

Man in the Middle: Ingres's Portrait
of Louis-François Bertin at the Salon
of 1833 and the Problem of the
Juste Milieu

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In a corner of room 60 on the second floor of the Louvre's Sully Wing, Ingres's *Portrait of Louis-François Bertin* hangs adjacent to his study for *Angelica saved by Ruggiero* (1819) (Fig. 1).¹ In the absence of Ruggiero, Angelica seems to look over her right shoulder, not at the hippogriff-riding knight who despatches a sea monster prior to rescuing her, but at a plump male figure resolutely oblivious to his neighbour and her peril. The juxtaposition of Bertin's self-confident gaze and relaxed body with Angelica's vulnerable nakedness could be read as an exercise in iconographical incongruity, if not a moment of curatorial mischief (Fig. 2). But whatever the explanation for the painting's current display, it is hard not to regard this as a dramatic fall from grace for a work that had occupied the 'place of honour' when first shown at the 1833 Salon, and attracted voluminous coverage in the press. Bertin's relegation to the upper reaches of the Sully Wing is consistent with the assumption that its standing as a work of art has been compromised by the received idea that it is, above all else, a social document: an archetypal image of the newly dominant bourgeoisie of early nineteenth-century France.²

By turning to the extensive range of reviews of the 1833 Salon, we may not only reconsider how to look at the painting in light of critics' emphases and preoccupations, but also learn much about the degree to which these writers aligned it with current attitudes to social identity and certain prevailing political ideas. As we will see, this Salon came at a moment of pervasive instability in both France's political history (the aftermath of the 1830 July Revolution), and also in terms of the character and priorities of contemporary artistic production (the exhaustion of Romantic clichés and Davidian habits). Amongst other things, the case of *Bertin* illustrates the way a portrait could stand in for, or be equated with, the more ambitious genre of history painting – an abiding tension within Ingres's work and reputation throughout his career. Indeed, critics' responses to his submission in 1833 of two portraits were partly informed by awareness of the delayed completion of *The Martyrdom of St Symphorian*, which was not to be exhibited until 1834.

While Ingres's status as the putative chef d'école was a focus for much criticism, this article pays particular attention to the complex and ubiquitous interplay between the language of politics and art at this juncture. More specifically, *Bertin*'s place within usage of the much-maligned term *juste milieu* is analysed. This term entered political discourse in the aftermath of the July 1830 Revolution, which brought Louis-Philippe, duc d'Orléans, to power as the head of a constitutional government. In 1831 Louis-Philippe invoked the idea of a *juste milieu* as a form of middle path between the dangers of popular

1. Henceforward *Bertin*.

2. I discuss the portrait's later reputation in Richard Wrigley, "C'est un bourgeois, mais pas un bourgeois ordinaire": The Contested Afterlife of Ingres's Portrait of Louis-François Bertin', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 84, 2021, pp. 220–47. For overviews of Ingres's portraits see Hélène Toussaint, *Les Portraits d'Ingres: peintures des musées nationaux* (Paris: Ministère de la culture, 1985); and Gary Tinterow and Philip Conisbee (eds), *Portraits by Ingres: Images of an Epoch* (London: National Gallery; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999).

3. On Ingres's critical reception more generally see Susan Locke Siegfried, 'Ingres and his Critics, 1806 to 1824' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1980), pp. 45–135; and Andrew Carrington Shelton, *Ingres and his Critics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), which is based on his thesis, Andrew Carrington Shelton, 'From Making History to Living Legend: The Mystification of Monsieur Ingres (1834–1855)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, New York University, 1997).

4. Théophile Thoré, *Le Salon de 1846* (Paris: Alliance des arts, 1846), p. 55. Bertin 'produit une prodigieuse sensation au Salon de 1832 [sic]' (C.A.D., 'Beaux-arts, Exposition dans les galeries du boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle, no. 22, en faveur des artistes malheureux' (*La France*, 11 February 1846, p. 4 feuilleton).

5. 'est demeuré inconnu et méprisé jusqu'à l'âge de cinquante ans' (Théophile Gautier, 'De la composition en peinture', *La Presse*, 22 November 1836.)

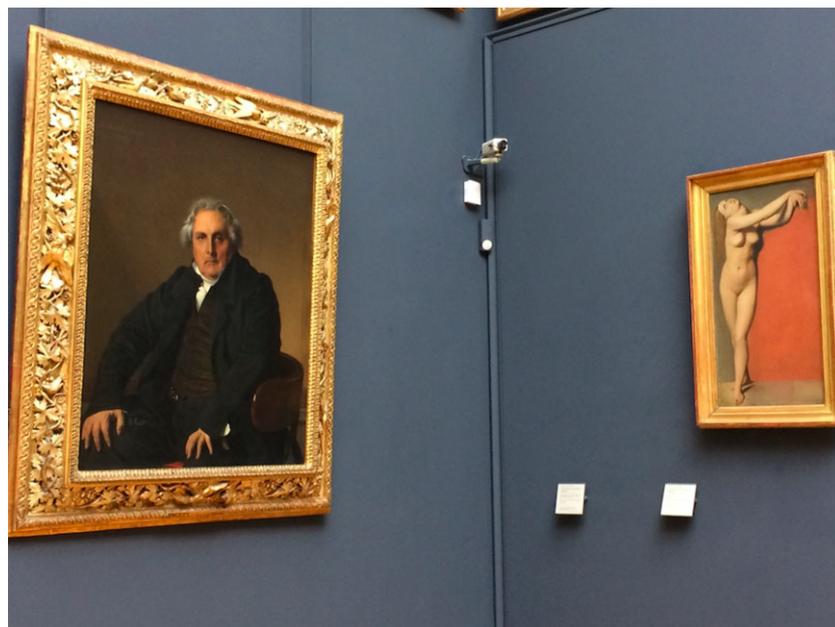


Fig. 1. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's *Portrait of Louis-François Bertin* and a study for *Angelica saved by Ruggiero* on show in the Musée du Louvre, 1 July 2019. (Photo: author.)

violence and the abuse of royal power. As a leading supporter of this policy, articulated through his editing of the influential newspaper *Le Journal des débats*, Louis-François Bertin's image inevitably attracted public comment. However, despite the fact that *juste milieu* has become an art-historical cliché in generalisations about nineteenth-century French art (primarily as a means to marginalise artists whose work is deemed to be unoriginal and populist), there has been no study of the early currency of the term in both political and cultural spheres, and how they relate to each other, nor has there been proper acknowledgement of the extent to which the term could be applied to Ingres in both artistic and political senses.

A further dimension to contemporary perceptions of Ingres's portrait is provided by the conventions shaping representations of the male bourgeois body, and their potential for allegorical characterisation. More specifically, judgements on the sitter's apparently obese body can be found in critical reactions to the painting and to bourgeois portraiture more widely, as well as in caricatures of the *juste milieu*. Rather than the prevailing assumption that Ingres's portrait expressed or encapsulated a form of political consensus and social homogeneity, in light of the range and pungency of critical commentary in 1833, it emerges as a highly contentious focus for polemics directed at Louis-Philippe and his government.

Retrospect

The fact that *Bertin* was well-received at the Salon of 1833 was often recalled by critics later in the nineteenth century as a contrast to the friction that marked Ingres's earlier and subsequent critical reception.³ Writing in 1846, when the painting reappeared in public at the Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle, Théophile Thoré observed that 'Ingres's reputation only really began after the July Revolution', and that *Bertin* was his 'first public success'.⁴ Théophile Gautier concurred in this chronology, lamenting that Ingres 'remained unknown and scorned until

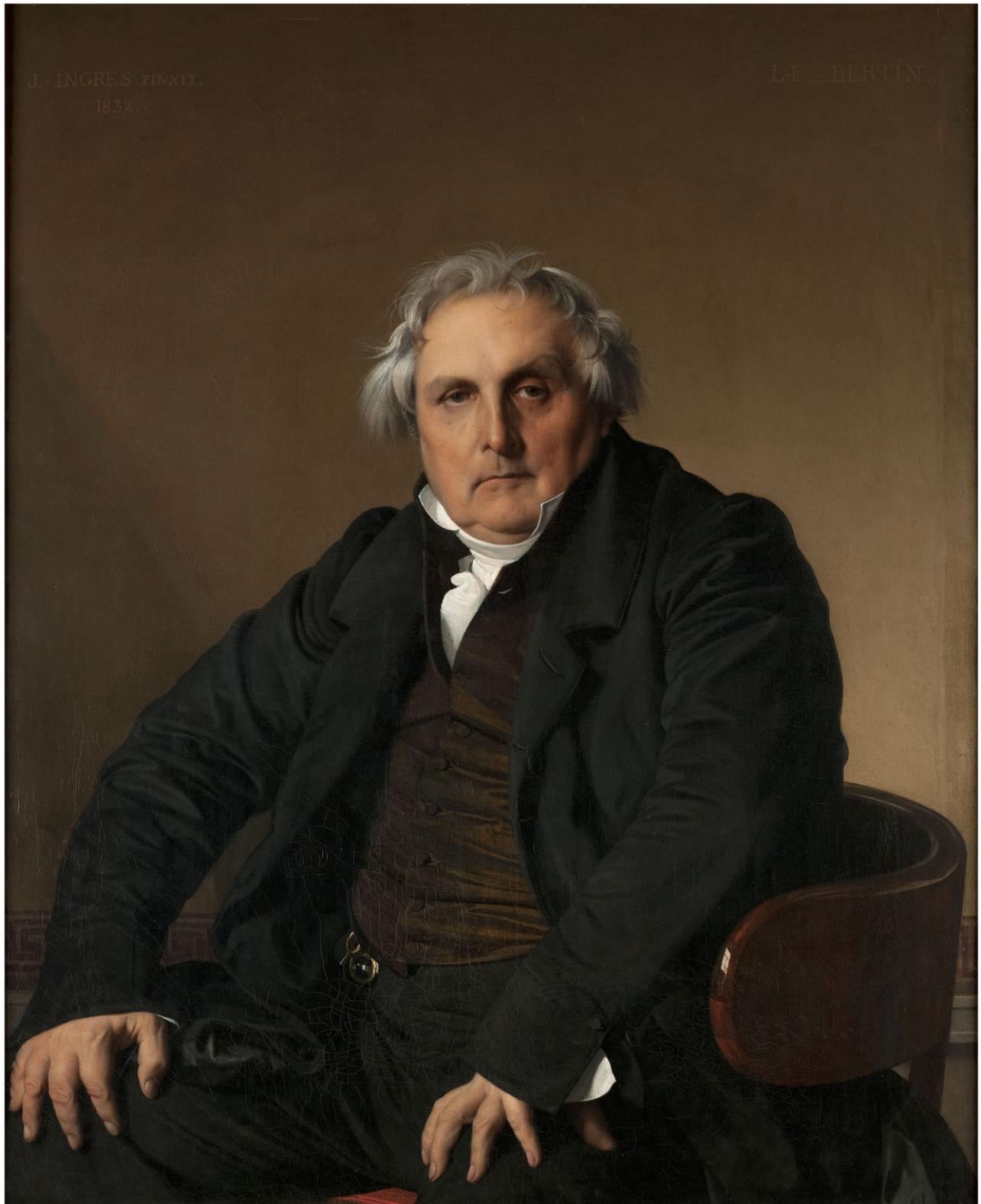


Fig. 2. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Louis-François Bertin*, 1832, oil on canvas, 116 x 96 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. (Photo: RMN – Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre).)

6. Paul Lacroix (Bibliophile Jacob), 'M. Ingres à l'Exposition universelle', *Revue universelle des arts*, 1855, p. 204.

7. 'son plus grand succès, et cette fois presque incontesté' (Daniel Ternois (ed.), *L'Atelier d'Ingres. Souvenirs* (Paris: Arthéna, 1993), pp. 235–6.)

8. Henry Lapauze, *Ingres, sa vie et son œuvre (1780–1867), d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: Georges Petit, 1911), pp. 290–8. Louis Dimier, *Histoire de la peinture française au XIXe siècle (1793–1903)* (Paris: Editions Delagrave, 1914), p. 88.

9. Daniel Ternois, *Ingres Monsieur Bertin* (Paris: Musée du Louvre. Service culturel. Réunion des musées nationaux, 1998), pp. 4, 29–35.

10. Ternois, *Ingres Monsieur Bertin*, p. 31. Neil McWilliam, *A Bibliography of Salon Criticism in Paris from the July Monarchy to the Second Republic 1831–1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), which lists 101 separate texts across 64 periodicals (including major newspapers and diverse periodicals) with 46 named authors, and amongst these texts were 8 full-length books (nos. 79–180, pp. 14–29). This apparent oversight may be explained by the fact that Ternois's book was a long time in press (see the correspondence in the dossier on the painting in the Louvre's Documentation). Yoo-Kong Lee, 'La fortune critique de Jean-[Auguste] Dominique Ingres (étude des critiques à l'occasion des Salons de 1802 à 1834)', 1995, 2 vols (Paris: Université de Paris-I), ii, pp. 3–215. See also Yoo-Kong Lee, 'Le Maître et ses élèves au Salon de 1833', *Bulletin du Musée Ingres*, vol. 74, March 2002, pp. 33–42.

11. Vincent Pomarède *et al.*, *Ingres 1780–1867*, Musée du Louvre Editions (Paris: Gallimard, 2006), pp. 276, 278. Charles Blanc, *Les Artistes de mon temps* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1876), p. 260.

12. Tinterow and Conisbee (eds), *Portraits by Ingres*, pp. 300–7, 503–4. Shelton addresses the reappearance of *Bertin* in the exhibition at the Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle in 1846 in Shelton, *Ingres and his Critics*, pp. 146–83. Siegfried mentions *Bertin*'s critical reception in Siegfried, 'Ingres and his Critics, 1806 to 1824', pp. 506–11.

