

The Rhetoric of Architecture and the Language of Pleasure:  
The *Maison de Plaisance* in Eighteenth-Century France

By

Alyson Jacqueline Liss

Bachelor of Architecture  
Cornell University, 2004

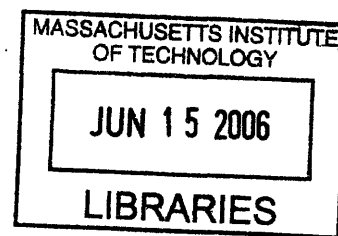
Submitted to the Department of Architecture in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Science in Architecture Studies

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the history of the *petite maison* (otherwise known as a little house) in eighteenth-century France. In particular, I focus on a popular libertine novella written in 1758 by Jean-François de Bastide entitled appropriately enough *La Petite maison*. In the novella, Bastide conflates concepts of vice and virtue in his descriptions of the little house. By doing so, the author set into play a terminological confusion of meaning that rendered the house as a problem that required a resolution. This thesis tracks the resolution of the ambiguous meaning of the little house in the work of the late eighteenth-century architect Claude-Nicolas Ledoux. I look at three different projects by Ledoux in order to trace how he transformed the “little house” as a literary trope illustrated by the author Bastide into a country house architectural typology. The first project discussed is a built music pavilion designed for fetes, entertainments and pleasures at Louveciennes for the mistress of Louis XV named Madame du Barry. The second project is an imagined house for a *Marchande de modes* (woman milliner tailor) represented in Ledoux’s treatise entitled *Architecture considered in relation to art, mores, and legislation*, published in 1804. The third imagined project, an institutional monastery *cum* brothel entitled Oikèma is also represented in his treatise. This thesis shows how Ledoux’s architectural typology of the little house resulted in nothing less than a formulation of a modern architectural conception of house and home.

By demonstrating that the little house is located at the fault lines of eighteenth-century moral philosophy, manners, architecture, sexuality, class, and nation building this thesis removes the building type from the historical margins that it has, until now, been relegated to. What is at stake, here, in this discussion of the *petite maison* is nothing less than the history of the formulation of a modern architectural syntax of domesticity. In this context, discussions of morality in elite discourse had forced sexuality out into the open. This thesis questions how the little house functioned as a vessel by which the language of sexuality came to be explored in both architecture and architectural theory in the twilight years of the eighteenth-century.

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## BIOGRAPHY

Alyson Jacqueline Liss earned her Bachelors degree in Architecture with a concentration in Theory of Architecture from Cornell University in 2004. She has taught architectural design studios at Cornell University in the Architecture Summer College program in Ithaca, New York as well as at the Boston Architectural Center in Boston, Massachusetts. She has been the recipient of awards and fellowships such as the Presidential Award for Excellence in Fine Art (1997); Baird Prize Bronze Medal, Cornell University Dept. of Architecture (1999); 1<sup>st</sup> Prize, Eastern Connecticut State University Student Housing Competition with ADD Inc., Cambridge, MA (2003); W. Danforth Compton Memorial Fellowship, MIT (2004-2006); and the Robert James Edilitz Fellowship, Cornell University College of Architecture, Art & Planning (2006) for her proposal: “Le Corbusier’s *Petite Maison* (1923, 1955): Discovering A Modernist’s Rococo Roots.” Her research interests include the History of Art and Architecture in the early modern period, with particular emphasis on the formulation of a modern architectural syntax in eighteenth-century architecture and architectural writing.

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The Rhetoric of Architecture and the Language of Pleasure:  
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## Introduction

### Decorum and the *petite maison*

The author, being in a *petite maison* where Madame de la Martelliere was with Mr. Le D. de R. wrote the following Verse: On the air: I will see, I will embrace this evening my Mistress. How this day has attractions! Here all enchants: Charming pleasure, am I in your palate? Does Psyche touch Love from a hiding-place in this retirement to prove her fires to Him? Which objects strike my eyes? It is Martelliere with R... Love, you will mislead your mother; I see the mystery: this is only one play.

Gabriel Charles L'Attaignant, (1756).<sup>1</sup>

I begin with this love song in order to elicit a sense of how sexuality and architecture came to be intertwined in the oral and literary culture of eighteenth-century France [Fig. 1]. What is noteworthy about the verse is that the *petite maison* – a term taken from architectural discourse that also becomes a literary device – connotes the place where amorous exploits occur between a certain Monsieur Le D. de R. and his mistress, Madame de la Martelliere. The *petite maison* had during this period an ambiguous meaning because it connoted two opposing social concepts: vice and virtue. The novelist Jean-François de Bastide would mask vice as virtue in *La petite maison* (1758) in order to describe a space of seduction. By contrast, the 1762 edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* defined the shepherd's "cabane rustique" or the primitive hut as a *petite maison*, thus associating the house with virtue.<sup>2</sup> And finally, in his *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804), the visionary architect Claude-Nicolas Ledoux conflated the two concepts, thereby representing the *petite maison* as a hybrid institution, a monastery cum brothel. A libertine novella, an

entry from the official dictionary of the French language, and an architectural treatise: what these examples indicate is that the *petite maison* played an elemental part in a broader cultural conception of architecture, its literary and pedagogical value and its ability to construct and order social mores. Bastide's *petite maison* speaks to a world of aristocratic leisure. The *Dictionnaire* provides a taxonomy of space in order to define the *petite maison* within the framework of an architectural typology, all of which leads up to Ledoux's *petite maison*, significantly renamed "*maison de campagne*," which lies at the foundation of the modern conception of the house. In fact, what Ledoux did was to extrapolate from the literary trope Bastide had popularized some fifty years earlier, with the result that the *petite maison* and its accompanying ornamental possibilities became pervasive in both his theoretical discussion of architecture and the design projects he published as part of that discussion. In other words, under Ledoux's guidance, the semantic ambiguities of the term *petite maison* – with all its complex allusions to virtue and vice, to masculinity and femininity, and to aristocratic and bourgeois morals – were introduced into architectural theory.

**P O E S I E S**

DE M. L'ABBÉ  
DE L'ATTAIGNANT;  
CONTENANT

Tout ce qui a paru de cet Auteur sous le titre de *Pièces de nos Opéra*, avec des augmentations très-considérables; et des annotations sur chaque Pièce qui en expliquent le sujet et l'occasion. Et des airs nouvellement composés sur toutes les Chansons.

TOME TROISIÈME.



A L O N D R E S,

Et se trouvent à Paris,  
Chez DUCHESNE, Libraire, rue Saint  
Jacques, au-dessous de la Fontaine Saint  
Éloi, au Temple du Croit.

M. D C C. L V I I.

LIVRE III. 221

Y. COUREUX.  
Quoi donc ! n'en est-ce pas assez  
Que votre beauté sous inspire ?  
Tant d'amans pour vous empressés ;  
Quoi donc ! n'en est-ce pas assez ?  
Vous-même aussi vous composez ;  
Apollon vous prête la lyre.  
Quoi donc ! n'en est-ce pas assez,  
Que votre beauté nous inspire ?

AUTRE

L'Auteur se trouvant dans une petite maison  
où étoit Madame de La Marcelline avec  
M. le D. de R. fit le Couple suivant.  
Sur l'air : Je verrai, j'embrancherai ce soir  
ma Maîtresse.

Que ce se jour a d'attetés !  
I- ci tout en- chaire : Vo- lupté  
K ij

222 CHANSONS DIVERSES.

ti char- mante, Suis-je en rou- pa-  
léis ? De Pfy-ché L'A-mour rou-  
ché Viens-il en ca- chette Dans  
cette ro- traite Lui prouvez les  
feux ? Quels ob- jets frap- pent mes  
yeux ! C'est la Mar- so- lière

LIVRE III. 223

A- vec R. . . A-  
mour, tu vas tromper ta me-  
re ! Je vois le mis- re-  
re : Co- ci n'est qu'un jeu.



K iij

Figure 1 Gabriel Charles L'Attaignant, (French, 1697- 1779) "Song," *Poesies de M. l'Abbé de L'Attaignant; contenant tout ce qui a par auteur sous le titre de pieces dérobées*, Vol. 3 (Londres [i.e. Paris], 1756-57): 221-224.

A discussion of the *petite maison* certainly warrants an interdisciplinary approach. The love song of 1756 that I use as epigraph testifies to the *petite maison* as a space of pleasure, as a building that by then carried with it certain notoriety. Bastide, however, eroticized architecture with an even broader pen by writing about an interior world, designed specifically for the purposes of seduction. He did so by ironically combining eroticism with pastoral signs and iconography.<sup>3</sup> What resulted from such a conflation was a representation of the little country house as a site of philosophical contestation for authors, painters, philosophers and architects during the second half of the eighteenth century. My thesis will explain this contestation and offer an interpretation of this *maison de plaisance* by looking in particular to Bastide's *La petite maison* and Ledoux's *L'Architecture considérée*. My contention is that it was during this period from the 1750's to 1790's that the country house, as both a literary trope and a building type introduced eroticism into architectural discourse in an unprecedented way. It imposed an interpretation of space that relied on terms and concepts taken from both social constructions of gender and from a philosophically inclined landscape imaginary. It was the latter, especially, that posited Nature as privileged site for reflection. In the pages that follow, I will consider how the language of sexuality inflected thinking about architecture by looking at novels, paintings, architectural drawings and treatises.

This comparative approach seeks to underscore the broader place sexual desire came to occupy in the formation of the modern conception of domestic space. This is a subject that has been left for the most part unexplored, despite the significant contributions made by art historians such as Ewa Lajer-Burcharth and Mary D. Sheriff who have studied the various ways in which eroticism came to be a guiding subject in Rococo painting.<sup>4</sup>

Three gardens with opposed social values add to the confused identity of the *petite maison*: first, the garden known as Arcadia – a rustic landscape inhabited by shepherds – represented pastoral happiness and imbued the *petite maison* with moral virtue; second, the garden of Cythera, a mythological landscape where Venus reigned that connoted seduction and pleasure and that was interpreted as a place of vice and obscenity thus lending a criminal tone to the *petite maison*; and third, the garden of Elysium which

was an idyllic landscape in the underworld where the morally “good” would travel to after death, and which instilled a sense of honorable morality to the country house. As moral values became part of a new political language, the distinctions between virtue and vice were used to not only represent different conceptions of nature, but to define different social classes as well. Hence, Arcadia was the rustic garden type tied to agriculture and labor; Cythera was related to the leisurely pleasures of the aristocratic sphere; and the Elysium was associated with the productive and virtuous leisure of the bourgeois.

The interdisciplinary approach I take to this material benefits from recent scholarship concerned with the intersecting of gender, sexuality, art, architecture and literature. Such an approach allows for the exploration of hidden complexities of a building type that has often been reserved for epigraphs and footnotes. In her discussion of gender, historian Joan Scott asserts “the primacy of that system [gender] in all social organization” and suggests that subjectivity is an “analytic category” that needs to be read as a socially constructed concept.<sup>5</sup> I would like to push the parameters of Scott’s model by suggesting that gender is not only an analytic category but should be used to rethink architecture itself. There is a scholarly tendency to interpret the *petite maison* as an eccentric folly of erotic pleasures built by an elite class. I intend to present a revision of that history by showing the tenuous relationship between sexuality and architecture as it is characterized by the *petite maison*. I offer a story of the house and home in eighteenth-century France that coincides with the development of modern notions of domesticity.

The inclination for eighteenth century moral philosophers to recognize the *petite maison* as illicit in nature, I believe, is symptomatic of a cultural condition that dealt with sexuality by classifying it, by confining it to the domestic interior, and by representing it in binary oppositions such as sanctioned or unsanctioned, moral or immoral, masculine or feminine, virtue or vice. Such differing meanings, attributed to the little house, speak to a larger problem of recognizing a break between social mores of the past and present, the desire to control new social mores, and a need to control such human interactions through architecture. At the forefront of this problem is the contentious presence of sexuality in discourse. When conflicting theories of sexuality were introduced into the *petite maison*,

the building type acquired ambiguous meaning. It is necessary to justify the nature of the terminological confusions associated with the house. The “official” definitions require interpretation and need to be balanced by “unofficial” historical evidence.

In 1694, the *petite maison* was included in the first edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Academie française* in a description under the entry “Maison.”<sup>6</sup> The *Dictionnaire*, which is a gauge of the contemporary use of French language, first lists a definition, “lodging, building made for lodging and for living in,” followed by a list of different expressions which apply the word “house” such as *maison commode, bien logeable. Belle maison. grand maison...petite maison...*<sup>7</sup> This list is followed by a series of sentences that show how such expressions should be employed in speech and writing. The *Dictionnaire* suggests, “One calls a house of the bottle [in speech *Maison de bouteille* was considered a vessel of mediocre capacity]. A small country house (*petite maison de campagne*) close to the city, where one is often visited by friends.”<sup>8</sup> The fourth edition of *Dictionnaire* in 1762 provides a revised definition of the *Maison de bouteille*, and of the *petite maison* to suggest that the building type “exposed its master to much expenditure” given that the house prompted holiday visits from friends and acquaintances.<sup>9</sup> To complicate matters further, by the fifth edition of *Dictionnaire* in 1798, the *petite maison* is recognized as a house for “*amusements secrets*” (secret recreations) – a definition close to Bastide’s own interpretation.<sup>10</sup>

Representations of the little house as a space for *amusements secrets* were already present in Bastide’s novella and Ledoux’s architecture. Rococo painters such as Francois Boucher and Jean-Honoré Fragonard painted such erotic scenes of domestic interiors. By 1798 – following the French Revolution – that the *petite maison* was defined in the *Dictionnaire* as a building type associated with eroticism and sexuality.<sup>11</sup> At this moment, the *petite maison* had become regulated, women were restricted to the private sphere of the house, and the house was established as a sign for the family. Because the house was handled as a space for the regulation of decorum, it needed to convey the “correct” etiquette in order to not be interpreted as a threat to patriarchal rules of behavior.

An extensive list of house types and terms can be found in the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751-72). Denis Diderot and



his collaborators attempted to structure and order the public sphere – and nothing less than the world – in their *Encyclopédie* passages. “House” was cross-listed with articles that classified the family, the nation, social order, domesticity, husbands, fathers, women and children. At its most basic, the *maison* was “a building intended for the habitation for man.”<sup>12</sup> The antiquarian Louis Chevalier de Jaucourt (1704-1799) in his *Encyclopédie* entry, “Family, House” (“*Famille, Maison*”), complicated such a conception of “house”; here the meaning of the house was set in opposition to that of the family. Jaucourt linked the word house with race, which was certainly not a novel definition because it dated back to the Middle Ages.<sup>13</sup> He suggests that elite persons who valued bloodlines above all else used the term *maison* to suggest a family lineage. In this context, *maison* suggested aristocratic corruption as opposed to moral excellence because “Vanity dreamed up the word *house* to reinforce distinctions of wealth and luck.”<sup>14</sup> Family, on the other hand, was characterized by “those ranks of citizens who, rising above the dregs of the populace, participate in the State and pass from father to son honest jobs, proper responsibilities, well-matched marriages, a decent upbringing, and gentle and educated manners.”<sup>15</sup> Jaucourt concludes by writing: “families are surely as good as houses.”<sup>16</sup> His definitions juxtaposed the aristocratic “house” with bourgeois “home”; furthermore, emphasis was placed on homes that served as an architecture for the genuine family – the patriarchal bourgeois family, that is – as opposed to the house of “vain,” “lucky,” and ineffective proprietors.<sup>17</sup> His judgments disturb class boundaries in order to subvert social traditions that support laws of inheritance in the form of land, wealth and power.

During this period of cultural transformation, the language of architecture was restructured in order to accommodate an altered interpretation of sexuality and gender in both the boudoir and the public sphere; in other words, issues of national consequence ranging from economics and agriculture to labor and production were posed in relation to the social planning of the family and home. After the execution of Marie-Antoinette, Republican mores were evoked in order to remove women from an authoritative position in public sphere and place them in the home.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, the *petite maison* was put to work in separate spheres either as a domestic space for the family or as a brothel for the good of the nation. Over the course of the eighteenth-century, the forces of power

that accomplish this “order” were not hierarchical in nature but rather discursive. The influence of multiple voices with numerous agendas imbued the little house with contradictory meanings that lead to a formulation of a modern language of architecture. Such a significant typological confusion of meaning merits an unraveling of the history of the *petite maison*.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Charles L’Attaignant, *Poesies de M. l’Abbé de L’Attaignant; contenant tout ce qui a par auteur sous le titre de pieces dérobées*, Vol. 3 (Londres [i.e. Paris], 1756-57): 221-224. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> “Cabane,” *Dictionnaire de L’Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 228. “Cabane. s.f. Petite loge, petite maison couverte ordinairement de chaume... Cabane de Berger. Le pauvre dans sa cabane, &c.”

<sup>3</sup> Jacques-François Blondel, the architecture teacher and theorist, legitimized the *maison de plaisance* as an architectural type worthy of theoretical investigation by publishing a two-volume treatise on the subject. His publication was indicative of the explosion of interest in the *maison de plaisance* in the eighteenth-century. Which is to say that Blondel was one of many architects who wrote about the *maison de plaisance*. Jacques-François Blondel, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, et de la decoration des edifices en general* (Paris, Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1737-38).

<sup>4</sup> Mary D. Sheriff, *Moved by love: inspired artists and deviant women in eighteenth-century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Mary D. Sheriff, *Fragonard: art and eroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, “Pompadour’s Touch, Difference in Representation,” *Representations*, No. 73. (Winter, 2001): 54-88.

<sup>5</sup> Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (Dec., 1989): 1053-1075.

<sup>6</sup> “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L’Académie française*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition (1694): 11. The *petite maison* was included in a list of over 35 phrases that included the word “house.”

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<sup>7</sup> “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition (1694): 11. “Maison. S.f. Logis, bâtiment fait pour y loger, pour y habiter. *maison commode, bien logeable. belle maison. grande maison. maison à porte cochere. petite maison. maison basse. maison élevée...*”

<sup>8</sup> “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition (1694): 11. “On appelle, Maison de bouteille. Une petite maison de campagne proche la ville, où l'on est visité souvent de ses amis que l'on y traite.” The *Dictionnaire* also suggests that the term was used in speech to indicate a hospital or house for the insane, “One calls in Paris, *Petites Maisons, hospitals where one locks up those with alienated spirit.*” This term remains popular throughout the eighteenth century. The *petite maison* was also called a “Maisonnette. s.f. dim. De maison. Petite maison & basse. Il a fait bastir une maisonnette. il est logé dans une petite maisonnette.” Translated as: “Of house. Small and low house. He built a *maisonnette*. He is living in a small *maisonnette*.”

<sup>9</sup> “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 75. “On appelle Maison de bouteille, Une petite maison de campagne près de la ville où l'on demeure, & qui expose son maître à beaucoup de dépense, à cause des visites que la proximité lui attire. Il est familier.”

<sup>10</sup> “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (1798): 55. “On appelle à Paris, Petites Maisons, l'Hôpital où l'on renferme ceux qui ont l'esprit aliéné. Il le faut mettre, il devrait être aux petites maisons.” “On dit proverbialement en parlant d'un trait de folie, que Ce sont les petites maisons ouvertes.” “On appelle aussi Petite maison, une maison destinée à des amusemens secrets.”

<sup>11</sup> “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (1798): 55. “One also calls a *petite maison*, a house intended for secret amusements.”

<sup>12</sup> Louis Chevalier de Jaucourt, “Maison,” *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751-76): 9:889. “Maison, s. f. (Architecture.) du latin mansio, demeure; c'est un bâtiment destiné pour l'habitation des hommes, & consiste en un ou plusieurs corps-de-logis.”

<sup>13</sup> The 1798 edition of the *Dictionnaire* gives a similar definition, “Maison, signifie encore Race. Il ne se dit que des races nobles et illustres. *Maison noble. Maison ancienne. Maison illustre. Grand maison. Maison souveraine. La Maison de France. La Maison d'Autriche. La Maison de Lorraine. La Maison de Coucy.*” See “Maison,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (1798): 56.

<sup>14</sup> Louis Chevalier de Jaucourt, “Famille, Maison,” *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751-76): 6:392.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Foucault refers to such emphasis and value given to bloodlines as “biopower.” My method of approach to the complicated subject of the *petite maison* is Foucauldian, in that I am taking a discursive approach to the subject. See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1, an Introduction* (1976; New York: Penguin, 1978).

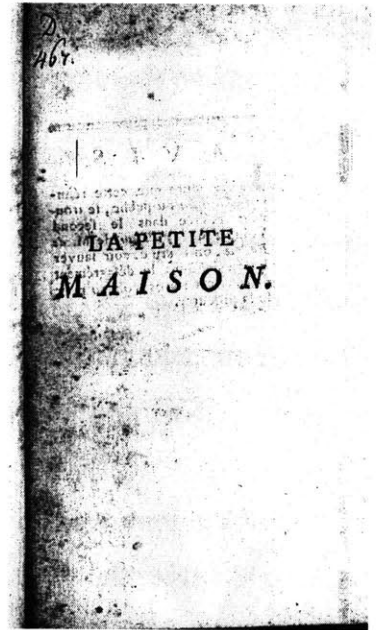
<sup>18</sup> Margaret H. Darrow, “French Noblewomen and the New Domesticity, 1750-1850,” *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, *Women and Power: Dimensions of Women's Historical Experience* (Spring, 1979): 41-65.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Contested Architecture:

#### Jean-François de Bastide's *La petite maison*

The *petite maison*, a derivation of the eighteenth-century French *maison de plaisance* or country house of pleasure, was a building type developed by architects as much as by writers, painters, sculptors, and decorative artists. The charged meaning of the *petite maison* was of course dependent upon the architect who designed it, or the writer who represented it in literary or social philosophical form. But it is precisely because the *petite maison* – whether built or inserted into a narrative of love – was called upon to order social mores that it became such a deeply contested category. In this chapter, I will interpret the history of the *petite maison* by means of its genesis in literary and pictorial form. In particular I will focus on a popular novella written in 1758 by Jean-François de Bastide entitled *La petite maison*, which was re-edited no less than three times in under a decade and prompted the critical reaction of no less than Melchior Grimm, François-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire, and, indirectly, Denis Diderot [Fig. 2].<sup>1</sup>



**Figure 2 Jean-François de Bastide (French, 1724-1798)**  
Title page, “La petite maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur* (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762)

### *Mixed Messages and Terminological Confusions*

In his book, Bastide uses the pretext of seduction to explore a wide range of social issues including domesticity, taste, and education of women. In so doing, he relied on the conventions of libertine fiction so as to philosophize the concept of love and understanding for his reader in the preface:

Read this work, which I regret not having written for you: it contains truths that you need to know: you will see that when there are two of us and that we are looking at each other, we begin to understand each other: that when we understand each other, we begin to love each other: that when we love each other, it is very difficult... But why warn you about something which may perhaps serve only to make you more virtuous?<sup>2</sup>

There are two aspects of this passage that are important to stress. First, Bastide depends here on a strategy frequently used by authors introducing works with potentially inflammatory subject matter: he fictionalizes authorship – assumes the voice of editor –

in order to distance himself from a work with sexual or political subtexts. Second, the title and its roots (*maison de plaisance*) in combination with the preface makes clear that morality, or rather its tenuousness, will enter the house in the pages that follow, thereby seductively initiating the reader – the female reader, that is – into the erotic “truths” of the *petite maison*. The eroticized domestic architecture described in the book sets the stage for a carefully choreographed series of illicit pleasures and lists over twenty major Rococo artists of the day as if it were akin to a *Salon livret*. Here architecture is used to seduce, and the book as a whole can be understood as reveling in the perceived susceptibility of the educated “virtuous” woman.

As Bastide emphasizes at the beginning of his story, the complex of buildings brought together under the rubric *petite maison* is located on the banks of the Seine River and includes, along with the main house, a menagerie of familiar and rare animals, a dairy adorned with marble and shells, and a stable. Taken together, these buildings borrow “more from nature than art and represents a *pastoral* and *champêtre* character.”<sup>3</sup> By using ideas associated with the *pastoral* to relate the house to the simple life of shepherds and *champêtre* to refer to the bountiful fields of the countryside, Bastide conflates a “productive” country house with a temple of love. His story takes place in a setting complete with all of the happiness that the pastoral life provides. The pleasures described are, however, different from those of a pastoral shepherd, because they are artfully contrived to both imitate and subvert socially constructed “virtues” of nature. Though Bastide did not invent the *petite maison* as a concept, he did challenge its implications by popularizing it as a house built specifically to seduce.<sup>4</sup> Of course, the *petite maison* had both supporters and critics, many of whom lent to it contradictory meanings. The *petite maison* became a discursive arena for moral philosophers and libertines, who attempted to either denounce or claim the country house in order to support their own ideological purposes. Because it was a type of *maison de plaisance*, the historical, social, medical, philosophical, and moral attributes given to country living by writers such as Bastide, philosophers such as Denis Diderot, and architects such as Jacques-François Blondel and Claude-Nicolas Ledoux only added to the confused identity of the little house. In volume nine of the *Encyclopédie*, published in December 1765, le chevalier de Jaucourt defines the *maison de plaisance* as “a building in the

country, which is intended for pleasure rather than for profit from the land that it possesses...in Latin it is named villa.”<sup>5</sup> He defines the *maison rustique* (rustic house) in the next entry as “any building that has a farm or a small holding.”<sup>6</sup> Bastide sets up a typological conflation of the *maison de plaisance* with the *maison rustique* in order to describe his *petite maison*. The celebrated farm becomes an aesthetic device to connote productive virtue in an erotic milieu.

The conflation of productivity and pleasure that affected interpretations of domesticity and social mores can further elucidated by contrasting the idealized garden of “Elysium” described by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his best-selling moral sentimental novel, *Julie; ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), with “Cythera” represented in by Jean-Antoine Watteau’s *fête galante* painting, *Embarkation à Cythera* (1717). Rousseau’s “Elysium” and Watteau’s “Cythera” as opposing representations of nature will be discussed in relationship to Bastide’s novella.

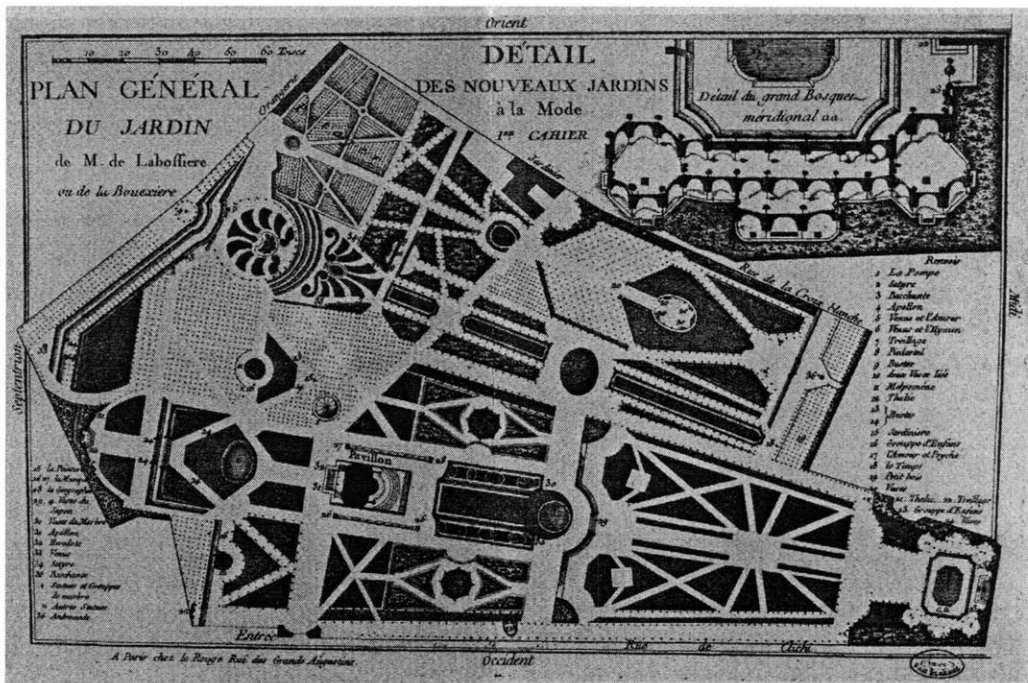
From the outset of the story, Bastide establishes virtue as a value to be conquered. The self-proclaimed “virtuous” young woman, Mélite, is contrasted with the Marquis de Trémicour, a man who is “unrivaled in agreeableness.”<sup>7</sup> The marquis has set his sights on Mélite, whose “liberal manners” suggests “*galanterie*” or a flirtatious disposition.<sup>8</sup> Dedicating her time to study, as opposed to affairs with men, her virtue caused a “constant war between them.” But believing that Mélite could not resist him once he had lured her inside his *petite maison*, the “magnificent and generous” Trémicour, “full of spirit and taste,” challenges her to visit him there.<sup>9</sup> She agrees, and the wager (*gageure*) is made. Sexuality and virtue become commodities – like the art and architecture of the *petite maison* – to be gambled with. The *petite maison* mediated between the Marquis and Mélite and seduced her after he, alone, could not. Trémicour requires the *petite maison* as a prosthetic replacing his impotence, and in turn the seduction depends on Mélite’s so-called un-womanly “nature” and knowledge of the arts. This plot device foreshadowed Choderlos de Laclos’ own extreme version of manipulation and seduction centered on a wager in his novel *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1781). While Mélite and Trémicour progress through the house, the former delights in the exquisite decoration of the Rococo interiors, which her life of study has given her the capacity to recognize and decipher. But it is Mélite’s honorable life that facilitates her seduction.<sup>10</sup> This fiction is



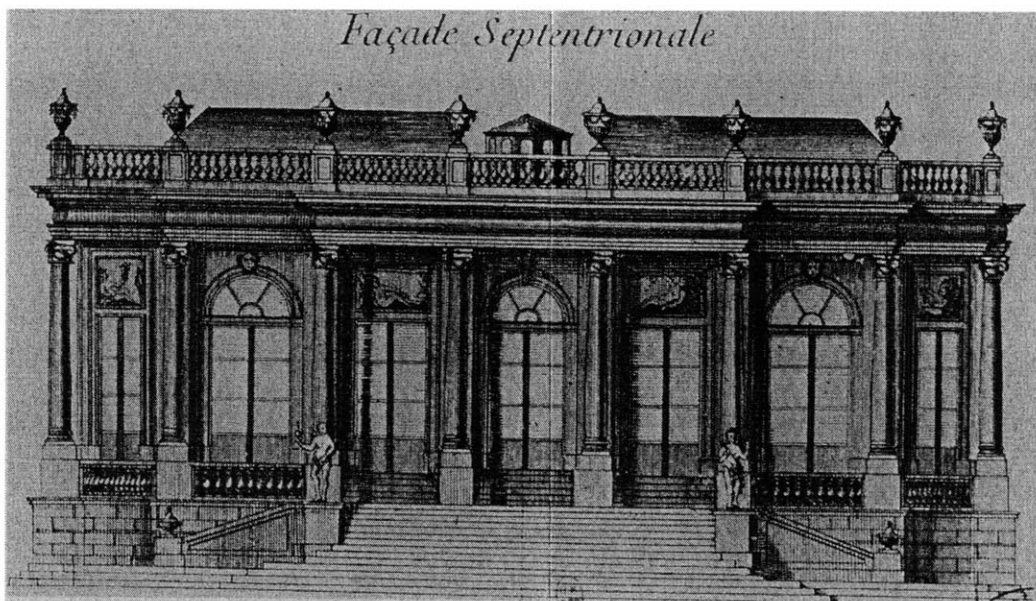
more than just a story about Méliete's loss of virtue; it also presents a subtle ideological attitude on the education of women. Furthermore, Bastide reverses the gendered identities of his characters by representing a castrated man, and an authoritative woman. In other words, the house is the site of a seduction between a supposedly effeminate man and a so-called masculine woman.

Those erotic "truths" reveal themselves in the plot to which I now turn.<sup>11</sup> After passing through a "small but perfectly proportioned" front courtyard, the pair enters a vestibule that leads into a circular salon with a ceiling painted by Noël Hallé (1711-1781).<sup>12</sup> Elaborating in a footnote, Bastide explains that the artist is "one of our French painters, who, along with [François] Boucher, was preeminent in the representation of fables."<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Hallé had become a full member of the French Academy in 1748, and a professor at the institution in 1755.<sup>14</sup> While Bastide gives a brief but "delicious" description of the ceiling painting in question, in the absence of a more elaborate description, the artist's name serves as a sign for his art. The footnote adds information about specific artistic talents that explain the reason for *his* inclusion in the text – after all, it should not be overlooked that all of these artists are men. Hallé also painted over-door love scenes in the Salon. His artwork, in combination with the "tastefully positioned sculptures enhanced by the luster of gold" and "drapes...chosen to compliment the lilac paneling" were designed with such talent that "even [Mathieu] le Carpentier himself could not have arranged anything more agreeable or more perfect."<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, the book delivers a catalog of *bon goût* and an advertisement of preferred artists.

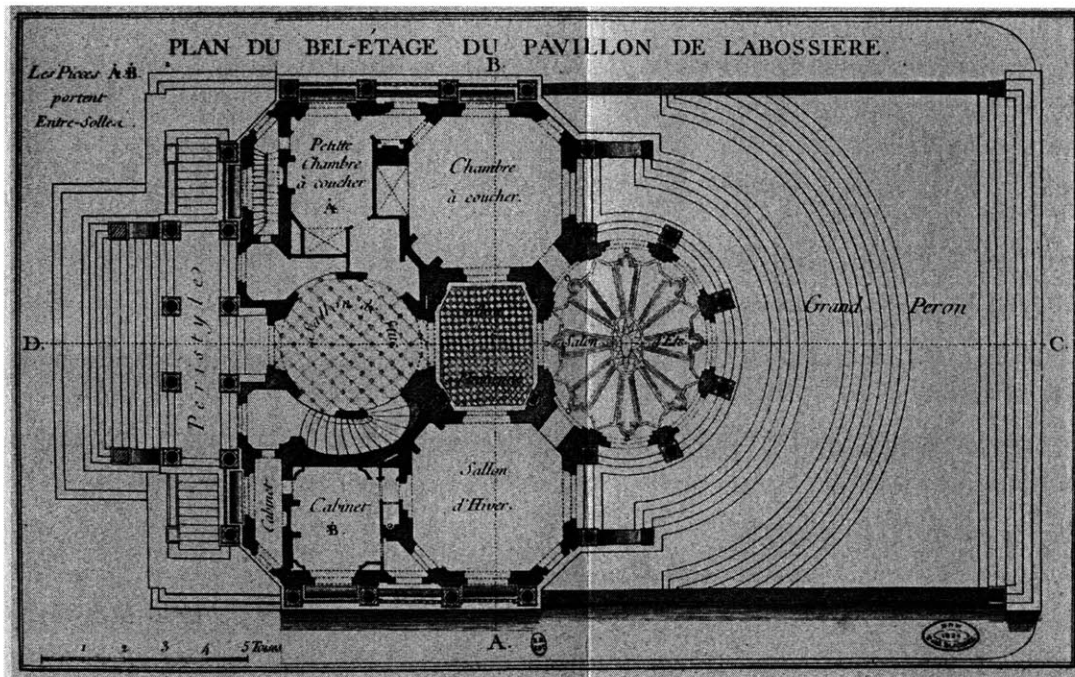
Bastide compliments the architect, le Carpentier, provides the reader with an example of what to look for in a *petite maison*, "[le Carpentier is] One of the king's architects, who excelled in the decoration of interiors. The *petite maison* of M. de la Boissière and the house of M. Bouret attest to his taste and genius."<sup>16</sup> Le Carpentier's pavilion de la Boissière, was built in 1751, appears as a renowned example of the house type. Located in the Rue de Clichy in Paris, it was designed to be a monument. Raised up on a plinth of fifteen steps, it overlooked an expansive formal garden filled with fountains and temples dedicated to mythological figures such as Amour, Venus, Hymen, Apollo, Bacchante and Satyr [Fig. 3].



