Recasting Iron: Alternative Imaginations of an Ephemeral Eiffel Tower, 1889-1909

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Abstract

There is perhaps no shorthand more banal for France and Frenchness than the omnipresent form of the Eiffel Tower. Because its iterations are so ubiquitous, the public imagination has come to regard the iron monument as an inevitability, eliding the uncertainty of its early period. Indeed, Gustave Eiffel's firm's lease on the Champs de Mars was to expire in 1909, at which point the Tower was to be moved or demolished entirely.

During this "trial run" period, the Eiffel Tower was just as ephemeral as the key-chains and postcards that litter its public perception. Yet, unlike these modern-day copies of the Tower, its two decades of transitory status allowed alternative imaginations for the Tower to flourish in a cultural dialogue. These changes in the Tower's official, physical form also illuminate the "unofficial" popular forces that rendered the temporary structure a permanent icon. This dissertation will integrate the lowbrow, the petty, the behind-the-scenes, the feminine, and the infantile into the canon of Eiffel Tower history by adding novel artifacts and texts to its record and giving voice and expression to the "little people" who set its iconicity in motion.

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Introduction: Reconsidering the Eiffel Tower

"Je cherche en même temps l'éternel et l'éphémère."

— Georges Perec[1]

Ironically, one of the most persistent myths about the Eiffel Tower comes from the chief *mythologiste* himself, Roland Barthes. His essay "La Tour Eiffel" begins, "Maupassant déjeunait souvent au restaurant de la Tour, que pourtant il n'aimait pas: *c'est*, disait-il, *le seul endroit de Paris ou je ne la vois pas*" (1). Unless Maupassant said this aloud and it passed into a sort of urban legend — even a Barthesian *mythe* —, Barthes is embellishing what the fin-de-siècle personality actually wrote for the January 6, 1890 installment in *L'Écho de Paris*, Maupassant's only text in which he directly addresses the Eiffel Tower. The writer complains that, every time one invited a friend during the *Exposition* to take a meal together, "il accepte à condition qu'on banquetera sur la Tour Eiffel. C'est plus gai. Et tous, comme par suite d'un mot d'ordre, ils vous y convient aussi tous les jours de la semaine, soit pour déjeuner, soit pour dîner" (*Œuvres complètes* 1452). Somehow, by the time Barthes penned his coffee-table book, this observation became contorted into a charming quip about how the Eiffel Tower was so detested that a famous author paradoxically embraced its restaurants if only to remove it from his sights. Certainly, Barthes may have been imbuing this anecdote with the knowledge that Guy de Maupassant was among those who signed the infamous "Protestation des artistes contre la tour de M. Eiffel," which demonstrates a much deeper

[1] This quote is the epigraph to Pérec's final chapter of *La Vie mode d'emploi*, and it is taken from his short story, "Les Revenantes," pp. 587.

opposition to the structure even than a simple dislike. While Barthes embellished the text, popular imagination has taken this a step further. When I announced I would be studying the Eiffel Tower's early days, multiple people in various social contexts excitedly shared with me the "fun fact" that "people hated the Eiffel Tower at first." Certainly, I cannot fault someone for making such a blanket statement in small talk, but it represents the persistent myth that Barthes's imagined Maupassant and those who authored the "Protestation des Artistes" held the majority opinion. Representations from decidedly lowbrow artists and souvenir object manufacturers demonstrate the breadth of popular reactions to the Tower, which ran the gamut from apathetic to ludic to even purely joyful. To pin the entire cultural reception of the Eiffel Tower at its inception on one narrow demographic also gives in to presentism, suggesting that people at the time did not have the understanding of the Tower's iconic status when, in actuality, they were putting that very iconicity in motion.

Barthes's anecdote points to a largely unaddressed area in studies of the Eiffel Tower: how the Tower's actual material existence in its early years impacted the people who visited it, lived with it, and imagined it. The theorist fails to do justice to Maupassant's feelings about the Tower because he takes the farsighted view, seeing the Tower as a whole. Instead of seeing that it is Maupassant's fatigue at continually being made to return to the Tower's restaurants with each and every acquaintance, Barthes extracts from Maupassant's description of a trend done to death as a full-blown hatred of the monument. Quite simply, Maupassant never claims to loathe the Eiffel Tower, but states that he is tired of his peers' continued invitations to dine there. If anything, it is the restaurants, not the Tower itself, that he dislikes. Perhaps the thesis of the essay,

Barthes's observation that "[c]e signe pur — vide, presque — il est impossible de le fuir, parce qu'il veut tout dire" even suggests an emptiness of materiality that leads Barthes to an uncertainty as to what the sign is actually signifying (27). While writers since Barthes have looked less at the Tower's negative space and more at its actual construction to decipher its meaning, they still usually lconsider the tower as a whole and do not analyze its individual parts and how people may have interacted with them. Barry Bergdoll, in introducing photographer Lucien Hervé's postwar photographs of the monument, focuses on "the ubiquity of the Tower in the topography and daily life of Paris" even as Hervé's photographs offer close-up views — some unprecedented — of the monument itself (14). Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, in her chapter on miniatures of "colossal" structures, hints at a "magic" in holding a miniature version of the structure, but does not zoom in on the structure itself, following Barthes in focusing on the view from above. She writes that "[t]he tower is after all a viewing platform from which to behold Paris and its environs as a panorama," but does not delve into the actual frame of that view, the iron beams (164). It seems that in focusing on how the Tower became an important monument or symbol, scholars come at the structure from either the far view, seeing the monument from pylons to summit or off in the distant cityscape, or the view *from* the monument[2]. While this is conducive to studies that seek to contextualize the Eiffel Tower, whether as a mythological symbol, an urban omnipresence, or a colossus among other such works of scale, it emphasizes the seen over the felt, the eternal over the ephemeral.

[2] The most famous quote from Barthes's essay concludes that "La tour est un objet qui voit, un regard qui est vu," privileging again the view *from* the Tower as much as the view the Tower itself exerts on the viewer (27).

There, are, however, histories of the Tower that are more grounded in the minutiae of the colossus that, while not focusing on the small physical components of the structure, zoom in enough to do justice to how the monument came to be part of everyday life in Paris. In her work on the *Exposition Universelle de 1889*, Deborah Silverman captures some of what Barthes missed when he called the Tower "vide." She notes that the very emptiness that troubled Barthes actually highlights "the dialectic of public and private space, [with the] the interpenetration of inner and outer space…effecting a dazzling spatial dematerialization. Enclosing nothing, the tower created continuously changing viewpoints" (88). Though Silverman's analysis also seems to privilege "viewpoints," her idea that the negative space of the Tower permitted the enmeshing of public and private contributes to her overall contention that the *Exposition* "creat[ed] a diversion from, and a temporary suspension of political and social differences" (74). She therefore transmutes the viewed into the felt, understanding that the "spatial dematerialization" that visitors to the Tower would have experienced with interpenetrating views contributed to the overall fantasy of political and social equality the *Exposition* was designed to elicit. Siegfried Giedion goes one step further in sublimating the view from the Tower into a grounded, physical experience. He writes of the structure,

> To a previously unknown extent, outer and inner space are interpenetrating. This effect can only be experienced in descending the spiral stairs from the top, when the soaring lines of the structure intersect with the trees, houses, churches, and the serpentine windings of the Seine. The interpenetration of continuously changing viewpoints creates, in the eyes of the moving spectator, a glimpse into four-dimensional experience (218).

By describing an "effect" over a mere view, Giedion enters a fourth, temporal dimension. He posits that a Tower visitor's ability to see familiar sights in Paris, "trees, houses,

churches, and…the Seine," all at once collapses time and space and allows the visitor to see and feel many moments simultaneously, coming from all over the city. In Giedion's analysis of the Tower, its material experience facilitates what Ben Highmore contends is the true urban reality: "The actuality of the city is its lived metaphoricity...'imaginary' and textual meanings have profound material consequences" (5). Giedion's analysis of the phenomenon of interpenetrating views a visitor would see during their climb of the Eiffel Tower posits that the physical structure of the monument itself facilitates an imagination of a four-dimensional city, making the "material consequences" of the Tower the phenomenon that Silverman describes, "a temporary suspension of political and social differences" (74). It is not the Tower as a whole that gives every visitor from every political and social background a way in to the fourth dimension, but an individual's physical experience of climbing each step and peering through each frame created by the iron beams.

While Silverman and Giedion's materially-grounded approaches to the Eiffel Tower were particularly influential in my own thinking, I wish to delve even further into how the micro- of such a macro- monument is what made it a success. In her work on glass and openwork structures, Annette Fierro begins the kind of analysis I hope to add to the conversation by observing the Tower in extreme close-up. She writes,

> Its 18,038 components, each drawn exactly by Eiffel and his associates, were prefabricated; all 2.5 million rivet holes were predrilled precisely for final erection on site. Two-thirds of the rivet holes were set in place in the shop, substantially decreasing on-site assembly time. This system not only accommodated a compression in construction schedule…it was also ideal for the likely prospect of its dismantling. (53)

To view the Tower this way completely changes how one visually consumes the monument. When I returned to the Tower with Fierro's emphasis on its smaller

components in mind, its millions of rivets, which were all too easy to ignore in light of the monument's spectacle, were suddenly starkly apparent. By seeing the mechanics of how the structure could come apart and envisioning how hands-on that process would be, I could seize upon its materiality instead of thinking of it only holistically and symbolically. This understanding of a structure's making and unmaking is the unique gift of ephemeral architecture, Robert Kronenburg writes:

> As temporary structures were the first architecture to be erected [,] they have the potential to make a direct connection with every person's ability to make architecture in a way that more complex forms cannot. They also therefore have the power to encapsulate, in the most immediate way, tthe primal act of building (7).

In this way, the Tower's intended ephemerality invites a more personal, hands-on connection. While it was harder for me as a twenty-first century visitor — used to the structure being permanent — to get to this association between my own power to build and the structure that stood before me, for a contemporary *Exposition Universelle* visitor and, moreover, for any visitor or resident of Paris in 1887 to 1889 who got to witness the Tower's rise in person or in print, this "primal" connection would have been far more acute. The sense of understanding one's own hands' potential to make and unmake the Tower comes with another kinetic possibility whose implications are headier still. Kronenburg adds, of ephemeral buildings,

> Such structures appear to have a latent energy encoded within their fabric — when disassembled there is the potential for erection into a usable form; when in use, there is the knowledge that one day soon they may be taken apart. (7)

Though Kronenburg is likely speaking metaphorically, the material reality of his theory holds up; there are several forms of latent energy in destruction. The gravitational energy of the Tower would be affected as its top was taken down, changing the amount of force

the earth would exert on the iron beams. Breaking the rivets' bonds is not unlike the act of combustion, which severs a material connection but generates heat. And finally, disassembling the structure releases its mechanical potential energy, not unlike when a spring is compressed and suddenly released. All of these forms of "latent energy" fall under one of the fundamental physics principle of Newton's Law: no matter can be created from nothing, nothing can truly be destroyed, and everything is simply transformed. Taken literally, the Tower's puddled iron would not dissipate into nothing, and its valuable raw materials would certainly have been repurposed for another feat of architecture. But taken figuratively, this idea of "latent energy," in combination with the Tower's invitation to us to imagine our building and destroying it as an ephemeral structure, embodies not just the physics of its destruction but the possibilities hidden in its structure, just waiting to be released by human imagination. Therefore, while Fierro zeroed in the structure's *physical* ephemerality, I want to add Kronenburg's theory of what that means for an individual visitor's understanding to establish how it was the Tower's *psychic* ephemerality that created space for reevaluating what it meant socially, emotionally, and even personally for the visitors that made it an icon.

Perhaps in taking some liberty with Maupassant's feelings towards the Tower, Barthes was gesturing at the affective significations of the Tower as a means to fill the "vide." The format of his text, designed to fill a coffee table book in publisher Delpire's "Le Génie du lieu" series, attests to this impulse. When Barthes fills the negative space of the pages between the images of the Eiffel Tower with his interpretations of the Tower-as-symbol, he continues the tradition of early Tower visitors filling the voids in the Tower's openwork with their own meanings. Furthermore, this idea of a desire to

interpret that which seems empty extends to his characterization of the "Protestation des artistes" as not a mere "protest" but a "Pétition des artistes." Barthes is just in changing this particular citation, since the original text, appearing in the February 14, 1887 edition of newspaper *Le Temps* was not actually entitled the "Protestation" but rather "Les artistes contre la tour Eiffel," with the former name being a colloquial one that has come to identify the text in scholarship. That Barthes chooses "pétition" specifically is interesting, as that term, as opposed to the far more abstract "protestation," has a material connotation: he invites us to imagine the text being passed around and each of the fifty-four signatories filling the negative space of the page with their imprimatur and all their artistic, professional, and emotional qualms about the Tower. The word choice, in addition to Barthes's chosen excerpts, attests to a plurality. He emphasizes the petitioning *artistes*' enumeration that "le Paris de Monsieur Eiffel" remains the Paris of "Germain Pilon, de Jean Goujon, de Barye" (i). The list of names, prefacing Barthes' own enumerative work that suggests significations for the Tower ultimately reinforces his conclusion that, "la tour est ce que l'homme met en elle, et ce tout est infini" (82). While I do take issue with Barthes's focus on the far view and the view of the city *from* the Tower, this conclusion that it is people whose desire to "mettre" their "tout" into the Tower to give the "vide" its significations is very much true of my more micro-analyses of Tower experiences. It becomes yet more significant in Barthes's understanding that the Tower, like any ephemeral architecture, is less a fixed material moment than a process of *becoming*. Barthes describes the Tower in transactional terms: "bien que la Tour soit un objet fini (et fini depuis longtemps), c'est toujours sa facture que l'on consomme esthétiquement…cette facture est essentiellement *prévisionnelle"* (*Œuvres Complètes*

547). By emphasizing the commercial "receipt" of the Tower, Barthes acknowledges a material quid pro quo that places the Tower in the hands of the people who have received it, and continue to receive it ad infinitum.

"L'éphémère" of the material Eiffel Tower

The Tower's planned destruction was a logistical necessity. While the Champ de Mars belonged at once to the French state as well as the city of Paris, its use was granted to the private firm Eiffel & Cie. from 1889 to 1909. The still-fragile Third Republic, reeling from the Boulanger crisis and the Prussian War, was "unable to afford complete financing of a 6.5 million French franc project" but needed to prove itself with an overt declaration of Republican triumph at the centenary of the French revolution[3], so "the government decided to offer a 1.5 million franc subsidy for the project, with the balance to be funded by the private operator and reimbursed by operating revenues attributable to the Tower during the World Fair and for twenty years after" (Moutier "Financing..." 128)[4]. Gustave Eiffel attested to the intricacies of this three-party arrangement in his 1900 tome *La Tour de 300 mètres* — a text partially designed to lobby for the Tower's continued existence —, Gustave Eiffel explained that despite the fact that the national land would have been better suited for the heavy foundations of the Tower,

> …des considérations administratives ne permettaient pas d'implanter la Tour dans le domaine de l'État, ce qui eût entraîné, pour légaliser une aliénation d'une durée dépassant celle de l'Exposition, de longues formalités. On les évita en plaçant la Tour dans le square, qui était le domaine de la ville, et en obtenant à cet effet

[3] I address this governmental imperative in Chapter II.
[4] This arrangement, much like the monument it engendered, ushered in a new age of financing, pioneering in France an arrangement that Michel Lyonnet du Moutier notes would now fall under the concept of "project finance" and provides "a fascinating laboratory for analysis of the agency relationships between the conceding authority and the concessionaire in what is now called a Public-Private Partnership" (128).

> l'autorisation du Conseil municipal. Celui-ci, en retour, demanda qu'à l'expiration de la concession, la Tour devînt la propriété de la Ville. (86)

In matters of finances and of foundations, the Tower was at once public and private. Due this heterogeneity, it needed to be ephemeral, so that the city of Paris could protect its interests in clearing the *Champ de Mars* for future *Exposition Universelle* feats of architecture and the revenue they would bring[5]. Yet, in making the structure ephemeral, the state, the city, and the engineering firm accidentally captured the lightning in a bottle that would lead to the ironic process of making the iron beams permanent.

The Tower's material ephemerality released it from the usual heaviness of monuments presumed permanent and created public space both literal and figurative for private re-imaginings of what the structure could become physically and mean to people psychically. By formally allowing people to imagine their own ability to unmake the structure with its rivets destined for easy disassembly, the Tower's very method of construction invited imaginations of the release of the latent energy not only in its physics but also in its significations.

It is no coincidence, then, that these re-imagined Eiffel Towers flourished in the structure's early years when it was slated to be ephemeral. In his introduction to a 1989 centennial exhibition celebrating the Tower at the Grolier Club, Phillip Dennis Cate noted, "It is during its first fifty-some years that the Eiffel Tower was probably most often portrayed and interpreted by photographers and artists, and that its status as the symbol of Paris became firmly established" (8). Cate's qualification that his statement is

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[5] The Tower was already part of a tradition of world's fair structures on the *Champs de Mars.* Siegfried Giedion reminds us that Frédéric Le Play, charged by Napoléon III to plan the 1867 *Exposition*, looked to "the Champ-de-Mars, the site in 1798 of the first of the small national exhibitions" for his fair, and it became from then on "the accepted site for the great world exhibitions" (194).

only "probably" true exemplifies the essential truth at the core of any investigation of Tower representations: the sheer extent of its material and psychic permeation into Parisian — and indeed global — life makes it all but impossible to catalogue every representation of the Tower in its early period. These inescapable transcriptions of the Tower's form into the public visual discourse mean that, regardless of whether we have been to see it in person, our relationship to the monument is necessarily mediated by its representations.

For the purposes of my study, I consider a "representation" to be any image, text, or three-dimensional rendering that seeks to portray the form of the physical Eiffel Tower monument *and* goes beyond mere replication to take editorial license with the Tower's physical form. In some crucial cases, this editorializing is incidental to the act of attempting to transfer the likeness of Tower as writing on a page, two-dimensional visual art, or miniaturized models; details of a complex object must necessarily be elided or even omitted to suit the artists' and writers' chosen media. In others, however, creators take more liberty in presenting their own version of the facts of the Tower as it stood or as they imagined it could stand. It was in the changes to the physical form of the Tower, whether implicitly or explicitly made, that the Tower's history itself was continually rewritten.

Representations rendered in its first twenty years played a particularly important role in forging the Tower's ultimate symbolic meaning(s) and status as an icon. Though it may have seemed for the Tower itself that the twenty-year deadline of its lease on the Champs de Mars signaled closure, for artists and writers, its intended ephemerality created an opening for a new cultural conversation. Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the

dialogic, while rooted in the emergence of the *novel* as a new literary form in the nineteenth century, can also readily be applied to a *novel form* as innovative as the Eiffel Tower. Moreover, it can also leap off the privacy of the page and into the infinitely more public space of architecture. When contrasting the past-tense of epics and lore with the present-tense of the emerging novel, Bakhtin writes, "[A]n object is attracted to the incomplete process of a world-in the making, and is stamped with the seal of inconclusiveness…It acquires a relationship…to the ongoing event of current life in which we, the author and readers, are intimately participating" (30). In his typology, "dialogic" works do not offer one sole, final truth from the author (as in "monologic" works constructed with one voice, a monologue) but are malleable in readers' interpretations of the work; their meaning is co-constructed and always evolving. In the case of the Eiffel Tower, it was its very "inconclusiveness" that invited readerly "relationships" and "participation" via representation that allowed the monument to be shaped into what it has become — and is still in the process of becoming. Precisely because the Eiffel Tower was not intended to be a permanent structure, it was the ideal subject for an ongoing dialogue. The material Tower — as well as its meanings and interpretations — was subject to change based on conversation around it, so artists and writers seized the seemingly-fleeting moment to enter and indeed engage in and "speak" the dialogue that ultimately made the ephemeral Tower a permanent fixture. Furthermore, Bakhtin reminds us that our view of works of art is often quite narrow, for we prioritize the "stylistics of 'private craftsmanship," ignoring "the social life of discourse outside the artist's study, discourse in the open spaces of public squares, streets, cities, and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs" that are ultimately critical to understanding art

(269). When assembling early Eiffel Tower representations, it becomes immediately clear that it was not Eiffel and his team's singular voice of "private craftsmanship" that came to define the Tower as an icon but the chorus of public, artistic discourse that erected its reputation. In re-assembling this dialogic material canon of the Eiffel Tower and looking closely at its individual, ephemeral parts, we can move towards filling in Barthes's "symbole…presque vide" and see that it no longer "veut tout dire," but it did invite all manner of interpretation in its early years.

"L'éternel" of the iconic Eiffel Tower

When I first considered this project, I intended to cover interpretive modifications to its form both official and "unofficial," or not planned by Eiffel et Cie or any *Exposition* planner. It seemed easier to bill the project as "a look at how the Tower was supposed to change" in addition to the ways in which the public at large thought to change it. However, when building my corpus of artifacts, the unofficial modifications proved to be more evocative than any official plan. Though this is in part due to a Barthesian "death of the author" scenario wherein the Tower gained its iconicity by growing beyond Gustave Eiffel's wildest dreams, it has a lot more to do with an expansion of what Hollis Clayson describes as the public's "vot[ing] with their feet": these unofficial Tower modifications meditate on the aspects of its form and material that made it an icon-by-acclamation, perhaps the first collectively designed, publicly designated monument of the modern era. They do more than evidence the idea that it was the "little people," not the men of state and mononymous engineer Eiffel, who made the Tower an icon, but demonstrate exactly *how* it was shaped and re-shaped to fulfill myriad narratives, including those of the marginalized: women, children, and people of color.

