EUGÈNE-EMMANUEL VIOLET-LE-DUC (1814-1879) AND THE ROMANTIC REFORM MOVEMENT IN ARCHITECTURE

THESIS

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This thesis examines French architect Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879), who combined eighteenth-century Rationalism with the historicist, anti-academic message of Romanticism, which was impelling the nineteenth-century architectural reform movement into the industrial age. Sources used include Viollet-le-Duc's architectural drawings and published works, particularly volume one of his Entretiens sur l'Architecture. The study is arranged chronologically, and it discusses his career, his restoration work, and his demands for reform of architectural education. One chapter contains a detailed analysis of his Entretiens. This thesis concludes that Viollet-le-Duc was as much a historian as he was an architect, and it notes that his hopes for reform were realized in the twentieth century.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the 1840s "came an artistic and literary flowering in France that matched the contemporaneous blossoming of socialist ideology."¹ A new generation of talent made itself felt on the Parisian scene and acted as a catalyst in the emergence of a new architectural movement. This new generation of architects made tentative steps during the July Monarchy of Louis Philippe between 1830 and 1848 and then flowered during the Second Empire of Napoleon III between 1852 and 1870.²

The philosophical background of modern architecture and the pedagogical reform the progressive architects in France sought are firmly embedded in the theories Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879) developed. He was one of the prime movers of the reform movement, but he stood apart from the hierarchy of the sanctioned academic circle. He combined the rationalism of the eighteenth century with the historicist, anti-academic message of Romanticism and impelled the movement into an industrial age, complete with

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new standards addressing the social and economic implications of advanced technology. Viollet-le-Duc displayed his sense of history in the numerous restoration commissions he completed and his response to the implications that accompanied an industrial age took form in his original designs, but neither exemplified modernity. The literary legacy he provided was the element which established his position. Through his writings the common threads of the architectural principles that presaged the modern movement became evident.

From the standpoint of his impact on the history of architecture, no art historian can neglect the contribution Viollet-le-Duc made to the restoration of Gothic monuments such as the Church of the Madeleine at Vézelay, Notre Dame of Paris, or the Chateau Pierrefonds. A fascination with the Middle Ages and the Gothic is a characteristic historiographers often attribute to the Romantics, but the term "Romantic" itself conjures images that are too easily oversimplified. As Paul Hazard points out, "It is no paradox to say that, if there was a romanticism which had its roots in the distant past, which in religion was theocratic, in politics conservative, and which in consequence would have nothing to do with the new ideas of the modern school,
there was also a liberal romanticism, liberal, even anarchical . . . ."³ Viollet-le-Duc propounded the virtues of the rationalism and geometric logic of Gothic architecture, but he refused to limit himself to a single specialty. Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Nikolaus Pevsner in their encyclopedic works on nineteenth and twentieth century architecture traced the visible evidence of his lifelong devotion to the restoration of French monuments.⁴ Pevsner also wrote an excellent comparison of English and French nineteenth century Gothic architecture in which he recognized that Viollet-le-Duc looked beyond the building to the builder.⁵ He remarked that "Viollet-le-Duc admires the designer for his grip on the logic of rational construction."⁶ An examination of Viollet's work within the context of liberal romanticism then also requires inclusion of his rationalism.

The works of Sir John Summerson provides further analyses of the classical forms of architecture and a critical approach to the rationalism of Viollet's writings on

⁶ Ibid., 18.
architectural theory. Louis Grodecki writes that Viollet was "the most eminent advocate" of the structural functionalism of the Gothic revival. Viollet's contribution to nineteenth century architectural theories of restoration provided a basis for the development of a regulated body of evidentiary and philosophical procedures used in historic preservation. Not that Viollet is always revered. His suggestion that a monument might be restored to a state in which it might never have existed horrifies many preservationists, but the detail in which he studied and rendered his restorations as well as his support of the preservation of a nation's culture through the restoration of its historical monuments provides inspiration still. His drawings and the resultant restorations are a tangible proof of his impact as an architect and have been the subject of several exhibitions in recent years, but the influence of his architectural theories outside the realm of restoration and Gothic revivalism are not as well defined.


In 1957 Robin Middleton wrote a dissertation entitled "Viollet-le-Duc and the Rational Gothic Tradition". In 1982, Middleton suggested in the introduction to a collection of essays on the Beaux-Arts that Viollet-le-Duc's life and works had not yet been fully examined from the standpoint of the "springs of his activity" or the "notions and theories that are his greatest claim to fame." In Viollet's two volumes, *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*, the reader finds examples of both rationalist and romantic influences which provide scientific and democratic threads to those movements. The structure of Viollet's social and intellectual circle of acquaintances reinforced those influences, but the depth and conviction of his pedagogical theories goes beyond that of other activists in the reform movement.

Recent studies on the history of architecture in the nineteenth century include discussions and revaluations of Viollet-le-Duc. Contemporary researchers have been fortunate to have the benefit of research based on the family archives held by Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc, the architect's great-granddaughter. Donald Drew Egbert led American historical

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studies of Beaux-Arts architecture. Arthur Drexler, Robin Middleton, David Watkin, David Van Zanten, Neil Levine, Richard Chafee, Joseph Rykwert, Françoise Bercé, and Bruno Foucart added incisive contributions to the recent body of studies on various aspects of Viollet's literary and architectural contributions. Since 1980 numerous essays, reprints, and exhibitions have commemorated the hundredth anniversary of his death.

Viollet-le-Duc brilliantly set forth his own application of scientific evaluation and geometric solutions to problems of composition and equilibrium in relation to Gothic architecture in the ten volume *Dictionnaire Raisonné de l'Architecture Française du XI au XVI Siècle* which he

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published in installments between 1854 and 1862. These volumes include the solutions Viollet applied to the restoration work intrusted to him by successive French governments from the 1840s until his death. He also provided a powerful guiding influence in the course of Gothic revival as architect to the Commission des Monuments Historique and, after 1853, as one of the three Inspecteurs Généraux of the Service des Edifices Diocésains.

In his lifetime, Viollet-le-Duc personified the transition between the Romantic movement of the first half of the century and the scientific materialism of the second. His writings show this progression, and they include, in his later lectures, the emphasis he placed on the use of new industrial materials, particularly metals. That Viollet-le-Duc stressed the structural advantages that metals provide is a greater indication of the growing influence of scientific methodology and the industrial revolution than of his insistence on the singular advantage of iron. The particular applications that he demonstrated in his lectures diverts the study of architecture away from the outdated methods of the previous generation to an expanded viewpoint of the possibilities accruing from the use of new technology.

In the nineteenth century emphasis on scientific hypotheses shifted to the practice of replicable experimentation. This development from theory to practice found application in social movements and industrial expansion, as well as in architecture. In France the industrial expansion nourished in the Second Empire reinforced the change from the Romanticism of the first three decades of the nineteenth century to an age of science. Viollet's political position within the regime and his personal acquaintance with Napolean III, combined with a growing emphasis on industrialization, led him to an enhanced appreciation of the use of new industrial materials. He believed that scientific advances with the accompanying industrial application of new methods and materials should be applied to new structures.

Certainly there is not a moment in time to which the historian might point to delineate the switch from Viollet the restoration architect to Viollet the precursor of the modern movement. His restoration work, although the subject of controversy in historic preservation circles, continued throughout his career, but by mid-century his growing concern with the development of an architecture "for our own times" became a passion. He expected this new style to appear naturally from the alterations in building practices that

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would evolve from the use of new materials. He sought "an alternative form of architecture, Gothic in its principles but not in its appearance."  

The absolute logic and systematic analyses that fill the pages of the *Dictionnaire Raisonné* paved the way for the syntheses he provided in the pedagogical lessons of his *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*. He wrote the first series of these lectures, published in 1863, to outline his radical reinterpretation of architectural education, which he presented during his brief and unpleasant appointment as Professor of History of Art and Aesthetics at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In 1872 he published the second series and in it he expanded his ideas.

In his first lecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Viollet-le-Duc insisted that a thorough knowledge of history was imperative to the development of creative power, but he stepped beyond the classical strategy by further suggesting that historical background should lead to a synthesis on the part of the artist or architect; it must reflect the current era with its cultural and technological changes.

We retain a multiplicity of antiquated notions and customs which belong to a bygone civilization, together

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with the wants, customs, and requirements of our own times.\textsuperscript{18} Viollet then suggested that these concepts, reduced to a set of principles, would result in a sort of fermentation that would produce new compositions rather than imitations.

The past is past; but we must search into it sincerely and carefully; seeking not to revive it, but to know it thoroughly, that we may turn it to good account.\textsuperscript{19}

Unfortunately Academicians held the "mechanical arts" in low esteem. Such work implied a vulgar commercialism.\textsuperscript{20}

Recognition of any union between science and art was a radical departure from the historical patronage the government granted to each. The government provided support for each field individually, but when such fields as engineering and architecture began to overlap in their endeavors, the government had to reevaluate its the response. In the years following the 1851 \textit{coup d'état}, Napoleon III rewarded the Academy for rallying to the Empire by leaving its relative power and influence intact, but following the Universal Exhibition of 1855, the mood of the government began to change.\textsuperscript{21} Viollet-le-Duc had published his \textit{Dictionnaire Raisonné} in 1854 "to provide the theoretical

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{18} Viollet-le-Duc, \textit{Entretiens}, 1:29.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 1:32.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 123.
\end{flushleft}
machinery which would cast into permanent disrepute the anachronistic teachings of those who saw no place for the study of historic buildings and the principles of construction."

In 1863 the government began to assert its authority over the Academy by the attempted reform of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and Viollet-le-Duc was firmly in the middle of the storm.

The criticism that Viollet's interest in new materials produced theories but not practical application is an oversimplification and ignores the bulk of the argument presented in these treatises. If one can grant that the "practice" of using metals, particularly steel, was the signpost of the subsequent generations of architects, then the importance of the theoretical underpinnings of its use can hardly be underrated.

The use of metals for engineering and architectural purposes was not original with Viollet-le-Duc. Obviously the use of iron in architecture could be justified on the basis of being superior to wood in structural strength, but Viollet addressed far greater issues. The recognition of a union between industry and art remained repugnant to the established teachings of the old guard within the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

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23 Hitchcock, Architecture, 190.
Beaux-Arts. Thus if a student could accept any alteration to the classical tradition in architecture, for example, the substitution of metal for masonry, the groundwork was laid for the introduction of a radical reinterpretation of architectural education and of "style" itself.

Had Viollet-le-Duc devoted his efforts to providing the "built word" rather than attempting to educate a generation to effect change, the resulting works might have been interesting models, but would not have provided sound theory for a modern movement. Change in the molding of thought processes occurs very slowly. The defenders of a status quo generally have the advantage over the proponents of change. Viollet-le-Duc, working from within the Second Empire, was in a position of influence strong enough to command an audience for his theories. He was not dependent upon the approval of the members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts for his daily bread. He saw the financial strictures that were binding the Empire and the public and creating a need for more fiscal responsibility on the part of those who carried forward the art of the period. He feared that these considerations would be the death of the "art" of architecture if another generation did not begin to utilize practical methods without losing a sense of aesthetics.

This thesis will demonstrate that the lectures on architectural theory contained in the *Entretiens sur*
l'Architecture fulfilled an agenda which surpassed the teaching of architectural practices based on models of imitation: that of continuing and expanding the liberal, democratic tradition which set the stage for the modern architectural movement. Through the vehicle of his Entretiens, Viollet-le-Duc not only presented the rational application of metals, he presented the rational application of democratic and capitalistic practices. By cautiously diverting students from the classical methodologies of the prevailing architectural practices, he inspired a new approach to the art. He molded the rational justification of the classical tradition to the scientific connection between utility and technology. He revealed the transition from the classical to the Gothic as a logical transition based on dynamic principles, principles that suited the needs of an expanding population and expanded awareness of the constructive arts. The next logical transition was to the use of materials developed in the current age, which further enhanced the architect's ability to meet the strength and space requirements of rational building. The admonition that the use of new materials was being applied by engineers instead of architects led, in logical order, to the discussion of the innovative achievements of other building trades. He encouraged cooperation between engineers and architects and freedom of competition in educational
practices. He focused attention on the need for economy of space and financial resources and he explored the need for reform in the relationship between the government and the institutions that governed architecture.

A careful examination of the *Entretiens* will demonstrate that he placed more emphasis on the need to develop and train a new breed of architects than on the teaching of any particular method or design. Again and again Viollet remarked that his designs were intended only to make a philosophical point. That philosophical point linked Viollet directly to the progressive reform of architectural education. Like many men and women of the Second Empire, possessed of scientific and literary talents, he tried to help the cause of social progress by diffusing knowledge. Emphasizing the systematic and the theoretical, he generalized about the future of modern architecture and gave the nineteenth century a point of departure from the stale academic theories that hampered vision, that designed a building and then forced a use on it, that ignored entire centuries of architecture. He believed that the development of genius equated directly to the degree of freedom granted the architect, just as imitation equated with the centralization of power.

The repression of the press during the revolutionary chaos of the early nineteenth century made common the
practice of using literary and philosophical papers to make political points indirectly. That Viollet-le-Duc did so in the _Entretiens_ is hardly unusual, but, wherein the practicality of some of the designs outlined in the work were never proven in built form, the practicality of the deeper agenda marks Viollet-le-Duc as a catalyst for change, a cornerstone of the liberal reform movement that led to twentieth century functionalism.
CHAPTER II

THE ACADEMIC TRADITION VERSUS THE LIBERAL TRADITION

Robin Middleton and David Watkin characterize eighteenth and nineteenth century architecture in France as stemming from a rationalist tradition based on clarity and mathematical certainty.¹ Viollet-le-Duc's emphasis on geometric principles falls into line with that tradition, but his alignment with the anti-establishment network within the rationalist tradition separated him from the mainstream. Viollet-le-Duc defined the mainstream viewpoint of academicians as detrimental to progress. He insisted that the traditionalists presented "architectural forms characteristic of the nations with whose arts we are acquainted, without pointing out the causes" that determined those forms or the "systems of architecture to which these forms are subordinated."² He believed the system of architecture implied rationalism and he applied that rational system in his explanation of each successive architectural period. Traditional training required that students produce compositions, in the nineteenth century sense of the word. A composition was a drawing derived from the study of monuments belonging to a particular period. For Viollet-le-Duc this

¹ Middleton and Watkin, Neoclassical and 19th Century, 9.
² Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 1:6.
was not enough for "us who have our compasses in our hands and geometry at our service." The radical departure from the official dogma of the Académie also included the "causes", both historicist and social, from which an architectural period derived its characteristic style. Rationalism, historical tradition, and the social aspirations of architecture then tied Viollet-le-Duc to this network of Romantic radicals.

This network did not exist separately in all cases from the Académie or the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but it formed a separate and powerful tradition that sought to free architectural training from the restrictions inhibiting the development of a modern movement. For the most part the leadership of the reform movement came from among the ranks of those who were students of the school itself. Viollet-le-Duc was not educated at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but the movement he advanced began within the Academy.

