical and chronological distance. Artists like Lecomte du Nouÿ realized that this was, in fact, true only to a

⁸⁹ Montgailhard 1906, p. 47-49.

certain extent, which may have been one of the reasons they painted more scenes of the contemporary East. Thus, they could avoid the complexities of historical reconstruction, while the surroundings provided enough exotic material to satisfy both their own artistic ambitions and the public's seemingly inexhaustible demand.

Whether Lecomte du Nouÿ was painting a historical scene, from which he was separated in time, or a land far from his Paris studio where he made most of these Orientalist pictures, he always sought to create a striking image that captured the right atmosphere and character. Two anecdotes recorded by Montgailhard are particularly revealing. The remarkable salon painting of 1877, *The Gate of the Harem, Souvenir of Cairo* (La porte du sérail, fig. 101; cat. 116), caught the attention of his friend and colleague, the Orientalist painter Théodore Ralli (1852-1909). In this picture, six harem guards lounge languorously on Persian rugs before an elaborately decorated doorway. Some sleep or smoke pipes while a black panther hisses at a passing stork. Despite the men's passive attitude, there seems little doubt that any attempt to trespass on their territory would be futile. Greatly impressed by the picture, Ralli subsequently visited Cairo seeking the exact location of this composition. Upon his return to Paris, he asked Lecomte du Nouÿ about the spot, for which he had searched in vain. The painter replied with a smile: "Nowhere, it was born in my imagination, based upon the many documents scattered around me, that I have complemented or varied to my liking so well, that it resembles nothing." Lecomte du Nouÿ further astounded Ralli as they discussed another Orientalist picture, *Ronde de nuit autour d'un harem* (Nightwatch outside a Harem, date and location unknown), the landscape of which Ralli admired. After enjoying his friend's praise for his great sense of the Orient, Lecomte du Nouÿ confided that he had begun sketching this exotic landscape in Ralli's own Paris garden!⁹⁰

These anecdotes underline the fact that, despite their careful finish and detail, such contemporary Oriental scenes should not be read as photo-realistic recording of things the artist had seen. The term "souvenir" used in Lecomte du Nouÿ's subtitle for this and other of his works was indeed no more than a visual reminiscence of things or places the artist had experienced. In the tradition of Vermeer's *View of Delft* (ca. 1660-61, Mauritshuis, The Hague), which is not an exact topographical rendition of that Dutch

⁹⁰ Montgailhard 1906, p. 54-55.

town, Lecomte du Nouÿ and others sought simply to obtain the most satisfying artistic effect. Their audiences were for the most part conscious of this practice. In view of the actual conception of *The Gate of the Harem, Souvenir of Cairo*, Duranty's review of it assumes added meaning: this modernist-leaning critic was not at all concerned with whether the scene correctly rendered a specific location, but devoted all his attention to its gripping Middle Eastern atmosphere:

Mohammetism still has its believers and the sun of the picturesque Orient still rises over Parisian art. *The Gate of the Harem* by Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ is infused with our anecdotal and malicious spirit. This painting is not treated with a loose brush, as he is too concerned with details, but how well do these black guards wake up, how they stretch, still drowsy, with a vague look in their eyes! The first light of dawn glistens slightly metallically on their shiny skin, but the modeling is very precise, the color is matte, firm, the scene very curious, the arrangement full of taste and skill; the profound, transparent shadow covers the blue and green tiles without fading them out, and its tones play well with those of the tapestries under the oblique rays of the waking day, in such a way that the fires of the sun crown the building in the distance, its lower sections rising from the gray of dawn. The excessive neatness of the fabrics and the very fresh costumes nonetheless furthers the idea of the exact Oriental reality. The embellishments of the memory have here brought back the faded old Orient.⁹¹

Houssaye, on the other hand, was less convinced by the truthfulness of this composition. In fact, he deplored Lecomte du Nouÿ's departure from his successful *néo-grec* subjects in favor of representing contemporary Egypt:

It is not sufficient to drape antique figures like statues and to paint accessories from plates in archeological dictionaries; it is necessary to know how to infuse these figures with an ancient character. Mr. Hillemacher has not done this. On the contrary, that is what Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ does so well. Unfortunately for us and for himself, Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ this year has left ancient Greece for contemporary Egypt, of which he has painted one of its elements in *The Gate of the Harem in Cairo*. This desertion has damaged his talent. One rightly says that it is not given to everybody to go to Corinth; so why do those who have victoriously chosen residence there want to leave?⁹²

⁹¹ Duranty 1877, p. 79-80; for the French text see cat. 116. On Duranty, see Bouillon 1990.

⁹² Houssaye 1877, p. 844 (republished in, Houssaye 1883, p. 159); for the French text see cat. 116.

From Fact to Fiction

Another solution for the artist to the problem of historical authenticity was to circumvent the issue altogether, instead composing images that were unapologetically fictional, often based on well-known literary sources. For academically trained artists this was not difficult or unusual, as they were traditionally trained to create idealized compositions in order to convey the most convincing and universal message. These and other concerns recur in many of Lecomte du Nouÿ's paintings, Orientalist and otherwise, which are discussed here in greater detail.

The Bearers of Bad Tidings (Les porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles, 1871)

Unfortunately, the painting that best represented Lecomte du Nouÿ to his contemporaries, and that therefore would be extremely important for us, cannot be found. *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82; cat. 64), known through many photographs and prints, is one of the artist's most original compositions. Lecomte du Nouÿ started working on the painting in 1864 but did not finish it until about 1870. He exhibited it in 1872, at the first salon organized after the Franco-Prussian War.⁹³ As he conceived the picture before his first voyage to Egypt and completed it afterwards, it automatically embodies many of the dilemmas regarding authentic representation discussed above. The painting depicts a pharaoh who has just killed three messengers for failing to find the common girl he loves. The work is *néo-grec* in that it revives an ancient culture through an unusual, individualized, and dramatic scene. It centers on a type of character usually celebrated in a history painting—in this case a political leader—yet focuses on a psychological predicament with no known basis in history or even mythology. Despite the gruesomeness of the subject, characteristic of works in the grand historical tradition, this is emphatically a genre picture because it concentrates on a highly personal incident. Despite Lecomte du Nouÿ's careful historical research of details, it clearly represents a fictional story. In the salon catalogue, the title was followed by a passage from Gautier's

⁹³ Moreau-Vauthier 1900, p. 22; for the French text see cat. 64. See also chapter I, note 91.

novel, as well as the author's name and the title of the book, underlining the picture's literary source.⁹⁴

The theatrical analogies often used by nineteenth-century critics of art suited this composition perfectly. Aware of its imaginary foundation, reviewers and viewers alike still focused on the question of the artist's skill in reviving a dramatic scene from the past. Most expressed great enthusiasm but some were annoyed. Around 1900, some three decades after the picture's creation, Moreau-Vauthier selected *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* for his book *Les Chefs d'Oeuvres des Grands Maîtres* (The Masterpieces of the Great Artists). Unlike many contemporary pictures it still incited contemplation, curiosity, and learning:

The ingenious and probable archeological reconstruction is interesting; we don't ask anything more and the artist deserves all praise. Spiritual and delicate, he doesn't pretend to move us; he understands how the tragic tone seems vulgar and out of place in this historic fantasy. It's a tale, a fairy-tale, an opera staging that is offered up for our curiosity. Soon the slaves will stand up like extras, and return their lanterns to the prop storeroom and the pharaoh will return to his dressing-room with his crown, scepter and terrible yataghan. Under the Second Empire, our French artists represented in very different works the picturesque life on the banks of the Nile. Whereas most featured the present, some wanted to evoke the past. [...] A great success crowned the knowledge and talent of the painter, and *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* took a definitive place among the pictures that everyone needs to know and admire. Despite the fact that for many years already, art criticism has undergone an exaggerated infatuation in favor of painting without ordnance and composition, the more eclectic and true connoisseurs have not ceased to esteem works that revive lost civilizations, create an interest in the past, and in one word, instruct.⁹⁵

The Bearers of Bad Tidings seamlessly blends fact and fiction, and is infused not only with overt doses of barbaric violence, but also a strong erotic tension. The anxious pharaoh watches broodingly over the sleeping city. Three barely clad corpses lie motionless in the foreground, their crushed skulls leaving little puddles of blood. In the background, two women stand in a doorway patiently awaiting the pharaoh's next instruction; but he can think only of Tahoser, the absent woman he desires. It was the subject's barbarity that generated the most attention, apparently causing quite a stir at the

⁹⁴ See cat. 64 for the text of the Salon catalogue. The many reproductions of the work, either prints or photographs, also often retained the reference to Gautier's *Roman de la momie*.

⁹⁵ Moreau-Vauthier 1900, p. 22; for the French text see cat. 64.

salon, where it earned the painter a second-class medal. More importantly, the government purchased it for the Musée du Luxembourg, then the main showcase for French modern art.

These honors challenged many reviewers to share their own opinions. Lafenestre cited the relevant passage from Gautier's novel and concluded that the painter's dry technique did not do justice to Gautier's elaborate prose:

His *Bearers of Bad Tidings* are the messengers that have just announced to the pharaoh, from the *Roman de la momie*, that they have been unable to trace the beautiful Tahoser: "The hours followed the hours; the sun had already disappeared behind the mountains, throwing its last fires at Thebes, and the messengers did not return. Pharaoh always remained still. The night spread out over the city, calm, cool, and blue; and on the corner of the terrace, the silent and impassible pharaoh cut his black contours like a basalt statue sealed to the entablature [...]. From this elevation, the king dominated the city unfolding at his feet [...]. Looking down with his eyes and thoughts upon this enormous city of which he was the absolute master, pharaoh sadly contemplated the limits of human power [...]. A first messenger appeared on the terrace, announcing to pharaoh that Tahoser was untraceable. The pharaoh struck out his scepter, the messenger fell dead." Two other messengers then faced the same ending. Mr. Lecomte du Nouy shows the three corpses stretched out in front of the sumptuously dressed pharaoh who leans on his elbow on the high terrace overlooking Thebes. The drawing of Mr. du Nouy is conscientious and fine, severe and forced; his qualities are those of his master, Mr. Gérôme, who has transmitted them to his loyal disciple; yet, at the same time the master has transmitted to his pupil a taste for dry contours, cold harmonies, monochromatic colors that have not permitted Mr. Lecomte du Nouy to translate the brilliant prose of Théophile Gautier in all its richness.⁹⁶

Jules Claretie, a prolific writer on artistic matters and at one point the administrator of the Comédie-Française, had predicted that such a violent scene would not attract a large audience, but admitted he was mistaken:

There is always a crowd in front of this painting, which has achieved great success. The subject, however, was not made to attract the public. The drama—as the painted inscription on the frame informs us—occurs under King Siphta Ménéphtha of the eighteenth dynasty, 1500 years before Christ, and in theory would not have much chance of obtaining a popular success. Still, the painting by Mr. Lecomte du Nouy has received this success. There is a certain mystery in the gaze of this pharaoh lying on his pillows, biting his nails, waiting impatiently, contemplating a city asleep. And lying at his feet, those who came not to tell him: "Your dream has been realized!" What dream was this? Those who have read the admirable book by Gautier, *Le Roman de la Momie*, will

⁹⁶ Lafenestre 1881, p. 265-266; for the French text see cat. 64.

remember the scene where the silent pharaoh [...] cries out into the night: "Tahoser, Tahoser" while cracking with his metal scepter the hard skulls of the messengers who could not tell him that Tahoser was not far away. It is that scene that Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ has rendered. He has reconstructed a sleeping Thebes, with its gigantic buildings, the palaces of Ramses and Amenophis. He has placed the pharaoh on his terrace like an Osirian statue, and he thus created a very dramatic décor, although, truth be said, the sky in itself, and the whole composition are similar to a beautiful opera backdrop. Maybe that's why the audience has paid so much attention to this drama? The corpses of the dead, as if they were bronze sculptures lying on the ground, have struck me in particular.⁹⁷

Jules Castagnary felt that historical and biblical painting had far outlived its significance and that salon visitors hardly paid attention to them unless the scene was particularly strange.⁹⁸ He recognized that many artists desperately sought attention for their works among the thousands hanging at the salon. One way of doing so, of course, was to invent striking images, something at which Lecomte du Nouÿ certainly succeeded in this case. When Dubosc de Pesquidoux noted this painting's appearance at the 1878 Exposition Universelle, it was already well known: it had not only been on public view since 1872, but its composition had also been widely disseminated through various kinds of reproductions. This critic focused primarily on the philosophical impact of the image, and displayed an unabashedly self-righteous attitude toward a non-western culture, stressing the underlying subject of Oriental despotism, that, he felt, had been righted by Christianity:

The pharaoh of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* has the fault to remain obscure for those who have not read the *Momie* by Théophile Gautier. One should see in this sovereign with his many bands, turning on his couch without finding ease, a good personification of Oriental despotism. Forgetting the three victims that he just struck and whose bloody corpses lay at his feet, pharaoh is all in his boredom, his incommensurable sadness, his unfulfilled dreams. He contemplates the immense city asleep under his eyes and regrets, perhaps like Caligula later, the other despot fashioned by quiritary rudeness, that his people do not have one single head to give him the pleasure to slice it with one single blow. It is human omnipotence brought to a halt, and unfortunate for the excess of a power that no movement directs to a human and superior goal. The layout, curious and solid, except for a few crude touches, gives the idea of excessive grandeur of the monstrous civilizations that Christianity had to conquer and replace.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Jules Claretie, *l'Art français en 1872*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 117-118; for the French text see cat. 64.

⁹⁸ Castagnary 1892, II, p. 20-22; for the French text see cat. 64.

⁹⁹ Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24-25; for the French text see cat. 64.

Philadelphia journalist Edward Strahan (pseudonym for Earl Shinn, who had also briefly studied with Gérôme in Paris) reported on the Exposition Universelle for an American audience and selected this work as one of its masterpieces. His review addressed not only artistic issues, such as the picture's technical merits, but also racial and cultural ones related to its subject. Although most commentators viewed *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* as historical or Orientalist, Strahan called it Biblical in treatment, even as he credited its secular source. Like Dubosc de Pesquidoux, Strahan saw the picture's representation of despotic arrogance as a testament to the superiority of Western, Christian civilizations over those of the barbaric and backward Orient:

Lent by the Luxembourg Gallery, which owns the canvas, M. Lecomte-du-Nouy's picture of the 'Bearers of Evil Tidings' takes its place as a selected standard of French Art, crowned by Governmental choice. Biblical in period and treatment, and to the eye an illustration of that Egypt which was the harsh foster-nurse of the Jewish race, the composition was, in fact, inspired by [...] "The Mummy," by Théophile Gautier. [...] The picture exhibits a chiseled precision of detail which would seem to make it classable with sculptor's work as much as with painting. We cannot deny that this canvas gives evidence of uncommon talent: by no means. We are grateful to the author for his niceties of manipulations and for his archeological researches. We can hardly expect from an artist whose forte is sculptural accuracy of drawing those lambent charms of atmosphere and color which are the property of "impressionist" painters; can hardly look for the vibrating tints of Decamps or Delacroix, or expect to see, along with the rigid anatomy of our painter, those tepid transparencies of the nights of sun-loved lands. The charm of such a work as this is different in kind: it is accuracy of study, masterliness of manipulation; it is balanced symmetry, which is surely one of the forms of harmony. [...] But we should not allow our attention to be too much entrapped by these learned perfections. Over all, we must perceive the terrible and sinister nature of the subject, —a scene of death, with its agonies and supreme convulsions, —a picture of irresponsible power, unsated after its most deadly exertion! We must look among these wretched ministers of tyranny for the manly obedience, the unquestioning submission which leads them to run up one after the other to their doom as fleetly as to a festival! We must let our imagination create an atmosphere of terrible apprehension, the brooding misgivings and patient fidelity of these wretched officers—the Oriental humility expressed in the Biblical words: "Ye have made our labor to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us!" The mere discovery and turn of his theme by our artist is in the nature of a lucky hit or windfall. The idea of these obedient ministers uncomplainingly dying by their monarch's hand while he muses dissatisfied on other things—the submissiveness of slavery and its insufficiency to fulfill the schemes of inordinate ambition—is a contrast of purposes which might have tempted Michel Angelo. Which are to be envied, the subjects whose all is but to attempt and to die, or the despot who can command everything and never attain satisfaction? Another painter might have

treated this drama with more fire and vitality. M. Lecomte-du-Nouy treats it in a spirit of brooding, reposeful, yet not satisfied philosophy, which has its own peculiar effect on the feelings of the beholder, and which keeps within the limits of quietude imposed by the canons of grand art.¹⁰⁰

The great popularity of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* is confirmed by the existence of numerous nineteenth-century engravings, lithographs, and photographs after it. These reproductions typically appeared in popular journals or were sold individually by publishers like Goupil & Cie.¹⁰¹ Thus the composition was recognizable to a large audience, including people who did not visit the salon or the Musée du Luxembourg. When the German historian Friedrich Hottenroth published his survey of historical costumes around 1884 in Stuttgart (soon thereafter published in France and the United States), a plate titled *Antiquité: Egypte-Ethiopie* featured this composition (minus the messengers' corpses), as well as figures in various Egyptian costumes (fig. 83).¹⁰²

Perhaps an even more significant indicator of the popular status of this painting, both in France and abroad, is a caricature published on the eve of World War I in the British journal *The Bystander* (fig. 84). Signed by Sid Treeby, the caricature is titled *Bearers of Evil Tidings*, and shows a devilish-looking German in black tie and top hat in the same pose as the pharaoh in Lecomte de Nouy's painting. The awning above him is anchored at one end by a model battleship, and the city of Thebes in the original composition has been transformed here into a dense landscape of smoking chimneys. The three messengers on the ground are wrapped in rolls of paper reading "Naval" "Holiday" and "Proposals" and the caption below reads "A picture portraying the tragic fate of Mr. Churchill's 'messengers' at the hands of the German 'Armaments' party. (After the painting by J. A. Lecomte du Nouy in the Luxembourg)." Both the fashion plate and the caricature indicate the lasting impact of Lecomte du Nouy's painting in the popular mind, even long after this kind of art had gone out of vogue.

¹⁰⁰ Strahan 1878, p. 37. For a similarly degrading attitude by Strahan towards Muslim culture in another of his reviews, see: Diederer 2001, p. 34-35. It discusses Jaroslav Čermák's *Abduction of a Herzegovinian Woman* (1861, New York, Dahesh Museum of Art).

¹⁰¹ Several of these reproductions are kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Cabinet des estampes, code DC 309 vol. I-IV; as well as at the Musée Goupil in Bordeaux. On the activities of the firm Goupil as a 19th-century art dealer and publisher, see *Gérôme & Goupil* 2000.

¹⁰² Hottenroth 1884, plate 8. I wish to thank Adrienne Childs for bringing this plate to my attention.

A more tangential connection with Lecomte du Nouÿ's painting can perhaps be established through the film *Salomé*, directed in 1922 by Charles Bryant and starring his wife, Alla Nazimova (1879-1945), in the title role. Based on the play by Oscar Wilde and shot entirely in a Hollywood studio with sets and costumes inspired by Aubrey Beardsley's famous illustrations to the story of Salomé, the movie retains a decidedly theatrical feeling. In one scene, a scantily clad black servant relays a message from King Herod to the self-absorbed princess Salomé. When the servant lies face down on the floor, she does not kill him but rests one foot on his head, in a scene of total submissiveness that is reminiscent of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 85). Even though one may never be able to prove that Bryant knew the painting or a reproduction of it, the visual similarity, even if purely coincidental, confirms the parentage between this kind of historical painting and early cinema.

Finally, Lecomte du Nouÿ's painting made a tremendous impression on the novelist Julian Green (1900-98), who recorded his vivid recollections of the painting in an autobiography of his childhood years.¹⁰³ In several passages, Green recalled how the image of the pharaoh and the nude black corpses lying in front of him awakened his sexual awareness and guilt-ridden attraction toward the male body. He first saw the painting during a visit with his mother and sisters to the Musée du Luxembourg:

We then passed on to the paintings, some of which linger in my mind: Cormon's "Cain," Bonnat's "Job," [fig. 81] a picture I thought repulsive. There was also the "Lady with the Glove," by Carolus Duran, and then, at sometime or other, we found ourselves in a smaller gallery; there, a certain picture held my mother's attention, because, she said, you could understand the feelings of an indignant pharaoh who had just killed with his own hand two [sic] slaves, the bearers of evil tidings. Fuming with rage, he lay on his couch with his victims dying at his feet. A long, bloodstained sword told the story in its own way. "Yes," Mamma, would say, with a gay little laugh, "I can understand the man." And turning to her daughters, she added: "Now please don't take what I say literally. You're so foolish!" As a rule, her sarcastic remarks were addressed to my sisters, not to me, either because she thought me too young to understand, or because she loved me a little more than the others. Alas, she had no idea of what she was doing, for the enemy lent me a terrible lucidity when I looked at that picture. I do not know when it first struck my eye. Probably not before I was six. After the age of eleven, I never saw it again, but between six and eleven I was very often shown it, with devastating effects. I am not expressing myself too strongly. Were it not for that picture my life would not perhaps have turned

¹⁰³ Green 1993. The book covers the years 1900-1916. I wish to thank Mr. Denis Coutagne, Aix-en-Provence, for pointing out to me Green's considerations on this painting.

out as it did. I imagine that my first sight of it only moved me faintly, but how can I tell? Is it not possible, on the contrary, that I was then given a violent and determinative shock? In any case, there came a day when, with all the pain a man is capable of bearing, I felt the torment of unappeased hunger. I remember very clearly that under a kind of hallucination, I fancied that one of the great brown bodies struck down by death really lay under my very eyes, and it seemed as though my whole being, soul and flesh, threw itself on him. At the same time, I knew this to be an impossibility. Such painful frustration is not to be described, It left a deep mark on me forever. All that life could teach me about the *durus amor*, I learned in the space of a few seconds and at an age when I could not understand its significance. All I knew is that I felt unhappy, and unhappy for the first time in my life, without having the least idea why. It never occurred to me that the slave in question was very closely connected to the lost soul in *The Divine Comedy*. I only entered into such considerations much later.¹⁰⁴

As Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre reveals his own clear predilection for the female body, he probably would have been surprised by Green's reaction to *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*. Indeed, this picture, more than any other by the artist, clearly appealed to viewers on many different levels and over a remarkably long period of time. This may ultimately be every artist's dream, and it certainly is an important factor in assessing a great work of art.

¹⁰⁴ Green 1993, p. 31-32. Green viewed his own youthful drawings of nude figures with a similar sense of guilt: "My pink nudes (of a toothpaste pink) were, in my own judgment, impure. In the same way, Dante's *Inferno* and the picture at the Luxembourg. All that formed part of an interdict, together with a great many other things." (p. 60). On p. 64, he continues to describe visiting the sculpture galleries in the Louvre and how this experienced "a kind of sexual intoxication." Then on p. 120, he noted: "At thirteen, I was far more innocent than at ten, or eight, when 'The Bearers of Evil Tidings' made me faint with languor." Not only did the actual encounters with the painting stir the boy's emotions, a black-and-white reproduction of it in a large book in his parents's library continued to work its haunting spell: "[...] I waited with a pleasure where horror had its part – my conscience worked on me – for the fascinating page that would show me 'The Bearers of Evil Tidings.' The Luxembourg painting, there it was, at last under my eyes, it was mine, and mine alone, in the alarming solitude – the strange nature of which I vaguely guessed. Of course the magic of color, the skin golden as sand, were lacking, but with burning cheeks and open mouth I looked once more at the torturing picture. I suffered as much as a man can suffer, but the difference was that I knew nothing about the character of my pain, nor did I know what I wanted, nor why I felt so unhappy. I only knew that if I had been that savage pharaoh, I would have spared the messenger, even if he had brought me news twenty times worse. Then, talking to myself in my emotion and my insides tightening with inexplicable covetousness, I closed the big album and replaced it on the shelf. And I forgot. I forgot with astonishing ease. Not a trace of obsession in my life. Only these very rare moments that prodigiously favored bold action. Then obsession took hold of my will power: I was thrown into the enemy's hands. With a dexterity fit to disconcert the most skillful people, he was careful not to prompt me to make dangerous gestures that might have enlightened me regarding myself, he merely contended himself with lodging in me, in my memory, as it were in my whole being, pictures that fascinated the child in order to bewitch the man, later on...." (p. 102-103).

III. EUNUCHS, DRUGS, AND HAREM SLAVES: ORIENTALISM IN THE WORK OF LECOMTE DU NOUÿ

Apart from the fame it brought the artist, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* is a prime example of the way in which Lecomte de Nouÿ effectively combined his penchant for archeological accuracy with fictional elements. It reflected the artist's love for Egypt, a country he had visited and that had already provided him with the material for such contemporary subjects as *A Gatekeeper in Cairo* (Un portier au Caire, cat. 25), and *The Dancing Fellah Woman* (La danseuse fellah, fig. 21). Lecomte du Nouÿ would continue to paint many contemporary Orientalist scenes, ranging from quick oil sketches made during his travels, to highly finished salon pictures perfected in his Paris studio.

Orientalism in art is not connected to a specific stylistic or theoretical trend, but is primarily defined by its subject matter. This might explain the various versions of it presented by such ideologically diverse painters as the Romantics Gabriel Decamps (1803-1860) and Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), the Neoclassicist Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867), the Impressionist Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), and the Fauvist Henri Matisse (1869-1954), and a great many others. While some artists, like Ingres, never traveled outside Europe, most were curious to learn more about ancient cultures, others were lured by the contemporary unknown; all were inspired by an unfamiliar environment and its people's customs and beliefs.

As with his explorations of *néo-grec* imagery, Lecomte du Nouÿ's involvement with Orientalism occurred relatively late within the phenomenon's heyday. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Orientalism gained enormous momentum as a result of European colonial expansion. By the second half of the century, Orientalist art was so common that certain critics had developed an aversion to it. In an 1876 Salon review, the critic Jules Castagnary found the subject passé, but nonetheless gave an interesting recapitulation of its origins:

Why doesn't one understand that Orientalism doesn't stick to our entrails and doesn't remain in our thoughts, and that it has never been anything else but a matter of fashion and infatuation? Do you remember how it began? The insurrection of Greece [War of Greek Independence (1821-30)] and the death of Lord Byron [1824] were the starting

points. It provoked an emotion in France never seen since, even when national interests seemed to commend it. All eyes, all hearts turned towards the Bosphorus. In conversations there was only talk about Missolonghi, Chios, Istanbul and Canari [on Corsica]. Young people were carried away. Everyone began to make the Orient of invention, without having seen it, without knowing it. Delacroix, in his studio in the rue de Grenelle (Saint-Germain), painted the episode of the massacre of Chios (1824); Victor Hugo, pacing the nursery gardens of the Luxembourg, composed *les Orientales* (1827). Finally, the cannon at Navarino resounded. [The battle of Navarino on October 20, 1827, was the final event that established the independence of Greece.] The Orient had opened to our landscape painters. Decamps and Marilhat hurried there at once.¹⁰⁵

Orientalist pictures may have bored Castagnary and certain other critics, but they remained thoroughly popular among artists and the (buying) audience toward the end of the century. In 1882, Lecomte du Nouÿ not only exhibited his large Homer triptych (fig. 20; cat. 160), he also showed the Orientalist canvas *The Rabbis commenting on the Bible on Saturday* (*Les rabbins commentant la Bible (Maroc)*, fig. 126). Gaston Schéfer seized this opportunity to introduce his salon review with another brief history of Orientalist art, and continued by lamenting the sorry state into which the genre had fallen. He acknowledged Lecomte du Nouÿ's powers of observation and handling, yet was not convinced that works of this type still contributed to the advancement of art. Indeed, he addressed the same idea of progress in art that many of his colleagues had cited when discussing *néo-grec* painting:

The Orient. Some fifty years ago, a few French artists, Delacroix, Decamps, Marilhat, etc., headed towards the Orient and discovered it. They brought back admirable works; better than that even, a ray of sunlight, that from there shone like a burning fire on all of French painting. But today, the Orient no longer has its light to bestow upon us, nor the brilliance of its costumes, nor the surprise of its customs: all of that is known and done. It has once again played its role of initiator. Art steeped itself in its light and its warmth as

¹⁰⁵ Castagnary 1892, II, p. 248: "Comment ne comprend-on pas que l'orientalisme ne tient pas à nos entrailles et au fond de notre pensée, qu'il n'a jamais été chez nous qu'une affaire de mode et d'engouement? Vous rappelez-vous comment la chose vint? C'est l'insurrection de la Grèce et la mort de Lord Byron qui furent le point de départ. Il y eut alors en France une émotion comme on n'en a pas vu depuis, même quand des intérêts nationaux semblaient la commander. Tous les regards, tous les coeurs se tournèrent vers le Bosphore. Dans les conversations, il ne fut plus question que de Missolonghi, de Scio, de Stamboul et du Grand Canaris. La jeunesse fut entraînée. Tout le monde se mit à faire de l'Orient d'invention, sans avoir vu, sans le connaître. Delacroix, dans son atelier de la rue de Grenelle - Saint Germain, peignit l'épisode enflammé du massacre de Scio (1824); Victor Hugo, en se promenant dans la pépinière du Luxembourg, rima les *Orientales* (1827). Enfin, le canon de Navarin retentit. L'Orient était ouvert à nos paysagistes. Decamps et Marilhat s'y précipitèrent." On Castagnary, see Bouillon 1990.

in the fountain of youth; it has nothing left to find here and painters abandon it now with the ingratitude that is the bitter but necessary law of progress.¹⁰⁶

However, the reservations of critics like Castagnary and Schéfer clearly had no great influence on the course of Lecomte du Nouÿ's art. In fact, throughout his career he continued to paint the very type of works attacked by these and other progressive critics— either descriptive genre paintings in contemporary North African or Middle Eastern settings, or wholly invented scenes of cultures long gone. In this latter category Lecomte du Nouÿ contributed some of his most original compositions to the genre of Orientalist painting.

The Dream of a Eunuch (Un rêve d'eunuque, 1874) and Related Compositions.

The Dream of a Eunuch (fig. 87; cat. 92) is a fascinating painting that touches upon many aspects of late nineteenth-century academic and Orientalist art. Lecomte du Nouÿ presumably conceived this work with the popular success of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82) in mind; it similarly combines exoticism with elements of violence and lust. But unlike *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*, *The Dream of a Eunuch* was not exhibited at the Salon of 1875; instead, the artist showed a version of this subject with a completely different composition titled *The Dream of Cosrou* (Le rêve de Cosrou, 1875; fig. 88; cat. 102), at the Salon of 1875.¹⁰⁷ To complicate things even more, there is a photograph of yet another version of the first composition, in which the crucial element of the smoke-formed figures is omitted (fig. 86; cat. 86). Like the Homer triptychs, these three closely related compositions provide useful insights into Lecomte du Nouÿ's artistic practice.

The Dream of a Eunuch (fig. 87) and *The Dream of Cosrou* (fig. 88), are based on one letter from Charles de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu's (1689-1755) *Lettres persanes* (Persian Letters, 1721), a novel comprised of some 161 fictitious letters written by, among others, two Persian noblemen visiting Paris, and by their wives and servants at home in the Persian capital of Ispahan (Esfahan in present-day Iran). This book was published anonymously by Montesquieu in Holland; it not only enabled the philosopher

¹⁰⁶ Schéfer 1882, p. 177-78; for the French text see cat. 172.

¹⁰⁷ My first research on this painting was published in d'Argencourt and Diederer 1999, II, p. 384-389. New findings since that publication, allow me to now offer slight amendments to this earlier research.

to criticize various aspects of contemporary French society, but also to discuss life in the Middle East, especially the customs of the harem. Lecomte de Nouÿ himself was evidently fascinated by this mysterious residence for concubines and created several more paintings of this subject.

In letter fifty-three of *Lettres persanes*, Zélis writes to her husband Usbek in Paris from the harem in Ispahan:

No passion was ever stronger or more vehement than that of Cosrou, the white eunuch, for my slave Zélide: he has asked for her hand in marriage with such persistence, that I can no longer refuse him. And why should I resist, when her mother does not, and since Zélide herself seems satisfied with this mock marriage, and the empty shadow that it offers her? What does she want with this unfortunate creature, who will merely be a jealous husband; who will only exchange his coldness for a useless despair; who, by perpetually recalling the memory of what he was, will only remind her of what he no longer is; who, always ready to give himself, but never giving, will deceive himself and always deceive her, making her constantly aware of the misery of his condition. And then! To be always in dreams and fantasies; to live only in imagination; to be always close to pleasure but never to experience it; languishing in the arms of someone unhappy; instead of responding to happy sighs merely answering one's regrets. Shouldn't one only have contempt for such a man, made only to guard and never to possess? I seek the love and don't see it. I speak to you freely as you like my naiveté, and because you prefer my free spirit and my sensibility for the pleasures with the feigned decency of my companions. I've heard you say a thousand times that eunuchs enjoy a kind of voluptuousness with women that is unknown to us; that nature recovers from its losses; that it has resources that repair the disadvantage of their condition; that even after no longer being a man, one is still sensitive; and that in this condition, one is more or less in a third state in which one changes pleasures. If that is true I find Zélide less pitiable. It is something to live with people who are less unhappy. Give me your orders in this matter, and let me know whether you want the marriage to take place in the seraglio. Goodbye.

From the seraglio in Ispahan, the fifth of the moon of Chalval 1713.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ The original French reads: "Jamais passion n'a été plus forte et plus vive que celle de Cosrou, eunuque blanc, pour mon esclave Zélide; il la demande en mariage avec tant de fureur, que je ne puis la lui refuser. Et pourquoi ferais-je de la résistance, lorsque sa mère n'en fait pas, et que Zélide elle-même paraît satisfaite de l'idée de ce mariage imposteur, et de l'ombre vaine qu'on lui présente?"

Que veut-elle faire de cet infortuné, qui n'aura d'un mari que la jalousie; qui ne sortira de sa froideur que pour entrer dans un désespoir inutile; qui se rappellera toujours la mémoire de ce qu'il a été, pour la faire souvenir de ce qu'il n'est plus; qui, toujours prêt à se donner, et ne se donnant jamais, se trompera, la trompera sans cesse, et lui fera essuyer à chaque instant tous les malheurs de sa condition?

Hé quoi! être toujours dans les images et dans les fantômes? ne vivre que pour imaginer? se trouver toujours auprès des plaisirs et jamais dans les plaisirs? languissante dans les bras d'un malheureux, au lieu de répondre à ses soupirs, ne répondre qu'à ses regrets?

Quel mépris ne doit-on pas avoir pour un homme de cette espèce, fait uniquement pour garder, et jamais pour posséder? Je cherche l'amour, et je ne le vois pas.

The Dream of a Eunuch (fig. 87; cat. 92) shows a man with Asian features reclining on a terrace beneath a star-studded sky, smoking a chibouk that induces a hallucination. Zélide, the object of his desire, materializes from the smoke and dances before him in all her feminine beauty and wearing a teasing smile. Her depiction as an ephemeral, unattainable vision alludes to Cosrou's physical condition, which prevents his desire from becoming reality. His dream is, in fact, a nightmare (the work has at times been published as *le cauchemar d'Eunuque* (The Nightmare of a Eunuch),¹⁰⁹ as represented by Zélide's cherubic companion, who symbolizes the source of Cosrou's misery. This Oriental Cupid is not depicted with the traditional bow and arrow, however, but instead holds a knife dripping with blood and is seated in a barber's bowl, the implements of Cosrou's castration. Lecomte du Nouÿ has thus offered a piquant image to male European viewers for whom the fantasy of the harem as a realm of unrestricted love was as unattainable as Zélide was to Cosrou. The many harem scenes painted by Lecomte de Nouÿ and other artists appealed to the curiosity of Western audiences who could but fantasize about such amorous paradises (even though not all of these depictions present entirely desirable circumstances). Indeed, *The Dream of a Eunuch* focuses on the figure of the eunuch himself rather than on one of those voluptuous women and consequently functions primarily as an emblem of Oriental despotism.

For his submission to the Salon of 1875, Lecomte du Nouÿ chose the same subject but completely altered his composition (fig. 87).¹¹⁰ With a title more reflective of its literary roots, *The Dream of Cosrou* (fig. 88; cat. 102) features a black eunuch reclining in an interior, his delirium generated by the water pipe he smokes. Zélide is now

Je te parle librement, parce que tu aimes ma naïveté, et que tu préfères mon air libre et ma sensibilité pour les plaisirs à la pudeur feinte de mes compagnes.

Je t'ai oui dire mille fois que les eunuques goûtent avec les femmes une sorte de volupté qui nous est inconnue; que la nature se dédommage de ses pertes; qu'elle a des ressources qui réparent le désavantage de leur condition; qu'on peut bien cesser d'être homme, mais non pas d'être sensible; et que, dans cet état, on est comme dans un troisième sens, où l'on ne fait, pour ainsi dire, que changer de plaisirs.

Si cela était, je trouverais Zélide moins à plaindre; c'est quelque chose de vivre avec des gens moins malheureux.

Donne-moi tes ordres là-dessus, et fais-moi savoir si tu veux que le mariage s'accomplisse dans le sérail. Adieu.

Du sérail d'Ispahan, le 5 de la lune de Chalval, 1713."

¹⁰⁹ Privat 1877, n. p.; for the French text see appendix V. Montgailhard omitted the short passage in Privat's text that contains this reference in his 1906 reprint. In the artist's dictionary, Siret 1883, this is one of only two paintings mentioned for the artist, and it is also called *Cauchemar d'un eunuque*, see cat. 93.

¹¹⁰ There is no doubt which of the two versions was exhibited at the Salon of 1875, as the work is reproduced in Dézamy 1875, plate 37, accompanied by a poem, see cat. 102.

dressed, the little Cupid-figure is positioned within her contours, and a far less conspicuous folding razor replaces the bloodstained knife. Evidently the artist adapted his composition to make it less graphic and therefore more suitable for display at the salon than his first version. Nonetheless, when the critic de la Fléchereye reviewed the 1875 Salon, he argued that while *The Dream of Cosrou* was beautifully executed, its subject was still somewhat improper.¹¹¹ Claretie, who had so admired the corpses in *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (though he had also questioned that work's violent premise), now wondered disdainfully "whether painting had nothing better to present than rebuses of absolutely doubtful taste?"¹¹² But the question of whether Lecomte du Nouÿ's compositions were readily comprehensible was ultimately of more concern to critics than questions of good taste. The issue had been raised in reviews of other paintings by the artist, including *The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian* (cat. 43) and the Homer triptych (cat. 160). In *The Dream of Cosrou*, in particular, the artist's form of self-censorship may have made it even more difficult for viewers who did not already know *Les lettres persanes* to comprehend fully.

A photograph of a third painting shows a composition very close to that of *The Dream of a Eunuch*, the major difference being that it lacks the apparition of Zélide (fig. 86; cat. 86).¹¹³ The background and terrace are virtually the same, except for a niche in the right wall, the absence of the little table with a still-life arrangement, and the bird on the battlements. Further, the man now smokes a water pipe and his features differ substantially. This last adjustment illustrates how nineteenth-century artists, in spite of an ostensible concern for accuracy, often referred indiscriminately to Middle Eastern, African, and Asian people. Montesquieu described Cosrou as white, yet in Lecomte du Nouÿ's three depictions he seems to have evolved from Asian to African to Middle Eastern. This is not an insignificant detail, as there existed a strict hierarchy among eunuchs, and their rank in the harem greatly depended on their skin color and on their physical condition. Depending on the type of operation they had had and the age at which they were emasculated, certain eunuchs could be sexually active and some indeed

¹¹¹ Fléchereye 1875, p. 128-129; for the French text see cat. 102.

¹¹² Claretie 1876, p. 352; for the French text see cat. 102. On Claretie, see Bouillon 1990.

¹¹³ When I researched the painting for the Cleveland Museum's collection catalogue, I was not aware of the existence of this work, see note 107.

married.¹¹⁴ But when scenes of the Orient were based on literary sources, as in this case, they were often interpreted particularly freely. For instance, Lecomte du Nouÿ changed the harem's location from Ispahan (Persia) to Cairo; the distinctive contours of the painted mosque resemble that Egyptian city's mosque of Sultan Hasan. Lecomte du Nouÿ visited Cairo, and may have seen a similar view from the citadel, an elevation that serves in his paintings as a terrace on which the eunuch reclines.¹¹⁵

The third painting carries a signature in the lower right corner on one of the rugs, but is not dated (fig. 86). This raises the question of the relative chronology of Lecomte du Nouÿ's three works on this subject. A reference in an 1877 auction catalogue to a painting called *Le Kieff du schériff (Souvenir d'Orient)* or, (The [drug-induced] Sleep of the Chieftain (Souvenir of the Orient)), may resolve this problem.¹¹⁶ The close description of the work in the catalogue mentions that the figure seems to look at the stars as he sleeps, but it does not refer to a woman, one of the key features of the 1874 painting. It is therefore possible to assume that the 1877 auction catalogue does not refer to the 1874 painting (Cleveland Museum of Art), but rather to this presently untraced variant of it. Furthermore, in his book, Montgailhard lists a painting with the title *Le kief du schérif* under the year 1873.¹¹⁷ Thus this mystery picture must have been painted one year before *The Dream of a Eunuch* (fig. 87), which bears the date of 1874, and must also predate *The Dream of Cosrou* (fig. 88) exhibited at that year's salon.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Penzer 1966, p. 140-151.

¹¹⁵ Technical research of the Cleveland painting has revealed that the artist at one point contemplated painting a pyramid in the background. It is not clear whether this element relates to a completely different composition that had been abandoned, or whether the view in the background was first to include such a building. If the latter is the case, he may have omitted it in order not to make it too much of an "Egyptian" scene, rather than a more generic "Oriental" one. For the technical research on the painting see d'Argencourt and Diederer 1999, vol. II, p. 387, Condition Summary.

¹¹⁶ For the full auction catalogue description, see cat. 86. Before knowing of this third version of the composition, I assumed that the description referred to the Cleveland painting, see d'Argencourt and Diederer 1999, vol. II, p. 387, Collections.

¹¹⁷ Montgailhard 1906, p. 118. See cat. 86.

¹¹⁸ The diaries of art dealer and collector Samuel P. Avery also contain a reference that might apply to one of these works, Fidell Beaufort 1979, p. 172 (see also chapter I notes 84 and 85). On June 24, 1873, he met in Paris with the dealer George A. Lucas, and noted: "to Lecomte de Nouy image girl ready - ordered The siesta on house top at Cairo about 15 x 24 for 2000 f." Given the date of their visit to Lecomte du Nouÿ and the word "siesta," it is tempting to assume it was *The Sleep of the Chieftain* (cat. 85) that they ordered, although this title could also apply to the Cleveland picture (cat. 92). *The Sleep of the Chieftain* seems to have remained in France, as it was most likely sold in the 1877 Paris auction, whereas Lucas and Avery bought works of art in Europe specifically for the American market. Furthermore, Avery ordered the painting rather than buy a finished picture, and the particular composition of *The Dream of a Eunuch* might

Of Dreams and Drugs

The Sleep of the Chieftain (Le kief du schérif, ca. 1873; fig. 86; cat. 86) depicts a reclining man smoking a water pipe. As such, it can be characterized as an Orientalist genre scene, and not necessarily an illustration of the text by Montesquieu that underlies *The Dream of a Eunuch* and *The Dream of Cosrou*. The subtitle *Souvenir d'Orient*, featured in the 1877 auction catalogue, refers to the artist's own visit to Cairo, where he would have seen both this exotic architecture and people smoking water pipes or hallucinatory drugs. The subject of Oriental men and women smoking was treated by Lecomte du Nouÿ many times in works like *A Pottery Merchant in Cairo* (Marchand de poteries au Caire, 1869; fig. 89; cat. 56), and was common to much Orientalist art. Yet *The Dream of a Eunuch* and *The Dream of Cosrou* can be distinguished from such genre scenes in their literary origins and but especially because of the actual depiction of the drug-induced hallucinations. It is not known whether Lecomte du Nouÿ experienced such hallucinations himself, although it would have easily been possible for him. Even if he had never traveled abroad, substances like morphine, hashish, and opium had found their way to Western Europe by the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁹ Although the use of such drugs was legal until the early twentieth century, the negative consequences of addiction still carried a social stigma before then. But it did not prevent drugs from becoming popular, especially in artistic circles. In 1845, the Parisian painter Fernand Boissard de Boisdénier (1813-66) founded the *Club des Hachichins*, (The Club of the Hashish Smokers) where artists and writers gathered regularly to consume hashish and discuss its effects. That same year, the medical doctor Jacques Joseph Moreau of Tours published *Du haschisch et de l'aliénation mentale* (On Hashish and Mental Alienation), the first study dedicated to this drug. In this book, Moreau twice noted that the consumption of hashish allowed access to the paradise of the Prophet.¹²⁰ As early as 1821, the British author Thomas de Quincey (1785-1859) published his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, and Théophile Gautier's *La pipe d'opium* was published in 1838

not yet have been established in the summer of 1873, possibly explaining the generic description in the diary. Although the early provenance of the Cleveland painting is unknown, it is a work that could well have been in the United States soon after its creation.

¹¹⁹ Davenport-Hines 2002, especially chapter three.

¹²⁰ Julien Cendres' postscript to Baudelaire 1851, p. 54.

and his *Le Club des Hachichins* in 1846.¹²¹ When the cartoonist Cham caricatured Lecomte du Nouÿ's 1875 Salon version of the subject, *The Dream of the Chieftan* for the comical publication *Le Salon pour rire* (fig. 90), he also focused on the painting's illustration of drug use, stating: "*Le Haschich! Eh! Eh! On lui finirait volontiers sa pipe!*" (Hashish! One would gladly finish his pipe!).

Lecomte du Nouÿ thoroughly transformed *The Sleep of the Chieftain* (fig. 86) in two subsequent compositions, not only by adding the actual hallucination, but by infusing the literary prestige of *Lettres persanes*. In keeping with academic principles, the artist thus elevated his composition from a mere genre scene to a more complex pseudo-history painting with additional layers of meaning. Depicting the consumption of hallucinatory drugs apparently posed no offence to public decency, whereas nudity was traditionally attempted only in literary, mythological, or biblical guises. Lecomte du Nouÿ adapted the compositions of his two versions of this subject to their intended purposes: one was made for a private collector, while the other was meant for the salon.

In his representation of dreams and apparitions, Lecomte du Nouÿ built upon a long pictorial tradition. Ingres and others had depicted the poet Ossian dreaming (1812-13, Musée Ingres, Montauban), and the well-established genre of Victorian fairy painting reflected its creators' experiments with hallucinogens of various kinds.¹²² Apart from Lecomte du Nouÿ's own possible experience of hallucinatory drugs, he is likely to have seen the drug-induced vision painted by Achille Zo (1826-1901), *The Dream of a Believer* (ca. 1870; fig. 91), exhibited at the Salon of 1870. Zo depicted the delirium of a turbaned man, a vision that seems to emerge from the smoke from his water pipe. He dreams of the Islamic paradise, where true believers reside happily forever in total bliss, and where there is a limitless supply of female beauties for sexual pleasure.

A comparable iconography can be seen on a nineteenth-century ivory miniature (fig. 92).¹²³ Even though Lecomte du Nouÿ may not have known this particular object, it reveals the prevalence of such motifs. A bearded man is seen exhaling the smoke from a cigar, which develops into the upper torso of a naked woman. The strings of pearls in her

¹²¹ See the introduction by Robert Chesnais to the edition of these two stories by Théophile Gautier, published in the series *L'esprit frappeur*, no. 6 (Paris 1998).

¹²² On this subject see: *Victorian Fairy Painting* 1997-98, especially the paintings by John Anster Fitzgerald (1823-1906), p. 36-39.

¹²³ Guégan 1997, repr. p. 96, in this publication, the miniature has been attributed to Théophile Gautier.

hair and on her body indicate that she is an Oriental woman and the welcoming gesture of her hand suggests that she is the willing subject of the man's erotic fantasy.¹²⁴ An engraving by the British artist Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) titled *The Harem* was an extreme example of this iconography (ca. 1810; fig. 93). It depicts a turbaned man in a state of arousal, smoking his chibouk and facing a seemingly endless array of female nudes.

In a picture from very late in his career, Lecomte du Nouÿ returned to the motif of a man reclining on a terrace beneath a starlit sky, smoking a water pipe and experiencing a drug-induced vision. In *An Oriental Dream* (*Rêve d'Orient*, 1904; fig. 94; cat. 304), however, the artist no longer bases his theme on Montesquieu and he comes closer in concept to Zo's painting. Montgailhard relates that Lecomte du Nouÿ was inspired here by Gautier's *La Mille et Deuxième Nuit* (*The One Thousand and Second Night*, 1842).¹²⁵ A *peri* (a supernatural being in Persian folklore) descends on a beam of light from an assembly of heavenly creatures to the poet Hassan as he is dreaming on his terrace. This picture is closely related to an oil sketch (fig. 95) in an album that Lecomte du Nouÿ named *Souvenirs de voyages, esquisses* (*Memories of my Travels, sketches*).¹²⁶ Lecomte du Nouÿ made many such sketches during his travels, and he used them throughout his career. These more or less elaborate sketches, as well as the numerous sketchbooks filled with simple pencil drawings, form a veritable catalogue of motifs that supported his memory long after he had witnessed or conceived them.¹²⁷ Whereas the Hassan sketch already clearly depicts a fictional encounter, most of these sketches are straightforward records of scenery the artist observed on his journeys abroad, like the beautiful view of rooftops in an Eastern town (fig. 96).

¹²⁴ Another picture with similar iconography was presented in the Paris sale, Hotel Drouot, *Orientalisme*, 12 March 1999, lot 258, Jules Ravel (1826-1898) *Turc rêvant des houris*. Oil on panel, 55 x 41 cm, repr. in color.

¹²⁵ Montgailhard 1906, p. 84.

¹²⁶ See appendix II, no. 59. I earlier discussed this oil sketch in d'Argencourt and Diederer 1999, cat. no. 135.

¹²⁷ The Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie in Aurillac possesses some 20 travel sketchbooks from the artist, as well as a large group of oilsketches and preparatory drawings, see appendix I.

Perceptions of Barbaric Violence

Henri Bouchot, curator of prints at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, contributed a preface to Guy de Montgailhard's 1906 biography of Lecomte du Nouÿ which addressed some of the issues discussed above and singled out violence as a prevalent characteristic of Oriental cultures. He described Lecomte du Nouÿ's work as follows:

One understands that the Orient, with its magic, its hashish and dreams, and that the African Egypt with its brutal light, and Asia with its Hebrew sentimentalities were his favorite places. The paradise of Mohammed and the promises of the Koran form the main subject matter of his compositions, sometimes mild, sometimes cruel. Because the Orient is more than just eunuchs sleeping at the gate of a seraglio [fig. 101], there are savage ones. There is his *Pharaoh*, a major and troubling work, where everything is designed for maximum drama and the splendid contrasts; the tranquility of a beautiful night and the rage of a human jackal, lolling in despair on his couch, amidst the cadavers of his *Bearers of Bad Tidings* [fig. 82]. I don't think that many works have so far tormented and moved us as much, indifferent as we all are.¹²⁸

Lecomte du Nouÿ expressed this perception of Oriental cruelty in various ways. In *The Dream of a Eunuch* (fig. 87) and *The Dream of Cosrou* (fig. 88), for example, Lecomte du Nouÿ characterized the Orient as an erotic paradise, as Zo and Rowlandson had done (figs. 91, 93). But his images were more ambiguous. With his representation of Cosrou, Lecomte du Nouÿ shifted the viewer's attention from Oriental pleasures to Oriental barbarity, as in *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82). One might even argue that the apparition of both the teasing female nude and the bloodstained knife in his two eunuch paintings symbolizes the male fear of castration. And in this context, how should the red hand painted directly beside the artist's signature in *The Dream of a Eunuch* (fig. 87) be interpreted? The motif is that of a *khamsa*, referring to the Arab word for five, and was intended to avert evil.¹²⁹ The artist had already represented several of these *khamsas*

¹²⁸ From Bouchot's introduction to Montgailhard 1906, p. x-xi; for the French text see cat. 64.

¹²⁹ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition (Leiden 1978), vol. IV, p. 1009, *Khamsa*: "five" still possesses, in several Muslim countries, as amongst peoples of ancient times, a magical value in connection with the use of the fingers of the hand as a defense against the evil eye. [...] Various representations of the hand, which were formerly current also in ancient civilizations, may be attached to this belief. One of the best-known is the piece of jewellery called "the hand of Fatma", used as an amulet and called *khamsa* etc., but one often

on a wall in his 1867 painting *The Dancing Fellah Woman* (fig. 21) and they still appear frequently in Islamic countries today. If Lecomte du Nouÿ was aware of the meaning of the *khamisa*, might the placing of this symbol so close to his own signature be read as a sign intended to ward off violence?

While paintings referring to or actually presenting scenes of exotic brutality, like *The Dream of a Eunuch* and *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* are clearly embedded in stereotypes about extinct and foreign cultures, they were also popular with the public. This is presumably why violence recurs regularly in *néo-grec* and especially Orientalist painting. Europeans had long envisioned Oriental warriors as fierce enemies in vicious battles with native and Western foes. This idea had been cultivated through images of crusaders clashing with infidels, as well as of the Turks' repeated attacks on the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Spain. Moreover, the related notion of Muslim cruelty and despotism were implicitly understood as indicators of that society's low level of civilization. This attitude is discernible in the reviews by Dubosc de Pesquidoux and Strahan of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (cat. 64), as well as Bouchot's assessment of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre in general.¹³⁰ Henri Regnault's (1843-1871) *The Execution without Judgment under the Moorish Kings of Granada* (1870; fig. 97), with its extremely graphic representation of a decapitation and the title emphasizing the injustice of the situation, conveyed a similar message. In 1866 Gérôme had exhibited an equally gruesome painting showing two guards flanking a pile of severed heads titled *Doorway to the Mosque El Assaneyn in Cairo where the heads of the Rebel Beys were exposed by Salek-Kachef*.¹³¹ Although no finished painting of a similar subject by Lecomte du Nouÿ is known, he did make a small oil sketch of a guard in a doorway beside a group of severed heads (fig. 98).

In a similar vein, Alexandre Cabanel's *Cleopatra Testing Poisons on Prisoners Condemned to Death* (1887; fig. 99) can be interpreted as the feminine counterpart to *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*. The painting, based on an anecdote drawn from Plutarch's *Lives* (Anthony, chapter LXXI.4), depicts the Egyptian queen preparing for her own suicide,

finds, on the walls of houses and elsewhere, the mark of a henna-painted hand, or a more schematic pattern with five branches. [...]" (Various bibliographic references are given in this entry.)

¹³⁰ See note 128.

¹³¹ Ackerman 2000, cat. 161 and 161.4. The work was sold at Christie's London, June 19, 2003 (lot 18). It has even been suggested that the dangling heads resemble Gérôme's critics.

calmly watching prisoners suffering the result of various poisons they are forced to swallow, while the body of one casualty is being carried away. Like pharaoh's frivolous violence in Lecomte du Nouÿ's picture, Cleopatra's capricious cruelty here is intended to stir the viewer's moral indignation, albeit with a degree of morbid fascination. Beyond representing an absolute ruler who could dispose of others at will, Cabanel played on the public's perception of this historical figure as a *femme fatale*. This idea of the ruthless Eastern woman was central to various depictions of the harem, including some of those by Lecomte du Nouÿ.

Inside the Harem

Derived from the Arab word *harim*, "harem" refers to the apartments for women in a Muslim household, an area that was strictly off limits to outsiders, especially Western men. This restriction naturally did not prevent Lecomte du Nouÿ and many of his colleagues from depicting this inner sanctum and its inhabitants. On the contrary, the very impenetrability of the harem only heightened their curiosity and fueled lively imaginings of what went on behind its walls. *The Dancing Fellah Woman* (fig. 21) was Lecomte du Nouÿ's first painting of a woman that was clearly intended to provide erotically charged entertainment for a male audience, yet it was not actually set in a harem. The scene occurs under a star-lit sky. The artist also made a small oil sketch of the exterior of *The Harem of Gesireh in Cairo* (not dated; fig. 100) and then depicted the guards at *The Gate of the Harem, Souvenir of Cairo* (La porte du sérail, 1876; fig. 101; cat. 116). The critic Ernest Boisse noted that:

The *Gate of the Harem* is a locked and carefully guarded gate; as one will see, it is preceded by a staircase of a few steps at the bottom of which there are five or six black men, whose belts hold many pistols and daggers. The sun begins to color the minarets, whose spires reach to the end of the canvas. The guards have just woken up and have lit their first pipes or cigarettes. At the top of the staircase, in front of the gate, kneels their chief and next to him a black panther with green eyes stretches out in the first beams of daylight. In the courtyard of a palace, a stork frisks about near a reflecting pool. This painting, which touches upon one of the mysterious sides of eastern life, is a remarkable

work due to its charming and harmonious coloring, and because of the curious robust figures to whom the master confidently entrusts the guarding of his wives.¹³²

In 1885, Lecomte du Nouÿ started work on a triptych titled *Ramses in his Harem* (Ramsès dans son harem; fig. 102, 102a; cat. 201) that, like *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82), was inspired by Gautier's *Le roman de la momie*. Far less suggestive and psychologically compelling than its predecessor, *Ramses in his Harem* shows pharaoh playing a board game with one of his mistresses, while others dance and play music. The critic Alfred Delilia found it "A marvelous antique document. According to Théophile Gautier's story, pharaoh, surrounded by his women Amensé, Taïa, and Hont-Reché, plays chess with the beautiful Twea. And Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ recreated this charming scene with an exquisite art. No one but the eminent artist could better render these black, yellow, green, and brown physiognomies, and discover more cleverly under the transparent gauzes the nudes in which he excels."¹³³

Judith Gautier (1845-1917), daughter of Théophile Gautier and his mistress (the contralto Ernesta Grisi), was a prolific writer and critic who played an active role in the cultural life of her time.¹³⁴ Tutored by a Chinese man, she eventually translated Chinese poetry and wrote several Orientalist novels. She was also an important promoter of Wagner's music and the first female elected to the Académie-Goncourt. Lecomte du Nouÿ dedicated to Judith Gautier an imaginary portrait of Tahoser, pharaoh's love interest in her father's novel,¹³⁵ and also illustrated some of her writings.¹³⁶ Judith Gautier's favorable opinion of *Ramses in his Harem* may well have been influenced by these associations, but it nonetheless constitutes a contemporary reaction from a leading intellectual. It is interesting to note that, as a woman, Judith does not seem to have been perturbed by the pervasive display of scantily clad female beauties who lived to serve. Indeed, she may well have seen in it a reflection of her own fictional approach to the East, one that similarly blended historical research and artistic fantasy:

¹³² Boisse, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 121; for the French text see cat. 116. Houssaye 1877, gives a less positive view of the picture, for the French text see cat. 116.

¹³³ Delilia 1887, p. 647; for the French text see cat. 201.

¹³⁴ For a biography see, Richardson 1987.

¹³⁵ Reproduced in Montgailhard 1906, p. 63. See also Aurillac: 82.13.89, appendix I.

¹³⁶ The Lecomte du Nouÿ album at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Cabinet des estampes, DC 309, vol. I, p. 88, contains two printed pages with Egyptian illustrations for her work, specified as "*Judith Gautier, Le Livre de Toth*."

[The picture's] first impression is so dazzling and so fresh that it looks like a bunch of flowers wet from the rain. Pharaoh is in the women's apartments and plays chess with the beautiful Twéa. His favorite women, Amensé, Taïa, and Hout-Reché are grouped around them. An alabaster in the Louvre, the portrait of Amenophis IV probably from the time of Moses, has served the painter as the model for rendering the pharaoh from the novel [fig. 103].¹³⁷ His slightly strange feminine beauty gives him an extraordinary charm. Very young, beardless, with long clear eyes, pure and open features, and a serious mouth: he has a physiognomy that is "relentlessly soft and of a granite-like serenity." His head is dressed with a black wig plaited on one side and a short front with the symbolic viper; from his naked bronze-colored chest hangs a gold necklace over an enameled breastplate, and his nipples are encircled with a blue tattoo. The attentive and meditative young girl who plays chess with the king is delightful. Seen in profile, she kneels close to the chessboard, one leg folded under her, and, despite her nudity, and adorned merely with a black and white belt around her waist and a papyrus bloom on her front, she is of a charming chasteness. Amensé, with silk-blue hair, coiffed in a sort of helmet with feathers of guinea fowl, leans forward in order to follow the game. Taïa, a grenade flower behind her ear, holds a polished mirror with a nice mischievous gesture, and Hout-Reché lies on pillows, her neck resting on a wooden half-moon (a slightly hard support, but it prevents the floral creation in her hair from being crushed), looks vaguely at the play of sunlight through the wooden lattice work of the window. How many interesting and accurate details might one study endlessly while resting one's elbows on the picture rail: the hardwood chessboard with feet that turn into the claws of a jackal, the peculiarly shaped chess pieces in green enameled ivory, the mats, the jewelry, the fabrics, the architecture, and much more. This painting of such pure design and with such beautiful light certainly repeats the success of the other canvas by Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ inspired by the same novel, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* [fig. 82], which is currently at the musée du Luxembourg.¹³⁸

Some fifteen years later, Lecomte du Nouÿ revisited the subject of a pharaoh in his harem in *The Sadness of Pharaoh* (*La tristesse de pharaon*, 1901; fig. 104; cat. 290).¹³⁹ Montgailhard writes that the painter envisioned this as an Egyptian pendant to Ingres's famous *Stratonice* (1840, Musée Condé, Chantilly), which features an ancient Greek interior.¹⁴⁰ Inspired by Gautier's line "Qui donc a pris le coeur de notre maître?" ("Who has stolen the heart of our master?"), pharaoh is seen here on his throne, immersed in a sorrow that blinds him to the women who patiently wait for him. It seems that the artist had interrupted work on this picture to visit Egypt, and it is clear that

¹³⁷ Aurillac: 82.13.1 and 82.13.22; see appendix I.

¹³⁸ Cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 60-61; for the French text see cat. 201.

¹³⁹ The artist Maurice Denis questioned this work in his Salon review as follows: "In order to satisfy what archeological passion persists Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ in drawing dryly, yet not without elegance, models in Egyptian costumes? Under the pretext to tell us, for example, the *Sadness of Pharaoh*?" Denis 1913, p. 77; for the French text see cat. 290.

¹⁴⁰ Montgailhard 1906, p. 83.

sketches he made from an ancient interior at Fayoum informed the archeological details in the final composition of this work.¹⁴¹

Both Egyptian harem scenes allowed Lecomte du Nouÿ to depict a range of female beauties in various poses, even as they appeased his relentless desire to recreate historic settings. Although it is difficult to judge their merit only through photographs, these works seem to lack both narrative and compositional originality. They relate closely to his earlier masterpiece *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82) in focusing on the mood of pharaoh, whose ruthlessness made the earliest composition unforgettable; in all three paintings the artist implies that, despite the absolute power of the pharaoh and his control of countless women, true love and happiness have eluded him.

The White Slave (L'esclave blanche, 1888)

The White Slave (fig. 105; cat. 219), showing a harem interior of a more intimate character, is perhaps Lecomte du Nouÿ's best-known picture. It is often reproduced in current literature on Orientalism and even serves to promote a wide range of commercial products. In both subject matter and composition, the artist once more pays tribute here to Ingres and Gérôme. A more generic kinship might also be established with Cabanel's red-haired beauty *Albaydé* (1848, Musée Fabre, Montpellier), an image inspired by one of Victor Hugo's poems in *Les Orientales*.¹⁴² As in Ingres's and Gérôme's odalisques and scenes of bathers, Lecomte du Nouÿ concentrated in this work on leisure in the luxurious setting of the harem. This bejeweled pale woman with abundant red hair seductively smokes a cigarette, admiring the curvilinear plumes of smoke emerging from her pouting lips. An elaborate meal has been served in precious dishes and two black female servants are washing laundry in a marble basin. Like the orange seen in the lower right corner, neatly peeled and divided into bite-size portions, Lecomte du Nouÿ offers up this concubine for his viewers' consumption, barely covering her body with a beautifully embroidered shawl.

¹⁴¹ Aurillac: 82.13.243, appendix I, is an Egyptian sketch dated 1901.

¹⁴² For a recent discussion of Cabanel's painting see Sylvain Amic in, Bonfait 2003, p. 405-406, repr.

Like many of Lecomte du Nouÿ's Orientalist pictures, this one reflects an amalgam of influences and elements. In two preparatory drawings, the artist established the basic pose of the central female figure, including the plume of smoke escaping from her mouth.¹⁴³ Art historian Marie-Colette Depierre has linked the figure's particular pose to the twelfth stanza in Gautier's *Le poème de la femme* (1849): "*La Géorgienne indolente, / Avec son souple narguilhé, / Etalant sa hanche opulente, / Un pied sous l'autre replié.*" (The indolent woman from Georgia, / With her flexible hookah, / Displaying her opulent hip, / One foot folded beneath the other.) A passage from Gustave Flaubert's *Salâmmbo* (1862) might also apply here: "*Presque toujours, elle était accroupie au fond de son appartement, tenant dans ses mains sa jambe gauche repliée, la bouche entr'ouverte, le menton baissé, l'oeil fixe.*" (Almost continuously she squatted in the back of her apartment, holding her bent left leg with her hand, her mouth slightly open, her chin lowered, her gaze fixed.)¹⁴⁴ Other elements in the composition have also been identified: the pillows and the fabrics worn by the servants are African and Middle Eastern, while the embroidered cloth under the dishes and the carved spoon appear to be Romanian (Lecomte du Nouÿ might have obtained them while visiting his brother in Romania), and the bowl holding dates in the foreground displays Hindu motifs.¹⁴⁵ Although luxury goods were actively traded throughout the Ottoman Empire, it is most likely that Lecomte du Nouÿ simply assembled disparate props that he felt would result in an appealing composition. The title of the painting refers to the racial distinction among the three slaves depicted and the disparity in their monetary value. By 1888 the Ottomans had almost ceased their trade in white slaves from Georgia and Circassia, yet this picture still documents the practice and indeed the fact that a white slave was spared manual labor in order to perform other duties.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Aurillac: 82.13.48 and 82.13.48, see appendix I.

¹⁴⁴ *Le poème de la femme* forms part of Théophile Gautier's, *Émaux et Camées* (Éditions Gallimard, Paris, 1981). The link between the picture and these literary sources was made in the unpublished study, Depierre 1980, p. 176.

¹⁴⁵ Depierre 1980, p. 176. These same findings have been published in *Orients* 1982, cat. no. 30.

¹⁴⁶ Depierre 1980, p. 176. Gérard de Nerval's *Voyage en Orient* (1851) is cited with various observations about this subject. In particular the 1956 edition by La Pléiade. See also, Ruth Bernard Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind* (New Haven, London, 2000), p. 63.

The White Slave received generally favorable press; apart from a critic who argued that the woman did not "live,"¹⁴⁷ the popular illustrated journals were quite taken by her.¹⁴⁸ While reviewing depictions of the nude at the Salon of 1888, Théophile Sylvestre wondered whether or not this woman's captivity in the service of male pleasure should be pitied. His ultimately negative answer illustrates the way in which a nineteenth-century man could assume his readers' agreement on the subordinate position of women in society. Indeed, Sylvestre's commentary can be regarded as the written counterpoint to the very painting it discussed. *The White Slave* reminded him of a specific love poem, and although he went so far as to imagine that the woman might be missing her lover at home, he did not think it necessary to pity her, implying that her ultimate role was to please and live for the higher purpose of love:

Pity her? Why? Isn't caring for her beauty enough to fill her days, does she not have, to reflect her charm, the running water that repeats to her as it falls in the resonant basin:

The song that the morning sings
And that the night teaches the day,
The plaintive and touching song,
The eternal song of love!¹⁴⁹

The White Slave reminded Sylvestre of a poem, and it also inspired the writing of a new one by Edmond Haraucourt, who later provided a perceptive assessment of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre.¹⁵⁰

What a strange psychology one might construe from this haughty and rapt personality, which appears frigid because of its austerity and troubles one through the sheer pride that emanates from his works. One easily understands that the art of Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ does not please most people, but no one passes by his canvasses with indifference; they impose a respect, and the vague restlessness that emanates from things with which one communicates uneasily, things that one only penetrates after a long study. The painting of Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ recalls that of Ingres; it has its qualities and its shortcomings, its

¹⁴⁷ Crinon 1888, p. 1052; for the French text see cat. 219.

¹⁴⁸ Henri Boucher, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 129; for the French text see cat. 196.

¹⁴⁹ For the complete poem and text see cat. 219.

¹⁵⁰ See cat. 219. For a similar poem by Dézamy, see cat. 102.

purity and its excessive neatness. One is particularly aware of this artistic legacy when standing in front of *The White Slave*.¹⁵¹

The Orientals (Les Orientales, 1885)

A harem scene of a wholly different character best exemplifies Lecomte du Nouÿ's representation of Eastern violence. Europeans fantasized about the eunuchs who had suffered from the whims of despots, as well as jealousy among the members of the harem, and the resulting cruelty and intrigue. This male construction of female vice found its expression in many canvasses, among them Fernand Cormon's (1845-1924) *Jealousy in the Seraglio* (1874, fig. 106) and Théodore Ralli's (1852-1909) *Drama in the Harem* (Salon of 1908, fig. 107).¹⁵² Such lurid imaginings clearly informed one of the four pictures in Lecomte du Nouÿ's Hugo-cycle, *Les Orientales* (fig. 57; cat. 186), based on the collection of poems published by Victor Hugo in 1829 under the same title. In a richly decorated interior, a sultan reclines as a naked woman with a satisfied, villainous smile leans over him. A slave, clenching a sharp dagger in his mouth, presents the sultan with a platter containing the severed heads of two of the woman's rival concubines. Hugo had formulated this whimsical act of bloodshed as follows: "*N'ai-je pas pour toi, belle Juive, / Assez dépeuplé mon sérail? / Souffre qu'enfin le reste vive. / Faut-il qu'un coup de hache suive / Chaque coup de ton éventail?*" (Have I not for you, beautiful Jewess, / depopulated my harem sufficiently? / Suffer, so the others can finally live. / Is it necessary that an ax falls / after every bat of your fan?)¹⁵³

Rather than merely illustrating Hugo's verse, Lecomte du Nouÿ created a picture in which elements of sexual desire, violence, and intrigue form a delicate mélange that at once attracts and repulses, just like the biblical story of the femme fatale Salomé, to whom this work certainly alludes.¹⁵⁴ Here again, the distinction between chronological

¹⁵¹ Haraucourt, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 61-62; for the French text see cat. 219.

¹⁵² The painting by Ralli was sold at Sotheby's, New York, November 3, 1999, lot 46, *Jalousie*, oil on canvas, 72.4 x 50.2 cm. The 1908 Salon catalogue (Société des Artistes Français) published by Ludovic Baschet, reproduces Ralli's *Drame au Harem*, which seems identical to the painting sold at this Sotheby's auction.

¹⁵³ The first stanza of Hugo's poem "La Sultane Favorite", no. XII in *Les Orientales* (1829).

¹⁵⁴ The museum in Aurillac keeps a small oilsketch of a woman holding a tray containing a round object, probably a representation of Salomé holding the head of John the Baptist (Aurillac: 82.13.230, see

and geographical distance becomes blurred. For the Middle East was perceived by artists of this period as an ideal setting for generic historical images, and for biblical tales in particular. While Cabanel had a very concrete historical reference point for his fantastical conception of Cleopatra's cruelty (fig. 99), Lecomte du Nouÿ even departed from Hugo's fictional presentation of the theme to create yet another bizarrely intriguing composition. As in *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82), in *The Orientals* he has developed a scene designed to incite the public's indignation, and hence its attention, through its exoticism, eroticism, and cruelty. Its large format and status within a series of canvasses illustrating Hugo's literary oeuvre, no less than the clear allusion to the biblical Salomé, all confirm Lecomte du Nouÿ's ongoing predilection for traditional history painting and its underlying academic principles.