While I will discuss the official architectural competition for the *Exposition de 1900*'s proposed modifications to the Tower — including two formally sanctioned by Gustave Eiffel — I will reserve their analysis for the Conclusion in order to let the unofficial modifications come out of obscurity and prove their integral value to the history of the Eiffel Tower. My analysis, therefore, rests principally with representations of the Tower that *re*-present the physical form of the Tower across artistic and commercial media, proposing in this way unofficial, unrealized, and unauthorized modifications of its original, 1889 structure.

Even with this focus on unofficial re-presentations, my corpus of Tower modifications could go on forever without the additional constraints of the time period and specific material evidence. The time frame is an easy designation to make: as I discussed previously, the Tower was due to come down in 1909. Even though it was ultimately deemed permanent in 1907 — a designation I will discuss further in the Conclusion —, since 1909 was the date envisioned at the outset for its destruction, this became the bookend to my artifacts. As for the starting date, I considered only 1889 and onward because there was a competition for "a monument on the *Champ de Mars*" as early as 1886. While some of the representations in my analysis do chronicle the 1889 Tower's construction, they ultimately depict *the Eiffel Tower*, not "a monument" that could have been in its place[6]. This led me to my second constraint: the modifications I considered had to make a substantive contribution to *the material of the structure on the Champ de Mars*. Truly any representation of the Tower in text, in image, and even in

[6] I also argue that, while other monuments were indeed proposed, this competition was never serious and was always rigged in favor of Eiffel, whose company presented its ideas before the call for designs ever went out. Please see Chapter III.

song could be considered a "modification" to its original form, or at the very least a grafting-on of new meaning to its original intent. Yet not all are grounded in the tangible, sensory Eiffel Tower as situated on the *Exposition* fairgrounds. While I established this constraint at first for the matter of expedience in narrowing down my pile of artifacts, it also led me to the most important ones to treat as far as showing how the public shaped the Tower's material and meaning.

In Chapter I, I begin the presentation of representations that modify the Tower with what is likely to be the most familiar medium for historians, cultural critics, and literary scholars: texts and images of fine and popular art that reconstitute the Tower. Through the filter of the incendiary "Protestation des artistes," a document that represents not mass but high culture's rejection of the Eiffel Tower — invalidating the widespread idea that "everyone in Paris hated it at first" —, I examine how certain Tower revisions put the protestors' accusations of "inutilité" on trial by giving the structure didactic, comical, and overall practical uses. I go on to expose the "Protestation" as the emotional, petty document that it always was, expanding upon signatory Charles Garnier's pettiness towards Gustave Eiffel and unearthing other small-minded, emotionally vulnerable reconfigurations of the Tower. Lastly, I set the stage for my following chapters by putting forth not the great works of art favored by the high society authors of the "Protestation," but works that showed in material adjustments and comments on the new structure how it was quickly becoming a democratized site of meaning.

In Chapter II, I extrapolate the concept of materiality even further to examine the even more fleeting physical traces of the tower laborers, the Alsatian restaurant, and the Javanese dancers at the *Exposition de 1889* that are embedded into the experience and

endurance of the Eiffel Tower. First, I examine the oft-forgotten laborers behind the Eiffel Tower and how the Third Republic government programmatically subsumed their participation by examining the few representations in which their labor is not made invisible. Second, I discuss how a seemingly last-minute gambit to get *Exposition* visitors riled up over the loss of Alsace-Lorraine ultimately failed due to a different interpretation of the material facts. Lastly, I discuss the Javanese dancers, who were second most popular attraction at the 1889 fair and who wove one of the most powerful emotional connections into the most popular attraction, the Eiffel Tower's, very foundations.

In Chapter III, I highlight perhaps the most democratic artifacts of all with a collection of souvenir objects riffing on the form of the Eiffel Tower and gesturing to what it meant to and how it invited meaning-making from women and children. I discuss evidently material items marketed to and purchased by these subordinate demographics as important testimonies via touch to their experience of the Tower that has been hitherto largely absent from the record. Items like a photo frame, scissors, and a locket become equally important as the texts I analyze in Chapter I in order to access how those other than adult men saw their own liberation, corporeal participation, and potential as a manufacturer in the Eiffel Tower. It is in this final chapter that I also make my closing argument: more studies of great cultural monuments must include seemingly lowbrow material objects in their corpora, because this approach moves us towards the filling in of a specific cultural "vide"s, like those observed by Barthes in the Eiffel Tower, by listening to those whose testimonies fell into the gaps of history.

By adding new material and textual artifacts to the canon of Eiffel Tower history, I aim to prove that there is more to say about the world's most famous monument.

Turning over the rocks of its historical foundation reveals that there is richness beneath the surface that has hitherto been ignored and must now be explored. Integrating the lowbrow, the petty, the behind-the-scenes, the feminine, and the infantile of this structure allows us to move away from the narratives set forth by Gustave Eiffel and the planners of the *Expositions* of 1889 and 1900. Using my novel material evidence, I intend to give voice to the people and the feelings that actually *made* the Eiffel Tower an icon rather than relying on the stated intentions of its architects and planners that it was *made to be* an icon.

Special Methodological Note

One of the most important ways I would like to contribute to the field of cultural history is in sharing a methodological tip for building the corpora behind this dissertation. Though my interest in exploring more "banal" objects in my analysis of the Eiffel Tower was ignited by seeing Hubert Cavaniol's collection at the *Petit Palais* museum's 2014 exhibition "Paris 1900," I knew I would need more hands-on time with objects than even generous M. Cavaniol could provide[7]. Luckily for me, I embarked on this project in the age of "the Internet of things," and I could easily search for and purchase items that interested me — and absorb the vast array even of those that did not — and mostly name my prices. Doubly lucky for me is that my mother-in-law, Danielle Lieber, is an avid collector of *nécessaires de couture* from the Belle Époque and had excellent instincts for how to search on French eBay specifically. She created targeted saved searches for "souvenir Tour Eiffel 1889," "Tour Eiffel ancien" etc. and forwarded me listings for my approval and authentication that supplemented my own searches. Over the summer of

[7] Please see Chapter III for my discussion with Hubert Cavaniol and some analyzed items in his collection.

2018, I scanned listings every day for souvenir objects from the 1889 *Exposition Universelle* to get the lay of the land and hope to land on items of particular interest. In order to corroborate the items' authenticity (because many items can have "1889" stamped on them but not be from the time period), I tried to find at least one other mention of the item in either Drouot Paris's auction back catalogues or in published material. My two greatest finds were a medal given to workers mentioned in Gustave Eiffel's own *Travaux scientifiques* (1900) and a pair of scissors included in — but not deeply analyzed in — Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby's *Colossal*. However, my analysis of the objects came not only from dialoguing with primary sources and other scholars, but in actually living with the items and building a personal collection that allowed me to substantively re-create the transportive, object-based experiences I write about for contemporaries of the early Eiffel Tower. In this dissertation, the majority of the objects I analyze are my own, were purchased with my own money, and continue to live and play roles in my home. I invite other scholars to seek out these affordable, quotidian artifacts and gain not only understanding but also a kind of pleasure from opening their Amazon packages with a somewhat ungainly but highly effective 1889 steel Eiffel Tower *coupe-papier* kept by the front door.

Chapter I: Representing a Co-Constructed Eiffel Tower

Non, certes, que nous entendions amoindrir ici la valeur du monument titanique…à l'entrée du Champ de Mars et comme un immense point d'exclamation, disons même d'admiration, subjugue les regards du spectateur !

— Bouniceau-Gesmon, pp. 2[8]

In the beginning, everyone saw the Eiffel Tower differently: its paint color's nuances in tones both perceived and physical invited — and even obligated — individuals to see the structure on a spectrum. Writing on Georges Seurat's signature, multicolored pointillism, Meyer Schapiro notes, "In its original state the Tower was closer to Seurat's art than it is today; the structure was coated with several shades of iridescent enamel paint" [9](23-4). While "iridescent" is hyperbolic, the Tower's paint reveals itself to be much shinier than from afar as one approaches the structure, especially after it has just been repainted. Indeed, the essential truth of the Tower's materiality is that it must be repainted approximately every seven years, since puddled iron is otherwise extremely vulnerable to the elements. In *La Tour de 300 mètres*, Gustave Eiffel

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[8] In his monograph dedicated to the monumental fountain designed by Francis de Saint-Vidal — discussed later in this chapter — this nineteenth-century "jack of all trades" writer and magistrate (who wrote on masters and servants, political reform, and architecture alike) describes the Eiffel Tower vis-à-vis the fountain underneath it.

[9] Rather humorously, Schapiro finishes his thought by noting that "the poet Tailhade called it the 'speculum-Eiffel,'" seeming to think humorist Laurent Tailhade was using the etymological interpretation of "spéculum," Latin for "mirror," rather than the more contemporary allusion to gynecological equipment. I am convinced Tailhade wished to evoke the latter since in context of his "Chronique" in the February 1890 issue of *Le Mercure*, he seems to be disparaging the monument more generally in his phrasing: "Autour du speculum-Eiffel, dans les gourbis pédiculaires, parmi les éphestions internationaux…." (33). Translated plainly, he notes that the Tower is found in a shantytown on swampgrass, among international sodomites. This quote from Schapiro has been used as a source for an interpretation of Tailhade's prose and republished several times as such, with no apparent investigation of the original source.

anticipated this ongoing maintenance and highlighted that it was especially essential for his work:

> On ne saurait trop se pénétrer du principe que la peinture est l'élément essentiel d'un ouvrage métallique et que les soins qui y sont apportés sont la seule garantie de sa durée. Cette considération avait pour la Tour une importance toute spéciale, en raison du petit volume qu'avait chacun des éléments qui la composaient, de leur faible épaisseur et des intemperies exceptionnelles auxquelles ils étaient exposés. (222)

He further specifies that the relatively delicate, thin pieces of puddled iron need a special paint recipe, consisting of 0.42 kilograms "minimum de fer rouge vif de Venise," 0.36 kg of "huile de lin," and 0.22 kilograms of "huile de lin cuite" in each single kilogram of paint (222). The official Eiffel Tower website specifies that, despite technological advances over the Tower's unexpectedly long life, the original method of application, done "manuellement à la brosse guipon" is still often the best solution for repainting the delicate iron parts ("La Peinture…"). Yet, the color applied with the straw-like, round brush has changed significantly over the years, and even varied during Eiffel's time. The Tower's official site documents its color chronology from 1887 to 1907:

> La première couleur adoptée pour la tour Eiffel a été appliquée directement dans les ateliers…à Levallois-Perret, le 'rouge Venise' est la couleur qui a fait resplendir la Tour lors de son montage en 1887 et 1888. Couleur recouverte dès son inauguration pour l'Exposition Universelle en 1889 par une couche épaisse de 'brun rouge.' En 1892, la Tour échange cette teinte contre une teinte plus ocre et devient 'ocre brun.' En 1899, juste avant l'Exposition Universelle de 1900, la Tour passe au jaune…Au moment de la pérennisation de la Tour en 1907, Gustave Eiffel opt pour le 'jaune brun' qui va être conservé durant 47 ans. ("La Peinture…")

In its first twenty years — its ephemeral period — the Tower changed color four times, only to change a fifth time when its lease was renewed and it was rendered permanent. These color changes were paired with a necessary variegation of the chosen hue in each repainting, for to keep the Tower's color consistent from afar, it has always been painted

"du plus foncé en bas au plus clair en haut" ("La Peinture…"). With this many early color changes in addition to the strategic variation in tone as one ascended the Tower, it is little wonder that its color was described with a variety of names in its early years. For every time Eiffel's own specification of "rouge Venise" for the Tower's parts was incorrectly evoked to describe the assembled Tower, another toponym, "bronze Barbadienne" was used to describe what the official Tower site calls its finished "brun rouge" color in 1889. While this label evoking a far-flung exotic island was most likely the creation of prosaic journalists, the official *Exposition de 1889* weekly gazette writer "V.-F. M." noted that nearly every layman visitor witnessed a variance in the Tower's color:

> La Tour Eiffel attire, à l'Exposition, les regards étonnés de tous les visiteurs, par les teintes absolument différentes qu'elle présente suivant l'inclinaison des rayons solaires. On la voit blanche, comme nickelée, bronze, rouge, etc.

And that the gradient only added to this perception:

> Elle a réellement cinq couleurs: du pied à la première plate-forme, elle est couverte d'une peinture vernissée bronze rouge; l'étage au-dessus est d'un ton plus clair; et, de là, au sommet, trois teintes graduées, de moins en moins foncées, de façon que la coupole est presque jaune d'or. D'où la variété des reflets. (286-7)

This reporter, by ascending the Tower during its hours of operation, documented its nuances of color in the daytime, but the possibility for diverging color perceptions only increased at night, during the wildly popular light shows on the *Champ de Mars*. Deborah Silverman describes the lights emanating from the Tower as "multicolored light beams into the night" with "the tower's own structure…an iridescent vision. It was graced by thousands of colored light bulbs, and the surface of its iron lacework was coated by different shades of colored enamel paint" (74). Between the actual, physical changes in color that the Tower experienced in its first twenty years, the optical effects of its

purposeful gradient, and the intervention of light both natural and artificial in guests' appearance, it is little wonder that the Tower's paint encouraged individuals to experience not only a spectrum of color but a range of possible forms[10].

Yet, while paint on the iron beams was the medium by which early viewers of the Tower saw great variation in its appearance, it was ultimately paint on a canvas that sealed the Tower's fate and form. As I sought to understand this sprawling conversation-via-representations at the beginning of the Tower's life, it became immediately clear to me that some voices sought to speak over and even silence others, making definitive statements about what the Tower was and would be at the expense of all other interpretations. The opening and closing statements in the cultural dialogue at the time, however, necessitated a look beyond their surface material and into the work being performed by their representational tactics. In order to demonstrate how the texts and depictions I analyze in this chapter spring forth from one representation and are effectively silenced by another, I will proceed reverse-chronologically, beginning with a discussion of Robert Delaunay's "closing statement" of the period and then addressing the "Protestation des artistes" as an "opening statement" piece in relationship to each

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[10] Indeed, the Tower's color changed two more times before it became what we know today. The official Eiffel Tower website documents that "La campagne de 1954 marque un subtil retour aux débuts de la tour Eiffel en adoptant une couleur 'rouge brun.' En 1968, une couleur spécialement conçue pour la Dame de Fer et réservée à son seul usage est choisie pour son harmonie avec le paysage parisien. Une teinte semblable au bronze, le 'brun Tour Eiffel' que nous connaissons tous.' This proprietary color, aimed at making the Tower fit with the Parisian vernacular, resolved a debate documented in the May 3, 1968 issue of *Le Figaro*…either the day of or three days before the dates widely agreed upon as the beginning of the French Cultural Revolution. Secondly, there are spots at the top of the Tower in particular where enough hands pass over the rails and erode the paint that one can see successive coats of different paint hues over the centuries, ravaged by the elements but nonetheless distinguishable to the keen eye.

group of representations I will address in this chapter. Beginning with Delaunay reveals how the debate ended up, illuminating the desire for closure within the debates that preceded it. Furthermore, I aim to assist the reader, who likely best knows the Eiffel Tower as it stands today, to more easily shed their assumptions about what the Eiffel Tower means today to better understand all that it meant.

At the end of his discussion of the Eiffel Tower, Siegfried Giedion suggests that it was Robert Delaunay's *Tour Eiffel* series of paintings that first allowed "the hidden emotional content of the tower [to be] revealed" (284). His repeated use of the phrase "emotional content" is uncharacteristically cryptic in his otherwise clear and efficient prose. Indeed, the father of modern architectural history does not venture to define this term when it appears in his didactic work *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941). The only clue that Giedion offers as to what he meant by "emotional content" is that Delaunay's paintings made it so that the Tower was "no longer…a hideous monster. It grows in its emotional significance, and its contemporary, the Sacré Cœur of Montmartre…becomes degraded to a sugarplum" (285). Delaunay succeeded in differentiating the Tower from other monuments like the Sacré Cœur by observing that, "in its structure [was] the possibility of showing what was going on below in the changing apprehension of the outer world," allowing visitors explore the "multi-sidedness" of the structure itself as well as the city around it (286). In attempting to confirm that it was this invitation to multiplicity that made the work "emotional" for Giedion, I ventured out to study the 1910 "Tour Eiffel aux arbres" held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (*Figure I*). Though I had been familiar with Giedion's analysis of the series for years, when I stood in front of Delaunay's work, I felt not an unleashing of multi-sided possibility but a

violent flattening: my eyes lingered on what appeared to be houses — symbols of the daily life Giedion vaunts — in the background, painted with a prickly dry-brush technique and subjugated by the lines of the Tower (*Figure II*). Was this violence the "emotional content," positioning the Tower not as interwoven into the Parisian cityscape but instead as an invasive rewriting of the city?

Figure I
Robert Delaunay's "Tour Eiffel aux arbres" (1910)
Oil on canvas
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Figure II
Center right and lower left close-ups of Robert Delaunay's "Tour Eiffel aux arbres" (1910)
Oil on canvas
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; Photos by author

Primary source accounts of Robert Delaunay's process support my perceptions of an *écrasement* of the city in favor of the Tower, demonstrating how the artist used the twenty-year-old monument as a vehicle for deconstructing not only the urban environment but also the artistic conversation that preceded the series of paintings. In writings that Delaunay intended to edit into an unrealized autobiography, the artist identified his early Eiffel Towers, painted from 1910 to 1912, as belonging to his "époque destructive," which was immediately followed by the advent of his "époque constructive" starting around 1913 (75-6). Writing in 1924, Delaunay described his 1910 Tower specifically as "art catastrophique" characterized by "visions de pénétration catastrophiques, les préjugés, les neurasthénies, la névrose" and effectuated by light, which "déforme tout, brise tout, plus de géométrie, l'Europe s'écroule" — in short, the

Tower ushered in a new form and indeed a new civilization (62). Giedion does not cite Delaunay's own visions of catastrophe in his *Tour* series but instead references the painter's close friend's diverging account. The poet Blaise Cendrars[11], also writing in 1924, described what he considered to be the feat of the *Tour* series:

> Aucune formule d'art connue jusqu'à ce jour, ne pouvait avoir la prétention de résoudre plastiquement le cas de la Tour Eiffel…Nous avons essayé tous les points de vues, nous l'avons regardée sous tous ses angles, sous toutes ses faces…(145)

Cendrars, in centering the plasticity of Delaunay's work and the materiality of the Tower in the Parisian landscape, views his friend's art as a primarily *constructive* endeavor even as the artist himself insisted on his *destructive* motive. Yet, what both Delaunay and his outside observer agree upon is that his *Tour* series sought to *resolve* something: Delaunay describes the end of geometry and of Europe itself, and Cendrars demarcates the end of efforts to render the Eiffel Tower plastic in a definitive representation. Both primary observers, then, observe not the explosion of possibility — as interpreted by Giedion — but an obliteration of previous paths in favor of new, singular and definite — even Bakhtinian "monologic" — meaning.

Furthermore, this effort at destruction and rebuilding is embedded in Delaunay's artistic method. Though, as Giedion cites, the painter obsessively visited Blaise Cendrars's hospital room (after the poet had taken an unfortunate fall) in order to study

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[11] Cendrars notably published his own Eiffel Tower representation, "Tour" in 1913, just outside the bounds of this project. His is a decidedly hedonistic take on the Tower, linking it to sexuality. Oddly enough, the "phallic" (and Louis Aragon's metaphor of looking up the Tower's skirts) references to the Tower were did not dominate in its first twenty years, but flourished thereafter.

its unique view on the Eiffel Tower[12], his dozens of renditions of the Tower-as-still-life proved to be mere *études*. Virginia Spate reveals that Delaunay "worked from memory. The dynamic paintings of the *Tour Eiffel* were begun during the months of April to September 1910 which the Delaunays spent in the country [near Nantua], and were mental images of Delaunay's visual experience of the tower" (172-3). That Delaunay ultimately privileged his own mental image of the monument over its actual materiality confirms Cendrars's assertion that the painter seized upon a plastic interpretation of the Tower, representing his own experience rather than the Tower itself. This privileging of "mind's eye view" of the Eiffel Tower appears in recent philosophical and linguistic scholarship as perhaps being more real than the iron beams themselves. Linguist Per Linell describes the Tower as the example par excellence of an "internal image." Conducting a thought experiment where he conjures up a mental image of the Tower, Linell concedes that

> [T]he imagined Eiffel tower is [not merely] 'internal' to me, 'in my head'… [it] is made possible because of my experiences of the outer world…I have seen material pictures (photos, drawings, paintings of the Eiffel tower. I may also be influenced by linguistic descriptions, mediated through talk or text, which make me able to construct a picture. (149)

The concept of the "Eiffel Tower" for viewers, visitors, and indeed mere imaginers of the monument is separated from the physical tower not only by the vagueness of one's memory of its form but by the mediation of artistic representations. When Giedion calls Delaunay's 1910 representation definitive, he observes that Delaunay shut the door on the Tower's physical mutability by valorizing its sublimated form, its "internal image," and its becoming an icon suspended in time and space.

