One

THE STUDENT WORK: THE *ENVOIS* FROM THE FRENCH ACADEMY IN ROME

The seminal episode in the story of the Romantic *pensionnaires* is their coming together at the French Academy in Rome after winning the Grand Prix in four successive years.[1] Held every year since 1720, the competition bestowed upon the winning student in painting, sculpture, and architecture a five-year state pension for study in Rome. Duban, the oldest of the four, won in architecture in 1823 and arrived in Rome at the end of that year. He was the son of a Bordeaux *quincaillier* and the brother-in-law of the Parisian architect and academician François Debret (1777–1850). Debret trained Duban in his atelier and shepherded him through the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Labrouste, who followed the next December, was the son of François-Marie-Alexandre Labrouste, Premier Commis des Finances and an important government official during the Revolution, Empire, Restoration, and Monarchy of July. Duc, who trained in the atelier of André-Marie Chatillon (1782–1859), arrived in 1825. The son of a fashionable sword-maker in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, he had his roots in the upper level of the artisanal class. Vaudoyer arrived at the end of 1826. He was from the heart of the architectural profession itself: son of the academician Antoine-Laurent-Thomas Vaudoyer (1756–1846), in whose atelier both he and Labrouste trained, and cousin of the academician Hippolyte Lebas (1782–1867). For two remarkable years, 1827–28, the four *pensionnaires* were in Rome working together.

The Académie des Beaux-Arts (which administered the Grand Prix competition and the French Academy in Rome) required the *pensionnaires* to execute studies of details of "les plus beaux monuments antiques" during the first three years of their stay, the study of an entire "monument antique d'Italie" together with a reconstruction and a historical note during their fourth year, and, during their fifth year, "le projet d'un monument public de sa composition, et conforme aux usages de la France." Study was to be concentrated in Rome itself; travel was to be authorized by the Director and supposedly was restricted to the last two years of work.[2] The yearly projects, or *envois,* were exhibited in Rome, then sent

to Paris for exhibition and criticism by the Académie. A formal (and usually polite) report on them was prepared by the Secrétaire Perpétuel and read at the Académie's annual *séance publique* in October, while a more lengthy, specific report was sent by him to the Director in Rome.

Though Duban, Labrouste, Duc, and Vaudoyer started with the mandated examination of Roman architectural remains, they were soon studying the whole span of architectural periods and types. From this they derived a vivid sense of history and a specificity and richness in their conception of modern architecture that they would at times permit to be labeled "Romantic." Where their old Neoclassical teachers in Paris had expected them to see an array of eternal, paradigmatic forms, in the monuments of Rome they saw functions, lives, and stories producing an infinite number of ephemeral shapes whose continuing transformation would produce a modern architecture consistent only in its generative principles.

Vaudoyer's thinking was already beginning to focus during the trip down to Rome through Turin, Milan, Bologna, Florence, and Siena, and the terms in which it was focusing were far from those of conventional Neoclassicism. "The cathedral gave me infinite pleasure," he wrote his father on January 6, 1827, of Siena. "A harmony reigns between the exterior and the interior and everything is decorated with colored marbles, paintings, etc. . . . and in no way resembles our white, cold churches in Paris." In Florence Vaudoyer had been unimpressed by the Pitti Palace, "the character of which I do not find appropriate for the habitation of a prince," but admired the Duomo and the Baptistry, "of which one cannot have any idea until one has seen them." Of San Miniato he remarked, "As Labrouste wrote me, it is a very beautiful thing." Labrouste, breaking the rule forbidding *pensionnaires* to travel during their first three years in Rome, had visited Florence in 1825. His enthusiastic discovery there of pre-Raphaelite architecture, embodied in a meticulous study of the Duomo and communicated to Vaudoyer by letter, had clearly already begun to influence the latter's thinking. "I will be very happy," Vaudoyer concluded of Florence, "when I return here to work."[3]

Settled in Rome, he was pleased to form tight friendships with the other *architectes pensionnaires*. "We are extremely close," he wrote in January 1827, "people find us haughty. I don't know why. . . . Labrouste and Duc have conducted me around all the ruins."[4] Soon he was helping Duc measure the capitals of the Temple of Jupitor Stator, learning important lessons about the close reading of monuments, as we shall see.[5] On May 18 Vaudoyer left for Florence in the company of Duban, Duc, and A.-A.-F. Decraëne (1797–1859), a Belgian friend from his father's atelier.[6] They traveled through the Etruscan, Early Roman, and pre-Raphaelite cities of Narni, Terni, Spoleto, Assisi, Perugia, and Arezzo and returned in early

July with a detour to Bologna.[7] The three *pensionnaires* would remember this trip as the moment when they began to understand how they could make use of what they had studied.[8] The next year, 1828, was spent in a strenuous program of travel. In May and early June, Vaudoyer walked through Latium with Duban, Duc, Labrouste, and Labrouste's older brother Théodore (1799–1885), who had arrived in January. They saw the Etruscan and Early Roman monuments at Ariccia (the Tomb of the Horatii), Veletri, Cori, Segni, Palestrina, and Tusculum and visited Renaissance Frascati, where they found time to see only the Villa Aldobrandini.[9] In July Vaudoyer traveled with Henri Labrouste to the Adriatic coast, visiting Loretto, Ancona, Fano, Rimini, and Ravenna, and returned alone through Assisi.[10] Rimini proved a disappointment both in the Roman bridge and in Alberti's San Francesco, but Ravenna was exciting, especially for the wonderfully cut stone cupola of the Tomb of Theodoric. Finally, in September, the group headed south—Vaudoyer, Decraëne, and Felix Wilhelm Kubly (1802–72), a Swiss student from his father's atelier, to Naples and Pompeii; Duc and Labrouste on to Sicily; then all together to Paestum.[11] The remains at Pompeii were more extensive than Vaudoyer had been led to expect; he found them immensely illuminating. Of Paestum he wrote, "The appearance of this beautiful ruin ravished me. It was one of the things that impressed me the most."[12]

Now, it seems, the work of discovery was over: the *pensionnaires* ceased their frenetic traveling. In 1829 Labrouste had only his fifth-year *envoi* to execute, an original design on a modern program; Duc's archaeological fourth-year *envoi* was a reconstruction of the Colosseum, which was near at hand; and Duban had returned to Paris that January. Vaudoyer wrote his father that he would stay in Rome to gather his thoughts.[13] Aside from short side trips to the Etruscan and Early Roman sites around Rome—Tivoli and Cori again with Théodore Labrouste in April;[14] Palestrina and Tivoli in late summer;[15] and, most notably, Tarquinia, where the celebrated archaic Etruscan tombs had been discovered, with Duc and both Labroustes in October[16]—Vaudoyer stayed put until April 19, 1830. Then he commenced one last major trip, a six-week journey to Naples and Sicily with Théodore Labrouste and A.-F.-F. Fries, a student of Huyot sent by him to Rome to measure Hadrian's Villa.[17]

Something exciting happened among the *architectes pensionnaires* in 1827–28. Together they formulated a new way of understanding architecture inspired by the study of the monuments of pre-Raphaelite Florence, of the Greeks in Sicily and at Paestum, and of the Etruscans and Republican Romans in Tuscany and Latium. It made the *pensionnaires'* former work at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris seem academic and worthless. Already on July 26, 1827, Vaudoyer wrote his father, "In general we disown what we have produced in Paris and count on our future productions to efface the

errors of the past."[18] The way to this rejection of the Ecole's teachings was led by Henri Labrouste—the first to go to Florence, the first to do a Greek *envoi*—and seemed to lose some of its impetus when Labrouste returned to Paris in early 1830. What exactly led to the *pensionnaires'* change of heart? Some answers emerge in Vaudoyer's letters.

One of the first notes of what was to become a sharp discordance in the father-son correspondence is struck by Léon's disparagement of the accuracy of earlier studies of Italian monuments. He had carried with him Charles Percier's folio *Choix des plus célèbres maisons de plaisance de Rome* (1809), and on January 22, 1827, shortly after his arrival, he remarked that "all the villas that I see prove the charlatanism of the work of M. Percier." By February 16 he was lecturing his father: "The drawings of M. Thibault [1757–1826] prove that in this time one made something of nothing. That fashion is passé and we think more seriously. One does not pass one's time . . . in making sketches by the bushel." The elder Vaudoyer's response that Léon might enjoy the convenience of a camera obscura occasioned an even louder detonation:

Is it with a camera obscura that we have drawn the entablatures and capitals we have sent back to Paris each year? I measured that of Jupitor Stator and I can judge how much effort it represents to measure, to restore, to trace, and to render. Is it with a camera obscura that Labrouste and Duc made their trip to Pompeii, from which they returned, not with sketches and picturesque views, but with plans and sections measured and redrawn? One no longer makes sketches as before which one never redraws and which repose in a portfolio without ever being consulted. One arrives in Paris today with [the record of] a complete tour, as much of ancient [monuments] as of modern, which one can utilize immediately; our manner of working today is not a fashion; it is scientific and incontestably superior to that of our predecessors.[19]

Vaudoyer ends by complimenting the one member of the former generation whom the *pensionnaires* respected (at least initially), Jean-Nicolas Huyot (1780–1840), professor of the History of Architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and author in 1811 of the first painstakingly accurate archaeological *envoi*, a study of the Temple of Fortuna at Palestrina.[20] Jacques-Ignace Hittorff (1792–1867), however, having raced through Pompeii and Sicily in two months in the winter of 1823–24, is disparaged by Vaudoyer—"Did nothing, remaining at Pompeii a single day"—and charged by him with "charlatanisme."[21]

What Vaudoyer and his fellow *pensionnaires* were seeking to accomplish was demonstrated in their *envois*. We have Vaudoyer's explanation of his second-year project, executed during the frenetic year of 1828, and his

third-year study of 1829.[22] The first was a parallel study of the temples of Minerva at Assisi, of Fortune at Tivoli, and of Fortuna Virilis at Rome. "I sought in my second-year *envoi*," he wrote his father on July 20, 1829, "to direct my attention to a more primitive architecture, to that simple architecture which owes its beauty only to its forms and proportions without distracting the attention to some frieze or *raye de coeur* more or less well executed." Thus in reconstructing missing parts he sought to work in the particular spirit of these primitive, simple productions, not in terms of modern taste:

The moderns have denatured this order [at Cori] because they did not study its principles. It is thus that one Attic sees bases attached to Doric columns. . . . I have not tried to make a beautiful door (in my reconstruction of the temple of Fortuna Virilis), but to make a door in the character of the rest of the monument, which has obliged me to use somewhat crude moldings. . . . I have not made what one calls beaux dessins, *that is of ornamental details, friezes, etc. . . . but I have made good studies (*bonnes études*).*[23]

The Académie des Beaux-Arts, which was confronted in this same dispatch of *envois* by Labrouste's Paestum and Duban's *temple protestant*, was not sympathetic. It criticized the poverty of Vaudoyer's models and especially the fact that they were built of limestone rather than smooth, sculpted marble.[24] In response Vaudoyer sent his third-year *envoi*, a parallel study of four ceremonial arches, again in stone: those at Fano, Ancona, Benevento, and the Porta Maggiore in Rome. His intentions, he wrote his father, were to show how the same arched form (indeed, three of the four from the same, Hadrianic period) took on subtle inflections when applied in different situations. The arch at Fano was a city gate built into a defensive wall, that at Ancona a freestanding monument, that at Benevento the entrance to a forum, and the Porta Maggiore the passage of an aqueduct over a major avenue.[25] He explained, "I am seeking to make it understood that I do not wish to make a comparative study but instead separate studies of monuments that nevertheless have some analogy of form and of construction; that is, the architecture of arches and vaults."[26] This sensitivity led him to dismiss Charles-Edouard Isabelle's *Parallèle des salles rondes de l'Italie* because the buildings illustrated were arranged by shape and not by function.[27] He changed his mind about a favorite project by Huyot for the Arc de Triomphe because it was based on the gate at Fano, with its pilastered gallery for passage along the city wall, and thus was inappropriate for a freestanding monument.[28]

Finally, in a lengthy letter of November 28, 1831, to his cousin Hippolyte Lebas, Léon tried to make a general statement of his new principles:

