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Reputation of power, is Power . . .
Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Bk. I, ch. x

Introduction

It seems natural, even obvious, to distinguish between representations and what they are representations of. A picture of a dog is no more a dog than the word "dog" is a furry, tail-wagging mammal. Nor are properties belonging to the object of a representation necessarily properties of the representation: a picture of a big dog need not be big, a picture of a dog that resembles Fido need not resemble Fido; even a picture of brown Fido need not be brown. And no number of pictures of Fido will sympathetically induce changes in Fido or any other dog. But however clear-cut this distinction may be when what is in question are pictorial references to ordinary, middle-sized material particulars such as dogs, it is much less clear in other cases. It is no violation of common-sense to consider "representations" of such things as gender norms or national identities or selves as non-neutral in the face of what they represent. The representations of gender norms, for example, can extend and enforce them, can change or undermine them, and may well lend a hand in constituting them in the first place.

My theme here is a form of pictorial representation, one found in the theory and practice of that strain of French Academic painting under Louis XIV associated with Charles LeBrun. LeBrun held the titles of First Painter to the King and Director of the French Royal Academy of Painting, and the works I will examine were devoted to the royal power. That one effect of royal power is the ability to command resources and to cause the proliferation of representations, especially flattering representations, is no surprise. But I intend to suggest something stronger: not only did these Academic representations present an expendi-

ture of royal power, they were meant to embody and therefore extend royal power—even to constitute royal power. The view under examination does not simply collapse the common-sense distinction between signifying properties and what is signified; indeed those relations play an important role in one concept of representation modeled on language and written texts. But to this the academicians added another, more robust concept, one that does not distinguish clearly between the representation and its object.

Implausible as this view may seem at first blush, I think it can prove genuinely explanatory: explanatory for thinking about pictorial representation, about how it can operate (on both its object and its viewer), and about its relation to power. But to see its explanatory value demands considering the nature and needs of state power. For unlike middle-sized material particulars, state power requires recognition to exist. Although that recognition need not be explicit, conscious, or voluntary, it must be widespread, and pictorial representations can be a powerful device for eliciting such recognition. Yet state power in general—or at least the particular form in question here—may demand that the constitutive role of recognition be disguised. Indeed many of the views and concepts of pictorial representation developed by the Academy reverse the dependence of power on recognition; they function in an ideology of representation. Nonetheless, I think that certain "formal," or structural, features of LeBrun's works can be explained in terms of how they elicit recognition and constitute this particular form of royal power. I make no claim that LeBrun's works *must* be explained so: for one, the royal power represented by LeBrun's works is long gone, and his representations do not now have any miraculous power to raise the dead. For any representations actually to operate as I suggest requires the support of a whole complex of institutions and activities committed to the care and feeding of state power. It is only because such a complex did exist that LeBrun's representations could have a recognizable object, i.e., the royal power of Louis XIV, to represent in the first place. What I shall argue is that the sort of representations developed by LeBrun and the Academy played a decisive role in extending and shaping state power as the embodied royal power of a particular moment of French absolutism—a form of state power that is politically absolute, yet also located particularly in the body of the King. And this means that like state power itself, the "body" in which it is located is no mere pre-social lump of flesh but an instituted body, one instituted in part by being represented.

The Documents in the Case

The style and substance of painting called "Academic" is largely due to a single institution: the *Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture*, founded in the youth of Louis XIV and typical of the state bureaucracy associated with his regime. It was established as one bid in the long battle for royal supremacy over

bourgeois prerogative. The royalist allegiance of the Academy lay at the heart of its claim to be the champion of a noble, liberal art degraded by association with craft-guilds to mere handiwork, to craft. To this end the Academy took over some functions of artistic training, regulated the careers of many artists, and played an important role in economic centralization and the nationalization of production. In short, it was "an ingeniously adapted civil-servantdom of typical Louis XIV character."[1] And chief civil servant was Charles LeBrun, who served as the Academy's Director for three decades, all the while amassing power and patronage.[2]

So the Academy itself arose in the consolidation of royal power. Moreover, part and parcel of its operation was the attempt to extend royal power over cultural production, by regulating artistic style and monopolizing art theory. This attempt was not always fully successful, not even to the extent of stifling the often acrimonious debate among Academy members about the chief functions and virtues of painting. Nonetheless, for the sake of simplicity, I shall treat the views on the ascendency under LeBrun as the "official" view. Particularly important to this view is the conception of "history painting" as the pinnacle of painterly achievement: although less noble genres, such as still-life painting, could be relegated to the status of craft, the Academy under LeBrun took over the business of history painting. It is through its monopoly on history painting that the Academy developed its two notions of representation: on the one hand, representation was to produce texts—narrations or *histoires*—that could be read by viewers competent in a signifying system (a select audience indeed[3]). On the other hand, the "textual" work of representation was largely secondary to the depiction of Kingship and its virtues, a depiction that did not simply "signify" them.

The germs of both notions can be found as early as 1648 in the request of Egmont Councillor de Charmois to the young Louis XIV to found an Academy of Painting. Charmois explicitly appeals to royal power to support true "art" in the face of its oppression by the "mechanical crafts."[4] Instead painting ought to be grouped with the other, more established, noble arts on the basis of a common parentage in what he calls "dessein." *Dessein* might be translated as "design" or

[1] Nicolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art Past and Present* (New York, 1973), 99-101.

[2] He was granted the title of First Painter to the King and given letters of nobility as well as being entrusted with complete control of the Gobelins and named *Directeur et Garde Général des Dessins et des Tableaux de Cabinet du Roi*, in charge of the royal collections of painting and sculpture. See H. Jouin, *Charles LeBrun et les Arts sous Louis XIV* (Paris, 1889), and Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine: Spectacle et Politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris, 1981), 137.

[3] For the effect of the esoteric character of state spectacles in shaping their audiences through exclusion, see *ibid.*; 7-8, 21-22, 38, 101-4, 150-51.

[4] "Requête de M. de Charmois," in L. Vitet, *L'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture: Etude Historique* (Paris, 1861), 198. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

"drawing," but Charmois conceives it as a form of writing, even calling painting an "escriture universelle"—which can be put in the service of royal power, especially in the depiction of the royal person.[5] The portraits of the artists who eagerly await the chance "to imitate the charms that blaze out of the face of Your Majesty" will serve the purpose of reanimating the king's presence in time (*d'icy à plusiers siecles*) and in space, thereby adding "the worship of strangers to the admiration that [the king's] renown has awoken in their souls."[6] Thus Charmois tells us that painting is a "true writing," of the sort known to the Greek authors of scripture; but rather than recording the divine word, it represents the quasi-divine person of the King, making him perpetual, ubiquitous, and the object of worship.