David Pinkney has remarked that during the 1830s the "democratic institutions that survived from the Revolution [1789] remained alien grafts on a hierarchical society," but by the 1840s a new age dawned. In this context the Académie remained closely allied to that hierarchical society and a network of architects, "grafted" systemically to that

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3 Ibid., 1:4.
4 Pinkney, Decisive Years, 4.
hierarchy, provided the stimuli of a new age in architecture. This network, traced from the first attack launched against the Académie by Jacques-Louis David and carried forward in the student movements of 1830 by Félix Duban (1796-1871), Henri Labrouste (1801-75), Louis-Joseph Duc (1802-79), and Léon Vaudoyer (1803-72), advocated change. This group of young architectural students carried the rationalist, historicist, anti-academic message of Romanticism, but each was educated in the Ecole Special d'Architecture and eventually became members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

Without the system, however, the cultural shift could not have existed. The "system" was the Académie, its teaching arm the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. These entities acted as the backbone of the French architectural tradition and thus are endemic to an understanding of the message Viollet-le-Duc imparted. Arthur Drexler argues that "the history of modern architecture is the history of the architect's attitude toward freedom and necessity." 5 The architects who participated in this liberation formed a divergent tradition. Not merely irritants to the system, they left artistic and architectural masterpieces as powerful statements of their purpose. In keeping with this spirit Viollet-le-Duc

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remarked, "The only motive that impels me is an instinctive revolt against oppression of any kind."\textsuperscript{6}

An examination of both the official academic tradition and the departure that created the shift to the modern movement gives a context to the pedagogy of Viollet-le-Duc. The reform process, initiated by J.-L. David, politically and artistically, maintained a line of continuity through J.-D. Leroy and A.-L.-T. Vaudoyer. Leroy's early Greek studies, a standard Vaudoyer's students carried forward against the classic tradition, manifested continued reform in the Romantic or Néo-Grec movement led by Labrouste, Duban, and others. Popular authors like Victor Hugo provided definition and garnered public support. Viollet's own background and the process that linked him to the reform movement clarifies the syntheses of architectural theory and pedagogical change proposed in the \textit{Entretiens sur l'Architecture}.

Politically, democratic reform meant a steady progress away from the ancien regime. The teaching of architecture followed a similar process and maintained official recognition between 1671 and 1968, first through the schools of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture and the Académie Royale d'Architecture and, after 1819, as the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The Royal Académies, established in the seventeenth century and based on the Italian models of

\textsuperscript{6} Viollet-le-Duc, \textit{Entretiens}, 2:114.
the early Renaissance, provided the means for the centralization of royal power and culture.⁷ The Académie Française, established to regulate the language, provided the model for the regulation of other arts and sciences. The Académie Royale d'Architecture, established in 1671 during the reign of Louis XIV, gave Colbert the means to combat the hegemony of the guilds and at the same time instituted a tradition of architectural assistance with royal buildings.⁸ In addition to advising the king, the academicians shared their knowledge among themselves and provided lectures on architectural theory.⁹

Nicholas-François Blondel, the first director and professor of the Académie Royale d'Architecture, established the organizational pattern of the school. Two days a week the professor, Blondel at the time, taught the correct rules of architecture, with prizes awarded from time to time as a means of encouraging the students. The course of study included geometry, arithmetic, hydraulics, the architecture of fortifications, perspective, stereotomy, and other forms of mathematics.

The student received direct training in architectural design in the workshop of a master and prepared his drawings

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⁷ Egbert, Beaux-Arts Tradition, 18.
in the workshop or "atelier", not at the Académie school. Blondel insisted training should include work on site as a mason or carpenter. Egbert suggests, however, that this was "presumably a sop to the ideals of the guilds or master craftsmen" whose influence remained sufficiently strong to pose opposition to the new official academies whose members placed themselves socially, intellectually, and artistically above the "mere craftsmen." Egbert's comment probably reflects the fact that, over the ensuing years, the Académie became increasingly elitist in its attitudes. The growing separation between the classical training offered by the Académie and the increased need for engineering skills became a point of contention with Viollet-le-Duc and other reformers who sought to bring architectural rationalism into line with the industrial arts.

The growing sense of elitism in the early years of the Académie also affected the selection of students. Admission to the Académie school depended on a nomination from the professor, who appointed six students, or from a member of the Académie, who could each appoint one student. Thus the workshops established by members of the Académie were not only the most prestigious of all the ateliers, but provided

\[10\] I refer to students of the Académie in the masculine gender during this period because the first woman was not officially admitted to the Académie until 1898.

\[11\] Egbert, Beaux-Arts Tradition, 24.

\[12\] Ibid., 24.
the means of entry to the school. Those ateliers sanctioned by the Académie became known as "ateliers intérieurs" while those conducted by non-members, regardless of reputation, were "ateliers extérieurs". Students outside these official ateliers not only lacked the patronage necessary for admission to the school, they stood little chance of winning the design competition for the Grand Prix.

In the eighteenth century, design competitions became the pre-eminent focus of architectural education. With some occasional exceptions, the annual Grand Prix award the Académie granted entitled the winner to a three year appointment at the French Academy in Rome with a government stipend. The award, granted only to French students, became the only assurance of recognition as an architect, regardless of competence. Before the Revolution the stipend the king granted often represented royal favor based on patronage or as a favor to an influential academician or minister and not necessarily based on talent.13

During the Revolution the academies, viewed as privileged and undemocratic institutions, were suppressed.14 The painter, Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825), a friend of Robespierre and a leading Jacobin, led the struggle against the academies and in 1790 united approximately three hundred

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13 Ibid., 28.
artists into the Commune des Arts which replaced the Academy of Painting and Sculpture.\textsuperscript{15} The Academy of Architecture was instructed to inspect its statutes as well.\textsuperscript{16} David, a député in the new government, the National Convention, was appointed to the Committee of Public Instruction.\textsuperscript{17} On 23 January 1793, two days after Louis XVI was guillotined, the Revolutionary Convention abolished the Academy at Rome, and in July it recognized the Commune des Arts as the official body.\textsuperscript{18}

Although J.-L. David directed most of his antagonism toward the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, he opposed the aristocratic nature and statutes of all the academies. He tried to diffuse the elitist nature of the Grand Prix competition by seeking to create a larger jury, including members outside the Academy. A direct line can be drawn from these early notions of change to the writings and the reform movement Viollet-le-Duc pressed, but this early shift toward an egalitarian value system rode the tide of subsequent political upheavals.

One of the last acts of the Convention in October 1795 was the establishment of the Institute National des Sciences et des Arts and the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture, under the direction of Julien-David Leroy (1724-1093). During the

\textsuperscript{15} Egbert, 22.
\textsuperscript{16} Chafee in Drexler \textit{Architecture of the Ecole}, 66.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 67.
\textsuperscript{18} Drexler, \textit{Architecture of the Ecole}, 22-23.
interim period between 1793 and 1795 and prior to its formal establishment of the Institute and the new Ecole, the Convention allowed J.-D. Leroy, whose writings were considered republican in nature, to reopen a school of architecture.\textsuperscript{19} Because the Convention allowed J.-D. Leroy to continue teaching and because of the patronage of J.-L. David, Leroy provided a continuity in architecture between the old and the new régimes.\textsuperscript{20}

Leroy, probably better known as an archeologist-historian of architecture, than as an architect himself, diverged from the mainstream during his own period of study in Rome by producing the first studies of Greek monuments. They not only altered his career, but they provided students with an awareness of Greek architecture.\textsuperscript{21} It is hardly surprising then to find a strong preference for the art and architecture of the Greeks in the first volume of Viollet-le-Duc's \textit{Entretiens}. The incorporation of Greek models and the expansion of the Grand Prix jury mark the expansion of democratic reform in architectural education.

Napoleon Bonaparte later reformed the Institute, reviving the classifications of study under its auspices, and even wanted to revert to the use of the word "Académie,"

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 38
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid. 70-71.
instead of "Classe," but the aristocratic connotation remained too strong.\textsuperscript{22} The revival of the term, Académie, as it defined classifications within the Institute, took place during the restoration of the Bourbons in 1816. In that year the Classe des Beaux-Arts was renamed Académie des Beaux-Arts, one of four academies comprising the Institut de France. The Académie des Beaux-Arts was divided into five sections, including the Section d'Architecture.\textsuperscript{23} Once again the members of the Académie prepared programs, appointed the professors, judged the Grand Prix, and controlled training at Rome. The members, as they had in the years before the Great Revolution, became increasingly conservative and less open to the process of change.\textsuperscript{24}

The new Académie displayed the same reactionary temperament as the Concert of Europe itself. An emphasis on the classical past and the use of masonry took precedence over modern methods and the Académie returned to an established architectural hierarchy that placed monumental buildings for king or state at the top, followed by structures for the aristocracy, the middle class, and, at the bottom, those for the lower class, commerce, and industry.\textsuperscript{25} Industrial architecture, therefore, did not appear in the

\textsuperscript{22} Egbert, \textit{Beaux-Arts Tradition}, 36.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, xxii.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 36-37.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 41-42.
programs of the Ecole.  

Viollet-le-Duc later attributed this message of hierarchy to the structural differences between Roman and Greek architecture: "The Greek subordinates his institutions to his genius: while the very genius of the Roman nation is submission to its institutions."  

And the result of this reaction? Neil Levine notes: "It can surely be said that no period in the history of French architecture was more fallow than the first three decades of the 19th century."  

Viollet somewhat sarcastically remarked that art in France maintained vitality. . . . "In fact it must be so or it would not have survived the artificial cultivation which has been imposed upon it during the last two centuries."

Into the dormant period of the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, falls an interesting juxtaposition that acts as a catalyst in the reform movement and marks the steady continuation of the cultural shift. Before the turn of the century, during the period of time when Leroy was operating the unofficial, but sanctioned, school of architecture, Antoine-Laurent-Thomas Vaudoyer

27 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 1:98.
29 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 2:382.
(1756-1846) joined him. After the Restoration, Vaudoyer, later a member of the Académie and secretary of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, sponsored as patron a successful workshop (atelier) which counted among its students a number of Grand Prix winners, including Henri Labrouste (Grand Prix 1824). Labrouste attended the Ecole, trained in Vaudoyer's atelier and gained practical experience working on the construction of the Church of St. Pierre du Gros-Caillou prior to winning the Grand Prix. His brother, Théodore, also a student at the Ecole, worked for the Department of Public Works. This experience outside the Ecole identifies another facet of the liberal shift occurring in the study of architecture, the growing emphasis on the practical aspects of construction and on engineering, a further example of freedom and necessity. Years later Viollet-le-Duc applauded the adoption of skills apart from those learned at the Ecole and issued a strong admonition:

If it is the instinct of self-preservation that has caused architects of late to resist what they regard as the encroachment of the engineer on their domain, or to set themselves against the methods adopted by the latter, this instinct has badly served them, and if it

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rules, will have no other result than gradually contracting the architect's field and limiting him to the function of decorative designer.\textsuperscript{31}

The growing emphasis on engineering expressed itself in the appearance of two new schools. The Département des Ponts-et-Chaussées (Department of Bridges and Highways), formed in 1716, established the first official corps of civil engineers and in 1775 founded a school in connection with the Department.\textsuperscript{32} Jean-Rodolphe Perronet (1708-1794), the first director of the school, was among those who submitted proposals to the National Assembly for the reform of the Académies. When the Convention dissolved the Académies, it established the Ecole Centrale des Travaux Publics (Central School of Public Works), which later adopted the name, Ecole Polytechnique.\textsuperscript{33} The significance of the Ecole Polytechnique in terms of the developing liberal tradition traced here is the influence of Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand (1760-1834) who taught there from 1795-1830. An architect by training, he eschewed stylistic considerations in favor of geometric simplicity and social application. Durand served as a link between the Ecole Polytechnique and the more progressive students at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.\textsuperscript{34} His dual interest

\textsuperscript{31} Viollet-le-Duc, \textit{Entretiens}, 2:72.
\textsuperscript{32} Egbert, \textit{Beaux-Arts Tradition}, 45.
\textsuperscript{33} Chafee in Drexler, ed. \textit{Architecture of the Beaux-Arts}, 72.
\textsuperscript{34} Egbert, \textit{Beaux-Arts Tradition}, 48.
enabled him to train a few students who strengthened the liberal tradition by "borrowing as occasion may require some of the appliances adopted by the engineer, and endeavoring to reconcile them with the art of architectural construction, continuing the consideration of the ways in which modern appliances may be allied with the ancient tradition of masonry."35 Henri Labrouste stood as an example of the "few."

Although Labrouste (Grand Prix, 1824) attended the Ecole with other Grand Prix winners, Guillaume-Abel Blouet (1795-1853, Grand Prix, 1821), Emile-Jacques Gilbert (1793-1874, Grand Prix, 1822), Felix Duban (Grand Prix, 1823), Louis-Joseph Duc (Grand Prix, 1825), and later, Léon Vaudoyer (Grand Prix, 1826), it was under Academy patronage in Rome that they became the leaders of the radical, rationalist movement that shook the Académie. Like Labrouste, each of these talented students experienced influences apart from the Ecole and dared to depart from the classical motif and the strictures of the academic program, but as previously noted, each became members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Emile-Jacques Gilbert received his early training at the Ecole Polytechnique before moving, as a student, to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.36 Gilbert used the training received from Durand to apply humanitarian and social concerns to the practice of

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35 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 2:73.
36 Egbert, Beaux-Arts Tradition, 50.
architecture. He built a prison, an asylum, a hospital, a police barracks and a morgue. Abel Blouet became a leader of the "rationalist" movement and pursued teaching at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts as his method of expression. Blouet and Gilbert expressed their radicalism through the use of applied color in restoration drawings, a concept considered as a sign of rebellion after 1830. Felix Duban later known for his use of iron and glass in the ceiling of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, worked on the construction of the Ecole from 1820 to 1823. A controversy over the use of iron, from both an architectural and an aesthetic viewpoint, raged over the next several decades.

Practical experience on construction sites and the open use of new technological materials gained favor among these young radicals. Duban, Vaudoyer and Labrouste went one step farther. The Académie required the Grand Prix winners studying in Rome to submit drawings derived from restoration studies made during their fourth and fifth years. Duban, Vaudoyer and Labrouste submitted controversial drawings which expressed their radicalism. Their submissions suggested that architecture experienced an evolution toward an increasing

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37 Middleton and Watkin, Neoclassical, 32, 219.
sense of informality. Certainly, the move from the ornate toward a simplicity of style continued into the international modern movement, but the intent expressed in the architect's response to the Beaux-Arts "program" was a political commentary. Not that political commentary in itself reflected radicalism. The programs required for the competitions always incorporated abstract ideas like monarchy, government, law, religion, and other topics. The program or plan drawn by the student was expected to contain a social or political message.

In his fourth-year submission (envoi) from the Academy in Rome, Labrouste shocked the Académie in Paris with drawings of the Greek temples at Paestum, arguing a social aspiration reflected in the designs. What created the storm? Labrouste suggested that the Greek temples at Paestum reflected two types of architecture, one decidedly Greek, the other a new form of architecture. Neil Levine suggests that "the very idea of the possibility of 'creating by oneself a new architecture' was the Romantic battle cry of the 1820s,

42 Ibid., 386.
'30s, and '40s which the Académie always vehemently condemned." Levine's explanation of Labrouste's defense of a new architectural form is interpretively applicable to the writings of Viollet-le-Duc. Levine states:

Labrouste's answer offered to the Academy in 1829 still rings loud and clear: such an attempt on the part of the later residents of Paestum (read Italy of Roman or Renaissance times or France of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries) to create another, new form of architecture, while academically reusing (read imitating) Greek forms in so-called classical ways, could only result in the loss of that "primitive purity" characteristic only of Greek architecture.

The literary device of substituting a seemingly innocuous word to avoid appearing openly inflammatory was not an uncommon practice in the nineteenth century. In fact throughout the history of the written word, authors consistently use such devices to avoid government or institutional censorship. The projection of abstract ideas through the medium of the envois did not depart from accepted practice, but the abstract ideas that Labrouste, Duban and Vaudoyer presented did just that.