13. Tinterow and Conisbee (eds), *Portraits by Ingres*, p. 282; see also pp. 300–7, 502–4. See Uwe Fleckner, *Abbild und Abstraktion. Die Kunst des Porträts im Werke von J.A.D. Ingres* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1995), on *Bertin* (p. 229) and *Mme Duvaucy*. See also Hans Naef, 'Die Gioconda von Ingres. Zum Bildnis Antonia Duvaucy de Nittis', *Schweizer Monatshefte Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur*, vol. 9, 1968, pp. 903–14.

the age of fifty'.⁵ In 1855, Paul Lacroix agreed that *Bertin* had forced viewers of the 1833 Salon to accept him as 'a great master', whilst also acknowledging that its exhibition was accompanied by 'the most violent contestations'.⁶ In his 1878 memoir of Ingres's studio, Amaury-Duval marginalised the presence of dissent in *Bertin*'s reception when he claimed it as Ingres's 'greatest success, and this time almost uncontested', but qualified his appraisal of the original response by asserting that *Bertin* had only been given the recognition it deserved later in the nineteenth century.⁷ Subsequent references to the painting's reception tend to acknowledge enthusiasm but offset this by invoking the critical antagonism that Ingres had become accustomed to.⁸

Ambivalence concerning the characterisation of critical response directed at Ingres in general, and *Bertin* in particular, in 1833 continues to run through modern writing on the subject. Judgements have oscillated between, on the one hand, insisting on Ingres as a target for uncomprehending criticism and, on the other hand, celebrating his art's ability to overpower scepticism. However, with the notable exceptions of Yoo-Kong Lee and Andrew Carrington Shelton, most commentators either cite either a very small number of reviews from 1833 or none at all. For Daniel Ternois, the painting achieved predominantly popular success and an enthusiastic critical response.⁹ However, Ternois did not use McWilliam's 1991 *Bibliography*, and treated the thirty-one texts transcribed in a thesis by his student Yoo-Kong Lee, from which he only refers to eight, as complete.¹⁰ For Vincent Pomarède, *Bertin* was well-received by most critics, a claim reinforced by citing Charles Blanc's anecdote in which the picture drew praise even from his notional rival, Delacroix. In 1876, Charles Blanc recalled Delacroix viewing the picture with the sitter's son, Édouard. Delacroix pursed his lips and blinked before saying: 'Cela est bien rendu' ('That is well captured'), following which a lively discussion ensued.¹¹

Andrew Carrington Shelton's 1999 discussion of the painting remains the best-informed by contemporary criticism (he cites twenty-two reviews). It draws attention to the way Ingres's reputation was thought of as linking artistic concerns (his alleged will to dominate and his retardataire style), with social and political judgements (provoked by *Bertin*'s support for Louis-Philippe).¹² However, as will become clear, his characterisation of the response as 'a stunning success' does not do justice to the diversity of opinion found in the full range of reviews, particularly regarding the painting's complex relation to the meanings associated with the *juste milieu*.¹³

'Ingres, à l'Institut, no. 1279 – Portraits, même numéro'

Ingres exhibited two paintings at the 1833 Salon, listed in the livret as follows: 'Ingres, à l'Institut, no. 1279 – portraits, même numéro'.¹⁴ Although these two portraits were Ingres's only contribution to the Salon, both Gustave Planche and Charles Lenormant note that he was also represented by Simon Pradier's print after *Virgil Reading the Aeneid*.¹⁵ However, it was well known that the artist was working on his next history painting, *The Martyrdom of St Symphorian*, which was to be his first major exhibit since *The Apotheosis of Homer* at the 1827 Salon. Ingres had originally intended to exhibit his 1823 portrait of Madame Leblanc with *Bertin*, but it was not possible to transport it from Florence to Paris in time; in its place he submitted *Madame Duvaucy* (Fig. 3).¹⁶ Since this was probably still in the possession of the sitter, as Hans Naef has argued, this represents a conscious choice on Ingres's part.¹⁷ That the two portraits were submitted separately, as recorded in the Salon *registre*, is consistent with this change of plan.¹⁸ They were displayed in different



Fig. 3. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Madame Duvaucy*, 1807, oil on canvas, 76 x 59 cm. Musée Condé, Chantilly. (Photo: RMN – Grand Palais (domaine de Chantilly)/Harry Bréjat.)

parts of the exhibition: *Bertin* in the ‘place of honour’ in the Salon carré, on the left after entering, where previous outstanding works such as Gérard’s *Saint Theresa* (1827) and Léopold Robert’s *Arrival of the Harvesters in the Pontine Marshes* (1831) had been hung;¹⁹ *Madame Duvaucy* in the adjacent Grande Galerie, near the entrance on the right.²⁰ *Bertin* had been exhibited in Ingres’s studio prior to being submitted to the Salon, following which it returned to the sitter.

The decision to show *Bertin* with a portrait that was twenty-six years old (in place of one that was ten years old) was to provoke more puzzlement and censure than his failure to produce a history painting. For sceptical writers such as Gustave Planche, these two portraits were consistent with the fundamental flaw in Ingres’s art: they ‘were not of their time’.²¹ Others exploited this chronological discrepancy and judged that the presumed intention of showing his progress had backfired.²² For the *Revue de Paris*, this self-congratulatory gesture, which implied that he had achieved artistic mastery twenty-

14. Nicole Garnier-Pelle, *Chantilly Musée Condé Peintures des XIXe et XXe siècles* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1997), no. 146, pp. 203–7.

15. Gustave Planche, ‘Salon de 1833’, *Revue des deux mondes*, ser. II, i, p. 549; Charles Lenormant, ‘Le Tu Marcellus Eris de M. Ingres, gravé par M. Simon Pradier’, *Le Temps*, 9 July 1833 pp. 321–6. This article is not in McWilliam, *A Bibliography*. I am grateful to Henri Zerner for sharing this reference.

16. On this portrait and the pendant of her husband see Tinterow and Conisbee (eds), *Portraits by Ingres*, nos. 88, 89, pp. 256–61, where G. Vigne is credited as the source for this information (pp. 260, 261 n. 10); the uncited source is Lenormant, ‘Salon de 1831’, in *Les Artistes contemporains* (Paris, 1833), pp. 156–8, 163.

17. Naef notes a letter from Hippolyte Flandrin which provides a date of February 1846 for an episode later related in Amaury-Duval’s *L’Atelier d’Ingres*. The aged Madame Duvaucy approached Ingres to find a buyer for the painting she was obliged to sell given her straitened circumstances following the death of Charles Jean-Marie Alquier, former French ambassador to the Vatican, whose mistress she had been and whom she had married following the death of his first wife. However, Naef suggests that Amaury-Duval’s story may involve some confusion with Madame Duvaucy’s attempt in 1850 to sell to the Louvre J.L. David’s portrait of Alquier, which he had left to her. See Naef, ‘Die Gioconda von Ingres’, pp. 912–13.

18. Nos. 4439, 4611.

19. Jal, *Les causeries du Louvre: Salon de 1833* (Paris: Gosselin, 1833), pp. 1, 9.

20. *La France littéraire*, vol. 6, March 1833, p. 152. ‘Entrée de la grande galerie’ (*Moniteur*, 19 March 1833, p. 764).

21. Planche, ‘Salon de 1833’, *Revue des deux mondes*, ser. II, ii, p. 91.

22. Laviron and Galbacio, p. 62; *La Propriété*, vol. 15, 16 March 1833, p. 3.

23. *Revue de Paris*, vol. 48, p. 133.

24. 'Le Marechal Ney de M. Langlois semble comme l'Ajax de M. Misbach, n'avoir été exposé que pour montrer ce qu'était la peinture d'une autre époque. Nous en dirons autant du Rampon de M. Couder' (Laviron and Galbacio, p. 163).

25. *La France littéraire*, vol. 6, March 1833, p. 153.

26. *La Quotidienne*, vol. 69, 10 March 1833, n.p. [p. 1]. Hans Holbein's *William Warham* (Louvre) has been proposed as a source for *Bertin* by Uwe Fleckner, 'Un pieux pèlerinage. La réception de Hans Holbein le Jeune dans l'œuvre de Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres', in Uwe Fleckner and Thomas W. Gaetgens (eds), *De Grünewald à Menzel: L'Image de l'art allemand en France au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2003), p. 119. Daniel Ternois makes a connection to a Hans Holbein the Younger portrait previously thought to be of Anne Boleyn, now identified as Anne of Cleves (Louvre) (Ternois, *Ingres Monsieur Bertin*, p. 45).

27. Louis de Maynard, 'Etat de la peinture en France. Salon de 1833', *L'Europe littéraire. Journal de la littérature nationale et étrangère*, vol. 11, 1 April 1833, pp. 57–8. Robert Rosenblum noted this text in Robert Rosenblum, *Ingres* (New York: Abrams, 1967), pp. 134–7, but without citing the source and making no further mention of criticism. He illustrated a painting attributed to Denner in the Louvre, *An Old Woman* (1724) (Inv. 1209), as does Shelton, *Portraits by Ingres*, p. 503. However, in 2004, Elisabeth Foucart-Walter demonstrated the misattribution to Denner of this painting; see Elisabeth Foucart-Walter, *Le tableau du mois no. 116: Un faux Balthasar Denner Tête de vieille femme au bonnet ou le Louvre trompé par un faussaire en 1837* (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2004; albeit joconde.fr still illustrates this with the attribution to Denner).

28. 'Ouverture du Salon', *Journal des débats*, 3 March 1833, p. 1.

29. Heine, p. 229.

30. A.V. 'Salon de 1833', *Le Nouvelliste*, vol. 398, 4 March 1833, n.p.

31. Anon., 'La Mode au Salon', *La Mode*, vol. 14, no. 11, 16 March 1833, p. 249.

32. In the 1827–1828 Salon, there were fewer portraits (229 out of 586), but they represented a higher proportion of the overall exhibits (39.08%).

33. Marie-Claude Chaudonneret, 'Ingres et la Direction des Musées sous la Restauration', in Claire Barbillion, Philippe Durey, and Uwe Fleckner (eds), *Ingres un homme à part? Entre carrière et mythe, la fabrique du personnage* (Paris: École du Louvre, 2009), pp. 88–9.

six years ago, was a sign of arrogance.²³ Ingres was not the only artist to be rebuked for anachronism: Laviron and Galbacio mocked Langlois's *Ajax* for seeming to belong to an earlier era, as well as paintings by Couder and Misbach for their incongruous Napoleonic subjects.²⁴ Both *Bertin and Madame Duvaucy* attracted comparisons with the manner of past artists, implicitly equating this with censure of Ingres's over-dependence on old models. For *La France littéraire*, *Madame Duvaucy* could have been by the same hand as a portrait of Marguerite d'Alençon (perhaps referring to a Jean Clouet portrait)²⁵ while *Bertin* was compared to Holbein.²⁶ Louis de Maynard chided Ingres with failing to follow through his well-publicised allegiance to Raphael. Rather, he provided chapter and verse to show that Ingres's paintings were more like those of Balthasar Denner (1685–1749), synonymous with 'minute' and 'microscopic' imitation of details, but, to make matters worse, even in this he had not matched his model in 'exactitude'.²⁷ By contrast, for Etienne Delécluze, former David pupil turned art critic, Ingres's choice of exhibits from different dates was a masterstroke: on the one hand, *Madame Duvaucy* demonstrated his powerful individuality, on the other hand, *Bertin* proclaimed his arrival at a state of perfection.²⁸

Opinions on Ingres's *Bertin* need to be set within broader critical attitudes to portraiture in general and bourgeois portraits in the 1833 Salon in particular (a theme to which we will return later). The high proportion of portraits was identified as a symptom of the Salon's overall weakness. Heinrich Heine had claimed there were 4,000 works in all media in the Salon, but not a single chef d'œuvre.²⁹ His figures seems plausible; the livret (including supplements) lists 3,318 items, of which 2,748 entries were in the painting section, although as in the case of Ingres's two portraits listed under 'Portraits même numéro', many of these contained more than one work. *Le Nouvelliste* went so far as to count up 737 portraits out of 2,248 exhibits.³⁰ *La Mode* reckoned there were 800, mostly poor.³¹ Griffiths and Mill's analysis of the 1833 Salon registre cites 821 portraits exhibited out of 1015 submitted in all media (including those that were either refused or exempt). This represents 27.24% of the total exhibits, an increase from 21.47% (675 out of 754) in 1831.³²

Nonetheless, as Marie-Claude Chaudonneret has pointed out, despite only showing two portraits, the artist was promoted to the rank of Officier of the Légion d'Honneur on 1 May before the Salon closed. Although this distinction was normally reserved for artists who had exhibited history paintings, Ingres had credit owed from his 1827 *Apotheosis of Homer*.³³

Contemporary Assessments of the Critical and Public Response in 1833

Writing to his teacher, F.X. Fabre, Fortuné Férogio claimed opinions on the Salon were wholly dominated by rival coteries and dismissed the press as being uncritically well-disposed towards Ingres, citing excessively complimentary comparisons of the artist to Raphael, Titian, and Velazquez by *L'Artiste*. However, his report that 'all the journals, or at least the most notable, the *Revue de Paris*, the [*Journal des*] *débats*, the *Courrier* etc., agree in finding these two portraits admirable', is an exaggeration.³⁴ The painting's reception is considerably more complex. It is essential to note, though, that while there were a variety of reservations about the picture's merits and Ingres's reputation, it was widely agreed to be one of the most prominent works on show that year, if not, indeed, the most outstanding.