These remarks are striking not only for the sacred character they attribute to the King, but also because they anticipate a view of painting later expressed by LeBrun and his circle. Like Charmois, they endorsed *dessein* as essential to painting, preferring it to its supposed rival, color, adding the values of "invention" and "expression"[7] for history painting, be it scriptural or historical. And because narration was one of the primary duties of painting, this official party also stressed the commonality between painting and the other arts. We can find ample documentation for these preferences in the series of *Conférences* and *Discourses* sponsored by the Academy, especially in the preface added by André Félibien to his transcription of the 1667 *Conférences*. There Félibien sets forth various aesthetic principles, most of them based on a distinction between the "practical" and "theoretical" components of painting—with the preference given to the latter. Indeed all distinctive features of painting are ultimately subordinate to the task of narration it shares with other arts: a depiction of human action that follows a narrative and temporal order. However different the means used to depict such action, painting shares with history and poetry the aim of ordering the narration of its action in a way that makes the principal parts clear and avoids distractions for its "reader." In other words it aims at dispositional unity of action, what LeBrun calls the task of "invention," the ordered distribution of information. The primary desideratum for a painting then is a depiction of human action that subordinates all the parts of the painting to a single and central "plot."[8]

To this end, Félibien stresses the need to capture the "diverse expressions of joy or sadness and other suitable passions."[9] Such expressions are the motor of

[5] "Requête de M. de Charmois," 201.

[6] *Ibid*., 199.

[7] See Renssaler Lee, "Ut Poesis Pictura: The Humanistic Theory of Painting," *Art Bulletin*, 22 (1940), 268.

[8] A. Félibien, *Conférences de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* in: *Entretiens sur les vies et sure les ouvrages des plus excellent peintres anciens et modernes; avec la vie des architectes* (Trevoux, 1725), 313 (pages are misnumbered).

[9] *Ibid.*, 315.

the narration, the basic means by which it is produced. These expressions are embodied in figures of humans in action, which are then arranged in various groups displaying the reactions of characters to the central action. But expression, both in individuals and in groups, is to be kept subordinate to the central plot, appearing as effects and ornamentation of this core and thereby reinforcing it through a kind of overdetermination. Thus, the groups of figures must be clearly marked in order of importance.[10] Also important is proper "decorum"—that is, the appropriate adjustment of the reactions displayed by the figures to the central story (e.g., their expressions) given differences in circumstances, such as age, sex, nationality, profession, customs, passions, and national dress.[11] "Beauty" becomes in large part a matter of decorum and is placed under the aegis of narration: it consists in the appropriateness and conformity of the means of representation to what the painter wants to represent, which is a well-ordered narration or *histoire*.[12] Throughout his Preface Félibien endorses those principles he sees as crucial to the function of painting as *representation*. For this reason the distinction he draws between the "theoretical" and the "practical" might best be understood as a distinction between what is represented (that is, some variation on a traditional story or history), and everything else, especially the means of representing.[13]

It is worth noting that to these poles of represented *histoire* and representing means, Félibien adds a third: the viewer on whom the representation acts. The aim of a clearly constructed painterly *histoire* is to produce passions in the soul of the viewer. Félibien compares this effect of painting with the power of music to inspire sentiments in its audience, although he gives the advantage to painting.[14] The viewer of an effective painting thereby extends the representative reach of painting, becoming yet another player in the drama unfolded on the canvas. As I shall argue further, Academic theory and practice put a novel twist on the order of the relationship: rather than the painting (and what is represents) being understood primarily in terms of the effect it has on an otherwise independent viewer, the viewer and the viewer's response are subsumed into the representational work of the painting. The viewer's response is important, because as Charmois proposed, it adds glory to what is represented.

The distinction Félibien made between representing and represented elements appears also in a "Discourse" presented by LeBrun in 1672, where he promotes felicitous *dessein* as the highest virtue a painter can achieve. LeBrun divides *dessein* fairly clearly into two parts. "Theoretic" *dessein* refers to a kind of

[10] Félibien, *Conférences de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, 316.

[11] *Ibid.*, 217.

[12] *Ibid.*, 217-318.

[13] The "practical" also includes those features of painting that are not really representative at all, what Félibien calls the the mechanical or handicraft parts of "*la practique*."

[14] *Ibid.*, 223, 324, 325.

conceptual or intellectual design; it depends solely on the imagination, is universal for all mental activities, and can be expressed more or less directly in words.[15] "Practical" *dessein* is a product of the intellectual *dessein*. In painting, such *dessein* depends on the hand and uses the pencil "to give form and proportion and ... imitate all visible things even to expressing the passions of the soul."[16] Theoretic *dessein* seems to be common to all forms of representation (despite its reliance on the imagination): it is the conceptual content that will be represented by different media. But some kinds of expression seem to represent this content more directly than do others. Language seems particularly gifted here: it is the most direct means of expression, and even has the power to express independently the representative content of all other media. Nonetheless, drawing or line, which LeBrun takes to be an independent component of painting, seems to share some of the advantages of spoken or written language. Drawing is the medium of practical *dessein*, the medium providing a representative power to painting, as well as to sculpture and architecture.[17] In painting, *dessein* constructs the expressions representing the passions of the soul, which are in turn the vehicle of the text. In contrast, color is far lower on the scale of representative power, perhaps right off of the scale altogether. LeBrun's humble evaluation of color stems in part from the view that it has only limited use as a representing medium: its materiality makes it inflexible, for it cannot be treated as a substitute for something else; it lacks representative transparency (one does not see through it as one does *through* line); and it does not enter into combinations with other representing components as readily as do lines.[18]

The relation of represented to representing elements seems to determine an order of organization relating each part to the whole—a point evident in LeBrun's *Conférence* on Poussin's *The Fall of Manna* (itself a model of organizational clarity). As documented in Félibien's transcription, LeBrun starts with an overall description of the work—its subject matter and composition.[19] He then moves to the ordering of figures into several groups (and the ways in which those groups are subordinated to the principal part),[20] from there to the *dessein* and proportion of those figures, and then on to their expressions. The order of discussion thus moves generally from considering the representing means to the subject represented thereby. To some extent this is a move to smaller and smaller parts of the painting, a kind of decomposition to get to the most basic representing

[15] "Opinion of the Discourse on the Merit of Color by M. Blanchard," in *Conférences Inédites de l'Academie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture d'après les manuscrits des archives de l'Ecole des Beaux-arts*, ed. A. Fontaine (Paris, 1903), 36.

[16] *Ibid.*, 36.

[17] *Ibid*., 41.

[18] *Ibid.*, 36-37.

[19] More accurately, with its disposition, the narrative relation of parts to the whole (*la disposition en général et de chaque figure en particulier*), Félibien, *Conférences de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, 402.