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[12] Perhaps the trauma of Cendrars's accident and subsequent hospitalization also had a role to play in Delaunay's angry, destructive brushstrokes.

In contrast, the "Protestation des artistes contre la tour de M. Eiffel,"[13] often cited as an attempt to destroy the Eiffel Tower before it was even completed, bolstered the structure as it physically existed by opening the door to material *re-presentation*. The text, signed by forty-eight fine artists, architects, writers, and composers, was published as an open letter in *Le Temps* on February 14, 1887 and represented the first rewriting of a nascent structure that had hitherto only been presented in government missives and the press as an upcoming certainty. These anguished *artistes* did not have Delaunay's luxury of taking artistic and physical distance from the Tower; they lived with it as it ascended and chronicled their feelings in a text that openly re-authors the Tower in its image-heavy prose. In this chapter, I will explore how, in the period before Robert Delaunay's *Tour Eiffel* series concretized the Tower as an untouchable icon, representations of its novel form entered into a conversation started by and responding to the "Protestation," a dialogue that ultimately altered the monument — and its creator — forever.

Practically Speaking

The critique of the "Protestation" that most evidently bothered Gustave Eiffel was the signatories' contention that the Eiffel Tower was fundamentally useless, called "l'inutile et monstrueuse tour Eiffel" (Meissonnier et al.). In his three book-length texts addressing the structure after 1889, he is clearly traumatized by this accusation, even stating in the preface of *Travaux Scientifiques exécutés à la tour de trois cents mètres* (1900) that one of the key reasons for exhaustively enumerating the scientific and

[13] The column in *Le Temps* — and the handwritten document upon which it is based, held at the Musée d'Orsay — is actually entitled "Les artistes contre la tour Eiffel," but it has been collectively and colloquially remembered as the "Protestation des artistes contre la tour de M. Eiffel." I have used the popular name for the document in the body of my text, but I have cited it under its published official name.

strategic uses of the Eiffel Tower was "encore pour répondre à cette reproche de l'inutilité" (i). While Eiffel's tomes eventually furnished the official "uses" for the Tower, between the Tower's public presentation in 1887 and the publication of Eiffel's ex post facto interpretations of the Tower in 1900, artists and writers took stabs both serious and playful at making the Tower "useful."

Yet, the "Protestation" itself, even as it branded the Tower as fundamentally useless, in fact likens the monument to a functional structure in the first physical alteration-via-representation of Eiffel's creation. Describing the planned structure as "une gigantesque et noire cheminée d'usine" born of the "mercantiles imaginations d'un constructeur de machines," the signatories use industrial metaphors to contrast the new structure with existing monuments in the city (Meissonier et al.). While the anguished *artistes* clearly intended the comparison of the Tower to a chimney to be an insult, close reading of the text reveals that the inclusion of this image ultimately undercuts the writers' principal critique. On the surface level, giving the Tower a "use" of channeling smoke away from a factory and into the sky deteriorates the accusation of inutility that so troubled Gustave Eiffel. While, of course, the Tower does not in fact work as a chimney, it is the juxtaposition of this utilitarian structure with the other, classic monuments that the signatories list immediately afterwards that works to subvert the argument. The text conveys a fear that such a chimney will "[écraser] de sa masse barbare Notre-Dame, la Sainte-Chapelle, la tour Saint-Jacques, le Louvre, le dôme des Invalides, [et] l'arc de Triomphe" (Meissonier et al.). Contrasting the "barbaric mass" of the chimney to these treasured monuments builds a fundamental tension between the industrial and functional, on one side, and the pre-industrial and decorative — even sentimental and spiritual — on

the other[14]. Though the writers do not entirely evacuate the list of religious and political structures of their usefulness, they do imply that it is something about the naked functionality of such a chimney that is ultimately an insult to more decorative — and comparably less immediately useful — structures.

At the root of this staged fight between the useful chimney and the ornamental monuments is the question of material. Immediately following the preamble introducing the *artistes* and the Tower, the "Protestation" argues that "l'âme de la France… resplendit parmi [la] floraison auguste de la pierre[15]." By beginning with this statement, the writers tie all of the emotion and ingenuity of the French architectural canon to a single substance, stone[16]. When they go on to write that stone is the material that composes "les plus nobles monuments que le génie humain ait enfantés," they make literal the already evident conceit of a French lineage, seeking to provoke a protective, parental response in their reader. The tender feelings of a family bond in humanity's having "enfanté," given birth to monuments are immediately tested by a conflict with cold, hard industry, which seeks to take the beautiful stone city by force, causing her to "s'enlaidir irréparablement et se déshonorer" with the erection of an iron column[17]. By casting *la pierre* in familial — and French — terms and *le fer* as a calculated intruder,

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[14] More broadly, this debate over the fundamental ethos of the Eiffel Tower reflected the growing concern over the morality of the industrial age and the advent of capitalism in post-Revolutionary France.

[15] In the phrasing "la floraison auguste de la pierre" lies an implicit callback to Victor Hugo's description of Notre-Dame as a "vaste symphonie en pierre," which would have been particularly timely in 1887 as Hugo had died only two years prior (132).

[16] In *La Tour Eiffel*, Roland Barthes concieves of stone as "matière tellurique…symbole d'assise et d'immutabilité…le matériau même de la *demeure*" (60).

[17] They also draw on the tactile, knowing that their reader can more easily imagine using their hands to create masonry than machinery to melt iron. I explore this connection between the audience's hands and the material further in Chapter III.

the signatories seek to provoke paternal protective impulses in their reader just as a father might protect his daughter from losing her honor and his paternal lineage from being torn asunder.

While the "Protestation's" appeal to fatherly stewardship is one implicit sketch among many seeking to incite their reader to preservationist action, Alphonse Mucha's sketched designs for "Le Pavillon de l'homme" represent a fully-realized paternal role for the material of stone in the Eiffel Tower. Nearly ten years after the "Protestation," contributor "Y.R." wrote in the December 15, 1897 issue of *La Plume*[18] that Mucha "entreprend de faire de l'architecture et de la sculpture" describing a maquette in the artist's atelier as a "projet d'un considérable édifice pour l'Exposition de 1900" (817). The maquette does not seem to have survived, but a series of pencil, ink, and watercolor designs remain, charting Mucha's progress from 1897 to 1899 on what he called "Le Pavillon de l'homme." The purpose for Mucha's proposed revision remains entirely unclear; the designs were never submitted to any publication, and I have not been able to find any record of the artist having contacted the local or national governments or even Gustave Eiffel. In the absence of such proof, I will treat these drawings (and the likely non-extant maquette) as a virtuosic exercise and a form of position statement by the artist.

While some sources claim that Mucha's design sought to "[remodeler] totalement la tour Eiffel," this is incorrect; the proportions of human figures included, for scale, at

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[18] Reviews of Mucha in *La Plume* should be taken with a grain of salt, for he was one of the revue's most enthusiastically featured artists. Indeed, the description of "Le Pavillon de l'homme" was written in the same year as the July 1, 1897 issue dedicated almost entirely to Mucha's biography and œuvre. It even featured a lithographic cover designed by the artist.

the foot of the two 1897 iterations of the design, (*Figure III*, *Figure IV*) in addition to the windows suggesting a gallery reminiscent of the Tower's second floor constructed in 1889, indicate that Mucha's intent was only to alter the first floor of Eiffel's structure (Leribault 86). It is easy, however, to see why scholars and popular writers alike have characterized Mucha's design as a total revision, for the frontal view of the structure exhibits arches and a pyramidal spire that mirror the existing latticework of the Tower. Yet, a total revision would be all but impossible when we return to the question of materiality. Mucha's design exhibits a complex program of allegorical statuary — whose motifs I will explore shortly — that suggests either masonry or bronze casting. Indeed, the Swiss sculptor James Vibert (also heavily featured in *La Plume*) "was commissioned to execute the [stone] sculptures of these unusual human figures, which seemed to merge and blend into the corners of the main structure" (Mucha, Alphonse 190). Because Mucha would later work in bronze with other collaborators[19], this particular outsourcing suggests that the printmaker was not seeking Vibert's expertise in bronze or plaster, but instead the Swiss sculptor's techniques in stone[20].

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[19] Perhaps the most famous example of three-dimensional Mucha work is a female bust, with characteristic Art Nouveau hair swirling around her, evoking and allegorizing *La Nature*. The bust exists in four versions designed by Mucha but ultimately executed — and signed — by Émile Pinedo. The bust was presented at the *Exposition de 1900.* Additionally, oil-rubbed bronze sculptures abound in the interior and the façade of *La boutique du bijoutier Georges Fouquet*, executed by the goldsmith Christofle (Leribault 127).

[20] James Vibert was a member of Auguste Rodin's atelier from 1894 to 1898, and his early works are aesthetically heavily influenced by the latter and, moreover, fashioned in bronze and plaster, Rodin's chief media. His best-known works, however, were executed much later, in a more Teutonic style and in stone: the "Serment du Grütli" (1913) adorns the Federal Palace of Switzerland in Bern, and "L'Effort humain" (1935) was installed late in the artist's life in a park in Geneva (Fontanes).

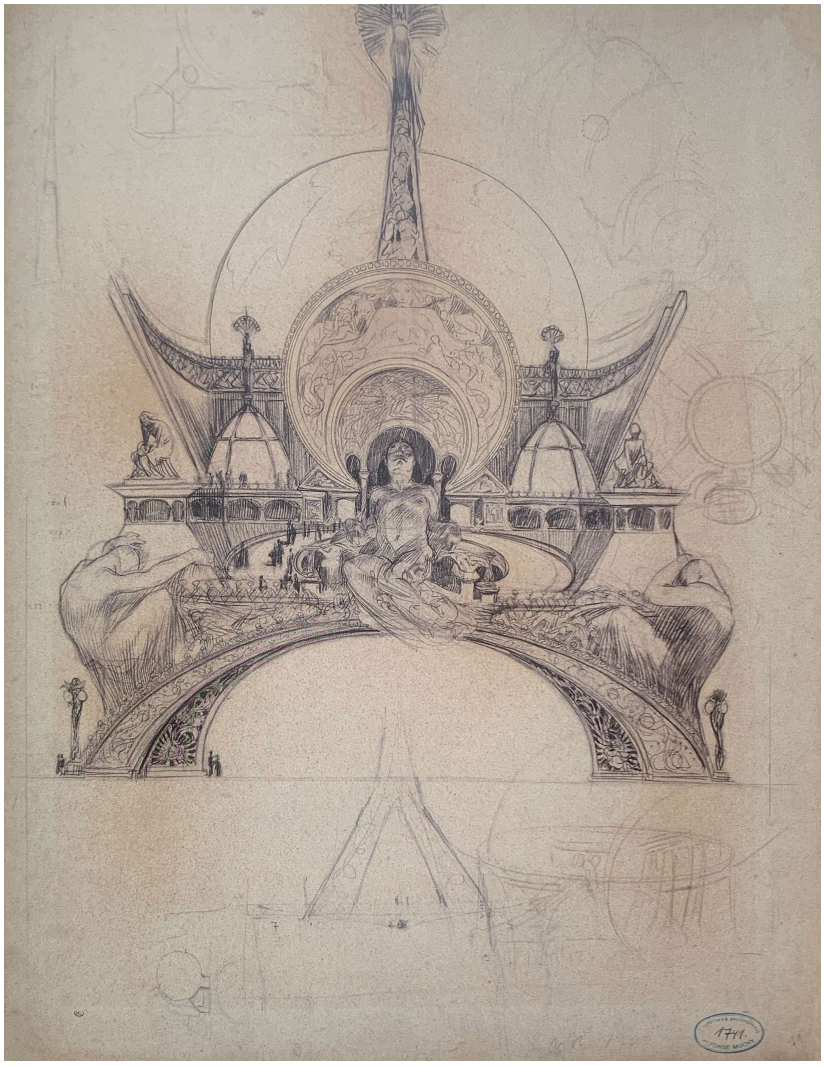

Figure III
First design for the *Pavillon de l'Homme* (1897)
Pencil on paper
Musée du Louvre, Fonds Orsay

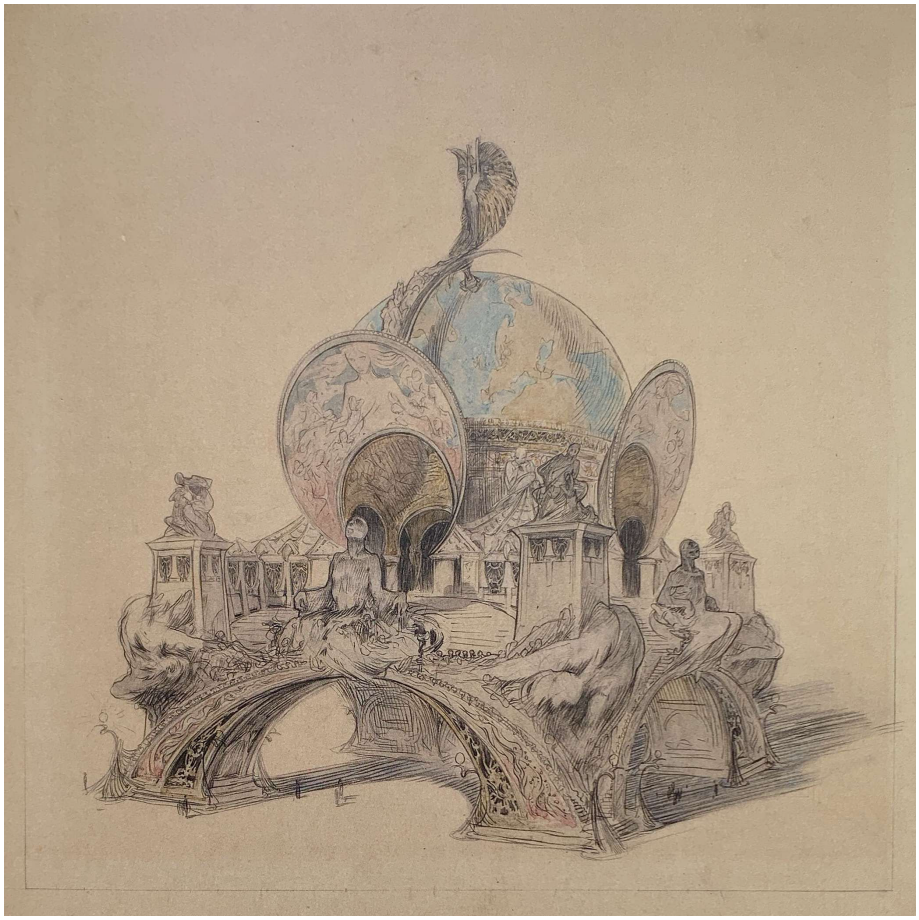

Figure IV
First design for the *Pavillon de l'Homme,* three-quarters view (1897)
Pencil and watercolor on paper
Prague National Gallery

This pursuit of masonry to augment and embellish the Tower, however, is likely central to why Mucha's design remained on the page and in a maquette and was never entertained as a serious possibility. Although the design only encompassed up to the first floor of the Tower, such a colossal undertaking in stone would not only have been prohibitively expensive but physically impossible. In the early stages of planning the Tower, Eiffel's company actually entertained a stone façade and made calculations to assess its feasibility. The engineers simulated, via calculations, the idea of an all-stone composition and of a mixed iron and stone structure to disappointing results. Gustave Eiffel told the official *Exposition de 1889* weekly paper that a mixed-material structure

would be susceptible to "élasticité, résistance ou dilatation" especially when one considered that "ces matériaux ne seront pas simplement superposés les uns aux autres…[i]ls seront inévitablement séparés par des lits de mortiers," with mortar being particularly vulnerable to the wind (23). Moreover, a stone Tower would have not have been as conducive an environment for Eiffel's much-touted meteorological experiments:

> Parlant devant la Société météorologique de France, M. Hervé-Mangon disait en propres termes: "Il existe, dans plusieurs observatoires, des tours en maçonnerie, mais elles présentent, pour l'installation des instruments météorologiques, plus d'inconvénients que d'avantages. (28)

Ultimately, between a dangerous susceptibility to the forces of the wind and an inability to use the Tower as meteorological laboratory, a stone Tower would have been even more "useless."

Why then, almost a decade after this scientific determination was made, might Alphonse Mucha have pursued a stone revision? Of course, because Mucha's primary media were two-dimensional lithographs and paintings, he did not often have to pay any mind to the laws of physics to reach his aesthetic aims, as is readily evidenced in the whorls of hair and swirling vines of his most famous posters. He had also just arrived in Paris from his native Moravia in 1888 with an artistic education, and therefore likely possessed neither the linguistic nor technical knowledge to understand the Eiffel company's findings in the *Exposition* journal, even if he did read it. Considering these biographical and professional details, "Le Pavillon de l'homme" might seem to have merely have been a virtuosic exercise or an intellectual game. Yet, the artist's Art Nouveau ideology and the consistency of the "Pavillon's" iconographic program of statuary with Mucha's symbolist œuvre suggest that, in revising the Eiffel Tower's first

floor, the Czech artist sought to imbue the structure with a use, rectifying the concerns of uselessness in the "Protestation."

Embedded in Mucha's revision is the didactic ethos of Art Nouveau, a style whose primary motivation was to edify the public with beautified versions of everyday objects — including a reimagined Eiffel Tower. Though Mucha rejected the "Art Nouveau" label in life, attesting to the uniqueness of his own, Eastern-European take on styles of the day, the immense popularity of his posters and their symbolic vocabulary heavily informed the pedagogical (and aesthetic) aims of the fin-de-siècle movement. Ronald F. Lipp and Suzanne Jackson describe the style-cum-ideology of Art Nouveau as being "conceived as the most profound and elevated art, the means by which ideals were to be intuitively conveyed to the viewer through symbolic and synthetic modes of expression" (14). More specifically, descendants John and Sarah Mucha write the artist believed in "the universality of art and its central position in the life of mankind" (The Mucha Foundation 6) and wished to share what Lipp and Jackson call, "[his] inexpressible yet compelling vision and some intuitive statement that the universe is benevolent, that life is good, and that happiness is within reach if only we know how to grasp it" (14-5). One of the most pointed displays of Mucha's core beliefs was his years-long project to illustrate the Lord's Prayer in a lithographic volume entitled *Le Pater* (1899), a work whose iconography he rehearsed in the 1897 iteration of "Le Pavillon de l'homme." In the May 1900 edition of the Catholic magazine *Le mois littéraire et pittoresque*, Father Abel Fulcran César Fabre described the original watercolor illustrations of *Le Pater*, displayed at the Bosnia-Herzegovina pavilion at the *Exposition de 1900*:

> L'artiste a vu dans [la prière *Pater noster*] les étapes successives de la lente ascension de l'homme vers un idéal divin. La traduction plastique qu'il en donne, sort des concepts auxquels nous a habitués l'iconographie chrétienne. Dieu n'est plus ce vieillard à barbe blanche…c'est l'être immense et fort…la Nature est personnifiée sous les traits d'un géant débonnaire…et l'Amour divin descend sur la terre sous la forme d'une femme. (598)

The cleric elucidates Mucha's primary innovation in this depiction of the common prayer when he describes the artist's use of universal archetypes — a ponderous diety, an earthly giant, a fleshly feminine "Love" — over preexisting Judeo-Christian aesthetic tropes. By playing with scale and gender rather than relying on viewers' knowledge of preexisting Christian art, Mucha invited a larger audience into the prayer's text. Many of the same accessible archetypes were present in the maquette of "Le Pavillon de l'homme" viewed and described by "Y.R." of *La Plume* two years before the publication of *Le Pater*:

> Quant à la sculpture, elle se compose de plusieurs groupes. Le plus important représente un homme qui s'étire de la terre. C'est la nature en travail, toute la poussée des forces humaines non encore dégagées des bas instincts…Sur les côtés d'autres sculptures : l'homme encore inconscient ayant un bandeau sur les yeux ; le génie, à côté de lui, le considère avec pitié. Plus loin l'homme a perdu son bandeau, il commence a s'apercevoir de soi-même ; le génie s'apprête à l'embrasser…Dans un autre, l'Amour élève la brute jusqu'à lui par son étreinte… Sur le derrière et plus haut encore se dresse le génie de la Terre qui appelle la protection de la Divinité. (817)

That this work predating *Le Pater* contains non-canonical yet easily readable visual allegories suggests not only the artist's growing interest in mysticism (Mucha was inducted into the Paris Freemasons in 1898) but his desire to reach a broader audience on the world stage at the *Exposition de 1900*. He saves the explicit religious imagery and text for private consumption of printed volumes (and small exhibitions, in the case of the Bosnian pavilion's display) of *Le Pater*. In an allegory where it is "le génie," not "God," that surmounts Mucha's design and reaches upward towards the iron spire of the Eiffel

Tower, international visitors of all faiths could see themselves included in the syncretic vision of "l'homme" rising to greater knowledge.