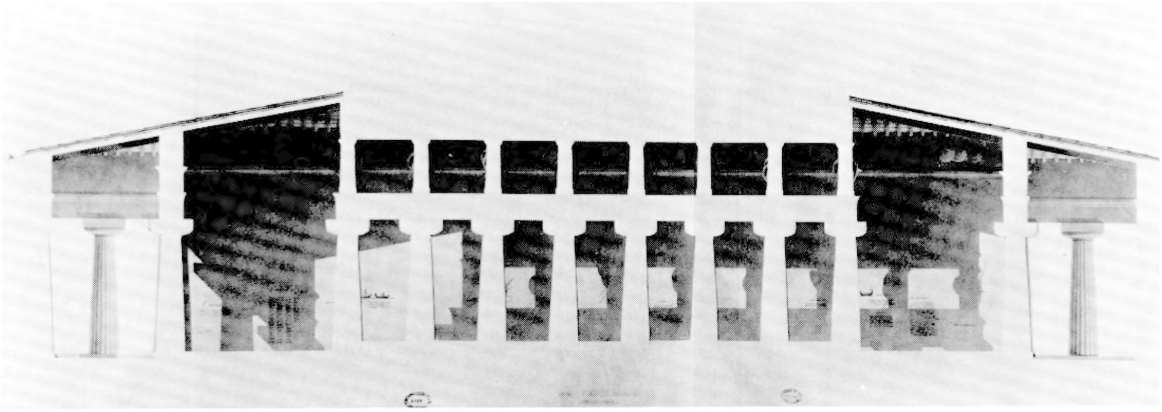
*Ideas have changed; the constitutional system has arrived and brought with it the spirit of examination, logic, and economy. One has begun now to think that it does not suffice to have an excellent taste for arrangement, to adjust ornaments perfectly, to draw to perfection, to encumber monuments with statutes, reliefs, etc. in order to make architecture. One has come to comprehend that our social and political institutions impose a considered architecture, logical, easily constructed, simple and economic. I do not make it my business to decide whether this is good or bad, but I think, nonetheless, that there is more merit in the monuments of the [Roman] Republic than in those of the time of Trajan; that it is not the richness of material nor the immensity of monuments that constitute true beauty, but rather a clear idea of propriety (*convenances*), of the needs of the period, and finally the nobleness of forms and the expression of a character appropriate to each thing. The Temple de la Paix [Pantheon] in brick and stucco is a masterpiece that is in no way inferior to the richest monuments in marble. I thus think that in order to satisfy the needs of our time, one must by preference study the rudimentary architecture (*architecture radicale*) of the ancients, that is, that which had to satisfy basic functions and was not corrupted by luxury. It is in this rudimentary architecture that one best perceives the reasons for forms, the* skeleton *in fact, which later conceals itself under rich garments. It is in order to strip the rich monuments of the Empire of all their adornment and to discover the nude that it is necessary to engage in the study of these Republican or Greek monuments which have only the purity of their forms and their simplicity for ornament. . . . So, this architecture that one calls Romantic, I don't know very well why, is an architecture which seeks to discover true principles, which demands that each form be determined by reason and necessity, which seeks to submit itself to the nature of materials, which tries, finally, to set this art in harmony with its century.*[29]

Later, in a letter of January 29, 1832, one of his last from Rome, Vaudoyer told his father of a conversation between Huyot and Duc: "After a long architectural discussion . . . they parted, saying: one, Duc, was a partisan of what was determined by reason and necessity and the other, Huyot, was a partisan of what first of all pleased the eye despite these two considerations." Vaudoyer concluded, "Thus you have two completely incompatible systems and no hope of ever seeing them changed."[30]

With Vaudoyer, however, we are only working around the edge of the problem. The central figure was Labrouste and the pivotal *envoi* his study

1
Henri Labrouste, Temple of Neptune (Hera II), Paestum, reconstruction of facade. Fourth-year envoi, *1828–29. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: H. d'Espouy,* Fragments d'architecture antique)

2
Henri Labrouste, Temple of Neptune (Hera II), Paestum, reconstructed cross section. Fourth-year envoi, *1828–29. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: Bulloz)*



3
Henri Labrouste, Basilica (Temple of Hera I), Paestum, reconstructed longitudinal cross section. Fourth-year envoi, *1828–29. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: Bulloz)*

of Paestum executed in the *annus mirabilis,* 1828 (figures 1–3).[31] Everything Vaudoyer explains—along with a good deal he does not—appears here, but more decisively and subtly. The Paestum study was later regarded as the first clear proclamation of the architectural revolution and was, at the time, the target of the Académie's bitterest criticisms.

The controversy over Labrouste's *envoi* centered on charges of archaeological inaccuracy (compared to the 1793 *envoi* of Claude-Matthieu Delagardette [1762–1805][32]) in the review sent privately from the Secrétaire Perpétuel, Quatremère de Quincy, to Horace Vernet, the Director of the French Academy in Rome. So unjust did Vernet find these charges that he visited Paestum himself with Louis Duc to check the disputed details and then wrote the Académie a vindication of Labrouste's project.[33] When the academicians refused to withdraw their criticisms, Vernet tendered his resignation (September 7, 1830), which was refused. At this point the coincidence of Labrouste's return to Paris, the outbreak of the revolution of July 1830, and the agitation leading to the creation of the Commission des Beaux-Arts (January 25, 1831) to review the conduct of the Ecole encouraged Vernet and the Romantic *pensionnaires* (falsely as it turned out) to believe that the Académie had been bridled, and the crisis faded away.

Examining Labrouste's drawings, one wonders what could have been so upsetting. The buildings are primitive stone monuments, like the temples Vaudoyer made the subject of his second-year *envoi,* but they are Greek, not provincial Roman. These were among the best preserved of the Greek temples in Italy; there was very little to restore. In 1878 Henri Delaborde spoke of the boldness of Labrouste's reading of the interior colonnades of the Temple of Neptune as supports for a closed roof and the garishness of his reconstruction of the painted terra-cotta gutters.[34] The former, however, was a logical solution to a recognized archaeological problem;[35] the latter conservative indeed when compared to the polychromatic reconstructions of Greek architecture being displayed in Paris during the late 1820s by Hittorff.[36] (In fact, the conservative critic Etienne-Jean Delécluze, reviewing the 1828 *envois* in the *Journal des Débats,* praised the "perfection" of Labrouste's reconstructions but asked why he did not show *more* polychromy.[37] Compared to Emile Gilbert's fourth-year *envoi* of 1826 restoring the almost completely destroyed Temple of Jupiter at Ostia—of which the Académie itself remarked that he had restored a great deal from very little—Labrouste's Paestum seems singularly judicious and precise. Was Labrouste merely being made to pay for the aggressive radicality of Duban's accompanying fifth-year *envoi* because the archaeological project could be disputed on familiar documentary grounds?

There was, however, something quite frightening in Labrouste's *envoi,* something more evident in the text accompanying the studies than in the

drawings themselves, as Neil Levine has pointed out. The chronological ordering of the monuments previously established by Delagardette (and since proven by archaeological exploration) placed the so-called Basilica as the oldest, followed by the Temple of Ceres, then the Temple of Neptune.[38] Delagardette's rationale for this ordering was the progressive lightening of proportions documented elsewhere in Greek architecture. Labrouste proposed a reversal: the Temple of Neptune first, then the Temple of Ceres, and finally the Basilica. He justified this by pointing out that Paestum was a Greek colony established in Italy far from Hellas and that this separation might be a more profound determinant of form than any progressive refinement imagined taking place everywhere simultaneously in the Mediterranean. Labrouste saw the Temple of Neptune as the earliest structure because it was the truest to the Attic paradigm represented at Olympia and Aegina. The Temple of Ceres he placed next because it had started to deviate from the Attic model (in proportions and in the placement of half metopes at the corners) and because it was made of two kinds of local stone, not one like the Temple of Neptune, indicating a greater familiarity with local quarries. The Basilica Labrouste placed last because it deviated the farthest from the Attic model. These last two structures, he stated, are no longer truly Greek, but "d'une architecture autre." But as they deviated from the Greek model, they became more organic to the Tyrrhenian coast: "Ces deux monuments seules offrent le type de l'architecture de Posidonia."

Labrouste found confirmation of this sequence in the local designation of the monuments. It would be logical, he observed, after the perilous sea journey from Greece, for the colonists to erect their first temple to the god of the sea, Neptune. Then, after the colony had set down roots and brought in fertile crops, a temple to the goddess of fertility, Ceres, would be appropriate. Finally, when the colony had become a strong political and military force, a civic meeting hall, the Basilica, would be necessary. Thus Labrouste depicted the group of buildings not as a microcosm of the evolution and refinement of the Doric Order, as they had been envisioned by Delagardette, but as a piece of history, revealing the specific state of mind and society of a colony of Greeks thriving two thousand five hundred years earlier. Labrouste's is a piece of Romantic historical writing in which monuments, like documents, are made to speak. Labrouste perceived a moving, personal story in the ruins of Paestum, just as his contemporary Augustin Thierry had found one in the historical documents of England and France.[39]

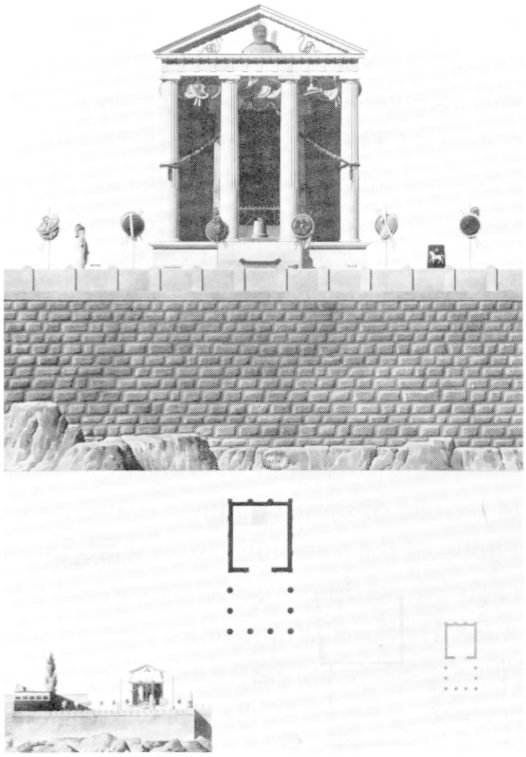
This personal story becomes most palpable in the details Labrouste added to his cross section of the Basilica (figure 3): inscriptions and symbols painted on the walls and shields and spears suspended from the exposed ceiling beams. This clothing of solemn ancient monuments in

anecdotal dress emerged as one of the chief motifs of the *envois* by the four *pensionnaires* who succeeded Vaudoyer, starting gently with Théodore Labrouste's second-year study of the Temple of Vesta at Rome of 1829 and becoming impishly exaggerated after the Revolution of 1830 in the successive fourth-year *envois* of Théodore Labrouste (figure 4), Marie-Antoine Delannoy (1800–60) and Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux (1801–71). Delannoy's (figure 5), appearing the year Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* was published, seems to envision the Tiber Island in terms of the cramped, overbuilt Ile de la Cité, in defiance of generations of French classicists who had tried to project Paris as if it were Rome.