[20] *Ibid.*, 407.

parts (e.g., from groups, to figures, to parts of figures, to expressions). The representative power of the painting seems then to reside in its smallest parts, its representing units, i.e., the expressions of the figures. LeBrun identifies such movements of the body as the primary vehicle of representation: the movements of the body represent the movements of the soul.[21] Moreover, these movements of the body, or expressions,[22] can be analyzed into discrete units, which function as units of representation that can be combined to show complex emotional states, which cannot themselves be seen. The different units and combinations of units are coordinated to represent various reactions to the principal subject, in this case to the body of Moses and the miraculous fall of Manna from heaven. Indeed LeBrun tells us that the whole painting describes a causal chain, the origin of which lies in this central subject.[23] The painting thereby displays a strict hierarchy of significance, based on movement from effect to cause, where each of the combinations of representing units points to others in ascending order of causation and importance, culminating in the central, motivating theme.

LeBrun's understanding of the special "vocabulary" of painting comes to fruition in his *Treatise on the Passions*, or *of General and Particular Expressions*, read before the Academy in 1678 and published twenty years later with engravings after LeBrun's drawings. LeBrun begins with a definition of expression in general as an "artless and natural resemblance of things that one wants to represent," which is "necessary" to the perfection of painting and by which "all that which is feigned seems to be true."[24] LeBrun limits his discussion, however, to a part of this general description: that which "marks the movements of the heart, and that makes visible the effects of passion." Despite the first description of expression as "natural and artless," LeBrun proceeds to codify and taxonomize this particular form of expression with nary a nod to how it produces the resemblance with represented things. Instead he justifies and explains his code of expression by explaining the significance of each unit of expression on the basis of its causal connection with a state of the soul through the "movements of the heart."

The main goal of the treatise, however, lies in the taxonomies LeBrun produces. The passions, LeBrun tells us, divide into the simple and the complex (or "composed").[25] The first group includes wonder (or astonishment), love, hate, desire, joy, and sadness; most other passions are compounded out of these simples.

[21] Félibien, *Conférences*, 413.

[22] For an account of the distinction between "general" and "particular" expressions see Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: The Origin and Influence of Charles LeBrun's "Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière"* (New Haven, 1994), 1 n. 2, 9.

[23] Félibien, *Conférences*, 416.

[24] *Traité des Passions* in: Jouin, 234. For a discussion of the various manuscripts of the text (alternatively titled *Conférence sur l'expression*), a transcription of Picart's 1698 edition, and another translation, see Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions*, 109-11, 112, 126.

[25] Jouin, *Charles LeBrun*, 237.

This division provides the categories for a taxonomic and causal account of the various expressions of the face and other external signs, whereby they are correlated to the passions that are their causal origins: the result is that each of the parts of a particular expression corresponds to the parts of the correlated passion. Simple passions cause "simple" expressions; complex passions produce complex expressions. So, too, do mild passions produce mild expressions and harsh passions harsh expressions.[26] These are no merely figurative analogies. Rather the causal connection between passion and expression is used to create structural and qualitative isomorphisms. The division of the passions into simple and complex allows LeBrun to map out these isomorphisms with fair precision. The six simple passions and their corresponding expressions constitute a set of primitive signifying units,[27] although they can also be arranged on a scale of positive or negative reactions diverging from a neutral center.[28] Wonder is the neutral state, but the soul usually finds an object to be either good or bad and so moves into positive or negative states, which can be simple or complex.

The expressions that correspond to these states are as schematized as the passions they represent. For instance, the nostrils move up and the pupils down as the reaction to an object becomes increasingly negative; whereas attraction is signaled by downward-turning nostrils and pupils that begin to roll back into the head—toward the pineal gland.[29] (As befits the extreme nature of the passion, "rapture" produces the most extreme eyeball rolling; see figure 1.) Most importantly for our purposes, these isolated expressions of parts of the face can be combined to produce complex expressions. Negative and positive expressions can even be combined, as in the expression of hope, where the eyebrows move in something like a sine curve (see figure 2). The only restriction on the combinatory possibilities of the units of expression is the actual structure of the complex passions themselves, for it is the structure of such passions that will be represented in the full facial expression, which is completely subservient to the needs of this system of representation. In this respect, despite his definition of expression as "natural and artless," LeBrun seems to aim at the properties that the Port-Royal logicians would ascribe to a conventional sign and that constitute its advantages relative to a natural one. In Foucault's memorable language, the conventional sign is "simple, easy to remember, applicable to an indefinite num-

[26] Jouin, *Charles LeBrun*, 243.

[27] I shall reserve "signification" for describing the operation of this sort of representation, in contrast with the kind that will be described below.

[28] See Norman Bryson, *Word and Image* (Cambridge, 1981), 50, and especially Montagu,*The Expression of the Passions*, 18-19, 21-23.

[29] For further illustrations, see Bryson, *Word and Image*, 49; Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions*, 29, 128-39, 145, 147; and Gareau, *Charles LeBrun: First Painter to King Louis XIV* (New York, 1992), 99. The most complete catalogue of LeBrun's works can be found in Thuillier, *Charles LeBrun 1619-1690, peintre et dessinateur* (Versailles, 1963).

Figure 1: Charles LeBrun, “Rapture.”

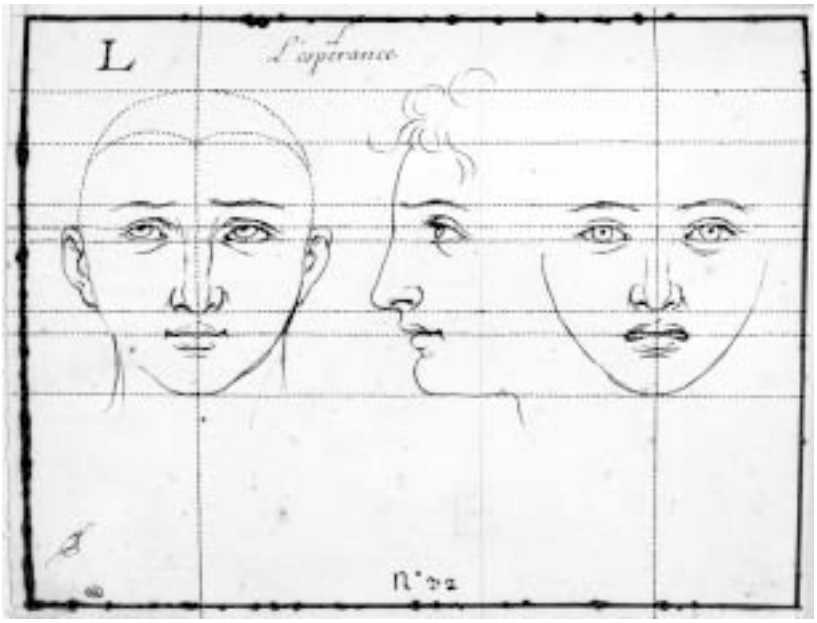

Figure 2: Charles LeBrun, “Hope.”