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43 Ibid., 386.
44 Ibid., 387.
Labrouste's work effectively sounded the deathknell of neoclassicism. The director of the Académie in Rome defended Labrouste's submission, and the aftermath of the storm resulted in the creation of the short-lived Commission des Beaux-Arts to review the conduct of the Ecole. The appointed commission included Labrouste and Duban as members. Reminiscent of J.-L. David's attack on the Académie, the commission tried to reduce the power exerted over the Ecole and to require that independent juries judge the Grand Prix competitions. Nevertheless, once again the Académie prevailed.

In response to the Academy's requirement that the fifth year envois demonstrate the value derived from the study of Roman monuments as it applied to nineteenth-century France, Labrouste's envois, "A bridge expected to tie France and Italy," brought more antagonism against him. Interpretations of the significance of the bridge vary. Perhaps the bridge merely signified crossing a border, the only common ground between ancient Rome and modern France. It could include some mystical statement about the provinces, as a rejection of Roman models in favor of Etruscan (pre-

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45 Van Zanten, Designing Paris, 11.
46 Egbert, Beaux-Arts Tradition, 52.
47 "Pont destiné à réunir la France à l'Italie." Interesting interpretations of this envois can be found in Levine, "Romantic Idea," in Drexler, The Architecture of the Ecole, 393-403, and Van Zanten, Designing Paris, 13-17.
Roman). It perhaps indicated Labrouste's refusal to look back. Regardless of the interpretation, the issues raised by this envois demonstrate the close ideological affinity shared by Labrouste and Viollet-le-Duc.

Viollet publicly deplored the bad faith the Académie displayed toward Labrouste. In his early writings, Viollet-le-Duc differentiated between the freedom of the Greek civilization and government and the hegemonic power structure of the Romans. He acknowledged the contribution the Greeks made to Roman architecture, but he insisted that the artistry of the Greeks diminished under the control of the Romans. The Roman attempts to both enslave and imitate the Greeks debased the freedom of Greek art. Dodging the issue of appearing to eliminate the usefulness of Roman architectural models, Viollet-le-Duc perhaps interpreted Labrouste's bridge between the Roman monument and nineteenth-century France in the statement:

... we should analyze them both, and adopt from the former [Greeks] what is truthful, logical, deeply thought out, or delicately felt and expressed; from the latter, [Romans] what it has of grandeur [read centralized power] and good sense [read lack of artistic or aesthetic inspiration], and what is applicable to our modern civilization, whose tendency is to reduce
everything to formulae, -- a result of the unity of our institutions and of our manners.\textsuperscript{48}

Further evidence of both the secular and revolutionary temperament among the students in Rome appears in Felix Duban's submission of a protestant church. His composition drew the ire of the Académie since a Swiss Calvinist church was neither ancient nor Italian, nor did he accommodate the restored Bourbon government.\textsuperscript{49} Vaudoyer's submission, "bellfroi," stood as a reminder to the Académie of revolutionary vigilance.\textsuperscript{50} Romantic or Néo-Grec departures increasingly began to appear in design submissions for the competitions at the Ecole. Van Zanten notes that "it was not a great step from equating Liberalism, Protestantism, and Romanticism to making anti-academicism the last term in the series."\textsuperscript{51}

Labrouste returned to Paris in 1830 and, with Duban, became a member of the young Romantic movement among the students of the Ecole and made serious attempts to reform the teaching system.\textsuperscript{52} Labrouste opened his own atelier, although not officially recognized by the Ecole. He continued his commitment to changing the direction of French architecture.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{48} Viollet-le-Duc, \textit{Entretiens}, 1:114.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 30.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 24.
\textsuperscript{52} Levine, "The book and the building" in Middleton, ed. \textit{The Beaux-Arts}, 146.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 154-155.
His open use of iron in the Bibliothèque Ste-Geneviève (1838-1850) showed his mastery of and commitment to the use of unconventional materials. Thus the architectural revolution in the academic tradition paralleled the political Revolution of 1830 against the repressive regime of Charles X.

The Ecole endured a period of unrest and increasing insubordination by the students during the reign of Louis-Philippe, whose liberalism waned under the increasing pressures exerted by the social radicals, workers, and students. The revolution of 1848, though ultimately reactive in nature, opened the way for reform in the Ecole. Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor Napoleon III after 1852, enamored of utilitarian practices and opposed by the conservative members of the Académie, lent his support to the opponents of the Ecole. The cultural shift toward a pragmatic union of architects, builders, engineers, and social scientists gained in momentum and led to increasingly democratic philosophies, philosophies that Viollet-le-Duc would voice in the Entretiens. It is important to note, however, that the liberal tradition established here attempted reform of the system, not separation from it.

In 1856 Labrouste closed his atelier and some of his students approached Viollet-le-Duc to open his own atelier. Viollet prepared the first lectures of the Entretiens sur

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54 Egbert, Beaux-Arts Tradition, 53.
l'Architecture to coincide with the opening of his school in the autumn of 1856 and published four lectures in 1858. Although his atelier only lasted a few months, Viollet continued writing the Entretiens. He completed six more lectures which he combined with his earlier work as volume one of the Entretiens which appeared in 1863. He published a second series in 1872 in which he expanded his ideas.

The anti-academicism of Labrouste, Duban, and other members of the movement eventually was grafted systemically to the established system. The Académie eventually granted them entry to membership, Blouet in 1850, Gilbert in 1853, Duban in 1854, Labrouste finally in 1867. Viollet-le-Duc, though historically, socially, and ideologically tied to the rebels of 1830, maintained a lifelong stance opposing the Académie. Labrouste's envois constituted an attack on the established order in France unequalled until Napoleon III promulgated a massive reform of the Académie at the instigation of Viollet-le-Duc. Thirteen years Labrouste's junior, Viollet-le-Duc staunchly defended the individuality of art and architecture in his writings and in his personal development as an architect.
CHAPTER III

VIOLLET-LE-DUC, WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF CHANGE

The political, economic and educational structure of France in the nineteenth century displayed the instability that follows revolution. The elements of change that accompanied the cultural shift in social and political philosophy affected Viollet-le-Duc's development in a more than peripheral way. The path by which he reached his position within the liberal branch of the architectural world began almost at birth. The liberal leaders of the reform movements who frequented the weekly salons held in his home undoubtedly affected the formulation of his later theories. More important was his exposure to liberal ideologies that took place within the context of a household dependent upon a tradition of government employment.

Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc, the architect's great-granddaughter, compiled the most recent biographical data available on Viollet-le-Duc and his formative years. Her writings, plus biographical sketches prepared for various exhibitions commemorating the one hundred years since his death, provide the framework for the following examination of the influences on Viollet's development as an architect and
There are a few other sources. Paul Gout, Viollet's student and biographer, quotes some extracts from a personal journal that Viollet apparently kept while at school and for some time afterwards, but unfortunately that journal has disappeared. The only other authority on Viollet's early years contemporary to that period can be found in Delécluze's *Journal* that Robert Baschet published in 1948.

Viollet-le-Duc's family background replicated in miniature the complicated interplay of ideologies in post-revolutionary France. Traditionally, the family was connected with the building trade or architecture on his maternal side and with civil service on his paternal side. Jean-Baptiste Delécluze, Viollet's maternal grandfather, held the title "Entrepreneur des bâtiments du Roi, [Building Contractor to the King]," but he was never a member of the Académie and never held the title "architect" though his work included projects for the church of the abbey of Prémontré (1786). J.-B. Delécluze purchased property from the Marquis de Chabanais and built the family residence at 1 rue

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Chabanais. Eugénie Delécluze (1785-1832), his daughter, married Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc in 1810, and they occupied the second floor of the house. Sophie Delécluze, Eugénie's younger sister, lived on the third floor with her husband Antoine Théodoze Clérambourg. Etienne-Jean Delécluze, who never married, lived on the top floor, which became known as the "donjon," the keep.

Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc was born 27 January 1814, three months before the first abdication of Napoléon Bonaparte. His godfather, Sigismond Viollet-le-Duc, had followed Napoléon in battle from Spain to Poland and later was appointed Secrétaire du Palais and Intendant Provisoire de la Liste Civile. Eugène's father, Emmanuel, did not share Sigismond's military background and loyalty to Napoleon. Emmanuel, twelve years younger than his brother Sigismond, was not particularly bonapartist. He referred to Napoléon as "the great devourer of men."^5

From the time of the second restoration until the accession of Louis-Philippe, Emmanuel held the position of Vérificateur des dépenses de la Maison du Roi. He and Etienne Delécluze shared a friendship from their bachelor days and an interest in art and literature. Emmanuel, a great book-lover, amassed a sizeable library inexpensively

^5 "ce grand mangeur d'hommes" see Aillagon, Viollet-le-Duc, Vernes, *Le voyage d'Italie*, 11.
from works revolutionaries had pillaged from estates and churches. His particular passion apparently focused on sixteenth century works which possibly augmented his son's knowledge of the Renaissance. Eugène's education reinforced his awareness and appreciation of classicism and the influence Etienne Delécluze, his uncle, provided bolstered and reinforced his studies, but Delécluze also exposed him to some of the liberal and avant-garde viewpoints of the era.

Etienne Delécluze studied painting under Jacques-Louis David, whose political viewpoints permeate the later writings of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. David's attempts to alter the exclusive nature of the Académies during the Revolution launched a continuing reform movement that included his students in its liberal outlook. Besides his Journal, Delécluze wrote Louis David, son école et son temps. Delécluze abandoned painting for writing but not before executing some works of merit including a portrait of the seven year old Eugène. Other notable works include Assomption for the church of Saint-Roche and, in 1808, Mort d'Astyanax, for which he won a medal at the Salon, the official annual art exhibition. As a writer, he became the art critic for the Journal des Débats in which, on September 24, 1829, he evidenced his support of Labrouste, praising his

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painting of Paestum, and questioning "why he did not show more polychromy."\(^7\) One of the signets of the liberal campaign was the controversy over polychromy, or the use of vivid color in classical architecture. Jacques-Ignace Hittorff (1792-1867) attempted to invigorate architecture in the lackluster period after the turn of the century by proving that the architecture of ancient Greece included painted decoration which could, therefore, appropriately be used in contemporary buildings.\(^8\) Although the recognition of the use of color did not originate with Hittorff, his defense of the practice influenced Labrouste in his drawings of Paestum.\(^9\)

This liberal viewpoint on the part of Etienne Delécluze, however, probably indicated his political stance more than it was an artistic statement because, according to his biographer Robert Baschet, Delécluze remained steadfastly attached to the classical school and admired Ingres.\(^10\) As David's biographer and in his position as art critic for the *Journal des Débats*, Delécluze defended the classical school against critics like Stendhal. Though the two men were friends, they did not see eye to eye on the merits of the classical school of painting. Stendhal remarked of the Salon of 1824: "In the pictures of the classical school the trees

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\(^7\) Van Zanten, *Designing Paris*, 11.
\(^8\) Middleton, "Hittorff's polychrome campaign," in Middleton, ed. *Beaux-Arts*, 175.
\(^9\) Ibid., 186.
are stylish and elegant, but lack truth."\textsuperscript{11} The liberal ideals of the Revolution and the evolution of style in art and architecture, though not necessarily always in consonance, punctuated the debates of the period. Both Delécluze and Stendhal were Italophiles and political liberals.\textsuperscript{12} Their differences appeared limited to the arena of art criticism.

Not only did young Viollet-le-Duc learn from the association between his uncle and J.-L. David, he grew up in a household frequented by many of the influential thinkers and writers of the time. His father and uncle each held lively salons on separate days of the week, Emmanuel on Friday, Etienne on Sunday. The French salon in the nineteenth century played an important role in the development of what the French considered to be the ideal man, the combination of art and nature, mind and heart.\textsuperscript{13} The salons at 1 rue Chabanais included writers, artists, architects and philosophers. The authors, Stendhal, J.J. Ampère, Sautelet, Albert Stapfer, Sainte-Beuve and Prosper Merimée, attended. Other people who influenced Viollet-le-Duc's development included the architects Achille Leclère, Desboeuf Huvé, with both of whom Viollet later studied, and

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 5.
Ludovic Vitet, who, in conjunction with Prosper Merimée, later hired Viollet for his first restoration work. In 1825 Merimée read *Les Espanols en Danemark* at the Delécluze salon. The connection between Etienne Delécluze and Prosper Merimée was, for Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, probably the most fortuitous association in relation to his future architectural career.

Léonor Merimée, Prosper's father, had also been a student of J.-L. David and later taught at the Ecole Polytechnique and, in 1807, became secretary of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.14 Delécluze acted as one of many accomplices to Prosper Merimée's scandalous hoax in the publication of the Clara Gazul plays. The story of Clara and the six plays she purportedly wrote, meticulously footnoted, and published under an assumed name, came from the pen of Prosper Merimée. To assist in the deception, Delécluze painted a portrait of the fictional Clara.15 Mérimée, himself, coiffed and veiled, sat for the portrait.16 Stendhal helped correct the proofs, John-Jacques Ampère wrote a flattering critique for *Le Globe*, the new Romantic weekly and, in 1830, Auguste Sautelet

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published the finished work.\textsuperscript{17} This coterie of friends disbanded around 1830 and Delécluze spent more and more time in solitude at Fontenay and later at Versailles.\textsuperscript{18} Most of the frequenters of Delécluze's salon contributed material to \textit{Le Globe}, a liberal journal later owned by the Saint-Simonists.

In the midst of this stimulating and somewhat irreverent period, approximately 1825, Eugène, with his younger brother, left Paris to attend the Institute Morin at Fontenay-aux-Roses where he demonstrated a talent for design, as well as mathematics.\textsuperscript{19} He completed his classical studies at the collège Bourbon in Paris and received his baccalauréat in 1830.\textsuperscript{20} Immediately following his graduation, Viollet spent a short time with his father and the architect Huvé at Compiègne, but the political events in Paris lured him back on 29 July.

Arriving in the early morning hours, he found the crowd erecting a rather poor barricade at the corner of the rue Chabanais and the rue Petits-Champs. The young Viollet lent his assistance. Those days marked the end of the reign of Charles X. His parents' reaction to his involvement in the

\textsuperscript{17} Lyon, Mérimée, 13.
\textsuperscript{18} Eugène Viollet-le-Duc 1814-1879, 20.
\textsuperscript{19} The exact date is somewhat unclear. Genevieve Viollet-le-Duc places Eugène's age at eleven or twelve.
\textsuperscript{20} The collège Bourbon had been the lycée Condorcet and under the first and second Empires, lycée Bonaparte.
July Revolution reflected both their support of their son and their attitude of moderation, that accommodation should accompany change. His mother wrote to him, not criticizing his zeal in taking "an active part in the defense of our rights," but suggesting that since the combat ended he should return to a more neutral position. His father expressed his dislike for the excesses of democracy.

On 7 August, Louis-Philippe, duc de Chartres, became king and a sense of normality returned to the Viollet-le-Duc household. Eugène worked for a time with Huvé, who lived at 2 rue Chabanais, and in the atelier of Achille Leclère, a former student of Durand. He also apparently had some instruction from M. Courcial, a teacher at the Ecole Polytechnique. This period of instruction, however, was brief. Although the instruction was undoubtedly important to his development, evidence for his personal development suggests he owed less to organized training than to self taught determination. He received a few lessons at Morin, some training in perspective from his uncle, and he possessed a prodigious visual memory. For Viollet, drawing was a second language. His parents and family members encouraged

21 "Non pas que je blâme la chaleur de ta petite lettre, au contraire, j'aime dans un jeune ce feu, cette ardeur; j'ai su avec plaisir que tu avais pris une part active dans la défense de nos droits, mais à présent l'heure du combat est passée, rentre un peu dans la neutralité." Letter as cited in Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc, Le voyage d'Italie, 12, 22 Ibid, 13.
him to enter the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but he refused in favor of traveling and studying the monuments of antiquity on site rather than through the lectures of the Ecole. At the age of seventeen he already opposed the pedagogical process the Ecole employed.