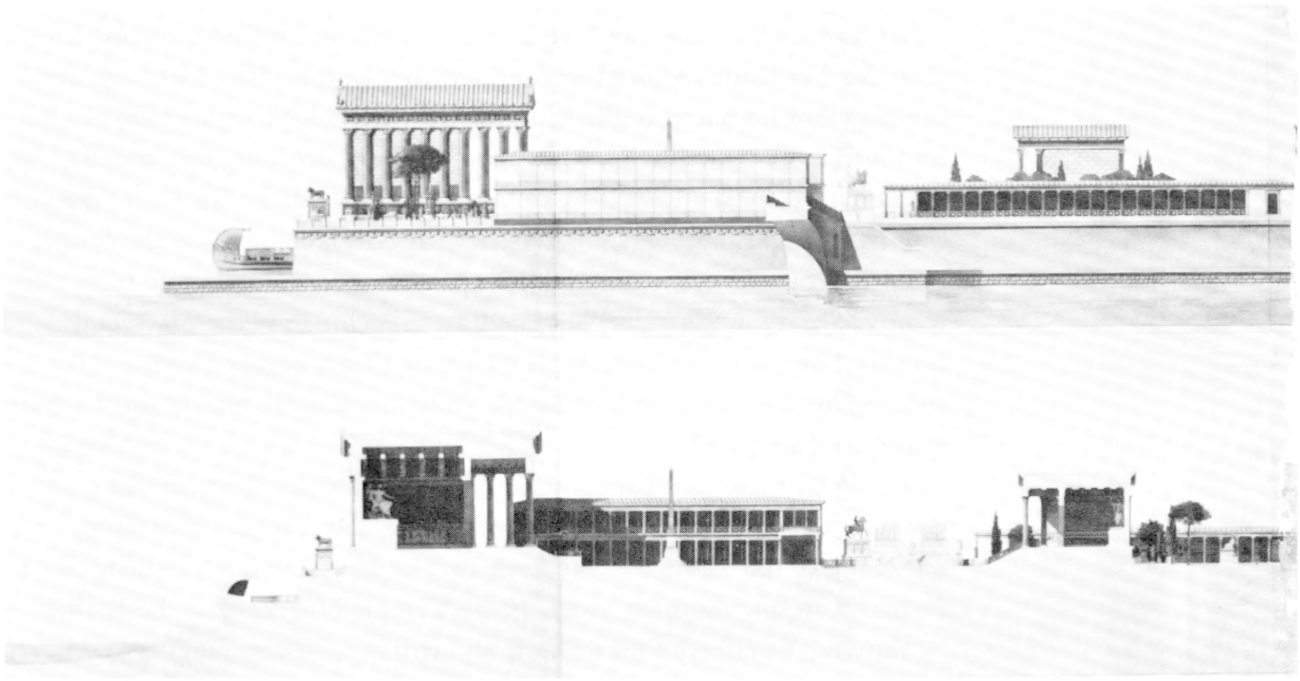
Labrouste accomplished this resurrection of the whole by reading ancient monuments closely, by training himself to see distinctions between structures apparently similar (just as Vaudoyer did with his *envoi* of arch forms). He could see one of these buildings at Paestum as not necessarily a temple at all. He refused the testimony of the conventional signs of meaning, the column and the pteripteral layout, to accept instead that of nuances of structure. He raised a new set of signs to consciousness and set aside the received vocabulary of Orders as meaningless (at least, outside Greece). What is amazing—and, to the Académie, enraging—is how much Labrouste was able to extract from the close examination of three nearly identical stone boxes.

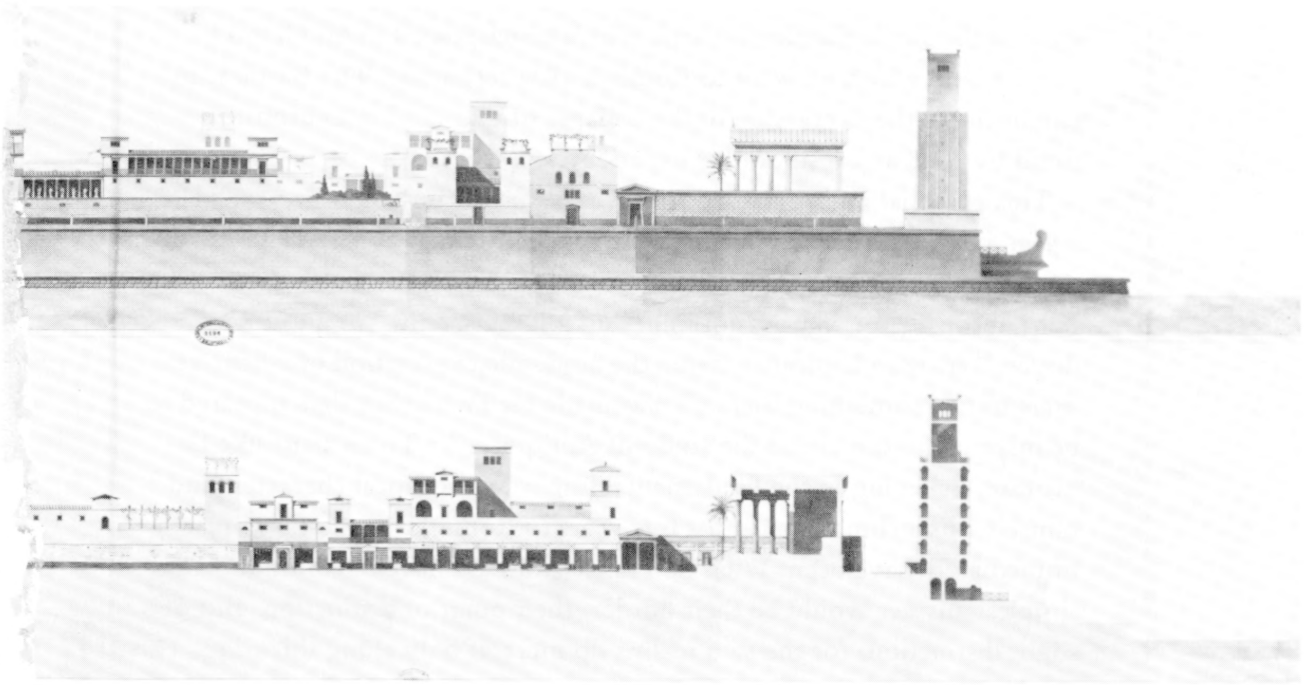
Labrouste's Paestum *envoi,* then, was a different kind of reconstruction than the Académie required or expected. But beyond this it had a general message that no one could have missed: the pure Attic style could not be removed from its natural soil in Greece without decaying into the ill-formed if practical architecture of the Paestum Basilica. The larger question Labrouste's drawings posed is clear: If Greek colonists at the apogee of Attic art could not meaningfully reproduce the Doric temple form once removed to a foreign place, how could a Frenchman in the nineteenth century hope to do so in Paris? If the Doric Order decayed so far in the short span of the history of Paestum, how much more utterly must it have evaporated by 1828?

It is clear, then, that Labrouste is declaring that the Doric Order could not survive out of its original time and place, but it is also clear in his rendering of the Temple of Neptune that he agreed that the Attic ideal of form did, at one moment, exist. In the Temple of Ceres and the Basilica he showed the effect of the cultural and structural forces enumerated by Vaudoyer. What forces, however, did he imagine produced the elegantly adjusted forms of the Temple of Neptune? One might reply that, though more subtly here than in the Basilica, structural forces are at work. Thirty-five years later Viollet-le-Duc would analyze the Doric temple in his *Entretiens* to show that it was essentially a rational structure in stone. Labrouste's suggestion that the interior two-storied colonnades did not



4
Théodore Labrouste, Temple of Hercules, Cora, reconstructed facade. Fourth-year envoi, *1831–32. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: Bulloz)*





5
Marie-Antoine Delannoy, Tiber Island, Rome, reconstructed view from the south. Fourth-year envoi, *1832–33. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: James Mathews)*

support balconies, but were instead a clever way of reducing the wide span of the roof members, has been depicted as structurally rationalist. But Labrouste's solution was that the tall supports were divided into two tiers of columns so that the ceiling could be reached without changing the proportions of the shafts or making them of excessive girth. A structural solution this is, but one to solve an aesthetic problem: how to maintain proper proportions in a difficult situation. Just such elegancies defined the mainstream of classical architectural thought from Ictinus to Palladio to Percier. Labrouste also expressed a preference for the adjustment of the triglyph at the corners of the entablature, a Greek refinement controverting the more regular but less elegant Renaissance and Roman practice. When in 1902 Hector d'Espouy made a selection of the most "classic" *envois* for his *Fragments d'architecture antique*, he devoted three plates to Labrouste's drawings of the Temple of Neptune and, not surprisingly, none to those of the Basilica.[40]

Should we read Labrouste's study as a factual history or as a mirror of a personal state of mind? Might we suppose that Labrouste, examining these evocative remains, deciphered not so much the history of Greek architecture in Italy as the evolution of his own conception of design? That is, the Temple of Neptune—beautiful in form but impossible to sustain by reason and necessity—is the Neoclassical ideal Labrouste himself imbibed in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, which he embodied in his Grand Prix project, and which he went to Rome in 1824 to pursue. The Basilica, by extension, is the expression of the collapse of that ideal in Labrouste's mind by 1828 as a result of his experiences in Rome.

This personal interpretation would explain Labrouste's fifth-year *envoi*, a *pont frontière* crossing a stream on the French-Italian border. The Académie intended that this *envoi* should be a large and elaborate composition, but Labrouste sent almost nothing: "un joli sentiment," to quote Vaudoyer.[41] In 1840 Labrouste stated the academic expectation of a fifth-year *envoi* to be "something that . . . was made for France but that appeared to be inspired by travel and the study of Antiquity."[42] To an artist like Labrouste, believing in the fundamental importance of local character (and himself a Frenchman exiled for five years to Rome), the question must immediately have been: What do France and Italy have in common? The simplest answer would be their border, their point of distinction. But of slight distinction, for the two realms do meet, if only along this edge. This border even has an architectural tradition embodied in the Roman bridge at Saint-Chamas and the arch at Aosta, upon which Labrouste's *envoi* is modeled: displaced, provincial Roman designs efficient in structure and simple in details like the Basilica at Paestum. Once again the Académie was moved to criticize his study of a debased, provincial model.[43]

Is one justified in interpreting these *envois* symbolically? They purport

to be serious ancient and modern designs. Paestum certainly seems scrupulously archaeological in its details—all but one, however, and the most important: the extrapolation of the function of the buildings and thus of their chronological sequence. In reaching these conclusions Labrouste stated simply that he accepted the designations of local tradition. How could he place such faith in mere local tradition? Obviously because he felt his purpose to be the same: to explain monuments poetically, to reveal what they suggest to the intuitive, common mind.

Since Vico and Herder had been brought to the attention of the French intellectual public, first by Cousin in 1816–21, then by Michelet and Quinet in 1827, art in general and the great works of the Greeks in particular had come to be viewed as communal productions of Hellenic culture and history and as symbolic rather than factual narratives. Quinet and especially Michelet developed in their subsequent writing a "symbolic" reading of history.[44] Labrouste imposed a poetic chronological structure on the monuments at Paestum, concluding that its justness had already been recognized in the spontaneous tradition that designates them as temples to Neptune and Ceres and a basilica. These structures are not, in the end, envisioned as historical facts, but rather as inscrutable artifacts that are valuable for the poetic aperçu they suggest: the sudden glimpse of the Greek colonists in Italy losing their faith in the Doric ideal just as Labrouste himself, twenty-five hundred years later, was losing his.

It is obvious in Vaudoyer's long letter to Lebas that his commitment to archaeological precision was more than just a fixation on correctness; it was the reflection as well of a new point of view—of "the spirit of examination" introduced by the new century of the "constitutional system," producing something called "Romantic architecture." Parallel to his development of the idea of precise reading of historical monuments are general remarks attempting to place his and his friends' enterprise in cultural context—most particularly to link it to what appeared to be Romanticism.

