



29-1 JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD, *The Swing*, 1766. Oil on canvas, 2' 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ " \times 2' 2". Wallace Collection, London.

In this painting epitomizing Rococo style, pastel colors and soft light complement a sensuous scene in which a young lady flirtatiously kicks off her shoe at a statue of Cupid while her lover watches.

EUROPE AND AMERICA, 1700 TO 1800

In 1700, Louis XIV still ruled as the Sun King of France, presiding over his realm and French culture from his palatial residence at Versailles (FIG. 25-32). By 1800, revolutions had overthrown the monarchy in France and achieved independence for the British colonies in America (MAP 29-1). The 18th century also gave birth to a revolution of a different kind—the Industrial Revolution, which began in England and soon transformed the economies of continental Europe and North America and eventually the world. Against this backdrop of revolutionary change, social as well as political, economic, and technological, came major transformations in the arts. Indeed, *Pilgrimage to Cythera* (FIG. 29-6), painted in 1717 and set in a lush landscape, celebrates the romantic dalliances of the moneyed elite. In contrast, the 1784 *Oath of the Horatii* (FIG. 29-23) takes place in an austere Doric hall and glorifies the civic virtue and heroism of an ancient Roman family. The two works have little in common other than that both are French oil paintings. In the 18th century, shifts in style and subject matter were both rapid and significant.

ROCOCO

The death of Louis XIV in 1715 brought many changes in French high society. The elite quickly abandoned the court of Versailles for the pleasures of town life. Although French citizens still owed allegiance to a monarch, the early 18th century brought a resurgence of aristocratic social, political, and economic power. Members of the nobility not only exercised their traditional privileges (for example, exemption from certain taxes and from forced labor on public works) but also sought to expand their power. In the cultural realm, aristocrats reestablished their predominance as art patrons. The *hôtels* (town houses) of Paris soon became the centers of a new, softer style called *Rococo*. Associated with the regency (1715–1723) that followed the death of Louis XIV and with the reign of Louis XV (r. 1723–1774), the Rococo style in art and architecture was the perfect expression of the sparkling gaiety the wealthy cultivated in their elegant homes (see “Femmes Savantes and Salon Culture,” page 753).



MAP 29-1 The United States in 1800.

Architecture

Rococo appeared in France in about 1700, primarily as a style of interior design. The French Rococo exterior was most often simple, or even plain, but Rococo exuberance took over the interior. The term derived from the French word *rocaille* (literally, “pebble”), but it referred especially to the small stones and shells used to decorate grotto interiors. Shells or shell forms were the principal motifs in Rococo ornament.

SALON DE LA PRINCESSE A typical French Rococo room is the Salon de la Princesse (FIG. 29-2) in the Hôtel de Soubise in Paris, designed by GERMAIN BOFFRAND (1667–1754). Parisian salons of this sort were the center of Rococo social life. They usurped the role that Louis XIV’s Versailles palace (FIG. 25-32) played in the 17th century, when the Sun King set the tone for French culture. In the early 18th century, the centralized and grandiose palace-based culture of Baroque France gave way to a much more intimate and decentralized culture based in private homes. The new architectural style mirrored this social and cultural shift. A comparison between the Salon de la Princesse and the Galerie des Glaces (FIG. 25-33) at Versailles reveals how Boffrand softened the strong architectural lines and panels of the earlier style into flexible, sinuous curves luxuriantly multiplied in mirror reflections. The walls melt into the vault. Irregular painted shapes, surmounted by sculpture and separated by the typical *rocaille* shells, replace the hall’s cornices. Painting, architecture, and sculpture combine to form a single ensemble. The profusion of curving tendrils and sprays of foliage blends with the shell forms to give an effect of freely growing nature, suggesting that the designer permanently decked the Rococo room for a festival.

French Rococo interiors were lively total works of art. Exquisitely wrought furniture, enchanting small sculptures, ornamented mirror frames, delightful ceramics and silver, small paintings, and decorative *tapestries* complemented the architecture, relief sculptures, and mural paintings. The Salon de la Princesse no longer has most of the movable furnishings and decor that once contributed so much to its total ambience. Visitors can imagine, however, how this and similar Rococo rooms—with their alternating gilded moldings, vivacious relief sculptures, luxurious furniture, and daintily colored ornamentation of flowers and garlands—must have harmonized with the chamber music played in them, with the elaborate costumes of satin and brocade, and with the equally elegant etiquette and sparkling wit of the people who graced them.

AMALIENBURG The French Rococo style quickly spread beyond Paris. The Amalienburg, a small lodge the French architect FRANÇOIS DE CUVILLIÉS (1695–1768) built in the park of the Nymphenburg Palace in Munich, is a prime example of Germany’s adoption of the Parisian style. The most spectacular room in the lodge is the circular Hall of Mirrors (FIG. 29-3), a silver-and-blue ensemble of architecture, stucco relief, silvered bronze mirrors, and crystal that represents the Rococo style at its zenith. The hall dazzles the eye with myriad scintillating motifs, forms, and figurations the designer borrowed from the full Rococo ornamental repertoire. Silvery light, reflected and amplified by windows and mirrors, bathes the room and creates shapes and contours that weave rhythmically around the upper walls and the ceiling coves. Everything seems organic, growing, and in motion, an ultimate refinement of illusion that the architect, artists, and artisans, all magically in command of their varied media, created with virtuoso flourishes.



29-2 GERMAIN BOFFRAND, Salon de la Princesse, with painting by CHARLES-JOSEPH NATAIRE and sculpture by J. B. LEMOINE, Hôtel de Soubise, Paris, France, 1737–1740.

Elegant Rococo rooms such as this salon, featuring sinuous curves, gilded moldings and mirrors, small sculptures and paintings, and floral ornament, were the center of Parisian social and intellectual life.

Femmes Savantes and Salon Culture

The feminine look of the Rococo style suggests that the taste and social initiative of women dominated the age—and, to a large extent, they did. Women—for example, Madame de Pompadour (1721–1764), mistress of Louis XV of France; Maria Theresa (1717–1780), archduchess of Austria and queen of Hungary and Bohemia; and Empresses Elizabeth (r. 1741–1762) and Catherine the Great (r. 1762–1796) of Russia—held some of the most influential positions in Europe. Female taste also had an impact in numerous smaller courts as well as in the private sphere.

In the early 18th century, Paris was the social capital of Europe, and the Rococo salon (FIG. 29-2) was the center of Parisian society. Wealthy, ambitious, and clever society hostesses competed to attract the most famous and the most accomplished people to their salons, whether in Paris or elsewhere in Europe (FIG. 29-3). The medium of social intercourse was conversation spiced with wit, repartee as quick and deft as a fencing match. Artifice reigned supreme, and participants considered enthusiasm or sincerity in bad taste.

The women who hosted these salons referred to themselves as *femmes savantes*, or learned women. Among them was Julie de Lespinasse (1732–1776), one of the most articulate, urbane, and intelligent French women of the time. She held daily salons from five o'clock until nine in the evening. The book *Memoirs of Marmontel* documented the liveliness of these gatherings and the remarkable nature of this hostess.

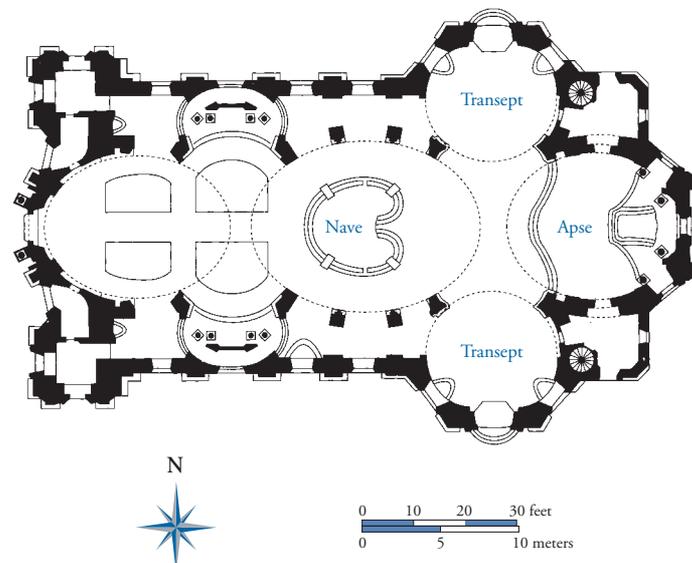
The circle was formed of persons who were not bound together. She had taken them here and there in society, but so well assorted were they that once there they fell into harmony like the strings of an instrument touched by an able hand. Following out that comparison, I may say that she played the instrument with an art that came of genius; she seemed to know what tone each string would yield before she touched it; I mean to say that our minds and our natures were so well known to her that in order to bring them into play she had but to say a word. Nowhere was conversation more lively, more brilliant, or better regulated than at her house. It was a rare phenomenon indeed, the degree of tempered, equable heat which she knew so well how to maintain, sometimes by moderating it, sometimes by quickening it. The continual activity of her soul was communicated to our souls, but measurably; her imagination was the mainspring, her reason the regulator. Remark that the brains she stirred at will were neither feeble nor frivolous. . . . Her talent for casting out a thought and giving it for discussion to men of that class, her own talent in discussing it with precision, sometimes with eloquence, her talent for bringing forward new ideas and varying the topic—always with the facility and ease of a fairy . . . these talents, I say, were not those of an ordinary woman. It was not with the follies of fashion and vanity that daily, during four hours of conversation, without languor and without vacuum, she knew how to make herself interesting to a wide circle of strong minds.*

* Jean François Marmontel, *Memoirs of Marmontel*, translated by Brigit Patmore (London: Routledge, 1930), 270.



29-3 FRANÇOIS DE CUVILLIÉS, Hall of Mirrors, the Amalienburg, Nymphenburg Palace park, Munich, Germany, early 18th century.

Designed by a French architect, this circular hall in a German lodge displays the Rococo architectural style at its zenith, dazzling the eye with the organic interplay of mirrors, crystal, and stucco relief.



29-4 BALTHASAR NEUMANN, interior (*top*) and plan (*bottom*) of the pilgrimage church of Vierzehnheiligen, near Staffelstein, Germany, 1743–1772.

The Rococo style also appeared in ecclesiastical architecture. Vierzehnheiligen's interior is light and delicate. Its plan features undulating lines and a dynamic interplay of ovals and circles.