ber of elements, susceptible of subdivision within itself and of combination with other signs."[30]

LeBrun's *Treatise* gives us something like a lexicon for painting, outlining both the semantic and etymological dimensions of the highly agglutinate code of bodily movements. Its "semantics" is anchored in the causal and signifying connections between body and soul; its ordering principles are sketched in the *Conférences* as the principles governing the construction of an "histoire." But the analogy LeBrun sought with language only goes so far: the ordering principles, for one, constitute no genuine syntax, since proper ordering of the basic units requires understanding the "sense" of the *histoire* they convey.[31] But the thoroughgoing codification of signifying units and their ability to be combined in orderly ways does mark the (semantic) *compositionality* of the entire system.[32] Norman Bryson describes this compositional codification as resting on a system of "the legible body," a useful term I shall adopt to explain the ends of this notion of representation. On this view the painted body is constructed through the play of signifying units that are read off in order to gain access to the underlying text. The body is exhausted by this reading, emptied of all importance and producing what Bryson calls the "characteristic dessication of LeBrun's images."[33] The aim is to produce a thoroughly transparent system of representation, in which the representing elements are arranged in a perfect isomorphism with the represented, each pointing to its distinct representational content and leaving no remainder.

The attempt to develop a flexible, conventionalized codex of representing units is modeled on a notion of how writing produces narratives (*histoires*); it makes the representative power of such units and combinations of units a matter of their operation as substitutes, or pointers, that signify in the absence of what they represent. But this sort of representation is ultimately subservient to another sense of representation, one in which what is represented is supposed to be made present and manifest. For the representing elements are bearers of a delegated authority: they represent a *histoire* which is always in the service of something else—the body and power of the King. LeBrun's most typical paintings and cycles of decoration portray either the virtues of the ministers of the King, models of and for the King, or most importantly of all, the King himself in all his glory and power, embedded in allegorical narrations of the accomplish-

[30] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, 1970), 61-62.

[31] For a general treatment of this point, see Richard Wollheim, *On Formalism and Its Kinds* (Barcelona, 1995), 26-27.

[32] I use "compositionality" here in its semantic sense, as a feature of a system in which a finite number of primitive units can generate an infinite number of meaningful wholes (of infinite complexity), and the meaning of the whole is a function of the meaning of the primitives.

[33] Bryson, *Word and Image*, 42.

ments of the King that are unfolding portraits of his titles and attributes. And the task of portraying an embodied and absolute state power requires operations of representation beyond that allowed by the legible body.

The Nature of "History"

The extension of the work of representation beyond what the system of the legible body can accommodate arises from a certain ideology of history, one in which all histories are made subordinate to the glory of Louis XIV. "History" in this sense is by no means simply a record of the past; just as important are the contemporaneous events of the living monarch's reign. Moreover, as Bryson argues, it unites two senses of history that we would normally keep distinct: history as event and history as the description of the event:

> in history, event and scripture fuse, for the historical is not only that which has occurred, but that which has recurred as writing ... in conquest, event is Scripture even as it happens: the battle is already narrative at the moment it takes place ... so far from shaping event into meaning, all the historian there has to do is to repeat the writing that emanates spontaneously from history itself.[34]

The sort of political power wielded by Louis XIV demands this view of history and its representation. Louis indeed commanded that LeBrun accompany him on his Flanders campaign of 1667[35]—but not because LeBrun happened to be a brilliant military strategist; rather the aim was that the historical event be made over immediately into a text. Yet the glory and power of Louis means that this could not appear a mere make-over: rather the event, and Louis himself, should immediately produce its own *histoire*. Seeing history already made as a text and testament to the glory of Louis, all LeBrun the historian had to do was to repeat from memory the event/text. The repetition propagates the fame of Louis to those absent from the actual moment, but this propagation was supposed to issue from the very presence of Louis in the original events. The result is that LeBrun's history paintings rest on a doubled notion of representation: on the one hand the paintings represent the event by substituting for it in different times and places; on the other hand what they represent is already a representation. And that representation is no mere substitution; instead it is, as Louis Marin explains, a redoubled and intensified presentation, one in which the events of history are made present through their titles and marks of legibility,[36]

[34] Bryson, *Word and Image*, 35-36.
[35] Jouin, *Charles LeBrun*, 213.
[36] Marin, *Portrait of the King* (Minneapolis, 1988), 6-7.

i.e., as events displaying the authoritative power and glory of Louis. This sort of historical "representation" subsumes even its representative substitutes in the self-propagating manifestation of Louis's power.

What we see is an ideology of historical representation tied to a particular view of royal power. The mechanics of this ideology have been usefully analyzed by Marin in a study of a plan (*dessein*) for a history of Louis's 1670 campaigns, written by Paul Pellison-Fontanier and addressed to Colbert. The aim of the history would be to sketch portraits of the players in this drama from among which "that of His Majesty must burst forth."[37] For this reason Pellison contrasts history with registers and chronicles; history is a kind of painting.[38] But this is a complicated kind of painting; it begins with a "picture" of the state of affairs at the beginning of the chain of events.[39] The next move is to describe when things shift out of balance, the moment of change.[40] This constitutes the explanation of the causes of the war, but that is nothing other than the explanation of the king's just claims.[41] Thus, what seems to be a simple explanation of a causal chain of events becomes an account of the king's justice and power. It is no longer a narration of temporally successive events: writing in the *futur antérieur*, Pellison describes actions that make up the history but only in order to reveal the attributes of the king's enduring character.[42] The description of the temporal, narrative progression of events is transformed into a depiction of the coexistent properties, even perfections, of the king's essence: "in the single action is revealed a universal essence of which the action is the representation."[43] The result, Marin concludes, is that the "narrative of the last war becomes [a portrait of] the body of the king."[44]

What Marin calls a transformation of the narrative into a "portrait" of the king's body illustrates several important points about the form of representation suited to the depiction of Louis's Kingship. The transformation rests on an ideology of history that holds that the events that make up a history are no brute facts, but are charged with representative power: what they express is the power located in Louis. Louis is their cause, the agent of history possessed of the power to transform things almost magically into vessels for signifying what is other than themselves.[45] Louis the King is also the ultimate significance of history. The events and characters in a history are signifiers, the King is what is signi-

[37] Marin, *Portrait of the King*, 40.

[38] *Ibid.*, 41.