In the tangle of Mucha's stone figures and spiritual symbols, one concrete goal emerges: using the shared experience of the Eiffel Tower to benevolently edify a global community. While his aesthetic and symbolic vocabulary are largely idiosyncratic, Mucha's goal of using stone statuary to educate the public on the occasion of the *Expositions Universelles* was not a new idea. For the *Exposition de 1889*, Charles Garnier similarly depicted mankind's progress through time with his "Histoire de l'habitation humaine," a series of forty-eight reconstituted human dwellings charting mankind's progress from prehistory to modern times with largely stone constructions on either side of the Pont d'Iéna[21]. Underneath the Eiffel Tower itself in 1889 was a monumental stone fountain designed by Francis de Saint-Vidal, depicting at its summit the struggle of "le génie," a young man, versus "la Nuit," a woman covered in a starry cloak. Each of the five lobes of the fountain featured a female figure representing "les cinq parties du monde," and similarly depicting progress: according to Bouniceau-Gesmon, Oceania allegorically represented "la pensée inculte de l'être humain à l'état préhistorique," Africa "la pensée à l'état naturel et sauvage," Asia "la recherche des raffinements du plaisir," America "la pensée industrielle…du lucre et du bien-être matériel," and, finally, Europe "la pensée philosophique" with "une pile de livres et une presse à imprimer" (30-1). Perhaps because, by the time of the *Exposition de 1900*, neither of these educational stone projects remained, Alphonse Mucha aspired to furnish their replacement in his "Pavillon de l'homme." His design pays homage — whether deliberately or

[21] I will further address this contribution by Garnier later in this chapter.

circumstantially — to Garnier and Saint-Vidal's work yet infuses his own vision of "progress" needing also to include "spiritual enlightenment" at the turn of the century. What then becomes particularly interesting is Mucha's preservation of the iron structure of the Eiffel Tower above the first floor. Even as he eschews some of the more direct, material implications of progress seen in Garnier's buildings and Saint-Vidal's global allegory, that Mucha's depiction of "le génie" raises her arms to the iron spire above recasts the "Pavillon de l'homme" as a stone scaffold for understanding how Gustave Eiffel's mastery of ironwork reached towards the heavens — in both a literal and figurative sense. Though the design was apparently never published, its opportunity to allow Mucha to flex his creative muscles and extend his allegoric motifs to a grand scale nonetheless distills a current of thinking about the Tower in the didactic era of Art Nouveau.

While Mucha saw the instructive potential in fleshing out the monument with stone, others "filled in" the Tower with writing in order to liken it to the destructive Tower of Babel. This tradition began early: the signatories of the "Protestation" declared during the earliest stages of the Tower's construction that "la malignité publique, souvent empreinte de bon sens et d'esprit de justice, [l']a déjà baptisé[e] du nom de 'tour de Babel'" (Meissonier et al.). Though many of the *artistes*, upon seeing the Tower in person, would come to revise (or even formally retract) the sentiments expressed in the "Protestation," "Babel" accusations continued well into the Tower's early years.

Two notable direct allusions to Babel came from the poet François Coppée and the novelist and journalist Guy de Maupassant, both writing in 1890, the year after the Tower's debut on the world stage at the 1889 Exposition Universelle. Their critiques are

notable among "Babel" accusations for their need to physically alter the Tower's material form in order to achieve their rhetorical goals. As both accuse the Tower of being a "pyramide" like the Biblical edifice of their accusation, they must evoke images of a Tower covered or filled in with stone to incite their reader to see through the spaces in Eiffel's openwork and into a Middle-Eastern architectural past to concretize their comparison.

In his anthology *Paroles Sincères,* François Coppée expresses aesthetic and symbolic disgust in his poem "Sur la Tour Eiffel." Mid-way through the lengthy poem, he makes a plaintive apostrophe: "Enfants des orgueilleuses Gaules, / Pourquoi recommencer Babel?" (Coppée). This rhetorical choice to all-but-directly address his readers as "Gallic" rather than "French" appears at first glance to merely be a way for the poet to reduce the number of syllables in the line to better maintain his meter. However, paired with the reference to Babel in the following line, the appellation ultimately works to paint an image of a pan-historical, mythologized past. Indeed, in the next stanza, Coppée continues, calls out, "Ô Moyen Âge! ô Renaissance!/ Ô bons artisans du passé!" mixing references to historical eras to create less of a temporal frame than a sublimated "past" of legendary greatness. It is in this climate of long-ago grandeur that Coppée introduces the even more ancient motif of the pyramid: he goes on to call the Tower "Cette pyramide insensée/ [Où l'on] montera pour cent sous" (Coppée). This second pair of lines at first furnishes yet another detail in the poet's painting of a noble background, but then crudely whips the reader back into the capitalist present with the more immediate material signpost of "cent sous." The allusions to a legendary past finished off with a price tag seeks to lull the reader into nostalgia, and then jolt them awake with an

image of the Eiffel Tower's cheapening of France's legacy and mythology.

Whereas Coppée's poem aims to incite the reader's patriotic indignation, Guy de Maupassant writes in the first person about his own disgust towards the Tower to invite readers to view his own perspective. The short story master was, and still remains, one of the most famous signatories of the "Protestation," and it is clear that, three years later in his serialized travelogue, *La Vie errante*, his vitriol had only grown stronger. The very first sentence of Maupassant's long account of his decision to leave France and travel the Mediterranean cites the Eiffel Tower as the inciting incident for the author's departure from Paris. He states, "J'ai quitté Paris et même la France, parce la Tour Eiffel finissait par m'ennuyer trop"[22]("Lassitude" 1). He describes the object of his revulsion as "cette haute et maigre pyramide d'échelles de fer" and notes that he views all of Eiffel's technological might as another attempt at "la naïve tentative de la tour de Babel" ("Lassitude" 1). While Maupassant does make a nod to the past à la Coppée (making the claim that "quelques temples et quelques églises, quelques châteaux contiennent à peu près toute l'histoire de l'art à travers le monde."), it is ultimately the immediacy of his first-person account, colored with his disgust for the Tower and the "Lassitude" that is the title of this chapter of his travels, that brings the reader in to his material understanding of the Tower as an odious pyramid.

Coppée and Maupassant's rhetorically very different texts ultimately coalesce around the motif of a pyramidal Tower of Babel. The repetition of this characterization raises the question: is the Eiffel Tower really a "pyramide?" In the strictest sense, the iron

[22] Please see the Conclusion for the dispelling of Roland Barthes's ironic mythologizing of Maupassant's reaction to the Tower.

tower is mounted on a square base of four pillars and its latticed stages taper to a point[23]. Yet unlike the celebrated pyramids of Giza, Nubia, and Greece — all sites of breathless pilgrimage for French travelers in the nineteenth century — and indeed any other world structure at the time, the square shape of the Eiffel Tower's base is overwritten by its arches. These celebrated forms were not even of mechanical importance, as they were "added by Eiffel to give the appearance of buttresses and reassure visitors that the novel structure was safe," making Eiffel's choice to include the Tower's celebrated curves a deliberate formal departure from any contemporary structure (Strickland and Handy 99). Given the Eiffel Tower's significant formal deviation from a pyramid base, Coppée and Maupassant's images of the Tower must physically "fill in" the arches in order to achieve their allusions to Babel. The writers' evocations of a pyramid allow the curvature and the filigree of the tower to melt away in favor of a simplified form that more easily recalls the ancient *ziggurat,* the architectural class to which the biblical edifice probably belonged. Though also not true pyramids, ziggurats took the form of "gigantesques tours à étages…de taille décroissante dont la dernière était très probablement surmontée d'un temple" (Sauvage 45). The most remarkable of all of these mixed-use structures was constructed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, whose great ziggurat of Etemanki, built by Hebrew slaves, likely became the mythical Tower of Babel (Gayford). In the case of the Eiffel Tower's illusions, there is no God to disperse sinners in linguistic chaos but instead an intrinsic ephemerality that invites detractors like Coppée and Maupassant to rewrite the structure and take ownership in verbal form of the subject of their distaste

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[23] Eiffel did travel to Egypt in 1865 and marveled at the architectural ingenuity of Giza. This experience led him to ask, in response to the "Protestation," "pourquoi ce qui est admirable en Egypte deviendrait-il hideux et ridicule à Paris?" (qtd. in Grigsby 104).

and fear.

Furthermore, when Roland Barthes cites Babel in a nod to the accusation levied by the "Protestation" and texts that followed, he foregrounds the usefulness of Babel, which "devait *servir* a communiquer avec Dieu," in order to underline the profound inutility of the Eiffel Tower (Barthes 33; emphasis mine). In his response published days after the "Protestation," Gustave Eiffel found himself forced for the first time to publicly list utilities for his creation — a tradition he would continue in the monographs referenced at the beginning of this section —, stating that "la tour promet d'intéressantes observations pour l'astronomie, la chimie végétale, la météorologie, et la physique" in addition to the potential for wartime communication (Meissonier et al.). Yet, these concrete scientific uses for the Tower were merely theoretical — promised, even — in 1887, when the Tower was not only in its early stages of construction but many of the technologies imagined by Eiffel would not be fully realized until the turn of the century. Perhaps inspired by Eiffel's grasping at scientific straws to assert the usefulness of his Tower, humorist Alphonse Allais presented his own "innovation" for the Tower in his anthology *Le Bec en l'air.* In the short text, a fictional version of Allais beholds the imagination of his character Captain Cap, who proposes to

> [R]envers[er] la tour Eiffel…plant[er] la tête en bas, les pattes en l'air. Puis, nous l'enveloppons d'une couche de magnifique, décorative et parfaitement imperméable céramique [pour faire] un somptueux gobelet quadrangulaire, [rempli] d'eau ferrugineuse et gratuite à la disposition de nos contemporains anémiés. (Allais)

This absurdist reconfiguration and appropriation of the Tower, though fantastic and hyperbolic, was ultimately just as impractical as Eiffel's proposed uses for scientific

experimentation and radio communication in 1897[24], when Allais laid out his plan to save the anemic denizens of Paris. Therefore, this outlandish plan to completely redesign the Eiffel Tower in order to make it useful neatly encapsulated the ongoing debate over the utility of the Eiffel Tower, undercutting its architect's earnest — yet decidedly counter-to-scientific-facts — efforts to ensure the structure's permanence. Though Eiffel was ultimately successful in saving the Tower from its planned demolition in 1909 on the basis of future scientific utility, caricatures like that of Alphonse Allais highlighted that, during the Tower's first twenty years, there could be no certainty as to its utility beyond the *Expositions Universelles.*

On the whole, artists and writers took advantage of the discourse surrounding the monument's utility to propose redesigns that promised to be useful in the wake of the "Protestation's" accusation that the Eiffel Tower was "useless." The "Protestation" itself set the tone for the ability of its signatories-*artistes* to reconstruct the Tower into a utilitarian chimney with nothing but a pen. Their recasting of the ornamental monument into a beastly tool of industry did more than critique its builder's aesthetics, demonstrating that, if the engineer could be an artist at the end of the nineteenth century, an artist could likewise be an architect of the page. A decade later, Alphonse Mucha's sketches converting the first floor of the Eiffel Tower into the "Pavillon de l'Homme" took this trend one step further. Mucha's stone iconographic program of man's progress towards the divine at once valorized the ancient material's preexisting capacity to educate via ornamentation and proposed a new direction wherein stone's overt instruction could

[24] The Eiffel Tower would not be used for radio communication until the beginning of the twentieth century, when it famously inhibited German radio communications in 1914 at the outbreak of World War I (Tuchman). Indeed, radio technology itself was only nascent in 1897, being restricted to small-scale operations.

didactically frame the industrial age — here represented by the second and third stages of the Tower left intact. In a less hopeful vein, poet François Coppée and journalist Guy de Maupassant regard the iron construction as inherently opposed to a mythic French past of stone when they accused the Eiffel Tower of being the second coming of the Tower of Babel. With their choice to call the Tower a "pyramide," they physically reconstruct its arches, filling them in materially in order to make its form more rhetorically useful for their Biblical allusion. In reshaping the Tower to be useful to their message, the writers highlight how this reincarnated Tower of Babel is in fact *only* useful as a literary device, as it did not seek to be a conduit for speaking to God like the original structure. The seriousness of their accusation was not shared by the entire literary community, however, for Alphonse Allais's proposal to flip the Tower, cover it in a ceramic shell, and use it as a massive fount of iron-enriched water to treat anemic citizens firmly figured in the realm of humorous absurdity. Even in his ridiculous reconfiguration, however, Allais uses the reconstructive power of the pen to furnish a practical use for the Tower. Undergirding each of these attempts to make the Tower useful for edification, accusation, or supplementation is a strong subjective current. Just as Eiffel himself appeared emotionally motivated when he repeatedly rehashed his personal trauma of the "Protestation's" critique as he physically augmented the monument with new scientific utilities, the literary and artistic rebuilders of the Eiffel Tower were propelled to create their reconstructions by hope, disgust, and mirth. Even in their attempts to objectively reconstruct the Tower to be more useful, the artists exemplified the ability of representation to gesture towards the ultimate use of the monument as an invitation to subjectivity — an invitation that doubled as one to keep it aloft.

"Petty," from the French "*petit*"

The "Protestation des artistes" is an emotionally loaded statement, explicitly citing visceral reactions: the "nous" of the text seeks to "protester de toute notre indignation," and "chacun s'afflige profondément" with the sounding of "notre cri d'alarme." The third person plural preceding these emotional descriptions, followed by the glut of signatures at the end, make it tempting to ascribe these emotions to the list of *artistes* who signed off on the document. However, the rhetoric of the text makes it clear that the signatories of the "Protestation" felt it was their duty to speak to something greater. The impassioned piece famously begins by identifying the "nous" as "écrivains, peintres, sculpteurs, [et] architectes," but the reference slowly changes. In the middle of their argument, the writers assure us that "chacun sent, chacun le dit…et nous ne sommes qu'un faible écho de l'opinion universelle, si légitimement alarmée," enclosing more than just the forty-five signatories in the plural by gesturing to the full Parisian populace who they have, presumably, overheard uttering these critiques (Meissonier et al.). By the end, they draw the lines of their argument broader still:

> Nous nous remettons à vous du soin de plaider la cause de Paris, sachant que vous y dépenserez toute l'énergie, toute l'éloquence que doit inspirer à un artiste tel que vous l'amour de ce qui est beau, de ce qui est grand, de ce qui est juste.

They finish by declaring that their impulse to protest arises from not only the geographical solidarity in "la cause de Paris" but truly universal values of "amour," beauty, and justice. In so doing, the *artistes* affect a posture of selflessness in making their case against the upcoming "tour de M. Eiffel." They practice what they preach by appending the text with a paragraph-length list of signatures that, appearing in no particular order, acts as a sort of "round robin." Because they designate no lead writer in

their universal plea, the *artistes* perform *fraternité* and *égalité*, seeking to speak for something greater than themselves[25].

However, in pulling apart the signatures of the "Protestation," the text's surface level emotional investment defending universal ideals begin to unravel, giving way to the concerns of the individual. All twenty-eight identifiable[26] visual artist and architect signatories (*Appendix I*) had some connection to the academic, Neoclassicist doctrinal styles of the *École de Beaux-Arts*. Whether they were graduates of the *École's* programs, professors to future artists, winners of the prestigious honors of the *Prix de Rome*, or even members of the *Légion d'Honneur*, the plastic artists who signed the "Protestation" would have been recognizable as proponents — and proliferators — of established academic aesthetics. Yet, even as their *œuvres* were officially recognized and sanctioned, this alone did not equal artistic success. In the increasingly consumer-driven *fin-de-siècle* art market, artists depended less on dedicated patrons and increasingly on commissions to make their living and stake their reputation. When we consider these artists as individuals seeking renown as well as remuneration, it becomes apparent that they would have a vested interest in keeping modernism, as exemplified by Gustave Eiffel's decidedly non-academic work of engineering, at bay. The emotion simmering beneath the surface of the "Protestation" can then be understood not only as an impassioned appeal to the public's taste, but also as a desperate attempt at self-preservation and control of the zeitgeist.

Not even the habitually humble and tactful Gustave Eiffel could hold back smaller-minded emotions when he was asked to respond to the "Protestation." When *Le Temps*

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[25] Indeed, there is even an "etc., etc." at the end of the text, alluding to the idea that there would be many more — perhaps infinitely more — who would have signed the text had they had access to it.

[26] One elusive signatory signed with what appears to be a nickname: "Limbo."

reached out to him for comment when they published the *artistes*' open letter, Eiffel's first quote wasted no time in singling out Charles Garnier[27] and accusing him of being capricious:

> M. Charles Garnier fait partie de la commission même de la tour. Il ne s'y est rien fait qu'il ne l'eût approuvé, c'est donc contre lui-même qu'il proteste. J'avoue ne point comprendre. (Meissonier et al.)

By pulling Garnier's name out of the anonymizing paragraph of signatures at the end of the "Protestation," Eiffel not only makes an example what he considered to be Garnier's caprice but also zeroes in on how that name in particular wounded him personally. Starting with a critique of Garnier and *then* addressing the signatories as a whole suggests Eiffel's inability to separate the personal from the professional; he had to express his feelings about a colleague's "betrayal" before he could move on to more structured, rational arguments. Even when Eiffel pivots to address the group as a whole, he cannot resist the urge to label their argument as reactionary, even obsolete. He asks :

> [P]ourquoi cette protestation se produit-elle si tard ? Elle aurait eu sa raison d'être il y a un an, lorsqu'on discutait mon projet. On l'aurait admise aux débats [.] Aujourd'hui, elle est inutile, tous nos contrats sont passés. (Meissonier et al.)

While he surely posed this question in order to highlight how it was the *artistes* who were being petty by publishing their criticism after-the-fact, it also reveals a certain smallness on Eiffel's part. He cannot start actually responding to the arguments set forth in the "Protestation" without first whining about its timing and leveling the signatories' accusations of inutility right back at them. Furthermore, in the last emotional stab before Eiffel's comments yield to more measured responses, he equivocates on his claim that the *artistes*' thinking was retrograde by stating that they are also too quick to judge; he tries

[27] I will address Garnier's own *petitesse* towards the Tower later in this chapter.

to have it both ways. When the writer for *Le Temps* indicated to Eiffel that the "Protestation" was not only commenting on the Tower's construction but also the need to maintain it for twenty years, the engineer passionately replied:

> Alors la protestation, au lieu d'être trop tardive, me paraît beaucoup trop prématurée. Quels sont les motifs que donnent les artistes pour protester contre le maintien de ma tour ? Qu'elle est inutile, monstrueuse ! Que c'est une horreur ! …Je voudrais savoir sur quoi ils fondent leur jugement. Car, remarquez-le, monsieur, ma tour, personne ne l'a vue et personne, avant qu'elle ne soit construite, ne pourrait dire qu'elle sera. (Meissonier et al.)

It is less the content of Eiffel's counter-argument than its form that reveals that he was thinking defensively rather than offensively. When we compare *Le Temps*'s transcription of these remarks with that of Eiffel's later arguments directly addressing the "Protestation"'s claims, these accusations of prematurity are characterized by shorter, more abrupt sentences, a rhetorical question, and enumerated exclamations. The interviewer and editor suggest in this punctuation that Eiffel was speaking in a more heightened, emotional state. Moreover, in this reply Eiffel calls the nascent structure "*ma* tour," whereas later, as in his monographs published post-construction, the architect is careful to invariably call it "*la* Tour." This transcription reveals a hitherto-unseen possessive impulse in Eiffel that came out when he felt defensive and even angry towards his detractors. The singling out of Garnier, the dueling accusations of obsolete and premature criticism, and the formal traits of Gustave Eiffel's response to the "Protestation" indicate that it was not only threatened *académiques* who exhibited their petty side where the Tower was concerned. Something about the giant Tower made these giants of men…*small*.

Perhaps the best medium for representing the pettiness of these Eiffel Tower debates was the art of caricature. Two satirical drawings from before the *Exposition de*

1889 capture how emotions ran high, clouding visions of the Tower's actual form. The first drawing, which Bernard Marrey describes as a mere "pochade" by Louis-Charles Boileau, situates the Tower in a contemporary architectural theory debate by mocking those who disagreed with Boileau (24). Son of the original architect of *Le Bon Marché,* Louis-Charles Boileau took it upon himself to honor his father's legacy by championing architecture for the masses. In the weekly trade journal *L'Architecture*, he argued in acid prose for the merits of "le rationalisme gothique," a movement largely based on Eugène Viollet-le-Duc's contention that materials and usage, not "ideal" form, should reign in architecture (qtd. in Lucan 276). Citing his own experience consulting with Gustave Eiffel's firm to create the novel windowed ceiling of *Le Bon Marché*, Boileau argued that the new iron architecture should be innovative, not imitative. In the 1876 *Encyclopédie d'Architecture*, he wrote of colleagues trying to overcome the starkness of iron, "[J]e sais qu'on pourra citer des architectes éminents qui…se sont flattés d'échapper à force de découpures ou d'enjolivements…à l'inexorable mesquinerie du métal" ("Magasins du Bon Marché" 120). Where they went wrong with their efforts, he writes, was in believing it was possible to erect "un monument avec du métal [qui pouvait] soutenir de comparaison sérieuse avec les édifices en pierre," because a metal structure "devait s'écarter en tout et pour tout de leur imitation et être considéré à un autre point de vue" (120). In short, Boileau believed that his approach, as seen in his department store's minimal iron and glass ceiling, was to let iron be iron, and any attempt to get over the new material's "inexorable mesquinerie" was, in fact, *mesquinerie* — pettiness — itself. Because Boileau believed that it was advantageous for him to supplement his "raisonnements de figures dessinées pour permettre au lecteur de juger mieux que sur des

paroles," he produced a caricature drawing of the Eiffel Tower as it may have been revised by those who felt they could overcome iron through decoration (*Figure V;* "Deux Critiques Extraordinaires" 55). The handwritten caption in the upper-right corner of the drawing is in the form of verse:

> La tour Eiffel est un squelette, / Dont on peut admirer les os. / La mienne, quoique plus complète, / A certes, entre maints défauts, / Celui de dépasser la page. / Mais, par Garnier et Dumas! / Je jure, à son grand avantage, / Qu'on ne l'exécutera pas.