The first murmurs came in June 1827. "Lord Byron, and not Biron," Léon exasperatedly chides his father, "was never an admiral, but a very distinguished poet and a defender of the liberty of the Greeks. . . . To get an idea of his character one must read the *Dernier Chant du Pèlerinage de Chil Harolde* [sic] by M. A. de Lamartine. It is a masterpiece of French poetry."[45] By October of that year Léon was asking for copies of Lamartine's *Méditations* and *Pèlerinage de Childe Harold*. "Don't go to Merlin, a rococo bookseller who doesn't even know who Lamartine is, go to Gosselin."[46] In October 1828 Chateaubriand arrived in Rome as French ambassador to the Holy See in the short-lived Liberal ministry of Martignac.[47] To the pleasure of the *pensionnaires*, Chateaubriand dined with them at the Villa Medicis on December 12. The literary diplomat commissioned

Vaudoyer, at his own expense, to design a small monument to Poussin for the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina. The two met frequently and talked about art.[48]

In late 1829 the Académie's harsh critique of the 1828 *envois* arrived at the Villa Medicis, and Vaudoyer's mere mentions of Romanticism became straightforward declarations. In January 1830 he wrote:

I persist in my opinion that we need no more mythology [in the programs formulated by the Ecole for the student competitions]; we live in the century of the practical [positif]*; I do not criticize the virgins of Raphael; on the contrary I cite them as [the work of a] painter who represents the ideas of his time. As for modern subjects, I think one can paint them very well. I need no other examples than the plague of Jaffa and the battles of Aboukir and Eylau of M. Gros, the* Sacre *of David, and his* Sermant du Jeu de Paume *[as well as] the battle of Austerlitz and the* Henri IV *of Gérard, and to make my ideas clearer I tell you that the* Famille malheureuse *of M. Prud'hon impressed me more than all the Narcissus's in the world. It is what I would call a* scène morale. *I do not exclude Greek or Roman subjects nor allegory but it is time . . . to paint our own history. . . . We need no more mythology. That is finished in the arts as it is in theater and in literature.*[49]

By March he was calling for a mild architectural revolution:

I do not have the ability to make myself understood. . . . The war of which I speak is not dangerous. Here it is only a matter of taste. You know that in the matter of taste it is difficult to prove who is right; thus this war in architecture is nothing more than what exists in literature between the Hugoans and the classicists and the same in painting. Why shouldn't architecture also have its little revolution? That is completely natural; the force of events is leading to it. The architecture of a people should derive its character [from] 1. the institutions, 2. the customs, 3. the climate, 4. the nature of materials, etc. . . . Thus the architecture of 1830 cannot be that of 1680 when one built Versailles while making the people die of hunger and misery. The luxury of a despot is superb [and] amazing, but the happiness of an entire nation wisely governed is much more satisfying. Thus it is great wisdom which influences us today to return to architecture an expression truer and more in harmony with the ideas of our century.[50]

(The real, political revolution was to break out three months later in July, and the tone of Léon's letters was to become more menacing, as we shall see.)

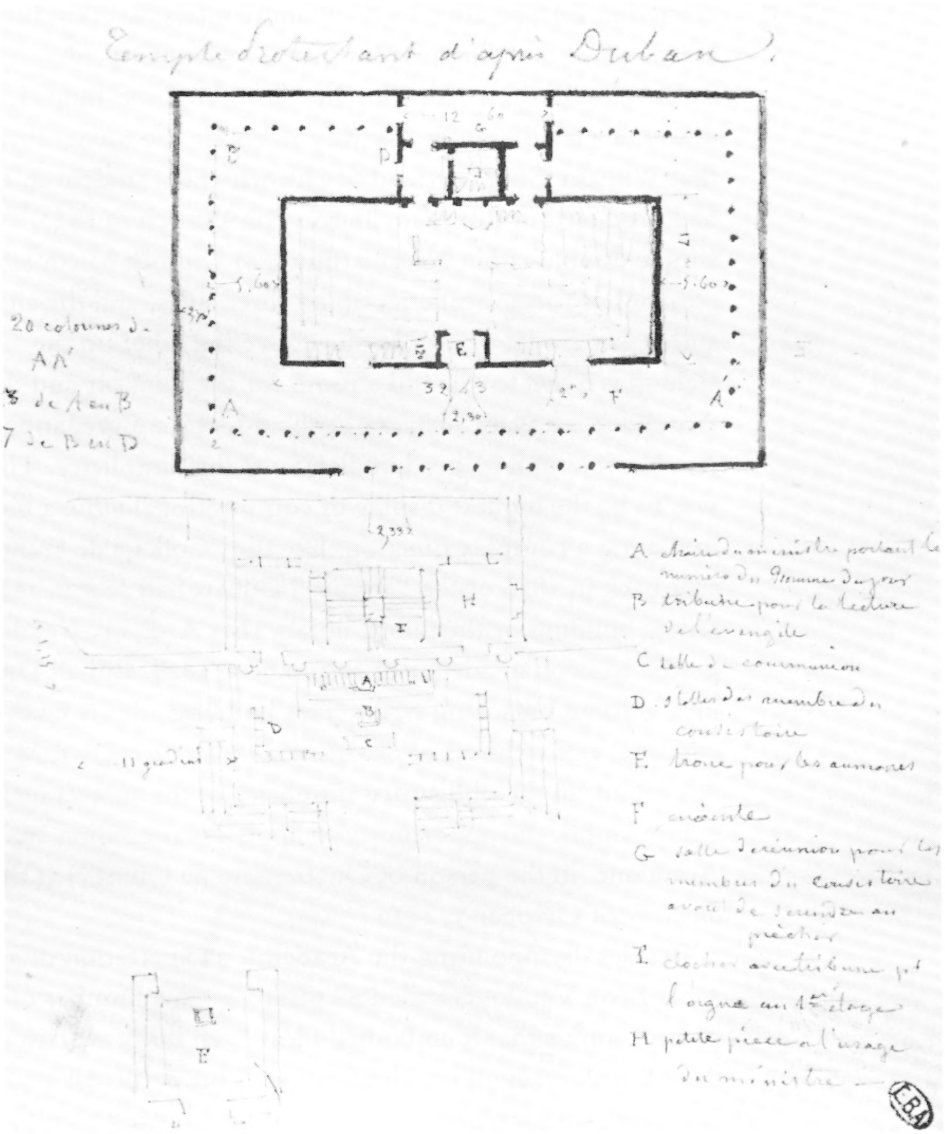
The *pensionnaires'* most forceful declarations of Romanticism, nonetheless, were their fifth-year *envois*, original designs envisioned for modern France. Again the first decisive blow was struck in 1828 by Duban's *temple protestant*. Like Labrouste's Paestum series, which accompanied it to Paris, it is a difficult project to grasp immediately; but if placed carefully in context, it emerges as a most striking statement.

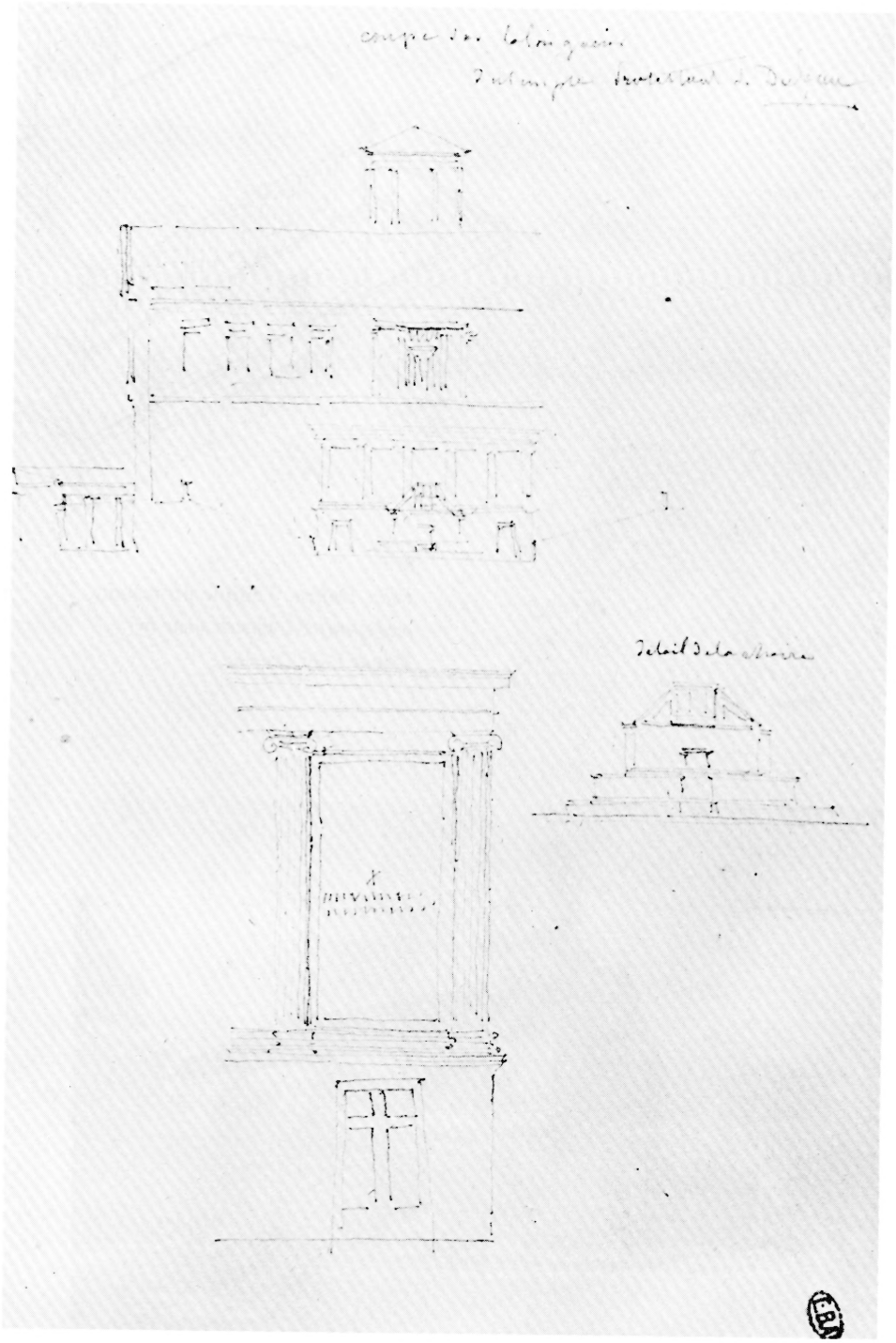
The original drawings of the project are lost, but the basic layout is recorded in two sets of sketches made after it, one by Labrouste and one by Joseph Lecointe (figures 6, 7).[51] The latter are particularly precise and give the plan, section, and details with dimensions and with the liturgical furniture depicted and identified. The little that we know about the project is, in fact, what is most important.

First, what kind of Protestant church is this? Duban identifies it only with the subscription, "Temple consacré au culte protestant." It does not resemble in layout or scale any of the impressive Protestant churches erected in Europe after 1800: Weinbrenner's Stadtkirche in Karlsruhe (1807–16), von Hansen's Vor Frue Kirke in Copenhagen (1811–16), Schinkel's Berlin parish churches (projected and built from 1827). Nor does Duban's design in any way resemble the model Protestant church that Wilhelm Stier, a friend of Hittorff and a student in Paris of Lecointe, had produced in Rome for Baron von Bunsen in 1827.[52] Instead, it is a simple double-cubic volume (figure 8) without balconies or interior complexities of form. Seats tier up on three sides, and the altar table, pulpit, and organ are set vertically one above the other on the axis of the fourth. Behind is a bell tower and a room for the minister and the consistory. Around it is a walled cloister, probably the congregational cemetery. The Académie shook its head in dismay at this simplicity. The fifth-year *envoi* was to be the highest display of compositional *virtù*: a big plan accommodating a complex function, like the "Collège de France" Blouet had sent back in 1826 or the "Bourse" Gilbert had sent in 1827, or like the senate building or the public library that A.-L.-T. Vaudoyer had suggested to Léon in a letter of February 8, 1828. But all Duban sent was this little puritan preaching box. "This building admits neither sculpture, nor painting, nor richness of ornament—one regrets that M. Duban . . . has not found, in the obligatory simplicity of the subject he has chosen for his composition, the opportunity to apply his preceding studies," intoned the Académie (in the person of Quatremère de Quincy) at the *séance publique annuelle* of October 3, 1829.[53]