IV. RELIGION AND REPORTAGE

Many nineteenth-century travelers to Egypt, Palestine and other Middle Eastern lands not only to learn about ancient cultures, but also because they believed that firsthand experiences there would enable them to better imagine the landscapes and customs of biblical times, and subsequently render more historically accurate religious paintings.¹⁵⁵ In this regard artists were following a trend established by scholars and scientists exploring biblical history. In 1865, for example, a group of British academics and clergymen founded the Palestine Exploration Fund with the purpose of researching the culture, topography, and geology of biblical Palestine and the Levant. Lecomte du Nouÿ was a practicing Roman Catholic and this seems to have partly motivated his own travels. Several sketches testify to his religious beliefs, like the one he made of a hand carrying a globe, with the caption: "*Le monde est dans la main de Dieu.*" (The world is in the hand of God.)¹⁵⁶

appendix I). See also Henri Regnault's depiction of Salomé in a richly decorated Orientalist setting (1870, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art). See also the chapter "Gold and the Virgin Whores of Babylon; Judith and Salome: The Priestesses of Man's Severed Head," in, Dijkstra 1986.

¹⁵⁵ For an introduction on religion and Orientalist art, see Malcolm Warner, "The Question of Faith: Orientalism, Christianity and Islam," in, Stevens 1984, p. 32-39.

¹⁵⁶ Aurillac: 82.13.34, see appendix I.

If nineteenth-century artists established connections between archeological finds and contemporary Middle Eastern customs and dress, they also used biblical references to describe or explain unfamiliar sights and events encountered on their journeys abroad. The local populations of these countries were believed to continue traditions described in the Testaments; and Montgailhard, for example, recounted Lecomte du Nouÿ's trip to Morocco in the following words: "A trip to Tanger lay ahead, and Lecomte du Nouÿ was eager to visit a country free from all European influence. As soon as he set foot on Moroccan soil he was charmed by the picturesque costumes, and specifically by the clothing of the local Jews, which united a rich variety of silk, velvet, gold, and jewels. In Tetouan, where he arrived on horseback, a Jew grabbed his stirrup, as in the Bible, helped him to descend, and told him while opening his house for him: "You are at home."¹⁵⁷

In addition to painting traditional religious pictures that represent specific passages from the Bible, Lecomte du Nouÿ also created Oriental genre scenes of Christians and non-Christians practicing their beliefs. This sort of painting usually had a strong ethnographic component and became popular subject among Western artists traveling to the Middle East. Indeed, it was one of the prevailing sub-categories within Orientalist art. With a defined number of official commissions for more traditional religious works, such as altarpieces and other church decorations, ethnographical religious genre paintings not only formed a welcome alternative for artists, but also reflected a strong demand from private collectors. Examples of works in both categories by Lecomte du Nouÿ are discussed here.

Job and his Friends (Job et ses amis, 1867)

At the 1867 Salon, Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibited his first biblical painting, *Job and his Friends* (fig. 108; cat. 30); it was accompanied in the catalogue by a citation from the Book of Job ("Mais Job répondit et dit: J'ai souvent entendu de pareils discours. Vous êtes tous des consolateurs fâcheux." (*Livre de Job, chap. XVI.*) ["But Job responded and said: I have heard many such things. Miserable comforters are you all!"]). The prologue tells how Satan, with God's permission, tried Job with severe afflictions in order to test

¹⁵⁷ Montgailhard 1906, p. 49.

his virtue. Job bore six great temptations in succession, with heroic patience and without the slightest murmuring against God or wavering in his loyalty to him. Then Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Baldad, and Sophar came to console him, their visit being the seventh and greatest trial, as they believed his own actions had caused his misfortune.

As mentioned in Chapter One, Lecomte du Nouÿ's rendition was criticized for its lack of visual excitement. Nonetheless, the composition demonstrates that he relied upon memories of his first journey to Egypt in 1865. Although the three men at right could easily have figured in any classical or mythological scene, the ruinous structures and the crouching figure in the center of the composition suggest the influence of Lecomte de Nouÿ's direct observations in Egypt. A sheet with various studies for the subject supports this impression (fig. 109). The sketch in the lower right corner of this sheet depicts a crouching figure in an Eastern setting, similar to the one in the painting. Further, at the 1867 Salon the artist also showed *The Dancing Fellah Woman* (fig. 22; cat. 31), which, according to the information in the catalogue, was inspired by his visit to Kaphra in Egypt in 1865.

In addition to the reviews of *Job* referred to in Chapter I, the cartoonist Cham also commented on the picture. Cham's caricatures after Salon paintings were, by definition, not complimentary, yet he provided an interesting insight by exaggerating the three figures at right into seemingly Oriental figures wearing kaftans (fig. 110). In his caption, Cham changed Job into a character from Léon Laya's popular comedy *Le duc Job* (1859). It seems that, for once, Lecomte du Nouÿ may have inspired his master Gérôme; his Job anticipates the older artist's 1874 rendition of *Saint Jerome* (fig. 111), which also features a very similar reclining, barely clad old man.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, Job's three friends in Lecomte du Nouÿ's painting seem to have been derived from the toga-clad men at right in Gérôme's famous *Phryné before the Areopagus* (1861; fig. 112).

Two Altarpieces for the Église de la Sainte-Trinité, Paris (1873-79)

In 1873, Lecomte du Nouÿ received a commission from the State and the City of Paris to paint two altarpieces for the Église de la Sainte-Trinité. The parish had been

¹⁵⁸ Ackerman 2000, p. 284-85, cat. no. 237, repr.

established in 1851 and the church building, located at place d'Estienne-d'Orves in the IX arrondissement, was executed between 1861 and 1867. The completion of the interior decoration lasted another decade, and the paintings for the side chapels were installed between 1875 and 1880. The painters of the other chapels in the church included Louis Français (1814-1897), Michel Dumas (1812-1885), Félix Barrias (1822-1907), Élie Delaunay (1828-1891) and Émile Lévy (1826-1890).¹⁵⁹ Lecomte du Nouÿ was asked to decorate the side chapel dedicated to Saint Vincent de Paul (1576/-80-1660), who had been revered for his charitable efforts. From the saint's eventful life, Lecomte du Nouÿ extracted two episodes: *Saint Vincent de Paul Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith* (1876; fig. 113, cat. 111) and, *Saint Vincent de Paul Helping the Inhabitants of Lorraine after the War of 1637* (1879, fig. 114; cat. 139). The saint enjoyed great popularity among Parisian Catholics, and Léon Bonnat had painted a similar altarpiece for the Church of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs in 1865, titled *Saint Vincent de Paul Taking the Place of a Galley Slave* (fig. 115).

Lecomte du Nouÿ's first painting in the church relates to Vincent de Paul's care for convicts consigned to the galleys. Before reaching their ships, or when illness compelled them to disembark, the convicts were kept in dungeons under miserable conditions. Vincent de Paul visited the galley convicts of Paris, Marseilles, and Bordeaux regularly and converted many to Catholicism. He established a hospital for them in Paris and was appointed royal almoner of the galleys by Louis XIII. The second altarpiece relates to the saint's charitable activities in the eastern French regions of Alsace and Lorraine; these areas suffered severely during the Thirty Years War (1618-48). Vincent de Paul engaged the Sisters of Charity, an order founded in the wake of his activities, to assist him. When contributions lagged, he published horrific accounts of scenes in the disaster areas and organized soup kitchens. Importantly, Lecomte de Nouÿ's altarpiece alluded to recent contemporary events, reminding French audiences of the Prussian occupation of Lorraine since the ending of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870.

A number of preliminary designs for these altarpieces provide insight into the artist's working method. A single extant oil sketch by Lecomte de Nouÿ shows two preparatory studies for the altarpieces, side by side, suggesting that they were

¹⁵⁹ Brunel 1995, p. 339-342.

commissioned and conceived together, even though the final canvasses would be executed several years apart (fig. 116). Two larger, individual oil sketches show more defined compositions, and are not only distinct from the earlier single sketch in a variety of ways, but are also quite different from the final painted altarpieces (figs. 113 and 114). Once the artist had settled on the designs for these works, he made many oil sketches illustrating the details of the figures' faces and bodies (fig. 119). In the sketch for the composition of the 1876 altarpiece, the figure of the saint commands more attention than he does in the final painting (fig. 117). Initially, he stands gesturing dramatically, raising a crucifix in his left hand and pointing upward with his right hand to an apparition of the Virgin. He is dressed in a bright white cassock, and a galley slave kneels forward to kiss his foot. In the final painting, however, Vincent de Paul is dressed in a sober black outfit and opens his arms in a humbly welcoming gesture. The kneeling slave has been omitted here, leaving an empty space in the center of the composition. As a result, the diagonal formed by the group of convicts is more strongly defined and leads the eye toward the main figure. By replacing the white garments of several figures, Lecomte du Nouÿ darkened the picture's overall tone, an effect he may have sought to more convincingly convey the squalid environment. The upper half of the painting is devoted to the supernatural appearance of the Virgin and Child, enthroned in the realm of heaven. While the oil sketch shows only these two figures hovering on clouds, the artist flanked them in the altarpiece with John the Baptist and two singing angels. Lecomte du Nouÿ made a visual connection here between earthly misery and heavenly salvation through the image of an angel holding the Eucharist, positioned immediately behind Vincent de Paul. With this image of the Madonna enthroned, the artist saw himself as sustaining the prestigious iconographic tradition of religious painting by Raphael and Ingres.

The 1879 altarpiece shows comparable changes in relation to the preparatory sketch. The sketch depicts a street covered in snow, to underscore the wretched conditions of the poorly clothed and starving citizens (fig. 118). Vincent de Paul, with the assistance of the Sisters of Charity and a devout rich lady, is seen handing out bread to the poor. Lecomte de Nouÿ's omission of snow in the final altarpiece may have been for purely aesthetic reasons: large areas of white, like the white garments he took out of the final version of the first altarpiece, might have drawn undue attention to minor parts of

the composition. As a pendant to the Virgin and Child in the first altarpiece, the upper half of the Lorraine picture features a triumphant Christ and angels holding a banner reading *1637 – Lorraine – Alsace – 1648*. Here again, the artist provided a visual link between the earthly and heavenly spheres by placing a large crucifix at the center of the composition.

Before the first altarpiece was installed in the chapel, it was presented at the 1876 Salon; the entry in the catalogue included the abbreviation: *M. INST. P. ET B.-A.*, indicating that the work had been commissioned by the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, then led by Philippe de Chennevières, Directeur des Beaux-Arts.¹⁶⁰ In his review of the 1878 Exposition Universelle, Strahan commented: "At the Salon of 1876, M. Lecomte du Nouy met his greatest triumph, receiving the ribbon of a chevalier of the order of the Legion of Honor. His pictures that season were the "Begging Homer" [...], and "St. Vincent de Paul in the Church of the Trinity at Paris; it is exhibited in the Pavilion of the City of Paris."¹⁶¹ Yet, as noted earlier, the critic Castagnary saw this as further evidence of the government's outdated system of commissions and surely viewed the awards merely as state acts of self-congratulation.¹⁶²

Once again, the critics were divided in their responses to this work. Edmond About was a spokesperson for the conservative *Conseil supérieur des beaux-arts* (High Council on the Fine Arts), an organization that championed religious painting, yet he was also famously anticlerical.¹⁶³ He faulted the clergy for its often misguided artistic demands in church commissions and praised the artist for his successful completion of a very arduous task. Since he had been required to represent both earthly and heavenly elements for this commission, the artist had, in effect, been asked to produce two different works in a single canvas: "Lecomte du Nouy has successfully translated the contrast between this good and noble man and the degraded beings who are elevated by the saint's eloquence. The attitudes and the faces of these disheveled converts and the grand pose of the good man standing among them like a Christian Orpheus amongst the lions and tigers, all that forms an incredible ensemble for the contentment of eye and

¹⁶⁰ Chennevières 1979.

¹⁶¹ Strahan 1878, p. 7.

¹⁶² See Introduction, p. 3 and note 2; for the French text see cat. 64.

¹⁶³ On About, see Bouillon 1990.

spirit. But modern mysticism is not easily content. It insists that the Virgin, the angels, and the Eucharist are also present." About did not believe that any artist would normally challenge himself this way, and praised Lecomte du Nouÿ's solution to a difficult predicament. He admired how the mystical figures floated in a conventional light, while the human and dramatic portion was rendered in more earthy bluish tones. He saw the figures of the Virgin and the angels as representing a wonderful mixture of influences, including the Old Masters and Lecomte du Nouÿ's personal tastes.¹⁶⁴

René Delorme also focused on the work's compositional division, but unlike About, he was far less impressed by the artist's handling of light:

This grand composition is divided in two parts: one celestial, in which the Virgin, the Christ child, and the angels hover on clouds; the other terrestrial, where Vincent de Paul is seen preaching and converting those who have been punished for their crimes by human justice. In this second part there is a group of men treated with unusual vigor and a complete knowledge of anatomy. Saint Vincent de Paul is also skillfully rendered. But the pale sky, the light violet coloring of the angels, and the particular light of the clouds provide too great a contrast to the realistic scene taking place below.¹⁶⁵

Charles Yriarte, writing in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, also praised the altarpiece in his salon review and illustrated it with drawings of the work:

Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ has executed a grand and very important composition for l'Église de la Sainte-Trinité. One can see in the two published images with what conscience the artist accomplished a task that might be considered a penum and a necessity of life. The whole lower area of the painting, the realistic part representing historic fact, *Saint Vincent Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith*, is well installed and deserves praise despite its neutral palette. The upper part is largely lacking in harmony and this is the area in which Lecomte du Nouÿ placed the Virgin and the celestial chorus in the manner of Ingres's *Vow of Louis XIII* [1824, Montauban Cathedral] and most Renaissance artists; yet there is a certain boldness in the way he has cut off the painting's supernatural part and emphasized it so vividly. There is much to praise in this work. This talented painter, as also evidenced by his *Begging Homer* [fig. 77], however, may not have sufficiently shaken off the influence of his three masters, Gleyre, Gérôme, and Signol.¹⁶⁶

Another critic was far less forgiving in his Salon review, and disagreed completely with Delorme's assessment of Lecomte du Nouÿ's anatomical skills:

¹⁶⁴ About, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 119-120; for the French text see cat. 111.

¹⁶⁵ Delorme cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 121; for the French text see cat. 111.

¹⁶⁶ Yriarte 1876 (I), p. 718-20, repr. p. 721; for the French text see cat. 111.

Never has a painter embarrassed this critic so much as Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ, whose real talent appeals to our sympathy, and whose works are always most disagreeable. What to say about *Saint Vincent de Paul Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith*? This painting reveals an enormous talent; it's the work of a knowledgeable draftsman, an artist to be reckoned with. But the cult of his masters makes a clumsy pupil of Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ. We fault him greatly for the canary-yellow halos around the head of the saint, and the host presented by the discreet angel behind him, as well as the upper part of the composition, which is a pale repetition of the *Virgin with the Host* [1851, Musée d'Orsay, Paris] by Ingres, who, like Gérôme, is admired by the artist. There are some beautiful areas in the group of the galley convicts, who seem so uncomfortable in their frame, so much so that the one in the foreground is obliged to fold his leg.¹⁶⁷

The 1879 Lorraine altarpiece was also first seen publicly at the salon. Jules Guillemot called it one of the exhibition's best pictures in terms of arrangement and design. He remarked that that Vincent de Paul was known to have been a rather ugly man, and that the artist had managed to create such an "expression of evangelical goodness while keeping the resemblance" that the saint's ugliness became unnoticeable.¹⁶⁸ Modernist critics, however, saw no redeeming qualities whatsoever in this kind of painting. Joris Karel Huysmans, for example, attacked a painting by another artist before shifting his tirade against Lecomte du Nouÿ's altarpiece:

All that is quite mediocre, but still, there is worse. It's astonishing, but that's the way it is. Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ has accomplished this tour de force. I have always assumed that Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ was perfectly capable of doing work other than painting. Did he miss his calling? Except for the fact that he has been making paintings for a long time, this would certainly have been clearly demonstrated by his *Saint Vincent de Paul*, brown like an old picture from the French school under Louis XIII. The only merit of this work is that no single fault curses louder than the others. Composition, design, color, everything is in keeping. It is aggravated Gérôme, it is painting by a prisoner.¹⁶⁹

Romanian Frescoes (after 1895)

After completing these altarpieces, the only large-scale religious works undertaken by Lecomte du Nouÿ were frescoes in Romanian churches. In 1895, during a visit to his brother, the architect André Lecomte du Nouÿ, in Romania he not only

¹⁶⁷ Anonymous 1876, p. 2; for the French text see cat. 111.

¹⁶⁸ Guillemot, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 123; for the French text see cat. 139.

¹⁶⁹ Huysmans 1883, p. 22; for the French text see cat. 139.

received portrait commissions from the royal family but was also asked to decorate churches, many of which were being restored by his brother. Montgailhard quotes the painter as saying: "The Romanian government has commissioned me to decorate several churches with frescoes, which I painted according to local custom in a Byzantine style, and in my compositions I added the portraits of sovereigns to the saints. I decorated the chapels and choirs of churches in Arges, Treiarchi, and Saint Nicholas of Iassy in this way."¹⁷⁰ Lecomte du Nouÿ made many preparatory sketches and cartoons for these frescoes (cats. 260-263, 265, 266, 283, 284). For the year 1899, for example, Montgailhard lists works for the church in Iassy: "*Carton pour Saint-Nicolas de Iassy (Roumanie). Quarante-deux figures: La mort de la Vierge* [for which the Dahesh Museum of Art in New York owns a red chalk detail study of the Virgin's face; fig. 120; cat. 247]; *Les Princes fondateurs; Basile le Loup; Le Roi; La Reine; Les Princesses; La Patrie Roumaine; Tous les Saints; etc.*"¹⁷¹

Judith (1875)

Lecomte du Nouÿ successfully straddled the realms of the Bible and the Orient with the tender rendition of an ornately attired woman's head in profile. He did not paint a traditional representation of a saint; indeed this Middle Eastern woman can only be identified as the apocryphal heroine Judith because her name is written in golden letters in the upper left corner of the small panel (fig. 121; cat. 106). Like Salomé, Judith was a biblical femme fatale, yet in this composition she holds neither a sword nor the decapitated head of Holofernes. Rather, the artist's primary concern seems to be the careful depiction of the exotic costume and facial expression, and the work recalls Montgailhard's account of Lecomte du Nouÿ's trip to Morocco, where the highly

¹⁷⁰ Montgailhard 1906, p. 73; several of the frescoes are reproduced in chapter IX.

¹⁷¹ 1904 Salon catalogue: *Les princes fondateurs et la famille royale – peinture murale*, (Eglise Tré-iérachi à Jassy (Roumanie); *La famille royale, La mort de la Vierge, Le Christ et les Saints – grande peinture murale* (Eglise Saint Nicolas). 1905 Salon catalogue: *S.M. le roi Charles ordonnant la reconstruction de l'église d'Argès, peinture murale. S.M. la reine Elisabeth offrant son Evangile à la Vierge – peinture murale* (Eglise de Curtéa d'Arges, Roumanie). Several of these works are reproduced in Montgailhard 1906, chapter IX. See also the album with photos, BN: DC 309, vol. II, p. 74-77. The cartoons were probably later displayed in Paris, as similar titles appear in the salon catalogues of 1904 and 1905 under the category *Monuments Publics* (Public Monuments) where they are described as *peinture murale* (murals).

decorated costumes worn by the Jews made such an impression. Here, the *shatweh*, a headdress traditionally worn by married women from Bethlehem, is the most conspicuous detail. It is made of quilted and padded linen that is embroidered, and a bride-to-be would attach coins from her dowry in rows along the front.¹⁷² Montgailhard listed this painting as "*Judith (Tête). Appartenant à M. Fontenier*" (Judith (Head). Belonging to Mr. Fontenier; cat. 106), together with a work called "*Tasie (Tête)*" (Tasie (Head); cat. 107), owned by the same person. The subject of this latter picture is not clear and may represent an obscure figure from literature or mythology; regardless these two paintings of female heads seem to have functioned as pendants.

Practicing Religion

Apart from illustrating specific biblical scenes or figures, Lecomte du Nouÿ also depicted contemporary people practicing their faiths in a Middle Eastern environment. Such works can be considered religious genre paintings because they were intended for private collectors rather than for state or church commissions. Although existing churches in France were sometimes redecorated and new ones were still being built, the number of traditional religious commissions was limited and divided among a large number of artists. Just as the *néo-grecs* had transformed traditional history painting by introducing scenes of ancient everyday life, so religiously themed genre scenes represented a similar departure from traditional biblical iconography. Gérôme, for example, had set the tone for images of Muslims praying, particularly on Middle Eastern rooftops and in mosques, in works like his famous *The Prayer (in Cairo)* (fig. 122), as well as *The Public Prayer in a Mosque* (1871, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).¹⁷³

¹⁷² Rajab 1989, p. 40-43, repr.

¹⁷³ Ackerman 2000, p. 256-57, cat. no. 152, p. 274-75, cat. no. 200. See also cat. nos. 151 and 163, as well as various other similar paintings.

At the Tomb of the Virgin, Jerusalem (Au tombeau de la Vierge, Jérusalem, 1871 and 1877)

In 1878, Lecomte du Nouÿ made his own variations on the popular theme of people practicing their religions with *Prayer in a Mosque* (n.d.; possibly the painting reproduced in fig. 123; cat. 130) and *The Evening Prayer in Tangiers* (1879; cat. 141). On the other hand, *At the Tomb of the Virgin, Jerusalem* (1871; fig. 124; cat. 63), presents the more unusual subject of two Christian women in colorful dress praying before the Church of the Tomb of the Virgin Mary in Jerusalem. As in his later *Judith* (fig. 121), Lecomte du Nouÿ devoted great attention to the rendition of the women's distinctive garments.¹⁷⁴ The arched doorway here closely resembles that of the church (the structure still exists today), suggesting that he either worked from a photograph of the building or that he had indeed visited Palestine.¹⁷⁵

In 1877, Lecomte du Nouÿ reworked this subject in a more ambitious manner in *Christian Women at the Tomb of the Virgin* (Les Chrétiennes au tombeau de la Vierge (Jérusalem), 1877; fig. 125; cat. 132). This version was exhibited at the Salon of 1878 and features a wider view of the neighboring Mount of Olives as well as more women praying. Only the kneeling woman directly in front of the (now open) door has, more or less, been retained from the earlier composition.¹⁷⁶ Strahan wrote:

Lecomte Du Nouy takes us to the Holy Land with a large and highly finished composition of "Christian Women Entering the Chapel of the Virgin." A Turkish sentinel, standing impassive[ly] at the portal, smokes a disrespectful pipe amid the ecstasy of these ardent Coptic and Albanian Christians, who kneel in the doorway or lean their heads in prayer against the external wall, fearing to enter until they have prayed away their sins and expiated their unworthiness. This picture is executed in palpable imitation of the style of Gérôme, but lacks that painter's lucidity of arrangement and purity of expression.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Rajab 1989. See for example plates 11, 12, 21, and 25 for similar garments.

¹⁷⁵ For a photo of, and information about the Church of the Tomb of the Virgin Mary, see: Freeman-Greenville 1988, p. 43-44.

¹⁷⁶ Aurillac 82.13.266, appendix I, is a preparatory sketch for the women holding a baby in her arms and the nude child lying before her.

¹⁷⁷ Strahan 1880, II, p. 63.

According to the salon catalogue, a certain Mr. Pulley owned the picture; he may have commissioned it, as Privat wrote in December 1877: "At this moment he finishes the *Christian Women at the Tomb of the Virgin*, a painting that will leave for England."¹⁷⁸ If he was not actually a dealer, Pulley did not keep the work for long, because Strahan featured it in his 1880 publication, *The Art Treasures of America*, while discussing the collection of Mr. Hercules L. Dousman of St. Louis. Eventually, it went into the collection of the devoutly Protestant collector Thomas Barlow Walker of Minneapolis. That Walker acquired such a work underscores the scholarly interest with which he and fellow believers approached the Middle East. Many American Protestants of this time saw the United States as the new Promised Land; countless American artists, scholars, and tourists traveled to Palestine, where they drew parallels with their homeland.¹⁷⁹ Thus the American agents George Lucas and Samuel P. Avery acquired Lecomte du Nouÿ's *A Woman from Bethlehem Praying on the Terrace of her House* (cat. 78), knowing the interest from American collectors for such pictures.¹⁸⁰ Walker surely perceived *Christian Women at the Tomb of the Virgin* as an illustration of religious life in the land of the Bible, both historic and contemporary. In 1911, he began donating paintings to the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in Minneapolis (now Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church), including this one. Ultimately, the church received from him thirty-two religious paintings intended to instill worshippers with Christian virtues and, in this case, teach them about the Middle Eastern origins of their faith.¹⁸¹

The Rabbis Commenting the Bible on Saturday (Morocco) (Les rabbins commentant la Bible (Maroc), 1882)

At least one visit to Morocco provided Lecomte du Nouÿ with many motifs for his religious genre paintings, especially scenes depicting the Jewish community: *The Jewess of Tangiers* (Juive de Tanger, 1877; cat. 120), *The Evening Prayer in Tangiers* (La prière du soir à Tanger, 1879; cat. 141), *The Rabbis Commenting the Bible on*

¹⁷⁸ Privat 1877, for the French text see appendix V.

¹⁷⁹ Davis 1996.

¹⁸⁰ See chapter I, note 83.

¹⁸¹ I would like to thank Janet L. Whitmore for providing me with the information regarding T. B. Walker, which she published in her dissertation, Whitmore 2002, p. 267-268.

Saturday (1882, fig. 126; cat. 172), *Saturday in the Jewish Quarter, Morocco* (Le Samedi au ghetto, Maroc, 1886; fig. 127; cat. 205). *The First Star (Morocco)* (La première étoile ou la fin du grand jeune, Maroc, 1894; fig. 128; cat. 248) is another example featuring Jews, and it also has an early American provenance, as Montgailhard listed it in a Boston collection. Schéfer's critical assessment of the state of Orientalist painting by the 1880s is once more pertinent here, as he followed it with a brief discussion of *The Rabbis Commenting the Bible on Saturday*:

The Orientalist pictures sent to this year's salon are rather few. They all have, with few exceptions, something familiar. Algeria and Morocco have provided the strongest contingent of images of picturesque scenes. Mr. Lecomte du Nouÿ exhibits a *Souvenir of Morocco: The Rabbis Commenting the Bible on Saturday*, a carefully studied and precisely painted work, yet somewhat pale, that recalls in many ways the manner of Gérôme. The types of the rabbis, of a large variety of expression, point towards an attentive study; one recognizes in this genre painting the firm composition and design that derive from a vigorous artistic training.¹⁸²

The familiar artistic pros and cons about this kind of art resurface here, but the depiction of Jewish people is significant here. Jewish people appear regularly in nineteenth-century Orientalist pictures, as they generally did not mind being portrayed by artists, whereas Muslims often objected to posing on religious grounds. This may explain why Lecomte de Nouÿ made several sketches in the Jewish ghetto of Tangiers, though he may also have been interested in Jewish culture because his first wife was Jewish.¹⁸³

The Marabout Prophet Sidna-Aïssa (Le marabout prophète Sidna-Aïssa, 1883)

Another of the artist's fascinating religious genre scenes is *The Marabout Prophet Sidna-Aïssa* (fig. 129; cat. 180). A marabout is a Muslim hermit, saint, and mystic, and Sidi Mohammed Ben Aïssa (also known as *al-Cheikh al-kamel*, which means "the perfect one") founded the Sufi brotherhood of the Aïssawa and was buried in 1526 in Meknès (Morocco). He traveled around the country preaching and gained a reputation for miraculously immunizing his followers from wounds and disease; during epidemics their

¹⁸² Schéfer 1882, p. 177-78; for the French text see cat. 172.

¹⁸³ See also the discussion around Lecomte du Nouÿ's portrait of Adolphe Crémieux, chapter I, fig. 47.

presence was often requested to dispel disease through ritual dances. The prophet wielded great political influence and called for a holy war against Portuguese and Spanish Christians.¹⁸⁴

Montgailhard described the painting's inception as follows: "Every day at the Arab market [Lecomte du Nouÿ] passed a *santon* seated at the gate of a mosque. Venerated by his followers in a very special way, his bed was never empty as one was honored to have a woman who had approached Sidna Aïssa, the saint of the mosque with the green ceramic decoration. Seeing Lecomte du Nouÿ, however, clearly brought him no pleasure whatsoever, because every time he saw this foreigner, the holy man cursed abundantly at him. This did not affect our painter, and he was satisfied to note in passing the smallest details of the accessories and the barbaric physiognomy of this fanatic. And that permitted him to compose his painting *The Marabout Prophet Sidna-Aïssa*."¹⁸⁵ Thus Lecomte du Nouÿ based his depiction of a sixteenth-century personage on his own contemporary experience abroad; he rendered the saint and his followers in a great variety of poses and expressions, paying careful attention to details of architecture and costume, including the Arabic script on the wall above the saint's head, which reads: "May God give you health. May God give you strength."

¹⁸⁴ See the entry on this painting in the auction catalogue *Important Orientalist Paintings from a Private European Collection* (Christie's, New York, October 31, 2001), p. 38, lot 7.

¹⁸⁵ Montgailhard 1906, p. 50.

V. LECOMTE DU NOUÿ: AN ASSESSMENT

In 1906, Montgailhard concluded his biography of Lecomte du Nouÿ with two chapters in which he attempted to characterize the artist's work and life.¹⁸⁶ The first of these chapters explains why the author wrote such a book at a time when many perceived Lecomte du Nouÿ's art as outmoded. Montgailhard challenged that view by celebrating the oeuvre of an artist who, he felt, was sincere, conveyed profound ideas, and was always reinventing himself. He believed that Lecomte du Nouÿ should be distinguished from his many colleagues who merely adhered to a school or attitude and produced pictures that reflected no deeper convictions. With such generic titles as *Bather*, *Dreaming*, or *Twilight*, the works of such artists represented only meaningless brushstrokes. They were not driven by any profound motivation, and Montgailhard grumbled that "a cold rage overtakes the critic who is condemned to contemplate the one thousandth nude, the fifteen hundredth bathing scene, or the ten thousandth picture that is no more than an advertisement for a fashionable couturier." Lecomte du Nouÿ, on the other hand, was, he felt, one of the last classical painters, together with Luc Olivier Merson and Jules Lefebvre, to produce truly powerful works. Like them he showed a noble enthusiasm and transmitted the great writers and cultural achievements of the world: Victor Hugo, Homer, Théophile Gautier, Antiquity, and the Orient, had inspired his greatest pictures. He sought archeological correctness in his historical scenes and strove to represent each person in an appropriate manner.¹⁸⁷

Montgailhard's characterized in glowing terms the artistic merits of an artist who is today all but forgotten. Indeed, on the basis of the aesthetic criteria of our own time, Lecomte du Nouÿ would typically be viewed as precisely one of those artists who produced nothing but "meaningless brushstrokes." The writer's arguments shed a different light on this artist's long-neglected oeuvre, suggesting that both the painter and his biographer never ceased to adhere to a concept of art that was rooted in academic classicism and that above all, they valued morally uplifting narratives executed with formal skill.

¹⁸⁶ Chapter XII: *L'ensemble de l'oeuvre* (The work as a whole), and Chapter XIII: *L'artiste et l'homme* (The artist and the man).

¹⁸⁷ Montgailhard 1906, chapter 12.

Lecomte du Nouÿ chose a traditional mode of expression and consequently positioned himself on the losing side in the battle for so-called artistic progress, as many avant-garde critics of the time saw their cause. Regardless of whether one supports this position or not, it should be acknowledged that artists like Lecomte du Nouÿ made their choice consciously. His encounter with Manet in Venice in 1875, for example, is emblematic of their contrasting points of view. Lecomte du Nouÿ saw the city of Venice as the embodiment of beauty, and he tirelessly depicted its countless charms. So when he met Manet there and saw that his colleague's representation of Venice consisted of a canvas showing only the sea, the sky, and three posts sticking out of the water, he asked in despair: "Why come this far, why live so long amidst this city of dreams, to find only this?"¹⁸⁸ Certainly, Lecomte du Nouÿ also painted charming little oil sketches there, studying picturesque details and casual street scenes. But these works were primarily intended as practical exercises and later, in his studio, they served to revive his memory. When Venice was the subject of one of his salon paintings, however, it would typically include *palazzi*, churches, and gondolas, and the scene might even be set in the past. It evidently did not enter Lecomte de Nouÿ's mind that something as seemingly banal as a sun-drenched water surface might count as a legitimate subject for a work of art; what significant message could it possibly communicate?

Other themes that modernist painters used to explore new artistic avenues were also anathema to Lecomte du Nouÿ. He saw no valid reason to depict scenes of modern life on the Parisian boulevards, and to him railway stations and factory smokestacks hardly represented awe-inspiring symbols of progress. On the contrary, they signified society's loss of ideals and traditional values. Some personal scribbles next to a sketch for one of his late pictures clearly express such convictions: "Beauty is dead, industry has triumphed, courage and personal heroism have been sacrificed on the brutal altar of the machine."¹⁸⁹ Even the terminology "sacrifice" and "altar" employed within such a cursory phrase betrays Lecomte du Nouÿ's ingrained preference for classical convention.

¹⁸⁸ Montgailhard 1906, p. 46-47. For a similar anecdote on a painting by Lecomte du Nouÿ of a buoy (cats. 93, 94), see Privat 1877, appendix V.

¹⁸⁹ Aurillac: 82.13.115, see appendix I.

Another of these sketches shows Poetry and Art fleeing before Industry, accompanied by the comment "farewell to the charms of dreams of spirit and soul."¹⁹⁰

Lecomte du Nouÿ was undoubtedly a conservative man, but this conservatism seems to have sprung from an almost endearing naiveté. The artist obviously dreamt of an ideal world and often painted one that went beyond conventional modes of representation. His depictions of apparitions and supernatural beings reflect a great imagination. This more or less symbolist element within his oeuvre links it to the broader characteristics of late nineteenth-century art. Although Lecomte du Nouÿ's Neoclassical and Orientalist traits are too dominant for him to be associated with more typical symbolists like Odilon Redon (1840-1916) or Puvis de Chavannes (1824-98), his predilection for chimerical imagery can be related to symbolist tendencies in French art of his time. In addition to the drug-induced hallucinations Lecomte du Nouÿ depicted in several of his Orientalist scenes, images of angels and other apparitions of human forms served as an alternative to a more traditional idealization and allegorical representation in a strictly Neoclassical sense. Another explanation for his fondness for representing otherworldly creatures might be related to the personal loss he had suffered through the premature deaths of his first two wives. Such profound and life-changing experiences might have incited a desire for spiritual solace.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's political point of view also reveals his conservative, if not reactionary, personality. As a young man he voluntarily participated in the Franco-Prussian War, and he lived long enough to experience World War I. These devastating historic events must certainly have shaped his nationalistic and patriotic feelings, which he expressed most concretely through various Napoleonic and other military images, both in painting and sculpture. The traditional French animosity towards the Germans, for example, was strongly reanimated after France's loss in the 1871 conflict, and it must have influenced Lecomte du Nouÿ's apparent desire for a powerful French leader, a concept he projected onto the historical figure of Napoleon.

A sense of the artist's political conservatism is further confirmed by our knowledge of his brush with royalty. When visiting his brother in Romania in 1895, the artist received several important commissions from that country's royal family. These

¹⁹⁰ Aurillac: 82.13.184, see appendix I.

ranged from official state portraits and murals in local churches to sculptural monuments. The artist was thus provided with exactly the kind of commissions and recognition he had dreamed of for so long. It is true that these commissions were significant, certainly by Romanian standards, and they allowed the artist to work on a grand scale, both in a literal and figurative sense. But Romania was not France, and being successful in this peripheral country did not translate into similar recognition at home, which is ultimately what counted for him. Even though he traveled widely, France was the center of the artist's world, an idea most poignantly expressed in the informal drawing he made of God's hand holding the globe, on which only Rome, Paris, and France are clearly marked.¹⁹¹

Still, it seems that Lecomte du Nouÿ's strong traditionalism did not preclude a sense of humor. A charming, undated little oil sketch, inscribed "*Sarah-Bernard et Clairin planant au dessus des hommes*" (Sarah Bernhardt and Clairin gliding over the people; fig. 130), depicts the famous actress and her painter friend flying a hot air balloon.¹⁹² And during a visit to Amsterdam, he drew on two facing pages of his sketchbook a row of five portly washerwomen dressed in long skirts, each bending forward while concentrating on her task. The sight of five formidable behinds, encountered during an early morning exploration of the city, had stopped the artist in his track.¹⁹³ But Lecomte de Nouÿ's most obvious attempt to make an intentionally humorous work of art is a drawing that bears the inscription "FLIRT" in capital letters. It shows a fashionably dressed young lady walking her dog on a leash. This dog in turn, closely follows and smells a smaller dog with apparent interest.

Ultimately, however, Lecomte du Nouÿ did not approach his art lightly, and he aspired to be remembered as a serious painter. Whenever possible, he created large-scale works in which he could express his profound ambitions. But against the changing social and political background of a devastating world war, as well a growing artistic mentality that cherished innovation and leaned toward abstraction, the concept of traditional history painting could no longer hold on to its former supremacy. During the 1880s, the French government stopped dictating most artistic matters and ceded control of the salon

¹⁹¹ Aurillac: 82.13.34, see appendix I.

¹⁹² Aurillac: 82.13.316, see appendix I. Sarah Bernhardt describes this experience in her memoirs, Bernhardt 1907, p. 283-87.

¹⁹³ Aurillac: 82.13.352, p. 13, see appendix I. The drawing bears the annotation "Amsterdam 8h du matin (Souvenir)," but it is not evident when this trip occurred.

exhibitions to the artists themselves. In the meantime, artists began to operate in an art market dominated by commercial galleries and predominantly middle- and upper- class patronage. As a result, there was room for a much greater variety of artistic expression. The traditional artists as well as the avant-gardists could operate in parallel worlds.

It should be acknowledged, however, that traditionalists like Lecomte du Nouÿ also reacted to these changing circumstances in their own ways. *Néo-grec* and Orientalist painting already represented a departure from established history painting. Admittedly, these changes did not go much beyond the parameters of the academic canon, and they were insufficient for more independent artists who wanted to depart even further, if not completely, from these principles. But it is nonetheless clear that these changes affected the more conventional artists to some degree.

Lecomte du Nouÿ's career strongly resembles that of Gérôme, with an early focus on *néo-grec* painting that shifted toward a preference for Orientalist subjects. In addition to Lecomte du Nouÿ's incessant attempts to realize monumental paintings and sculptures, the majority of his oeuvre, like that of his teacher, also consisted of exotic easel pictures that were intended for private collectors. In fact, the main difference between the two artists was that Gérôme never really worked on a truly grand scale, with the exception of a few sculptures. Even if Lecomte du Nouÿ cherished higher aspirations, he is currently most recognized as an Orientalist painter, a reputation defined by such works as *The Dream of a Eunuch* (fig. 87) and *The White Slave* (fig. 105). Even during his lifetime the artist achieved his widest recognition with a composition set in ancient Egypt, *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (fig. 82).

The Western European taste for exoticism flourished in the nineteenth century, and the modern scholarly debate on this subject has turned into a distinct phenomenon itself. The term Orientalism originally referred quite neutrally to the study by Western scholars of Eastern cultures in the broadest sense, with a focus on religion, customs, language, literature, and the arts. Within the discipline of art-history, the term usually refers to the depiction by Western European artists of non-Western, usually Middle and Far Eastern subjects. Since 1978, with the appearance of Edward Said's groundbreaking book *Orientalism*, no modern study of the subject can avoid reference to his theories,

which were primarily concerned with literary criticism rather than the visual arts.¹⁹⁴

Said's idea that the concept of Orientalism was an imperialistic tool used to further Western European dominance and to reinforce its colonial power, was first systematically transposed to art history by Linda Nochlin in her 1983 review of an exhibition about nineteenth-century French Orientalist painting.¹⁹⁵ In the meantime, the discussion on this subject has far from subsided and several refinements to Said's arguments have already been offered.¹⁹⁶

In her article, Nochlin applied Said's view to the genre of Orientalist painting, arguing that many of these images sustained negative stereotypes about Islamic cultures, such as corruption (expressed through ruined buildings that are supposed to be emblematic of decay and neglect), idleness (men and women sitting around lazily), violence (gruesome images of barbaric behavior), and, last but not least, two related concepts of power (man's sexual power over women, as well as the white man's domination over "inferior" darker races). Such stereotypes were undeniably prevalent in Western European culture of the nineteenth century and a painter like Lecomte du Nouÿ was very much a product of this culture. Indeed, in this book I have made somewhat similar observations, in particular in relation to the artist's Orientalist pictures like *The White Slave*, *The Orientals*, *The Dream of a Eunuch*, and *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*.

This Saidian approach, however, should not be the only lens through which to look at Orientalist art in general, or at Lecomte du Nouÿ's in particular. Certainly, the artist was a Catholic, nationalistic, and conservative man, and perhaps even a womanizer, but he was also someone with a true artistic drive and sensibility. Artists like Lecomte du Nouÿ, or Gérôme, were not principally motivated to depict Orientalist subjects as an artistic means of political suppression. Their work may have confirmed, and even furthered, certain stereotypes, but these artists' sincere fascination with, and admiration for the exotic subject they portrayed must have been a far greater force. The hardships of travel, the risks of disease and other hazards that could occur during their long sojourns

¹⁹⁴ Said 1978.

¹⁹⁵ Nochlin 1983, p. 118-189; the exhibition and its catalogue reviewed is *Orientalism* 1982.

¹⁹⁶ For this discussion see MacKenzie 1995, and for a more recent study on a particular facet of Orientalism that also provides amendments to Said, see Benjamin 2003, and its review, Bohrer 2004, p. 176-180.

abroad were too great for such negative approach to be the main point of departure for their artistic pursuit.

The stereotypes for which nineteenth-century Orientalist painting has often been faulted existed, but they should be placed in context and also be recognized in a far greater range of artistic categories. Artists have always constructed images of many kinds, and constructed remains the operative word, especially academically trained artists who were taught to select from nature the most significant characteristics available so as to create a convincing and intelligible image. Moreover, no matter how realistic representations of far away places appeared, or how much historical research underlay these compositions, both painter and spectator were generally well aware that these images ultimately represented only a relative truth. In Lecomte du Nouÿ's work this argument is well illustrated by the genesis of *The Gate of the Harem* (fig. 101).

One could draw a parallel between Orientalist painting and the prolific genre of Italian peasant imagery. When French nineteenth-century artists traveled in great numbers to Italy, they were usually first lured by the desire to discover the classical past and study its remnants. Once there, the new environment provided also many unexpected charms in terms of unfamiliar landscapes and the local population that often looked so different. As a result, there exist countless Italian peasant and brigand scenes by French artists that stem primarily from a curiosity about the unknown and "exotic." The French also had an overt political interest in Italy, and great parts of the peninsula were under Napoleonic rule for many years. Few would argue, however, that these peasant scenes served as a tool to exert French cultural dominance over Italy. Nonetheless, these images certainly could be characterized as a stereotypical representation of another people, dealing with issues of another civilization, class and, if not race, at least skin color. For a painter from Paris, a Neapolitan peasant could appear as foreign or exotic as a Moroccan pottery merchant. Rather than contempt, feelings of curiosity and admiration inspired most of these depictions. Once the road to Naples had been traveled too often, the greater artistic challenge lay in the exploration of North Africa and the Middle East. Similar to Italian peasant scenes, most Orientalist Salon paintings were created primarily out of an artist's personal desire and excitement rather than an expression of disdain, and at the same time the works catered to great demand from a collecting audience.

It is true that most harem scenes generally depict the female nude as an easily available object for the male spectator, either the painter himself, the Salon visitor, or the collector of such works. Yet, the harem scene is ultimately not more than a variation on the theme of the classical or Biblical nude. Gérôme's early *néo-grec* painting of a bathhouse, *Le Gynécée* (1850, Private collection) hardly differs in concept from his later Orientalist *Moorish Bath* (1872, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).¹⁹⁷ The voyeurism that clearly underlies these works does not differ greatly from that of an original Roman fresco with a similar subject, or a 17th-century depiction of a bathing Bathsheba. Moreover, works by modernists such as Courbet and Gauguin, who are generally championed by contemporary critics, Nochlin included, as the providers of relief from the stuffy academic painter's attitude, contain endless references that could be used to single out an approach that reflects the idea of male domination, if not sexual obsession. Courbet's *Woman with a Parrot* (1866, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), let alone *The Origin of the World* (1866, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), or Gauguin's countless depictions of Haitian beauties, ultimately reveal no true distinction from that of Orientalist harem scenes, other than stylistic ones.

Nochlin argued that Orientalism "can be viewed under the aegis of the more general category of the picturesque, a category that can encompass a wide variety of visual objects and ideological strategies," such as regional genre painting.¹⁹⁸ She compared Gérôme's North African Islamic processions to the Catholic pardons in Brittany by artists like Jules Breton and Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret, claiming that both "represent backward, oppressed peoples sticking to traditional practices." To Nochlin, the alternative to the picturesque quality of these works was provided by Courbet in his *Burial at Ornans* (1850, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) and Gauguin, in his *Day of the God* (1894, The Art Institute of Chicago). Courbet, it is argued, avoided the picturesque by including his own friends and family as the "natives," and thus truly identified with the people represented. And Gauguin's use of compositional flatness and decorative simplification is supposed to have brought his art closer to his "primitive" subject. Since Nochlin's article appeared, however, it has become clear that a painter like Dagnan-

¹⁹⁷ Ackerman 2000, cat. no. 29 and 197.

¹⁹⁸ Nochlin 1983, p. 127.

Bouveret most certainly did not look down upon the religious and rural traditions of the region from which he originated, and to which he continually returned. On the contrary, he, too, used family members who posed for his paintings, and he deeply respected the customs he commemorated on canvas.¹⁹⁹

Orientalist religious genre scenes by Lecomte du Nouÿ must also have originated from a sincere curiosity about different customs and beliefs, rather than being the weapons in an artistic crusade. The artist remained a practicing Catholic all his life, and he could now easily be molded into the representative of a Western aggressor creating images that celebrated his own cultural superiority over the barbaric Islamic world. Such an approach has indeed been taken in writings about *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*, and similar issues of despotic violence are evidently incorporated in his eunuch paintings. But some nuances are nonetheless worth noting. Nineteenth-century France, for example, experienced a great deal of anti-Semitic sentiment within its own borders, and Lecomte du Nouÿ could have easily shared them. He did, however, marry a Jewish woman and repeatedly painted images of Jews that were inspired by his travels in the Middle East. No matter how this biographical fact should be interpreted, it does at least reveal a certain open-mindedness in an otherwise distinctly conservative personality.

Moreover, an artist cannot always be held responsible for the way his work is interpreted by others. In particular, Lecomte du Nouÿ's *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* has been a convenient vehicle for certain critics to share their brazen views of the inferior "other," both in terms of a barbaric non-Western civilization and the supremacy of Christianity. Lecomte du Nouÿ indeed pulled out all his artistic stops to create an outrageous image intended to attract the attention of the visitors to the Salon. As an up-and-coming artist, he seems to have been far more concerned with establishing his own reputation than with waging a cultural war, though certain later critics employed the image for just this purpose. Similarly, but on a different level, the strong impact this painting had on the young Julian Green's homosexual awakening was surely not intended when a decidedly heterosexual artist as Lecomte du Nouÿ composed his picture.

Ultimately, I second Nochlin in her conclusion that: "Works like Gérôme's, and that of other Orientalists of his ilk [such as Lecomte du Nouÿ], are valuable and well

¹⁹⁹ Weisberg 2002.

worth investigating not because they share the esthetic values of great art on a slightly lower level, but because as visual imagery they anticipate and predict the qualities of incipient mass culture. [...] As a fresh visual territory to be investigated by scholars armed with historical and political awareness and analytic sophistication, Orientalism – or rather its deconstruction – offers a challenge to art historians, as do many other similarly obfuscated areas of our [art historical] discipline.”²⁰⁰ Indeed, the similarly obfuscated areas would be the broader category of academic art, which deserves equal scrutiny and an open-minded approach by art historians, especially those using modernist criteria as the only valuable approach to works created in the nineteenth century.

Ultimately, it is not productive merely to situate artists within the opposing camps of academicism versus the avant-garde. These apparently opposing camps, consisted in reality of a great array of individuals who represented a range of artistic personalities, ideas, and attitudes. Twenty-first century viewers who reject the work of an artist like Lecomte du Nouÿ due to its unfashionable academicism fail to appreciate the rich and diverse nature of late-nineteenth century culture.

²⁰⁰ Nochlin 1983, p. 189.

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ OF WORKS BY JEAN LECOMTE DU NOUÏ.

Notes to the reader:

This chronological listing of known works by Lecomte du Nouÿ is based upon Guy de Montgailhard's "*Catalogue des oeuvres de Lecomte du Nouÿ*," which he appended to his 1906 biography of the artist (Montgailhard 1906, p. 113-141), and which covers the artist's oeuvre up to the date of publication.

Following the English title of a catalogue number, Montgailhard's French titles and other pertinent information, such as exhibitions and owners, are here repeated verbatim in parenthesis and printed in *italics*. If applicable, the English title is usually a direct translation of the title given in the Salon catalogue, or the title given in Montgailhard.

If my research has indicated that a work was created in a different year than the year under which it was listed by Montgailhard, that work has been moved to its proper place in the chronology.

Known works not mentioned by Montgailhard have been added to this listing. If no other information is available than that a work was exhibition at a certain Salon, that work is catalogued under the year that exhibition took place, even though it may actually have been created earlier.

If the present location, type of material, or size of a work of art is not provided here, then that information is currently not known to me.

Under each catalogue number I have listed all the related contemporary criticism on that specific work that I have come across during my research. If a text contains references to more than one work, cross-references have been made to the appropriate catalogue numbers.

There exist three main photographic resources for 19th-century reproductions of Lecomte du Nouÿ's work. The most important one is kept at the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Site Richelieu). Four large volumes containing photographs and some original prints are kept there under the library code DC 309. Here they are referred to as BN: DC309, followed by the appropriate volume number (I-IV) and the page number (the volumes, however, are not paginated).¹

A second (smaller) group of photographs is kept at the Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet in Paris, which can also be accessed through the website: www.roger-viollet.fr.

Thirdly, there exists a group of contemporary reproductions in various techniques (photograph, photogravure, engraving) produced by the firm of Goupil & Cie, Paris. Most images of artworks ever published by this important 19th-century publisher are kept in the Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

1862

1) Portrait of the sculptor Antoine Coysevox

Oil on canvas.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon (A 2944), on loan to the Hôtel de Ville, Lyon.

Provenance: Sent by the French government to Lyon in June 1862, and placed in the Salon de la Conservation of the Hôtel de Ville, Lyon, in December 1862.

¹ These photos might all or in part have been donated to the Bibliothèque National by the artist himself. See BN DC 309, I, p. 64, which contains a postcard of *The Bearers of Bad Tidings*, with the following annotation by the artist: "Cher Monsieur Bouchot, acceptez / je vous prie / tous mes / remerciements / pour le soins / que vous / voulez biens / apportez à / la reunion / de mon oeuvre / dans les collections / d'estampes de la / Bibliothèque Nationale. Votre bien devoué / Paris 17 avril 1901 30. Bd Flandrin Lecomte du Nouÿ." Bouchot was curator at the BN and also provided a preface to Montgailhard's biography of the artist.

1863

2) *Francesca da Rimini and Paolo* (*Francesca di Rimini et Paolo aux enfers* (Dante). Musée de Cette [sic] for Sète)).

Oil on canvas, 185 x 148 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ / 1863.

Present Location: Musée Paul Valéry, Sète (inv. 890.8.10).

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1863, no. 1135: *Francesca di* [sic] *Rimini et Paolo*. (*Divine Comédie, Dante.*)

Literature: Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Cham au Salon de 1863 (Paris, Martinet, n. d. [1863]), no. 1135: "Francesca de Rimini n'ayant plus à redouter de se casser le cou si elle tombait de cette hauteur, la chose se trouvant déjà faite." [Figure 16] Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 16.

Poppi 1994, fig. 42 (not exhibited).

Note: The artist also painted a small oil sketch with the subject of Dante and Virgil, Aurillac: 82.13. 295, see appendix I.

1864

3) *Portrait of the painter Adolphe Morin* (*Portrait de M. Adolphe Morin, peintre.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1864, no. 1142: *Portrait de M. Morin.*

4) *Portrait of Mme Morin* (*Portrait de Mme la générale Morin. Appartenant au général Morin.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1864, no. 1143: *Portrait de Mme la baronne M...*

5) *Study of a Lamb* (*Étude d'agneau* (Grandeur naturelle). Appartenant à M. André Du NouÏ.)

Related Work: See cat. 318.

6) *Portrait of the painter Gautier Saint-Elme* (*Portrait de M. Gautier Saint-Elme, peintre.*)

7) *The Loyal Dog* (*Le chien fidèle.*)

8) *Portrait of the painter Bidault* (*Portrait du peintre Bidault* (Dessin).)

Drawing

9) *Portrait of the painter Jacquesson de la Chevreuse* (*Portrait de M. Jacquesson de la Chevreuse, peintre. Au Comité de la Société du baron Taylor.*) [Figure 17]

Oil on canvas, 40.6 x 32.7 cm, signed in wet paint with the back of the brush along the left edge: *A mon petit Jacquesson Lecomte*; inscribed in gold paint, upper left: *JACQUESSON DE LA CHEVREUSE / par son camarade LECOMTE DU NOUÏ / 1864*; countersigned in red paint in lower left corner by Jean-Léon Gérôme: *Jl.G.*

Present Location: Mr. and Mrs. Marcus, Toledo, Ohio

Provenance: Galerie Daniel Greiner, Paris; Galerie Hahn, Paris; Brady & Co., New York

Exhibited: Galerie Daniel Greiner, *Portraits et autoportraits de peintres du XIXe siècle* (December 1986), no. 9, reproduced on title page.

Hahn 1995, no 177; see appendix II.

Note: Jacquesson de la Chevreuse (Toulouse 1839-Paris 1903) was a fellow student with Lecomte du NouÏ in Gérôme's studio.

10) *Portrait of the painter Pecque* (*Portrait du peintre Pecque.*)

1865

11) *The Greek Sentinel* (*La sentinelle grecque. "D'un bout à l'autre de l'année, comme un chien je veille au haut du palais des Atrides, en face de l'Assemblée des Astres de la nuit." Eschyle (Orestie). Salon de 1865. Collection de M. le duc du Mouchy.*) [Figure 69]

Signed on foot of burner: J.LECOMTE-DUNOUÏ.1865.PARIS.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1865, no. 1278: *Sentinelle grecque.*

Literature: Du Camp 1865, p. 668-669: "Qui ne se souvient de l'admirable début de l'*Orestie*? Qui n'a présent à la mémoire le douloureux monologue du veilleur? "Dieux, je vous en prie, délivrez-moi de mes travaux; faites que je me repose de cette garde pénible! D'un bout à l'autre de l'année, comme un chien, je veille en haut du palais des Atrides, en face de l'assemblée des astres de la nuit. Régulateurs des saisons pour les mortels, rois brillants [sic] du monde, flambeaux du ciel, je les vois, ces astres, et quand ils disparaissent et à l'instant de leur lever. Sans cesse j'épie le signal enflammé, ce feu éclatant qui doit annoncer ici que Troie a succombé!" J'avais toujours été surpris qu'un tel sujet, si profondément plastique par lui-même, ne tentât point un peintre de talent. Dans cet homme que ronge l'ennui, qu'accable la fatigue d'une tâche incessante, qui, du haut de la terrasse où il a posé son lit, comme une cigogne voyageuse, regarde invariablement vers la mer immense pour découvrir au loin, sur le promontoire à peine visible, le bûcher allumé qui annoncera la bonne nouvelle, il y avait motif à un tableaux majestueux et solide, donnant lieu à des lignes sévères, relevées par d'habiles oppositions de couleurs. Les poètes sont de bons conseillers pour ceux qui savent les entendre, et l'on ne les consulte peut-être pas assez souvent. Dans sa simplicité grandiose et farouche, Eschyle semble n'avoir écrit que pour offrir aux peintres des sujets magnifique. Le veilleur mélancolique qui se plaint de son sort a fourni à M. Lecomte-Dunouy l'occasion de faire un agréable petit tableau où l'on sent trop l'influence de M. Gérôme et les habitudes un peu étroites de l'école dite des *pompéistes*, qui voient trop souvent les choses par leur petit côté. La toile est fort restreinte, mais les dimensions sont peu importantes, et ce n'est pas à cause de cela qu'elle manque de largeur. La touche est maigre, quoique assez serrée, et la coloration est d'une harmonie triste qui n'est point désagréable à voir. M. Lecomte-Dunouy a interprété Eschyle à sa guise, c'était son droit; au lieu de faire un guetteur harassé qui interroge l'horizon avec angoisse, il a représenté un oplite qui monte la garde au haut des tours et regarde tristement vers la ville endormie à ses pieds. Est-ce le sujet en lui-même qui a séduit l'artiste? Je ne le pense pas; je m'imaginerais volontiers qu'il a été plutôt entraîné par ce que je nommerai d'un vilain mot, le *bric-à-brac*. En effet, tout le soin de l'exécution est donné à la tunique rouge, au casque armé de son nasal, aux cnémides, à la sarisse, au bouchier posé contre la muraille. Il y a là une préoccupation de vérité archéologique qui mérite d'être louée; mais. Puisque M. Lecomte-Dunouy était en veine de recherches, pourquoi s'est-il arrêté en chemin, et pourquoi sur ce merlon de pierre qui fait partie d'un palais d'Argos grave-t-il l'oiseau consacré à Minerve et emblème d'Athènes? Le demi-loup argien eût été là plus à sa place que la chouette athénienne. Ceci est bien peu important, me dira-t-on; je le sais. L'art n'est pas la science, je le sais encore et ne les confonds pas. Cependant il était bien facile d'être exact, le tableau gagné une petite saveur archaïque qui ne lui aurait pas nui. Telle qu'elle est néanmoins, et malgré ces très légères critiques de détail, cette toile est honorable, et prouve chez l'auteur un esprit curieux et distingué. En somme, c'est plutôt une vignette qu'un tableau; c'est une traduction d'Eschyle *ad usum Delphini*, mais c'est déjà beaucoup que de s'être épris d'un tel poète: si ce n'est un résultat, c'est une promesse bonne à enregistrer, et dont il convient de tenir compte."

Gautier 1865, p. 887: "Nous adressons la même louange à M. Lecomte-Dunouy; *la Sentinelle grecque* est une invention heureuse, pleine de poésie et de style. C'est une toile grande comme les deux mains, mais qui pour nous équivalait à un tableau d'histoire. Placé au faite du palais d'Agamemnon pour annoncer le retour de la flotte, Lyncée s'est un instant assoupi sous le ciel d'un bleu nocturne; son casque penche, sa lance va lui échapper, mais le sentiment du devoir le réveillera, et il apercevra sur les montagnes le feu, signal de la prise de Troie. M. Lecomte-Dunouy a la finesse, la précision et l'exactitude archaïque de M. Gérôme, et son tableau, qui échappe par sa petitesse à beaucoup de visiteurs, n'en est pas moins une oeuvre d'un art très-élevé."

Gautier 1868, p. 628; for text see cat. 43.

Périer 1868, p. 47-48; for text see cat. 43.

Chaumelin 1873 ("Salon de 1868"), p. 124-125; brief mention only, for text see cat. 43.

Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 15-16.

Photo: Goupil & Cie.

Related Works: Engraving by Lecomte du Nouÿ, original included in Montgailhard 1906, opp. p. 24.

[Figure 69]

12) Portrait of Mme Pinel (*Portrait de Mme Pinel. Appartenant au docteur Sameleigne.*)

13) Portrait of Mme Bouillard (*Portrait de Mme Bouillard.*)

14) Portrait of Ms. Clément de Donzère (*Portrait de Mlle Clément (de Donzère).*)

15) Portrait of Ms. Mathilde Leclerc (*Portrait de Mlle Mathilde Leclerc (Dessin). Salon de 1866.*)
Drawing

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1866, no. 2349: Portrait de Mlle M. L.; dessin.

16 a-g) Seven drawings after the Antique for the *Drawing Course* by Goupil & Cie. (*Sept dessins d'après l'Antique pour le cours Goupil (Gérôme, directeur). Lithographiés par Bargue.*) [Figures 18-20]

17) Antonello da Messina, drawing for the *Drawing Course* by Goupil & Cie. (*L'Antonello de Messine. Dessin pour le Cours Goupil.*)

18) Job and his Friends (*Job et ses amis (Esquisse peinte). Appartenant au peintre Charles Delort.*)

Painted sketch

Related Work: See cat. 30.

19) Portrait of Count du Puy (*Portrait du comte du Puy (Dessin). Gravé par Waltner.*)
Engraving, original in BN: DC 309, II, p. 22.

20) Portrait of the engraver Waltner (*Portrait du graveur Waltner (Dessin). Gravé par lui-même.*)
Engraving, damaged original in BN: DC 309, II, p. 66.

21) View of the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid, Egypt
Oil on canvas, 16 x 19.5 cm, inscribed and dated on the stretcher: (*Egypte*) *Vue du Sphinx et de la grande pyramide a ... 1865.*

Present Location: Private collection

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 135; see appendix III; W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

22) The Great Pyramids [not dated]

Oil on canvas, 13.4 x 28.2 cm, inscribed on the stretcher: *les grandes pyramides vues de la route de...*

Present Location: Private collection

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 141; see appendix III; W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

23) Egypt, View of Choubra, near Cairo, 1865

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 134, see appendix III.

24) Egypt, The Road to Choubra, Cairo, 1865

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 137, see appendix III.

1866

25) A Gatekeeper in Cairo (*Un portier au Caire. Appartenant à Ali Pacha.*)

26) The Invocation to Neptune (*L'invocation à Neptune. Salon de 1876 [sic for 1866] "Tiré des Hymnes d'Homère". Musée de Lille.*) [Figure 70]

Oil on panel, 39 x 31 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE-DUNOUY.1866.

Present Location: Lille, Palais des Beaux Arts (inv. P 678).

Provenance: Acquired in 1866.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1866, no. 1152: Invocation à Neptune.

Tradition & Revolution 1993, cat. no. 70.

Literature: Charles Blanc, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 115: "M. Lecomte du Nouy, dans un petit tableau plein de grandeur, *l'Invocation de Neptune*, a su deviner la poésie religieuse des sacrifices antiques

et jeter le prestige du merveilleux dans l'intérieur d'un de ces temples païens, que nous croyons, grâce à notre ignorance, avoir été froidement symétriques et régulièrement tracés."

Théophile Gautier 1866, cited in translation from *Tradition & Revolution* 1993, p. 148; for text see chapter II.

Jahyer 1866, p. 168: "M. Lecomte-Dunouy trouve des enthousiastes pour son *Invocation de Neptune* (1152). Cette petite toile est pourtant, selon moi, très ordinaire. J'y retrouve tous les procédés de l'école, les procès académiques, la peinture éteinte; et cela copié sans grandeur."

Chaumelin 1873, p. 124; brief mention only, for text see cat. 43.

Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Lenglart 1893, p. 164: "no. 460: *Invocation à Neptune*. Près de la statue du dieu des mers, deux prêtresses, dont l'une soulève la branche d'olivier sur le trépied fumant; derrière, plusieurs personnages en adoration. [...] Acheté en 1866."

Montgailhard 1906, p. 15, 16, repr. after p. 24.

27) Pastophorus, a Begging Priest in Ancient Egypt (*Pastophorus (prêtre mendiant. - Égypte ancienne). Appartenant au Marquis Arconati.*)

Note: Possibly mentioned in Privat 1877, see appendix V, as "Prêtres mendiants."

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 85.

28) Portrait of Ms. Antoinette Gauché (*Portrait de Mlle Antoinette Gauché (Dessin.)*)

Drawing

29) A repetition of the portrait of Antoinette Gauché with variations (*Répétition avec variante (Sanguine.)*)

Red chalk drawing

1867

30) Job and His Friends (*Job et ses amis. Salon de 1867. Appartenant au peintre Charles Toché.*) [Figure 108]

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1867, no. 904: *Job et ses amis. "Mais Job répondit et dit: J'ai souvent entendu de pareille discours. Vous êtes tous des consolateurs fâcheux."* (Livre de Job, chap. XVI.)

Literature: Mantz 1867, p. 519-20: "M. Lecomte-Dunouy a sans doute aussi ses rêves et ses aspirations; mais pourquoi faut-il qu'il fasse un tableau comme les écoliers font un pensum? Son *Job* est une peinture qui vise évidemment au caractère: recherche vaine! Dans sa tonalité d'un gris sourd, dans son exécution aride, elle respire un immense ennui. Job et ses amis interlocuteurs sont des personnages muets. L'auteur applique d'ailleurs le même système à tous les sujets. Le don du sourire manque à son talent comme celui des larmes. M. Lecomte-Dunouy a imaginé de refaire dans la *Danseuse Fellah* un des meilleurs tableaux de M. Gérôme, *L'Almée*. Il aurait pu s'épargner cette peine. Son anecdote est froidement contée; son pinceau n'a ni la souplesse, ni la grâce, ni l'esprit, et sa danseuse ne danse pas."

Montifaud 1867, p. 454: "Il n'y a aucun cachet de grandeur dans le *Job* de M. Lecomte-Dunouy. Son type est assez repoussant. Ce n'est plus cet accablement du corps dans lequel on devine l'âme debout, vaillante et magnifique, jetant son défi aux dénégations de la peur et de l'envie. On ne conçoit plus cette profondeur de douleur, et ces contractions des plaies béantes embrassées par le soleil du désert. On ne sent plus tomber sur soi cette flèche acérée et brûlante de ce même soleil biblique. C'est un moribond à l'oeil terne dont la physionomie n'est pas transfigurée en son heure sainte."

Privat 1877; see appendix V, with extensive discussion on this painting.

Strahan 1878, p. 7; for text see under cat. 105.

Montgailhard 1906, 17, repr. p. 42. *Job* was hung next to the *Marchand d'esclaves* by Giraud (see *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (1867), p. 519) in the salon d'honneur. Montgailhard suggests that Lecomte du Nouÿ was inspired by Hippolyte Flandrin's *Dante et Virgile aux Enfers* (1834-35, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts), and even he admitted that the picture didn't "manifest any great personality."

Photo: Goupil & Cie [Figure 108]

Related Works: Composition sketch, Aurillac: 82.13.74, see appendix I. [Figure 109]

Study of a head for "Job and His Friends," Aurillac: 82.13.20, see appendix I.

Caricature by Cham [Figure 110]

See cat. 18.

31) A Dancing Fellah Woman (*Une danseuse fellah (Égypte). Salon de 1867. Appartenant à M. Émile Rouard, d'Amiens.*) [Figure 21]

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1867, no. 905: Danseuse fellah, à Kaphra (Basse Égypte).

Literature: Mantz 1867, 519-20; for text see cat. 30.

Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Strahan 1878, 7; for text see cat. 105.

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after p. 80.

Photo: Goupil & Cie.

Related Work: See Drouot 2003, appendix III, lot 145. Present location, New York, private collection.

32) An Almeh (*Almée (Sanguine). Appartenant à M. Terme.*)

Red chalk drawing.

Exhibited: possibly, Tripp 1886, no. 6, see appendix IV.

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 53; see appendix II.

Note: Possibly the drawing in Montgailhard 1906, repr. before p. 105. If so, then a drawing in one of the sketchbooks relates as well, Aurillac: 82.13.364, see appendix I. On the subject of the Almeh, see *Gérôme & Goupil* 2000, p. 129-133.

33) Bonaparte at Beaucaire (*Bonaparte à Beaucaire. Appartenant à M. de Swarte.*)

Related Work: See cat. 35, 244.

34) Portrait of Béranger de la Drôme (*Portrait de M. Béranger de la Drôme. Président de la Cour de cassation. Musée de Valence. [Erroneously catalogued by Montgailhard under 1868.]*)

Oil on canvas, 235 x 168 cm, signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUY MDCCCLXVII.

Present Location: Musée de Valence (inv. P 126).

Provenance: Gift of Mr. René Béranger, the sitter's son.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 8.

Related Work: Preparatory study of the desk with a bronze sculpture of a griffon. Oil on canvas, 40.9 x 32.2 cm. Private collection, Paris.

1868

35) Bonaparte at Beaucaire (*Bonaparte à Beaucaire. Dessin pour le Dictionnaire Larousse, première édition.*)

Drawing for the first edition of the Larousse Encyclopedia.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 17, 115.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 1.

Related Works: See cat. 33, 244.

36) Portrait of the medal engraver Heller (*Portrait du graveur en médaille Heller (Dessin.)*)

Drawing

37) Portrait of Mrs. Heller (*Portrait de Mme Heller mère (Dessin.)*)

Drawing

38) Portrait of the lawyer Cherrier (*Portrait de Me Cherrier, avocat.*)

39) Portrait of Dr. Pinel (*Portrait du docteur Pinel. Appartenant au docteur Sameleigne.*)

40) Portrait of Mrs. Suriau (*Portrait de Mme Suriau.*)

41) The Nightwatcher in Cairo (*Le veilleur de nuit au Caire.*)

Oil on panel, 40.6 x 31.7 cm, signed and dated lower left, 1868.

Provenance: London sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, October 18, 1978, lot 282, *Cairo, A Figure by Moonlight*, repr. [listed here as sold by The Goupil Gallery, Paris, May 1870], £2000; Mathaf Gallery, London, reproduced in their June 1979 catalogue, n. p.; Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman (deaccessioned); present location unknown.

Literature: Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 18.

Thornton 1983, 190, repr. in color [erroneously listed as exhibited at the Salon of 1868].

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 58; see appendix II.

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 32, inscribed in pencil on album page "Le veilleur de nuit."

42) Demosthenes (*Démosthène (Sanguine)*). Appartenant à Mlle Francastel.)

Red chalk drawing

Related Works: See also cats. 58, 109.

43) The Madness of Ajax the Telamonian (*La folie d'Ajax le Télamonien. Salon de 1868. Tiré de Sophocle. Appartenant à M. Léon Ribaud, de Lyon.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1868, no. 1493: *La folie d'Ajax le Télamonien*. "Malheureux! J'ai laissé ces Atrides maudits s'échapper de mes mains pour me jeter sur des génisses, sur des agneaux bêlants, et je me suis baigné dans leur sang!" (Sophocle, *Ajax*.)