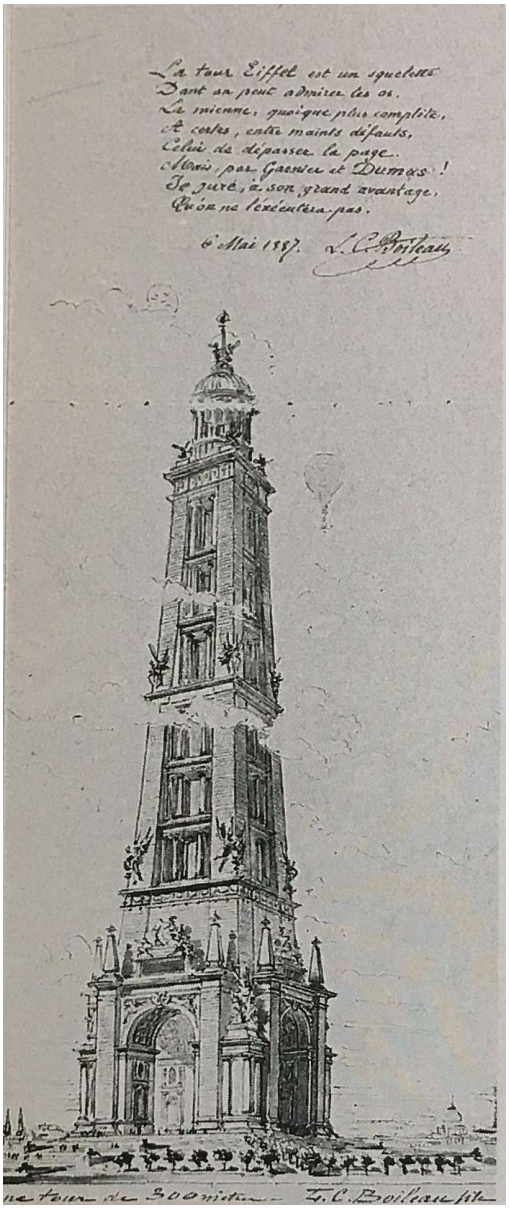

Figure V
Louis-Charles Boileau, "Caricature de la Tour Eiffel" (1887)
Pen and ink
Musée d'Orsay, Fonds Eiffel

By joining a depiction of the Tower remade to look like masonry with a direct callout to Charles Garnier and Alexandre Dumas *fils*, Boileau equates the *mesquinerie* of the "Protestation" with the vain efforts of his fellow architects to reduce ironwork to a mere simulation of masonry. He addresses the authors of the "Protestation" not only in his poem but also in the specific formal alterations made to the Tower in his drawing.

Boileau references the structural and decorative motifs of *every* monument that the "Protestation" cites by name as being at risk from the Eiffel Tower: his arches resemble L'Arc de Triomphe, his gargoyles and statuary recall Notre-Dame and the Louvre, his dome matches that of the Palais des Invalides, and, finally, his covered spire blends in with those of Saint-Jacques and the Sainte-Chapelle. His aping of those structures vaunted by "Garnier et Dumas" showcases how Boileau believed that fleshing out the "squelette" of the Eiffel Tower to make it "blend in" with the rest of Paris would make it a ridiculous chimera. Though it would certainly speak in the architectural vernacular — the mix of Beaux-Arts and *Haussmannien* stonework — of the rest of Paris, Boileau contends, a covered Tower would add nothing to the artistic conversation but mimicry. For Boileau, the ultimate goal of an artist or architect was to approach philosophical "truth" via the *vraisemblable*: "ce ne sont pas les qualités intrinsèques des matériaux, leur fond vrai qui doit influencer leurs formes, mais bien les qualités apparentes sous lesquelles ils se présentent aux yeux: leur fond vraisemblable" ("Magasins du Bon Marché "122). The Tower in Boileau's caricature exemplifies a normative "vérité" rather than a pursuit of the actual, "vraisemblable" possibilities of iron to advance aesthetic enjoyment as well as practical use. This quick "pochade" undercuts the entire debate of the "Protestation," demonstrating how, as in the debate in architectural theory at the fin de siècle, desires to make the new match the old were less about the ideals of design and more about mollifying writers' and builders' personal iron anxieties.

The second drawing clarifies the "Protestation" signatories' particularly egotist worries of being made obsolete if one man was permitted to make such a profound mark on the Paris skyline. On June 29, 1889 (only about two months after the debut of the

Exposition de 1889) the English humor magazine *Punch; or, The London Charivari* published what would become probably the most famous caricature of Gustave Eiffel and his Tower (*Figure VI*). From a series entitled "Mr. Punch's Fancy Portraits" comes a drawing captioned "M. Eiffel, 'Our Artist's Latest Tour de Force'" that depicts Gustave Eiffel and his monument as one entity. In the *Punch* cartoon, the summit of the Tower becomes Eiffel's top hat, the crisscross of the iron beams forms a windowpane-patterned overcoat, and the "shoes" of the Tower, buried in the *Champ de Mars* for stability, are unearthed to don Gustave Eiffel's splayed feet. Unlike in other engraved and lithographic depictions of Gustave Eiffel — and indeed unlike the majority of photos —, the engineer smiles broadly, his teeth obscured by his mustache to reveal a blackened open mouth. The caricature alone seems menacing enough with this inscrutable smile and wide, ready stance, but the poem on the page preceding it clinches *Punch's* characterization. *Punch's* send-up of William Shakespeare's *Richard III* is entitled "What, Go You Toward the Tower?," a parody of Lord Stanley's fearful query in Act III, Scene 2 of the play, "What, shall we toward the tower?" The magazine's poem then furnishes two negative characterizations of the Tower: the structure is called "an imposing, colossal Titanic… / As something Satanic had raised a world-panic" and accused of being a "Titan-like world-witching Tower" (323). This verse calling the Tower "Satanic" and "world-witching" sets the scene for the caricature on the next page, casting a pall over the depiction of Eiffel despite the jaunty play on words in the caption and general jocular tone of the publication. Merging the mood of its verse and the wit of its engraving, *Punch* gives Gustave Eiffel ownership and authorship of the negative perceptions of the Tower. The caricature equating the negative sides of the Tower directly with Eiffel elucidates the

long-form title of the *artistes'* protest being "Protestation des artistes contre la tour de M. Eiffel," specifically directed at the engineer himself. From the *Punch*'s outside, London vantage point, it is suggested that the *artistes* and other detractors took issue not with the Tower itself so much as with one man's jeering dominance of their city's aesthetics. Although caricature is, on the surface, one of the pettiest of art forms, here its prescience comes from matching form with function to call out the true fears of Eiffel Tower detractors: a self-serving fear of being creatively outdone by one man's work towering over all the rest.

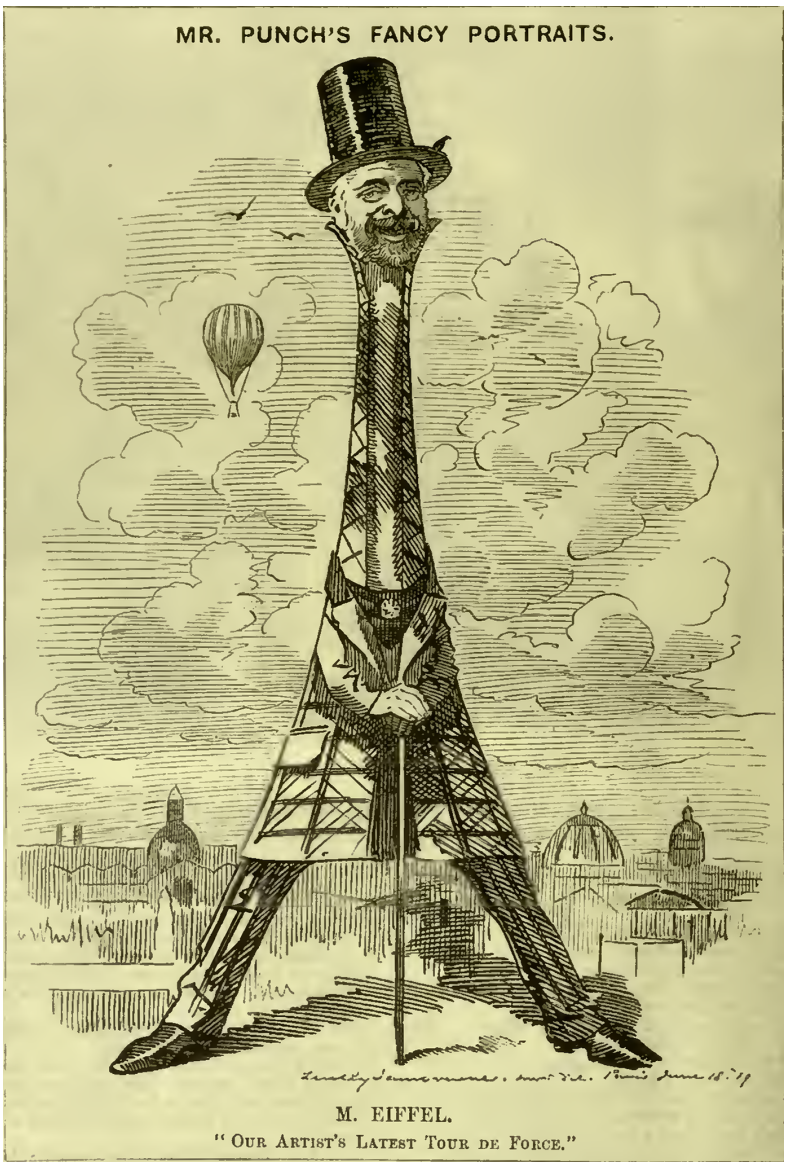

Figure VI
Caricature of Gustave Eiffel in the June 29, 1889 issue of *Punch; or, The London Charivari*
Ink on paper
Internet Archive

The petty concerns unearthed by the Boileau and *Punch* caricatures are made even more manifest by two literary representations of individual artists' small-mindedness and even jealousy. In the first of these cases, Gustave Eiffel and Louis-Charles Boileau were perhaps correct to single out Charles Garnier as the primary architect of the *artistes'* claims, because Garnier made every effort to manifest his feelings of discontent. While

responses to the "Protestation" by Gustave Eiffel in *Le Temps* and minister Édouard Lockroy in an open letter to Jean-Charles Alphand have proven, in posterity, to be nearly indivisible from the text to which they responded, the third response in the series is often forgotten: Charles Garnier also authored an open letter, responding directly to Lockroy. The pettiness began when Lockroy did not take Eiffel's tone of humble surprise towards the renowned architect of the *Opéra*, but singled him out in an otherwise high-minded appeal to the *artistes*' commitment to aesthetics. Lockroy writes,

> Si d'ailleurs vous désiriez vous édifier sur [les architectes cités dans la « Protestation »] vous pourriez vous renseigner auprès de Charles Garnier, dont *l'indignation* a dû rafraîchir la mémoire. Je l'ai nommé, il y a trois semaines, architecte-conseil de l'Exposition. (*Encyclopédie d'architecture* 59)

Garnier did anything but take the high road in response to Lockroy's italicized mocking of his "indignation" and accusations that the architect was biting the hand that fed him. The architect's letter drips with pettiness right from the salutation, as he begins, "Mon cher ami, Précisons les faits. Voulez-vous?" Following this condescending question are two descriptions of how an embattled Garnier intended to quit his newly assigned role — *twice*. First, he describes sending a letter to Lockroy to explain his signature of protest "en vous offrant de quitter immédiatement l'emploi que vous sembliez me reprocher," which he says was met with Lockroy's reassurance, by letter, that such an action was not necessary. Second, Garnier recounts that this did not calm him — "je n'en restais pas moins accusé d'un peu de félonie" — and therefore he went to hand in his "démission officielle" in person. After painting himself as the victim who nonetheless sought to rectify a perceived wrong, the architect then accuses the minister of misrepresenting the conversation they had in person:

> [V]ous m'avez engagé à m'adresser à la presse [pour] dire que vous saviez mes sentiments avant ma nomination, que cette nomination avait été faite non dans mon intérêt mais dans celui de…la réussite de l'Exposition de 1889. (*Encyclopédie d'architecture* 59)

Again portraying himself as selfless, Garnier concludes by saying that, despite Lockroy's accusing him of not being transparent with his critiques before joining the commission, he would nonetheless fulfill his role to ensure the success of the Exposition. He cannot, however resist one last stab, noting that he would be "dès lors plus armé et plus puissant pour remplir ma mission…[et] je [dirai] à mes confrères…de ne jamais abandonner leur indépendance." Because the monthly revue *l'Encyclopédie d'Architecture*, which printed the full series of "Protestation" responses in its 1886-1887 annual bound volume, observed that Garnier's "lettre nous paraît clore pour le moment le débat," Charles Garnier got the last, petty word in this early Tower conversation (59).

While it seems Garnier had a mind for vengeance when he insinuated that Lockroy ought to have known he was no fan of the Tower, to his credit, he had established his antipathy to the structure in a public forum months before the "Protestation" was published. At a banquet for the alumni of the École de Beaux-Arts, the architect *par excellence* of the Second Empire shared a spirited song, entitled "La Tour Eiffel: Complainte," that he had written about the upcoming structure. The otherwise serious trade publication, *La Construction Moderne*, gleefully printed his ephemeral words in their January 1, 1887 issue's humor section and even supplemented his verse with caricatures illustrating his song. In the architect's sarcastic representations of the Tower and the journal's satirical illustrations, the Tower is represented as a variety of commonplace objects (*Figure VII*): it is a "clou céleste" filling in a fearsome void in the *Champ de Mars* but accidentally drilling through the earth itself, an "entonnoir planté sur

un gros bout" and "poutres en treillis" that look not unlike a wire cage to grow tomatoes, a special ship to combat "le mal de mer," and, even a "crachoir" that Saint Peter urges God himself not to use (134-5). Although these initial representations are largely harmless and excellent fodder for illustration, there is one stanza so dark that the illustrator cannot equal Garnier's words. Concluding the conversation between Saint Peter and God, Garnier imagines the following exchange: Saint Peter notes, "– Ce n'est pas tout, lorsqu'un jour la camarade/ Fera de l'œil à quelque beau gaillard, / Il n'aura qu'à franchir la balustrade/ pour proprement dévisser son billard," to which God replies, scoffing, "– Bon! au suicide/ qui se décide/ Va chez Satan/ ça me vide d'autant" (135). Because Garnier had no real way of knowing the Tower would indeed become a destination where people took their lives[28], that his otherwise giddy *complainte* furnishes the most evil representation of the Tower in its early years suggests something deeper than mere mockery was at the root of his macabre vision.

[28] The first of approximately 370 deaths by suicide at the Eiffel Tower — as of August 2019 — took place in August 1900 when, "a demented printer's mechanic gravely climbed fifty feet up the north pier, lighting the way with the butts of three candles. He undressed, left a note willing his clothes to Gustave Eiffel, and carefully hanged himself" (Harriss 199). Nobody truly fulfilled Garnier's vision of leaping off of the Tower until 1911, "after which it had been a fixture in Paris for twenty-two years (Harriss 199).

Figure VII
Depictions of the Eiffel Tower as a "clou céleste," "poutres en treillis," a ship against "mal de mer," God's "crachoir," and a site for "suicide" printed in the January 1, 1887 issue of *La Construction Moderne* to illustrate a "complainte" by Charles Garnier
Ink on paper
Internet Archive

From his acerbic open letter to Lockroy and his morbid representation of the monument as a death trap in his song, it would seem Charles Garnier carried ill will towards the Eiffel Tower that went beyond his aesthetic distaste. The nature of his ire becomes clearer when we consider that Garnier hoped to make his own tour de force at the *Exposition de 1889*. As the celebrated architect of a *magnum opus* that had popularly taken his name (much as the Tower would take Gustave Eiffel's) and a member of the *Académie de Beaux-Arts* since 1874, Garnier was given *carte blanche* to erect whatever he wanted as part of the *Exposition de 1889*'s suite of new constructions. He seized the opportunity to make concrete his pet project of recounting *l'Histoire de l'habitation*

humaine in a series of re-creations of homes from prehistory through the Renaissance. In his monograph *L'Exposition de 1889,* architect and "attaché au service des installations à l'Exposition Universelle de 1889" Maurice Brincourt described Garnier's effort as "[q]uarante-quatre maisonnettes de tous genres, de toutes formes et de toutes couleurs semblent avoir été sorties d'une énorme boîte de jouets." Disarray was not his worst critique, however, for he expressed the consensus among "[l]es savants, les critiques d'art…[qui] prétendent que M. Garnier s'est aussi peu soucié de la vérité que de la logique, et qu'il a commis de lourdes fautes au point de vue historique et archéologique" (173). Indeed, even H. de Curzon, who later recognized Garnier's contribution to architectural history in a review of his 1892 book (also entitled *L'Habitation humaine*) for the *Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature* described the *Exposition* showcase as "une œuvre de vulgarisation…[une] collection de maquettes grandeur naturelle" (Curzon 398). Perhaps worst of all, Garnier's effort was accused of being redundant: writing for the official weekly bulletin *L'Exposition de Paris*, a "G.L." noted that

> [L]e grand défaut de la collection de M. Ch. Garnier [est que] l'histoire de l'habitation est partout, à l'Exposition: à la rue du Caire, à l'Indo-Chine, au Kampong javanais, aux maisons scandinaves, aux pavillons des Amériques…et à côte des gigantesques temples hindous ou mexicains. (219)

By putting *l'Habitation humaine* in context with the rest of the *Exposition*, G.L. articulated what other critics only insinuated: Garnier's grand, Second Empire-style study paled in comparison to the vibrant, *fin-de-siècle* spectacle already on display. To make matters worse for Garnier, all three critics put the *habitations* in spatial context, describing them as being "au pied de la Tour Eiffel." Respectively, Brincourt, Curzon, and G.L. described Garnier's forty-four houses as being "rangées un peu au hasard au pied de la Tour Eiffel," "[étalés] au pied de la Tour Eiffel," and much inferior to

structures “que les peuples du nouveau monde ont élevées à grands frais au pied de la Tour Eiffel” (173; 219; 398). While all three most likely include the Eiffel Tower to orient their reader in the *Exposition* space, describing *L’Habitation humaine* as being at “foot” of the Tower became a trope implies that Garnier’s contribution was — literally and figuratively — overshadowed by that of Gustave Eiffel. Taken metaphorically, the critics’ placement of the fabled architect of the Second Empire’s constructions in the shadow of the engineer’s novel Tower asserts that the era of Garnier’s *beaux-arts* glory was actively being made obsolete — as prehistoric as his *habitations* — in the age of iron.

Because Garnier’s letter and song antedate *l’Habitation humaine* by two years, the poor reception of his pet project could not be the animating force behind his petty words. However, it does give his sentiments a particular prescience. Perhaps Garnier protested so vehemently against the Eiffel Tower and the changing of the guard that it represented because he knew his own hold on the Parisian architectural vogue was slipping. The particular acidity of his condescension and accusation to Lockroy and the morbidity of his caricature of the Tower could reflect his own, small-minded insecurity and egotism at being unseated as the latest, greatest contributor to the Parisian skyline. The timeline of Garnier’s involvement with the *Exposition de 1889* and its innovative centerpiece suggest that, at the root of so many articulations of protest was simply jealousy, made smaller still by the scale of Garnier’s *œuvre* “au pied de la Tour Eiffel.”

Another disgruntled writer’s small-minded take on the Eiffel Tower was even more informed by a notion of scale. Though Joris-Karl Huysmans was not one of the signatories of the “Protestation,” he authored a kindred piece of protest two years later.