**Figure 3 Jean-Michel Chevotet (French, 1698-1772)**  
 Garden Site Plan of Mr. De Laboissière, 1751. Reprinted from Jean-François de Bastide: *The little house: an architectural seduction*, trans. Rodolphe el-Khoury (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996): 64.



**Figure 4 Mathieu le Carpentier (French, 1709- 1773)**  
 Front Elevation, *Pavillon de la Boissière*, 1751. Reprinted from Jean-François de Bastide, *The little house: an architectural seduction*, trans. Rodolphe el-Khoury (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996): 63. Note: Drawing in 1996 translation in mislabeled “Garden elevation.”



**Figure 5 Mathieu le Carpentier (French, 1709- 1773)**

Ground Plan, *Pavillon de la Boissière*, 1751. Reprinted from Jean-François de Bastide, *The little house: an architectural seduction*, trans. Rodolphe el-Khoury (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996): 61.

The primary entry sequence begins at the orthogonal front façade composed of a fifteen steps that rise to a projecting rectangular peristyle screened by four ionic columns [Fig. 4]. Another layer of six ionic columns creates a gallery between the garden and the circular “stucco salon” (or *Salon de Stuc*) inside. In plan, the primary parti through the house is composed of a Stucco Salon, a small rectangular Italian Salon (“*Salon à l’Italienne*”) and the grand oval shaped Summer Salon (or “*Salon d’Eté*”), which extends beyond the back façade and mediates between being an interior room, and an independent pavilion that overlooks three terraces and the gardens beyond [Fig. 5]. The pavilion’s sidewalls extend beyond the rectangular building envelope on the garden façade. They flank twenty-four stairs and three terraces that mimic the oval shape of the summer salon. These back stairs and terraces compose half the plan, and compress the interior spaces

towards the front façade. In plan, the summer salon is a point of release between the compressed interior rooms and the grand exterior stepped terrace. To the right of the *Salon à l'Itallienne* is a square shaped winter salon with chamfer corners; to its left is a formal bedroom. Both of these spaces rival the summer salon in scale, however the latter remains the privileged space in the retreat. The *petite maison* is, in fact, titled a “pavillon de Labossiere” by le Carpentier.

“Pavilion” is not defined in the *Encyclopédie*, however, the 1762 edition of the *Dictionnaire* suggests that it originated as “a species of portable housing used for the encampment of people at war.”<sup>17</sup> In the body of the text, a single sentence suggests that pavilions can also be found in private gardens. Although not expressly referred to as pleasure houses by the *Dictionnaire*, architects such as le Carpentier and later Ledoux, classified their pleasure houses as “pavilions.” Yet Bastide, along with other authors and playwrights, replaces the term pavilion with *petite maison*.

As the sun begins to set for Trémicour and Méлите, a chandelier and girandoles are lit. The lights reflect in mirrors mounted on the wall, which allows Méлите better views of the sculptures by Nicolas Pineau (1684-1754) and the painted woodwork by Pierre-Bertrand Dandrillon (1725-1784).<sup>18</sup> As she flatters Trémicour, he kisses her hand and breaks the spell that the salon had cast; however, “he trusted that she would be touched even more by more touching objects and thus hastened her to her destiny.”<sup>19</sup> As architecture tightens its grasp of seduction, the novella tells its readers that so too can the spectator lose their attachment to virtue. The agency of the house and its interior is expressed in the form of anthropomorphic space, where Méлите feels the contact of objects that are in fact an extension of Trémicour’s own body. Méлите is “touched” by art and is then startled to realize that her admirer is stroking her hand.

Next, the couple enters a bedroom with a vaulted ceiling painted with a personification of sleep: the great “Hercules in the arms of Morpheus, awakened by Love,” by Jean-Baptiste Pierre (1714-1789). Decorated with pale yellow walls, bronzes, porcelains and overlooking a garden, the room could have “coerced even the coldest minds to sense something of the voluptuousness [*volupté*] it proclaimed.”<sup>20</sup> Sensing danger, Méлите stops speaking and leaves the room, only to enter a boudoir decorated with mirrors framed in wood carved to imitate trees and lit from chandeliers covered with

gauze drapery.<sup>21</sup> Fearing the loss of her virtue while standing in a “magical boudoir” that “could have been mistaken for a natural wood,” Méliete conjectured “that such dangerous art in such a charming place exposed one to no end of treacherous temptations.”<sup>22</sup> Here, Méliete recognizes the danger posed to her preservation of virtue by the persuasive powers of art and architecture in the *petite maison*.

The seduction continues as the couple traverses the bathroom, dressing room, water closet, wardrobe, mezzanine, vestibule, garden, salon, cabinet, dining room, pantry, and finally another boudoir. In the final scene, it is Trémicour who is getting exhausted as he runs out of rooms, yet not until Méliete “almost fell into a *bergère*” (shepherdess) does Trémicour collapse at her feet [Fig. 6].<sup>23</sup> Because most of the art described is based on pastoral themes that Bastide associates with the house, it is quite sardonic that just before Méliete “loses the wager,” she collapses into a fashionable chair called a shepherdess. The irony that Méliete loses her virtue in a chair named after a virtuous peasant cannot be overlooked; the placement of key furniture pieces in particular spaces at critical moments in the story emphasizes Bastide’s conflation of a productive peasant life with luxurious debauchery.

This finale, which caught the public’s imagination, was actually a revision of the first publication of *La petite maison*.<sup>24</sup> Bastide’s original version concludes with Méliete escaping from Trémicour’s house and fleeing into the countryside. Presumably, the countryside where Méliete sought shelter was less of an artifice for love and seduction than the *petite maison*. Even though the house is a temple of love in the country, Méliete can still find refuge in the real pastoral landscape. The original conclusion appears contradictory to Bastide’s conception that his *petite maison* “borrowed more from nature than art.” In this version, the house does not solve Trémicour’s “problem.” It also denies the agency that he attributes to architecture and interior ornament.



**Figure 6 Jean Nicolas Blanchard**  
*Bergère à la Reine*, Après 1771, Carved and gilded beech wood. H.: 1,03 m.; L.: 0,75 m.; Pr.: 0,61m. Paris, Louvre Museum.

Bastide's novel was not well received by all critics, especially the *philosophes*. While a separate pamphlet of the story was circulating,<sup>25</sup> Friedrich Melchior Grimm writes in the February 1761 publication of *Correspondance littéraire*:

The *petite maison* is a tale which one drew from the second volume of the *Spectateur* of Mr. Bastide, and which one could exempt of reprinting. The author of this tale does not have talent. He appears to have made his booklet only to quote the names of the artists who are employed in the interior decoration of the houses of Paris. Also the two heroes of this *petite maison*, Melite and Trémicour, are precisely the characters who interest least.<sup>26</sup>

Such biting criticism faulted Bastide for writing a story that advertised the work of Parisian artists. Bastide also assigned professional authority to architects designing spaces that had the capacity to manipulate human behavior.

One year prior to Grimm's note, and two years after the publication of *La petite maison*, François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire addressed Bastide in a letter (1760) as the "Spectateur," "author *du monde*."<sup>27</sup> Voltaire's ironic tone received no written response, albeit Bastide did publish the letter in his journal, *le monde*.<sup>28</sup> Voltaire picked up on the double meaning of *le monde* as both the world and elite salon "society." First, he rhetorically asks if Bastide writes "truths" about the physical world, knowing full well that the latter writes about the social world – the other *le monde* that is – of wealthy Parisians. By questioning Bastide's "physical world truths," Voltaire also probes and refutes the proposal that tangible objects can seduce. Second, Voltaire casts justifiable doubt on whether or not Bastide is directing his work towards the reform of manners, morals or both. Using irony, he suggests that Bastide does not direct acceptable mores any more than polite society dignifies genius. In a sarcastic tone, Voltaire writes:

It is somewhat of a reflection on human nature, I agree with you, that money accomplishes everything when merit almost nothing: that the real workers behind the scenes have hardly a modest subsistence, while certain selected personages flaunt on the stage [Théâtre]; that fools are exalted to the skies and genius in the gutter...Believe me, dear *Spectator*, I cannot urge you too strongly to reform our virtues: men cling too tightly to their vices.<sup>29</sup>

Speaking in eloquently insincere prose, Voltaire responds to Bastide's writing in a tone that mocks the latter's own cynical authoritative claims to the improvement of manners. Bastide is no more simply a spectator than he is simply the editor of *La petite maison*.

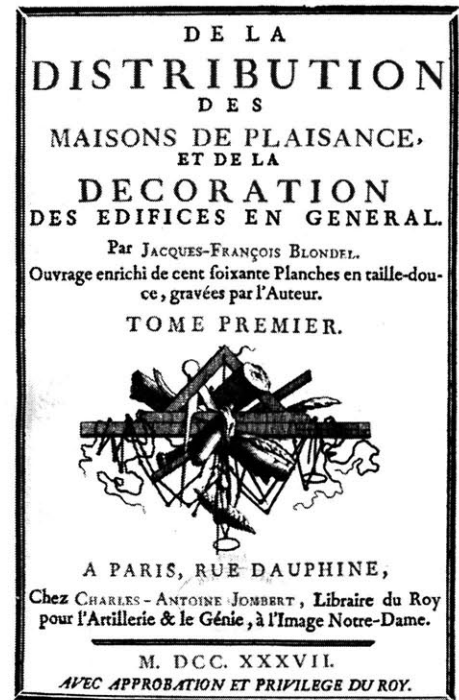
### *Seduction in the Garden*

In the eighteenth century, nature became increasingly politicized. It is therefore no coincidence that it became yet another defining theme for country houses such as the *petite maison*, the *maison de plaisance*, the *maison de campagne*, and the *maison rustique*. Already, Bastide conflates the garden types known as Elysium and Cythera in order to complicate his story behind concepts such as honor, labor, and production. This conflation created a semantic gap in the conflicting representations of the little house.

One of the great eighteenth-century teachers of architecture, Jacques-François Blondel, published a two volume treatise entitled *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, et de la decoration des edifices en general* (1737-38) early in his career.<sup>30</sup> This treatise, written twenty years previous to Bastide's novella, was dedicated to the country pleasure house and is indicative of the cultural significance that the *maison de plaisance* architectural type had gained in the eighteenth-century. His books provide drawings, accompanied by text, in order to describe the rules that an architect should abide by in order to design a tasteful country house. By writing about the rules of decorum and how they manifest in the every detail of the house – from plans, elevations, and stair rails to doorways, parterres and fountains – he provides a manual that organizes domestic space [Fig. 7, 8].<sup>31</sup>

Blondel did not eroticize the country house as Bastide did. Seduction still had profoundly negative connotations, as evidenced by Boucher d'Argis' *Encyclopédie* entry in which he defined the term as “a cunning fraud, which one employs to deceive somebody, and to make it grant some act or contrary step with its honor or its interests.”<sup>32</sup> Seduction was deceitful, manipulative, and appears to have no place in “honorable” houses. The antiquarian Louis Le Chevalier de Jaucourt provides the “moral” entry for “Seducer” in the *Encyclopédie*, noting that “it is that which with only the sight of pleasure, tries with art to corrupt virtue, to misuse the weakness or the ignorance of a young person....”<sup>33</sup> He suggests that the individual who employs “art” in order to manipulate “corrupts virtue.”





**Figure 7, 8 Jacques-François Blondel (French, 1705-1774)**

Left, Frontispiece. Right, Title page. Reprint from Jacques-François Blondel, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, et de la decoration des edifices en general* (Paris: C.A. Jombert, 1737-1738).

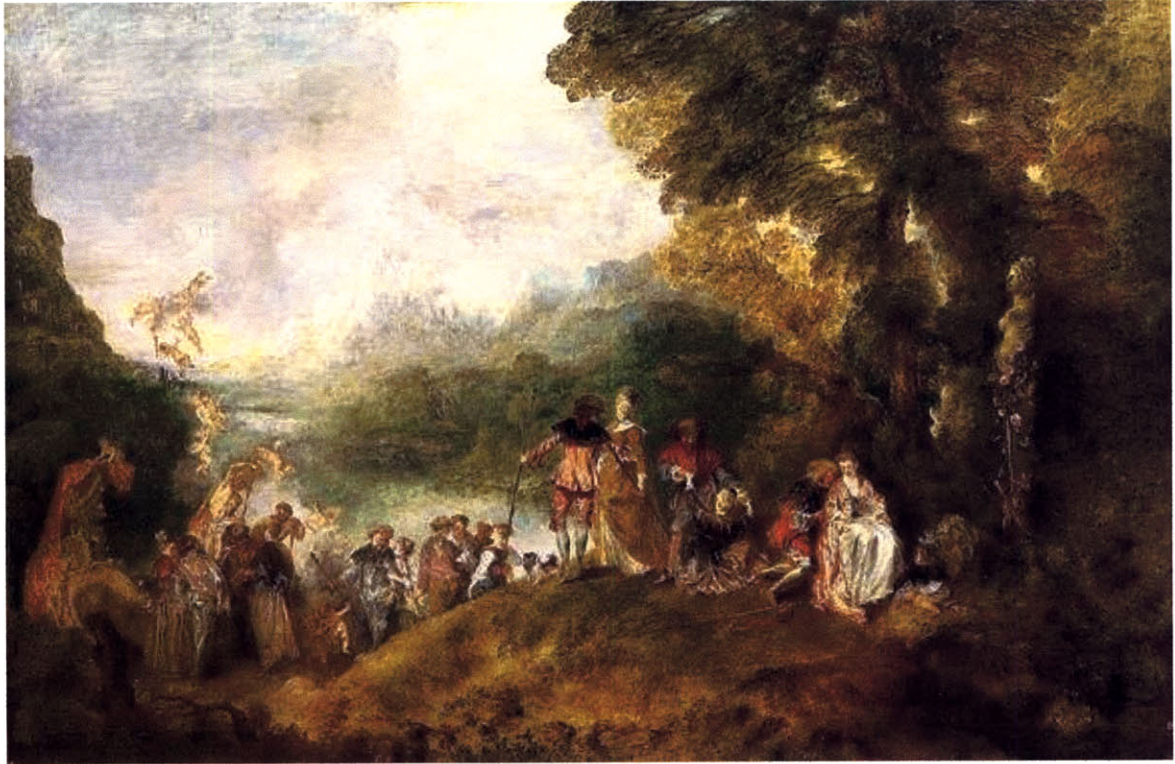
In the *Encyclopédie*, Cythera appears in over ten articles including “Venus,” “Temples de Vénus,” and “le vivrais.” Diderot himself provides a brief description of the celebrated Island in the entry entitled “Cythérée.” He suggests that it is an island situated near Crete, where Venus loved to be accompanied by the Pleasures and Graces. Very little written about the island in this passage suggests that it is a landscape for seduction.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, Edme-François Mallet dedicated a full column to Elysium in the *Encyclopédie*, noting that the underworld garden, dedicated to the good, was “full of agreeable countryside landscapes, charming prairies, and delicious forests.”<sup>35</sup> Elysium was certainly portrayed as the more monumental and desirable of the two because it linked death to eternal pleasure. The epistemological confusions of the *petite maison* are in part due to the different conceptions of nature to which the house belonged. The ambiguous meaning of the house is also indicative of a confidence of using “nature” to

justify gender difference and class identities. As the eighteenth century progressed, representations of the erotic garden of Cythera, explored by Jean-Antoine Watteau in his painting, *Embarkation à Cithera* (1717) were substituted for portrayals of moralized sexuality denoted by the garden of Elysium, famously described in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Heloise* (1761). Such a belief that nature conditioned social mores provoked the contentious interpretation of the country house.

The island garden known as Cythera was defined in the eighteenth century as erotic and obscene, yet this interpretation was of course de-emphasized in the *Encyclopédie*. In classical mythology, Venus was born from sea foam ocean waves and transported to the island of Cythera.<sup>36</sup> Venus, the goddess of both adoration and sexual desire, lends the two concepts to the island. In the eighteenth century, the island became a popular subject for literature and art, the quintessential representation being Jean-Antoine Watteau's *fête gallant* painting, *Embarkation à Cithera* (1717) [Fig. 9]. By using "à" in the title of the picture, the painting can be interpreted as representation of a departure "for" or "from" Cythera. Together, the title and image represent an equivocal subject that has henceforth been questioned. Thomas Crow suggests that the life of eighteenth-century nobles shifted from the "exercise of power" into "the crafting of leisure," and it is precisely these representations of noble leisure's intricate codes, popularized in the seventeenth century as *honnêteté* or propriety, that Watteau painted for an elite society.<sup>37</sup> Building on Crow's work, Georgia Cowart connects the theme of Cythera to the "subversive utopia" of two opera ballets, *Le triomphe des arts* (1700) and *Les amours déguisez* (1713). She posits that the ballets gave "meaning to the sacred island of Venus as a political utopia and as a direct challenge to the absolutism of Louis XIV."<sup>38</sup> As such, Cythera provided an ideal place for libertine explorations of pleasure and utopia.

In Watteau's painting, sixteen couples gesturing amorously to each other navigate down a picturesque landscape toward the water where two boats with oarsman await them. In the foreground, a couple is seated next to a sculpture of Venus. Next to them a man helps a woman rise as their group departs the island. Each of the couples flash seductive gazes, caress at each other as they prepare to depart. Watteau's figures form a serpentine line that weaves around painted hills and descend toward the water below.

Cupids cast their spell over the couples closest to the water's edge.<sup>39</sup> All of these erotic signs of bliss – the sculpture of Venus, the paired couples and the crowning of cupids – indicate that the group is departing from Cythera. Watteau has in fact represented the fabled island of pleasure.<sup>40</sup>



**Figure 9 Jean-Antoine Watteau (French, 1684-1721)**  
*Embarkation à Cythera*, 1717, Oil on Canvas, H.: 1,29 m.; L.: 1,94 m., Paris, Louvre Museum.

Bastide explored the theme of this island in an early novel titled *La Trentaine de Cithere* (1753).<sup>41</sup> His tale begins with the corruption of love that leads to the sorrow of Amour who falls into a twenty-year slumber.<sup>42</sup> Upon awakening, the god realizes that love only appears uncorrupted in “Bourgeois circles.” Bastide notes Love’s frustration, “Ah Parbleu, says he (it was the first time that he swore) that is too strong; one takes me for a puppet; I will put it [love] in good order.”<sup>43</sup> Finished with dealing in “the businesses of mortals,” Amour subsequently “yields all his rights to Venus” except for the island of Cythera. There Amour decreed that vice would be “unmasked” by a law of abstinence that would be enforced to separate virtuous “true lovers” and reward them.

This pretense, gives Bastide the liberty to discuss the sexual exploits of Cythera's inhabitants, and his first character to appear is coincidentally a young rich woman named Mélite who is dressed as a shepherdess. A rendezvous between the masked Mélite and a man named Moncade occurs in a cabinet inside the temple of love. Mélite hesitates as Moncade advances, he wonders why and unmask her. In a plot twist, Moncade recognizes Mélite to be a woman whom he detests, and he is appalled that she would try to trick him. He leaves her crying, but as "spite is the most sensitive pain of the women, her despair did not last." Bastide continues, "To feel a durable despair, it is necessary to have virtues." The author makes it perfectly clear that Mélite has no virtues, and in her weakened state, she is left powerless to the charms of Misapous who witnessed the entire episode. This excerpt not only illustrates Bastide's ongoing cynicism respective of virtue, but also his interest to destabilize the idealizing concepts that suggest mores can be ordered in a disordered society. His conflation of Cythera with "virtue" subverts moral beliefs that trivialize and condemn pleasure in-and-of-itself as fruitless.

Such quandaries about the utopist island were expanded upon by the poet Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1670-1741), who footnotes the title for his allegory, *La liturgie de Cithere* (1748), with an alternative: "The obscene word."<sup>44</sup> His inscription reveals that the nineteenth century interpretation of a *Cytherea* as a derogatory name for a prostitute was already firmly part of French discourse in the early eighteenth century.<sup>45</sup> Cythera was polarized against a more virtuous type of nature by 1748 and Elysium was ready to supplant the so-called obscene landscape as the premiere garden type for a *maison de plaisance* in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's great sentimental novel *Julie ou la nouvelle Heloise* published in 1761.<sup>46</sup>

Rousseau, of course, does away with Cythera and replaces it with Elysium – which was a garden of economy, controlled freedom, and contrived productive nature – in order to represent the quintessential bourgeois garden [Fig. 10, 11]. It is not insignificant that Rousseau wrote his novel while living in Madame d'Épinay's *petite maison* known as "L'Hermitage," as historian Maurice Cranston suggests, and completed the work at the Montmorency manor of Meréchal de Luxembourg.<sup>47</sup> During this period of time, Rousseau also completed *Du contrat social* (April 1762) and *Emile* (May, 1762).<sup>48</sup> In *Julie*, Rousseau explores the progress of love and virtue from Julie and Saint-

Preux's youthful romance, to their separation, and consequently to Julie's obedience of her family's wishes to marry another man, Monsieur de Wolmar.<sup>49</sup> The historian Marlene LeGates suggests that Julie's marriage transforms her earlier relationship with Saint-Preux from one of young love into virtuous friendship that surpasses the pleasures they experienced during their early indiscretions.<sup>50</sup> During Saint Preux's visit to the estate of Monsieur de Wolmar, the former is shown the secret garden that Julie cultivated after her mother's death. The scene follows a description of Julie and her husband's well run house, where "everything one sees...joins together the agreeable and the useful; but useful occupations are not limited to activities that yield a profit; they additionally include any innocent and simple amusement that nurtures the taste for retreat, work, moderation, and preserves in the person who indulges them a healthy soul, a heart free from the confusion of passions."<sup>51</sup> Rousseau establishes a dialectic of house and garden. By doing such, he conflates retreat with labor, and happiness with an orderly control of the passions of the soul.

To summarize, Bastide's garden of sexual delights was replaced with another type of garden that connoted productive virtue. The honorable Julie names Elysium after the underworld garden of Greek mythology where the good and virtuous would spend eternity. The sanctuary cultivated by Julie became one of the most renowned gardens of the second half of the eighteenth-century. Clearly, Rousseau's moral philosophical messages of virtue, family values, and respect for a patriarchal social order are invested in both Julie's household and her secrete garden.<sup>52</sup> Protected under lock and key, the garden is hidden from the vegetable and fruit orchards by two walls and thick hedges. Upon entering for the first time, Saint Preux, imagines himself to be "dropped from the sky" into an "enchanted" "rustic and wild" island that was separate from the surrounding productive fields; and Julie had carefully cultivated this garden with her own hands.<sup>53</sup>

LA NOUVELLE  
HÉLOÏSE,  
O U  
L E T T R E S  
D E D E U X A M A N S ,

*Habitans d'une petite Ville au pied  
des Alpes;*

RECUEILLIES ET PUBLIÉES  
PAR J. J. ROUSSEAU.

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TOME PREMIER.

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A L O N D R E S .

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M. DCC. LXXXI.



Left, **Figure 10 Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Swiss-French, 1712-1778)**

Cover, *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* (London, 1762).

Right, **Figure 11 Pierre Philippe Choffard, after Hebert-François Bourguignon (French, 1699-1773)**

“The confidence of beautiful souls,” 1764, engraving, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Reprinted from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie or the New Heloise....* (1762; London, University Press of New England, 1997).

Appropriate to Julie and Wolmar’s open insistence on honesty, the couple reveals all of their horticulture secrets about Elysium to Saint Preux. Julie suggests “it is true that... nature did it all, but under my direction, and there is nothing here that I have not designed.”<sup>54</sup> Saint Preux notes the artfully crafted natural roof of trees and vines that lends cool shade to the visitor in the garden: “These garlands seemed to have been casually cast from tree to tree, as I had sometimes seen in forests, and formed something like draperies above us which protected us from the sun, while we had under foot a soft, comfortable and dry path on a fine moss without sand, grass, or rough shoots”<sup>55</sup> By equating the nature of trees and shrubs to draperies, Rousseau assigns a domestic quality to Elysium. The garden becomes a “natural” extension of the productive household, and Julie’s “nature” as mother in a domestic space role is defined.

In Julie's mind, her children would be taught to tend to Elysium in the same careful way that she had. The garden would then serve to educate her children and be a product of their own hands as well as hers. The pedagogical role of the garden is once again linked to the family unit and to domesticity. Julie's bird aviary also connects Elysium to the principals of freedom. After Saint Preux realizes that the birds make Elysium their home of their own free will, Julie explains to him that in the sanctuary, humans are actually the guests of birds. Her former lover then asks "lest your birds be your slaves you have become theirs," prompting her reply, "Now that... is what a tyrant would say, who thinks he is enjoying his freedom only insofar as it disturbs that of others."<sup>56</sup> Elysium becomes an allegorical space that illustrates the freedom of man over and above the politics of tyranny, and the spaces of leisure in the garden are designed to teach the benefits of a "balanced" moral order. Rousseau writes a description of nature that is intended to evoke a humbling and morally good effect in the spectator.

Along with Rousseau's more overtly political writings, Elysium in *Julie* became a literary map for garden designers such as René-Louis (marquis) de Girardin who published his own treatise titled, *An essay on landscape; or, on the means of improving and embellishing the country round our habitations* (1777). Girardin was so influenced by Rousseau's thoughts about landscape theory that he invited the latter to live out the rest of his life at Ermonville, which was the Marquis' estate. At Ermonville, Rousseau lived in a rustic *hameau* on the estate, explored botany with Girardin's son, and wrote his last book, *Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, (1782). The folly par excellence in Girardin's garden was a temple dedicated to Rousseau that served posthumously as the moral philosopher's tomb [Fig. 12].



**Figure 12 Alexandre-Louis-Joseph de Laborde (French, 1773-1842)**  
*Philosopher's Pyramid, Ermonville, from A. J. L. de Laborde: Description des nouveaux jardins de la France, et des ses anciens chateaux* (Paris, 1808-1815). Reprinted from Dora Wiebenson, *The Picturesque Garden in France* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978).

The decade of the 1770's was a turning point in landscape design and theory. Besides Girardin's treatise, other significant works published were, Thomas Whateley's *Observations on Modern Gardening* (1770, translated into French in 1771), Nicholas Duchesne's *Traité de la formation des jardins* (1775) and Jean-Marie Morel's *Théorie des jardins* (1776). Rousseau not only formulated a relationship between landscape and moral philosophy, but also was able to watch as landscape theorists and gardeners implemented picturesque "ordered" natural gardens similar to his Elysium. Besides being influential in gardening circles, *Julie* became a great best seller after its publication.



Even Jean-François de Bastide was so moved by the novel, as Robert Darnton suggests, that it caused him to take “to his bed and nearly drove him mad, or so he believed, while it produced the opposite effect on Daniel Roguin, who sobbed so violently that he cured himself of a severe cold.”<sup>57</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux’s client Madame du Barry was so enamored with Rousseau’s book that she read it four times, pretended to be a country peasant in order to visit him, and claimed responsibility for the author’s return from exile to Paris.

Aristocrats who sought after the leisure pleasures of a morally charged countryside built fashionable *petite maison* retreats.<sup>58</sup> Louis XV, his mistresses, and later his grandson’s wife Queen Marie Antoinette were no exceptions. Many rumors and stories surrounded the *petite maison* of King Louis XV at the *Parc-aux-cerfs*, a lodging for the mistresses of the King, which was overseen first by Madame du Pompadour and later by Madame du Barry.<sup>59</sup> Along with the women that du Barry refers to as *élèves* (“a general term...applied to the young persons who were kept there”), a “Madame,” undermistresses, teachers, waiting women, and “La Mère Bompert, *pourvoyeuse en chef des cellules du Parc-aux-cerfs*” were known to live in the house.<sup>60</sup> Du Barry notes “the work of the house was performed by proper servants, and male domestics chosen expressly for their age and ugliness.”<sup>61</sup> Following along a similar line of thought, those found in the house in compromising positions would be punished by serving out the rest of their life in prison.

When the Marquis de Sade expressed his displeasure with Sartine (the General inspector and later the director of the book trade) over the police presence, inspection, and documentation of the brothels of Paris, he condemned the creation of “vexations and odious tyrannies on the pleasures of the public so as to furnish lascivious lists that could warm up the intimate dinners of the *Parc-aux-cerfs*.”<sup>62</sup> The *petite maison* was in this case used as a political weapon against the monarchy. The Marquis de Sade even condemned the King and his courtesan for seeking pleasure in the written accounts of prostitutes from inside the walls of their own private brothel by suggesting that the keeping such records was a hypocritical invasion of privacy.<sup>63</sup>

In the Salon, Diderot also took blows at the little country house. Before his discussion of Pierre-Antoine Baudouin’s painting entitled “The Marriage Bed” exhibited

in the 1767 Salon, Diderot introduced this son-in-law of Boucher with a dictum: “Always little pictures, little ideas, frivolous compositions, appropriate for the bedroom of a little mistress, in the *petite maison* of a little master; just the things for little Abbés, little lawyers, substantial financiers, and other persons without virtues and with a taste for the trivial.”<sup>64</sup> Just as critics call for integrity to enter the house, the *petite maison* is presented as a type of architecture that is part of the (apparently) unscrupulous bourgeois order of “small lawyers” and “substantial financiers.” Furthermore, as Diderot – with Jean Le Rond d'Alembert and their team of *philosophes* – ordered the world by categorizing it into seventeen volumes of text and eleven volumes of plates known as the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, pleasure too was regulated and guided towards expressions of happiness in virtue.

Fictional documentaries of elite social activities drove an entire economy of writing and publication in the second half of the eighteenth century. Historian Robert Darnton shows that illicit literature known as *libelles* that purported to be “truth” were told by voyeuristic voices that narrated scenes while looking through peepholes, windows and partially parted drapes.<sup>65</sup> He remarks that this form of authorial address gave the reader an opportunity to coauthor the writing as if the latter shared the window of the boudoir with the former.<sup>66</sup> As they share a literary hole in the wall, as it were, the reader and writer exchange notes about aristocratic indecency. In order to facilitate the trade of both books and ideas a coded language was created. Darnton points out that in order to sell and distribute banned books, avoid arrest and imprisonment, and maintain considerable investments, authors, publishers and vendors referred to their illegal manuscripts as “philosophical,” thus collapsing the materialist distinction of philosophy and eroticism.<sup>67</sup>

Not to be outdone by literary types, one of the century’s quintessential Rococo painters, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, erotized the “in-between” in his painting *Les curieuses* (1775-1780) [Fig 13]. By playing with subject positions, Fragonard represents two young women as they peek through fabric curtains, through the frame of the painting, towards the painting’s audience who returns their gaze. One compelling effect of the picture is that the composition structures the viewer’s gaze as voyeuristic, not unlike the narrator’s gaze in erotic libertine novels and *libelles*. The erotic relationship of

architecture, literature, and painting is undeniable in this piece. Because Fragonard paints a shallow space that focuses on two parting curtains and two women in the foreground, the painting represents a window that relies on the viewer for context, more so than illustrating any interior environment. The painting challenges the traditional roles of subject and object as the undressed, painted women gaze into “real” space, while they conceal their own with the painted fabric of the boudoir. Their nudity is reiterated in the parting of the fabric, no doubt an overt sign for the female genitalia. The spectator then comes to realize that he is not only trying to look into a boudoir scene, but into a woman’s anatomy and sex as well.



**Figure 13 Jean-Honoré Fragonard (French, 1732-1806)**  
*Les curieuses*, 1775-1780. Oil on canvas, H.: 0,16 m.; L.: 0,13 m.,  
Paris, Musée Louvre.

Literary critic Jean-Marie Goulemont has noted that the typical structuring of a libertine plot leads from the “presentation of an obstacle to complicit resistance, and then finally to seduction.”<sup>68</sup> Bastide’s novella, initially, follows this standard literary sequence, but, it breaks with convention in its conclusion; Melite escapes from the house and flees to the countryside, leaving a rejection letter addressed to the disappointed Marquis. The woman-empowering ending was changed in subsequent editions, concluding instead with Melite losing the wager and, consequently, her “virtue.” The impact of the *petit maison* was to weaken Mérite’s free will. Ironically enough, this made the story even more erotic. In both versions of the narrative architecture and art are able to seduce and please the characters to different degrees.

Over thirty years after the publication of *La petite maison*, it is no accident that Bastide edits a novel about architecture entitled *L’homme du monde éclairé par les arts* (1774), written in correspondence form. This fiction was the result of collaboration between Bastide and architect Jacques-François Blondel. With Bastide as his editor, Blondel explored the rules of taste and decorum while critiquing and appraising built projects in and around Paris. His critical descriptions include Ledoux’s *hôtel* for the dancer Mademoiselle Guimard and Madame du Barry’s pavilion at Louveciennes.

Historian Jennifer Jones notes that in October 1774 Madame de Montaclos, editor of *Journal de dames*, discussed the offensive nature of *L’homme du monde*.<sup>69</sup> Montaclos interpreted the book as a diluted treatise on aesthetics because it was written in the form of a novel.<sup>70</sup> She also suggests that the author and editor wrote such a novel in order to cater to a female audience.<sup>71</sup> Montaclos advised her female readers to pass on reading the novel, and instead, refer to more meaningful texts such as *Réflexions critiques sur l’apoesie et sur la peinture* written by abbé Du Bos.<sup>72</sup> Not only does this provide insight into female reception of *L’homme du monde*, but it also reveals a tendency for both men and women to succumb to a culturally constructed trapping to interpret novels as feminine and more suitable for a female audience. Indeed, moral philosophers such as Rousseau considered the novel an effeminate literary genre. In *The Confessions* (1770), Rousseau famously recounts that his early interest in reading was fostered by a curiosity for his deceased mother’s novels. In fact, those novels provided Rousseau with his first

reading experience. However, after devouring his mother's collection he moved on to philosophy and history and reserved his so-called feminine novels for more leisurely entertainment.<sup>73</sup>

For many writers, mentioning the *petite maison* in their novels provided just the right amount to illicit connotations to pepper the plot with intrigue. In Choderlos de Laclos's scandalous book, *Les liaisons dangereuses* (1782), the Marquise de Merteuil writes to the Vicomte de Valmont of her manipulation of a lover (a chevalier) and of "how best to throw him into despair."<sup>74</sup> After lashing the Chevalier with her "acid" tongue, and seeing his "charming face" turn "melancholy," she "could think only of how to avoid leaving him with the impression that I had slighted him." Her thoughts turn to "compensating" him (and herself) by inviting the Chevalier to her secret *petite maison*. In order to prepare for the rendezvous, Merteuil retires to read "a chapter of *Le Sopha*, a letter from *Héloïse*, and two of La Fontaine's tales, so as to establish in my mind the different nuances of tone I wished to adopt."<sup>75</sup> The erotic novel by Crébillon fils, the moral novel by Rousseau, and the fables of La Fontaine serve as quintessential manner books whose "tone" can be easily replicated by the Marquise to suit any occasion.