Only eight out of over one hundred reviews fail to mention *Bertin*, though some are no more than short articles covering the whole exhibition,³⁵ but these are anomalous in that the picture normally received extensive coverage.³⁶ Five reviews rank *Bertin* as the top portrait in the Salon.³⁷ That the picture had created a public ‘sensation’ was noted by Maximilien Raoul in the *Cabinet de lecture*, but undercut by claiming that Ingres had hoped for a ‘triumph’.³⁸ Very enthusiastic responses were frequently qualified. As was usual, reviewers situate their own opinions within a broader range of responses, often observing that the painting was differently judged in criticism and public opinion, or alternatively by the ‘crowd’, and also cite artists’ judgements. For the *Courrier français*, the Salon was notable for its lack of major works by a number of leading artists (Gérard, Guérin, Hersent, Schnetz, Léopold Robert), and that, like Ingres, Delaroche and Steuben had only sent a portrait each. Indeed, observing that a portrait, Ingres’s *Bertin*, was the main draw – ‘the crowd stops in front of the portrait of M. Bertin aîné’ – merely highlighted this inadequacy.³⁹

If the *Courrier de l’Europe* invoked a conventional subordination of criticism to public opinion, noting that *Bertin* ‘earned for the author almost unanimous praise from criticism; the finest [being] that awarded each day by the crowd’,⁴⁰ other critics refrain from taking sides, and point to the fact that opinions were divided. In Heine’s words: ‘This year everyone talks the most about M. Ingres, both praising and censuring’.⁴¹ Similarly, Louis de Maynard observed that the crowd were attracted to *Bertin* because it was widely spoken of as a chef d’œuvre, but ‘turn away from it sometimes saying like Figaro: so who is being fooled here?’.⁴² His own doubts about whether Ingres deserved the degree of praise that he received, expressed in an extended set of historical reflections on Ingres’s place in the state of French art, were underpinned by this reference to public incomprehension. For Maynard, further proof of the unreliability of public opinion was the fact that Ingres’s other exhibit was abandoned to ‘complete solitude’.⁴³ For *Le Figaro*, *Bertin*’s success was a mixed blessing: ‘the portrait’s success has been great and deserved, and this is very unfortunate’, because Ingres’s manner was too idiosyncratic to merit being taken as a model by younger artists, as had recently been the case to the detriment of French art, especially history painting.⁴⁴ A number of journals regretted that *Bertin* had been overpraised and misleadingly claimed as the Salon’s best exhibit.⁴⁵

One common way in which claims of *Bertin*’s superiority were compromised, if not directly challenged, was to state that it shared the honours of the Salon, either with Ingres’s other portrait, *Madame Duvaucy*, or with works by other artists. Jal singled out both Ingres’s portraits as outstanding paintings – ‘two chefs d’œuvre of form and drawing’.⁴⁶ For the *L’Écho de la jeune France*, the fact that ‘all eyes’ were turned towards both Ingres’s pictures was only highlighted with regret, since it was insufficient consolation for the poor standard of the exhibition, a ‘distressing spectacle displayed on the walls of the Louvre’.⁴⁷ Some reviewers unequivocally preferred *Madame Duvaucy* to *Bertin*, with the unmistakable, and indeed damning, implication that the 1832 painting was less good than one painted in 1807.⁴⁸ Others judged that the two portraits were on the same level – another way of lamenting that no progress had been made, and thus further evidence that Ingres’s cult of Raphael was a dead end. Maynard adds the further caveat to this judgement that *Bertin*’s inferiority to *Madame Duvaucy* was agreed upon by many artists.⁴⁹ *Bertin*’s success was also qualified by pairing it with other artists’ portraits; the *Journal du commerce* bracketed it with Champmartin’s portrait of the Duc de Decazes (a

34. ‘Vous parlez du Salon, c’est encore vous parler de coterie; maintenant, rien que cela’. He asserted that, for the ‘public artiste’, the best picture was Alexandre Hesse’s *Honneurs funèbres rendus au Titien, mort à Venise pendant la peste de 1576*. ‘Les correspondants du peintre Fabre (1808–1834), lettres de Bertin aîné, Garnier, Férogio, Boguet, Mérimée père, Guérin, Gérard, Girodet-Trioson’, *Nouvelle Revue rétrospective*, vol. 4, no. 26, January–June 1896, pp. 252–3 (26 March 1833).

35. *Bagatelle; Le Bonhomme Richard; Le Diable boîteux; Gazette de France; L’Indépendant; Journal des dames et des modes; Légitimité, souveraineté populaire quasi-légitimité. Revue mensuelle, par A. Thomas; Tribune catholique*. See McWilliam, *A Bibliography* for details.

36. See note 10 for a summary of the full range of reviews.

37. *Journal des artistes*, vol. 11, 17 March 1833, p. 175; *Journal des femmes*, 30 March 1833, p. 147; *Le Nouvelliste*, vol. 456, 29 April 1833, n.p. [2–3]; *Annuaire des artistes français*, p. 4; *Causeries du monde*, March 1833, pp. 92–6.

38. *Bertin* ‘a fait, et devait faire, sensation; mais il est bien loin, nous en avons la persuasion, de valoir à l’artiste le triomphe éclatant qu’il en attendait’ (Maximilien Raoul, ‘Beaux-arts. Salon de 1833’, *Cabinet de lecture*, vol. 256, 24 April 1833, p. 11).

39. ‘Ouverture du Salon de 1833’, *Courrier français*, vol. 61, 2 March 1833, pp. 2–3.

40. ‘a valu à l’auteur, de la part de la critique, des éloges presque unanimes; le plus beau lui est décerné chaque jour par la foule’ (‘Salon de 1833’, *Courrier de l’Europe*, vol. 83, 24 March 1833, p. 2).

41. ‘C’est [de] M. Ingres que l’on parle le plus cette année, au point de vue de l’éloge comme de la censure’ (Heinrich Heine, *Allemands et français* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1882), p. 230). See also *Annales du musée et de l’école moderne des beaux-arts* (Paris: Pillet aîné, 1833), p. 88.

42. ‘se retire parfois en disant comme Figaro: qui donc trompe-t-on ici?’ (*L’Europe littéraire*, vol. 11, 1 April, p. 58). McWilliam, *A Bibliography*, vol. 164, p. 26, identifies the author as Louis de Maynard de Queilhe (1811–1837).

43. *Ibid.*

44. ‘le succès de ce portrait a été grand et mérité, et c’est un grand malheur’ (Anon., ‘Salon de 1833’, *Figaro*, 24 March 1833, article 3, p. 2).

45. ‘Salon de peinture’, *Courrier des théâtres*, 7 March 1833, no. 5189, p. 2. ‘trop vanté’

(Anon., 'Musée – Promenade', *Le Corsaire*, 8 March, no. 3684, n.p. [pp. 2-3]).

46. Jal, p. 30.

47. 'Beaux-arts. Récit d'un voyageur', *L'Écho de la jeune France*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1833, pp. 111–15.

48. *Bertin and Duvaucy* were amongst the top two or three chefs d'œuvre but the 'dame romaine' was preferred (E.J., 'Salon de 1833', *Courrier de l'Europe*, 12 March 1833, p. 2); for Gautier, *Duvaucy* was 'la plus belle chose du Musée, et je le mets beaucoup au dessus du portrait d'homme' ('Salon de 1833', *La France littéraire*, vol. 6, March 1833, pp. 152–3); see also Anon. 'Salon', *La Tribune politique et littéraire*, vol. 6, 3 March 1833. In 1834 Théophile Gautier preferred it to *Madame Leblanc* in 1834 ('Salon de 1834', *La France industrielle*, vol. 1, April 1834, pp. 17–22). In 1836, he recalled it as 'le plus beau visage de femme que l'art a réalisé depuis la Monna Lisa et la Jeanne d'Aragon' ('De la composition en peinture', *La Presse*, 22 November 1836, feuilleton, n.p. [pp. 1–2]). In 1837, although he dated it to 1802, he again enthused over the painting's execution: 'toute la finesse gothique d'un portrait d'Holbein ou de Raphael, encore à l'école de Pierre Vannucci; quelque chose comme la tête d'Anne de Boleyn ou de Jane Aragon' ('Salon de 1837. Ecole d'Ingres.-Lehmann, Amaury Duval, Flandrin', *La Presse*, 15 March, n.p. [p. 3]). In his obituary of Ingres, he renewed the pairing: 'On y revit aussi ce portrait de *Madame de Vaucy* qui semblait une *Monna Lisa* en costume de l'Empire, et ce magnifique *Bertin l'aîné*, où le plus haut style s'unit à la plus exacte vérité et fait de ce patricien de la bourgeoisie quelque chose d'auguste comme une effigie de César' (Theophile Gautier, 'Ingres', *Moniteur*, 23 January 1867, p. 3). See <theophilegautier.fr>, dossier Ingres.

49. Maynard, *L'Europe littéraire. Journal de la littérature nationale et étrangère*, vol. 17, 8 April 1833, pp. 69–70.

50. 'Exposition de 1833. Grand Salon', *Journal du commerce*, 3 April 1833, no. 5433, p. 3.

51. *Le Moniteur universel*, 19 March 1833, p. 764. On the political nature of some of the portrait's later pendants and suggested companions see Wrigley, 'C'est un bourgeois'.

52. Delécluze, 'Ouverture du Salon', *Journal des débats*, 3 March 1833, feuilleton, pp. 1–2.

53. Delécluze, 'Salon de 1833', *Journal des débats*, 22 March 1833, p. 1; Lenormant, p. 13.

54. Anon., 'Beaux-arts. Salon de 1833', *Journal des dames et des modes*, 15 April 1833, pp. 161–2; A. Johannot, no. 1305, *Année de la victoire d'Hastenbeck*, no. 1306, *Entrée de Mlle de Montpensier à Orléans pendant la Fronde, en 1652*; T.

former minister under the Restoration) and his son 'which at the other extreme, serves as a pendant and a worthy one to the fine portrait of M. Bertin by Ingres';⁵⁰ the *Moniteur* made the same comparison but added Scheffer's portrait of the liberal journalist Armand Carrel, giving a political dimension to this trio's pre-eminence.⁵¹

However, a number of critics preferred works by other artists to *Bertin*. Curiously, amongst them are two authors who knew Ingres well and were some of the most eloquent advocates for his work, Étienne-Jean Delécluze and Charles Lenormant. For the former, even though *Bertin* was 'one of the finest works by M. Ingres', he placed it after the miniature portraits by Madame de Mirbel;⁵² for the latter, a Classical archaeologist well-informed about the contemporary art world, the same two artists' exhibits were 'undeniably the most remarkable paintings in the exhibition'.⁵³ The *Journal des dames et des modes* preferred works by the Johannot brothers.⁵⁴ Horace Vernet was preferable to Ingres for Maynard because less 'exclusive' and more generous in what his aesthetic offered to viewers and other artists.⁵⁵ The satirical review *Le Charivari* provocatively singled out Decamps's tiny *Studio Interior* (32 × 40 cm) as the outstanding picture,⁵⁶ but in another article suggested that the Salon's worthwhile achievements amounted to no more than Granet's *Freeing of Prisoners in Algiers* and Ingres's two portraits.⁵⁷ *Le Siècle* also preferred Decamps' *Studio Interior*, demoting *Bertin* to fourth ranking after Decamps, Scheffer's *Marguerite in the Church*, and Hesse's *Titian's Funeral*.⁵⁸ For *La Mode*, *Bertin* was only one of a dozen that stood out.⁵⁹

These disputed claims to Ingres's pre-eminence echo the established expectation that, for each Salon exhibition, there would be a single outstanding work, and also that a senior artist such as Ingres might be justifiably considered as a figurehead for the French School. Gautier expressed this sense of ambivalence regarding Ingres's superiority through the imagery of the artist standing atop a pedestal, one which Ingres had 'so laboriously constructed' for himself; this sense of elevation above the throng of the Salon was further signalled through the idea that Ingres had become a 'myth', 'the personification of drawing'.⁶⁰ Although Ingres's pupil, Raymond Balze, recalled that Ingres himself was disdainful of the way artists used portraits 'to get themselves talked about and to put themselves on a pedestal',⁶¹ it was precisely this gesture of self-elevation that Benjamin Rouboud used in his image of Ingres from 'Le Panthéon charivarique' in 1842.⁶² This personalised caricature was in tune with a strong current of resistance to the proliferation of statues to contemporary figures. Anticipating the reaction against later nineteenth-century statomanie, Bidault's September 1832 letter in the *Journal des artistes* argued against the erection of statues to topical heroes, as they were more driven by 'the mania for apotheoses' than true merit.⁶³ The case of Ingres's reputation exemplifies Bidault's point that this was liable to provoke dissent and iconoclasm.

Art as Politics

In order to understand the contested nature of *Bertin*'s pre-eminence, we should first of all consider more generally how the 1833 Salon was characterised. Expectations had been heightened after the cancellation of the 1832 Salon because of a cholera epidemic; but perhaps more significant was the sense of taking stock almost two years after the memorable 1831 Salon, and three years into a new regime.⁶⁴ That Salon was remembered as having displayed a prolific and diverse range of responses to the 1830 Revolution (restrictions on submissions were relaxed leading to an exceptionally large exhibition, as was also the

case in 1833).⁶⁵ However, by 1833 the political euphoria had waned and there was a greater willingness to acknowledge the lowering of standards caused by a more lenient jury.

The ways in which comments on the quality of the Salon are related to the political situation reveal much about the tenor and focus of contemporary critical criteria. Such remarks provide a context for attitudes to *Bertin* as an image of an individual who represented his class, and also assertions of Ingres's implication in the political as well as the artistic status quo. Delécluze made the practical point that the fact that the Salon was open at the same time as the Chambre des députés was sitting meant that 'periodical and newspaper readers' attention was divided between art and politics.⁶⁶ *Le Siècle* judged that the Salon was the place to look for symptoms of an 'esprit nouveau' (new spirit), based on the premise that art and politics were intimately bound together: 'pictorial, literary, and political reforms follow a parallel course; this is the consequence of the same principle; they are all daughters of the moral and intellectual revolution which has taken place in feelings and opinions'.⁶⁷ Echoing Louis-Philippe's declaration on 30 July 1830 at the Hotel de Ville that 'La Charte sera désormais une vérité' ('The Charter will henceforward be a Truth'), the same reviewer went on to point up this equivalence by virtue of its inadequate realisation: 'But is it not time to put aside false politics and conventional etiquette in all things? Is it not time that the arts, just like the Charter, became a truth?'⁶⁸

For several critics, the shortcomings of the Salon were a direct reflection of those in the political domain. *Le Revenant* lamented the fact that the Salon was an 'authentic mirror of the political world – a little of everything, of mediocrity, above all uniforms and caricatures everywhere',⁶⁹ a view shared by the *Courrier français*: 'Art ... vegetates in the provisional, as does our social state'.⁷⁰ Heine set the tone for his dismissive review with the leading question: 'This lamentable malaise which we observe in the political life of the French, since the crazy intoxication of freedom has dissipated, is it also evident in art? Was this year's exhibition no more than a motley yawn, a multicoloured echo of the session of the Chambers?'.⁷¹ Indeed, a number of reviewers used similar sceptical judgements on the 'depressing and empty' impression of the Salon's 'chaos' to voice regrets on the sweeping away of the Bourbon monarchy and the conscientious patronage of its last two kings, Louis XVIII and Charles X.⁷² For Auvray and Chatelain in *Prométhéides*, 1830 had ushered in a new era of unstable and coarsened artistic patronage. In contrast to the Bourbons and also Napoleon, the rich of the new regime were constrained by 'the morals and squalid ignorance of the shopcounter'; moreover they could not be relied on as their wealth was dependent on the caprices of the Bourse.⁷³

That the new regime needed to get a grip on the art being produced under its aegis was one conclusion drawn from dismissive judgements on the unsatisfactory achievements visible in the Salon. This was the largest Salon ever assembled, but its scale only served to throw into relief the undeniable shortcomings of what was on view. For the *Charivari*, the Salon exposed the impoverishment at the heart of the elaborate institutional apparatus of the official art world:

What do we find of the riches of the Classic school, this school whose despotic power has weighed, without resistance, for thirty years, on all arts establishments, and which at this moment still monopolises everything to the benefit of its doctrines, the schools of Paris and Rome, the Academy of Fine Arts, the admission committees of the Salon, commissions for

Johannot, no. 1307, *Scène domestique*, no. 1308, *Minna et Brenda sur le bord de la mer*.