[39] *Ibid.*, 51.

[40] *Ibid.*, 58.

[41] *Ibid*., 59.

[42] *Ibid.*, 74-75. Marin characterizes this as a tense describing an eternal present, an a-chronic present in which all the parts co-exist (*ibid*., 86).

[43] *Ibid.*, 84.

[44] *Ibid.*, 88.

[45] See also Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 31, and Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, 1992), 62, 74.

fied, and so the King appears as both the end and the cause of signification itself. And the signified king is no mere symbol of the state, nor some ideal of political power. Rather the ultimate signified is the individual, yet absolute, embodied king: the body of the King. Moreover, the King's body is both the total and sufficient cause of history; embodying power completely and all at once, the causality exercised by Louis's body is all one way: the unfolding of events or of their description is not itself any sort of cause, not even for the *display* of Louis's power. That power is already present and manifest in the attributes of Louis's body, and any further display seems simply a result of the power manifest in Louis's body — a power that turns events and their narration into a self-portrait, indeed an extension of Louis's body. To present such a portrait is the function of an ideologically loaded history: it both recognizes the power Louis embodies and claims that that power in no way depends on the recognition afforded by the history: Louis's body generates its own recognition. What we should now examine is the process whereby the representation of the King's body became so important that it had to be taken to represent nothing other than itself.

The History of the Body of the King

This process has been well documented by Ernst Kantorowicz in his seminal work *The King's Two Bodies*, although it has been left to others to consider its particular application to the French monarchy.[46] Kantorowicz's account is particularly useful for illustrating some of the problems facing attempts to institute power bodily, especially the tension-fraught role given to the king's images. Kantorowicz describes a long history of explaining royal power by making the king a *persona mixta* or *gemina persona*, e.g., a person pairing a mortal side that exists in time with an immortal side that exists in the sempiternity of the angels. This doubling was sometimes extended to spatial presence, so that the king becomes both precisely located and ubiquitous, and even to bodily presence.[47] Kantorowicz locates the source of this doubling in Christological conceptions, particularly in the doctrine of the eucharist. As the non-figurative nature of transubstantiation was emphasized the host came to be called the "corpus verum" of Christ; it was paired with a "corpus mysticum," which was initially transferred to the church as a whole. The latter term eventually came to be applied to the political realm, such that the polity was conceived as a body whose head was the king. So long as the king was bound to the realm as the head

[46] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957). For treatments of how the doctrine played in France, see Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, Ch.1, especially 11-15, and also Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, tr. Lydia Cochrane (Durham, N.C., 1991), 121-22, and Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 43.

[47] See Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 171, 184.

to a body, the analogy could serve to limit royal power, as it was used for a time in France. Indeed for much of its history in both England and France, the doctrine worked to distinguish the private, mortal individual from the immortal and symbolic lineage. But nothing in the distinction prevented associating the mystical body with the particular person of the king.[48] As we shall see, this was a possibility exploited by Louis XIV. Indeed, perhaps the most characteristic feature of his brand of absolutism was the identification of the mystical body with Louis's particular person, the primacy of which was announced by Louis himself: "*la nation ne fait pas corps en France, elle réside tout entière dans la personne du roi*."[49]

These two bodies were already associated to some degree by the notion of the "Dignity" (*Dignitas*) of the King's office. Whereas an office is something only fulfilled by an individual, to which the individual is subordinated, the Dignity of the King "referred chiefly to the singularity of the royal office, to the sovereignty vested in the king by the people and resting individually in the king alone."[50] A Dignity is identified with a certain sort of individual, and although the titles designating it are not quite the same as proper names, neither do they simply pick out a quality of an individual or offer a definite description. What they designate is a "singular," something uniting those contrary properties and categories that had been uneasily associated in the *persona mixta* of the king. The peculiar metaphysical status of this singularity was explained by the theorists of the Dignity on analogy with the strange "natural history" of the Phoenix: after a life of 500 years, the Phoenix sets itself on fire and perishes, but only so that it can arise again from the ashes.[51] The successive mortals still counted as the same individual,[52] and so it became both father and son to itself, both mortal and immortal, and indeed both species and individual.[53] The term "Phoenix" thus referred equally and unambiguously to the mortal individual and the immortal species, which were simply different aspects of the self-same thing, and which made the Phoenix an excellent symbol for a Dignity. Like the Phoenix, the Dignity fused various dualities, particularly that of individual and office, in one corporate and singular body. Associated with the *corpus mysticum*, which in turn became a "singular" united with the *corpus verum*, the Dignity is invested fully in an individual, who thereby gains a mystical body of his or her own.[54]

[48] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 220-21.
[49] See Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 13.
[50] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 384.
[51] See Marin, 100 ff, for a discussion of the application of the analogy to Louis XIV.
[52] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 393.
[53] *Ibid.*, 388-400.
[54] *Ibid*., 406.

The rise of absolutism in France led to just such a fusion of the dual aspects of the Dignity in the body of the King.[55] This fusion is illustrated by the development of the royal funeral rites, rites founded upon the doctrine that the "*Dignitas* [and hence the King] *non moritur*," which as Kantorowicz points out, explains the familiar, but peculiar cry "*le roy est mort; vive le roy*." Particularly interesting is the custom of putting an effigy dressed in the royal insignia on top of the coffin of the king. In its English origins, the practice was purely figurative, symbolizing death's dissolution of what was united in life: the effigy represented the body politic (the mystical body of the polity), which was normally invisible, while the usually visible natural body of the king (the body of the king qua mortal man) lay inside the coffin. But in France, where it was introduced in 1422, the effigy took on a life of its own. At first the doubling of bodies was accompanied by a doubling of the rites; to the mourning of a funeral was added a triumphal procession centered on the effigy and celebrating the immortality of the royal Dignity. But the effigy eventually came to be treated as the embodied living Majesty, the Dignity itself. During the triumphal rites, it received constant attention and all the forms of respect due the living King. No merely symbolic substitute, the effigy seemed to *be* the King in his Dignity. So literally did this come to be taken that the successor to the dead king had to stay away from the image, since there could not be two embodiments of the immortal Dignity at the same time.[56] Indeed the turn these rites took in France illustrates an increasingly strict conception of the unity between individual, kingly body and immortal Dignity, the unity of a transcendent body clearly different from any mortal remains.

The dead body in the coffin was no longer the King, for death did not dissolve the *King* into his two bodies, but merely created a corpse, while the substance of the King's body transferred to that of the effigy in an act of political transubstantiation. Moreover, these funeral practices show not just the identification of the royal Dignity with a particular body, but the demand that the Dignity must always be present and manifest in that body, a demand fulfilled somewhat clumsily by the effigy. As long as no living body bears the Dignity, the effigy seemed to display the real presence of the king qua King. Indeed what one saw when one looked even at the living King was not a natural body at all (one that could be identified with a corpse), but the Majesty ordained by God appearing externally (although at least through the end of the sixteenth century, the king remained "internally" human[57]).[58] Wherever it was located, the body of

[55] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 446.