His early association, through Delécluze, with the philosophies of J.-L. David provided some influence, but by 1831, having spent time in the workshops of architects like Huvé or Leclere, Viollet was also aware of the progressive ideologies of Labrouste and Duban and the dissatisfaction they expressed with the status quo. His position within the cultural shift and his sympathy toward the republican cause worked together to influence the route he took to achieve his architectural goals. His penchant toward self-taught models and the importance of on-site education grew in intensity through the next few years and he incorporated such a disciplinary shift into his pedagogical principles.

After these events that signaled a change in governments, Eugène's father, Emmanuel, returned to his duties at the Tuilleries. When Louis-Philippe arrived he named Emmanuel to the post of Conservateur des Résidences Royales. The following year, in June 1831, the Viollet-le-Duc family moved from the Delécluze house to the Palais des Tuilleries. Shortly afterwards, on 21 July, Viollet left the atelier and traveled with his uncle, Delécluze, "to see,
study, draw, and compare the most beautiful monuments of all periods."23 They toured Provence during July and August. Though already associated with the liberal branch of architecture through his uncle, Viollet developed his perceptual and artistic skills during his travels and began to consolidate his theories of architecture. He strengthened his conviction that formal study within the narrow confines of the official school stunted the growth of an architect's art, a conviction that carried the liberal message into the Second Empire.

In 1832 Viollet-le-Duc's mother died in the cholera epidemic that swept Paris. Grieving for his mother, he threw himself into his work and study. He toured Normandy, alone this time, between 20 September and 25 October. He stopped at Cherbourg and produced some romantic watercolors. His uncle wrote to him on 10 October, relating delight at receiving some of his portfolio, and remarking that Hittorff expressed an interest in Viollet's work.24 Hittorff gave Delécluze some samples of his work on Greek antiquities from the region of Athens which he thought might be useful to Viollet.25 Delécluze again seemed intent to keep his nephew constantly abreast of any new developments in architectural

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23 "... pour voir, étudier, dessiner, comparer, les plus beaux monuments de toutes les époques," G. Viollet-le-Duc, Le voyage, 13.
24 Ibid., 13.
25 Ibid., 13.
theory and its application in an evolving style. Viollet did later use the Hittorff's archaeological justification for polychromy in the murals he designed for Notre-Dame.26

When he returned to Paris, Viollet-le-Duc, who needed to raise money for his continued studies, sold some of his watercolors and taught lessons in design. He also worked for Ceceri who designed sets for the Opera and for public festivals, an experience that proved useful for him in the Second Empire. With enough money raised, Viollet set out again. Between 4 May and 15 September 1833 he traveled in the Loire, along the coast, and in the Pyrenees. His love of the mountains resulted in 165 watercolors.

The year 1834 brought a series of important events in Viollet-le-Duc's life. In that year, he married Elisabeth Tempier, and they moved into the Tuilleries with his father. In the Salon of 1834, he displayed some of the watercolors he produced on his last trip and won several medals, one for a view of the Pyrenees. He received a temporary appointment as professor of composition and decorative drawing at the Ecole de Dessin which later became the Ecole des Arts Décoratifs. His temporary position did not become permanent until 1850.

The first public recognition of his talent occurred at the Tuilleries. Viollet's father, Emmanuel, now in charge of the royal residences, met almost daily with Louis-Philippe.

The King expressed interest in the young artist whom he saw in the Palace and noticed some of the watercolors that Viollet painted. He commissioned three watercolors of interior views of the Palace, one of which was "L'Escalier des Tuileries vu du premier étage." The King also ordered bronzes cast from these drawings, but they were lost, probably in the fire which destroyed the château at Neuilly in 1848.27

In 1835 Viollet-le-Duc made his fifth tour of France, this one with Léon Gaucherel, one of his students, who specialized in engravings. Gaucherel later produced some of the plates for Viollet's Dictionnaire. Viollet recognized, however, that despite his passion for France, his education lacked an important obligation of all artists of his time: study in Italy. Finances posed the only problem.

At a grand ball held at the Palace of the Tuilleries, Viollet executed a watercolor of the women seated at an immense banquet table. The King offered 5000 francs for the finished work, "Le Banquet des dames aux Tuileries." With this money Viollet traveled to Italy and Sicily for eighteen months. Although this journey may not mark the beginning of Viollet-le-Duc's career, it constituted one of the major determinants in the development of his reputation and the

27 Viollet-le-Duc, ed. Farrant, 34.
basis of his theoretical notions. In a letter to his uncle, Etienne Délecluze, Viollet-le-Duc wrote from Venice:

Greek art makes itself felt here, far into the middle ages; at each step one finds traces of it and never of the roccoco which distorts most of Rome, the principle was purer . . . . One can consider this city as outside of Italy but no less beautiful and curious. Here one sees clearly how the Gothic is grafted on the ancient arts, the explanation of it is given by a crowd of examples; it is a complete course, for there is not one gap [break in succession] from the Greek to the Renaissance . . . . I arrived in Italy with a full memory of the Palladio which we studied in the ateliers . . . but the architecture of Palladio, Sansovino, Vignole . . . is to my mind, a blend of the ancient and the roccoco, cold and without character.

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29 "L'art grec se fait sentir ici, bien avant dans le moyen âge; à chaque pas on en trouve des traces, et jamais le rococo n'a pu se contourner autant qu'à Rome; le principe était pur . . . . on peut considérer cette ville comme en dehors de l'Italie, mais elle n'en est pas moins belle et curieuse. Ici on voit clairement comment le gothique s'est greffé sur les arts antiques, l'explication en est donnée par une foule d'examples; c'est un cours complet, car il n'y a pas une lacune depuis le grec presque pur jusqu'à la Renaissance . . . . Je suis arrivé en Italie avec la mémoire remplie de Palladio, dont on nous nourrit dans les ateliers . . . mais je trouve Palladio, Sansovino, Vignole . . . est à mon avis, un mélange d'antique et de roccoco, tout cela froid et sans caractère." *Lettres d'Italie de Viollet-le-Duc*, ed. Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc (Paris: Léonce Laget, 1971), cited in *Le voyage d'Italie*, 20.
The continuity that Viollet-le-Duc identified during his sojourn in Italy constantly reappears in the *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*. In Italy, Viollet reached his conclusion that the Gothic style grafts organically to the Greek and brings forward a synthesis, a notion repellent to the Académie. Viollet's first love, developed in his late teens, revolved around what he considered to be a uniquely French style, the Gothic. He deplored imitation of Roman style, a style developed in a land of glaring sun and Mediterranean climate and imported to an altogether different climate and geographical zone. He did, however, return from his journey with a deep respect for the variety of classical architecture.

When he returned to Paris, Viollet-le-Duc resumed his teaching at the Ecole de Dessin. His father introduced him to Isidore Justin Séverin, Baron Taylor who published *Voyages pittoresques dans L'ancienne France*. Between 1838 and 1845, Viollet collaborated with Baron Taylor and provided sixty watercolors for the publication in 1838 and another 221 over the next seven years. He also worked under Achelle Leclère at the Conseil des Bâtiments on two projects. Clearly, however, the most important project of his fledgling career was the opportunity Prosper Mérimée extended to him on 13
February 1840, the restoration of the abbey church at Vézelay.\textsuperscript{30}

Mérimée held the post of Inspecteur Général des Monuments Historiques, a government position previously occupied by Ludovic Vitet.\textsuperscript{31} When Vitet left the office to take another government post, Prime Minister Adolph Thiers appointed Mérimée, who was neither an architect nor an archaeologist. In his new role, Mérimée relied heavily on Vitet and Baron Taylor for advice, but like Stendhal, Thiers showed a preference for Romanticism in the Salon of 1824.\textsuperscript{32}

In 1840, instability in French foreign affairs took Louis Philippe's government to the brink of war. The king refused to propose the possibility of war to the Parliament and consequently Thiers resigned. The king called on Marshal Nicolas Soult and François Guizot to form a new ministry.\textsuperscript{33} Guizot maintained an interest in the national past. As a Protestant, educated in Geneva, he was influenced by Protestant historians, like Jules Michelet, and through the Commission des Monuments Historiques he assured funds for restorations.\textsuperscript{34}

The relationship between government and architecture was not necessarily a reflection an artistic schism. Government

\textsuperscript{30} Viollet-le-Duc, 39.
\textsuperscript{31} Baschet, Mérimée, 85.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 86.
\textsuperscript{33} Pinkney, Decisive Years, 132.
\textsuperscript{34} Middleton and Watkin, Neoclassical and 19th Century, 33.
support of Gothic restorations did not indicate an antipathy toward the Académie and its support of classical history. The appointment of a young architect to a government project depended more on personal influence than where he was trained. Individual government officials supported young Romantics like Vitet and Mérimée.

Thus the connections made through the social network of his family served Viollet well. Prosper Mérimée, acting in his position as Inspecteur Général des Monuments Historique, charged Viollet with the restoration of Ste.-Madeleine at Vézelay which led to a succession of such commissions. Mérimée later recalled his hesitation in assigning this project to the young architect. In a letter to Sainte-Beuve, from Cannes, Mérimée wrote:

This grand and beautiful church was in such a terrible state that more than once the question of demolition arose . . . . I was then Inspector of Historic Monuments and I recall that I consulted M. Delécluze and asked him if we ran too great a risk by conferring on his nephew such a difficult and dangerous a restoration. Delécluze told me "if Eugène told you he could take charge of it, without doubt, he will succeed."

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36 Ibid., 116.
37 "Cette grande et belle église était en si mauvais état qu'il avait été plus d'une fois question de la démolir. . . . J'étais alors inspecteur des monuments historiques et je me
Viollet did indeed succeed in the restoration at Vézelay and after the work was well underway, Viollet accompanied Mérimée on his tour of inspection through France. Between 1842 and 1845, the commission awarded him twelve more restorations of medieval monuments. The fact that Viollet did not graduate from the Ecole or become an Académie-supported student at Rome, limited the projects he could be assigned within the government agencies. Architects trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the French Academy in Rome at government expense were afterwards employed in the construction of government buildings. An architect assigned to a new project by the Conseil de Bâtiments Civil was limited to a single project at one time. Viollet was not a member of this class of architects and consequently his employment in government projects was primarily administrative or in the construction of restorations. On the other hand, because he was not in the main category, the government did not limit him to single projects. This also undoubtedly explains why his original designs were carried out in the private sector. The large number of projects

rappelle que j'allais consulter M. Delécluze et lui demander si nous ne faisions pas courir un trop grand risque à son neveu en lui confiant une restauration si difficile et si dangereuse. Delécluze me dit: "Si Eugène a dit qu'il s'en chargeait, ne craignez rien, il réussira." as cited in Pierre Trahard, Prosper Mérimée, de 1834-1853 (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1928), 326-328.

38 Van Zanten, Designing Paris, 115.
39 Ibid., 117.
assigned to him reflected his connection with Mérimée and the personal influence Mérimée possessed as well as the technical skill Viollet himself demonstrated. Mérimée's influence would eventually lead to even more important projects for Viollet in the Second Empire.

Viollet's relationship with Mérimée continued throughout his life, both professionally and later as close friends. A second important opportunity in 1840, however, brought Viollet into closer contact with the liberal architectural movement and particularly with Labrouste and Duban. Viollet received an appointment as Inspecteur Secondaire to the restoration of the Sainte Chapelle in Paris.

Felix Duban and Henri Labrouste were also involved in the work of the Commission des Monuments Historiques. Duban directed the work at Sainte Chapelle and Jean Baptiste Antoine Lassus, a student of Henri Labrouste, was Inspecteur Premier. During this project Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc began experimenting with the idea of alternative training for architectural students, that of teaching the essential skills of construction to students working directly on the building site. Not only would students receive a more practical education but they would become acquainted with the modern materials necessary for the evolution of a modern
architecture.⁴⁰ This idea in itself presented a challenge to the classical program of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

In the _Entretiens_, Viollet delivered an indictment against the Ecole on this basis. He noted that students spent years "preparing designs of impossible and indescribable buildings . . . . They have few practical ideas, many prejudices, no knowledge of the building materials which our country affords or of the modes of using them, . . . . no idea of the conduct and administration of building works, no method . . . to erect substantial and commodious buildings which shall be adapted to their respective purposes."⁴¹

Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus continued the idea of on-site education in the next joint project awarded them. They entered a limited competition for the restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris. The Conseil des Batiments, a government-appointed board of architects, named Duban, Mérimée, and Rohault de Fleury to judge the competition. Their choice of Viollet-le-Duc and J.-B.-A. Lassus demonstrated personal as well as professional ties. The plans Viollet and Lassus submitted, however, indicated another facet of the romantic movement, documentation of historical research. The report

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⁴⁰ B. Bergdoll, "'The synthesis of all I have seen': the architecture of Edmond Duthoit (1837-89)," in Middleton, _Beaux-Arts_, 217.
⁴¹ Viollet-le-Duc, _Entretiens_, vol I, 386.
attached to the plans submitted to the committee included a statement describing the method Viollet and Lassus employed to arrive at the proposed restoration plans.

"To reach this result, it was necessary to decipher the texts, to consult all the existing documents concerning the construction of this building, as much descriptive as practical, to study especially the archaeological features of the monument, and finally to garner the treasured traditions."\textsuperscript{42}

Viollet and Lassus received the appointment for the restoration of Notre Dame on 30 April 1844. The work continued until 1864. Viollet undertook other restoration works during that period of time, but in the twenty year period that followed this important appointment, he solidified his architectural ideas. Notre Dame exemplified more than an architectural commission. It embodied many of the conflicts and issues of the Romantic movement. Viollet and Lassus incorporated both documentation and tradition in their report, but they used the construction site to experiment with new construction materials and new training practices.

The central position of Notre Dame in the Romantic movement overlapped the years Duban and Labrouste completed

their studies in Rome and returned to Paris. Between 1824 and 1832 Victor Hugo published influential works on the preservation and restoration of medieval architecture. Neil Levine examined at length both the writings of Hugo, particularly *Notre Dame de Paris*, and the continued body of interpretation, from Zola to Frank Lloyd Wright, that followed Hugo's works. What Levine established in terms of Hugo's influence on Henri Labrouste connected this influence to Viollet-le-Duc.

When Labrouste returned from Rome in January of 1830, Hugo's controversial play *Hernani* was ready for production. The play brought to the stage the contest between the Romantic and the Classical and, in the context of the political events of the moment, the contest between freedom and autocracy. Contentious performers, threats of censorship, and mutinous paid applauders, plagued Hugo and he drafted the students of the ateliers to provide the counter-demonstrations. These included the students of Duban and

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Two years later, Hugo asked Labrouste to proofread and criticize the chapter "This will kill that" which he added to the eighth edition of *Notre Dame de Paris*. This chapter held the contention that the printing press would kill architecture as the mode of cultural expression, a notion that continued to be a subject of interpretive analyses. According to Hugo: "down to the fifteenth century, architecture was the chief recorder of the human race . . . . The human race has never conceived an important thought that it has not written down in stone . . . . Architecture is dethroned, the stone letters of Orpheus must give way to Gutenberg's letters of lead."  