VIERZEHNHEILIGEN Rococo style was not exclusively a domestic phenomenon, however. One of the most splendid examples of Rococo ecclesiastical architecture is the pilgrimage church of Vierzehnheiligen (Fourteen Saints; FIG. 29-4) near Staffelstein (MAP 25-1), which the German architect BALTHASAR NEUMANN (1687–1753)

designed. The interior (FIG. 29-4, *top*) exhibits a vivacious play of architectural fantasy that retains the dynamic energy of Italian Baroque architecture (see Chapter 24) but not its drama. Numerous large windows in the richly decorated but continuous walls of Vierzehnheiligen flood the interior with an even, bright, and cheerful light. The feeling is one of lightness and delicacy.

Vierzehnheiligen's plan (FIG. 29-4, *bottom*) reveals the influence of Borromini (FIGS. 24-10 and 24-13) but is even more complex. Neumann seems deliberately to have banished all straight lines. The composition, made up of tangent ovals and circles, achieves a quite different interior effect within the essential outlines of a traditional rectilinear basilican church with a nave, transept, and apse. Undulating space is in continuous motion, creating unlimited vistas bewildering in their variety and surprise effects. The structural features pulse, flow, and commingle as if they were ceaselessly in the process of being molded. The design's fluidity of line, the floating and hovering surfaces, the interwoven spaces, and the dematerialized masses combine to suggest a "frozen" counterpart to the intricacy of voices in a Bach fugue. The church is a brilliant ensemble of architecture, painting, sculpture, and music that dissolves the boundaries of the arts in a visionary unity.

Painting and Sculpture

ANTOINE WATTEAU The painter whom scholars most associate with French Rococo is ANTOINE WATTEAU (1684–1721). The differences between the Baroque age in France and the Rococo age can be



29-5 ANTOINE WATTEAU, *L'Indifférent*, ca. 1716. Oil on canvas, 10" × 7". Louvre, Paris.

This small Rococo painting of a languid, gliding dancer exhibits lightness and delicacy in both color and tone. It contrasts sharply with Rigaud's majestic portrait (FIG. 25-30) of the pompous Louis XIV.



29-6 ANTOINE WATTEAU, *Pilgrimage to Cythera*, 1717. Oil on canvas, 4' 3" × 6' 4½". Louvre, Paris.

Watteau's *fête galante* paintings depict the outdoor amusements of French upper-class society. The haze of color, subtly modeled shapes, gliding motion, and air of suave gentility match Rococo taste.

seen clearly by contrasting Rigaud's portrait of Louis XIV (FIG. 25-30) with one of Watteau's paintings, *L'Indifférent* (*The Indifferent One*; FIG. 29-5). Rigaud portrayed pompous majesty in supreme glory, as if the French monarch were reviewing throngs of bowing courtiers at Versailles. Watteau's painting, in contrast, is more delicate and lighter in both color and tone. The artist presented a languid, gliding dancer whose stilted minuet could be a parody of the monarch's solemnity if the paintings were hung together. In Rigaud's portrait, stout architecture, bannerlike curtains, flowing ermine, and fleur-de-lis exalt the king. In Watteau's painting, the dancer moves in a rainbow shimmer of color, emerging onto the stage of the intimate comic opera to the silken sounds of strings. As in architecture, this contrast of paintings also highlights the different patronage of the eras. Whereas royal patronage, particularly that of Louis XIV, dominated the French Baroque period, Rococo was the culture of a wider aristocracy in which private patrons dictated taste.

PILGRIMAGE TO CYTHERA Watteau was largely responsible for creating a specific type of Rococo painting, called a *fête galante* (amorous festival) painting. These works depicted the outdoor entertainment or amusements of French high society. An example of a *fête galante* painting is Watteau's masterpiece (painted in two versions), *Pilgrimage to Cythera* (FIG. 29-6). The painting was the artist's entry for admission to the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture (see "Academic Salons," Chapter 31, page 823). In 1717 the *fête galante*

was not an acceptable category for submission, but rather than reject Watteau's candidacy, the academy created a new category to accommodate his entry. At the turn of the century, two competing doctrines sharply divided the membership of the French academy. Many members followed Nicolas Poussin in teaching that form was the most important element in painting, whereas "colors in painting are as allurements for persuading the eyes"—additions for effect and not really essential.¹ The other group took Peter Paul Rubens as its model and proclaimed the natural supremacy of color and the coloristic style as the artist's proper guide. Depending on which doctrine they supported, academy members were either *Poussinistes* or *Rubénistes*. Watteau was Flemish, and Rubens's coloristic style heavily influenced his work. With Watteau in their ranks, the *Rubénistes* carried the day, establishing Rococo painting as the preferred style of the early 18th century.

Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera* (FIG. 29-6) portrays luxuriously costumed lovers who have made a "pilgrimage" to Cythera, the island of eternal youth and love, sacred to Aphrodite. The elegant figures move gracefully from the protective shade of a woodland park filled with amorous cupids and voluptuous statuary. Watteau's figural poses blend elegance and sweetness. He composed his generally quite small paintings from albums of superb drawings in which he sought to capture slow movement from difficult and unusual angles, obviously intending to find the smoothest, most poised, and most refined attitudes. As he experimented with nuances of posture and movement, Watteau also strove for the most exquisite shades of



29-7 FRANÇOIS BOUCHER, *Cupid a Captive*, 1754. Oil on canvas, 5' 6" × 2' 10". Wallace Collection, London.

In this Rococo canvas, François Boucher, painter for Madame de Pompadour, portrayed a rosy pyramid of infant and female flesh and fluttering draperies set off against a cool, leafy background.

color difference, defining in a single stroke the shimmer of silk at a bent knee or the iridescence that touches a glossy surface as it emerges from shadow. The haze of color, the subtly modeled shapes, the gliding motion, and the air of suave gentility appealed greatly to the Rococo artist's wealthy patrons.

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER After Watteau's early death at 37, his follower, FRANÇOIS BOUCHER (1703–1770), rose to dominance in French painting, in large part because of Madame de Pompadour's patronage. Although he was an excellent portraitist, Boucher's fame rested primarily on his graceful canvases depicting Arcadian shep-



29-8 GIAMBATTISTA TIEPOLO, *Apotheosis of the Pisani Family*, ceiling fresco in the Villa Pisani, Stra, Italy, 1761–1762. Fresco, 77' 1" × 44' 3".

A master of illusionistic ceiling painting in the Baroque tradition, Tiepolo adopted the bright, cheerful colors and weightless figures of Rococo easel paintings for huge frescoes.

herds, nymphs, and goddesses cavorting in shady glens engulfed in pink and sky-blue light. *Cupid a Captive* (FIG. 29-7) presents a rosy pyramid of infant and female flesh set off against a cool, leafy background, with fluttering draperies both hiding and revealing the nudity of the figures. Boucher used the full range of Italian and French Baroque devices—the dynamic play of crisscrossing diagonals, curvilinear forms, and slanting recessions—to create his masterly composition. But in his work he dissected powerful Baroque curves into a multiplicity of decorative flourishes, dissipating Baroque drama into sensual playfulness. Lively and lighthearted, Boucher's artful Rococo fantasies became mirrors for his patrons, the wealthy French, to behold the ornamental reflections of their cherished pastimes.

JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD Boucher's greatest student, JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD (1732–1806), was an outstanding colorist whose decorative skill almost surpassed his master's. An example of his manner can stand as characteristic not only of his work but also of the later Rococo style in general. In *The Swing* (FIG. 29-1), a young gentleman has managed an arrangement whereby an unsuspecting old bishop swings the young man's pretty sweetheart higher



29-9 CLODION, *Satyr Crowning a Bacchante*, 1770. Terracotta, 1' $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. Louvre, Paris.

The erotic playfulness of Boucher's and Fragonard's paintings is evident in Clodion's tabletop terracotta sculptures representing sensuous fantasies often involving satyrs and bacchantes, the followers of Bacchus.

and higher, while her lover (and the work's patron), in the lower left corner, stretches out to admire her ardently from a strategic position on the ground. The young lady flirtatiously and boldly kicks off her shoe toward the little statue of Cupid. The infant love god holds his finger to his lips. The landscape setting is out of Watteau—a luxuriant perfumed bower in a park that very much resembles a stage scene for comic opera. The glowing pastel colors and soft light convey, almost by themselves, the theme's sensuality.

GIAMBATTISTA TIEPOLO *The Swing* is less than three feet in height, and Watteau's *L'Indifférent* (FIG. 29-5) barely 10 inches tall. But the intimate Rococo style could also be adopted for paintings of huge size, as the work of GIAMBATTISTA TIEPOLO (1696–1770) demonstrates. Of Venetian origin, Tiepolo worked for patrons in Austria, Germany, and Spain as well as in Italy. A master of illusionistic ceiling decoration in the Baroque tradition, Tiepolo favored the bright, cheerful colors and relaxed compositions of Rococo easel paintings. *Apotheosis of the Pisani Family* (FIG. 29-8), a ceiling fresco in the Villa Pisani at Stra in northern Italy (MAP 25-1), shows airy figures fluttering through vast sunlit skies and fleecy clouds, their forms casting dark accents against the brilliant light of high noon. Tiepolo here elevated the Pisani family members to the rank of gods in a heavenly scene that recalls the ceiling paintings of Pozzo (FIG. 24-24). But while retaining 17th-century illusionism, Tiepolo softened the rhetoric and created pictorial schemes of great elegance and grace, unsurpassed for their sheer effectiveness as decor.

CLODION Rococo was nonetheless a style best suited for small-scale works that projected a mood of sensual intimacy in elegant salons. Artists such as Claude Michel, called CLODION (1738–1814), specialized in small, lively sculptures representing sensuous Rococo

fantasies. Clodion lived in Rome for several years, and his work incorporates echoes of Italian Mannerist sculpture. His small group *Satyr Crowning a Bacchante* (FIG. 29-9) depicts two mythological followers of Bacchus, the Roman god of wine. The languorous bacchante being crowned by the satyr with a floral wreath is reminiscent of the nude female personification in Benvenuto Cellini's *Saltcellar of Francis I* (FIG. 22-51). The erotic playfulness of Boucher's and Fragonard's paintings is also evident in Clodion's sculpture. He captured the sensual exhilaration of the Rococo style in diminutive scale and inexpensive terracotta. As is true of so many Rococo artifacts, the artist designed this group for a tabletop.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The aristocratic culture celebrated in Rococo art did not go unchallenged during the 18th century. Indeed, the feudal system that served as the foundation of social and economic life in Europe dissolved, and the rigid social hierarchies that provided the basis for Rococo art and patronage relaxed. By the end of the 18th century, revolutions had erupted in France and America. A major factor in these political, social, and economic changes was the Enlightenment.