After an elaborate scheme that leads the Chevalier to her "temple of love," the couple spends the night together. As they part at day break, the Marquise hands the Chevalier keys to her *petite maison*, stating that "I acquired this only for you: it is proper that you should have it in your keeping..." She qualifies this gesture by telling the Vicomte: "I thus skillfully forestalled whatever reflections he might otherwise have made on the propriety – always doubtful – of keeping a *petite maison*." Laclos reveals his own preconceptions about the little house by writing about the potential impropriety that society might read into keeping such a "temple of love." The author also represents a house that belonged to the manipulative female proprietor who emasculated her lover, the Chevalier. Such a house furthered the power of the Marquise, and this time, in 1782, the *petite maison* was represented as "improper."

About five years after *Les liaisons dangereuses* was completed, on the eve of the Revolution in 1787, the *petite maison* was ripe ammunition for critics to use against Rococo artists. Asserting that the Rococo was a disturbing force in social mores, the artist and critic J-A-D Robin announced in his pamphlet, *L'ami des artistes au salon*:

The Art, cultivated until our days, however already lost its force and its rise. Our monuments perhaps are more finished, neater in details, but they have less majesty... It is less the genius which missed the Artists than the mores of the times of which they know the instigation: everywhere where love of the fatherland will have little influence, one will be little interested in the actions and the features of his heroes. The taste for *petite maisons*, for these voluptuous boudoirs, which, among *les grandes* (the rich), has succeeded representation and the dignity of public mores, has inspired that (taste) for trinkets, extended this passion for fantastic and licentious productions. The Arts cannot take on a new character among us, when the nation itself becomes vulnerable to more forces.<sup>76</sup>

The *petite maison* opposed the “fatherland.” The house of pleasure was also offensive, affronted the “dignity of public mores,” and stifled the progress of art, while seducing and making vulnerable the *citoyen* (citizen). Historian Melissa Hyde suggests that Robin’s “moral tenor” in this passage evokes a stronger conception of nation building than his predecessors.<sup>77</sup> As the revolution approached the *petite maison* was coupled with Rococo painters who presumably supported the illicit connotations of the house type. In this sense, Artists and Architects were called to arms to shift domestic pleasure from a passion for so-called “fantastic and licentious productions” towards to the virtuous pleasures of the nation, and the family as nation in the mirror image of the bourgeois domestic order.

#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> See Jean-François de Bastide, *La petite maison* (1758; 1879; Paris: Gallimard, 1993): 7-20. See also, Jean-François de Bastide, “La petite maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, Vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762). Historian Dora Wiebenson notes that the earliest version of *La Petite maison* was published in Bastide’s journal *Nouveau Spectateur*, Vol. 8 in 1758. Dora Wiebenson, *Picturesque Gardens in France* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978): 14. See also,

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Jean-François de Bastide, *L'Amant anonyme et autres contes* (1763; Paris: Éditions Desjonquères, 2002): 7-18. Jean-François de Bastide was born in Marsailles, 1724 as the son of a “lieutenant criminel de la ville.” The Scholar Michel Delon writes a brief biography and chronological outline of Bastide as an introduction to *L'Amant anonyme et autres contes*. He notes that the author’s family was the subject of social intrigue and scandal after Bastide’s great-uncle, l’abbé Pellegrin, became famous for leaving the church to pursue a career in the opera. Bastide moved to Paris as a young man and began to publish his own written work in 1749. He wrote novels, moral comedies, fairy tales, and worked as an editor for *le Mercure*. In 1758 he published *La Petite Maison* in vol. 2 of *Nouveau Spectateur*. And from 1758 to 1760 he publishes 8 volumes of the *Nouveau Spectateur*. The journal was renamed *le monde comme il est* in 1760. In 1761 he published *La petite maison* as a separate book. In 1763 he published *Contes*, which included another edition of *La petite maison*. Just before his passing in 1798, he was offered a job in the Ministry of Police, which is ironic, because the Police were known to keep written detailed records of the exploits of prostitutes in old regime France. See also *The Encyclopedia Americana: A library of Universal Knowledge* (New York: The Encyclopedia Americana corporation, 1919): 419. See also Jan Herman, “Promenade dans *La petite maison* de Bastide et les *Salons* de Diderot. Visite guidée par un séducteur,” *Locus in Fabula: La topique de l’espace dans les fictions françaises d’Ancien Régime* (Paris: Éditions Peeters Louvain, 2004): 30-46.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, “La petite maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, Vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): iii-iv.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 1. See also Literature published earlier referring to the *petite maison* includes a British play entitled *La maison rustique*. See M. Florent Carton Dancourt, *La maison rustique; or the country house. A farce. As it acted [sic] ou [sic] all our theatres with great applause. Done from the French by Sir...*, The third edition. (London, 1735).

<sup>4</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, “La petite maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, Vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762). See Jan Herman, “Promenade dans *La petite maison* de Bastide et les *Salons* de Diderot. Visite guidée par un séducteur,” *Locus in Fabula. La topique de l’espace dans les fictions françaises d’Ancien Régime* (Paris: Éditions Peeters Louvain, 2004): 30-46.

<sup>5</sup> Louis Le chevalier de Jaucourt, “Maison de Plaisance,” *L’Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1765): 9:889.

<sup>6</sup> Louis Le chevalier de Jaucourt, “Maison rustique,” *L’Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1765): 9:889.

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<sup>7</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, “La petite maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, Vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): 2-3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>10</sup> Mel, the latin root of the word Mélite, is a noun that means pleasantness, sweetness or honey. See “Mel,” *Latin Dictionary and Grammer Aid*, University of Notre Dame, [April 11, 2006], <http://archives.nd.edu/latgramm.htm>

<sup>11</sup> De Bastide’s *romans* follows the typical structuring of a libertine plot, which the historian of French literature, Jean-Marie Goulemot asserts, led from the presentation of an “obstacle to complicit resistance, and then finally to seduction.” See Jean-Marie Goulemot, “Toward a Definition of Libertine Fiction and Pornographic Novels,” *Yale French Studies*, No. 94, *Libertinage and Modernity* (1998): 133-145.

<sup>12</sup> Tremicour’s *petite maison* is surrounded by a “menagerie of wild and domesticated animals... a charming dairy decorated in marble and shells... carriages, and a storehouse for the numerous and varied provisions a delicate and sensual life requires.” See Jean-François de Bastide, “La petite maison” *Nouveau Spectateur*, vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): 14-15.

<sup>13</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, “La petite maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): 14-15.

<sup>14</sup> See Nicole Willk-Brocard, “Noël Hallé,” *Grove Art Online*, Oxford University Press, [April 1, 2006], <http://www.groveart.com/>

<sup>15</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, “La Petite Maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): 15.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> “Pavillon,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 327. “Pavillon. s.m. Espèce de logement portatif, servant au campement des gens de guerre...” “... *Il a bâti un pavillon au bout de son jardin.*”

<sup>18</sup> Pineau worked as a sculpture and later on interior architecture projects such as Peter the Great, (1718–20). Bastide speaks about these artists in a familiar tone, only referring to them by their last names. He provides a footnote for Dandrillon, stating that he “discovered the secret of odorless paneling paint and the art of gilding sculpture with no primer.” Jean-François de Bastide, “La Petite Maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): 17-18.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-22.



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<sup>21</sup> Bastide notes that the boudoir is “a place which it is useless to name to the women who enters there, because her spirit and her heart guess it at once.” “lieu qu’il est inutile de nommer à celle qui y entre, car l’esprit et le coeur y devinent de concert.” See Jean-François de Bastide: “La Petite Maison,” *Nouveau Spectateur*, Vol. 2 (1758; S.I.: s.n., 1762): 25.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 78. Anthony Vidler compares this passage to Claude-Nicolas Ledoux’s winter garden salon designed for the dancer Mlle Guimard’s *hôtel*. See Anthony Vidler, *Claude Nicolas Ledoux: Architecture and Social Reform at the End of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990): 50-59.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-78. “Mélite tremblante de frayeur, étoit prête à se trouver mal; elle tomba presque dans une bergere. Trémicour se jetta à ses genoux.”

<sup>24</sup> It was suggested by the nineteenth century bibliophile named P.L. Jacob, who republished *La Petite maison* in Paris in 1897, that the original version of *La petite maison* was published in the 1754 edition of *Journal Oeconomique*. However, Historian Dora Wiebenson notes that Bastide’s novella is not located in this journal edition. See Dora Wiebenson, *The picturesque garden in France* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978): 14 n. 83.

<sup>25</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, *L’Amant anonyme et autres contes*, Édition établie et présentée par Michel Delon (1763; Paris: Éditions Desjonquères, 2002): 22.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, *Lettres, curieuses & intéressantes de Monsieur de Voltaire, et de plusieurs autres personnes, distingués par leur rang & par leur mérite. Avec des réflexions & des notes. Par M.A.D. [Monsieur Anthony d’Esca, the editor]* (Dublin: chez W. Hallhead, 1781): 54-57. This compilation of letters was published in 1781, although Voltaire’s letter addressed to Bastide was dated 1760. See S. G. Tallentyre, *Voltaire in his Letters, being a Selection from His Correspondence* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919). See also “Social Conditions in 1760, to M. de Bastide,” University of Chicago, [May 9, 2006], <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/homes/VSA/letters/index.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Historian Minnie M. Miller suggests that *Le monde* was originally titled *Le nouveau spectateur*, which was probably a response to Joseph Addison (1672 – 1719) and Richard Steel’s (1672–1729) popular daily English journal, *The Spectator* (1711-14). Joseph Addison (1672 – 1719) was an English politician and writer. Richard Steel (1672–1729) was an Irish writer and politician. Together the two developed the popular daily English journal, *The Spectator* (1711-14) that focused on diverse subjects such as manners, literature, economics, and urban and country life. See Minnie M. Miller, “Science and Philosophy as Precursors of the English

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Influence in France: A Study of the Choix Des Anciens Journaux,” *PMLA*, Vol. 45, No. 3. (Sep., 1930): 856-896.

<sup>29</sup> François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, *Lettres, curieuses & interessantes de Monsieur de Voltaire, et de plusieurs autres personnes, distinguées par leur rang & par leur merite. Avec des reflexions & des notes. Par M.A.D. [Monsieur Anthony d’Esca, the editor]* (Dublin: chez W. Hallhead, 1781): 54-57.

<sup>30</sup> Jacques-François Blondel, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, et de la decoration des edifices en general* (Paris, C. A. Jombert, 1737-38).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. See also Reed Benhamou, “Parallel Walls, Parallel Worlds: The Places of Masters and Servants in the “Maisons de plaisance” of Jacques-François Blondel,” *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 7, No. 1. (1994): 1-11. For Blondel’s role as a teacher see Freek H. Schmidt, “Expose Ignorance and Revive the “Bon Goût”: Foreign Architects at Jacques-François Blondel’s École des Arts,” *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 61, No. 1. (Mar., 2002): 4-29.

<sup>32</sup> Boucher d’Argis, “Séduction,” *L’Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1765): 14:887. He continues, “The seduction of a girl, or a son of family, is looked upon like an abduction.” The original French quote reads, “est une tromperie artificieuse, que l’on emploie pour abuser quelqu’un, & le faire consentir à quelque acte ou démarche contraire à son honneur ou à ses intérêts... La séduction d’une fille, ou d’un fils de famille, est regardée comme un rapt... La séduction des temoins est appelée plus communément subornation.”

<sup>33</sup> Louis Le Chevalier de Jaucourt, “Seducteur,” *L’Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1765): 14:887. “Seducteur, s. m. (Morale) c’est celui qui dans la seule vue de la volupté, tâche avec art de corrompre la vertu, d’abuser de la faiblesse, ou de l’ignorance d’une jeune personne....”

<sup>34</sup> Denis Diderot, “Cythérée,” *L’Encyclopedie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1753): 4:606.

<sup>35</sup> Edme-François Mallet, “Elysée,” *L’Encyclopedie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1755): 5:532.

<sup>36</sup> After Cronus castrated his father Uranus, the former threw the latter’s genitals into the ocean. The genitals mixed with the sea and created foam from which Aphrodite was born. For an analysis of the etymology of Cythera see Gareth Morgan: “Aphrodite Cytherea,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 108 (1978): 115-120.

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<sup>37</sup> Thomas Crow, "Codes of Silence: Historical Interpretation and the Art of Watteau," *Representations*, No. 12 (Autumn, 1985): 2-14.

<sup>38</sup> See Georgia Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera* and the Subversive Utopia of the Opera-Ballet," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 83, No. 3 (Sept., 2001): 461.

<sup>39</sup> Cupid is the Roman harbinger of love. His Greek counterpart is Eros, son of Aphrodite.

<sup>40</sup> See Michael Levey, "The Real Theme of Watteau's Embarkation for Cythera," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 103, No. 698 (May, 1961): 180-185. See also Calvin Seerveld, "The Telltale Statues in Watteau's Painting," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 14 No. 2 (Winter, 1980-1981): 151-180.

<sup>41</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, *Le Trentaine de Cithere* (Londres, [Paris?]: 1753).

<sup>42</sup> Amour is the god of love.

<sup>43</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, *Le Trentaine de Cithere* (Londres [Paris?]: 1753): 4.

<sup>44</sup> Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, *Oeuvres de Rousseau*, Vol. 2 (London [Paris?], 1748): 133-135.

<sup>45</sup> See Gareth Morgan, "Aphrodite Cytherea," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 108. (1978): 115-120. Morgan notes, "The common understanding of the term – and certainly the explanation that is found in the vocabularies of school-texts – it that "Cytherea" is an adjectival form of the island of Cythera, which lies between Crete and the Peloponnesus. It is clear that ancient scholars did not easily accept this view, and even went to some pains to combat it. Both Hesychius and the *Suda* begin their comments with a contradiction of this common error, and all the authorities strive for a different explanation. The first known explicator is Lucius Annaeus Cornutus, writing about 50 A.D. He says: 'Cytherea is so called from the pregnancies that result from copulation; or because of the concealment for the most part of sexual desires. It is from this that the island of Cythera is holy to Aphrodite' (Cornutus *ND* 45.15 in Teubner, ed. C. Lang, 1881). In other words, the island gets its name from the epithet, and not the other way around..." (Morgan, 15)

<sup>46</sup> See Catherine Cusset, *No Tomorrow: The Ethics of Pleasure in the French Enlightenment* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999): 15-42. Cusset completes her own provocative comparative study of Watteau's Cythera and Rousseau's Elysium.

<sup>47</sup> See Maurice Cranston's Introduction in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (1762; London: Penguin Classics, 1968): 24. See also, Maurice Cranston, *The Solitary Self: Jean-Jacques Rousseau in Exile and Adversity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

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<sup>48</sup> See Maurice Cranston's Introduction, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (1762; London: Penguin Classics, 1968): 24.

<sup>49</sup> Marlene LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1. (Autumn, 1976): 21-39.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. See also, Mary Trouille, "The Failings of Rousseau's Ideals of Domesticity and Sensibility," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4. (Summer, 1991): 451-483; Sarah Herbold, "Rousseau's Dance of Veils: The *Confessions* and the Imagined Woman Reader," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32.3 (1999): 333-353.

<sup>51</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, or, the New Heloise* (1764; New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1997): 386-387.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. See also Marlene LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1. (Autumn, 1976), 21-39; H. Gaston Hall, "The Concept of Virtue in La Nouvelle Heloise," *Yale French Studies*, No. 28, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau." (1961), 20-33.

<sup>53</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, or, the New Heloise* (1764; New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1997): 386-387.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 388.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 389. See also, Eva Maria Neumeyer, "The Landscape Garden as a Symbol in Rousseau, Goethe and Flaubert," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 8, No. 2. (Apr., 1947): 187-217.

<sup>56</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, or, the New Heloise* (1764; New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1997): 392.

<sup>57</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre...and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1999): 243. Daniel Roguin was a close friend of Rousseau. When Rousseau was forced to leave Paris, he exiled in Switzerland, and stayed with Roguin and his large family in a villa on Lake Neuchâtel. See Maurice Cranston, *The Solitary Self: Jean-Jacques Rousseau in Exile and Adversity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997): 1-5.

<sup>58</sup> Although by the time that Bastide writes his novella, the *petite maison* was already popular in the suburbs of Paris. See Charles Pinot Duclos, *A course of gallantries; or, the inferiority of the tumultuous joys of the passions to the serene pleasures of reason: attested by the confession of a nobleman who had tried both. ...* (London: printed for S. Vandenberg, 1775): 96-99. In this novel, while speaking about a lover, the narrator suggests that:

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“One day she charged me to find out a little house, that we may see one another, said she, with more liberty. The use of these private houses, commonly called little houses, was first introduced at Paris, by lovers who had measures to keep, and make a mystery of their being together, and by those who would have a secure place to make a party of debauch in (meaning a debauch of drinking) which they would have been afraid to make in public houses, and ashamed to make at home.... Such was the origin of these little houses, which were so multiplied: afterwards they ceased being sanctuaries for intrigue. At first, they were made use of to conceal one’s affairs from the public; but soon after they were made use of by a great many, to make it believed they had affairs, which really they had not. They are not now even let but to people of superior rank: that was also the reason why several took these little houses out of mere vanity and air. They are become at length so common, and public, that the extremities of some of the suburbs are full of them. Those to whom they belong are known, as are those who actually possess them. It is true, that since they have ceased to be secret houses, they are no more indecent; but they have also ceased to be necessary. At present, a little house serves no more to a great many, than to give themselves false airs, and for a place where, instead of going for their pleasure, they go to pass away time that lies heavy upon their hands, better than they could do at home.”

<sup>59</sup> Étienne Léon Lamothe-Langon, *Memoirs of Madame du Barry*, Trans. H.T. Riley, Vol. 2 (London: Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnot, 1830-31): 192-199. Du Barry notes that she was unaware of the house until her confidant, the Duc de Richelieu, brought it to her attention. The account told by du Barry in her *memoirs* of the house was all second hand information, told to her by the Madame of the Parc, a woman whom du Barry held significant contempt for. There was certainly a lot of intrigue and literature suggesting the activities that took place in the mysterious establishment during the period.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 196-197. Of “La Mère Bompert, chief provider of the cells of the Parc-aux-Cerfs,” Du Barry explains “She was in correspondence with all sorts of persons with the most celebrated females termed *appareilleuses*, with the most noted pimps.” *Appareilleuses* was an abusive term for a “woman who trades to discharge girls (into vice), & to produce them.” See “Appareilleuse,” *Dictionnaire de L’Académie française, 4th Edition* (1762): 83. “Appareilleuse. s.f. Terme injurieux, qui se dit d’Une femme qui fait métier de débaucher des filles, & de les produire.” In 1798, “to discharge girls is replaced with prostitute the women” *Dictionnaire de*

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*L'Académie française*, 5th Edition (1798): 66. "... qui se dit d'Une femme qui fait métier de prostituer des femmes."

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Pamela Cheek, "Prostitutes of 'Political Institution,'" *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter, 1994-1995): 194.

<sup>63</sup> Étienne Léon Lamothe-Langon, *Memoirs of Madame du Barry*, trans. H.T. Riley, Vol. 2 (London: Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnot, 1830-31): 196. Reflecting on her role and identity in society, DuBarry writes of the Parc-aux-cerfs that, "My present situation was not a little embarrassing. Known and recognized as the mistress of the King, it but ill accorded with my feelings to be compelled to add to that title the superintendent of his pleasures; and I had not yet been sufficiently initiated into the intrigues of a court life to accept this strange charge without manifest dislike and hesitation."<sup>63</sup> Du Barry takes on a moralizing tone that shifts her role as the mistress to the king away from an arbiter of pleasure to something more virtuous.

<sup>64</sup> Denis Diderot, *Diderot on Art, Volume II: The Salon of 1767*, trans. by John Goodman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995): 164.

<sup>65</sup> Robert Darnton, *Forbidden Best Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995): 76-84. Darnton provides a survey of illegal texts, their content and trade in the years 1770-1789. I owe much to Darnton's scholarship concerning the relationship between pornographic and political texts. Darnton speaks of the *libelles* as written coverage of "between the sheets" exploits of the monarchy and elite society.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Jean-Marie Goulemot, "Toward a Definition of Libertine Fiction and Pornographic Novels," *Yale French Studies*, No. 94, Libertinage and Modernity (1998): 133-145. See also Jean-Marie Goulemot, *Forbidden texts: erotic literature and its readers in eighteenth-century France*, Trans. James Simpson (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1994).

<sup>69</sup> Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2004): 134-135.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1781; London: Penguin Books, 1953): 17-21. If sexing the novel was not enough, Jean Marie Goulemot suggests

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that Rousseau eroticizes the genre by adding “one-handed” as qualifying descriptor. In other words, such books were read with only one hand in order to leave the other free for more physical pleasures. Jean Marie Goulemot, *Forbidden texts: erotic literature and its readers in eighteenth-century France*, Trans. James Simpson (Cambridge: England, Polity Press, 1994).

<sup>74</sup> Choderlos de Laclos, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782; England: Penguin Books, 1961): 41.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 42. The books that Mertuiel is referring to are: the licentious writer Crébillon fils (1701-1777), the moral philosopher Rousseau’s *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, and two stories by the famed poet and fable writer, Jean De La Fontaine (1621-1695).

<sup>76</sup> J-A-D Robin, *L’ami des artistes au salon: Sans offenser l’amitié fait instruire* (Paris rue du Roule, N.11, 1787): 16. Collection de Pieces sur les Beaux-Arts (1673-1808), dit Collection Deloynes. Vol. 15, pieces 379. « L’Art, cultivé jusqu’à nos jours, a cependant déjà perdu de sa force & de son élévation. Nos monuments font peut-être plus finis, plus soignés dans les détails, mais ils ont moins de majesté. Dans la Peinture on a négligée l’histoire pour se livre au genre. C’est moins le génie qui manqué aux Artistes que les moeurs du tems dont ils savent l’impulsion: partout où l’amour de la patrie aura peu d’influence, on s’intéressera peu aux actions & aux traits de ses héros. Le goût des petites maisons, de ces voluptueux boudoirs, qui, chez les Grands, a succède à la représentation & à la dignité des moeurs publiques, a inspire celui des colifichets, a étendu cette passion pour les productions fantastiques & licencieuses. Les Arts ne peuvent prendre parmi nous un nouveau caractère, qui quand la nation sera elle-même devenue susceptible de plus d’énergie. » Robin follows his thought by suggesting that: « Les caractères des passions qu’a dessinées le fameux le Brun, égarent toujours, par leurs excès, les Artistes que l’étude de l’antique n’aura pas appris à être plus modérés et plus sages. » See also Melissa Hyde, *Making Up the Rococo: Francois Boucher and His Critics* (Los Angeles, Getty Publications, 2006): 17-18.

<sup>77</sup> Melissa Hyde, *Making Up the Rococo: Francois Boucher and His Critics* (Los Angeles, Getty Publications, 2006): 17-18. Hyde suggests that the uneasiness felt by critics of Boucher and his “school” of painters (including Fragonard), manifests in warnings to young painters about his rococo style’s seductive nature and represented contradictory values to that of public mores. She proposes, “Robins text exemplifies the sharpened rhetoric that emerged closer to the Revolution. The moral tenor has become more pitched and centered on patriotism than that of most earlier critics, but the complaints and the call for total reform (unrealized as yet) remain unchanged.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *Themes of Pleasure in Some Projects by Claude-Nicholas Ledoux*

“This is how the asylum of Love should be...”

“I couldn’t agree more,” said Méлите, “but tell me, why is it that I have heard it said that so many of these *petites maisons*, betray such bad taste?”

Jean-François de Bastide, *La petite maison* (1758)<sup>1</sup>

By mid-century, the pursuit of pleasure became the defining theme of the *maison de plaisance*. Its meaning was shaped not only in novellas such as Bastide’s *La petite maison* or relevant entries of the *Encyclopédie*, but also in dictionaries, treatises, plays, poems, paintings, and even songs. As I pointed out in chapter 1, Bastide, in his 1758 novella *La petite maison*, conflated the little house with the *maison de plaisance*, setting into play a rhetorical confusion in its architectural type. It could mean an aristocratic residence, a country house, or even a brothel. Nowhere is this range more clearly spelled out than in Claude-Nicholas Ledoux’s treatise *L’Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l’art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804).<sup>2</sup> This chapter will examine the concept of pleasure as Ledoux formulated it in his treatise and also in three architectural projects, a pavilion for Louis XV’s mistress, Madame du Barry at Louveciennes (completed in 1771), a country house for a so-called *marchande de modes* (or woman tailor) and a *maison de plaisir* (or brothel) that he named *Oikèma*.<sup>3</sup> I will show how Ledoux in his early career struggled with this confusion and was critiqued for it, but by the end of his life, had resolved the typological inconsistencies that plagued him.



### *Architecture and the chaotic sphere of representation*

The *maison de plaisance* is little more than a footnote in the history of architecture, save for anecdotal references to erotic fiction. One of the few scholars who has studied the issue in detail is Anthony Vidler, who recognized the importance of Bastide's novella as an avenue to understanding both decorum in the French eighteenth-century interior more broadly, and Ledoux's private *hôtels* and pavilion projects in relationship to literary descriptions more specifically.<sup>4</sup> He relates the Rococo aesthetics explored by Bastide to Ledoux's private residences designed for wealthy clients.<sup>5</sup> Yet even Vidler fails to note the presence of the *petite maison* in Ledoux's work beyond the private *hôtels* for courtesans. Nor does he refer to the *petite maison* in relationship to the moralist rustic houses so dear to Ledoux and the theorist Abbé Laugier, or the houses' role in literature and the critique of manners.

Given the pedagogical tone of Ledoux's treatise, it is relevant to note that he studied architecture with the academician Jacques-Francois Blondel.<sup>6</sup> Blondel insisted throughout his writings on the architect's duty to instruct his patron in matters of taste as well as on architecture's capacity to educate the public at large. Hence statements made by Ledoux in his introduction link architecture to God's work, reveal a concern to reach "the people," and insist on the tutelary value of architecture as arbiter of social mores: "God!... your temple dominates over all edifices just as our love for you must dominate over all emotions. ... Morality, which is active religion, philosophy, which is the sister of religion, these also have their sanctuaries. ... Where vice does not reign, virtue does not need an altar. ... Example is the most powerful of lessons. A majestic building is consecrated to wisdom."<sup>7</sup> The capacity to make architecture speak in the name of God is similarly explored by Ledoux, who challenges architects to teach the public how to live by a code of virtuous mores.<sup>8</sup> For Ledoux, knowledge manifests itself as a taxonomy of building typologies that are "read" not simply by architects, but also by the viewers of his designs and the inhabitants of his city. The aspirations of this so-called *architecture parlante* – architecture that speaks – went beyond the rules of form and function, causing architecture, in effect, to guide social behavior.<sup>9</sup>

Ledoux's instructive ambitions are expressed in the private residences that he designed as well as in his proposal for the ideal city of Chaux, which encompassed his

project for the Saline de Chaux or salt works factory (1773-76). His approach to urbanism in practice and theory came to redefine the terms of pleasure, which as we have seen, had become firmly identified with the *maison de plaisance*. The terms of this identification had become increasingly complicated by the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau which explains how the *maison de campagne*, theorized by Ledoux as the locus of virtue, came to hold a far more privileged place in his treatise than his earlier designs for an aristocratic house dedicated to sociability, leisure and pleasure at Louveciennes. Yet, this shift in language and idea – from the *maison de plaisance* to the *maison de campagne* – highlights the contentious place that pleasure held in Ledoux’s architecture over the course of his career.<sup>10</sup> For Ledoux, the architecture of private life necessarily participates in the public sphere. And as I will argue, the changing character of pleasure adopted by architecture discourse addressed nothing less than the social order of the Old Regime, and was used to rethink class lines, gender roles, reproductive responsibilities and nation building.

The frontispiece of *L’Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l’art, des moeurs et de la législation* illustrates a diagram of Ledoux’s architectural and social agenda [Fig. 14]. Framing Ledoux’s title, which suggests that architecture typologies will spatially express a new relationship between “art, mores, and legislation,” is a portico supported by two caryatids. Centered at the base of the portico is a bust of the architect, surrounded by scrolls of drawings, a compass and tree branches. In plate 1 Ledoux suggests that the “collection assembles all of the types of buildings employed in the social order” by listing the building types that he intends to explore in his treatise including *maisons de campagne*, theaters, churches, cemeteries, and urban infrastructure.<sup>11</sup> By writing about what he considers to be disjoints between the perception of freedom and its actual presence among the people in the *Prospectus* (1802) for his treatise, Ledoux introduces his social agenda.<sup>12</sup> He suggests, “Natural law, which guides mankind everywhere, is found nowhere: the human species is suspended magically in our theatres. What whimsicality! What forgetfulness of principles! Health, mores, the general effect, all out against such abuse: man is isolated; the fortune of the day separates the classes. I say more, it effaces them.”<sup>13</sup> Paris and its environs choreograph “whimsical” representations of men in their playhouses. Ledoux also suggests that “man” is “effaced” because he

lacks the freedom to move beyond his class. Architecture, then, is able to bring the “effaced” classes out from the margins of society by creating visual signs to represent and in turn “correct” the manners of everyday life. Ledoux continues, “Examples and models persuade the multitudes, more than the sentences of Socrates and Solomon, more than projects, aborted nightmares. What these philosophers have attempted, art, in its executive combinations, has exposed to the light of day, and has cemented it. What they have said, I have done.”<sup>14</sup> What philosophers could not create with words – a virtuous, productive, and “good” society – Ledoux boldly claims to have done with architecture.<sup>15</sup> For Ledoux, architecture was an embodiment of desire, while a discourse of sexuality empowered the architect.



**Figure 14 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
Frontispiece, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (Paris, Chez l'auteur, de l'Impr. de L. H. Perronneau, 1804).

Expressions such as “social pact” employed in *L’Architecture* reinforce the political and social role of architecture; Ledoux’s choice of words suggests an interest in Rousseau’s “social contract.”<sup>16</sup> Ledoux claims to transform moral philosophical thought into image and architecture. Consequently, he believes that the ideal city of Chaux will order a virtuous government and a social system; a system that man will naturally enter into. Earlier references to “natural law” are contradicted by his terminological choice of social pact. What remains most important about Ledoux’s citation of two social systems is his belief that architecture has agency over other mediums of expression, and can initiate so-called improvements of health conditions, mores and legislation. It is precisely for this reason, that his project should be understood as a response to the ethical and moral requisites considered vital to establish order in his ideal city.

Mores were also rules of conduct that helped to guide different aspects of interpersonal relationships, public relationships, as well as those between people and objects. Architectural design etiquette plays a significant part in the ordering and visual display of power, class and gender differences, which were spelled out on façades and in interiors by means of architectural ornament and structure such as the column orders. Architecture then had the rhetorical capacity to describe building programs and the social status of patrons through ornament and structure that were based on culturally collective rules of etiquette. Hence, both Blondel and Ledoux stress the importance of concepts such as *convenance* (suitability), *bienséance* (decorum), *distribution* (space planning), *ordonnance* (order), Style, and *caractère* (character) in architecture. Such rules formulated an etiquette of architecture that was written about in their treatises, taught in the academy and studio, and built in Paris and its neighboring regions.<sup>17</sup>

The belief that architecture could formulate social and cultural order was reinforced by Ledoux’s decision to write in a manner that fused the architecture treatise with an etiquette book. Decorum, or appropriateness, is a term found in architectural treatises that dates back to Vitruvius, who borrowed such concepts of architectural etiquette from the rules of Cicero’s rhetoric. Ledoux explores this notion of persuasive language in three ways. First, he employs rhetoric in his treatise by means of Cicero’s concept of “grand style,” where fabulous references persuasively guide the reader through expositions that accompany each of his project proposals. Second, he exercises

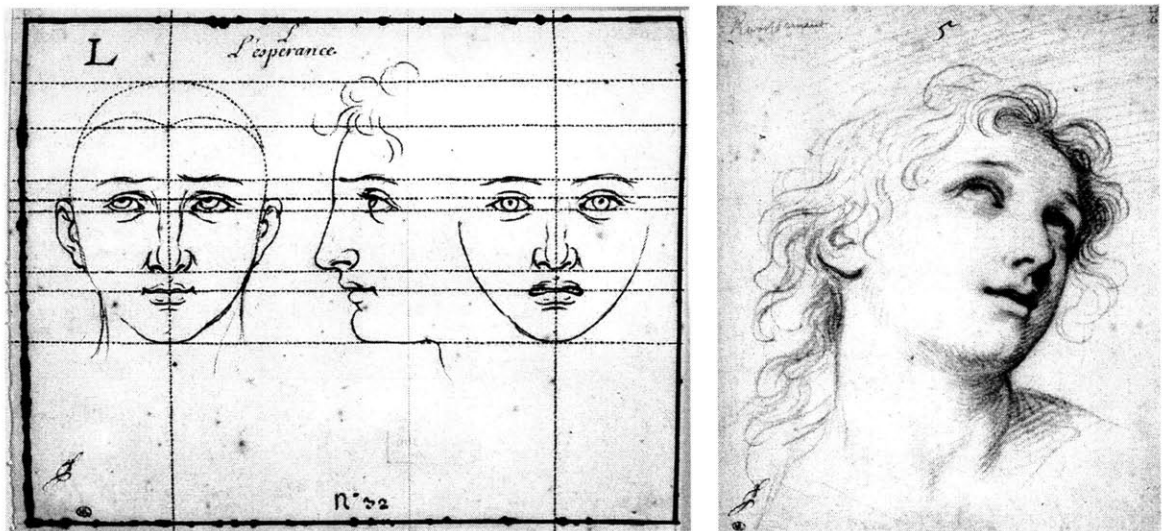
the rules of decorum in order to develop his own language of architecture.<sup>18</sup> Third, when espoused by architecture, decorum demonstrates social order and cultural etiquette in an eighteenth century architectural syntax. Ledoux refers to this as ‘mores’.

Blondel advocated for the decorous rules of architecture such as character in his treatise, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, et de la décoration des edifices en general* (1738). He advised architects to follow the rules of architectural etiquette through a language of architectural ornament.<sup>19</sup> Later, in his treatise titled *Cours d'architecture, ou Traité de la décoration, distribution & construction des bâtiments* (1771-77), he elaborates further by suggesting that “all [architecture] should have a character which determines their general form and which announces the building for what it is.”<sup>20</sup> The concept of character relates architecture and space to the performance of every day life dictated by manners, to the rules of classical theater explored by Aristotle in his book *Poetics*, and to Charles Le Brun’s sketches that investigate the relationship between human emotion and facial expressions [Fig. 15, 16]. In *Poetics*, Aristotle lists four attributes necessary for a successful character: goodness, appropriateness, likeness, and consistency noting that: “Since tragedy is an imitation of people better than we are, one should imitate good portrait painters.”<sup>21</sup> I am sketching out a scene, where mores not only manifest themselves in social interaction, but also dictate bodily performances.<sup>22</sup> These performances compliment and mirror theater acting. Furthermore, theatricality is also used as a way to think about architecture etiquette and its own performance value. Like Le Brun’s character types that were conceived as reflections of the physiological personality of the soul introduced by Renée Descartes’ *Les passions de l’âme* (1649), architecture too was “typed” to reflect different building programs, social classes, and even psychological identities. Ledoux takes this notion even further in his treatise when he assigns different characters to distinctive country houses that “speak” to their identities.