Literature: Chaumelin 1873 ("Salon de 1868"), p. 124-125: "M. Lecomte-Dunouy est le meilleur élève de M. Gérôme: comme son maître, il se pique de littérature; / *Il a des vieux auteurs la pleine intelligence, / Et sait du grec, madame autant qu'homme de France. / -Du grec! ô ciel! du grec! - Du grec! quelle douceur! / Si nos souvenirs sont fidèles, M. Lecomte-Dunouy débuta, au Salon de 1865, par une traduction d'Eschyle (la *Sentinelle grecque*, sujet tiré de l'*Orestie*); l'année suivante, il fut médaillé pour une *Invocation à Neptune*; aujourd'hui, il s'attaque à Sophocle, et, dans un petit tableau sur la bordure duquel il a inscrit un passage de ce poète, il déroule la scène suivante: / Ajax, fils de Télamon, l'invincible Ajax, vient de massacrer dans sa chambre, - où il les avait réunis, - d'innocentes génisses et des agneaux bêlants, qu'il a pris pour les Atrides; tout à coup, il reconnaît son erreur et, saisi d'un juste dégoût, il écarquille les yeux, se drape en frémissant dans son manteau et s'applatit contre la muraille; une femme gigantesque, blanche et morte comme la statue de Commandeur, ayant une lance à la main, un casque sur la tête et un hibou sur l'épaule, - vous avez reconnu Minerve, - descend du plafond, au milieu d'un feu de Bengale, et appuie sa lourde main sur le front du Télamonien; les parents de ce dernier, ses amis, ses esclaves, placés au fond, dans la coulisse, regardent avec stupéfaction ce qui se passe...; ils s'attendent à voir disparaître le héros dans une trappe. M. Lecomte-Dunouy voudrait nous faire croire qu'il a découvert dans Sophocle cet égorgeur en chambre, cette géante qui exécute une *pose blanche*, ce feu de Bengale et ces comparses anodins. - Nous ne prendrons pas le change. Figurants et accessoires viennent des Variétés; la Minerve est, peut-être, une cariatide en carton-pierre détachée de quelque temple de la Sagesse, - du palais du Corps législatif, par exemple, - mais pour sûr, l'Ajax est bien l'idiot belliqueux que nous avons vu dans la *Belle Hélène*. Toute cette scène, d'ailleurs, est une charge héroïque. L'auteur de la *Folie d'Ajax le Télamonien* nous pardonnera la franchise un peu crue de nos observations: il est jeune, il dessine bien, et saura sans doute se débarrasser de cette touche maigre et lisse qu'il a empruntée à son maître; il a une ambition louable, celle de s'élever au-dessus de la banalité; il a lu dans Horace que la couronne de lierre, récompense des fronts savants, *doctarum ederae praemia frontium*, donne aux hommes l'immortalité, et que, pour ne pas être confondu avec la foule, il n'est rien de tel que de hanter les bois sacrés, de regarder danser les nymphes et les satyres, et d'évoquer les ombres des héros... Tout cela est fort beau, sans doute, mais le moindre grain de vie, de réalité, ferait bien mieux notre affaire. / Eh! que nous importent les Atrides, les Ajax, les Ulysse, les Achille et autres grands hommes antédiluviens, pour lesquels nous n'aurions pas assez de cordes et assez de potences, s'ils revenaient aujourd'hui! Trop longtemps ces héros ont traîné sur la scène leurs cothurnes et leurs passions bestiales. Le romantisme littéraire en a débarrassé le théâtre. D'où vient donc qu'ils gardent encore en peinture un reste de leur antique omnipotence? C'est la faute à David! ne manqueront pas de s'écrier les peintres chevelus, qui oublient volontiers que Delacroix a peint Bacchus, Orphée, Ariane, Andromède, et bon, nombre d'autres dieux, demi-dieux, héros et héroïnes de l'antiquité. Non, mes amis, c'est n'est pas plus la faute à David que la faute à Delacroix. C'est la faute au public inconséquent qui bâille à une tragédie de Racine et tolère la tragédie du premier rapin venu. C'est la faute aux critiques assermentés qui décrivent minutieusement ces peintures héroïco-comiques et qui prétendent que le grand art est là. C'est la faute aux amateurs qui achètent ces vieilleries, sauf à les reléguer dans un*

coin de leur cabinet et à ne jamais les regarder. C'est la faute à M. Alexandre Dumas fils qui s'est rendu, dit-on, l'acquéreur des *Centaures* de M. Fromentin, lui qui sait si bien, pourtant, que Marco vaut Laïs, que tous les viveurs n'ont pas des pieds de bouc, et qu'on voit encore sur le turf, des hommes-chevaux."

Grangedor 1868, p. 512-14: "M. Lecomte-Dunoüy s'est inspiré de la tragédie antique en ajoutant, lui aussi, à la concision sculpturale du texte un commentaire d'un goût tout à fait moderne. Les débris sanglants des animaux, égorgés dans sa folie par Ajax, encombrant le premier plan de cette toile, qui, à nos yeux cependant, possède un mérite rare de nos jours, celui d'enfermer dans un petit cadre de sincères aspirations à la grandeur du dessin. / La figure de femme assise et chastement drapée, qui suit d'un oeil inquiet et triste les mouvements convulsifs du héros, est ample et pure. Quant à l'apparition de Minerve, à qui le peintre donne la couleur du marbre, nous la trouvons en contradiction directe avec le caractère de la Fable antique et elle nous rappelle plutôt les blancs fantômes des légendes du moyen âge. Nous ne faisons cette critique de détail que parce que le groupe de jeunes artistes, où M. Lecomte-Dunoüy tient un rang si honorable, semble attacher une extrême importance à la sincérité des restitutions archéologiques. La dimension colossale de la Déesse, qui ne touche point la terre, suffirait pour lui conserver un aspect surnaturel et sacré. C'est aussi amoindrir une invention hardie et une conception large que d'en trop accentuer les détails secondaires de couleur et de lumière. La scène s'éclaire par en bas aux lueurs d'un brasier; les visages prennent dès lors un aspect étrange: ceci est dans le sens du drame; mais ce qui n'y reste plus, c'est l'effet du masque de pierre et des formes de cette Minerve qui, lui donnant le relief d'un personnage vivant, introduit dans l'ensemble du groupe une réalité discordante au point de vue poétique. Quand l'impossible et le convenu entrent dans une composition héroïque, ils ne doivent pas s'y heurter contre la vraisemblance et l'illusion qu'exige toute représentation complète de la vie réelle. Le reproche que nous formulons ne s'adresse donc pas à M. Lecomte-Dunoüy seul, mais en même temps à une tendance de notre époque dont il subit la pression. En sympathisant avec la légitime ambition dont il fait preuve, nous ne croyons pas qu'il lui soit nécessaire, pour être plus large et plus pénétrant, de rester dans sa peinture aussi matériellement exact et précis. Il doit savoir choisir entre la beauté des formes, qu'il entrevoit, et leur caractère purement pittoresque. Il doit mettre en un mot au service d'une poétique plus franche une exécution précieuse et un talent qui est sincère."

Lafenestre 1881("Le Salon de 1868"), p. 40: "Puis viennent, derrière eux, tous les archaïques qui répètent, sur tous les tons, le plus souvent à mi-voix, tous les chers rythmes du passé. Quelques-uns, tels que MM. Hector Leroux, Lecomte-Dunouy, Schutzenberger, Alma-Tadema, interprètent l'antiquité familière, souvent avec esprit, parfois avec grandeur. Les imitateurs du moyen âge se divisent toujours en deux camps, ceux qu'on pourrait appeler les imitateurs mécaniques, qui reproduisent, avec un scrupule voisin parfois de la niaiserie, les procédés les plus bizarres d'un art enfantin et imparfait, et ceux, au contraire, qui appliquent avec intelligence à la représentation des temps disparus tous les moyens mis à notre disposition par les progrès de l'art."

Montifaud 1868, p. 253: "Comme les portraitistes sont des historiens, Gérôme apporte un *Calvaire*; Carolus-Durand un *Saint François d'Assise recevant les stigmates*; Picou un *Molière* entouré de tous les personnages de ses pièces. Nous étudierons aussi les *Fureurs d'Ajax*, de Lecomte Dunouy; la *Naissance d'Eve* d'Emile Bin; ..."

Houssaye 1868, p. 323-324 [also cited in Montgailhard 1906, p. 116-117]: "Dans la *Folie d'Ajax le Télamonien*, M. Lecomte du Nouy a fondu en une seule deux scènes de l'*Ajax porte-fouet* de Sophocle: la scène où l'héros sortant de sa tente, s'aperçoit de sa fatale illusion, et la scène où seul, au bord de la mer, il va se frapper de son glaive. Ajax est dans sa tente – tente destinée à soutenir les vents et la pluie durant un siège de neuf ans – solidement construite avec des planches et des solives de bois, recouvertes de peaux et de grosses étoffes. A ses pieds, gisent dans le sang les têtes et les corps des brebis, des génisses, des agneaux et des beliers égorgés. Les fils de Télamon regarde d'un air morne ces victimes de sa démence. Il sort de son délire; il a honte de sa méprise, il ramène son ample chlamide autour de sa tête, comme s'il se sentait indigne de la lumière du soleil; il cherche son épée à terre pour s'en percer la poitrine; il s'écrie, d'une voix douloureuse: "Malheureux, j'ai laissé échapper les maudits, pour me jeter sur des génisses, sur des agneaux bêlants et je me suis baigné dans leur sang." Derrière lui, tout en armes, éclairée d'une lueur surnaturelle, majestueuse comme Hère, implacable comme une Erinnye, s'élève Athénè. Encore irritée des blasphèmes d'Ajax, la déesse le poursuit de sa colère jusqu'à l'heure du trépas; elle touche sa tête du doigt

pour le plonger plus avant encore dans le désespoir, pour le vouer aux supplices du Tartare. Au fond, près de la porte, un groupe de guerriers salamiens regarde tristement le délire de leur roi, et la captive d'Ajax, Tekmessas, abattue par la douleur, s'affaisse sur un escabeau. Lorsqu'on a vu cette toile, on en conserve pour longtemps le souvenir; il est impossible de comprendre et d'exprimer mieux la grandeur, la poésie et la fatalité du drame de Sophocle. Comme M. Gérôme, M. Lecomte du Nouy possède non seulement la science, mais encore le sentiment de l'Antiquité. Quoique sa manière de peindre procède de celle de Gérôme, il reste puissamment original, car il y a dans ses oeuvres un caractère de barbarie et de rudesse primitive que le peintre du *Roi Candaule* et des *Gladiateurs* [replaced by *Phryné* in Montgailhard 1906] n'a jamais exprimé. M. Lecomte du Nouy est le peintre des Grecs d'Agamemnon, comme Gérôme est celui des Grecs de Périclès. On cherche un artiste digne d'illustrer l'Iliade; il est trouvé en M. du Nouy. Nous ne voulons quitter la *Folie d'Ajax* sans admirer encore des guerriers de Salamine. Ils sont là sept ou huit, et chacun a un type différent et profondément accentué; chacun exprime un sentiment divers, soit de tristesse, soit d'étonnement. La captive est adorablement belle dans son attitude affaissée, désolée. Quelle que soit la majesté d'Athènes, nous préférons à la déesse Ajax et les autres figures. La leur bleuâtre qui l'enveloppe lui donne l'aspect diaphane d'un spectre. On la croirait éclairée par la lumière électrique. Il faut laisser cet effet aux machines des theaters de féeries."

Périer 1868, p. 47-48: "Les artistes et quelques amateurs connaissent le nom de M. Lecomte-Dunouy et ses premiers succès. Mais combien y a-t-il de gens de salons, de cercles ou d'ailleurs qui sauraient vous dire ce qu'il a fait et ce qu'il est? Critique, ce sont là de tes coups! Le premier, je crois, des ouvrages exposés par M. Lecomte-Dunouy, la *Sentinelle de nuit à Athènes*, m'avait vivement frappé. C'était, si je ne me trompe, il y a deux ou trois ans. Sa *Folie d'Ajax*, du Salon actuel, aussi bien peinte, aussi serrée d'exécution, aussi ferme et précise de formes, n'a pas le charme si poétique de ce premier tableau, mais elle s'élève encore bien au-de-là par la conception si forte et si réussie, par le beau caractère antique des figures, par l'étude sévère des draperies et par l'intense énergie de terreur et d'émotion qui remplit ce grand petit cadre. / La hauteur de l'idée, la beauté de sa traduction font oublier quelque sécheresse de surface, quelque froideur de ton. / C'est une oeuvre ici vraiment hors de pair, un honneur, d'abord à celui qui l'a faite, et puis à l'école de M. Gérôme. / Il est bien difficile de la décrire, la scène étant du tragique le plus riche: *Malheureux! J'ai laissé ces Atrides maudits s'échapper de mes mains pour me jeter sur des genisses, sur des agneaux bêlants, et je me suis baigné dans leur sang.* (Sophocle, *Ajax*) / Ajax en délire se détourne avec horreur des victimes égorgées. Minerve, qui plane au-dessus du héros dans une vapeur argentine, étend la main sur sa tête; les Grecs, hommes et femmes, accroupis les uns en dedans et les autres au seuil de la porte, le contemplent avec un mélange de terreur et de pitié. / Nous sommes ici dans le plein sublime de la fiction. La Minerve est une figure homérique conçue dans une mesure de réel et de fantastique d'un effet prestigieux. La blanche immatérialité de corps et l'aurole où respindit la déesse introduisent même ici, dans le drame, un sentiment d'apparition surnaturelle, plus grand et plus religieux que l'idéal antique; le peintre commente ainsi le poète avec un rare bonheur, et nous devons l'admirer d'avoir porté si fièrement ce glorieux fardeau. Amplifiez le tableau par la pensée, ce sera la plus belle des grandes toiles historiques, non-seulement de ce Salon, mais de beaucoup d'autres."

Gautier 1868, p. 628: "Nous suivons avec un vif intérêt depuis son *Lyncée veillant sur la tour du palais d'Agamemnon* le talent de M. Lecomte-Dunouy qui représente les scènes de l'antiquité grecque avec un sentiment à la fois si neuf et si archaïque. Sans doute l'influence de M. Gérôme, son maître, est visible sur lui, mais sa nature particulière se dégage de plus en plus, et son originalité s'épure de tout alliage. / La *Folie d'Ajax le Télémonien*, tel est le titre du tableau de M. Lecomte-Dunouy, qui ne dépasse pas les proportions d'une toile de chevalet, et même d'une toile de chevalet fort petite. Mais la dimension ne fait rien à la chose, et ces figures hautes de quelques centimètres ont la taille héroïque et sont plus grandes que les gigantesques personnages de certains tableaux d'histoire couvrant tout un pan de muraille. / Le sujet est emprunté à la tragédie de *Sophocle, Ajax porte-fouet*, dont le livret cite ce passage: "Malheureux! J'ai laissé ces Atrides maudits s'échapper de mes mains, pour me jeter sur des genisses, sur des agneaux bêlants, et je me suis baigné dans leur sang!" Ajax sortant de son délire comme d'un rêve regarde de l'air d'un somnambule qu'on a réveillé en sursaut le carnage auquel il vient de se livrer. Autour de lui gisent dans le sang des têtes de bœufs, de moutons, de chèvres, de genisses, comme les morts d'un champ de bataille imaginaire. Des trépieds, des escabeaux renversés, attestent la frénésie du fils de Télémon, et, dans le fond de la chambre, se sont réfugiés, pleins d'épouvante, les amis, les esclaves, les enfants et les femmes. Derrière lui, Pallas-Athènes, dont son impiété, à toujours méprisé les secours et les conseils, prétendant

qu'un mortel, s'il est brave, doit vaincre sans l'aide des dieux, s'élève, comme un spectre vengeur, baignée d'une lumière surnaturelle et dans une pose de malédiction. Cette déesse irritée, assistant à la mort de son blasphémateur, est vraiment superbe et d'une haute poésie. Ajax, honteux de cet acte de folie qui le rend la risée du camp, se perce la poitrine au seul endroit vulnérable correspondant au trou de la blessure dans la peau du lion néméen dont Hercule le couvrit quand il était enfant. Le glaive dont il se sert est l'épée d'Hector, présent funeste! / Un rapprochement involontaire se présente à notre esprit devant ce tableau si parfaitement grec et antique, qui aurait pu figurer dans la pinacothèque des Propylées, et nous pensons à Leconte de Lisle. Les deux noms ont même une sorte d'assonance: Leconte de Lisle, Lecomte-Dunouy, l'artiste et le poète, nous semblent comprendre l'hellénisme de la même façon. Chaque peintre a son domaine. M. Lecomte-Dunouy habite la Grèce héroïque et mythologique. M. Hector Leroux a pris son domicile dans la Rome des empereurs, dont il peint les moeurs et les usages." [Continues to discuss Leroux.]

Périer 1869, p. 116. Brief positive mention of this painting before criticizing *L'amour qui passe, l'amour qui reste*; for text see cat. 48.

Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Strahan 1878, p. 7; for text see cat. 105.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 18.

44) Portrait of André Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Portrait de mon frère André.*)

45) Sancho and Don Quichotte (*Sancho et Don Quichotte (Esquisse).* Gravé par Lefort. Appartenant à Léopold Flameng.)

An original engraving is included in BN: DC 309, I, p. 63.

1869

46) Portrait of Ms. Berthaux (*Portrait de Mlle Berthaux.*)

47) Portrait of Mrs. Louis (*Portrait de Mme Louis. Appartenant au sculpteur Noël Louis.*)

48) Love that Goes, Love that Remains (*L'amour qui passe, l'amour qui reste (Allégorie).* Salon de 1869. Musée de Boulogne-sur-Mer.) [Figure 23]

Oil on canvas, 130 x 207 cm, signed and dated lower right: 1869.

Present location: Boulogne-sur-Mer, Château-Musée (inv. 203/13), State deposit.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1869, no. 1427: *L'amour qui passe, l'amour qui reste*.

Literature: Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Roy 1869 (I), p. 250: "Signalons un jolie poème grec de M. Ranvier, et dans ce genre archaïque, *l'Amour qui passe, l'Amour qui reste*, de M. Lecomte Dunouy [...]."

Roy 1869 (II), p. 377-78: "Puisque nous parlons du nu, c'est-à-dire des études premières de l'art, il nous semble tout naturel de passer sans transition aux oeuvres plus ou moins inspirées de l'antique, et aux compositions qui ont pour but de généraliser le sentiment. Là aussi nous trouvons les deux tendances opposées, mais l'idéal domine. M. Leconte Dunouy est au premier rang parmi ceux qu'on a appelés les néo-grecs. L'allégorie philosophique revêt sous son pinceau les formes les plus pures, et il sait élever les sentiments jusqu'à la généralisation. *L'amour qui passe, l'amour qui reste*, est le poème éternel des déceptions humaines: dans une draperie claire, soutenue par les nuages, la femme aimée, endormie du sommeil de l'indifférence, emporte avec elle l'amour inconstant; elle fuit vers l'horizon des souvenirs où l'âme la suit avec douleur jusqu'à ce qu'elle ait pris le calme souriant des belles heures lointaines. Près du seuil de la maison, assis sur le banc des voyageurs, un jeune homme abattu, le coeur plein du désespoir amer que laisse l'oubli de l'aimée, appuie, rebelle encore, sa tête sur l'épaule de la mère qui, elle, a attendu cet instant hélas prévu, -- des larmes et des dégoûts, pour remplir son rôle consolateur. Patient, parce qu'elle aussi a l'éternité des saintes tendresses, elle retrouve l'enfant meurtri, et les paroles caressantes dont elle le berçait reviennent à ses lèvres pâles. Elle se tait, pourtant, car elle sait que les douleurs violentes commandent le silence; mais comme elle saura, au moment opportun, retrouver le chemin de ce coeur, et y verser le baume des consolations ineffables! Heureux ceux à qui reste, pour reposer leur front lassé, ce sein

maternel inépuisable en tendresse! Le vieux chien, si souvent rebuté aux heures de joie, sent aussi que le moment est revenu pour les fidèles, et il appuie sa tête calme et triste sur les genoux du jeune maître qui ne se défend plus contre ses caresses. Ce group réel est rendu avec un charme parfait de sentiment, et s'accommode aisément de la sobriété de la couleur; l'Amour qui fuit a de la grace, mais on regrette dans le groupe ailé la crudité de la draperie violette et le ton peu harmonieux du corps de l'infidèle; M. Dunouy aurait gagné, en cette circonstance, à consulter d'un peu plus près la nature."

Périer 1869, p. 116-118: "J'ai beaucoup loué naguère M. Lecomte-Dunouy pour son *Ajax*, d'aucuns diront trop. Je l'avais trouvé grand dans un cadre minuscule; le voilà rapetissé dans un grand (1427). J'y vois toujours beaucoup de science, et de la tendance à l'expression des beautés classiques; mais quelle abstinence ou quelle impuissance de couleur et de ton! La triste apparence d'une fresque blafarde est-elle admissible en un tableau, même de grand cheval? *L'amour qui passe et l'amour qui reste*. Il y a là noblesse et hauteur d'idée, contraste éloquent; c'est une belle ambition. / Le peintre ne saurait douter de la sincérité des regrets que j'éprouve à ne pouvoir dire que dans l'exécution du projet il soit à la hauteur de la conception. Qu'il me permette une première objection: l'amour qui passe, de cette façon-là, ne s'envole pas d'ordinaire dans les nuages; il reste à terre et fort terre à terre, pas éthéré du tout, mais matériel tout à fait; car notre matière seule est infidèle et changeante, parce que, seule, elle fut légère ou fautive dans le choix. Notre âme, libre et seule, ne saurait être volage, parce qu'elle se fût fixée pour toujours. / Si cet amour passé, si cette amante qui s'en va, se dégage et s'élève de la terre, comme nous le voyons-là, n'importe avec qui, c'est elle alors qui doit avoir raison, et le jeune homme doit avoir tort. Pour un amant, rester ici-bas quand l'autre part pour le ciel, c'est une condamnation. Il s'ensuit déjà que nous resterons froids en face de sa douleur, fût-elle mieux exprimée. Mais elle l'est académiquement, c'est-à-dire assez mal. Une véritable figure d'amoureux transi, ingrate et lourde, quoique, ou parce que régulière. / De son côté, la mère consolatrice est froide, bien peu participante. / Mais le pire est que le type de visage de la belle infidèle est, aussi, bien bizarrement choisi, maussade et renfrogné. Qu'elle ne montre pas un tantinet d'émotion, passe encore! bien qu'on se figure mal tant de douleur pour une pure poupée; mais au moins devrait-elle plaire et séduire, et faire envier celui qui *la dérange*? / Enfin, si toute la matière, dans ce tableau, n'est pas absolument dure et cassante, elle sent au moins le carton. A tous égards donc cette marche actuelle est fâcheuse: expression et couleur se vont précipiter bientôt aux limbes de la peinture, en passant par la littérature, la thèse et l'antithèse. Sous ce rapport, il ne manque rien. Ce qui manque, ce sont toutes les passions et toutes les tendresses, à la traduction desquelles ne suffit pas *l'intelligence* de l'artiste. / Pour agir sur nos esprits, pour faire vibrer les cordes de nos cœurs par l'expression de la passion en peinture, il faut être plus naïf et plus remué soi-même. / Ou plus d'émotion, ou moins d'ambition."

Hache 1869, p. 244: "Nous préférons certes à l'oeuvre de M. Lambron celle de M. Lecomte-Dunouy, *l'Amour qui passe, l'Amour qui reste*, malgré le poncif et l'excès de correction incolore dans l'exécution."

Lafenestre 1881 ("Le Salon de 1869"), I, p. 103-104: "Au-dessous de MM. Delaunay et Moreau, la poésie antique n'apparaît guère que sous la forme la plus mince, celle des anecdotes. Il en faut excepter *l'Amour qui passe et l'amour qui reste*, par M. Lecomte-Dunouy, *L'Amour qui passe*, c'est une belle jeune femme, nue comme Vénus, froide comme elle, qui s'envole on sait bien où, vers d'autres aventures, d'autres baisers, d'autres abandons, et se laisse mollement porter à travers l'air bleu par la folle bande des Cupidons sans un regard de pitié pour le beau jeune homme qu'elle laisse en larmes, *L'Amour qui reste*, c'est la mère, affectueuse et tendre, matrone au front serein, au noble profil, qui quitte sa quenouillée pour tendre ses bras au fils prodigue, et consoler, de sa parole calme, la victime des chaleureuses et stériles passions. Un peu plus de vigueur dans l'exécution ferait de cette composition une oeuvre excellente, dans la donnée claire et sobre des bas-reliefs antiques. La tête de la mère est d'un sentiment grave, et le groupe de la courtisane et des amours n'est pas dépourvu de l'élégance qui convient en pareil sujet."

Chaumelin 1873, p. 228: "Puisque je parle de nudités, il faut bien que je signale la prétentieuse et plate allégorie que M. Lecomte-Dunouy a peinte sur ce sujet banal: *l'Amour qui passe et l'Amour qui reste*. Un éphèbe (il faut parler grec avec M. Lecomte-Dunouy) demande à sa vieille mère de le consoler du départ de sa Calypso: celle-ci, trop laide vraiment pour être regrettée, s'esquive dans les airs, portée par des amours. La peinture est à la hauteur de l'idée. C'est lisse. C'est froid, c'est terne."

Chaumelin 1873, p. 231: "M. Lecomte-Dunouy est aussi creux, aussi terne, aussi banal, dans son portrait de *Mlle E. T...*, que dans son allégorie: *l'Amour qui passe et l'Amour qui reste*; jamais disciple d'Ingres et de Flandrin n'a fait aussi scrupuleusement abstraction de la vie."

Chaumelin 1873, p. 302: "M. Lecomte-Dunouy a pensé qu'il ne suffisait pas à sa gloire d'avoir mis en tableautins burlesquement sérieux les tragédies d'Eschyle et de Sophocle; il a voulu sur un penser nouveau faire une peinture antique. Il a choisi ce sujet inédit: *l'Amour qui passe et l'Amour qui reste*; *l'Amour qui passe*, une grosse femme nue qui s'envole, indifférente et railleuse, portée à d'autres amants par de petit scélérats ailés; -- *l'Amour qui reste*, une vieille mère et un chien vers lesquels se retourne tristement le grand nigaud délaissé par sa maîtresse. Cette scène piquante est peinte avec une lourdeur et une gaucherie sans pareilles. Les figures sont creuses, les expressions niaises, les attitudes banales. Le coloris est terne et lourd."

Dolent 1869, p. 66: "*L'Amour qui passe et l'Amour qui reste*, de M. Lecomte-Dunouy, est une allégorie. Une jeune femme qui n'aime plus s'envole soutenu par des Amours académiques, et le benêt d'amant délaissé se désole entre les bras de sa mère. Que la femme quitte ce garçon-là, ne l'aimant plus, cela n'étonne point, mais qu'elle l'ait aimé, cela est fait pour surprendre."

Montgailhard 1906, p. 18.

Photo: Album Michelez (Achats et Commandes de L'Etat): cliché 79 no V (5)

Related Works: Engraved by Rapin, included in Montgailhard 1906, before p. 1. An engraving was also exhibited at Tripp 1886, no. 59, see appendix IV.

See cat. 112.

49) Portrait of Mrs. Eglantine Pujol (*Portrait de Mme Églantine Pujol. Salon de 1869. Musée de Lille.*) [Figure 24]

Oil on canvas, 146 x 89.5 cm, signed and dated upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUY / 1869.

Present Location: Lille, Palais de Beaux Arts, (inv. P 989), given by the artist in 1874.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1869, 1427: Portrait de Mlle E. T...

Tradition & Revolution 1993, cat. no. 71.

Literature: Strahan 1878, p. 7; for text see cat. 105.

Chaumelin 1873 ("Salon de 1869"), p. 231 [first published in *L'Indépendance Belge*]; for text see cat. 48.

Chaumelin 1873, p. 329 [first published in *La Presse*]: "Tandis que M. Cabanel se livre aux gentilleses du pastel, M. Lecomte-Dunouy se contente de colorier de teintes plates des lithographies médiocrement dessinées. Son portrait de *Mlle E. T...*, malgré les nuances variées d'un cachemire abandonné autour des hanches, à la froideur d'une grisaille."

Périer 1869, p. 92: "Une grande sécheresse et des contours découpés, joints au raplatissements des surfaces, le tout aggravé par une froideur de ton inconsciente ou systématique, effacent à mes yeux toutes qualités, dans le portrait peint par M. Lecomte-Dunouy (1418)."

50) Portrait of Ms. Kelsen (*Portrait de Mlle Marie Kelsen.*)

51) Portrait of Ms. Henriette Saint-Clair (*Portrait de Mlle Henriette Saint-Clair.*)

52) Portrait of Mr. Derain (*Portrait de M. Derain.*)

53) Portrait of Mrs. Aglaé Marche (*Portrait de Mme Aglaé Marche.*)

54) The Charmer (*Le Charmeur. Salon de 1870. Musée de Reims.*) [Figure 29]

Oil on canvas, 89.9 x 116.3 cm, signed lower right: LECOMTE.DU.NOUY.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Reims (inv. D.873.1)

Provenance: Acquired from the artist by the French government and donated to the Reims museum in 1873.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1870, no. 1649: Le Charmeur.

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 533.

Reims, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Les peintres de la Belle Époque* (1976). No catalogue.

Literature: Chaumelin 1873, p. 430: "Les charmeurs et les charmeuses ne manquent pas au Salon. Nous avons parlé tout à l'heure de la Fille aux oiseaux, de M. Reynaud. C'est un lion que dompte la Charmeuse de M. Charles Ronot, figure de grandeur naturelle, costumée à l'antique, très distinguée de tournure et de coloris. *Le Charmeur*, de M. Lecomte-Dunouy, est un vilain petit bonhomme nu, couleur de pain d'épice, assis à terre et soufflant bêtement dans une double flûte, à la grande joie d'un serin et de deux margots qui ouvrent le bec et battent des ailes comme les coucous des horloges de la Forêt-Noire. Quant au Charmeur, de M. Victor Giraud, c'est une sorte d'Egyptien solennel et lugubre comme un magnétiseur, secondé par un petit joueur de flûte et qui, à l'aide de deux cerceaux magiques, attire à lui les colombes, les tourterelles voltigeant dans une serre où sont groupés une douzaine de spectateurs, hommes et femmes, habillés à l'antique. A dire vrai, ce n'est pas le sujet représenté qui intéresse le plus dans ce tableau. L'attention est vivement sollicitée et accaparée par la variété, la richesse et l'éclat des costumes; ils écrasent complètement les physionomies, qui sont d'ailleurs assez monotones; ils sont peints avec une intensité et en même temps avec une pureté de ton vraiment prodigieuses."

Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24; for text see cat. 64.

Strahan 1878, 7; for text see cat. 105.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 19, repr. p. 20.

Montgailhard 1914, p. 47; brief mention only.

1870

55) A Woman from Antiquity Unwinding Yarn (*La dévideuse antique* (Dessin). Appartenant à M. Fougues-Duparc. [Listed erroneously under 1869 by Montgailhard])

Black and white crayon on paper (dim. unknown), signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ 1870.

Present Location: Private collection, USA.

Provenance: Probably: Paris sale, Millon & Associés (G. Augier, specialist), 2 July, 1997, lot 24, *Jeune femme grecque et sa servante*, 1870, pencil and wash heightened with white, 13.4 x 16.1 in. (34 x 41 cm), est. FF. 5.000 – 6.000. Galerie Gabriel Terrades, Paris. Private collection, USA.

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 11, see appendix IV.

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 52, 53.

56) A Pottery Merchant in Cairo (*Marchand de poteries au Caire*. [Listed erroneously under 1869 by Montgailhard, see note below.]) [Figure 89]

Oil on panel, 30.5 x 22.2 cm (12 x 8 ¾ in.), signed lower left: LECOMTE-DUNOUY.

Present Location: New York, Kenneth Jay Lane collection.

Provenance: New York sale, Sotheby's, Oct. 31, 2000, lot 34, *The Opium Smoker*, repr.; New York, Kenneth Jay Lane.

Note: A photo of this painting, BN: DC 309, IV, p. 40, has the title inscribed on its blue backing paper: 1870 [top] and: MARCHAND AU CAIRE [below]. As the artist has given these photographs to the BN, this dating should be trustworthy. For comparable dating, see cat. 57.

57) A Woman Selling Goods in Herculaneum (*Marchande à Herculaneum*. [Listed by Montgailhard under 1871, see note.])

Exhibited: London, Royal Academy 1871, no 599: Une Marchande d'Herculaneum

Note: Possibly identical to "une Marchande à Pompéi" as listed in Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Note: A photo of this painting, BN: DC 309, IV, p. 42, has the title inscribed on its blue backing paper: 1870 [top]; MARCHANDE A POMPEI [bottom]. Visibly signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ 1870. For comparable dating see cat. 56.

58) Demosthenes Practicing His Declamation (*Démosthène, au bord de la mer, s'exerçant à la parole. Salon de 1872.*) [Figure 75]

Oil on panel, 47.5 x 38 cm, signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ / 70.

Present location: Private collection

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1872, no. 967: Demosthène s'exerce à la parole.

Provenance: New York sale, Sotheby's, Feb. 17, 1993, lot 21A, reproduced, \$13,800; London sale, Christie's, March 20, 1998, lot 93, repr., £ 7,475.

Literature: Strahan 1878, p. 7; for text see cat. 105.

Claretie, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 118; for text see cat. 64.

Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Lafenestre 1881 ("Le Salon de 1872"), I, p. 266-68; for text see cat. 64.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 18, 22.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 230-14 (www.roger-viollet.fr)

Photogravure by Goupil & Cie, in: Horne ed. *Great men and famous women* (1894), vol. II.

Related Works: Drawing by Lecomte du Nouÿ, repr. in Montgailhard 1906, 22; perhaps cats. 42 or 109.

Engraving in *L'univers Illustré* (1872), J. Pellissier del. / H. Maghellen sc.

Engraving in *L'univers Illustré* (1872), and *Le Monde Illustré* (1872?), p. 301: Albert Duvivier del. / E.

Thomas

See cat. 42, 109.

59) *Graziella* (*Graziella. Appartenant à M. Lacavallerie.*)

60) *Mountain Landscape with Farmers and Wagons pulled by Oxen*

Oil sketch

Oil on canvas, signed lower left: Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ 1870.

Present Location: Paris, Patrick Roger-Binet.

61) *The Town Square at Mallevall (Loire)* [Figure 34]

Oil on canvas, 23.3 x 31.2 cm, inscribed and dated on the stretcher: *La Grande Place. Mallevall – Loire 1870.*

Present Location: Collection of Benjamin Doller, New York.

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 139, see appendix III; W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

61a) *View of Mallevall*

Oil on canvas, 28 x 22 cm, inscribed and dated on the stretcher: *Mallevall (Loire) 1870.*

Present Location: Private collection.

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 129, appendix III; W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

Related Works: For oil sketches that may also depict Mallevall, see Aurillac: 82.13.289, 82.13.331, 82.13.335, 82.13.336, see appendix I.

62) *The Alps and the Dauphiné seen from Mont Pilat* [not dated] [Figure 35]

Oil on canvas, 21 x 31 cm, inscribed on the stretcher: *Les Alpes et le Dauphiné vues du Mont Pilat.*

Present Location: Private collection.

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 136, see appendix III; W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

Note: See also, *Mont Pilat and the three Peaks seen from Mallevall (Loire)*, Drouot 2003, lot 138, see appendix III.

1871

63) *At the Tomb of the Virgin, Jerusalem* [Figure 124]

Oil on panel, 37.8 x 29.6 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE.DU.NOÛÏ – 1871.

Present location: New York, Dahesh Museum of Art, 2001.13.

Provenance: London sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet & Co., March 19, 1980, lot 67, repr. b/w, *Chrétiennes au tombeau de la vierge, Jérusalem*, on panel, signed and dated 1871, titled on reverse 15 x 11 ½ in. 38 x 29 cm [provenance given: Frédéric Reitlinger, Paris] est. £3,500-5,000 (bought in); London sale, Christie's or Sotheby's [from undated auction catalogue page in the Documentation of Musée d'Orsay] 1987?, lot 137, repr. b/w: *Chrétiennes au tombeau de la vierge, Jérusalem*, signed and dated 1871, titled on the reverse, oil on panel, 38 by 29 cm; 15 by 11 ½ in., est. £10,000-15,000; New York sale, Sotheby's, February 22, 1989, lot 54 (bought in); New York sale, Sotheby's, May 1, 2001, lot 18, repr. in color: *Chrétiennes au tombeau de la vierge, Jérusalem*, [provenance given: Frédéric Reitlinger, Paris; Schweitzer Gallery, New York], est. \$20,000-30,000 (bought in); acquired by the Dahesh Museum of Art after this sale.

Literature: Small (2001), p. 12-14, fig. 13.

Related Work: See cat. 132.

64) *The Bearers of Bad Tidings* (*Les porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*. "Tiré du Roman de la Momie." Th. Gautier. Salon de 1872. Lithographié par Charles Schaller. Musée du Luxembourg.) [Figure 82]

Oil on canvas, 74 x 121 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE.DU.NOUY / PARIS / MDCCCXXI.

Provenance: Acquired by the French government June 14, 1872, for FF 3000; entered the Musée du Luxembourg January 9, 1874; transferred to the Dépôt de l'Etat, July 27, 1923; deposited at the Museum of Tunis, August 3, 1923; transferred to the Ministère de l'Education Nationale, then around 1960 to the Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, Tunis. After the independence of Tunisia, the painting stayed in that country, but its present location is unknown.

Exhibited: London 1871, no. 423. [Montgailhard 1906, p. 21, mentions that it was first exhibited in London, where it hung over a doorway and went virtually unnoticed. Where in London it was exhibited is not clear, but the painting does not appear in Graves 1906, which provides an index of works exhibited at the Royal Academy.]

Paris, Salon 1872, p. 966: *Les porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*. "... Un second messenger roula à côté du premier. Un troisième eut le même sort. Et Pharaon, planant par l'oeil de la pensée sur cette ville démesurée dont il était le maître absolu, réfléchissait tristement aux bornes du pouvoir humain ..."

(Théophile Gautier, *La Momie*.) [médaillon 2e classe]

Vienna, Wiener Weltausstellung 1873, no. 418.

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 534.

Catalogo de la exposicion de pintura Francesa Contemporanea 1870-1918, Ministerio de instruccion publica y Bellas Artes, Madrid (1918), p. 120: *Lecomte-du-Nouy*, 30 Boulevard Flandrin. Paris. *Les porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*. Los portadores de malas noticias. Propiedad del Estado francés.

Literature: Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Strahan 1878, p. 7; for text see cat. 105.

Strahan 1878, p. 37, repr. opp. p. 37: "*Bearers of Evil Tidings Slain by Pharaoh*. By J.J.A. Lecomte-du-Nouy. / Lent by the Luxembourg Gallery, which owns the canvas, M. Lecomte-du-Nouy's picture of the

"Bearers of Evil Tidings" takes its place as a selected standard of French Art, crowned by the Governmental choice. Biblical in period and treatment, and to the eye an illustration of that Egypt which was the harsh foster-nurse of the Jewish race, the composition was, in fact, inspired particularly by the following passage in "The Mummy," by Théophile Gautier: "A second messenger fell beside the first. A third met the same fate; and Pharaoh, floating by the eye of thought over that overgrown city of which he was the absolute master, reflected with mortification on the limited nature of human power." The picture exhibits a chiseled precision of detail which would seem to make it classable with sculptor's work as much as with painting. We cannot deny that this canvas gives evidence of very uncommon talent: by no means. We are grateful to the author for his niceties of manipulation and for his archaeological researches. We can hardly expect from an artist whose forte is sculptural accuracy of drawing those lambent charms of atmosphere and color which are the property of "impressionist" painters; can hardly look for the vibrating tints of Decamps or Delacroix, or expect to see, along with the rigid anatomy of our painter, those tepid transparencies of the nights of sun-loved lands. The charm of such a work as this is different in kind: it is accuracy of study, masterliness of manipulation; it is balanced symmetry, which surely is one of the forms of harmony. None can fail to see the elegant balance of masses, the intelligence and the address and cleverness, the vast quantity of small antique bric-à-brac most delicately adjusted, and the general collection of most ingenious, most interesting details. But we should not allow our attention to be too much entrapped by these learned perfections. Over all, we must perceive the terrible and sinister nature of the subject, -- a scene of death, with its agonies and supreme convulsions, -- a picture of irresponsible power, unsated after its most deadly exertion! We must look among these wretched ministers of tyranny for the manly obedience, the unquestioning submission which leads them to run one after the other to their doom as fleetly as to a festival. We must let our imagination create an atmosphere of terrible apprehension, the brooding misgivings and patient fidelity of these wretched officers -- the Oriental humility expressed in the Biblical words: "Ye have made our labor to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us!" The mere discovery and turn of his theme by our artists is in the nature of a lucky hit or windfall. The idea of these obedient ministers uncomplainingly dying by their monarch's hand while he muses dissatisfied on other things -- the submissiveness of slavery and its insufficiency to fulfill the schemes of inordinate ambition -- is a contrast of purposes which might have

tempted Michel Angelo. Which are to be envied, the subjects whose all is but to attempt and to die, or the despot who can command everything and never attain satisfaction? Another painter might have treated this drama with more fire and vitality. M. Lecomte-du-Nouy treats it in a spirit of brooding, reposeful, yet not satisfied philosophy, which has its own peculiar effect on the feelings of the beholder, and which keeps within the limits of quietude imposed by the canons of grand art. M. Lecomte-du-Nouy is the artist of the "Begging Homer," which we have already published."

Castagnary 1892, II, p. 20-22: "Une conquête du bon sens et du goût qu'il ne faut pas manquer d'enregistrer, c'est la diminution croissante, nous pourrions dire la presque disparition des tableaux mythologiques et religieux. Le Calvaire et l'Olympe reculent également. Sur les douze cents toiles que contient le Salon, c'est à peine s'il y en a quarante dont les sujets soient empruntés à la double légende chrétienne et païenne, et sur ces quarante, c'est à peine si une critique indulgente en trouverait un à épargner. [...] Le talent de l'artiste décroît à mesure que l'infirmité du genre se révèle, ce qui est un bon signe. La foule, non moins bon signe, se tient admirablement devant ces images: elle s'en désintéresse au point de ne pas même y chercher un prétexte à moqueries. Elle les regarde d'un air indifférent et elle passe. C'est comme si on lui avait parlé sanscrit. De fait, quand une société en est arrivée à s'éprendre de la nature, à boire aux sources mêmes des réalités vivantes, toutes les rêveries, toutes les idéalizations enfantées par l'humanité en bas âge lui deviennent insipides. Si elle les recherche, c'est pour en déterminer le contenu en les soumettant à l'analyse de la raison, nullement pour en propager le culte en les faisant figurer dans des représentations destinées à agir sur l'esprit. Gens de la seconde moitié du XIX siècle, nous en sommes là. Chaque jour nous détachons davantage des hallucinations de l'antique religiosité. Encore quelque laps de temps, et dans les créations du peintre aussi bien que dans celles du poète, la croix de Jésus aura rejoint le char d'Apollon. Des *Marie* à la crèche, des *Samaritaine* au puits, des *Madeleine* au désert, des ermites et des pénitents, de tout le long cortège des martyrs ensanglantés et des Saintes émancipées, chacun de nous en a assez. Ce monde biblique, allégorique et mystique a fait son temps. Il était moins humain, moins riant que le monde charmant des forces naturelles issu du clair génie de la Grèce, et il a vieilli plus vite. Qu'ils disparaissent tous les deux; qu'on les enferme au garde-meubles de l'histoire, là où gisent toutes les défroques du passé, et que la République française mette soigneusement la clef dans sa poche. J'aperçois au livret une *Tentation de Jésus-Christ*, par M. Michel Dumas; [...], qui porte la mention sacramentelle: M. INST. P. ET B.-A., c'est-à-dire commande du ministère de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts. J'imagine bien que ce sont là des legs de l'administration impériale, et que M. Jules Simon n'est pas coupable de ces acquisitions. Mais la chose ne doit plus se reproduire. La République n'est pas faite pour entretenir un art que l'opinion délaisse et que le goût condamne. Elle se doit à elle-même de lui couper les subsides. C'est une mesure réclamée à la fois par la raison moderne et par la politique. La séparation de l'Eglise et de l'Etat ne saurait mieux commencer qu'en peinture. / Il n'y a pas que les sujets mythologiques et religieux qui s'en aillent, il y a les sujets historiques. Dans ce débordement de toiles de toutes sortes, on en compte en plus quinze ou vingt ayant trait à des événements de l'antiquité, du moyen-âge ou des temps modernes. C'est à proprement parler, les détritiques de deux écoles en décomposition, l'école classique et l'école romantique. Le public ne s'y arrête guère, sauf quand il est attiré par l'étrangeté de la scène représentée, comme dans *l'Empereur Claude*, de M. Alma-Tadema; *les Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*, de M. Lecomte du Nouy [...]."

Jules Claretie, *L'art français en 1872*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 117-118: "Il y a toujours foule devant ce tableau, qui a obtenu un succès d'attraction. Le sujet n'était pourtant pas fait pour attirer le public. Un drame qui se passe, comme nous dit l'inscription peinte sur le cadre, sous le roi Sipta Ménéphtha, de la 18e dynastie, 1500 ans avant J.-C. ne doit pas, en principe, avoir une grande chance d'obtenir un succès populaire. Pourtant le tableau de M. Lecomte de Nouy a obtenu ce succès-là. C'est qu'il y avait je ne sais quoi de mystérieux dans la vue de ce Pharaon couché sur ses coussins, se mordant les ongles, impatient d'attendre, contemplant une ville endormie, et étendant à ses pieds ceux qui ne lui venaient pas dire: "Ton rêve est réalisé!" Quel rêve était-ce donc? Ceux qui ont lu l'admirable livre de Th. Gautier, *le Roman de la Momie*, se rappellent la scène où le Pharaon silencieux, découpant sur le coin de la terrasse ses noirs contours, comme une statue de bronze scellée à l'établissement, y appelle dans la nuit: "Tahoser! Tahoser!" et de son sceptre en métal fend le crâne dur des messagers qui ne lui viennent point dire que Tahoser n'est pas loin. C'est cette scène que M. Lecomte du Nouy a rendue. Il a réédifié Thèbes endormie, avec ses constructions gigantesques, ses pylônes, ses palais de Ramsès et d'Aménophis; il a étendu sur la terrasse le Pharaon, semblable à une statue osirienne, et il a fait ainsi un très dramatique

décor, quoique, à vrai dire, le ciel en soit un peu semblable, et la composition toute entière, à un beau tableau d'opéra. N'est-ce point pour cela peut-être que le public a tant regardé ce drame? Les cadavres des morts, pareils à des statues de bronze couchées à terre, m'ont particulièrement frappé. Ce tableau est très supérieur au *Démotsthènes* du même auteur. Démotsthènes, s'exerçant à la parole le long d'un rivage où la mer est houleuse et ne mugit pas assez pour que l'orateur, la *bête féroce*, comme disait Eschine, son rival, hurle à lutter contre son terrible fracas."

Lafenestre 1881("Le Salon de 1872"), I, p. 265-68: "M. Lecomte du Nouy est plus grave dans ses rapports avec l'Égypte et la Grèce, mais il a moins d'éclat que M. Alma-Tadéma. Le respect, chez lui, glace la verve. *Ses Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles* sont les messagers qui viennent annoncer au Pharaon, dans le *Roman de la Momie*, qu'ils n'ont pu retrouver la trace de la belle Tahoser: "Les heures succédaient aux heures; déjà le soleil avait disparu derrière les montagnes, lançant ses derniers feux à Thèbes, et les messagers ne revenaient pas. Pharaon gardait toujours son attitude immobile. La nuit s'étendit sur la ville, calme, fraîche et bleue; et sur le coin de la terrasse, le Pharaon silencieux, impassible, découpait ses noirs contours comme une statue de basalte scellée à l'entablement.... De cette hauteur, le roi dominait sa ville déployée à ses pieds.... Planant par l'oeil et la pensée sur cette ville démesurée dont il était le maître absolu, Pharaon réfléchissait tristement aux bornes du pouvoir humain.... Un premier messager parut sur la terrasse, annonçant au Pharaon que Tahoser ne se trouvait pas. Le Pharaon étendit son sceptre, le messager tomba mort". Deux autres messagers eurent ensuite le même sort. M. Lecomte du Nouy montre les trois cadavres étendus devant le Pharaon accoudé, dans ses somptueux habits, sur la haute terrasse de Thèbes. Le dessin de M. du Nouy est consciencieux et fin, sévère et poussé; ces qualités sont celles du maître, M. Gérôme, qui les a transmises à son disciple fidèle; mais le maître a transmis en même temps à son élève ce goût des contours secs, des harmonies froides, des couleurs monochromes qui n'a point permis à M. Lecomte du Nouy de traduire dans toute sa richesse la prose éclatante de Théophile Gautier. / M. Lecomte du Nouy ne se montre pas moins habile dans son *Démotsthènes s'exerçant à la parole* au bord de la mer; mais là aussi, M. Lecomte du Nouy lutte contre un souvenir terrible, celui d'Eugène Delacroix qui a traité deux fois ce sujet, dans une donnée plus libre, avec la sympathie passionnée d'un grand peintre. L'érudition qui ne prend pas une forme vivante, colorée, expressive, est une qualité stérile. Il en est des peintres comme des femmes; il n'est pas mal qu'ils soient savants, mais si la science en eux tue l'émotion, l'enthousiasme, la simplicité, le naturel, le charme, au diable la science! Mieux vaut mille fois un grain de folie! / A quelque époque qu'il se place, hélas! le genre historique, entre des mains médiocres, est un genre froid. Les tableaux qui croient représenter des scènes du XVI^e siècle sont innombrables: la plupart ne sont qu'une exhibition glacée de vieux meubles, de fripperies surannées, de bibelots curieux; dans les appartements d'autrefois, soigneusement restaurés et vernis, les habitants anciens n'ont pas voulu revenir. La mesquine habileté matérielle que déploient dans cette patiente fabrication ceux qui s'y adonnent, n'a d'égale que leur pauvreté d'imagination. Ce ne sont que des dames assises, cavaliers saluant, soldats regardant une épée, pages jouant dans l'antichambre, gentilshommes regardant des livres, gentilshommes allumant une pipe. Avec ces puérilités, on a pu faire des chefs-d'oeuvre; mais il y faut mettre un esprit, une bonhomie, un art extraordinaire; il faut être Terburg ou Meissonnier! Dans cette foule de soi-disant évocateurs du passé qui ne ressuscitent que des armures rouillées et des oripeaux déteints, on distingue à peine une quinzaine d'artistes, sincèrement émus par leurs sujets retrospectifs, et donnant un accent à leurs compositions."

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24-25: "M. Lecomte du Nouy conserve avec plus de fidélité que son maître, M. Gérôme, les traditions des néo-grecs. Cette petite secte produisit jadis un vif émoi en inaugurant à sa façon, contre les romantiques, la réaction qui se termine aujourd'hui par son triomphe. M. Lecomte du Nouy est un des rares adeptes qui suivent les données primitives, non sans les modifier par des inspirations personnelles. Chacun de ses tableaux, pris aux pures sources de l'antiquité, est une résurrection originale et piquante des mondes évanouis. / L'artiste tient de son maître la précision un peu sèche, la tonalité un peu grise, la science archéologique jointe aux recherches pittoresques; toutes ces qualités sont acquises, voulues, systématiques. Moins sûr et moins lumineux que M. Gérôme, moins quintessencé et précieux qu'Hamon, les premiers chefs du groupe, M. Lecomte du Nouy a comme l'un et l'autre, un grand goût et un sentiment juste des temps classiques. / Son *Eros* est fin, élégant et malin. / Le Pharaon des *Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles* a le tort de rester obscur pour ceux qui n'ont point lu la *Momie* de Théophile Gautier. / Il faut voir dans ce souverain enveloppé de bandelettes, tournant sur sa couche sans trouver le repos, une bonne personnification du despotisme oriental. Oubliant les trois victimes qu'il vient d'abattre et dont les

cadavres sanglants gisent à ses pieds, Pharaon est tout entier à son ennui, à son incommensurable tristesse, à ses rêves inassouvis. Il contemple l'immense cité endormie sous ses yeux et regrette, peut-être comme plus tard Caligula, autre despote façonné par la rudesse quirite, que le peuple n'ait pas une seule tête, pour se donner le plaisir de la trancher d'un seul coup. C'est l'omnipotence humaine acculée et malheureuse de l'excès même d'un pouvoir que nul mobile ne dirige vers un but humanitaire et supérieur. / La mise en scène, curieuse et solide, malgré ses touches un peu crues, donne l'idée de la grandeur démesurée des civilisations monstreuises que le christianisme devait vaincre et remplacer. / *Le Charmeur* qui, assis au pied d'un chêne, sur une peau de bouc, attire les oiseaux de la forêt avec ses airs de flûte, peut faire le pendant du *Combat de coqs* de Gérôme. Jamais pâtre de l'Arcadie ne montra plus de sérénité rustique, ni oiseaux des bois sacrés plus d'innocence primitive. L'antiquité revit dans ce petit cadre avec une aimable intensité. / *La mort de Jocaste*, *Homère mendiant*, sont d'autres spécimens soignés du même genre, qui plaît au public par sa nouveauté, et aux artistes comme aux lettrés par l'effort et la science qu'il révèle."

Moreau-Vauthier 1900, livraison VIII, p. 22, repr.: "*Lecomte du Nouy (école française, Paris 1842), Les porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles. Musée du Luxembourg.* / Combien d'écrivains, depuis Chateaubriand jusqu'à Flaubert, combien de personnages imaginaires, depuis Atala jusqu'à Salammbô, inspirèrent aux peintres d'incompréhensibles rébus. Voici une composition qui échappe cependant aux défauts du genre. La scène, prise dans le *Roman de la Momie* par Th. Gautier et convertie de la forme écrite dans la forme plastique, conserve par extraordinaire une signification qui satisfait sans exiger le secours d'un long commentaire. On fait très souvent l'erreur de croire que le Pharaon s'irrite d'une défaite subie par ses armées, tandis que, dans le roman, une femme est vainement recherchée par des esclaves. Mais qu'importe s'il s'agit d'une femme ou d'une bataille perdue. La reconstitution archéologique, ingénieuse et vraisemblable, intéresse; nous n'en demandons pas davantage et le mérite en reste tout entier à l'artiste. Spirituel et délicat, celui-ci ne prétend pas nous émouvoir; il a compris combien le ton tragique paraîtrait vulgaire et déplacé dans cette fantaisie historique. C'est un conte, une féerie, une mise en scène d'opéra qui s'offre à notre curiosité. Tout à l'heure les esclaves vont se relever comme des figurants et reporter leurs lanternes au magasin d'accessoires et le Pharaon regagnera sa loge avec son pschent, son sceptre à tête d'uroeus et son terrible yatagan.... Sous le second Empire, nos artistes français représentèrent dans des oeuvres très diverses la vie pittoresque des bords du Nil. Si la plupart figurèrent le présent, quelques uns voulurent évoquer le passé. Lecomte du Nouy assure modestement devoir de précieux renseignements aux travaux et aux conseils de l'archéologue Prisse d'Avesnes. Ajoutons que le maître désira connaître les lieux où se déroulait son anecdote et entreprit le voyage du Caire. Ses recherches personnelles lui rapportèrent des détails caractéristiques. Il trouva, par exemple, au musée de Boulacq, les petites lanternes déposées par les esclaves sur les marches de l'escalier. / Le tableau, commencé vers 1864, lentement poursuivi, ne fut terminé qu'en 1870 et ne parut qu'en 1872, au premier Salon qui suivit la guerre. Un très vif succès couronna la science et le talent du peintre, et *Les Porteurs de Mauvaises Nouvelles* conquièrent une place définitive parmi les tableaux que tout le monde doit connaître et admirer. / Bien que depuis quelques années la critique d'art se laisse aller à un engouement exagéré en faveur de la peinture dépourvue d'ordonnance et de composition, les vrais connaisseurs, plus éclectiques, n'ont pas cessé d'estimer aussi les oeuvres qui font revivre les civilisations disparues, intéressent au passé, instruisent en un mot."

Henri Bouchot, from his introduction to Montgailhard 1906, p. X-XI: "On devine toutefois que l'Orient, avec ses magies, ses hatchichs et ses rêves, que l'Égypte africaine aux lumières brutales, que l'Asie aux sentimentalités hébraïques, l'arrêtent de préférence. Le Paradis de Mahomet, les promesses du Coran forment la matière principale de ses compositions, tour à tour adoucies ou cruelles. Car l'Orient n'est pas que d'eunuques endormis à la porte d'un sérail; il y a les fauves. Tel ce *Pharaon*, oeuvre capitale et troublante, où tout se machine pour le drame en des oppositions splendides; le calme d'une belle nuit et la rage de ce chacal humain, vautré désespérément sur sa couche, au milieu des cadavres de ses *Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*. Je ne crois pas que beaucoup d'oeuvres aient à ce point tourmenté et remué les indifférents que nous sommes tous."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 1; p. 21-22, 61.

Lacambre 1974, p. 120, no. 151 [The painting was not in the exhibition].

Burollet 1976, p. 94, repr.

Honour 1989, vol. IV-2, p. 174-76, fig. 128.

Related works: Caricature in *The Bystander*, (Nov. 19, 1913), p. 408.

Various engravings

Lithograph by Charles Schaller

Document: Letter of Lecomte du Nouÿ's widow to the Director of the Musées Nationaux [Archives du Louvre, Paris, file: P30 Lecomte du Nouÿ]: "Versailles 6 r. des Réservoirs (ancien 20) / 27 Mars 1937. / Monsieur le Directeur / Je vous serai infiniment reconnaissante si vous pouviez me dire ce qu'est devenu le tableau: "Les Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles," de mon cher et regretté mari, J. Lecomte du Nouÿ, j'avais écrit au Luxembourg à ce sujet et je n'ai jamais eu réponse. Les peintres de 1880 ont été sacrifiés, cependant si j'en crois certaines visites de marchands, ils vont ressortir! [Further compliments him on his tenure as director and asks for the address of Mr. Washington Lop, which in reply is given as 103 rue La Boétie.] [signed:] E. Lecomte du Nouÿ."

Photo: Goupil & Cie.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 6029-15 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, I, p. 65-72, includes various photographs and engravings of this composition, including one with the title in German (Die Unheilsboten).

65) Portrait of the sculptor Bayard de la Vingtrie (*Portrait de Bayard de la Vingtrie, sculpteur (Dessin).*)

Drawing

Related Work: See cat. 71.

66) Portrait of Captain Titeux (*Portrait du capitaine d'État-Major Titeux.*)

67) Oedipus's Farewell to Jocasta (*Les adieux d'Oedipe à Jocaste. Exposition Universelle de 1878. Musée d'Arras.*) [Figure 37]

Oil on canvas, 115 x 148 cm.

Formerly: Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Arras, burnt during a fire at the museum in 1915.

Exhibited: Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 540: La mort de Jocaste.

Literature: Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Strahan 1878, p. 7-8; for text see cat. 105.

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 25; for text see under cat. 64.

Montgailhard 1906, pp. 22-24, repr. opp. p. 32.

Note: The subject for the prix de Rome in 1871 was: *Adieux d'Oedipe aveugle aux cadavres de sa femme et de ses deux fils*. First prize: Edouard Toudouze; accessit: Edouard Vimont; accessit: Lecomte du Nouÿ, for this painting.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 1400-20 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related Works: Preparatory drawing of the head of Jocaste, Aurillac: 82.13.15, see appendix I.

Calque (drawing on tracing paper) for the 1871 prix de Rome competition of this subject, 1871, pencil on tracing paper, 27.8 x 30 cm. Paris, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. [Figure 38]

68) The Besieged City of Paris, Rescued by English Assistance (*Paris secouru par la bienfaisance anglaise (Esquisse).*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 30, 33, repr. p. 29.

69) Portrait of Ms. Blanche Tabar (*Portrait de Mlle Blanche Tabar.*)

70) Portrait of Mrs. Gourdon (*Portrait de Mme Gourdon.*)

71) Portrait of Helene Fioretta (*Portrait d'Hélène Fioretta. Appartenant à M. Bayard de la Vingtrie.* [see also cat. 65])

72) Portrait of the engraver Maximilien Rapine (*Portrait du graveur Maximilien Rapine (Dessin). Gravé par Rapine.*)

Drawing

Note: A copy of the engraving by Rapine is kept in the BN: DC 309, II, p. 62; inscribed upper right: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / A SON AMI / MAXIMILIEN RAPINE / PARIS MDCCCLXXI.

73) Portrait of Mrs. de la Ruelle (*Portrait de Mme de la Ruelle.*)

74) Portrait of Admiral Coligny (*L'Amiral Coligny (Dessin). Gravé par Rapine. Appartenant à Rossi.*)
A copy of this engraving is kept in BN: DC 309 II, p. 13; signed upper left LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / DEL.
1871. Lower right: Max Rapine / Sc.
Related works: A drawing of this subject on tracing paper is kept in Aurillac: 82.13.217, see appendix I.

75) View of Paris in the Snow [Figure 33]
Oil on canvas, 30.5 x 44 cm, inscribed on reverse: *21 degrés ½ de froid*; dated: 1871.
Present Location: Paris, Private collection.
Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 119, see appendix III.

1871 or 1872

76) The Prisoner (copy after the painting of the same title by Gérôme in Nantes)
Oil on canvas, 42 x 71 cm.
Provenance: New York sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, January 16, 1975, lot 139, 42 x 71 cm, repr. b/w.
Literature: Ackerman 2000, p. 54, 248 no. 134, p. 410 note 191.
Document: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Los Angeles, keeps the following letter by Gérôme to Philibert Doré-Graslin (a former painter and Delaroche-student, and member of the Nantes *Société des Amis des Arts*, as well as a commission member for the Musée des Beaux Arts, in which function Gérôme must have written to him. I would like to thank Céline Rincé-Vaslin from the Nantes museum for this information.): "Paris, 22 Nov. 1871 / Mon cher Doré / Un de mes élèves M. Lecomte Dunouy a la commande d'une copie d'après mon tableau du prisonnier. Est-il nécessaire de demander une autorisation à une autre personne que vous? Et dans ce cas vous seriez bien aimable de me faire savoir à qui adresser la requête. / M. Lecomte Dunouy a beaucoup de talent et je ne serais pas fâché qu'il y eut une reproduction bien faite de ce tableau là. / Soyez assez bon pour me dire deux mots là dessus car il partira de suite. Amitiés à vous, / Mes plus respectueuses salutations à Mme Doré. / Gérôme"

1872

77) Christmas Night in Jerusalem (*La nuit de Noël à Jérusalem.*)
Literature: Privat 1877, see appendix V.
Note: Probably identical to the painting *Bethlémitaine priant sur la terrasse de sa maison* (see chapter I p. 25, and Montgailhard 1906, p. 34)
Possibly photo in BN: DC 309, I, p. 23.

78) Chloé at the Fountain (*Chloé à la fontaine.*)
Signed and dated in fountain: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1872.
Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 8.
Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-1 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

79) Portrait of a Woman with a Fur Hat.
Oil on canvas, 35 x 27 cm, signed and dated upper left: 1872.
Provenance: Paris sale, Drouot Richelieu, March 25, 1991, lot 126, repr., *Portrait d'une élégante à la toque de fourrure.*

80) Portrait of Baron Michaud, French Consul in Venice (*Portrait de Baron Michaud, consul de France à Venise (dessin).*) [Erroneously listed under 1875 by Montgailhard])
Drawing
Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 47, signed and dated on left: A Monsieur le Baron A. Michaud / Consul Général de France / souvenir affectueux / Lecomte du Nouÿ / 1872.

81) Mount Fleschhorn, Simplon, 1872
Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 137, see appendix III.
Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 43, see appendix IV.

82) The Ambush (*Le Guet-apens (Moyen Age).*)

Oil on canvas, 64.5 x 53.5 cm, signed and dated, lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1873.

Literature: Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 158, see appendix II.

Note: The Documentation at Musée d'Orsay keeps a vintage black and white photograph of this painting with the following inscription on the reverse: "Toile 0.645 x 0.535, s. d. 1873, *Les guet-apens ou Les nervi*." The signature and date are also clearly visible on the photographic image. Montgailhard, however, listed the work in his catalogue under the year 1872. This composition is the only one that more or less matches the brief description by Samuel P. Avery of one of the three pictures he "engaged" on July 2, 1872: "Men at a church door – moonlight, snow on ground 21 x 25 for 2500." See chapter I, p. 25. It is possible that the painting was reserved (as implied by the term engaged, rather than bought) before being finished and dated in 1873.

83) Eros (*Eros-Cupido. Salon de 1874. Imité d'une gemme antique. Musée de Tours.*) [Figure 42]

Oil on canvas, 200 x 147 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / MDLXXXIII.

Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tours. Inv. 875-1-3.

Provenance: Bought by the French government on June 5, 1874, for FF 2000; February 17, 1875, allotted to Tours; 3 May 1875, arrived in Tours.

Exhibited: Vienna, Wiener Weltausstellung 1873.

Paris, Salon 1874, no. 1128: Eros. (Imité d'une pierre antique.)

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 535

Literature: Clermont 1874, p. 38.

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1874, p. 87: "L'Éros de M. Lecomte du Nouy, est un beau garçon au teint de rose, aux yeux lascifs, pourvu d'un arc et d'un carquois, entouré de petits garçons aux ailes de papillons servant de messagers. Des coffrets abondamment pourvus de bijoux et de perles forment son artillerie, et cette artillerie produit des effets plus formidables que les terribles canons Krupp. Des urnes, des guirlandes, des colombes se becquetant sur un socle, complètent ce tableau où les traditions grecques et les leçons de M. Gérôme [sic] se mêlent aux souvenirs de Boucher."

Lafon 1874, supplement, p. 211.

Montfauud 1874, p. 301. Mentioned only in a listing of Salon paintings that deserved to be singled out of the 2000 works submitted.

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 24: "Son Eros est fin, élégant et malin." (For full text see cat. 64.)

Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Montgailhard 1906, repr. before p. 81.

Moreau 2001, II, p. 452-454.

Photo: Documentation Musée d'Orsay: Album de photographies des achats de l'État au Salon de 1874 (par Michelez), planche no. 27.

Document:

Archives Nationales, Paris: Fichier: F21 232 1874.

84) The Philosopher without Knowing It (*Le philosophe sans le savoir. Salon de 1873.*) [Figure 39]

Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 46 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1873.

Present location: Worcester Art Museum, on loan from Clark University, Worcester MA.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1873, no. 901: Le philosophe sans le savoir.

Literature: Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Montfauud 1873, p. 278: "A la suite de Mme Brown, il y a une assez longue liste de peintres de genre que leur talent reconnu n'exclurait pas d'une discussion un peu acerbe, mais qui méritent d'être nommés: [...] Lecomte Dunouy, *le Philosophe sans le savoir* [...]"

Claretie 1876 ("Salon de 1873"), p. 109: "A propos du soleil, M. Leconte du Nouy [sic] devrait bien en chercher quelque rayon. M. Leconte du Nouy est l'auteur des *Messagers de mauvaises nouvelles*, tableau qui fit sensation en 1872, et qui méritait d'être loué comme il fut. Cette année, M. Leconte du Nouy expose un jeune Turc à peu près nu buvant dans le creux de sa main – l'écuelle du père Adam – à une fontaine, tandis qu'une femme et un vieillard le regardent, à demi surpris. Les Orientaux d'ordinaire ne s'étonnent pas pour si peu. L'auteur appelle cette toile *le Philosophe sans le savoir*. Peinture trop sèche, trop peu

colorée. M. Leconte du Nouy, qui a travaillé avec Gérôme, Signol et Gleyre, se rapproche beaucoup plus ici de M. Signol que de ses deux autres maîtres. Ce pâle soleil de son froid Orient ne ferait jamais cuire un oeuf à la coque."

Related Work: Rough pencil drawing of this same composition appears in one of the artist's sketchbooks, Aurillac: 82.13.361, p. 53, see appendix I.

85) The Orange Seller (*La belle orangère.*)

Signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ / 1873

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 47.

86) The Sleep of the Chieftain (*Le Kieff du Schérif.*) [Figure 86]

Oil on canvas, ca. 40 x 65 cm.

Provenance: possibly, Paris sale, Hôtel Drouot, *Catalogue des tableaux modernes composant la collection de M. F. J****, (23 March, 1877), lot 37, "Le Kieff du Schérif. (Souvenir d'Orient). Effet de nuit. Le schérif est couché sur des tapis recouvrant une terrasse; sa tête et son bras gauche reposent sur un coussin, sa main droite tient la chibouque; il semble regarder les étoiles en sommeillant. Son turban et sabre sont accrochés au mur. H., 0m, 40. L., 0m,65."; Possibly: Drouot, Paris, 15 April, 1889, lot 21, Le fumeur d'opium. Haut., 38 cent.; larg., 64 cent.

Literature: Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Clement and Hutton, *Artists of the 19th century* (Boston 1885), p. 47: "For private galleries he has painted [...] *The Repose of the Schérif* [...]."

Related Works: See cats. 92, 102, 304.

87) Portrait of Captain de Montarby (*Portrait du capitaine de Montarby.*)

88) Portrait of the French Consul in Venice, Mr. Bataillard (*Portrait de M. Bataillard, consul de France à Venise.*)

89) Portrait of Mrs. Duplessis (*Portrait de Mme Duplessis.*)

90) The Departure of the Ambassadors, copy after Carpaccio (*Copie du Mariage de Sainte-Ursule du Carpaccio (Venise). À l'École des Beaux-Arts de Paris.*) [Figure 36]

Oil on canvas, 338 x 305 cm.

Present location: Paris, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts (inv. MU 2449), entered November 13, 1884.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 35.

Duro 1985, no. 93.

91) Venice, seen from the Public Garden

Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 14 x 32.5 cm, inscribed: *Venise 1873 Aout vue du Jardin publique.*

Present Location: W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 133, see appendix III.

91a) Venice, the Quarter of San Giovanni i Paolo

Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 27.1 x 11 cm, inscribed: *Venise 1873 Aout / quartier St Jean et Paul.*

Present Location: W. M. Brady & Co., New York.

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 133, see appendix III.

91b) Venice, the Church of San Giovanni i Paolo, 1873

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 140, see appendix III.

91c) Venice, the Quarter of San Giovanni i Paolo (A Woman Seated in a Doorwell), 1873 [Figure 45]

Oil on canvas, 16.8 x 18.5 cm, inscribed on stretcher: *Venise. 1873. Aout. Quartier S Paul et Jean.*

Present Location: Washington, DC, Private collection

Provenance: Drouot 2003, lot 143, see appendix III.

92) The Dream of a Eunuch (*Un rêve d'eunuque.*) [Figure 87]

Oil on panel, 39.3 x 65.4 cm, signed and dated center left: Lecomte du Nouÿ 1874.

Present location: Cleveland Museum of Art, Seventy-fifth Anniversary gift of Mrs. Noah L. Butkin, 1991.173.

Provenance: New York sale, Sotheby's Parke-Bernet, April 28, 1977, lot 209, repr. *La reve*, \$8000; Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin, Cleveland; gift to the Cleveland Museum of Art, 16 December 1991.

Exhibited: *Orientalism* 1982, no. 55, p. 81 (repr.), p. 83.

Literature: Privat 1877, see appendix V; listed as "Cauchemar d'eunuque."

Siret 1883, I, École française, 1842. Histoire, portrait. Élève de Gleyre et de Gérôme. Peintures dans des églises de Paris. Cauchemar d'un eunuque. [This is the complete entry on Lecomte du Nouÿ.]

Montgailhard 1906, p. 119.

Thornton 1985, p. 132.

d'Argencourt, Diederer 1999, II, p. 384-387, repr.

Related work: See cats. 86, 102, 304.

93) A Painter at Sea (*Un peintre à la mer.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 43 (la bouée), gives a revealing anecdote on this picture and cat. 94, cited from Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Fidell Beaufort 1979, p. 272: Paris Aug. 28, 1874, "to Dunouy and paid for picture of artist on bouy at Venice 2000."

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 46. A Goupil reproduction, showing a painter seated behind an easel on a large metal bouy, painting two ships, with a harbor seen in the distance. The reproduction bears a pencil inscription: Etude en mer.

Related works: Aurillac sketchbook: 82.13.361, p. 20, see appendix I.

Oils sketch of a bouy, Aurillac: 82.13.292, see appendix I.

94) A Wind Hose in Venice (*Un coup de vent à Venise. Appartenant à Mme Em. Jupin.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 43, gives a revealing anecdote on this picture and cat. 93, cited from Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 47-48. An engraving shows a similar composition as in cat. 93, but a wind hose blows the painter's easel in the water.

95) Portrait of Ms. Charlotte Balny d'Avricourt (*Portrait de Mlle Charlotte Balny d'Avricourt (Dessin).*)
Drawing96) Portrait of Ms Balny d'Avricourt (*Portrait de Mlle Balny d'Avricourt.*)97) The Honeymoon in Venice (*La lune de miel à Venise.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1875, no. 1290: La lune de miel; - Venise au XVI^e siècle.

Literature: Claretie 1876 ("Salon de 1875), p. 352; for text see cat. 102.

Flécherye 1875, p. 128-129; for text see cat. 102.

Privat 1877, see appendix V.

Stranahan 1897, p. 319: "Every strand of Gérôme's complex relation to art leads to its special group. One artist, Jean Jules Antoine Lecomte du Nouÿ (Paris, Medal 1866, '69; 2d class '72; Legion of Honor, 1876), caught the expression of that master's art in veritable echo. He has also caught, in his Honey-Moon, in which a happy pair float out from Venice in a gondola, the very tone of Gleyre's Lost Illusions."

Cham 1875, no. 1290. M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Une nouÿ à Venise.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 39.

Goupil & Cie.

98) Portrait of Ms Emma Franchetti (*Portrait de Mme Emma Franchetti (Dessin).*)

Drawing

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 24.