Philosophy and Science

The *Enlightenment* was in essence a new way of thinking critically about the world and about humankind, independently of religion, myth, or tradition. The basis of Enlightenment thought was empirical evidence. Enlightenment thinkers promoted the scientific questioning of all assertions and rejected unfounded beliefs about the nature of humankind and of the world. Thus, the Enlightenment encouraged and stimulated the habit and application of mind known as the scientific method.

This new approach to the acquisition of knowledge had its roots in the 17th century, with the mathematical and scientific achievements of René Descartes (1596–1650), Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), Isaac Newton (1642–1727), and Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716). England and France were the principal centers of the Enlightenment, though its dictums influenced the thinking of intellectuals throughout Europe and in the American colonies. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), and other American notables embraced its principles.

NEWTON AND LOCKE Of particular importance for Enlightenment thought was the work of Great Britain's Isaac Newton and John Locke (1632–1704). In his scientific studies, Newton insisted on empirical proof of his theories and encouraged others to avoid metaphysics and the supernatural—realms that extended beyond the natural physical world. This emphasis on both tangible data and concrete experience became a cornerstone of Enlightenment thought. In addition, Newton's experiments revealed a rationality in the physical world, and Enlightenment thinkers transferred that concept to the sociopolitical world by promoting a rationally organized society. Locke, whose works acquired the status of Enlightenment gospel, developed these ideas further. According to Locke's "doctrine of empiricism," knowledge comes to people through their sense perception of the material world. From these perceptions alone people form ideas. Locke asserted that human beings are born good, not cursed by Original Sin. The laws of Nature grant them the natural rights of life, liberty, and property as well as the right to freedom of conscience. Government is by contract, and its purpose is to protect these rights. If and when government abuses these rights, the citizenry has the further natural right of revolution. Locke's ideas empowered people to take control of their own destinies.

PHILOSOPHES The work of Newton and Locke also inspired many French intellectuals, or *philosophes*. These thinkers conceived of individuals and societies at large as parts of physical nature. They shared the conviction that the ills of humanity could be remedied by applying reason and common sense to human problems. They criticized the powers of church and state as irrational limits placed on political and intellectual freedom. They believed that by the accumulation and propagation of knowledge, humanity could advance by degrees to a happier state than it had ever known. This conviction matured into the “doctrine of progress” and its corollary doctrine of the “perfectibility of humankind.” Previous societies, for the most part, perceived the future as inevitable—the cycle of life and death. Religious beliefs determined fate. The notion of progress—the systematic and planned improvement of society—first developed during the 18th century and continues to influence 21st-century thought.

DIDEROT Animated by their belief in human progress and perfectibility, the philosophes took on the task of gathering knowledge and making it accessible to all who could read. Their program was, in effect, the democratization of knowledge. Denis Diderot (1713–1784) greatly influenced the Enlightenment’s rationalistic and materialistic thinking. He became editor of the pioneering *Encyclopédie*, a compilation of articles written by more than a hundred contributors, including all the leading philosophes. The *Encyclopédie* was truly comprehensive (its formal title was *Systematic Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Crafts*) and included all available knowledge—historical, scientific, and technical as well as religious and moral—and political theory. The first volume appeared in 1751 and the last of the 35 volumes of text and illustrations in 1780. Other Enlightenment authors produced different compilations of knowledge. Diderot’s contemporary, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788), undertook a kind of encyclopedia of the natural sciences. His *Natural History*, a monumental work of 44 volumes, was especially valuable for its zoological study. Buffon’s contemporary, the Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus (1707–1778), established a system of plant classification.

The political, economic, and social consequences of this increase in knowledge and the doctrine of progress were explosive. It is no coincidence that the French Revolution, the American Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution in England all occurred during this period. These upheavals precipitated yet other major changes, including the growth of cities, the emergence of an urban working class, and the expansion of colonialism as the demand for cheap labor and raw materials increased. This enthusiasm for growth gave birth to the doctrine of Manifest Destiny—the ideological justification for continued territorial expansion. Thus, the Age of Enlightenment ushered in a new way of thinking and affected historical developments worldwide.

VOLTAIRE François Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire (1694–1778), became, and still is, the most representative figure—almost the personification—of the Enlightenment spirit. Voltaire was instrumental in introducing Newton and Locke to the French intelligentsia. He hated, and attacked through his writings, the arbitrary despotic rule of kings, the selfish privileges of the nobility and the church, religious intolerance, and, above all, the injustice of the *ancien régime* (the “old order”). In his numerous books and pamphlets, which the authorities regularly condemned and burned, he protested against government persecution of the freedoms of thought and religion. Voltaire believed humankind could never be happy until an enlightened society removed the traditional obstructions to the progress of the human mind. His personal and public involvement in the struggle against established political and religious authority gave authenticity to his ideas. It converted a whole generation to the conviction that fundamental changes were necessary. This conviction paved the way for a revolution in France that Voltaire never intended, and he probably would never have approved of it. He was not convinced that “all men are created equal,” the credo of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Jefferson, and the American Declaration of Independence.

29-10 JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY, *A Philosopher Giving a Lecture at the Orrery*, ca. 1763–1765. Oil on canvas, 4' 10" × 6' 8". Derby Museums and Art Gallery, Derby.

Wright’s celebration of the inventions of the Industrial Revolution was in tune with the Enlightenment doctrine of progress. In this dramatically lit scene, the wonders of science mesmerize everyone present.



1 ft.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION The Enlightenment's emphasis on scientific investigation and technological invention opened up new possibilities for human understanding of the world and for control of its material forces. Research into the phenomena of electricity and combustion, along with the discovery of oxygen and the power of steam, had enormous consequences. Steam power as an adjunct to, or replacement for, human labor began a new era in world history, beginning with the Industrial Revolution in England. These technological advances, coupled with the celebration of "progress," gave rise to industrialization. Most scholars mark the beginning of the Industrial Revolution with the invention of steam engines in England for industrial production and, later, their use for transportation in the 1740s. By 1850, England had a manufacturing economy—a revolutionary development because for the first time in history, societies were capable of producing a seemingly limitless supply of goods and services. Within a century, the harnessed power of steam, coal, oil, iron, steel, and electricity working in concert transformed Europe. These scientific and technological developments also affected the arts, particularly the use of new materials for constructing buildings (FIG. 29-11) and the invention of photography (see Chapter 30).

JOSEPH WRIGHT Technological advance fueled a new enthusiasm for mechanical explanations about the wonders of the universe. The fascination science held for ordinary people as well as for the learned is the subject of *A Philosopher Giving a Lecture at the Orrery* (FIG. 29-10) by the English painter JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY (1734–1797). Wright specialized in painting dramatic candlelit and moonlit scenes. He loved subjects such as the orrery demonstration, which could be illuminated by a single light from within the picture. In the painting, a scholar demonstrates a mechanical model of the solar system called an *orrery*, in which each planet (represented by a metal orb) revolves around the sun (a lamp) at the correct relative velocity. Light from the lamp pours forth from in front of the boy silhouetted in the foreground to create dramatic light and shadows that heighten the drama of the scene. Awed children crowd close to the tiny orbs that represent the planets within the arcing bands that symbolize their orbits. An earnest listener makes notes, while the lone woman seated at the left and the two gentlemen at the right

look on with rapt attention. The wonders of scientific knowledge mesmerize everyone in Wright's painting. The artist visually reinforced the fascination with the orrery by composing his image in a circular fashion, echoing the device's orbital design. The postures and gazes of all the participants and observers focus attention on the cosmic model. Wright scrupulously rendered with careful accuracy every detail of the figures, the mechanisms of the orrery, and even the books and curtain in the shadowy background.

Wright's realism appealed to the great industrialists of his day. Scientific-industrial innovators, such as Josiah Wedgwood, who pioneered many techniques of mass-produced pottery, and Sir Richard Arkwright, whose spinning frame revolutionized the textile industry, often purchased works such as *Orrery*. To them, Wright's elevation of the theories and inventions of the Industrial Revolution to the plane of history painting was exciting and appropriately in tune with the future.

COALBROOKDALE BRIDGE Advances in engineering and the development of new industrial materials during the 18th century had a profound impact on the history of architecture, leading eventually to the steel-and-glass skyscrapers of cities all over the world today. The first use of iron in bridge design was in the cast-iron bridge (FIG. 29-11) built over the Severn River, near Coalbrookdale in England (MAP 30-1), where ABRAHAM DARBY III (1750–1789), one of the bridge's two designers, ran his family's cast-iron business. The Darby family had spearheaded the evolution of the iron industry in England, and they vigorously supported the investigation of new uses for the material. The fabrication of cast-iron rails and bridge elements inspired Darby to work with architect THOMAS F. PRITCHARD (1723–1777) in designing the Coalbrookdale Bridge. The cast-iron armature that supports the roadbed springs from stone pier to stone pier until it leaps the final 100 feet across the Severn River gorge. The style of the graceful center arc echoes the grand arches of Roman aqueducts (FIG. 10-33). At the same time, the exposed structure of the bridge's cast-iron parts prefigured the skeletal use of iron and steel in the 19th century. Visible structural armatures became expressive factors in the design of buildings such as the Crystal Palace (FIG. 30-48) in England and the Eiffel Tower (FIG. 31-1) in France.



29-11 ABRAHAM DARBY III and THOMAS F. PRITCHARD, iron bridge, Coalbrookdale, England, 1776–1779.

The first use of iron in bridge design was in this bridge over the Severn River. The Industrial Revolution brought engineering advances and new materials that revolutionized architectural construction.

WRITTEN SOURCES

Diderot on Chardin and Naturalism

Denis Diderot was a pioneer in the field of art criticism as well as in the encyclopedic compilation of human knowledge. Between 1759 and 1781 he contributed reviews of the biennial Salon of the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture (see “Academic Salons,” Chapter 31, page 823) to the Parisian journal *Correspondence littéraire*. In his review of the 1763 Salon, Diderot, a great admirer of Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin (FIG. 29-12), had the following praise for that painter’s still lifes and for naturalism in painting.