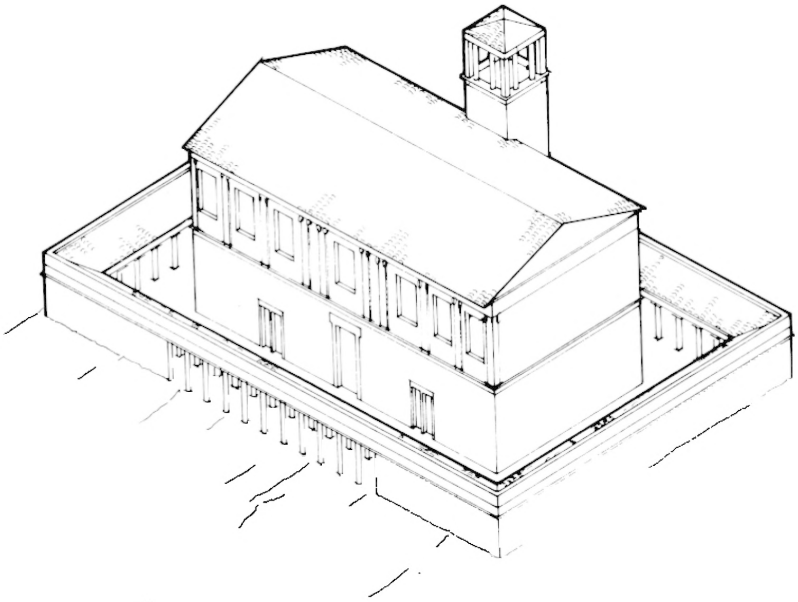
Besides disappointing the Académie's expectation of a striking plan—what Léon Vaudoyer called a "pétard"—in a number of details Duban's project shows that it embodied ideas even more worrisome to the architectural bureaucracy of the Restoration. This particular plan, with everything in a single space arranged for ease of hearing and seeing, is Calvinist, and

6
Félix Duban, Temple protestant, *plan. Fifth-year* envoi, *1828–29. Sketch by J.-F.-J. Lecointe. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris.*





7
Félix Duban, Temple protestant, *cross section and details. Fifth-year* envoi, *1828–29. Sketch by J.-F.-J. Lecointe. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris.*



8
Félix Duban, Temple protestant, *reconstructed isometric view by David Van Zanten.*

9
Felix Wilhelm Kubly, Protestant church, Heiden, Switzerland, 1838–40. (Photo courtesy Benno Schubiger)

more specifically Swiss Calvinist, a type established in Switzerland in the seventeenth century and manifested in Duban's day in Conrad Stadler's parish church at Uster (1823–26) and in Felix Wilhelm Kubly's at Heiden (1836–40, figure 9).[54] Kubly we have already met: he and Decraëne were part of the Romantic *pensionnaires'* circle, both having studied with Labrouste and Léon Vaudoyer in A.-L.-T. Vaudoyer's atelier in Paris before coming to Rome. Duban's *temple protestant* is the middle term between Uster and Heiden. Nor was it done merely from books or from conversations with Kubly and Melchior Berri, who, besides being Duban's friend and a student of Huyot, was the son and son-in-law of Calvinist pastors from Basel.[55] On his way back to Paris from Rome in 1829, Duban studied Calvinist church architecture in Geneva (as well as, perhaps, elsewhere in Switzerland and Germany).[56] He redrew his *envoi* as a result and replaced that done in Rome with that shown in Lecointe's sketches.

Presenting a design for a Swiss Calvinist church for a fifth-year *envoi* in 1828 had several implications. First, it flouted the expectations of the Académie, which conducted the Academy in Rome specifically so that the ancient Mediterranean tradition might be thoroughly inculcated in its prize students. A Swiss Calvinist type is neither ancient nor Italian in any sense. Second, it was inimical to the policies of the restored Bourbon government. Technically, it presented a model for French Protestant church building (a tradition that had been forced into Switzerland in 1685 by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes). This was an appropriate gesture in 1828 due to the liberalization introduced by the ministry of Martignac that included, on January 11 of that year, the naming of the Swiss Lutheran Baron Georges Cuvier as Conseiller d'Etat for the newly upgraded division of Cultes Protestants et Isréalites. But Martignac's year-long ministry was only a moment in the absolutist, clericist Restoration government, preceded by the repressive ministry of Villèle and followed by that of Polignac—which finally incited the revolution of 1830. Protestantism was otherwise a catchword for Liberalism and resistance to the Bourbon monarchy. Protestants led the Liberal opposition in parliament: Guizot, Benjamin Constant, de Labrode, Delessert, Cuvier, Stapfer. Protestantism was presented as the philosophical ingredient that would regenerate French culture by Rousseau, de Staël, Sismondi, Constant, Mignet, and Quinet.[57]

The historian and Liberal journalist François Mignet—famous as the author of the first popular history of the Revolution—had been very clear indeed about how Calvinism might be Liberalism in politics in his articles and in his popular lectures at the Paris Athenée of 1822 ("De la Ligue et de protestantisme en France") and 1823 ("Histoire de la révolution d'Angleterre et de la restauration des Stuarts"). Formulating his ideas definitively in "Etablissement de la réforme à Genève" (1824–34), Mignet shows how Calvin, using the ecclesiastical government he created in the consistory,

established a democratic counterforce to the existing feudal authority so that in Geneva and subsequently in Holland, Scotland, England, and France the Calvinist church became the instrument of a parliamentary revolution. Calvin "subordinated the State to the Church," Mignet wrote, *civil society to religious society, and prepared in Geneva a religion and a government for all those in Europe who rejected belief and resisted the government of their land. This is what happened in France during the minority of Charles IX; in Scotland during the troubled reign of Mary Stuart; in the Netherlands at the time of the revolt of the United Provinces; and in England under Charles I. . . . This system, which was to extend over a large part of Europe, which prepared the Protestantism of the insurrection against the princes as the system of Luther had prepared by Protestantism the insurrection against the Popes, which put an ecclesiastical government at the disposition of all countries where political power could not sustain itself, which was to agitate for sixty years in France, served to carry out the Reformation in Scotland, contributed to the emancipation of Holland, presided over the revolution in England, which would leave its mark on Coligny, on the Prince of Orange, on Cromwell, this Calvin introduced first in Geneva.*[58]

Indeed, this is but the core of the concept of the evolution of post-medieval philosophical history formulated by Victor Cousin in his celebrated courses at the Sorbonne in 1828 and 1829. The Revolution of 1789, Cousin proposed, was but the outcome of the Reformation in Germany and the parliamentary revolution in England. These two phenomena were local and isolated in their time; but when generalized by the philosophers of the great, central nation of Europe, France, during the eighteenth century and when manifested in the Revolution, they were brought to fruition.[59]

Both Liberalism and Protestantism were thoroughly bound up with Romanticism in the late-Restoration mind. In 1825 Ludovic Vitet (founder of the Commission des Monuments Historiques as well as a friend of Labrouste, Duban, and Vaudoyer) wrote, "Romanticism is Protestantism in the arts."[60] The historians whom we have noted exploring the Protestant thread in French and European history were generally called "Romantic" and by the late 1820s were accepted as models for the Romantic writers led by Hugo.[61] In the detail and vividness of their writing as well as in their admiration for the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance (the periods of the communes, the Reformation, and the first parliaments), they seem to complement Dumas, Nodier, and Hugo.

It was not a great step from equating Liberalism, Protestantism, and Romanticism to making anti-academicism the last term in the series. Since

David's campaign against the Académie during the Revolution, that institution had been firmly linked to absolutism. Now, with the royalist Quatremère de Quincy proclaiming a theory of an immutable ideal in the Orders, that charge seemed borne out. Not surprisingly, contemporary critics placed Duban's fifth-year *envoi* in this context. The architect Petrus Borel wrote in *L'Artiste* in 1833:

The temple, perfectly laid out, carefully thought through, of a fine and unexpected appearance, aroused loud cries from MM. the academicians; this design, at least as heretical as the communicants for whose use it was destined, was treated as one treats the Huguenots, and they almost made an auto-da-fé of it, or to speak a more harmonious language, a sacrifice to the God of Good Taste. . . . *At this first and terrifying demonstration, the* belle au bois dormant, *that is the Académie, awoke alarmed and protested as strenuously as possible against this temple, questioning the legitimacy of their architecture of divine right, because there is also legitimacy and divine right in the Académie; because there is a legitimate architecture and an illegitimate one, because there is a revealed art and an apocryphal one, unrecognized, not by the Council of Nice or Trent, but by the council of Fontaine and Guénepin.*[62]

Duban's *envoi* was a rough equivalent of Hugo's *Cromwell* published the year before: an attack on the academic conventions expanded into an historical resuscitation of the age of Protestantism and parliamentarianism. Duban's trip to Switzerland to study Protestantism in its homeland coincided with those of Edgar Quinet and Jules Michelet to Germany (1827 and 1828, respectively), undertaken for the same purpose.[63]

Neither Duban's flouting of the Académie's expectations nor his revolutionary political insinuations, however, are strictly architectural in nature. One can conclude from his *envoi* that he was dissatisfied with the Bourbon monarchy and with the Neoclassical administration of the arts, but can one perceive here the formulation of a profoundly new style of architecture? To look for peculiar ornaments and exotic configurations of the sort that Wilhelm Stier introduced into his Protestant church project of 1827, however, is to miss the basic principle of architectural creation accepted by the Romantic *pensionnaires*. Since, as Vaudoyer stated, architecture is the result of climatic, material, and social forces, to create a new architecture, one must study these forces. The Protestant church type, particularly in the form Duban has chosen here, was the key to the evolution of a new institutional form.

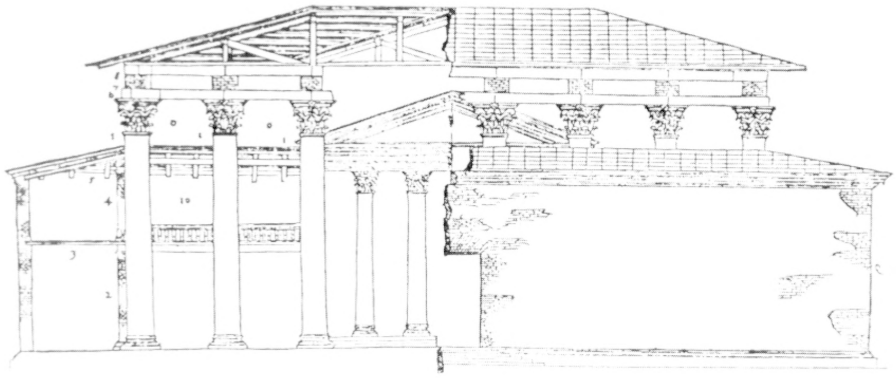
As we shall see in the next chapter, the Early Renaissance, represented in Italy by Brunelleschi and in France by the architects of François I, Henri

II, and Henri IV, was pictured by the Romantic *pensionnaires* as a moment when modern Christian culture comprehended the lucidity and logic of antiquity and was profoundly reanimated by this illumination, before sinking into the academicism of the Baroque and the absolutism of Louis XIV. The *pensionnaires'* objective was to carry architectural evolution forward from this point. Their friend the critic Hippolyte Fortoul later wrote that they "brought back from Rome, with a new and correct conception of the ancient monuments, the necessity to take up the architectural tradition where it had been in France at the beginning of the seventeenth century."[64] A basic component of this Early Renaissance French culture emphasized by every Liberal historian was Calvinism—a French conception gaining strength during the sixteenth century, almost establishing itself with Henri IV, then violently uprooted by Louis XIV in 1685.[65] French Calvinism's architectural masterwork was de Brosse's temple at Charenton, a huge double-cubic space set laterally on its axis. The Swiss Calvinist church type preserved its memory after Charenton was destroyed by a mob and Calvinist church building was forbidden in France.[66] Duban, in his *envoi,* was thus reintroducing the Charenton church type back into France, making good the cultural break brought about by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

There is one last knot Duban may have sought to tie with his *envoi.* At least by 1845, when writing of the Charenton temple in his "Etudes d'architecture en France," Vaudoyer recognized de Brosse's church as a materialization of Vitruvius's basilica at Fano (figure 10).[67] That is, he envisioned the church as picking up the thread of antiquity just as de Brosse's other works or Brunelleschi's dome did, but in an importantly different way. Not only was the form of the Fano building absolutely logical—being communicated by Vitruvius almost exclusively in terms of numerical ratios—but it was also specifically designed as a place for legal argument and judgment, a balconied double-cube with the tribune in the center of the long wall. Duban thus would appear to be evoking Fano as well as Charenton—Roman law as well as French Renaissance religion—to make the following historical point: that the Protestant church, like the Calvinist cult that engendered it, was a place of reason and judgment; its reason was Roman logic and its law Roman law (as indeed Calvinist law was). Calvin ruled Geneva as president of the consistory. By submitting this *envoi,* Duban made a series of architectural and cultural links previously ignored by academic Neoclassicism and Bourbon absolutism, ones connecting the Republican qualities of Roman antiquity with Renaissance Protestant France and now, in 1828, with the Liberal effort of Martignac's ministry.