[56] *Ibid*., 421-29.

[57] *Ibid.*, 422.

[58] For differing views about the "direction of fit" in the fusion of the private, physical body and the political, symbolic body, compare Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 131, to Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 126.

power had to be manifest as such, and at least part of the function of the proliferation of ceremonials under Louis was to make this body visible.[59]

The body here is conceived as the fusion of the immortal Dignity with an individual body—a singular, Phoenix-like super-body, identical throughout time. But the twin demands that the Dignity be identified with an individual body and that the body manifest the Dignity, the authority and power there invested, resulted in a peculiar status for the image of the king's body. Starting early in the sixteenth century, the royal image in general began to take on a new and important role. For instance, the respect and forms of behavior due to the person of the King were transferred to his images, so much so that some French jurists proposed the right of asylum for the "holy" statues of the king, and injury done to royal statues and images counted as treason.[60] The result is a thoroughgoing political iconolatry, in which the portrait of the King embodied his real presence, that is, the presence of what is manifest in the living body. This is a doctrine clearly related to the need that power be recognized, and recognized as legitimate, to constitute state power. By being represented, the body of power can be displayed in a way that makes recognition inescapable.[61] Thus not only is the body stripped bare of his representations (e.g., the naked body of the king in death) simply not the real presence of the King, but even the living body of the king must be constituted as representation to count as King. Marin cites Félibien eulogizing Louis XIV as a "chef d'oeuvre of its power" that gives to the earth such "a perfect model of the great King" that Félibien felt himself "gently forced to make a portrait of [His] Majesty's portrait and to give it to the public."[62] Louis was thus already supposed to be a portrait even before the work of pen or paint began.

But Félibien's praises finesse a difficult issue for the King's representation. Marin argues that crucial to the transformation of a natural body or image into the embodiment and extension of power is the act of naming and recognition; indeed "to make the king's portrait, that is, to make a copy of the king's portrait, is not only to reproduce and multiply the links of the mimetic chain but also to celebrate, as officiating priest chosen by Heaven, the ritual of the royal mystery of the transubstantiation of the prince's body."[63] Yet the ideology of absolute, embodied royal power requires that the actions of both the maker of the portrait and the viewer who recognizes it must themselves count as an effect of royal power, of the presence of royal power in the portrait. For this very reason the

[59] See Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 14, also 16-20, 22.

[60] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 427, n. 371. For discussions of the history of such practices, see Pevsner, *Academies of Art*, 84, 26; Kantorowicz, 427; Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 129; and Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 9.

[61] See Marin, *Food for Thought* (Baltimore, 1986), xvii.

[62] Cited in *ibid*., 210.

[63] *Ibid.*, 211.

concept of how image can represent royal power must be a bit unstable. On the one hand, royal power itself causes the viewer's recognition. On the other hand, it is by being represented, that royal power can be displayed and thus recognized. If royal power is embodied, absolute power—power located completely in a singular—then it requires being extended through representations of this body. But by the same token it cannot be located in any representation distinct from itself. The singular body of power, the body of Louis the King, must somehow cause a proliferation of representations, yet be present singularly in all of them so that it depends only on itself.

This tension was already present in the multiplication of "bodies" in the funeral rites. We can also see it in a telling passage where Félibien struggles with the number of representations of Louis and their relation to each other:

> [I]f the works of Apelles provided the opportunity to say formerly that there were two Alexanders, that Philip's son was the Invincible one and that of Apelles the Inimitable one, there are grounds for saying today with more truth that with your Person and your Portrait we have two Kings, both of whom will never have anything comparable to them.[64]

Although it might be barely acceptable to distinguish in the case of Alexander between the natural body, which was the son of Philip, and the inimitable King, given in the portrait, Louis is already a portrait. And the portrait that Louis is is inimitable, just because the absolute king is inimitable (a common appellation given to Louis). Indeed no portrait can be an imitation: instead of imitating, they display the King who is without comparison. But between the Portrait and the Person of Louis XIV, we have two portraits and thus two Kings, each of which constitutes the real presence of an incomparable Phoenix-King. In short, embodied power that is singular, yet extended in space through its representations, seems to result in a proliferation of incomparable Kings, and a threat to absolute power.

LeBrun's Representation

LeBrun's representations address the tension between the singular body of power and its images. Indeed I shall argue that taken as a whole, they resolve the tension, successfully representing royal power as embodied and also extended through its representations, thereby helping to institute that power as singular and absolute. The compositional, expressive system of signification examined above has an important role to play in such representation, but to see its role requires deciphering some of the uses to which LeBrun put it. Félibien provides

[64] Cited in Marin, *Food for Thought*, 213.

a useful commentary for one of LeBrun's most famous paintings, the *Queens of Persia at the Feet of Alexander* (also known as the *Tent of Darius*), painted for Louis XIV in 1662 (see figure 3). The work depicts an incident from the histories of Alexander, in which Alexander visits the family of the conquered Darius. Félibien tells us that at first the women and their servants mistake Alexander's companion for the king himself; realizing their error, they throw themselves on Alexander's mercy, showing various states of high emotion. The scene provides any number of opportunities for LeBrun to demonstrate his skill with the various codes that convey the history: marks of national origin, minute differentiae of rank, and above all, expressions of complex and even mixed emotions. Indeed the history demands what it illustrates: the exercise of highly tuned faculties of decoding, even for recognizing the central character of Alexander. The body of Alexander is divided into individual units, each of which represents a slightly different state of the soul: ". . . clemency in the left hand, protective assurance in the right, compassion in the face, civility in the left leg; finally in the characteristic tilt of the head the personal sign of Alexander."[65] It is to this figure that all

Figure 3: Charles LeBrun, "The Family of Darius at the Feet of Alexander," ceiling from the Queen's apartment.

[65] A. Félibien, *Les Reines de Perse aux pieds d'Alexandre, peinture du cabinet du roy*, tr. Collonel Parsons, as *The Tent of Darius Explained* (London, 1703), 11, quoted in Bryson, *Word and Image*, 53.

the other figures react, and their bodily movements are to be read off in light of the central figure. The queen mother shows humiliation, the wife of Darius dissatisfaction mixed with hope, and so on in painstaking detail.[66] We see here the kind of hyper-legibility that LeBrun was to recommend and codify sixteen years later in his *Treatise*.