There are many small pictures by Chardin at the Salon, almost all of them depicting fruit with the accoutrements for a meal. This is nature itself. The objects stand out from the canvas and they are so real that my eyes are fooled by them. . . . In order to look at other people’s paintings, I feel as though I need different eyes; but to look at Chardin’s, I need only keep the ones nature gave me and use them properly. If I had painting in mind as a career for my child, I’d buy this one [and have him copy it]. . . . Yet nature itself may be no more difficult to copy. . . . O Chardin, it’s not white, red or black pigment that you grind on your palette but rather the very substance of objects; it’s real air and light that you take onto the tip of your brush and transfer onto the canvas. . . . It’s magic, one can’t understand how it’s done: thick layers of colour, applied one on top of the other, each one filtering through from underneath to create the effect. . . . Close up, everything blurs, goes flat and disappears. From a distance, everything comes back to life and reappears.*

* Translated by Kate Tunstall, in Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, eds., *Art in Theory 1648–1815: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 604.



29-12 JEAN-BAPTISTE-SIMÉON CHARDIN, *Saying Grace*, 1740. Oil on canvas, 1' 7" × 1' 3". Louvre, Paris.

Chardin embraced naturalism and celebrated the simple goodness of ordinary people, especially mothers and children, who lived in a world far from the frivolous Rococo salons of Paris.

“Natural” Art

ROUSSEAU The second key figure of the French Enlightenment, who was also instrumental in preparing the way ideologically for the French Revolution, was Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). Voltaire believed the salvation of humanity was in the advancement of science and in the rational improvement of society. In contrast, Rousseau declared that the arts, sciences, society, and civilization in general had corrupted “natural man”—people in their primitive state—and that humanity’s only salvation lay in a return to something like “the ignorance, innocence and happiness” of its original condition. According to Rousseau, human capacity for feeling, sensibility, and emotions came before reason: “To exist is to feel; our feeling is undoubtedly earlier than our intelligence, and we had feelings before we had ideas.” Nature alone must be the guide: “All our natural inclinations are right.” Fundamental to Rousseau’s thinking was the notion that “Man by nature is good . . . he is depraved and perverted by society.” He rejected the idea of progress, insisting that “Our minds have been corrupted in proportion as the arts and sciences have improved.”² Rousseau’s elevation of feelings above reason as the most primitive—and hence the most “natural”—of human expressions led him to exalt as the ideal the peasant’s simple life, with its honest and unsullied emotions.

CHARDIN Rousseau’s views, popular and widely read, were largely responsible for the turning away from the Rococo sensibility

and the formation of a taste for the “natural,” as opposed to the artificial and frivolous. Reflecting Rousseau’s values, JEAN-BAPTISTE-SIMÉON CHARDIN (1699–1779) painted quiet scenes of domestic life, which offered the opportunity to praise the simple goodness of ordinary people, especially mothers and young children, who in spirit, occupation, and environment lived far from corrupt society. In *Saying Grace* (FIG. 29-12), Chardin ushers the viewer into a modest room where a mother and her small daughters are about to dine. The mood of quiet attention is at one with the hushed lighting and mellow color and with the closely studied still-life accessories whose worn surfaces tell their own humble domestic history. The viewer witnesses a moment of social instruction, when mother and older sister supervise the younger sister in the simple, pious ritual of giving thanks to God before a meal. The simplicity of the composition reinforces the subdued charm of this scene, with the three figures highlighted against the dark background. Chardin was the poet of the commonplace and the master of its nuances. A gentle sentiment prevails in all his pictures, an emotion not contrived and artificial but born of the painter’s honesty, insight, and sympathy. Chardin’s paintings had wide appeal, even in unexpected places. Louis XV, the royal personification of the Rococo in his life and tastes, once owned *Saying Grace*. The painter was also a favorite of Diderot, the leading art critic of the day as well as the editor of the *Encyclopédie* (see “Diderot on Chardin and Naturalism,” above).



1 ft.

29-13 JEAN-BAPTISTE GREUZE, *Village Bride*, 1761. Oil on canvas, 3' × 3' 10½". Louvre, Paris.

Greuze was a master of sentimental narrative, which appealed to a new audience that admired “natural” virtue. Here, in an unadorned room, a father blesses his daughter and her husband-to-be.

JEAN-BAPTISTE GREUZE

The sentimental narrative in art became the specialty of French artist JEAN-BAPTISTE GREUZE (1725–1805), whose most popular work, *Village Bride* (FIG. 29-13), sums up the characteristics of the genre. The setting is an unadorned room in a rustic dwelling. In a notary’s presence, the elderly father has passed his daughter’s dowry to her youthful husband-

to-be and blesses the pair, who gently take each other’s arms. The old mother tearfully gives her daughter’s arm a farewell caress, while the youngest sister melts in tears on the shoulder of the demure bride. An envious older sister broods behind her father’s chair. Rosy-faced, healthy children play around the scene. The picture’s story is simple—the happy climax of a rural romance. The painting’s moral is just as clear—happiness is the reward of “natural” virtue.

Greuze produced this work at a time when the audience for art was expanding. The strict social hierarchy that provided the foundation for Rococo art and patronage gave way to a bourgeois economic and social system. Members of this bourgeois class increasingly embraced art, and paintings such as *Village Bride* particularly appealed to them. They carefully analyzed each gesture and each nuance of sentiment and reacted enthusiastically. At the 1761 Salon of the Royal Academy, Greuze’s picture received enormous attention. Diderot, who reviewed the exhibition for *Correspondence littéraire*, declared that it was difficult to get near it because of the throngs of admirers.

VIGÉE-LEBRUN *Self-Portrait* (FIG. 29-14) by ÉLISABETH LOUISE VIGÉE-LEBRUN (1755–1842) is another variation of the “naturalistic” impulse in 18th-century French art. In this new mode of portraiture, Vigée-Lebrun looks directly at viewers and pauses in her work to return their gaze. Although her mood is lighthearted and her costume’s details echo the serpentine curve Rococo artists and wealthy patrons loved, nothing about Vigée-Lebrun’s pose or her mood speaks of Rococo frivolity. Hers is the self-confident stance of a woman whose art has won her an independent role in her society. She portrayed herself in a close-up, intimate view at work on one of the portraits that won her renown, that of Queen Marie Antoinette (1755–1793). Like many of her contemporaries, Vigée-Lebrun lived a life of extraordinary personal and economic independence, working for the nobility throughout Europe. She was famous for the force and grace of her portraits, especially those of highborn ladies and royalty. She was successful during the age of the late monarchy in France and was one of the few women admitted to the Royal Academy. After the French



1 ft.

29-14 ÉLISABETH LOUISE VIGÉE-LEBRUN, *Self-Portrait*, 1790. Oil on canvas, 8' 4" × 6' 9". Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Vigée-Lebrun was one of the few women admitted to France’s Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture. In this self-portrait, she depicted herself confidently painting the likeness of Queen Marie Antoinette.

29-15 WILLIAM HOGARTH, *Breakfast Scene*, from *Marriage à la Mode*, ca. 1745. Oil on canvas, 2' 4" × 3'. National Gallery, London.

Hogarth won fame for his paintings and prints satirizing 18th-century English life with comic zest. This is one of a series of six paintings in which he chronicled the marital immoralities of the moneyed class.



Revolution, however, the Academy rescinded her membership, because women were no longer welcome, but she enjoyed continued success owing to her talent, wit, and ability to forge connections with those in power in the postrevolutionary period.

WILLIAM HOGARTH Across the Channel, a truly English style of painting emerged with WILLIAM HOGARTH (1697–1764), who satirized the lifestyle of the newly prosperous middle class with comic zest. Traditionally, the British imported painters from the Continent—Holbein, Rubens, and Van Dyck among them. Hogarth waged a lively campaign throughout his career against the English feeling of dependence on, and inferiority to, these artists. Although Hogarth would have been the last to admit it, his own painting owed much to the work of his contemporaries in France, the Rococo artists. Yet his subject matter, frequently moral in tone, was distinctively English. It was the great age of English satirical writing, and Hogarth—who knew and admired this genre and included Henry Fielding (1701–1754), the author of *Tom Jones*, among his closest friends—clearly saw himself as translating satire into the visual arts.

Hogarth's favorite device was to make a series of narrative paintings and prints, in a sequence like chapters in a book or scenes in a play, following a character or group of characters in their encounters with some social evil. *Breakfast Scene* (FIG. 29-15), from *Marriage à la Mode*, is one in a sequence of six paintings that satirize the marital immoralities of the moneyed classes in England. In it, the marriage of a young viscount is just beginning to founder. The husband and wife are tired after a long night spent in separate pursuits. While the wife stayed home for an evening of cards and music-making, her young husband had been away from the house for a night of suspicious business. He thrusts his hands deep into the empty money-pockets of his breeches, while his wife's small dog sniffs inquiringly at a woman's lacy cap protruding from his coat pocket. A steward, his hands full of unpaid bills, raises his eyes to Heaven in despair at the actions of his no-

ble master and mistress. The house is palatial, but Hogarth filled it with witty clues to the dubious taste of its occupants. For example, the row of pious religious paintings on the upper wall of the distant room concludes with a curtain-shielded work that undoubtedly depicts an erotic subject. According to the custom of the day, ladies could not view this discretely hidden painting, but at the pull of a cord, the master and his male guests could gaze at the cavorting figures. In *Breakfast Scene*, as in all his work, Hogarth proceeded as a novelist might, elaborating on his subject with carefully chosen detail, whose discovery heightens the comedy.

Hogarth designed the marriage series to be published as a set of engravings. The prints of this and his other moral narratives were so popular that unscrupulous entrepreneurs produced unauthorized versions almost as fast as the artist created his originals. The popularity of these prints speaks not only to the appeal of their subjects but also to the democratization of knowledge and culture the Enlightenment fostered and to the exploitation of new printing technologies that produced a more affordable and widely disseminated visual culture.

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH A contrasting blend of “naturalistic” representation and Rococo setting is found in the portrait *Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan* (FIG. 29-16) by the British painter THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH (1727–1788). This painting shows a lovely woman, dressed informally, seated in a rustic landscape faintly reminiscent of Watteau (FIG. 29-6) in its soft-hued light and feathery brushwork. Gainsborough intended to match the natural, unspoiled beauty of the landscape with that of his sitter. Mrs. Sheridan's dark brown hair blows freely in the slight wind, and her clear “English” complexion and air of ingenuous sweetness contrast sharply with the pert sophistication of those that Continental Rococo artists portrayed. Gainsborough originally had planned to give the picture a more pastoral air by adding several sheep, but he did not live long enough to paint them. Even without this element, the painting



29-16 THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, *Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, 1787. Oil on canvas, 7' 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " \times 5' $\frac{5}{8}$ ". National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Andrew W. Mellon Collection).