55. *L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 11, 1 April 1833, p. 57.

56. Anon., 'Salon de 1833', *Le Charivari*, vol. 119, 29 March 1833, pp. 1–2.

57. Anon., 'Salon de 1833', *Le Charivari*, vol. 107, 17 March 1833, p. 1.

58. 'Anon.', 'Les Beaux-arts en 1833. Ouverture du Salon', *Le Siècle*, vol. 1, 1833, pp. 397, 402.

59. Anon., 'La Mode au Salon', *La Mode*, vol. 14, no. 11, 16 March 1833, p. 249. *Bertin* was amongst the top exhibits for the Anon., 'Salon de 1833', *Courrier des théâtres*, 14 April 1833, no. 5227, p. 2.

60. 'A M. Ingres les honneurs du pas. – M. Ingres en est digne sous tous les rapports; il a une fermeté de conviction malheureusement trop rare aujourd'hui. . . . Aujourd'hui, M. Ingres est sur le piédestal qu'il s'est si laborieusement construit. – Il est devenu un mythe; c'est la personification du dessin, comme Decamps est celle de la couleur' (*La France littéraire*, vol. 6, March 1833, p. 152).

61. 'Aujourd'hui, on n'a de considération que pour les portraits, c'est une manière comme une autre de faire parler de soi et se mettre sur un piédestal' (Raymond Balze, 'Notes inédites d'un élève de Ingres', *La Renaissance de l'art français et des industries de luxe*, May 1921, p. 216).

62. *Le Charivari*, 27 May 1842. François Marius Granet made a private satire on Ingres's auto-apotheosising in a drawing (Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence), which shows Ingres on a pedestal with the inscription 'GLOIRE', having bellows inserted in his backside, beneath a pseudo-halo controlled, as is the artist, by strings pulled by Madame Ingres (Jean-Pierre Cuzin and Dimitri Salomon, *Ingres regards croisés* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2006), p. 265, fig. 410).

63. Bidault, 'Sculpture. Des statues des hommes célèbres', *Journal des artistes*, year 6, vol. 2, no. 10, 2 September 1832, p. 165. The article is signed Bidault, presumably Jean Joseph Xavier Bidault (1758–1846). We find the same equation between statue and apotheosis in David d'Angers's notebooks: Pierre-Jean David d'Angers, *Carnets de David d'Angers*, 2 vols (Paris: Plon, 1958), ii, p. 143, cited in Michael D. Garval, "'A Dream of Stone": Fame, Vision, and Monumentality in Nineteenth-Century French Literary Culture' (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2004), p. 13. See Maurice Agulhon, 'La "statuomanie" et l'histoire', *Ethnologie française*, new series, vol. 8, no. 2–3, 1978, pp. 145–72.

64. See Nicos Hadjinicolaou, 'The Debate at the Salon of 1831', *Block*, vol. 9, 1983, pp. 62–7;

ministers and the Civil List, the judgement of competitions, the distribution of support funds, commissions, purchases etc. – One painting and two portraits [i.e. Granet's *Freeing of Prisoners in Algiers* and Ingres's two paintings].⁷⁴

and 'Art in a Period of Social Upheaval: French Art Criticism and Problems of Change in 1831', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1983, pp. 29–37, and his thesis: *La lutte des classes en France dans la production d'images de 1829/1831 – Première partie: la critique d'art* (thèse de doctorat d'Etat ès lettres et sciences humaines, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1980).

65. Exhibits at the 1833 Salon had grown slightly since 1831, but this seems to be the result of the jury's very low rate of rejection: 1827: 1,834 exhibited (3,422 submitted) 53.59%; 1831: 3,180 exhibited (3,576 submitted) 88.85%; 1833: 3,318 exhibited (3,465 submitted) 95.76%. See Harriet Griffiths and Alister Mill, *Database of Salon Artists: A Record of Salon Entries from 1827 to 1850*, Archives des Musées Nationaux <<http://humanities-research.exeter.ac.uk/salonartists/works>>. See James Kearns and Alister Mill (eds), *The Paris Fine Art Salon / Le Salon 1791–1881* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015).

66. Delécluze, 'Salon de 1833', *Journal des débats*, 2 May 1833, p. 1.

67. 'les réformes pittoresques, littéraire et politique suivent une marche parallèle; ce sont des conséquences d'un même principe; elles sont toutes filles de la révolution morale et intellectuelle qui s'opère dans les sentimens et dans les opinions' (Anon., 'Les Beaux-arts en 1833. Ouverture du Salon', *Le Siècle*, vol. 1, p. 258).

68. 'Mais n'est-il pas temps en toute chose de mettre de côté la politique fausse et l'étiquette de convention? N'est-il pas temps que les arts deviennent aussi bien que la Charte, une vérité?' (C., 'Salon de 1833', *Le Siècle*, p. 403).

69. 'véritable miroir du monde politique' – 'un peu de tout, de la médiocrité, surtout des uniformes et des caricatures partout' ('Salon de 1833. Les portraits', *Le Revenant*, vol. 427, 2 March 1833, n.p. [2]).

70. 'L'art [...] végète dans le provisoire, ainsi que notre état social' ('Salon de 1833', *Courrier français*, vol. 70, 11 March 1833, p. 3).

71. 'Ce lamentable malaise que nous remarquons dans la vie politique des Français, depuis que la folle ivresse de la liberté s'est dissipée, se manifeste-t-il aussi dans l'art? L'exposition de cette année n'était-elle qu'un baillement bigarré, un echo multicolore de la session des Chambres?' (Heine, p. 229).

72. 'triste et nue' ('Beaux-arts. Récit d'un voyageur', *L'Écho de la jeune France*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1833, pp. 111–15). Where attacks on Louis XVIII and Charles X were deplored it was pointed out that they had supported art even though they were not interested in it, a point repeated in Edouard Mennechet, 'Première visite

Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that Ingres's reputation as a prominent artist with a career that spanned the first three decades of the nineteenth century was dealt with in terms that absorbed and inflected contemporary political polemics.

If the sense of living in a phase of cathartic renewal and transition dominated responses to the 1831 Salon, in 1833 there was much more uncertainty about which direction both art and social life were moving (as we will see, perceptions of Ingres's art were coloured by the same doubts). When signs of a loss of artistic momentum were detected, they were likely to be condemned as symptoms of alarmingly retrograde tendencies. Beyond Ingres's established reputation as a prominent *classique* in the debates of the 1820s, his position as arguably the author of the Salon's most notable exhibits, one of which was a portrait of the editor of a pro-government newspaper, invited critical comments that exploited the overlap of the language of art and that of politics. This general phenomenon, which had been a commonplace of French cultural commentary before, during, and after the Revolution, took on a new vocabulary after 1830 and was to inform attitudes to *Bertin* as an inherently political painting.

Ingres and *Bertin* were politicised by means of a variety of terms. Jules Janin held up Ingres's career as an example to the young of the way artistic talent transcended the vicissitudes of revolution; his 'exile' in Rome (1806–1824) conferred greater status on him, whereas it would have brought ignominy on a king.⁷⁵ But most such comparisons were predominantly derogatory. For some writers, Ingres had got stuck; in the words of Louis de Maynard he was merely 'immobile'.⁷⁶ Laviron and Galbacio were characteristically more outspoken: he was 'an immobile and unvarying man', but only because he was afraid of making a wrong move.⁷⁷ Planché accused Ingres of wanting 'to immobilise thought in the galleries of the Vatican', as if he aspired to resist 'the eternal laws which govern human development'.⁷⁸ However, the choice of 'immobile' as the condemnatory key note in these remarks carried more than art-historical significance, for this was the term used to characterise those French people who sought to ignore the turbulent transformations of post-revolutionary social and political life, in contrast to their opposites who, like weathervanes, accommodated themselves to every changing wind.⁷⁹

For several critics, however, Ingres was guilty of a more active, partisan, and therefore threatening, aesthetic programme. For the Maximilien Raoul, Ingres 'wanted to make the work of a master and a sovereign', albeit through the vehicle of 'the simple portrait of a man of bourgeois physiognomy'.⁸⁰ Louis de Maynard took the long view: there had been a succession of dominant individual artists who had been 'the instrument of [the] revolutions which had transformed painting, after Boucher came David, after David Géricault, and today finally it is M. Ingres who presumes to dominate'.⁸¹ Maynard went on to hammer home his point: Ingres 'has implausible despotic pretensions and a naturally exclusive spirit which would prefer to allow only his protégés to bask in the sun's rays which he dispenses'.⁸² For *La France nouvelle*, echoing condemnatory vocabulary familiar from the Revolution, matters were made worse by the way that Ingres's admirers wanted to impose a 'despotisme d'école', acting with 'fanatisme'.⁸³ Laviron and Galbacio declaimed against his 'despotic tenacity' and the way in which

the vast majority of his pupils 'had been squashed under his murderous guidance'.⁸⁴ The young artist Fortuné Feroggio bemoaned the ever-expanding 'Ingres party'.⁸⁵

This tendency to single out Ingres as a damaging influence on contemporary art is only one side to the politicisation of Ingres's reputation, and that of *Bertin*. That the painting was inherently political was recognised in the circumstances of its inception.

Henri de Delaborde recalled that the distinctive pose of the portrait – arrived at after prolonged uncertainty – owed its origin to Ingres witnessing a political discussion between Bertin and his sons.⁸⁶ The separation between the chair's round back and Bertin's body, accentuating his forward-leaning posture, combined with his slightly raised left eyebrow and steady gaze, are consistent with the sitter's active engagement with a spectator. In his 1889 essay on the Bertin brothers, Léon Say (Bertin's grandson-in-law) summoned up the image of Bertin as he was shown in Ingres's portrait in order to evoke his self-defence in the court case brought against the *Journal des débats* for having offended the person of the king, Charles X, in 1829: 'One imagines the Bertin of Ingres's portrait, getting up with the help of his powerful hands, stepping out of the frame, proudly looking at his judges, without arrogance, but without embarrassment'.⁸⁷ However, these are both retrospective readings of the portrait. In 1833, the *Journal des demoiselles* captured this sense of animation, but linked it to Bertin as an imaginary viewer of the other exhibits: 'he makes a movement as if to rise from his armchair, his eyes shine, his brow creases', not to complain about the 'cold and pale sketches' of latterday romantics, but to compliment Alexandre Hesse on his painting of *Titian's Funeral*.⁸⁸

Defining the *Juste Milieu*

In reviews of the 1833 Salon, Ingres, Louis-François Bertin, and *Bertin* are all associated with a term that exemplifies the ambiguities of political and aesthetic categories and judgements of the early July Monarchy – the *juste milieu*. There has been much argument amongst art historians about the meaning and scope of *juste milieu* as an artistic label. If Marie-Claude Chaudonneret is unusual in opining that 'historically and politically' the term 'doesn't mean very much',⁸⁹ Stephen Bann more polemically repudiates 'the pernicious myth of the conservative *juste milieu*', as part of his reappraisal of the art of Paul Delaroche.⁹⁰ However, art historians consistently use the term *juste-milieu* as if modern generalisations were an accurate reflection of contemporary currency.⁹¹ No one has provided a detailed analysis of the use of the term in the early 1830s in Paris.⁹² The only study of this sort is by Xavier Landrin, who addresses it in terms of political vocabulary and the evolution of the notion of the centre.⁹³

As is well-known, the term entered parlance as a political label following its use by Louis-Philippe in January 1831. In a speech in response to an address from the city of Gaillac in the Tarn, the king sought to depolarise the political landscape: 'we seek to maintain a middle path equally distant from the excesses of popular power and the abuses of royal power'.⁹⁴ This was the first of twenty references to the term in the *Journal des débats* in 1831. In 1832, the term peaks (thirty-seven) and runs at about half of that through the rest of the decade.⁹⁵ We can compare this with the figures for the production of caricatures using *juste milieu* in their titles, based on the Bibliothèque Nationale de France's *documents iconographiques*, which begin with six in 1831, drop to three in 1832, and

au Salon', *Chronique de France*, vol. 8, 1833, p. 123.

73. 'les mœurs et l'ignorance crasse du comptoir' (Félix Auvray and Jean-François Chatelain, *Prométhéides. Revue du Salon de 1833*, pp. xiv–xv).

74. 'Quelles sont là les richesses de l'école classique, de cette école dont le pouvoir despotique a pesé, sans résistance, pendant plus de trente ans, sur tous les établissements des arts, qui, en ce moment encore, monopolise tout au profit de ses doctrines, écoles de Paris et de Rome, académie des beaux-arts, commissions d'admission au salons, commissions près les ministres et la liste civile, jugement de concours, distribution de fonds d'encouragemens, commandes, acquisitions etc. – Un tableau et deux portraits' (Anon., 'Salon de 1833', *Le Charivari*, vol. 107, 17 March 1833, pp. 1–2).

75. 'Le talent est la seule grandeur qu'on ne détrône pas' (Jules Janin, 'Le Salon de 1833', *Journal des enfans*, vol. 1, 1833, pp. 257–9).

76. *L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 21, 17 April 1833, p. 85.

77. 'le dévergondage de la couleur . . . un homme immobile et invariable . . . parce qu'il a peur de faire un faux pas' (Laviron and Galbaco, p. 65).

78. 'vouloir immobiliser la pensée dans les galeries du Vatican'; 'c'est protester contre les lois éternelles qui régissent le développement de l'humanité' (Planche, 'Salon de 1833', *Revue des deux mondes*, ser. II, ii, p. 91).