Lassus, one of the students who petitioned Labrouste to open an atelier in 1830, and therefore one of those who supported Hugo, became linked to Notre Dame in 1844. The contest of forces continued to be played out. The site itself became the workshop of a new generation of architects. In 1844, Viollet-le-Duc was thirty years old. Through Lassus, he gained a more thorough understanding of the rationalist doctrine that Labrouste transmitted to his students. At this time Viollet-le-Duc began to publish his

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theories on architectural construction. He wrote a series of articles on the construction of religious buildings in France from the beginning of Christianity to the sixteenth century, "De la construction des édifices religieux en France depuis le commencement du christianisme jusqu'au XVI siècle," published in the *Annales archéologiques*, which became the principal source of the Gothic revival in France.⁵⁰ He later developed these further in his *Dictionnaire Raisonné* and, by 1847, he was supervising work on twenty-two sites.

By 1847, however, another tempest was brewing in Paris. The Bourgeois Monarchy of Louis-Philippe faced an economic depression. Revolutionary socialism emerged, and writers like Victor Hugo illuminated the problems of poverty, exploitation, and oppression. Louis Blanc's radical tract *Organisation du travail*, went into its fifth edition.⁵¹ With the rapid improvements in industry and transportation, the population consolidated in the cities, and the distribution of wealth became exaggerated in the hands of industrialists. As Priscilla Robertson points out, "France did not become the second industrial power in Europe without at the same time accumulating the second most miserable class of factory workers."⁵² The extension of public education posed a more

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⁵⁰ Pinkney, *Decisive Years*, 108.
⁵¹ Ibid., 94-99.
subtle change, but one equally destructive to the old regime.\textsuperscript{53} Again, as in 1789, the secularization and democratization of education became an issue.\textsuperscript{54} Apropos to the philosophy of the liberal movement in architecture, Ludovic Vitet, the founder of the Commission des Monuments Historiques remarked as early as 1825, "Romanticism is Protestantism in the arts."\textsuperscript{55}

The great workshop experiment of the Second Republic, accomplished by banquet and barricade, was short lived. Mérimée gravitated to the regime that would safeguard his interests.\textsuperscript{56} In 1848 Viollet-le-Duc was thirty-four years old. His travels and his association with the leaders of the Romantic movement in architecture and literary circles consolidated the development of his theories about Gothic architecture and the rationalist school. He was now committed to republican notions about the democratization of education and the need for practical on-site experience based on his own self-taught model. He continued to attack the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but he maintained his affiliation with the architects who remained in the mainstream of the Beaux-Arts system. Nevertheless, he continued to remain within the

\textsuperscript{53} Pinkney, \textit{Decisive Years}, 150.
\textsuperscript{55} as cited in Van Zanten, \textit{Designing Paris}, 24, 258f. 60.
\textsuperscript{56} Trahard, \textit{Prosper Mérimée}, 278.
circle of influence Mérimée provided and worked to accomplish his goals under the protection of the Second Empire of Louis Napoleon.

The Second Empire embodied many of the principles of modernity that Viollet-le-Duc sought to propagate. These included the application of new materials developed by the emerging industries such as iron and the cultivation of loyalty in the affluent middle class. The impact of industry on changing the methods of construction signified to him the emergence of a new age. The rising middle class demanded more practical and cost efficient construction.

Viollet, also, moved consistently away from the concept of Gothic Revival and toward the development of a modern style. At the same time he was aware of the growing importance of engineering. Government architects pressed for more cooperation with their counterparts in engineering, particularly in railroad projects, and Viollet advocated this coalition. The body of written work he produced incorporated these philosophies and acted as a guide to the student of a new age in architecture.
CHAPTER IV

VIOLLET-LE-DUC AND THE SECOND EMPIRE

The synthesis of architectural theory that Viollet-le-Duc conveyed in his *Entretiens* influenced change in architectural theory and training during his lifetime. It also continued to bolster the reform process that culminated in the student revolt of 1968, a century after publication, which effectively ended the dominance of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Viollet-le-Duc was a product of, and at the same time a catalyst in, the changing relationship between arts and industry and between the government and the Ecole des Beaux Arts during the Second Empire. He abandoned his support of the Gothic Revival and insisted architecture should reflect the social aspirations of the people living in the nineteenth century, not those of the thirteenth century. The growth of a wealthy middle class meant a demand for domestic and industrial building controlled, not by king or state, but by cost-conscious individuals and businesses.

Viollet-le-Duc supported the increased interest in industrial materials and the modern methods accompanying industrial growth. These notions did not separate him philosophically from Napoleon III whose own writings sought a reconstituting of French society, ideas which cost him the support of the conservative Académie des Beaux-Arts. In 1844
Louis-Napoleon wrote *Extinction du Paupérisme* and in it he expounded the economic objectives of socialism rather than of privilege, objectives reminiscent of the writings of Claude Henri de Saint-Simon. Saint-Simon published works on social questions early in the century and his proposals for reform were carried forward by followers such as Charles Fourier.¹ Social change and industrial progress in relation to architecture and engineering became dominant themes in the writings of Viollet-le-Duc.

Donald Egbert has suggested that, since the seventeenth century, four points of view on architecture emerged. He defines these points of view as those of the academic architect, the craftsman-builder, the civil engineer, and, more recently, the social scientist.² By the mid-nineteenth century Viollet-le-Duc began to establish a pedagogical composite of these points of view, which eventually took form in the *Entretiens*. The economic and political climate under which Viollet-le-Duc worked during the Second Empire and the evolution of the Beaux-Arts tradition combined to make his composite democratic and pragmatic.

Viollet exerted a strong influence in the Second Empire. He came to that position once again through his relationship with Prosper Mérimée. Viollet missed some opportunities by

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¹ Pinkney, *Decisive Years*, 92-93.
shunning the established educational system, but his continued antagonism toward the Ecole des Beaux-Arts found a forum for expression in yet another circle of relationships centered around Prosper Mérimée.

Although Prosper Mérimée's family encouraged him to secure a future in government employment, he wanted to avoid any connection with the regime of Charles X. While on tour in Madrid in 1830, Mérimée received word that the regime had fallen. During this trip through Spain, Mérimée developed his interest in archeology which later helped him carve out his career in government service. He also forged a friendship with Don Cipriano, Count de Teba, who later became the Count de Montijo. Cipriano's wife, Maria Manuela Kirkpatrick, was the daughter of William Kirkpatrick, a Scot who emigrated to Malaga and later was named United States Consul to Malaga by George Washington.

Mérimée spent time with the de Teba family which included two young daughters, six-year-old Francesca, who became the Duchess of Alba, and four-year-old Eugénie, the future Empress of France. Mérimée maintained a lifelong friendship with Maria Manuela and her daughters, particularly

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3 Lyon, *Life and Times*, 85.
5 Lyon, *Life and Times*, 76.
Eugénie. Cipriano, a revolutionary and Bonapartist soldier, encouraged Eugénie's sympathy for the Bonapartist legend. Eugénie also read the works of the French socialist philosopher, Fourier, but abandoned her fascination with socialism while in her twenties. In July 1834 Cipriano succeeded his brother as Count de Montijo. He fulfilled his parliamentary duties in Madrid, although he and his family spent much of their time in Paris until his death in 1839.

In November 1852, after the Senate passed the act creating an Empire, but before the referendum, the Prince-President Louis-Napoleon held a hunting party at Fontainebleau. Maria Manuela and Eugénie numbered among those included on the guest list. On 23 January the Emperor informed the Chambers of his intention to marry Eugénie, and on 29 January, in a civil ceremony, they were married. The public ceremony occurred the following day at Notre Dame.

Viollet-le-Duc in collaboration with Lassus, decorated Notre Dame for the imperial marriage which they accomplished in "velvet and ermine, gold and silver, flags and hangings of all colors." In 1856, he again decorated Notre Dame for the baptism of the imperial prince.

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9 Ibid., 164.
10 Ibid., 144-151.
11 Ibid., 332-335.
Viollet-le-Duc and Prosper Mérimée continued their friendship and working relationship into the Second Empire. The personal influence Mérimée maintained with the new Empress added a dimension to his professional well-being. On 23 June 1853 Mérimée was appointed to the Senate, a position that guaranteed a steady income. On a social level Mérimée enjoyed a close friendship with the Empress. He occasionally wrote comedies performed for the imperial household and guests and Viollet-le-Duc designed the costumes and sets.

Mérimée also cultivated a friendship with Louis-Napoleon's cousin, Princess Mathilde. When Louis-Napoleon became president of the Second Republic, he chose Mathilde to act as hostess at the Elysée. After Louis-Napoleon's marriage to Eugénie, Mathilde remained a member of the household, despite some hostility toward the Empress. Mathilde was a cousin of Tsar Nicholas I and the estranged wife of Russian Prince Demidov. Since she was considered a Russian princess, Mathilde had been allowed to live in Paris during the exile of the Bonapartes, and she had used her influence on their behalf. Viollet-le-Duc also cultivated a friendship with Mathilde and, through her, he maintained contact with her paramour, Count Nieuwerkerke, whom Louis-

13 Baschet, Mérimée, 179-180.
14 Viollet-le-Duc, 37.
15 Ridley, Napoleon III, 236.
16 Ibid., 154.
Napoleon appointed Director of the Beaux-Arts. Edmond and Jules de Goncourt provided evidence of the informality of the friendship between Viollet and Princess Mathilde in the journals they kept.\textsuperscript{17} Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc also commented on the intimate nature of Viollet's relationship with Mathilde and noted that Viollet received seventy-eight apparently confidential letters from the Princess which his son returned to Mathilde after Viollet's death.\textsuperscript{18} Social issues and the arts were frequent topics of conversation and Nieuwerkerke became an ardent supporter of academic reform in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Nieuwerkerke later became a powerful ally in Viollet's attempt to modify the power structure of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

By 1853, Viollet-le-Duc was comfortably entrenched in the new government on a social and policy-making level. In that year he was appointed one of the three inspecteurs généraux des Edifices Diocésains. The Commission des Bâtiments Civils, which created the Commission des Monuments Historiques in 1837, took control of the Edifices Diocésains eleven years later.\textsuperscript{19} Originally the prefects appointed the architectes diocésains who were then responsible only to the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} References to Viollet's social contact with Princess Mathilde can be found in \textit{Pages from The Goncourt Journal}, ed., trans. Robert Baldick, 129, and \textit{The Goncourt Journals 1851-1870} ed., trans. Lewis Galantiere, 265.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Viollet-le-Duc, 38.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Van Zanten, \textit{Designing Paris}, 123-124.
\end{itemize}
prefects and the Bishop. The rationale for the centralization of the commission under government supervision included concerns over the quality of the work that emanated from architects who maintained their positions at the whim of the prefects.  

The specific standards applied to government architects on the commission were threefold: fiscal accuracy, functional satisfaction, and aesthetic propriety. The seriousness of these standards carried over into Viollet-le-Duc's writings. He emphasized the need for fiscal accountability in the Entretiens and included sample budgets for the edification of his students.

The bureaucratic process of government employment, the acceleration of the Industrial Revolution of the early nineteenth century, and the concurrent maturation of Romanticism into a growing social conscience clearly influenced Viollet-le-Duc. He drew on the Romantic notion of individualism in his efforts to free architectural education from the strict academic notion of classical imitation, but he also sought to divert his students from an agrarian, Romantic frame of reference into the reality of rapid industrialization. Viollet stated: "Our public buildings appear to be bodies destitute of a soul, the relics of a lost civilization... which have no other claim to distinction

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20 Ibid., 124.
21 Ibid., 130.
than their cost..."22 Prior to that time, architecture was identified with description rather than construction.23 Architectural training emphasized duplication of the buildings of antiquity, rather than the submission of designs applicable to a particular purpose. Viollet consistently questioned an educational process which trained architects whose "aim is rather to erect buildings that will do honor to themselves rather than to fulfil all the conditions imposed by the needs and habits of the day; . . . imitating the forms of bygone times, rather than trying to discover an architecture appropriate to the age in which we live."24

The academic hegemony of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and its requirement of classical imitation produced architects trained to design monumental edifices for king or state.25 Viollet-le-Duc abhorred both the method and the message. He pointed out that the Roman system of building used slave labor, whereas the Gothic reflected the building system of free, thinking men.26

A liberal revolution in architecture paralleled the liberal political movements.27 By the time Louis-Napoleon consolidated his power in France, the constant threat of

22 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 1:446.
24 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 1:320.
27 Ibid., 4:51.
revolution brought workers and bourgeois together against anything reminiscent of the old order. The French theorists who supported the national workshops and the dreams of the first socialist age failed to seize power, and the Continent emerged from the havoc of 1848 with one clear victor: capitalism.28

The aristocracy, not sympathetic to Napoleon III, aligned itself with the church and sought protection against the danger to property ownership that the socialism of 1848 threatened. France still remained bound by a social order that defied allowing the upper classes to indulge in the vulgar business of capitalism. The bourgeois joined the clerical camp less from a revival of faith than from fear of revolution.29 Parisian radicals did not separate economic issues from political and religious motivations and directed their animosity toward the church rather than toward property owners, since the church supported the status quo and openly opposed socialism. The labor force did not form the framework of a Marxian model of the proletariat, however, because the artisans thought in terms of individual opportunity. They sought to rise in the social order through

the demonstration of skill, and their demands included free, universal, and secular education.  

Technological skills transmitted through apprenticeships were no longer adequate to meet the needs of rapid industrialization, but the process of changing the educational system was tedious. The Ecole Polytechnique established in 1795 as a response to fears of invasion and the need to build fortifications produced a body of engineer-architects whose usefulness to the government overshadowed the architects trained for monumental works. The break between architects and engineers continued into the Second Empire. The decree establishing the Ecole Polytechnique stated the intent:

- to train students for the artillery service; military engineering; bridges & highways & civil constructions; the mines; the building of ships and vessels; topography; & at the same time for the free practicing of those professions which require a knowledge of mathematics & physics.

The tedious relationship between Church and state in the Second Empire further complicated the issue of education. The Falloux Law of 1850 returned education to the hands of

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the Church, but necessity kept that control from being hegemonic. The system of secular education Napoleon I had established and the Université administrated was too large and entrenched to be dismantled, but the new law once again allowed the clergy to teach at any level, and it divided the authority for choosing teachers and students between secular and clerical officials.

The issue of education therefore became tied to the issues of liberal reform. Technological and scientific knowledge became a dominant theme. To the worker, economic well-being of the moment was more important than salvation at some indefinite time in the future, and the church posed a threat to universal education. The alliance of the bourgeois and the Church was one reason for this attitude. Since the Falloux Law again permitted the clergy to teach in primary schools, employer-dominated councils hired them less for religious reasons than for the church's opposition to socialism.\(^3\) As in all industrializing nations at that time, greed prohibited education as well. Parents and employers eager for the employment of children slowed the process of widespread public education. Educational reforms that Viollet-le-Duc and others sought were thus connected not only to the revolt against the methodology of traditional educational and its exclusive tendencies, but also connected

\(^3\) Williams, *Napoleon III*, 191.
to the need to restructure the economic base of the nation. Viollet's anti-clericalism, reinforced since childhood, reflected the growing social and cultural shift.

Napoleon III consolidated his power in 1852 by bringing a large number of elements together. He controlled the allegiance of the army and used it to effectively silence the legislature and reestablish order in Paris. The political maneuverings solidifying the Second Empire gave him an overwhelming majority of 7,481,000 to 647,000 in the plebiscite of 1851. A consensus appeared.