Nowhere is “architectural profiling” more evident and complicated than in the *petite maison*. Listen to M. Desmahis’ *Encyclopedie* entry for “Fat,” a term used to “type” a man “whose vanity alone forms his character”: “He has sufficiency of beautiful spirit and satiric words, of the man of red heeled quality,<sup>23</sup> the messenger (*coureur*) and the creditors; of the ladies' man of the *petite maison*, amber and let us gray him.”<sup>24</sup> It

seems that Desmahis, who notably also wrote the passage on “Women [moral]” in the *Encyclopedie*,<sup>25</sup> associates the country house cum love nest with a conceited courtier.<sup>26</sup>

Ledoux’s work exemplifies the moral ambiguities of the *petite maison*, as he explores both its illicit and licit programs. It might be tempting to suggest that with the adoption of the Neoclassical style his projects were, in effect, moralized. However, this paper seeks to complicate that reading of Ledoux by suggesting that his early Neoclassical façade work at the *pavilion de musique*, Louveciennes, coexisted with the supposedly feminine, amoral, and sexually explicit rococo style interior; while his later work at *Oikèma* – as a brothel designed specifically to quell erotomania in young men – brought the language of sexuality into the open, just as the author cum editor Bastide had. Ledoux transformed this architectural syntax from an erotically charged *petite maison* building type into a rustic house architectural typology in order to organize the productive people in his ideal city of Chaux.



**Figure 15, 16 Charles Le Brun (French, 1619-1690)**

Left, “Hope.” Right, “Rapture.” Reprinted from Amy M. Schmitter, “Representation and the Body of Power in French Academic Painting,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (July 2002): 399- 424

Ledoux would spend his career codifying a language of architecture based on neoclassicism as pioneered by Abbé Laugier in his book, *An Essay on Architecture* (1753). In the book, Laugier sketched out an origin of architecture's history that begins with the *cabane rustique* [Fig. 17]. The Jesuit priest and architecture critic, advocating a moralizing approach to design, suggests that, "Another objection will perhaps be made, namely that I reduce architecture to almost nothing, since with the exception of columns, entablatures, pediments, doors, and windows I more or less cut out the rest. It is true that I take away from architecture much that is superfluous, that I strip it of a lot of trinkets (*colifichets*) of which its ornamentation commonly consists and only leave it its natural simplicity..."<sup>27</sup> Here, moral and natural philosophy are united with aesthetic discourse. The relationship of the *petite maison* to Laugier's *cabane rustique* is twofold. First, the *cabane rustique* ties architecture to the provincial and productive life of shepherds. Second, it relates Laugier's idea of the first habitation of man to the country house. In fact, Abbé Laugier's *cabane rustique* is a moralized precedent of the little house. The *Dictionnaire de l'academie française* (1694) defined "cabane" as a "small *loge* of shepherds or of some poor person."<sup>28</sup> However by 1762, the term's meaning had expanded to include a "small *loge*, *petite maison*, usually covered with thatch."<sup>29</sup> The *petite maison* as a simple house for shepherds is an extraordinary idea because it opposes contemporary interpretations found in novels, songs and plays that presented the architectural type as a domestic stage for erotic activities. That there were two concurrent and morally opposed identities for the *petite maison* is important to stress, as the libidinous sexuality tied to the one disturbed the moral respectability of the other.

As a shelter for shepherds, the *petite maison* connoted the idyllic, pastoral landscape of Virgil's paradise "Arcadia,"<sup>30</sup> while linking the expression to Nicolas Poussin's painting entitled *Et in Arcadia Ego* (1638-40) [Fig. 18].<sup>31</sup> In this way, opposed meanings attributed to the *petite maison* enriched and complicated the role that pleasure was thought to play in the domestic spaces of the *maison de plaisance cum maison de campagne*. No longer only referring to fashionable reproductions of a shepherd's country life mimicked by wealthy patrons, the little house was also the shelter for Laugier's

primitive man. His “origin” of architecture, founded on the “cabane rustique,” transformed the *petite maison* into a moralized residence for the shepherds of Arcadia.

Laugier’s subtle reference to the *petite maison* did not fall on deaf ears. Ledoux was of course well aware of the relationships between the *cabane rustique*, Virgil’s Arcadia, and the moralized *petite maison*. Listen to Ledoux speak of the “purified” little house: “O divine genius! You who draws from the language of the poet of Mantua to enrich ours, your color is pure; it is not full of mixtures that destroy the hues with time; join me to your seductive language to appeal. I will invoke the science of Columella in order to sing of RUSTIC HOUSES.”<sup>32</sup> While looking to the poet of Mantua – who is none other than Virgil himself – for inspiration, Ledoux ties his “rustic house” to Virgil’s pastoral Arcadia. He seems to believe that Virgil’s language is “pure” (and true) in color and devoid of self-destructive societal trappings.<sup>33</sup> Ledoux also turns to Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella (4 AD - ca. 70 AD), Roman author of the twelve-volume treatise *de Re Rustica*, for guidance in agriculture, husbandry, and life, in order to “sing of Rustic Houses.”<sup>34</sup> By citing Columella, the desire to return architecture to nature is supported in another manner because contemporary English botanists had used the word to refer to primary support structures of shells, animals, and plants.<sup>35</sup> Abbé Laugier’s *cabane rustique*, represented in the frontispiece of *An Essay on Architecture* is composed of four tree trunks rooted in the ground that support a lintel and pitched roof formed by smaller trunks, or perhaps “columella.” While Ledoux’s words connect architecture to “science” and nature, those same words also tell the reader that his “rustic house” is part of France’s historical legacy – because it connotes Virgil’s “Arcadia,” Watteau’s “Cythera,” and Rousseau’s “Elysium” – and is active in controlling mores, people, and the body politic. While searching for rustic pleasures, Ledoux situates the little house at the center of his treatise *L’Architecture*, and accordingly, his ideal city of Chaux. In the pages that follow I will track Ledoux’s changing attitude towards the *maison de plaisance* and how he took the building type known as the *petite maison* and formulated it into a modern architectural typology of house and domesticity.





**Figure 17** Abbé Marc-Antoine Laugier (French, 1713-1769)  
Frontispiece, *Essai sur l'architecture* (Paris, 1753, 1755).



**Figure 18** Nicolas Poussin (French, 1594-1665)  
*Et in Arcadia Ego*, 1638 – 1640. Oil on Canvas, H.: 0,85 m.; L.: 1,21 m. Paris, Louvre Museum.

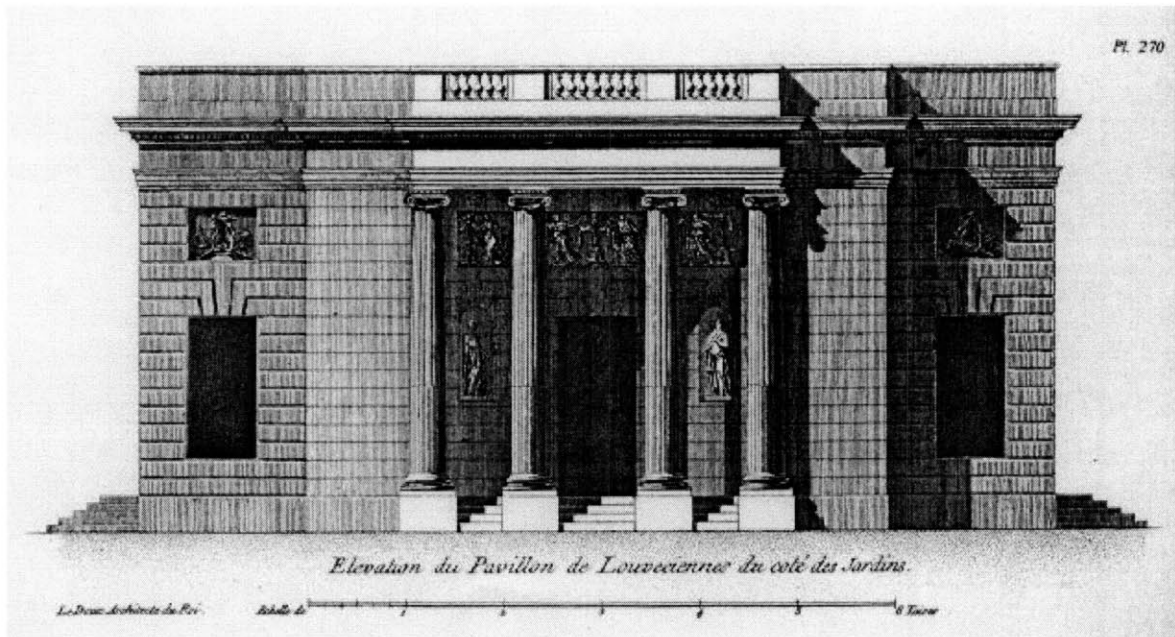
### ***A Music Pavilion at Louveciennes***

To summarize, the *petite maison* as a *maison de plaisance* was replaced by Ledoux with the term *maison de campagne* in order to connote moral virtue. This occurred during the cultural period when elite literary explorations of morality forced sexuality into open discourse. As we shall see, such semiotic shifts in meaning did not stop critics from interpreting Ledoux's country houses as illicit and criminal. It is precisely because Ledoux asserts rustic houses' role as an organizer of society that the terminological confusion of the *petite maison* can be tracked not only in literature, but in architecture as well. As Ledoux's career progressed, his projects demonstrated an organization of the variegations of the little house that were so tenuous in literature, painting, and architecture into a country house typology. While assuming a moral philosophical tone, in order to not only regenerate the shifting conceptions of the house but also to order them into a theory of sexuality in society, he formulates a modern conception of domesticity. The music pavilion at Louveciennes, completed in 1771, exemplifies one of Ledoux's first instantiations of sexed space, which was not yet systematized as a concept or method [Fig. 19].

Before continuing, a brief discussion of Ledoux's early career is necessary. After beginning his profession in 1764 with public works projects at the *Département des Eaux et Forêts* (in Franche-Comté and Burgundy), it was the elite's enthusiasm for Ledoux's designs for *maisons de plaisance*, *pavilions*, and Parisian *hôtels* (beginning in 1765) that won him fame and appointments.<sup>36</sup> Madame du Barry, who had been recently installed as the *maîtresse en titre* at Versailles, commissioned Ledoux to design the *pavilion de musique* as a stage for fetes, dinners, pleasures, and consumption.<sup>37</sup>

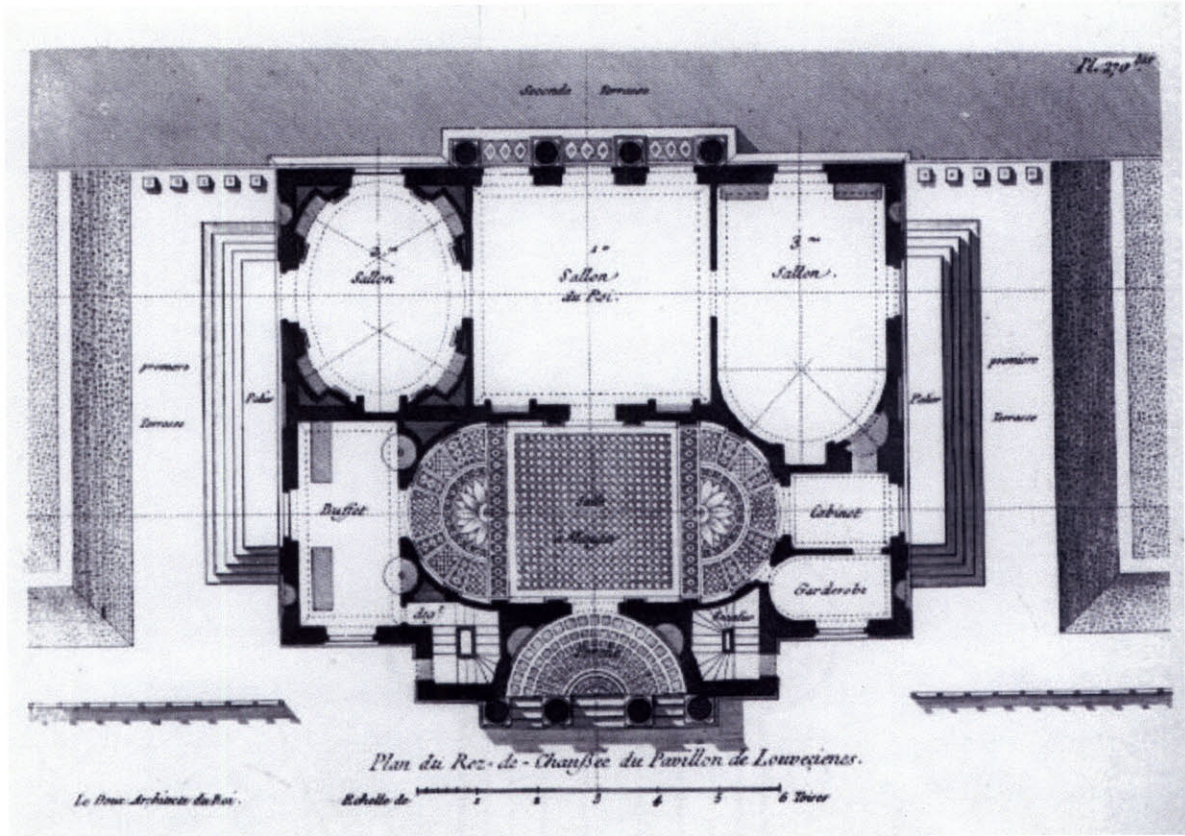
Instead of presenting his work chronologically in the first and only volume of *L'Architecture considérée* by including the pavilion project for Madame du Barry, Ledoux introduced his later imaginary work. He planned to save his realized *maison de plaisance* projects for later volumes. In order to establish a legacy that focused on a reinterpretation of social mores through built form – before immortalizing in print his earlier projects that did not fit within the rhetoric of his treatise – Ledoux chose to include fictional projects sited inside as well as surrounding his ideal city of Chaux. The Louveciennes engravings, signed by the artist Seiller, were planned for a third volume; yet, it was not until 1847 that his drawings of the project were published.<sup>38</sup> The pavilion survived the terror (unfortunately du Barry did not) and still exists at the edge of the forest of Marley, albeit in an altered state, overlooking the Seine River.<sup>39</sup>

In elevation, an apse shaped porch, screened by four fluted Ionic columns, serves as the primary entrance into the pavilion [Fig. 19].<sup>40</sup> In plan, the porch is concealed inside a projecting rectangular volume. By mid-century, the *Dictionnaire* had given currency to the *porche*, derived from the Latin term *porticus*, as the entry of a village church. This raises the question that perhaps Ledoux is thinking about the provincial church *porche* when he labels his own plans. Although Ledoux characterizes a number of other entrances to his country house projects with the same title, and could have simply chosen the name because it was less formal than the term *porticus*. Such pastoral notions were conflated with notions of pleasure, for a frieze on the front façade representing dancers during a Bacchanalia supported the interpretation of the project as a temple of love.<sup>41</sup>

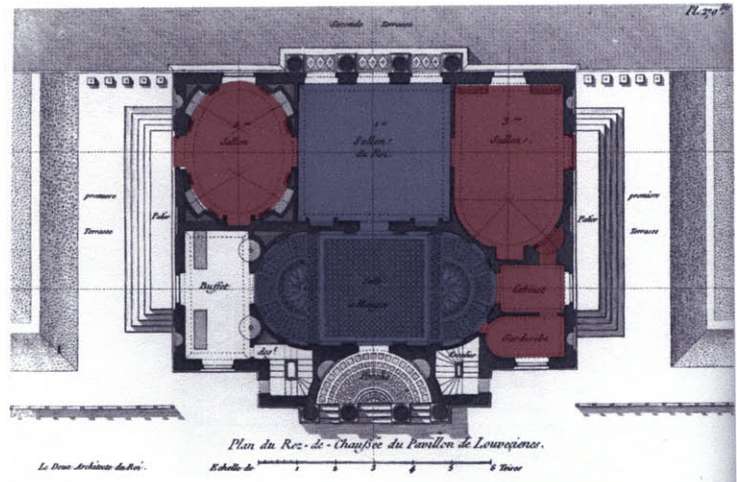


**Figure 19 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**

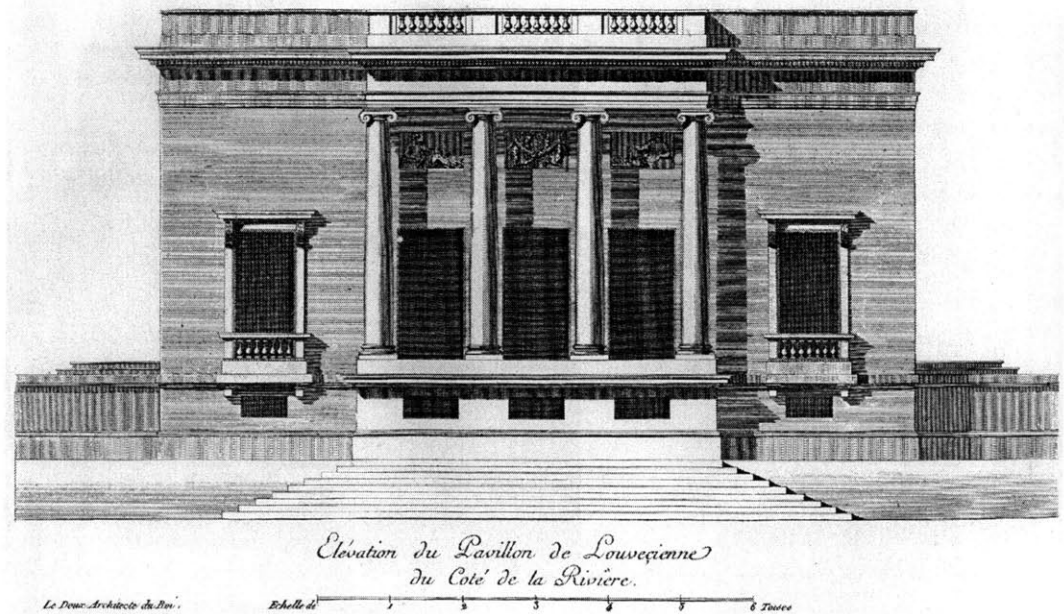
Garden Elevation, *Music Pavilion at Louveciennes*, 1771. Engraving by Sellier. Reprinted from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux*, (New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1984), Plate 270.



**Figure 20 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Ground Floor Plan, *Music Pavilion at Louveciennes*, 1771. Engraving by Sellier. Reprinted from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux*, (New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1984), Plate 270.

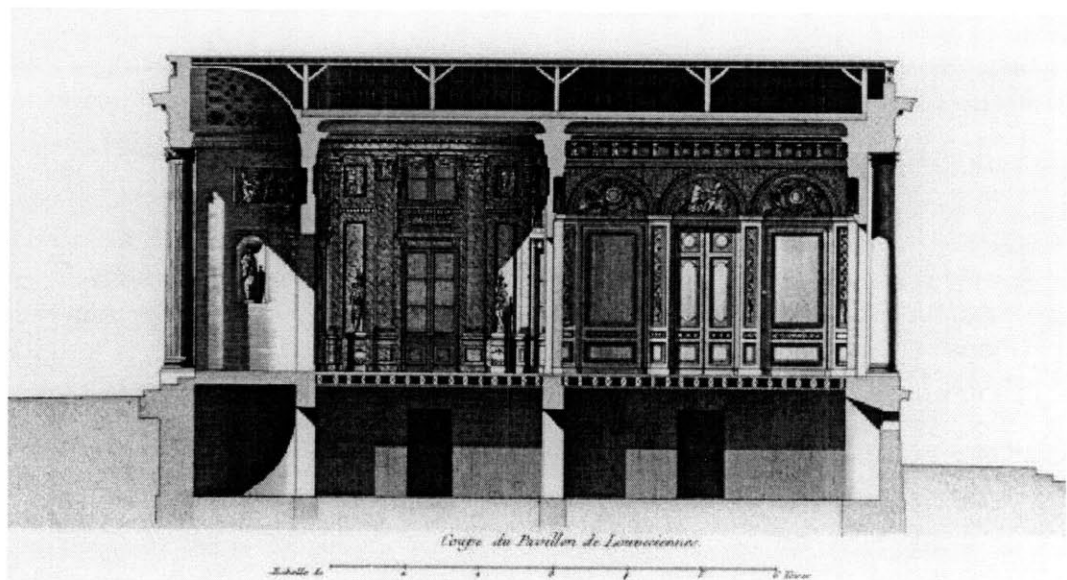


**Figure 21 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Edited and Colored Ground Plan [my work], *Music Pavilion at Louveciennes*.



**Figure 22 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**

River Elevation, *Music Pavilion at Louveciennes*. 1771. Engraving by Sellier. Reprinted from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux*, (New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1984), Plate 272.



**Figure 23 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**

Section, *Music Pavilion at Louveciennes*. 1771. Engraving by Sellier. Reprinted from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux*, (New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1984), Plate 272.

In plan, Madam du Barry's music pavilion represents an architectural embodiment of sexuality and privileges the authority of the Royal mistress in monarchical matters. Although the pavilion's exterior envelope is orthogonal, the interior is composed of three curvilinear grandly proportioned rooms (counterclockwise from left: second salon, dining room, and third salon) that surround an impressive central space titled "Salon of the King" [Fig. 20]. The primary entry sequence, represented in plan and section, is a compressed march composed of three grand public spaces: an apsidal shaped entry porch (*porche*), a square shaped dining room (*sale à manger*) with semi-circular ends at the right and left, and a square shaped Salon of the King (*Salon du Roi*) [Fig. 20, 23]. To the left of the dining room is a *buffet*,<sup>42</sup> and to the right is a *cabinet* (boudoir) and *garderobe* (dressing room).<sup>43</sup>

The Salon of the King is distinguished from the other spaces in the house by its imposing scale, its central location, and its visual accessibility from the rooms and gardens that surround it. The primary axial march through the dining room and the King's Salon sketches out an abstract phallus; and the entry porch can be interpreted as the dismembered head of that phallus [Fig. 21]. Overlooking the Seine River through a screen of four grand ionic columns, the square shaped *Salon du Roi* is flanked on the left by an oval-shaped salon (entitled "second salon") and on the right by a third, apsidal shaped salon suggestive of both basilica and theater plans (entitled "third salon") [Fig. 22]. The King's Salon *cum* shaft cleaves in two the curvilinear, private spaces belonging to the Countess. Both the salons on the left and right of the *Salon du Roi* have doors that access stepped terraces on either side of the pavilion, which lead to the property's picturesque gardens. King's Salon stabilizes the chaotic collection of rooms, however, this central phallus is encircled and locked into place by the curved spaces of Madame du Barry.

The most private spaces in the house – a cabinet and dressing room – are accessible from the dining room, which was most public space in the house, as well as from the private third salon. The hidden rooms in the *poche* are concealed behind doors designed to unify with the walls, which can be employed in order to secretly observe, regulate, and order events on the so-called political stage – and public space – in the house. The *poche* also provides stealth passage from the third salon, which Ledoux later

renames bed-room, into the dining room and out the front door, effectively by-passing the Salon of the King altogether. In this way, Louis XV's grand stabilizing "square" salon is only authoritative in ceremony, thus emphasizing the castrated phallus primary axial sequence.

Jean Michel Moreau le Jeune's watercolor titled "Fête at Louveciennes" captures the dinner celebration held in the dining room of the pavilion on September 27, 1771 [Fig. 24]. The scene represents the first public acknowledgement by Louis XV of du Barry's new social title as mistress to the King. The representation of guests seated at a large dinner table surrounded by standing company, servants, and lackeys denotes the etiquette that distinguished different levels of wealth, nobility, and service. The watercolor represents consumption and luxury; however, it also illustrates France's colonial interests. The depiction of Madame du Barry seated on the left, holding the hand of her standing Bengalese manservant named Zamor, connotes France as a colonial power that imported more than coffee and sugar: it claimed ownership of bodies as well [Fig. 25]. The perspective looks towards one of the dining room's semicircular ends, where couples gather in three balconies that architecturally borrow from the private boxes of the theater to watch the spectacle below. With his audience in place and his characters choreographed, Ledoux refers to the pavilion as a "playhouse" in his treatise in two ways: first, the house is purely for amusement; and second, it is a theater for acting. Even though the pavilion was not a featured project in his treatise he does mention it in the introduction. He observes that the house is "An episodic scene, thousands of actors employed in the large theater of events, (Louveciennes) facilitated the artist the means of binding the interests of art with those of the government."<sup>44</sup> Ledoux was provided with the political support needed to become an architect of public works projects including the *Saline de Chaux* in part because of the success of the pavilion and his alliance with du Barry [Fig. 26].<sup>45</sup>





**Figure 24 Jean-Michel Moreau le Jeune (French, 1741- 1814)**

*The inaugural fete in the Dining Room at Louveciennes, 1771.* Watercolor, Louvre collections. Reprinted from Bernd H. Dams, Andrew Zega, *Pleasure Pavilions and follies: in the gardens of the ancien régime* (Paris; New York: Flammarion, 1995), 102.



**Figure 25 Jacques-Antoine Lemoine (French, 1752-1824)**  
Portrait de Zamor, 1785. Oil on Canvas. Private Collection. Reprinted from *Madame Du Barry: de Versailles à Louveciennes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1992), 171.



**Figure 26 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
Plan detail, Saline de Chaux, Plate 14, 1804. Engraving by Druit. Reprinted from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (Paris, Chez l'auteur, de l'Impr. de L. H. Perronneau, 1804), 89.

For a brief period of time, the apsidal shaped third salon housed Fragonard's series of four paintings entitled the 'Progress of Love' (1770-1771) originally known as *Les Amours des Bergers* or "the love of shepherds."<sup>46</sup> They are individually titled *The Meeting*, where love must wait, *The Pursuit*, where courtship is announced, *Love letters*, where the bond of friendship is represented, and *The Lover Crowned*, where the symbolic visual codes of the consummation of love concludes the narrative [Fig. 27, 28, 29, 30]. Shortly after their completion, these paintings were replaced by Joseph-Marie Vien's Neoclassical series entitled *Progress of Love in the Hearts of Young Girls* (1773-4) [Fig. 31, 32].<sup>47</sup>



**Figure 27, 28 Jean-Honoré Fragonard (French, 1732–1806)**

Left, *The Meeting*, 1771-73. Oil on canvas, 125 in. x 96 in. (317.5 cm x 243.84 cm). Henry Clay Frick Bequest, Frick Collection, New York.

Right, *The Pursuit*, 1771-73. Oil on canvas, 125 1/8 in. x 84 7/8 in. (317.82 cm x 215.58 cm). Henry Clay Frick Bequest, Frick Collection, New York.



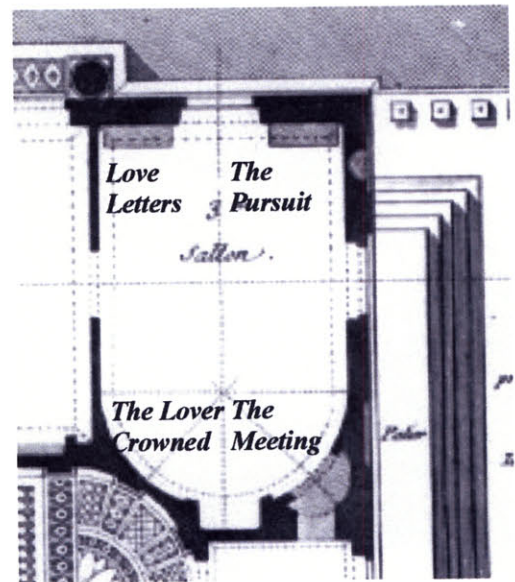
**Figure 29, 30 Jean-Honoré Fragonard**

Left, *Love Letters*, 1771-73. Oil on canvas, 124 7/8 in. x 85 3/8 in. (317.18 cm x 216.85 cm). Henry Clay Frick Bequest, Frick Collection, New York.

Right, *The Lover Crowned*, 1771-73. Oil on canvas, 125 1/8 in. x 95 3/4 in. (317.82 cm x 243.21 cm). Henry Clay Frick Bequest, Frick Collection, New York.



**Figure 31, 32 Joseph-Marie Vien (French, 1716-1809)**  
 Left, *The Meeting with Love*, 1773. Oil on Canvas, H. : 3,35 m. ; L. : 1,94 m.; right, *The Lover Crowning his Mistress*, 1773. Oil on Canvas, H.: 3,35 m.; L.: 2,02 m. Louvre Museum, Paris.



**Figure 33 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux**  
 Plan detail, Pavilion at Louveciennes. Adapted from "Schematic plan of the *Salon en cul-de-four* at Louveciennes" by Donald Posner, "The True Path of Fragonard's 'Progress of Love,'" *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 114, No. 833 (Aug., 1972), 526-534.

Influenced by picturesque gardening theories developed during the 1770's by René-Louis marquis de Girardin and Jean-Marie Morel, the gardens at Louveciennes were experienced as an unfolding narrative designed to excite specific feelings in the spectator at critical moments in the landscape. The fundamental concept of the picturesque garden was that it was designed from a single painterly perspective station point; although, theorists such as Girardin also valued "side-scenes," which were considered to be smaller and more private spaces designed though poetry in order to surprise and provoke the imagination. While the landscape provoked thought, nature taught moral lessons to the observer. Fragonard's paintings are representations of these "side-scenes." However, the lessons of the *Progress of love* were not necessarily of the morality of marriage, but of the pleasure of courtship and consummation.

There are many speculations as to why the paintings were rejected.<sup>48</sup> Scholars have suggested that Fragonard's Rococo style was no longer fashionable;<sup>49</sup> others propose that the paintings were biographical and Louis XV objected to being represented as a gentleman shepherd.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, the series works in three different registers: first, the pictures narrate the stages of love; second, they denote art's representation of love; third, they suggest that painting is capable of illustrating an account of temporal pleasure over and against that of static happiness. Art Historian Dora Ashton suggests that because Ledoux was involved in all aspects of his design process, from façade designs to interior details, such as the cherubs that he sketched in the over-doors of the *Salon du Roi*, he would have been familiar with Fragonard's intentions for a narrative series denoting the love of shepherds.<sup>51</sup> It is not surprising then, that the language of love and explicit erotic codes in Fragonard's series of Rococo paintings reverberated in Ledoux's pavilion plan [Fig. 33].

In the third salon, Fragonard's paintings alternated with doorways that lead to different spatial "events." Because of this, the paintings in their original positions can be employed to interpret how Ledoux's plan was designed for not only structuring erotic pleasures but also embodying sexuality. In between "The Meeting" and "The Pursuit" was a doorway leading out into the terrace and gardens. The Art historian Mary D. Sheriff investigates the relationship between the landscape at Louveciennes and painted garden; however, she stops short of interpreting the paintings as relational to the pavilion

plan beyond the threshold next to *The meeting* that provides access to the terrace outside. Because the garden and picture are both considered ‘painterly’ views by picturesque theoretical standards, Sheriff suggests that the “real” vista sets the stage for a spectator to act out Fragonard’s represented scenes in the garden.<sup>52</sup>

Fragonard brought the outside in by hanging his pictures in the salon gallery. By doing so, he mirrored the garden rooms that Girardin referred to as “little easels” in the picturesque landscape.<sup>53</sup> Listen to Girardin as he searches for poetical moments in the countryside, “We must seek for them behind the frame of the great landscape; they are, as it were, little easel pictures in a gallery...As soon as we leave the house...we should find a beaten path, which will conduct us to all the beautiful spots.”<sup>54</sup> The salon simulated a garden “side-scene,” Fragonard’s paintings unfolded a narrative of “love,” and Ledoux’s plan revealed a plot of pleasure.

A window in between “The Pursuit” and “Love Letters” framed a view of the Seine River. A doorway leading into the *Salon du Roi* separated “Love Letters” from “The Lover Crowned.” By visually juxtaposing the paintings (and their erotic signs) to du Barry’s own relationship with her patron and lover King Louis XV, Ledoux and Fragonard create a spatial interpretation of the mistress’s social position and behavior. Continuing with this comparison of plan to paintings, to the right of “The Lover Crowned” (which was coded with erotic signs denoting the consummation of the painted couples adoration for each other) and to the left of “The Meeting” (which begins the narrative) was a niche probably reserved for an ottoman or daybed. Also in between the artworks was a concealed, secrete passage that lead to a private cabinet space (a boudoir), and Madame du Barry’s dressing room beyond. It seems quite possible that Fragonard’s paintings referred to the *petite maison* too explicitly, and it was this explicitness that gave him grounds for dismissal.<sup>55</sup>

The body, anatomy, and authority of women spatially organized in the pavilion in fact destabilized socially constructed notions of gender difference and patriarchy. This did not go unnoticed by critics, for, soon after Ledoux had completed the pavilion at *Louveciennes* in 1771 the little house appeared as a backdrop in the satirical publications that the 27 year-old official mistress du Barry.<sup>56</sup> As the target of social and political slander, du Barry was written about in fictitious memoirs and anecdotes, including

Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert's *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (1775) [Fig. 34].<sup>57</sup> Critics such as Mairobert associated the *pavilion* more with Watteau's Cythera than Rousseau's Elysium, and consequently this *maison de plaisance* was interpreted as a space for luxury and libidinous pleasures. Robert Darnton, historian of eighteenth-century print culture, puts forward that Mairobert's *Anecdotes* publication was a revolutionary document that claimed to objectively uncover "truths" about the monarchy based on an analysis of gossip and fictitious accounts.<sup>58</sup> In his narrative, Mairobert may have refuted some of the lies circulating via textual and oral rumor; however, his own vindications of du Barry are subverted by his subtle accusations about her destructive role at court. In *Anecdotes*, an older Louis XV is not seduced by a noble lady, but by a bastard child of low birth who was married into nobility. As if his story were not scathing enough, she was accused of being a working class, simple-minded shop girl who was lured into prostitution because of her "natural susceptibility" to it, and later, as Darnton notes, was "pimped out" to the king by her lover turned brother-in-law.



**Figure 34 Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert (French, 1727-1779)**  
 Frontispiece, *Anecdotes sur Me. la Comtesse Dubarri*, Nouvelle édition, revue et corrigée, ornée du portrait de l'héroïne (London [i.e. Amsterdam?], 1776): 1.



In this two volume “contemporary history,” Mairobert criticizes the decadent spending and unproductive luxury that the pavilion represents. Consequently, Louveciennes has a prominent role in exposing the countess as a wasteful woman who procured the money of the monarchy and the nation for her own selfish pleasures. He suggests, “It appeared very extraordinary, that notwithstanding the money which Madam Du Barry spent, and the facility with which she obtained it from the Comptroller-general, she did not realize anything, she did not make any acquisition, she did not buy any land: for the *Château de Lucienne* did not yield anything useful, it was no more than a *boudoir* for a *grand Dame* like her.”<sup>59</sup> He asks the reader to observe the facile spending habits of the Comtesse as well as her failure to contribute “anything useful” in return. Moreover, he incites the public to see du Barry as both a powerful force in the monarchy, and a woman who undermines the patriarchy.

While condemning du Barry because “her passion for show and luxury appeared on every occasion,” Mairobert uses objects to judge du Barry’s extravagances and allude to her drainage of national resources.<sup>60</sup> More specifically, she “exerted an authority, which proved the great power she had over the treasury.”<sup>61</sup> Later, he argues that “She had neither land nor house; she contented herself with adorning her chateau at Louvecienne, which the curious crowded to see; but it was not open to everyone; it was by a particular favor that people were admitted into that repository of voluptuousness.” Mairobert distinguishes between the concepts of “house” and Madame du Barry’s “chateau.” Unlike Jaucourt, who in the *Encyclopedie* associated “house” with aristocratic behavior and “family” with bourgeois values, Mairobert’s “house” connoted work, productivity, and family, whereas “chateau” signified illicit activity and uneconomical pleasures. Such semantic confusion attests to the disturbed subject position of “house” in the French language.