79. Although the term was particularly relevant to the transition from Napoleon to Restoration, it was still current in the early July Monarchy: [A.J.Q. Beuchot], *Dictionnaire des Immobiles, par un homme qui jusqu'à présent n'a rien juré et n'ose jurer de rien* (Paris: Poulet, 1815), *Petit Dictionnaire des girouettes, par une société d'immobiles* (Paris: Marchands de nouveautés, 1826), *Nouveau Dictionnaire des girouettes par une girouette inamovible* (Paris: Marchands de nouveautés, 1832). See Pierre Serna, *La République des girouettes: 1789–1815 et au-delà: une anomalie politique: la France de l'extrême centre* (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2005).

80. 'a voulu faire œuvre de maître et de souverain'; 'le simple portrait d'un homme à physionomie bourgeoise' (Maximilien Raoul, 'Beaux-arts. Salon de 1833', *Cabinet de lecture*, vol. 256, 24 April 1833, p. 11).

81. 'l'instrument des révolutions qui ont agité la peinture, qu'après Boucher est venue David, après David Géricault, et qu'aujourd'hui enfin c'est M. Ingres qui affecte l'empire' ('État de la Peinture en France. 4e article. Salon de 1833',

L'Europe littéraire, vol. 11, 25 March 1833, pp. 45–6).

82. 'a d'inconcevables vellétés de despotisme et un esprit naturellement exclusif qui ne voudra admettre que ses protégés aux rayons du soleil dont il sera le dispenseur' (*L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 11, 1 April 1833, p. 58).

83. *La France nouvelle*, 21 March 1833, p. 1.

84. 'a été flétri sous sa direction meurtrière' (Laviron and Galbacio, pp. 62, 66).

85. 'Le parti Ingres s'étend tous les jours: à lui tous les sculpteurs, tous les architectes' (26 March 1833, L.G. Péliissier, 'Les correspondants du peintre Fabre 1808–1834', *Nouvelle Revue rétrospective*, semestre 5, January–June 1896, p. 251, cited in Philippe Bordes, 'Girodet et Fabre, camarades de l'atelier', *Revue du Louvre*, 1974–1976, pp. 393–6).

86. Henri Delaborde, *Ingres: sa vie, ses travaux, sa doctrine, d'après les notes manuscrites et les lettres du maître* (Paris: Plon, 1870), vol. 108, p. 245.

87. 'Se figure-t-on le Bertin du portrait d'Ingres, se levant sous l'effort de ses mains puissantes, sortant de son cadre, regardant fièrement ses juges, sans arrogance, mais sans embarras' (Léon Say, 'Bertin l'aîné et Bertin de Vaux', *Le Livre du centenaire du Journal des débats 1789–1889* (Paris: Plon, 1889), p. 44).

88. '[il] fait un mouvement, et va se lever se son fauteuil, ses yeux brillent, son front se plisse . . . froides et pâles ébauches' ('Arts. Salon de 1833', *Journal des demoiselles*, vol. 1, no. 2, 15 March 1833, p. 58).

89. Marie-Claude Chaudonneret, 'La peinture en France de 1830 à 1848. Chronique bibliographique et critique', *Revue de l'art*, vol. 91, 1991, p. 76.

90. Stephen Bann, *Paul Delaroche. Painting History* (London: Reaktion, 1997), pp. 115–19.

91. Léon Rosenthal, *Du Romantisme au Réalisme. Essai sur l'évolution de la peinture en France de 1830 à 1848* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1914), ch. 5, 'Le Juste Milieu'. Norman D. Ziff, *Paul Delaroche, A Study in Nineteenth-Century French History Painting* (New York: Garland, 1974), p. 116. Albert Boime, *Thomas Couture and the Eclectic Vision* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980). Boime was taken to task by Charles Rosen and Henri Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism. The Mythology of Nineteenth-Century Art* (New York: Viking, 1984), p. 117, and by Michael Marrinan, 'The Modernity of Middleness: Rethinking the *Juste Milieu*', *Porticus*, vol. 12–13, 1989–1990, pp. 42–63. See also Michael Marrinan, *Painting Politics for Louis-Philippe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 206–15. Boime responded in Albert Boime, 'Going to Extremes over the

two in 1833, with only one in 1835 and 1837. In the satirical journal *La Caricature, juste milieu* is found in connection with its lithographs (title, caption, or commentary) ten times in both 1831 and 1832, and four times in 1833.

As the presence of the term in caricature suggests, it rapidly became a subject for jokes.⁹⁶ Indeed, in the opinion of the *Charivari*, the new regime was merely an exaggerated parody of the Restoration.⁹⁷ References in the *Journal des débats* demonstrate that usage in the Chambre often resembled the satirical tone found in a comédie-vaudeville or a 'farce'.⁹⁸ Reports of speeches repeatedly note that use of the term elicited laughter, as in the case of a speech by André Dupin aîné on 5 April 1831, when his ironical employment of the term provoked a 'movement of universal hilarity'.⁹⁹ However, although it is clear that the term was preponderantly used by its detractors, Dupin's remarks suggest that, even for those who spoke for the new regime, it was possible to acknowledge the punning potential of *juste milieu* in the rhetorical arena of the Chambre (of which he was to become President from November 1832), without compromising one's political allegiance.¹⁰⁰ In August 1833, Louis-François Bertin himself reiterated the term's proper meaning in a counterblast to continued derogatory sniping from republicans and legitimists alike:

There has been enough irrelevant digression on the *juste-milieu*; it is really time to know what it is. The *juste-milieu* is the Third Estate of the Ancien Regime, it is the bourgeoisie of 1789, it is the nation of the Consulat and the Empire, it is the constitutionalists of the Restoration and the July Monarchy. The *juste-milieu* is this class, thank God so numerous today, in whose hands property is entrusted; it is the meeting of all enlightened men, friends of order and justice.¹⁰¹

Contrary to modern art-historical categorisation, it is clear that, in 1833, Ingres and his art could be treated as exemplifying a *juste milieu* aesthetic. In part this could be explained by Bertin's identification with the government, but critical applications of the label to Ingres and Bertin illustrate that there is neither any simple equivalence across political and artistic usage, nor consensus as to how to characterise Ingres's artistic position.

For some critics, the metaphor of the *juste milieu* was recognised as having transferred from political discourse to the realm of art, and was applied to paintings that occupied an intermediate stage between the legacy of David and the extravagant reaction of romantics. In the *Annales du musée*, Desains observed that the quarrel between *classiques* and *romantiques* had been eased by the way 'a *juste milieu* . . . has taken hold of the reins of the arts, and has effected a fusion which tends to make it proceed in a wise and considered way which can only favour a prosperous outcome'.¹⁰² The metaphor of reins held by the *juste milieu* steering art implies that there had been an application of the new regime's ideology to the polarised landscape of the art world. In justifying the relevance of the formula of *juste milieu* to art, in 1831 the *Journal des artistes* had observed that art and politics were subject to the same 'wind':

For some time now, the wind has been decidedly towards fusion; in journals and salons nothing else is talked about, and, without speaking of the political *juste milieu*, we begin to recognise that in the arts good [comes from] the *juste milieu* between the cold classic and the hot romantic.¹⁰³

L'Indépendant underpinned the recommendation that artistic contrasts should be resolved by the creation of a *juste milieu* in painting by citing Ovid: 'Medio

tutissimus ibis' ('the middle path is safest', *Metamorphoses*, II, 137), thereby shifting emphasis away from the contentiousness of contemporary politics to a matter of Classical decorum and its authority.¹⁰⁴

However, Louis de Maynard argued against any such admixture of politics and art, with specific reference to the apparent overlapping inherent in the phenomenon of the *juste milieu*. He mocked the *Journal de Paris* for proposing to apply the formula of the *juste milieu* as a time-honoured 'middle path' to irreconcilable opposites in literature, Racine and Shakespeare, as well as Charles X and Robespierre. Whereas there was a rationale for adopting the policy of the *juste milieu* in politics, as a form of international integration designed to minimise friction, Maynard observed that French writers and artists did not decide which style they should adopt by exchanging advice with their foreign neighbours. Moreover, resorting to a physical comparison, Maynard pointed out that the combination of two excellent liqueurs usually resulted in a revolting drink.¹⁰⁵

For 'N.' in *La Quotidienne*, the Salon continued its role as a showcase for the values of the current regime, and 1833 was a timely occasion to allow a view to be formed on what 'the poetics of a Museum of the *juste milieu* looked like'.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, voices critical of the new form of government, such as *Charivari*, assumed that it was necessary to take sides in art as in politics – in their case the popular and democratic.¹⁰⁷ By contrast, for the *Figaro*, the parallel of democratic process and artistic judgement, such that 'painters like ministers are decided by the majority', was problematic: for all that there was evidence of reasonable and well-observed criticism, public opinion inevitably also meant misunderstanding and erroneous judgements, unlike former days when princes and connoisseurs had held sway.¹⁰⁸

As these comments indicate, the question of whether art should be thought of as reflecting the reigning political system was itself a political choice. However, those comments that address this linkage are predominantly sceptical. The tone had been set at the Salon of 1831. For Charles Lenormant, the prevailing 'confusion' and 'interminable disputes', the 'perpetual inconsistency in principles and practice', and equal amounts of exaggeration from all sides, had left those artists with real talent no choice but 'a way much disparaged these days, that of the *juste milieu*';¹⁰⁹ the *juste milieu* was thus a pragmatic, if unprincipled, compromise. He sympathises with artists' predicament, and acknowledges the unwelcome crossover from politics to art, thereby testifying to the fact that *juste milieu* was not yet a term current in art-critical language. An article on opera in the *Gazette de France* from the same year emphasised that the term *juste milieu* had been avoided precisely to prevent any potential confusion with political vocabulary.¹¹⁰ Louis Peisse was more censorious, observing that those artists who were capable of studying conscientiously, and who 'know everything they should know, and do everything it is possible to do without genius', were the majority. These were the artists of the *juste milieu*: 'without faults, without beauties, their works disconcert criticism; we find a respectable mediocrity pervades all parts of their works. Art has nothing to hope or to fear from them'.¹¹¹ In 1833, *Le Siècle* echoed Peisse's repudiation using the same formula: perfection would never be attained by pursuing 'a kind of *juste milieu*, which, in the arts no more [than in politics], will result in nothing more than a respectable mediocrity'.¹¹² Nonetheless, this situation could be thought of as a form of artistic progress, insofar as it signalled a resolution of the exaggerated contrast between *romantique* and *classique*. Indeed, such an outcome was applauded by the *Journal des artistes*, which judged that the 'pictorial revolution' evident in the 1831 Salon had

Construction of the *Juste Milieu*', in Petra ten-Doesschate-Chu (ed.), *The Popularisation of Images. Visual Culture under the July Monarchy* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 213–35. Like Boime, Stephen Eisenman claims Victor Cousin's eclectic doctrine is equivalent to the term 'juste milieu' as applied to art (Stephen Eisenman (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century Art: A Critical History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), pp. 230–6). See also Olivier Deshayes, *Paul Delaroche. Peintre du juste milieu? (1797–1856)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2016).

92. Patrick Lenouëne addresses this point in relation to examples outside Paris, Patrick Lenouëne, 'Débats autour de la réception des œuvres exposées dans le nord de la France de 1815 à 1848', in *Les Salons retrouvés. Éclat de la vie artistique dans la France du Nord 1815–1848*, 2 vols (Association des Conservateurs des Musées du Nord-Pas-de-Calais, 1993), i, pp. 49–51. This lack of attention to contemporary usage also applies to the history of music for this period; see Katharine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France. La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris 1834–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), which employs the term without discussing its actual use in criticism. None of the contributions addressed the problem at the conference *Le Juste Milieu Resonances musicales d'une question politique* (Université Jean Monnet, Saint-Etienne, 15–16 February 2018). The same applies to the study of literature of the early 1830s; in 1833, the *Charivari* singled out Casimir Delavigne as one of the leading poets of the *juste milieu* (19 April 1833, p. 3, column 5).

93. Landrin found twenty-two publications using the term in their titles from 1830–1835 in Xavier Landrin, "'Droite", "gauche", "juste-milieu": la formalisation politique de l'entre-deux sous la Monarchie de Juillet', *Gauche-droite: usages et enjeux d'un clivage canonique*, June 2008, Université Paris X, Nanterre, France. <<https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00702307>>. Olivier Deshayes cites Landrin's study in Deshayes, *Paul Delaroche*, p. 49 n. 45.

94. 'Nous cherchons à nous tenir dans un juste milieu également éloigné des excès du pouvoir populaire et des abus du pouvoir royal' (*Le Moniteur officiel*, 31 January 1831, and *Journal des débats*, 1 February 1831). A relatively rare example of a contemporary text citing the king's speech is Alphonse Pepin, *Deux ans de règne, 1830–1832* (Paris: Alexandre Mesnier, 1833), pp. 181–2. Louis Blanc quoted part of the speech; see Louis Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans: 1830–1840*, 5 vols (Paris: Pagnerre, 1842–1844), ii, p. 266. Francis Haskell quotes the speech in his pioneering article; see Francis Haskell, 'Art and the Language of Politics', *Journal of European Studies*, vol. 4, 1974, pp. 215–32, reprinted in *Past and Present in Art and Taste* (New Haven, CT:

Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 65–74. Anselm Gerhard notes the way an edition of Louis-Philippe's speeches attempted to endow the term, as used here, with historical legitimacy by referring to a 1697 remark by Fénelon on royal duty, although he points out that it was only in the 1734 edition of this text that the word 'juste' was inserted before 'milieu'; see Anselm Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theater in Paris in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998) pp. 207–8 (originally published as Anselm Gerhard, *Die Verstärkung der Oper. Paris und das Musiktheater des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler, 1992). I am grateful to Michael Fend for discussing this aspect of early nineteenth-century French musical history.

95. 1833 (18), 1834 (14), 1835 (11), 1836 (12), 1837 (14), 1838 (6), 1839 (13).