Into this new order, Napoleon III brought with him a group of one-time Saint-Simonian economists who glorified industrial production and classified artists and writers among the useful, productive members of society. They believed that a coalition of industrialists, engineers, bankers and artists could create a better world. Their goal, the establishment of an industrial utopia which would raise the standard and quality of life, centered on the growth of the railroads with capital raised primarily from Saint-Simonian investors. Thus a group of intellectuals took a place within the coalition of industrialists, shopkeepers, and peasants who hoped the fall of the Republic

34 J. P. T. Bury, France 1814-1940 (New York: Barnes, 1962), 89.
36 Ibid., 38-39.
might provide a means of recovering from the economic problems that preceded 1848. But recovery would be a slow process. Centered in Paris, it radiated to the countryside. Even by 1866, the rural population still comprised seventy-eight percent of the total population of France, and Napoleon III's reforms affected the cities more than the countryside.

The iron industry bridged this rural-urban gap. Most of the iron forges were located in rural areas where wood for firing the furnaces could be easily acquired. Furthermore, Saint-Simonian concepts embraced the utilitarian importance of iron, and this linked industry, the Second Empire, and architecture. Saint-Simonian philosophy held that iron, as an industrial product, was a product of the future, out of which a new society would be built. Iron was linked to another one of the keystones of industrial power, the railroads.

The financial embarrassment of the Second Republic had sharply interrupted the railway building boom of the 1840s. Louis-Napoleon's government set about immediately to reemploy those persons whom the cessation of work on the rail system had left jobless. The government agreed to assume the obligation of acquiring land, grading and building roadbeds,

37 Pinkney, Decisive Years, 11.
38 Steiner, Iron Architecture, 39.
and constructing and building bridges and stations. With government insured credit and the additional bonus of British investment capital, railroad companies could also rehire workers and begin building the rail lines. The method Napoleon III used to reduce unemployment set in motion the modern form of the French economic structure and solidified a new social structure.

Investment banks established under Napoleon III channelled funds to industry by mobilizing savings that might otherwise have been hoarded. Institutions like the Crédit Mobilier and the Crédit Foncier provided the required credit to industrial and commercial ventures based on the best Saint-Simonian principles of establishing one great industrial community. The government backed the shares that companies lacking capital sold to the public. The Crédit Mobilier was formed with the intention of consolidating capital for the promotion of public utility undertakings, not as a commercial banking enterprise. The government guaranteed the railway-bond interest, which enabled entrepreneurs to invest larger sums than otherwise seemed prudent. In conjunction with easing credit, the state

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40 Steiner, Iron Architecture, 39.
41 Morazé, Triumph, 329-332.
lowered taxation by reducing budgetary charges and thus concentrated the available financial resources, public and private, into the hands of private enterprise.\textsuperscript{43} Foreign trade was stimulated by an increase in commercial treaties, particularly one with Great Britain, which further increased the demand on railway building, improved shipping capabilities, and attracted British investments.

Industry and engineering focused on the expansion of transportation required to facilitate trade. This expansion naturally included the construction and improvement of ports and facilities. The Suez Canal, built between 1856 and 1869, stands as an example of the new emphasis on constructive energy. It also was the site of a failed Saint-Simonian experiment with communal living. The canal, however, launched Marseilles as a major shipping center by connecting it to the Indian Ocean and from there to China. Growth in national power, therefore, became concentrated in industries, such as iron, that were basic to the expansion of those public projects.

The technical revolution and the government's guarantee of building bridges and stations placed an ever greater emphasis on the work of engineers. The production of ships, bridges, canals, and especially that of rails and locomotives

\textsuperscript{43} Morazé, \textit{Triumph}, 330.
brought metallurgy to a competitive frenzy. As a consequence of the focus on metal production, Viollet-le-Duc insisted that the modern architect must confront social change and reach rational and functional conclusions for new designs. The architectural use of new materials predated Viollet's work, but the evolution in the use of iron brought with it a pragmatic system of design that would enable the student to compete or cooperate with engineers trained in the techniques derived from experience with the new materials.

New processes emerged rapidly in the production of iron and steel and stimulated the expansion of ironworks in regions close to coalfields to reduce shipping and handling expense and time delays. Efficiency and rationalism led to a growing concentration of production. The chief regions in France for the smelting of iron and the manufacture of iron and steel products during the Second Empire were Lorraine, Alsace, the Department de Nord, and the Haute Marne Department. The decline in reserves and increased competition led to the establishment of a powerful federation of employers, the Comité des Forges.

In keeping with his introduction of a vast program of public works, Napoleon III gave further stimulus to economic recovery by energizing the building trade. The narrow

44 Ibid., 272.
winding streets so easily barricaded in the coup d'état were broadened into magnificent boulevards to create a capital "worthy of his dynasty."\textsuperscript{46} The Crédit Mobilier lent assistance to the expansion of private building, mansions and châteaux, and the new face of Paris. The transformation of Paris inspired other municipalities to make the same sort of improvements. The speculation in rural improvements was accomplished through the Crédit Foncier.

Originally intended for the mobilization of rural finances for the expansion of agriculture, the Crédit Foncier succeeded in its early years, a profitable investment for shareholders.\textsuperscript{47} Napoleon III, however, offered secret executive support to those who would take part in the transformation of the cities, and thus the government used the Crédit Foncier not only to finance rural building, but to engage in urban land speculation, financing urban reconstruction as well.\textsuperscript{48} Between 1852 and 1857 unprecedented expansion in transportation and industry occurred throughout France, facilitated by both the ease of credit and the manipulation of accounts.

During the early years of Napoleon's reign he abandoned his social policy in favor of encouraging bourgeois

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 146.
\textsuperscript{48} Morazé, \textit{Triumph}, 298-338.
capitalism. The economic prosperity and well-being of the new order was displayed in all its glory at the Paris Exhibition of 1855. This exhibition established a new precedent in French society. It was housed in the Palais de l'Industrie, the first national monument not erected at government expense; it was not only privately owned, but profit-making. The government donated the land and guaranteed the shareholders four percent interest on their investment and conceded to the Compagnie du Palais de l'Industrie, a private holding company, the right to charge admission. Expositions such as this one diffused knowledge and encouraged technological emulation, stressing standards of research and attainments that anticipated technological training and formal education as major industrial resources.

The shift from royal or public funding to private funding, the rise of capitalism, and the viewpoint of education as an industrial resource were part of a cultural shift that began before the Revolution of 1789. If "culture" is defined as "the means whereby individuals communicate, perpetuate and develop their principles, values and beliefs," the lectures that Viollet-le-Duc prepared and published

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49 Ibid., 336.
50 Mainardi, Art and Politics, 40.
51 Ibid., 40.
52 Landes, Prometheus, 151.
The concentration of wealth in the hands of the middle class was derived from trade and industry rather than property and conquest. Demand increased for private architects to design chateaux that displayed the owner's new found success. Concurrently, the increase in investment capital created the need for private architects to design offices and department stores. Viollet-le-Duc showed increasing concern that young architects should be trained to identify the social aspirations of the nineteenth century and to respond to those demands.

The government espoused capitalism, technological innovation, and educational reform. The Ecole des Beaux-Arts, though still entrenched in a teaching methodology that emphasized description and classical imitation, experienced a similar evolution in the nineteenth century that opened a door to the reforms proposed by Viollet-le-Duc. The shift in values and beliefs that brought about the French Revolution and became its legacy sparked a parallel shift in the Ecole, a government institution in itself.

The Romantic radicals sought to loosen the grip of the Académie on artistic freedom, to open the Académie to a broader range of students and to democratize the jury system that judged the competitions in much the same way J.-L. David

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had attempted to change the institutions at the turn of the century. Viollet-le-Duc echoed these principles and concluded that "the genius of the people is almost always in conflict with the institutions which govern them." He also aligned himself with the industrial impetus of the Second Empire and its ministers by supporting the exercise of power over the Académie to enable the state to coordinate the research for engineering and industry necessary to accomplish its economic goals. The direct intervention of government in education was reinforced early in the Second Empire. The Catholic Church hoped in 1853 that Napoleon III would abandon the Université and return education to the church, but instead the government retained the power to control the teaching profession and the academic advisory councils. The École des Beaux-Arts, however, remained virtually autonomous until 1863.

The compromises that carried forward from the revolutionary period, though questioned by the liberal faction of architects, did not come under serious attack until 1863. Between 1854 and 1868 Viollet-le-Duc continued his work on the Dictionnaire raisonné which he structured as a rational guide to architectural theory. He also took a brief foray into teaching at a more direct level when Henri

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54 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 1:99.
55 Williams, Napoleon III, 84.
Labrouste closed his atelier in 1856. Viollet's atelier only lasted a few months. He began writing the lecture series, *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*, for use in his school and completed the first volume in 1863. He presented the first seven of these lectures during his brief appointment as Professor of History of Art and Aesthetics at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts after the proclamation of 1863. In addition to his strenuous schedule of government projects, he published the second volume of *Entretiens* in 1872.

Viollet made use of his position within the Second Empire to press for educational reform in architecture. He did this during his visits to the court residence at Compiègne where he and Mérimée entertained the court with theatrical performances and at the weekly salons Princess Mathilde held in Paris. His influence resulted in a report Niewerkerke sent to the Ministre de la Maison de l'Empereur et des Beaux-Arts which proposed drastic changes in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The Imperial decree Napoleon III issued on 13 November 1863 instituted sweeping changes in the operations of the official architectural school and reduced the power and influence of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Richard Chafee suggests that this decree "occasioned the greatest disturbance to architectural education in France.

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between the suppression of the royal academies in 1793 and the riots in 1968."57 Until 1863 the ateliers still remained distinct from the Ecole. The competitions provided the measure of the individual progress a student made outside the Ecole.

The consolidation of power and the reform of the teaching methods took shape in the Decree of 1863.58 The documents, reprinted in the Gazette des Architectes et du Bâtiment, outlined several changes. The imperial decree directed the Ecole to discharge four of the six professors. It established a larger number of chairs and named new professors. It instituted the post of director of the Ecole, appointed by imperial decree, rather than elected by the professors and made the director of the Ecole, as well as the director of the Academy in Rome, responsible to the Ministre des Beaux-Arts. The government named Viollet-le-Duc to the chair of Professor of the History of Art and Aesthetics. The decree established a Higher Council for Teaching, appointed by the government, to guide the school. Reminiscent of the reforms instituted by David, control of the Grand Prix programs and the selection of the jury was transferred to the Council. It also lowered the maximum age of admission to the

57 Ibid., 97.
Ecole and of competition in the Grand Prix from thirty to twenty-five. It seems clear that the government intended to wrest control of the pedagogical program from the hands of the traditionalists. Official ateliers were established and partially funded by the government, a practice that continued into the twentieth century.

The power struggle that ensued left few tangible traces of governmental control. Defiance of the decree centered on the issue of professors, and student disturbances interrupted Viollet-le-Duc's lectures to the point that he resigned after his seventh lecture on 18 March 1864.59 His pedagogical message included more than architectural training. "The ancients had ... the privilege of an education in perfect harmony with their social condition; while ours is only a crude farrago of obsolete traditions which no one believes and of novel sciences which are manifestly at issue with those traditions."60

Shaken by his experience at the Ecole, Viollet traveled to Italy for a few weeks, but on his return to Paris he resumed his attacks on the teaching of the Beaux-Arts. He completed the second volume of the Entretiens. Together the two volumes contain his composite views on architectural theory and training. Despite the fact that the Académie

59 Drexler, Architecture of the Ecole, 103.
60 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 1:147.
maintained its control over teaching at the Ecole, the social and technological emphasis that characterizes twentieth century design and construction rocked the established order and demanded its attention. Not that the Imperial Decree produced no lasting effects. The Académie no longer controlled the jury that awarded the Grand Prix and, therefore, the establishment of official ateliers diminished the power of the private ateliers directed by members of the Academy. The lower age limit and the expanded breadth of the coursework somewhat deprived the Grand Prix of being the sole aim of study.\textsuperscript{61}

The lectures contained in the \textit{Entretiens} provided for future students a remarkable window into the influences that surrounded Viollet-le-Duc. Even more importantly, however, they demonstrated the advances in philosophy and science that characterized the nineteenth century. He successfully extended the boundaries of architectural study through the written word of his theories, an influence that provided an impetus to the twentieth century.

CHAPTER V

VIOLLET-LE-DUC AND THE ENTRETIENS SUR L'ARCHITECTURE

The atelier Viollet-le-Duc opened in 1856 at the request of some of Labrouste's students was an unsuccessful venture in teaching, as was Viollet's experience at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The instrument he devised for his teaching, fortunately, survived. The Entretiens sur l'Architecture included far more than instruction on architectural principle. Through the medium of the Entretiens, Viollet-le-Duc provided not only a synthesis of architectural history and the practical application of rational design methods, he also incorporated the scientific and philosophical inquiries that dominated nineteenth-century intellectual thought. Regardless of whether or not his architectural theories are in every case valid, Viollet-le-Duc's writings reflect, almost like a mirror, the currents of French political and intellectual thought which emerged in and characterized the nineteenth century.

The sheer physical endurance of an edifice provides a built word from which its archaeological and social history can be partially devined. The interpretations of architectural methods of design and construction obviously require technical knowledge of the field, a knowledge this
thesis does not pretend to possess. The philosophical bases of the shift that occurred in the nineteenth century and the amalgamation of cultural, economic, and intellectual influences that produced change appeared, in large part, in the written works of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc.

In his Preface to the *Entretiens*, Viollet alluded to the failure of his atelier and issued an indictment against "certain professors of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Bibliothèque Impérial [who] wished to do me the honor of attacking my 'tendencies' by preventive measures."¹ He believed his detractors were unjustified in describing his theories as "dangerous dogmas."² He then modestly, and with the polished edge of sarcasm, agreed to abandon the "fierce impending conflict" producing the "tumult [which] is the foe to study."³ On the contrary, however, Viollet continued to place himself on the front lines of "tumult." He published not only a first volume, to which this preface is attached, but also a second volume, in which he continued the defense of his theories. He and his supporters also waged an ardent battle in the press, particularly in the *Gazette des architectes et du bâtiment*, and the *Encyclopédie d'architecture*. His rivals answered in the *Revue générale de*

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¹ Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens*, 3.
² Ibid., 3.
³ Ibid., 4.
l'architecture. Mérimée referred to one such vituperative exchange in a letter to Viollet-le-Duc after the edict of reform in 1863. Mérimée wrote, "Have you read Beulé's speech? If you have not read it, read it; there is a slashing blow addressed to you, but you won't die from it."5

What occurred in the nineteenth century that created an intellectual revolution? Later generations of historians identified and defined the currents of thought that characterized that century; Viollet-le-Duc exhibited those themes and provided justifications that enabled future generations to understand the basic framework of those theories.

These themes included, first and foremost, nationalism, and it was the responsibility of the educational system to inculcate the love of nation and French culture. The word "nationalism" was first used in 1798, the year "civilization" appeared as a new word in the dictionary of the French Académie.6 Civilization implied the entire social, economic, and political system; egalitarian, yet elite; universal, but nationalist.7 In conjunction with nationalism and

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4 Aillagon, E.E. Viollet-le-Duc, 29.
5 Mérimée refers to an article in la Revue des Deux-Mondes, "Avez-vous lu la tartine de Beulé? Si vous ne l'avez pas lue, lisez-la; il y a un coup de griffe à votre adresse, mais vous n'en mourrez pas" in Mérimée, Correspondance générale, 11:570 as cited in Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, 141.
7 Ibid., 8.
civilization, intellectuals explored the attributes of race, a theme that Von Ranke later termed "Zeitgeist" and Viollet-le-Duc termed "the national genius." Although France became one the first unified nation states, its political leaders understood the meaning of unification better than its people did. The people perceived the state as the province of the prince, not as a community. In the twentieth century the notions of nationalism and racism reached political extremism, but in the early decades of the nineteenth century patriotism was a relatively new development.