But the representation in this painting displays a dimension not explicitly figured in the writings of the Academy: the significance of the body of Alexander. This figure is both marked by the composition of the scene and the thematic center of attention. All of the other figures react to it; it is the cause of their actions.[67] To be sure, the principle of the unity of action demands such centralization of the motivating cause. But the reactions of the figures are centered on Alexander in yet a further sense; they represent not only the passions experienced by the subsidiary figures, but these passions themselves point to attributes of Alexander, particularly his power. On the one hand the reactions of the figures are structured narratively: moving from beginning to end, they show humility in the face of his power, the mixed emotions of hope and fear of the effects of his power and then sheer wonder and admiration, perhaps the purest mark of the presence of royal power. On the other hand the body of Alexander is not just the cause to which the figures all react, but his presence is the *meaning* of their actions, and his power is displayed though these actions. The actions represent the various manifestations of kingly power on those of different origins, ranks, ages, etc., so that one could almost reconstruct the character of Alexander from the expressions of the cast deployed about him. To be sure Félibien's description shows that much of Alexander's body is also mapped by the generalized codes of representation, for its movements display his character. Nonetheless, his body does retain one unusual feature: "the personal sign of Alexander" in the tilt of his head. The tilt of the head is significant, but it is a strange sort of sign: unique, untransferable and capable of combination only with highly particularized other signs (those compatible with kingship). Alexander's body thus appears a unique and extraordinary body, a body represented less to be legible than as an end in itself.

The peculiar importance the body of Alexander has among all the other expressive bodies is exemplified in the series of battle scenes LeBrun painted during the 1660s. The opportunities for movement and highly charged expression are obviously numerous in such subjects, and LeBrun exploits them to the full. And the centrality of the general-king Alexander is likewise obvious in paintings in which he is the cause of the fighting in a double sense—both its instigator and its goal. But perhaps most interesting is the handling of the royal body itself. An example is *the Entry of Alexander into Babylon* (see figure 4).

[66] Félibien, *Les Reines de Perse aux pieds d'Alexandre*, 15, also Bryson, *Word and Image*, 54.

[67] Compare LeBrun's analysis of the figure of Moses in Poussin's *Fall of Manna* described above.

Figure 4: Charles LeBrun, "The Entrance of Alexander into Babylon" or "The Triumph of Alexander."

Figure 5: Charles LeBrun, "The Franche-Comté Conquered for the Second Time."

Surrounded by all the marks of kingship, the triumphal chariot, the spear and the royal cloak, as well as all the figures representing the conquered Babylon, Alexander calmly, almost motionlessly, glances outward from the canvas. The body itself shows none of the signifying expressions consuming all around it; it does not seem subjected to the task of representing anything other than itself. Indeed the series of preparatory drawings executed for the *Passage to Granique* shows how important the appearance of simple bodily presence in the figure of Alexander was for LeBrun.[68] Each subsequent sketch displays the body of Alexander more and more clearly. LeBrun actually devotes more ink to the figure with each successive drawing, as if the body of Alexander literally deserves more material than any other figures, whose bodies we are in some sense to look *through*. The body of the king thus has a kind of weight and opacity drained from all the other figures.

Nonetheless, these paintings still treat Alexander and may serve as a somewhat generic model of the perfect king, or rather as a signifier for a royal power embodied elsewhere, namely, in the person of Louis XIV. The viewer is undoubtedly expected to make a comparison between Alexander and Louis—a comparison explicit and popular even from Louis's childhood.[69] But as Chartier argues, the use of symbolic representation, in which the significance of royal power is indicated largely through simile and the use of distinct symbols, gave way during the 1670s to "real allegory," that is, to "representing the king in his own likeness and illustrating the history of his reign."[70] To understand the full structure of representation at work in LeBrun's works we should next look to the paintings in which Louis himself appears. The best example of such works can be found in the cycle of paintings LeBrun designed for Versailles. The cycle reaches its apex in the main public rooms of this setting: the Grande Galérie, the Salon de la Paix, and the Salon de la Guerre. There surrounded by painted medallions and other allegorical reproductions, we find a number of large history-paintings representing various glorious moments in the reign of the incomparable and absolute Louis. One such work can serve as an example: *Franche-Comté Conquered for the Second Time* painted in 1674 in the Salon de la Paix (see figure 5). Allegory reaches a fever pitch in this work, mixing both political and ideal symbols. The historical event is dated precisely through symbols: three zodiac signs mark the three months of the conquest and an old man represents the season of winter. The location is also specified: the rock stands for the citadel of Besançon and the river god indicates the river Soux. We see the rock defended

[68] See Thuillier, *Charles LeBrun 1619-1690, peintre et dessinateur*, cat. nos. 111-15; Gareau, *Charles LeBrun*, 121, gives an early study.

[69] See Charmois in Vitet, *L'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, 197. For other royal stand-ins popular in the early part of Louis's reign, see Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 66-92.

[70] Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 131. See also Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 3.

by a single soldier (military valor), as the lion of Spain sinks its claws into it. But Hercules (heroic valor) and Minerva press the attack on the citadel. To the right the imperial German eagle screams at these fighters, but does not leave its withered branch to intervene. Below this action Mars leads the villages of Franche-Comté, represented as supplicant maidens, to appeal to Louis. At the heart is the end (in both senses) of the conquest: Louis resplendent in armor and wig calmly makes the kingly gestures of pointing and directing, as he is crowned by Victory and surrounded by Glory and Renown (blowing a double trumpet for the king's two victories).

Most of the elements of the work, whether allegorical or expressive, are charged with a representative task. The bodies are legible, encoded by a publicly available, thoroughly conventional, system of representation. They are pointers, or signifiers, that first serve to represent either virtues or events (acting allegorically) or mental states (acting expressively) and then operate to reveal attributes of the King. These signifying elements are exhausted, emptied by being read off as pointing to something else. This something else is, of course, the body of the King. This work, like the other works in Versailles, is a "portrait" of the body of Louis XIV, in the sense Marin described, illustrating attributes of the royal Dignity in one way or another. Even the figures that symbolize the narrative chain of events record them in order to reveal attributes of the king's character and power. For the narration is itself designed to show the King's justice and the triumph of his power, to transform the incident into a document of the King's character, just as Pellison's design for a history of the 1667 war sought to sketch a portrait of the King, by transforming the narration into a single view of the King's attributes and qualities, manifest in his body. The body of the King is both the compositional center and the center of attention: other figures literally point to it, extending the gestures of the outstretched arms. The turmoil of the other figures seems almost to create a whirlpool around the central figure of Louis, himself motionless. Even the diverse virtues associated with Louis (Hercules, Minerva and Mars) appear to rise out of his body; shadowy emanations of the king, they perform his will, while he remains still, an unmoved mover at the heart of an explosion of action. His body is also better lit, more defined by its shadows and even materially thicker than the other elements, as if its importance deserved an additional layer of paint over and above that reserved for the other figures. Although adorned with signs of the royal prerogative (e.g., the baton, armor, gestures), Louis's body still maintains its representative density. It does not function to point to anything other than the King's body; even the pointing gesture signifies nothing other than the body's power to point (the royal power to draw boundaries[71]). The body is significant, but not as a symbolic or expressive sub-

[71] See "king, rex, he who traces (oregô: to extend in a straight line; regere fines: to trace a boundary, etc.) ..." Marin, *Portrait of the King*, 194.

stitute for something else, for it is the final resting place of the signifying chain. It refers only to itself, representing the King's body as the body of royal power.