96. The first use noted by Landrin occurs in 1830 and is a satire against Louis-Philippe by the royalist Marquis de Chabannes, *Les jongleries du juste-milieu démasquées, chanson nouvelle, par le marquis de Chabannes; dédiée à Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, proclamé roi des Français, le 7 août 1830, par 229 députés* (25 December 1830) (Landrin, "Droite", "gauche", "juste-milieu", p. 8). Chabannes later published Marquis de Chabannes, *Le Juste-Milieu, autrement dit la farce, avec tout l'appareil Dupino, Guizotin, le banquier sans pareil, Les accapareurs, leurs plans et leurs maximes, Charenton, en un mot; le tout pour dix centimes* (Paris: Aux bureaux du Régénérateur, 1831). See also Félix Bodon's anecdotal essay about a would-be politician fudging all of his opinions in order to curry the widest possible favour, Félix Bodon, 'Le Juste milieu et la popularité', in *Paris, ou Le livre des cent-et-un*, 14 vols (Paris: Ladvocat, 1831–1834), iii, pp. 151–67.

97. *Le Charivari*, 21 April 1833, p. 3. This is echoed by antagonistic comments on the new regime in France in the *Westminster Review*, which denounced the *juste milieu* as 'a trick from the beginning' (vol. 17, July 1832, pp. 213, 222) or a 'fraud' (vol. 17, July 1832, p. 254), cited in Vincent E. Starzinger, *The Politics of the Center: The Juste Milieu in Theory and Practice, France and England, 1815–1848* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1991), pp. 11–12.

98. Derville [Louis Desnoyers], Varin, and Desvergères, *Le Juste-Milieu, ou le Nouveau Préfet, comédie-vaudeville en un acte et en prose* [Paris, Nouveautés, 1er août 1831] (Paris: Barba, 1831).

99. 'mouvement universel d'hilarité' (*Journal des débats*, 5 April 1831, p. 2). Another example of Dupin asserting that his use of *juste milieu* was justifiable, but being greeted with derision, is *Gazette nationale ou Moniteur national*, 5 Feb. 1831, p. 246. For a pre-history of this aspect of political culture, see Antoine de Baecque, *Les*

been fully consolidated by 1833. Once again, the article sought to distance art from politics by approvingly noting the 'fusion' that had brought many artists together in 'a certain *milieu*'.¹¹³

At first sight, it would seem that this general diagnosis of artistic compromise was hardly relevant to Ingres, an artist commonly identified with intransigent dedication, but Heinrich Heine deftly found a way to compare both him and his art to Louis-Philippe and his ideology:

As Louis-Philippe in politics, M. Ingres has this year been the king in art; as the former reigns in the Tuileries, he reigns in the Louvre. The character of M. Ingres is also *juste-milieu*; M. Ingres, in fact, is a *juste-milieu* between Meiris and Michelangelo. In his pictures, we find the heroic vigour of Meiris and the fine colouring of Michelangelo.¹¹⁴

Not only was Ingres's artistic pre-eminence a parallel to the king's royal authority, his art was reduced to an aesthetic compromise (albeit in the form of an ironical role-reversal of Michelangelo and van Meiris).¹¹⁵ Heine gives over part of his review to quoting Louis de Maynard, who had also positioned Ingres as the representative of an artistic *juste milieu*. His comments on the Salon come as the conclusion to a review of the French school since the late eighteenth century, culminating in the present with Ingres, who represented 'a kind of *juste milieu*' between David's pupils and the leaders of the 'école romantique'.¹¹⁶ Here, the term is claimed as belonging to art, albeit with the qualification 'a kind of', signalling an awareness of the political parallel.

If some insisted on keeping art and politics distinct, others found the array of bourgeois portraiture in the Salon to be palpable evidence of a direct continuum between the *juste milieu* as a political class with its artistic equivalent, and Ingres's painting of Bertin was at the heart of such a convergence. For the Nisard in *Le National*: 'His portrait is him in all his aspects; it is his epoch' ('Son portrait c'est lui tout entier; c'est son épopée')¹¹⁷ – the first invocation of the idea that *Bertin* is an icon of his class and his times. Heine was not the only critic to link Ingres to the *juste milieu* as both a political and artistic term of censure. The *Messenger des dames* picked out *Bertin* as an image:

of the most able defender of today's government, M. Bertin *l'ainé*, owner-editor of the *Journal des débats*. As I don't want to collide with the rabble of critics who find this portrait admirable, I will confine myself to saying that the advocate of the *juste milieu* employed a painter of the *juste milieu*, M. Ingres, who glories in having nothing in common with the classiques, and who would blush to be associated in anyway with the pupils of simple nature. But could masterpieces ever emerge from the chilly combination of a *juste milieu*?¹¹⁸

However, the most pungent alignment of *Bertin* and the *juste milieu* was Charles Philippon's merciless characterisation of the sitter:

A considerable place in the Salon is occupied by a portrait that one would take for that of a restaurateur or a member of the modern Caveau; this is the face of a rake, pink and puffy cheeks, red nose, mouth and ears, all that supported by a huge chest and a wide abdomen, all that leaning on fat thighs, heavy arms, fat hands, all that oozing fat and resembling the personification of the *Juste-Milieu*. . . It is the portrait of M. Bertin de Vaux by M. Ingres.¹¹⁹

This satirical description ignores the *juste milieu* as an artistic trend and indeed ignores Ingres, who is reduced to being no more than the transcriber of a shamelessly exaggerated physical reality.

We noted above that caricatural representations of the *juste milieu* had appeared mostly in 1831–1832,¹²⁰ giving this 1833 satire a retrospective

resonance. These images, primarily devised by Charles Philippon for *La Caricature*, are remarkably diverse, playing on the metaphorical versatility of the notion of a middle path. Philippon created opposed sets of armorial bearings for the People and the *Juste Milieu* (Fig. 4), contrasting signs of action with royalist dishonest compromise;¹²¹ Philippon and Julien ironically linked the term to the confined and bound body of a prisoner ‘between the guillotine and Liberty’ (Fig. 5), in a way which complements Bertin’s seated pose.¹²² A print by Philippon from 28 April 1831 creates a deceptively singular physical correlate: ‘The caricature will henceforward be a Truth . . . The *Juste Milieu*’, in which an obese standing figure has legs but no head, merely a bloated envelope made up of court dress (Fig. 6).¹²³ In Traviès’s ‘Le pot de Mélasse’, a ‘portrait’ of the *juste milieu* takes the form of a spherical jar of molasses (Fig. 7).¹²⁴ Both the *juste milieu* and its adherents were castigated for obesity – a well-established metaphor for greed and overindulgence,¹²⁵ and given the label ‘ventru’, hence the *Figaro*’s jibe: ‘Le *juste milieu* n’est pas le cœur, c’est le ventre’ ‘The *juste milieu* is not the heart, it is the belly’.¹²⁶ Such metaphors also play on the earlier association of *juste milieu* with the body in its use as a formula for healthy living, transforming this into a polemical vision of the pathologically distended body politic.

There is a further way in which Bertin’s portrait intersects with caricatures of Louis-Philippe as an obese body: in the lithographic parody, published in *La Caricature*, there is a pear scribbled on the wall to the sitter’s right (Fig. 8).¹²⁷ This perfectly illustrates the satirical conceit’s adoption as a form of popular graffiti, following Philippon’s notorious trial on 14 November 1831, in which he defended himself by a sequence of four drawings that started with a pear and ended with Louis-Philippe.¹²⁸

Thus, *Bertin* could be plausibly treated as an image of the *juste milieu* because of the sitter’s corpulence and his well-publicised support for this political formula. Moreover, Ingres could without difficulty be polemically positioned to his detriment as exemplifying an artistic *juste milieu*.

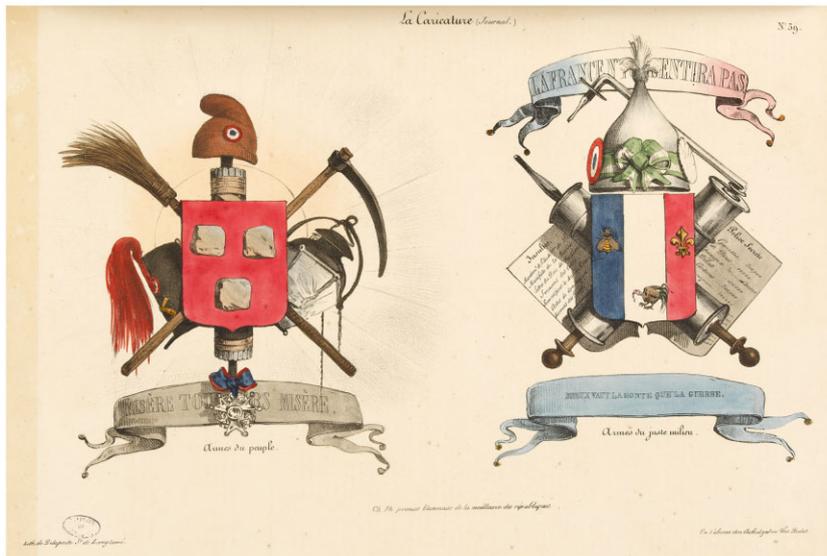


Fig. 4. Charles Philippon, ‘Les Armes du Peuple. Les Armes du Juste-Milieu’ (‘The Arms of the People, The Arms of the Juste-Milieu’), *La Caricature*, vol. 30, 26 May 1831. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

éclats du rire. La culture des rieurs au XVIIIème siècle (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2000).

100. In justifying the government’s new procedure for choosing mayors, Dupin explained: ‘Il choisira le maire parmi les hommes qui tiennent à un juste milieu (Rire et interruption à gauche)’; in response he asserted: ‘Je répète l’expression de *juste milieu* [original emphasis], dont je me suis servi à dessein. Le maire, tel que je le conçois, tient le juste milieu dont l’homme de bien et le bon citoyen font leur règle de conduite: il administrera la commune sans passions et sans faiblesse; il fera exécuter les lois envers et contre tous; il sera l’ami de l’ordre public, et l’ennemi de tous les excès; il ne se lance pans dans un avenir incertain; il ne reporte pas ses regards sur un passé qui n’est plus; c’est l’homme du présent’ (*Gazette nationale ou Moniteur universel*, 5 Feb. 1831, p. 246).

101. ‘On a, certes, assez divagué sur le parti du juste-milieu; il est bien temps de savoir ce que c’est. Le juste-milieu, c’est le tiers-état de l’ancien régime, c’est la bourgeoisie de 1789, c’est la nation du Consulat et de l’Empire, ce sont les constitutionnels de la Restauration et de la monarchie de juillet. Le juste-milieu, c’est cette classe, grace à Dieu si nombreuse aujourd’hui, dans les mains de laquelle se trouve repartie la propriété; c’est la réunion de tous les hommes éclairés, amis de l’ordre et de la justice’ (*Journal des débats*, 25 August 1833). As an unsigned lead article, Bertin would certainly have approved it, if he had not written it himself. However, we should note that Bertin spurned Louis-Philippe’s request to visit his country house, Les Roches, preferring to retain his independence from the head of state (Mme Victor Hugo), *Victor Hugo raconté par un témoin de sa vie*, vol. 3, pp. 89–92, cited in Hans Naef, *Die Bildniszeichnungen von J.-A.-D. Ingres*, 5 vols (Bern: Benteli, 1977–1980), iii, p. 120.

102. ‘s’est emparé des rênes de l’art, a opéré une fusion qui tend à le faire marcher dans une voie sage et réfléchie dont l’issue ne peut être que prospère’ (Charles Desains, *Annales du musée et de l’école moderne des beaux-arts. Salon de 1833* (Paris: Pillet aîné, 1833), p. 168). The description of a fusion, in which opposed artistic tendencies came together in a harmonious compromise, was ironically applauded in a review of Desains’s *Souvenirs*, which concluded: ‘nous sommes tout ce qu’il y a de plus juste milieu’ (*L’Indépendant*, 23 June 1833).

103. ‘Depuis un certain temps le vent est décidément à la fusion; qu’il n’est question que de fusion dans les journaux et les salons, et que, sans parler du juste milieu politique, on commence à s’apercevoir que le bon dans les arts, est le juste milieu entre le froid classique et le chaud romantique’ (Anon., ‘Que la politesse est une belle chose, et que tout le monde n’est

pas poli', *Journal des artistes*, vol. 21, 22 May 1831, p. 399).

104. Anon., 'Beaux-arts', *L'Indépendant*, 23 June 1833, p. 1.

105. 'voie de milieu' (L. de M. [Louis de Maynard], 'De la littérature des journaux politiques. Deuxième article', *Le Journal de Paris, La Tribune, Le Constitutionnel, L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 59, 15 July 1833, pp. 237–8).

106. 'la poétique d'un Musée de juste milieu' ('Visite au Musée', *La Quotidienne*, vol. 77, 18 March 1833).

107. 'L'art, comme la politique, a ses partis de résistance, de juste-milieu et de mouvement . . . il faut nécessairement qu'elle devienne populaire et démocratique' (Anon., 'Salon de 1833', *Le Charivari*, vol. 95, 5 March 1833, p. 1).

108. 'les peintres comme les ministres sont désignés par la majorité' (N.H.F., 'Salon de 1833', no. 66, *Le Figaro*, 7 March 1833, pp. 2–3).

109. 'inconstance perpétuelle dans les principes et la pratique . . . une voie bien décriée de nos jours, celle du juste-milieu' (Lenormant, 'Salon de 1831', in *Les Artistes contemporains*, p. 113). A less serious review illustrates the term's comic potential: Cadet, a bellicose veteran of 1830, mocks Crouton, who claims: 'moi aussi, mais j'suis pour les arts'; Cadet replies: 'Oui, les arts du juste milieu' (*M. Crouton au Salon de 1831* (Paris: Maldon, 1831), p. 5).

110. 'En arrière donc la politique et la littérature; au diable le gouvernement et Camille Desmoulins, le révolutionnaire; le ministère et Antony le bâtard; le budget et le Moine à cornes! et si je ne comprends pas le juste milieu dans cette rebuffade générale [of everything which was 'dangereusement aimable'], ce n'est point que je l'oublie et ne l'envoie aussi au diable de bon cœur; mais c'est que je craindrais, quand il s'agit de l'Opéra et de tout ce qu'il renferme, qu'on ne vît dans l'emploi de cette expression, un jeu de mots qui est à mille lieues de la pudeur de mes pensées' (Anon., *La Gazette de France*, 4 June 1831, pp. 1–3).