A second important theme in nineteenth-century thought was the liberalism that grew out of the revolutionary period and expressed itself in democratic principles, Protestantism, and an awareness of the social aspirations of the people. The student work produced by Labrouste, Duban, Vaudoyer, and the Romantic liberals, manifested and popularized this theme. They sought to wrest control of the academic program and the competition juries from the conservative members of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and they sought the institution of democratic, egalitarian policies in the operations of the Ecole. Viollet-le-Duc reinforced their attack in the Entretiens. He noted that "men never become tyrants until they find drudges willing to resign themselves to their tyranny .... The Ecole d'Architecture ... is ... a kind of Academic

8 Zeldin, France 1848-1945, 2:3-7.
palaestra in which a chosen few attain to high positions simply by waiting for the prizes to drop into their mouths."  

In addition to democratic principles, the Romantic liberals demonstrated a third theme. They recognized the importance of the new social sciences and identified historical examples of social influences like those indicated in Hittorf's studies of polychromy. The influence of the social scientists is evident in Viollet-le-Duc's writing, but it is not easy to identify the specific influence. His writing probably echoed Count Claude Henri de Saint-Simon more than Auguste Comte, but elements of both can be found. Viollet shared Saint-Simon's organic view of history and near worship of productivity. The structure of the Entretiens, echoed some of Comte's stages of social history, particularly Comte's conception of the metaphysical, legalistic period of Greece and Rome; of the Middle Ages, in which industry and civil liberty made headway; and, finally, the period of the Industrial Revolution, with science and industry dissipating superstition. For Comte, however, science could not tolerate the chaos of individualism; he proposed that Order and Progress replace liberty, equality, and fraternity. Viollet-le-Duc could hardly denigrate individualism since he

9 Viollet-le-Duc, Entretiens, 386.
11 Zeldin, France, 598.
believed the self-taught model superior to the anonymity of the Académie, but order and progress are repeated often in his work.

A fourth theme reflected in Viollet-le-Duc's work is the historical method of research. François Guizot, prior to his political activity, organized the movement for systematic, scientific work in collecting and editing the sources of French history. The Romantic liberals of the period, by examining the medieval period and extrapolating a continuity to the nineteenth century, injected a sense of determinism and organic unity into historical research that carried over into architectural and archaeological research. In terms of architectural composition, the liberal Romantic movement redefined the purpose of the structural entity itself. Instead of the imitation of some eternal physical ideal, a structure should reflect the evolution of society and the advance of technology. Although a structure might reflect history, as indeed Labrouste accomplished in the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, it should be an abstract diagram of natural forces. The examination of historical sources also carried with it the exercise of critical scholarship required to appraise the material. Viollet-le-Duc consistently criticized the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of "setting aside or

12 Ibid., 213.
13 Drexler, Architectural of the Ecole, 231.
14 Ibid. 219.
willfully ignoring" the architectural systems of some civilizations "without thoughtful examination."\textsuperscript{15}

A fifth theme of the liberal Romantic movement that Viollet-le-Duc endorsed was the need for an architecture uniquely expressive of the nineteenth century. He believed a new architecture would emerge from an understanding of the evolution of the function of architectural design. The term "functionalism" was not yet in use; it was coined later in the century by Le Corbusier, but function became an important concept in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Viollet-le-Duc insisted that modern architecture design should reflect the function for which the building was intended. He pointed out that the imitation of classical forms left buildings whose function was then imposed on an incompatible shape.

The new architecture Viollet-le-Duc envisioned would not only seek to simplify design and base it on function, it would express the history and culture of the people and demonstrate the level of their advancement. Being precise about the point of departure of the modern movement is impossible. What can be said of the Romantic movement is that it led to some irrefutable arguments that changed the philosophical basis of architecture. According to Viollet-le-Duc, the design of a structure reflects its function and

\textsuperscript{15} Viollet-le-Duc, \textit{Entretiens}, 1:6.
its materials. As the function evolved through history so did the form of the structure. By extension, the design would include the use of the new building materials offered in an industrial age and would reflect the cost considerations of a modern economy.

Drexler suggested that "if we did not have to live with the results, architecture would metamorphose into philosophy." The design of a building reflects the philosophy of the architect and the influences which have generated that philosophy. The tenets of Viollet-le-Duc's philosophy are contained in the *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*. Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc considered it his most revolutionary work. His philosophy of architecture is in that work, but it also contains his commentary on the educational inadequacies of the current system of architectural training. This last theme was hardly unusual in the nineteenth century. Education was an issue that stood in the foreground of each regime and kept the church and state at odds for generations. The issue of architectural education and the conservative academic policies of the Académie remained a lifelong issue to Viollet-le-Duc, so this theme must be noted, but only in so far as it demonstrates his ongoing battle with the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

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16 Ibid., 15.
17 E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, 18.
A discussion of these six themes as they are revealed in the writings of Viollet-le-Duc will be limited to an examination of Volume I of the *Entretiens* since the primary focus of this examination addresses Viollet's adversarial stance toward the Académie in the early years of the Second Empire. Viollet-le-Duc prepared the first volume of the *Entretiens* as a course of lectures for his own teaching, first at the atelier and later at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Were such themes as nationalism, liberalism, and historicism part of an architectural message or a political one? Viollet-le-Duc stated his intent in the preface:

In my view, a course of lectures on Architecture must embrace a wide field of studies -- research into the history of Nations, an examination of the Institutions and Customs, and a proper estimate of the various influences that have raised them to distinction or effected their decay.\(^\text{18}\)

This intent embodied most of the themes noted as major currents in nineteenth-century thought. It seems to offer a handbook on philosophy rather than a manual for training in architectural practices. He defended his intent and further highlighted these themes, adding:

Merely to present to attentive readers the architectural forms characteristic of the nations with whose arts we

are acquainted, without pointing out the causes by which their peculiarities have been determined, their connection with the national genius, and their relative influences, -- without inquiring into the "why and wherefore" of the various systems of architecture to which these forms are subordinated -- would have been to present a sterile compilation of the numerous works which all can now easily procure . . . . [Therefore] I propose . . . to inquire into the reason of every form, -- for every architectural form has its reason . . . .19

The themes that became obvious in Viollet's stated intent were nationalism and the national genius, social institutions and customs, historical research, design function, and the then current educational system. Viollet proceeded to address the rising generation of architects and their need to meet the challenges of an industrial society. He recognized that these students were "imbued . . . with the practical spirit of our age, which duly estimates the value of time . . . ."20

From the beginning of Lecture I, Viollet's purpose became entangled in a personal defense. The Académie insisted on the purity of the classical model and its use in architectural training. Viollet contended that the value of

19 Ibid., 6-7.
20 Ibid., 6-7
art is independent of the period in which it originates, but that the artist who is an imitator cannot be understood by contemporaries. Such art does not express the manners and customs of the artist's own period. He did defend the artists of the Middle Ages against the defamatory term "barbarism," a description the Académie applied to the Gothic.

Viollet-le-Duc began his prodigious use of historical research in Lecture II. He asserted he would limit his discourse to subjects and descriptions he had personally observed and that any other statements would reflect diligent research. He suggested that other authors and professors made assertions they could not have observed, or could have observed only superficially, and they had been quoted as accepted sources. He disapproved of this unprofessional practice and used research methods to disprove the supposition that the Greek temple is an imitation in stone of a wooden hut. He believed this hypothesis was unfounded. Viollet, accused of being a specialist in Gothic restoration, went to great lengths in the first lectures not only to prove that he possessed a wide knowledge of Greek and Roman civilization and architecture, but to defend the rationalism of the Gothic system. In this lecture he carefully cites Vitruvius, chapter and verse.\footnote{Entretiens, 1:35-36.} He also footnoted illustrated
descriptions he had not personally observed. The entire
discussion, which covers some twenty pages including
illustrations, however, seems directed toward the defense of
his own reputation. Concerning the supposition that the
temple imitated the hut, he stated:

This supposition . . . is of the same order as that
which refers the architecture of our Gothic churches to
the forest avenues of Gaul and Germany. Both are
fictions well adapted to amuse the fancy of dreamers,
but very hurtful, or at best useless, when we are called
upon to explain the derivations of an art to those whose
vocation it is to practice it. 22

This minor fit of pique, however, does not detract from
his noteworthy ability in historical research methods.
Viollet used his study of classical literature to reinforce
his archaeological determinations. He quoted a passage from
Euripides to support his findings that intervals were left
between triglyphs placed over columns in certain temples.

In the remaining pages of Lecture II, Viollet briefly
presented the historical and esthetic justification for the
use of polychromy, although it is without documentation. He
commended the artistry and reason the Greeks displayed in
their architecture, but once again returned to the issue of
imitation, suggesting, "that if the Parthenon is in its place

22 Ibid., 53.
at Athens, it is but an absurdity in Edinburgh, where the sun prevails over the mists only for a few days in the year."23

Viollet used the last few pages of the lecture to set the stage for his advocacy of Greek architecture. Like many of those who participated in the Romantic movement, he preferred Greek architecture over Roman. He differentiated between the social aspirations and political systems of the two nations as the bases of his arguments. Viollet introduced the discussion in an almost inflammatory manner.

The genius of the Roman people differs materially from that of the Greeks. The Roman is essentially an administrator and a politician; he is the founder of Modern Civilization: but is he like the Greek, an Artist? Certainly not. Is he possessed of that instinct inherent in the organization of some favored beings which leads them to clothe all their conceptions in forms which are the direct emanation of Art? No.24

A comparison of the two civilizations, however, became part of a more complicated issue. Viollet bases his defense of Greek architecture on the artistic freedom of Greek society. He then developed an organic connection between the Greeks and the Middle Ages.

23 Ibid., 56.
24 Ibid., 63.
In 1845, Ludovic Vitet, the first Inspecteur des Monuments Historiques, published a monograph in which he concluded that the pointed Gothic arch symbolized a republican, civil spirit, whereas the round arch indicated traditional centralized Papal authority. Viollet-le-Duc made no attempt to judge each style impartially. In fact he made it very clear in Lecture III that the heart of the controversy over styles was in fact a controversy between the advocates of the medieval period and the advocates of antiquity. In the same way that he forewarned of the outcome of the Greek-Roman question, he revealed his bias concerning the Gothic at the beginning of Lecture III. From the beginning of this lecture the rhetoric leads to the final outcome and does not allow impartiality.

On the one side we see the advocates of the arts of antiquity, on the other the apostles of Medieval art. I speak of artists who have convictions, who are defending principles; it must be understood that I consider as excluded from the lists those who interest themselves in every form of Art alike, -- not that I despise their judgment, but because this general and altogether material admiration cannot fail to lead us gradually

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into indifference...it is well to know what we are fighting for.\textsuperscript{26}

This entire argument finally led to the one question that consumed Viollet-le-Duc's entire message: "an architecture for our own time." He was not so transparent as to offer that argument yet, but he did include a brief history of the revolutionary nature of the French people, "almost continually at war with their governing institutions."\textsuperscript{27} He noted the subjugation of the Gallo-Roman populations to the barbarians, to the "repugnant" German feudal system, to the theocracy, and finally to royal power. He concluded that despite these conflicts, art followed a systematic course and therefore "it would appear as if Art was then the only refuge of liberty."\textsuperscript{28}

Viollet-le-Duc began his defense of Greek architecture by linking Greek society to the industrial classes of the Middle Ages, correspondingly linking commerce and art to liberty. He then presented a tightly drawn synopsis of the organization of the Roman system in relation to the conquered or newly allied; a program so complete it led to conformity, loss of traditions and even, in some cases, nationality itself. The Greeks, on the other hand, although they utilized architectural orders such as the Doric order, did

\textsuperscript{26} Entretiens, 76.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 77.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 77.
not impose rules that implied a loss of individual liberty or blind obedience to an imperious law. "It would never have entered into the mind of a Greek artist to give a similar appearance to two buildings intended for different purposes."29

If this statement seems reminiscent of the arguments Viollet continually pressed in his debate against the current academic freedom, the tie only grew stronger. Viollet attributed the argument for creative freedom to the Greeks. This rhetorical device was, in all likelihood, a method for avoiding censorship of his writings. He then constructed a dialogue for a Greek architect transported to the nineteenth century. The time-traveler concluded that uniformity and repetition of style would not appeal to the Greeks, or even the Romans. The Greek maintained that their architects "had rules certainly, but rules to be interpreted, not servilely followed as a flock of sheep follows in the same track led by the shepherd."30

So much for historically accurate documentation, but at least Viollet-le-Duc was creatively tendentious, a trait he shared with another of his contemporaries, the historian, Jules Michelet. Michelet also used historical treatises to instill national identity, but that anticipates the

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29 Ibid., 89.
30 Ibid., 89.
conclusion of Viollet's arguments. Viollet generalized historical fact into broad national goals and equated architectural freedom with political liberty. The Goncourt brothers commented that Michelet "is a historian with opera glasses; big events he looks at through the small end, little ones through the large end." This comment could just as easily have applied to Viollet-le-Duc. Not that his argument completely breaks down, if art reflects culture, but the message became political rather than scholarly.

Whereas Lecture II included numerous illustrations showing the rational methods of the Greeks, Lecture III remained void of representations of Roman methods. Instead, Viollet discussed Roman architecture in terms of its political methods.

The Roman people has at command numerous armies which it can employ in public works, and a slave population at least double that of the citizens. So much for labor. Its conquests and the way it administers them bring a stream of wealth into its treasuries. With the labor it will erect buildings: with the wealth it will pay artists and buy costly materials.

Throughout the remainder of the Entretiens, it is difficult to determine which empire Viollet is actually

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32 *Entretiens*, 91.
criticizing, that of the Romans or that of Napoleon III. Not that a monarchy escaped unscathed.

The more wise, powerful, and well-regulated the institutions by which nations are governed, the less capable are the arts of freely manifesting their proper vigor, and producing works in perfection. No one, perhaps, reasoned thus in the presence of Louis XIV: but the feeling which led this prince to cover France with public buildings in the Roman style was perfectly in agreement with his principles as an absolute monarch -- as head of a unified nation: Roman architecture alone could be in harmony with his political system; and he would have little toleration for the sentiment that if a nation wishes to have arts, it must allow a certain degree of liberty to artist in matters of art.33

In Lecture IV, Viollet returned to the subject of Roman architecture, this time in greater detail. In this lecture, he discussed the message that form implied in the design of a building. The message he accorded to the form of Roman structures was power. Discussing the features of Roman architecture, he again showed competence in historical research. He cites the works of Vitruvius and he analyzed them critically for apparent mistakes. The small end of Michelet's opera glass is applied to the plan and

33 Ibid. 97.
construction of various Roman buildings. He employed fewer digressions than found in Michelet’s examinations of historical events and a greater number of definitive illustrations. Lecture IV more directly addressed architectural history and design instruction than any of the preceding lectures. Drawings that he and his student, Leon Gaucherel, produced at certain sites, provided insights. Viollet-le-Duc always included human forms in these drawings to provide a sense of proportion.

In Lecture V Viollet recommended methods of study and research, including attention to archeology. He warned students that although photographic representations were now available and sources of instruction voluminous, students should be wary of relying on the interpretations of others. He used this opportunity to plant distrust in the academic program.