In this life-size portrait, Gainsborough sought to match the natural beauty of Mrs. Sheridan with that of the landscape. The rustic setting, soft-hued light, and feathery brushwork recall Rococo painting.

clearly expresses the artist's deep interest in the landscape setting. Although he won greater fame in his time for his portraits, he had begun as a landscape painter and always preferred painting scenes of nature to depicting human likenesses.

JOSHUA REYNOLDS Morality of a more heroic tone than that found in the work of Greuze, yet in harmony with "naturalness," included the virtues of honor, valor, and love of country. According to 18th-century Western thought, these virtues produced great people and exemplary deeds. The concept of "nobility," especially as discussed by Rousseau, referred to character, not to aristocratic birth. As the century progressed and people felt the tremors of coming revolutions, these virtues of courage and resolution, patriotism, and self-sacrifice assumed greater importance. Having risen from humble origins, the modern military hero, not the decadent aristocrat, brought the tumult of war into the company of the "natural" emotions.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS (1723–1792) specialized in what became known as *Grand Manner portraiture* and often depicted contemporaries who participated in the great events of the latter part of the 18th century. Although clearly showing individualized people, Grand Manner portraiture also elevated the sitter by conveying refinement and elegance. Painters communicated a person's grace and class through



29-17 SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, *Lord Heathfield*, 1787. Oil on canvas, 4' 8" \times 3' 9". National Gallery, London.

In this Grand Manner portrait, Reynolds depicted the English commander who defended Gibraltar. Typical of this genre, Heathfield is large in relation to the canvas size and stands in a dramatic pose.

certain standardized conventions, such as the large scale of the figure relative to the canvas, the controlled pose, the landscape setting, and the low horizon line. Reynolds painted his portrait of *Lord Heathfield* (FIG. 29-17) in 1787. This burly, ruddy English officer, commandant of the fortress at Gibraltar, was a perfect subject for a Grand Manner portrait. Heathfield had doggedly defended the British fortress against the Spanish and the French, and later received the honorary title Baron Heathfield of Gibraltar. Here, he holds the huge key to the fortress, the symbol of his victory. He stands in front of a curtain of dark smoke rising from the battleground, flanked by one cannon that points ineffectively downward and another whose tilted barrel indicates that it lies uselessly on its back. Reynolds portrayed the features of the general's heavy, honest face and his uniform with unidealized realism. But Lord Heathfield's posture and the setting dramatically suggest the heroic themes of battle and refer to the revolutions (American and French) then taking shape in deadly earnest, as the old regimes faded into the past.

BENJAMIN WEST Some American artists also became well known in England. BENJAMIN WEST (1738–1820), born in Pennsylvania on what was then the colonial frontier, traveled to Europe early in life to study art and then went to England, where he met with almost immediate success. A cofounder of the Royal Academy of Arts, West succeeded Reynolds as its president. He became official painter to King George III (r. 1760–1801) and retained that position during the strained period of the American Revolution.

29-18 BENJAMIN WEST, *Death of General Wolfe*, 1771. Oil on canvas, 4' 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " \times 7'. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (gift of the Duke of Westminster, 1918).

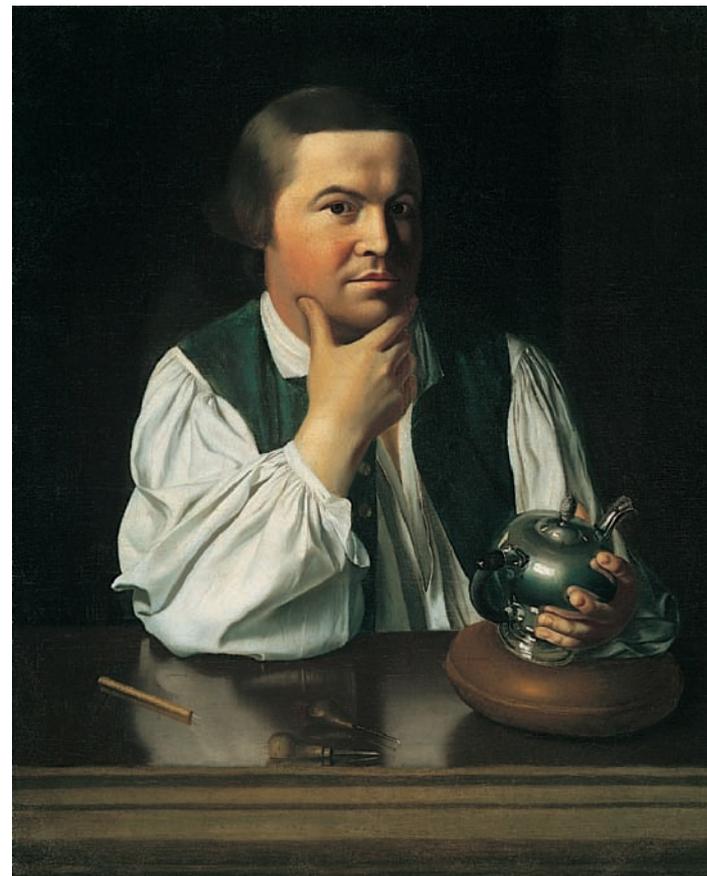
West's great innovation was to blend contemporary subject matter and costumes with the grand tradition of history painting. Here, West likened General Wolfe's death to that of a martyred saint.



1 ft.

In *Death of General Wolfe* (FIG. 29-18), West depicted the mortally wounded young English commander just after his defeat of the French in the decisive battle of Quebec in 1759, which gave Canada to Great Britain. In portraying a contemporary historical subject, he put his characters in contemporary costume (although the military uniforms are not completely accurate in all details). However, West blended this realism of detail with the grand tradition of history painting by arranging his figures in a complex, theatrically ordered composition. His modern hero dies among grieving officers on the field of victorious battle in a way that suggests the death of a great saint. West wanted to present this hero's death in the service of the state as a martyrdom charged with religious emotions. His innovative combination of the conventions of traditional heroic painting with a look of modern realism was so effective that it won viewers' hearts in his own day and continued to influence history painting well into the 19th century.

JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY American artist JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY (1738–1815) matured as a painter in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Like West, Copley later emigrated to England, where he absorbed the fashionable English portrait style. But unlike Grand Manner portraiture, Copley's *Portrait of Paul Revere* (FIG. 29-19), painted before Copley left Boston, conveys a sense of directness and faithfulness to visual fact that marked the taste for honesty and plainness many visitors to America noticed during the 18th and 19th centuries. When Copley painted his portrait, Revere was not yet the familiar hero of the American Revolution. In the picture, he is working at his profession of silversmithing. The setting is plain, the lighting clear and revealing. Revere sits in his shirtsleeves, bent over a teapot in progress. He pauses and turns his head to look the observer straight in the eye. Copley treated the reflections in the polished wood of the tabletop with as much care as Revere's figure, his tools, and the teapot resting on its leather graver's pillow. Copley gave special prominence to Revere's eyes by reflecting intense reddish light onto the darkened side of his face and hands. The informality and the sense of the moment link this



1 ft.

29-19 JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY, *Portrait of Paul Revere*, ca. 1768–1770. Oil on canvas, 2' 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ " \times 2' 4". Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (gift of Joseph W., William B., and Edward H. R. Revere).

In contrast to Grand Manner portraiture, Copley's *Paul Revere* emphasizes his subject's down-to-earth character, differentiating this American work from its European counterparts.

The Grand Tour and Veduta Painting

Although travel throughout Europe was commonplace in the 18th century, Italy became a particularly popular destination. This “pilgrimage” of aristocrats, the wealthy, politicians, and diplomats from France, England, Germany, Flanders, Sweden, the United States, Russia, Poland, and Hungary came to be known as the Grand Tour. Italy’s allure fueled the revival of classicism, and the popularity of Neoclassical art drove this fascination with Italy. One British observer noted: “All our religion, all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come from the shores of the Mediterranean.”*

The Grand Tour was not simply leisure travel. The education available in Italy to the inquisitive mind made the trip an indispensable experience for anyone who wished to make a mark in society. The Enlightenment had made knowledge of ancient Rome and Greece imperative, and a steady stream of Europeans and Americans traveled to Italy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. These tourists aimed to increase their knowledge of literature, the visual arts, architecture, theater, music, history, customs, and folklore. Given this extensive agenda, it is not surprising that a Grand Tour could take a number of years to complete, and most travelers moved from location to location, following an established itinerary.

The British were the most avid travelers, and they conceived the initial “tour code,” including important destinations and required itineraries. Although they designated Rome early on as the primary destination, visitors traveled as far north as Venice and as far south as Naples. Eventually, Paestum, Sicily, Florence, Genoa, Milan, Siena, Pisa, Bologna, and Parma (MAP 25-1) all appeared in guidebooks and in paintings. Joseph Wright of Derby (FIG. 29-10) and Joseph Mallord William Turner (FIG. 30-23) were among the many British artists to undertake a Grand Tour.

Many of those who completed a Grand Tour returned home with a painting by Antonio Canaletto, the leading painter of scenic views (*vedute*) of Venice. It must have been very cheering on a gray winter afternoon in England to look up and see a sunny, panoramic view such as that in Canaletto’s *Riva degli Schiavoni, Venice* (FIG. 29-20), with its cloud-studded sky, picturesque water traffic, and well-known Venetian landmarks (the Doge’s Palace, FIG. 19-21, is at the left in *Riva degli Schiavoni*) painted in scrupulous perspective and minute detail. Canaletto usually made drawings “on location” to take back to his studio and use as sources for paintings. To help make the on-site draw-

ing true to life, he often used a camera obscura, as Vermeer (FIGS. 25-1 and 25-19) did before him. These instruments were darkened chambers (some of them virtually portable closets) with optical lenses fitted into a hole in one wall through which light entered to project an inverted image of the subject onto the chamber’s opposite wall. The artist could trace the main details from this image for later reworking and refinement. The camera obscura allowed artists to create visually convincing paintings that included variable focus of objects at different distances. Canaletto’s paintings give the impression of capturing every detail, with no omissions. In fact, he presented each site within Renaissance perspectival rules and exercised great selectivity about which details to include and which to omit to make a coherent and engagingly attractive veduta.