What may be most important, however, is the *location* of these representations: LeBrun's paintings in Versailles were not isolated works, but formed part of a cycle of representation that embraced the whole building and its grounds. We cannot understand the structure of representation in LeBrun's work unless we understand what constitutes the entire representation. I suggest that that must be Versailles itself (see figure 6). Most of the decoration for Versailles was handed over to LeBrun from early on; he had ultimate control over the design and placement of every element of the interior,[72] and he undoubtedly influenced the plans of both architecture and landscape.[73] As design czar for Versailles, LeBrun was able to impose an overall plan in which the decorations were meant to accord fully with court life, which of course itself aimed at upholding the power and prestige of Louis.[74] Not only was the king at the center of the signs and stratagems, marks and machinations of court life, but his body, its health and illness, and even its simple presence, was the object of obsessive attention reported in

Figure 6: Pierre Patel, "View of the Chateau Versailles in 1668."

[72] Note, however, that many of LeBrun's original plans for Versailles were modified or abandoned; see Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 136-40.

[73] For LeBrun's influence in these areas, see Pierre Marcel, *Charles Le Brun* (Paris, 1909), 71, quoted in Gareau, *Charles LeBrun*, 44.

[74] See Thuillier, *Charles LeBrun 1619-1690, peintre et dessinateur*, xxxi-xxxii.

court journals. And just as the life of the court was structured around the royal body, so too were the buildings in which courtly life was set designed for this body. Indeed, I would like to suggest that Versailles is no mere container enframing the distinct body of the king, but a full-scale representation of the King's body that extends Louis's "body" and power throughout the whole representation. On the one hand, Versailles is constructed as a litter of signifying representations pointing to the power deriving from the King's body, and as deriving from the King's body. On the other hand, Versailles also completes the work of signification, for just as the King's body transforms things into signifiers and extensions of his power and body, so too does Versailles represent the King's body as present everywhere, not just in the density of his images, but because the entire complex is represented as an extension of the royal Dignity and power. And it represents that Dignity and power as invested in and identical to Louis's particular body. That body is thus represented as extending throughout the whole complex (perhaps beyond), and Versailles functions as a kind of prosthesis for the body of power.[75]

In claiming that Versailles is an extension and representation of Louis's body, I do not mean to suggest this is how it would work for the king, that the exchange between Louis Bourbon as viewer and the representation of Louis XIV in the walls of the palace would somehow show the identity of the two. But the function of Versailles was not to represent Louis to himself; Versailles is composed almost exclusively of public spaces, and it transforms even seemingly private spaces into settings for public display, albeit for a select public.[76] Versailles represented Louis XIV to a subject-public that has entered its precincts, it represented Louis to that public as already and everywhere bodily present, and by virtue of that body, commanding a recognition it had no choice but to tender. In this way, the representation that is Versailles represents itself as the real presence of what it represented. In some sense it does include that presence, but not because of some magical ability of Louis's singular body to extend itself, amoeba-like, throughout the locations of state power. Rather as a representation of the body of power, Versailles plays a constitutive role in the institution of absolute power in a precise location. It is the representations and their power to command recognition—along with the various other institutions in which recognition takes place—that constitute the body of power in the particular body of Louis.

We should bear in mind that the very nature, location, and design of Versailles restricted physical and cognitive access to the spectacles of representation it offered. As a representation of the body of power, then, Versailles served to distinguish sharply between who was included and who was excluded from the work of recognition. Thus did Versailles not only act to constitute a precise form of state power, but also to determine the "nation" that was the audience for that

[75] See Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 151, for a comparison with theater.

[76] In contrast, see my account of representation of and to the King in "Picturing Power: Representation and Las Meninas," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 54, 255-68.

power.[77] State power and nation are mutually implicated here. For the nation is determined (in part) by representations like Versailles that are in the service of state power. But that state power itself needs recognition by the nation in order to exist. That means that, however little it can admit it, embodied royal power needs such representations to make its "presence both legitimate and authoritative"[78] It needs them because they are representations that act, that represent by presenting, exhibiting or exposing titles and qualifications, by figuring them in painting, by being a sign, by bringing to observation, and by playing in public.[79] Such representations do not refer in any straightforward sense (although not because what they refer to is a singularity or other metaphysical peculiarity). Rather they are like speech-acts: they do not merely describe a state of affairs, but they help to bring them about. But also like speech-acts, such representation-acts cannot operate either *ex nihilo* or willy-nilly. That they count and how they count depends on a whole complex of social institutions and activities, of which they are part. That complex is what allows the sort of recognition whereby state power is constituted, but no single part of the complex need be either necessary or sufficient for its constitution. That is one of the reasons why an ideology could develop to disguise the dependence of royal power on its representation and recognition. For any representation-act to play a role in the constitutive recognition of state power, it must refer to that power as it is already constituted in representations and recognitions. It is only too easy, then, to represent that power as something simply found. This becomes yet easier when that power is found in a particular body, a body that seems to have just the same sort of reality attributable to other, ordinary middle-sized things. But however easy it may be to overlook its operation, such representations, along with other institutions and acts of recognition, are what constitute state-power in general, as well as the particular body in which it may be invested.[80]

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[77] See Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine*, 150, 151, for a treatment of some of the relevant historical changes. For the forms and functions of representations available to classes denied access to Versailles, see Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 133.

[78] Marin, *Portrait of the King*, 194.

[79] See Littré's *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (4 vols.; Chicago, 1974-78), 1381-83, entries 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 13.

[80] I would like to thank the audiences for several earlier versions of this paper, first at the Pacific Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, Los Angeles, Spring 1996, then at the Philosophy Department Colloquium at the University of New Mexico (thanks especially to Aladdin Yaqūb for the point about compositionality), and last at the National Meetings of the American Society for Aesthetics, Santa Fe, November 1997. I would particularly like to thank Rebecca Kukla for a very clear explanation of the notion of "constitutive recognition," and a number of related points. Two anonymous referees for this journal are due considerable gratitude for their careful reading and many helpful suggestions.