The various schools or sections of schools should base their respective claims to superiority on something more substantial than opinions pronounced by amateurs more or less well-informed. They should have recourse to good reasons, supported by facts, rather than listen complacently to commonplace generalities respecting the
various forms of Art; for a single word from a practical man is often sufficient to destroy a whole scaffolding of superficial argumentation.\textsuperscript{34}

Viollet-le-Duc derived most of his own architectural education from travel, observation, and on-site training. He placed far more value on the study of history and the practical experience gained in the workshop than he placed on the lectures and design competitions which the academic program sponsored. He concluded his discussion of teaching methods with the proposition that education should no longer be the exclusive realm of the elite nor should it enforce a particular form. Instead it should stress invariable principles derived from rational examples. He asserted that the Ecole des Beaux-Arts would have excluded Vitruvius because as a result of the principles he taught, he did not insist on a particular form.

In Lecture VI, Viollet began to build his case for an architecture exclusive to the nineteenth century. He took memory and the mind's eye on a journey through history in search of themes and contrasts. He pointed out that memory and imagination combine in the architect's mind, but when the actual design of a building is at hand, the architect should not attempt to imitate a monument of the past. He should have absorbed a sense of beauty and style, but then he must

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 144-145.
apply those principles to the needs at hand. He should plan the general arrangement of the space requirements and let the plan shape the form. In support of this concept, he added that "arts which cease to express the want they are intended to satisfy, the nature of the material employed, and the method of fashioning it, cease to have style." He also suggested that forms perfectly adapted to their purpose are in fact beautiful. He carried this notion almost to extreme proportions, but yet the attempt drew imagination to Viollet's own time.

The locomotive, for example, has a special physiognomy which all can appreciate, and which renders it a distinct creation. Nothing can better express force under control than these ponderous rolling machines. . . . The locomotive is almost a living being, and its external form is the simple expression of its strength. A locomotive therefore has style.

Viollet went on to note that a sailing-vessel has style, as does a gun, "but a gun made to resemble a crossbow will have none." He believed a new style could emerge, but "at the present day, style has quitted the arts and taken refuge amid industrial pursuits."

36 Ibid., 184.
37 Ibid., 184.
38 Ibid., 187.
In a literary structure that brings Comte to mind, Viollet-le-Duc moved from his previous discussions of Greek and Roman society to the industry and civil liberty the Middle Ages expressed. He drew attention to "Europe becoming Christian, yet for a long time preserving its ancient manners and customs, and consequently the architecture of pagan antiquity." He discussed at length the historical process of changes in style. Each civilization developed over time a new set of manners and customs, just as early Christianity inhabited Roman structures until the manners and customs of the people changed.

In this lecture, Viollet outlined the evolution of Byzantine art and Etruscan art in the same sort of progression, a gradual, organic process, each stage building on the last under Roman or Greek influence. He developed this progression through more or less stable societies until the end of the twelfth century. At that point, he suggested: The spirit of nationality began to make itself felt, as the result of efforts more or less successful to secure the enfranchisement of the communes, of the scholastic discussions, the study of ancient philosophy, and the progress of monarchical power. The encyclopedic spirit, and the application of the exact sciences engaged the attention of enlightened men; and the influence of the

39 Ibid., 196.
monks then disappeared for ever from the history of art."^{40}

Viollet explored the logical development of the worker and the associations formed in the Middle Ages which led to a greater freedom of expression. He believed that, beginning in the thirteenth century, architecture became a pure, exact reflection of the current ideas of the nation; it assumed the form of a science. He viewed Gothic architecture as a reaction against monastic influence which displayed the triumph of an intellect asserting its independence and following a logical process.

Viollet stepped quickly over what he termed the "disordered fancies or mystifications of the renaissance."^{41} He apparently felt that in terms of French tradition the Italian Renaissance did not hold local historical significance and he, at this point, intended to build a French national identity, expressed in architecture. He viewed the Reformation as having a more profound influence than the Renaissance on architectural style in France. To Viollet-le-Duc, the architecture which resulted from the chaotic social and ecclesiastical disorder of the period was reasonable. He noted that, although it was severe, it was appropriate to the requirements, unostentatious, and well-

^{40} Ibid., 236.
^{41} Ibid., 241.
informed. This description could easily apply to Duban’s envois, the Calvinist "temple protestant" with its "single space arranged for ease of hearing and seeing."42

Viollet ended this lecture, the lengthiest of the series, not only drawing a parallel from the Gothic period to the nineteenth century, but one allied to his own philosophy of the on-site workshop as opposed to the structure of the Académie:

In our own times, as in all former periods, it is from below that the movement proceeds; it is in the workshop and the studio that the labor is being undertaken; the old spirit of the lay craftsmen of the twelfth century is being gradually awakened, for in France the humblest workman reasons and desires to understand what he is doing . . . for our age has not yet exhausted all its creative powers.43

Lecture VII reinforced, for the most part, the discussion of style begun in the previous lecture. He devoted several pages to a discussion of polychromy and to decoration, stressing that the appearance created by decoration should not hide the function of a building. A hospital should not look like a palace or a city mansion like a country manor. Viollet presented greater detail on the

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42 Van Zanten, Designing Paris, 19. This envois was previously discussed in Chapter 2 above.
43 Entretiens, 246.
building programs of various French provinces during the Middle Ages. He explained the principles of rationalism employed and footnoted the discussion to his *Dictionnaire Raisonné*. In this lecture Viollet focused primarily on architectural theory and execution rather than on political philosophy.

In Lecture VIII, however, Viollet-le-Duc presented a convincing indictment against the teaching methods the current academic program employed. He demonstrated that while architects are called upon to control the cost of work entrusted to them and to be conscious of the use and expense of new materials, they received no such training. He attributed the excessive expense of modern buildings and the lack of originality shown in their design to the course of instruction. He demanded that architects become responsive to the public, a public that the Académie des Beaux-Arts appeared to overlook, both personally and in instructional programs. He reinforced the notion of practicality and attention to function. The absurdity of designing a building and later forcing a new use on it created a consequent embarrassment for the architect who might have to put up partitions or cut stairwells through floors of just completed buildings. Viollet suggested artisans of the Middle Ages would have rejected the possibility of such mistakes.
Viollet discussed special design problems presented in the plan requirements of a private château, and he included lengthy instruction on the esthetics of exterior and interior decoration. Throughout Lecture VIII, he repeatedly appealed to the conscience of the architect in aligning design with function.

In the designs for palaces, châteaux, and houses, architects towards the second half of the seventeenth century concerned themselves but little with internal arrangements, the convenience and comfort of the inmates; they sought for grand effects. Viollet obviously found this lack of concern for practical matters objectionable, not only for architects in the seventeenth century but in the nineteenth as well. He noted that:

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries architects not only paid attention to internal arrangements, but subordinated the designs for the exterior to them. The usages of life dictated the arrangement, and the arrangement suggested the form of the building . . . . When Academical doctrines took upon themselves to direct the arts, this principle was practically set at

\[44\] Ibid., 380.
defiance, although none dared to deny its truth or importance.45

The composition of Lecture IX is, once again, a tribute to Viollet-le-Duc's literary skill in argumentation. He opened the lecture with a defense of originality, then followed with his own novel theory of design based on the triangle. He used the concept of originality to introduce themes within themes. He demonstrated that the loss of originality accompanied the centralization of power under Louis XIV. He maintained that, under the Provincial system, with government and education spread among the many capitals, guilds and artisans developed original designs. When Louis XIV drew the center of government to Paris, he centralized the arts as well and stifled independent action. This process, also discussed in Chapter Two of this work, effectively unified the direction of the arts. Viollet remarked that this centralization was essentially a revival of the system established under the Roman Empire. The system of patronage that developed reinforced uniformity. The artisans and guilds of the Middle Ages, those who had taken pride in each structure of the provincial towns, gradually disappeared.

After this introduction, Viollet presented his own plan of what an educational program ought to possess. He believed

45 Ibid., 381.
the skills taught should be partly theoretical, mostly practical. This discussion draws attention to the nineteenth-century dilemma, the growing dichotomy between science and art. Viollet's course of study was based on geometry. He included the study of archaeology because it provided the proof of geometric precision. The curriculum would also include instruction in perspective and shading. To these practical arts, Viollet added observation and sketching. The curriculum he devised was exactly the structure of his own education. The elements of instruction would provide the student with a sense of the harmony of both proportion and site.

At this point, Viollet introduced his notion that the geometric basis of architecture was tied to the triangle. Viollet designed a concert hall that illustrated his organic view that nature and the universe was composed of polyhedra based on the equilateral triangle.\(^46\) He showed the precision of this application in examples ranging from the pyramids to Notre-Dame. Through this discussion, he also made a case for the organic unity of history and architecture, from the organic progression of creation to the organic progression of architecture with interior and exterior unity.

Viollet moved into Comte's third phase of social history, the Industrial Revolution, in Lecture X. He,

however, referred to the first half of the nineteenth century, the period since the French Revolution, as a transitional phase. He observed that there is a distinction between form as a reflection of tradition and form as a reflection of the requirements of social conditions. He was disappointed that the current architectural theories of the Académie des Beaux-Arts were fashionable without being original. The styles were simply resurrections expressed as Neo-Greek, Neo-Roman, and Neo-Gothic. He believed that precepts from the past should be carefully studied and analyzed, precepts which he reiterated, but progress should emanate from those precepts in order to reach a synthesis.

Architecture . . . must take account of the ideas of progress proper to the age, -- subjecting those ideas to a harmonious system sufficiently pliant to lend itself to all the modifications, and even consequences of progress; it cannot therefore confine itself to the study and application of purely conventional formulas.  

In taking progress into account, however, Viollet-le-Duc was well aware of the economic issues of his time. His restoration projects kept strictly to budgets and the government of the Second Empire engaged itself in public financing. He knew that architects must become increasingly

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47 Ibid., 474.
responsive not only to the changing function of buildings but to the changing economic structure.

In the nineteenth century there is a serious question which is daily assuming greater importance, and which will eventually take precedence of all the rest: the question of expense, -- the financial question. The greater the increase of prosperity in a particular civilization, -- the greater the extent of wealth, -- the more are people inclined to make a judicious use of their means.48

Viollet ended Volume I of the Entretiens with a caution to architects to be judicious about expenditures. He assured them that their architecture would survive if it remained in harmony with the necessities of the times. Those necessities included a judicious use of materials, economic considerations and the nature and needs of the society.

The first lectures and the atelier Viollet opened were announced in the Revue Générale de l'Architecture et des Travaux Public and in the Encyclopédia d'Architecture.49 The first Entretiens appeared in 1858 and the first volume of ten Entretiens in 1863. Throughout the ten lectures of this volume the emphasis he placed on the study of archeology and

48 Ibid., 486.
history always included the social composition of societies. The Saint-Simonian concept of the organic nature of history and value of productivity were reflected in Viollet's reverence for the artisans of the Middle Ages. He was convinced a new architecture would naturally occur if architects would practice originality rather than imitation. But originality must remain aligned to the patterns of nature and the customs, habits and economic strictures of modern society.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The sheer magnitude of the restoration works Viollet-le-Duc completed in France during the nineteenth century is a monument in itself. His written works fill volumes and his research and descriptive powers were prodigious. He set himself at odds with the powerful and prestigious Académie des Beaux-Arts and never relented in his efforts to change the direction of French architecture.

Viollet-le-Duc was directly and indirectly responsible for a remarkable number of restorations throughout France, through his work with the Conseil des Monuments Historique and the Comité Généraux des Edifices Diocésains. These restorations should be viewed from two standpoints. In the first place, monuments of timeless importance were saved, and they stand as a tribute primarily to the Gothic period. Secondly, they are representative of the nineteenth century theories of restoration, and they stand as an example of the talent and rationalist training of that period. As a result of the restoration work carried out during that time, restoration and historic preservation became a recognized field, and its advocates profited from the efforts of Viollet-le-Duc.
Viollet's restoration work, however, left some grounds for criticism. Purists felt his work was often too radical, that he destroyed parts of some edifices that should have been saved. Even as recently as 1992, the *New York Times* noted that "in the great European debate about how far restoration should be permitted to go, the restorers of the Notre Dame say they have come down on the side of 'soft' and 'respectful' interventions."¹ Bernard Fonquernie, the architect in charge of the present efforts in the restoration of Notre-Dame, and Eric Salmon, who is responsible for dressing the stones, pointed out that "a lot of the work will involve correcting the efforts of the nineteenth-century restorers, who used cement, even lead, to seal many joints. All of this will have to be removed."² Nevertheless, the current project is the first major restoration of Notre-Dame since Viollet-le-Duc restored it 140 years ago.

His restoration work notwithstanding, was Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc an architect? He was certainly a technician, although Nicholas Pevsner suggests that the technical advantages of ribs, buttresses and pointed arches were vastly overestimated by Viollet-le-Duc and his followers.³ Despite the large number of designs to his

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² Ibid.
credit, he never built anything that accorded with his theories and the individual houses he designed are "lackluster and commonplace." This statement may be true in a technical sense, but the chateaux Viollet built warrant further investigation in terms of his theories on simplicity and social spaces. Perhaps it is true, however, that Viollet-le-Duc did not distinguish himself as an architect.

Was he then a philosopher or was he a reformer? In his own words, "it was not philosophers, it was reformers of the social constitution, or those who put themselves in opposition to the civil law [the Académie, one wonders], that were regarded as dangerous at Rome. Was Viollet-le-Duc successful as an educational reformer? The Académie des Beaux-Arts, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and the Section d'Architecture survived his onslaughts and the Imperial edict of 1863, but not without modification. The Beaux-Arts school of architecture did continue to wield influence for another century, but not the singular influence it held before Viollet's writings. The International movement emerged from such controversial terms as functionalism and organic unity. Viollet-le-Duc helped open that door to modern architectural design.

His greatest contribution was his literary legacy. Even while he sought change, he incorporated change in his own

work. He led the Gothic Revival, but then abandoned it. He praised the craftsmen of the Middle Ages for their mathematical rationalism and their ability to reflect changes in social patterns and building materials. He too tried to incorporate such notions and encouraged the architects of the nineteenth century to make use of new materials and to study the patterns emerging in the nineteenth century.

Viollet-le-Duc can hardly be held responsible for not identifying the ultimate shape of those patterns emerging from within his own period, but he did recognize that enormous change was occurring. Perhaps his social and political connections so placed him that he could not ignore the change around him, but what distinguishes him is that he committed his vision to paper.

As important as his vision was his talent as a writer, an historian, and a social critic. Like Michelet, his writing style was too romantic and his vision and patriotism too dogmatic. Nevertheless, those traits were indigenous to the nineteenth century and distinguish its writers from among the vast roll-call of historians. Viollet was one of the early proponents of the social sciences and gave that field a basis of historical research that added credibility to social theory.

Viollet-le-Duc was not a wealthy man. His financial well-being, like his father's, depended on the whim,
benevolence, and building projects of the state. He observed, first hand, the relationship between the state and the arts, under first a monarchy, then a brief worker's commune, and, when he wrote the Entretiens, an empire. He battled with, and against, the most important social critics and art critics of the age.

Although he hoped to establish a new architectural movement from his syntheses of theories, what he actually synthesized was the social movements of the nineteenth century. His written work held strong architectural value, but his social theories were undoubtedly "dangerous dogmas" in a rapidly changing society. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the social, intellectual, and economic system of the ancien regime, an anachronistic "civilization," existed contemporaneously with an emerging industrial world. Viollet-le-Duc outlined the dialectic of architecture, stood at the center of the swirling tide of romantic reform, and wrote the history of change.
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