THE GRAND TOUR The 18th-century public also sought “naturalness” in artists’ depictions of landscapes. Documentation of particular places became popular, in part due to growing travel opportunities and expanding colonialism. These depictions of geographic settings also served the needs of the many scientific expeditions mounted during the century and satisfied the desires of genteel tourists for mementos of their journeys. By this time, a “Grand Tour” of the major



29-20 ANTONIO CANALETTO, *Riva degli Schiavoni, Venice*, ca. 1735–1740. Oil on canvas, 1' 6½" × 2' 7⁄8". Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo.

Canaletto was the leading painter of Venetian *vedute*, which were treasured souvenirs for 18th-century travelers visiting Italy on a Grand Tour. He used a camera obscura for his on-site drawings.

sites of Europe was an essential part of every well-bred person’s education (see “The Grand Tour,” above). Naturally, those on tour wished to return with items that would help them remember their experiences and impress those at home with the wonders they had seen. The English were especially eager collectors of pictorial souvenirs. Certain artists in Venice specialized in painting the most characteristic scenes, or *vedute* (views), of that city to sell to British visitors. Chief among the Venetian painters was ANTONIO CANALETTO (1697–1768), whose works, for example *Riva degli Schiavoni, Venice* (FIG. 29-20), English tourists avidly acquired as evidence of their visit to the city of the Grand Canal.

* Cesare de Seta, “Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century,” in Andrew Wilton and Ilaria Bignamini, eds., *Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Tate Gallery, 1996), 13.

ART AND SOCIETY

The Excavations of Herculaneum and Pompeii

Among the events that fueled the European fascination with classical antiquity were the excavations of two ancient Roman cities on the Bay of Naples—Herculaneum and Pompeii. The violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius in August 79 CE had buried both cities under volcanic ash and mud (see “An Eyewitness Account of the Eruption of Mount Vesuvius,” Chapter 10, page 245). Although each city was “rediscovered” at various times during the ensuing centuries, systematic exploration of both sites did not begin until the mid-1700s. Because Vesuvius buried these cities under volcanic ash and lava, the excavations produced unusually rich evidence for reconstructing Roman art and life. The 18th-century excavators uncovered paintings, sculptures, furniture, vases, and silverware in addition to buildings. As a result, European interest in ancient Rome expanded tremendously. European collectors acquired many of the newly discovered objects. For example, Sir William Hamilton, British consul in Naples from 1764 to 1800, purchased numerous vases and small objects, which he sold to the British Museum in 1772. The finds at Pompeii and Herculaneum, therefore, quickly became available to a wide public.

“Pompeian” style soon became all the rage in England, as evident in the interior designs of Robert Adam, which were inspired by the slim, straight-lined, elegant frescoes of the Third and early Fourth Styles of Roman mural painting (FIGS. 10-21 and 10-22). The new Neoclassical style almost entirely displaced the curvilinear Rococo (FIGS. 29-2 and 29-3) after midcentury. In the Etruscan Room (FIG. 29-21) at Osterley Park House, Adam took decorative motifs (medallions, urns, vine scrolls, sphinxes, and tripods) from Roman art and arranged them sparsely within broad, neutral spaces and slender margins, as in his ancient models. Adam was an archaeologist as well, and he had explored and written accounts of the ruins of Diocletian’s palace (FIG. 10-74) at Split. Kedleston House in Derbyshire, Adelphi Terrace in London, and a great many other structures he designed show the influence of the Split palace on his work.



29-21 ROBERT ADAM, Etruscan Room, from Osterley Park House, Middlesex, England, begun 1761. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Inspired by the recent discoveries at Herculaneum and Pompeii, Adam incorporated classical decorative motifs into his Etruscan Room, which he based on Roman mural painting.

The archaeological finds from Herculaneum and Pompeii also affected garden and landscape design, fashion, and tableware. Clothing based on classical garb became popular, and Emma Hamilton, wife of Sir William Hamilton, often gave lavish parties dressed in floating and delicate Greek-style drapery. Neoclassical taste also determined the pottery designs of John Flaxman (1755–1826) and Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795). Wedgwood established his reputation in the 1760s with his creamware inspired by ancient art. He eventually produced vases based on what were thought to be Etruscan designs (actually Greek vases found in Etruscan tombs) and expanded his business by producing small busts of classical figures as well as cameos and medallions adorned with copies of antique reliefs and statues.

NEOCLASSICISM

One of the defining characteristics of the late 18th century was a renewed admiration for classical antiquity, which the Grand Tour was instrumental in fueling. This interest gave rise to the artistic movement known as *Neoclassicism*, which incorporated the subjects and styles of ancient art. Painting, sculpture, and architecture, however, were only the most prominent manifestations of Neoclassicism. Fascination with Greek and Roman culture was widespread and extended to the public culture of fashion and home decor. The En-

lightenment’s emphasis on rationality in part explains this classical focus, because the geometric harmony of classical art and architecture embodied Enlightenment ideals. In addition, classical cultures represented the pinnacle of civilized society, and Greece and Rome served as models of enlightened political organization. These cultures, with their traditions of liberty, civic virtue, morality, and sacrifice, were ideal models during a period of great political upheaval. Given these traditional associations, it is not coincidental that Neoclassicism was particularly appealing during the French and American Revolutions. Further whetting the public appetite for classicism

were the excavations of Herculaneum (begun in 1738) and Pompeii (1748), which the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius had buried (see “The Excavations of Herculaneum and Pompeii,” page 766). Soon, murals based on artwork unearthed in the excavations began to appear on the walls of rooms in European town houses, such as the “Etruscan Room” (FIG. 29-21) by ROBERT ADAM (1728–1792) in Osterley Park House in Middlesex, begun in 1761.

WINCKELMANN The enthusiasm for classical antiquity also permeated much of the scholarship of the time. In the late 18th century, the ancient world increasingly became the focus of scholarly attention. A visit to Rome stimulated Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) to begin his monumental *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which appeared between 1776 and 1788. Earlier, in 1755, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), the first modern art historian, published *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture*, uncompromisingly designating Greek art as the most perfect to come from human hands—and far preferable to “natural” art.

Good taste, which is becoming more prevalent throughout the world, had its origins under the skies of Greece. . . . The only way for us to become great . . . is to imitate the ancients. . . . In the masterpieces of Greek art, connoisseurs and imitators find not only nature at its most beautiful but also something beyond nature, namely certain ideal forms of its beauty. . . . A person enlightened enough to penetrate the innermost secrets of art will find beauties hitherto seldom revealed when he compares the total structure of Greek figures with most modern ones, especially those modelled more on nature than on Greek taste.³

In his *History of Ancient Art* (1764), Winckelmann described each monument and positioned it within a huge inventory of works organized by subject matter, style, and period. Before Winckelmann, art historians had focused on biography, as did Giorgio Vasari and

Giovanni Pietro Bellori in the 16th and 17th centuries. Winckelmann thus initiated one modern art historical method thoroughly in accord with Enlightenment ideas of ordering knowledge—a system of description and classification that provided a pioneering model for the understanding of stylistic evolution. His familiarity with classical art derived predominantly (as was the norm) from Roman works and Roman copies of Greek art in Italy. Yet he was instrumental in bringing to scholarly attention the distinctions between Greek and Roman art. Thus, he paved the way for more thorough study of the distinct characteristics of the art and architecture of these two cultures. Winckelmann’s writings also laid a theoretical and historical foundation for the enormously widespread taste for Neoclassicism that lasted well into the 19th century.

Painting

ANGELICA KAUFFMANN One of the pioneers of Neoclassical painting was ANGELICA KAUFFMANN (1741–1807). Born in Switzerland and trained in Italy, Kauffmann spent many of her productive years in England. A student of Reynolds, and an interior decorator of many houses built by Adam, she was a founding member of the British Royal Academy of Arts and enjoyed an enviable reputation. Her *Cornelia Presenting Her Children as Her Treasures*, or *Mother of the Gracchi* (FIG. 29-22), is an *exemplum virtutis* (example or model of virtue) drawn from Greek and Roman history and literature. The moralizing pictures of Greuze (FIG. 29-13) and Hogarth (FIG. 29-15) already had marked a change in taste, but Kauffmann replaced the modern setting and character of their works. She clothed her actors in ancient Roman garb and posed them in statuesque attitudes within Roman interiors. The theme in this painting is the virtue of Cornelia, mother of the future political leaders Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, who, in the second century BCE, attempted to reform the Roman Republic. Cornelia reveals her character in this scene, which takes place

after the seated visitor showed off her fine jewelry and then insisted haughtily that Cornelia show hers. Instead of rushing to get her own precious adornments, Cornelia brought her sons forward, presenting them as her jewels. The architectural setting is severely Roman, with no Rococo motif in evidence, and the composition and drawing have the simplicity and firmness of low-relief carving.



1 ft.

29-22 ANGELICA KAUFFMANN, *Cornelia Presenting Her Children as Her Treasures, or Mother of the Gracchi*, ca. 1785. Oil on canvas, 3' 4" × 4' 2". Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond (the Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund).

Kauffmann’s painting of a virtuous Roman mother who presented her children to a visitor as her jewels exemplifies the Enlightenment fascination with classical antiquity and with classical art.

David on Greek Style and Public Art

Jacques-Louis David was the leading Neoclassical painter in France at the end of the 18th century. He championed a return to Greek style and the painting of inspiring heroic and patriotic subjects. In 1796 he made the following statement to his pupils:

I want to work in a pure Greek style. I feed my eyes on antique statues, I even have the intention of imitating some of them. The Greeks had no scruples about copying a composition, a gesture, a type that had already been accepted and used. They put all their attention and all their art on perfecting an idea that had been already conceived. They thought, and they were right, that in the arts the way in which an idea is rendered, and the manner in which it is expressed, is much more important than the idea itself. To give a body and a perfect form to one's thought, this—and only this—is to be an artist.*

David also strongly believed that paintings depicting noble events in ancient history, such as *Oath of the Horatii* (FIG. 29-23),

would instill patriotism and civic virtue in the public at large in postrevolutionary France. In November 1793 he wrote:

[The arts] should help to spread the progress of the human spirit, and to propagate and transmit to posterity the striking examples of the efforts of a tremendous people who, guided by reason and philosophy, are bringing back to earth the reign of liberty, equality, and law. The arts must therefore contribute forcefully to the education of the public. . . . The arts are the imitation of nature in her most beautiful and perfect form. . . . [T]hose marks of heroism and civic virtue offered the eyes of the people [will] electrify the soul, and plant the seeds of glory and devotion to the fatherland.†

* Translated by Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves, eds., *Artists on Art*, 3d ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), 206.