It is interesting to note that the fourth-year *envoi* Labrouste originally intended to submit with Duban's *temple protestant* was a reconstruction of

10
Andrea Palladio, Reconstruction of Vitruvius's basilica at Fano.



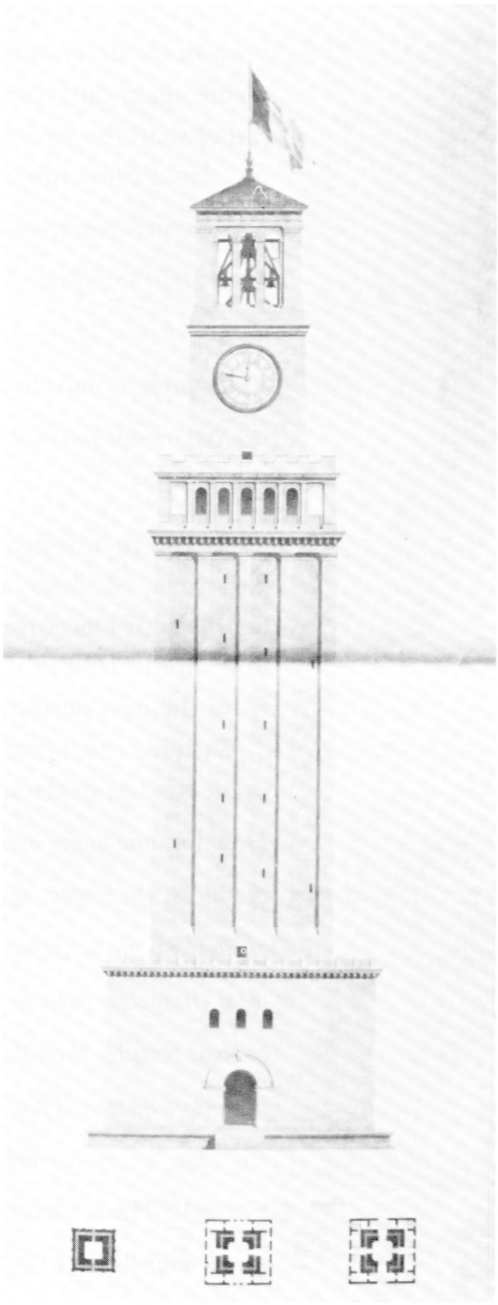
Vitruvius's basilica at Fano. He traveled there with Vaudoyer in July to see whether there were any remains.[68] He changed his mind, however—and Vaudoyer insisted that it was not because he would have had only Vitruvius's written description to work from—perhaps because he wished to make his point personally, not as a reinforcement of Duban's.

After Duban's *temple protestant* came Labrouste's *pont frontière* and several other fifth-year *envois* pointedly political in subject: Duc's 1830 *monument aux victimes de la Révolution de 1830,* Vaudoyer's *beffroi* of 1831 (figure 11), Marie-Antoine Delannoy's *monument triomphal à élever à Toulon en l'honneur de l'armée d'Afrique* of 1833, Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux's *chambre des députés* of 1834 (figures 15-17), and Pierre-Joseph Garrez's *halle aux grains pour Paris* of 1835.[69] These last could celebrate the new order, however, as Duban's could not (although Constant-Dufeux's and Garrez's were seen as Republican and thus still revolutionary[70]). What is remarkable about these projects is not only their subject but that they all reject the Académie's conception of the last *envoi* as a grand composition and thus carry the revolution in government into the administration of the arts.

The Vaudoyer letters as usual permit an intimate glimpse of these events. In a letter of August 27, 1831, Léon announced his intention of executing a mere belfry, a *beffroi,* for his fifth-year project, already aware that "you will, I think, criticize me for the slight importance of this project." He was too busy finishing his historical studies in Rome, he explained, to execute an elaborate composition of the sort the Académie required, and nonetheless felt that with a *beffroi* "one might make something very monumental and with great character."[71] Vaudoyer *père* responded on September 20:

I admit that this choice has singularly amazed me. Is this, I ask myself, a motif to which one might apply (following the intention, the institution of this last envoi*) all the advanced and excellent studies you made during your four preceding years? Is there here any invention in plan? An occasion for architectural and monumental disposition and proportioning? . . . Do you not fear that one will say of your* beffroi *what they did . . . of the* prêche *(preaching box) of M. Duban, of the bridge of M. Labrouste, and finally of the little* monument de Juillet *of this year on a half-sheet of paper simply in outline without plan or section by M. Duc?*[72]

He went on to cite a list of proper subjects he had suggested in a letter of February 8, 1828—a *chambre des pairs avec salle de trône,* a *bibliothèque publique,* a *campo santo comme à Pise,* etc. But, a loving father, he devoted the rest of his letter to advice about how Léon might make his *beffroi* a good one. "This is your thunderclap," he ended, "try to make it dazzling!"[73]



11
Léon Vaudoyer, Beffroi pour une ville de guerre frontière. *Fifth-year* envoi, *1831–32. Private collection, Paris.*

Receiving in response only a few remarks about details, interspersed with fierce declarations of adherence to Romanticism, Vaudoyer *père* wrote again on October 15 to suggest that Léon emphasize the decorative rather than the structural in his project. What came back from Vaudoyer *fils,* dated November 17, was this:

I will never compromise my doctrines and . . . I will not sacrifice any of my ideas in an effort to please. I will not make a pétard. *I have neither the time, the means nor the desire. If one insists to me tomorrow that a project of the sort I understand, a vast project, must be made, I would respond that I am not an architect, my studies are not finished, and this is because the arts are not taught in France as they should be.*[74]

Léon also mentioned that he was studying the campaniles at Venice, Cremona, Modena, and Valencia for his *envoi.* His father advised him, in his reply of December 10, "Instead of falling back into the infancy of art, you should seek in the enlightened centuries the monuments which date from the best period of architecture."[75]

With his *envoi* finished and his departure from Rome approaching, Léon made his last declaration in a letter of January 4, 1832:

How can one make architecture like [that of the Temple of] Venus and Rome with the ideas, the needs, the materials of today? There surely is the old school of the antique no matter what . . . and that produced the Madeleine, monument without local character, then in front of it the Chambre des Députés, which is another ancient temple, then the Bourse, and finally the portico of the Pantheon with its infamous lintels. That is how for so long our architecture has been without character; that, to say it more clearly, is why we do not have architecture. . . . Poor France!!! What I wish most is to have a bad report on my project [from the Académie] because then I might believe that it was not too bad.[76]

The Académie duly reported at the annual *séance publique* that Vaudoyer, "having confined himself in a project so slight, has denied himself all his means,"[77] and went on to attack all the fifth-year *envois* recently sent to Paris.

What was at issue? First, the refusal to present a display of compositional *virtù.* But there was more: a *beffroi* is not just its English analogue, a belfry. It is (to quote the dictionary of the Académie Française) a "tower or belfry where one stands watch, where there is a bell to sound an alarm."[78] Again, Quatremère wrote in his *Dictionnaire d'architecture* of this very year: "It is, in fortified cities or in towns within reach of the enemy, a tower, a belfry, or an elevated place, where there is a bell that sounds

when one spots the enemy or when one wishes to assemble troops."[79] It is a watchtower, more particularly a civil watchtower, an appendage to the *hôtel de ville* and the very opposite of a church belfry (which has a separate designation in French: *clocher*).

Vaudoyer himself wrote in 1841: "The *beffroi* and the *hôtel de ville* are often interchangeable, and in charters and franchises one bestows on a town the right to a *beffroi* as a sign of liberty."[80] Later, in his didactic fantasy *Histoire d'un hôtel de ville et d'une cathédrale* (1878), Viollet-le-Duc vividly depicted the *beffroi* as the expression of the democratic, communal element in the architectural landscape of his fictive city of Clusy.[81] When in 1099 a commune was established there, the old Gallo-Roman curia was transformed into a *hôtel de ville* by the addition of a massive *beffroi* where it fronted the market square. In this were hung three bells, "the first and the largest for the convocation of assemblies; the second for signaling fires, attacks, disturbances; the third to sound at morning and at curfew."[82] The bishop, however, refused to respect the commune, and his retainers robbed and molested the population. "Often, at night, one heard the bell in the *beffroi* ringing, announcing the attack of a party sallying from the episcopal palace against the richest houses."[83] He forced the king to disestablish the commune. "The abolition of the commune was published in the town [with] an injunction that all the magistrates of the town should cease their functions, deposit the seal and the banner of the commune at the episcopal palace, take down the bells from the *beffroi* without delay, and avoid any assembly."[84] In response the citizens gathered and, to the ringing of the bells in the *beffroi*, attacked the bishop's palace and cathedral, burned them, and slaughtered their inhabitants.

Vaudoyer apparently wished his *beffroi* to be understood in this context, as indicated by the huge tricolor flapping at its roof peak. His initial intention had been to place his *beffroi* on the *terre-plein* at the west prow of the Ile de la Cité in Paris, "supposed to be in front of the city hall, which occupies the space covered by the Place Dauphine and the streets and buildings that surround it."[85] The Revolution of 1830 had been proclaimed at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, as the Republics of 1848 and 1870 were also to be. It was Vaudoyer's intention to install that institution in the central place of the Parisian urban landscape and mark it with a watchtower visible along the river and from the hills north and south.

Vaudoyer's project, as executed, is isolated, not in Paris but on a "frontière de guerre." It is merely a monument of vigilance, a reminder to the Académie that the revolution is accomplished and that there is a watch for resistance and backsliding. Student demonstrations against the administration of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and of the Grand Prix competition had followed the revolution of July and had closed the school most of the fall.[86] In Rome Labrouste had already been proposing reforms of these

institutions; and on January 25, 1831, the Commission des Beaux-Arts was created by the government to project reforms. Among its members were Labrouste, Duban, and Blouet (as well as Delacroix, Delaroche, and Scheffer). The *pensionnaires* were both excited and aware that from the start the Académie would refuse to acknowledge the commission's authority. In the same letter that Vaudoyer informed his father of his choice of a *beffroi* as an *envoi*, he also blustered, "If the Institut continues to press forward on the absurd course it follows today, I will declare myself in open opposition to it . . . and this opposition will grow so much that it will eventually overthrow this body if it does not desist, just as the Liberal opposition overthrew Charles X."[87] But the Académie did not cede. When the Commission des Beaux-Arts made its report on October 31, 1831, that body refused to respond and by obstinacy (helped by governmental lethargy) rendered it a dead letter. Years later, in 1862, Viollet-le-Duc wrote of the Académie, "It has not had its revolution, poor devil, and it must have it, it will have it, I do not doubt . . . but we will probably not see it in our own time. . . . We need a 1792."[88]