99) Portrait of Mrs. Pauline Forney (*Portrait de Mme Pauline Forney (Dessin).*)

Drawing

100) Portrait of Léonide Leblanc (*Portrait de Léonide Leblanc, du "Théâtre Français". Appartenant à M. Noël Louis.*)

101) The Butchers of Venice (*Les Bouchers de Venise. Salon de 1875 [sic for 1874] Appartenant à M. Dècle.* [Montgailhard erroneously lists this work under 1875.]) [Figure 40]

Signed and dated on rear of boat: Lecomte Dunouÿ 1874.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1874, no. 1129, *I macellaj* [sic] (*les bouchers*) de Venise. *Souvenir de Voyage de 1873.*

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 536.

Literature: Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Claretie 1876 ("Salon de 1874"), p. 272: "M. Leconte du Nouÿ [sic], qui a du succès avec ses *Bouchers à Venise*."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 49.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-2 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related Work: One of the artist's travel sketchbooks contains a pencil drawing of two figures in a gondola loaded with unidentifiable cargo, which is very similar to the composition of this painting: Aurillac: 82.13.361, p. 2. The same sketchbook also contains several other rough sketches and details of gondolas and boats.

1875

102) The Dream of Cosrou [Figure 88]

Signed lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1875 [legible from photogravure].

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1875, no. 1291: *Le songe de Cosrou*. "... Jamais passion n'a été plus vive que celle de l'eunuque Cosrou pour mon esclave Zélide." (Montesquieu, *Lettres Persanes*.)

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 537 [marked with * as being in the artist's possession.]

Literature: Flécherye 1875, p. 128-129: "M. Lecomte du Nouÿ nous montre *Une Lune de miel à Venise au XVI^e siècle*, n° 1290, d'une propreté de pinceau admirable, et un *Songe de Cosrou*, n° 1291, tiré des *Lettres persanes*, quelque peu scabreux, et très spirituellement traité d'ailleurs. L'eunuque est admirablement dessiné; il est impossible de pousser plus loin la précision dans les moindres détail."

Dézamy 1875, plate 37, accompanied by the following poem:

Le songe de Cosrou.

*Non, jamais passion d'homme ne fut plus vive
Que celle de Cosrou, l'eunuque de sérail,
Pour Zélide – une esclave aux lèvres de corail,
Aux grands yeux de gazelle, aux seins couleur olive.*

*L'infortuné se meurt d'une amour excessive.
S'endort-il un instant? Son esprit en travail,
Dans le nuage ambré du narguilé d'émail
L'aperçoit, plus charmante encore et plus lascive.*

*De cette vision – idéale Péri –
L'heureux Cosrou déjà se croit l'époux chéri;
Mais son bonheur, hélas! n'est qu'un songe éphémère;*

*Et quand il veut atteindre à la félicité,
Un froid éclair d'acier – reminiscence amère! –
Le rejette de rêve à la réalité.*

Privat 1877; see appendix V.

Strahan 1878, p. 8; for text see under cat. 105.

Claretie 1876 ("Salon de 1875"), p. 352: "En revanche, M. Lecomte du Nouy s'attarde à des fantaisies romantiques, comme *la Lune de miel* en gondole, à Venise, au seizième siècle, -- une Venise qu'il nous montre gelée et sans poésie, -- ou à des gravelures pseudo-spirituelles comme *le Songe de Cosrou*. Le peintre a choisi son sujet dans *les Lettres persanes*, et il a traduit Montesquieu comme s'il se fût agi d'un conteur érotique. L'eunuque Cosrou est endormi, songeant à l'esclave Zélide, et la fumée de son narghileh prend, en s'envolant, une forme bizarre, celle d'un petit amour persan qui se moque de Cosrou en lui montrant à la fois la belle Zélide et un ironique rasoir, sans compter certain plat à barbe... Pour peu que le magistrat qui en 1875 a cherché noise aux gravures d'Eisen et aux *Contes de La Fontaine* jette un regard au tableau de M. Lecomte du Nouy, je ne réponds pas que Cosrou, le narghileh, le petit amour et surtout le rasoir trouvent grâce devant un tribunal. Nous devenons si prudes, à cette heure! Mais j'avoue que la peinture a autre chose à faire qu'à présenter des rébus d'un goût absolument douteux dans le genre de celui que M. Lecomte du Nouy vient d'emprunter à Montesquieu."

Cham 1875, n.p.: "no. 1291, M. Lecomte du Nouy. *Le Haschich!* -- Eh! eh! on lui finirait volontiers sa pipe!" [Figure 90]

Photo: Goupil & Cie [Figure 88]

103) Portrait of Mrs. Brochard (*Portrait de Mme Brochard (Dessin).*)

Drawing

Note: possibly identical to photo in BN: DC 309, II, p. 93; inscribed upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1875, upper right: MARY ANNE

104) Portrait of Valentine Peigné Crémieux, wife of the artist (*Portrait de Mlle Valentine Peigné-Crémieux (Dessin).*) Drawing.

Exhibited: possibly, Paris, Salon 1877, (Dessins) no. 3009: Portrait de Mlle V. P. C... (Appartiennent à Mme Peigné-Crémieux.). Exhibited together with cat. 114.

Literature: Castagnary 1892, II, p. 201: "Regardez en passant les deux petits portraits fins et précis que M. Lecomte du Nouy a crayonnés à la mine de plomb, et arrêtons-nous aux fusains, qui sont nombreux et beaux."

Note: Possibly the photo in the BN: DC 309 II, p. 43. The sitter wears a hat and corsage, and the work contains an elaborate monogram in upper right corner, signed and dated upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / 1875.

Related Work: See cat. 114.

105) The Begging Homer (*Homère mendiant. Salon de 1876. Petit tryptique sur bois.*) [Figure 77]

Oil on panel, central panel: 39 x 30 cm, side panels, each: 39 x 15.5 cm [dimensions from 1951 auction catalogue].

Left panel, signed lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ; Greek inscriptions: [in sun:] ΦΟΙΒΟΣ; [center right on altar:] ΤΡΟΙΑ; [center left on shield:] ΔΙΑ; [bottom step:] ΤΙΛΙΑΣ.

Right panel, signed lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ; Greek inscriptions: [in moon:] ΕΚΑΘΗ; [on lower step:] ΟΔΥΣΣΕΙΑ.

Central panel, signed lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / 1875.

Provenance: Paris sale, Drouot, June 25, 1951, lot 123.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1876, no. 1242: - Homère mendiant.

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 538 [in catalogue with * as still in the artist's possession.]

Tripp 1886, no. 13, see appendix IV.

Literature: Yriarte 1876 (I), p. 720: "Le peintre d'un réel talent, ainsi qu'en peut s'en convaincre par l'*Homère mendiant*, ne secoue peut-être pas assez les influences de ses trois maîtres, Gleyre, Gérôme et Signol."

Yriarte 1876 (II), reproduction of the right wing on p. 5.

Anonymous 1876, p. 2; for text see cat. 111.

Strahan 1878, p. 6-8, repr.: "*Homer Begging*. By J.J.A. Lecomte-du-Nouy. / Obviously it is in the great picture of Ingres, the "Apotheosis of Homer," that Lecomte-du-Nouy finds the idea of personifying the "Iliad" and Odyssey." Ingres represents them as sitting figures, both war-worn and somber; the Odyssey grasping an oar, to express the idea of traveling. The young pupil of Gérôme depicts the Iliad and Odyssey

as standing forms; the Iliad tramples upon the head of Hector, and holds up a sword in dedication to Phoebus, before the altar of Troy. The Odyssey, supporting herself on the oar, returns, veiled, to the palace of Ulysses, where the crescent of Hecate dimly illumines a twilight scene, and Penelope's interminable tapestry waits in the basket, not to be finished till the husband's reappearance. Framed by these upright figures the painter places in the midst the inspired mendicant, their progenitor. The boy who leads him, in an attitude of confidence, sinks sleeping in his lap, as the blind bard reposes by a well in some antique city. Is it Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodos, Argos, or Athens, - cities the disputants of his birth, and mourners of his death, "*Through which the living Homer begged his bread?*" The inspired harp reposes idly by the well-curb, strangely associated with the wanderer's cane and mendicant's platter. Homer is awake, turning up the balls of his sightless eyes to the evening which closes upon them, night upon night. Fatigued to the last degree by the day's wanderings, he meditates a new canto of his poems - not now of the stirring Iliad, but of the weary Odyssey. And as he counts the cities he has delighted with his songs, without receiving from any of them the poor boon of a home, he thinks of the journeys of Odysseus, and the prototype of his wandering hero, he sees sublimely - himself. / People familiar with Gérard's [sic for David?] "*Belisarius*" will discover a striking resemblance in motif with M. Lecomte-du-Nouy's work and "*Belisarius*," except that the latter work is not balanced by battles of the victorious general. The dreamy sentiment which pervades "*Homer*" characterizes "*Belisarius*," both appealing to our compassion and not vainly. / No one can tell the place where Homer was born, whether he was a European or Asiatic Greek, or whether, in fact, a Homer ever lived at all. Wolf, in his famous Prolegomena, first made popular the startling theory that the poet whom men had so long worshiped and imitated was no more a real character than Romulus or Theseus, and that the Homeric poems had been composed at different periods, by various writers, whose names were forever lost. But modern critics still cling to the real existence of a Homer, and the Iliad and the Odyssey bear everywhere the traces of the labors of a single mind. They are so admirable that it is impossible to believe that they are only a combination of irregular ballads and the work of various writers. So brilliant a piece of mosaic would not have escaped the scrutiny of ancient criticism, and must apparently have been recorded in history. We assume, therefore, that Homer lived, and that some of the legends told of his early life are true; that he was a poor bard who wandered from town chanting his ballads for money; that he was blind in his old age; that he was a native of Ionia, and lived in some prosperous Greek city on the Asiatic shore, and perhaps left descendants in Chios. / Jules Jean Antoine Lecomte-du-Nouy was born at Paris, and is a pupil of Gleyre and of MM. Gérôme and Signol. The first of his pictures which left an impression on our mind was "*Job and his Friends*," an often-treated subject, it shows the principal with his friends, telling them that they are false. At the same Salon he exhibited a "*Dancing Fellah Woman*," a study which he had made at Kaphra, in Upper Egypt. This was in 1867, when all the world was agog with the Exposition Universelle of that year. Next year he exhibited "*La Folie de Ajax le Telamonien*," illustrating a passage from the "*Ajax*" of Sophocles, when the hero reproaches himself for permitting the accursed Atrides to escape from his hands. / A portrait of a young lady was, we think, the only one he sent in 1869, and for this he obtained a medal; an idyllic subject, the "*Charmer*," was his subject in 1870; it was purchased for the Art Museum of Reims, and in 1872 he exhibited two pictures, his success with which induced a departure from his choice of subjects; in this change he has continued his successes, and to those he owes his present fame. "*Demosthenes on the Sea-Shore*." Demosthenes the weak-lunged, Demosthenes the stutterer, who by the power of will and perseverance became the greatest orator of antiquity. An admirable lesson and prototype. In the same Salon (1872) as "*Demosthenes*" hung "*The Bearers of Bad News Killed by Pharaoh*," and for this picture was awarded a second-class medal to its artist. It illustrates a passage in Théophile Gautier's "*The Mummy*." "*The Bearer of Bad News*" has been sent to the Exhibition of this year from the Gallery of the Luxembourg, where it has rested since 1872, serving its probation for possible entrance to the Gallery of the Louvre; we shall have more to say about this in future pages, when we offer an engraving of it to our readers. At the Salon of 1876, M. Lecomte-du-Nouy met his greatest triumph by receiving the ribbon of a chevalier of the order of the Legion of Honor. His pictures that season were the "*Homer Begging*" of this article, and "*St. Vincent de Paul Relieving the Gallery Slaves*," the latter painted for the chapel of St. Vincent de Paul in the Church of the Trinity at Paris; it is exhibited in the Pavillion of the City of Paris. Among the other pictures of M. Lecomte-du-Nouy's at the Paris Exhibition are two remarkable ones, "*The Death of Jocasta*," sent from the Musée d'Arras. Also, "*The Dream of Cosrou*:" it represents the eunuch in the interior of a mosque, asleep on a profusion of rugs, whilst his mind perceives the aerial beauty floating in the atmosphere. It well depicts the passage in Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* - "Never was there passion more intense than that of my eunuch Cosrou for my slave Zélide."

Edmond About, *XXe siècle* (15 June 1876), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 119-120; for text see cat. 111.

Dézamy 1876, no. XIX:

Homère mendiant

*Au temps où sur la terre habitait le génie,
Un mendiant aveugle, à demi nu, très vieux,
Sans guide qu'un enfant, sans abri que les cieux,
Parcourait en chantant les villes d'Ionie.*

*Et les passants, saisis d'une extase infinie,
S'arrêtaient à l'aspect de ce front radieux
Sous lequel on sentait tout un peuple de dieux
S'agiter et rouler en des flots d'harmonie*

*Homère! Nom magique!... Au seuil du monde ancien
Se dresse, flamboyant, ce luth parnassien
D'où se sont envolés tes vers, à grands coups d'ailes;*

*Et ton âme – oubliant les terrestres douleurs,
Conçut et nous légua deux filles immortelles:
L'Iliade sanglante et l'Odyssée en pleurs!*

Adrien Dézamy

Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1878, p. 25; for text see cat. 64.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 55.

Photo: Goupil & Cie [Figure 77]

Related Works: See cat. 160 for the 1881 version of this composition.

Possibly, Hahn 1995, no. 27; see appendix II.

106) Judith (*Judith (Tête)*). Appartenant à M. Fontenier.) [Figure 121]

Oil on panel, 32.4 x 20.3 cm, inscribed upper left: JUDITH; signed and dated upper right: LECOMTE DU NOUY / 1875.

Present location: New York, Dahesh Museum of Art, 1999.3.

Provenance: Mr. Fontenier. Sotheby's, New York, November 10, 1998, lot 63, \$11,500; Dahesh museum of Art, New York.

Exhibited: Small 2000, p. 11-12, fig. 2.

Small 2001, p. 12-14, fig. 13.

Literature: Small 1999, p. 44-45, no. 22, repr.

107) Tasie (*Tasie (Tête)*). Appartenant à M. Fontenier.)

108) Mars and Venus (*Mars et Venus (Éventail)*). Appartenant à Mme Peigné-Crémieux.)
Fan

109) Demosthenes (*Démosthène (Dessin à la plume)*). Appartenant à Me Crémieux.)
Pendrawing

Related Works: See cats. 42, 58.

110) Portrait of Ms. Gabrielle Salvador (*Portrait de Mlle Gabrielle Salvador (Dessin)*).
Drawing

111) Saint Vincent de Paul bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith (*Saint Vincent de Paul ramène des galériens à la Foi. Salon de 1876. Pour la chapelle Saint Vincent de Paul, à la Trinité de Paris.*)

Oil on canvas, 465 x 285 cm, signed and dated lower right: Lecomte du Nouy Pinxit MDCCCLXXVI.

[Figure 113]

Present location: Paris, Church of the Trinity. Commissioned in 1873 by the French government and the city of Paris.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1876, no. 1241: *Saint Vincent de Paul ramène des galériens à la foi.* (Pour l'église de la Trinité. — M. Inst. p. et B.-A.).

Literature: Dufour 1876, p. 42: "Les divinités païennes trouvent donc encore des adorateurs alors que l'idéal évangélique et chrétien ne rencontre plus guère qu'incrédulité ou faiblesse. M. Lecomte du Nouy dans son tableau, destiné à l'église de la Trinité, laisse trop naïvement paraître les laborieux efforts du peintre. M. Dehodencq a plié sous la gravité de son sujet: *Jésus-Christ ressuscitant la fille de Jaire?* Le programme était bien au dessus de ses forces, et l'exécution en est demeurée trop insuffisante. Au moins dans le *Saint Vincent de Paul ramenant les galériens à la foi* de M. Lecomte du Nouy, l'intérêt est-il surexcité par une reminiscence classique; la division de la scène en deux parties: le ciel et la terre, Dieu et les hommes, comme dans la *Dispute du Saint Sacrement* de Raphaël. Le ciel assiste aux oeuvres de charité de saint Vincent de Paul, et l'illumine de sa clarté."

Strahan 1878, p. 7; for text see cat. 105.

Edmond About, cited from Montgaillard 1906, 119-20: "M. Lecomte du Nouy, un des meilleurs élèves de Gérôme, s'est tiré à son honneur d'un pas dangereux. Rien n'est moins simple ni moins facile que de peindre un tableau que l'on n'a pas rêvé soi-même, qui vous est en quelque sorte dicté pas la pensée d'autrui. Les artistes qui travaillent à la décoration des églises échappent rarement à la collaboration d'un saint homme, fort incompetent et qui plus est mystique en diable. Est-ce que le marquis de Chennevières, directeur des Beaux-Arts, n'a pas accepté et sollicité les conseils du doyen de Sainte-Geneviève pour la destruction systématique du Panthéon? Comment un simple peintre échapperait-il à cette autorité hautaine qui ne sait rien et tranche tout? Dans les églises de Paris, ce n'est pas le prêtre qui paye, mais c'est lui qui commande. Le curé de la Trinité veut une toile qui représente Saint Vincent de Paul catéchant les galériens. Le sujet est acceptable et comporte un certain pittoresque. Les galériens ne sont pas des Antinoüs et le père des enfants trouvés était d'une laideur évangélique. Cependant le tableau se comprend et se sent. M. Lecomte du Nouy a très bien traduit le contraste de cette bonne et noble nature avec les êtres dégradés que l'éloquence du saint ramène et relève. Les attitudes, les visages de ces catéchumènes débraillés, le grand air du bonhomme debout au milieu d'eux, comme un Orphée chrétien au milieu des lions et des tigres, tout cela forme un ensemble à souhai pour le contentement des yeux et de l'esprit. Mais le mysticisme moderne ne se contente pas à si bon marché. Il veut que la Vierge et les anges et que l'Eucharistie elle-même soient de la fête. On impose à l'artiste un deuxième tableau qui sera contenu dans le premier, en lui laissant le soin de nous faire comprendre qu'il y a deux actions simultanées dont l'une se passe sur la terre et l'autre dans le ciel."

Jamais un simple artiste ne s'aviserait d'un tel plan: on ne se commande pas des tours de force à soi-même. Eh bien! M. Lecomte du Nouy a rempli très honorablement les conditions du programme: les éléments mystiques planent, dans une lumière de convention, légèrement azurée, sur la partie humaine et dramatique du tableau. Les corps glorieux de la Vierge et des anges sont traités dans un style élevé où l'inspiration des maîtres s'allie à une somme très honorable d'originalité personnelle.

Mais comme le jeune artiste est mieux chez lui et qu'il est plus vraiment lui dans son *trptyque d'Homère!* Cette oeuvre intime, serrée et comme réfugiée dans son petit cadre, inspire une vraie dévotion. Elle m'a rajeuni de plus de vingt ans, en reportant mon esprit aux ateliers de la rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, à cette maison si bruyante et pourtant si studieuse où Gérôme, Hamon, Picou, Isambert, quatre peintres appelés à des fortunes terriblement inégales, réinventaient à frais communs l'antiquité grecque. Elle était bien un peu moderne, l'antiquité de Gérôme et de ses amis; il y avait dans leurs Athènes beaucoup de Pompéi et un tantinet de Paris.

Mais quelle foi! Que de goût et de grâce! Cette révolution à huis-clos n'a pas été stérile; il en reste des chefs-d'oeuvre. L'antiquité de la rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs revit dans le tableau de M. Lecomte du Nouy, dans ses figures allégoriques drapées comme Rachel, qui symbolisent l'Iliade et l'Odysée, dans ce groupe ingénieux et délicat du vieillard et de l'enfant, dans les terrasses, les portiques et les frontons de la

ville grecque endormie, dans les arrangements ingénieux, dans le dessin délicat, dans la sobriété des couleurs, dans le fini, pour ainsi dire excessif, de la peinture. Petit travail de longue haleine, oeuvre de patience ardente et délicate, qu'on ne fait ni pour le marchand, ni pour l'amateur, ni pour le succès du Salon, mais pour soi-même, per suo diletto, ou pour les beaux yeux d'une femme aimée."

Delorme 1876, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 121: "M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a exposé un tableau, destiné à l'église de la Trinité, qui représente *Saint Vincent de Paul ramenant des galériens à la foi*. Cette grande composition se divise en deux parties: l'une, céleste, dans laquelle planent sur des nuages la Vierge, l'Enfant et des anges; l'autre, terrestre où l'on voit saint Vincent de Paul prêchant et convertissant ceux que la justice humaine a punis pour leurs crimes. Il y a dans cette seconde partie du tableau, un groupe d'hommes traité avec une vigueur peu commune et une science complète de l'anatomie. Saint Vincent de Paul est également traité de main de maître; mais le ton blafard du ciel, le coloris violet pâle des anges, la lumière particulière des nuages contrastent trop violemment avec la scène réelle qui se déroule plus bas." Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Yriarte 1876 (I), p. 718-20, repr. p. 721: "M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a exécuté une grande composition pour l'église de la Trinité, et le travail est très important. On verra par les deux dessins publiés avec quelle conscience l'artiste a accompli une tâche qu'on considère parfois comme un pensum et comme une nécessité de la vie. Toute la partie inférieure du tableau, partie réelle et représentation du fait historique, *Saint Vincent ramène des galériens à la foi*, est bien installée, et, malgré sa coloration neutre, mérite des éloges. Dans la partie supérieure, où, à la façon de M. Ingres dans le *Voeu de Louis XIII*, et de la plupart des artistes de la Renaissance, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a fait apparaître la Vierge et le céleste chœur, le défaut d'harmonie est visible; mais cependant il y a quelque hardiesse à trancher ainsi la partie surnaturelle du tableau et à l'affirmer vivement. Il y a beaucoup à louer dans cette oeuvre-là. Le peintre, d'un réel talent, ainsi qu'on peut s'en convaincre par l'*Homère mendiant*, ne secoue peut-être pas assez les influences de ses maîtres, Gleyre, Gérôme et Signol."

Anonymous 1876, p. 2: "Jamais peintre n'a embarrassé notre critique comme M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Dont le talent réel appelle notre sympathie toujours, et dont les oeuvres nous sont toujours aussi antipathiques que possible. Que dire du *Saint Vincent de Paul qui ramène des galériens à la foi*? Il y a dans ce tableau une somme de talent énorme; c'est un travail de dessinateur savant dont on doit tenir compte. Mais le culte de son maître et de ses maîtres fait de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ un élève maladroit. Nous critiquerons bien haut ces auroles jaune-serin, qui entourent la tête du saint, et l'hostie présentée par l'ange discret qui se tient derrière lui, et la composition supérieure du tableau, répétition pâle de la *Vierge à l'hostie*, de M. Ingres qui partage avec M. Gérôme les admirations du peintre. Il y a de beaux morceaux dans le groupe des galériens, si mal à l'aise pourtant dans leur cadre, que celui du premier plan est obligé de replier sa jambe. / Mais si, par respect pour l'effort, nous sommes indulgents pour ce saint Vincent, nous ne saurions trop blâmer ces rébus annuels dont l'*Homère mendiant* est un pitoyable spécimen. Décidément M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a pris à tâche de refroidir M. Ingres, et il a éprouvé le besoin d'accommoder à la façon de M. Gérôme les graves figures de l'Iliade et de l'Odyssée, deux belles images qu'il nous gâte. Cela est impardonnable, et ce qui l'est plus encore c'est que M. Lecomte du Nouÿ fait école. MM. Motte et Courtois, en suivant ses fâcheux exemples, arrivent à faire de l'histoire des rébus indéchiffrables."

Montgailhard 1906, p. 51-53; repr. after p. 32.

Brunel, e.a., 1995, p. 75, 383, repr.

Bruno Foucart, "L'église de la Trinité," in Centorame 2001, p. 106: "Dans la chapelle Saint-Vincent de Paul, les toiles de Lecomte du Nouÿ, 1876 et 1879, montrent un goût pour le clair-obscur, une volonté réaliste et expressive, directement et violemment inspirés du Caravage et de la peinture espagnole."

Related Works: 111a) Composition sketch for the two Altarpieces of Saint Vincent de Paul in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Paris, ca. 1876, Aurillac: 82.13.288, see appendix I. [Figure 116]

111b) Composition sketch for *Saint Vincent de Paul Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith*, ca. 1876, oil on canvas, 48 x 30 cm. Paris, Petit Palais, inv. PPP 4727. [Figure 117]

111c) *Head of a Man (looking left)*, study for *Saint Vincent de Paul Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith*, oil on canvas, 24.3 x 20.2 cm, dedicated and signed lower left: SOUVENIR AMICAL / A. M. PENET / LECOMTE.DU.NOÛÿ. Collection, Serge Lemoine, Paris.

111d) *Studies of two Heads, Praying Hands, and a single Hand*, detail sketches for *Saint Vincent de Paul Bringing the Galley Slaves to the Faith*, ca. 1876, oil on canvas, 32 x 26.5 cm, inscribed: BAINVILLE.

Paris, Private Collection, courtesy Blondeau-Breton-Pradère. See also, Brady 1996, no. 30, repr. in color. [Figure 119]

Note: see also cat. 118, possibly one of the works mentioned here.

Related Works: Lecomte du Nouÿ made a drawing after the painting. Reproduced in Yriarte 1876 (II), p. 721.

See cat. 139, for the 1879 altarpiece.

Photo: Photo, Album Michelez (Achats et Commandes de L'Etat), Documentation du Musée d'Orsay. Goupil & Cie.

112) Variant of "Love that Goes, Love that Remains" (*Variante de l'Amour qui passe.*)

Related Work: See cat. 48.

113) A Smoking Gatekeeper (*Un portier fumant au Caire.*)

Oil on canvas, 45.7 x 32.4 cm, signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1876.

Present location: Rome, Private collection.

Provenance: New York sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, October 13, 1978, lot 230, repr., *The smoker*, property of Mr. Joseph E. Reichman, Brooklyn; New York sale, Sotheby's, November 2, 2001, lot 23, repr., *The smoker* (provenance given: Mathaf Gallery Ltd., London), sold \$32.950 (premium); Filippo Restelli Gallery, Rome; Private collection, Rome.

Related Work: Engraving of this composition by Rapine, Aurillac: 82.13.199, see appendix I.

Photo: Goupil & Cie.

114) Portrait of Henriette Peigné-Crémieux (*Portrait de Mlle Henriette Peigné-Crémieux (Dessin.)*)

Drawing

Exhibited: possibly, Paris, Salon 1877, (Dessins) no. 3010 – Portrait de Mlle H. P. C... (Appartiennent à Mme Peigné-Crémieux.). Exhibited together with cat. 104. This drawing might represent the sister of Valentine Peigné-Crémieux.

Literature: Castagnary 1892, II, p. 201: "Regardez en passant les deux petits portraits fins et précis que M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a crayonnés à la mine de plomb, et arrêtons-nous aux fusains, qui sont nombreux et beaux."

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 53: upper left, elaborate monogram of sitter; upper right, signed and dated: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / 1876. Pencil notation in album, Peigné-Crémieux (Henriette) / Mme Gaston Thomson.

Related Work: Lithograph of this composition: Aurillac: 82.13.222, see appendix I.

See cat. 104.

115) Portrait of Mme Valentine du Noÿ (unfinished) (*Portrait de Mme Valentine du Noÿ (Inachevé.)*)

Note: possibly, Paris sale, Drouot, February 23, 1983, lot 142, *Valentine*, toile, signée en haut, à droite, et datée 1876, 88 x 74 cm. est. FF 10.000/12.000.

116) The Gate of the Harem, Souvenir of Cairo (*La porte du Sérail. Salon de 1877. Appartenant à M. le vicomte Daupias.*) [Figure 101]

Oil on canvas, 73.6 x 130 cm, signed and dated lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1876.

Present location: Paris, Collection Yves Saint Laurent - Pierre Bergé.

Provenance: Paris sale, Georges Petit, Collection M. le Comte Daupias de Lisbonne, May 16-17, 1892, lot 143, repr., *La Porte du sérail; souvenir du Caire (Salon de 1877)*, sold FF 3000. London sale, Christie's, November 3, 1977, lot 59, color repr., *The Guard of the Seraglio, Egypt*, sold £32.000. Paris, Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1877, no. 1267: *La porte du Sérail; - Souvenir du Caire.* (Appartient à M. Daupias.) Stevens 1984, cat. 86.

Literature: Ernest Boisse, *La Patrie*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 121: "*La Porte du Sérail* est une porte fermée et soigneusement gardée; comme on va le voir, elle est précédée d'un escalier de quelques marches au bas duquel sont cinq ou six noirs, dont les ceintures sont pleines de poignards et de pistolets. Le soleil commence à colorer les minarets, dont les flèches se dessinent au fond de la toile. Les gardiens viennent de se réveiller et ont allumé la première pipe ou la première cigarette. Au haut de l'escalier, devant la porte même, est accroupi le chef de la bande; à côté de lui, une panthère noire, aux yeux verts,

s'allonge aux premiers rayons du jour. Dans la cour du palais, près d'un bassin, s'ébat une cigogne. Ce tableau, qui touche à un des côtés mystérieux de la vie orientale, est un très remarquable travail par la couleur générale, qui a du charme et de l'harmonie, et par les types curieusement classés des personnages robustes, mais bouffis, auxquels le maître confie sans inquiétude la garde de ses épouses."

Montgailhard 1906, p. 53

Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Houssaye 1877, p. 844 (republished in Houssaye 1882, p. 159): "Mais il ne suffit pas de draper des personnages antiques selon le modèle des statues et de peindre les accessoires d'après les planches des dictionnaires d'archéologie; il faut encore savoir imprimer aux figures le caractère antique. C'est ce que n'a pas fait M. Hillemacher. C'est au contraire ce que fait si bien M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Malheureusement pour nous et pour lui, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a délaissé cette année la Grèce antique pour l'Égypte contemporaine, dont il a peint un des aspects dans la *Porte du Sérail au Caire*. Cette désertion a nuit à son talent. On dit avec raison qu'il n'est pas donné à tout le monde d'aller à Corinthe; pourquoi donc ceux qui y ont victorieusement élu domicile veulent-ils quitter Corinthe?"

Duranty 1877, p. 79-80 (with Lecomte du Nouÿ's drawing after the painting on p. 81): "Le mahométisme a toujours ses croyants et le soleil de l'Orient pittoresque se lève toujours sur l'art parisien. *La porte du Sérail* de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ est imprégnée de notre esprit anecdotique et malin. Ce tableau n'est pas traité d'un pinceau entraîné, le faire s'y achève quelque peu aux détails, mais que ces noirs gardiens se réveillent bien, comme ils se délient encore engourdis, roulant un oeil vague! La lueur du matin glisse un peu métallique sur leur peau brillante, mais le modelé est très-précis, la couleur est mate, ferme, la scène très-curieuse, l'arrangement plein de goût et de habileté; l'ombre profonde, transparente, voile bien, sans les éteindre, les faïence bleues et vertes dont la note joue richement, avec celle des tapis, sous les rayons obliques du jour levant, tandis que les feux du soleil couronnent les parties lointaines de l'édifice dont le pied renaît dans le gris de l'aube. Un côté de propreté excessive, des étoffes, des habits tout frais éloignent cependant l'idée de l'exacte réalité orientale. Les embellissements du souvenir ont ici remis à neuf le vieil Orient défraîchi. M. Chlebowski se rapproche de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ, par sa *Mosquée verte*. Cela vient de ce qu'ils sont tous deux élèves de M. Gérôme. M. Pasini a cherché, dans son *Vieux Conak*, l'harmonie vigoureuse des notes brunes, grises et bleues, finement tissées ensemble; l'impression de tristesse, d'abandon, et d'écroulement des choses de l'Orient rend son tableau bien plus véridique que la spirituelle, aiguë, serrée, *Porte du Sérail* de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ."

Bouchot's introduction to Montgailhard 1906, p. X; for text see cat. 64.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 54.

Thornton 1983, p. 188-89, repr.

Honour, 1989, IV-2, p. 174-76, fig. 129.

Photo: Goupil & Cie.

117) A View of Venice (*Une vue de Venise. Appartenant au baron Michaud.*)

118) Studies of Galley Slaves (*Études de galériens. Appartenant à Mme Pauline Forney.*)

See cat. 111 (Related Works).

119) Portrait of a Woman

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 24: Photo of a pencil drawing depicting the portrait of a woman. Inscribed with elaborate vertical letters: EMMA, plus large initial: J (or F); signed upper right: Lecomte du Nouÿ / 1876.

1877

120) Jewess of Tangiers (*Juive de Tanger. Appartenant à M. Tétin.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 44. A bust-length depiction of a woman who wears an elaborate costume and smells a flower.

121) A Temple Guard in Jerusalem (*Garde du Temple à Jérusalem. Appartenant à M. Köhn.*)

122) At the Gate of A Mosque (*A la porte d'une mosquée. Appartenant à M. Köhn.*)

Note: An engraving by Rapine, depicting a bearded and turbaned man seated near an archway (he faces to the right), who smokes a short pipe and holds two guns, could well be the composition of cat. 121 or 122. The engraving is marked, lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUY 77; lower right: M. Rapine Sct., Aurillac: 82.13.200, see appendix I. This print is also in BN: DC 309, IV, p. 36, with pencil inscription: *gardien de Mosquée (Tanger)*; p. 37 contains a Goupil & Cie photo of a painting depicting the same composition. BN: DC 309, p. 35, contains a Goupil & Cie photogravure with pencil inscription: *Soldat Marocain*. It depicts a standing black man with turban and beard, who holds a long gun and stands in an archway; signed and dated lower left *Lecomte du Nouÿ / 1877*.

123) Portrait of the daughter of sculptor Noel Louis (*Portrait de la fille du sculpteur Noel Louis.*)

124) Self-portrait of the Artist (*Portrait de l'auteur. Salon de 1878 [sic for 1877]. Appartenant à M. André du Noüy.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1877, no. 1268: *Portrait de l'auteur*.
Paris, Exposition Universelle 1878, no. 539.

125) Tomb Statue of Valentine Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Statue de Valentine du Noüy (Pierre). Pour son tombeau, au cimetière Montparnasse.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 44.

126) Portrait of Valentine Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Portrait de Valentine du Noüy. Médaillon terre cuite. Appartenant à Mme Henriette Thomson.*)

Terracotta Medallion

127) Portrait of Valentine Lecomte du Nouÿ, for her tomb (*Portrait de Valentine du Noüy. Pour le tombeau.*)

128) Portrait Medallion of Valentine Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Médaillon marbre de Valentine du Noüy. Salon de 1877. Appartenant à Mme Peigné-Crémieux.*)

Marble

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1877, no. 3937: *Portrait de Mme L.-D.-N... - médaillon, marbre.* (Appartient à Mme Peigné-Crémieux.)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 42, inscribed at left: VALENTINE LECOMTE DU NOUÿ; signed lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ 1877. An engraving after this medallion is included on the same album page.

Related Works: A bronze version of the portrait medallion is mounted to the sitter's actual grave on the Montparnasse cemetery in Paris.

129) Swiss Landscape, Le Bouveret (*Paysage de Suisse (Le Bouveret). Appartenant à Mme Rugel.*)

1878

130) Prayer in a Mosque (*Prière dans une mosquée. Appartenant à M. Köhn.*)

Note: Possibly identical to *Prayer in a mosque*. 1878, oil on canvas, 50.8 x 35.6 cm, private collection (formerly collection Julian Hartnoll, London). [Figure 123]

131) A Chieftain (*Un Schérif. Appartenant à Mme A. Beauvais.*)

Oil on canvas, mounted to panel, 25.5 x 20 cm, dedicated, signed and dated upper left: [?] ANAÏS BEAUVAIS / HOMMAGE DE L'AUTEUR / LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1878.

Provenance: London, Mathaf Gallery. Amman, Jordan National Museum of Fine Arts (deaccessioned according to a 2002 letter from the museum). Present location unknown.

Literature: Daulte 1981, p. 55, repr. in color.

Thornton 1983, p. 191, repr. in color.

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 33: inscribed in pencil "Un soldat Marocain."

Note: See cats. 157 and 158 for portraits of Anaïs Beauvais.

132) Christian Women at the Tomb of the Virgin (*Les Chrétiennes au tombeau de la Vierge (Jérusalem)*. Salon de 1878. Appartenant à M. Walker.) [Figure 125]

Oil on canvas, 82.5 x 128 cm, signed and dated 1877.

Present location: Minneapolis, Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church.

Provenance: Mr. Pulley, UK, by 1878; Mr. Hercules L. Dousman, St. Louis, by 1879; possibly via Knoedler & Co., New York, to Thomas Barlow Walker, Minneapolis; his gift to the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1878, no. 1368: *Les chrétiennes au tombeau de la Vierge à Jérusalem*. Appartient à M. Pulley.

Literature: Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Strahan 1880, II, repr. p. 57 (engraving), repr. before p. 63 (photogravure), p. 63.

Montgailhard 1906: repr. after p. 72.

Whitmore 2002, p. 267-268, figure 5.8.

Related Work: Aurillac: 82.13.266, see appendix I.

See cat. 63.

133) A Moroccan Soldier (*Soldat Marocain*. Appartenant à Me Allou.)

134) Portrait of Adolphe Crémieux (*Portrait de Me Crémieux, sénateur*. Salon de 1878. Appartenant à Mme Peigné-Crémieux.) [Figure 47]

Oil on canvas, 121 x 101 cm, signed and dated: Lecomte du Nouy pinxit 1878; inscribed upper left: CRÉMIEUX.

Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, on loan from the Musée d'Orsay (inv. R.F. 1968-11).

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1878, no. 1369: *Portrait de M. Crémieux, sénateur*. Appartenant à Mme Crémieux.

Tripp 1886, no. 58 (engraving), see appendix IV.

Literature: Privat 1877; for text see appendix V.

Castagnary 1892 ("Salons – année 1878"), II, p. 342: "Voici M. Crémieux, par M. Lecomte Du Nouy; le portrait est exact, mais sec à l'extrême."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 120 (engraving).

135) The Jealous Man behind the Flowers (*Le jaloux sous les fleurs*. Appartenant à M. Claudius Gérentet.)

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 20: depicting an oriental balcony scene with a woman and a black servant being observed by a jealous man drawing his sword.

1879

136) A Soldier from Tangiers (*Un soldat de Tanger (Maroc)*. Appartenant à M. Peabody.)

Note: possibly, BN: DC 309, IV, p. 34, signed upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ 79. Pencil notation on album page: *Soldat Marocain*. Depicting a three-quarter portrait of a standing soldier wearing a moustache. He carries two revolvers in his belt, and holds a long stick in his left hand.

137) Portrait of Mme Peigné-Crémieux (*Portrait de Mme Peigné-Crémieux*.)

138) A Guard in Egypt (*Un veilleur en Égypte*. Appartenant à M. Peabody.)

Note: possibly BN: DC 309, IV, p. 31. Signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ 79. Inscribed on album page: *Le Veilleur*. Depicting an armed man seated near a campfire in the lower left corner. The picture has a strong chiaroscuro effect, and the background shows an oriental village.

139) Saint Vincent de Paul Helping the Inhabitants of Lorraine after the 1637 War (*Saint Vincent de Paul secourant les Alsaciens et les Lorrains après la guerre de 1637*. Salon de 1879. Pour la chapelle Saint Vincent de Paul, à la Trinité de Paris.) [Figure 114]

Oil on canvas, 470 x 285 cm, signed and dated lower right: Lecomte du Nouy pinxit 1879.

Present location: Paris, Church of the Trinity. Commissioned by the French government and the city of Paris in 1873.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1879, no. 1831: *Saint Vincent de Paul secourt les Alsaciens et les Lorrains après leur réunion à la France*. Pour la chapelle Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, à l'église de la Trinité. (Repr. in illustrated version of the Salon catalogue.)

Literature: Jules Guillemot, *Le Soleil* (8 May), cited from Montgailhard 1906, 123: "Cette année, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ expose un *Saint-Vincent de Paul* destiné à l'église de la Trinité. Au point de vue de l'arrangement et du dessin, c'est une des bonnes toiles du Salon; saint Vincent de Paul était très laid, comme on le sait, et l'artiste a su mettre, sur le visage de son héros, une telle expression de bonté évangélique, tout en gardant la ressemblance, que la laideur du saint passe, pour ainsi dire, complètement inaperçue. Nous avons vu sur le chevalet, dans l'atelier de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ, le pendant de ce tableau, *Saint Vincent de Paul distribuant du pain aux Lorrains après la guerre de 1637*, qui nous a semblé ne devoir rien laisser à désirer à son précédent."

Huysmans 1883, p. 22: "Tout cela est bien médiocre, et pourtant il y a pis. C'est étonnant, mais c'est comme cela. M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a accompli ce tour de force. Sympathiquement, je me suis toujours figuré que M. du Nouÿ était apte à s'occuper de travaux autres que ceux de la peinture. N'y aurait-il pas eu erreur dans sa vocation? Son *Saint-Vincent de Paul*, tourné au brun ainsi que les vieux panneaux de l'école française, peints sous Louis XIII, le démontrerait certainement, si les preuves de son auteur n'étaient faites depuis longtemps. Le seul mérite de cette toile, c'est qu'aucun défaut n'y jure plus haut que l'autre. Composition, dessin, couleur, tout est à l'avenant. C'est du Gérôme aggravé, de la peinture de prisonnier."

Lafenestre 1879, n. p., gives a lengthy description of the composition.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 52-53, repr.

Brunel, e.a., 1995, p. 75, 383, repr.

Bruno Foucart, "L'église de la Trinité," in. Centorame 2001, p. 106: "Dans la chapelle Saint-Vincent de Paul, les toiles de Lecomte du Nouÿ, 1876 et 1879, montrent un goût pour le clair-obscur, une volonté réaliste et expressive, directement et violemment inspirés du Caravage et de la peinture espagnole."

Related Works: See cat. 111a) Aurillac: 82.13.288, appendix I. [Figure 116]

139a) Study for *Saint Vincent de Paul secourant les Alsaciens et les Lorrains après la guerre de 1637*, ca. 1876, oil on canvas, 48 x 30 cm. Paris, Musée du Petit Palais, inv. PPP 4728. [Figure 118]

139b) Versailles sale, Palais des Congrès, April 4, 1993, lot 47, *Etude pour St. Vincent de Paul*, oil on canvas, 20.5 x 15.5 cm, signed upper left and dedicated to Mme Alphen, dated 1878, not repr.

139c) Head of a Bearded Man in Profile (looking down, facing right), study for the far left figure in *Saint Vincent de Paul secourant les Alsaciens et les Lorrains après la guerre de 1637*, oil on panel, 23 x 18.5 cm, signed and dated in gold paint, upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 78, inscribed in gold paint, upper left: ETUDE DE MA CHAPELLE DE LA TRINITE. New York, Private Collection.

139d) Head of a Bearded Man in Profile with Bandage (looking upward, facing right), study for *Saint Vincent de Paul Helping the Inhabitants of Lorraine after the 1637 War*, oil on canvas, mounted on panel, 22 x 18.5 cm. Private Collection.

See also cat. 111, for the 1876 altarpiece.

140) Portrait of Elise Jung (*Portrait de Mme Élise Yung*.)

Exhibited: Possibly, Paris Salon 1880, no. 2205: *Portrait de Mme ****. H. 0.26 – L. 0.20 m. App. à Mme Yung.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 67, signed and dated, Lecomte du Nouÿ 79.

141) Evening Prayer in Tangiers (*La prière du soir à Tanger. Appartenant à M. Knoedler*.)

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 30. An armed man standing on a carpet reads prayers, while he keeps a long gun leaning against him. Two figures are seated behind him, and the background depicts rooftops of the city.

142) Portrait of Mrs. Brandon (*Portrait de Mme Brandon (Dessin).*)

Note: Paris sale, Drouot, December 16, 1996, lot 50, "Portrait de Marguerite Brandon vue de profil." Crayon noir et sanguine. Annoté en haut à droite: "Marguerite Brandon née Salvador." Signé et daté à droite au centre: "Lecomte du Nouÿ 1879," 30.2 x 23.5 cm.

Photo: BN: DC 309 II, p. 11.

143) Marble portrait medallion of Félicité Alexandrine du Nouÿ (*Médaille (marbre) de Mme du Nouÿ, mère.*)

Related Work: An engraving by Rapine after this relief, Aurillac: 82.13.223, see appendix I.

1880

144) Portrait of the Marquise du Planty (*Portrait de Mme la marquise du Planty (Dessin). Appartenant à Mme Lubeck de Planty.*)

Drawing

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 21, signed middle left: Lecomte du Nouÿ / Napoli / 1880.

145) Portrait of the poet Paul Darasse (*Portrait de M. Darasse, poète (Dessin). Appartenant à Mme Vincent Darasse.*)

Drawing

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 36.

Photo: BN: DC 309 II, p. 19, signed and dated, lower left: 1880; inscribed upper right: PAUL DARASSE / 1880.

146) Self-portrait of the Artist (*Portrait de l'auteur. Au Musée des Offices, à Florence.*)

Oil on panel, 25 x 21 cm, signed and dated upper left: LN (in monogram) 1880.

Present Location: Florence, Gli Uffizi, inv. 1890 n. 1979 (probably a gift from the artist).

Exhibited: Rosenberg 1977, p. 75, no. 40, repr.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 128.

Berti 1979, p. 914, no. A 520, repr.

Thuillier 1984, repr. opp. p. 32.

147) Portrait of André Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Portrait de mon frère André du Nouÿ, architecte d'Arges (Dessin).*)

Drawing, inscribed upper left: ANDRE LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / ARCHITECTE / 1880;

signed and dated lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ à son frère 1880.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 75.

Photo: BN: DC 309 II, p. 34.

148) View of Venice (*Vue de Venise. Appartenant à Mme Louise Lubeck.*)

149) Portrait of Colonel Salvador (*Portrait du Colonel Salvador.*)

Oil on canvas, 135 x 95 cm.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1880, no. 2204: Portrait de M. le colonel S... / H. 1.35 – L. 0.95 m. App. à Mme Salvador.

Literature: *L'Exposition des Beaux-Arts (Salon de 1880). Comprenant trente-quatre planches en Photogravure par Goupil et Cie.* (Librairie d'Art, Ludovic Baschet, éditeur, Paris 1880), n. p., reproduced in 12th livraison, not discussed in text.

Exposition Universelle des Beaux-Arts. Dix années de Salon de peinture et de sculpture, 1879-1888 (Paris, Librairie des bibliophiles, 1889), Salon de 1880, 21, only mentioned.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 65.

150) Portrait of Mme Salvador.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 64, signed and dated: Lecomte du Nouÿ 1880.

151) A Guard at a Mosque (*Gardien de Mosquée. Appartenant à M. Köhn.*)

Note: possibly: London sale, Christie's, Oct. 9, 1964, lot 126, An old bearded Arab seated on a stone ledge – signed and dated 1880, 15 x 11½ in., not reproduced.

152) Allah! Allah! (*Allah! Allah! Appartenant à M. Köhn.*)

Oil on canvas, 54.5 x 40 cm.

Provenance: London sale, Christie's, November 2, 1979, lot 245, Arabs at Prayer, 58.2 x 41.2 cm, signed and dated 1880. London, Mathaf Gallery. Amman, National Gallery of Art, Jordan (deaccessioned according to a 2002 letter from the museum). Present location unknown.

Literature: Daulte 1981, 52, repr. b/w, entitled: L'heure de la prière, date given, ca. 1870.

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 29, pencil inscription in album: Allah Allah.

153) The Gatekeepers in the Orient (*Les portiers en Orient. Appartenant à M. Knoedler.*)

154) The Jewish fiancées (*Les fiancées juifs. Appartenant à M. Knoedler.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, 45. Depicting a street scene with a young couple. The man leans over a low wall towards a woman who pats a dog.

155) Portrait of Caroline Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Portrait de Caroline du Nouÿ (Dessin).*)

Drawing, inscribed upper left: CAROLINE DU NOUÿ 1880, signed lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ.

Photo: BN: DC 309 II, p. 36. Three quarter seated portrait of Caroline Lecomte du Nouÿ who leans against a pillow and is turned to face the viewer. The head is more finished than the rendition of the rest of her body.

1881

156) Portrait of Mrs. Evrard (*Portrait de Mme Evrard. Salon de 1881 [sic for 1883].*)

Signed upper left: JEAN. DU. NOUÿ, inscribed and dated upper right: NOGENT S/M [sur Marne] / 1881.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1883, no. 1453: Portrait de Mme E...

Literature: *Salon de 1883. Dictionnaire Véron*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 124; for text see cat. 159.

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after p. 104.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 23.

157) Portrait of Mme Anaïs Beauvais (*Portrait de Mme Anaïs Beauvais (Dessin).*)

Drawing

Note: see cat. 131, for a painting dedicated to Anaïs Beauvais.

158) Portrait of Mr. Beauvais (*Portrait de M. Beauvais (Dessin).*)

Drawing

159) *Portrait de Caroline du Nouÿ. Salon de 1881 [sic for 1883].*

Present location: France, Private collection.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1883, no. 1452: Portrait de Mme***.

Literature: *Salon de 1883. Dictionnaire Véron*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 124: "*Mme Caroline du Nouÿ* est assise, se présentant de trois quarts et se penchant légèrement en avant. Elle tient son éventail ouvert, de ses mains reposant sur ses genoux. La plume rouge de son chapeau se marie bien à l'or de ses beaux cheveux blonds. La délicate et jolie figure est habilement traitée et se détache sur le ciel bleu qui forme le fond. – *Mme Evrard* est un petit chef-d'oeuvre de délicatesse et de fini plus fini qu'un Holbein. C'est de l'ingrisme pur et poussé à l'outrance. Car le dessin, les lignes et le modelé sont fouillés avec une précision et un modelé délicat qui peuvent défier bien des maîtres. Et pourtant Mme Evrard n'est qu'un petit buste, et la tête de cette vénérable dame n'est que de demi-nature. Elle est posée de trois quarts sur un fauteuil au dos violet, et elle tourne sa bienveillante tête de face; aussi nous pouvons étudier sur la simaise cette oeuvre hors de pair, dont le front légèrement ridé, les cheveux grisonnants, les yeux bleus et le nez et la bouche vivent et respirent; sa main droite tient ses lunettes, et la gauche sa broderie, à laquelle travaille cette bienveillante dame, qui peut se flatter d'avoir une oeuvre qui restera."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after p. 120.

160) The Begging Homer (*Homère. Salon de 1882. Musée de Grenoble.*) [Figure 80]

Oil on canvas, central part: 236 x 174 cm; each wing: 236 x 104 cm, signed lower left of central panel: Jean Du Nouy 1881. [Montgailhard listed the two wings, The Odyssey (*L'Odyssée (Peinture à la cire). Salon de 1882. Triennal de 1883. Exposition Universelle de 1889. Musée de Grenoble.*), and The Iliad (*L'Iliade (Peinture à la cire). Salon de 1882. Musée de Grenoble*) separately in his chronological catalogue, see Montgailhard 1906, p. 124-125.

Present Location: Musée de Grenoble (inv. MG 909)

Provenance: Gift of the artist in 1891.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1882, no. 1602: Homère; triptyque.

Paris, Triennale 1883.

Tripp 1886, no. 10, see appendix IV.

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1889, no. 880.

Lyon, Espace Lyonnais d'Art Contemporain, *La peinture et le format* (1976-77).

Polyptyques 1990, cat. 35, reproduced.

Literature: Énault 1882 [n. p.], repr.: "Lecomte du Nouy est un curieux et un chercheur. C'est aussi un homme instruit, un fin lettré et un passionné d'érudition: il a l'horreur du sujet banal qui se trouve à la portée de tout le monde; c'est aux sources élevées et pures, que le vulgaire ne trouble point, qu'il aime à puiser ses inspirations. Le tableau qu'il intitule *Homère* appartient à cette catégorie d'oeuvres distinguées que nous sommes toujours heureux de signaler et de reproduire. Le vieil aède, dans une demi-nudité, plus héroïque peut-être que vraisemblable, vu son grand âge, les tempes ceintes de la bandelette sacrée d'Apollon et des Muses, est assis sous un portique ionien; l'enfant qui conduit les pas incertains de l'illustre aveugle dort sur sa poitrine, et, devant les yeux éteints du chanter aimé de Jupiter, qui n'aperçoit plus les réalités de ce monde, passent les visions sublimes des dieux et des héros qu'il a chantés, la sage Minerve, patronne de cet Ulysse qui fut peut-être sa création la plus originale et la plus profonde; la Discorde, soeur de la Guerre, et tous ces rois dont les folles passions firent le malheur de tant d'hommes. On devine chez M. Lecomte du Nouy cette vue supérieure des choses à laquelle se reconnaissent les véritables artistes et qui établit entre certains esprits quelque chose comme une affinité de race, et cette fraternité intellectuelle qui est la plus précieuse de toutes et la plus vraie. On emporte de cette oeuvre une impression de réelle et sérieuse grandeur."

Charles Clément, "Exposition de 1882 (deuxième article)," *Journal des débats* (5 May 1882), [p. not known]: "En continuant l'étude des rares tableaux de style que l'on rencontre au Palais des Champs-Élysées, je serai forcé de rapprocher des ouvrages qu'il est bien difficile de comparer entre eux. Les uns sont de vraies compositions, respectables par leur importance, par leurs tendances, par les efforts qu'elles ont coûtés, les autres, et c'est le plus grand nombre, sont des nus que l'on pourrait bien nommer des nudités qui sont ou de simples exercices de peinture, des études d'atelier que l'artiste ne s'est pas donné la peine de transformer en tableaux, ou des oeuvres d'un caractère ambigu et malsain, dont je préférerais n'avoir pas à m'occuper. Cependant la pénurie est si grande sur ce point que je relèverai dans cet ordre de sujets tout ce que je trouverai digne de quelque attention. / L'*Homère* qu'expose M. Lecomte du Nouy est un ouvrage très considérable que l'artiste a dû reprendre à plusieurs fois, où il a concentré ses efforts et mis tout ce qu'il a de volonté, de savoir et de talent. Il a adopté l'ancienne forme du triptyque et représenté dans le panneau central le vieux poète avec son petit guide et dans l'une des parties latérales l'*Odyssée* personnifiée par Pénélope, et dans l'autre l'*Iliade*, que symbolise un roi qui vient d'être frappé à mort et qui tombe de son trône. Quel est ce personnage? J'avoue que je n'en sais trop rien. Ce ne peut être Achille. Serait-ce Priam? Mais il paraît très jeune, et le prince troyen était un vieillard. Quoi qu'il soit, Homère est assis à droite, au premier plan, sur une marche au pied de la colline de l'Acropole, que l'on aperçoit vaguement, couverte de ses monumens [sic], dans la pénombre de la nuit. Il est vu de face, l'un de ses bras posé sur son genou relevé, tenant de l'autre main sa lyre à trois cordes. Son petit conducteur couché près de lui et profondément endormi appuie sa tête sur la poitrine du vieillard. Je ne puis pas dire que la figure principale me satisfasse pleinement. Les traits du visage ne manquent ni de beauté ni de caractère; sans s'éloigner très sérieusement du type consacré, M. Lecomte du Nouy a donné à cette partie de son oeuvre un caractère personnel qui mérite d'être signalé, mais le galbe et l'attitude manquent de grandeur et de beauté, et il était, me semble-t-il, bien inutile de montrer et d'afficher ce vieux corps replié sur lui-même où l'auteur s'est plu à accumuler et à souligner toutes les laideurs et les difformités que produisent l'âge et les

misères de la vie. Il suffisait d'un bout de draperie pour enlever à cette auguste figure ce cachet de réalité et de vulgarité qui n'est certainement pas de mise dans un pareil sujet. Sans adopter une manière conventionnelle que je n'aime pas plus que lui, l'artiste aurait pu donner à son héros ce caractère général, absolu, presque divin qu'il a revêtu en traversant les siècles. Il ne faut pas se laisser obséder par le succès d'autrui, et je crains que M. du Nouy n'ait subi l'influence de *Job* de M. Bonnat, dont le peintre éminent avait fait accepter les *hideurs* par des prodiges d'exécution. Le type de l'Homère de M. du Nouy est donc discutable, mais il serait injuste de ne pas ajouter que le dessin est en général correct et fin, et que le modelé, un peu maigre et sec, est savant et remarquablement bien suivi. Quant à la figure du jeune garçon, elle est élégante, très juste d'attitude et elle exprime parfaitement le sommeil. / Dans le panneau de gauche Pénélope est représentée debout dans un appartement de style archaïque, chastement drapée dans un vêtement blanc qui enveloppe tout le corps, recouvre la tête et une partie du visage. Elle tient pressé contre elle l'arc et le portrait de celui qu'elle attend avec anxiété. Un molosse assis à ses pieds paraît faire bonne garde. Autour d'elle, sur le sol, sont la corbeille et les pelotons qui contribuent à expliquer le sujet. C'est une bonne figure mais qui, par son immobilité et sa froideur, donne l'idée d'une statue antique plutôt que d'une personne vivante. / Le panneau de droite est occupé par le personnage dont j'ai parlé plus haut et qui est renversé la tête en avant sur le premier plan du tableau. Ce corps nu jeté en raccourci dans une position qui présentait de grandes difficultés d'exécution, est composé et dessiné d'une manière remarquable et mérite de grands éloges. Une figure de femme qui symbolise, je pense, la Vengeance, et qui vole au-dessus de lui, tenant d'une main une torche et de l'autre des flèches, a beaucoup de mouvement et d'ampleur. C'est une belle invention qui fait honneur à l'artiste. Tous les accessoires sont traités de main de maître. M. du Nouy sait à fond son métier; il est doué d'un goût, d'une délicatesse et d'un tact pittoresque très distingués. Il sait composer, il sait dessiner; et quoique cet ouvrage ait des parties faibles, on tiendra certainement grand compte au laborieux artiste de la grandeur et de la difficulté de son entreprise."

Montrosier 1882, p. 27-28: "M. Lecomte du Nouy nous donne en grand la seconde édition d'un triptyque que nous vîmes au Salon il y a plusieurs années [1876, see cat. 105]. Il chante, ce qui est peu commun, la misère du vieil Homère et sa gloire éternelle. Seulement, — comme dit le Bassecour des *Faux Bons Hommes* — on sent trop ici l'élève de Gérôme. Beaucoup de travail et de science, un effort qui n'est pas sans grandeur; mais de chaleur, de passion, de vie point."

Chesneau 1882, p. 218: "J'aime mieux M. Lecomte du Nouy. Sans doute il retarde de près d'un siècle et son *Homère* en triptyque n'est pas une traduction à la façon de Leconte de Lisle; à coup sûr le poète aveugle appuyé sur sa lyre avec l'enfant endormi sur ses genoux parmi les ruines de Troie, flanqué à droite d'une *Ilias* aux retentissantes clameurs, et à gauche d'une *Odysseus* drapée à la Pénélope sous la garde du chien d'Eubée; oui, tout cela trahit les routines du concours d'école, mais avec une conviction énergique, têtue, qui ne me déplaît point. Cela n'a que le tort de venir après coup. En 1802 cet Homère eût ravi les amateurs idolâtres de Girodet-Trioson, et Firmin-Didot eût confié au peintre une part de collaboration importante dans la célèbre édition illustrée des classiques grecs à côté de Gérard, de Girodet, d'Ingres, de Percier, etc. J'ajoute que M. Lecomte du Nouy y eût tenu très dignement sa place."

Anonymous, "Salon de 1882," *l'Événement*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 124-25: "Je ne sais pas si le tableau de M. Lecomte du Nouy intitulé *Homère* fera sensation. C'est un très beau tableau que cet Homère, une oeuvre forte, une oeuvre honnête, qui, en d'autres temps, eût fait acclamer le peintre qui l'a signée. C'est un triptyque. / Au centre, M. Lecomte du Nouy se lance en pleine réalité et nous représente dans un très vigoureux effet, le divin vieillard assis au bas d'une colonne, tel que le plus farouche Espagnol du XVII^e siècle l'aurait compris. Un enfant, son guide, dort, la tête appuyée sur la poitrine du poète, et lui, veille, une main appuyée sur sa lyre. Cette partie du drame est traitée avec une vigueur d'un accent singulièrement puissant. / La lumière se pose avec une franchise presque brutale sur les saillies que les ombres sourdes modelent avec une énergie jusqu'ici peu familière à l'auteur. A droite et à gauche, l'*Iliade* et l'*Odyssee*. Ici, la palette cède le pas au dessin. Nous quittons Ribéra pour trouver Ingres, deux maîtres en somme que M. Lecomte du Nouy rend frères, par la seule puissance de son talent."

Houssaye 1883, p. 216-17, also partly cited in Chevillot 1995, p. 209: "Voici enfin le grand triptyque où M. Lecomte du Nouy a représenté Homère dormant entouré de l'*Iliade* et de l'*Odyssee* personnifiées. Ingres avait conçu Homère dans son caractère impersonnel et grandiose de dieu de la poésie. M. Lecomte du Nouy, dont nous aimons le talent sérieux et original, s'est trompé à notre avis en représentant Homère sous

la figure réelle et vivante que lui ont prêtée les contes à dormir debout du faux Hérodote et du pseudo-Plutarque. Une discussion sur l'existence au moins très problématique d'un poète seul auteur de l'*Iliade* et de l'*Odyssée* ne serait pas ici à sa place. Nous dirons toutefois que l'Homère symbolique d'Ingres est plus vrai que l'Homère de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Nous ne connaissons pas l'Homère mendiant, l'Homère aveugle, l'Homère bâtonné par les habitants de Cumes et assailli par les chiens du berger Glaucus, au lieu que nous reverrons l'Homère idéal des apothéoses. Celui-ci, Frédéric Auguste Wolf lui-même ne pourrait pas le nier."

Guide du Salon de Paris (1882), p. 19.

Judith Gautier, *Le Rappel* (20 March, 1886), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 126: "Lecomte du Nouÿ est un de ces artistes, rares aujourd'hui, qui ne se laissent pas détourner de leur route, et ne sacrifient aucune de leurs convictions aux engouements passagers. Il ne conçoit que des sujets grandioses, et, ce qui est mieux encore, a le courage et l'énergie de les exécuter, à ses risques et périls, sans attendre l'appui d'une commande, ou la perspective d'un monument public où suspendre ses grandes étoiles. Il s'inspire d'Homère, de la Bible, de Victor Hugo, et ne procède que par séries d'oeuvres, polyptiques ou triptyques, qu'il met de longues années à parachever. Dans le panneau central du triptyque consacré à Homère, on voit le poète des poètes venant mourir aux portes d'Athènes le soir d'un long jour de marche. A bout de forces, il s'est laissé tomber près d'une fontaine, retenant de la main son seul bien, la lyre, faite d'une carapace de tortue et de deux cornes d'antilope, et "lui, dont la gloire illuminera le monde", il exhale sa grande âme dans l'ombre, solitaire, sans que nul dans ce monde y prenne garde. L'enfant qui guide le sublime aveugle s'est endormi, insouciant et las, la joue appuyée sur ce coeur qui cesse de battre. Au fond, la ville s'élève dans la demi-teinte, et un bouge, où l'on veille encore, met une clareté fauve dans l'ombre. La figure d'Homère, puissante et noble sous ses haillons, a beaucoup de caractère et de grandeur; elle est émouvante et se grave fortement dans la mémoire. Une scène de l'*Iliade* forme le second panneau de triptyque. C'est Hector, orné du pectoral de Patrocle, tenant en main le sceptre de Priam, et renversé sur les marches du trône de Troie. Au-dessus de lui, la Guerre furieuse passe en agitant sa torche, et plus haut les Dieux de l'Olympe se concertent. Un détail intéressant: le sceptre de Priam, avec ses deux boules de cristal cannelé, a été copié sur un des objets découverts dans les dernières fouilles de Schliemann. / Le dernier panneau, l'*Odyssée*, nous montre Pénélope dans la pénombre de son palais; toute droite, toute blanche, tirant son voile sur sa bouche, avec, dans ses beaux yeux, quelque chose de l'expression inquiète et furtive d'une biche poursuivie; elle tient un portrait de l'époux absent, portrait exécuté d'après une antique peinture murale, et près d'elle, on voit le chien Argos et, dans des corbeilles, les laines à tisser."

Charles Clément, *Journal des Débats* (20 March, 1886), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 127-128: "Nous avons encore, grâce à Dieu, quelques peintres de mérite qui résistent bravement au courant de réalisme grossier qui entraîne une grande partie de l'école contemporaine. Ils pensent que l'artiste doit avoir pour but de parler à l'imagination et au goût en donnant un corps aux rêves de l'esprit et un aliment au besoin d'idéal qui le possède, en montrant des scènes intéressantes, des combinaisons de lignes harmonieuses et grandes, des formes pures et belles. Ils se préoccupent du sujet, de la composition, du dessin, de la couleur: ils croient qu'il y a des lois dont l'homme doué pour les arts porte le Code en lui-même, et que c'est l'étude seule qui donne les moyens de les discerner et de les appliquer. Quelques-uns d'entre eux, découragés par les dispositions actuelles du public, qui n'en a que pour les impressionnistes, les luministes et autres dévoyés, abandonnent la lutte et se retirent sous leur tente, mais il en est aussi qui ont le courage de leurs opinions et qui en appellent à un public d'élite des jugements incompetents de la foule. / Tel est le cas de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Il vient d'exposer, dans les galeries de M. Tripp, son *Homère*, vaste composition que l'on a déjà vue à l'un des derniers Salons, et quatre fragments de son polyptyque destiné à glorifier Victor Hugo, dont le public ne connaissait que trois parties. Ce sont là les pièces capitales, les morceaux de résistance de cette exposition, qui est complétée par deux tableaux d'une moindre importance: *Pharaon dans son gynécée* et le *Samedi dans le quartier Juifs à Tanger*, ainsi que par plusieurs portraits, genre dans lequel M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a obtenu de nombreux succès, et par une foule d'esquisses, d'études et de dessins qui permettent de suivre les travaux déjà nombreux de l'artiste et d'apprécier son talent d'une manière plus complète qu'on n'a pu le faire jusqu'ici aux expositions annuelles, dont M. Lecomte du Nouÿ est un des fidèles. Nous ne reviendrons pas sur les grandes toiles, dont nous avons eu déjà l'occasion de parler. Cependant, à propos de l'*Homère*, nous relèverons un point qui paraît avoir de l'intérêt. Outre le grand triptyque que l'on connaît, et qui mérite les éloges qu'on lui a donnés, l'exposition actuelle renferme

une charmante variante en réduction de cet ouvrage. Il me semble résulter de la comparaison que l'on peut faire de ces deux toiles que, lorsque M. Lecomte du Nouÿ exécute dans de grandes dimensions, poussé par un désir de perfection qui n'a certes rien de blâmable en lui-même, il insiste trop sur les parties secondaires qu'il faudrait avoir le courage de sacrifier pour faire valoir le sujet. C'est ainsi que, dans l'*Homère*, l'attention est attirée par le ciel clair et brillant, par la forge à gauche, par les détails d'architecture et de sculpture, de l'autre côté, et dans l'*Illiade*, par la jupe verte de la Némésis. Le parti pris de la réduction, où le groupe principal est moins héroïque peut-être, me paraît beaucoup mieux entendu. L'unité d'impression y est complète et, en me souvenant de l'excellent et charmant tableau *les Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*, du Musée du Luxembourg, des *Docteurs commentant le Bible*, exposé il y a quelques années; du *Samedi dans le quartier des Juifs à Tanger*, que l'on voit chez M. Tripp, je conclurais volontiers que c'est dans les tableaux de caractère, d'archéologie, de costumes pittoresques, de figures typiques, plutôt que dans les grandes toiles où le nu domine, et où il est absolument nécessaire de concentrer l'effet, que M. Lecomte du Nouÿ trouve à exercer ses plus précieuses facultés. C'est là qu'il montre avec le plus d'évidence son savoir comme compositeur, la finesse et la fermeté de son dessin, la conviction de sa facture et ses rares facultés d'observateur et de psychologue. J'insiste tout particulièrement sur ce point; les types de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ sont très bien choisis et très bien vus; les expressions aussi bien que les pantomimes de ses personnages d'une franchise, d'une précision, d'une vérité qui méritent les plus grands éloges, où l'on retrouve les caractères dans ses portraits: ils sont écrits. L'un d'eux surtout, celui d'une jeune femme, est ravissante par l'attitude, par l'arrangement du costume, par le caractère aimable et distingué de la physionomie. Nous engageons vivement nos lecteurs à visiter cette exposition. Pas de mise en scène, pas de réclame, ni réflecteurs, ni musique, mais des tentatives élevées, de l'art sérieux et de bon aloi."

Dumas 1889, no. 880, fig. 6, reproduces the left wing as an engraving.

Chevillot 1995, p. 208-209, reproduced.

Related Works: The Musée de Grenoble keeps four drawings, framed together, of which at least three are preparatory studies for the triptych: one for the head of Homer, one for the head of the boy, and a third sheet with three hands. The fourth drawing depicts another head, but that cannot be related to the final composition of the painting. The drawing with the hands contains the inscription: *Etudes pour Homère / A mon eleve et cher ami / Georges Sauvage / Du Nouÿ*. Black chalk with white highlights, 38 x 29 cm each.

[Figure 66]

See cat. 105, for smaller 1878 version of this composition.

161) Portrait of Mr. Genest (*Portrait de M. Genest*)

Photo: possibly BN: DC 309, II, p. 35, signed upper left: JEAN DU NOUÿ; dated upper right: 1881.

162) Saint Anthony (*Saint Antoine (Esquisse)*. Appartenant à M. Genest.)

163) The Roman Servant (*La servante romaine*. Appartenant à M. Köhn.)

164) Osmin, The Abduction of the Seraglio (*Osmin de l'enlèvement au Sérail*. Appartenant à M. Pagans.)

Related Work: Possibly, Hahn 1995, no. 26, see appendix II.

165) Self-portrait in the Middle East [Figure 4]

Oil on canvas, 63.1 x 38.6 cm, signed lower right: DU NOUÿ; inscribed on reverse of canvas: J. Lecomte du Nouÿ 1881; written on stretcher bar: Vente Versailles / le 15 février 1950.

Present Location: Musée Anne de Beaujeu, Moulins (inv. 87.5.1)

Provenance: Patrick Roger-Binet, Galerie Coligny, Paris.

Literature: Vaisse 1988, p. 38, fig. 13.

Related Work: Aurillac: 82.13.136, appendix I.

166) Venice, 1881

Drouot 2003, lot 128, see appendix III.

167) Portrait of Mrs. de Servillanges (*Portrait de Mme de Servillanges.*)

168) A Death Portrait (*Mon portrait après décès. Appartenant au docteur Cazalis.*)

169) Portrait of Caroline Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Portrait de Caroline du Nouÿ. Appartenant à Mme Evrard.*)

Note: Possibly, Paris sale, Ader Picard, May 30, 1980, lot 173, oil on canvas, 46 x 38 cm, signed and dated lower right: 82.

170) A Chinese Ivory (*Un ivoire chinois. Appartenant à Me Clunet.*)

171) A Study of a Head (*Une tête d'étude. Au docteur Veyssière.*)

172) Rabbis Commenting on the Bible on Saturday (*Les rabbins commentant la Bible (Maroc). Salon de 1882. Triennial de 1883. Appartenant à M. Vlasto.*) [Figure 126]

Oil on canvas, 76 x 132 cm. The Hebrew text being read in the picture has been translated as follows:

"Thus shall you eat it, your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste – it is the Lord's Passover."

Present Location: London, Guildhall Art Gallery.

Provenance: Presented by Adam Scott Esq., in memory of his sisters Janet and Mary Scott, 1925.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1883: no. 1603 - Les rabbins commentant la Bible le samedi.

Paris, Triennial 1883.