111. 'savent tout ce qu'il faut savoir, et font tout ce qu'il est possible de faire sans génie . . . sans défauts, sans beautés, leurs ouvrages déconcertent la critique; une honnête médiocrité s'y trouve comme infuse dans toutes les parties. L'art n'a rien à espérer ni à craindre d'eux' (Louis Peisse, 'Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1831. (Deuxième article)', *Le National*, vol. 123, 8 May 1831, n.p. [pp. 3–4]). This text is referred to but not quoted and without page reference by Rosenthal, *Du Romantisme au Réalisme*, p. 205.

112. 'une sorte de juste-milieu, qui, dans les arts non plus, n'aboutit guère qu'à une honnête

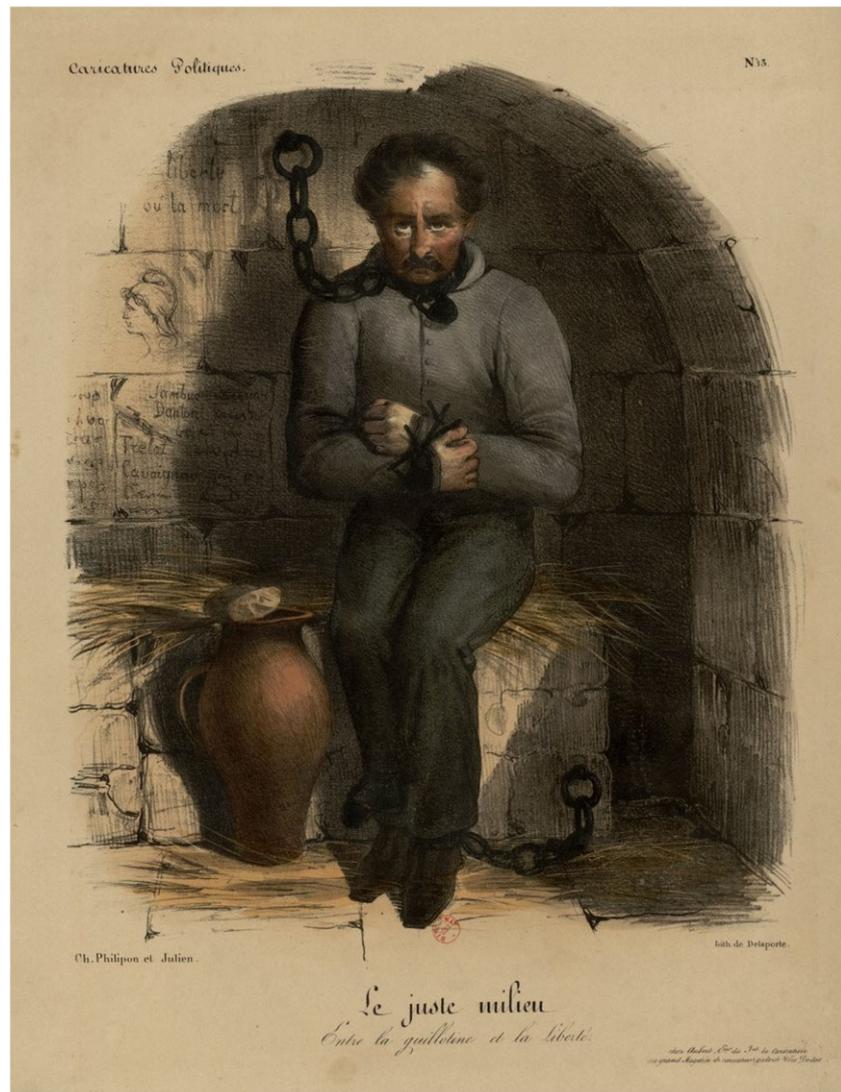


Fig. 5. Charles Philippon and Julien, 'Le Juste Milieu entre la guillotine et la liberté' ('The Juste Milieu Between the Guillotine and Liberty'), *La Caricature*, Dépôt 18 March 1831. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

Bourgeois Bodies and Portraits

The state of portraiture was recognised as being less dependent on the prevailing standard of portraitists than the historically variable physical and moral constitution of sitters. Reviewing the low standard of portraiture evident during the Empire and Restoration, Laviron and Galbacio were tempted to believe that 'humankind has degenerated, so much is it the case that the painted heads of our epoch show us worthless and insignificant men'.¹²⁹ Indeed, *Bertin* was applauded precisely because Ingres had found a way to create an admirable portrait of a bourgeois, against the grain of that class's unprepossessing appearances, namely by depicting Louis-François Bertin, 'the most elevated type of the class which he represents' ('le type le plus élevé de la classe qu'il représente').¹³⁰ Interestingly, Bertin's body could also serve as a counter-example to ideas of corporeal decline. Delécluze, who championed the painting



Fig. 6. Ch[arles] Philippon, 'La charge sera désormais un vérité. Le Juste Milieu' ('The Caricature will Henceforward be a Truth. The Juste Milieu'), *La Caricature*, vol. 26, 28 April 1831. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

in 1833, was to look back admiringly on its sitter and his body as something that later generations failed to live up to. Comparing Louis-François Bertin's constitution and physiognomy with that of his son Armand, Delécluze judged that the latter fell short: 'But his were no longer the features of the earlier Bertins, on which early youthful years, passed in the middle of revolutionary troubles and persecutions, had imprinted a mark of energy particular to the men who entered active life in 1789'.¹³¹ Delécluze does not make the connection, but we may imagine that he recognised the parallel between Bertin and Ingres, nineteen years younger but still a witness to the Revolution and its aftermath. Something of Delécluze's respect for Bertin's constitution emerges in the homage rendered by *Prométhéides*. *Revue du Salon de 1833*:

In the future, when great and fertile France
Will trample the debris of this futile century,

médiocrité' (Anon., 'Les Beaux-arts en 1833. Ouverture du Salon', *Le Siècle*, vol. 1, 1833, p. 260). The association of 'juste milieu' and 'honnête' had been articulated in a lithograph published in *La Caricature*, vol. 27, 5 May 1831, plate 54, which shows three men who represent socio-political constituencies of the early July Monarchy, each with their characteristics: 'Le mouvement – impatient – trop pressé; Le juste milieu – honnête homme – propriétaire – ordre public – peureux; La résistance – ganache – carliste – henriquiniste – bandagiste' (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, De Vinck Collection, vol. 94, no. 12030).

113. 'Exposition au Louvre (Première article)', *Journal des artistes*, 3 March 1833, pp. 29–30.

114. 'Comme Louis-Philippe dans la politique, M. Ingres a été cette année le roi dans l'art; comme le premier règne aux Tuileries, lui, il a régné au Louvre. Le caractère de M. Ingres est aussi juste-milieu; M. Ingres, en effet, est un juste-milieu entre Mieris et Michel-Ange. On trouve dans ses tableaux la hardiesse héroïque de Mieris et le fin coloris de Michel-Ange' (Heine, p. 23). Heine presumably refers here to the Dutch genre painter Frans van Meiris (1635–1681).

115. In 1832, Heine had already identified the character of Robert le Diable, in Meyerbeer's opera of the same name, as a personification of the *juste milieu*, which he claimed was partly responsible for its success (Gerhard, *Urbanization of Opera*, pp. 207–8). For a later German description of contemporary musical factions in terms of political labels, including the *juste milieu*, see a review by Robert Schumann, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, vol. 1, 5 May 1834, p. 38, cited in Mark Evan Bonds, *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 182.

116. 'Depuis David jusqu'au Salon de 1833', *L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 9, 20 March 1833, p. 37.

117. N., 'Salon de 1833', *Le National*, vol. 97, 7 April 1833.

118. 'du défenseur le plus habile du gouvernement actuel, de M. Bertin l'aîné, propriétaire-rédacteur du *Journal des débats*. Comme je ne veux pas heurter de front la tourbe des journalistes qui a trouvé ce portrait admirable, je me contenterai de faire remarquer que l'avocat du juste-milieu s'est adressé à un peintre de juste-milieu, M. Ingres, qui se fait gloire de n'avoir rien de commun avec les classiques, et qui rougirait d'une association quelconque avec les élèves de la simple nature. Or, des chefs-d'œuvre pourront-ils jamais naître de la froide combinaison d'un juste-milieu?' ('Beaux arts. Salon de 1833. (Troisième article)', *Messenger des dames*, 28 March 1833, p. 45). A

similar convergence is found in *L'Écho français* (H.-O., 'Salon de 1833', *L'Écho français*, vol. 1534, 15 April 1833, article 4 feuilleton): 'Ce sont des médiocrités de comptoir, d'atelier, de parquet, multipliées par de faméliques médiocrités. C'est le juste milieu tout entier peint par le juste-milieu'.

119. 'Une large place de ce salon est occupé par un portrait qu'on prendront pour celui d'un restaurateur ou d'un membre du Caveau moderne; c'est une face de viveur, des joues roses et bouffies, un nez, une bouche et des oreilles rouges, tout cela supporté par une grosse poitrine et un large abdomen, tout cela appuyé sur des grosses cuisses, de gros bras, de grosses mains, tout cela suintant la graisse et ressemblant à la personification du Juste-Milieu... C'est le portrait de M. Bertin de Vaux par M. Ingres' (*La Caricature*, vol. 127, 11 April 1833, col. 1013, signed CH. PH). The sitter's brother is here mistakenly named. Some of these phrases echo those in the review in *Tribune*, vol. 62, 3 March 1833: 'c'est un grand mangeur et viveur aux tons bouffis', which recalls 'certain jouisseur du Caveau moderne' rather than 'les moines graves de Guirlandaio'.

120. Famously including Grandville's parody of Eugène Devéria's *The Birth of Henri IV* (1827 Salon), 'La naissance du juste milieu' (*La Caricature*, 2 February 1832).

121. 'Arms of the People, Arms of the Juste-Milieu', *La Caricature*, no. 30, 26 May 1831.

For a detailed account of the imagery, see Charles Philipon, *La Caricature, 1830–1835. Lithographies complètes. An Illustrated Catalogue Raisonné of the Lithographs* (San Francisco, CA: Alan Wofsy Fine Arts, 2017), p. 67. A parallel to this is the series of 'Bigarrures' in *Le Figaro*: 'Un classique propose cette définition du juste-milieu: Entre les trois Grâces et les trois Parques, les trois Dupin. Autre exemple: Entre la paix et la guerre, M. de Talleyrand. Autre exemple: Entre un bonnet phrygien et un bonnet de police, un bonnet de coton' (vol. 65, 6 March 1831, p. 3).

122. 'The Juste Milieu between the guillotine and Liberty', *La Caricature*, Dépôt 18 March 1831, and a smaller version as one of eight caricatures on the same page, 26 April 1831.

123. Ch[arles] Philipon, 'The caricature will henceforward be a Truth. Le Juste Milieu', *La Caricature*, vol. 26, 28 April 1831. This formula echoes the declaration made on 30 July 1830 by Louis-Philippe, 'La Charte sera désormais une vérité'.

124. Charles Joseph Traviès, 'Le pot de Mélasse, portrait du Juste-Milieu', *La Caricature*, vol. 78, 29 April 1832, plate 157.

125. David Kerr notes 'The figure of the "Ventru", the bloated deputy whose obesity



Fig. 7. C.J. Traviès, 'Le pot de Mélasse, portrait du Juste-Milieu' ('The Pot of Molasses, Portrait of the Juste Milieu'), *La Caricature*, vol. 78, plate 157, 29 April 1832. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

Your work, like a sacred book, will depict
The doctrinaire type from these revered times.¹³²

Ingres's painting is imagined as inheriting the durability of Bertin's body. As we will see, what Bertin's body was taken to express was an important aspect of readings of Ingres's portrait as a historicised representation beholden to its social and political circumstances.

There are no shortage of attacks on the bourgeoisie as patrons and subjects for art, coming both from republican and legitimist sides of the political spectrum, each of which sought to assert their role as guardians of France's art. In 1830, Charles Philipon's *La Silhouette* published a series of letters by 'Un Rapin' (answered by 'Un Bourgeois') on bourgeois attitudes to art, all of which were by this account incomprehending – penny-pinching ignorance of painting and its ways of creating visual illusion.¹³³ This polemical lament was reiterated in 1833 by Désiré Nisard in *Le National*. If Nisard's catalogue of inadequacy was testimony to the unfortunate fact that bourgeois values, however admirable in civil society and in politics, had been assimilated into the arts, it was also a veritable definition of the *juste milieu*:

I like the bourgeois by taste and necessity, being myself immersed in the bourgeois by all kinds of relation and links; I like it in civil and political life; but in the arts, in poetry, I detest it. The bourgeois, in the arts, is whatever has no character of its own, it is what is neither common people nor great lord, it is that which is neither picturesque nor of the elevated style; it is that kind of painting made by people who have neither spirit nor taste, in which one floats between what are called extremes, making things prosaic but not picturesque, and noble but not elevated... Sentiment is not bourgeois because sometimes one has to make big mistakes and the bourgeois, once again, is the absence of big mistakes.¹³⁴

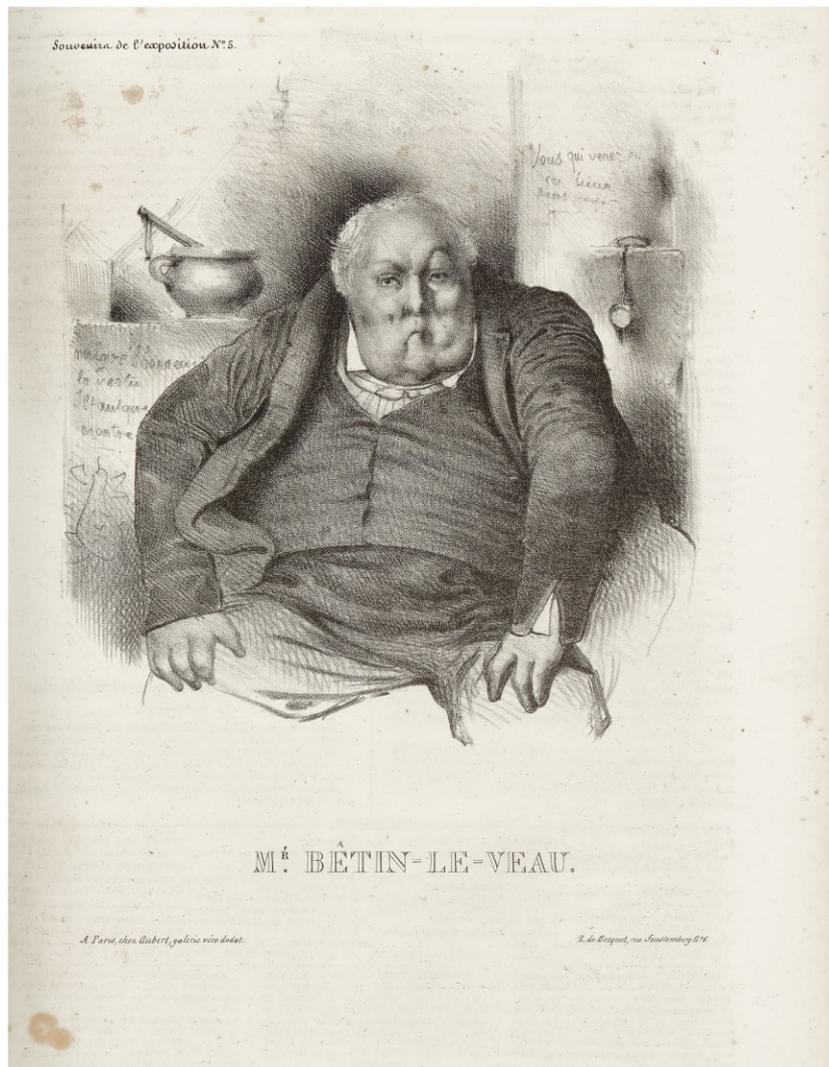


Fig. 8. Anonymous, 'M. Bétin-le-Vau', lithograph, *La Caricature*, vol. 127, 11 April 1833, col. 1013, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. (Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.)