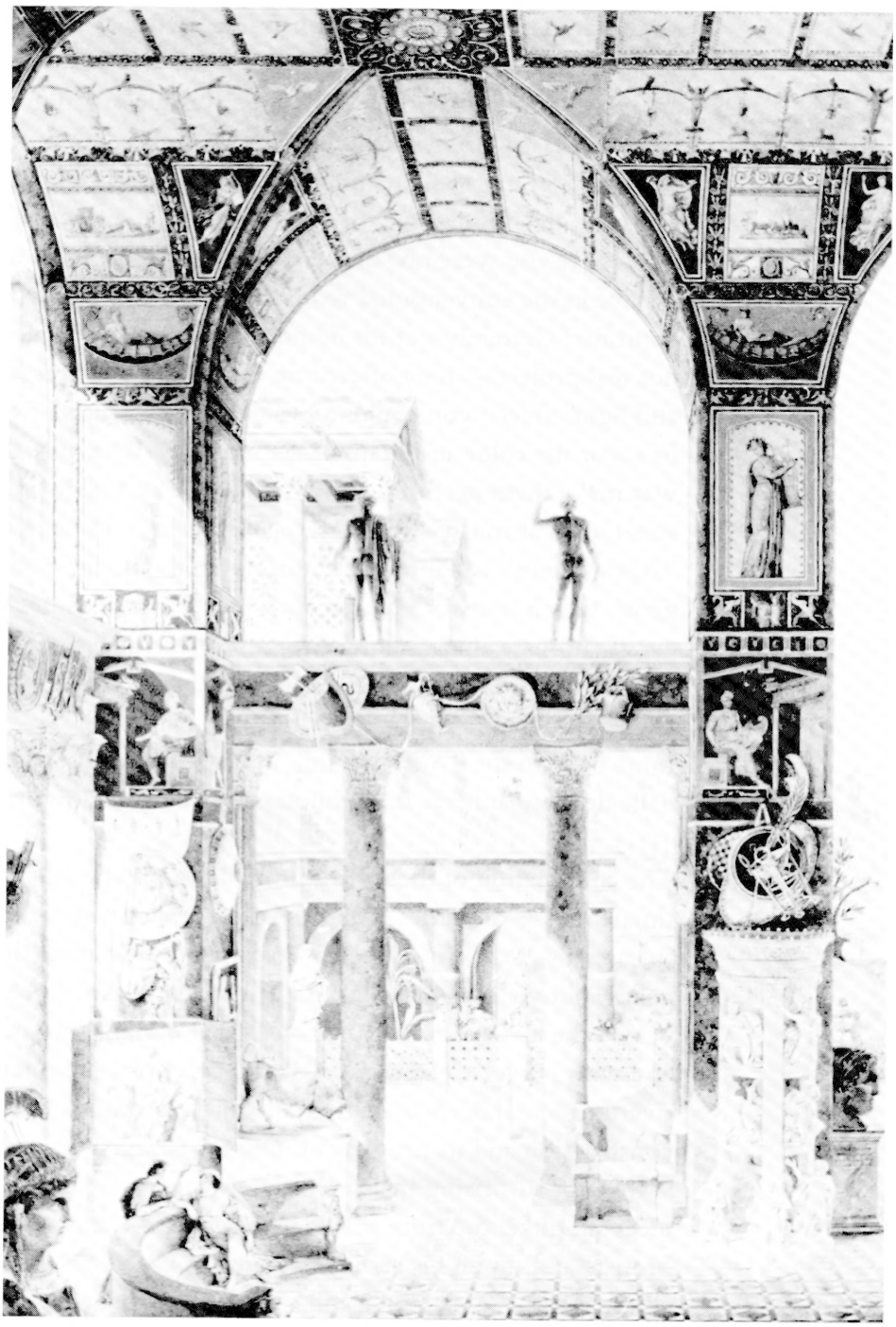
Until recently the Labrouste family kept on the wall a framed watercolor inscribed on the back, "Agrigentum. 1828" (figure 12). It shows a fortified Greek hill town with terraces above a gateway, a temple, a tomb, and perhaps a palace (from left to right), all garishly painted and, in the case of the city gate, decked with battlefield litter to frighten any potential enemy. The first thing one realizes is that this was the real source for the teasing *envois* of Théodore Labrouste and Delannoy (figures 4, 5), not the comparatively restrained section drawing of the Basilica at Paestum (figure 3). One also notices that this model is fiercer and more profound than its imitations. It is not an archaeological reconstruction at all; and despite its subscription, it does not represent any of the six celebrated temples commanding the ridge of ancient Agrigentum. What it shows instead is a jumble of construction quite like the nineteenth-century town of Grigenti, which clung to another less dramatic ridge inland to the north (figure 13). Labrouste, as he did in his Paestum series, has projected back into the past from the real, undignified experience of the site itself with a ragged, humble life still warm within it. He has been blind to "the Roman magnificence, which one would love to see," as Quatremère remarked of Delannoy's *envoi*.[89]

The most striking and peculiar quality in Labrouste's "Agrigentum," however, is that the style of rendering itself is primitive and naive. The scale is wrong; the perspective is exaggerated; the lines are too sharp; the colors are too intense—it exists in an eerie "airless space" (to use Neil Levine's phrase). Duban had also begun executing watercolor fantasies in Rome and continued to do so far into the 1850s, to considerable public

12
Henri Labrouste, "Agrigentum," imaginary reconstruction of an ancient Greek city, dated 1828. Académie d'Architecture, Paris.

13
Nineteenth-century view of Grigenti, Sicily. (Photo courtesy Northwestern University)

14
Félix Duban, "Baja," architectural fantasy, dated 1835. Musée Vivenel, Compiègne.

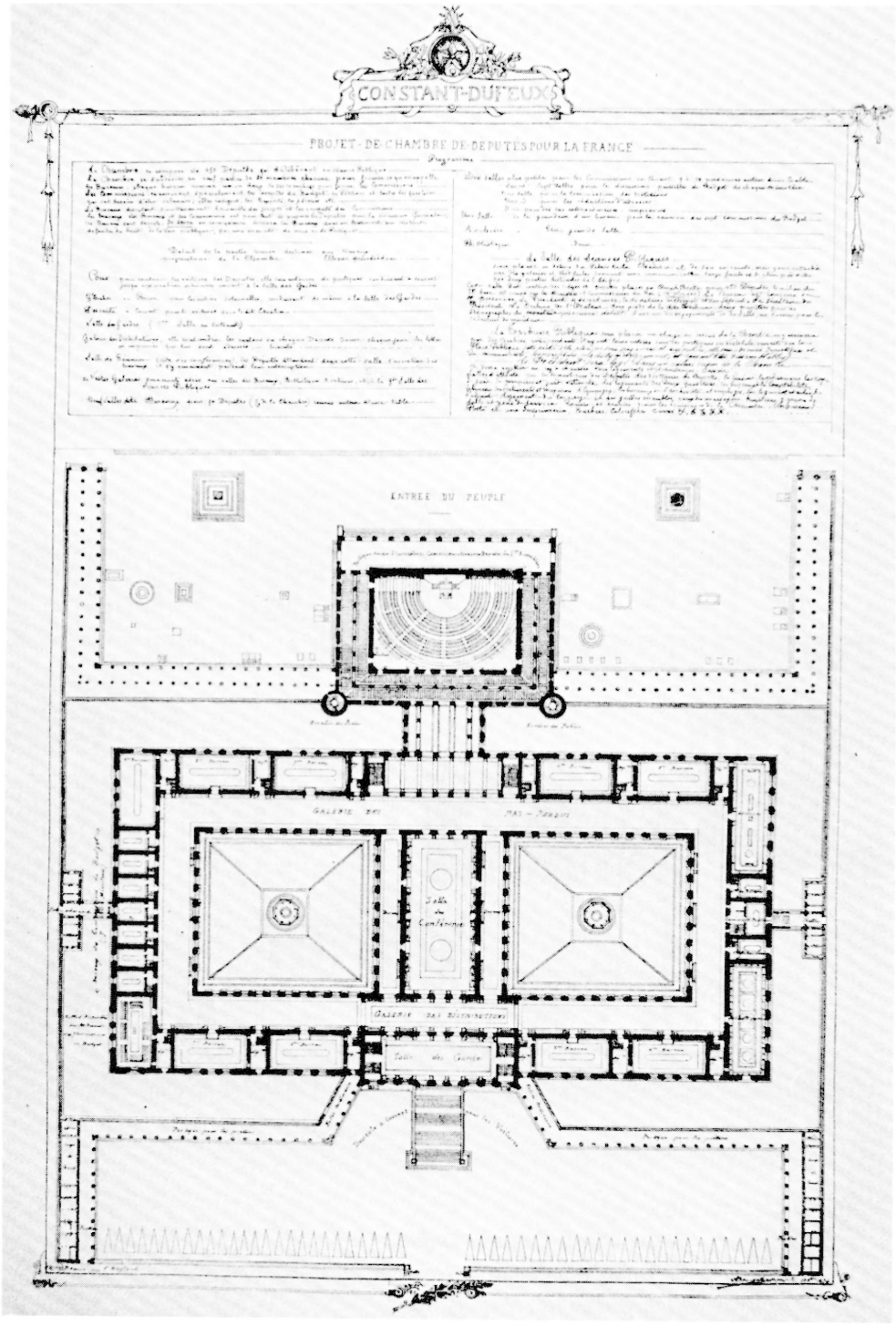


acknowledgment, but his are realistic reconstructions of ancient and Renaissance monuments that invite one to walk directly into them (figure 14).[90] Labrouste's fantasy, by contrast, is just that: something "other" that carries the mind across a threshold into a different world. His sketchbooks from his years in Rome are filled with drawings of naive, out-of-scale, unperspectival architectural backgrounds extracted from Pompeiian and quattrocento frescoes. They embodied a way of seeing that he was trying to study and that here, in the "Agrigentum," he reproduces.

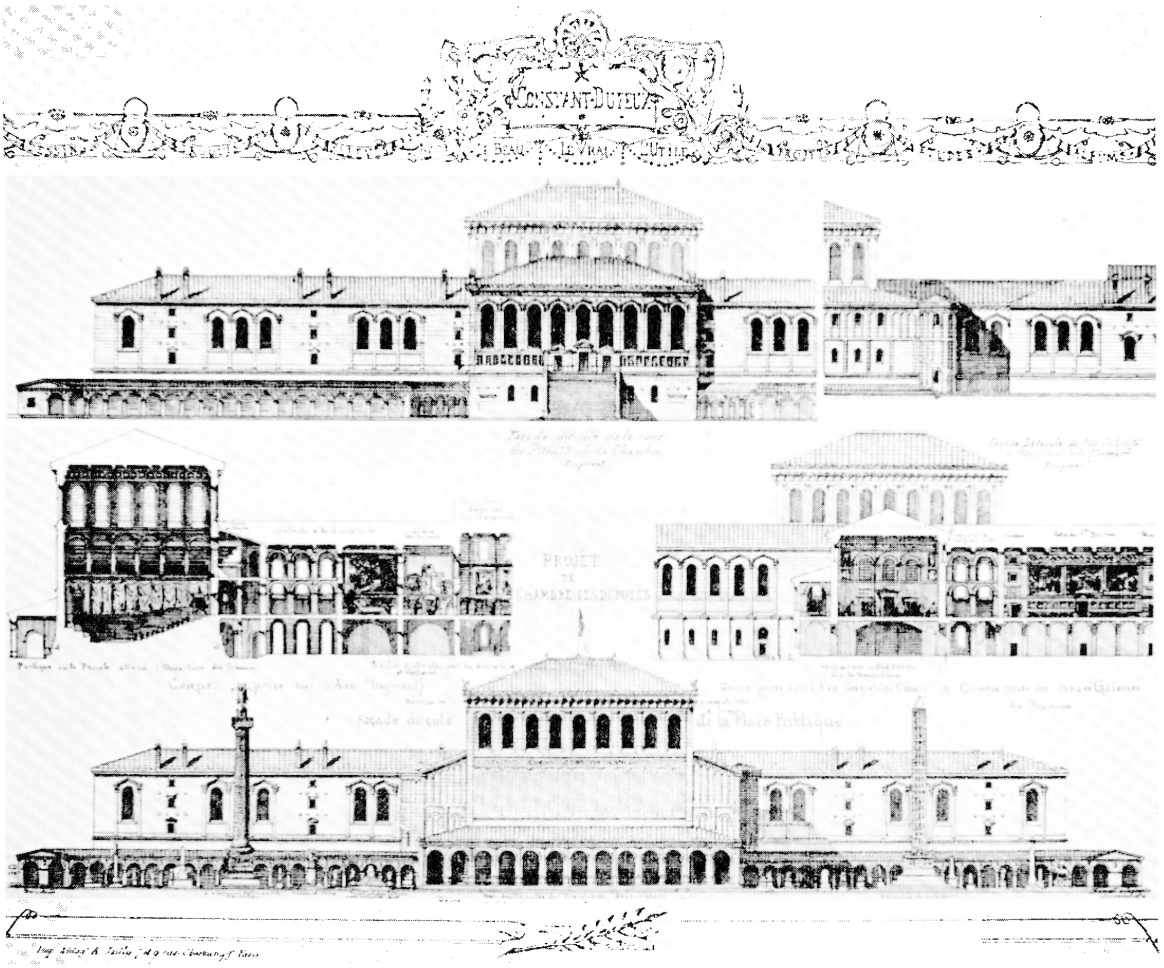
Labrouste's "Agrigentum" is a pure fantasy and as such brings out a quality underlying the more constrained official *envois*: they were not serious building designs but rather conceptual gestures. It was a pretense of the *envois* that practice in archaeological reconstruction would increase the designer's knowledge of canonical form and that the fifth-year exercise in composition might sharpen his practical ability. But neither the academicians nor the *pensionnaires* had the slightest intention that these designs be erected. If you were one of the Romantic *pensionnaires* who had ceased to believe in the conventional worth of these exercises, what could you use them for? Certainly not for demonstrating a "new style" since they were not real projects—they offered no field to check expressive proportions and light effects; you could not calculate the thrusts or finger the moldings or savor the color and grain of the masonry. The only thing you could do was make them gestures, either political, like Vaudoyer's *beffroi*, or personal like Labrouste's Paestum, *pont frontière,* and "Agrigentum." The "Agrigentum" is Labrouste's musing on the hodge-podge town of Grigenti, which transforms itself back into Periclean times before his mind's eye. Labrouste alone among the *pensionnaires* is personal, rather than political and programmatic. The result is that only in his work are things unresolved but continuously resolving. We shall see in the final chapter how he came back to the "Agrigentum" in his last, greatest design, that of the Salle des Imprimés at the Bibliothèque Nationale (figure 84).