Literature: Schéfer 1882, p. 177-78: "L'Orient. / Il y a environ cinquante ans, quelques artistes français, Delacroix, Decamps, Marilhat, etc., se dirigèrent vers l'Orient et en firent la découverte. Ils en rapportèrent des oeuvres admirables; mieux que cela encore, un rayon de soleil qu'il répandirent sur leurs toiles et qui, de là, rayonna comme un foyer brûlant, sur la peinture française tout entière. Mais aujourd'hui, l'Orient n'a plus à nous donner sa lumière, ni l'éclat de ses costumes, ni l'imprévu de ses coutumes: tout cela est connu et fait. Il a joué encore une fois son rôle d'initiateur. L'art s'est trempé dans sa lumière et sa chaleur comme dans la fontaine de Jouvence; il n'a plus rien à y trouver, et les peintres l'abandonnent maintenant avec cette ingratitude qui est la loi amère, mais nécessaire, du progrès. / Les tableaux d'Orient envoyés au Salon de cette année sont assez peu nombreux. Ils ont tous, à peu d'exceptions près, et quelque chose de déjà vu. / L'Algérie et le Maroc ont fourni le plus fort contingent de vues de scènes pittoresques. / M. Lecomte du Nouÿ expose un *Souvenir du Maroc: les Rabbins commentant la Bible le samedi*, oeuvre soigneusement étudiée et nettement peinte, un peu pâle, cependant, qui rappelle par bien des points la manière de Gérôme. Les types des rabbins, de grande variété d'expression, témoignent d'une étude attentive; on reconnaît, dans ce tableau de genre, la fermeté de composition et de dessin que donne une vigoureuse éducation artistique."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after p. 48; p. 49.

Related work: Preparatory drawings, repr. Montgailhard 1906, p. 12, 49.

173) Portrait of Georges Aublet (*Portrait de Mme Georges Aublet.*)

174) Portrait de Mr. F. Bessières d'Istrie (*Portrait de M. F. Bessières d'Istrie.*)

175) Portrait of Caroline Lecomte du Nouÿ in Bernese Dress (*Portrait de Caroline du Nouÿ en Bernoise. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1904.*)

Present Location: Private Collection, France.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 38, signed and dated lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ 82.

176) Head of a Rabbi (*Tête de rabbin. Appartenant à M. Vlasto.*)

177) The Santon (*Le Santon. Appartenant à M. Köhn.*)

178) Portrait of Mrs. Théodore Ralli (*Portrait de Mme Théodore Ralli.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 61.

Note: Her husband, Théodore Ralli, was a painter and friend of Lecomte du Nouÿ.

1883

179) A Gaul (*La vedette gauloise. Salon triennal de 1883. Appartenant à M. Psicha, d'Athènes.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 54, signed lower left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1883. A Gaul leaning against a rock with a dead boar on his shoulder and a shield next to him. He overlooks the water towards the left and stands next to a campfire with two long spears.

Related Works:

Two oil studies of legs wrapped in fabric and leather bands, Aurillac: 82.13.337, and 82.13.340; see appendix I.

See cat. 218.

180) The Marabout Prophet Sidna Aissa, Morocco (*Le Marabout prophète Sidna-Aissa (Tanger). Salon de 1883* [sic for 1884] *Appartenant à M. Psicha, d'Athènes.*) [Figure 129]

Oil on canvas, 74.9 x 125.7 cm, signed and dated lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ 1883.

Present Location: Private Collection.

Provenance: Mr. Psicha, Athens, by 1906; London sale, Sotheby's, June 13, 1973, lot 40; Gallery Kourid, Athens; The Fine Art Society, Ltd., London; private collection in 1979; New York sale, Christie's, October 31, 2001, lot 7, repr., (bought in).

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1884, no. 1465: Le Marabout prophète Sidna-Aïssa – Maroc. Appartient à M. Psicha.

Literature: Louis Énault, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 50: "*Le Marabout Prophète*. M. Lecomte du Nouÿ est entré dans le vrai et le vif des choses lorsqu'il nous a montré, dans un tableau à la fois pittoresque et saisissant, ce *Marabout Prophète*, Sidna Aïssa, arbitre du Maroc, tenant les âmes suspendues à ses lèvres, et les esprits enchaînés à ses paroles. / Le groupe est admirablement posé et les impressions des auditeurs se trahissent sur leurs visages mobiles avec une fidélité singulièrement éloquente." Paris – *Salon de 1884*. Louis Enault. / Ajoutons, à propos de cette toile, que, longtemps après son exposition, le conseiller à la cour du Sultan Abd-el-Hakim y retrouvait le souvenir de son pays dans sa vérité archéologique."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 80.

Related Work: Hahn 1995, nos. 62, 102, see appendix II.

181) The Toilers of the Sea (*Les travailleurs de la mer. (Victor Hugo). Au Musée de Caen.*) [Figure 56]

Provenance: Donated by the artist in 1886 to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen; destroyed in 1944.

Exhibited:

Paris, Salon 1884, no. 1464: Les travailleurs de la mer. (Victor Hugo) Fragment d'un pentaptique.

Tripp 1886, no. 11, see appendix IV.

Literature:

Mantz 1884, [p. not known]: "[...] et M. Lecomte du Nouÿ, qui a sculpté une tête en ivoire pour un des ses *Travailleurs de la mer*; mais nous sommes bien forcé de dire que l'éminent académicien néglige de plus en plus son écriture, qu'il indique à peine la moitié des choses, et qu'il nous laisse le soin de deviner le reste."

Henri Jouin in *l'Oeuvre d'art* (September 25, 1896), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 57-59: "Voici le peintre tout occupé de Victor Hugo et de son oeuvre. Deux, trois tableaux ont paru, et le peintre a conçu le projet d'en faire plus de vingt. Il les a composés; ses esquisses sont prêtes, et l'épopée se déroulera lentement, mais avec régularité, sous nos yeux. Pourquoi M. Lecomte du Nouÿ n'a-t-il pas mené à terme sa tâche séduisante, si lourde qu'il l'ait faite? Je n'ai pas à le savoir, mais je suis heureux pour lui d'une interruption dans l'accomplissement d'un travail que la postérité n'eût pas approuvé. Que l'on y songe, le peintre, le sculpteur font oeuvre synthétique et définitive. Ils ne disent qu'une parole en l'honneur du poète ou de l'homme d'État, mais il faut que cette parole, longuement préparée, soit juste et ne dépasse pas la mesure. Victor Hugo mort hier n'est pas entré dans l'immortalité: on le discute, on le passe au crible; dans un demi-siècle son oeuvre aura subi de fortes coupures. Tous les maîtres ont été l'objet d'une revision semblable. Homère lui-même, Shakespeare, Molière, Corneille, ne nous sont pas familiers dans la totalité de leurs productions. Le temps a fait son choix... Flaxmann s'est fait la satellite de Dante, et personne ne contredit l'hommage de Flaxmann. L'opinion n'aurait pas suivi M. Lecomte du Nouÿ dans ses commentaires ingénieux de l'oeuvre mêlé, inégal de Victor Hugo. / Si maintenant j'étudie comme page de

genre *Giliatt aux prises avec la pluie*, j'y reconnais des qualités réelles. Il y a de la grandeur dans la composition, et elle est d'un heureux aspect dans sa sauvage réalité. / Mais aussi, quel est l'artiste qui n'a pas été tenté, au moins une fois dans sa vie, de se consacrer pendant des années à une oeuvre immense, pour attacher son nom à quelque chose de colossal, qui stupéfie les générations, comme si cette énormité dans le travail ajoutait quelque chose à la beauté de l'oeuvre produite?... / Sans doute, c'est après avoir vu se dresser devant lui les murs cyclopéens des palais de Korsabad, ou bien les gigantesques peintures de la chapelle Sixtine, qu'un pareil rêve peut entrer dans l'esprit d'un artiste. Il se dit: "Mois aussi, je ferai quelque chose d'énorme qui étonnera le monde et rendra mon nom immortel." Telles furent sans doute les pensées que remua du Noüy quand il entreprit de composer une multitude de toiles rappelant l'oeuvre titanique de Victor Hugo. Il faut le féliciter d'avoir abandonné, après l'avoir entreprise, la réalisation de ce rêve chimérique, et d'avoir arrêté aux tableaux qui viennent d'être indiqués les vingt ou trente compositions qu'il avait projetées et dont il avait déjà terminé les esquisses."

Judith Gautier, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 126 (for full text see cat. 160): "Il s'inspire d'Homère, de la Bible, de Victor Hugo, et ne procède que par séries d'oeuvres, polyptiques ou triptyques, qu'il met de longues années à parachever."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after. p. 16.

Menegoz/Vanel 1928, p. 79: "Polyptique sur l'oeuvre de Victor Hugo. Les Contemplations, Les Orientales et Les Travailleurs de la mer. H. 2.90 m – L. 6.52. donné par l'auteur en 1886."

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985, repr. p. 106.

Barrielle 1985, p. 246-47, repr. (all four paintings).

Related work: A pencil sketch for the Octopus in one of the artist's sketchbooks, Aurillac: 82.13.350, p. 26, see appendix I.

Photo: Photo of the artist in his studio, with this painting hanging on the second level behind the balustrade (fig. 5).

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 6427-6 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

182) Portrait of Mrs. Louise Cruppi (*Portrait de Mme Louise Cruppi*.)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 18, signed upper right: LECOMTE DU NOUY / 1883.

See cat. 246.

183) Sowing in Egypt (*Les semailles en Égypte (Grisaille)*). Appartenant à Mlle Vidal, de L'Opéra.)

Photo: BN: DC 309 IV, p. 22: inscribed "Les semailles après la crue du Nil. / (Vue de Chouba pres de Caire).

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 39, see appendix IV.

184) Head of an Almeh (*Tête d'Almée*). Appartenant à la comtesse Pierre de Failly.)

Note: BN: DC 309, II, p. 25, photo of the portrait of Comtesse Pierre de Failly (not signed nor dated), who was the owner of this work.

185) Head of the Virgin (*Tête de Vierge (Dessin)*). Appartenant à Mme Besson.)

See cat. 247.

1884

186) The Orientals (*Les Orientales*. "N'ai je pas, pour toi, belle Juive, Assez dépeuplé mon sérail?" (Victor Hugo). Salon de 1884 [sic for 1885]. Au Musée de Caen.) [Figure 57]

Provenance: Donated by the artist in 1886 to the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Caen, destroyed in 1944.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1885, no. 1511: Les Orientales. "Nai-je pas pour toi, belle juive, / Assez dépeuplé mon sérail? / Souffre qu'enfin le reste vive. / Faut-il qu'un coup de hache suive. / Chaque coup de ton éventail?" (Deuxième fragment d'un polyptyque [sic] sur Victor Hugo).

Tripp 1886, no. 11, see appendix IV.

Literature: Charles Clément, *Journal des Débats* (20 March, 1886), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 127; for text see cat. 160.

Henri Jouin in *l'Oeuvre d'art* (September 25, 1896), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 57-59; for text see under cat. 181.

Menegoz/Vanel 1928, p. 79: "Polyptique sur l'oeuvre de Victor Hugo. Les Contemplations, Les Orientales et Les Travailleurs de la mer. H. 2.90 m – L. 6.52. donné par l'auteur en 1886."

Montgailhard 1906, p. 56-58, repr. after p. 64.

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985, repr. p.106

Barrielle 1985, p. 246-47, repr. all four paintings.

Related Work: Sketch for the female figure, black chalk heightened with white on brown paper, 47.7 x 60.3 cm; repr. Klobe 1996, no. 14, repr.; Patrick Roger-Binet, Paris.

Hahn 1995, no. 153, see appendix II.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-8 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

187) Study of a Dog (*Étude de chien. Appartenant à M. Vlasto.*)

Note: possibly photo BN: DC 309, IV, p. 22, depicting a dog in a winter landscape.

188) Portrait of Captain Bertain (*Portrait du capitaine Bertin.*)

189) The Moorish Woman (*La Mauresque. Appartenant au docteur Hénocque.*)

Exhibited: Nantes 1886, no. 667: Une Mauresque (Alger).

Tripp 1886, no. 9, La Mauresque, Souvenir de la casbah d'Alger. See appendix IV.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 144.

Note: Compare with Gérôme's *Femme du Caire fumant une cigarette*, 1882, see Ackerman 2000, cat. no. 308, color repr. p. 126.

190) Portrait of Emilie Jupin (*Portrait de Mme Emilie Jupin.*)

191) Contemplations – At Present (*Les Contemplations (Aujourd'hui). Salon de 1884 [sic for 1885]. Au Musée de Caen.*) [Figure 58]

Provenance: Donated by the artist to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen; destroyed in 1944.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1885, no. 1512: Les contemplations; - aujourd'hui. Et disaient: qu'est-ce donc que cet homme qui songe?" (Troisième fragment d'un polyptyque [sic] sur Victor Hugo).

Tripp 1886, no. 11, see appendix IV.

Literature: Charles Clément, *Journal des Débats* (20 March, 1886), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 127; for text see cat. 160.

Henri Jouin in *l'Oeuvre d'art* (September 25, 1896), cited from Montgailhard 1906, 57-59; for text see under cat. 181.

Menegoz/Vanel 1928, p. 79: "Polyptique sur l'oeuvre de Victor Hugo. Les Contemplations, Les Orientales et Les Travailleurs de la mer. H. 2.90 m – L. 6.52. donné par l'auteur en 1886."

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985, repr. p. 106

Barrielle 1985, p. 246-47, repr. all four paintings.

Related Works: Drawing with two studies for the putto in *Contemplations (Aujourd'hui)*. Fusain, sanguine et craie blanche sur papier brun, 90 x 84.5 cm, inscribed lower left: à mon chère confrère et voisin Henri Roullier pour le Musée de Chartres / Lecomte du Nouÿ / étude pour le polyptique sur Victor Hugo du Musée de Caen. Roanne, Musée Joseph Déchelette (M. J. 86.1132).

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-10 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

192) Portrait de Mr. Lucien Auvray (*Portrait de M. Lucien Auvray.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 1. Signed upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ A L'AMI AUVRAY; dated upper right: 1884.

193) A study of a Pasha (*Un Pacha (Etude).*)

194) Landscapes of Étretat (*Paysages d'Étretat. Appartenant à Me Clunet.*)

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 41, see appendix II.

1885

195) *The Lyrical Muse (La muse lyrique (Dessin). Appartient à Mlle Émilie Vidal de l'Opéra.)*
Drawing

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 28, see appendix IV.

196) *Abraham's Vision (La vision d'Abraham. Salon de 1887 [sic for 1888]. Appartenant à S. M. la reine de Roumanie.)*

Oil on canvas, 77 x 127.3 cm, signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUY, 85.

Present Location: Bucharest National Museum of Art, inv. no. 8.847/881.

Provenance: Transferred from Curtea de Arges to the museum in Bucharest in 1948.

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 1, *La Vision d'Abraham. Compte les étoiles si tu peux les compter. Ainsi sera ta postérité!* (Bible). See appendix IV.

Paris, Salon 1888, no. 1555: *La vision d'Abraham. "... Compte les étoiles, si tu les peux compter... Ainsi sera ta postérité."* (La Bible)

Literature: Houssaye 1888, p. 63: "Pour un tableau d'une exécution un peu dure, la *Vision d'Abraham*, que nous avons omis de citer dans les peintures d'histoire, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a pris comme épigraphe ce verset de la Bible: "Compte les étoiles, si tu les peux compter..." Les salonniers n'auraient pas une tâche moins impossible s'il leur fallait étudier, ou seulement caractériser, ou même ne faire qu'énumérer les innombrables tableaux de genre, -- plaisant ou déplaisant, -- du palais des Champs-Élysées. Nous serons donc sans conscience, et nous citerons, un peu au hasard de la rencontre et à la fortune de la cymaise, une douzaine de ces tableaux."

Crinon 1888, p. 1052: "M. Lecomte du Nouÿ nous présente une *Esclave Blanche* qui dénote une touche savante, exercée, cela est ingénieusement composé mais manque de souplesse; cette femme charmante ne vit pas. Quant à la *Vision d'Abraham*, du même peintre, elle n'est pas non plus exempte de critique."

Henri Boucher, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 128-29: "*Le Ramsès* de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ était une des oeuvres du Salon de 1887. En 1888, le peintre se présente avec deux toiles: l'une, biblique et sacrée; l'autre, moderne et profane. Toujours originales et personnelles dans la conception comme dans le faire, se tenant à l'antipode du banal et du naturalisme envahisseur, les oeuvres de M. du Nouÿ rendent l'esprit curieux en saisissant agréablement les yeux; elle ne vous permettent pas de passer rapidement devant elles, vous retiennent et veulent qu'on les regarde, qu'on les étudie. Les deux sujets de cette année n'ont pas la valeur du *Ramsès* de l'an passé. Ce sont néanmoins des oeuvres tout à fait dignes de remarque et d'intérêt. Le premier est la *Vision d'Abraham*. Au milieu d'une nuit étoilée, Dieu apparaît; le saint patriarche s'est avancé au bord de sa tente, où repose sa compagne endormie; dans une pose respectueuse, presque agenouillée, il lève sa tête vénérable vers le Seigneur qui, les bras étendus vers les voûtes célestes, fait entendre cette prophétie: "Compte les étoiles, si tu peux compter.... Ainsi sera ta postérité." Cette scène renferme un caractère de grandeur et de mystère habilement rendu; des effets singuliers et fort heureux sont abordés et traités hardiment, tel que celui qui fait que toute la face d'Abraham est éclairée par la clarté blanche qui émane de l'apparition divine, tandis qu'il reçoit derrière lui la lumière rouge provenant de l'intérieur de la tente. Dehors, une outre où l'eau rafraîchit est suspendue à un trépied; un chien veille, couché sur un mur bas; au loin la plaine sombre s'étend, sillonnée par une rivière qu'argente le reflet de la lune qui se lève à l'horizon. / L'*Esclave blanche* est plutôt ce qu'on appelle en peinture un morceau, car tout l'intérêt est concentré sur cette belle fille qui, rêveuse, fume sa cigarette, assise sur de riches coussins dans une pose bizarre, mais gracieuse. La tête relevée, le regard perdu de son oeil noir semble suivre le filet nuageux de la fumée qu'elle laisse échapper de ses lèvres; des fruits, du vin sont à sa portée; derrière elle tombe un rideau noir qui fait ressortir les lignes souples de son corps et le grain délicat de sa peau, tandis que sa tête fine, que coiffe une chevelure magnifique ton acajou, se détache sur le parement en faïence verte du mur; dans le fond, au bord d'un bassin, deux négresses vaquent aux soins de l'intérieur. Des journaux illustrés populaires se sont justement emparé de ces deux sujets, ce qui n'est pas sans raison; n'est-ce pas, en effet, la sanction du talent d'un peintre, que de juger ses oeuvres dignes d'être mises sous les yeux de tous?"

Montgailhard 1906, p. 60, repr. before p. 25. Also citing de Thémynes in *La Patrie*: "Pendant la nuit, Jéhovah apparaît au patriarche prosterné et lui dit: "Compte les étoiles, si tu peux les compter. Ainsi sera ta

postérité." / Le parti de lumière est hardi et ingénieux. La tête d'Abraham se profile avec la netteté que donne le burin, éclairée d'un côté par les reflets rougeâtres du feu de la tente, de l'autre par la clarté d'une nuit étoilée et celle qui émane de la grande figure du Créateur."

Benedict 1978, no. 543, La vision d'Abraham.

197) *Contemplations – Past Times (Les contemplations (Autrefois). Au Musée de Caen.)* [Figure 59]

Alternative title: Victor Hugo and His Muse.

Provenance: Donated by the artist to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen; destroyed in 1944.

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 11, see appendix IV.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. after. p. 16, 126.

Menegoz/Vanel 1928, p. 79: "Polyptique sur l'oeuvre de Victor Hugo. Les Contemplations, Les Orientales et Les Travailleurs de la mer. H. 2.90 m – L. 6.52. donné par l'auteur en 1886."

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985, repr. p. 106

Barrielle 1985, p. 246-47, repr.

Henri Jouin in *l'Oeuvre d'art* (September 25, 1896), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 57-59; for text see under cat. 181.

Related Works: Two studies for the woman, Montgailhard, repr. p. 4 (full figure), and p. 99 (head).

Drawing of Hugo's hand holding a quill, Aurillac: 82.13.5, see appendix I.

198) *Victor Hugo (Victor Hugo (Dessin).)*

Note: Possibly the lithograph BN: DC 309, II, p. 28, depicting the laurelled head of Victor Hugo within a lire and banderole that reads: ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.

199) *Portrait of Professor Adrien Proust (1834-1903) (Portrait du professeur Proust (de l'Académie de Médecine).)*

Oil on canvas, 44.5 x 36.5 cm, signed and dated upper left: Lecomte du Nouÿ au Docteur Proust, 1885.

Present Location: Illiers-Combray, Musée Marcel Proust. Don de Suzy Mante-Proust.

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 3, see appendix IV.

Tadié 1999, cat. no. 25, repr. in color.

200) *Portrait of Mlle Lucienne de Failly (Portrait de Mlle Lucienne de Failly.)*

201) *Ramses in his Harem (Les échecs (Ancienne Égypte). Premier fragment de Ramsès dans son harem. Salon de 1887. Exposition Universelle de 1889.)* [Figures 102, 102a]

The central canvas: "Ramsès dans son harem"; 113 x 144.5 cm, signed and dated: 1885. The two wings, representing Music and Dance, each measure, 126.5 x 75 cm, and are signed and dated: 1886.

Provenance: Julian Hartnoll, London; Setton Collection; Charles de Pauw, Brussels;

London sale, Sotheby's, June 17, 1986, lot 34: bought in.; Private collection, where it was destroyed by fire.

Exhibited: Tripp 1886, no. 14, see appendix IV.

Paris, Salon 1887, no. 1449: Ramsès dans son harem. "Le Pharaon, entouré de ses femmes, Amensé-Taïa, Hont-Reché, joue aux échecs avec la belle Twea." (T. Gautier, *Roman de la Momie*.)

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1889.

London, Fine Arts Society, *Eastern Encounters* (1978), no. 105.

Literature: François Bournaud, *Paris Salon 1887*, ill opp. p. 37, cited from Sotheby's 1986 auction catalogue: "Quelle réunion de splendides beautés qui en forment la plus charmante parure! Ces femmes nues sont adorablement belles dans leur diverses attitudes [...] C'est une oeuvre d'une telle beauté du dessin, d'un fini si précieux, d'un si ravissant coloris, que je n'hésite pas à dire qu'un grand maître de la renaissance aurait été heureux de la signer."

Kitzo 1900; for text see appendix VI.

Judith Gautier, in *Rappel*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, 60: "Son premier aspect est si éclatant et si frais qu'il donne l'impression d'une touffe de fleurs mouillées de pluie. Pharaon est dans son gynécée et joue aux échecs avec la belle Twéa. Autour d'eux se groupent les femmes favorites, Amensé, Taïa, Hout-Reché.

C'est un albâtre du Louvre, le portrait d'Aménophis IV, très probablement contemporain de Moïse, qui a servi de modèle au peintre pour réaliser le Pharaon du roman. Il a un charme extraordinaire dans sa beauté féminine un peu étrange. Très jeune, imberbe, aux longs yeux clairs, aux grands traits purs, à la bouche sérieuse, il a bien cette physionomie "implacablement douce et d'une sérénité granitique." Coiffé d'une perruque noire nattée d'un seul côté, il a le front court de la vipère symbolique; sur sa poitrine nue, couleur de bronze neuf, retombent le gorgerin d'émaux et le pectoral d'or, et les pointes de ses mamelles sont cerclées d'un tatouage bleu. La jeune fille attentive et recueillie qui joue avec le roi est délicieuse. Elle est vue de profil, agenouillée près de l'échiquier, une jambe repliée sous la cuisse, et, malgré sa nudité, seulement parée d'une ceinture noire et blanche autour des reins et d'une fleur de papyrus au front, elle est d'une chasteté charmante. Amensé, aux cheveux de soie bleue, coiffée d'une sorte de casque en plumes de pintade, se penche pour suivre la partie. Taïa, une fleur de grenade à l'oreille, tient un miroir de métal poli, avec un joli geste mutin, et Hout-Reché, couchée sur des coussins, le cou appuyé sur une demi-lune de bois, support un peu dur mais qui empêche l'édifice fleuri de la coiffure d'être froissé, regarde vaguement le soleil jouer dans les échancrures de la fenêtre découpée à jour. Combien de détails intéressants et d'une exactitude certaine à étudier longuement, les coudes sur la cimaise: l'échiquier en bois dur, et dont les pieds se contournent en griffes de chacal, les jetons, d'une forme particulière, en ivoire émaillé de vert, les nattes, les bijoux, les étoffes, l'architecture; mais nous n'en finissons pas. Ce tableau, d'un dessin si pur et d'une si belle lumière, retrouvera certainement le succès d'une autre toile de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ, inspirée du même roman, les *Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*, qui est actuellement au musée du Luxembourg."

Delilia 1887, p. 647: "1449 *Ramsès dans son harem*. Une page antique merveilleuse. Le pharaon, dit la légende de Théophile Gautier, entouré de ses femmes Amensé-Taïa, Hout-Reché, joue aux échecs avec la belle Ewea. Et M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a reconstitué avec un art exquis cette scène charmante. Nul mieux que l'éminent artiste ne pouvait rendre ces physionomies noires, jaunes, vertes, brunes et sous des gazes transparentes découvrir plus savamment les nus dans lesquels il excelle."

Montgailhard 1906, pp. 60-61, repr. opp. p. 64.

Harding 1979, left wing repr. p. 98, and detail repr. on cover.

Richon 1985, p. 34-41, repr.

Related Works: Head of Amenophis IV, Aurillac: 82.13.22, see appendix I.

Head of Amenophis IV, Aurillac: 82.13.1, see appendix I.

Woman holding a mirror, Aurillac: 82.13.8, see appendix I.

Photo: Goupil & Cie

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 9303-5 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Documentation de Musée d'Orsay keeps a black and white photo by Albert Hautecour, which shows the painting in a large frame exhibited in a vaulted hall.

Photo of the artist in the studio working on this painting (fig. 5).

202) Standing Portrait of Caroline Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Portrait en pied de Caroline du Nouÿ*.)

Literature: Kitzo 1900, for text see appendix VI.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 39: She is seen standing in profile, facing right, wearing an elaborate gown and holding a fan.

203) Portrait de Ms. Lamboi (*Portrait de Mlle Lamboi*.)

204) A Crab in Venice, Contemplating (*Un crabe à Venise (Contemplation)*). Appartenant à Mme la comtesse de Martel (*Gyp*).)

Related Work: Aurillac: 82.13.253, see appendix I.

205) Saturday in the Jewish Quarter, Morocco (*Le samedi au Ghetto (Maroc)*. Salon de 1889. Appartenant à Mme Baccarach.) [Figure 127]

Exhibited: Nantes 1886, no. 666: Le Samedi dans le Ghetto (Maroc).

Tripp 1886, no. 17, see appendix IV.

Paris, Salon 1889, no. 1600: Le samedi dans le quartier juif; - Maroc.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 50; repr. after p. 8.

Related Work: Hahn 1995, nos. 91, 118; see appendix II.

1886

206) Portrait of Mrs. Fr. Fenwich (*Portrait de Mme Fr. Fenwich.*)

207) Portrait of the Painter Georges Sauvage (*Portrait du peintre Georges Sauvage (Dessin.)*)
Drawing.

Note: The sitter was a pupil of Lecomte du Nouÿ.

208) Portrait of Mrs. Lot (*Portrait de Mme Lot.*)

1887

209) The End (Old Cairo) (*Fin de tout (Vieux Caire). Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1903.*)

210) Tahoser (*Tahoser du "Roman de la Momie" (Th. Gautier). Appartenant à Mme Judith Gautier.*)
Inscribed upper left: à JUDITH GAUTIER / Lecomte du Nouÿ.
Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 63.

211) Selfportrait (*Portrait de l'auteur*) [Figure 1]

Oil on canvas, oval: 58 x 48 cm, signed and dated: Lecomte du Nouÿ / peint par lui-même / Paris 1887.

Present Location: Musée de Grenoble (inv. MG 1622).

Provenance: Gift of the artist, 1909.

Literature: Chevillot 1995, 210, reproduced.

212) Portrait of Privat de Fressenel (*Portrait de maître G. Privat de Fressenel.*)

Signed and dated upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÿ / 1887.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 137.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 56.

213) Landscape of Uriage (*Paysage d'Uriage. Appartenant à Mme Henriette Thompson.*)

214) Study for The White Slave (*Etude de l'esclave blanche. Appartenant à Ernest Lefèvre.*)

Related Work: See cat. 219.

215) Haute Egypte. Souks à Assouan.

Oil on panel, 19 x 27 cm, monogram and date, lower left: L. N. 87; dedicated on reverse: A l'ami Letourneau.

Provenance: Arlette Gimaray, Paris.

Exhibited: *Peintres Orientalistes* 1983, [n. p., no cat. nos.] reproduced.

Note: This work was later included in a group of six landscape sketches that were sold at Sotheby Parke Bernet, Monaco, October 26, 1981, lot 503-508, provenant d'une collection parisienne: lot 503, *Les bords du Nil à Assouan* (repr.), oil on panel, 18.5 x 27 cm, signed and dated: L. N. 87; lot 504, *Le marabout d'Omar, près d'Assouan*, oil on panel, 18 x 27 cm, signed and dated: L. N. 87; lot 505, *Vue d'une pyramide à Assouan*, oil on panel, 18.5 x 27 cm, signed and dated: L. N. 87; lot 506, *Souks à Assouan* (repr.); oil on panel, 19 x 27 cm, signed and dated: L. N. 87, dedicated on reverse: à l'ami Letourneau; lot 507, *Vue des pyramides à Assouan*, oil on panel, 18.5 x 27,5 cm, signed and dated: L. N. 87; lot 508, *Paysage Normand*, oil on panel, 18.5 x 27 cm, signed and dated: L. N. 87.

1888

216) The Good Omen (L'heureux présage (Égypte). L'Automobile Club de 1904.)

217) Jacques Lecomte du Nouÿ (*Mon fils Jacques (Dessin aux deux crayons.)*)

Drawing

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 128.

218) The Gallic Coast Guards (*Les gardes-côtes (Ancienne Gaule)*). Salon de 1889. Au Musée archéologique de Saint-Germain-en-Laye.) [Figure 67]

Oil on canvas, 76.5 x 126.5 cm, signed and dated: Lecomte du Nouÿ 88.

Present Location: Paris, Musée d'Orsay, (inv. R.F. 907).

Provenance: Gift of Albert Le Roy, on behalf of the artist, in 1895 to the archeological museum in Saint-Germain-en-Lay. Transferred to the Musée du Louvre, and then to the Musée d'Orsay.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1889, no. 1599: Les gardes-côtes; - ancienne Gaule.

Equivoques 1973, n. p. repr.

Literature: J. Alboize, *l'Artiste* (1889), cited from *Equivoques* 1973: "On sait que M. Lecomte du Noüy a, pour les sujets archaïques, une préférence très décidée; en archéologie, ses recherches d'exécution ne s'aventurent guère en dehors des traditions d'école. Les gardes-côtes, ancienne Gaule, en dépit d'une certaine sécheresse dans le coloris, ne sont pas sans intérêt; ce sont bien là, tels que les récits de César nous les représentent, avec leurs armes et leur accoutrement étranges, les types de nos rudes ancêtres. La perspective embrumée de l'Océan et des falaises abruptes encadre bien leur aspect barbare; sur la grève, un chien aboie à la lune qui se lève à l'horizon et dont le disque rougeâtre transparaît à peine à travers un brouillard opaque, détail qui ajoute encore à l'accent sauvage de ce sujet."

Gyp, *Bob au Salon de 1889*, cited from *Equivoques* 1973: "L'Oncle Jean. - Et ici, "les Gardes-Côtes", de Lecomte du Noüy!... c'est très bien, ne trouvez-vous pas?... -- Si... cette grande mer... ces blocs énormes de rochers sont très grandioses... -- Il a une vision très personnelle des choses, Lecomte du Noüy!... -- Oui... et il ne doit pas souvent s'occuper de l'effet à produire sur le "bourgeois", moi j'adore ça!... -- Ce tableau donne une impression de profonde tristesse... je ne sais pas trop pourquoi... Le Gommeux, retirant sa canne de sa bouche. - Ça manque de femmes!... Bob. - M'sieu l'abbé, on avait d'jà, dans c'temps-là des petites guérites en paille pour l'bord de l'mer?... L'Abbé. - Où ça?... Bob. - Là... vous voyez pas... dans l'dos d'l'homme... L'Abbé, haussant les épaules. - C'est son bouclier... Bob, vexé. - Ben, j'sais pas trop l'quel d'nous deux qui a raison!..."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after p. 8; p. 64.

Related Work: BN: DC 309, I, p. 55 also contains an engraving by Kemplen after this composition.

See cat. 179.

219) The White Slave (*L'esclave blanche*. Salon de 1888. Exposition Universelle de 1889. Gravé par Duvivier. [Listed erroneously by Montgailhard under 1887.]) [Figure 105]

Oil on canvas, 149 x 118 cm, signed and dated lower center right (in border of napkin): LECOMTE DU NOUÿ 1888.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1888, no. 1554: L'esclave blanche.

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1889.

Equivoques 1973, n. p., repr.

Orients 1982, no. 30, repr.

Peintres Orientalistes 1983, n. p.

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985, p. 501 (repr.), 807, cat. no. 832.

Exotische Welten 1987, cat. no. 387, p. 353 fig. 14.

La France 1989, 135, no. 117.

Histoires Parallèles 1995-1996, 98, cat. 41, repr.

Espejismos 1999, 255, no. 63, repr. p. 92, 236, 237.

Kridla Slavy 2000-2001, 436, repr. p. 454.

Fantaisies 2003, p. 74, repr.

Literature: Crinon 1888, p. 1052: "M. Lecomte du Nouÿ nous présente une *Esclave Blanche* qui dénote une touche savante, exercée, cela est ingénieusement composé mais manque de souplesse; cette femme charmante ne vit pas. Quant à la *Vision d'Abraham*, du même peintre, elle n'est pas non plus exempte de critique."

A. Silvestre, *Le nu au Salon de 1888*, cited from *Equivoques* 1973:

"Si je n'étais captive

J'aimerais ce pays,

et cette mer plaintive

et ces champs de maïs

Ainsi dit une mélancolique romance de Delphine Gay, mise en musique par je ne sais plus quel Aristide Latour et qu'on chantait dans mon enfance. Le refrain m'en revient devant cette belle créature dont le rêve va plus loin que les murs de la piscine où le caprice du maître lui laisse, pour tout divertissement, le souci de sa toilette.

Oui certes, plus loin que cet horizon de pierres, ses yeux errent sur quelque paysage que l'azur d'un Bosphore vient perdre dans l'azur du ciel, là où se rejoignent les deux infinis du firmament et de la mer. / Tandis que la fumée de sa cigarette monte en spirale dans l'air tranquille et chargé de parfums, il est visible qu'elle écoute une de ces musiques mystérieuses qui nous chantent à l'esprit plus qu'à l'oreille. / Voulez-vous que nous essayions d'écouter cette chanson de son âme, cette silencieuse chanson du souvenir? Aux féroces dentelures des moucharabiés pareilles à des toiles d'araignées tissées dans l'or, comme aux cordes invisibles d'une harpe éolienne, elle chante:

*Sur le flot par le vent poussée,
Fleur par le vent prise au buisson,
La mer bien longtemps m'a bercée
Et je sais encor sa chanson:*

*La chanson de la mer lointaine
Qui chante au pays du soleil
Et meurt dans la brume incertaine
Sous un rayonnement vermeil;*

*La chanson de larmes mêlée
Que la vague dit en partant
Et qui rend l'âme exilée
Un peu du ciel qu'on aimait tant!*

*La chanson que le matin chante
Et que la nuit apprend au jour,
La chanson plaintive et touchante,
L'éternelle chanson d'amour!*

Au bien aimé de là-bas elle rêve, tandis que sur les marches qui bordent le bassin de marbre, ses gardiennes et ses esclaves tout à la fois, tordent le linge où les divines odeurs de son corps sont demeurées. Au bien-aimé dont les baisers n'étaient pas descendus plus bas que son visage, car c'est vierge sans doute qu'elle a été vendue pour le plaisir plus grand du maître. Aucune révolte d'ailleurs dans son beau regard perdu, sous son front sans pli casqué d'une admirable chevelure noire. C'est tout au plus si un pressentiment de la vie est au fond de l'existence pareille, pour elle, à un fleuve dont les eaux ne vont vers aucune mer, et qui simplement coule avec le bruit monotone de l'eau qui fuit. Aucun idéal n'est au fond de sa méditation vague dans cette griserie douce du tabac qui met une étincelle rouge entre ses doigts. / La plaindre? Pourquoi? Le soin de sa beauté ne vaut-il pas d'occuper ses jours et, comme Narcisse, n'a-t-elle pas pour y mirer ses charmes, l'eau courante qui lui répète, en tombant dans la vasque sonore,

*La chanson que le matin chante
Et que la nuit apprend au jour,
La chanson plaintive et touchante,
L'éternelle chanson d'amour!"*

Edmond Haraucourt, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 61-62: "Ici, la science veut devenir la seule émotion; la volonté analyse, pèse, discute, puis crée: nul hasard, nulle fantaisie; une conscience d'ascète, et, dans l'esprit, une raideur religieuse, un hiératisme de croyant solitaire qui vit dans son rêve abstrait, qui affirme autoritairement, sans souci d'ailleurs d'être cru, plein de dédain de ce qu'il n'a pas élaboré, de ce que veulent les autres, et de la façon dont ils jugent ce qu'il a lui même voulu.... Quelle curieuse psychologie on pourrait dresser de cette personnalité hautaine et recueillie, et qui apparaît froide parce qu'elle est austère, et qui inquiète par la solidité d'orgueil que dégagent ses oeuvres! On conçoit aisément que l'art de M. Lecomte du Noüy ne plaise pas au plus grand nombre, mais nul ne passe indifférent devant

ses toiles; elles imposent un respect et la vague inquiétude qui émane des choses avec lesquelles on communique malaisément, des choses qu'on ne pénètre qu'après une longue étude. La peinture de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ rappelle celle d'Ingres; elle en a les qualités et les défauts, la pureté et la netteté excessives. Devant l'*Esclave blanche*, surtout, on sent cette directe filiation, et plus encore on la sentait devant le portrait récemment exposé aux Trente-Trois de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ: à celui-là il n'eût presque manqué qu'un changement de signature."

Poem by Edmond Haraucourt, inspired by *L'esclave blanche*, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 63:

*Bête d'amour, es-tu la soeur, es-tu l'esclave?...
Brute aux flancs lumineux, femelles aux larges reins,
Bloc d'ennui, dans le flux onduleux de tes crins
Ton corps désespérant roule comme une épave.*

*Esclave et reine, ô toi l'essor, et toi l'entrave,
Toi, source de douleur et tombeau des chagrins,
Toi que l'homme doit fuir à l'heure où tu l'étreins,
Toi le baiser qui souille et toi l'amour qui lave!*

*Et dire qu'un esprit pourra sortir de toi
Et que le Rêve, aïeul des dieux, le Rêve-roi,
Va germer de ta chair stupide sur le monde?*

*Dors donc, et fais-nous vivre, et mourir, et penser!
Dors, et j'humilierai mon front sur ta peau blonde
Qui ne comprendra pas l'honneur de mon baiser!*

Boucher, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 129: for text see under cat. 196.

Montgailhard 1906, pp. 61-63, repr. bef. p. 65.

Connaissance des Arts, 306 (August 1977), p. 12, repr.

Harding 1979, p. 90, repr.

Depierre 1980, p. 173-179.

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985, repr. p. 501.

Jullian 1977, repr. p. 57

Verrier 1979, repr. p. 38

Thornton 1985, p. 119, repr.

Lemaire 1986, p. 258, repr.

Magiciens 1989, p. 48, repr.

Sebbar 1990, p. 189-199.

Arasse 1992, 241, repr. p. 243, no. 229

Boyer/Champion 1993, p. 426, repr.

Gost 1993, p. 149, repr.

Harrison 1993, p. 7 repr.

Baur 1995, p. 116, repr.

Bernard 1996, 340, repr. p. 278

Peltre 2000, p. 202-203, repr.

Lemaire 2000, p. 277, repr.

Fauque/Bayard 2001, p. 21, repr.

Related Works: Study for *The White Slave*, Aurillac: 82.13.47, see appendix I. Also repr. in Montgailhard 1906, p. 62.

Study for *The White Slave*, Aurillac: 82.13.48, see appendix I.

Study, see cat. 214, possibly one of the above.

Engraving by Duvivier, BN: CD 309, IV, p. 23, below the main image, there are also two small engravings of a pipe and a cigarette (left corner) and a moon or sun (right corner).

220) *The Beautiful Fernande (La belle Fernande. Au Musée d'Angers. [Montgailhard erroneously listed this work under 1887.]*

Oil on canvas, 81 x 65 cm, signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ 1888.

Present location: Angers, Musée des Beaux-Arts (inv. MBA 343).

Provenance: Henri Jouin collection; donated by him in Oct. 1900 to the museum.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 145.

Photo: photogravure BN: DC 309 II, p. 10, entitled "Mme Fernande Bloch."

221) *The Republic seized Prosperity*

Oil on panel, 26.5 x 20.5 cm, signed, dedicated and dated lower left: A l'ami Lucas / Lecomte du Nouy 88.

Provenance: Paris sale, Drouot, July 1, 1994, lot 178, not repr., provenance: Collection de Jonge, (bought in); Paris sale, Drouot, 2 December, 1994, lot 62, *La République saisit la prospérité*, repr. b/w, panneau d'acajou, une planche, non parqueté, signé, dédicacé en bas gauche "A l'ami Lucas / Lecomte du Nouy-88", 26.5 x 20.5 cm.

222) *Self-Portrait at the Easel. [Figure 2]*

Oil on canvas, 99 x 50 cm, signed and dated upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUÏ 1888.

Present location: Vic-sur-Seille, Musée départemental Georges de Latour, inv. 1999.1.79.

Provenance: Collection Jacques Thuillier.

Literature: Bourdieu-Weiss 2003, n. p., no. 52, *Autoportrait au chevalet*, repr. in color.

1889

223) *Antiope and Jupiter (Le dieu et la mortelle (Dessin rehaussé de pastel). Appartenant à la vicomtesse des Fosseuz.) [Figure 44]*

Charcoal and pastel (various colors) on brown paper, 55.8 x 46.3 cm, signed, dated and dedicated bottom right: A ses amis G. Des Fosseuz / Lecomte du Nouy 1889; inscriptions upper left and right: ANTIOPE – IVPITER.

Present location: New York, Dahesh Museum of Art, 2002.21.

Provenance: Vicomtesse des Fosseuz, 1889; New York sale, Sotheby's, April 2, 1996, lot 254, repr., sold \$8,050; New York sale, Christie's, June 6, 2002, lot 771, repr., sold \$2,390 premium; New York, Dahesh Museum of Art.

Related Works: See cat. 230.

Perhaps related to "Jupiter and Venus," Drouot 2003, lot 130, see appendix III.

224) *Portrait of Mrs. Lina Roveda (Portrait de Mme Lina Roveda.)*

225) *Sunday in Venice (Le dimanche à Venise. Salon de 1890. Appartenant à Mlle E. Vicat.)*

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1890, no. 1429: *Le dimanche, à Venise*.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 48.

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 152, see appendix II.

226) *Pharaoh on his Terrace (Pharaon sur sa terrasse. Gravé par Jasinsky, pour l'édition du Roman de la Momie, de Charpentier.)*

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 86.

227) *Crossing the Nile (La traversée du Nil. Gravé par Jasinsky, pour l'édition du Roman de la Momie, de Charpentier.)*

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 87.

1890

228) *The Malipiero Palace (Le palais Malipiero (Venise). Appartenant à Mme la comtesse Lepelletier d'Aunay.)*

229) My Family (*Ma famille (Ma femme, mon fils, et moi). Salon de 1891.*) [Figure 49]

Signed on mouse cage: JEAN DU NOUY 1890.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1891: no. 987 - *Ma famille*, portraits.

Literature: Véron, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 131; for text see cat. 230.

Montgailhard 1906, p. 76, repr. opp. p. 136.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 32; p. 33, also a photo of a drawing after this painting by Corabeuf, "Juillet 1909."

230) The God and the Mortal Woman (*Le dieu et la mortelle. Salon de 1891.*)

Signed and dated, lower left in tree-trunk: JEAN DU NOUY pinxit / 1890.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1891, no. 986: *Le Dieu et la Mortelle*. "Relevez-vous, jeune mortelle, / Vous lirez l'amour dans mes yeux." (Philémon et Baucis. – Dédicé au maître musicien Gounod.) (Fragment d'un triptyque sur l'Amour.)

Literature: Véron, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 131: "*Le Dieu et la Mortelle*, tableau ou groupe symbolique dédié au célèbre compositeur Gounod: le Jupiter olympien reçoit en ses bras la Mortelle, ou plutôt la Muse, de profil qui, d'un élan sensuel plein d'ardeur, lui présente non seulement ses lèvres lascives, mais encore son superbe torse d'un modelé irréprochable. Est-ce la Muse qui implore l'inspiration sur ses lèvres altérées de la substance fécondante et créatrice que dispose le Dieu? En tout cas, Évoqué, car l'Amour exulte avec son anneau nuptial de la main gauche, et tenant de la droite un vulgaire pissenlit surmonté de son léger pollen ou duvet en globule volatile. Tel est ce groupe symbolique remarquable par le modelé clair et net. – *Ma Famille*, très bien groupée, honoré maître! Mme du Nouÿ est assise de trois quarts et presse son cher enfant sur son cœur. Le charmant espiègle, en pleine lumière (comme vous tenant votre palette) joue avec ses petits rats blancs en cage. Ce que j'admire en ce superbe médaillon, c'est la lumière qui se modèle sans ombre et presque sans demi-teinte, le tout fouillé et rendu avec une maestria bien connue."

Montgailhard 1906, p. 77, repr. before p. 97.

Photo: Interior photo of the artist's studio (fig. 6).

Related works: See cat. 223.

Possibly related to "Jupiter and Venus," Drouot 2003, lot 130, see appendix III.

231) Portrait of M. Henri Boucher (*Portrait de M. Henri Boucher. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1903.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 9, signed upper left: LECOMTE DU NOUY FECIT HENRY BOUCHER / 1890.

232) Portrait of Mrs. Edmée Mols (*Portrait de Mme Edmée Mols. Appartenant au peintre Robert Mols.*)

233) The Village of Rochemaure, Ardèche (*Le Village de Rochemaure (Ardèche).*)

Related Work: Hahn 1995, nos. 1, 33, see appendix II.

1891

234) The Love and the Night (*L'amour et la nuit. "Encore une heure, ô nuit!" Peinture décorative pour un ciel de lit. Appartenant à Mme N***.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1892, no. 1034: *L'Amour et la Nuit*. Panneau décoratif pour un ciel de lit.

Literature: Max de Fontissant, 1892, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 131: "*L'amour et la nuit*, panneau décoratif, par Lecomte du Nouÿ. Cette peinture d'une coloration grise, peut ne pas plaire, au premier abord, mais, en l'examinant un instant, il est impossible de ne pas être frappé de la science du dessin et du modelé, ainsi que du talent de composition, qui sont les qualités dominantes de cet artiste consciencieux."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 33.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-6 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related Work: Incorporated in BN: DC 309, I, p. 45, original drawing of the male torso.

Red and white crayon, signed and inscribed lower right: *Etude pour l'amour et la nuit*.

235) Grisailles for the Book of Toth by Judith Gautier. The Arrival of the Princess at the Temple; Pharaoh in his House on the Banks of the Nile. (*Grisailles pour le livre de Toth (Judith Gautier). 1^o L'arrivée de la Princesse au temple. 2^o Le Pharaon dans sa maison du bord du Nil. Magazine Français.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 88.

1892

236) Dying For the Fatherland (*Pour la patrie. Salon de 1892. Au Musée d'Angers.*) [Figures 54, 54a]
Oil on canvas, 102 x 180 cm, signed and dated lower right: JEAN DU NOUY pinxit 1892; inscribed, upper left in laurel wreath: AUX BRAVES.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers (inv. MBA 344).

Provenance: Henri Jouin; donated to the Angers museum in October 1900.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1892, no. 1033: Mourir pour la patrie.

Literature: Lafenestre, 1892, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 132: "Sans doute, pour ramener à la vérité une génération égarée, il n'est ni nécessaire, ni juste, ni habile, de pousser l'esprit de réaction jusqu'à une sorte de fanatisme intransigeant, comme le fait, par exemple, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Cet artiste, savant et habile, pour faire front aux novateurs, recule, sans hésiter, jusqu'aux froideurs les plus oubliées de la peinture académique; ses figures, correctes, blanches et lisses, ont tout juste l'apparence de statues d'ivoires; ses vrais ancêtres ne sont même pas parmi les classiques de France, mais parmi les classiques du Nord, autour de Gérard de Lairese et de Van der Werff. Son étude d'homme mort qu'il appelle *Mourir pour la patrie*, si l'enveloppe en était moins froide, serait sans doute regardée avec l'attention qu'elle mérite, pour la science qu'elle montre et le sentiment qu'elle exprime; mais le dédain excessif qu'affiche M. Lecomte du Nouÿ pour l'harmonie des couleurs et pour les séductions de la brosse rend vraiment difficile la tâche de ceux qui voudraient rendre justice à son mérite réel et à ses inébranlables convictions." Montgailhard 1906, 77-78, repr. after p. 136.

Related works: 236a) Study for *Pour la patrie*, red chalk heightened with white on brown wove paper, 49.8 x 32.4 cm, signed lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ 92. Detroit Institute of Arts, 1999.35. Gift of Mrs. Ann D. Stoddard. [Figure 55]

236b-f) Preparatory studies for soldiers in the background (that were eventually painted over by the artist) in Aurillac: 82.13.30 [repr. Montgailhard 1906, p. 78], 82.13.36, 82.13.37, 82.13.45, 82.13.130, see appendix I.

236g) Hahn 1995, no. 89, see appendix II.

236h) BN: DC 309, III, p. 23-24, reproduces a work called "Pour l'honneur" depicting only the head of a dead soldier, and a medal in the upper left corner.

237) The Head of a Young Woman

Provenance: London sale, Sotheby's, April 20, 1967, lot 179: red, black and white chalks on buff paper, ca. 22.5 x 19.5 cm, signed and dated: 92, from the Bergrand Collection, and in Paris sale, 29 June 1927 (note on the verso of the frame).

Possibly identical to: Head of a young woman, red, white and black chalk on brown laid paper, 24.7 x 19.2 cm, signed in red chalk at lower left: Du Nouÿ, exhibited at Shepherd Gallery, New York (Nov. 1977 – Feb. 1978), no. 69, repr.; Private collection.

1893

238) Portrait of Mrs. Cécile Privat de Fressenel (*Portrait de Mlle Cécile Privat de Fressenel. Salon du Caire, 1893.*)

Note: possibly BN: DC 309, II, p. 57, oval portrait, dedicated: A MES AMIS PRIVAT / LECOMTE DU NOUÿ.

239) Portrait of Léonce Privat de Fressenel (*Portrait de Léonce Privat de Fressenel. Salons du Caire et d'Alexandrie, 1892 et 1894.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 58, bust length portrait of boy in sailor's outfit, inscribed upper left: LEONCE PRIVAT; dated lower left: DU NOUY pinxit / 1[?] AVRIL 1893.

240) Portrait of Mrs. Paita de Ortéga Morejon (*Portrait de Mlle Paita de Ortéga Morejon.*)

241) A Parisian Model (*Un modèle Parisien. Salon du Caire, 1893. Appartenant à S. Ex. Take Ionescu.*)

242) *Portrait of Baroness Boissy d'Anglais (Portrait de Mme la baronne Boissy d'Anglais (Dessin aux deux crayons).)*

243) *Medineh el Fayoum, February 1893*

Drouot 2003, lot 128, see appendix III.

1894

244) *The Supper at Beaucaire (Le souper de Beaucaire (Bonaparte). "Croyez-moi, dit-il, il viendra un homme qui saura réunir sur sa tête toutes les espérances de la nation, et alors..."*. Salon de 1894. Gravé par Rodriguez et Jules Massard. Appartenant à M. le duc de Gramont.) [Figure 53]

Oil on canvas, 76 x 110 cm, signed and dated, lower left: Lecomte du Nouÿ 1869-1894.

Present Location: Châteaux de Malmaison et de Bois-Préau (inv. MM 85.2.1).

Provenance: Victor de Swarte; Duc de Gramont; Baronne Philippe de Gunzbourg, who donated it in 1985.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1894, no. 1106: *Le souper de Beaucaire*. "Croyez-moi, dit-il, il viendra un homme qui saura réunir sur sa tête toutes les espérances de la nation, et alors..." (*Mémoires de B...*).

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1900 (together with cat. 279).

Paris, Galerie Charpentier, *Les peintres 1900* (1953).

Literature: Roger-Milès 1894, 30, repr. opp. p. 32: "Enfin, pour en finir avec la résurrection napoléonienne, je veux noter encore *Le souper de Beaucaire*, une des meilleures toiles qu'ait signées M. Lecomte-du-Nouÿ."

Walton 1900, II, p. 79, engraving after the painting by Gaston Rodriguez.

Montgailhard, 1906, p. 17, 79, repr. opp. p. 96.

Hubert 1986, p. 214, repr.

Hubert 1989, p. 34, repr.

Related Works: Goupil & Cie.

Engraving by Gaston Rodriguez, see Walton 1900.

Study of a head, Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 80.

See cats. 33, 35.

245) *Portrait Medallion of Caroline Lecomte du Nouÿ (Médailon de Caroline du Nouÿ (marbre). Salon de 1895. Appartenant à Mme J. Namur.)*

Marble

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1895, no. 3253: *Portrait de M. L.-D. N...*

Photo: possibly, BN: DC 309, II, p. 41: bust, ¾ profile seen from behind, inscribed: CARO DU NOÛY.

246) *Portrait of the lawyer Jean Cruppi (Portrait de Me Jean Cruppi, avocat général à la Cour de Cassation. Salon de 1895.)*

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1895, no. 1128: *Portrait de M. Jean Cruppi, avocat général à la Cour de cassation*.

Literature: E. Guénin, *L'Estafette* (17 January, 1895), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 139: "Au fond, les deux tableaux destinés au prochain Salon. C'est d'abord un vigoureux petit *Portrait* où M Cruppi est représenté dans la robe rouge d'avocat général à la Cour de cassation. C'est ensuite une composition très fine de coloration et très serrée de dessin: *La Fin du grand Jeûne à Tanger*. Sur une terrasse élevée de la capitale du Maroc, des hommes et des femmes, en brillants costumes, regardent et font admirer aux enfants la scintillante étoile qui lentement s'élève au milieu du ciel bleu, par une de ces belles nuits comme on en voit dans les seuls pays d'Orient. Assis sur un tabouret bas, sa palette à la main, penché sur sa toile, vêtu d'un veston gris, contre lequel, aux moments difficiles, il essuie son pinceau, d'un gros tricot de laine bleue et d'un pantalon marron où viennent se perdre des pantoufles en feutre, Lecomte du Nouÿ s'acharne après une jambe de son Napoléon, dont la pose n'est pas juste à son gré. L'artiste est un homme de cinquante-deux ans, de taille moyenne, dont les cheveux grisonnent déjà. Une forte moustache donne à sa physionomie très fine une allure toute martiale, tandis que les bleus, toujours un peu voiles dénotent le poète et le rêveur."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. after p. 40.

Related Work: BN: DC 309, II, p. 17; p. 18, cat. 182.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-13 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

247) Head of the Virgin (*Tête de Vierge (Sanguine)*). Appartenant à S. Ex. Tigrane Pacha.)
Probably identical to: Head of the Virgin, study for the mural, *La mort de la Vierge* in the church St Nicolas de Iassy (see cat. 283). [Figure 120]

Red and white crayon on paper, 20 x 25.8 cm, inscribed upper right: pour la mort de la Vierge; signed lower left: du Nouÿ.

Present Location: Dahesh Museum of Art, gift of DeCourcy E. McIntosh, 2001.11

Literature:

Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 97, the mural is repr. on p. 74.

Small 2001, p. 12-14, fig. 13.

Note: see also cat. 185.

248) The First Star, Morocco (*La première étoile ou la fin du grand jeune (Maroc)*). Salon de 1895. Gravé sur bois, par Kemplen. Appartenant à M. Herbert Radclyffe (Boston).) [Figure 128]

Oil on canvas, 76 x 127.5 cm, signed and dated, 1894.

Provenance: New York sale, Sotheby's, May 28, 1981, lot 117, color repr., \$16,500; present location unknown.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon Figaro, 1895, no. 1127: *La première étoile ou la fin du grand jeune*; Tanger (Maroc).

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 80, repr. opp. p. 40.

E. Guénin, *L'Estafette* (17 January, 1895), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 139; for text see cat. 246.

Bénédite 1895, brief mention p. 55-56, repr. p. 42.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-5 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Goupil & Cie.

249) Portrait of Countess Geoffre de Chabrignac (*Portrait de Mme la comtesse de Geoffre de Chabrignac*.)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 12.

250) Portrait of Mrs. Léo Baraduc (*Portrait de Mme Léo Baraduc*. Salon de 1896.)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1896, no. 1196: *Portrait de Mme B...*

1895

251) Portrait of Countess de Bercy (*Portrait de Mme la comtesse de Bercy*. Salon de 1896.)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1896: no. 1197: *Portrait de Mme T. de B...*

Note: The museum in Aurillac keeps a copy of Montgailhard 1906, with the following dedication by Lecomte du Nouÿ: A la Marquise Th. de Bercy / Souvenir affectueux / d'un vieil ami: / Jean du Nouÿ / 14 dec. 1906.

Photo: There exist three photographs of different portraits of this sitter, BN: DC 309, II, p. 5, oval portrait, page inscribed in pencil: Marquise de Bercy; BN: DC 309, II, p. 6, rectangular portrait; BN: DC 309 II, p. 7, rectangular portrait.

252) The Virgin of the Skies "Diana" (*La Vierge des nuées "Diane"*. Salon de Munich 1897. Appartenant à S. M. la Reine Elisabeth de Roumanie.)

253) Portrait of the Princess of Saxen Meiningen (*Portrait de S. A. R. la princesse de Saxe Meininge*. (Dessin aux deux crayons).)

Drawing.

254) Portrait of Mrs. Take Ionescu (*Portrait de Mme Take Ionescu* (Dessin aux deux crayons). Appartenant à S. E. le ministre de Roumanie.)

255) Portrait of H. R. H. Princess Mary of Romania (*Portrait de S. A. R. la princesse Marie de Roumanie*. (Dessins aux deux crayons).)

Drawing.

256) Portrait of H. M. King Charles I of Romania (*Portrait de S. M. le roi Charles I^{er} de Roumanie. Salon de Munich 1897. Palais Royal (Bucarest).*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. after title page; signed and dated upper left: 1895 SINAIA JEAN DU NOÛY.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, pp. 69-73.

Related work: Preparatory study with two portraits of the King and two portraits of the Queen (cats. 256-259), Aurillac: 82.13.283, see appendix I.

Oil study of the crown, Aurillac: 82.13.264, see appendix I.

257) Portrait of H. M. Queen Elizabeth of Romania (*Portrait de S. M. la reine Elisabeth de Roumanie. Salon de Munich 1897. Palais Royal (Bucarest).*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. before p. ix; inscribed, dated, and signed upper left: 1895 JEAN DU NOÛY.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, pp. 80-84.

Related Work: Preparatory study, Aurillac: 82.13.309, see appendix I.

Oil study of the crown, Aurillac: 82.13.237, see appendix I.

Preparatory study with two portraits of the King and two portraits of the Queen (cats. 256-259), Aurillac: 82.13.283, see appendix I.

1896

258) Portrait of H. M. King Charles I of Romania (*Portrait de S. M. le roi Charles I^{er} de Roumanie. Pour l'Université d'Issay (Roumanie).*)

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 166, 172, 174, see appendix II.

Preparatory study with two portraits of the King and two portraits of the Queen (cats. 256-259), Aurillac: 82.13.283, see appendix I.

259) Portrait of H. M. Queen Elizabeth of Romania (*Portrait de S. M. la reine Elisabeth de Roumanie. Pour l'Université d'Issay (Roumanie).*)

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 167, see appendix II.

Preparatory study with two portraits of the King and two portraits of the Queen (cats. 256-259), Aurillac: 82.13.283, see appendix I.

260) The Founding Princes of the Church of the Three Saints, Iassy (*Les princes fondateurs de l'Église des trois Saints (Iassy).*)

261) Cartoons for the murals of King Charles I, Queen Elizabeth and the Royal Family (*Le roi Charles I^{er}, la reine Élisabeth et la famille royale. Cartons pour les peintures murales de l'Église.*)

262) Studies for Angels (*Études d'Ange (Sanguines). A S. M. la Reine Elisabeth.*)

263) Portrait of H. M. Queen Elizabeth (*Portrait de S. M. la reine Elisabeth (Dessin aux deux crayons). Appartenant à Mme Mavrogheni, grande maîtresse de la Cour de Roumanie.*)

1897

264) Bonaparte Annotating the Commentaries of Caesar (*Bonaparte annotant les commentaires de César. Appartenant à S. A. R. la princesse Charlotte de Saxe-Meiningen.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906: p. 72, repr. bef. p. 73.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 12-14. One photo shows the picture in an elaborate frame with an eagle. A 1902 engraving of the composition by L. Quarante, shows an image of a sunrise next to the title.

265) H. M. King Charles I ordering the Restoration of the Church of Argès. (*S. M. le roi Charles I^{er} ordonnant la restauration de l'église d'Argès.*)

266) Cartoons for: H. M. Queen Elizabeth Offering her Gospel to the Church of Argès (*S. M. la reine Elisabeth offrant son évangile à l'église d'Argès. Cartons pour les peintures murales.*)

267) Commemorative plaque for the visit by H. M. Emperor Franz-Joseph of Austria to Romania. (*Stèle commémorative en souvenir de la visite de S. M. l'empereur d'Autriche François-Joseph en Roumanie (Marbre). Au Château royal de Sinaia.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 88.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-14 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related work: cat. 271

268) Portrait of H. R. H. Feodora of Saxen Meiningen (*Portrait de S. A. R. la princesse Feodora de Saxe Meiningen (Princesse de Reuss XXX). Appartenant à S. A. R. la princesse Charlotte de Saxe-Meiningen.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 63: inscribed below: SON ALTESSE LA PRINCESSE FEODORA DE SAXE MEININGEN; signed and dated upper right: JEAN DU NOÛY pinxit 1897.

269) Carmen Sylva Listening to the Voices of the Forest (*Carmen Sylva écoutant les voix de la forêt. (D'après une photographie de Braun.) Salons de 1899, Paris et Gand. Au Château royal de Sinaia. [Listed erroneously by Montgailhard under 1899.]*)

Oil on canvas (size unknown), signed, inscribed and dated, left lower center: Jean du Noüy pinxit / fait au château royal de Sinaia / 1897.

Present Location: Royal Castle Sinaia, Rumania.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1899, no. 1165: Portrait de S. M. la reine Elisabeth de Roumanie (Carmen Sylva).

(Destinée au château royal de Sinaia.).

Ghent, Salon 1899.

Literature: Achille Fould, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 137: "*Sa Majesté la Reine de Roumanie, Carmen Sylva, nous est présentée par M. Lecomte du Noüy. Oeil bleu, nez fin; petite bouche, cheveux gris, robe de satin blanc, ornée de dentelle blanche, sortie de bal grise, doublée de satin rose, cou nu, la souveraine s'offre à nous assise sur un vaste fauteuil rouge. Dans sa main gauche, elle tient un livre sur ses genoux; dans sa main droite est une plume. Son coude s'appuie sur un coussin blanc rosé. Une fourrure noire s'étend sous ses pieds. Papiers, encre, photographie, bouquet de violettes sont placés sur une table près d'elle. Voire même la médaille que lui décerna l'Académie française. Dans la partie allégorique, en haut de la toile est rappelée la Forêt qui chante. La Forêt s'anime. C'est une femme entourée de feuillage, un fil de la Vierge à la main. Des génies voltigent autour d'elle. L'un tient une couronne, l'autre une flûte, un troisième jette des fleurs dans l'espace. Le luxe de la composition est digne du royal modèle auquel s'applique on ne peut mieux aussi le faire correct, original et serré par lequel se distingue M. Lecomte du Noüy.*"

Montgailhard 1906, p. 71, 81, repr. opp. p. 72.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 87.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-14 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related Work: Study with baby heads for "Carmen Sylva écoutant les voix de la forêt", pastel, red and white crayon on brown paper, 20.5 x 33.2 cm, signed and dated: 1896. Bucharest, National Museum of Art, inv. 1882.

Aurillac: 82.13.115, verso, see appendix I

1898

270) Portrait of H. M. Queen Elizabeth (*Portrait de S. M. la reine Elisabeth. Sur la toile, la reine a écrit: "Darf ich die Namen nimmer N[sic for H]ören – ach! die sussen! – immer Darf ich, Mutter sagen noch!" (Si je ne dois pas m'entendre appeler de ce doux nom encore, puis-je du moins le dire! mère.) Appartenant à S. A. S. la princesse mère de Wied.*)

271) Commemorative plaque of the visit by the Austrian Emperor Franz-Joseph to Romania (*Stèle commémorative de la visite de l'empereur François-Joseph. Bronze, incrusté dans le rocher de Sinaia. Une épreuve à l'Académie Roumaine (Bucarest).*)

Bronze

Related work: cat. 267

272) View of the Abbey of San Gregorio, Venice (*Vue de l'Abazia San Gregorio (Venise). Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1904.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon de l'Automobile-Club, 1904.

Literature: Anonymous, cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 137: "Cette étude du cloître San Grégorio est doublement intéressante, d'abord parce que ce fut S. A. la Comtesse de Flandre, soeur du roi de Roumanie, qui l'indique à du Nouÿ, pendant un séjour à Ragatz, comme lui ayant servi à faire une aquarelle, et en second lieu parce que le charme de cette belle abbaye est aujourd'hui bien profané: un hôtel s'y est installé."

Anonymous, *Journal des Arts* (9 March, 1904), cited from Montgailhard 1906, 140-41; for text, see cat. 303.

273) Study of a male head

Oil on canvas, 33.5 x 24.5 cm, signed and dated: Du Nouÿ / 98.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers (inv. MBA 294).

Provenance: Henri Jouin; his gift to the museum, 10 December 1898.

274) Study of a female head

Oil on canvas, 33.5 x 24.5 cm, signed and dated: J. du Nouÿ / 98.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers (inv. MBA 295)

Provenance: Henri Jouin; his gift to the museum, 10 December 1898.

Note: Both these head studies can be seen hanging in a photo of the artist in his studio (fig. 6), directly to the right of the large *Le Dieu et la Mortelle* (cat. 230), over each other.

275) Portrait of Mrs. Prezan, 1898

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 54, signed upper right: JEAN DU NOÛY / 1898 / CASTEL PELES.

276) Portrait of a Woman, 1898

Red and white chalk and graphite on paper, 10 3/4 x 8 1/8 in.

Signed and dedicated lower right: A Monsieur Cagnat / [...] bon souvenir / Jean du Nouÿ / 98

Present Location: New York, Private collection.

1899

277) For the Honor (*Pour l'Honneur! Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1905.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 23-24. Head of dead soldier, with Painted medal in upper left corner, inscribed, upper right: "POUR L'HONNEUR."

278) Portrait of Countess Ounous de Clairvaux (*Portrait de Mme la comtesse d'Ounous de Clairvaux.*)

Signed upper right: Jean DUNOÛY 1899.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 113.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 50-51.

279) The Dictation at Austerlitz (*La dictée d'Austerlitz, 1^{er} Aout [sic for Décembre?] 1805. "Car la Victoire ne saurait hésiter, dans cette journée où il s'agit de l'honneur de l'infanterie française." (Napoléon). Salons de Paris 1889 [sic for 1899], Gand 1899.*)

Oil on canvas, 80 x 106 cm, signed and dated 1899.

Present Location: Private collection, Switzerland.

Provenance: Versailles sale, Cherau-Légiers, March 10, 1968, lot 110, La Dictée d'Austerlitz. Toile.

Signée en bas à droite et datée 1899. H. 0.80; L. 0.106, repr. [see also lot 111: *Mlle de Maupin* (cat. 297) offered in same auction]. Galerie Le Sphinx, Paris.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1899, no. 1166: La dictée d'Austerlitz, 1^{er} août 1805. "Car la Victoire ne saurait hésiter, dans cette journée où il s'agit de l'honneur de l'infanterie française. (Napoléon)."

Ghent, Salon 1899.

Paris, Exposition Universelle 1900 (together with cat. 244).

Literature: Guénin 1895, p. 113; also cited in Montgailhard 1906, p. 138: "Longtemps encore, je verrai M. Lecomte du Nouÿ comme il m'est apparu pour la première fois dans son atelier. Il était en train de peindre

la *Veillée d'Austerlitz* et achevait de placer ses personnages. A côté de l'artiste, un gros volume sur Napoléon, ouvert à une page où s'échafaudait le fameux chapeau représenté sous ses divers aspects. Au milieu du hall, une espèce de chambre en papier gris; une des parois déchirée laisse voir l'empereur étendant une jambe devant le feu qui rougit d'une lueur violente les uniformes de ses généraux. Procédé ingénieux qui permet à l'artiste, travaillant en pleine lumière, d'avoir les colorations justes de son effet de nuit. A droite, le plus admirable paravent chinois qu'il ait été donné à un Parisien de contempler occupe tout un panneau, oeuvre merveilleuse, composée de pierres précieuses de toutes les nuances et entourée de superbes sculptures sur bois. A gauche, une Vénus de Milo, de taille naturelle, se dresse sur un socle recouvert de velours rouge. [fig. 6] A côté, une belle copie d'un dessin de Raphaël rappela cette phrase que le maître de céans inscrivit un jour sur l'album d'une de ses admiratrices. 'Gérôme est mon maître et Raphaël mon Dieu.' "

Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 1.

Photo: Braun, in Documentation du Musée d'Orsay.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-20 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, III, p. 17, contains a reproduction of this painting and the following text: "Le soir du premier Décembre 1805, près du feu d'un bivouac, devant tous les généraux assemblés, Napoléon dicta la proclamation qui devait être lue aux troupes avant la bataille du lendemain. Ses dispositions étaient prises, les plans tracés, les ordres donnés. Son génie prévoyait tout, les attaques et les mouvements de l'ennemi, décidait du sort du combat, commandait la victoire, "car, disait-il, elle ne saurait hésiter dans cette journée où il s'agit de l'honneur de l'infanterie française." C'est par ces éloquentes harangues qu'il imposait à ses troupes la confiance qu'il avait lui-même en sa fortune et qu'il exaltait leur enthousiasme."

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 38, see appendix II.

Study for the legs of Napoleon, Aurillac: 82.13.328, see appendix I.

Study of a head for one of the generals, Aurillac: 82.13.320, see appendix I.

280) Commemorative plaque of the trip by King Charles I of Romania to Russia (*Stèle commémorative en souvenir du voyage du roi Charles I^{er} de Roumanie en Russie.*)

Plaster or terracotta relief, with the inscription: PLEUNA 1877. ARMEE RUSSE ARMEE ROUMAINE.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 115.

281) Saint John the Baptist (*Saint Jean-Baptiste. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1903.*)

282) Portrait of Mrs. de Giafferi (*Portrait de Mme V. de Giafferi. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1904.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 27.

283) Cartoons for the Church of Saint Nicholas of Iassy, 42 Figures: The Death of the Virgin, The Founding Princes, Basil the Wolf, The King, The Queen, The Princesses, The Romanian Fatherland, All the Saints, etc. (*Carton pour Saint-Nicolas de Iassy (Roumanie). Quarante-deux figures: La mort de la Vierge; Les Princes fondateurs; Basile le Loup; Le Roi; La Reine; Les Princesses; La Patrie Roumaine; Tous les Saints; etc.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. pp. 65-74.

Note: BN: DC 309, I, p. 5, photo of the artist and someone else in front of the mural (or the cartoon for)

"The Death of the Virgin."

See cat. 247.

284) Study of an angel holding a candle, for a mural in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Iassy.

Red chalk and white crayon on beige paper, 27.5 x 34 cm.

Note: Repr. in Montgailhard 1906, p. 37 (without dedication), and also in a 1991 catalogue of Galerie Paul Prouté, Paris (p. 25, no. 122), in which the drawing is seen bearing a dedication to Mr. Babelon, signed and dated 1908. As Montgailhard's book was published in 1906, this date reflects the year of the dedication, and not the creation of the drawing.