† *Ibid.*, 205.

29-23 JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID, *Oath of the Horatii*, 1784. Oil on canvas, 10' 10" × 13' 11". Louvre, Paris.

David was the Neoclassical painter-ideologist of the French Revolution. This huge canvas celebrating ancient Roman patriotism and sacrifice features statuesque figures and classical architecture.



JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID The Enlightenment idea of a participatory and knowledgeable citizenry lay behind the revolt against the French monarchy in 1789, but the immediate causes of the French Revolution were the country's economic crisis and the clash between the Third Estate (bourgeoisie, peasantry, and urban and rural workers) and the First and Second Estates (the clergy and nobility, respectively). They

fought over the issue of representation in the legislative body, the Estates-General, which had been convened to discuss taxation as a possible solution to the economic problem. However, the ensuing revolution revealed the instability of the monarchy and of French society's traditional structure and resulted in a succession of republics and empires as France struggled to find a way to adjust to these decisive changes.

JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID (1748–1825) became the Neoclassical painter-ideologist of the French Revolution. A distant relative of Boucher, he followed the Rococo painter's style until a period of study in Rome won the younger man over to the classical art tradition. David favored the academic teachings about using the art of the ancients and of the great Renaissance masters as models. He rebelled against Rococo style as an “artificial taste” and exalted the “perfect form” of Greek art (see “David on Greek Style and Public Art,” page 768).

OATH OF THE HORATII David concurred with the Enlightenment belief that subject matter should have a moral and should be presented so that noble deeds in the past could inspire virtue in the present. A milestone painting in David's career, *Oath of the Horatii* (FIG. 29-23), depicts a story from pre-Republican Rome, the heroic phase of Roman history. The topic was not too arcane for David's audience. Pierre Corneille (1606–1684) had retold this story of conflict between love and patriotism, first recounted by the ancient Roman historian Livy, in a play performed in Paris several years earlier, making it familiar to David's viewing public. According to the story, the leaders of the warring cities of Rome and Alba decided to resolve their conflicts in a series of encounters waged by three representatives from each side. The Romans chose as their champions the three Horatius brothers, who had to face the three sons of the Curatius family from Alba. A sister of the Horatii, Camilla, was the bride-to-be of one of the Curatius sons, and the wife of the youngest Horatius was the sister of the Curatii.

David's painting shows the Horatii as they swear on their swords, held high by their father, to win or die for Rome, oblivious to the anguish and sorrow of their female relatives. In its form, *Oath of the Horatii* is a paragon of the Neoclassical style. Not only does the subject matter deal with a narrative of patriotism and sacrifice excerpted from Roman history, but the painter presented the image with force and clarity. David depicted the scene in a shallow space much like a stage setting, defined by a severely simple architectural framework. He deployed his statuesque and carefully modeled figures across the space, close to the foreground, in a manner reminiscent of ancient relief sculpture. The rigid, angular, and virile forms of the men on the left effectively contrast with the soft curvilinear shapes of the distraught women on the right. This pattern visually pits virtues the Enlightenment leaders ascribed to men (such as courage, patriotism, and unwavering loyalty to a cause) against the emotions of love, sorrow, and despair that the women in the painting express. The French viewing audience perceived such emotionalism as characteristic of the female nature. The message was clear and of a type readily identifiable to the prerevolutionary French public. The picture created a sensation at its first exhibition in Paris in 1785, and although David had painted it under royal patronage and did not intend the painting as a revolutionary statement, the Neoclassical style of *Oath of the Horatii* soon became the semiofficial voice of the French Revolution. David may have painted in the academic tradition, but he brought new impetus to it. He created a program for arousing his audience to patriotic zeal.

DEATH OF MARAT When the French Revolution broke out in 1789, David threw in his lot with the Jacobins, the radical and militant revolutionary faction. He accepted the role of de facto minister of propaganda, organizing political pageants and ceremonies that included floats, costumes, and sculptural props. David believed that art could play an important role in educating the public and that dramatic paintings emphasizing patriotism and civic virtue would prove



29-24 JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID, *Death of Marat*, 1793. Oil on canvas, 5' 5" × 4' 2½". Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.

David depicted the revolutionary Marat as a tragic martyr, stabbed to death in his bath. Although the painting displays severe Neoclassical spareness, its convincing realism conveys pain and outrage.

effective as rallying calls. However, rather than continuing to create artworks focused on scenes from antiquity, David began to portray scenes from the French Revolution itself. He intended *Death of Marat* (FIG. 29-24) not only to serve as a record of an important event in the struggle to overthrow the monarchy but also to provide inspiration and encouragement to the revolutionary forces. Jean-Paul Marat (1743–1793), a writer and David's friend, was tragically assassinated in 1793. David depicted the martyred revolutionary after Charlotte Corday (1768–1793), a member of a rival political faction, stabbed him to death in his medicinal bath. (Marat suffered from a painful skin disease.) David presented the scene with directness and clarity. The cold neutral space above Marat's figure slumped in the tub produces a chilling oppressiveness. The painter vividly placed narrative details—the knife, the wound, the blood, the letter with which the young woman gained entrance—to sharpen the sense of pain and outrage and to confront viewers with the scene itself. *Death of Marat* is convincingly real, yet David masterfully composed the painting to present Marat as a tragic martyr who died in the service of the revolution. David based the figure of Marat on Christ in Michelangelo's *Pietà* (FIG. 22-12) in Saint Peter's in Rome. The reference to Christ's martyrdom made the painting a kind of “altarpiece” for the new civic “religion,” inspiring the French people with the saintly dedication of their slain leader.

29-25 JACQUES-GERMAIN SOUFFLOT, Panthéon (Sainte-Geneviève), Paris, France, 1755–1792.

Soufflot's Panthéon is a testament to the Enlightenment admiration for Greece and Rome. It combines a portico based on an ancient Roman temple with a colonnaded dome and a Greek-cross plan.

Architecture and Sculpture

Architecture in the Enlightenment era also exhibits a dependence on classical models. Early in the 18th century, architects began to turn away from the theatricality and ostentation of Baroque and Rococo design and embraced a more streamlined antique look.



PANTHÉON The portico of the Parisian church of Sainte-Geneviève, now the Panthéon (FIG. 29-25), by JACQUES-GERMAIN SOUFFLOT (1713–1780), stands as testament to the revived interest in Greek and Roman cultures. The Roman ruins at Baalbek in Lebanon, especially the titanic colonnade of the temple of Jupiter, provided much of the inspiration for Soufflot's design. The columns, reproduced with studied archaeological precision, stand out from walls that are severely blank, except for a repeated garland motif near the top. The colonnaded dome, a Neoclassical version of the domes of Saint Peter's (FIGS. 24-3 and 24-4) in Rome, the *Église du Dôme* (FIG. 25-36) in Paris, and Saint Paul's (FIG. 25-38) in London, rises above a Greek-cross plan. Both the dome and the vaults rest on an interior grid of splendid freestanding Corinthian columns, as if the portico's colonnade continued within. Although the overall effect, inside and out, is Roman, the structural principles employed are essentially Gothic. Soufflot was one of the first 18th-century builders to suggest that the logical engineering of Gothic cathedrals (see "The Gothic Cathedral," Chapter 18, page 469) could be applied to modern buildings. In his work, the curious, but not unreasonable, conjunction of Gothic and classical has a structural integration that laid the foundation for the 19th-century admiration of Gothic building principles.

CHISWICK HOUSE The appeal of classical antiquity extended well beyond French borders. The popularity of Greek and Roman

cultures was due not only to their association with morality, rationality, and integrity but also to their connection to political systems ranging from Athenian democracy to Roman imperial rule. Thus, parliamentary England joined revolutionary France in embracing Neoclassicism. In England, Neoclassicism's appeal also was due to its clarity and simplicity. These characteristics provided a stark contrast to the complexity and opulence of Baroque art, then associated with the flamboyant rule of absolute monarchy. In English architecture, the preference for a simple style derived indirectly from the authority of the classical Roman architect Vitruvius, through Andrea Palladio's work (FIGS. 22-29 to 22-32), and on through that of Inigo Jones (FIG. 25-37).

RICHARD BOYLE (1695–1753), earl of Burlington, strongly restated Jones's Palladian doctrine in a new style in Chiswick House (FIG. 29-26), which he built on London's outskirts with the help of WILLIAM KENT (ca. 1686–1748). The way had been paved for this shift in style by, among other things, the publication of Colin Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715), three volumes of engravings of ancient buildings, prefaced by a denunciation of Italian Baroque and high praise for Palladio and Jones. Chiswick House is a free variation on the theme of Palladio's Villa Rotonda (FIG. 22-29). The exterior design provided a clear alternative to the colorful splendors of Versailles (FIG. 25-32). In its simple symmetry, unadorned planes, right



29-26 RICHARD BOYLE and WILLIAM KENT, Chiswick House, near London, England, begun 1725.

For this British villa, Boyle and Kent emulated the simple symmetry and unadorned planes of the Palladian architectural style. Chiswick House is a free variation on the Villa Rotonda (FIG. 22-29).



29-27 JAMES STUART, Doric portico, Hagley Park, Worcestershire, England, 1758.

Most Neoclassical architects used Roman buildings in Italy and France as models. Stuart, who spent four years in Greece, based his Doric portico on a fifth-century BCE temple in Athens.

angles, and precise proportions, Chiswick looks very classical and “rational.” But the Palladian-style villa’s setting within informal gardens, where a charming irregularity of layout and freely growing uncropped foliage dominate the scene, mitigates the classical severity and rationality. Just as the owners of English villas cultivated irregularity in the landscaping surrounding their homes, they sometimes preferred interiors ornamented in a style more closely related to Rococo decoration. At Chiswick, the interior design creates a luxurious Baroque foil to the stern symmetry of the exterior and the plan. Palladian classicism prevailed in English architecture until about 1760, when it began to evolve into Neoclassicism.