The materialist philosopher Baron Paul Henri Thiry d’Holbach underscored this critique, by objecting to pleasure without productivity in his controversial book *Système de la nature, ou, Des loix du monde physique & du monde moral* (1770), which just happened to be a favorite text of the Marquis de Sade. He relates sexuality to national duty by suggesting that, “the conjugal bonds are sweet only in proportion as they identify

the interest of two beings, unified by the want of legitimate pleasure, from whence results the maintenance of political society, and the means of furnishing it with citizens.”<sup>62</sup> D’Holbach denies “legitimate pleasure” to those uninterested in reproduction and sexuality becomes a determinant in matters of the state.

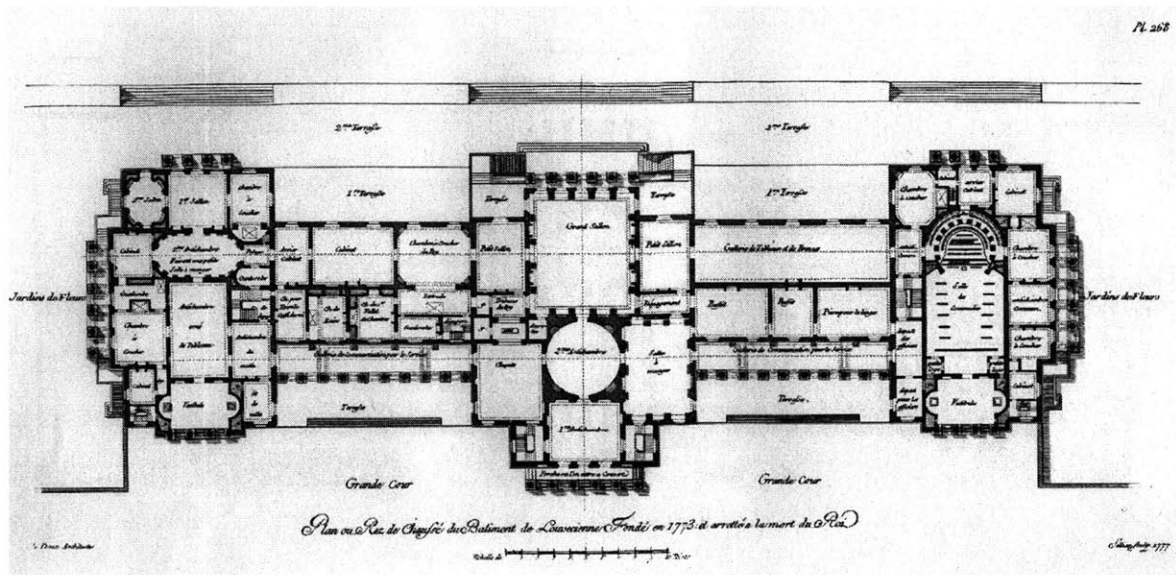
Mairobert places so much emphasis on the pavilion as a sign for debauchery and anti-family values that he offers a description of it and its architect. In the body of the text, he writes: “[the] young architect [Ledoux], who with great talents for decorations, has fine ideas; but they are sometimes irregular, and he is not always careful to preserve a proper uniformity, which is essential in every work.” Ledoux’s failure is blamed on design inconsistencies. The Neoclassical façade contrasted with a Rococo interior was a “careless” mistake – blamed on youth – that limited the pavilions’ “proper uniformity.” Rococo art such as Jean-Honoré Fragonard’s paintings “*Progress of Love*,” located in the third salon of the *pavilion de musique*, highlight these inconsistencies.<sup>63</sup> Mairobert speaks of the pavilion as a mere trinket (*colifichet*). By using such vocabulary, he distinguishes between the design of the pavilion and Architecture, along with the powerful reactions, such as the sublime, that can be evoked by the latter. *Colifichet* is precisely the same noun that Laugier employed in order to describe superfluous ornament that distinguishes so-called less meaningful projects from neoclassical architecture. Mairobert writes:

While the spectator admires so many trifling and cynical beauties, he is reminded that the place is too insignificant for the favorite of a great king; that the details are ... too immensely expensive for a private person; and the only idea that occurs at the view of such a contrast is, that we are in a *petite maison* where every part reveals the owner. The King...had supped but thrice at this elegant lodge, and the third time...the pleasures were soon over, his Majesty having returned to Versailles at half after eleven.<sup>64</sup>

The pleasures of du Barry’s *petite maison* may have fooled the King once or perhaps even twice, but the monarch was too wise to be seduced a third time by futile design.<sup>65</sup> The pavilion is physical evidence of the courtesan’s unchecked mores and flawed

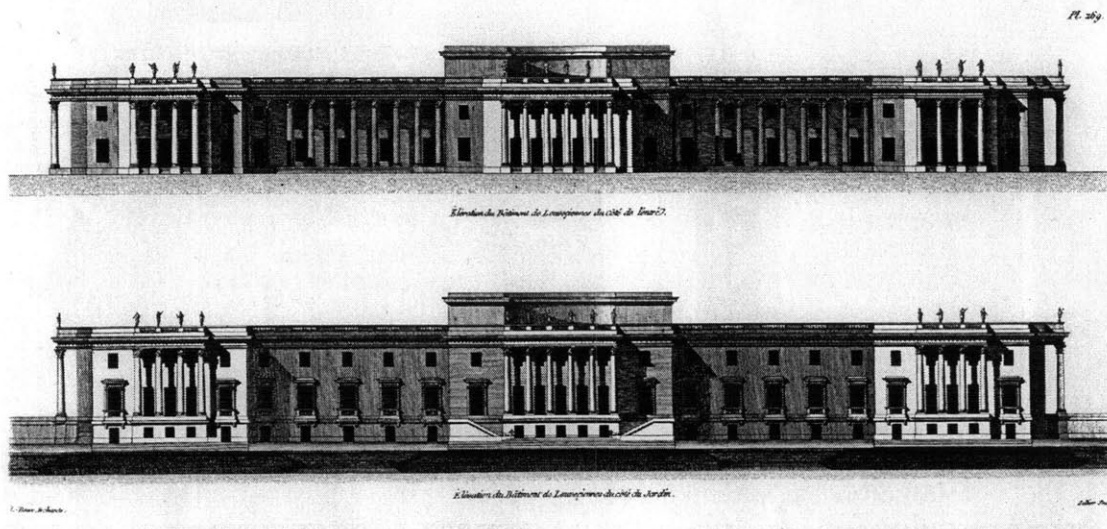
lifestyle. The court, in turn, is condemned for ceding a powerful role in the nation to the Comtesse.

When Mme du Barry requested an addition to Louveciennes, Ledoux responded in 1773 with a proposal for an enormous chateau. A plan engraving for the expanded pavilion reveals Ledoux's thoughts about the third salon specifically, and about his response to criticism over the pavilion more generally [Fig 35]. The representation illustrates his proposal for a grand *maison de plaisance* over five times larger in length than the original pavilion, and more than three times larger in width.<sup>66</sup> The conflation of a Neoclassical exterior and Rococo interior, which had given Mairobert ammunition to criticize Ledoux's design "inconsistencies," was resolved during the project's revision. If consumption, infidelity, and misogamy had become tantamount with the *pavilion du musique* and its misleading Neoclassical façade, the new *maison de plaisance* "corrected" this impression.



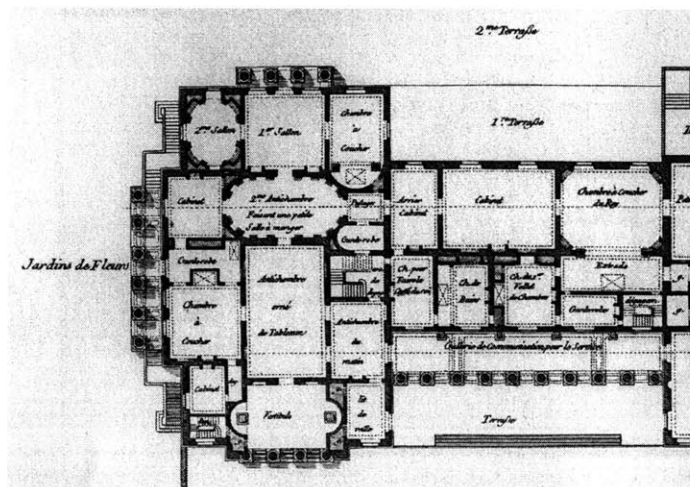
**Figure 35 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Plan, "Building at Louveciennes," 1773. Engraving by Sellier, Reprint from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Claude Nicolas Ledoux, unpublished projects* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1992). Plate 268.

Two bar buildings connected three pavilions with interiors as austere as the Neoclassical front façade [Fig. 36]. Taken over by the massive chateau and consigned to the back left-most corner of the project, the original pavilion maintained the same spaces and room titles; aside from the third salon that was renamed a formal bedroom.<sup>67</sup> The king’s apartment was connected to du Barry’s new bedroom by the boudoir and dressing room of the pavilion [Fig. 37]. However, the project was never realized because Louis XV died before construction began.<sup>68</sup> This being said, the plan still choreographed the relationship of Madame du Barry to the king in a countryside more akin to the landscape imaginary explored by Watteau and Fragonard than by Rousseau. The *petite maison* at Louveciennes may have been masked by an all-encompassing addition; however, the planning of the pavilion did not drastically change, albeit for the renaming of certain spaces. The new “chateau” did not abide by Rousseau’s moral beliefs that happiness would be found in productive pleasures any more than the smaller *petite maison* did. In the years that followed, Ledoux’s plans for country houses would undergo a dramatic change in composition in order to resolve any ideological inconsistencies.



**Figure 36 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, (French, 1736-1806)**

Front and Back Façades, “Building at Louveciennes,” 1773. Engraving by Sellier, Reprint from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Claude Nicolas Ledoux, unpublished projects* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1992). Plate 269.



**Figure 37 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Plan detail, “Building at Louveciennes,” 1773. Engraving by Sellier, Reprint from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Claude Nicolas Ledoux, unpublished projects* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1992). Plate 268.

Madame du Barry lived in the pavilion until her final arrest that resulted in her execution at Place de la Republic, formerly entitled Place Louis XV. Designed to choreograph sensual pleasures not unlike those narrated by Bastide, Ledoux inadvertently raised controversial questions about the terms of “productivity” in the leisure lifestyle of the aristocracy when he designed the *pavilion de musique*.<sup>69</sup> In the pages that follow, another house for an influential woman – a bourgeois merchant of fashion known as the *marchande de modes* – will illustrate Ledoux’s changing theories of domestic architecture and the *maison de plaisance*. By suggesting that the natural role of the *marchande de modes* in society is to care for the family and the underprivileged, Ledoux tailors social philosophy to his nascent architecture designs for the house. Underscoring Ledoux’s amendment of his inconsistencies – namely the conflation of a neoclassical exterior with a rococo interior at Louveciennes – was the appearance of a systemized plan for his bourgeois house typology. Only when we consider the significant shift that Ledoux made during his career from the chaotic planning of a seductive *petite maison* to the organization of the deeply moral *maison de campagne*, does history reveal the impact of the country house on the formation of a modern language of architecture.

### *An Imagined House for a Marchande de modes*

By the 1780's, the *marchande de modes* (woman merchant tailor) had become another central figure in society. Holding such authority in the costly field of dresses, hairstyles and accessories established the tailor as a politically powerful economic force in Paris. Her influence in matters of taste and expenditure disturbed class boundaries as well as socially constructed notions concerned with the differences between genders. In his treatise, *L'Architecture*, Ledoux redefines this identity of the *marchande de modes* in a house project entitled "*La maison d'une marchande de modes.*" This country house is the only private residence in his treatise that Ledoux specifically names for a woman.<sup>70</sup> As we shall see, he designed the house in such a way as to order her virtue, mores, and role in the body politic. By taking heed of his previously discussed design "inconsistencies" at the music pavilion, Ledoux revised his architectural syntax and offered an image of domesticity that limited a woman's role in society to the domestic sphere. Certainly, then, the country house for a merchant tailor represents a turning point in Ledoux's formulation of domestic architecture from the *petite maison* type to the *maison de campagne* typology.

As I pointed out in the last chapter, in 1775 Mairobert had offered his readers an interpretation of Ledoux's pavilion at Louveciennes as a luxurious trinket. This term is critical to restate, because it not only mimics Laugier's language of condemnation for superfluous ornament, but it is precisely the same term that was evoked in speech in order to describe the expensive accessories that the *marchande de mode* marketed. Mairobert insinuated that Madame du Barry, as a shop girl cum prostitute, was dangerous to the class order, the monarchy, and the nation. He suggested that Ledoux's "trinket" pavilion was a useless object that reflected the controversial mores of the royal favorite. Because the tailor was a woman, a shopkeeper, a merchant, and an employer of shop girls, her virtue and authority were subjects of speculation. The fact that shop-girls worked behind glass shop windows in the public eye helped critics circulate the cliché that these women had a propensity for prostitution. The same space was interpreted for the purpose of interrogating the merchant tailor's virtue and undermining her influence in matters of taste.<sup>71</sup> Ledoux's rustic domicile was designed to order her behavior and would undermine her economic and social freedom by taking her out of the shop and siting her

in domestic space.

Ledoux is not the first person to grapple with the identity of the *marchande de modes*. François Boucher's painting titled *The Milliner (Marchande de Mode)*, completed in 1746, represents a *marchande de modes* serving a wealthy woman client in a boudoir [Fig. 38].<sup>72</sup> The painting illustrates the point that the *marchande de modes* was not an unusual subject for representations. However, the signs in Boucher's painting that signify luxury, eroticism, and consumption are precisely the same values that Ledoux argues against when he attempts to redefine the identity of the *marchande de modes*.



**Figure 38 François Boucher (French, 1703-1770)**  
*The Milliner*, 1746. Oil on Canvas, National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.

In the painting a patron sits on a chair in front of her toilette, holding a ribbon in both hands, while gazing down at the merchant tailor who is seated at her feet. Her dressing table is outfitted with a looking glass, perfume and make-up boxes, a power puff, and a gilded open jewel box spilling over with fabrics and ribbons. A simple open box brimming with trinkets is represented on the floor in front of milliner's lap, while a cat lounging in a *bergère* is to her right. Another closed box, adorned with Boucher's signature, is painted to the right of the milliner, and a measuring stick pointing towards the cat rests on the box.<sup>73</sup> Behind the pair is a niche draped with red curtains that partially conceal a day bed cloaked in red fabric. A panel above the client's head is painted to represent a picturesque landscape. Signs of pleasure, eroticism, consumption, and luxury exist as codes in the painting. In the midst of an aristocratic milieu, the woman being served allows her cat – an overt sign of sexuality – to occupy a chair while a *marchande de modes* sits at her feet. Boucher paints the measuring stick, which is a sign for the milliner, as an arrow that points towards the cat, thus emphasizing the so-called relationship of the *marchande* to eroticism. Melissa Hyde notes that the painting is also an allegory for morning because it represents the *toilette*, the act of dressing, and the ritual of make-up application, all of which enable identity construction.<sup>74</sup> At the time, in 1746, the *marchande* was renowned for the decoration of court dresses, hats and elaborate coiffeur styling. She prided herself as being *the* tastemaker of *la mode*. And Historian Jennifer Jones puts forward that according to Louis Sebastien Mercier, writer and dramatist who pioneered bourgeois drama, the milliner was the “architect and decorator par excellence” of fashion and manners because, through her work, she instructed clients in the art of grace and decorum.<sup>75</sup>

While tracing the development of the fashion industry of old regime France, Jennifer Jones suggests that the *marchande de modes* ascended from a “decorator” of clothing and hair in the 1740's to a member of a government sanctioned merchant class in 1776.<sup>76</sup> In the 1760's, before they had earned legal status, an elite cultural distaste for the milliner tailor's authority had developed in the public sphere. Jones shows that conceptions of sexual inequality, the tradition of marriage, and patriarchal order were all evoked by the Abbé Jaubert when he suggested that women should be required to marry a



male merchant or pay one for the privilege of being a professional *marchande de modes*.<sup>77</sup> However, there was an economic rationale for lending legal authority to the *marchande de modes*. Critics wondered what additional virtuous occupations workingwomen could perform, if not in *la mode*, without “succumbing” to prostitution.<sup>78</sup> Upon the trade’s reformation in 1776, when seamstresses lost their production rights for dress parts, the *marchande de modes* gained the legal jurisdiction to fabricate entire garments, along with elaborate hairstyles and trinkets.<sup>79</sup> Only then did the woman tailor have the legal authority to profit from *la mode*. Jones notes that in this respect, the merchant tailor maintained more freedom than other bourgeois women in Paris who relied on their husbands for financial support.<sup>80</sup> However, during the second half of the eighteenth century, social constructions of gender difference helped to create male identity and support a patriarchal order. In *Emile, ou l’education* (1762) Rousseau discusses biological difference and women’s “nature” in the midst of his ideas on education.<sup>81</sup> In the body of the text, Rousseau considers tailoring, sewing and embroidery to be “women’s work” rather than a vocation for men, thereby effeminizing the tailor profession.<sup>82</sup>

As an architect who imparted grace, the *marchande de modes* supported court fashion etiquette, which emphasized class differences. Clothing – its weight, scale, shape and decoration – could affect body movement in a profound way, and because interpersonal socializing mirrored and even replicated stage performances such as dance, having a polite demeanor depended on good carriage. Historian Dena Goodman suggests that as luxury goods such as the writing desk became widely available during the reign of Louis XV, aristocrats had to develop other methods that distinguished themselves from the bourgeois. One such tactic was to choreograph graceful interaction with furniture. Another means of displaying class difference was through cultivating ways of wearing clothing and hair. As such, the *marchande de modes* became an important fixture in identity construction, or in dressing people up with varying identities, as it were.

For example, by the 1780’s Marie Antoinette had developed an exceptionally close relationship with her tailor, Rose Burtin.<sup>83</sup> Jennifer Jones notes that this rapport troubled members of court because it broke social rank and protocol and eventually promoted reports of decadence and spending by both the Queen and her “architect” of

fashion.<sup>84</sup> Consequently, as historian Jill Casid suggests, the Queen and women of fashion were popular subjects for satirical images such as the anonymous engraving entitled, *The Vengeance of the Deplumed Birds against the Feathered Hairdo of Mademoiselle of the Sighs*, ca. 1780 [Fig. 39].<sup>85</sup> Because the milliner was known for her fashionable hair styling and Marie Antoinette was notorious for her interest in these elaborate constructions, the image not only attacks these two women, but also suggests that their pillage of nature would be met with revolt. This reasoning echoes Mairobert's own attack of Madame du Barry, who in his eyes took all she could from nature and the nation and gave nothing in return.

Such satirical images that speak to concerns about women of fashion looting nature for superficial motives appears just at a moment in the 1780's when Marie Antoinette had retreated into her *hameau*. Architect Richard Mique between 1783-1786 designed this ornamented farm in the gardens of Versailles. The Queen's *hameau* consisted of a dairy, a working village, a boudoir, a granary cum ballroom, and a chicken coop.<sup>86</sup> Jill Casid puts forward that the farm "is a contested ground" which formulated the socially constructed relationship of heterosexuality and nature.<sup>87</sup> A rhetoric that associated "Nature" with human behavior and "natural" with femininity and masculinity was used to slander Marie-Antoinette and her *hameau*. The site was rumored to be host to Sapphic activities that not only rendered the Queen unproductive for the nation in terms of childbearing, but also emasculated the king. The conflation of the country house with a dairy and menagerie borrows from Bastide's conception of the *petite maison*, which at the time was being transformed by Ledoux into an architectural typology that he believed to be virtuous and productive. The *marchande de modes* further complicated the disturbed interpretation of artificial landscapes such as the Queen's *hameau* by designing hats that simulated gardens, such as the hat "*en pouf à la Luxembourg* [gardens]" or the *pouf au parc anglais* [Fig. 40].<sup>88</sup>



Left, **Figure 39 Anonymous**

*The Vengeance of the Deplumed Birds against the Feathered Hairdo of Mademoiselle of the Sighs*, ca. 1780, etching and engraving. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Reprint from Jill Casid, "Queer(y)ing Georgic: Utility, Pleasure, and Marie-Antoinette's Ornamented Farm," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 30.3 (1997): 311.

Right, **Figure 40 Jean-Pierre-Julien Dupin**

"Pretty Omphale promenading at the Arsenal. She has on a little vest with revers and two rows of buttons over a skirt trimmed in the latest taste. Her hat is *en pouf à la Luxembourg*," *Galerie des Modes*. 1787, Plate 325. Reprint from Stella Blum, *Eighteenth-Century French Fashions*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1982): 54.

Representations by other writers complicate the so-called erotic or frivolous reputation of the merchant tailor. Given the societal concerns about her, it is important to consider authors and artists who gave agency to this bourgeois businesswoman in the public sphere, that is, outside of the house. Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis featured the tailor in an education book entitled *Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes*, (*Theatre of education for young people*) (1781).<sup>89</sup> As a celebrated French novelist and

governess of the children of the Duc d'Orleans (Louis-Phillippe, the future King of France was educated by her), Genlis was an authority on education and manners. Her influence in such matters is evident in the reputation of *Théâtre* beyond France's borders. Her book was swiftly translated into English in 1781, which was the same year as its original publication. Included in her education and manner book is a one-act play entitled "La marchande de modes, comédie," which features a virtuous tailor named Madame Dupré in her shop. The play consists of tutorial conversations between Madame Dupré and her employees. She teaches her shop-girls lessons of servitude and respect for social "superiors" who also happen to be clients. Here, the moral of Genlis' story is that the *marchande de modes* is an authority of mores for the bourgeois and merchant classes, yet, she remains in the service of her aristocratic clients.

An ironic effort to recuperate the virtue of the *marchande* in the 1790's undoes Genlis' representation. Jennifer Jones cites a pamphlet titled *Etrennes aux grisettes, noms et demeure des grisettes* (1790) in which the names and addresses of milliners in Paris were listed along with notes regarding their morality. In one particular passage of the text, the eighteenth century reader would be told:

Bertrand Angélique, *marchande de modes* rue Neuve des Petits-Champs. This young lady possesses a virtue that is proof against all seduction. With a child like figure and fifteen or sixteen years old at least, she possesses a gentleness, boldness, and polish that infinitely augment her charms. All lovers are invited to try the conquest, which has already unsuccessfully been tried by a soldier.<sup>90</sup>

There is a degree of irony in the author's words, and in truth, he describes the *marchande* for future conquests as opposed to commending her for being virtuous. The passage underscores the fact that this *marchande* was under surveillance in case her moral status should change. As long as she was virtuous, the *marchande* and her economic freedom did not threaten the destruction of a "natural" family order, although this virtue remains suspect due to the ironic tone of the pamphlet. Family, virtue, and productivity were all lessons that Ledoux evokes in his treatise when he illustrates the house for a *marchande de modes* to which I now turn.

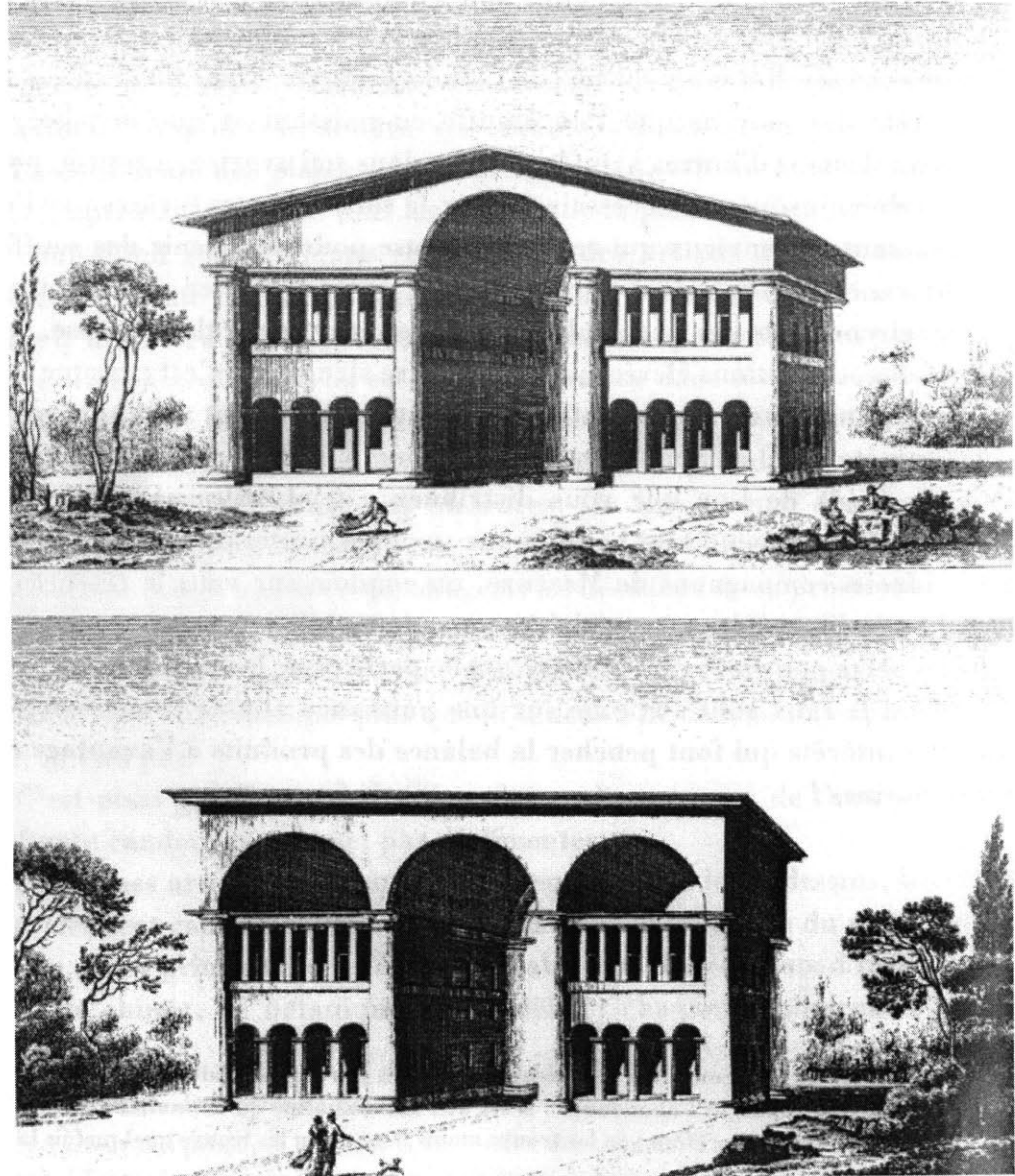
Inspired more by Rousseau's "Elysium" than Watteau's "Cythera," the perspective engraving of the *maison d'une marchande de modes*, signed by the engraver Van Maëlle, represents a house sited in a clearing surrounded by signs of productivity and leisure [Fig. 41]. An unrefined dirt road leads through the triumphal arch centered on the house facade.<sup>91</sup> In the foreground, a man pushes a wheelbarrow across the road that leads to, and through, the house. To the right of the picture, a woman sits on a rock; her figure is partially concealed by a man seated in front of her. Another man, lounging on a boulder, points towards the landscape worker with outstretched arms, while a walking stick rests on his shoulder and points towards the sky. The wheelbarrow, the walking stick, and the picturesque landscape connote labor, leisure, and virtue, respectively. We can gather from these signs that Ledoux's perspective arranges the virtue of the merchant tailor by placing her house in a morally charged landscape. This representation opposes Fragonard's *Progress of Love*, where each painting represents a couple in an erotic side-scene, and Boucher's *The Milliner*, in which seductive signs of sexuality are coded in the painting.

In plate 95, Ledoux's plans for the tailor's house are arranged above and below an elevation for the *Maison des Artistes* [Fig. 42]. The house for artisans shares its plans with the house for a *marchande de modes*. Although the perspective engravings represent both the milliner's house and the artisan's house in picturesque landscapes, the elevation of the former has no surrounding site context, whereas the latter house does. Because the two houses share plans, a reading of the elevation of the artisan's house is necessary. Using fences, Ledoux extends the house façade on both sides into the gardens.<sup>92</sup> The fences are attached to boundary walls that define a garden space between the house and the property edge.<sup>93</sup> An exposed foundation aligns with the fence and boundary wall to effectively root the building in the natural landscape. This design strategy appears to coincide with a romanticist conception of nature. In an unprecedented bold effort to literally bring nature inside, Ledoux includes a raised garden on the third floor.

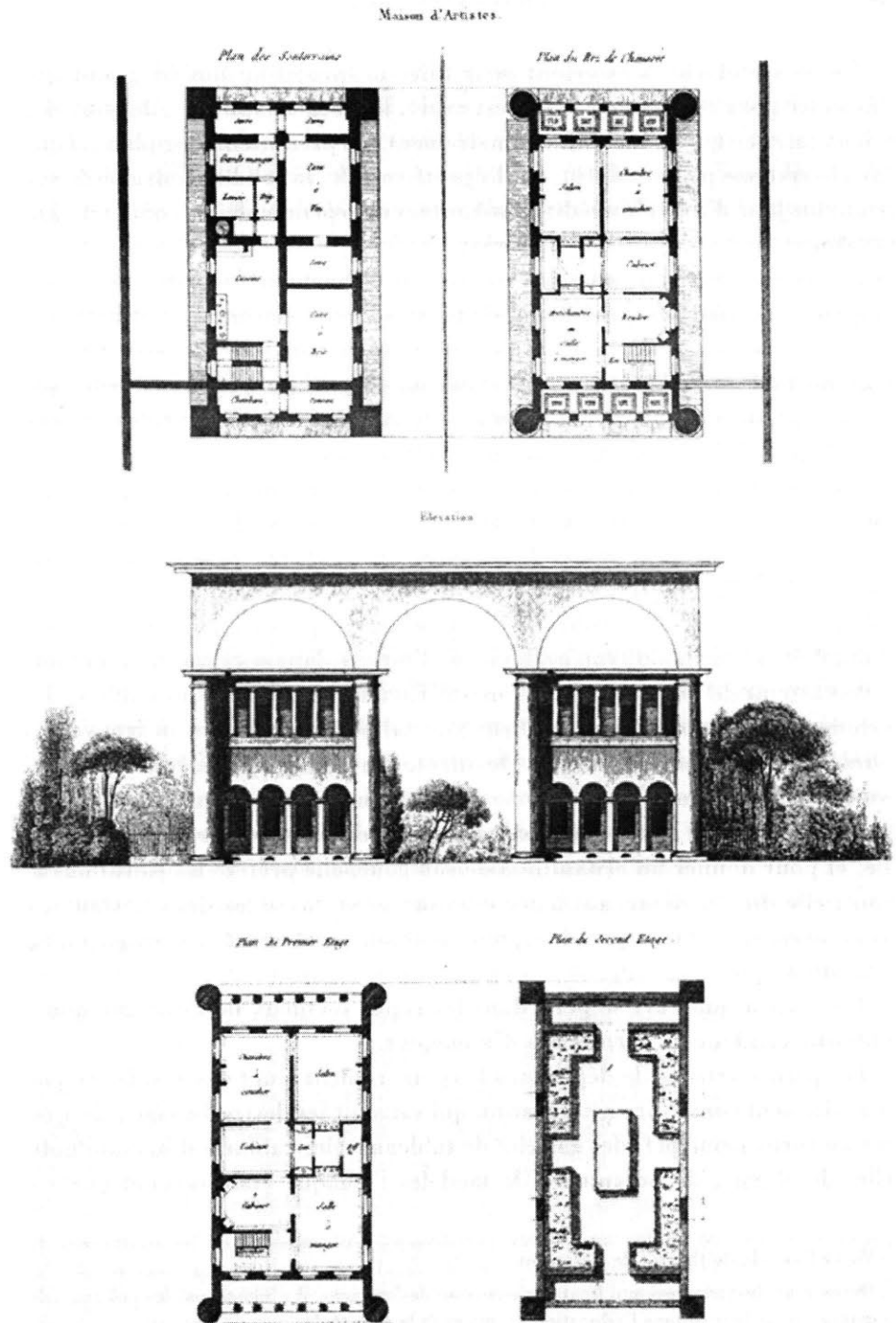
VUE PERSPECTIVE  
DES MAISONS DÉSIGNÉES SOUS LES N<sup>os</sup> 94 ET 95

(PLANCHE 96)

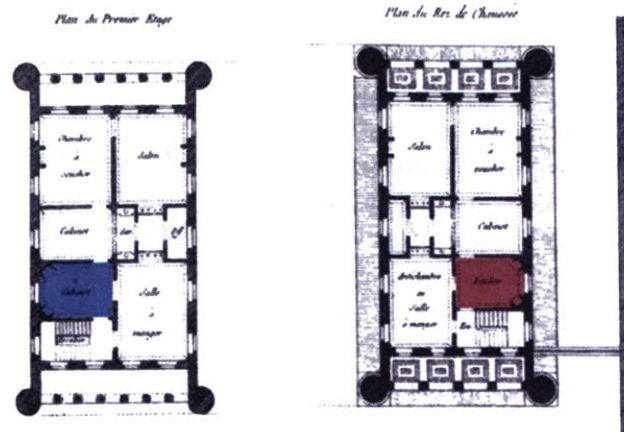
Vues Perspectives



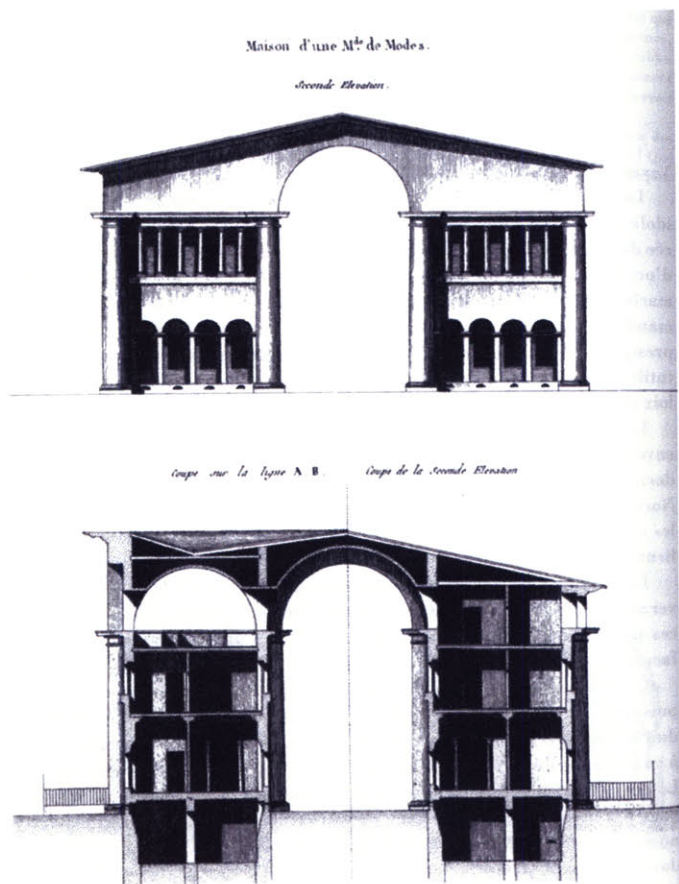
**Figure 41** Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)  
“Perspective View,” house for a marchande de modes, Plate 96, *Architecture considered in relation to Art, Mores and Legislation*, (Paris, Chez l'auteur, de l'Impr. de L. H. Perronneau, 1804).