The culmination of the fifth-year *envois*—intentionally so—was the penultimate one of the series, the *chambre des députés* of Constant-Dufeux of 1834 (figures 15–17).[91] In subject, it continues the political thread of Duban's and Vaudoyer's *envois*, but with greater emphasis. In composition, it develops the boxy reticence of these earlier designs, but now at large scale and with perverse elaboration. In its use of ornament it applies the accretive, incidental decoration suggested in Labrouste's Paestum basilica reconstruction and its progeny among the fourth-year *envois*.

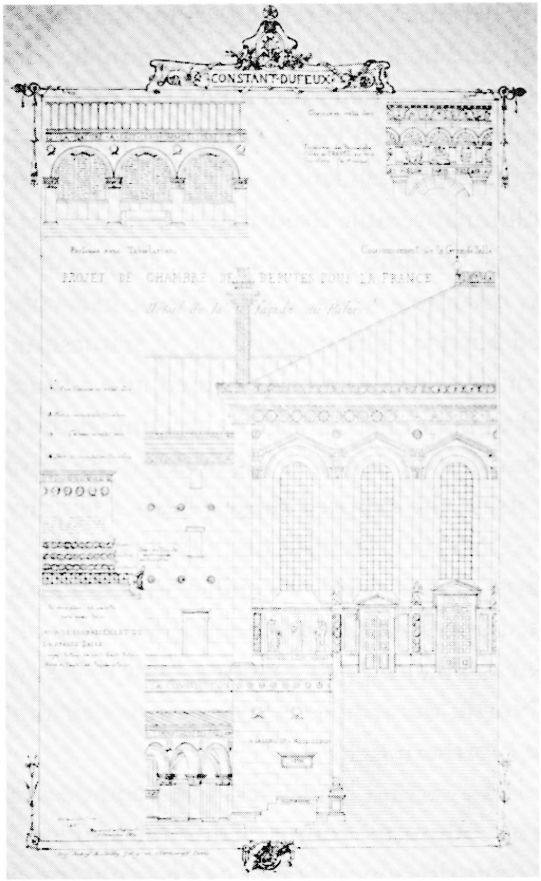
It is not surprising that such a cumulative statement of the *pensionnaires'* ideas should come from this hand. Constant-Dufeux was as old as Labrouste and, upon his arrival in Rome in late 1829, the most successful of all the *pensionnaires*. While still a student at the Ecole he had designed

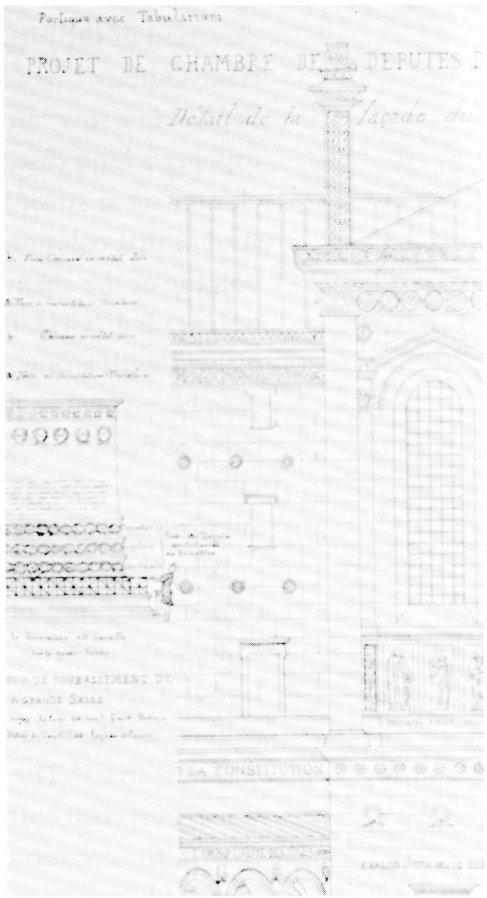


15
Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux, Chambre des députés, *plan. Fifth-year* envoi, *1834–35. Redrawn and published lithographically by A. Joilly, Paris, 1872–75.*



16
Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux, Chambre des députés, *elevations. Fifth-year* envoi, *1834–35. Redrawn and published lithographically by A. Joilly, Paris, 1872–75.*





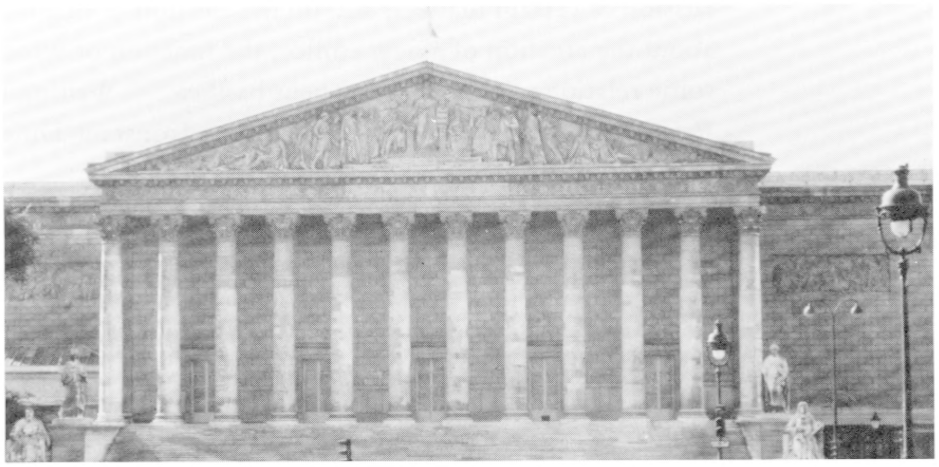
17
Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux, Chambre des députés, *details. Fifth-year* envoi, *1834–35. Redrawn and published lithographically by A. Joilly, Paris, 1872–75.*

important work at the canals Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin and had projected the Galérie Colbert for the architect Billaud and the Fontaine Gaillon for Visconti—this last the finest piece of Restoration decoration not from the hand of Percier.[92] He is said to have had eight million francs of work on hand when he won the Grand Prix. Upon his return to Paris, he established himself as the principal ornamentalist of the group—Labrouste's competitor as the originator of the Néo-Grec mode. But the great opportunities he had received before going to Rome did not again present themselves, apparently in part because of the reputation for radicality he had cultivated with his *envois,* and he never built a major public structure.

Constant-Dufeux's *chambre des députés* was obviously conceived with the existing building, erected by Bernard Poyet (1742–1824) in 1806–10, in mind (figure 18).[93] The first thing evident in comparing the two facades is that the monumental columnar temple front that constitutes the whole elevation of the Napoleonic building has, in a sense, slipped down Constant-Dufeux's facade to become a series of short Doric half-columns embedded in a low, arcaded portico. The majestic file of statuesque shafts topping a high cascade of steps has been transformed into a functional cloister set at street level to keep rain off visitors arriving at the building. And as that colonnade has slipped down, it has revealed the blank, boxy volume of the chamber itself; the exposed surface bears a lengthy inscription headed "CHARTE CONSTITUTIONELLE." The chamber's walls are pierced with a ring of large arched windows and crowned with a corbelled cornice enframing painted porcelain plaques bearing the arms of all the cities of France. The roof is a tall, hipped covering built to cast off the rains and snows of the North; the windows are expansive to admit an ample flow of the feeble Northern light.

Behind the chamber rises a second larger, less open and decorated volume divided into suites of committee rooms. Constant-Dufeux rephrased and regularized the 1830 constitution of France as his program, and this layout is its consequence. It divides the legislative process into a public, deliberative function and a private, analytical one carried on by committees in secret.[94] The chamber enclosing the deliberative function faces outward; porcelain emblems of the cities of the nation sparkle around its crown, the constitution rests on its brow, a cloister opening upon a public square filled with political memorials sits at its foot. This last includes a column "à la mémoire des victimes de la Révolution," the Monument Desaix, a "Sepulture aux citoyens mort en juillet, 1830," the obelisk of Luxor (set up in the Place de la Concorde in 1836), and is surrounded on three sides by a "tabularium" of written inscriptions. The private committee block of the structure faces inward, away from this square, with a private members' entry at the back.

In the public square or in the cloister around it, the public might wait



18
Bernard Poyet, Chambre des Députés, Paris 1806–10.

for the opening of the session, then flow into the building through the broad corridors surrounding the chamber and climb the spiral staircases to the two tiers of galleries. The inner wall of this annular corridor steps forward in a series of four tall benches. In a detail sketch, Constant-Dufeux shows that these benches are decorative bands inscribed with all the names of the deputies of the Constituent Assembly, the Legislative Assembly, and the Convention—the three original Revolutionary legislatures of France. The chamber literally, physically rests upon the memory of the Revolution and of the first representatives of the people. Constant-Dufeux's building thus embodies the history and organization of a French Republican government, as a Gothic cathedral once embodied that of the Christian doctrine: in its pattern of volumes it states the structure of the political system; in its decorative dress it communicates its spirit. Founded upon the legislators of the Revolution, its constitution is open for all to read, while the names and history of its people gather about it in memorial and increase year by year.

In an important sense Constant-Dufeux's monument is a manifestation of and the key to everything going on in the *pensionnaires'* minds. Labrouste's basilica at Paestum, Duban's *temple protestant*, and this *chambre des députés* were all public assembly halls. They were simple boxes in plan and structure, but they were potentially the type of modern democratic architecture. Already in 1836 Vaudoyer had ended his entry "Basilique" in the second volume of the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, "It seems to us that the activities of a government based on national representation, on public discussion of certain matters, and on the election of magistrates will bring about the creation of a new edifice, the function of which might have some relation to that of the ancient basilica."[95] Writing in César Daly's *Revue générale de l'architecture* in 1846–47, Constant-Dufeux himself was more categorical:

Today when every capital, every city, even the smallest village, must have their assembly halls, why do we not seek here the motif for a new architecture? Why do we not make these buildings the object of particular study and research, in order to constitute a new type, because they are now so important and new as well? . . . Will we be powerless to conceive an architecture représentative?[96]

He continues, making specific suggestions about procedure:

Have more confidence in our institutions and in our future, and especially have more confidence in ourselves. Consider that in order to make good architecture, it is necessary first to imagine the layout of spaces and the method of construction, without any preoccupation with style, *having in view only* the satisfaction of material and moral needs, *as generally as will permit a* prudent economy

of the means at our disposal. *This first operation of the spirit, which we call the ART OF BUILDING, should be followed by that which constitutes what we call the ART OF SCULPTING, that is, the art of conceiving and of giving to the work the most appropriate and expressive form, so that the work may finally receive the ART OF PAINTING, the indispensable complement for perfecting the work so that it is worthy of being called a monument of art.*[97]

The architect, the *pensionnaires* seem to have agreed, is the student and servant of his society. His responsibility is to house and make expressive its primary institutions, which around 1830 meant the public assembly hall. The architect's method is to study this problem functionally and historically, to distinguish an abstract, practical core, and then to dress it up with an accretive, meaningful decoration.[98]

Two