1900

285) Portrait of Mrs. Daban (*Portrait de Mme M. Daban.*)

286) For Liberty (*Pour la liberté (Statue marbre). Dédié aux enfants de Paris. Salon de 1901.*) [Figure 51]
Marble

Present Location: possibly, Brussels, Musée de l'Armée.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1901, no. 3328: Pour la liberté. – statue, marbre. “Feu!!! L'enfant tomba et cette petite âme s'envola.”

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 89-90, repr. after p. 88.

Photo: BN: DC 309 II, pp. 126-129.

1901

287) H. M. King Charles (*S. M. le roi Charles (Terre cuite). Appartenant à S. Ex. M. Kalendro.*)
Terracotta

288) Madeleine de Maupin (*Madeleine de Maupin. Appartenant à Lady Bateman.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 83, inscribed: MADELAINE [sic] DE MAUPIN.

Related Work: See cat. 297.

289) A Girondin (*Un Girondin. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1903. Appartenant à M. Henri Bouchot, de l'institut.*)

290) The Sadness of Pharaoh (*Tristesse de Pharaon. “Qui donc a pris le coeur de notre maître?...” Roman de la Momie. (Th. Gautier). Salons de Paris 1901 et de Vienne 1902.*) [Figure 104]

Provenance: London sale, Christie's, May 4, 1973, La Tristesse de Pharaon, 69.9 x 110.5 cm, signed and dated 1901.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1901, no. 1232: Tristesse de Pharaon. “Qui donc a pris le coeur de notre maître” (*Roman de la Momie. Th. Gautier.*)

Vienna, Salon 1902.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, pp. 82-83, repr. after p. 96.

Denis 1913, p. 77: “Pour satisfaire quelle passion d'archéologie M. Lecomte du Nouy persiste-t-il à dessiner sèchement, mais non sans élégance, des modèles costumés en Égyptiens, sous prétexte de nous dire par exemple la *Tristesse de Pharaon*?”

Demaison 1901, repr. p. 410 [not mentioned in text].

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 3858-10 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Goupil & Cie.

Note: As Montgailhard claims that the artist visited a chamber in Egypt which inspired his depiction of the interior in this painting, an oil sketch in Aurillac from 1901 may be related to this visit, Aurillac: 82.13.243, see appendix I.

291) Portrait of Mrs. Knapp (*Portrait de Mme Knapp (Dessin aux deux crayons).*)
Drawing

292) Portrait Medallion of Mrs. Knapp (*Portrait de Mme Knapp (Médaille en marbre).*)
Marble

293) Portrait of Countess Jeanne de Gerson (*Portrait de Mme la comtesse Jeanne de Gerson. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1902.*)

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 26: signed and dated upper left: JEAN DU NOÛY / 1901.

294) The Rabbi (*Le Rabbin. “Car Mardochée le Juif fut le second après le Roi...” (Livre d'Esther). Salon de 1902. [sic for 1904]*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1904, no. 1085: Le rabbin. “Car Mardochée le juif fut le second après le Roi.” (*Livre d'Esther.*)

Photo: BN: DC, IV, 2 last pages, painting signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUY / 1902.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-18 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

295) Self-portrait (*Mon portrait. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1905*. [Erroneously listed by Montgailhard under 1902.])
Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. title page: signed upper left: JEAN.DU.NOÛY. PARIS. 1901.

1902

296) Saint John the Baptist (*Saint Jean (Sanguine)*. *Appartenant à S. M. la Reine Elisabeth*. [Erroneously listed by Montgailhard under 1901.])

Red chalk and white crayon on brown paper, 33,5 x 26,4 cm, signed and dated lower right: LECOMTE DU NOUY / 1902; inscribed in halo: LE PRECURSEUR.

Present Location: Bucharest, National Museum of Art, inv. 1827.

Photo: Agence photographique RMN.

Related Work: BN: DC 309, I, p. 28 is a photo of a painting with a very similar composition, not signed or dated.

297) Mademoiselle de Maupin (*Mademoiselle de Maupin*. "J'ai quitté pour vous mes habits d'homme, je les reprendrai demain matin pour tous. Songez que je ne suis Rosalinde que la nuit." (Th. Gautier). *Salon de 1902*.)

Oil on canvas, 107 x 86 cm, signed lower right: Lecomte du Nouy.

Present Location: Private collection, UK.

Provenance: Versailles sale, Cherau-légers, March 10, 1968, lot 111, as: *Le chevalier d'Eon*, Toile. Signé et datée 1902. H. 0.102; L. 0.855, repr. [see also lot 110, *Dictée d'Austerlitz* (cat. 279) in same auction]; New York sale, Sotheby's, October 31, 2000, lot 87, sold \$55,000; Private collection.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1902, no. 1007: *Mademoiselle de Maupin*. [With the same text passage as in title above.]

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 41; p. 83-84, the painting was started in 1866 and finished only in 1902. The male figure bears the likeness of Théophile Gautier.

Related Works: Preparatory study for the head of *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, see Montgailhard 1906, p. 83-84, with Lady Bateman, Shobdon Castle.

Study of Arms and Hands for "Mademoiselle de Maupin."

Pencil on paper, New York, Dahesh Museum of Art, gift of DeCourcy Macintosh, 2002.64

Hahn 1995, no. 67, 68, see appendix II.

Oil sketch with a different composition of this subject, Aurillac: 82.13.308, see appendix I.

See cat. 288.

298) Portrait of Lady Bateman (*Portrait de Lady Bateman (Cire colorée, ornée de bijoux)*. *Au château de Shobdon*.)

Colored Wax

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 86.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 3.

299) Portrait of the young Robert Castelnau (*Portrait du jeune Robert Castelnau. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1903*.)

300) Portrait of Lady Bateman (*Portrait de Lady Bateman. Au château de Shobdon (Angleterre)*.)

Literature: *Country Life* (Nov. 10, 1906), p. 674 gives photo of the interior of Shobdon Castle, featuring a portrait gallery with the Lecomte du Nouy painting of Lady Bateman, and the bust length marble portrait relief of Lady Bateman.

Photo: BN: DC 309 II, p. 2.

1903

301) The Iron that Provides Bread (*Le fer qui donne du pain (Statue plâtre)*. *Salon de 1903*.)

Plaster

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1903, no. 2914: *Le fer qui donne du pain*; statue, plâtre.

Related works: French sale, Ferri Scp., June 24, 1998, lot 216, *Le fer qui donne du pain* (sketch), terracotta, 5.3 x 5.7 in. (13.5 x 14.5 cm), FF 4.200.
New York sale, Sotheby's, December 14, 1989, *Figure of a Blacksmith: le fer qui donne du pain*, bronze with patina, 12.8 in. (32.5 cm) (bought in).
See cat. 308.

302) The Sorceress (*La sorcière*. Salon de 1904.)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1904, no. 1084: *La sorcière*.

Literature: Peladan, *Revue hebdomadaire* (7 May 1904), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 140: "M. Lecomte du Nouÿ se trouve un des derniers dessinateurs. *Sa Sorcière*, comme étude de nu accroupi et replié, s'impose par une solidité de construction aujourd'hui fort rare."

Fix Polak, *l'Art et la Mode* (21 May 1904), cited from Montgailhard 1906, 140: "Une Sorcière au corps souple, chaudement coloré par les reflets de la flamme, très délicat morceau de nu fort habilement traité par M. Lecomte du Nouÿ."

Maurice Hamel, *The Salons of 1904* (translated by Paul Villars, Goupil & Co., Paris, New York), repr. Montgailhard 1906, repr. opp. p. 104.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-19 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Goupil & Cie.

Related Works: Study for *La sorcière*. Black pencil and pastel on beige paper, 22 x 18 cm, signed lower right and inscribed with title upper left. Galerie A. Laurentin, Paris.

appendix IV (Hahn 1995), no. 161

Study of the sorcerer's head, Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 105.

BN: DC 309, III, p. 29-32, contains various colored prints of this composition in different proofs.

1904

303) The Queen of Hearts (*La dame de coeur*. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1904. Appartenant à la marquise de Bercy.)

Literature: Anonymous, *Journal des Arts* (9 March, 1904), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 140-41: "Suivons M. Lecomte du Nouÿ, aux rivages changeants, aux visions diverses, où son caprice et son habileté se jouent. A Venise, il nous montre l'enceinte de retraite plaisante que le joli *Cloître de San Gregorio*, ses portiques festonnés de verdure, l'apaisement de son morne silence. Aux bords du Nil, le même artiste semble avoir partagé ses préférences indécises entre une femme qui mouille au fleuve sacré ses pieds de bronze, et une cigogne enjambant les vases succulentes. Pour moi, les négligeant peut-être un peu toutes les deux, je m'attarderais en la contemplation de ces brumes opalines, de ces brouillards laiteux, dont si doucement s'enveloppe la terre des Pharaons, à l'instant précis où le soleil à peine revenu l'éveille en une caresse première. J'aime encore et beaucoup un profil de dessin délicat, et qui suffit à proclamer un bien charmant visage. Il faut donc nous réjouir que la Roumanie, longtemps habitée par lui, nous ait rendu M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Nous y gagnerons un peu, si elle y perd beaucoup. / Il n'est pas de Cercle sans un salon de jeu; et sans doute les fervents de l'automobile n'ont pas échappé à cette nécessité mondaine. Ici, cependant, le *Brelan de dames* est tout spécialement désirable; il ferait bon le trouver dans son jeu, et l'avoir sous la main, car ce brelan n'est point, selon la tradition, de Judith, de Pallas, etc.; il est de quatre femmes, dames de beauté, reines d'élégance capiteuse, et Comerre, Bourgonnier, Lecomte du Nouÿ, de Schryver, les ont imaginées, complaisamment pénétrées d'une radieuse existence. Ces quatre dames batailleront peut-être; il serait malaisé de trouver quatre femmes, et surtout quatre jolies femmes qui s'entendent; mais si j'étais sultan de quelque lointain Constantinople, j'aimerais à recevoir ce quatuor dans mon harem hospitalier; et je ne m'impatierais pas à me faire des patiences qui me ramèneraient sans cesse des cartes si bien historiées."

304) An Oriental Dream (*Rêve d'Orient*. Salon de 1905.) [Figure 94]

Oil on canvas, 70.5 x 121.4 cm, signed and dated, 1904.

Provenance: New York sale, Christie's, May 24, 1985, lot 185, *Reve d'Orient*, color repr., bought in; London sale, Sotheby's, June 17, 1986, lot 32, *A Dream of the East*, color repr., £12.100. Mathaf Gallery, London.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1905, no. 1143: *Rêve d'Orient*.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 84.

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 5-12, various photographs and engravings of this composition.
Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 59, see appendix II; present location, Cleveland Museum of Art.
Aurillac sketchbook: 82.13.359, p. 41, appendix I, shows a reclining figure in very similar pose.
See cat. 92.

305) *Fleeing Thoughts (Pensées fugitives (Maroc). Salon de 1905.)*

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1905, no. 1144: *Pensées fugitives*.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 50.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-2 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, IV, pp. 12, 13 (engraving), p. 14 (color lithography), p. 15 (sepia print).

306) *A Jew (Un juif. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1905. Appartenant à S. A. R. le prince Victor de Wied.)*

307) *A Woman carrying a Jug on the bank of the Nile while looking at a Stork*

Oil on canvas, 59 x 40 cm, Paris sale, Tableaux Anciens et Orientalistes, July 11, 2001, lot 41, *Le petit matin*; bought in.

Literature: Anonymous, *Journal des Arts* (9 March, 1904), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 140-41:

"Aux bords du Nil, le même artiste semble avoir partagé ses préférences indécises entre une femme qui mouille au fleuve sacré ses pieds de bronze, et une cigogne enjambant les vases succulentes." For full text see cat. 303.

Photo: BN: DC 309, IV, p. 26, *Le matin au bord du Nil*.

1905

308) *The Iron that Provides Bread (Le fer qui donne du pain (Statue marbre). Pour l'Oeuvre de Vie internationale, au ministère de l'Agriculture. Salon de 1905. La première épreuve, réduction en biscuit, appartenant à Mme Henriette Thomson.) [Figure 50]*

Marble

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1905, no. 3325: *Le Fer qui donne du Pain*; statue, marbre.

Literature: Auguste Dalligré, *Journal des Arts* (24 June 1905), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 141: "*Le Fer qui donne le pain*, statue marbre, de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ. Un paysan au torse nu, en pantalon de toile et coiffé d'un chapeau usé, assis sur une gerbe de blé, d'un coup de marteau redresse le fer de sa faux. Rien de plus simple et de plus vrai que la pose de cet homme qui, tout en regardant devant lui, accomplit sa besogne. Visage d'expression bien typique, corps musclé, fort sans excès; dos très observé dans sa courbe et ses reliefs; le tout habilement rendu et sans effort apparent; motif d'un sentiment très sincère en son ensemble."

Montgailhard 1906, repr. bef. p. 89, p. 90-91.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, pp. 131-33.

Related Works: Terracotta sketch, 13.5 x 14.5 cm, French sale, Mr. Marc Ferri, specialist, June 24, 1998, lot 216, sold for FF 4.200.

Three bronze reductions, 50.5 cm high, 32.3 cm high, and 32.5 cm high; New York sale, Sotheby's, Dec. 14, 1989, lot 138-140.

See cat. 301 for the plaster version.

309) *Portrait of Jacques Lecomte du Nouÿ (Portrait de mon fils Jacques. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1906.)*

Inscribed, upper left: *Mon fils Jacques avant son départ au regiment*; signed and dated, right: JEAN DU NOÛY 1905.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. before p. 104.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 98, this photo differs from the one reproduced in Montgailhard. It shows the same inscription as given here, but also shows a hand in an otherwise similar composition. It is likely that the artist changed the painting between photographs.

1906

310) Madrigal (*Madrigal. Salon de 1906.*)

Inscription: Petite Reine, Le charme de votre doux / visage réjouit qui vous voit / la douceur de vos yeux / qui vous aime. Jean du Nouÿ 1906.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1906, no. 984: Madrigal.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, 84, repr. after p. 128.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-11 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

311) Portrait of Guy de Montgailhard (*Portrait de M. Guy de Montgailhard. Salon de l'Automobile-Club de 1906.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 109.

312) Portrait of Stanislas Meunier (*Portrait de Stanislas Meunier.*)

Note: BN: DC 309, II, p. 96, shows a female portrait, signed and dedicated upper left: A Madame Stanislas Meunier / souvenir d'un ami lecteur / Jean du Nouÿ.

313) The Prosciber (*Le proscripteur. "Allons, dit Hérode, chassez-moi ces gens là!" Salon de 1906.*)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1906, no. 985: Le proscripteur.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 85.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-10 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, I, p. 41-43 (photos and postcard).

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 176, see appendix II.

Preparatory sketch for the Christ child, Aurillac: 82.13.209; for Joseph, Aurillac 82.13.24, see appendix I.

314) Portrait of Dimitri Stirbey (*Portrait du prince Démètre Stirbey.*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, repr. p. 107.

See cats. 316, 326.

No. 314 is the last work included in Montgailhard's catalogue of Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre.

315) Venise, la nuit, 1906.

French sale, Jonquet Scp., July 7, 1994, lot 21, *Venise, la nuit*, 1906, sanguine, 7.1 x 9.1 in. (18 x 23 cm) (bought in).

1907

The Paris Salon catalogue of 1907 contains no works by Lecomte du Nouÿ.

1908

316) Monument for Prince Barbo Stirbey

Present Location: Craiova

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1908, sculpture, no. 3320: Monument du prince Barbo Stirbey, à ériger à Craiova (Roumanie), Le Prince Barbo Stirbey (groupe bronze), L'Histoire Roumaine (bas-relief bronze); Le Danube Roumain (bas relief bronze), reproduced in catalogue.

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 92.

See cats. 314, 326.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 2481-1 (www.roger-viollet.fr)

1909

317) The Marquise of X...

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1909, no. 1090: La marquise de X..., repr.

318) The Lost Lamb

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1909, no. 1091: L'agneau perdu.

See cat. 5.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-8 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, I, p. 89, postcard.

1910

319) Venice!

Triptych in elaborate neo-renaissance frame (fig. 7.)

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1910, no. 1153: Venise!

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 7-9, 37. Central panel in the predella reads: J'APPARAIS A QUI SAIT ME VOIR. Other depictions in the predella are: La belle Venise; a male and a female river god; portraits of Bellini and Veronese; John Ruskin holding 'The Stones of Venice'; Lord Byron overlooking the canals; portraits of Vittorio Carpaccio and Giovanni Tiepolo.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, nos. 730-11, 13114-7, 3620-10 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related Work: Hahn 1995, no. 44, see appendix II.

Several related sketches for these predella paintings in Aurillac: 82.13.205, 82.13.206, 82.13.210, 82.13.213, 82.13.214, 82.13.225, 82.13.226, 82.13.227, 82.13.228, 82.13.229, 82.13.278, 82.13.307, see appendix I]

1911

The Paris Salon catalogue of 1911 contains no works by Lecomte du Nouÿ.

1912

320) Alexander at the Tomb of Achilles

Inscription on the frame, decorated with medallions of Cesar and Napoleon:

Honorer les héros engendre des Héros / Avant de combattre les Perses / Alexandre sacrifie au tombeau d'Achille / H.C.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1912, no. 1097: Alexandre au tombeau d'Achille.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 51.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-5 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Related Works: Hahn 1995, no. 49, see appendix II, although different title; perhaps related to small sketch at Galerie Patrick Roger-Binet, Paris.

Study of the Shoulder, Upper Right Arm and Chest of Alexander

Oil on canvas, oil on canvas, 28.8 x 34.5 cm, Private collection, Paris.

Study of the Foot of Alexander

Oil on canvas, 25 x 18.5 cm, Private collection, Paris.

Fragment of a study for laurelled head of Alexander, Aurillac: 82.13.341, see appendix I.

Rough sketch of overall design of painting and frame with various inscriptions: Aurillac, 82.13.135, see appendix I.

Design for an elaborate neo-renaissance frame that resembles the one for the painting seen in the above-mentioned photograph at Roger-Viollet, Aurillac: 82.13.72, see appendix I.

321) The Philosopher (or: Diogenes in his Barrel)

Oil on canvas, 149 x 149 cm.

Present Location: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nancy (Inv. 1176), gift of the artist in 1913.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1912, 1098: Le Philosophe.

Literature: *L'illustration*, 3610 (4 Mai 1912), repr. p. 366.

Related Work: Various related sketches in Aurillac: 82.13.13, 82.13.158, 82.13.201, 82.13.204, see appendix I.

Drouot 2003, lot 124, see appendix III.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 4916-11 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

322) Portrait of a Woman (Blanche de Failly)

Oil on canvas, 56 x 47 cm, signed and dedicated: à sa cousine Blanche de Failly, 1912.

Provenance: Paris sale, Drouot, March 24, 1995, lot 169, portrait de femme, not reproduced; Paris sale, Drouot, May 17, 1987, lot 170, Portrait de Blanche de Failly. Peinture sur toile, 56 x 47 cm, signée en haut à gauche et dédicacée à sa cousine Blanche.

1913

323) The Last Rounds by the Turks, Constantinople

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1913, no. 1079: Les dernières rondes turques; Constantinople.

Related Works: Hahn 1995, nos. 13, 14, 20, see appendix II.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-4 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, III, p. 44-45, a lithograph with an inscription by the artist: La dernière ronde turque, Constantinople, 1913; as well as a photo and a postcard.

324) Portrait of Mrs. Magnin

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1913, no. 1080: Portrait de Mme J. Magnin.

325) The Divine Singer (Orpheus)

Present Location: Hôtel de Ville, Versailles

Exhibited: Paris, Salon des Artistes Français, 1913, no. 3693: Le divin Chanteur; groupe marbre.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 123-125. According to an inscription on these album pages, the work was originally intended for the music room in the palace of the Queen of Rumania.

326) Portrait of Prince Barbo Stirbey

Bronze

Exhibited: Paris, Salon des Artistes Français, 1913, no. 3694: Le Prince Barbo Stirbey; buste bronze (Appartient au prince Démètre Stirbey).

See cat. 314, 316.

327) Study for The Philosopher and the Patissier, 1913

Drouot 2003, lot 123, see appendix III.

1914

328) Célimène

Inscribed on frame: Puis je empêcher les gens de me trouver aimable? Molière.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1914, no. 1221: Célimène; fragment d'une décoration.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 102; BN: microfiche Ne 63 Fol. Collection Laruelle Tome 132, photo with the artist's inscription: "Lecomte du Noüy, l'auteur et le mari. 1918."

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-17 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

329) The Oriental Woman

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1914, no. 1222: L'Orientale; fragment d'une décoration.

Literature: *L'illustration*, no. 3714 (2 Mai 1914).

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 101.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13115-16 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

330) Triumphant Romania

Bronze Bust

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1917, no. 4001: La Roumanie triomphante; buste bronze (Destiné à S. M. le roi de Roumanie)

Photo: For several photos of the artist presumably working on this model, see BN: DC 309, II, p. 116-121.

331) Portrait of André Lecomte du Nouÿ

Plaster Bust

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1917, no. 4002: André Lecomte du Nouÿ, architecte, correspondant de l'Institut; buste platre. (Appartient à la Fondation Carol de Bucarest.)

332) Portrait of a Woman wearing a Hat

Oil on canvas, 68 x 58 cm, oval, signed and dated 1914.

Provenance: Madrid sale, Subastas Alcala, February 18-19th, 2004, Retrato de dama, busto, con sombrero de plumas, Óleo/lienzo (óvalo), 68 x 58 cms, Firmado y fechado en 1914. Precio de salida 720.00 euros.

1918

333) The Guardians of the Great City

Oil on canvas, 165 x 275 cm, signed and dated 1918.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1919, Les veilleurs de la grande cité.

[Note: exhibited again in 1923]

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 10.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 6419-2 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

A postcard of this work is kept in the archives of the Musée de l'armée in Paris, which provides the size of the picture, and bears an annotation by the artist as being dedicated "à la mémoire de Guynemer."

Related Works: Drawings of an airplane, Aurillac: 82.13.189 and 82.13.174, see appendix I.

334) The Bombardment of the Church of St. Gervais

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1920, no. 1003: Le bombardement de l'église St. Gervais le Vendredi Saint 1918.

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 10, photo with inscription by the artist: "Le bombardement de l'église St. Gervais le Vendredi Saint 1918 / où j'étais! / l'auteur Lecomte du Nouÿ."

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 6427-4 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

Annotated photograph at BN, microfilm, Ne 63 Fol. Collection Laruelle Tome 132.

Also shown in fig. 7.

Related Works: Two studies of the artist's head, Aurillac: 82.13.18, 82.13.19, see appendix I. The latter is signed and dated: Du Nouÿ / l'auteur à St Gervais / 1918.

Oil sketch of the ruined church, Aurillac: 82.13.247.

1919

335) My Muse, 1919

Drouot 2003, lot 131, see appendix III.

336) From the Front

Painting of a winged putto wearing a military helmet and carrying a basket of flowers with a label that reads: Envoi du Front. Inscribed upper right: A nos chères mairaines de France. A shovel, a soldier in ditch, and tanks are depicted in the background.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 58.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. ND 7823/A and listed as exhibited at the Salon of 1919.

1920

337) Victory, the Sower of Stars.

Oil on cardboard, ca. 90 cm diameter

Provenance: Offered by the artist to the Musée de l'armée in Paris in June 1921. Deposited with the 24th Artillery Regiment in October 1934; current location unknown.

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1920, no. 1002: La victoire, semeuse d'étoiles.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 57.

Note: I would like to thank Mr. Lacaille, conservator at the Musée de l'armée in Paris for the following information concerning the painting: "Le tableau représentait une Victoire, à mi-corps, casquée, les bras chargés d'un drapeau français - parsemé d'étoiles destinées aux généraux -, de palmes et de lauriers, d'une

épée, de la médaille militaire et d'une banderole portant l'inscription "Honneur et Patrie 1914-1918." Elle se détachait sur le ciel, où se distinguaient, comme en filigrane, les portraits de plusieurs grandes figures de l'histoire militaire de la France (Clovis, Charlemagne, Jeanne d'Arc, Henri IV, Louis XIV, Napoléon), notamment de la Grande Guerre (Foch, Joffre, Pétain, Gallieni, Castelnau, Mangin, Guynemer). Au fond, on voyait l'Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile à Paris, rappelant le défilé de la Victoire du 14 juillet 1919. Dans les écoinçons du cadre, figuraient, en haut, les portraits de Clemenceau et Poincaré, en bas, les armoiries d'Alsace et de Lorraine, les provinces retrouvées."

338) Imperial Destiny, Napoleon on Saint Helena (1821)

Signed and dated lower right, 1920

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1921, no. 1185: L'impériale destinée; Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène (1821), repr.

Photo: Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, Paris, no. 13114-3 (www.roger-viollet.fr).

BN: DC 309, III, p. 21.

339) Portrait of Stanislas Meunier

Plaque, inscribed: Professeur de géologie au museum

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 64. Photo is signed by the artist, lower right: Lecomte du Nouÿ sculpt. 1920.

1921

340) Tears of the Orient

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1921, no. 1186: Larmes d'Orient, dédiées à Pierre Loti.

Photo: Roger-Viollet ND 8294. A woman with butterfly wings and wearing an Oriental costume, jewelry and a turban, is seated on a stone ledge overlooking a city at night. She holds a staff with a half-moon and star, and moonlight is coming through the clouds above. Seen standing on an easel to the left of the plaster bust in fig. 7.

Note: Pierre Loti (pseudonym of Julien Viaud, 1850-1923) was an author of travel narratives and novels set in mainly in exotic locations, which he visited during his career as a naval officer.

1922

341) Phaedre

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1922, no. 1052: Phèdre, reproduced.

342) The Model

Exhibited: Paris, Salon 1922, no. 1053 – Le modèle.

1923

see cat: 335) The Guardians of the Great City

Exhibited: Paris Salon 1923, no. 1032: Les veilleurs de la grande Cité.

Note: Previously exhibited in 1818.

343) Ophelia

London sale, Sotheby's, November 25-26 and December 15, 1987, lot 858, Ophelia, repr. b/w, signed, oil on canvas, circular, diam. 91 cm. est. L 3.000-4.000, bought in.

Exhibited: Paris Salon 1923, no. 1033 – Ophélie.

Photo: Seen standing on the far left easel in the photo of Lecomte du Nouÿ's studio, fig. 7.

344) The Little Conqueror

Exhibited: Paris Salon 1923, no. 1034 – Le petit vainqueur.

Related Work: Aurillac: 82.13.141.

WORKS NOT DATED

345) Female Egyptian Musician (*Musicienne d'Egypte*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, pp. 10, 13.

346) Head of a Black Woman (*Tête de négresse*)

Literature: Montgailhard 1906, p. 8, described as wearing a yellow scarf.

347) Head of a Black Woman

Oil on canvas, 46 x 38 cm, signed and dedicated lower right: à mon cher confrere G. Laugée 1909.

Provenance: Paris sale, Drouot, March 20 1991, lot 145, repr.

348) The Virgin Mary, Design for a Church Decoration

Drawing

Present Location: Bucharest, National Museum of Art, inv. 1567

349) The Arch Angel Michael, Design for a Church Decoration

Crayon on brown paper, 26,2 x 6,8 cm, signed lower left: Lecomte du Nouÿ.

Present Location: Bucharest, National Museum of Art, inv. 1568. Formerly at the Musée Toma Stelian in Bucharest.

350) Jesus Christ, Design for a Church Decoration

Crayon on brown paper (dimensions not known), signed lower left: Lecomte du Nouÿ.

Present Location: Bucharest, National Museum of Art, inv. 1566. Formerly at the Musée Toma Stelian in Bucharest.

351) Portrait of Mrs. Vernet

Pastel, 61 x 50 cm, signed upper right: Lecomte du Nouÿ / OP-1.

Present Location: Musées des Beaux-Arts de Rouen, 971.3. Gift of Mme de Failly in 1971.

352) Study of the Head of an Old Woman Wearing a Veil [Figure 72]

Oil on canvas, 25 x 17.5 cm.

Present Location: Jane Roberts Fine Arts Ltd., London and Paris.

353) Study of a Head of a Bearded Man (grisaille) [Figure 73]

Oil on canvas, 20.5 cm x 15.7 cm.

Present Location: Private collection, Paris

354) Study of a Nude Woman on a Terrace Praying to the Moon

Oil on canvas, 16 x 29 cm.

Present Location: Private collection, Paris

355) Study of a Hand and Drapery

Oil on canvas, 30.2 x 21.5 cm.

Present Location: Private collection, Paris

356) Study for "L'angoisse maternelle devant le spectre de la guerre"

New York sale, Sotheby's, October 26, 1990, lot 139, signed, dated and inscribed on reverse, oil wash on tracing paper, 31.8 x 30.5 cm; provenance: Galerie Fischer-Kiener, Paris, sold \$2.475.

357) From an "Extrait du registre des délibérations du Conseil Municipal – Séance de 17 Aout 1954, de la Commune de Donzère" it can be concluded that the city decided to purchase a portrait of its native painter Félix Clément by Lecomte du Nouÿ. No further specifics about this portrait, nor its present location are known.

358, 358 a-d) Group of five oilsketches: Three individual heads of Oriental men, and two landscapes of La Corne d'Or, Constantinople.

Provenance: Paris [?] sale, Blanchet & Joron-Derem, April 7, 2000, lot 55, Portrait d'oriental, [plus others] 45 x 61 cm [frame], repr., sold FF 65.000.

Paris sale, Gros et Delettrez, November 20, 2000, lot 306, La Corne d'Or, 11.3 x 19 cm; lot 307 Portraits de trois Egyptiens; left one inscribed: Mohamad Saïd; right one signed lower left; 18 x 8.5 cm and 18 x 10.5 cm; lot 308, Constantinople. La Corne d'Or; inscribed Vendredi soir 5 Octobre 1894, 11.3 x 18.5 cm [all five works framed together].

The two landscapes were then sold separately: Paris sale, Drouot [?] March 28, 2003, lot 117, Vue de la Corne d'Or, repr., gouache, signed and inscribed, dated 1899, repr.; sold E 1.500.

Note: Even though the techniques, dates and dimensions that are provided here differ slightly in each sale, the works were reproduced, and they appear to be the same objects.

359) Figure with raised hands, and detail studied of hands

Red and white chalk on paper, 38 x 25 cm, signed.

Present location: Toulouse, Galerie B. Moulins

360) Head of a Woman (sketch on white background)

Oil on canvas, 32.5 x 24.8 cm, signed lower left: DU NOÛY

Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener

361) Head of a Woman (sketch on dark grey background)

Oil on canvas, 36.3 x 29.2 cm, signed upper left: DU NOÛY

Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener

362) Two studies of a female nude

Red and white chalk on paper, 22.5 x 34.5 cm, monogram, lower left.

Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener

363) The Brothers Jean and André Lecomte du Nouÿ

A sculpted relief showing the heads of Jean and André Lecomte du Nouÿ in profile, flanked by personifications of Architecture and Painting.

Photo: BN: DC 309, I, p. 11.

364) Sculpture of a woman with three putti carrying baskets. Executed in a very 18th-century decorative style.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, p. 122.

365) Sculpture of a reclining man and a rooster.

Photo: BN: DC 309, II, 134. Photo shows the work in an unfinished modeling stage, probably executed in clay.

366) Victorious France, or: The Great Liberator

Present Location: Paris, Musée de l'armée

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 56, with inscription: Le plâtre original est au musée de l'armée.

Agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, RV 632835 (www.roger-viollet.fr), which also mentions that General Mallette, director of the Musée de l'armée, offered the sculpture to the Hôtel des Invalides.

I would like to thank Mr. Lacaille of the Musée de l'armée in Paris for the following information regarding this work: "La sculpture, intitulée dans nos dossiers "La France victorieuse" ou "La Grande Libératrice," représentait une figure de femme, nue, appuyée sur un bouclier portant le portrait du roi Albert 1^{er} [see Aurillac: 82.13.125], et tenant de la main droite l'épée de César, Louis XIV et Napoléon, qui fixa au Rhin la frontière française, de la main gauche le flambeau de la civilisation latine. Sur le devant du socle, figurait une carte du Rhin, limite entre la Gaule et la Germanie, la pointe de l'épée marquant un endroit sur la carte. On y voyait également les armoiries d'Alsace et de Lorraine, et en arrière l'inscription "A nos héros".

Cette oeuvre était la maquette d'un monument qui devait être élevé sur les bords du Rhin, face à l'Allemagne, à l'initiative du Comité de la rive gauche du Rhin, au lendemain de la Grande Guerre. Haute de 2,30 m. et large de 1,15 m., elle fut proposée par l'artiste au musée, dont le comité de perfectionnement refusa le don. Cependant, elle fut portée à l'inventaire du musée (Inv. 1216 C) et présentée aux Invalides, exposée dans l'une des galeries de la cour d'honneur, jusqu'à sa destruction accidentelle (pour une raison que nous ne connaissons pas). Il s'ensuivit la réforme (destruction définitive) de cette pièce le 2 juin 1927." **Related Work:** Aurillac: 82.13.98, see appendix I.
See cat. 369 for a similar title.

367) André Lecomte du Nouÿ

Plaster or terracotta bust

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 62, two photos from different angle.

368) André Lecomte du Nouÿ

Plaster or terracotta bust

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 63. A different bust of the same sitter, on a more elaborate base.

369) The Great Liberator, 1914-1918

Medal in bas-relief, with the inscription: La Grande Libératrice.

Photo: BN: DC 309, III, p. 59.

Note: This work has a comparable iconography to that of cat. 366 and also shows the cathedral of Strasbourg against a rising sun. The Musée de l'armée in Paris also keeps a photo of this work with the title "La Grande Libératrice 1914-1918."

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John Davis, *The Landscape of Belief. Encountering the Holy Land in Nineteenth-century American Art and Culture* (Princeton 1996)

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Delacroix. *The Late Work*, exh. cat. Paris, Grand Palais; Philadelphia Museum of Art (1998-99)

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René Delorme, *Bulletin français* (16 June 1876)

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Alfred Delilia, "Salon de 1887," *Le moniteur de l'exposition de 1889*, 3 year, no. 125 (Sunday, May 22, 1887)

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Maurice Demaison, "Les Salons de 1901: La peinture" *La revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, 9 (June 1901)

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Maurice Denis, "Le Salon de la Société des Artistes Français (1901)," *Théories. 1890-1910. Du Symbolisme et de Gauguin vers un nouvel ordre classique*. (3 edition, Paris 1913)

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Marie-Colette Depierre, *Les oeuvres orientalistes de la deuxième moitié du 18ième siècle et du 19ième siècle au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes*. (Unpublished *Mémoire de Maîtrise*, Université de Haute-Bretagne, Rennes, December 1980)

Dézamy 1875

Adrien Dézamy, *Salon de 1875. Reproductions des principaux ouvrages accompagnées de sonnets par Adrien Dézamy* (Paris, Goupil & Cie, ed., Paris 1876)

Dézamy 1876

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Diederer 2001

Roger Diederer, *Telling Tales I, Classical Images from the Dahesh Museum of Art*, exh. cat. New York, Dahesh Museum of Art (2001).

Dijkstra 1986

Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity. Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (New York/Oxford 1986)

Dolent 1869

Jean Dolent, "Notes sur le Salon de 1869," *Avant le déluge* (Paris 1869)

Doré 1983

Gustave Doré 1832-1883, exh. cat., Strasbourg, Musée d'Art Moderne/Cabinet des Estampes (1983)

Drouot 2003

Paris sale, Drouot, *Estampes, Dessins et Tableaux, Objets d'art et de bel ameublement*, June 23, 2003, room 1 and 7, Mr. Eric Beaussant and Mr. Pierre-Yves Lefèvre, commissaires priseurs (see appendix III)

Dubosc de Pesquidoux 1874

Dubosc de Pesquidoux, "Le Salon de 1874. Les peintres classiques." *L'Artiste* 45 (August 1874), 87.

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Dubosc de Pesquidoux, "Le Salon de 1878," *L'Artiste* 50 (July 1878), 3-27.

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Maxime du Camp, "Salon de 1865," *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, 35 année, vol. 57 (1865)

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Georges Dufour, "Salon de 1876," *L'Artiste*, 47, vol. II (1876)

Dumas 1889

F.-G. Dumas, *Exposition Universelle de 1889. Catalogue Illustré des Beaux-Arts 1789-1889* (Paris 1889)

Duranty 1877

L.E. Duranty, "Réflexions d'un bourgeois sur le Salon," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 16 (July 1877)

Duro 1987

Paul Duro, "Le Musée des copies de Charles Blanc à l'aube de la IIIe République. Catalogue." *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français*, année 1985 (1987), 283-313.

Énault 1882

Louis Énault, "Lecomte du Nouy, Homère," *Paris Salon* (Paris, E. Bernard et Cie. 1882)

Équivoques 1973

Équivoques. Peintures françaises du XIXe siècle. Exh. cat. Paris, Musée des Arts Decoratifs (1973)

Espejismos 1999

Espejismos del Medio Oriente: Delacroix a Moreau, exh. cat. Mexico City, Museo Nacional de San Carlos (1999)

Exotische Welten 1987

Exotische Welten, Europaeische Phantasien, exh. cat. Kunstverein Stuttgart (1987)

Fantaisies (2003)

Fantaisies du harem et nouvelles Schéhérazade, exh. cat., Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona; Muséum d'histoire naturelle de Lyon (2003). French edition.

Fauque/Bayard 2001

Claude Fauque and Marie-Noëlle Bayard, *Sur le motif – Les fleurs d'Orient* (Paris 2001)

Fidell Beaufort 1979

Madeleine Fidell Beaufort, Herbert L. Kleinfield and Jeanne K. Welcher (eds.), *The Diaries, 1871-1882, of Samuel P. Avery, Art Dealer* (New York 1979)

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P. de la Flécherey, *Le Salon de 1875* (Paris 1875)

Foucart 1987

Bruno Foucart, *Le renouveau de la peinture religieuse en France (1800-1860)* (Paris 1987)

Freeman-Greenville 1988

G.S.P. Freeman-Greenville, *The Holy Land. A Pilgrim's Guide to Israel, Jordan, and the Sinai* (New York 1988)

Gautier 1865

Théophile Gautier, "Salon de 1865," *Le moniteur universel* (24 June, 1865)

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Théophile Gautier, Arsène Houssaye, Charles Coligny, *Le Palais pompéien; études sur la maison gréco-romaine, ancienne résidence du prince Napoléon* (Paris 1866)

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Théophile Gautier, "Salon de 1868," *Le moniteur universel*, 130 (9 Mai 1868)

Gérôme & Goupil 2000

Gérôme & Goupil, *Art and Enterprise*, exh. cat. Bordeaux, Musée Goupil; New York, Dahesh Museum of Art; Pittsburgh, The Frick Art & Historical Center (2000-2001)
[English and French editions]

Gost 1993

Roswitha Gost, *Der Harem* (Cologne 1993)

Grangedor 1868

J. Grangedor, "Le Salon de 1868," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 24 (June 1868)

Graves 1906

Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts, a Complete Dictionary of Contributors and their Work from its Foundation in 1769 to 1904* (London 1906)

Green 1993

Julian Green, *The Green Paradise. Autobiography, Volume I (1900-1916)*, (New York/London 1993)

Grunchec 1984

Philippe Grunchec, *The Grand Prix de Rome. Paintings from the École des Beaux-Arts 1797-1863* (International Exhibitions Foundation, Washington, D.C. 1984), exh. cat. New York, National Academy of Design, and traveling.

Guégan 1997

Stéphane Guégan, ed., *Théophile Gautier, la critique en liberté. Les Dossiers du Musée d'Orsay*, no. 62 (Paris, 1997)

Guénin 1895

Eugène Guénin, "XVIII Lecomte du Nouÿ," *Les Parisiens de Paris. Silhouettes Artistiques* (Paris 1895)

Hache 1869

Ernest Hache, "Salon de 1869," *Les merveilles de l'art et de l'industrie* (Année 1869-70)

Hahn 1995

Lecomte du Nouÿ, Jules-Jean-Antoine, 1842-1923, *Souvenirs de Voyages*, exh. cat. Paris, Galerie Hahn (22 Sept.-27 Oct. 1995) (see appendix II)

Harding 1979

James Harding, *Artistes Pompiers* (New York 1979)

Harrison 1993

Charles Harrison, e.a., *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction: The Early Twentieth Century* (New Haven/London 1993)

Haskell 1981

Francis Haskell, book review of "*The Diaries 1871-1882 of Samuel P. Avery, art dealer, and The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*," *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 123 (April 1981)

Haskell & Penny 1981

Francis Haskell & Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique* (New Haven/London, 1981).

Hauptman 1985

William Hauptman, "Delaroche's and Gleyre's Teaching Ateliers and their Group Portraits," *Studies in the History of Art* 18 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1985)

Hauptman 1996

William Hauptman, *Charles Gleyre 1806-1874; I – Life and Works; II – Catalogue raisonné* (Princeton 1996)

Histoires Parallèles 1995-1996

Histoires Parallèles, La peintures française du XIXe siècle au Musées des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, exh. cat. Miyazaki, Departmental Museum (and five other Japanese venues) (1995-1996)

Honour 1989

Hugh Honour, *The Image of the Black in Western Art* (Cambridge 1989)

Hottenroth 1884

Friedrich Hottenroth, *Trachten, Haus, Feld, und Kriegsgeräthschaften der Völker alter un neuer Zeit* (Stuttgart ca. 1884). French edition: *Le Costume – Les Armes, Les Bijoux, La Céramique, Les Utensils, Outils, Objets Mobiliers, etc. Chez les Peuples Anciens et Modernes...* (Paris, A. Guérinet, ca. 1890s)

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Henry Houssaye, "Salon de 1868: II, La légende et l'histoire" *L'Artiste* (June 1868)

Houssaye, 1877

Henry Houssaye, "Le Salon de 1877-II," *La Revue des Deux Mondes* (15 June 1877)

Houssaye 1883

Henry Houssaye, *L'art français depuis dix ans* (Paris 1883)

Houssaye 1888

Henry Houssaye, *Le Salon de 1888. Cent planches en photogravure par Goupil & Cie.* (Paris 1888)

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Nicole Hubert, "Nouvelles acquisitions. Peintures, Miniatures, gravures. Musée de Malmaison et de Bois-Préau," *La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* no. 3 (1986)

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Nicole Hubert, Alain Pougetoux, *Châteaux de Malmaison et de Bois-Préau. Musées napoléoniens de l'Île d'Aix et de la Maison Bonaparte à Ajaccio. Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures et dessins* (Paris 1989)

Huysmans 1883

Joris Karel Huysmans, "Le Salon de 1879," *L'art Moderne* (Paris 1883)

Jacques and Schwartz 2001

Annie Jacques, Emmanuel Schwartz, *Les Beaux-Arts, de l'Académie aux Quat'z'arts. Anthologie historique et littéraire* (Paris, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 2001)

Jahyer 1866

Félix Jahyer, *Salon de 1866* (Paris 1866)

Jullian 1977

Philippe Jullian, *Les Orientalistes. La vision de l'Orient par les peintres européens au XIXe siècle* (Fribourg 1977)

Kitzo 1900

Lucile Kitzo, "Lecomte du Nouÿ," *La Petite Roumanie* (14-26 February 1900) (see appendix VI)

Klobe 1996

Nineteenth Century French Drawings, (May through July 1996, Molly Klobe, Chamberlin Gallery, Inc., 225 West 86th Street, New York)

Kridla Slavy 2000-2001

Kridla Slavy: Voytech Hynais, cesti Parizané a Francie, exh. cat, Prague, Galerie Rudolfinum (2000-2001)

La gloire de Victor Hugo 1985

La gloire de Victor Hugo, exh. cat. Grand Palais, Paris (1985)

La France 1989

La France: Images of Women and Ideas of Nation, 1789-1989, exh. cat. London, Hayward Gallery; Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery (1989)

Lacambre 1974

Geneviève Lacambre, *Le Musée du Luxembourg en 1874*, exh. cat. Paris, Grand Palais (1974)

Lafenestre 1879

Exposition des Beaux-Arts. Le livre d'or du Salon de peinture et de sculpture rédigé par G. Lafenestre (Paris, Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1879)

Lafenestre 1881

Georges Lafenestre, *L'art vivant. La peinture et la sculpture aux Salons de 1868 à 1877* (Paris 1881)

Lafon 1874

E. Lafon, *Notice des tableaux du musée de la Ville de Tours* (Tours 1874)

Lécharny 1998

Louis-Marie Lécharny, *L'art pompier*, in the series *Que sais-je?* (Paris, Presse Universitaire de France 1998)

Lemaire 1986

Gérard-Georges Lemaire, *Le Salon de Diderot à Apollinaire: esquisses en vue d'une histoire du Salon* (Paris 1986)

Lemaire 2000

Gérard-Georges Lemaire, *L'Univers des Orientalistes* (Paris 2000)

Lemaistre 1889

Alexis Lemaistre, *L'École des Beaux-Arts, dessinée et racontée par un élève* (Paris 1889)

Lenglart 1893

Jules Lenglart (pref.), *Catalogue des Tableaux du Musée de Lille* (Lille 1893)

Lepage 2000

Jean Lepage, *Le mirage oriental* (Narbonne, Editions Musées de Narbonne, 2000)

Lepage 2002

Jean Lepage, *Rome, Romains et Romanité dans la peinture historique des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*, exh. cat. Musée d'art et d'histoire de Narbonne, Salle des Consuls du Palais des Archevêques (Narbonne 2002)

Louvre 1922

Musée national du Louvre. Département des antiquités grecques et romaines. Catalogue sommaire des marbres antiques. (Paris 1922)

MacKenzie 1995

John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism. History, theory and the arts* (Manchester, New York, 1995)

Magiciens 1989

Magiciens de la Terre, exh. cat., Paris, Centre Georges Pompidou (1989)

Mainardi 1993

Patricia Mainardi, *The End of the Salon. Art and the State in the Early Third Republic* (Cambridge 1993).

Mantz 1867

Paul Mantz, "Le Salon de 1867," *La Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 22 (June 1867)

Mantz 1884

Paul Mantz, "Feuilleton du Temps. Salon, I," *Le Temps* (11 May, 1884)

Marc 1889

Gabriel Marc, *Les Beaux-Arts en Auvergne et à Paris 1868-1889* (Paris 1889)

Menegoz/Vanel 1928

G. Menegoz, G. Vanel, *Musée de Caen et Collection Mangel. Catalogue des tableaux, sculptures, dessins, aquarelles et objets d'art* (Caen 1928)

Merson 1899

Luc-Olivier Merson, *Notice sur la vie et les oeuvres de M. Émile Signol* (Paris 1899) [text presented at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, 25 February 1899]

Milner 1988

John Milner, *The Studios of Paris. The Capital of Art in the Late Nineteenth Century* (New Haven / London 1988)

Milner 2000

John Milner, *Art, War and Revolution in France, 1870-1871. Myth, Reportage and Reality* (New Haven/London 2000)

Montgailhard 1906

Guy de Montgailhard, *Lecomte du Noüy* (Paris 1906)

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Guy de Montgailhard, "L'oeuvre de J. Lecomte du Noüy. Peintre et Statuaire," *Les Saisons* (21 March, 1914)

Montifaud 1867

Marc de Montifaud, "Salon de 1867 (La peinture historique)," *L'Artiste* 37 (June 1867)

Montifaud 1868

Marc de Montifaud "Salon de 1868," *L'Artiste* 38 (May 1868)

Montifaud 1873

Marc de Montifaud, "Salon de 1873," *L'Artiste* (June 1873)

Montifaud 1874

Marc de Montifaud, "Le Salon de 1874," *L'Artiste* (May, 1874)

Montrosier 1882

Eugène Montrosier, "La peinture décorative et religieuse," *L'Exposition des Beaux-Arts (Salon de 1882)* (Librairie d'Art, Ludovic Baschet, éditeur, Paris 1882)

Moreau 2001

Véronique Moreau, *Peintures du XIX^e siècle, 1800-1914, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours* (2001), 2 vols.

Moreau-Vauthier, 1900

Charles Moreau-Vauthier, *Les chefs-d'oeuvres des Grands Maîtres. Nouvelle Série. Livraison 1-30, 1800-1900* (Hachette & Cie, Paris, n.d. [1900?]), livraison VIII, 22, reproduced.

Moreau-Vauthier 1906

Charles Moreau-Vauthier, *Gérôme, peintre et sculpteur, l'homme et l'artiste* (Paris 1906)

Moulin 1996

Hélène Moulin and Charlotte Fortier-Beaulieu, *Félix Clément (1826-1888). Itinéraire d'un peintre drômois au XIX^{ème} siècle*, exh. cat. Musée de Valence (1996)

Nantes 1886

Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure et lithographie des artistes vivants, exposés au Palais du Cours Saint-André, Nantes, 1886 (Imprimerie du Commerce, Rue Scribe, Nantes 1886)

Orientalism 1982

Orientalism: the Near East in French Painting 1800-1880, exh. cat., Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, N.Y.; Neuberger Museum, State University of New York, College at Purchase (1982)

Orients 1982

Orients, exh. cat. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes (1982)

Orientalistes 2001

Les Orientalistes chez Courbet, exh. cat. Ornans, Musée Courbet (2001)

Peintres Orientalistes 1983

Les peintres Orientalistes (1850-1914), exh. cat. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Pau; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dunkerque; Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai (1983)

Peltre 1997

Christine Peltre, *Retour en Arcadie. Le voyage des artistes français en Grèce au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, Klincksieck, 1997)

Peltre 2000

Christine Peltre, *Les Orientalistes* (Paris 2000)

Penzer 1966

N.M. Penzer, *The Harem* (London 1966)

Périer 1868

Paul Pierre [Casimir Périer], *Un chercheur au salon, 1868. Peinture – Les inconnus, les trop peu connus, les méconnus, les nouveaux et les jeunes* (Paris 1868).

Périer 1869

Paul [Pierre] Casimir Périer, *Propos d'art à l'occasion du Salon de 1869. Revue du Salon* (Paris 1869)

Polyptyques 1990

Polyptyques. Le tableau multiple du moyen âge au vingtième siècle, exh. cat., Musée du Louvre (Paris 1990)

Popescu 1999

Carmen Popescu, "André Lecomte du Nouÿ (1844-1914) et la restauration des monuments historiques en Roumanie," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français*, année 1998 (1999)

Poppi 1994

Claudio Poppi, *Sventurati Amanti. Il mito di Paolo e Francesca nell'800*, exh. cat., Rimini, Museo della Città (1994).

Privat 1865

Gonzague Privat, *Place aux jeunes! Causeries critique sur le Salon de 1865* (Paris 1865).

Privat 1877

Gonzague Privat, "Lecomte du Nouÿ," *Galerie contemporaine* (Paris, Baschet, 1877), n.p. (see appendix V)

Randall 1970

Lilian M. C. Randall, *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909* (Princeton 1970)

Rejab 1989

Jehan Rejab, *Palestinian Costume* (Kegan Paul International, London/New York, 1989)

Richardson 1987

Joanna Richardson, *Judith Gautier. A Biography* (New York, 1987)

Richon 1985

Olivier Richon, "Representation, the Harem and the Despot," *Block*, 10 (1985)

Richter 1984

Gisela M. A. Richter, abridged and revised by R. Smith, *The portraits of the Greeks* (Ithaca, NY, 1984).

Rionnet 1996

Florence Rionnet, *Notes et documents des musées de France, 28. L'Atelier de moulage du musée du Louvre (1794-1928)* (Paris 1996).

Roger-Milès 1894

L. Roger-Milès, *Le Salon de 1894. Cent Planches en Photogravure et à l'eau-forte et un Fac-simile en couleurs par Goupil & Cie.* (Paris 1894)

Rosenberg 1977

Pierre Rosenberg, e.a., *Pittura francese nelle collezioni pubbliche fiorentine*, exh. cat. Palazzo Pitti, Florence (1977)

Roy 1869 (I)

Elie Roy, "Salon de 1869. Histoire littéraire." *L'Artiste* 39 (May 1869)

Roy 1869 (II)

Elie Roy, "Salon de 1869," *L'Artiste* 39 (June 1869)

Said 1978

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York 1978)

de Sault 1864

C. de Sault, *Essais de critique d'art. Salon de 1863* (Paris 1864)

Schéfer 1882

Gaston Schéfer, "L'Orient," *L'Exposition des Beaux-Arts (Salon de 1882)* (Librairie d'Art, Ludovic Baschet, éditeur, Paris 1882)

Schnapp 1996

Alain Schnapp, *The Discovery of the Past* (British Museum Press, London 1996), translated from the French.

Schwartz 2002

Emmanuel Schwartz, *La chapelle de l'École des Beaux-Arts de Paris. Présentation historique, artistique et littéraire* (ENSBA, Paris 2002)

Sebbar 1990

Leïla Sebbar, "L'esclave blanche de Nantes," *L'atelier imaginaire* (Paris, Edition l'âge de l'homme, Mai 1990)

Sewell 2002

Darrell Sewell, e.a, *Thomas Eakins*, exh. cat. Philadelphia Museum of Art; Paris, Musée d'Orsay; New York, The metropolitan Museum of Art (2002)

Shadows of a Hand 1998

Florian Rodari, et al, *Shadows of a Hand. The Drawings of Victor Hugo*, exh. cat. New York, The Drawing Center (1998)

Sigal 2003

Laurence Sigal-Klagsbald, *Museum Guide. Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme* (Paris 2003)

Siret 1883

Adolphe Siret, *Dictionnaire historique et raisonné des peintres de toutes les écoles depuis l'origine de la peinture jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris 1883, 3 ed.)

Sloane 1951

Joseph C. Sloane, *French Painting between the Past and the Present. Artists, Critics, and Traditions, from 1848 to 1870* (Princeton 1951, paperback ed. 1973)

Small 1999

Lisa Small, *Highlights from the Dahesh Museum Collection* (New York 1999)

Small 2000

Lisa Small, *A Distant Muse. Orientalist Works from the Dahesh Museum of Art*, exh. cat. New York, Dahesh Museum of Art, and traveling (2000)

Small 2001

Lisa Small, *Telling Tales II, Religious Images in 19th-Century Academic Art*, exh. cat. New York, Dahesh Museum of Art (2001)

Stevens 1984

Mary Anne Stevens, ed., *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse. The Allure of North Africa and the Middle East*, exh. cat. London, Royal Academy of Arts; Washington, National Gallery of Art (1984)

Strahan 1878

Edward Strahan, ed., *The Chefs-d'Oeuvres d'Art of the International Exhibition, 1878* (Philadelphia, Gebbie & Barrie, publishers, 1878)

Strahan 1880

Edward Strahan, ed., *The Art Treasures of America* (Philadelphia 1880)

Strahan 1881

Edward Strahan, *Gérome. A Collection of the Works of J. L. Gérome in One Hundred Photogravures* (New York 1881)

Stranahan 1897

C. H. Stranahan, *A History of French Painting, from its earliest to its latest practice* (New York 1897)

Tadié 1999

Jean-Yves Tadié, ed., *Marcel Proust, l'écriture et les arts* exh. cat. Bibliothèque Nationale de France/RMN, site François Mitterrand/Tolbiac (Paris 1999)

Thornton 1983

Lynne Thornton, *Les orientalistes. Peintres voyageurs 1828-1908* (Paris 1983)

Thornton 1985

Lynne Thornton, *La femme dans la peinture orientaliste* (Paris 1985)

Thuillier 1984

Jacques Thuillier, *Peut-on parler d'une peinture "pompière"? Essais et conférences - Collège de France* (Paris 1984)

Tinterow and Conisbee 1999

Gary Tinterow and Philip Conisbee, eds., *Portraits by Ingres. Images of an Epoch*, exh. cat. London, National Gallery; Washington, National Gallery of Art; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (1999-2000)

Tinterow 2003

Gary Tinterow, ed., *Manet/Velázquez: The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, exh. cat. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2003)

Tolles 1999

Thayer Tolles, ed., *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Volume I. A Catalogue of Works by Artists Born before 1865* (New York 1999)

Tradition & Revolution 1993

Tradition & Revolution in French Art 1700-1880. Paintings and Drawings from Lille. Exh. cat. London, National Gallery (1993)

Tripp 1886

Exposition d'oeuvres importantes par M. Lecomte du Noüy, (Paris, Galerie D. Tripp, 15 March – 30 April 1886) (see appendix IV)

Turner 1996

Jane Turner ed., *The Dictionary of Art* (London 1996), 34 vols.

Vaisse 1976

Pierre Vaisse, "Charles Blanc und das 'Musée des Copies'," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 39, part I (1976), 54-66.

Vaisse 1988

Pierre Vaisse, "Considerations sur l'autoportrait au XIXe siècle," *Bulletin de la Société des Amis du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes* 6 (1988), 38, fig. 13.

Vaisse 1995

Pierre Vaisse, *La Troisième République et les peintres* (Paris 1995)

Verrier 1979

Michelle Verrier, *Les Peintres Orientalistes* (Paris 1979)

Victorian Fairy Painting 1997-98

Victorian Fairy Painting. Exh. cat. London, Royal Academy of Arts; Iowa, The University of Iowa Museum of Art; Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario (1997-98).

Vidal-Bué 2000

Marion Vidal-Bué, *Alger et ses peintres* (Paris 2000)

Walton 1900

W. Walton e.a., *Exposition Universelle, 1900. The Chefs-d'oeuvre*. (George Barrie & Son, Philadelphia 1900)

Weisberg 2002

Gabriel Weisberg, *Against the Modern. Dagnan-Bouveret and the Transformation of the Academic Tradition*, exh. cat. New York, Dahesh Museum of Art (held at the National Academy of Design, New York) (2002).

White & White 1993

Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World* (Chicago, 1965; new edition 1993)

Whitely 1972

Jon Whitely, *The Revival in Painting of Themes inspired by Antiquity in Mid-Nineteenth Century France*. (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Oxford 1972).

Whitmore 2002

Janet Whitmore, *Painting Collections and the Gilded Age Art Market: Minneapolis, Chicago and St. Louis, 1870-1925*, (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Minnesota 2002)

Yriarte 1876 (I)

Charles Yriarte, "Le Salon de 1876 (premier article)" *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 13 (July 1876)

Yriarte 1876 (II)

Charles Yriarte, "Le Salon de 1876" *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 14 (July 1876), the right wing repr. on p. 5.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF WORKS BY LECOMTE DU NOUÏ IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSÉE D'ART ET D'ARCHÉOLOGIE, AURILLAC

The Aurillac museum acquired this collection together in 1982. The numbers above each entry are the museum's inventory numbers and are used for reference in this book (for example, Aurillac: 82.13.1).

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>82.13.1
Aménophis IV
Pencil with white highlights
on paper, 355 x 240 mm
Signed: Lecomte du NouÏ /
1885
See also 82.13.22</p> | <p>82.13.7
Head of a woman in profile,
looking left
Charcoal with white
highlights on brown paper,
255 x 225 mm</p> | <p>82.13.13
The philosopher
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
350 x 280 mm
See cat. 321</p> |
| <p>82.13.2
Head of child or cherub
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
280 x 230 mm</p> | <p>82.13.8
Woman holding a mirror
Charcoal and white
highlights on brown paper,
255 x 360 mm
Study for cat. 201.</p> | <p>82.13.14
Head of man with moustache
Charcoal and white
highlights on paper, 320 x
270 mm</p> |
| <p>82.13.3
Seated man playing a flute
Charcoal with white
highlights on paper, 340 x
280 mm
Relates to 82.13.17</p> | <p>82.13.9
Torso of a figure holding a
plaque over her/his head
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
330 x 275 mm</p> | <p>82.13.15
Head of the dead Jocasta,
study for "Oedipus's
Farewell from Jocasta"
Charcoal and white
highlights on paper, 300 x
245 mm
Inscribed: Etude pour Jocaste
/ 1877
See cat. 67</p> |
| <p>82.13.4
Bucephalus
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
225 x 350 mm
Inscribed: Le cheval
d'Alexandre le Grand
Bucéphale</p> | <p>82.13.10
Study of a bent elbow
Charcoal and white
highlights on gray paper, 190
x 235 mm</p> | <p>82.13.16
Torso of a baby or putto
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
310 x 280 mm</p> |
| <p>82.13.5
The hand of Victor Hugo
Charcoal with white
highlights on paper, 185 x
265 mm
Inscribed: La main de Victor
Hugo du musée de Caen;
signed upper right.
See cat. 197</p> | <p>82.13.11
Upper body of a nude man
wearing a headband and
holding a pencil in his right
hand
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
280 x 390 mm
Verso: Woman with a book</p> | <p>82.13.17
Seated man, perhaps a scribe
or musician
Charcoal with white
highlights on paper, 355 x
260 mm
Relates to 82.13.3</p> |
| <p>82.13.6
Torso of a reclining male
nude
Three chalks on brown paper,
280 x 390 mm</p> | <p>82.13.12
Portrait of a woman in profile
wearing a tiara
Red chalk with white
highlights on brown paper,
330 x 265 mm
Inscribed: Teresita / 1918
Probably representing the
third wife of the artist, Térésa
Marie Fisanne</p> | <p>82.13.18
Self-portrait, study for "The
Bombardment of the Church
of St. Gervais"
Charcoal with white
highlights on brown paper,
300 x 250 mm
See 82.13.19 and cat. 334</p> |

82.13.19
Self-portrait, study for "The Bombardment of the Church of St. Gervais"
Charcoal with white highlights on brown paper, 275 x 250 mm
Inscribed: Du Nouÿ / L'auteur à St Gervais / 1918
See 82.13.18, and cat. 334

82.13.20
Head of a man, study for "Job and his Friends"
Charcoal with white highlights on brown paper, 325 x 255 mm
Inscribed: ami de Job / du Nouÿ / 1866
See cat. 30

82.13.21
Head of woman
Red chalk with white highlights on brown paper, 280 x 215 mm

82.13.22 **[Figure 104]**
Aménophis IV
Black pencil and white chalk highlights on brown paper, 220 x 165 mm
Signed: Lecomte du Nouÿ 84
See also 82.13.1

82.13.23
Head of woman in profile, facing left
Red chalk and white highlights on brown paper, 255 x 215 mm

82.13.24
Saint Joseph
Red chalk with white highlights, 325 x 250 mm
See cat. 313

82.13.25
Study of two heads
Red chalk with white highlights, 350 x 180 mm
Verso: Study of a leg and foot being reflected

82.13.26
Reclining nude woman
Red chalk with white highlights, 260 x 380 mm

82.13.27
Old bearded man holding a stick
Red chalk with white highlights, 285 x 240 mm

82.13.28
A woman
Red chalk with white highlights on paper, 355 x 268 mm

82.13.29
Sheet with a woman's face, arm, hand and knee
Red chalk with white highlights on brown paper, 325 x 250 mm
Verso: Study for a female torso with raised arms

82.13.30
Study for the upper body of a fallen soldier
Pencil on paper, 205 x 305 mm
Inscribed: pour "patrie"
See cat. 236

82.13.31
Head of a bearded man, looking right
Pencil on tracing paper, 200 x 160 mm

82.13.32
Drapery study
Pencil on tracing paper, 245 x 195 mm

82.13.33
Study of two hands
Pencil on tracing paper, 175 x 230 mm

82.13.34
The World is in God's Hand
Pencil on paper, 90 x 85 mm
Inscribed: Le monde est dans la main de Dieu; signed: Du Nouÿ del

82.13.35
Torso of a nude woman pointing upwards
Pencil on paper, 140 x 225 mm
Verso: At the Convent (showing a nun in a window)
Inscribed: Au couvent

82.13.36
Study of a fallen Soldier
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm
See cat. 236

82.13.37
Study of the upper body of a fallen soldier
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm
See cat. 236

82.13.38
Study of a horse head
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm

82.13.39
Study of a horse
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm
Verso: study of the rear flank of a horse

82.13.40
Study of a man
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm

82.13.41
Study of a man
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm

82.13.42
A man
Pencil on paper, 310 x 195 mm

82.13.43
Study of a standing nude man
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200 mm

- 82.13.44
Portrait of Vibert
Pencil on paper, 360 x 230 mm
Inscribed: Portrait du peintre Vibert / pas Pille / 1891
- 82.13.45
Study of an arm and knee
Pencil on paper, 180 x 200 mm
See cat. 236
- 82.13.46
Head of an old bearded man
Pencil on paper, 230 x 360 mm
- 82.13.47
Study for "The White Slave"
Black pencil on paper, 105 x 100 mm
See cat. 219
- 82.13.48
Study for "The White Slave"
Ink on paper, 50 x 50 mm
See cat. 219
- 82.13.49
Study of a reclining woman
Pencil on paper, 200 x 310 mm
- 82.13.50
Study of a woman with raised arms
Red chalk on paper, 210 x 165 mm
- 82.13.51
A woman
Pencil on paper, 230 x 210 mm
- 82.13.52
Chariot
Pencil on paper, 225 x 290 mm
- 82.13.53
Wooden gears (a mill)
Pencil on paper 145 x 200 mm
- 82.13.54
Study of a house
Pencil on paper, 135 x 205 mm
- 82.13.55
Well in the ramparts of Dijon
Pencil on paper, 145 x 95 mm
Inscribed: Puit à Dijon dans les ramparts
- 82.13.56
Architectural studies
Pencil on paper, 200 x 290 mm
- 82.13.57
Study of architecture
Pencil on paper, 200 x 320 mm
- 82.13.58
Architectural studies
Pencil on paper, 295 x 200 mm
Many notations
Verso: idem
- 82.13.59
Study of twigs and leaves
Pencil and watercolor on paper, 150 x 195 mm
Verso: idem
- 82.13.60
Study of bamboo
Pencil and watercolor on paper, 200 x 145 mm
Verso: A twig with leaves
- 82.13.61
Study of branches
Pencil on paper, 200 x 310 mm
- 82.13.62
Study of branches
Pencil on paper, 200 x 310 mm
- 82.13.63
Fence of tree branches
Pencil on paper, 135 x 205 mm
- 82.13.64
Head of a woman
Pencil on tracing paper, 155 x 145 mm
- 82.13.65
Woman and child in a window
Ink on tracing paper, 70 x 90 mm
- 82.13.66
Sketch of an ancient warrior
Pencil on paper, 200 x 155 mm
Inscribed: Vae Victis
- 82.13.67
Flirt
Pencil on paper, 240 x 180 mm
Inscribed: FLIRT
- 82.13.68
Study of a man and arms
Pencil on paper, 360 x 230 mm
- 82.13.69
Apollo
Pencil and ink on paper, 210 x 340 mm
Inscribed: Apollon
- 82.13.70
Assembly of priests
Pencil on tracing paper, 150 x 120 mm
Inscribed: Assemblée de prêtres
- 82.13.71
Interior in a Middle Eastern building
Pencil on paper, 200 x 315 mm
- 82.13.72
Elaborately decorated neo-renaissance frame
Pencil on paper, 335 x 250 mm
See cat. 320

82.13.73
By an unidentified artist
Portrait of a bearded man
Pencil on paper, 300 x 210
mm
Signed illegibly

82.13.74 [Figure 109]
Compositional sketch for
"Job and His Friends"
Pencil and ink on paper, 155
x 200 mm
See cat. 30

82.13.75
Recto:
Study for a monument
Pencil on paper, 135 x 105
mm
Inscribed: France / le
souvenir / la famille / la
Patrie / la Foi
Verso: detail study

82.13.76
Seated woman
Pencil on paper, 90 x 70 mm

82.13.77
French Finances
Pencil on paper, 140 x 205
mm
Inscribed: finances françaises
/ ingenieurs

82.13.78
Horse in harness
Pencil on paper, 165 x 105
mm

82.13.79
Repentance
Pencil on paper, 200 x 200
mm
Inscribed: le repent [...]

82.13.80
Buddha statue
Pencil on paper, 165 x 115
mm

82.13.81
Seated woman
Pencil and red chalk on
paper, 170 x 65 mm

82.13.82
A cross in a landscape
Pencil on paper, 135 x 200
mm
Verso: wheelbarrow

82.13.83
Crouching figure on a
pedestal
Pencil on paper, 180 x 110
mm

82.13.84
Archway in a wall
Pencil on paper, 145 x 200
mm

82.13.85
Study of female hairdo with
braids
Pencil on paper, 205 x 150
mm
Inscribed: coiffure femme

82.13.86
Various studies
Pencil on paper, 195 x 140
mm
Verso: child in a cart

82.13.87
Various studies of classical
elements
Pencil on paper, 310 x 200
mm

82.13.88
Various studies in the Middle
East, detail of an amulet
around an arm
Pencil on paper, 190 x 215
mm
Verso: Scene with seated
figures

82.13.89
Tahoser
Pencil on paper 115 x 95 mm
Inscribed: TAHOSER

82.13.90
Ruins
Pencil on paper, 140 x 195
mm

82.13.91
The eve of Easter
Pencil on paper, 115 x 180
mm
Inscribed: La veille de
Pâques

82.13.92
Studies of Egyptian
sculptures
Pencil on paper, 200 x 145
mm

82.13.93
Seated draped woman
Pencil on paper, 165 x 105
mm

82.13.94
Studies of jug and holder
Pencil on paper, 135 x 105
mm

82.13.95
People in front of a puppet
theatre
Pencil on paper, 180 x 230
mm

82.13.96
Gears of a watermill
Pencil with white highlights
on brown paper, 250 x 320
mm
Verso: decorative border

82.13.97
Unidentified scene with a
naked woman
Pencil and ink on paper, 140
x 83 mm
Inscribed: jardin / printemps
Verso: Dancing woman

82.13.98
Study for a sword
Blue and black pencil and ink
on paper, 195 x 215 mm.
Inscribed: FRANCE / [...] /
CLOVIS / CAESAR /
ALEXANDRE / achille
See also 82.13.165 and 166,
possibly for cat. 366

82.13.99
Various compositional sketches
Pencil and ink on paper, 130 x 205 mm

82.13.100
Design for a monument
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 210 x 135 mm
Inscribed: En souvenir de notre liberation / Liberté tenant le drapeau / FRANCE / le souvenir américain

82.13.101
Design for a monument
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 210 x 130 mm

82.13.102
The Thoughts of a Queen
Blue pencil and ink on squared paper, 140 x 85 mm
Inscribed: Les pensées d'une Reine

82.13.103
The Devil's Bridge
Pencil and ink on paper, 95 x 125 mm
Inscribed: Le pont du diable

82.13.104
Allegorical scene
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 125 x 115 mm

82.13.105
Allegorical study
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 210 x 135 mm

82.13.106
Design for a plaque
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 135 x 105 mm
Inscribed in medal:
CIVILISATION LATINE /
ROME PARIS ATHENE
Text underneath drawing: La culture sensibilise l'esprit pour le bien de l'homme, la civilization discipline la brutalité des passions pour le bonheur des peuples.

Verso: Similar design
Inscribed in medal:
Université – Sorbonne;
underneath: Libération du despotisme de la Brutalité Ignorante

82.13.107
Four views of Venice
Pencil and ink on paper, 135 x 210 mm
Inscribed: Vue S Georges vu de la Piazza / Piazza San Marco soleil couchant / St Marc interieur / Vue du Palais [...]