**Figure 42 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Plans and Elevation, house for a *marchande de modes* and artisans, Plate 95, *Architecture considered in relation to Art, Mores and Legislation*, (Paris, Chez l'auteur, de l'Impr. de L. H. Perronneau, 1804).



**Figure 43 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Plan Detail, [color added] “House for a marchande de modes,” *Architecture considered in relation to Art, Mores and Legislation*, (Paris, Chez l’auteur, de l’Impr. de L. H. Perronneau, 1804).



**Figure 44 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Elevation and Section, “House for a marchande de modes,” Plate 94, *Architecture considered in relation to Art, Mores and Legislation*, (Paris, Chez l’auteur, de l’Impr. de L. H. Perronneau, 1804).



Each floor plan – the ground floor, first floor and basement – is divided in half in the long direction and into thirds in the short in order to delineate seven different rooms. The left half of the ground plan is broken down into an enfilade of three rooms: a dining room, entry space and salon. The right half mirrors the proportions of the left and is composed of a stair and boudoir adjacent to the dining room, a cabinet next to the entrance, and a formal bedroom next to the salon. Loggias at each end decorated with symmetrical floor paving patterns, suggests that the house has two identical façades. As noted, the primary entry into the house is located not on one of the primary façades, but underneath the grand arch in the center of the plan. This entry space separates the salon from the dining room. Both the ground and first floor are composed of an apartment. These stacked apartments are identical in plan, aside from the boudoir on the first floor, which is renamed “cabinet” on the second. This semantic difference indicates that Ledoux sexed the two floors, because an apartment with a boudoir suggests that it was for a woman, the *marchande de modes* [Fig. 43].

In elevation, the merchant tailor’s house is broken down into three parts [Fig. 44]. More specifically, the house is actually composed of two buildings that are separated by a grand arch of almost equal width and scale. The plans that Ledoux provides are for two residences connected by the arch. A giant pitched roof attaches the two pavilions and creates a single monumental arch. Two columns placed at each end of the façade create compositional consistency between the two halves. These oversized columns rise above the second floor ceiling and support the three-story arch that covers the road. The project is sutured together under a pitched roof and reads like a triumphal arch of domesticity. Instead of leading into a monumental public square or providing entry into a city, the arch frames a path that leads to the primary entrance on the side of the house. The arch is a monumental threshold into virtuous domestic life, and a frame for the picturesque landscape beyond that is defined by a periphery of trees.

Each of the two buildings, divided by the covered archway of an almost similar width, has a façade articulated with a ground level portico composed of three square columns and two engaged columns attached to the outer walls that support four archways. The second floor piano nobile is represented on the façade elevation by a loggia, screened

by six fluted Doric columns. The interior section is simple and undecorated, except for a pair of Corinthian fluted columns in the anti-chamber, or salon.<sup>94</sup>

In the body of the text that accompanies these engravings Ledoux construes fashion to be a women's work as well as her vice. Listen to the "real" architect illustrate the danger of fashion influencing mores:

Fashion is a tax which Love and Hymen pay with Whim; this idol has a hundred heads; in one cut down fifty reproduce; surrounded by tempting prestige, connected with garlands of flowers, glaze of gold, diamonds, pearls; slave of luxury, if it is the despair of husbands, it is almost always the hope of lovers. Fashion, which orders nations, is so widespread on the French continent, that it makes almost all the expenses of the thoughts of these pleasant people: this art appears futile, however it gathers around it those which control and dictate laws from one pole to another.<sup>95</sup>

Ledoux personifies *la mode* as Hydra in order to symbolize the trade as materialistic and corrupt.<sup>96</sup> He conflates the monstrous idol with Medusa while insinuating that the "petrifying influence" of *la mode*, which can serve well to seduce a lover, is but "the despair of husbands."<sup>97</sup> Consequently, the hybrid – specifically female – deity, supported by merchants such as the *marchande de modes*, corrupts the institution of family and marriage. Ledoux underscores the power of fashion in the formulation of social etiquette, by emphatically stating that it attracts influential people who are able to "control and dictate laws." While recognizing the influence that the milliner has over public consumption, Ledoux – impersonating Perseus – attempts to decapitate Medusa once and for all in order to affix virtue to fashion.<sup>98</sup> In an address to the *marchande de modes*, he suggests a revision of her occupation:

...you hold in your hands a reverie scepter, the only one which is with the shelter of the revolutions; it orders with the ground and will organize, for arts, a new world which will owe you all his splendor... While soliciting your help, enchanted sex, to propagate the taste of the arts, I will subject to your sensitivity

the house of the poor, and so much of other buildings neglected by scornful Architecture.<sup>99</sup>

Ledoux instructs the *marchande* to join him in popularizing both a new artistic taste and compassionate assistance of the poor.

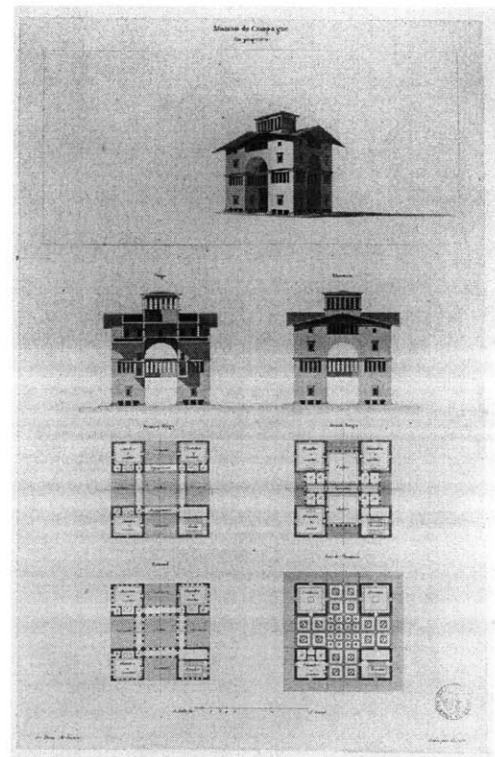
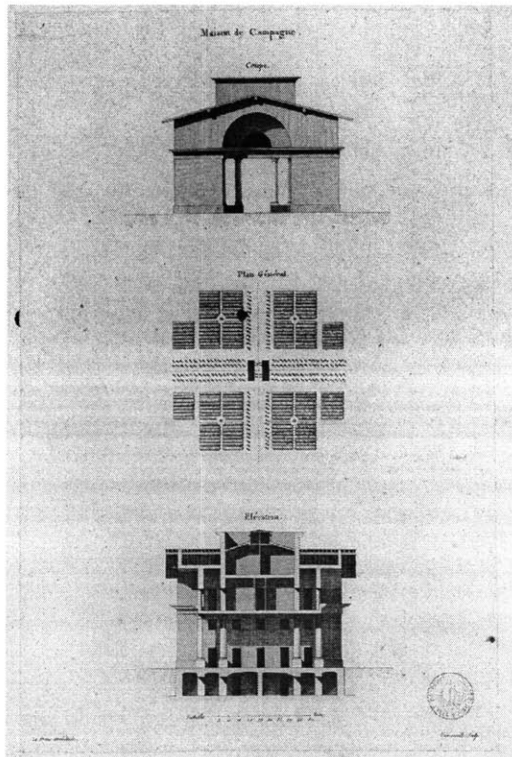
Ledoux's house has formal similarities to the grand arch and oversized pilasters that frame the entry to Leon Battista Alberti's (1404-1472) church, S. Andrea (1470-76) in Mantua, Italy, or the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus in the Forum Romanum. Yet, instead of honoring the church and its patron as Alberti had done, or commemorating successful war conquests as Severus had done, Ledoux pays tribute to the cult of the family. Consequently, his façade celebrates a workingwoman who has supposedly shed the decadence of her earlier life of *la mode* for a role as wife and mother. By returning to the home, Ledoux suggests that she can work to restore mores in the city of Chaux.<sup>100</sup>

Although the house for a *marchande de modes* stands out in Ledoux's treatise as one of two projects that transformed the triumphal arch into a domestic house, he actually produced a large number of projects that were variations on the theme of triumphal arch for his *maison de campagnes* typology. Most of these projects remained in the *Cabinet des Estampes* in Paris until historian Michel Gallet published them in 1992.<sup>101</sup> A brief discussion of three *maison de campagne* projects, which range in complexity, will underscore the significance of the house for a *marchande de modes* as the exemplar of the typology. Also, because Van Malle – the same engraver of the house for a *marchande de modes* – signed these engravings as well, it is probable that these projects were all developed during the same period of time in the mid-to late 1780's.

The first *maison de campagne* engraving is represented at the intersection of four *allées*, which quarter the site into four garden-plots [Fig. 45]. The house is split into two enclosures that read as long rectangular piers by a grand triumphal arch. On the ground floor, the piers are planned as enfilades that each includes a kitchen, washroom, carriage space, meat pantry, porter's space and a grand stair. Above, at the piano-nobile, the two piers are planned as enfilades composed of an anti-chamber, dining room, cabinet and a salon. A pediment cuts across the façade, creating a flat ceiling for the "covered court"

beneath the archway, supported by eight oversized columns and an additional eight pilasters. Above this flat roofed court, at the second floor level, the rectangular piers are planned as private apartments dedicated to a “Mister” and a “Madam.” Here, the two piers are connected by a cruciform shaped passage that splits the space in between into quarters: consisting of two toilets and two chambers for “domestics.”

In another triumphal arch *maison de campagne* project, Ledoux uses bi-axial symmetry to divide his plan into four quarters [Fig. 46]. Like Bastide’s *petite maison*, Ledoux includes a Dairy in his country house, except, instead of representing it as a separate building on the estate as the former had, Ledoux includes it inside of one of the arch piers on the ground floor of his country house. Ledoux organizes a farm program within the building envelope of his country house. In plan, across the court in the upper right pier, Ledoux writes “Fruitier” to suggest that this space also has a utilitarian purpose as a space for storing and selling fruit. In the lower left pier, he designs a bedroom attached to two dressing rooms, and in the lower right pier, he sites a grand stair. Above, at the mezzanine, a loggia spans the arch and forms a square envelope around a salon. The loggia connects the four piers together, which are all programmed as formal bedrooms, except for one at the lower right of the plan that is reserved for the grand stair. On the first floor above, the flat roof of the loggia provides a passage that accesses the three bedrooms sited inside of the piers. At the piano nobile, or second floor level located above the arch, are two salons divided by a corridor. Again, three-square bedrooms are arranged inside of the piers. In total, Ledoux designed ten formal bedrooms in this *maison de campagne*. What makes this house different from the others so far discussed, besides the inclusion of a dairy, is that Ledoux eliminates the enfilade style apartment, and replaces it with a cell that consists of a bedroom and dressing room. This *maison de campagne* appears to change the social structure of the house, by creating communal salon space accessible to the three bedrooms on each floor. This is opposed to the apartment plan, which was traditionally a series of private spaces that included a salon and a dining room. Such apartment planning separated residents from each other. This project illustrates the development of a house typology in which the deeply private formal bedrooms are arranged around communal space.



Left, **Figure 45 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**

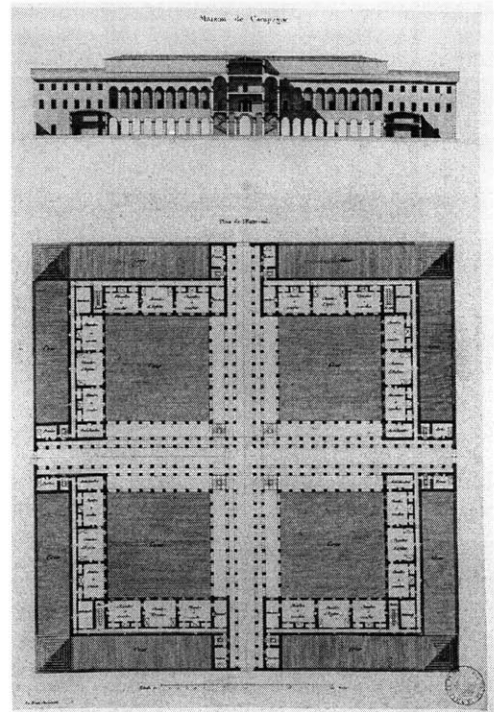
“Maison de Campagne,” Plate 47, Reprinted From *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux Unpublished Projects* (1991; Paris: Ernst & Sohn, 1992).

Right, **Figure 46 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**

“Maison de Campagne,” Plate 51, Reprinted From *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux Unpublished Projects* (1991; Paris: Ernst & Sohn, 1992).

In the final triumphal arch *maison de campagne* that I will now discuss, Ledoux designs a monumental institution more akin to a monastery than a country house [Fig. 47]. The immense scale of the project dwarfs the triumphal arch located on the center of the façade. In plan, a square shaped plinth elevates the ground floor. A cruciform shaped covered passage quarters the project, and the quarters each form an interior court, bordered on the two interior sides by a hypostyle hall. An enclosed enfilade of spaces of single room width creates an envelope around the four courts. These spaces that surround each court on the ground floor are dedicated to functions such as a *lavoir* for washing crockery, a *buanderie* for washing clothes, and a kitchen. The first floor is composed of a cruciform shaped enclosure that intersects at a grand court with stairs at each corner. This cruciform plan mirrors the covered passage at the ground floor below.

In plan, the vertical bar that extends in opposite directions from the court is an enfilade consisting of an anti-chamber, dining room, small salon, and culminates in an apartment composed of a grand salon formal bedroom, boudoir, toilette and two private stairs. At the left and right of the center court is another enfilade composed of a grand gallery, and another apartment with a grand salon, bedroom, boudoir, toilette and two stairs. The mezzanine level above replicates the planning of the ground floor, with a square building envelope surrounding four inner courts divided by a cruciform shaped gallery. Here, in the plan, Ledoux lists nothing less than sixteen bedrooms that alternate with eight children's rooms. At its most complex, *maison de campagne* is institutionalized by Ledoux, and appears to have more in common with his monastery-cum brothel project titled Oikèma, which I will discuss in the next chapter. The house for a *marchande de modes*, as a *maison de campagne*, is one step in Ledoux's process of not only embodying sexuality, but also institutionalizing it in his architecture.



**Figure 47 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
“Maison de Campagne,” Plate 90, Reprinted From *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux Unpublished Projects* (1991; Paris: Ernst & Sohn, 1992).

Together, these projects describe the functional and economical development of Ledoux's country house typology. The house for a *marchande de modes*, is significant not only because it is one of two triumphal arch projects included in his treatise, but because it illustrates his conception of ordering human behavior in such a specific manner, that those woman who's lives extended outside the sphere of domesticity disrupted his social order and required spatial reclassification back inside his virtuous *maison de campagne*. In order to tie women's productivity to the home, Ledoux needed to shift women of authority out of the public sphere. Ledoux writes,

The Arts borrow all their glare from you: if the gallery of Apollo likes so much all the exerted eyes, it is that love is seen everywhere that you inspire... you hold in your hands a *révéré sceptre*... it orders the land and will organize, for the arts, a new world which will owe you all his splendor. After having regenerated...the tender kids entrusted to your care, after having inserted in their education first knowledge which will make them capable to direct their choices, accustomed to see the graces reflecting itself in your mirrors, you will necessarily take the ideas of the beautiful, the perfect ones; you will communicate them, you will generalize them, by binding them to the system which will go of an equal step with the public utility.<sup>102</sup>

In this project for a *marchande de modes*, Ledoux comes close to Laugier's "*cabane rustique*," where columns support each corner of the project, which is topped with a pitched roof that provides both shelter for the house, and a public space underneath its arch for the protection of the public, whether they be the poor that Ledoux beckons the *marchande* to embrace, or the shepherd which is part of the rhetoric of his perspective views. What results from the development of an architecture typology for the country house is the confiscation of the tailor's agency in the public sphere. By the time Ledoux publishes his treatise, the *maison de campagne* is firmly moralized. The country house is recuperated from a decadent house for a courtesan and redesigned for the virtuous seller of *useful* luxury and priestesses of the poor.<sup>103</sup>

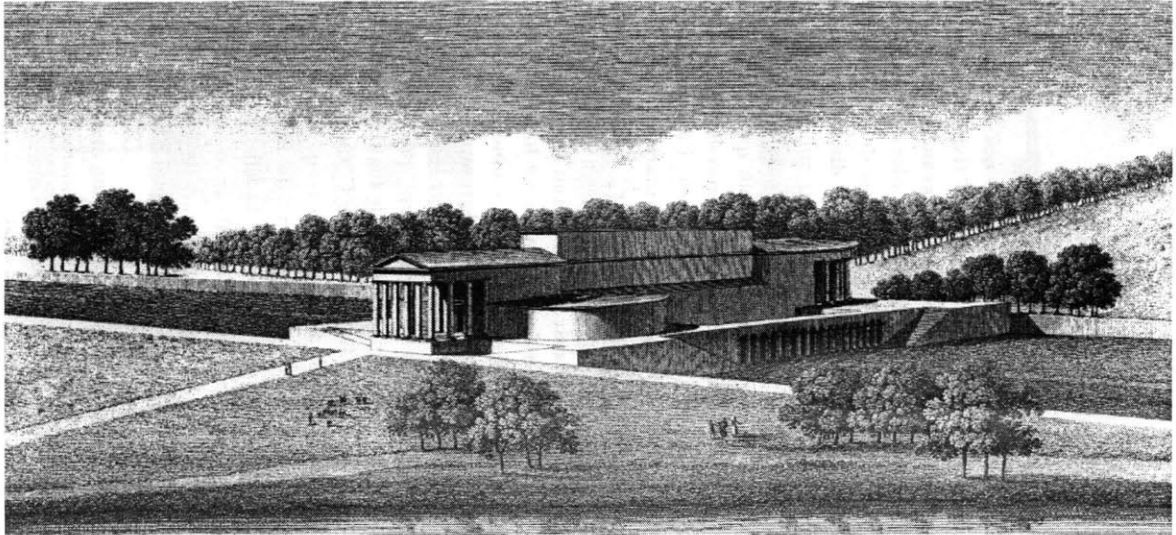
### ***Institutionalized Pleasure: Oikèma***

Moralists who announced the benefits of productive country living and libertines who published in writing the carnal desires of human nature helped to create the contested value of pleasure connoted by the *petite maison*. The literary and architectural examples of the little house provided thus far suggest that the conflicting concepts that lend it meaning had great influence on the development of domestic space as well as architectural syntax. By 1790, Ledoux had conflated these opposing values of pleasure in his design for a hybrid institution, a monastery cum brothel that elaborately ordered the sexual exploits and social mores of the young male population at his ideal city of Chaux. The project was named Oikèma [Fig. 48].<sup>104</sup>

Ledoux introduces Oikèma at the beginning of his treatise *L'Architecture considérée* long before he presents the engravings of the project when he remarks, "Seen nearby, vice does not influence less strongly the soul; by the horror that it prints on him, he is caused to react towards virtue. Oikèma presents depravity in its nudity to the ebullient and unsteady youth, which it attracts, and the feeling of the degradation of virtuous Hymen which embraces and crowns them."<sup>105</sup> The purpose of the project is to facilitate order by allowing young men to perform acts of debauchery in a seductive space *à la Bastide*. As an institution, the building structures an erotic experience and serves to exhaust the sexual will of Ledoux's male populace. When the young men weary of vice, they depart as willing participants who are ready to re-enter the ideal city of Chaux as reformed, virtuous and productive members of society.

As part of the building's debauched anatomy, the prostitute facilitated Ledoux's social agenda to a so-called meaningful end. The architecture of Oikèma presupposes that sexuality must be productive. In Ledoux's narrative only men appear to tire of vice, leave Oikèma, and join in the social contract. The social legitimacy of sexuality, inside or outside of this institution's walls, was conditional upon its productive and reproductive yield in relation to, marriage, family and the nation. Consequently, Ledoux considered the wife and the prostitute's sexuality in his development of the country house.





**Figure 48 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 “Perspective View,” Engraving, Plate 103, *Architecture considered...* (Paris, L. H. Perronneau, 1804).

Given the importance of the meaning of language in the formation of architecture that I have stressed thus far, a few words about the etymology of Oikèma are necessary. Oikèma is a word borrowed from the Greek term *Oiâkhma*, meaning a dwelling place or habitation. However, this is not its only definition, as Oikèma can also mean cell or prison. In classical Greek, *oikos* was generally used to identify an estate. Ledoux conflates all of these meanings – dwelling, cell, prison and estate – in order manage sexuality through space with the desired result of guiding human behavior.

In an overt reference to Rousseau’s social contract as well as in an attempt to bolster the reputation of Oikèma, Ledoux writes, “Indeed, why don't the ideas which seem more to move away from the goal where one wants to arrive, make more progress? ... delivered to the improvement of the *social pact*, they have a policy rather than a legislation; they control by *manners*, and the base of their code is *purity* [emphasis added].”<sup>106</sup> The text suggests that by controlling sexuality through architecture, it can be rendered virtuous and “pure.” Ledoux’s own rules of poetic diction define Oikèma as much more than a place of habitation; it was a place for the education of young men. More specifically, it housed their sexual education and pleasure. In his vision, “Hymen and Love will conclude a treaty which must purify the public mores and make man

happier; Hymen goes down from the top of Olympus surrounded by the celestial powers; he advances, torch in hand, he is crowned with roses, avoids the most beautiful colors, all laugh around him, all burst with joy....”<sup>107</sup> Man’s happiness – according to Ledoux – depends on the legal institution of marriage, which when coupled with Love, will ameliorate public manners.

In *L'Architecture considérée*, a perspective engraving by Coquet et Bovinet of the project in a landscape surrounded by pastoral signs suggests that Oikèma is in Arcadia [Fig. 48].<sup>108</sup> Although it is located at the junction of two roads, it is not a privileged point of intersection in the community. Instead of the building being integrated with the road, the temple front porch interrupts it. The surrounding landscape is cleared and scattered with small clusters of trees.<sup>109</sup> In the foreground two men and a woman stroll along a meandering path. Two figures gesture towards Oikèma with raised arms while a smaller man with a walking stick listens, motioning towards the couple. To their left, a shepherd holding a walking stick tends to his flock, while three other figures approach the building.

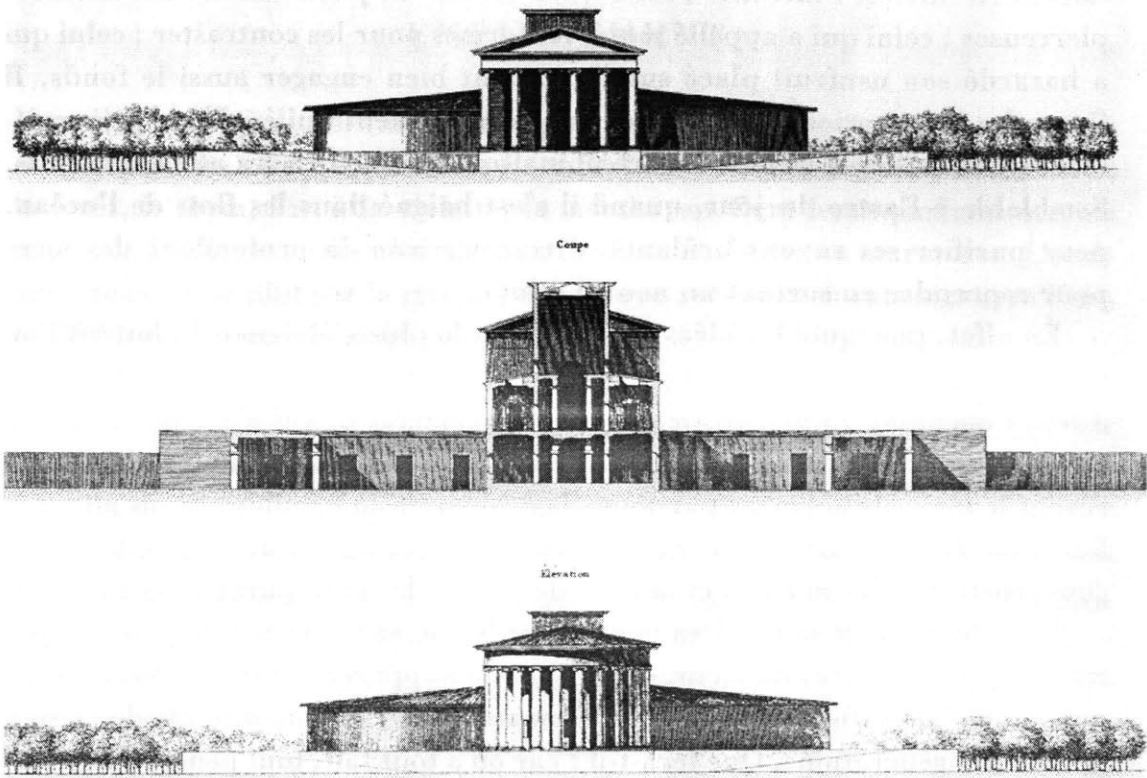
The body of the text describes this Arcadia as an intoxicating landscape, “It is sited in a “small valley... surrounded by tempting prestige; a soft wind cherishes the atmosphere; the odoriferous varieties of the forest, thyme, iris, violet, mint blow their perfumes on these walls....”<sup>110</sup> Ledoux’s prose refers to an environment where multiple faculties are stimulated by the nature of the site.<sup>111</sup> By recording his state of delirium that was presumably induced by the site description, he continues, “Where am I? The flash of pleasure springs, and the empire of pleasure controls these places full with charms to the dawn of desire, which extends its rays on a preferred ground... Oh! I do not doubt it anymore, it is there where the pleasures promised by Mahomet fixed their stay.”<sup>112</sup> Here, even the architect’s imagination is swept away – and seduced – by the charms of architecture. In an orientalist tone he suggests that Oikèma is the paradise of the afterlife. Yet, in such a paradise inhabited by shepherds and families, he can transcend death and return to tell his tales of pleasure. Oikèma’s external appearance may connote Arcadia, but its interior conflated Venus’ obscene island of Cythera with the Elysian Fields of the underworld.

The same Island of Cythera that became a sign for prostitution is represented as a phallic shaped house for prostitutes. As the prostitute’s body is conflated with the space

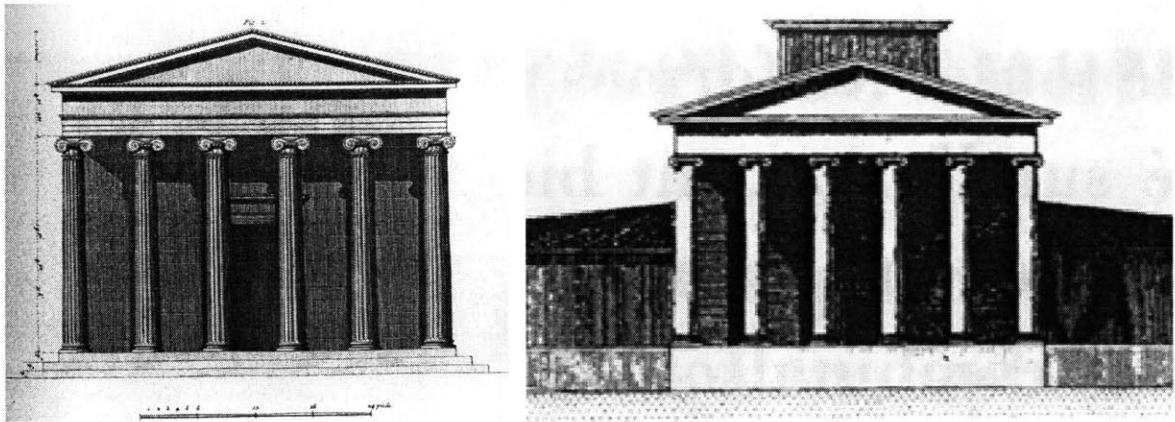
the architecture is referred to simply as a pleasing “charms,” effectively effacing her body, voice, and name from the project. The so-called “cells” in which the prostitutes reside are the sole representations of their presence.<sup>113</sup>

The front façade of Oikèma is celebrated with a sober Temple front [Fig. 49]. Six Ionic columns support an entablature and pediment devoid of bas-reliefs or other ornamentation, most likely because the project could not be represented by ornamentation that described eroticism. In fact, it is the absence of ornament on the smooth exterior walls that discloses the explicit “nature” of Oikèma.

One precedent for Ledoux’s façade composed of a *prostyle* porch is Julien David LeRoy’s engravings of the Erechtheum (“Erictheus”) on the Acropolis in Athens from his book entitled *Ruins of Athens, with remains and other valuable antiquities in Greece* (1758) [Fig. 50]. The north *prostyle* porch of the Erechtheum is composed of six Ionic columns, similar to Ledoux’s façade at Oikéma.<sup>114</sup> In his study of the Acropolis, LeRoy focused on the documentation of ancient architectural proportions, decorum, and systems in order to determine its influence on the history of architecture.<sup>115</sup> Pursuing this agenda, he provided a comprehensive study of ancient Greek ruins “In order to facilitate the Attainment of which [Art and Architecture], we have laid down a general and universal Method of ascertaining, with the greatest Ease and Accuracy, the true Proportions known to the Ancients, by Models and Minutes; which method, if well attended to, will greatly assist the Designer.”<sup>116</sup> The book was a significant contribution to eighteenth century architectural theory and fueled the contemporary Greco-Roman debate. LeRoy, of course favored the Ancient Greek architectural legacy narrative and declared that the “Greeks invented the art of building.”<sup>117</sup>



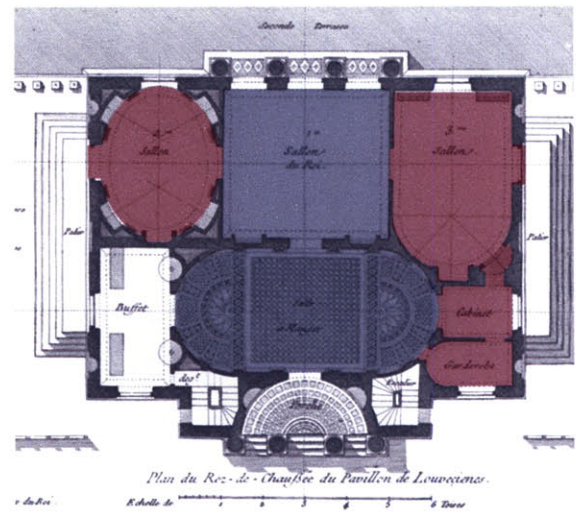
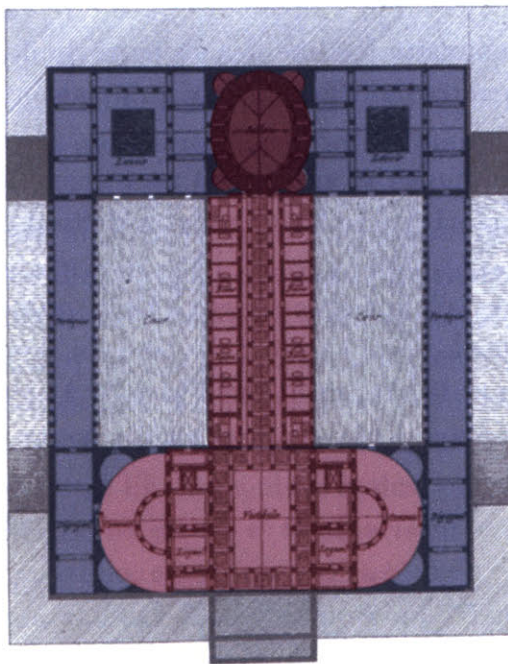
**Figure 49 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 (top to bottom) “Front Elevation,” “Section,” “Back Elevation,” Engraving, Plate 104, Reprinted from *L'Architecture considérée...* (Paris, L. H. Perronneau, 1804).



**Figure 50 Julien David LeRoy; Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
 Left, Erechtheum, 1758, engraving, Reprinted from *The Ruins of the Most Beautiful Mounments of Greece* (trans. David Britt (1770; Los Angeles; Getty Research Institute, 2004); right, Oikèma, Reprinted from *L'Architecture considérée...* (Paris, L. H. Perronneau, 1804).

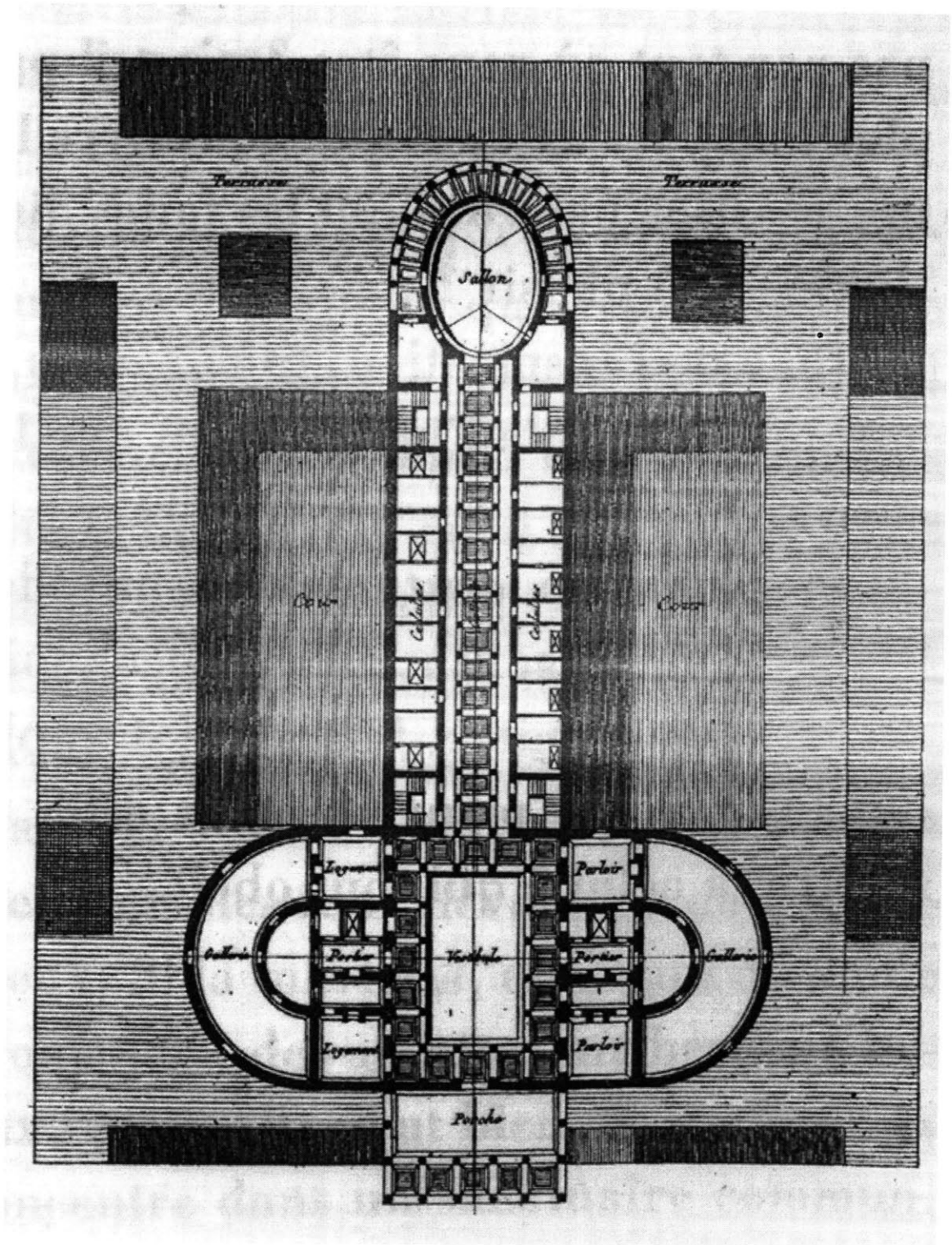
LeRoy's genders the Ionic columns at the Temple of Minerva Polias at the Erechtheum by suggesting that "As is known, the Ionians intended its slender columns to imitate the delicacy of the female form; the apt design of its entablature made it capable of the greatest variety, and the Greek architects took full advantage of the opportunities that it offered to vary spacing of their columns at will."<sup>118</sup> He also stresses the significant difference between Roman Ionic column bases mounted on plinths and the Greek Ionic column bases absent of plinths that rested directly on building foundations. Similarly, the Ionic columns at Oikèma stand on the building's foundations.