His 1889 essay "Le Fer," which would later be included in his second volume of art criticism, *Certains*, betrays his naked hatred for the monument. As an architectural purist whose commentary on the built environment favors the medieval and early modern, Huysmans was especially disgusted by the ephemeral structures built for the *Exposition de 1889*. He describes the ensemble of new buildings made possible by "le fer" as

> …érigés pour satisfaire le goût des cambrousiers de la province et des rastaquonères [étrangers au mauvais goût] hameçonnés dans leurs pays par nos annonces…[Les bâtiments sont] de l'art pour les Américains et les Canaques. (172)

By attributing the aesthetic and material of these new buildings to the foreign tastes of "rastaquonères," "Américains," "Canaques," and even country bumpkins, Huysmans establishes them as "Other" in geographic terms. The distance he places between the perceived Paris of his birth and the new, global Paris of the *Exposition* is made even more evident by the extremely specific notions of scale he applies to the Eiffel Tower. He describes the size of the monument in terms of preexisting structures and places in Paris:

> La tour Eiffel est …même pas énorme ! — Vue d'en bas, elle ne semble pas atteindre la hauteur qu'on nous cite. Il faut prendre des points de comparaison, mais imaginez, étagés, les uns sur les autres, le Panthéon et les Invalides, la colonne Vendôme et Notre-Dame et vous ne pouvez vous persuader que le belvédère de la tour escalade le sommet atteint par cet invraisemblable tas. — Vue de loin, c'est encore pis. Ce fût ne dépasse guère le faite des monuments qu'on nomme. (Huysmans 172)

The comparison of Eiffel's Tower to other monuments in the city is not particularly novel[29], but, in contrast, the specific views from *l'Esplanade des Invalides* and the *quai d'Orléans* attest to Huysmans's "insider" views as a local. A lifelong inhabitant of the neighborhood to the west of the *Jardin du Luxembourg* — now the 6th Arrondissement —

[29] Please see Chapter III for a discussion of a souvenir coin that visually compares the scale of the Tower to local and global monuments.

with his family home at 11 Rue de Sèvres (Roubier, "Rue de Sèvres") and his final home, marked by a plaque, at the 31 rue Saint-Placide (Roubier, "Rue Sainte-Placide"), Huysmans would have known the cited Tower views all too well. First, to see the view from the *Esplanade des Invalides* (*Figure VIII*), Huysmans would have only had to walk about twenty-five minutes Northwest of his neighborhood. When I took in this view for myself, I could easily determine how Huysmans came to his conclusion that the Tower "double à peine une maison de cinq étages." The view of the Tower from the Western side of the Esplanade in 2018 is indeed framed by extant five-floor apartment buildings, and, taking my hand with outstretched fingers as an index, I determined that spire of the Tower could be understood to equal the height of the buildings in front of it from that vantage point. The case is very similar for the view from the *quai d'Orléans* (*Figure IX*), which would have been about a half-hour walk for Huysmans from his neighborhood, Northeast to the South side of the *Île de la Cité*. Looking almost due West, I could see the "délicat et petit clocher" of the church of *Saint Séverin* in almost perfect alignment with the spire of the Eiffel Tower (175-6)[30]. Although Huysmans's text makes it clear that he did indeed visit the monument, we only know for certain that he took in the "vue d'en bas," therefore experiencing the Tower's height in only a cursory way. It is clear, then, from the specificity of his views from the *Esplanade des Invalides* and the *quai d'Orléans*, that his primary experience with the object of his critique was an incredibly personal, local one. While he was not wrong that the Tower appeared to be the same

[30] Huysmans even wrote a monograph, *La Bièvre et Saint-Séverin*, of which the second part, dedicated to the *quartier Saint-Séverin*, pays particular homage to pre-Haussmann Paris. He writes of the neighborhood he would have overlooked from the *quai d'Orléans*, "A l'heure actuelle, le quartier Saint-Séverin, le seul, à Paris, qui conserve encore un peu de l'allure des anciens temps, s'effrite et se démolit chaque jour; dans quelques années, il n'y aura plus trace des délicieuses masures qui l'encombrent" (49-50).

height as a five-story building or the clock tower of Saint-Séverin, his "measurements" are idiosyncratic and limited in scope. In refusing to venture away from what were likely to be his usual sites of *flânerie*, he refashions the Tower to fit the scale of his own personal map of Paris, pettily ignoring empirical fact in order to privilege his own understanding of the city.

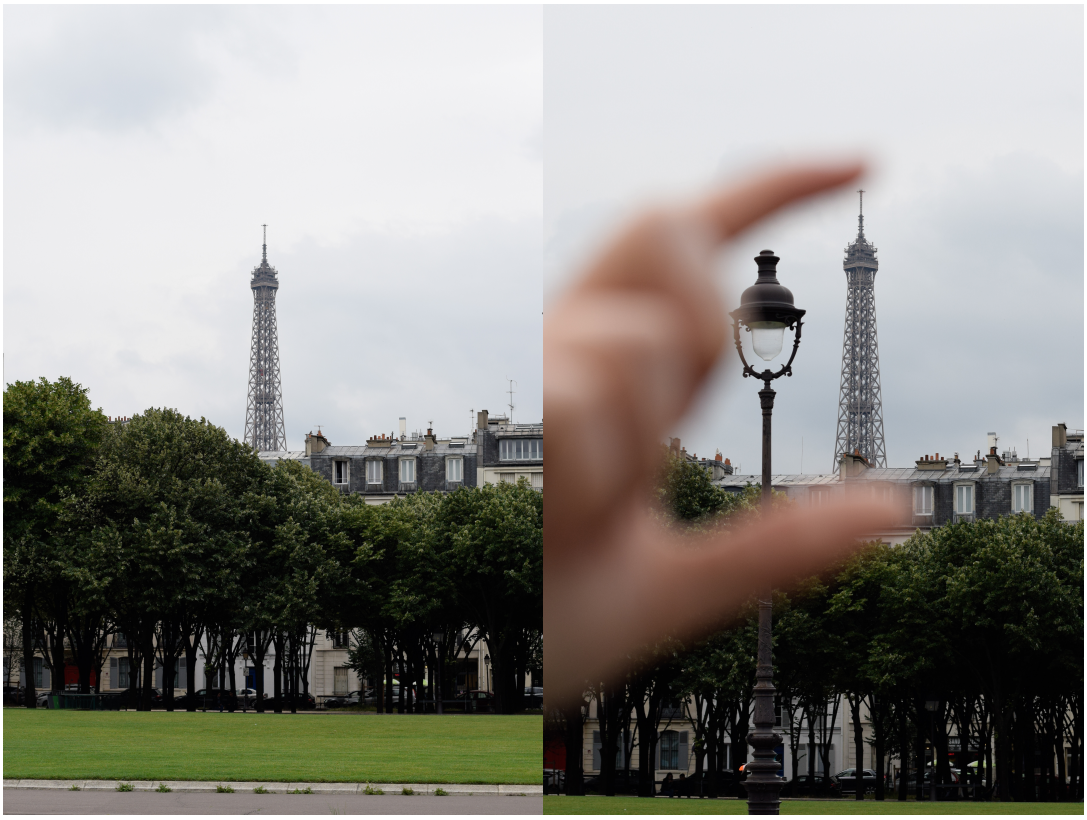

Figure VIII

The view of the Eiffel Tower from the Esplanade des Invalides on June 25, 2018; The author's fingers extended to demonstrate how the Tower appears to be the same height as the "maison de cinq étages" in front of the monument from this angle
Photos by Damien Lieber

Figure IX
The view of the Eiffel Tower and the "délicat et petit clocher" of the church of Saint-Sévérin on June 25, 2018
Photo by Damien Lieber

The second layer of small-mindedness in Huysmans's essay comes not from the geography of his specific views of the Tower but from his comparison of the Tower to his own body. William Thompson calls the whole of "Le Fer" a work of "pettiness and jealousy," largely owing to Huysmans's extended commentary on the Tower's size (1132). Though the text omits the first-person "je" save for a quick aside of "je l'ai dit plus haut," the character of Huysmans's descriptions of size is inherently physically relational and corporeally personal. Although the critic describes his primary method of comparison as being from specific geographical sites, the level of detail in his assessment of the views of the Tower from different points in the city suggests that he must have gone to these sites in-person, specifically for this essay, to affirm for himself that the Tower was "même pas énorme," perhaps even using his fingers to "measure" as I myself

did on the *Esplanade des Invalides*. Huysmans even encourages his reader to also take on this physical task: "vous ne pouvez vous persuader" in front of the other listed monuments that the Eiffel Tower is the tallest structure. Therefore, while Huysmans and his imagined reader would purport to be comparing monuments, the personalized perspective of these observations implies a subjective, physical comparison as well. He also sets the precedent for considering the Tower as *bodily* at the linguistic level: he calls it a "suppositoire solitaire" (174) — a medicine designed to go into the anal orifice — and the color of "jus refroidi de viande" (175) — like flesh itself. It is from this basis of bodily engagement and comparison with the Tower that I take the liberty of reading Huysmans's text with a decidedly psychoanalytic lens. What Thompson reads as "jealousy" I would then extrapolate to read as "insecurity," here inflected with the classic fear of emasculation. As a man, Huysmans would theoretically not be affected by Freud's "penis envy," yet his insistence on understanding a decidedly phallic monument[31] through his own body betrays a certain "size anxiety" he experienced. Of course, there can be no certainty that Huysmans experienced a "penis envy" when viewing the Tower. However, the bodily undercurrent of his critique nonetheless lends itself to an understanding that Huysmans may have been quite jealous of what he saw as Gustave Eiffel's marking of urban — and even more importantly — aesthetic territory. In attempting to take the Tower down with petty size comparisons and visceral fleshly metaphors, Huysmans engages in the pettiest of all "measuring contests" with Gustave Eiffel and his Tower.

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[31] In *Punch*'s rewriting of a scene of *Richard III* — discussed previously — we see an overt accusation of phallic form: the Tower is called "an imposing, colossal Titanic…Which schemed in the epoch of structures turned phallic" (323).

Reactions in the form of representations and revisions to the world's newest tallest structure evoked the smallest, most self-centered emotions in even the most lauded of *fin-de-siècle* luminaries. The naked commercial ambition of the "Protestation" set the stage for Louis-Charles Boileau's petty sketch-as-rebuttal to his peers, *Punch*'s paranoid casting of Eiffel as a monopolizer of the skies, Charles Garnier's dejection at coming second to the very monument he helped erect, and, most nakedly of all, Joris-Karl Huysmans's corporeally-based jealousy. This chronology of reactions would seem to suggest that the colossal Tower rendered its beholders smaller and smaller the longer it stood aloft. Perhaps more important than the character of these sentiments, however, is their broad characterization as *emotional* responses. Even as the monument's pettiest of critics wrestled with what the iron beams meant for them personally, they nonetheless dignified the structure with their most intimate of feelings. Though they would seem to have refused to allow the Eiffel Tower to be considered an artistic achievement, their emotionally charged revisions to its structure implied that the work they so reviled was capable of eliciting great sentiment and meaning for its beholders. In the end, though the pettiness of these elites towards the new construction would seem to have come from a narrow perspective, it in fact opened the gates wide for the grafting of emotion onto the Tower by all of its visitors and beholders, no matter how *petite* their stature in society.

Tower to the People

The critic, dramatist, and *académicien* Jules Lemaître wrote with great excitement to his "chère cousine" on May 31, 1889 that he had made a charming discovery on his stroll to the newsstand. Among "autres *eiffeliana*" that proliferated in the first month of the Exposition de 1889, Lemaître found "un 'document' qui m'a touché par sa niaiserie

généreuse et compliquée" (201). The item in question was a small book that presented its reader with a foldout page containing "La Tour Eiffel construite en 300 vers" across its four folded portions (*Figure X*)[32]. Ever the critic, Lemaître recounted that he found the poem "saugrenu" even as he marveled at its "turriforme" shape (203). But what struck him most of all was his impression that the author of the ludic poem "a été profondément et véhémentement ému par le colosse de fonte" in just one of the signs that "il y a quelque chose de religieux dans l'admiration que la tour inspire à la foule" (202-3). In a text-object that was, quite literally, pedestrian to him as a literary luminary, Lemaître found a trace of the sublime, conveniently rendered in an inexpensive form within reach of "la foule" of everyday citizens. The calligram, "saugrenu" as it may be, represents the perfect counterpoint to the false popular "nous" of the "Protestation." As I discussed earlier in this chapter, the "nous" of the *artistes*' missive fluctuates, reaching out to *le tout Paris* but ultimately coming up short, only truly representing the opinions of the elites — Lemaître's peers — that signed it. Both the historical context and textual form of "La Tour de 300 mètres construite en 300 vers" offer insight into the true "nous" of the Parisian populace.

[32] I was able to see the original format of Bourgade's fold out book in various auction listings, but I was not able to obtain either the (sold) items themselves or authorized photographs.

Figure X
Armand Bourgade's "La Tour de 300 mètres construite en 300 vers"
Engraving on paper. 80 x 57 cm. ARO1981-950
© RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY; Musée d'Orsay; Photo by Patrice Schmidt

The author of the poem, whom Lemaître described as "ému par le colosse de fonte" may not, in fact, have been quite so taken aback by novelty. Armand Bourgade, a personage less known by name and more by his extant ephemeral works, was primarily a pop-up bookmaker and "cartomancer" (Matthews). While he did often work in the medium of text and print, to call him merely "author" would do a disservice to the diversity of his *œuvre*. His most widely represented extant works on auction sites and in museums are *Boum-Boum du Cirque d'Été* (1900; Ketterer Kunst) and *Polichinelle des*

Champs Elysées (circa 1880; The Metropolitan Museum of Art), both vibrant lithographic works featuring pop-up components that depict the entertainment of circus clowns and street puppet shows, respectively. His most notable text-only work is *Nouvel Art de tirer les cartes: Ou, la connaissance de l'avenir prédite par les cartes*, on whose title page the publisher describes him as an "auteur de plusieurs ouvrages sur les sciences occultes" (Bourgade). The recurrent themes and diverse media of Bourgade's *œuvre* paint him as a connoisseur of the popular with his finger on the pulse of burgeoning bourgeois and working-class interest in spectacle and leisure at the *fin-de-siècle*. Indeed, the fold out Tower poem that so delighted Lemaître demonstrates Bourgade's eager participation in the new trend of *eiffeliana* — and in a shrewd business strategy of giving the people what they wanted.

Knowing that Bourgade was not necessarily a poet or author could perhaps explain one of the most jarring formal traits of the Eiffel Tower calligram: the text is rife with grammatical and spelling errors[33]. First, from the very beginning, it is clear that Bourgade omitted *circonflexes* for aesthetic effects, leaving his multitude of apostrophic "Ô" lines unmarked. However, further omissions of the accent marking complicate the reading of the poem: lines 109, 153, and 263 read, "Et sitot [sic] exprimés, tu combles les désirs," "Ecrits souvent empreints de pure [sic] vérité," and "De l'amour du pays que notre ame [sic] animée." Furthermore, an *accent grave* is missing on line 237: "La [sic] haut, près des nuages." These spelling mistakes are not as grievous as those of lines, 202, 209, and 259: "Abandonne le champ, le marteau, la faucile [sic]" "Il pivotte [sic] au soleil et s'endort sur la dure" and "DESSINNENT [sic] SON CONTOUR." Finally, the most

[33] See *Appendix II* for the full, transcribed text of the poem.

dominant errors are those of conjugation, found in lines 58, 61, 97, 244, 282, and 284: “Je descend [sic] pas à pas,” “Je construit [sic] sur ma route,” “Sublime et grand Paris que tu me semble [sic] beau,” “CAR JE TIENT [sic] PEU DE PLACE,” “QUE TU N’EST [sic] PAS SI BELLE,” and “Ils prendrons [sic] ton drapeau pour soulier et pour guide.” The volume of these errors combined with the handwritten lithographic text render the poem decidedly informal. It is not hard to imagine Bourgade scribbling the poem hurriedly, perhaps in front of the very monument that inspired him, and rushing the piece to production without much editorial supervision. More importantly, however, none of the numerous errors complicate the pronunciation of the writer’s words, giving the text a certain orality despite its dominant form as a — highly visual — calligram. What seems most important here is to convey an everyman of no literary distinction’s profound feelings towards the Tower in an easily digestible, immediately comprehensible “turriforme” shape that could invite even less educated readers to participate in *Eiffeliana*. The lack of written finesse in Bourgade’s work is, in fact, its own form of finesse in presenting an accessible counterpoint to the artistic elite’s vision in the “Protestation.”

Furthermore, the content of Bourgade’s replies to the *artistes* in the form of his calligram Tower, suggests an even more radically popular interpretation of the structure. While on the surface, Bourgade’s poem appears to be an “ODE À PARIS ET À LA FRANCE” (Line 93) and a celebration of “REVOLUTION” and “LA RÉPUBLIQUE” (Lines 141-2) thanks to large, capitalized apostrophes that form the structural backbone of the Tower representation, smaller stanzas dig deeper into the nature of how the monument represented these hallowed entities. Two of the most interesting stanzas

respond directly to the "Protestation," echoing its language in order to counter its arguments. The first lines of the poem, forming the summit of the Tower, read "Eiffel Titan Eiffel / Ta nouvelle Babel," a motif, echoing that of the "Protestation," that is repeated as one reads "down" the Tower. Before reaching the direct refrain of these lines, however, Bourgade prepares the reader for the impact of the repetition by responding less explicitly to the "Protestation." Among verse that describes the Tower directly are stanzas that explore the notion of who, besides the "Titan Eiffel" and his Tower, illuminated the nineteenth-century. Approximately halfway through the poem and the Tower structure, Bourgade furnishes a list of "auteurs":

> Le Théâtre aujourd'hui n'a pas qu'un seul grand maître:
> Les deux Dumas, Sardou, Dennery *[sic]*, Montépin,
> Meilhac et Halévy, Clairville et Richepin,
> Sont les auteurs plaisants, mordants et satiriques
> Dont les savants écrits tristes ou pathétiques
> Ecrits, souvent empreints de pure *[sic]* vérité
> Deviendront les joyaux de la postérité! (Lines 145-154)

While novelists and dramatists Alexandre "Dumas" *père* and *fils*, playwrights Victorien "Sardou," Adolphe d'Ennery (here written "Dennery"), novelists Xavier de Montépin, opera scribes Henri "Meilhac" and partner Ludovic "Halévy," comedic polymath writer Louis-François-Marie Nicolaïe (pseudonym "Clairville"), and poet Jean "Richepin" were all "auteurs" in the traditional sense of the written word, Bourgade expands his definition of "auteur" a stanza to follow. He elaborates,

> Tous les français sont fiers de nos vaillants auteurs
> Dont les savants esprits, sont les admirateurs
> Les deux Dumas, Sarcey, Goncourt, Zola (Emile),
> Grim-Escoffier, Houssaye et Lecomte de Lisle.
> …
> Inventeurs, médecins, ingénieurs, amiraux,
> Peintres, sculpteurs, tribuns, poètes, généraux;
> Sont les rudes lutteurs dont la vertu stoïque

Régénère le siècle et le rend héroïque!! (Lines 159-162 ; 167-170).

Citing the Dumas father and son again alongside critics Francisque “Sarcey,” Jules and Edmond “Goncourt,” novelist and journalist “Zola (Émile),” journalist and Légion d’Honneur honorary Henri — pseudonym “Thomas Grim” — “Escoffier,” multimedia writer Arsène “Houssaye,” and poet “Lecomte de Lisle” only expands the pool of “auteurs” slightly, adjoining more popular, accessible writers to the list of highbrow figures. However, Bourgade then adds additional professions to the list of “vaillants auteurs” as delineated in the first line of the stanza. The poet creates a parallel between the named men of letters and “Inventeurs, médecins, ingénieurs, amiraux, / Peintres, sculpteurs, tribuns / poètes, généraux.” If this was not already manifest enough, a final name-dropping stanza furnishes the names of some of these alternate “auteurs”:

Ce siècle a produit de grands hommes
Flammarion, roi des astronomes
Connaît du ciel l'immensité
Son style avec sublimité
Nous apprend la marche du monde
De l'étoile, la terre et l'onde
Il la voit, la nomme et fait tant
Qu'il pourra préciser quel est son habitant.
Popp a comprimé l'air; Pasteur, guérit la rage;
La mer est soumise à l'hélice de Sauvage;
Eiffel nouveau titan, élève vers les cieux
La nouvelle Babel, au faîte audacieux
Le Téléphone, agent de la parole humaine
L[']a transporté au lointain, sur le fil qui l'entraine. (Lines 179-192)

Here, astronomer Camille “Flammarion,” compressed-air entrepreneur Victor “Popp,” biologist Louis “Pasteur,” and ship engineer Frédéric “Sauvage” populate a list that ends — and even culminates — with Gustave Eiffel, the “nouveau titan.” Though it could seem up to this point that Bourgade’s formal call-back to the list of names of the “Protestation”’s signatories was merely accidental or an effort to mirror the names

scientists engraved on the iron Tower[34], the overt echo of the poem's opening lines in the phrasing of "Eiffel nouveau titan, élève vers les cieux / La nouvelle Babel, au faîte audacieux" explicitly refers to the "Protestation's" fears of a new structure "déjà baptisé[e] du nom de 'tour de Babel'."