Elsewhere this baleful influence was blamed on the underlying materialistic spirit of industrialism and commerce, which had the century in its grip, even invading the studio.¹³⁵ For the *mondain* and bohemian *L'Écho de la jeune France*, this was solely because government support was lacking, and henceforward artists were obliged to make small interior scenes and portraits 'for the use of the bourgeois of Paris and the suburbs'.¹³⁶

If Maynard resigned himself to the fact that 'our painting is as bourgeois as we are. Our pictures have our stature',¹³⁷ this situation could also be acclaimed as a salutary sign of the times, proof that affluent bourgeois could now enjoy pleasures that had previously been the exclusive preserve of aristocrats and great families.¹³⁸

Whatever the justification for the abundant presence of bourgeois portraits at the Salon, the resulting impression was frequently found to be 'grotesque',¹³⁹ indeed so ugly as to provoke *Le Corsaire* to compare the Salon to the shopwindow of 'a seller of caricatures'.¹⁴⁰ For *La Quotidienne*, the lowly

embodies the results of ministerial corruption, had been popularised in Béranger's songs', and Eugene Lami's illustration in volume two of the Perrotin edition of *Œuvres complètes de P.J. Béranger* (Paris, 1834), opp. p. 168 (David S. Kerr, *Caricature and French Political Culture 1830–1848: Charles Philippon and the Illustrated Press* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 73). In 1824, *La Pandore* had published a satire whose raison d'être was 's'engraisser' in 'L'homme du siècle, le représentant de notre âge', *La Pandore*, vol. 377, 25 July 1824, p. 4.

126. *Le Figaro*, vol. 43, 13 February 1831, p. 3; see also *Le Figaro*, 16 February 1831, p. 1. Chateaubriand mocked the new regime as a 'système pansu' (paunchy system). See *De la nouvelle proposition relative au bannissement de Charles X et de sa famille* (Paris: Le normant fils, 1831), in *Grands Écrits politiques*, 2 vols (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1993), ii, p. 632, cited in *Caricatures politiques 1829–1848. De l'étéignoir à la poire* (Conseil général des Hauts de Seine, Maison de Chateaubriand, 1994) p. 78. The metaphor remained active, as in Daumier's lithograph *Le Ventre législatif*, published in *L'Association mensuelle*, January 1834.

127. 'Betin de Vau', *La Caricature*, vol. 127, 11 April 1833, col. 1013. The picture is often mistakenly linked to Bertin's brother, Bertin de Vaux; see Laviron and Galbacio, p. 61; *Journal des femmes*, 30 March 1833, p. 147; *La Propriété*, vol. 15, 16 March 1833, p. 3; Pierre-Nolasque Bergeret, *Lettres d'un artiste sur l'état des arts en France, considérés sous les rapports politiques, artistiques, commerciaux et industriels* (Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1848), p. 66; Théophile Gautier, 'M. Bertin de Veaux', *Les Beaux-arts en Europe. 1855*, ser. 1 (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1856), p. 164.

128. Charles Philippon, Letter to Roslje, 7 July 1846, cited in Léopold Carteret, *Le Trésor du bibliophile romantique et moderne 1801–1875*, 4 vols (Paris: L. Carteret, 1925), iii, p. 124.

129. 'l'espèce humaine a dégénérée, tant les têtes peintes dans notre époque indiquent des hommes nuls et insignifiants' (Laviron and Galbacio, p. 147).

130. [Anon.], 'Salon de 1833', *L'Artiste*, 1833, vol. 5, p. 154. See Michael Marrinan's discussion of Bertin in Michael Marrinan, *Romantic Paris. Histories of a Cultural Landscape, 1800–1850* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 243.

131. 'Mais ce n'était plus cette figure des anciens Bertins, sur laquelle les premières années d'une jeunesse passée au milieu des troubles révolutionnaires et des persécutions avaient imprimé un cachet particulier d'énergie aux hommes qui sont entrés dans la vie active en

1789' (Etienne Jean Delécluze, *Souvenirs* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1862), p. 155).

132. 'Plus tard, lorsque la France énorme et fertile / Fouillera les débris de ce siècle futile, / Ton œuvre lui peindra comme un livre sacré / Le type *doctrinaire* en ce temps révéral' (*Prométhéides*, pp. 33-4). The *Doctrinaires* were a group of prominent intellectuals who aspired to understand and reform post-revolutionary society, associated with liberal views under the Restoration, and pro-constitutionalist opinions under the July Monarchy, views which Louis-François Bertin promoted through his editorial role on the *Journal des débats*. In the words of one member of this group, Charles de Rémusat: 'We shared one common thought: the idea of bringing the Revolution to an end by creating genuine representative government' (*Mémoires de ma vie*, ed. by C.H. Pouthas, 2 vols (Paris: Plon, 1959), ii, p. 287, cited in Aurelian Craiutu, 'The Method of the French Doctrinaires', *History of European Ideas*, 2004, vol. 30, no. 1, p. 52).

133. 'Le bourgeois dans ses rapports avec les arts', *La Silhouette*, vol. 1, 1830, pp. 11-13. The censure here anticipates that found in *Physiologie du bourgeois* (Paris: Aubert, 1841).

134. 'J'aime le bourgeois par goût et par nécessité, étant plongé moi-même dans le bourgeois par tous les genres de relations et de liens; je l'aime dans la vie civile et dans la vie politique; mais dans les arts, dans la poésie, je le déteste. Le bourgeois, dans les arts, c'est ce qui n'a aucun caractère propre, c'est ce qui n'est ni peuple, ni grand seigneur, c'est ce qui n'est ni pittoresque ni de haut style; c'est cette espèce de peinture qui font les gens qui n'ont que de l'esprit et du goût, où l'on flotte entre ce qu'on appelle les extrêmes, et où l'on fait du prosaïque qui n'est pas du pittoresque, et du noble qui n'est pas de l'élevé... Le sentiment n'est pas bourgeois parce qu'il faut faire quelquefois de grosses fautes et que le bourgeois, encore un coup, c'est l'absence de grosses fautes' ('Salon de 1833', *Le National*, 22 March 1833 (incompletely quoted in Rosenthal, *Du Romantisme au Réalisme*, p. 228 n. 2).

135. *Le Nouvelliste*, vol. 398, 4 March 1833.

136. 'à l'usage des bourgeois de Paris et de la banlieue' ('Beaux-arts. Récit d'un voyageur', *L'Écho de la jeune France*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1833, p. 111).

137. 'notre peinture est aussi bourgeoise que nous. Nos tableaux ont notre taille' ('État de la peinture en France. 4e article. Salon de 1833', *L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 11, 25 March 1833, pp. 45-6).

138. *Journal des dames et des modes*, 25 April 1833, p. 178.

forms of caricature and signpainting were the appropriate art forms for the present day.¹⁴¹ This general scepticism about the representation of the bourgeoisie as a class provides a background for critics' more detailed reservations aimed at Ingres's depiction of particular aspects of Bertin's body.¹⁴²

Bertin's pose and his hands are the prime focus for critical comments on the virtues or otherwise of the portrait as a representation of the sitter. Not until the Second Empire would commentators shift towards an enthusiastic consensus. In 1833, all are negative, apart from those by Gustave Planché, for whom: 'The hands are modelled with an unimaginable finesse'.¹⁴³ Maynard related that the 'Sunday public' had taken up the idea that the hands were 'claws', and the pose 'trivial'.¹⁴⁴ Laviron and Galbacio found the pose 'insolent and in bad taste', and it was this that disqualified it from being considered in the same company as portraits by Raphael, Bronzino, Fra Bartolomeo or Albrecht Dürer, artists who would never have painted hands as 'twisted' as Bertin's: 'nature cannot have made him like that, unless Bertin's hands are not made like those other men'.¹⁴⁵ The *Petit Courrier des dames* found the hands 'swollen and disgraceful';¹⁴⁶ the *Courrier de l'Europe* attributed their strangeness to the fact that they might be covered by gloves.¹⁴⁷

The slur that Bertin appears to be sitting on a toilet became popular with later antagonistic commentators, but originates in 1833. This first appears in the lithograph in *La Caricature*, in which a chamber pot appears behind Bertin's right shoulder.¹⁴⁸ Defecation as a tool in the caricaturist's arsenal had famously been used in Daumier's *Gargantua* (April 1831), showing royal patronage as a cascade of excrement.¹⁴⁹ *La Caricature's* image extends the characterisation of Bertin as coarse: his excessive appetite causes his repulsive obesity, and his frequent recourse to a *chaise percée*. In these terms, Ingres's willingness to depict Bertin in such a manner was shocking evidence of the artist's aesthetic degradation, and his complicity in a corrupt regime. Bertin's body, contained in its rumpled black suit, so palpably rendered in Ingres's portrait, had been the means by which Louis-Philippe's political detractors were able to maximise their iconoclastic satire. Bertin's body was all too easily coterminous with the distended pear-shaped physique of the king, and all this stood for in terms of corruption and self-indulgence.

*

It is clear that *Bertin* received a mixed and complex critical response, contrary to current consensus largely based on very incomplete readings of criticism. Indeed, judgements on *Bertin* were extremely polarised. On the one hand, the picture was lauded as a remarkable masterpiece by a mature artist, demonstrating that, even in an unassuming portrait, he was capable of exceptional finesse sufficient to defuse frustration at the lack of a new history painting. On the other hand, *Bertin* was censured because of the sitter's obesity and suggestive pose. Furthermore, Ingres's alleged artistic inadequacies amplified, rather than deflected, accusations of a will to dominate, based on an idea of his narrow aesthetic intransigence.

The picture was extensively implicated in polemic against the government and its ideology, identified with the formula of the *juste milieu*. However, what has emerged with much greater force than has previously been recognised is the way that the portrait provoked a variety of political responses, from affirmations of the status quo to republican denunciations of its corruption and iniquities. Not only was Bertin's portrait treated as a personification of the *juste milieu*, Ingres was labelled as being a painter to the regime, and attacked for the

compromise assumed to be inevitable in such alignment. This was perceived as being part of a more insidious contamination, wherein the artist's vaunted independence had been abandoned in favour of gratifying the simple-minded narcissism of the bourgeois beneficiaries of the new regime. Readings of Ingres's portrait as an icon of bourgeois political power were to be elaborated and consolidated when it was next publicly visible in Paris as part of a group of his works in an exhibition of French painting at the Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle in 1846, and then at the 1855 Exposition Universelle. But it is clear that the contested foundations of such political characterisations of Ingres's portraits were laid in 1833.

I dedicate this article to the memory of Jon Whiteley, friend and teacher.

139. Offended by 'la bourgeoise expression de leurs physionomies si communes, voire même grotesques' (*Courrier de l'Europe*, vol. 83, 24 March 1833, p. 2)

140. The multitude 'était au Louvre comme devant les vitraux de Susse, d'Aubert, ou de Martinet; il est vrai qu'à voir le nombre de portraits qui enlaidissent le Musée, on peut se croire chez un vendeur de caricatures' ('Première promenade – Méditation', *Le Corsaire*, no. 3682, 6 March 1833, n.p. [2–3]).

141. *La Quotidienne*, vol. 77, 18 March 1833, n.p.

142. See Richard Wrigley, 'The Class of '89: Cultural Constructions of Bourgeois Identity in the Aftermath of the French Revolution', in Andrew Hemingway and William Vaughan (eds), *Art and Bourgeois Society: Europe and America 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 130–53.

143. 'Les mains sont modelées avec une finesse inimaginables' (Planche, 'Salon de 1833', *Revue des deux mondes*, ser. 2, ii, p. 91). Planche remained enthusiastic, as in his comments in 1851 on Magimel's volume of prints after Ingres: 'un chef d'œuvre de vérité. Il est permis de blâmer l'attitude du modèle; mais l'attitude une fois acceptée, il faut admirer sans restriction l'énergie de l'expression: les yeux regardent, la bouche parle, les mains frémissent en se contractant sur les genoux' ('Les œuvres de M. Ingres', *Revue des deux mondes*, Dec. 1851, p. 1134).

144. *L'Europe littéraire*, vol. 11, 1 April 1833, pp. 57–8.

145. 'insolente et de mauvais ton . . . la nature ne peut pas lui avoir donné cela, à moins que les mains de M. Bertin ne soient pas faites comme celles d'un autre homme' (Laviron and Galbacio, pp. 61–2).

146. 'enflées et disgracieuses' (*Petit Courrier des dames*, 5 April 1833, p. 151).

147. 'Ces mains sont peut-être gantées' (*Courrier de l'Europe*, vol. 83, 24 March 1833, p. 2).

148. *Le Charivari*, 15 May 1833.

149. *La Caricature*, vol. 26, 28 April 1831. A later image shows the entrance to the toilet behind the auditorium of the Cour de Pairs to remind viewers that peers were mere mortals ('Vue principale de la cour des Pairs', *La Caricature*, vol. 237, 21 May 1835).