Ledoux's phallic plan has often been the primary focus of scholarship about Oikèma.<sup>119</sup> While exploring the relationship between sexuality and the public sphere, the moral philosophical emphasis on productive sexuality, the construction of gender difference, and the public role of virtue have been greatly emphasized. What have been sidelined in such analytical projects are the architectural precedents that Ledoux draws upon in the design of Oikèma, as well as the relationship that such an institutional monastery cum brothel had with the country house. Oikèma, as we shall see, was one variation of Ledoux's rustic house architectural type. The brothel can also be seen as an attempt to resolve the ambiguous meaning of the *petite maison* because it takes advantage of the terminological confusions associated with it by interpreting debauchery as a productive activity for the body politic. By combining different architectural types – the monastery, the Greek temple, and the basilica – Ledoux "resolved" the opposed meanings of virtue and vice, leisure and labor, masculinity and femininity beneath a mask of productive virtue. In fact, Ledoux's plan at Oikèma is a complete formal reversal of the pavilion at Louveciennes. Opposed to the pavilion plan that asserted Madame du Barry's control of monarchical power by surrounding King's square salon with curvilinear spaces that she controlled, a raised square shaped plinth creates an enclosure around the curvilinear phallus inhabited by prostitutes and locks it in its place [Fig. 51].

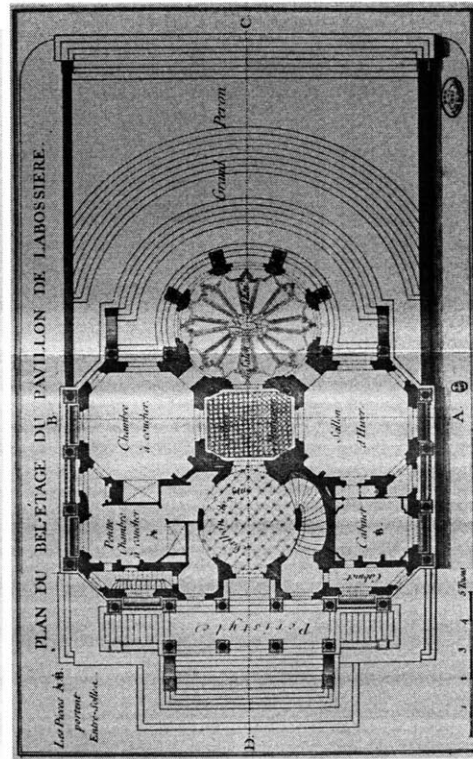
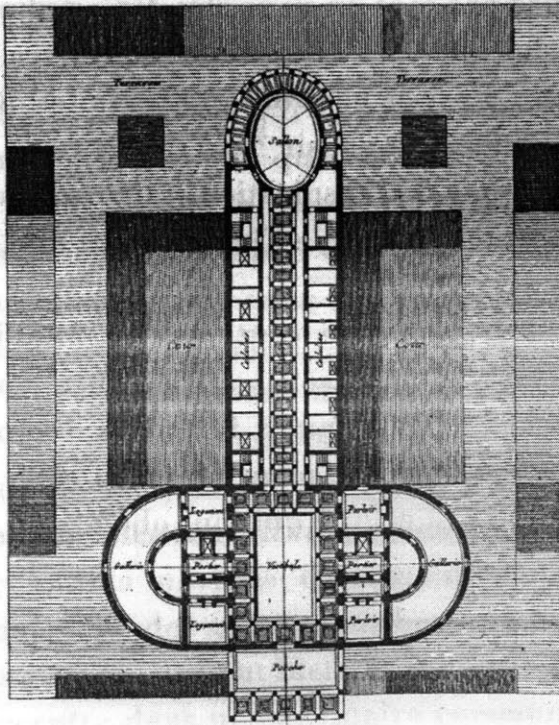


**Figure 51 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux**

Diagram Plans [color added for emphasis], Left, Basement Plan of Oikèma, Reprinted from *L'Architecture considérée...* (Paris, L. H. Perronneau, 1804); right Ground Floor Plan of the pavilion at Louveciennes Reprinted from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux*, (New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1984), Plate 270.



**Figure 52 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux**  
 Ground Floor Plan, Oikèma, plate 104, Engraving, Reprinted from *Architecture considérée...*  
 (Paris, L. H. Perronneau, 1804).



**Figure 53** Claude-Nicolas Ledoux; Mathieu Le Carpentier

Left, Ground Floor Plan of Oikèma, see figure 52 for reprint information; right, Ground Floor Plan of the *pavillon de la Boissière*, see figure 5 for reprint information.

Ledoux's plans for Oikèma borrow from a number of precedents including the Le Carpentier's *petite maison*, the basilica, and the monastery. In plan, a long shaft forms the central axis and culminates with an oval salon at the tip of the phallus [Fig. 52]. The oval salon that once served as the transition between interior and terrace at Le Carpentier's pavillon de la Boissière (1751) was employed by Ledoux as the culminating apse in his own pleasure basilica close to half a century later [Fig. 53]. Ledoux adopted the architectural language of basilicas – a nave, a transept, side aisles and an apse – in order to design his institutionalized country house. The Ancient Greek architectural syntax is undeniably employed at Oikèma, evidenced by its temple front. Yet, the plan and section that draws on the architectural language of basilicas, which is important to note considering that before the Christian Church borrowed the Roman basilica plan for religious purposes it served as public space, a large meeting hall, or courthouse [Fig. 49].



Opposed to traditional basilica planning where the lateral transept is located in between the apse and nave, in Ledoux's phallic plan for Oikèma the transept is placed directly behind the Temple front. This transept, completed at each end with semicircular galleries similar in form to the dining room of the pavilion at Louveciennes, forms the testis of the phallus.

At the intersection of the shaft and transept is a rectangular cloister labeled "vestibule." To the right and left of the vestibule are spaces reserved for gatekeepers (*portiers*). Flanking the gatekeeper's cell to the left of the vestibule are lodgings, and to the right are visiting rooms (*parloir*).<sup>120</sup> Beyond the visiting rooms to the right, and lodgings to the left are galleries. Staircases flanking the series of cells at the beginning and end of the shaft descend into the basement where communal programs, such including laundry pools, are sited around two open courts with peristyles on the exterior wall that function as thresholds between the landscape and the building interior. At the basement floor, the testis shaped space is reserved for communal activities and the central gallery in the shaft cleaves two rows of bathroom cells in two.<sup>121</sup>

Skylights located at the center of the pitched roof light a grand nave entitled "gallery" in the engraving; this gallery is an interpretation of a traditional nave that provides access to the side aisle cell bedrooms. Lean-to aisles composed of small cells (*cellulies*) that double as private bedrooms and workspaces for prostitution flank the gallery. The cells to the left of the gallery are composed of semi private antechambers, and large private rooms divided into two spaces by a screen of two Ionic columns and two pilasters; hanging behind the columns are fabric draperies that frame the bed beyond.<sup>122</sup> This grand "cell" is contrasted in the plan with the cells across the gallery, lining the right wall, which are planned with a semiprivate antechamber and a room with a bed that lacks any decorative columns, drapes, and ceremony.<sup>123</sup> Such spatial distinctions allude to class and economic distinctions that differentiate the prostitutes at Oikèma.

Ledoux's sectional engraving, which is cut through the *cellulies* and double height gallery space, illustrates a day lighting solution for the cells of Oikèma that does not appear in the insular perspective view of the project that describes smooth windowless wall surfaces.<sup>124</sup> He resolves the lack of daylight in the cells by introducing skylights,

similar to that illuminating the grand gallery. The windowless, private cell also implies Ledoux's reserve in not eroticizing the brothel for voyeurs. This is an important shift away from the narrator voyeur character common in erotic novels who claimed to capture and relay erotic scenes from under the bed, beyond the window, or from a peephole inside a closet, to name a few scenarios. Ledoux discusses the skylight as a strategy for structuring natural light in a *maison de campagne* project for *mecanicien*, an erudite scholar scientist.<sup>125</sup> He suggests that in the *cabinet retire* where one "withdraws" from the distractions of domestic affairs, "... it is necessary to light it from the top, so that thought is not distracted by external objects."<sup>126</sup> At Oikéma, the same skylight that is employed to keep distractions out also conceals them within. He writes, "These quiet walls hide agitations inside; it is there where one gives up oneself with the torrent of vain joy which involves destruction. The circles of the atmosphere accumulate their colors on my passage, and I cross a people of illusions...in the center one notices a tripod found in the ruins of the Venus temple; its flame rises in a pyramid."<sup>127</sup> By referring to spaces of pleasure as disordered, Ledoux borrows from the concept of *beau désordre*, or beautiful disarray, which the historian Mary Sheriff suggests is the ultimate sign of eroticism in the boudoir paintings by Boucher and Fragonard.<sup>128</sup> Within the disordered milieu of eroticism, Ledoux is forced to design architectural solutions that "hide agitations." His response was to design using neoclassical "quiet walls."

The terms *cellulies*, *parloirs*, and *portiers* inscribed into his plans are all common names for spaces found in Monasteries.<sup>129</sup> Because the Monastery was the primary place of education for girls, Ledoux's architectural language alludes to Oikéma as a school and prison for women. That Ledoux borrows from the architectural language of monasteries is significant, because the institution had been the subject of elite moral debate.

The historian Lester Gilbert Krakeur suggests in his research concerning Madame de Genlis – the author and educator of manners – that the late-eighteenth century attack on the convent was criticized in four primary registers.<sup>130</sup> First, Krakeur points out that forced entry of a woman into a convent, usually done to increase the marriage dowry of a sister, came to be considered abusive.<sup>131</sup> Second, he notes the rampant rumors regarding vice and immoral behavior that were thought to corrupt life in the convent.<sup>132</sup> Third, he notes Genlis' critique that sheltered education did not prepare women for "real" life.<sup>133</sup>

Fourth, Krakeur suggests that many critics, including Genlis and *philosophes* such as Diderot, believed that pedagogy in the monastery was obsolete.<sup>134</sup> He writes that when all monastic orders were closed in 1790 with no alternative schools established in their place, Genlis began to advocate that they be maintained. By 1802 there were sixty-two illegal convents for education operational in Paris, and by 1810 they were legalized.<sup>135</sup> That the monastery was under attack for being a space that gave rise to vice and debauchery made it the perfect architectural language after which to model Oikèma. As a space for sexual instruction and so-called immoral behavior, designed for the good of the family, city, and nation, Oikèma borrowed from the educational and licentious connotations that the monastery evoked.

Oikèma was a compositional balancing act between a phallic plan, used to create and sequence different stages of pleasure referred to as “agitations,” and a Neoclassical façade. He suggests that,

Horace relates that the austere Plato noticing a young man of his knowledge under these porticos, advances towards him, and says, while embracing: young good man, you are not therefore the corruptor of the women of your friends. In a time where the domestic mores are lost, which lesson! a young man hides himself for going to see the courtesans.<sup>136</sup>

Quoting classical Greek philosophers, Ledoux emphasizes the lessons he hopes men will learn at Oikèma. Specifically, agitations instigating vice would be so abundant that overindulgence would generate a distaste and even embarrassment for such pleasures and rendezvous with courtesans. Distaste, would in turn, lead the citizen towards the path of marriage and a “fruitful” bourgeois family unit.

Even though Ledoux suggests that a visit to a prostitute could be interpreted as an embarrassment, in this cultural milieu, prostitution was considered an economically necessary occupation at the time due to unequal woman’s rights, female poverty, and unemployment in a society with very strict rules regarding welfare support.<sup>137</sup> It was rumored that a favorite pastime of Louis XV and his mistress Mme de Pompadour was the reading of police records that documented in detail the sexual activities of prostitutes

with numerous Parisians from a spectrum of social classes as told to police inspectors by brothel madams. Monarchical voyeurism of the public records of prostitution (whether truth or fiction) placed emphasis on the story of the prostitute as a literary form of entertainment.<sup>138</sup> While it commonly employed the “prostitute’s voice” as a narrative device, literature about the life of the prostitute, sexuality and the detailing of sexual encounters came to be considered as a type of writing about social mores.<sup>139</sup> Writing about sexuality had become inextricably linked to the literature of mores. The second half of the century also saw a “domestication” of prostitution that represented a fantasy of the brothel as family as a result of political health regulations created to check the spreading venereal diseases.<sup>140</sup>

At the same moment that the medico-politics of prostitution was being discussed, reading about prostitution became a literary form of entertainment. The politicization and medicalization of sexual pleasure gave police health inspectors the legal right to inspect and regulate the prostitute and the brothel, while at the same time legitimizing and legalizing the profession. Legalized, but still a scandalous enterprise, it was used to represent the Queen Marie-Antoinette in images and text as the quintessential whore of the French Enlightenment, poisoning the throne with greed, incest and venereal disease, joined by an impotent king at her side.<sup>141</sup> Paradoxically, literary descriptions about prostitutes claimed to inform societal mores, while their title and image became a sign used to deconstruct the sovereign power.<sup>142</sup> The contradiction was necessary to both undermine the authority of the Queen, and maintain an economic means for women with few other options.

Susan Conner suggests that the primary concern after the revolution for the Jacobins in the year II, was “the management of sexuality.” Prostitution complicated an understanding of sexuality as a critical component of the preservation of the family and the state.<sup>143</sup> Ordered by a political system of venereal checks and balances, *femme public* or the prostitute was subject to police raids. During raids that targeted suspect illicit houses and brothels, roundups and unauthorized medical examinations would occur. It was believed that the *citoyenne* and *citoyene* would be protected by such measures that permitted both state regulated penetration of the woman’s body, and legal authorization of prostitution as a form of employment.<sup>144</sup>

While discussing the communes and baths, Ledoux asserts the agency of the architect as the ameliorator of public conduct, for "Here the Architect is more powerful than love."<sup>145</sup> Shifting among thought experiments that include conceptions of pleasure, architecture, nature, and socio-medicine he notes,

O you! for which the gods has hastened care... only supporter of love...show us to the way that the honest man must traverse... nature proclaimed your capacity... it is from you to direct passions, to regularize them; it is from you to recall man to his first obligations... Undoubtedly you will not confuse the epilepsy of the blood which deadens the faculties, with the economy of pleasure which increases them... Indeed, when the heart is agitated by the storm, it obeys dominant vagueness... it degenerates.<sup>146</sup>

Oikèma might be a site of societal degeneration, however, man is expected to be morally good enough to recognize this, gain control of himself and direct his passions elsewhere. His passions would be channeled towards an "economy of pleasure" opposed to sensations that cause fleeting "epilepsy of the blood" which diminishes man's perceptive and productive capabilities.

Ledoux created another imagined brothel entitled *maison de plaisir* for Paris [Fig. 54]. The center of the plan borrows from the phallic plan at Oikèma, yet is it expanded with a circular enclosure. Radiating from the enclosure are twelve pavilions, and a square building envelope fortifies the entire project. Similar to Oikèma's denotation as a prison, the plan for the *maison de plaisir* evokes the panopticon of British legal scholar and theorist Jeremy Bentham (1787). Comparisons can be drawn between the *maison de plaisir* and the libertine writings of both Nicolas-Edme Rétif (or Restif de la Bretonne) (1734–1806) and Donatien Alphonse François de Sade (1740-1814) who both produced written work related to prostitution in France.

By looking at a series of sketches for a *maison de plaisir* created by Marquis de Sade, now located in Moscow at the Museum of State History, historian Alexandre Stroeve suggests a correlation between the spatial planning of sexuality by the writer and Ledoux. More specifically, Sade's sketches are plan diagrams that show his progress of

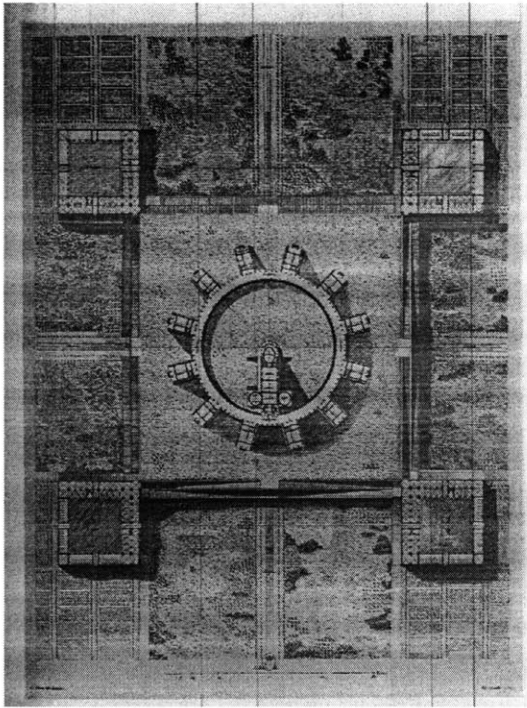
development from a labyrinthine gesture that Stroeve sees as phallic in form, into a programmatically sophisticated plan.<sup>147</sup>

The sketch that follows Sade's labyrinthine diagram represents two nested curving spaces that define an open courtyard [Fig. 55]. The outer arch contains four circles, of which two are labeled, while the inner arch is left with open ends and is split in half by a large circle. Stroeve shows that the text provides hints to Sade's program planning. Sade writes, "Here one mutilates (*estropie*)," "there one screws (*fout*)," "here one gives oneself [to murder]."<sup>148</sup> The reliance on "one" is exemplary of Sade's interest in individual (self-interested) pleasure.

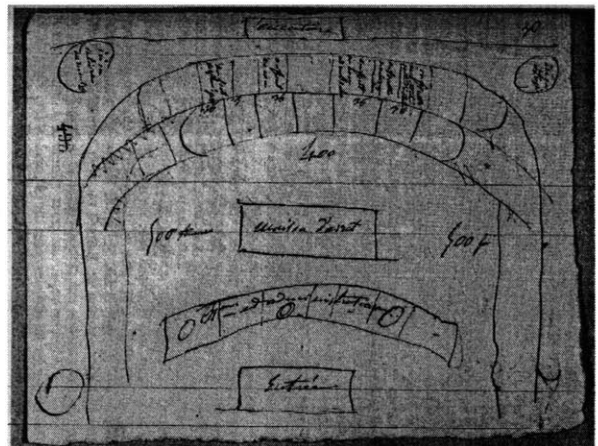
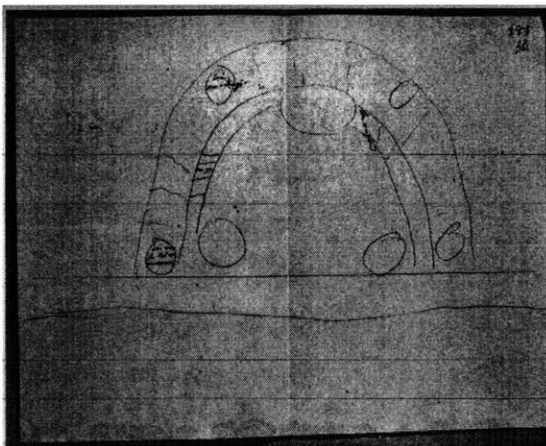
The third sketch further develops a ceremonial procession through the project, indicated with three rectangular spaces labeled "entrance" or *entreé*, "prison" or "*maison d'arret*" and finally "cemetery" or "*cimetière*" [Fig. 56].<sup>149</sup> The space represented in the third sketch, similar to Sade's other three, is diagrammatic. His use of terms combined with diagrams allows for an interpretation of his thoughts about the activities labeled in relationship to one another. In between the entrance and the prison is a long curving bar, divided into seven parts. The prison beyond it is centered in a space marked three times by the number 400, which indicates the number of people "kept" in his *maison de plaisir*. He then repeats a variation on the double arch that Stroeve suggests represents a gallery, which is divided into compartments. Five of the sections located in the inner gallery are labeled "thirty-six," indicating the number of people kept there. In the outer gallery, five of the partitions are labeled as methods of torture. For instance, "one whips with all kinds of instruments," "one whips with rods," etc. The only way out is by Death, which Sade accounts for by including a cemetery as the final destination in his house.

His fourth and most conclusive drawing divides the house into three parts using double lines [Fig. 57]. The house is enclosed inside a rectangle. Now, the entry is labeled the "porte d'entreé" followed by an "interior court", and a gallery for administration. The center space includes the prison and final space consist of six bars that radiate from the prison, which each contain thirty-six "boudoirs." Again, torture and murder occur close to the back of the house, this time in three circles representing towers at the end of the radiating bars. Sade's final drawing comes closest to replicating Ledoux's radiating urban plan for Chaux. The author's compartmentalizing and

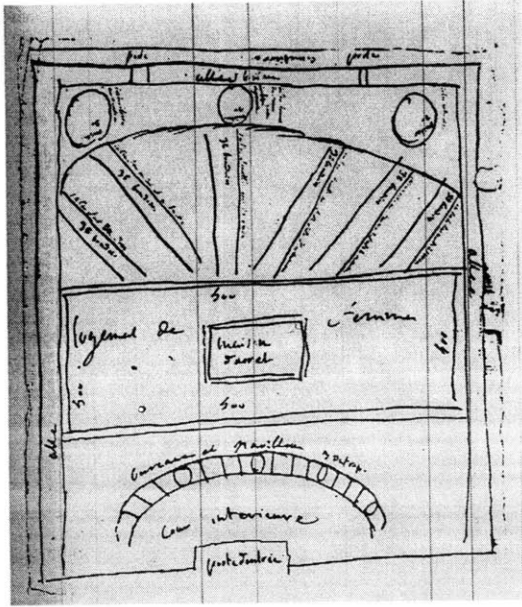
containment of women for sexual pleasure also reflects Ledoux's own plans, however the architect is more interested in this pleasure culminating in a useful result for the body politic than in expressions of violence and eroticism in an of themselves.



**Figure 54 Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (French, 1736-1806)**  
*Maison de plaisir*, engraving. Reprint from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Claude Nicolas Ledoux, unpublished projects* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1992). Plate 238.



**Figure 55, 56 Marquis de Sade (French, 1740-1814)**  
Left, *Maison de plaisir*, drawing. Right, *Maison de plaisir*, drawing. Reprints from Alexandre Stroeve, "Dessins inédits de Sade," *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, No. 32 (2000): 329, 331.



**Figure 57 Marquis de Sade**

*Maison de plaisir*, drawing. Reprint from Alexandre Stroev, "Dessins inédits de Sade," *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, No. 32 (2000): 333.

The problem of sexuality is resolved – in Ledoux’s own mind – by the time he develops Oikéma. In his *petite maison* cum brothel, Ledoux justifies the embodiment of sexuality in architecture precisely because it he has incorporated it into the social legislation and mores of his ideal city. At the outset of his treatise, Ledoux had promised that his architecture would regulate human behavior. Consequently, the *petite maison* and its conflicting connotations is important to Ledoux’s conception of the family, city, and nation precisely because the house educates and influences the manners of men and women both inside and outside its ornamented walls. Oikéma is one resolution Ledoux’s country house domestic ideology.

The little house that Bastide described, as an instrument of seduction was a conceptual phallus employed to seduce an un-womanly woman when an emasculated man could not. Following Bastide’s gender-bending plot and architectural description, the little house was criticized, then explored by Ledoux in a built pavilion for a powerful mistress, then criminalized, and by the end of the century was redesigned in Ledoux’s treatise as a prison, monastery, brothel, and home for female prostitutes. In fact, Oikéma was an embodiment of sexuality. In plan, the apse at the tip of the phallus’ shaft



borrowed from the spatial release point of Carpentier's pavilion. But it was also a complete spatial reversal of the music pavilion at Louveciennes, for instead of the phallus being encased and guarded by the private spaces of the Countess it was locked in place by the square plinth of Oikèma. In this case, as Elysium prevailed over Cythera, a moralized little country house developed. The history of the little house reveals nothing less than the eminent rise of a modern architectural language of domesticity.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-François de Bastide, *The Little House*, trans. Rodolphe El-Khoury (1758,1879; New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1996): 73.

<sup>2</sup> Ledoux makes clear in the "Architecture considered in relation to art, mores, and legislation. C.N. Ledoux Prospectus" that he intends to publish four volumes, however only the first volume ever went to press as a finished product. Daniel Ramée compiled almost all of Ledoux's engravings in a two-volume print of Ledoux's work in 1847. See Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, in association with the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library of Columbia University, 1983): xv-xvi.

<sup>3</sup> The engravings for this project, intended by Ledoux to be included in volume II, were posthumously published in the 1847 edition of Ledoux's treatise published by Daniel Ramée.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Vidler, *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux: architecture and social reform at the end of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990): 50-59.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Robin Middleton, "Jacques-François Blondel and the "Cours d'Architecture," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Dec., 1959): 141. See also, Freek H. Schmidt, "Expose Ignorance and Revive the "Bon Goût": Foreign Architects at Jacques-François Blondel's École des Arts," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Mar., 2002): 4-29.

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<sup>7</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 2.

<sup>8</sup> Emil Kaufmann writes in a footnote “The term architecture parlante was used in an anonymous essay *Etudes d'architecture en France*,” *Magasin Pittoresque* (1852), 388, to characterize Ledoux’s work...” Emil Kaufmann, *Architecture in the Age of Reason* (1955; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1968): 251 no.78. See also, Emil Kaufmann, *Three Revolutionary Architects – Boullée, Ledoux and Lequeu*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 42 (Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1952): 417, 447, 514, 520, 535.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Ledoux’s projects were interpreted as “speaking architecture” because they visually and spatially expressed architectural function and purpose.

<sup>10</sup> I speak of Ledoux’s architecture in terms of individual buildings as well as the cityscape of his ideal city of Chaux.

<sup>11</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): plate 1. “Construits où commences depuis 1768 jusques en 1789.” He suggests that the “*collection qui rassemble tous les Gen Geures de Batiments, Employée dans l'ordre Social.*”

<sup>12</sup> See Ledoux’s “Prospectus” for his forthcoming four-volume treatise (of which only 1 volume was completed and published). Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, “Architecture considered in relation to art, mores, and legislation. C.N. Ledoux Prospectus,” *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux* (1802; New York: Princeton Architectural Press, in association with the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library of Columbia University, 1983): xi-xvii.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, xv.

<sup>15</sup> According to Socratic “natural law,” however, all men are not created equal; Ledoux’s use of the phrase highlights some quandaries in the text. To be precise, it discloses discrepancies between wanting to give legitimacy to a broad spectrum of social classes and reinforcing the status of the “weak” and “strong” of society by making architecture display those differences.

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau cannot be forgotten for his influential contributions towards a widespread interest among aristocrats, *philosophes*, and bourgeois to “return to nature.” Among the many denotations that nature assumes in eighteenth century language is the family and freedom. More specifically, for Rousseau, returning to a natural social state would be to return to the family. When the family no longer needs each other (i.e. children grow up) it naturally

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separates and each (male) member adopts his natural state of freedom and “common liberty.” See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “The First Societies,” *The Social Contract* (1762; London: Penguin Books, 1968): 50-52.

<sup>17</sup> See Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, “Perspectus,” *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux* (1802; New York: Princeton Architectural Press, in association with the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library of Columbia University, 1983): xi-xii. “There [in the Temple of Imagination] one sees Suitability (*Covenantance*), Order (*Ordonnance*), Style, Decorum (*Bienséance*), and Symmetry, all of which have equal relationships among themselves that do not nevertheless exclude the picturesque; Variety, in all the guises to which it is susceptible; Severity of principles; Unity of thoughts and of lines, Unity, the principle of all things, Unity so desirable and so desired, Fitness (*Commodité*), Distribution, which is welcomed in all levels of society; Decoration, which enlivens surfaces; Proportion, which purifies them; Genius, which exalts conceptions; Judgment, which regulates them, Reasoning, which discusses them; Method, which guides the stylo; Minerva, that wise Minerva, who sanctions the decrees.”

<sup>18</sup> Vitruvius Pollio, *Ten books on architecture*, trans. Ingrid D. Rowland (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 25. Vitruvius suggests in Book 1, Chapter 2 entitled “The Terms of Architecture,” part 5, that, “correctness (decor) is the refined appearance of a project that has been composed of proven elements and with authority. It is achieved with respect to function, which is called *thematismos* in Greek, or tradition, or nature.”

<sup>19</sup> Jacques-François Blondel, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, et de la decoration des edifices en general* (Paris, Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1737-38).

<sup>20</sup> Jacques-François Blondel, *Cours d'architecture, ou Traité de la décoration, distribution & construction des bâtiments* (Paris, Desaint, 1771-77): 2:229. “tous devoient avoir un caractère qui determine leur forme générale et qui annonce le batiment pour ce qu'il est.”

<sup>21</sup> Aristotle. *Poetics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967): 8.1; 24.

<sup>22</sup> See Mimi Hellman, “Furniture, Sociability, and the Work of Leisure in Eighteenth Century France,” *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 32.4 (1999): 416. A language of visual codification was interpreted by readers who learned how to engage and use objects gracefully. Art historian Mimi Hellman calls the performance relationship between aristocrats and space the “work of leisure” and suggests that it was both taste, displayed in the form of the collection and placement of objects in decorated private spaces as well as the carefully choreographed movements in regard to furniture and other decorative objects that defined social status. Thus transforming the

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domestic *space* into domestic *stage*. On the stage, the inhabitant-cum-actor as well as the visitor-cum-spectator would be judged.

<sup>23</sup> “Talon [Heel],” *Dictionnaire de l'académie française*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (1798): 629. “One calls *Talon rouge*, a young court gentleman who has red heels with his shoes.” “On appelle Talon rouge, Un jeune homme de la Cour qui a des talons rouges à ses souliers. Les talons rouges de Versailles. C'est un talon rouge.” The expression referred to couturiers or *petits-mâîtres* (dandy) of Versailles, known as the “red heels of Versailles.”

<sup>24</sup> M. de Desmahis: “Fat,” *Encyclopédie* (1756): 6:421. Desmahis explains “Fat” as “...Il a du bel esprit la suffisance & les mots satyriques, de l'homme de qualité les talons rouges, le coureur & les créanciers; de l'homme à bonnes fortunes la petite maison, l'ambre & les grisons....” Note: to “grey” someone is to make them drink until they are half-drunk. “Gray” is also an expression referring to someone who is easily intoxicated. “Griser,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (1798): 664. As illuminated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, there is an indication of Desmahis’ personal and autobiographical relationship with the “fat”. In *The Confessions*, Rousseau suggests that that Desmahis, “the celebrated but short-lived author of the comedy of *L'Impertinent*...had merit and even wit, but he was in some degree the original of his comedy, and a little of a coxcomb with women, by whom he was not much regretted.” Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions* (1782; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000): 454-465 (Book 10, 1758).

<sup>25</sup> About Women, M. de Desmahis notes that “This art to like, this desire to like all, this envy of liking more than another... seems to be in women a primitive character” (my translation) “Cet art de plaire, ce désir de plaire à tous, cette envie de plaire plus qu'une autre, . . . semble être dans les femmes un caractère primitif” M. de Desmahis, “Femme [morale],” *Encyclopédie* (1756): 6:473.

<sup>26</sup> By using the term *coureur* (messenger), Desmahis also subtly characterizes the “fat” as sexually “loose,” because the term *coureuse* (which is the feminine version of the *coureur*), was used to express the “cheapest of species” of the woman or girl prostitute, a term that Jean-François Féraud’s *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (1787-1788) warns the foreigner to use with extreme caution. See Jean-François Féraud, *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (Marseille, Mossy 1787-1788): A608a.

It is also not irrelevant to note that Jean-François de Bastide, authored *Les confessions d'un fat*. Melissa Hyde cites this text in her analysis of Boucher’s representations of subjects with ambiguous genders. She compares critic’s uncomfortable reactions to such pictures, with

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Bastide's own writing on the subject. Bastide writes "Everything in *le monde* is enchantment for a young man: that certain uniformity that exists between the sexes, the rouge, the dazzling attire, the diamonds, that air of coquetry, the appearances of sentiment, the respective pleasantries, the mutual obligingness; in short, all of those attractions that one discovers ceaselessly seducing the mind and the heart of a young man, and forming for him the most breathtaking spectacle in the universe." Jean-François de Bastide: *Les confessions d'un fat*, (1:17) as quoted by Melissa Hyde, *Making Up the Rococo: François Boucher and His Critics* (Los Angeles, Getty Publications, 2006): 147.

<sup>27</sup> Marc Antoine Abbé Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture* (Paris: Chez Duchesne 1753; 1775): 57.

<sup>28</sup> "Cabane," *Dictionnaire de l'academie française*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition (1694): 137. "Cabane, Petite loge de berger ou de quelque pauvre personne."

<sup>29</sup> "Cabane," *Dictionnaire de l'academie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 228. "Cabane, Petite loge, petite maison couvert ordinairement de chaume."

<sup>30</sup> Virgil's *Eclogues* was a compilation of 19 bucolic poems about love and the pastoral life.

<sup>31</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1955): 295-320. See also Louis Marin, *Sublime Poussin*, trans. Catherine Porter (California: Stanford University Press, 1999): 104-118.

<sup>32</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, "Prospectus," *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux* (1802; New York: Princeton Architectural Press, in association with the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library of Columbia University, 1983): xv.

<sup>33</sup> Color in rococo painting and "reality" was a contested issue for philosophers and art critics because it was often associated with cosmetics. When individuals gain agency over their own identity construction, confusions arise because makeup can fabricate or conceal social status and gender. Melissa Hyde suggests that makeup was considered a medium capable of constructing and maintaining self-identity that disrupted both the social order (as both Mme du Pompadour and a bourgeois wife both wore rouge) and assumed gender differences (as transvestitism was less detectable with rouge). See Melissa Hyde, *Making Up the Rococo: Francois Boucher and His Critics* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006): 107-128; 145-156; 83-101. See also, Melissa Hyde, "Confounding Conventions: Gender Ambiguity and Francois Boucher's Painted Pastorals," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Fashioning Gender. (Autumn, 1996), 25-57. See also, Melissa Hyde, "The "Makeup" of the Marquise: Boucher's

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Portrait of Pompadour at Her Toilette,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Sep., 2000): 453-475. The use of color to undermine the social order appears to be unacceptable for Ledoux, who insists upon “pure color.” His insistence on “pure color” also alludes to his rejection of rococo style painters, who were often accused of using makeup in their paintings. Also, it is important to remember many early *maison de plaisance* projects by Ledoux incorporated rococo artwork into the interiors.