Despite Bourgade's mirroring of the "Protestation"'s list of names and "Babel" allusion, however, the "Tour de 300 mètres construite en 300 vers" is not an angry rebuttal to the *artistes'* text but instead a gentle effort at re-education after two years of living with the Tower. Even though the poet renovates the idea of who can belong on the list of "auteurs," his inclusion of Alexandre "Dumas" *fils* and "Lecomte de Lisle," two signatories of the "Protestation," indicates a desire not to recast the list of the *artistes* but instead to augment it for a new century. This decidedly benevolent current continues in the last direct response to the 1887 text, where the voice of the Tower itself, though quite arrogant, does not wish to destroy that which came before:

> MA HAUTEUR EST SANS EGALE
> Notre-Dame, la vieille et haute Cathédrale
> Dont les sculptures sont d'admirables bijoux
> NE PEUT M'ATTEINDRE QU'AUX GENOUX (Lines 155-8)

Though the large text and capitalization of this declaration could seem aggressive to the *artistes'* cherished "Notre-Dame," the poet's decision to write this verse in the first person and place it within a frame of the stanzas listing the "auteurs" makes it clear that

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[34] However, none of the names in Bourgade's poem, despite their being positioned in almost the exact same location on the structure, appear in the iron engravings of scientists' names on the Eiffel Tower. While there is indeed a "Sauvage," Bourgade's detailing of the "hélice de Sauvage" separates his citation from the official Tower's citation of engineer and geologist François Clément Sauvage. This in itself is an interesting effort at rewriting the Tower, though it is notably less significant than Bourgade's retort to the "Protestation" if only because the selection of names appears to have been made for syllabic distribution rather than any effort to overwrite the names of scientists on the Tower.

the anxieties of the *artistes*, while very real, ultimately did not come to pass. In Bourgade's conception, there is indeed something incredibly haughty about the Tower's appearance as the tallest structure in the world, but his representation of the structure with words imbued with misspelled orality and interdisciplinary inclusivity demonstrates that the Tower was already proving to be a far more accessible and even benevolent structure than the *artistes* could ever have foreseen. With a novel shape, numerous misspellings, and callback to one of the first attempts to represent the Tower in words, Bourgade offers a vision of a structure that invited "auteurs" and readers of all stripes to participate in building a new, popular vision of the future[35].

If Bourgade invited readers to participate in a sublimated, abstracted version of the Tower suspended on the page in calligram, artist Henri Rivière invited his audience to view the Tower as a grounded part of their daily existence. In 1902, two years "too late" for the Exposition de 1900's renovation of the Tower with electric lights, Rivière presented his *Trente-six vues de la Tour Eiffel*, containing thirty-six lithographs of geographically diverse views of the now thirteen-year-old structure. In her commentary on each of Rivière's *vues*, Aya Louisa McDonald described the artist's muse as "un anachronisme voué à la démolition" saved "simplement [par] l'inertie" (93). Henri Rivière was not as shrewd as Armand Bourgade in seizing the zeitgeist to maximize his audience and his profits; indeed, Rivière's publisher's initial run of five hundred print copies was never realized, with comparably very few copies printed on-demand for subscribers (105). Yet, it is perhaps Rivière's poor timing that makes his representations

[35] This playful vision includes such works as Guillaume Apollinaire's altogether more playful calligram of the Eiffel Tower, published in 1918. This ludic, positive view of the Eiffel Tower is consistent with works published after the close of the debate, when the Tower was assumed permanent and, moreover, amusing.

of the Tower so crucial to understanding how it was *not* merely "inertia" that kept the iron structure aloft but instead the closely-related phenomenon of habituation: the Tower, by 1902, had become inextricable from everyday life.

What separates Rivière's depictions of the Tower from rote representations is their distinctly local, even subjective character. While almost all[36] thirty-six lithographic plates of the artist's work offer unique vistas of the monument, the most novel views come from the artist's own neighborhood of Montmartre. Henri Rivière was best known as a shadow theatre puppeteer and dramaturge featured at the celebrated artists' haunt and cabaret, Le Chat Noir. If the artistic scene of the Chat Noir cohort was *à l'avant garde*, their chosen environs at the Northern end of Paris were perhaps even more so. Annexed to the city of Paris in only 1860, Montmartre was still "entre ville et campagne" in the 1880s when Rivière started his studies for the *Trente-six vues* (McDonald 44). The most interesting and personal of Rivière's Tower lithographs employ what was, by 1902, the known quantity of the Eiffel Tower's silhouette to highlight the liminality of his changing neighborhood as well as the fringe existence of its inhabitants.

One of the most evocative of Rivière's *vues* is the fourteenth plate, "De la rue Lamarck" (*Figure XI*). Even among Rivière's numerous Montmartre scenes, this short street "où vivait les chiffonniers et les gitans" marked the northernmost point in his survey. Appropriately, the image depicts a life on the edge: a winding horizon frames a gray, rain-covered street on which the trees and passers-by are buffeted by a fierce wind coming from over the hills of Montmartre. In her study of the *Trente-six vues*, McDonald

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[36] The frontispiece or first view is divorced from geographic context, showing the Tower piercing through the clouds with only a suspended branch of leaves to "ground" it in any way. This image, notably, is the most directly related to Rivière's inspiration in Hokusai's *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*.

describes this scene as exemplifying “le sentiment de pauvreté, de misère, de désespoir” with its forbidding weather, spindly “fortifications” and, most importantly, soggy and bent figures (44). In her estimation, the Tower off in the distance is “une écharde grise qui se détache sur une troué brillante dans le ciel,” with only its shadow and the viewers of the images as “témoins de cette misère” (44). Yet, to interpret this vista as purely one of misery and hardship is to read it only on its representative surface and ignore its deliberate composition. First, McDonald’s analysis focuses on “l’image d’une femme misérable,” casting her as the sole human character in a scene that, in fact, includes two figures. Almost completely blended into the fence on the right side of the frame is a second, much smaller figure whose clothing is printed in the same shade as the fence and whose scarf even joins the horizontal wooden plank behind him. Only his white face, half obscured by his hat, and his darkened reflection in the wet street distinguish him from his dreary surroundings. In a simple reading, the presence of this figure scarcely undercuts McDonald’s characterization; just because the woman is not suffering through the storm alone does not mean she suffers any less. However, considering these two unfortunates vis-à-vis the Tower silhouette alters the reading of the image. The woman in the foreground, the man in the middle ground, and the Tower in the background form a sort of elongated triangle of sight lines in the composition. While McDonald does acknowledge the Tower’s ability to “see” the walking figures as a “témoin,” her characterization of its form as “une écharde” piercing through the darkness in the sole spot of light imbues it with the sense that it has splintered — or broken — through in a somewhat violent way to survey its miserable denizens of the outskirts of the city from its perch in the *centre-ville*. The barely-visible yet nonetheless looming silhouette of the

Tower could certainly be read as the threat of surveillance, but Rivière's formal treatment of the monument undercuts this easy reading. Famously, Roland Barthes considered the Eiffel Tower to be "un objet qui voit, un regard qui est vu" (27-8). This conception of a two-way gaze undercuts the theories of architectural lines of sight that bookend Barthes's study, notably Jeremy Bentham's eighteenth-century utopic imagining of a benevolent (albeit controlling) "Panopticon" tower and Michel Foucault's subsequent pathologizing of that omnipresent gaze with his "panopticism" in prisons of the 1970s. Indeed, what Helen Hills terms the "asymmetrical viewing patterns" of "panoptic" scenarios are rendered symmetrical in the case of the Eiffel Tower not only by Barthes's theory but also by Rivière's treatment of the Tower in his view from Montmartre (18). The composition's triangulation between the Tower, the waif, and the camouflaged man does privilege the Tower's lines of sight by stretching them further towards the human subjects, but this triangle nonetheless allows for a returned view. Moreover, Rivière's muted color treatment for the Tower's presence reflects not only the material reality of hazy rain and fog, but also a gentler presence than that of a menacing, panoptic prison tower. According a softer tone to the Tower and more stark relief to the figures foregrounds the human element of the urban landscape. The composition of the view "de la rue Lamarck" grants the primary agency of the gaze to human beings, allowing the outlined figures to even *refuse* the gaze as they look down to avoid feeling the wind and rain on their faces. Even in dank misery, these people are not merely victims of their liminal status in Parisian geography and society, but actors who can forge ahead with their own lives. If they choose to look up at the distant Tower, the monument is less an "écharde" than a signpost, an unwavering geographic marker guiding the figures and the

viewer out of the rain and towards their destination. The reduced detail of the Tower constitutes a necessary formal modification at such a far distance, but in reducing the glittering Tower to a faded silhouette, Rivière privileges his figures' experiences in Montmartre over their relationship with the commercial center of Paris. Significantly softened, Rivière's Tower thus provides a visual for Barthes's description of the iron structure as "une femme qui veille sur Paris, qui tient Paris rassemblé à ses pieds" who reciprocates the gaze — "elle inspecte et protège, elle surveille et couvre" — for the good of human beholders (82).

Figure XI
The fourteenth of Henri Rivière's "vues de la Tour Eiffel," "De la rue Lamarck" (1902)
Lithograph on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Though the scene "De la rue Lamarck" would have been a novel look into the life at the Parisian city limits, it does not offer the "insider" view of the ninth plate, "De la rue des Abbesses" (*Figure XII*). Only a ten-minute walk from the rue Lamarck in

Montmartre, the rue des Abbesses was and still is a much more central location in the northern Parisian neighborhood. On my tour of Rivière's Montmartre views, this plate's stunning panoply of architectural landmarks viewed from on high was the sight I most hoped to see. I understood, of course, that modern Montmartre is far more built up than the neighborhood in its first few decades, but I hoped that by mentally "controlling for" centuries of construction I could still catch a glimpse of what inspired Rivière to include the rue des Abbesses in his *vues*. Yet, even after spending hours at the site in an attempt to triangulate the view — walking the entirety of the street, going higher up the hill, looking further east and west —, I found no modern analog for Rivière's scene. I was almost ready to give up entirely and retire to dinner when, walking ten minutes northwest to the Place du Tertre, I finally saw the Tower from Montmartre (*Figure XIII*). Even though I thought myself to be thoroughly habituated to the sight of the monument, standing on the sloped Place, I found myself jolted, even rattled, to attention by this particular vista. My astonishment certainly was partially attributable to my having spent all afternoon in a vain search of a Tower view, but there was something more to the way the Tower "snuck up" on me through a foggy sky, asserting itself over the buildings and foliage as a reminder that even Montmartre's *monde à part* was still woven into the fabric of Paris. Upon further analysis, I concluded that what had shocked me about this sighting is that it presented almost an exact inverse experience to Edmond de Goncourt's view of Montmartre from atop the Eiffel Tower. On July 2, 1889, he wrote in his *Journal, Mémoires de la vie littéraire*:

> Là haut, la perception, bien au-delà de sa pensée à ras de terre, de la grandeur, de l'étendue, de l'immensité babylonienne de Paris et avec, sous le soleil couchant, des coins de bâtisse…ayant des lignes tranquilles de l'horizon, le sursaut et l'échancrure pittoresque, dans le ciel, de la colline de Montmartre, prenant au

crépuscule l'aspect d'une grande ruine qu'on aurait illuminé. (100)

From the Place du Tertre, it was not Montmartre emerging on the horizon but instead the Tower and the *centre-ville* that broke through, faded through the fog like a "grande ruine."

Figure XII
The ninth of Henri Rivière's "vues de la Tour Eiffel," "De la des Abbesses" (1902)
Lithograph on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Figure XIII
The foggy view of the Eiffel Tower from the Place du Tertre in Montmartre on June 25, 2018
Photo by Damien Lieber

Between my fruitless effort to find Rivière's exact view and this unprecedented reversal of the view from the summit of the Tower, I concluded that Rivière's *vue* "De la rue des Abbesses" is truly a *vue privilégiée.* Rivière likely took advantage of his network of social connections through the *Chat Noir* to ask a friend, George Auriol, to climb his rooftop at 44, rue des Abbesses, to behold this unique, reverse view of Paris and the Eiffel Tower (McDonald 54). From this ultimate "insider" perch — at a private address

—, the lithographer beheld not only the Tower off to the east, but

> à gauche [de la scène] l'Opéra, au centre l'église de la Trinité vue presque de profil au-dessus de la rue Saint-Lazare…et plus loin le dôme de l'Observatoire, les flèches de Sainte-Clotilde et le dôme des Invalides. (McDonald 54)

Framing the Eiffel Tower with his own, Montmartre-centric view of Paris, Rivière provided the ultimate counterpoint to the *artistes*' fear, articulated fifteen years before in the "Protestation," that the monument would "[écraser] de sa masse barbare" all the stone monuments that cemented Paris's reputation. Representing the Tower from his friend's rooftop, Rivière maintained that life went on well after the completion of the Eiffel Tower, and not even two decades later it had integrated itself so indelibly into everyday life that it was no longer *à l'avant-garde* but instead a fixture on a skyline of a *vue privilégiée* from the new frontier of Montmartre. It is in this way that Rivière's representation, though not a shocking formal revision of the Tower's physical form in its necessary dilution of details from a far-away perspective, rewrites the Tower not as the antagonist envisioned by the "Protestation" but instead part of the *mise-en-scène* of modern life.

Armand Bourgade and Henri Rivière's revisions-via-representation of the Eiffel Tower demonstrated the importance of how representations carved out *space* for the common people to participate in the architectural novelty. Bourgade's rendering of the "La Tour de 300 mètres en 300 vers" expanded not only the repertoire of *who* could physically rewrite the structure — complete with misspellings and grammar mistakes — but also the gamut of "auteur" luminaries who forged the nineteenth century. In daring to re-author the monument and its context as a mere pop-up book and card-maker, Bourgade claimed the space of the Tower as a stage for the popular, lowbrow imagination. Printed

thirteen years later, Henri Rivière's "Trente-six vues de la Tour Eiffel" demonstrated just how the space envisioned by Bourgade could be occupied. The artist's lithographs depicted an Eiffel Tower integrated into Parisian life even at its outer limits in the geographic and cultural frontier of Montmartre. Though Bourgade's book was named for the Eiffel Tower, its lithographic plates observed how a far away, faded, and formally reduced monument gave context to the liminal existence and new narratives of people living, quite literally, "on the edge." Habituation to the Tower in the temporal space after its completion did not erase its likeness from the skyline but integrated it into the rich text of *fin-de-siècle* existence, making it belong to everyone who experience it.

Conclusion

Siegfried Giedion's description of Robert Delaunay's *Tour Eiffel* series, though ultimately opaque in its evocation of "emotional content," is preceded by another, more clearly articulated hypothesis about the uniqueness of the Eiffel Tower:

> To a previously unknown extent, outer and inner space are interpenetrating. This effect can only be experienced in descending the spiral stairs from the top, when the soaring lines of the structure intersect with the trees, houses, churches, and the serpentine windings of the Seine. The interpenetration of continuously changing viewpoints creates, in the eyes of the moving spectator, a glimpse into four-dimensional experience. (284)

The "fourth dimension" to which Giedion alludes is popularly, and erroneously, considered to be "space-time," a duration rather than a physical dimension[37]. Though it is

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[37] H. S. M. Coxeter demystifies this popular misconception, explaining that it resulted from the collapsing of two theories of four-dimensionality: "Little, if anything, is gained by representing the fourth Euclidean dimension as *time*. In fact, this idea, so attractively developed by H. G. Wells in *The Time Machine* [*1895*], has led such authors as John William Dunne (*An Experiment with Time*)[1927] into a serious misconception of the theory of Relativity [1916]. [Hermann] Minkowski's geometry of space-time [1908] is *not* Euclidean, and consequently has no connection with the present investigation" (119). In the popular imagination, then, the Euclidean fourth dimension in space was

entirely possible that Giedion was referring to this cliché, the rest of his description of a person moving within the Eiffel Tower indicates that he may have been referring to the far more interesting understanding of a fourth-dimensional geometrical space. In 1880, Charles Howard Hinton's essay "What is the Fourth Dimension?" advanced the idea that, if we can draw three-dimensional cubes from two-dimensional squares, a fourth dimension could be possible at a perpendicular to our own existence. We, as three-dimensional beings, would, however, be unable to perceive it. Hinton's logic follows that

> If we are in three dimensions only, while there are really four dimensions, then we must be relatively to those beings who exist in four dimensions, as lines and planes are in relation to us. That is, we must be mere abstractions. (20)

In this conception of the fourth dimension as a purely geometrical phenomenon, Giedion's evocation of "four-dimensional experience" could mean that a winding descent of the Eiffel Tower enabled its visitors to see how their experience could only exist relatively to other possibilities, to other scenes of life being lived in the "windows" of the iron beams looking out onto the streets below. While Giedion goes on to describe how he believed Robert Delaunay's post-Cubist *Tour* series to make this phenomenon visually comprehensible as no other work had before, as I discussed in the Introduction to this chapter, the brushstrokes of these paintings foreground the beams of the Eiffel Tower at the expense of all else. The best way to truly unlock the structure's unique ability to situate the individual in a spectrum of possibilities is to focus not on the foreground of the iron beams but on their creation of windows into the background.

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mistakenly conflated with "Minkowski space," a time-based concept that laid the groundwork for Albert Einstein's theory of Relativity.

Although the Tower was not — and could not be — filled in in the various ways suggested by artists and writers, the "windows" it made were fleshed out with the dialogue of those who beheld it. Its open structure left space for expression via representation. In the wake of the "Protestation"'s accusations of "inutility," Alphonse Mucha, François Coppeé, Guy de Maupassant, and Alphonse Allais manifested a deep human desire to tinker with the material world — whether in three-dimensional drawings or two-dimensional texts — in order to make it useful for their own ends. While these tinkerers often came from didactic and ludic places, the Tower also prompted less noble emotional outbursts, proving that it was, if nothing else, a lightning rod for subjectivity. The petty reconstructions of Louis-Charles Boileau, Charles Garnier, and Joris-Karl Huysmans showed the place of the Tower in excavating the basest of human emotions even from noble aims of constructing modernity. Yet the representations of these first two groups of reactionaries were ultimately less informative that those who opened the Tower's openwork even further to show how any visitor or beholder could manifest *their* desires and emotions through its beams. Armand Bourgade and Henri Rivière demonstrated that the true power of the Eiffel Tower was not in its novelty but in its ability to enmesh itself in popular culture and daily life, showing it belonged to the everyman as much as the privileged *artiste*. The form of the Eiffel Tower offered not only views into the psyche of tortured *artistes* and witty critics but much more literal, physical views onto the actual lives of those below.

The fourth dimension that Giedion ascribed to the iron monument is less a thrilling *entrée* into an unexplored dimension than an opening up of what already existed.

In serving as a flashpoint for the vagaries of human expression, the Eiffel Tower derived its staying power from its ultimate quotidian-ness.

Chapter II: Restoring Actors to the Eiffel Tower's Stage

"Nous sommes tous citoyens de la Tour Eiffel."

— Jules Simon[38]

As befit a monument erected on the *Champ de Mars,* the Eiffel Tower was planted on grounds of both ideological and physical warfare[39]. From the outset, Gustave Eiffel, trying to assure his monument's permanence, clung to the notion of making the Tower a strategic observational perch. In the February 1889 *Conférence sur la Tour de 300 mètres*, Eiffel repeated a quote he gave to Max de Nansouty, writing for *Le Génie Civil* in December 1884:

> En cas de guerre, on pourrait de cette tour, convenablement placée comme situation, observer tous les mouvements de l'ennemi, dans un rayon de 60 kilomètres, et cela par-dessus les hauteurs qui entourent Paris, et sur lesquelles sont placés les nouveaux forts. (108)

Eiffel took this assertion that the Tower had military application even further in his 1900 book on the *Travaux scientifiques exécutés à la tour*: "Si ces communications avec des points éloignés avaient existées pendant l'investissement de Paris en 1870, on se rend parfaitement compte quels incalculables services elles auraient rendus à la défense" (38). Eiffel later embraced the patriotic, defensive, and even vengeful dimension of his engineering feat by citing M. J. Janssen, a fellow engineer speaking 1889 *Scientia* conference, in *Travaux scientifiques.* Janssen described Eiffel as "un homme d'un grand talent, d'un caractère hardi et entreprenant, [qui] s'éprendra de l'idée de venger en quelque sorte sa patrie, par la réalisation d'une œuvre grandiose." In other words, Eiffel's

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[38] Jules Simon, who served as *Président du conseil* from 1876-77, was said to have made this statement, "sans être démenti" at "un banquet international" (*Exposition Universelle de 1889* 287).

[39] Additionally, the *École Militaire* was and remains its Southwestern neighbor.

tower would thereafter make it strategically possible to prevent another military embarrassment such as the Prussian siege of 1870 (215-6). Perhaps Eiffel adopted Janssen's words in order to capture what he himself had been unable to articulate: that his personal sense of trauma over the Prussian takeover of Paris and his desire for retribution fueled his initial efforts to design and construct the Tower.

If the ideological connection between the Eiffel Tower and war was not apparent enough from the remarks from and about its namesake, its physical framing at the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* concretized this notion. Just to the east, on the Left Bank of the Seine's *Esplanade des Invalides* were the pavilions of the *Exposition Coloniale*. This display of European colonies was surveilled not only by the new iron colossus and the existing monument of the *Invalides* itself, but also by a new structure: the *Palais du ministère de la guerre.* The Ministry of War's structure dwarfed each of the buildings within the *Exposition coloniale* and functioned as a formidable barrier and a policing presence to the pavilions dedicated to individual colonies. In order to proceed from the main fairground at the *Champ de Mars* to visit the colonial exhibits, one would have had to pass by — if not directly through — the Ministry of War's domain.