82.13.108
Sketch of a staircase in a house
Pencil on paper, 240 x 170 mm

82.13.109
Loving is Living
Pencil and ink on paper: 95 x 145 mm
Inscribed: Au jardin d'Amour / Aimer c'est vivre!

82.13.110
Praxiteles sculpting
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 80 x 165 mm
Inscribed: Praxitel

82.13.111
Danae
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 110 x 140 mm
Inscribed: Danae

82.13.112
Design for a Casket
Pencil and ink on cardboard, 140 x 105 mm
It shows portrait medallions attached, such as 82.13.116, 82.13.163 or 82.13.143

82.13.113
Design for a triptych with dancers
Blue pencil and black ink on paper, 75 x 200 mm

82.13.114
The Iron of Glory
Pencil and ink on paper, 130 x 105 mm
Inscribed: Le fer de Gloire

82.13.115
Night, Sower of Stars
Blue pencil and ink on paper, 205 x 130 mm
Inscribed: La nuit semeuse d'étoiles / Jetant les étoiles du ciel
Verso:
Inscribed: La beauté est morte l'industrie triomphe / le courage l'héroïsme personnel fait place [...] sacrifice sur l'autel brutal de la machinerie.
With separate image: La poétesse du bois

82.13.116
Design for a self-portrait on medallion
Blue pencil and ink paper, 130 x 100 mm
Inscribed: Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ 1842-19.. pour le coffret peint sur émail noir (genre Jean Fouquet) par Me Van Driesten ou Dubois
See 82.13.112

82.13.117
Allegorical scene
Pencil and ink on paper, 135 x 150 mm

82.13.118
Allegorical scene
Pencil and ink on paper, 112 x 135 mm
Inscribed: industrie – travaux – vie – honneur – échange – terre – champs – blé

82.13.119
Triumphant Angel
Ink on squared paper, 180 x 160 mm

82.13.120
A sculptor at work
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
110 x 140 mm
Verso: Similar composition
in mirror image

82.13.121
Hercules and Omphale
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
195 x 150 mm

82.13.122
Studies of angels
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
210 x 130 mm

82.13.123
Female river god
Pencil and ink on paper, 95 x
105 mm
Verso: idem

82.13.124
Tomb monument
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
105 x 135 mm

82.13.125
Monument to Albert I of
Belgium
Blue pencil on paper, 170 x
115 mm
Inscribed: La Belgique fut le
boucle de la France
See cat. 366

82.13.126
A seated figure
Pencil and ink on paper, 100
x 80 mm

82.13.127
Self-portrait in profile
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
90 x 95 mm
Inscribed: A celle qui fut le
charme et l'inspiration de
mes derniers jours / Jean
Lecomte du Nouÿ / 1842 19..
See also 82.13.163 and
82.13.116

82.13.128
A bunch of leaves

Blue pencil and ink on paper,
105 x 100 mm
Inscribed: une touffe de
feuilles / femme du peuple
orné d'un [...] tête nue pour
[...] de soleil. Vue sur la quai
de l'hôtel d Ville. Paris 4
Juillet 1918

82.13.129
The British Alliance
Ink on paper, 87 x 50 mm
Inscribed: L'alliance anglaise
la sympathique dame

82.13.130
A fallen soldier
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
100 x 135 mm
Study for cat. 236

82.13.131
A seated figure
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
110 x 85 mm

82.13.132
Four allegories in roundels
Blue and black pencil, and
ink on paper, 130 x 205 mm
Inscribed: la foret qui chante
/ Les pensées de vie jeune

82.13.133
Brittany
Ink on paper, 105 x 75 mm
Inscribed: Bretagne / Rohan
suis. Rohan reste

82.13.134
Soldier with a woman and
carrying a child
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
105 x 135 mm
Inscribed: Fleur de Poilu /
Héros / Guerre

82.13.135
Design for "Alexander at the
Tomb of Achilles" and its
frame
Blue pencil and ink on
cardboard, 135 x 105 mm
See cat. 320

82.13.136
Sketch of a Middle Eastern
scene with women carrying
water and seated figures.
Pencil and ink on paper, 95 x
155 mm
Seated figures compare with
cat. 165.

82.13.137
Declaring War to War
(Sketch for a War
Monument?)
Pencil and ink on paper, 190
x 130 mm

82.13.138
Handle of a sword
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
110 x 90 mm

82.13.139
Unidentified scene
Ink on paper, 210 x 130 mm

82.13.140
The Desperate Ones
Ink on paper, 110 x 165 mm
Inscribed: Les désespérés

82.13.141
Design for a frame holding a
painting and mirror
Pen on paper, 150 x 100 mm
Inscribed: le petit vainqueur /
peinture; glace
See cat. 344 for similar title

82.13.142
The French Dream
Pencil and ink on paper, 180
x 115 mm
Inscribed: Le rêve Français /
Le Rêve du Patriote ou le
Reveil / en allégorie un vieux
soldat médaillé

82.13.143
Design for a portrait
medallion
Pencil and ink on paper, 100
x 135 mm
Inscribed: JEAN LECOMTE
DU NOUY 1842-19.. / PLUS
NE VEULX

- 82.13.144
Design for a monument
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
135 x 105 mm
Inscribed: La France /
l'entière des civilisations
passées, appuyée sur la
tradition, découvre l'étoile
lumineuse de son front [...]
les nations alliées l'entourent
la protège comme la raison
même de la civilization. /
Carte de la France
- 82.13.145
Interior of a chapel
Ink on paper, 190 x 150 mm
- 82.13.146
Design for a monument
Pencil and ink on paper, 175
x 135 mm
- 82.13.147
Design for two figures
holding a portrait medallion
Pencil and ink on paper, 115
x 140 mm
- 82.13.148
Designs for monuments
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
210 x 135 mm
Inscribed: Dedié aux mères
aux veuves de France –
Françaises / etc.
- 82.13.149
God created the Woman, and
Love existed
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
85 x 85 mm
Inscribed: Dieu créa la
femme et l'amour fut
- 82.13.150
Aspasia
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
87 x 125 mm
Inscribed: Socrate / Aspasia
See 82.13.286
- 82.13.151
Hercules and Omphale, and,
The Birth of Venus
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
75 x 195 mm
Inscribed: Hercule et
Omphale; Naissance Vénus
- 82.13.152
The Judgment of Paris
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
80 x 200 mm
- 82.13.153
Thought, sheet with four
sketches
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
125 x 170 mm
Inscribed: la pensée / La voie
du sang maternel
Verso: la pensée dans la
tranchée / l'évocation dans la
chaumière
- 82.13.154
Salomé
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
200 x 75 mm
Inscribed: Danse / Salomé
[...]
- 82.13.155
Scene with sirens
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
75 x 200 mm
Inscribed: Paris
See 82.13.159
- 82.13.156
Design for a sculpture of a
woman with a putto
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
150 x 100 mm
- 82.13.157
Sketch for memorial portrait
of the artist (?)
Pencil and ink on paper, 150
x 135 mm
See also 82.13.112, 116, 143,
and 163.
- 82.13.158
Sheet with various
compositional studies
Blue pencil and black ink on
paper
135 x 210 mm
- Various inscriptions: En
Souvenir d'Argesch / Les
âmes Royales / Le philosophe
[see cat. 321] / Les veilleurs /
etc.
- 82.13.159
Study with sirens
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
135 x 210 mm
Inscribed: Les Sirènes
Verso: idem
See 82.13.155
- 82.13.160
Design for a representation of
the Four Arts
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
140 x 195 mm
Inscribed: "Ingres ou Gérôme
(Vierge)" / "Musset ou Th
Gautier" (Muse) / "Mercier
ou Jean Goujon (Sculpture) /
Berlioz ou Gounod
(Musique).
- 82.13.161
Design for bench supports
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
130 x 210 mm
- 82.13.162
Design for a monument
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
210 x 135 mm
Inscribed: En Souvenir de
/ les Etats Unis
- 82.13.163
Design for a monument with
a head in profile; self-portrait
(?)
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
115 x 90 mm
Inscribed: PLUS NE VEULX
See also 82.13.127
- 82.13.164
Female head with laurel
wreath
Ink on paper, 65 x 85 mm

82.13.165
Design for a monument
Bleu pencil and ink on paper,
190 x 95 mm
See also 82.13.98, possibly
for cat. 366

82.13.166
Design for a monument
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
135 x 105 mm
See also 82.13.98, possibly
for cat. 366

82.13.167
The Dear Shadow
Pencil and ink on paper, 135
x 105 mm
Inscribed: L'ombre chère

82.13.168
Design for an ornamental
frame
Pencil and ink on paper, 155
x 135 mm

82.13.169
You shall not go far
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
110 x 160 mm
Inscribed: Tu n'iras pas plus
loin

82.13.170
Design for a torchère (?)
Pencil and ink on paper, 145
x 190 mm

82.13.171
Design for a monument with
a dog (?)
Neither Band nor Master,
Free I am Free I remain
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
130 x 210 mm
Inscribed: Ni collier! Ni
Maitre / libre je suis / libre je
reste

82.13.172
Man with an ax
Ink on paper, 120 x 85 mm

82.13.173
The Demon of the Flesh

Pencil and ink on cardboard,
F 140 x 105 mm
Inscribed in ink: le démon de
la chair avec des ailes
sauvages d'appetits terrestres
vers les étoiles l'amour
vainqueur; in pencil: L'ame
L'esprit libérée de la matière
retourne au ciel a [...] Dieu

82.13.174
Sketch of an airplane
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
140 x 210 mm
See cat. 333

82.13.175
Various sketches, one of a
man in military uniform
Ink on paper, 115 x 75 mm

82.13.176
Study of a carpet seller
Ink on paper, 115 x 180 mm
Inscribed: Md de Tapis
Verso: architectural study

82.13.177
Harness for an ox
Ink on paper 205 x 130

82.13.178
Man in ancient roman dress
Pencil and ink on paper, 206
x 105 mm

82.13.179
Sheet with various
compositions
Pencil and ink in paper, 130x
175 mm
Verso: Standing figure

82.13.180
Nude woman washing her
feet
Charcoal and ink on paper,
160 x 125 mm

82.13.181
Henriette
Pencil and ink on paper, 105
x 95 mm
Inscribed: Henriette
Possibly, Henriette Peigné
Crémieux

See cat. 114, and 82.13.222

82.13.182
Fasces
Ink on paper, 300 x 190 mm
See 82.13.187

82.13.183
Woman Dancing
Pencil and ink on paper, 140
x 80 mm

82.13.184
Allegorical sketch
Blue pencil and ink on paper,
70 x 110 mm
Inscribed: masque / Poesie,
Arts, fuyant devant
l'industrie [...] adieu aux
charmes de la reverie de
l'âme et de l'esprit

82.13.185
Man felling a tree
Pencil and ink on paper, 140
x 80 mm
Verso: sketch

82.13.186
Bathsheba
Pencil and ink on paper, 130
x 210 mm
Inscribed: Bethsabée
See also 82.13.255

82.13.187
Two Lictors
Pencil and ink on paper, 190
x 300 mm
See 82.13.182

82.13.188
Bust of a woman
Ink on paper, 300 x 210 mm

82.13.189
Propeller airplane
Blue pencil and ink on paper
210 x 270 mm
See cat. 333.

82.13.190
Holy Trinity
Pencil and ink on paper, 125
x 180 mm
Verso: The baptism of Christ

- 82.13.191
Return From Exile, study for a monument
Pencil and ink on paper, 190 x 155 mm
Inscribed: Retour d'exil
- 82.13.192
The benediction by the Archbishop
(And a further study of a carpet seller, see 82.13.176)
Pencil and ink on paper, 210 x 335 mm
Inscribed: La bénédiction donnée par l'Archevêque
- 82.13.193
Studies of Roman armor
Pencil and ink on paper, 285 x 230 mm
- 82.13.194
Judgment Day
Ink on tracing paper, 120 x 130 mm
Inscribed: Jour dernier
- 82.13.195
Coat of Arms
Blue pencil on tracing paper, 390 x 250 mm
- 82.13.196
Unidentified Scene
Ink on prepared canvas, 180 x 240 mm
- 82.13.197
Dancing Woman
Black and white pencil on tracing paper, 325 x 255 mm
- 82.13.198
Head of Napoleon III wearing a laurel wreath
Charcoal and ink on tracing paper, 260 x 230 mm
- 82.13.199
Porter in Cairo
Engraving 315 x 225 mm
Signed in engraving: LECOMTE DU NOUY 76 / M RAPINE sc
- Written in pencil: Portier au Caire
See cat. 113
- 82.13.200
Oriental man smoking
Engraving 330 x 240 mm
See cats. 121, 122
- 82.13.201
The 41st Seat
Wash on tracing paper, adhered to paper, 310 x 255 mm
Inscribed: Esquisse d'un tableau qui devait s'appeler le 41^e fauteuil par Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ [...] / Le personnage du premier plan c'est Verlaine tenant ds. ses mains son livre [Sagesse?] / Les autres: Molière, Balzac, Th. Gautier etc. les plus grands qui ne furent pas de l'Institut / de ce projet il n'est resté que le [Philosophe] qui est au Musée de Nancy.
See cat. 321
- 82.13.202
Study for a postage stamp
Wash on canvas, 190 x 160 mm
- 82.13.203
Photograph of a study for a postage stamp
230 x 175 mm
- 82.13.204
Study for "The Philosopher"
Wash on tracing paper, 185 x 220 mm
See cat. 321
- 82.13.205
Tiepolo
Wash on tracing paper, 115 x 105 mm
Inscribed: TIEPOLO
See cat. 319
- 82.13.206
Head of an 18th-century man in profile
- Wash on tracing paper, 140 x 135 mm
- 82.13.207
Family crest
Oil on tracing paper, 190 x 130 mm
Inscribed: PLUS NE VEULX
82.13.208
Design for a postage stamp (1918)
Wash on tracing paper, 210 x 175 mm
- 82.13.209
The Christ Child
Wash on tracing paper, 265 x 225 mm
Study for cat. 313
- 82.13.210
Tiepolo
Wash on tracing paper, 120 x 115 mm
Inscribed: TIEPOLO
See cat. 319
- 82.13.211
Design for a ceiling decoration (?)
Wash on tracing paper, 160 x 250 mm
Verso: Torso of a male archer
- 82.13.212
Cybele
Wash on tracing paper, 140 x 260 mm
- 82.13.213
Beautiful Venice
Wash on tracing paper, 160 x 170 mm
Inscribed: VENEZIA BELLA
See cat. 319
- 82.13.214
Allegorical study, possibly related to the predella scenes of "Venice"
Wash on tracing paper, 130 x 430 mm
See cat. 319

82.13.215
Jacques du Nouÿ and his
nanny
Wash on tracing paper, 180 x
260 mm
Inscribed: Jacques du Nouÿ
et la petite mère / le premier
dejeuner 1886

82.13.216
Orpheus
Wash on tracing paper, 180 x
120 mm
Probably a design for cat. 325

82.13.217
Gaspard de Coligny
Pencil on tracing paper, 175 x
125 mm
See cat. 74

82.13.218
Sketch for a Napoleonic
scene
Wash on tracing paper, 175 x
210 mm
The final painting can be
seen in fig. 7.

82.13.219
Woman Reading
Wash on tracing paper, 105 x
90 mm

82.13.220
A Celestial Shadow
Wash on tracing paper, 110 x
150 mm
Inscribed: Ombre Céleste

82.13.221
Sketch of figures ascending a
hill, carrying a load
Wash on tracing paper, 180 x
240 mm
See 82.13.136

82.13.222
Henriette Peigné Crémieux
Engraving, 280 x 180 mm
See cat. 114

82.13.223
Félicité Alexandrine du
Nouÿ, after a sculpted relief
Engraving, 275 x 180 mm

Inscribed: Lecomte du Nouÿ
sculpteur - M. Rapine Sct
See cat. 143

82.13.224
Photographic reproduction of
"Bonaparte annotant les
commentaires de César"
235 x 180 mm
See cat. 266

82.13.225
Veronese
Wash on tracing paper, 120 x
110 mm
See cat. 321.

82.13.226
Bellini
Wash on tracing paper, 115 x
105 mm
See cat. 321.

82.13.227
Carpaccio
Wash on tracing paper, 120 x
110 mm
See cat. 321.

82.13.228
Reclining Man
Wash on tracing paper, 125 x
380 mm
See cat. 319

82.13.229
Allegorical study, possibly
related to predella scenes of
"Venice"
Wash on tracing paper, 120 x
250 mm
See cat. 319

82.13.230
Possibly a Sketch of Salomé
carrying the Head of John the
Baptist
Oil on canvas, 135 x 110 mm

82.13.231
Study of a flower
Oil on canvas, 95x 85 mm

82.13.232
A man contemplating the
Moses by Michelangelo

Oil on canvas, 110 x 155 mm

82.13.233
Rocky coastal landscape
Oil on paper, 110 x 220 mm
82.13.234
Oriental scene with a man
seated near an open door,
while others are seen inside
Oil on canvas, 150 x 110 mm

82.13.235
Unidentified scene
Oil on canvas, 135 x 240 mm

82.13.236
Landscape with a wall and
houses
Oil on canvas, 145 x 215 mm

82.13.237
Crown
Oil on canvas, 160 x 210 mm
Inscribed: Couronne de S. M.
la Reine / Elisabet [sic] de
Roumanie / (Carmen Sylva)
1895; signed: Lecomte du
Nouÿ 1er janvier 1895

82.13.238
People in a gondola
Oil on canvas, 120 x 190 mm
Inscribed: La promenade de
Chioggia

82.13.239
Rural scene
Oil on canvas, 125 x 180 mm

82.13.240
The miracle (two nuns in
front of a crucifix)
Oil on canvas, 225 x 160 mm
Inscribed: Le miracle,
l'adoration perpétuelle

82.13.241
Fourmies
Oil on canvas, 175 x 265 mm
Inscribed: FOURMIES
This subject relates to a
worker's revolt in the
Northern French textile town
of Fourmies on May 1, 1891,
that was violently suppressed
by soldiers and resulted in

nine casualties, among which there where women and a child	Oil on canvas, 100 x 125 mm	82.13.262 Study of a cupboard
82.13.242 Force tamed by the Senses Oil on canvas, 115 x 195 mm Inscribed: La force domptée par les sens	82.13.251 Fallen tree Oil on canvas, 115 x 190 mm	82.13.263 View of a village Oil on canvas, 110 x 300 mm
82.13.243 Entrance to a tomb near the Pyramids at Giseh Oil on canvas, 195 x 115 mm Inscribed: lower left: LE 8 FEV. 1901; over that text in smaller cursive: Lecomte du Nouÿ; lower right in black cursive: entrée d'un tombeau / pres des Pyramides de Giseh / le Caire Egypte. See cat. 290.	82.13.252 Unidentified scene with flying figures and a person on a balcony Oil on canvas, 130 x 100 mm	82.13.264 Crown Oil on canvas, 155 x 210 mm Inscribed: Couronne de S. M. le Roi / Charles 1er de Roumanie / 1895; signed: Lecomte du Nouÿ 1er Janvier 1895
82.13.244 Trees and foliage Oil on canvas, 240 x 185 mm	82.13.253 A crab on a beach with Venice (?) in the background Oil on canvas, 85 x 140 mm Inscribed: Rêverie du soir	82.13.265 Study of a head Oil on canvas, 200 x 130 mm Signed and dated: du Nouÿ 76
82.13.245 Unidentified scene of two equestrians carrying dead bodies, surrounded by many bystanders Oil on canvas, 180 x 215 mm Same composition as 82.13.293	82.13.254 Head of a turbaned man in profile Oil on canvas, 210 x 120 mm	82.13.266 The widow Oil on canvas, 200 x 240 mm, inscribed: VEUVE Study for cat. 132
82.13.246 View of a classical façade Oil on canvas, 140 x 140 mm	82.13.255 Bathsheba Oil on canvas, 100 x 155 mm See also 82.13.186	82.13.267 Paysage Oil on canvas, 105 x 300 mm
82.13.247 Ruins of a church, study for "The Bombardment of the Church of St. Gervais" Oil on canvas, 210 x 120 mm	82.13.256 Head of an officer with helmet Oil on canvas, 190 x 120 mm	82.13.268 Front legs of a goat Oil on canvas, 190 x 120 mm
82.13.248 Gondola Oil on canvas, 115 x 195 mm	82.13.257 Study of two cats being venerated in ancient Egypt Oil on canvas, 125 x 195 mm	82.13.269 Landscape study Oil on canvas, 115 x 190 mm
82.13.249 Tree trunk Oil on canvas, 120 x 195 mm	82.13.258 Staircase leading into the water Oil on canvas, 125 x 115 mm	82.13.270 A Jug Oil on canvas, 70 x 155 mm
82.13.250 Flower and leaves	82.13.259 Study of two doors Oil on canvas, 115 x 195 mm	82.13.271 Night and Twilight Oil on canvas, 130 x 160 mm Inscribed: Nuit / Crépuscule See 82.13.310
	82.13.260 F181 Study of an Oriental man near a doorway standing next to a pile of severed heads Oil on canvas, 175 x 130 mm	82.13.272 Venetian scene Oil on canvas, 120 x 195 mm
	82.13.261 View of houses in the hills Oil on paper, 110 x 300 mm	

82.13.273
Church interior
Oil on canvas, 120 x 190 mm

82.13.274
Head of a goat
Oil on canvas, 120 x 195 mm

82.13.275
View of Venice
Oil on canvas, 115 x 195 mm

82.13.276
Apollo
Pencil, pen and oil on canvas,
185 x 235 mm

82.13.277
Study of Venice
Oil on canvas, 115 x 195 mm

82.13.278
Study of Venice
Oil on canvas, 115 x 165 mm
See cat. 319

82.13.279
Unidentified scene
Oil on canvas, 115 x 95 mm

82.13.280
Grandiose Interior (Doge
Palace?)
Oil on canvas, 115 x 190 mm

82.13.281
Study for a triptych
Oil on canvas, 115 x 150 mm

82.13.282
Harem scene (?)
Oil on canvas, 100 x 175 mm

82.13.283
Four studies of the portraits
of the King and Queen of
Romania
Oil on canvas, 115 x 195 mm

82.13.284
Two water carriers
Oil on canvas, 140 x 110 mm

82.13.285
Sirens
Oil on canvas, 125 x 205 mm

82.13.286
Socrates at Aspasie
Oil on canvas, 130 x 175 mm
Inscribed: Socrate chez
Aspasie
See 82.13.150

82.13.287
View of Venice
Oil on canvas, 200 x 115 mm

82.13.288 **Fig 16**
Two designs for the
altarpieces in the Church of
the Trinité in Paris
Oil on canvas, 170 x 200 mm
See cats. 111 and 139

82.13.289
View of buildings
Oil on paper, 110 x 150 mm

82.13.290
View of Venice
Oil on canvas, 190 x 120 mm

82.13.291
Unidentified scene
Oil on canvas, 165 x 130 mm

82.13.292
A buoy
Oil on canvas, 160 x 230 mm
See cat. 93

82.13.293
Unidentified scene of two
equestrians carrying dead
bodies, surrounded by many
bystanders
Oil on canvas, 170 x 225 mm
Same composition as
82.13.245

82.13.294
Unidentified scene with
seated people
Oil on canvas, 100 x 165 mm

82.13.295
Dante and Virgil
Oil on canvas, 190 x 120 mm

82.13.296
Study of water
Oil on paper, 55 x 145 mm

82.13.297
Study of a sunset behind
clouds
Oil on canvas, 125 x 215 mm

82.13.298
Study for a portrait of Queen
Elizabeth of Romania
Oil on canvas, 170 x 115 mm

82.13.299
Sketch of an unidentified
scene
Oil on canvas, 100 x 120 mm

82.13.300
Studies of branches with
leaves
Oil on canvas, 240 x 190 mm

82.13.301
Homer reciting
Oil on canvas, 155 x 120 mm

82.13.302
Study of rocks
Oil on paper, 160 x 300 mm

82.13.303
Design for a triptych with a
historical scene
Oil on canvas, 130 x 315 mm

82.13.304
Sketch of a woman
Oil on canvas, 85 x 90 mm

82.13.305
Study of a hand
Oil on canvas, 90 x 120 mm

82.13.306
Study of a woman
Oil on canvas, 150 x 120 mm

82.13.307
Views of Venice
Oil on canvas, 120 x 195 mm
See cat. 319

82.13.308
Study for Mlle de Maupin (?)
Oil on canvas, 105 x 160 mm
See cat. 297

82.13.309
Study for a portrait of Queen
Elisabeth of Romania
Oil on canvas, 125 x 80 mm

82.13.310
Day and Dawn
Oil on canvas, 135 x 160 mm
Inscribed: Jour / Aurore
See: 82.13.271

82.13.311
Unidentified mythological
scene
Oil on canvas, 190 x 100 mm

82.13.312
A flower
Watercolor on paper, 110 x
160 mm

82.13.313
Roundel with a woman and a
figure holding a plaque
Oil on canvas, 175 x 175 mm

82.13.314
Design for a religious
triptych
Oil on canvas, 115 x 165 mm

82.13.315
Madonna and Child
Oil on canvas, 65 x 65 mm

82.13.316 **F3D**
Sarah Bernhardt and Clairin
gliding over the people
Oil on panel, 140 x 230 mm
Inscribed: Sarah-Bernard et
Clairin planant au dessus des
hommes / du Nouÿ

82.13.317
Street with archways
Oil on canvas, 390 x 245 mm
Inscribed: BAT ADIB /
DAMAS

82.13.318
Mountain landscape with
rocks
Oil on paper, 205 x 285 mm
Dated: 1870

82.13.319
Sketch for a subject set in
Ancient Greece
Oil on canvas, 200 x 230 mm

82.13.320
Head of a General, for "The
Dictation at Austerlitz"
Oil on canvas, 310 x 230 mm
See cat. 280

82.13.321
Unidentified scene in ancient
Greece
Oil on canvas, 200 x 290 mm

82.13.322
Study of tree branches
Oil on canvas, 235 x 325 mm

82.13.323
Figures in a landscape
Oil on canvas, 150 x 310 mm

82.13.324
Sketch of an unidentified
scene, A Painter in his studio
(?)
Oil on canvas, 235 x 325 mm

82.13.325
Interior of a large hall in a
castle
Oil on canvas, 250 x 325 mm

82.13.326 **F3J**
View of the Carpathian
Mountains
Oil on canvas, 185 x 305 mm
Inscribed: Vue des Carpathes
prise au dessus du chateau
royale Sinaïa 1897 Lecomte
du Nouÿ

82.13.327 **F3K**
View over rooftops of an
Oriental city
Oil on canvas, 215 x 320 mm

82.13.328
Legs of Napoleon, for "The
Dictation at Austerlitz"
Oil on canvas, 400 x 235 mm
See cat. 280

82.13.329
Archway in Rome
Oil on canvas, 270 x 320 mm
Inscribed: Rome vieux
quartier

82.13.330
Gynécée
Watercolor on paper, 220 x
340 mm
Inscribed: GYNECEE;
signed: Lecomte du Nouÿ

82.13.331
Village Church, probably in
Malleval
Oil on canvas, 310 x 230 mm
See cat. 61, 61a

82.13.332
View of a town from a
window
Oil on canvas, 240 x 330 mm

82.13.333
Study of a tree trunk
Oil on canvas, 270 x 455 mm

82.13.334
Wheel of a water mill
Oil on canvas, 320 x 250 mm

82.13.335
Street in Malleval
Oil on canvas, 285 x 230 mm

82.13.336
View of Malleval
Oil on canvas, 290 x 395 mm
Inscribed: Malleval 1870

82.13.337
Study of legs
Oil on canvas, 380 x 285 mm
See cat. 179

82.13.338
Study of a cupboard
Oil on canvas, 320 x 255 mm

82.13.339
Drapery
Oil on canvas, 450 x 220 mm

82.13.340
Study of legs
Oil on canvas, 235 x 300 mm
See cat. 179
82.13.341
Fragment of the head of
Alexander
Oil on canvas, 260 x 365 mm
See cat. 320

82.13.342
Garden
Oil on canvas, 310 x 240 mm

82.13.343
The New Dawn of Justice
and Peace
Oil on canvas, 300 x 355 mm
Inscribed: La nouvelle aurore
de justice et de paix

82.13.344
Study of trees
Oil on canvas, 345 x 295 mm

82.13.345
Lenoir
Sketch in Fayoum
Oil on canvas, 220 x 180 mm

82.13.346
Travel sketchbook
35 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
70 x 110 mm

82.13.347
Travel sketchbook, dated
1893
48 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
80 x 105 mm

82.13.348
Travel sketchbook
48 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
70 x 100 mm

82.13.349
Travel sketchbook
33 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
85 x 120 mm

82.13.350
Travel sketchbook
36 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
85 x 120 mm
82.13.351
Travel sketchbook
30 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
80 x 120 mm

82.13.352
Travel sketchbook
52 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
80 x 120 mm

82.13.353
Travel sketchbook
54 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
80 x 105 mm

82.13.354
Travel sketchbook, 1893
54 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
80 x 105 mm

82.13.355
Travel sketchbook
61 sheets with mostly pencil
drawings
80 x 105 mm

82.13.356
Travel sketchbook
38 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
120 x 150 mm

82.13.357
Travel sketchbook
54 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
90 x 150 mm

82.13.358
Travel sketchbook
49 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
115 x 190 mm

82.13.359
Travel sketchbook

58 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
70 x 105 mm

82.13.360
Travel sketchbook
58 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
70 x 105 mm

82.13.361
Travel sketchbook
54 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
90 x 150 mm

82.13.362
Travel sketchbook
56 sheets with mostly pencil
drawing
85 x 150 mm

82.13.363
Travel sketchbook
56 sheets with sketches in
pencil, charcoal and wash on
paper
185 x 120 mm

82.13.364
Travel sketchbook
161 sheets with sketches in
pencil, ink and gouache
170 x 105 mm

82.13.365
Photo of a painted woman's
portrait, probably the artist's
wife
100 x 75 mm

82.13.366
Printed address label in
Spanish, with French writing
Ink on paper, 60 x 145 mm

82.13.367
(Autograph?) handwritten
text on the Gauls
Ink on paper, 260 x 205 mm

82.13.368
Photo of a statue by Lecomte
du Nouÿ (cat. 366)
Book illustration, 70 x 45
mm

82.13.369
Emile Friant
Portrait of Luc Olivier
Merson (1920)
Engraving, 240 x 165 mm

82.13.370
Unknown artist
Head of a young woman
Pencil and red chalk on
paper, 150 x 100 mm
Signed 1887

82.13.371
L. Rollet
Seascape
Ink on paper, 180 x 135 mm

82.13.372
L. Rollet
Seascape
Pencil and ink on paper, 180
x 130 mm

82.13.373
Unknown artist
Landscape
Watercolor, 150 x 210 mm

82.13.374
Luc Olivier Merson
Family scene
ink on paper, 285 x 200 mm

82.13.375
Unknown photographer
Photo of a young Egyptian
boy
130 x 100 mm

Appendix II

The content of two albums comprising 176 oil sketches was exhibited at Galerie Hahn in Paris from 22 September – 27 October 1995. The exhibition catalogue contains 13 color reproductions and lists all the works with the titles given according to the album inscriptions by Lecomte du Nouÿ. The catalogue consists of 12 unnumbered pages, and 13 works are reproduced in color. The titles as listed in this catalogue are repeated here. If known, the work's current location is given, and cross-references to related catalogue raisonné numbers were made.

LECOMTE DU NOÛY / Jules-Jean Antoine / 1842-1923 / *SOUVENIRS DE VOYAGES* / EXPOSITION / du 22 septembre au 27 octobre 1995 / GALERIE HAHN / 10, rue de Louvois – 75002 Paris

1 Ruines du Château de Rochemaure (Ardèche)
Oil on canvas, 12 x 19.5 cm
See cat. 233

2 No title
Oil on canvas, 16 x 12 cm

3 Terrasse de ma maison (Tunis)
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 19.3 cm

4 No title
Tête de femme
Oil on canvas, 15.8 x 13.2 cm

5 Terrasse de la Mosquée de Bou Saada. Algérie.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.2 cm

6 Village de Bou Saada (Algérie)
Oil on canvas, 11.8 x 19.2 cm

7 Entrée de la Mosquée de Bou Saada. Algérie
Oil on canvas, 11.8 x 19.1 cm

8 Le café dit "de Fromentin". Alger
Oil on canvas, 11.8 x 19.1 cm

9 Bassin de l'Alhambra. Grenade (Espagne).
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 19.5 cm

10 Etudes de l'Alhambra. Grenade.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.8 cm

11 Mur de la Mosquée. (Tunis)
Oil on canvas, 12.3 x 20.1 cm

12 L'Oued (rivière) de Bou Saada. Algérie
Oil on canvas, 11.8 x 19.1 cm

13 Au Bosphore. La ronde des soldats autour du Palais du Sultan
Oil on canvas, 6.3 x 11.7 cm
See cat. 323

14 Au Bosphore
Oil on canvas, 6.3 x 11.3 cm
See cat. 323

15 Venise vue de la Guidecca
Oil on canvas, 7.5 x 14 cm

16 Fontaine de la Mosquée d'Alger
Oil on canvas, 15.8 x 12.6 cm

17 Porte d'une Mosquée au Caire
Oil on canvas, 15.9 x 9.3 cm

18 Une veuve turque sur les ruines de la maison incendiée. Constantinople, et: Légende Bretonne.
Oil on canvas, 19.8 x 11.8 cm
Present Location: Brest, Musée des Beaux-Arts

19 Légende Bretonne
Oil on canvas, 8 x 11.7 cm
Present Location: Brest, Musée des Beaux-Arts

20 La ronde matinale autour du Palais Impérial. Bosphore. [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.3 cm
Annotated lower left: RONDES MATINALES
See cat. 323

21 La corne d'or, la nuit. Stanboul vu de Péra. Constantinople
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 19.5 cm
Annotated bottom center: Ode à la lune

22 Lever de lune dans la Mer Noire
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 18.8 cm
Signed and annotated lower left: 1h ½ du matin, mer noire, lever de lune, 28 octobre 1899, à bord du Regela Carui I"

23 Village au bord du Tage. Lisbonne. Portugal.
Oil on canvas, 12 x 21 cm

24 Théâtre Anamite. Expos 1900
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 19.8 cm

25 Le mur du Sérail. Constantinople.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.1 cm
Annotated lower left: Cave Canem

26 L'enlèvement. Stanboul. Constantinople.
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 18.2 cm
See cat. 164

27 Homère
Oil on canvas, 10.9 x 15.7 cm
Annotated: Le Poète
See cat. 105, 160; and Aurillac: 82.13.301,
appendix I.

28 Au cimetière hors les murs. Constantinople.
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 19.6 cm
Annotated lower left: aux chemins des morts

29 Cimetière hors les murs. Stanboul.
Oil on canvas, 11.8 x 19.7 cm

30 Le marabout à l'ombre d'une Mosquée.
Stanboul
Oil on canvas, 12 x 19.3 cm

31 Au bord du Golfe de Bythinie. Asie Mineure.
Oil on canvas, 12 x 19.7 cm

32 Intérieur Breton à Pont-Aven.
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 19.2 cm
Present location: Brest, Musée des Beaux-Arts]

33 Cheminée à Rochemaure. Ardèche
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 19.2 cm
Possibly related to cat. 244, *Le souper de
Beaucaire*; see also cat. 233.

34 Lanternes de la Mosquée d'El Asar. Caire
Oil on canvas, 9.8 x 12.5 cm

35 Jésus au lac de Genasereth (esquisse)
Oil on canvas, 7.3 x 13.2 cm

36 Les gardiens de nuit. Sérail. Constantinople.
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 16.8 cm
Annotated lower left: Le mur du Sérail;
annotated lower right: mur jaune, porte
chambranle blanc chaud.

37 Une danseuse en Egypte à Siout [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 16.6 x 12.1 cm

38 Napoléon à Austerlitz

Oil on canvas, 13.7 x 11.1 cm
See cat. 279

39 Vue du Mont Blanc. Chamounix
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 18.9 cm

40 Le Mont Blanc vu de Chamounix
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 18.8 cm

41 La descente du Chaudron. Etretat.
[reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 19.8 x 12.2 cm
See cat. 194

42 L'Académie vue de ma fenêtre. Venise.
Oil on canvas, 18.6 x 11.7 cm

43 La cour du Monastère (Sinaïa). Roumanie.
[reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 19.8 cm

44 Venise!
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 26.2 cm
Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener

45 Le Caire
Oil on canvas, 12 x 19.1 cm

46 Ici je bâtirai mon Palais! (Sinaïa). Le Prince
Charles et la Princesse Elisabeth.
Oil on canvas, 12.3 x 19.4 cm

47 Même sujet que le précédent.
Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 19.2 cm

48 Le Doge Foscari au Palais Ducal. Venise.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.3 cm

49 Achille au tombeau de Patrocle.
Oil on canvas, 15.7 x 10.3 cm
See cat. 320

50 Le Seigneur!
Oil on canvas, 12.7 x 19.6 cm

51 Un poste avancé! Haute Egypte.
Oil on canvas, 19.7 x 11.4 cm
Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts et
d'Histoire de Narbonne, inv. 98-3-1; see Lepage
2000, p. 97, fig. a.

52 Un café à Louqsor. The Egypte.
Oil on canvas, 11.5 x 19.6 cm
Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts et
d'Histoire de Narbonne, inv. 98-3-4; see Lepage
2000, p. 97, fig. b.

- 53 Les Almées! Egypte.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.7 cm
- 54 La prière du soir à Abderaman. Alger.
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 21.5 cm
Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Histoire de Narbonne, inv. 98-3-2; see Lepage 2000, p. 97, fig. e.; and, Vidal-Bué 2000, repr. p. 162.
- 55 Une école arabe. Alger.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 15.9 cm
- 56 L'arbre mort. Vieux Caire
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 19.7 cm
Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Histoire de Narbonne, inv. 98-3-3; see Lepage 2000, p. 97, fig. d.
- 57 Le vieux Caire
Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 19.6 cm
- 58 Un veilleur de nuit. Vieux Caire.
Oil on canvas, 20.1 x 11.9 cm
See cat. 41
- 59 La Péri et le Poète. Le Caire. [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 19.4 cm
Present location: The Cleveland Museum of Art, see: d'Argencourt, Diederer 1999, II, 388-89, repr.
See cat. 304 and [Figure 95]
- 60 Sur la route du Vieux Caire. Le matin.
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.7 cm
Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener
- 61 Le vieux cimetière d'Alger
Oil on canvas, 11.1 x 15.1 cm
- 62 Le Marabout. Tanger.
Oil on canvas, 13.3 x 21.8 cm
See cat. 180
- 63 Les Derviches hurleurs. Le Caire 1886.
Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 20 cm
- 64 Les partageux. Le Caire.
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 20 cm
See Aurillac: 82.13.359, p.10, appendix I.
- 65 L'écrivain public (Tanger).
Oil on canvas, 15.3 x 12.9 cm
Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Histoire de Narbonne, inv. 98-3-5; see Lepage 2000, p. 97, fig. c.
- 66 Au bord du Nil.
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 20 cm
- 67 Mademoiselle de Maupin.
Oil on canvas, 17.8 x 12.5 cm
See cat. 297
- 68 Etude de main.
Oil on canvas, 13.8 x 16.6 cm
Study of the hand of Albert in Mademoiselle de Maupin, cat. 297.
- 69 Le Caire. Vue d'une terrasse, Vieux Cartier.
Oil on canvas, 12.7 x 19.9 cm
- 70 Le Caire, vue de la Citadelle prise à l'hôtel des étrangers Esbekich.
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 20.1 cm
- 71 Le Caire, au lever du soleil, par la brume
Oil on canvas, 19.8 x 12.3 cm
- 72 Le Caire, la Mosquée des Derviches tourneurs
Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 19.9 cm
- 73 Intérieur de la Mosquée.
Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 20 cm
- 74 Le Caire, quartier de la Citadelle
Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 20.1 cm
Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener
- 75 Le Caire. Quartier de la Mosquée du Sultan Qualaoum et Moristan
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 20 cm
- 76 Le Caire. Quartier Bal et Mars.
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 20 cm
- 77 Le Caire.
Oil on canvas, 20.1 x 12.4 cm
- 78 Le Caire. La nuit prise de la terrasse de mon hôtel.
Oil on canvas, 12.7 x 20 cm
- 79 Le Caire. La terrasse de mon hôtel.
La rue de l'Eskebich éclairée.
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 19.8 cm
- 80 Les Pyramides de Giseh au soleil levant.
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 19.6 cm
See cats. 21, 22, 217, related works

81 Le Caire. Le harem de Gésireh [Figure 100]

Oil on canvas, 19.2 x 25.5 cm

Present location: Beauvais, Musée départemental de l'Oise

82 Sur la route des tombeaux des Kalifes (Le Caire).

Oil on canvas, 12.2 x 19.9 cm

Present Location: Paris, Galerie Chantal Kiener

83 Les tombeaux des Kalifes. (Le Caire)

Oil on canvas, 12.3 x 19.9 cm

84 Tombeaux des Kalifes le soir. (Le Caire)

Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 19.9 cm

85 Route de Choubra. (Le Caire). Le canal du petit Nil.

Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 20 cm

86 Louqsor. Haute Egypte, de la terrasse de l'hôtel.

Oil on canvas, 11.3 x 19.7 cm

87 De la terrasse de l'hôtel, Louqsor. (Haute Egypte)

Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 19.7 cm

88 Mosquée dans les ruines d'un temple égyptien, Amenotep III, Ramses II, Louqsor, (Haute Egypte) [reproduced]

Oil on canvas, 19.8 x 12.5 cm

89 Pour la Patrie

Oil on canvas, 11 x 26.3 cm

See cat. 236

90 Porte de Tanger. 1876

Oil on canvas, 19.7 x 12.9 cm

91 Une rue de Tanger. 1876

Oil on canvas, 20 x 12.3 cm

Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.001

See cat. 205

92 La porte de ma chambre à Tanger. 1876

[reproduced]

Oil on canvas, 23.1 x 12.2 cm

93 Porte de maison juive, Casbah. Tanger. 1883

Oil on canvas, 20.4 x 12.2 cm

Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.002

94 L'Alhambra. Grenade. 1880

Oil on canvas, 12.2 x 20.4 cm

95 Cour des Lions – Alhambra. 1880

Oil on canvas, 11.9 x 8.1 cm

96 Alhambra. 1880

Oil on canvas, 12.2 x 9.5 cm

97 Vue de Tanger. 1883.

Oil on canvas, 12.7 x 19.7 cm

98 Tanger

Oil on canvas, 12.6 x 9.1 cm

Present Location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.003.

99 Porte de maison juive. 1883

Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 9.4 cm

Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.004

See cat. 205

100 A la Casbah. Tanger. 1883

Oil on canvas, 11.3 x 14.2 cm

101 Vue de Tanger de la Casbah. Tanger. 1883

Oil on canvas, 12.8 x 20 cm

102 Ruelle derrière une Mosquée. Tanger. 1883

Oil on canvas, 12.3 x 19.5 cm

See cat. 180

103 Fenêtre de ma chambre. Tanger. 1876

Oil on canvas, 13.5 x 10 cm

104 Rue de Tanger. Porte d'une école arabe. 1877

Oil on canvas, 20 x 12.6 cm

105 Rue de Tanger. 1876

Oil on canvas, 17.2 x 12.4 cm

106 Vue de la Casbah de ma terrasse. Tanger. 1877 [reproduced]

Oil on canvas, 17.9 x 12.9 cm

107 Derrière la Mosquée. Tanger. 1883

Oil on canvas, 19.6 x 12.6 cm

108 Au desert. L'Aurès. Biskra. 1883. [reproduced]

Oil on canvas, 6.1 x 19.6 cm

Present location: Beauvais, Musée départemental de l'Oise

109 La Mosquée Mohamed. Alger. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.6 x 18.1 cm

110 Minaret d'Alger. Vue prise du café
Fromentin. 1883 [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.4 cm

111 Ruelle de la Casbah. Alger. 1883
Oil on canvas, 19.9 x 11.9 cm

112 La Casbah d'Oran. 1883
Oil on canvas, 11.4 x 20.3 cm

113 Porte de la Mosquée de Tiemcen. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.7 x 19.7 cm

114 La Mosquée de Bou-Médine. Tiemcen. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 19.7 cm

115 Porte de Marabout. Tiemcen. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 16.6 cm

116 Vue de Tiemcen. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.4 x 16.6 cm

117 Porte de Marabout et lampe de Synagogue.
Tiemcen. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.1 x 16.7 cm
[Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme,
inv. 95.38.005]

118 Le Samedi dans le quartier juif [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 20.8 x 15.5 cm
Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire
du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.006
See cat. 205

119 Bords de l'Oued. Biskra. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.5 x 19.4 cm
Present location: Musée des Beaux-Arts et
d'Histoire de Narbonne, inv. 98-3-6; see Lepage
2000, p. 97, fig. f.

120 Hors de la ville Française. Biskra. 1883
Oil on canvas, 8.3 x 16.4 cm
Present location: Beauvais, Musée départemental
de l'Oise

121 Au Caravansérail. Biskra. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.3 x 19.9 cm

122 Entrée du Caravansérail. Biskra. 1883
Oil on canvas, 12.6 x 19.4 cm

123 Bains des juives. Tunis
Oil on canvas, 21 x 20.6 cm

Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire
du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.007

124 Chez les Ouleds-Nails. Biskra. Daoula. 1883
Oil on canvas, 13.4 x 20.6 cm

125 Grenade le soir. 1883
Oil on canvas, 11.4 x 18.8 cm

126 Chez Ben Chedrit. Tetouan. Maroc. 1877
Oil on canvas, 12 x 19.3 cm
Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire
du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.008

127 Le soir au Caire de ma fenêtre
Oil on canvas, 12 x 19 cm

128 Etude du Vieux Caire
Oil on canvas, 12.2 x 19.1 cm

129 Au quartier juif. Tanger
Oil on canvas, 8.6 x 21.2 cm

130 Au quartier juif. Tanger
Oil on canvas, 8.6 x 21.2 cm, inscribed: Pierres
sur une chaussée
Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire
du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.009

131 La rue de l'Esbekich. Le Caire
Oil on canvas, 15.2 x 25 cm

132 Rue à Malleval
Oil on paper, 20.6 x 14.7 cm
See cat. 61, 61a; and Aurillac: 82.13.336,
appendix I

133 Pope du monastère de Sinaia. Roumanie
Oil on canvas, 18.9 x 11.5 cm

134 Pope du monastère de Sinaia. Roumanie
Oil on canvas, 18.9 x 11.7 cm

135 Ma chambre au Monastère d'Argès.
Roumanie
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 13.2 cm

136 Sans titre [Cell in a monastery]
Oil on canvas, 16.8 x 22.8 cm

137 Le Monastère de Sinaia
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 19.2 cm

138 Sans titre [two studies of stones and a street]
Oil on canvas, 26.3 x 13.4 cm

139 Venise. L'escalier du traghetto au Zattere.
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 19.8 cm
See cat. 225

140 Le même à marée basse
Oil on canvas, 11.5 x 19.6 cm
See cat. 225

141 Venise
Oil on canvas, 18.9 x 11.6 cm

142 Venise
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.8 cm

143 Sur le Grand Canal. Venise
Oil on canvas, 11.7 x 19.7 cm

144 Bateau pêcheur à la Guidecca. Venise
Oil on canvas, 11.5 x 19.7 cm

145 Sans titre [A torrent]
Oil on canvas, 12.3 x 20.3 cm

146 Jaltabatil. Le roi s'amuse de Victor Hugo.
Oil on canvas, 21.3 x 20.2 cm

147 Iassy
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 18.8 cm

148 Quartier juif. Iassy. Roumanie. Vue prise de
l'église Trelerarchi
Oil on canvas, 10.4 x 19.1 cm, annotated lower
left: 13 mai 1905, Iassy
Present location, Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire
du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.010

149 Saint Nicolas. Iassy
Oil on canvas, 12.2 x 19.5 cm

150 Iassy. Chantier de l'Eglise St Nicolas
Oil on canvas, 11.8 x 18.8 cm

151 Un Monastère. Iassy
Oil on canvas, 11.6 x 18.9 cm

152 Le Dimanche à Venise [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 15.7 x 25 cm
Annotated: Dimanche (Chioggia)
See cat. 225

153 Etude de panthère
Oil on canvas, 20.6 x 12.2 cm
See cat. 186

154 Salle d'auberge dans la montagne. Bagnères
de Luchon.

Oil on canvas, 12.2 x 20 cm

155 Une Sakieh. Bord du Nil. (Vieux Caire)
Oil on canvas, 17.4 x 15.6 cm

156 Bords du Nil devant l'île de Rodah. (Vieux
Caire)
Oil on canvas, 12.6 x 20.1 cm

157 Cave Canem
Oil on canvas, 19.1 x 15.1 cm
See Aurillac: 82.13.234, appendix I.

158 Le Guet-Apen
Oil on canvas, 13.1 x 9.8 cm
See cat. 82

159 Croquis esquisse pour le portrait de
l'architecte Ballu réédifiant l'hôtel de ville de
Paris.
Oil on canvas, 15.3 x 13 cm
Note: Lecomte du Nouÿ allegedly traveled with
Ballu to Venice in 1870.

160 Veuve!
Oil on canvas, 11.3 x 8.5 cm
Annotated: Veuve
See cat. 132, and Aurillac: 82.13.266, appendix
I.

161 La Sorcière [reproduced]
Oil on canvas, 10.6 x 9.4 cm
See cat. 302

162 En retenue
Oil on tracing paper, 14.1 x 12.9 cm

163 Sans titre [Apparition of Christ]
H/T 19.1 x 8.7 cm

164 Le remords de Juda
Oil on tracing paper, 22.2 x 14.7 cm, annotated:
Pour trente pièces d'or

165 Pour trente pièces d'or
Oil on tracing paper 18.9 x 14.7 cm, annotated:
C'était Dieu

166 Portrait du Roi de Roumanie
Oil on canvas, 22.6 x 17 cm, annotated:
Université d'Iassy, Roumanie
See cat. 258

167 Portrait de la Reine de Roumanie
Oil on canvas, 22.6 x 15.6 cm, annotated upper
left: Elisabeth; bottom: Université de Iassy
See cat. 259

168 Coq, poules et chapon. Le Caire
Oil on canvas, 20.4 x 16.9 cm

169 No title [An oriental woman at her window]
Oil on canvas, 20.5 x 15 cm

170 No title [study of a hand]
Oil on canvas, 18.6 x 10.8 cm

171 No title [study of a man's head]
Oil on canvas, 22.6 x 18.4 cm

172 Esquisse pour le portrait de sa Majesté le
Roi Charles pour l'université d'Iassy
Oil on canvas, 14.2 x 10.1 cm
See cat. 258

173 Esquisse pour le portrait d'Henriette
Thomson en juive de Tanger
Oil on canvas, 15.2 x 9.9 cm
Present location: Paris, Musée d'art et d'histoire
du Judaïsme, inv. 95.38.011
Note: Henriette Thompson owned several of the
artist's works, see cat. 213.

174 Le Roi de Roumanie
Oil on canvas, 15.2 x 9.9 cm

175 No title [View of Venice]
Oil on canvas, 9.3 x 13.7 cm

176 Les proscrits
Oil on canvas, 8.3 x 18 cm
See cat. 313

177 Portrait du peintre Louis Marie François
Jacquesson de La Chevreuse
Oil on canvas, 41 x 32.5 cm
Signed, annotated and dated: Jacquesson de la
Chevreuse par son camerade Lecomte du Nouÿ,
1864
See cat. 9 and [Figure 17]

APPENDIX III

Paris sale, Hotel Drouot, Estampes, Dessins et Tableaux, Objets d'art et de bel ameublement, June 23, 2003, room 1 and 7, Mr. Eric Beaussant and Mr. Pierre-Yves Lefèvre, commissaires priseurs.

ENSEMBLE d'ESTAMPES, DESSINS et AQUARELLES, / sur la Grèce, la Turquie et l'Italie / Provenant de l'Atelier de J.J.A. LECOMTE du NOUY (1842-1923): / DESSINS et TABLEAUX par ou attribués à / J.J. BELLEL, W. BOUGUEREAU, L.M. BOURGEOIS, T. CHATTRAN, J.J.A. / LECOMTE du NOUY, / L.O. MERSON, A. MOREAU, L. MOUILLARD, J.E. RENIE, G. SAUVAGE / Provenant de l'atelier et de la collection / de Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY / (Paris 1842-1923) / n^{os} 118 à 178:

118. Louis Maximilien BOURGEOIS (1839-1901), *Portrait de Lecomte du Nouy*, Bronze signé et daté 1869 en bas à droite. Diam.: 16,5 cm € 150 / 200 [repr.]

119. Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923), *Vue de Paris sous la neige*. Huile sur toile signée en bas à gauche. Annotée 21 degrés 1/2 de froid et datée 1871 au verso. (Rentoilée). 30,5 x 44 cm € 300 / 500 [repr.]

120. Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923), *Tête de jeune homme, d'après un maître italien*, Huile sur toile signée en bas à droite. 12,7 x 9 cm € 100 / 150

121. Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923), *Chez la mère Anthony à Marlotte (Seine-et-Marne)*, Huile sur toile signée en bas à droite. 17,8 x 33 cm € 150 / 200

122. Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923), *Tête de Christ*, Huile sur toile signée à droite. 33 x 23,7 cm € 100 / 150

123. Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923), *Étude pour le Philosophe et le pâtissier*, Huile sur toile signée et datée 1913 en bas à gauche. 32,5 x 23,6 cm € 100 / 150

124. Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923), *Étude pour le Philosophe*, Huile sur toile signée à droite. 35 x 27 cm € 100 / 150

Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923)

125. *Étude pour un sujet antique*, Huile sur panneau, signée en bas au centre. 21 x 12,4 cm € 100 / 150

126. *Étude pour un portrait de femme*, Huile sur toile signée à gauche. 32,4 x 24,5 cm € 150 / 200

Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923)

127. *Étude pour un portrait de femme*, Huile sur toile signée en haut à droite. (Rentoilée). 35,5 x 29 cm € 150 / 200

128. Suite de quatre études: *Venise, mai 1881; Le Caire, Quartier Bab el Neizsh; Medineh el Fayoum, février 1893; Sinaïa, Roumanie*, Quatre huiles sur panneau. Annotés et signés au verso. 12,4 x 21 cm chaque. € 300 / 500 [repr.]

129. *France. Mallevall (Loire)*, Huile sur toile signée en bas à gauche. Annotée au verso. 31 x 45,5 cm € 150 / 200

130. *Étude pour un plafond: Jupiter et Vénus*, Huile sur toile signée en bas à droite. 27 x 41,3 cm € 150 / 200

131. *Ma Muse*, Crayons de couleurs. Annoté en haut à gauche, signé et daté 1919 en bas à gauche. 27 x 21 cm (ovale). € 60 / 80

132. *Grande mosquée de Gaza (Syrie), Église des Croisés*, Relevés d'architecture, coupes, plans. Cinq aquarelles (une signée), un dessin. € 400 / 500 [repr.]

Atribué à Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923)

133. *Venise. Vue prise des jardins publics*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1873 au verso. (Rentoilée). 13,5 x 32 cm € 200 / 300

134. *Égypte. Vue de Choubra, près du Caire*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1865 au verso. (Rentoilée). 15 x 41 cm € 200 / 300 [repr.]

Atribué à Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923)

135. *Égypte. Vue du sphinx et des pyramides*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1865 au verso. (Rentoilée). 15,7 x 29,4 cm € 300 / 400 [repr.]

136. *France. Les Alpes et le Dauphiné vus du Mont-Pelat (Loire)*, Huile sur toile annotée au verso. (Rentoilée). 21 x 31 cm € 200 / 300

Atribué à Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923)

137. *Égypte. Route de Choubra au Caire*. Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1865 au verso. (Rentoilée). 15,4 x 44,7 cm € 300 / 400 [repr.]

138. *France. Le Mont-Pilat et les trois dents vus de Mallevall (Loire)*, Huile sur toile annotée au verso. (Rentoilée). 21 x 31 cm € 200 / 300

139. *France. La grande place, Mallevall (Loire)*, Huile sur toile. (Rentoilée). 22,5 x 30,5 cm € 200 / 300

140. *Venise. L'église San Giovanni et Paolo*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1873 au verso. (Rentoilée). 27 x 10,7 cm € 300 / 400 [repr.]

141. *Égypte. Vue des pyramides de Gizeh*, Huile sur toile annotée au verso. (Rentoilée). 13 x 28 cm € 300 / 400 [repr.]

142. *France. Vue de Mallevall (Loire)*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1870 au verso. (Rentoilée). 28 x 21,8 cm € 200 / 300

143. *Venise. Quartier de San Giovanni et Paolo*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1873 au verso. (Rentoilée). 26,8 x 18,5 cm € 300 / 400

Atribué à Jules-Jean-Antoine LECOMTE du NOUY (Paris 1842-1923)

144. *Mont du Fleschhorn, Simplon*, Huile sur toile annotée et datée 1872 au verso. (Rentoilée). 15 x 34 cm € 200 / 300

145. *Kaphira près de Gizeh*, Huile sur toile annotée au verso. 16 x 31,5 cm € 200 / 250

146. *Étude de trône / Étude de charrette / Étude de hampes de drapeaux*, Trois esquisses, huiles sur toile. € 150 / 200

Jean-Joseph BELLEL (1816-1898)

147. *Traversée du désert*, Huile sur toile. 21,7 x 32,5 cm € 150 / 200

148. *Paysage algérien*, Huile sur toile. Monogramme en bas à droite. 23 x 33 cm € 100 / 150

149. *Paysage algérien*, Huile sur toile. 6 x 39 cm € 100 / 150

150. *Paysages d'Afrique du Nord*, Deux huiles sur carton. L'une monogrammée en bas à droite. 16 x 34,5 cm et 17 x 34,5 cm € 200 / 300

151. William BOUGUEREAU (La Rochelle 1825-1905), *Homme nu de dos*, Crayon noir annoté : *Dessiné par Bouguereau pendant la séance du 16 déc. 87 aux Artistes des Champs-Élysées*. 17,5 x 13 cm € 50 / 80

152. Théobald CHARTRAN (Besançon 1849-Neuilly 1909), *Musicienne grecque*, Huile sur toile. 30 x 17 cm € 200 / 250

Théobald CHARTRAN (Besançon 1849-Neuilly 1909)

153. *Scène de l'histoire grecque*, Crayon noir, gouache. 29 x 21,5 cm € 100 / 150

154. *Musicienne grecque*, Huile sur calque. 21,5 x 13,5 cm € 80 / 120

155. Luc-Olivier MERSON (Paris 1846-1920), *Vignette*, Plume, aquarelle annotée : *A mon cher ami Lecomte du Nouy / Souvenir affectueux de son dévoué / Luc-Olivier Merson 1918*. 13 x 23,5 cm € 100 / 150

156. Adrien MOREAU (Troyes 1843-Paris 1906), *Scène antique, esquisse*, Huile sur toile. 40,5 x 32 cm € 200 / 250

Lucien MOUILLARD (Expose au Salon de 1870 à 1904)

157. *Scène de village arabe*, Huile sur toile signée en bas à droite. 16 x 21 cm € 200 / 250 [repr.]

158. *Bateaux à marée basse*, Huile sur panneau, signée en bas à gauche. 28,7 x 41 cm € 150 / 200

159. Lucien MOUILLARD (Expose au Salon de 1870 à 1904), *Paysage en Algérie*, Huile sur toile. 17 x 31 cm € 200 / 250 [repr.]

160. Lucien MOUILLARD (Expose au Salon de 1870 à 1904), *Bateaux à marée basse*, Huile sur panneau, signée en bas à gauche. 32,4 x 41 cm € 150 / 200

161. Lucien MOUILLARD (Expose au Salon de 1870 à 1904), *Scène de la vie arabe à Garshia*, Huile sur toile annotée et signée en bas à gauche : *A Garshia / au viel ami J. du Nouy / L. Mouillard*. 33 x 41,5 cm € 200 / 250 [161]

162. Jules-Émile RENIE (1835-1910), *Étude de paysage normand*, Huile sur toile annotée en bas à droite : *à mon ami J. du Nouy / J. Em. Renié*. 17,7 x 30 cm € 150 / 200

163. Attribué à Jean-Émile RENIE (1835-1910), *France. Suite de quatre vues de Villers*, Huile sur panneau, annotée et datée 15 juillet 1875 au verso. 12,6 x 20,7 cm € 150 / 200

164. Georges SAUVAGE (Exposé au Salon de 1874 à 1913), *Étude de main et de pied*, Huile sur toile annotée au verso. 40 x 32,8 cm € 100 / 150

165. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Tête d'enfant*, Huile sur toile. (Accident). 22 x 16 cm € 50 / 100

166. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Tête d'homme barbu*, Huile sur toile. (Accident). 33 x 24 cm € 50 / 80

167. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Suite de quatre vues d'Égypte*, Huile sur toile marouflée sur carton. 12,3 x 19,7 cm € 150 / 200

168. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *La belle juive*, Huile sur toile, craie blanche. 66 x 39 cm € 100 / 120

169. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Kavadgi?* Huile sur toile, craie blanche. 66 x 39 cm € 80 / 100

170. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Napoléon*, Huile sur panneau. 41 x 33 cm € 100 / 150

171. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Arabe assis devant une place de village*, Huile sur panneau. 46 x 38 cm € 200 / 300

172. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Étude de deux femmes*, Huile sur panneau. 48,5 x 36 cm € 100 / 150

173. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Étude de deux femmes*, Huile sur carton. 46 x 38 cm € 100 / 120

174. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Statue de Vénus vue de dos*, Huile sur toile. (Accident). 32,5 x 24,5 cm € 60 / 80

175. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Études pour deux portraits de femmes*, Huile sur toile. 24 x 33 cm € 80 / 120

176. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Ange portant les Évangiles*, Huile sur panneau. 35 x 26,5 cm € 100 / 120

177. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Étude de fleur de pissenlit*, Huile sur panneau. 34,2 x 23,2 cm € 100 / 120

178. ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DU XIX^e SIECLE, *Paysage de montagne*, Crayon noir, craie blanche. Diamètre: 21,5 cm € 60 / 80

178. [sic] *Palette de peintre, documentation, dessins, bis et carnets*. € 20 / 30

APPENDIX IV

Galerie D. Tripp / 34, rue de Provenance, 34 / Exposition d'oeuvres importantes / par / M. Lecomte du Nouy / du 15 mars au 30 avril 1886 / Catalogue.

[page 1]

1 – La Vision d'Abraham

“Compte les étoiles si tu peux les compter. Ainsi sera ta postérité!” (Bible)

2 – Portrait de Mme F.F...

3 – Portrait de M. le docteur Proust, de la Faculté de Paris

4 – Portrait de M. Lecomte du Nouy

5 – Portrait de Mme L... d. N... Fragment de triptyque Ma famille

6 – L'Almée

7 – L'Extase

8 – Portrait de Mme T. R...

[page 2]

9 – La Mauresque, Souvenir de la casbah d'Alger

10 – Homère. Triptyque

1 Iliade

2 Homère mendiant

3 Odyssée

Et quelque grand que soit un homme

Il n'est grand homme qu'après sa mort

Lefranc du Pompignan

11 – Victor Hugo, fragment d'un polyptique

1 Les Contemplations d'autrefois. – Vénus, sous les traits de la Muse, vient inspirer le jeune poète

2 Les Orientales

N'ai-je pas pour toi, belle juive,

Assez dépeuplé mon sérail!

3 Les Travailleurs de la mer. – Giliatt Clubin et la pieuvre

4 Les Contemplations d'aujourd'hui

Quel est donc cet homme qui songe?

12 – Portrait de Mme P. C...

13 – Homère, variante

14 – Pharaon dans son gynécée. Fragment d'un triptyque tiré du Roman de la momie (Théophile Gautier)

15 – Portrait de Mme L... d. N...

16 – Portrait de M. A...

17 – Le Samedi dans le quartier juif à Tanger (Maroc)

[page 3]

18 – Portrait de Mme F...

19 – Portrait de M. F. G...

20 – Portrait de Mme L... d. N...

- 21 – Eve. Etude
- 22 – Etudes de Venise
- 23 – Etude de danseuse (Egypte ancienne)
- 24 – Têtes de genies. Etude
- 25 – Etudes de Venise
- 26 – Carton d'études
- 27 – Portrait de Mme B...
- 28 – La Muse lyrique
- 29 – Portrait de Mlle de F... (Pastel)
- 30 – Portrait de Mme L... d. N... (Dessin)
- 31 – Carton d'études
- 32 – Etude de paysage (Villers-sur-Mer)
- 33 – Le Chaouc (Maroc)
- 34 – Paysage (Auvergne)
- 35 – Carton d'études
- 36 – Etude de Vierge (Dessin)
- 37 – Tête de Turc
- 38 – Croquis pour "Les Châtiments"
- 39 – Les Semailles au nil (Grisaille)

[page 4]

- 40 – Carton d'étude
- 41 – Paysage; Auvergne
- 42 – Paysage; Auvergne
- 43 – Paysage; Le Simplon
- 44 – Une Rue de Venise
- 45 – Etude de paysage; Auvergne
- 46 – Souvenir du siège
- 47 – Etude de Venise
- 48 – Etude peinte
- 49 – Carton d'études
- 50 – Carton d'études
- 51 – Portrait de Mme S...
- 52 – Portrait de Mlle L. C...
- 53 – La Dévideuse antique
- 54 – Carton des "Châtiments" (Victor Hugo)
- 55 – Portrait de Mme A...
- 56 – Portrait de Mme O. J...
- 57 – Portrait de Mme L. de N... (Etude)
- 58 – Portrait de M. Crémieux (Gravure de M. Lévy d'après le tableau de M. Lecomte du Nouy)
- 59 – L'Amour qui passé (Gravure)
- 60 – Les Rabbins commentant la Bible; Maroc. France

APPENDIX V

Gonzague Privat, "Lecomte du Nouy," *Galerie contemporaine* (Baschet, Paris, 1877), n.p. [also reprinted in part and with small variations in the text in Montgailhard 1906, p. 37-44].

L'originalité dans les arts a toujours passé à bon droit pour le don le plus enviable qu'un peintre ou un sculpteur puisse souhaiter, car il n'est si petit talent qui n'ait survécu aux caprices de la mode, au mouvement des esprits, du moment qu'il a été l'expression absolue d'une interprétation personnelle de la nature. Le secret des succès répétés de M. Lecomte du Nouy est tout entier dans cet axiome, en quelque sorte le point de départ et la base de la critique moderne, laquelle pourrait prendre pour devise le mot du songeur Hamlet: "*To be or not to be.*" Être ou n'être pas.

Le peintre sur lequel j'écris ces quelques notes biographiques a su affirmer dès ses débuts sa personnalité; il a eu, en outre, la rare bonne fortune d'être remarqué à ce moment de la vie ou généralement l'unique *desideratum* du peintre est de n'être point refusé. Il est juste d'ajouter qu'en le traitant avec cette douceur, la fortune était équitable, et comme la réputation de la déesse est quelque peu entachée au sujet de la manière trop fantaisiste dont elle distribue ses faveurs, je me plais à lui donner pour une fois ce certificat d'honnête fille.

C'est en 1865 que le jeune artiste se montra réellement ce qu'il devait être plus tard; un peintre savant et correct, très-chercheur, soucieux à l'excès d'exactitude archéologique, dessinateur fin et délicat, exécutant plus précieux que brillant. Le Salon de cette année 1865 nous le montre auteur de *la Sentinelle grecque*, une figure haute de quelques pouces, d'un geste énergique et noble digne de ces héros d'Homère dont l'artiste lit et relit les merveilleux combats.

M. Lecomte du Nouy avait alors 23 ans; il sortait de chez Gérôme où se sont formés tant de peintres de talent et où il avait obtenu à deux reprises le premier prix de concours. Cette petite réputation d'église avait déjà franchi les quatre murs de l'atelier et les espérances que l'on fondait sur le jeune homme étaient connues dans le monde artiste. D'ailleurs il avait déjà affronté ce terrible juge que l'on nomme le public. En 1863, étant encore à l'atelier Signol il avait exposé une *Françoise de Rimini aux enfers* qui, sans donner la mesure de ses forces, laissait pressentir les destinées probables de l'auteur. L'année suivante il s'était essayé dans un autre genre par l'envoi d'un portrait de femme, qui ne passèrent point aperçus. Néanmoins, je le répète, ses véritables débuts, ses premiers pas dans la voie qu'il devait parcourir désormais, se firent au Salon de 1865. C'était toute une révolution dans l'art néo-grec, cette petite *sentinelle grecque*, et le coup porta d'autant plus vigoureusement que la main dont il partait s'essayait pour la première fois. Le public se livra sans arrière-pensée à cet art si fin et si franc, qui parlait haut et ferme et semblait se complaire dans l'analyse, sans souci de tomber dans la minutie. Et, de fait, cette crainte eût été puérile. Si merveilleusement traité que fût l'accessoire, il s'effaçait discrètement devant le thème poétique que l'artiste avait mis en lumière et ne sollicitait les regards qu'après que l'esprit était pleinement pénétré de la grandeur de cette microscopique mise en scène. Le poète put dire: "Voilà bien les hommes du divin chanfre de l'Ionie!" L'archéologue y trouva ces mille détails de ciselure par qui l'antiquité revit seulement à ses yeux, et le commun des martyrs, qui ne regarde ni si loin, ni si près conclut que M. Lecomte du Nouy était tout simplement un peintre excellent dont il faudrait chercher consciencieusement les ouvrages au prochain Salon.

Dès ce moment, l'artiste fut classé.

L'exposition de 1866 le vit arriver avec une nouvelle toile inspirée de l'antique: *l'Invocation à Neptune*, acquise par le Musée de Lille. Le jury récompensa l'auteur par une médaille qui l'exemptait du dangereux honneur d'être jugé à l'avenir, si ce n'est par le public, qui ne sait que médiocrement gré au jury de ce petit travail préparatoire d'épilage artistique quand il songe que Delacroix, Decamps, Diaz, Th. Rousseau, Rude et tant d'illustres maîtres ont si souvent été sacrifiés sur ces autels du bon goût.

Depuis cette époque M. Lecomte du Nouy a figuré à tous les Salons.

En 1867, il expose *une Danseuse Fellah* qui montre son talent sous un aspect nouveau. Cette fois, le charme se joint au caractère, la grâce fait son entrée dans l'oeuvre du jeune artiste qui prend la bonne résolution de la retenir au logis. La *Danseuse* est escortée de *Job et ses amis*. Autre surprise que ce *Job*! Les personnages sont de grandeur naturelle et l'exécution de ces grands morceaux est en rapport avec leurs proportions. Cette fois l'artiste a voulu faire grand, se poser en peintre d'histoire, ce à quoi il réussit, sauf cette unique point que son tableau lui reste, l'Etat supposant sans doute que la peinture d'histoire doit être surtout encouragée par les particuliers.

Job et ses amis attendent encore mélancoliquement dans l'atelier qu'un quatrième ami leur offre l'hospitalité dans une galerie ou dans un musée.

Cette leçon ne fut point donnée en pure perte, Lecomte du Nouÿ revint bien vite à ces petits poèmes antiques et attendit les commandes de grands tableaux en travaillant paisiblement à *la Folie d'Ajas* [sic] *le Télamonien* qui fut exposé en 1868.

En 1869, nous voyons *l'Amour qui passe et l'Amour qui reste*, ouvrage de haute morale dans laquelle le peintre essaie de prouver par une mimique éloquente que la femme est perfide comme l'onde jusqu'au jour où elle est mère et que, quand un brave jeune homme a été trompé par une jeune personne d'humeur capricieuse, il lui reste la consolation de se mettre tout nu et d'aller pleurer dans le sein de sa mère pendant que l'infidèle s'envole dans l'infini en compagnie d'un amour tout neuf.

M. Lecomte du Nouÿ a été justement puni de cette accès de sainte fureur contre le sexe auquel nous devons Mimmi Pinson. Un de ses amis a fait là-dessus une romance et son tableau, lithographié sur la première page, semblait parfaitement convenir à ce genre de production.

L'Amour qui passe eut un succès de sentimentalité bourgeoise, un succès de maman, et je suis sûr de passer pour un être absolument pervers aux yeux de toutes les mères qui me liront, pour n'avoir pas craint de plaisanter un si touchant sujet. Donc, encore un succès! Il était dit que le peintre les connaîtrait tous. Ce tableau fait aujourd'hui partie du musée de Boulogne, où j'ai pu le revoir cet été avec les mêmes sentiments d'irrévérence, ce dont je demande pardon à Dieu et aux hommes.

Cette nomenclature des oeuvres de M. Lecomte du Nouÿ sera complète lorsque j'aurai donné le titre des tableaux qu'il exposa successivement depuis la guerre.

En 1872, il exposa *les Porteurs de mauvaises nouvelles*, que le Musée du Luxembourg s'empressa d'acquérir. A mon sens, cette toile est l'oeuvre capitale du jeune artiste. L'effet en est saisissant. C'est le drame épique dans sa sauvage grandeur.