STUART AND REVETT British painters and architects JAMES STUART (1713–1788) and NICHOLAS REVETT (1720–1804) introduced to Europe the splendor and originality of Greek art in their enormously influential *Antiquities of Athens*, the first volume of which appeared in 1762. These volumes firmly distinguished Greek art from the “derivative” Roman style that had served as the model for classicism since the Renaissance. Stuart and Revett fostered a new preference for Greek art and architecture over Roman antiquities, despite the fact that in the 18th century, familiarity with Greek art continued to be based primarily on Roman copies of Greek originals. Notwithstanding the popularity of the Grand Tour (see “The Grand Tour,” page 765), travel to Greece was hazardous, making firsthand inspection of Greek monuments difficult. Stuart and Revett spent four years visiting Greece in the early 1750s, where they formed their preference for Greek art. When Stuart received the commission to design a portico (FIG. 29-27) for Hagley Park in Worcestershire, he used as his model the fifth-century BCE Doric temple in Athens known as the Theseion. His Doric portico is consequently much more severe (and authentic) than any contemporaneous Neoclassical building in Europe based on Roman or Renaissance designs.



29-28 THOMAS JEFFERSON, Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1770–1806.

Jefferson led the movement to adopt Neoclassicism as the architectural style of the United States. Although built of local materials, his Palladian Virginia home recalls Chiswick House (FIG. 29-26).



29-29 THOMAS JEFFERSON, Rotunda and Lawn, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1819–1826.

Modeled on the Pantheon (FIG. 10-49), Jefferson's Rotunda, like a temple in a Roman forum, sits on an elevated platform overlooking the colonnaded Lawn of the University of Virginia.

THOMAS JEFFERSON Part of the appeal of Neoclassicism was due to the values with which it was connected—morality, idealism, patriotism, and civic virtue. Thus, it is not surprising that in the new American republic (MAP 29-1), THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743–1826)—scholar, economist, educational theorist, statesman, and gifted amateur architect—spearheaded a movement to adopt Neoclassicism as the national architectural style. Jefferson admired Palladio immensely and read carefully the Italian architect’s *Four Books of Architecture*. Later, while minister to France, he studied French 18th-century classical architecture and city planning and visited the Maison Carrée (FIG. 10-32), a Roman temple at Nîmes. After his European trip, Jefferson completely remodeled his own home, Monticello (FIG. 29-28), near Charlottesville, Virginia, which he first had designed in a different style. The final version of Monticello is somewhat reminiscent of Palladio’s Villa Rotonda (FIG. 22-29) and of Chiswick House (FIG. 29-26), but its materials are the local wood and brick used in Virginia.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA Jefferson’s Neoclassicism was an extension of the Enlightenment belief in the perfectibility of human beings and in the power of art to help achieve that perfection. When he became president, he selected Benjamin Latrobe (1764–1820) to build the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C., specifying that Latrobe use a Roman style. Jefferson’s choice in part reflected his admiration for the beauty of the Roman buildings he had seen in Europe

and in part his association of those buildings with an idealized Roman republican government and, through that, with the democracy of ancient Greece.

In his own designs for public buildings, Jefferson also looked to Rome for models. He modeled the State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia, on the Maison Carrée (FIG. 10-32). For the University of Virginia, which he founded, Jefferson turned to the Pantheon (FIG. 10-49). The Rotunda (FIG. 29-29) is the centerpiece of Jefferson’s “academical village” in Charlottesville. It sits on an elevated platform at one end of a grassy quadrangle (“the Lawn”), framed by Neoclassical pavilions and colonnades—just as temples in Roman forums (FIGS. 10-12 and 10-43) stood at one short end of a colonnaded square. Each of the ten pavilions (five on each side) resembles a small classical temple. No two are exactly alike. Jefferson experimented with variations of all the different classical orders in their designs. Jefferson was no mere copyist. He had absorbed all the principles of classical architecture and clearly delighted in borrowing from major buildings in his own designs, which were nonetheless highly original—and, in turn, frequently emulated.

JEAN-ANTOINE HOUDON Neoclassicism also became the preferred style for public sculptural commissions in the new American republic. When the Virginia legislature wanted to erect a life-size marble statue of Virginia-born George Washington, the commission

turned to the leading French Neoclassical sculptor of the late 18th century, JEAN-ANTOINE HOUDON (1741–1828). Houdon had already carved a bust portrait of Benjamin Franklin when he was U.S. ambassador to France. His portrait of Washington (FIG. 29-30) is the sculptural equivalent of a painted Grand Manner portrait (FIG. 29-18). But although both Washington and West’s General Wolfe (FIG. 29-18) wear contemporary garb, the Houdon statue makes overt reference to the Roman Republic. The “column” on which Washington leans is a bundle of rods with an ax attached—the ancient Roman *fasces*, an emblem of authority (used much later as the emblem of Mussolini’s Fascist—the term derives from “fasces”—government in 20th-century Italy). The 13 rods symbolize the 13 original states. The plow behind Washington and the fasces alludes to Cincinnatus, a patrician of the early Roman Republic who was elected dictator during a time of war and resigned his position as soon as victory had been achieved in order to return to his farm. Washington wears the badge of the Society of the Cincinnati (visible beneath the bottom of his waistcoat), an association founded in 1783 for officers in the revolutionary army who had resumed their peacetime roles. Tellingly, Washington no longer holds his sword in Houdon’s statue.



29-30 JEAN-ANTOINE HOUDON, *George Washington*, 1788–1792. Marble, 6' 2" high. State Capitol, Richmond.

Houdon portrayed Washington in contemporary garb, but he incorporated the Roman *fasces* and Cincinnatus’s plow in the statue, because Washington had returned to his farm after his war service.

29-31 HORATIO GREENOUGH, *George Washington*, 1840. Marble, 11' 4" high. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

In this posthumous portrait, Greenough likened Washington to a god by depicting him seminude and enthroned in the manner of Phidias's Olympian statue of Zeus, king of the Greek gods.



HORATIO GREENOUGH After his death, Washington gradually acquired almost godlike stature as the “father of his country.” In 1840 the United States Congress commissioned the American sculptor HORATIO GREENOUGH (1805–1852) to make a statue (FIG. 29-31) of the country’s first president for the Capitol. Greenough used Houdon’s portrait as his model for the head, but he portrayed Washington as seminude and enthroned, like the famous lost statue of Zeus that Phidias made for the god’s temple at Olympia in ancient

Greece. The statue, which epitomizes the Neoclassical style, did not, however, win favor with either the Congress that commissioned it or the public. Although no one ever threw Greenough’s statue into the Potomac River, as one congressman suggested, the legislators never placed it in its intended site beneath the Capitol dome. In fact, by 1840 the Neoclassical style itself was no longer in vogue. The leading artists of Europe and America had embraced a new style, Romanticism, examined in the next chapter.

THE BIG PICTURE

EUROPE AND AMERICA,
1700 TO 1800

ROCOCO

- In the early 18th century, the centralized and grandiose palace-based culture of Baroque France gave way to the much more intimate Rococo culture based in the town houses of Paris. There, aristocrats and intellectuals gathered for witty conversation in salons featuring delicate colors, sinuous lines, gilded mirrors, elegant furniture, and small paintings and sculptures.
- The leading Rococo painter was Antoine Watteau, whose usually small canvases feature light colors and elegant figures in ornate costumes moving gracefully through lush landscapes. His *fête galante* paintings depict the outdoor amusements of French high society.
- Watteau's successors included François Boucher and Jean-Honoré Fragonard, who carried on the Rococo style late into the 18th century. In Italy, Giambattista Tiepolo adapted the Rococo manner to huge ceiling frescoes in the Baroque tradition.

Watteau, *Pilgrimage to Cythera*, 1717

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

- By the end of the 18th century, revolutions had overthrown the monarchy in France and achieved independence for the British colonies in America. A major factor was the Enlightenment, a new way of thinking critically about the world independently of religion and tradition.
- The Enlightenment promoted scientific questioning of all assertions and embraced the doctrine of progress. The first modern encyclopedias appeared during the 18th century. The Industrial Revolution began in England in the 1740s. Engineers and architects developed new building materials. Iron was first used in bridge construction at Coalbrookdale, England, in 1776.
- The Enlightenment also made knowledge of ancient Rome imperative for the cultured elite, and Europeans and Americans in large numbers undertook a Grand Tour of Italy. Among the most popular souvenirs of the Grand Tour were Antonio Canaletto's *vedute* of Venice rendered in precise Renaissance perspective with the aid of a camera obscura.
- Rejecting the idea of progress, Rousseau, one of the leading French *philosophes*, argued for a return to natural values and exalted the simple, honest life of peasants. His ideas had a profound impact on artists such as Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin and Jean-Baptiste Greuze, who painted sentimental narratives about rural families.
- The taste for naturalism also led to the popularity of portrait paintings set against landscape backgrounds, a specialty of Thomas Gainsborough, among others, and to a reawakening of an interest in realism. Benjamin West represented the protagonists in his history paintings wearing contemporary costumes.

Canaletto, *Riva degli Schiavoni, Venice*, ca. 1735-1740Greuze, *Village Bride*, 1761

NEOCLASSICISM

- The Enlightenment revival of interest in Greece and Rome, which spurred systematic excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii, also gave rise in the late 18th century to the artistic movement known as Neoclassicism, which incorporated the subjects and styles of ancient art.
- One pioneer of the new style was Angelica Kauffmann, who often chose subjects drawn from Roman history for her paintings. Jacques-Louis David, who exalted classical art as "the imitation of nature in her most beautiful and perfect form," also favored ancient Roman themes. Painted on the eve of the French Revolution, *Oath of the Horatii*, set in a severe classical hall, served as an example of patriotism and sacrifice.
- The Neoclassical style also became the rage in interior decoration, fashion, and architecture. Roman and Italian Renaissance structures inspired Jacques-Germain Sofflot's Panthéon in Paris and Richard Boyle's Chiswick House near London. A Greek temple in Athens was the model for James Stuart's Doric portico in Worcestershire.
- In the United States, Thomas Jefferson adopted the Neoclassical style in his designs for Monticello, the Virginia Capitol, and the University of Virginia. He championed Neoclassicism as the official architectural style of the new American republic because it represented for him idealism, patriotism, and civic virtue.

David, *Oath of the Horatii*, 1784

Jefferson, Monticello, Charlottesville, 1770-1806