<sup>34</sup> See Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *De Re Rustica*, (Loeb Classical Library, 1941). Columella writes: “But, by heaven, that true stock of Romulus, practiced in constant hunting and no less in toiling in the fields, was distinguished by the greatest physical strength and, hardened by the labors of peace, easily endured the hardships of war when occasion demanded, and always esteemed the common people of the country more highly than those of the city. For as those who kept within the confines of the country houses<sup>17</sup> were accounted more slothful than those who tilled the ground outside, so those who spent their time idly within the walls, in the shelter of the city, were looked upon as more sluggish than those who tilled the fields or supervised the labors of the tillers.” (Columella, Book 1, 16-17).

<sup>35</sup> Then entry “Columella,” in the *Oxford English Dictionary* quotes James Lee: *An introduction to botany* (London, 1760); See also Louis Chevalier de Jaucourt, “Volute,” *Encyclopédie* (1765): 17:461. “Volute, (Conchy liographie.) en latin helix, c'est le contour des spirales autour du fust de la coquille; lequel fust, en latin columella, va en diminuant à un point comme centre qu'on appelle oeil de la volute.”

<sup>36</sup> Anthony Vidler, *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux: architecture and social reform at the end of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990): 40-59.

<sup>37</sup> As a former courtesan, and so-called employee of a Marchande de mode, Madame du Barry filled the void left at Versailles after Madame de Pompadour died. Madame du Barry was gifted the land at Louveciennes in celebration of her new social position.

<sup>38</sup> See Daniel Ramée, *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux* (Paris: Lenoir, 1847).

<sup>39</sup> In his *Prospectus* Ledoux hints that Louveciennes would be included in the third volume of his treatise when he suggests that: “After having discussed the origin of the arts, their progress, their decadence; after having indicated the ways to profit from errors, by applying to our customs truths verified by time, one will present city houses, country houses, all of an infinite variety. Celebrated pavilions; city palaces, pleasure palaces, built on the most brilliant theater in the world. One will see there Beauty seated in the center of the radii, shedding her benefits over grateful industry.” Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, “Prospectus,” *Architecture de C.N. Ledoux* (1802;

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New York: Princeton Architectural Press, in association with the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library of Columbia University, 1983): xv-xvi.

<sup>40</sup> Ledoux does away with the vestibule entirely at Louveciennes.

<sup>41</sup> This interpretation was similar to the critical reception of Ledoux's *hotel* for the dancer and courtesan Mlle. Guimard.

<sup>42</sup> The *buffet* was a space reserved for the storage of flatware, table services, linens, and was often occupied by servants, as opposed to guests. "Buffet," *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 224. "Buffet. s.m. Espèce d'armoire pour enfermer la vaisselle & le linge de table."

<sup>43</sup> The architect and theorist Le Camus de Méziers calls a woman's *cabinet* a *boudoir*. The *cabinet* was a private space that usually contained a daybed, and was used as a reception space for intimate friends. The *boudoir* was regarded similarly, and by the second half of the eighteenth century was often represented as a space for reading "one handed novels." Rousseau referred novels as being "one handed," because it implied that one hand was left free for other activities, induced by the text. Also, the *garderobe* or dressing room was used for keeping toilettes and clothes. Le Camus de Méziers, *The Genius of Architecture; or the Analogy of that Art with our sensations*, trans. Robin Middleton (1780; Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1992): 115-118, 130.

<sup>44</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 2.

<sup>45</sup> The Saline de Chaux was built in the 1770's. The Saline was an impetus for Ledoux to begin to imagine an industrialized town of his own design. The ideal city of Chaux was conceived, but never built.

<sup>46</sup> Dora Ashton, *Fragonard and the Universe of Painting* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1988): 142. Many Scholars have speculated on what Fragonard's intended sequence for the pictures was. This is a contentious subject with multiple theories. See Donald Posner: "The True Path of Fragonard's 'Progress of Love,'" *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 114, No. 833. (Aug., 1972): 526-534.

<sup>47</sup> Vien's series of paintings *Progress of Love in the Hearts of Young Girls* (1773-4) consisted of, *Oath of Feminine Friendship*, the *Temple of Hymen* (both located at Chambéry, Préfecture), the *Meeting with Cupid* (Paris, Louvre) and the *Crowning of the Lovers* (Paris, Louvre). Vien was Jacques-Louis David's teacher and future director of the French Academy at Rome.

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<sup>48</sup> See Mary Sheriff, *Fragonard art and eroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 58-82; Donald Posner, "The True Part of Fragonard's 'Progress of Love,'" *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 114, No. 833 (Aug., 1972): 526-534.

<sup>49</sup> Dora Ashton suggests that the most probable explanation for the rejection is "Fragonard was in general querulous and defiant." Dora Ashton, *Fragonard in the Universe of Painting* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988): 151-152. My thesis shows that the possible reasons for their rejection are much more rooted in elite cultural criticism of sexuality and representation of identities.

<sup>50</sup> Of the paintings in the apsidal shaped third Mairobert notes that the ceiling is painted with a "vague sky and four large paintings by S. Fragonard, that describe the amours of shepherds and resemble allegories of the adventures of the mistress of the place. They are not yet finished." Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert, *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (Londres, 1775): 233. Here we are given a clue to the public's reception of the works, and the allegorical codes in the four paintings that were interpreted by a spectator as a biographical interpretation of du Barry's relationship with Louis XIV. See Louis Petit de Bachaumont et al., *Memoires secretes pour servir à l'histoire de la République des Lettres en France depuis 1762 jusqu' à nos jours* (London, 1784); Dora Ashton, *Fragonard in the Universe of Painting* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1988): 142. It is probable that Madame du Barry found the subject matter amusing, but the execution too overtly sexual. In her memoirs, she recalls an episode when she dressed up as a provincial, albeit fashionable, woman to disguise her identity in order to pay a visit to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whom she desperately wanted to meet. She had read his novel *Julie; ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) three times. After concocting a tale that she herself was from the countryside and had heard that Monsieur Rousseau was an excellent transcriber of music. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's tale of physical passion that ends in social utopia is particularly reminiscent of the *petite maison's* own travels in Ledoux's work from space for eroticism to brothel that is essential to the mores of his own city of Chaux.

<sup>51</sup> Dora Ashton, *Fragonard and the Universe of Painting* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1988): 142-152.

<sup>52</sup> Mary D. Sheriff also suggests the relationship between the picturesque landscape outside, and the "actor"/ "guest" who shifts between interpreting two-dimensional paintings about gardens, and acting the scenes themselves out in the garden. Mary D. Sheriff, *Fragonard: art and eroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 58-94.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*



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<sup>54</sup> René-Louis marquis de Girardin, *An essay on landscape; or, on the means of improving and embellishing the country round our habitations* (London: J. Dodsley, 1783): 51-52.

<sup>55</sup> Fragonard brought the canvases to his brother's house in Grasse, where he painted a fifth picture titled "Reverie" (1790-1791). Notably, this occurred after Louis XV had died and Madame du Barry had been "disgraced" and forced to leave France. The painting represents a disheveled woman sitting at the base of a phallic column capped with a sphere shaped sundial and cupid pointing to something beyond the frame of the canvas. The woman, with her hand in her lap, and the other leaning on the base of the column, looks up towards where cupid's finger leads her.

<sup>56</sup> See Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1996): 137- 168. At least three of these "scandalous" texts claimed to "truthfully" describe the history and exploits of Madame du Barry. Darnton notes that Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert's *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (1775), François Bernard's *La Gazette de Cythère... (et) le précis historique de la vie de Mme la comtesse du Barry* (1775), and Félix Nogaret's *Memoires authentiques de Mme la comtesse du Barry* (Londres, 1772) were on STN's list of the top 100 bestselling underground books.

<sup>57</sup> Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert, *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (1775). In an analysis of these books, Robert Darnton notes that such stories were written to mimic either du Barry's own pen or that of contemporary, supposedly "authoritative" historian-narrators who claimed that their fictions were true. Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1996): 137- 168.

<sup>58</sup> See Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1996): 137- 168. Darnton also notes that Mairobert's *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (1775) held second place in the Société typographique de Neuchâtel (STN) top 100 roster of best selling books of their underground book trade.

<sup>59</sup> Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert, *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (Londres, 1775): 200. "...elle ne plaçât rien, elle ne fit aucune acquisition, elle n'achetât aucune terre: car le Chateau de Lucienne ne donnait rein d'utile, n'était même qu'un boudoir pour une grande Dame comme elle."

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 211. "La Favorite fit dans le même tems un coup d'autorité, qui annonçoit le crédit plus efficace qu'elle n'avoit sur la Finance. Ayant eu occasion de connoître les talens

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précieux de M. Vernet, le fameux Peintre de marine, qui a décoré le joli Pavillon de Lucienne de morceaux affotris de sa façon, elle fut chez cet Artiste rendre hommage à son métrite.”

<sup>62</sup> Baron Paul Henri Thiry d’Holbach: *Systems of Nature or Of the laws of the physical world and of the moral world*, translation by H.D. Robinson, 1868, (London, 1770, Manchester: Clinamen Press, 1999): 142. D’Holbach continues, “Friendship has charms, only when it more particularly associates two virtuous beings; that is to say, two beings animated with the sincere desire of conspiring to their reciprocal happiness. In short, it is only by displaying virtue that man can merit the benevolence, the confidence, the seteem, of all those with whom he has relation; in a word, no man can be independently happy.”

<sup>63</sup> During his explanation of the pavilions’ distribution of space, he notes the “basse relief by Sieur Le Comte representing Bacchanalians” in the *porche*, in the oval side salon he notes the ceiling “executed by Briard; the motto is *Ruris amor*. He represents the pleasures of the country.” Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert, *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (Londres, 1775): 233.

<sup>64</sup> Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert, *Anecdotes sur M. la Comtesse Du Barri* (Londres, 1775): 233-234. Il résulte de l’admiration de tant de beautés légers, fragiles & vaines, que le local est trop mesquin pour la Favorite d’un grand Roi ; que les détails en font trop recherchés, trop fastueuse, trop immensément chers pour une Particulière ; & qu’on ne peut concevoir d’autre idée, à la vûe d’un pareil contraste, que de s’imaginer être dans une petite maison où tout se ressent, & du mot & du chose.

<sup>65</sup> Mairobert uses the *petite maison* to transition from du Barry to her manipulative brother-in-law who financially benefits from her position. He too owns a *petite maison* that is mentioned to support Mairobert’s anecdotes of his extreme lack of manners, and undermining of social order.

<sup>66</sup> Ledoux’s engraving for plate 268 entitled “*Plan ou Rez de Chaussé du Batiment de Louveciennes fondé en 1773 et arreté a la mort du Roi*” is signed by the artist “Sellier Sculp,” and dated 1777. Although the other plates for Louveciennes (268 – 272) are not dated, they are signed by Sellier. Plate 271 shows the subterranean floor plan and section for the pavilion, along with the expanded section of Louveciennes. This conflation of projects from two different periods perhaps suggests that all of the plates were created around the year 1777. It is also quite possible that Ledoux made changes to the pavilion in the drawings after it was completed, as he had done in other projects. See W. Hermann, “The Problem of Chronology in Claude-Nicolas Ledoux’s Engraved Work,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Sept. 1960): 191-210

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<sup>67</sup> The official title that Ledoux uses is *chamber à coucher*.

<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, Madame du Barry's pavilion is planned in an unusual way in comparison to Parisian hotels and other domestic buildings, because of its smaller scale, and program dedicated solely to leisure and pleasure. A plan to architecturally reconfigure societal and sexual mores becomes abundantly clear in the plan for the project; Ledoux makes a spatial connection between the most private space in the house – the cabinet – and the most public – the Salle à Manger used for fetes and celebrations.

<sup>69</sup> In his book *L'Homme du Monde*, Blondel follows a description and critique of Ledoux's hotel for Mlle. Guimard, with a brief but praising passage about the pavilion at Louveciennes. Of the *hôtel* he notes that: "The outsides are charming. The architect had intention, says one, to represent the Temple of Terpsichore, in the frontage on the side of the entry. One cannot better succeed... In a rather small space, this pretty residence offers all the conveniences and all approvals; and what is not presented by the truth, east compensates by prestige. There is nothing in the garden that, though not very roomy, does not charm and does not astonish by its very new taste. The apartments seem to owe with the magic their various approvals... The *chamber à coucher* invites at rest, the *sallon* with pleasure, the dining room with cheerfulness; the forms are clever..." He concludes with a note about Louveciennes: "I do not know, moreover, Mr. Le Doux... if I can, one of these days, outward journey to see the house of Luciennes... that is, says one, another small masterpiece, I will announce my observation to you. I pass to other objects." Jacques-François Blondel, *L'Homme du monde éclairé par les arts* (1774; Geneva: Minkoff, 1973): 114.

<sup>70</sup> This, I believe, was intentional because male *marchand de modes* (male merchant tailors) were also present in Paris, however Ledoux chose to use the feminine version of the noun, *marchande*.

<sup>71</sup> See Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Berg: 2004): 145-169. Jones quotes *Etrennes aux grisettes mons et demeure des grisettes* (1790) BN, c5; of IA. See also Sterne, Laurence, "The Pulse. Paris." and "The Husband. Paris," *The works of Laurence Sterne, A.M. ... With the life of the author. In six volumes*, The fourth edition. Vol. 4 of 6 (Dublin, 1769-70): 99-106.

<sup>72</sup> Francois Boucher, *The Milliner*, 1746. Oil on Canvas, National Museum in Stockholm, Sweden.

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<sup>73</sup> Colin B. Bailey, *The Age of Watteau, Chardin and Fragonard; Masterpieces of French Genre Painting* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2003): 226-228. See Catalogue No. 54, “Francois Boucher, *The Milliner (Morning)* 1746.”

<sup>74</sup> Melissa Hyde, *Making up the Rococo; Francois Boucher and His critics* (Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute; 2006): 107-138. Melissa Hyde suggests that application of make-up brought about class and gender ambiguity because it was accessible to women of different class, from the queen to the *grisette*, so to speak. As such, it could potentially be more difficult to decipher class based on appearances.

<sup>75</sup> Louise Sebastien Mercier suggests “in creating the accessories, in imparting the grace, in giving the perfect pleat...” the *marchande de modes* “is the architect and decorator par excellence.” Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, t. 1:136 as quoted by Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial culture in old Regime France* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2004): 92.

<sup>76</sup> Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial culture in old Regime France* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2004): 88-103.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-96.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>80</sup> It was generally considered at the time that constant surveillance through shop windows set up a spatial condition where the girls could be easily seduced.

<sup>81</sup> See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, Or Treatise on Education* (1762; New York: Prometheus Books, 2003): 265-268. Rousseau suggests, “in fact, almost all little girls learn to read and write with repugnance; but as to holding the needle, they always learn willingly. They imagine themselves already grown, and take pleasure in thinking that these talents will one day be of service in adorning them.”

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial culture in old Regime France* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2004): 96.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Jill Casid, “Queer(y)ing Georgic: Utility, Pleasure, and Marie-Antoinette's Ornamented Farm,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30.3 (1997): 304-318.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>88</sup> Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial culture in old Regime France* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2004): 94. Jones notes that the *marchandes* introduced new hairstyles through the 1770's often, which created a demand from clients for constant attention and styling. Of particular attention for this project is the coiffure styling titled "Poufs au sentiment including pictures of loved ones and associated symbols and trinkets; and the pouf au parc anglais including windmills, sheep, shepherds and even a hunter."

<sup>89</sup> Stéphanie Félicité Comtesse de Genlis, *Théâtre a l'usage des jeunes personnes*, or *Theatre of education for young people*, Vol. 4 of 4 (Dublin, 1781): 60-90.

<sup>90</sup> *Etrennes aux grisettes, noms et demeure des grisettes* (1790) BN, L5i 91A. As quoted by Jennifer Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (New York, Berg Publishers, 2004): 159.

<sup>91</sup> Although it appears that Ledoux intends for his plans to represent both projects, there are inconsistencies between the drawings (even if they are by the same author) that allows the drawings to read as both individual projects, and a series of plates to read as a complete project.

<sup>92</sup> See Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation*, (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 315-322, Plates 94, 95, 96.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> It is important to note that there are many inconsistencies between plans, elevations and sections present throughout Ledoux's book, and that when interpreting the drawings, I recognized these inconsistencies, and take into account all of the details and nuances present in the drawings as ideas and concepts that Ledoux was testing. The differences and ambiguities enrich the work, and provide opportunity for discussion. For a discussion of Ledoux's design inconsistencies see W. Herrmann, "The Problem of Chronology in Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's Work," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Sep., 1960): 191-210.

<sup>95</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 315. "La mode est un impôt que l'Amour et Hymen paient au Caprice; cette idole a cent têtes ; en abat-on cinquante se reproduisent ; entourée de prestiges séducteurs, enchaînée avec des guirlandes de fleurs, couverte d'or, de dimants, de perles ; esclave du luxe, si elle est le désespoir des maris, elle est presque toujours l'espérance des amants. La mode, qui commande aux nations, est si répandue sur le continent français, qu'elle fait presque tous les frais des délibérations de ce peuple aimable : cet art paraît futile, cependant il rassemble autour de lui ceux qui gouvernent et dictent des lois d'un pôle à l'autre. »

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<sup>96</sup> Ernst Cassirer points out that Diderot employed the same metaphor to interpret religion. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (1932; Boston: Beacon Press, 1951): 134-135.

<sup>97</sup> Besides being a monster, gorgon also means, “petrifying influence.” “Gorgon,” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (1989).

<sup>98</sup> Freud interpreted Medusa’s ability to transform men into stone in an unfinished essay. See Sigmund Freud, *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, *Standard Edition of the complete Psychological Works*, ed. James Strachey, 22 vols. (London, 1953-74): 7:96. See also Peter Benson, “Freud and the Visual,” *Representations*, No. 45. (Winter, 1994): 101-116. Benson notes that for Freud “This severed head, Freud claims, is a replacement for the image of a woman’s genitals (“essentially those of the mother”), its writhing hair evoking her pubic foliage. This, then, is the principal and original sight that immobilizes thought, a power which visual artists have proved able to usurp and weave into their own fabrications, just as Athena (goddess of craft and design) carried the Gorgon’s head protectively before her,” (Benson, 101)

<sup>99</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 318.

<sup>100</sup> Francois Boucher’s history painting interpreted through Rococo values of color, patronage and signs threatened the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* and the socially constructed patriarchal order of eighteenth-century France. After Watteau’s submission to the Académie his painting, *Le Embarkation à Cythera* (which was neither history nor genre painting) the painting genre was resolved when the institution created a new subcategory of painting entitled *fête galante* to accommodate his work. Melissa Hyde, “Portrait of Pompadour at her Toilette,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Sept. 2000): 457; Thomas Crow, *Painters and public life in 18th century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

<sup>101</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, unpublished projects*, edited by Michel Gallet (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1992).

<sup>102</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 315.

<sup>103</sup> Judging by the different engravers that Ledoux used for his projects, Anthony Vidler suggests that Oikema and the double house projects were designed between 1785 and the commencement of the Revolution in 1789. Vidler further conjectures that most of the *maison de campagne* projects date between his release from prison in 1793, and the publishing of his

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*Prospectus* in 1802. Anthony Vidler, *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux: architecture and social reform at the end of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990): 255-361.

<sup>104</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): Plates 103-104.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. « Vu de Prés, le vice n'influe pas moins puissamment sur l'âme; par l'horreur qu'il lui imprime, il a fait réagir vers la vertu. L'Oikema présente à la bouillante et volage jeunesse qu'il attire la dépravation dans sa nudité, et le sentiment de la dégradation de l'Hymen vertueux qui l'embrasse et le couronne. »

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 342.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 340. Hymen, a name often used by Ledoux in *L'Architecture considérée*, is known in Greek mythology as the god of marriage.

<sup>108</sup> The roads intersect at the front façade entry. One road is compositionally continued through the interior procession of the project with an *allée* beyond Oikéma. *Allée* a “place suitable to walk, which extends in length, & which is bordered of trees or greenery, without being bound by walls.” “Allée,” *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4th Edition (1762): 52.

<sup>109</sup> Small clumps of trees were a landscaping trademark of the celebrated English picturesque landscape designer Capability Brown.

<sup>110</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 343.

<sup>111</sup> Ledoux mimics the scents of nature in the building program by including a *sechoir* or a place where perfumers dry soaps. The program was written into his passages investigating the subterranean spaces, yet was excluded from the engraved plan.

<sup>112</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 343.

<sup>113</sup> Joan Landes puts forward that the French Revolution had a “phallic quality” and patriarchal ordering. Joan Landes, *Women in the Public sphere* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1988): 158. See also Susan P. Conner, “Public Virtue and Public Women: Prostitution in Revolutionary Paris, 1793-1794,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter, 1994-1995): 221-240.

<sup>114</sup> In 1750, Julien David Leroy won the *Pris de Rome*. For more biographical information, see Gérard Rousset Charny: “Le Roy [Leroy], Julien-David” *Grove Art Online*. Oxford University Press, [May 8, 2006]. <http://www.groveart.com/>. In 1758, LeRoy (1724-

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1803), another student of Blondel, published *Ruins of Athens, with remains and other valuable antiquities in Greece*

<sup>115</sup> Julien David LeRoy, *The Ruins of the Most Beautiful Monuments of Greece*, trans. Davie Britt (2d ed., 2vols. 1770; Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2004): 206.

<sup>116</sup> Julien David Leroy, *Ruins of Athens, with remains and other valuable antiquities in Greece*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, translated into English (1758; London, Printed for Robert Sayer, 1759). In 1775, Le Roy redesigned section of gardens at chateau Chantilly in picturesque style.

<sup>117</sup> Julien David LeRoy, *The Ruins of the Most Beautiful Monuments of Greece*, trans. Davie Britt (2d ed., 2vols. 1770; Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2004): 218.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 218-219. LeRoy notes that “this Temple was built to Erictheus, or of their kings, according to *Diodorus Sicculus*, at a small distance from that of *Minerva*, in Gratitude for his having instructed them in the Worship of *Ceres*, the Goddess of Agriculture.” He continues “Here are no Inscriptions to be found to give us the Time of its being built, but some Particularities in its *Ionick* Decoration, seems to place it before the Time of *Adrian*.” There was also suggestion at the time that the temple of *Minerva Polias* in the *Erechtheum* was once employed as a Harem.

<sup>119</sup> Paulette Singley, “The Anamorphic Phallus within Ledoux’s Dismembered Plan of *Chaux*,” *Journal of Architectural Education*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Feb., 1993): 176-188.

<sup>120</sup> “Parloir,” *Dictionnaire de L’Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 302.  
“Visiting room. s.m. Place intended in a Religious House, to speak to people about the outside. It is more usually said when speaking about Monasteries for girls....” “Parloir. s.m. Lieu destiné dans une Maison Religieuse, pour parler aux personnes de dehors. Il se dit plus ordinairement en parlant des Monastères de filles. Le parloir d’en-bas. Le petit parloir. Le grand parloir. On la fit venir au parloir. La grille d’un parloir.”

<sup>121</sup> Religious allusions are commonly used to name the spaces of *Oikèma*, evident in Ledoux’s use of the term *cellulies*, *parloirs*, and *portiers*, all words commonly used to name the spaces found in Monasteries for girls.

<sup>122</sup> Draperies were commonly found in eighteenth-century representations of women reading on a day bed in the *boudoir*. The placement of the draperies corresponds to the placement of the bed in Ledoux’s plan.

<sup>123</sup> Ledoux makes these spaces equal in section, however, I believe that the plan shows a conscious effort to make the cells different.



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<sup>124</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): plate 104. The engraving is signed by Coquet.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate 19.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 113. « Il faut l'éclairer par Le haut, afin que la pensée ne soit pas distraite par des objets extérieurs. »

<sup>127</sup> Ces murs tranquilles cachent les agitations du dedans ; c'est-là où l'on s'abandonne au torrent d'une fausse joie qui entraîne la destruction.

<sup>128</sup> Mary D. Sheriff, *Moved By Love* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2004): 125-151.

<sup>129</sup> "Cellule," *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 262. "Cell, little chamber for a Monk or a Nun...." "Parloir," *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 302. "Visiting room (parloir), Place intended in a Religious House, to speak to the people about outside. It is said more usually while speaking about the Monasteries of girls...." "Portiers," *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1762): 426. "Gatekeeper...who has care to open, to close, & to keep the principal door of a home."

<sup>130</sup> Lester Gilbert Krakeur, "A Forgotten Participant in the Attack on the Convent: Madame de Genlis," *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 52, No. 2. (Feb., 1937): 89-95.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 89-90.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 90-92.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 92-93.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>136</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 346.

<sup>137</sup> Pamela Cheek, "Prostitutes of 'Political Institution,'" *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter, 1994-1995): 193-219.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 213

<sup>140</sup> See David Weed, "Fitting Fanny: Cleland's Memoirs and the Politics of Male Pleasure," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol 31, No. 1, Thirtieth Anniversary Issue: I (Autumn 1997): 7-20.

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<sup>141</sup> See Jill Casid, "Queer(y)ing Georgic: Utility, Pleasure, and Marie-Antoinette's Ornamented Farm," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30.3 (1997): 304-318.

<sup>142</sup> It is also important to note the titles given to men and how they are shifted in meaning when they are applied to women. I am thinking specifically of the *femme du monde* otherwise known as prostitute, and *l'homme du monde* who was a well-educated male.

<sup>143</sup> Susan Conner, "Public Virtue and Public Women: Prostitution in Revolutionary Paris, 1793-1794," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter, 1994-1995): 221-240.

<sup>144</sup> It is important to state here that Ledoux was a royalist, and he does not use *citoyen* or *citoyenne* in this treatise. Instead, his ideal city of Chaux is inhabited by "*peuple*".

<sup>145</sup> Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation* (1804; Paris, Hermann, 1997): 344.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 340.

<sup>147</sup> Alexandre Stroeve, "Des Dessins Inédits du Marquis de Sade," *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, No. 32 (2000): 323-342. Stroeve suggests that the title of *Labyrinth* is not a coincidence, because in "the first volume of the *Journées de Florbelle* concludes in the narration of the adventures in a labyrinth."

<sup>148</sup> Alexandre Stroeve, "Des Dessins Inédits du Marquis de Sade," *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, No. 32 (2000): 326.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 331.

## CONCLUSION

In the History of Architecture, the *petite maison* has surprisingly enough been relegated to footnotes and epigraphs. My thesis removes the little house from such historical margins by demonstrating that it is located at the fault lines of eighteenth-century moral philosophy, manners, architecture, sexuality, class, and nation building. Binary oppositions such as masculine or feminine, licentious or virtuous, obscene or morally good characterize the system of terms that belongs to the *petite maison*. Such oppositions created a terminological confusion that lent ambiguous meaning to the little house. Each of these claims, the terminological confusions, the ambiguous meanings, and the historical imprint created by the little house, deserves particular attention. This is because in order to explain the historical formation of the modern domestic house one must chronicle the eighteenth-century *petite maison*. In this context, discussions of morality in elite discourse had forced sexuality out into the open. In this thesis, I question how the little house functioned as a vessel by which the language of sexuality came to be explored in both architecture and architectural theory in the twilight years of the eighteenth-century. What is at stake is nothing less than the history of the modern house.

The categorization of terms in texts such as the *Dictionnaire* and the *Encyclopédie* lent opposing meanings to the *petite maison*. As taxonomies of ideas and objects were developed, the boundaries between definitions of different architectural types were created. Problems arose when different concepts of “house” such as *maison de plaisance*, *maison rustic*, *cabane rustique*, *maison de campagne*, and diverse models of “garden” such as Arcadia, Cythera, and Elysium, were conflated in the representation and terms used to define the *petite maison*. Bastide conflated opposing terms when telling the story of seduction entitled *La Petite maison*. His narrative disturbed socially constructed attitudes about sexuality and gender difference because it relied on character development in which a man was not really a man, nor was a woman really a woman. In

the body of the text, Trémicour's house serves as a prosthetic armature that compensates for his own impotence. In return, Mélite is a well-educated woman who has resolved to not take a lover, as other women her age had already done, in order to focus on her studies. The two characters require each other in order for the house and seduction to succeed. When Bastide developed his little house he underscored the crisis that arose when building types were categorized. Categorization is problematic because it makes it impossible to escape from predefined meanings and creates an even greater difficulty to "progress" beyond the set limits of the terms. The contentious meanings of the *petite maison* fractured the boundaries created by a taxonomy of different "houses" that was established in the name of knowledge, progress and reason.

Ledoux's formulation of the *petite maison* into an architectural typology resulted in nothing less than a crisis of modernity. This crisis, or the belief that modernity is a problem, developed out of a cultural condition that sought to classify, categorize, and organize architectural types and sexuality – as well as everything else in the world – through language. Such systems of classification, exemplified by the *Encyclopédie*, were scientific in that they purported to establish universal laws. The taxonomy of architectural types that such thinking organized – and the *petite maison* is the preeminent example of this – became problematic and ambiguous once they were conflated with other architectural types that connoted different meanings. Taxonomy such as this is a form of violence because the act of classification limits the cultural scope of architecture to a specific moralized agenda. This agenda should be interpreted with enough skepticism to see that the taxonomy provides only one component to a larger story of house and home.

In other words, the *petite maison* is one example of both the crisis and the eminent rise of modernity. The house became a problem because the opposing terms that defined it made "proper" classification impossible and led to a typological confusion. The confused identity of the *petite maison* was criminalized by some and revered by others but nonetheless it needed to be resolved with definite meaning. As the French Revolution approached, representations of the little house could be found in discourse concerned with virtue, productivity and progress. And as the house became a space for the strong authoritative woman, it was criminalized and redefined as a brothel cum prison

instead. By the end of the century, a moralized discourse that included conceptions of the family, heterosexuality, gendered roles, Elysium, and house settled the so-called problem of the *petite maison* of seduction.

We see the architect Ledoux struggle with the *petite maison* throughout his career in three selected projects. First, the *petite maison* entitled the music pavilion at Louveciennes spoke to Madame du Barry's agency in the political and public sphere as well as to her authority over the King. Second, the country house for a *marchande de modes* is designed as a house with a systematized interior and sexed floors; it stands as a triumphal arch of domesticity. Because this merchant tailor had become a powerful woman in the public sphere, such a house contradicted her authority and positioned her inside the private sphere of domesticity. It is important to note that this project was developed after the 1781 publication of de Laclos' *Dangerous Liaisons* that criminalized the *petite maison* as an illicit temple of love for the Marquise de Merteuil, a powerful seductress. Third, in 1804 Ledoux published *L'Architecture considérée* in which he proposed a plan for an ideal city, a country house typology and a hybrid institution, monastery cum brothel. The treatise effectively inscribed gender difference and patriarchy into a new conception of domesticity. It also represented the little house as an architectural typology. What resulted was a new conception of the cult of womanhood in eighteenth-century France.

In this thesis, literature provides a counter story and fills some very large gaps in the contentious history of the *petite maison*. How does one handle a history that borrows from the genre of literature that vacillates between historical evidence and myth yet purports to be "true" all the same? In my slippery historical milieu between 1750 and 1804, the conception of modern domesticity and the patriarchal system that regulates it were established through novels, songs, encyclopedias, dictionaries, architecture, paintings, moral philosophy and treatises. I believe that it is particularly important to suggest that Ledoux's shift in architectural language from the *petite maison* to a *maison de campagne* resulted in nothing less than the formulation of a modern language of architecture and a modern conception of domestic space. Ledoux's professional response to the ambiguous meaning of the *petite maison* was to split it into two architectural types, the rustic house and the brothel, respectively. The virtuous turn of the *petite maison*

followed Ledoux's project at Louveciennes for Madame du Barry in the 1771 yet it would take the rest of his career to ultimately control the little house for productive purposes.

Because Bastide's narrative represents an erotic architecture that depends on a reversal of socially created gender roles to succeed, the house destabilized such categorical roles. The destabilization disturbed class boundaries, preconceived notions of sexuality and gender difference. After the French Revolution, when women were regulated to the interior sphere of domesticity, it was not the identity of women that was sought after for definition but the identity of the figures seeking to gain or maintain power. Such power was created and maintained by imposing constrictions on human behavior, or in other words, mores. I believe that the history that I have put forward sets the stage for twentieth-century abstractions of moralized gardens and *petite maisons*.

When Le Corbusier published his book entitled *Une petite maison* in 1954, he told the story of a house designed for his mother in "arcadia." Le Corbusier's arcadia was located in Vevey, Switzerland on the shores of Lake Geneva in 1923. The modernist architect writes, "This little house will shelter my father and mother in their old age, after a life of hard work... My mother is a musician, my father a nature-lover."<sup>1</sup> That the *petite maison* is the bourgeois house of leisure *par excellence* easily acquired after a lifetime of labor is taken for granted. He underscores the point that his drawings "confirm the architectural features implied in the simple solution of 1923, a period when the search for a suitable form of house was not a question which exercised people's minds very much...."<sup>2</sup> What are present in his language of labor, Arcadia, and crime, albeit in an abstracted form, are the moralized concepts that the *petite maison* connoted by the end of the eighteenth century. Elysium certainly replaced Cythera in the cultural mind's eye. And because of Ledoux's diligent work formulating a country house typology, the *petite maison* connoted such "moral" mores into the Twentieth century. Le Corbusier's bourgeois house actually developed from the Rococo pleasure pavilion that was known to spatially organize debauchery. This history yielded not only the fact that private accounts began to be interpreted in the public sphere, which has been emphasized in comparative literary studies of libertinism, but also the notion that the formation of a

modern conception of moralized domesticity was the result of nothing less than the shift of meaning of the *petite maison* from obscene to virtuous.

That the *petite maison* resurfaced in twentieth-century architectural history as a bourgeois house with which Le Corbusier rewarded his parents after their lifetime of labor is significant proof of the power of language and meaning in the formation of architecture. That Arcadia and Elysium prevailed over the so-called obscene word of Cythera is suggestive of the power that the morally toned rhetoric of family, marriage and domesticity maintained through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A distinction between words and things, representations and original objects, is exposed as less definitive in the history of the *petite maison*. Words appear to be just as authentic as objects and in the case of the *petite maison* they have so much power and authority that in order to “define” architecture and remove it from the problematic sphere of terminological confusion, it was redesigned. However, just because such definitions prevailed over others does not predetermine that they remained triumphant. Definitions and terminological confusions of the *petite maison*, which this project underscores challenges an economy of words that criminalized the house in the eighteenth century. In the twenty-first century, one would hope that definitive meanings of architecture should be interpreted as being more problematic than ambiguous meanings are.

What the history of the little house reveals is that cultural shifts in language and meaning associated with particular building types can actually initiate changes in the way that architecture is designed. And as Ledoux asserts in the title of his treatise, design can, in turn, modify human behavior. Not only does the agency of architects manipulate, reconsider and challenge the design of space, but so does the particular meaning and language associated with the architectural vocabulary and the terms used to describe it whether it be moral, gendered, or sexed. In this case, as Elysium prevailed over Cythera, a moralized little country house architectural type developed. The history of the little house reveals nothing less than the eminent rise of a modern architectural language of house and home.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Le Corbusier, *Une Petite Maison* (Basel: Birkhäuser – Publishers for Architecture, 1954): 5.

<sup>2</sup> Le Corbusier, *Une Petite Maison* (Basel: Birkhäuser – Publishers for Architecture, 1954): 63.



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