Couché sur une terrasse qui domine la ville ou la lune épand ses lueurs livides, le Pharaon pensif attend les messagers de la victoire. A ses pieds gisent, baignés dans leur sang, les esclaves imprudents qui ont osé dire au maître que ses ennemis étaient triomphants. Et lui, impassible, mystérieux et terrible, comme ces sphinx de granit qui gardent les pyramides où ses os reposeront un jour, il interroge la nuit où doit briller l'étoile des Pharaons.

Par cette belle conception, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ s'élevait au premier rang et, dans cette heureuse année, il exposait au même Salon *Démotènes s'exerçant à la parole*, oeuvre d'un caractère élevé où ses qualités atteignent leur plus haut degré d'expression.

Le Philosophe sans le savoir, exposé en 1873 représente un jeune Arabe qui boit au jet d'une fontaine. L'apologue est suffisamment connu de tous pour que j'insiste sur la façon dont le peintre a su en tirer parti.

Eros Cupido date de 1874, il a été acquis par l'Etat pour le Musée de Tours; *les Bouchers de Venise*, peint au retour d'un premier voyage en Italie, ont été exposés au même Salon. En 1875, *la Lune de miel à Venise* et *le Songe de Cosrou*, l'une des plus jolies fantaisies qui soit sortie du pinceau de l'artiste.

Cette année, M. Lecomte du Nouÿ, revenant à la grande peinture ou plutôt la grande peinture revenant à lui sous la forme d'une commande pour l'église de la Trinité, a exposé *Saint*

Vincent de Paul ramenant les galériens à la foi, composition d'un grand style, exécutée avec une science incontestable, qui a valu à son auteur la croix de chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. [The following two paragraphs are not included in Montgailhard's reprint of this text.]

En dehors de ses expositions, l'artiste a produit nombre de tableaux intéressants, qui ont aussitôt trouvé place dans les cabinets des collectionneurs. Je citerai entre autres toiles: **le Cauchemar d'eunuque**, **le Veilleur de nuit au Caire**, **le Charmeur**, qui est au Musée de Reims, **le Kieff du schérif**, **Prêtres mendiants**, **Chrétiennes au tombeau de la Vierge**, **une Marchande à Pompéï**, **la Nuit de Noël à Jérusalem** et **le Guet-apens**, **Tryptique sur Homère**.

A Londres, à Vienne, à Lyon, M. Lecomte du Nouy a obtenu des médailles; à l'école des Beaux-Arts, il a remporté un second grand prix de Rome avec **la Mort de Jocaste**. Il méritait, dit-on, le premier, et à cette époque la presse, par les éloges donnés à son tableau de concours, l'a amplement consolé de cet échec relatif.

[Montgailhard's reprint of this text continues here:]

Après avoir énuméré toutes ces compositions d'un type aussi sévère, j'aurai quelque peine à être cru si j'ajoute que M. Lecomte du Nouy a pu peindre son tableau dans une note essentiellement comique, un tableau comme Biard en peignant dans son plus joyeux temps.

Un jour que l'auteur de **la Sentinelle grecque** se promenait avec quelques amis sur le bord de la mer, devisant d'art et d'avenir, la conversation tomba sur la difficulté de trouver un sujet de tableau. Parmi nos jeunes gens, il y avait, je crois, Ferrier, aujourd'hui à Rome, Toudouze, qui en est revenu ou en revient cette année. La compagnie, on le voit, était experte sur la matière.

-- Tout a été fait! disait l'un d'un ton lamentable.

-- On le recommence... autrement, répondait Lecomte; mais tenez, en voilà un tableau, là devant nous!

-- Ah! Oui, la mer!... du nouveau!

-- Eh! parbleu oui! du nouveau! ce qui date de l'origine du monde sera toujours nouveau. Vous n'avez pas la prétention d'inventer une nouvelle nature, d'autant mieux que celle que le bon Dieu a faite n'est pas trop mal, en vérité. Au surplus, si toute simple elle ne vous suffit pas, regardez!

Et voilà le chevalier de la mer, le défenseur du bon Dieu qui saute sur une bouée et se met dans l'attitude d'un peintre occupé à faire une étude.

-- Est-ce un tableau? cria-t-il en se retournant sur la bouée secouée par la vague.

-- Fais-le, tu le verras et tu le vendras... si tu peux, ripostent les amis en levant les épaules.

Le lendemain, le tableau était sur le chevalet, et, quelques jours après, un amateur l'emportait religieusement dans sa galerie.

Lecomte triomphait.

Ce n'était là que le prologue d'une série de victoires.

L'artiste, revenu depuis quelques jours à Paris, travaillait dans son atelier à une scène antique quand, après les trois coups de rigueur, un Monsieur entre gracieusement, avec cet air aimable qui caractérise l'amateur.

C'en était un, en effet.

Job en paraissait déjà tout consolé et sa femme semblait déjà devenir plus traitable.

-- Monsieur, je désirerais avoir *quelque chose* de vous.

-- Parfaitement, Monsieur, j'ai là un **Job**...

-- Non, pas de **Job**...

-- C'est un **Job** un peu grand, ses amis aussi, mais la société est assise pour tenir moins de place.

-- Non, pas de **Job**, je n'aime pas **Job**.

Lecomte du Nouy ne comprenait pas cette haine inflexible contre **Job**; le saint homme avait-il jamais prévu cette nouvelle catastrophe? Le peintre mit alors aux mains de son visiteur un

carton contenant les photographies de ses oeuvres et l'engagea à choisir parmi tant de sujets celui qui s'éloignait le plus de *Job* lequel sujet il s'engageait à reproduire avec ou sans modifications dans le plus bref délai.

Le monsieur s'assit et commença son inspection.

Pendant ce temps, Lecomte du Nouy regardait *Job* qui supportait cette nouvelle infortune avec plus de resignation que son auteur qui n'aime pas à collectionner ses oeuvres.

Tout-à-coup ce monsieur pousse un cri, un cri de joie!

-- Celui-là! Je veux celui-là! Pas de *Job*.

--Voyons!

Horreur! C'était la *Bouée*, la fameuse bouée qu'on avait prétendue invendable et qui, pour la seconde fois, trouvait acquéreur!

-- Vous y tenez absolument? fit le peintre. Vous ne préféreriez pas une scène antique ou biblique? Par exemple, un...

-- Non! Non! Pas de *Job*. Celui-là, je le veux, il me le faut!

-- Allons, fit Lecomte du Nouy, qui décidément avait eu trop raison, je vous le recommencerais avec une variante.

-- Non! Non! Pas de variante. Vous seriez capable d'assoir *Job* sur la bouée; je crains que *Job* ne soit votre idée fixe.

Hélas non! C'est le tableau qui est fixe et non moi. Voyons; je ferai intervenir un coup de vent. Le vent emportera la boîte à couleurs, les pinceaux, les albums, le chapeau du peintre, il retournera le parasol, la jaquette.

-- Parfait, ce sera plus drôle.

Lecomte a fait le tableau tel qu'il l'avait promis. Six personnes sont venues tour à tour lui en commander des reproductions après avoir toutes six, avec un ensemble navrant, refusé *Job*, inconsolable depuis ce temps-là. Mais le peintre a vengé le saint homme de ce mépris immérité, et a refusé les commandes de Bouées, avec un stoïcisme antique.

Je le répète, il a connu tous les succès.

Mais hélas! Il devait aussi connaître bien des douleurs, et des douleurs, la plus amère. Pourquoi faut-il que cette étude sur le sympathique artiste, dont je m'honore d'être un des plus anciens amis, soit attristée dans ces dernières lignes par le deuil et les larmes?

Au mois d'août dernier, Lecomte du Nouy épousait une charmante jeune fille qu'il adorait: Mlle Peigné-Crémieux, petite fille de l'illustre orateur et il partait pour passer en Italie les heureux premiers jours de cette nouvelle vie.

La saison était à peine écoulée que le jeune couple revenait en grande hâte à Paris; la mort avait déjà touché au front la jeune épouse.

Il ya deux mois à peine, nous la conduisons au cimetière.

Si, pénétrant dans l'atelier du peintre, vous le voyez modeler la terre ou creuser le marbre, ne vous étonnez pas.

C'est pour sculpter le tombeau de sa femme que le jeune peintre est devenu sculpteur.

Gonzague Privat.

Décembre 1876

Une année s'est écoulée depuis que j'écrivais ces lignes: cette année n'a pas été perdue par M. Lecomte du Nouy. Au Salon dernier, il nous faisait admirer son propre *Portrait*, étude enlevée d'une brosse vigoureuse, et un remarquable tableau d'Orient: *la Porte du Sérail*. D'un voyage au Maroc, entrepris cet été, il a rapporté d'innombrables sujets de tableau. En ce moment, il termine *les Chrétiennes au tombeau de la Vierge*, tableau qui va partir pour l'Angleterre, et il met la dernière main à un superbe *Portrait de M^e Crémieux*, destiné à l'Exposition de 1878.

Décembre 1877.

APPENDIX VI

Lucile Kitzo, "Lecomte du Nouÿ," *La Petite Roumanie* (14-26 February 1900), cited from Montgailhard 1906, p. 133-37:

"Nous sommes à Passy, avenue Flandrin. C'est là que, non loin des massifs verdoyants du Bois de Boulogne, s'élève une des plus coquettes demeures d'artistes qui soient à Paris, l'hôtel de M. Jean du Nouÿ.

Nous sonnons à cette porte hospitalière pour les Roumains. On nous introduit dans un délicieux salon, dont les murs sont couverts des toiles du maître. A travers les portes ouvertes, nous apercevons une enfilade de pièces de réception, meublées de larges divans, tendues d'étoffes d'Orient, et plus loin, un jardin où s'épanouissent des roses et quelques-unes de ces fleurs aux formes et couleurs étranges, que l'on prendrait plutôt pour des papillons ou des colibris: des orchidées. Cet examen rapide est vite interrompu par la venue du maître.

Bien qu'ayant la barbe et les cheveux plutôt sel que poivre, Jean du Nouÿ conserve la belle prestance de la jeunesse, et ses yeux, au regard vif et pénétrant, se posent sur vous avec bienveillance. Souverainement sympathique, le Parisien de Paris au teint bronze, au geste abondant, a quelque chose de l'homme du Midi.

D'ailleurs, Jean du Nouÿ aime les pays du soleil; il nous disait quelle joie il éprouve à quitter le ciel gris et pluvieux des rives de la Seine pour la lumière splendide de l'Italie, de l'Espagne ou de la Roumanie – car le peintre nous visite souvent.

Je ne voudrais pas trop médire de ce ciel parisien, si fin et si doux par certaines journées privilégiées du printemps ou de l'automne; nulle part le sourire du soleil n'est plus spirituel que dans celle [sic for cette] ville de l'esprit, mais ses sourires sont trop rares.

M. Jean du Nouÿ nous parle de notre pays avec une admiration communicative, en employant la langue pittoresque de ces artistes à la vision très sûre, qui restent peintres, même en causant, comme Fromentin; son salon est certainement un des coins de Paris où tout ce qui est roumain excite le plus vif enthousiasme. C'est que le maître n'a pas seulement visité Bucarest et Iassy; il a parcouru nos campagnes, dont il a fixé les aspects en de véridiques esquisses qu'il nous fait admirer. Rendant les formes aussi habilement que les couleurs, le peintre a su donner à ces études rapides ce degré de vie qui constitue l'oeuvre d'art. Il procède d'Ingres, dont il a la merveilleuse pureté de lignes, la probité du dessin, tandis que sa palette chaude et vibrante l'égale aux grands magiciens du pinceau.

Le maître nous permet de regarder de plus près les belles choses qui tentent notre curiosité. Voici d'abord: le *Portrait de ma femme*. Debout, en claire toilette de soirée, l'éventail à la main, une belle personne se détache sur le fond sombre du tableau. Le profil aux lignes délicates offre une grâce et une élégance accomplies; le buste et les bras sont d'une modelé superbe, et le main, cette pierre de touché de l'habileté d'un peintre, a une exquise finesse. Un *ritratto muliebre*, c'est, hélas! tout ce qui reste de celle qui fut la joie de ce foyer.

Nous nous arrêtons devant le *Portrait de la comtesse de B...* que M. Jean du Nouÿ vient d'achever: un régal des yeux, un morceau de musée. Le visage aux traits menus et distingués, auréolé d'une chevelure d'un blond vénitien, sourit d'un sourire charmant sur un fond à la Van Dyck. Ce portrait évoque, en effet, ceux que le grand peintre flamand aimait à tracer, quand posaient devant son pinceau les grandes dames de jadis aux figures nobles et pâles encadrées de nattes d'or entremêlées de perles et émergeant de grands cols en guipure de Venise.

Voici enfin une des plus célèbres toiles du maître: *la Partie d'échecs du Pharaon*, qui certes occupera un jour une place d'honneur dans une des salles des peintres français au Louvre. Ce n'est pas seulement un beau tableau, il y a là encore une admirable reconstitution historique. Le sujet est emprunté au *Roman de la Momie* de Théophile Gautier, et nous pouvons avancer que si l'illustre auteur des *Emaux et Camées* peignait avec sa plume, M. Jean du Nouÿ écrit l'histoire avec son pinceau. Ce qui est merveilleux dans cette toile, c'est le fini des détails. Toute l'antiquité

égyptienne y est évoquée. Nous vivons dans la familiarité d'un de ces grands bâtisseurs de pyramides, monuments mystérieux élevés à la limite de l'océan des sables. Ramsès est au milieu des femmes de son harem; il joue aux échecs avec sa favorite, tandis qu'une autre suit attentivement la partie. Les torses de ces personnages du premier plan son d'un dessin magistral. Des deux côtés du tableau, des danseuses, légèrement vêtues de gaze, exécutent des danses gracieuses aux sons de la flûte et de cet instrument multicorde, ressemblant déjà à une harpe, que manient de belles esclaves; une des danseuses, emportée par le rythme, élève dans un mouvement harmonieux ses bras blancs au-dessus de sa tête, et l'ondulation du corps est si bien rendue qu'on dirait qu'elle va sortir du cadre pour continuer devant vous cette danse, qui charmait le Pharaon avant que le berceau de Moïse ne flottât sur le Nil.

Ajoutez à la beauté des lignes de tous ces corps féminins la magie d'un coloris rappelant celui des Vénitiens, ces draperies rouges, violettes ou jaunes, ces tapis d'Orient que l'imagination a diaprés de fleurs si étranges, tout le désordre pittoresque d'un gynécée royal, de mignonnes babouches jetées d'un côté, des éventails et des lotus ailleurs, et vous aurez une des plus merveilleuses illustrations qu'un poète romancier ait pu désirer pour son oeuvre.

On rêverait d'une belle édition de Salammô, illustrée par Jean du Nouÿ, et l'on serait sûr alors de n'avoir pas seulement quelque chose d'impeccable au point de vue de l'art, mais encore une oeuvre documentée; car le peintre est doublé d'un érudit et le grand Maspero est de ses amis. Mais voici un beau triptyque représentant *Homère* aveugle, avec l'enfant qui lui sert de guide, entre deux figures allégoriques symbolisant l'Iliade et l'Odyssée, une de ces oeuvres de patience ardente et délicieuse, dont Edmond About a dit qu'on ne les exécute 'ni pour le marchand, ni pour l'amateur, ni pour le succès du Salon, mais pour soi-même, per suo diletto....' Voici encore une *Esclave blanche* à la carnation nacrée, à l'élégance svelte d'une odalisque d'Ingres.

"Vous avez vu ce que j'ai fait; venez voir maintenant ce que je fais," nous dit en souriant M. Jean du Nouÿ. Et nous suivons le maître dans son atelier. Un bel escalier de bois sculpté, rappelant celui du Musée de Cluny, nous conduit dans l'atelier du maître, vaste salle gothique ménagée sous les combles de l'hôtel, comme ces nefs de cathédrales qui reposent sur une église inférieure. Voici, à l'entrée, une magnifique académie, le *Guerrier mourant*, ayant pour motto des vers de Carmen Sylva. Partout des esquisses que le peintre a rapportées de ses nombreux voyages. L'une d'elles, faite en Égypte, chef-d'oeuvre de pensée autant que de peinture, représente les Pyramides au lointain du désert; sur un ciel d'un bleu verdâtre passe un vol de corbeaux; rien de plus, mais c'est la *Fin de tout*.

Les Pharaons étaient hantés par l'idée de la mort; comme ce grand Ramsès qui tout à l'heure jouait aux échecs avec les femmes de son harem, ils bâtissaient leurs tombeaux en même temps que leurs palais, et la demeure réservée au cadavre était plus grandiose, plus durable que la maison du vivant, hôte d'un jour, – de même, la momie, couchée par les embaumeurs dans son cartonnage et ses deux cerceux, était plus durable que le corps animé, car le ver du sépulcre rebroussait chemin, repoussé par les âcres parfums du bitume et des aromates.

Voici précisément que, dans cette petite toile de M. Jean du Nouÿ, les oiseaux des charniers, les corbeaux, peuplent seuls ces orgueilleuses solitudes, souffletant la vanité humaine du bout de leurs ailes sombres. Et ce symbolisme de la *Fin de tout* est plus clair, malgré la simplicité des moyens, que si le peintre-philosophe avait tracé une Nephthys – personnification de la *fin* comme Isis représente le *commencement* – agenouillé, une jambe repliée sous la cuisse, l'autre relevée à la hauteur du coude et les bras étendus en avant, selon l'immuable attitude que les décorateurs d'hypogées prêtaient cette déesse.

Le peintre nous réservait une surprise. Il nous conduit devant des toiles couvertes, et, écartant les étoffes qui les cachaient, il nous montre les *Portraits en pied du Roi et de la Reine de Roumanie*. C'est bien de l'art supérieur, de l'art achevé; il y a de la majesté souveraine dans ces deux oeuvres.

Charles Ier est debout; un manteau, dont la doublure écarlate fait valoir le costume sombre, est jeté négligemment sur ses épaules; la main gauche s'appuie contre une table couverte de

parchemins, sur laquelle est aussi placée la couronne d'acier forgée du métal d'un canon. Le Roi est d'une ressemblance morale autant que physique; M. Jean du Nouÿ a rendu ce mélange de sévérité et de suprême bienveillance qui caractérise cette belle et noble figure, si familière à tous les Roumains. Non moins réussi, mais procédant d'une autre pensée, le portrait de notre souveraine. Ces limpides yeux bleus, dont le regard éclaire le doux visage encadré de cheveux blancs, semblent rêver à des choses très grandes et très sereines. Autour du personnage, rien que les attributs de la royauté, aucun rappel de Carmen Sylva. La Reine est sans âge; c'est Élisabeth en soi plutôt qu'à un moment déterminé de sa vie; tant pis pour qui ne comprend pas ce haut symbolisme, à la fois simplification et raffinement de l'art! L'artiste a peint une âme auguste; il a rendu, en dehors du temps, une beauté toute spirituelle, une beauté de reine, rien que reine, dans un oubli voulu de la mère qui a souffert et de la muse qui a chanté.

Je ne serais pas femme si je prêtais un moment d'attention à la toilette de Sa Majesté. Le long manteau en velours bleu de roi, doublé de satin blanc, est retenu aux épaules par un magnifique collier de perles, tombant sur la robe droite de mousseline plissée bordée de fourrure. Les bras, d'une forme exquise, émergent des manches bouffantes se terminant au coude par un fouillis de dentelles, et nous admirons la belle main où tant de lèvres se sont posées avec vénération, la main qui a essuyé des larmes et séché des sueurs d'agonie.

Mais, à côté d'Élisabeth dans son rôle officiel, nous trouvons *Carmen Sylva écoutant les voix de la forêt*. Cette fois la belle main tient la plume, le regard scrute l'invisible, l'oreille se tend vers la vague harmonie des choses que la reine-poète traduira en vers mélodieux. Sur le plan inférieur du tableau, les objets réels et familiers, livres préférés, photographies d'êtres chers, orgue, cahiers de musique, carton de dessin, médaille que l'Académie française a décernée à l'auteur des *Pensées d'une Reine*; sur le plan supérieur, la forêt à gauche, printanière, avec les bourgeons d'un vert tendre, à droite automnale, avec les feuillages jaunés ou roussis – peuplée de fées et de petits génies qui chantent ou jouent d'instruments champêtres; tout cela d'un style très élevé et d'une couleur à la fois chaude et délicate.

Une immense toile ébauchée barre le fond de l'atelier, le *Dernier sommeil de la Vierge*, pour le narthex de l'église Saint-Nicholas de Iassy. À gauche, Basile le Loup et sa famille; à droite, la famille royale de Roumanie, avec la chère absente jamais regrettée; au-dessus, une procession d'anges et de saints d'un style byzantin largement interprété. Enfin un tableau de chevalier presque achevé: *Napoléon dictant ses mémoires, à Sainte-Hélène*.

Nous avons vu et admiré bien d'autres oeuvres, bien d'autres objets exquis, comme cette merveilleuse cassette de peintre, don d'une bonne fée et légitime orgueil de son possesseur. François Ier ramassa le pinceau de Titien; une reine-artiste offrit à M. Jean du Nouÿ une palette plus précieuse encore par la pensée qui y est inscrite que par l'enveloppe d'or et d'émail qui la dérobe aux regards du profane....

Nous saluons le maître, et nous emportons de cette visite un souvenir que le temps et la distance n'ont point encore effacé. Cet hôtel de l'avenue Flandrin est fait à souhait pour le rêve d'art qu'y poursuit M. Jean du Nouÿ."

SYNOPSIS / SAMENVATTING

Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ (1842-1923) bleef zijn leven lang trouw aan de academische principes die hem als schilder onderwezen zijn, en hij creëerde daarbij enkele spraakmakende kunstwerken die hem tijdens zijn leven grote faam brachten. Zijn artistieke reputatie overleefde hem echter niet lang aangezien modernistische concepten als individualiteit en originaliteit gedurende de 2e helft van de 19e eeuw langzaam maar zeker de boventoon begonnen te voeren. Hierdoor is het merendeel van academische kunstenaars zoals Lecomte du Nouÿ gedurende de 20e eeuw genegeerd, maar sinds een aantal jaren begint hierin langzaam weer een kentering te komen.

Vanaf 1863 tot aan zijn dood in 1923 exposeerde Lecomte du Nouÿ voortdurend op de Parijse Salon en ontving hierbij regelmatig hoge onderscheidingen. Zijn werk werd veelvuldig besproken in de kunstkritiek van zijn tijd en riep zowel positieve als negatieve reacties op. Door het bestuderen van zulke recensies worden niet alleen de kunstenaar en zijn werk herontdekt, maar ook de toenmalige discussie omtrent de ontwikkeling van moderne kunst.

Lecomte du Nouÿ putte zijn inspiratie voornamelijk uit de Klassieke Oudheid, de Bijbel, en zijn vele buitenlandse reizen. Op die manier legde hij zich toe op het uitbeelden van onderwerpen die zowel geografisch als chronologisch ver van hem verwijderd waren. Lecomte du Nouÿ was een aanhanger van het *beau idéal*, waarbij de nadruk ligt op de geïdealiseerde vorm zoals gedefinieerd tijdens de klassieke oudheid en renaissance. Hierbij stond het menselijk lichaam centraal als de principiële drager van het narratieve element in een kunstwerk. Deze visie ging meestal gepaard met een schildertechnisch hoge kwaliteit en grote aandacht voor detail.

De 19e-eeuwse kunstkritiek kende veel verschillende stemmen, en even gevarieerd waren de reacties op Lecomte du Nouÿ's kunst. Zo was criticus Jules Castagnary in 1872 zeer verheugd dat Salonbezoekers nauwelijks nog naar schilderijen met historische en religieuze onderwerpen keken en vond dat de Franse overheid dit soort kunst niet meer moest ondersteunen, aangezien er geen maatschappelijk draagvlak meer voor bestond. Werken van schilders zoals Lecomte du Nouÿ incorporeerde alles wat hij verafschuwde in contemporaine kunst. Daar dwars tegenover stonden critici als Guy de

Montgailhard, die zelfs in 1914 Lecomte du Nouÿ nog dankte voor zijn heldhaftig verdedigen van het schoonheidsideaal door voortdurend kunst te scheppen die leerzaam en opbouwend was. Lecomte du Nouÿ was bewust geen avantgardistisch kunstenaar en voerde de traditie van Raphael and Ingres hoog in het vaandel.

Voor een hedendaags publiek is het moeilijk een beeld van Lecomte du Nouÿ te vormen aangezien er sinds zijn overlijden nauwelijks over hem is geschreven en omdat weinig van zijn werk in musea tentoongesteld is. Deze studie neemt als uitgangspunt de biografie die Guy de Montgailhard in 1906 publiceerde, tot nu toe de enige uitvoerige tekst over de kunstenaar. Deze dissertatie presenteert eerst een vernieuwd overzicht van Lecomte du Nouÿ's leven en werk. Het tweede hoofdstuk behandelt daarna de drie belangrijkste categorieën binnen zijn oeuvre: *néo-grec*, oriëntalistische en religieuze kunst. Tenslotte is een catalogus toegevoegd waarin alle aan mij bekende werken van de kunstenaar opgenomen zijn.

Hoofdstuk I

Jean Antoine Jules Lecomte (Parijs, 10 Juni 1842 – Parijs, 19 Februari 1923) was de zoon van Jules Louis Michel Lecomte en zijn vrouw Félicité Alexandrine Dunouy. De kunstenaar veranderde later officieel zijn achternaam door de beide namen van zijn ouders te combineren tot Lecomte du Nouÿ, de naam waarmee hij zijn meeste werken signeerde. Deze spelling werd echter niet consequent aangehouden en sommige schilderijen dragen de signatuur "Lecomte du Noüy," of gewoon "du Nouy."

Lecomte du Nouÿ kende zijn vormingsjaren als kunstenaar van 1861 tot en met 1872. Hij studeerde tot 1863 in Charles Gleyre's atelier, wiens onafhankelijke positie – los staand van de gangbare Neo-klassieke en Romantische stromingen – vooral populair was bij toekomstige Impressionisten. Gleyre had echter ook al veel gereisd in het Midden-Oosten, wat voor Lecomte du Nouÿ een reden kan zijn geweest om bij hem in de leer te gaan. Nadat Gleyre's atelier in de problemen raakte, is Lecomte du Nouÿ overgestapt naar de studio van Émile Signol, waar hij voor ongeveer een jaar bleef en onder wiens leiding hij in 1863 zijn eerste Salonstuk tentoonstelde. Datzelfde jaar werden in de Parijse École des Beaux-Arts grondige hervormingen doorgevoerd. Een belangrijk

aspect hiervan was dat naast het traditionele tekenonderricht voortaan ook schilderen werd onderwezen. Hiervoor werden drie ateliers opgericht onder leiding van Jean-Léon Gérôme, Isidore Pils en Alexandre Cabanel. Lecomte du Nouÿ werd een van de eerste leerlingen van Gérôme, bij wie hij studeerde van 1864 tot en met 1872, en wiens invloed voor de rest van zijn leven van uitermate groot belang zou blijven.

Aan het begin van zijn carrière richtte Lecomte du Nouÿ zich vooral op klassieke thematiek, maar na een reis naar Egypte in 1865 begon hij ook oriëntalistische onderwerpen te schilderen. In 1871, na de chaos van de Frans-Duitse oorlog, nam Lecomte du Nouÿ deel aan de *prix de Rome* competitie, waar hij een eervolle vermelding behaalde. Het niet winnen van deze prijs betekende een grote teleurstelling, maar hij verdiende desalniettemin medailles op verscheidene Salons en zijn werken werden regelmatig door de Franse overheid aangekocht.

Na het verlaten van Gérôme's atelier zette Lecomte du Nouÿ de artistieke thema's die hij reeds exploreerde voor de rest van zijn carrière voort. Naast portretten bleef hij zich toewijden aan historische, religieuze, literaire en oriëntalistische onderwerpen. Een belangrijke toevoeging tot dit repertoire was zijn activiteit als beeldhouwer. Hij begon met deze discipline aangezien hij de graftombe van zijn eerste vrouw zelf wilde uitvoeren. Daarna maakte hij ook andere sculpturen met voornamelijk historische en militaire onderwerpen en enkele grote monumenten.

In 1895 bezocht Lecomte du Nouÿ zijn broer André in Roemenië, die daar hofarchitect was. Na geïntroduceerd te zijn aan de koninklijke familie, ontving de schilder meerdere officiële opdrachten zoals statieportretten. Hij keerde regelmatig terug naar Roemenië en vervaardigde ook enkele muurschilderingen in Roemeense kerken. Dit gaf hem de gelegenheid om op een grote schaal te werken, een ambitie die hij gedurende zijn hele carrière zou koesteren. Hij wilde de vereerde traditie van historieschilderkunst hoog houden en greep elke kans aan om *la grande peinture* nieuw leven in te blazen. Zo begon hij in 1884 aan een cyclus van meerdere grote doeken waarin het hele literaire oeuvre van Victor Hugo verbeeld zou worden. Uiteindelijk realiseerde hij slechts vier schilderijen, waarschijnlijk tekenend voor het feit dat er aan het einde van de 19e eeuw nauwelijks nog een publiek bestond voor zulk een groots gebaar. Naast zijn artistiek traditionalisme was Lecomte du Nouÿ ook op politiek gebied conservatief en

nationalistisch. Dit komt vooral tot uitdrukking in de vele werken die Napoleon als groot Frans staatsman uitbeelden, zowel als in andere militaire onderwerpen. De kunstenaar bleef tot aan zijn dood actief, maar slechts weinig van zijn late werk is gelocaliseerd. De foto's die ervan bestaan doen echter vermoeden dat het aan kwaliteit nogal inboet. Zowel thematisch als in technische uitvoering lijken deze werken geringe overtuigingskracht te bezitten.

Er blijven nog enkele vraagtekens rondom de kunstenaar Lecomte du Nouÿ, zoals de aard van zijn eigen activiteit als leraar en zijn werkmethode. Er is uiterst weinig bekend over het aantal leerlingen dat hij gehad heeft. Zijn schijnbaar beperkte rol op dit gebied kan een teken zijn dat een jongere generatie kunstenaars zijn artistieke opvattingen niet deelde en meer moderne mentoren zocht, maar het kan ook zijn dat Lecomte du Nouÿ het leraarschap bewust beperkte aangezien hij veel reisde. Verder heeft recent onderzoek duidelijk gemaakt dat een groot aantal 19e-eeuwse academische kunstenaars zich op grote schaal van fotografie bedienden voor het componeren van hun schilderijen. Of Lecomte du Nouÿ dit ook deed is niet geheel duidelijk. Er zijn echter geen foto's bekend, uit zijn nalatenschap of elders, die direct aan zijn geschilderde oeuvre gerelateerd kunnen worden.

Hoofdstuk II

Vanaf de 2e helft van de 19e eeuw werd de academische traditie sterk aangevochten met onderwerpen die zich richtten op de uitbeelding van het moderne leven, alhoewel dat niet weg neemt dat historische taferelen nog volop geproduceerd werden. Ondanks vele praktische tekortkomingen bleef de Salon een populair forum voor kunstenaars om dit soort traditionelere werken te tonen. Maar academische kunst zelf bleef ook niet statisch en ontwikkelde zich wel degelijk. Zo ontstond de *néo-grec* schilderkunst, ook wel "archeologische" schilderkunst genoemd. Dit populaire genre kende haar grootste bloeiperiode van 1847 tot en met 1863. Met Gérôme als de onbetwiste leider, transformeerde een grote groep kunstenaars de traditionele historieschilderkunst zoals die lange tijd door Jacques Louis David en de Franse Academie gepredikt werd. Met hun nieuwe aanpak werd de aandacht verlegd van de

universele waarden zoals die in mythe en religie te vinden zijn, naar de anecdotische ervaringswereld van het individu. Lecomte du Nouÿ behoorde tot de tweede generatie schilders die, nog lang nadat Gérôme naar het oriëntalisme was overgestapt, het *néo-grec* genre beoefenden.

De *néo-grecs* namen geen genoegen met het uitbeelden van gestileerde gebaren en draperieën om hun historische voorstellingen vorm te geven, maar zochten naar een grotere detaillering om het verleden overtuigender te doen herleven. Door middel van opgravingen en andere kennisvergaring maakte de archeologie grote vorderingen. De studies die hieruit voortkwamen stonden ter beschikking van kunstenaars, en daarnaast volgden studenten geschiedenisonderwijs aan de École des Beaux-Arts. Klassieke sculpturen (of gipsen modellen daarvan) speelde hierbij een belangrijke rol. Niet alleen werd aan de hand van deze modellen ideale proportie onderwezen, de werken leverden ook concrete informatie met betrekking tot historische personen en evenementen. Zo baseerde Lecomte du Nouÿ zijn geschilderde weergave van Homerus op een Romeinse buste van de dichter, en die van Ramses op een Egyptisch pharao portret in het Louvre. De grote aandacht voor het historische detail werd meestal gecombineerd met uiterst bizarre en vaak gewelddadige onderwerpen. Zodoende probeerde men zich te onderscheiden van de duizenden stukken die typisch op een Salon tentoongesteld werden en de aandacht te trekken van het veeltallige publiek. De uitzonderlijke thema keuze ging meestal gepaard met een verfijnde techniek die haar oorsprong vond in het academisch principe van idealisering. Het tekenonderwijs had zich traditioneel op perfectie en correctie gericht, en veel kunstenaars bedienden zich bewust van een illusionistische techniek om hun vaak bizarre recreaties van voorbije tijden geloofwaardiger te maken. Net als bij de latere griezelfilms, reageerde het grote publiek hierop met een combinatie van afschuw en fascinatie. Lecomte du Nouÿ zelf verwief zo zijn grootste faam met *De boodschappers van het slechte nieuws*, een schilderij dat perfect in deze categorie past.

Voor modernistische critici was deze aandacht voor het verleden verwerpelijk. Niet alleen hechtten deze schilders te veel waarde aan onbelangrijke details, de fixatie op het verleden blokkeerde de algemene artistieke vooruitgang. Maar anderen zagen de activiteiten van Gérôme en de zijnen als een vernieuwende voortzetting van de

gewaardeerde traditie van historieschilderkunst. Het is echter een feit dat critici steeds vaker de notie van vooruitgang in hun waardeoordeel lieten figureren.

Goede voorbeelden van Lecomte du Nouÿ's *néo-grec* schilderijen zijn *De griekse wachter*, *De aanroep tot Neptunus*, en *De waanzin van Ajax de Telamoniër*. Deze werken werden over het algemeen vrij positief ontvangen, alhoewel er ook altijd wel negatieve reacties te vernemen waren. Een opvallend fenomeen in deze kunstkritieken is de veelvuldige verwijzing naar het theater. De geschilderde historische voorstellingen behandelden natuurlijk vaak dezelfde thematiek als toneel en opera, maar daarnaast werd het illusionistische karakter van schilderijen ook met decorstukken vergeleken. Soms in negatieve zin (slechte schilderijen werden afgedaan als goedkope decors), maar ook in positieve zin. Bezoekers van theater en Salon wilden vaak graag verleid worden door een illusionisme dat in beide kunstvormen uitgedragen werd. Uiteindelijk hoorde hiertoe ook de cinema, en nadat de beeldende kunst het pad van abstractie koos, nam dit medium zelfs de overhand in de overdracht van het verhaal.

In twee successieve voorstellingen van de bedelende Homerus komen vele aspecten van Lecomte du Nouÿ's kunstopvatting aan de orde. Beide werken zijn triptieken, de eerste uit 1875 was vrij klein en volgde de *néo-grec* traditie door de aandacht te leggen op het armoedige bestaan van de klassieke dichter, en hem niet te vereren als een half-god zoals Ingres dat gedaan had. In 1881 herhaalde Lecomte du Nouÿ dit thema met een vergelijkbare compositie, maar dit keer op veel grotere schaal. Met dit enorme werk presenteerde hij wederom een groots historiestuk. De centrale voorstelling met de bedelende Homerus kreeg door allerlei veranderingen in de compositie een nog minder geidealiseerd karakter. De bijna naakte Homerus werd uiterst realistisch afgebeeld met alle lichamelijke tekenen van zijn ouderdom en vermoeidheid. De verwantschap met Léon Bonnat en de invloed van 17e eeuwse Spaanse schilders zoals Ribera, die erg populair waren in 19e eeuwse Frankrijk, is hier duidelijk aanwezig, en toont aan dat Lecomte du Nouÿ niet in een artistiek vacuum opereerde.

Vele kunstenaars, waaronder Lecomte du Nouÿ, reisden naar Noord Afrika en het Midden-Oosten om zich te informeren over het verleden. Naast oude gebouwen en

ruïnes, heersten er daar nog gebruiken die een directe schakel met het verleden leken te vormen. Maar de notie van een zo correct mogelijke weergave van het verleden vormde toch een probleem voor kunstenaars, aangezien men zich wel degelijk realiseerde dat historische kennis uiteindelijk beperkt was. Om dit probleem te omzeilen, werden ook vaak moderne exotische onderwerpen afgebeeld, die ook uiterst populair bleken bij verzamelaars. Weer een andere oplossing voor dit probleem was het uitbeelden van duidelijk fictieve onderwerpen, zoals bijvoorbeeld *De boodschappers van het slechte nieuws*, gebaseerd op een populaire roman van Théophile Gautier. Meestal werden dit soort exotische schilderijen in het atelier gemaakt en betrof het samenstellingen van velerlei elementen die men ofwel zelf op reis ervaren had ofwel volledig gefantaseerd waren; uiteindelijk ging het de meeste kunstenaars erom een overtuigend kunstwerk te maken.

Met *De boodschappers van het slechte nieuws* kende Lecomte du Nouÿ zijn grootste success, en het doek werd door de Franse regering aangekocht voor het Musée du Luxembourg, het toenmalige museum voor moderne kunst. De voorstelling werd veelvuldig gereproduceerd en was daardoor erg bekend bij een groot publiek. Net als Gérôme verlegde Lecomte du Nouÿ ook langzaam zijn aandacht van klassieke onderwerpen naar oriëntalistische themas. Dit genre bood enorme mogelijkheden in onderwerpskeuze, en zowel kunstenaars als verzamelaars waren uiterst geboeid door exotische themas, onbekende landschappen, volkeren, gebruiken en religies. Men produceerde uiterst realistische voorstellingen van het dagelijks leven in het Midden Oosten, maar vooral ook gedeeltelijk of volledig gefantaseerde composities. Zo hadden Westerlingen in principe geen toegang tot de harem, maar bestaan er wel talloze afbeeldingen van dit vermeende paradijs der lusten. Voor West-Europeanen bood het Oriëntalisme legio mogelijkheden om hun fantasie de vrije loop te laten, en dat gold met name voor erotische voorstellingen. Daarnaast bestonden er ook vele vooroordelen die tot uitdrukking kwamen in deze werken, zoals barbarisme en geweld in de Islamitische cultuur. Al deze elementen culminereren in Lecomte du Nouÿ's oeuvre met schilderijen als *De droom van een eunuch* (waarin ook druggebruik een centrale rol speelt), en *De witte*

slavin. Dit schilderij van een rokende harem slavin is tegenwoordig Lecomte du Nouÿ's meest bekende schilderij.

Naast het bezoeken van buitenlandse oorden om historische kennis op te doen, speelden religieuze overwegingen ook vaak een rol om reizen te ondernemen. Veel kunstenaars bezochten het Midden Oosten om op overtuigender wijze Bijbelse voorstellingen te kunnen weergeven. Aangezien de Franse overheid echter maar een beperkt aantal opdrachten voor altaarstukken en andere religieuze kunstwerken verstrekke, richtten veel kunstenaars zich daarnaast ook op zogenaamde religieuze genre schilderijen. De uitbeelding van Christenen en Moslims die hun geloof praktiseren is dan ook een van de belangrijkste sub-categoriën binnen het orientalisme. Lecomte du Nouÿ ontving een staatsopdracht voor twee altaarstukken in de Kerk van de Heilige Drie-eenheid in Parijs (1873-79), maar zijn afbeelding van de oudtestamentische Judith is daarentegen vooral een studie van een vrouw in Oosterse kledij. En naast Moslims biddend in een moskee, schilderde Lecomte du Nouÿ ook vaak de Joodse bevolking in Marokko en elders. Dit had waarschijnlijk te maken met het feit deze bevolkingsgroep geen principiële bezwaren had om afgebeeld te worden, in tegenstelling tot vele Moslims die hier om religieuze redenen vaak bezwaar tegen maakten. En aangezien zijn eerste vrouw Joods was, had hij daarom misschien ook een grotere interesse voor Joodse tradities.

Lecomte du Nouÿ hield zijn leven lang vast aan een kunst die voortborduurde op traditionele academische principes. Hij keerde het opkomende modernisme bewust de rug toe, aangezien kunst voor hem in traditie gegrondvest was; vandaar zijn voorliefde voor klassieke onderwerpen, literatuur en religie. Een straatscène op de Parijse boulevard of een zon doordrenkt landschap kon voor hem geen diepere boodschap overbrengen. Het werk van academische kunstenaars zoals Lecomte du Nouÿ evolueerde echter ook tot op zekere hoogte, en droeg duidelijk bij aan de vormtaal van stromingen zoals het symbolisme. Zij bedienden daarnaast een groot publiek en maakten een belangrijk deel uit van het artistieke klimaat van hun tijd. De 19e eeuw wordt tegenwoordig nog te vaak

alleen vanuit een modernistische invalshoek bekeken, en dat is een verkeerd uitgangspunt om tot een correct historisch beeld van deze periode te geraken.

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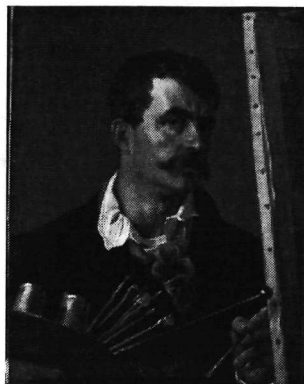


Figure 2

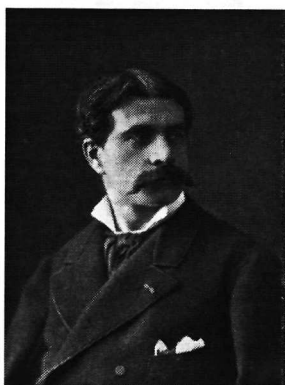


Figure 3

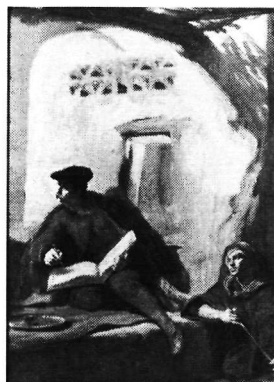


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

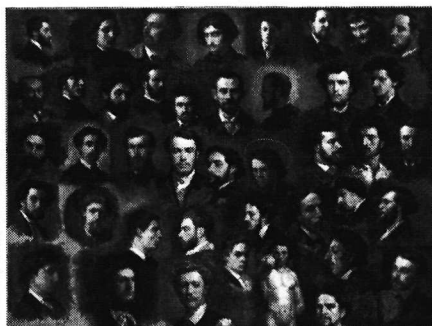


Figure 8



Figure 9

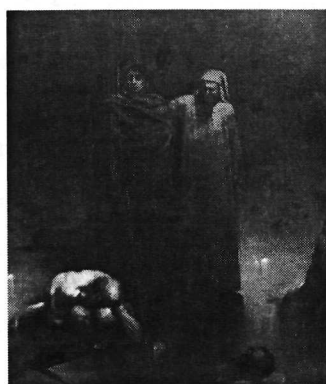


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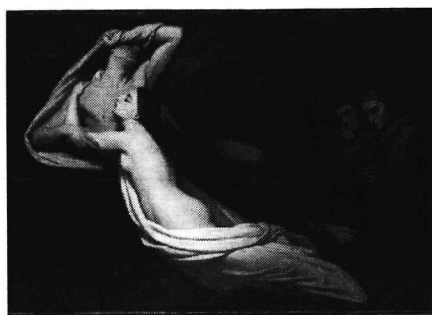


Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Francesco de Rimini n'ayant plus à rebouter de se casser le cou si elle tombait de cette hauteur, la chose se trouvant déjà faite.

Figure 16

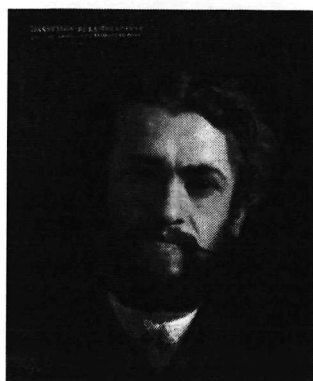


Figure 17

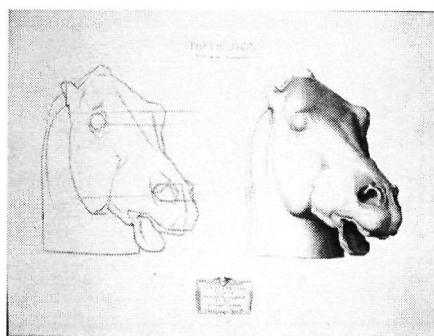


Figure 18

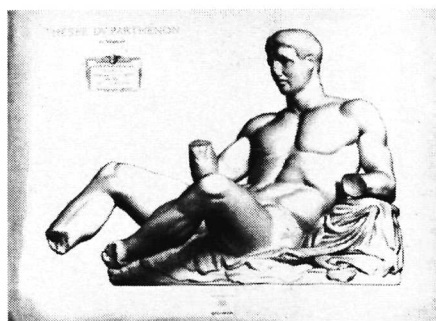


Figure 19

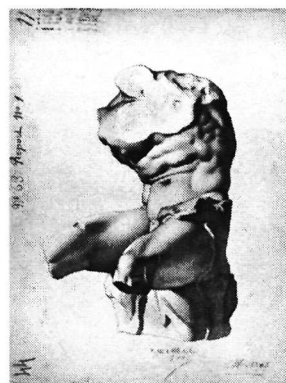


Figure 20

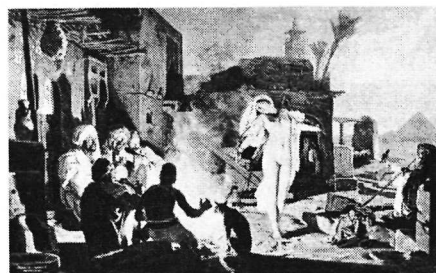


Figure 21

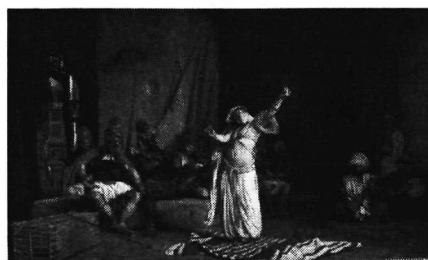


Figure 22

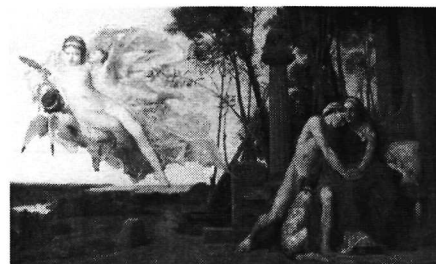


Figure 23



Figure 24

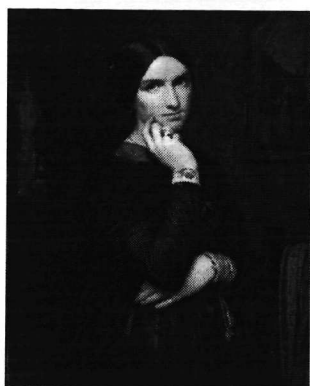


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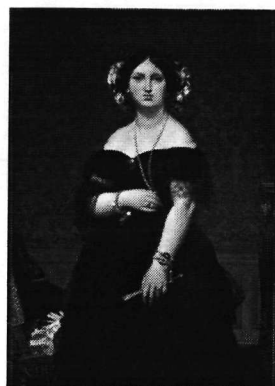


Figure 26

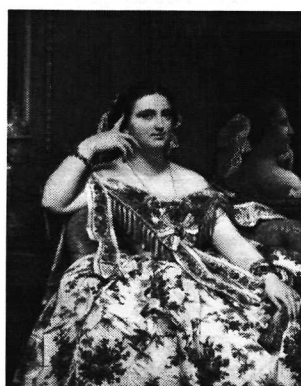


Figure 27



Figure 28

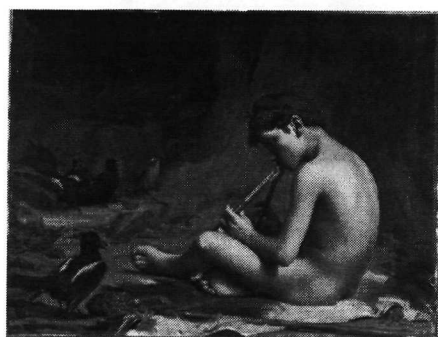


Figure 29

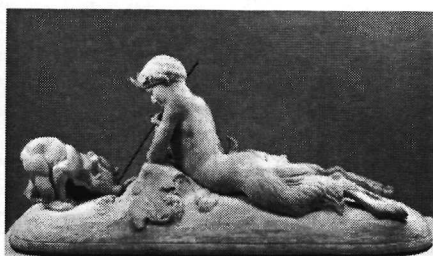


Figure 30

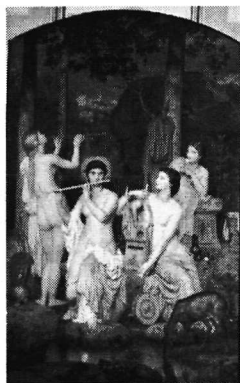


Figure 31

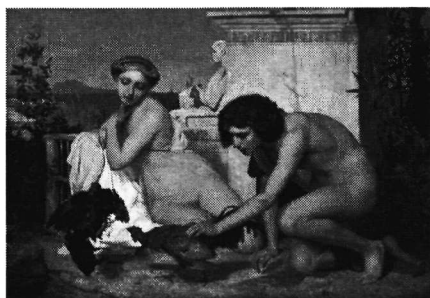


Figure 32



Figure 33



Figure 34



Figure 35

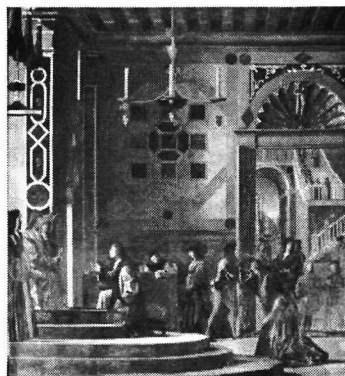


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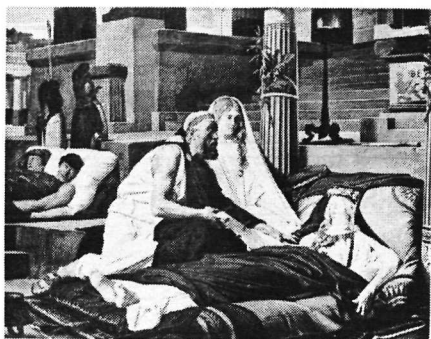


Figure 37

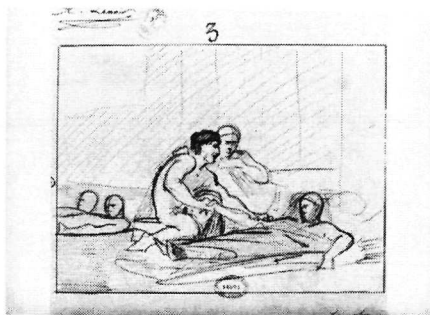


Figure 38

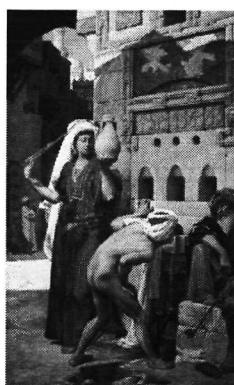


Figure 39



Figure 40



Figure 41

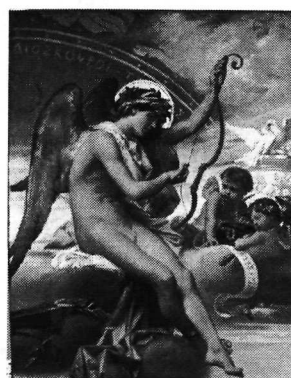


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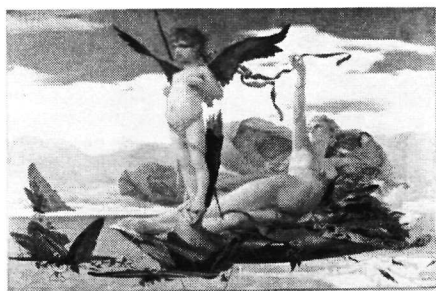


Figure 43



Figure 44



Figure 45



Figure 46

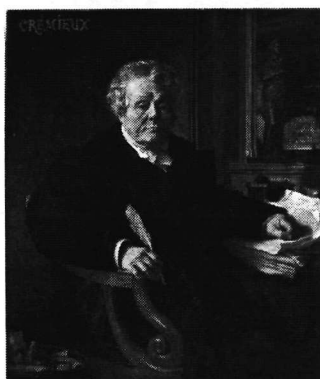


Figure 47



Figure 48



Figure 49

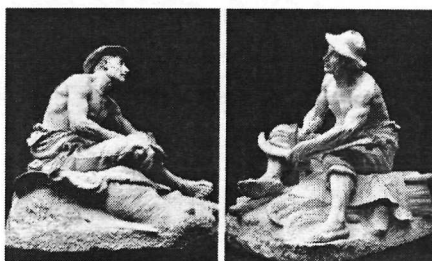


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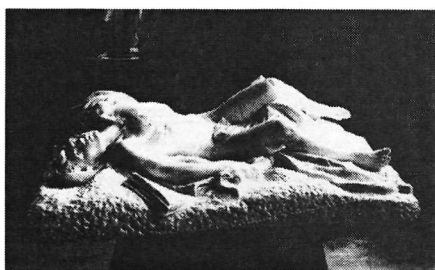


Figure 51

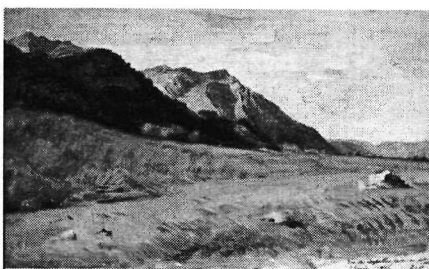


Figure 52



Figure 53

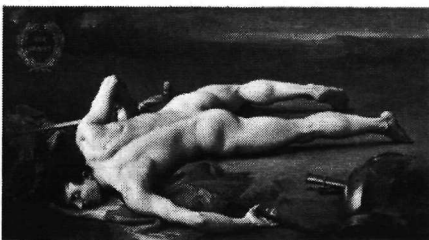


Figure 54

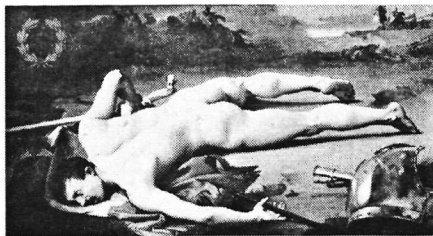


Figure 54a

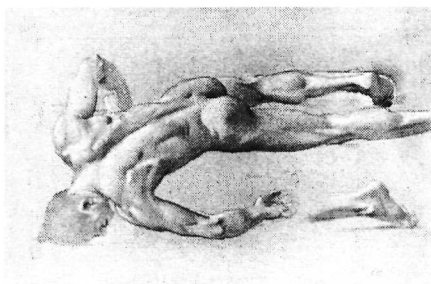


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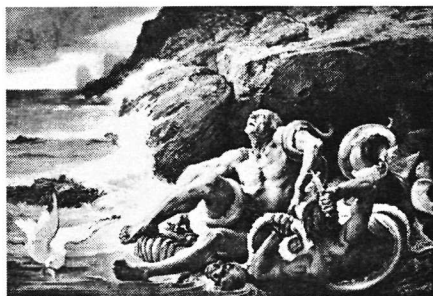


Figure 56



Figure 57



Figure 58



Figure 59



Figure 60

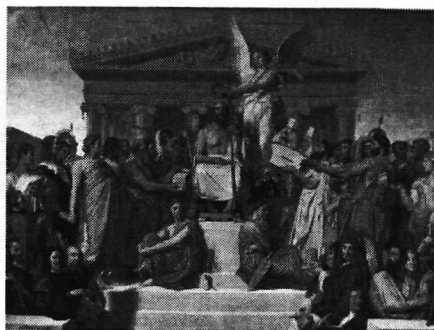


Figure 61

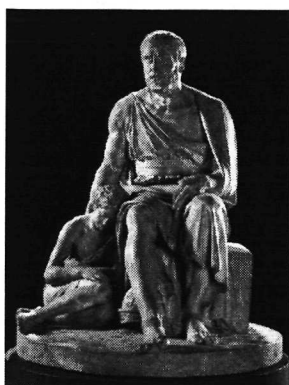


Figure 62

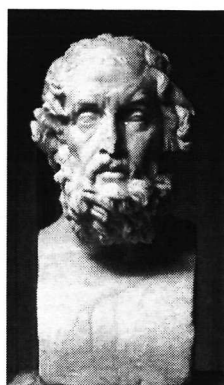


Figure 63



Figure 64

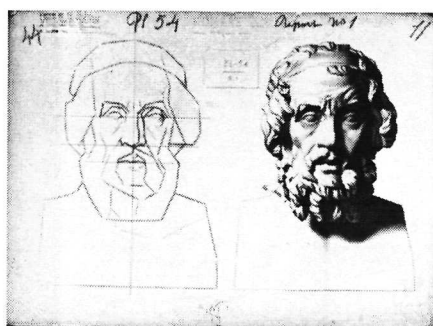


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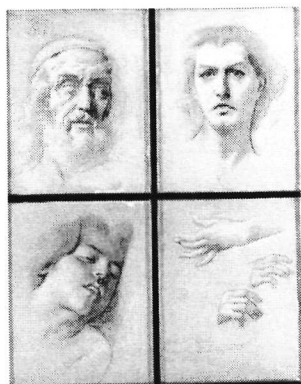


Figure 66



Figure 67

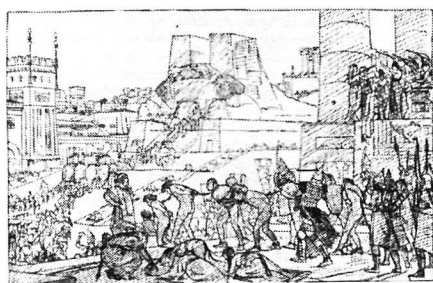


Figure 68



Figure 69

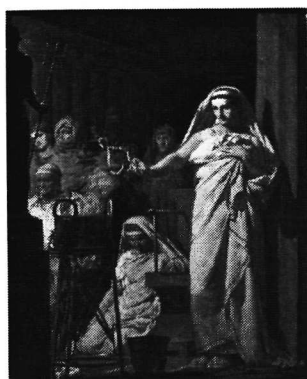


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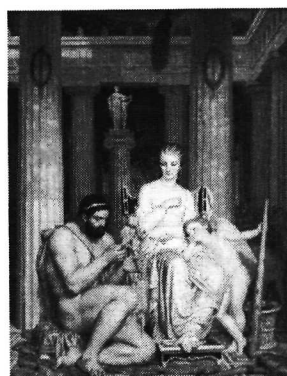


Figure 71



Figure 72



Figure 73

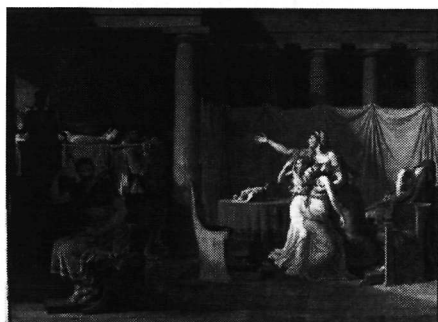


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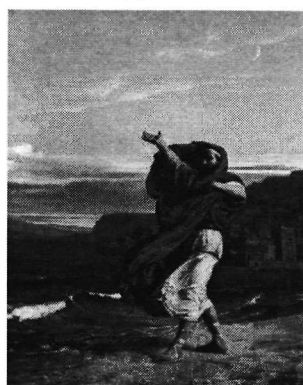


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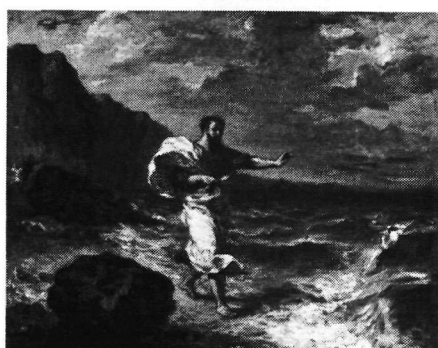


Figure 76



Figure 77



Figure 78



Figure 79



Figure 80

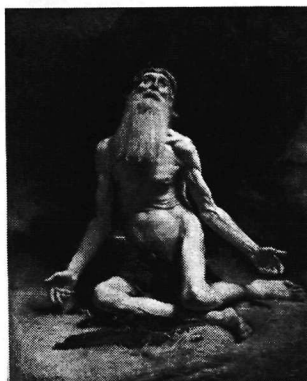


Figure 81



Figure 82

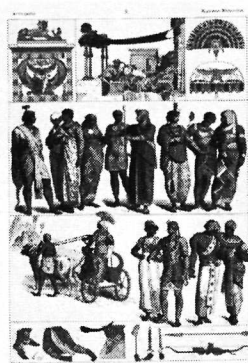


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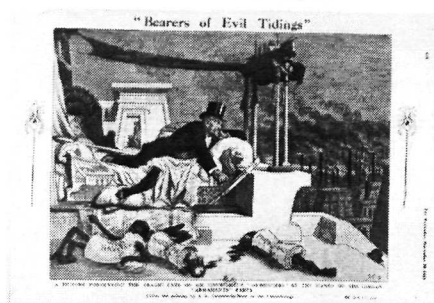


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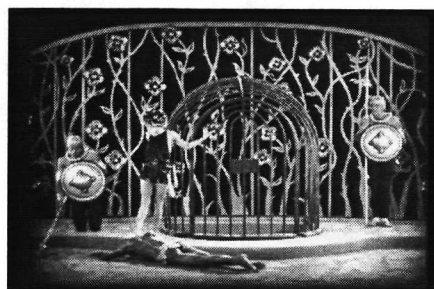


Figure 85



Figure 86



Figure 87

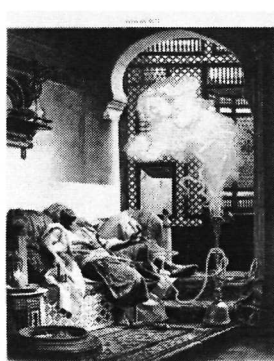


Figure 88



Figure 89



M. LECOMTE DU NOUY.

Le Haschich!

— Eh! eh! on lui finirait volontiers sa pipe!

Figure 90



Figure 92

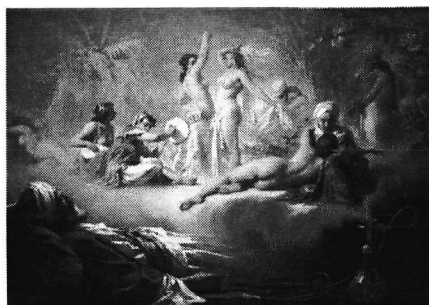


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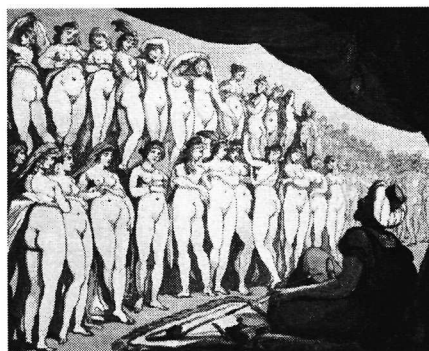


Figure 93

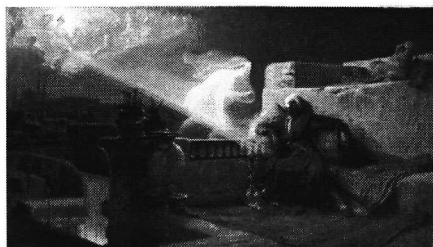


Figure 94

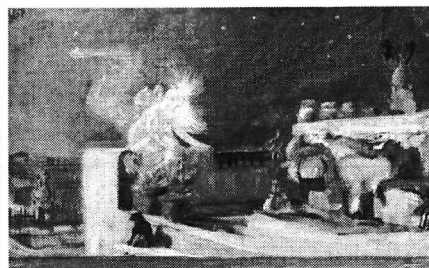


Figure 95

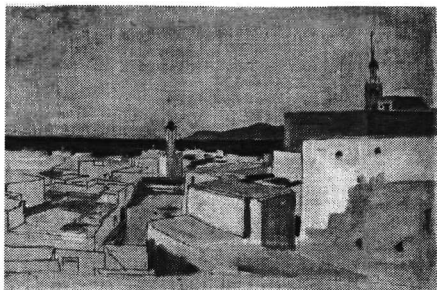


Figure 96



Figure 97



Figure 98



Figure 99

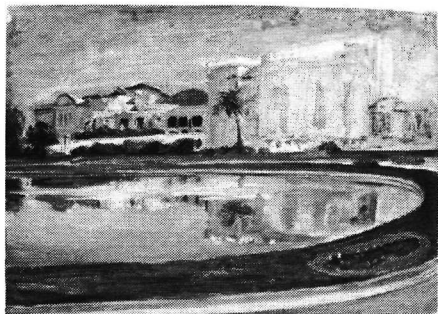


Figure 100

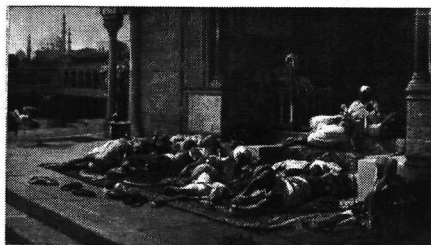


Figure 101



Figure 102

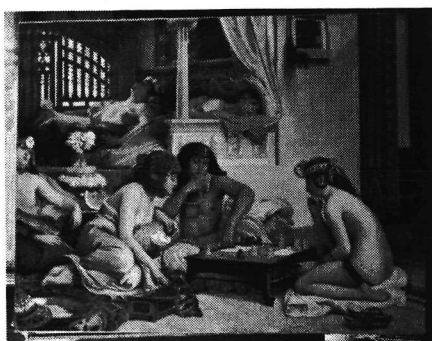


Figure 102a



Figure 103



Figure 104

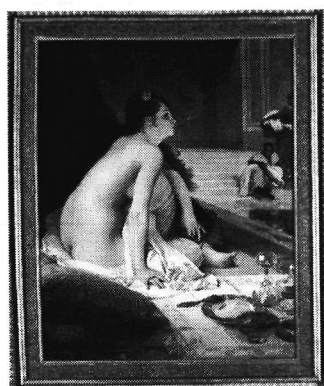


Figure 105

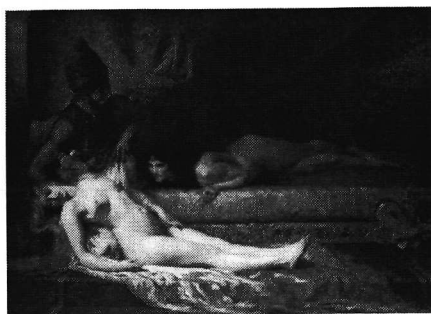


Figure 106

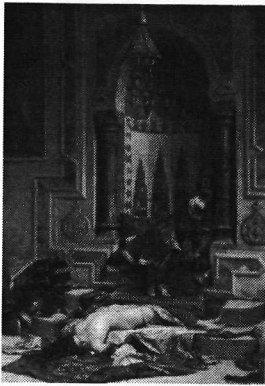


Figure 107



Figure 108

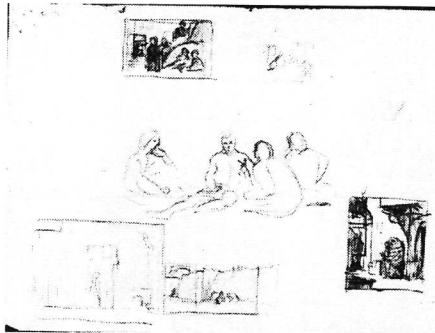


Figure 109



104. — LEONTO-OKOIT.
Nommé d'après M. Leon Laya, Jod n'a pas le son pour
représenter. Ses amis refusaient de lui en prêter, la con-
science par corps était abolie.

Figure 110

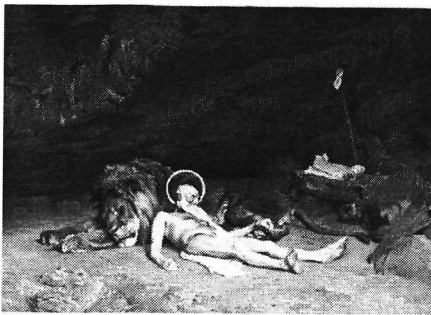


Figure 111

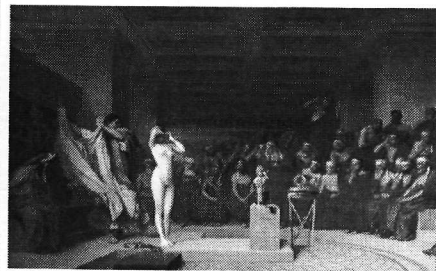


Figure 112



Figure 113

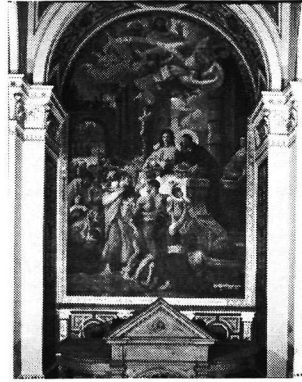


Figure 114



Figure 115



Figure 116

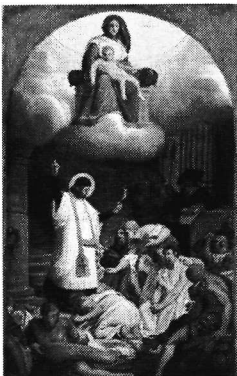


Figure 117



Figure 118

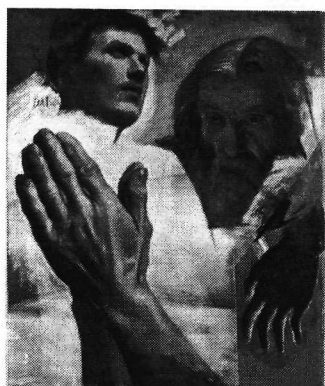


Figure 119



Figure 120

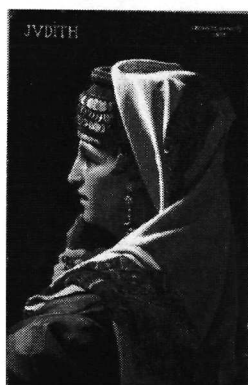


Figure 121



Figure 122

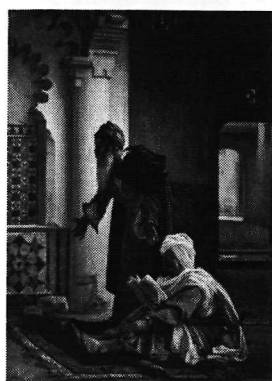


Figure 123

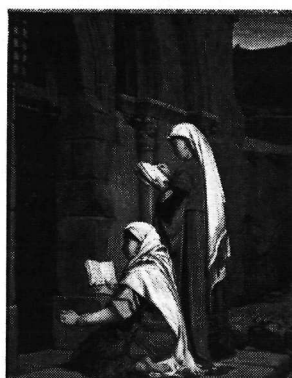


Figure 124



Figure 125



Figure 126

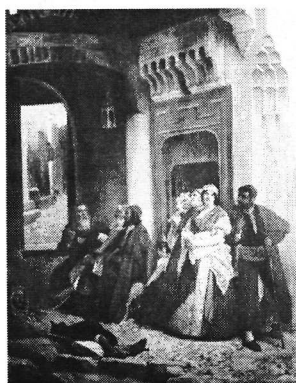


Figure 127



Figure 128



Figure 129



Figure 130