Yet, as with most of the rhetorical and spatial narratives that set out to define the Eiffel Tower, this idea of the monument as a bastion of French military authority began to unravel from its very inception. Certainly, the Tower did prove to be a military asset in World War I and the Nazis claimed it as a symbolic hostage in their photographs claiming the monument as war booty[40]. Accentuating these boldface events in the Tower's first quarter- and half- century of existence ignores, however, the quotidian

[40] Please see the Conclusion for discussion and analysis of these use cases for the Tower.

reality of the monument that has proven much more important for the longevity of its international reputation today. Moreover, a shift towards the study of everyday life allows us to pivot away from the big-picture, traditional categories of analysis and adopt small-scale — but equally important — objects of inquiry. Quentin Deluermoz and Pierre Singaravélou refer to these big-picture categories as those of "l'entendement historique: les pays, les siècles et les grands hommes" (*Pour une histoire* 230; "Explorer le champ…" 86). Such large scales of analysis, however, ignore all that was *little* about the colossus. In this chapter, I will unspool new threads in the Eiffel Tower's history that threaten to tangle and ultimately unravel the Tower's carefully constructed "grand" histories about "grand" people by concentrating instead on the "little" histories and indeed "the little people."

It is a lot easier to uncover the "little" histories and their "little" actors on the smaller scales of the artifacts I have addressed in previous chapters simply because these artifacts, as I have mentioned above, possess their own materiality separate from the physical Eiffel Tower monument. It is much harder to extricate the stories of hidden actors from the actual iron beams themselves, but material traces exist to remind us of their indispensable role in erecting a monument that would become colloquially known not as "la tour de trois-cents mètres," constructed by hundreds, but the work of one man, "la Tour *Eiffel*." In bringing the histories of these hidden actors back to light, we gain a much clearer understanding of how the Eiffel Tower became permanent and how the "grands hommes" had to reach for it as a national symbol precisely in order to attempt to dominate the "little histories" that were actively weaving divergent narratives for the monument's future. Though the Tower was sewn up with the hard power of France's

military prowess in the post- Prussian War period, the promise of its new Republican government, and its hold on its sprawling colonial empire, the monument's small actors ultimately wove a different and multifaceted tapestry of meaning that redefined the Tower and made it the structure we know — and love — today.

The *Exposition*'s Ironclad Politics

The smallest snags by unsung actors threatened to rend asunder the fabric of a tenuous national bandage. Facing 1889, the centenary of the start of the French Revolution, France had achieved only a moment of peace. The Third Republic formed in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War was only nineteen years old and deep in the throes of *l'Affaire Boulanger*, in which Georges Boulanger's royalist, authoritarian and populist *Revanchisme* was only narrowly defeated in the March 1889 elections, two months before the *Exposition Universelle* was slated to begin. Cognizant of France's fraught domestic politics, the government seized on the upcoming *Exposition* as a moment to rewrite the recent past and present a coherent narrative on the international stage. While the *Exposition* year itself would promote a vision of one hundred years of revolutionary progress, the fledgling Republic needed something far less ephemeral than a fair to solidify its vision of the future.

As early as May 1884, Gustave Eiffel told his engineers that "le gouvernement cherch[ait] un projet susceptible à frapper l'opinion pour fêter le centenaire de la Révolution" (Marrey 69). By June 6, Émile Nouguier and Maurice Koechlin presented a three-hundred meter pylon whose design would be refined — after a firm rejection by Eiffel — into something resembling the final Tower by December 12 of that same year. The dates of these conversations in Eiffel's firm are particularly notable, for the

government's public contest for a monument design was not opened until two years later on May 1, 1886. That Eiffel may have been tipped off is significant: even though the Republicans needed the egalitarian cover of a public contest in the tense populist climate, the race was ultimately fixed in favor of the certainty of what Eiffel could achieve. First, Eiffel's design idea had already been published as early as December 1884 in the civil engineering review *Le Génie Civil* (Nansouty 108). Second, the contest rules specified a 125 meters square base just like Eiffel's. Third, while the competition was in full swing, Édouard Lockroy, then minister of Commerce and Industry, commissioned a subcommittee on May 12 to conduct feasibility studies for the implementation of Eiffel's design (Eiffel, *Travaux Scientifiques* 7). The desire to fix the competition and therefore eliminate any uncertainty as to what and, more importantly, *who* would create a new national symbol attests to just how much the Third Republic was counting on building, quite literally, a new legacy.

Even as the 1889 date presented an opportunity to reflect on the one hundred years since the storming of the Bastille, Joseph Harriss writes, "the organizers of the Paris Exposition of 1889 soft-pedaled its role as the centennial celebration of the French Revolution out of consideration for aristocratic sensibilities both at home and abroad" amid threats by foreign monarchs countries to boycott the events (7). The "revolution" the Republicans wanted to highlight was not the bloody legacy of the guillotine and even, in far more recent memory, the radicalism of the Paris Commune, but instead a focus on the first phase of the Revolution, including its first republic, constitution, and declaration of human rights, and a march of progress. Harriss notes that "political implications were de-emphasized" (8) by the *Commission d'études* in November 1884, and indeed its

president claimed, “1789 [est une] date économique en même temps que date politique, [qui] a produit du progrès…C’est à cet examen de la situation économique universelle que sont conviées toutes les nations” (*L’Exposition de 1889* 11). The “revolution” of the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* was to refer almost exclusively to the Industrial Revolution, with the crown jewels of the *Galerie des Machines* and the Eiffel Tower as centerpieces. The events of the actual French Revolution were fêted separately at “une cérémonie solennelle” in Versailles on May 5, 1889, where Sadi Carnot gave a speech in the Hall of Mirrors recognizing the reconvening in 1789 of the *États-Généraux*, which marked the start of what was the first, republican phase of a much more complicated revolutionary process (“Le Centenaire de la Révolution”). Furthermore, as I have previously discussed, *Exposition* “rapporteur général” Alfred Picard saw the Eiffel Tower as the centerpiece of this recasting of the revolution: “cette œuvre colossale devait constituer une éclatante manifestation de la puissance industrielle de notre pays… et contribuer largement au succès des grandes assises pacifiques organisées pour le Centenaire de 1789" (7). Picard here draws a notable connection between France’s “puissance industrielle” and the “assises pacifiques” — the peaceful gatherings — of the world’s peoples at the fair, making a somewhat sinister suggestion that it was the sheer industrial might of France, as part of its insistence on reinforcing public order, that would quell its continued social and political unrest. Gustave Eiffel himself made this “law and order” implication far more concrete at a trade conference in 1889, stating that "J’ai donc voulu élever à la gloire de la science moderne et pour le plus grand honneur de l’industrie française un arc de triomphe qui fût aussi saisissant que ceux que les générations qui nous ont précédés ont élevé aux conquérants” (“Conférence de M. Eiffel” 39). Eiffel

optimistically drew a parallel between previous monumental odes to military might and his new ode to science, speculating that industrial progress would usher in a new, less militaristic, era of peace. The Eiffel Tower, in order to do the job it was handpicked to do for the Third Republic, would quash any civil unrest by broadcasting a vision of political and economic strength for the entire world to see.

It seems from the outside, at least, that the *Exposition* was not only an economic success but triumphant in the Republicans' mission to hide political weakness with industrial bravado. Deborah Silverman summarizes the view from the outside, observing that the built environment of the *Exposition* "creat[ed] a diversion from, and a temporary suspension of, political and social differences" (74). These differences were suspended by the illusions presented at the fair, illusions which covered up stories and divergences that must be uncovered in order to understand how the Tower became a perennial, and then permanent, fixture. Though the fair was certainly as "pacifique" as Picard wished it to be, embedded into its very foundations — another possible translation for Picard's "assises" — was continued unrest and undercutting of the desired political message. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how within the Eiffel Tower itself, alternate viewpoints of this critical historical moment bring to light how hidden actors, far from the "grands hommes" of the government and even Gustave Eiffel, came to act upon and ultimately affect the permanence of, the monument so desired and needed by the French government. The spatial logic of this argument necessitates that I analyze the Tower from the inside out, from the hands that placed its iron beams, to the "foreign" Alsatian restaurant inside its second floor, lastly to the colonial exposition in its shadow to the east.

Who built the Eiffel Tower?

Académicien Eugène Melchior de Vogüé described the construction of the Eiffel Tower as an almost magical process, marveling,

> [O]n n'apercevait presque jamais d'ouvrier sur la Tour ; elle montait toute seule, par l'incantation des génies. Les grands travaux des autres âges, ceux des pyramides par exemple, sont associés…[à] des multitudes humaines…la pyramide moderne est élevée par un commandement spirituel, par la puissance du calcul requérant un très petit nombre de bras. (de Vogüé 15)[41]

While the writer recognizes that part of why he views the process this way had to do with the manner in which the Tower was assembled — with finished beams shipped from Levallois-Perret outside of Paris — his sentiment that the Eiffel Tower was only truly the work of one man, Gustave Eiffel with the "puissance du calcul," was not unique. Seemingly mirroring De Vogüé's vision of a "spirituel" ascension is the renowned series of fourteen photographs, taken once per month, by Théophile Feau chronicling the Tower's "état d'avancement" from atop the *Palais du Trocadéro*. The visual series makes the feat of engineering appear straightforward and, perhaps even more importantly, almost entirely divorced from the hands of the men who actually built it. Those laborers, who were far away from the camera's lens and from the minds of those who sought, like De Vogüé, to romanticize the Tower's ascent.

However, De Vogüé's seeming erasure of the workers would have been counter to one of his political goals as a member of the *Musée Social*, an institution whose vice president, Émile Cheysson, also remarked on the invisibility of the Tower's laborers.

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[41] De Vogüé describes the process of building the canon of art history in much the same terms, with emphasis on the metaphorical hands that built it. In his *Roman Russe*, he writes, "Observez dans toutes ses applications le travail de l'esprit humain depuis un siècle; on dirait d'une légion d'ouvriers, occupée à retourner, pour la replacer sur sa base, une énorme pyramide qui portrait sur sa pointe" (XV).

Cheysson, a conservative social reformer and engineer, rooted his institution in the discourse that came out of the Social Economy section at the *Exposition Universelle de 1889*. Janet Horne describes this section as having two goals in its address of "the social question": the exhibits were "decidedly in favor of industrialization and economic growth" but saw these as the means to "improve the material conditions of…citizens' lives" (64). This pairing of industrial machines and "social mechanics" added a new layer to the idea of social economy, which, according to André Gueslin, was truly invented "à la fin du premier tiers du XIX^{e} siècle" (1). As with everything at the fair, these exhibits were tightly edited, considering every angle of what was put on the global stage. One of the jewels of the Social Economy section was a "village ouvrier" that was "le modèle où se réunissaient toutes les classes de la société qui y trouvait des 'distractions saines et agréables'" (Godineau 77). While this village made workers and their lifestyle visible and even appear enjoyable, De Vogüé pointed out that it eschewed all mention of labor unrest (Horne 68). These are also important currents to recognize in Cheysson's remarks on the Eiffel Tower. In a speech delivered on June 13, 1889 at the *Congrès d'Économie Sociale*, Cheysson imagined a socially conscious *Exposition* visitor looking around at the marvels of the fair and being

> …écrasé sous le poids de cette grandeur artistique et surtout industrielle, dont il vient d'avoir la brusque révélation…une pensée qui, d'abord confuse, se précise, puis devient à ce point impérieuse qu'il ne peut plus s'y soustraire : celle des hommes auxquels doit toutes ces magnificences, celle de leur condition matérielle, de leur état moral. Voici un monde nouveau qui surgit, celui du fer et de la grande industrie. Que fait-il de ses acteurs? (1)

Though Cheysson does not name the Eiffel Tower specifically, looking instead at the social economy of the *Exposition* as a whole, his remark later in the speech that "[l]es

fellahs[42] sacrifiés jadis par les pharaons nous gâtent les pyramides" addresses the same point as De Vogüé that this new, modern pyramid's ascent and subsequent celebration elided the risks taken and contributions made by laborers. Yet, in context of the Social Economy section as a whole, it is also important to see how Cheysson's framing foregrounds the concerned, external visitor, who wishes to enjoy the fruits of industrial labor but cannot help but be concerned about the workers who "gâtent" the public with a new marvel. The worker himself is not actually attended to, but spoken for. Cheysson's remarks and the Social Economy exhibits demonstrate an awareness of the need to grow social welfare along with the economy, but ultimately replace real workers' testimonies — and grievances — with a didactic version of their lives catering primarily to *Exposition* visitors, not French workers themselves. I will seek to restore some of the Eiffel Tower workers' own voices to the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* by first examining their popular material culture representations vis-à-vis the Tower, an attempt by Auguste Rodin to speak for them, a more realist effort by Alexandre Charpentier, and, finally, Henri Rivière's documentary lithographs that speak to the Tower workers' own voices in the strikes of September and December 1888.

Making the Manpower Manifest

Very few depictions of the original Tower workers are present in the visual record of the structure's ascension as chronicled in engravings and daguerreotypes. Even fewer

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[42] Literally, this term translates to "peasants," and Cheysson may have chosen it to make his pro-labor audience relate more easily to what was then understood to be a workforce of enslaved Hebrews. More recent archaeological research has in fact supported this choice, for it seems that the Judeo-Christian tradition's characterizing of all Egyptian architectural laborers as slaves painted over something more nuanced; material evidence at the site of the pyramids shows that some of the laborers ate prime cuts of meat and therefore were likely to have been skilled, compensated workers (Shaw).

workers figure in the artistic canon of the Tower's early years, with artists largely favoring the far-away views that center visitors and beholders' perspectives but take us away from those with tactile involvement in the monument. Though the three hundred men who toiled on the *Champ* certainly were not Cheysson's possibly enslaved "fellahs," their lack of inclusion in the continued popular imagination of the Eiffel Tower story nonetheless indicates a certain devaluation of their contribution. Of course, in many cases of monument building, the architect in charge gets the majority of the credit. But in the Tower's early years, material traces indicate a willful programmatic turn, transforming the many hands behind "la tour de trois cents mètres" into "la Tour Eiffel," executed by one man for one national agenda.

Restoring artistic works that actively center the worker in the Eiffel Tower's visual canon and introducing new artifacts into this record, however, provides evidence that the monument's popular, shared story is what has actually made it endure. Artists and artisans actively sought to grant the worker increased prominence in the history-in-the-making of the Eiffel Tower.

I found one of the most fruitful sources of depictions of Eiffel Tower workers in a very unexpected place: plumbing online auctions for souvenir objects, I encountered a variety of medals and coins — *œuvres numismatiques* — that depicted workers and that were even marketed to me, the modern buyer, as depicting "ouvriers de la Tour." That I felt the need to be a *buyer* is in itself significant, for though there are museum specimens for two of these medals, they do not figure in any specific collections, whether of "Eiffeliana" or *Exposition Universelle* archives. In fact, the rarest of the medals, a commemorative token given only to those directly involved in planning and constructing

the Tower, does not seem to have a place in any official collections. The striking piece, a "médaille de grand module portant l'effigie de la Tour de 300 mètres, les armes de la ville, et, en relief, le nom des destinataires" is documented in Gustave Eiffel's own *La Tour de 300 Mètres* and realized by F. (Ferdinand) Levillain (313). The Paris *Conseil municipal* voted on March 16, 1889 to sponsor medals for "tous les ouvriers qui auront … travaillé personnellement, d'une façon continue et manuellement, au montage et au parachèvement de l'œuvre universelle" (313). Of the 246 medals issued, 92 were cast in silver for the personnel who had worked on the Tower from its ground-breaking on January 28, 1887 — including Gustave Eiffel himself — and the remaining 154 were cast in bronze. An additional clause in the resolution, stating that "[d]es médailles en bronze, à titre de commémoration, pourront être distribuées par les soins du Bureau," could perhaps explain why the medal I found and purchased bears no officially engraved name (313). Besides my own copy, I have thus far only ever seen one more blank bronze copy and a bronze piece engraved for "G. Hennebert" (in what appeared to be its original, circular red leather presentation box), who figures on the official list of recipients. I have never seen one of the silver copies online even in museum collections, leading me to believe that these may still reside with the families of the Tower workers, making this piece a private memento on the fringes of the public record.

Before addressing how the motifs on the medal frame the workers' experiences and contributions, it is crucial to examine the context in which the medals were presented: *Exposition* commissioner Adolphe Alphand personally distributed each medal, most likely on the occasion of the Tower's private opening ceremony. On March 31, 1889, all the workers were invited to a private launch party alongside "[le] Ministre du

Commerce, M. Tirard…des Directeurs de l'Exposition, MM. Alphand et G. Berger, [et] des Présidents du Conseil municipal, M. Chautemps, [et] du Conseil général, M. Jacques" whose presence among the workers "donnèrent une importance qui n'avait pas été prévue" to the occasion (Eiffel, *La Tour de 300 Mètres* 311). This text framing the event as unimportant save for the presence of distinguished figures, presumably written by Gustave Eiffel or his editor, *Imprimeries Lemercier*, in *La Tour de 300 Mètres* foregrounds the decision-makers and all but erases the workers. However, this dismissive introduction in *La Tour de 300 Mètres* is nonetheless followed by faithfully transcribed speeches by Eiffel, Tirard, Alphand, and even "un ouvrier mécanicien M. Rondel" as they were printed in the journal *Le Champ de Mars* on April 6, 1889. These texts readily acknowledge the difficulty of the workers' tasks — Eiffel takes particular care to note "le froid et le vent que vous avez si souvent bravés" (311) — the nobility of their mission — Tirard exclaims "ces ouvriers …sont la gloire, la force, et l'espérance de la patrie" (312) — and their centrality to the monument itself — Alphand notes that "[cette] Tour fait honneur, non seulement à M. Eiffel, mais encore à vous tous" (313).

Yet, despite the specificity of these remarks acknowledging the workers, one of the most salient ideas that emerged from the inauguration was the idea that the Tower belonged to and was erected by France itself, a sentiment reflected in the symbolism of the workers' medal. Gustave Eiffel proclaimed that the Tower was "notre œuvre…une œuvre qui nous est commune à tous et dont nous pouvons être fiers d'être les collaborateurs à des degrés divers. Vous y avez tous mis ce quelque chose qui ne se paye pas, ne s'achète pas, ne se vend pas" (313). This remark effectively acknowledged the broader public's indispensable role in keeping the Tower aloft. This broader language

marks a juxtaposition with the specificity of the other speeches of the day and, particularly when accompanied by the medal, flattens the laborers' contribution. By abstracting what he had just called a struggle in the cold and wind to something broader that could not be remunerated, bought, or sold, Eiffel subsumes the struggle of the workers into something more abstract and collective.

Figure I
Large-format medal given to the Eiffel Tower workers in 1889; bronze; 2.95" diameter (7.5 cm)
Inscription: Front "Exposition Universelle 1889 / Tour de 300 Mètres au Champ de Mars", "F. Levillain"; Back "République Française/ Ville de Paris" "F. Levillain"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

This discourse becomes material in the symbolism of the medal, which, although it displays the tools of workers, puts them in the hands of goddesses and crowns them with the imprimatur of the Republic, further erasing the individual contributions to emphasize a unified nation[43]. On what *La Tour de 300 mètres* suggests is the face of the medal, a seated female figure gazes at the Eiffel Tower in the background (*Figure I*). Her seat's back is a shield bearing the seal of the city of Paris, with its stars and a ship on

[43] This is much like how the Tower itself crowned by a French flag on an occasion ostensibly dedicated to the workers.

treacherous waters, which is attached to the actual seat formed by an anvil. She holds an axe, and at her bare feet lays a pair of tongs that ultimately frame the blank space where a worker's name would be engraved. The figure herself is undeniably Greco-Roman, draped in a gently billowing *stola*, the feminine equivalent of the toga. Her crown, with its eight square, architectural tips resembling crenellations, identifies her as Fortuna, the goddess protector of cities. Pairing Fortuna with the seal of Paris is not surprising, but the ensemble of tools — the anvil, the hammer, and the tongs — is what makes this particular presentation special. These three implements are almost always depicted and associated with Vulcan, the god of fire and metalworking. This gender-bent assignment of tools would be striking on its own, but the reverse side of the medal extends the conceit: another female figure foregrounds the city of Paris and the Seine, holding the tools of an oar and a vase, spilling directly into the Seine, seemingly serving as the source of its current. This figure's half-crown (extending just over her forehead and not around the sides of her skull) and resplendent nudity identify her as Venus, and her pose suggests the very specific canon of the "Venus Victrix," a Roman iteration of Aphrodite whose form was often co-opted for representations of historical figures, as in Antonio Canova's marble depiction of Pauline Bonaparte (the younger sister of the French Emperor). This medal's female figure, like her counterpart on the medal's face, holds the tools designated for a male god, one of the many *Potamoi*, or local gods specific to individual rivers. By depicting goddesses with the practical tools of gods, the medal's two faces suggest that the labor of the workers receiving these tokens is made sublime and attributed to forces greater than those exerted by any individual worker.

Figure II
Medal, probably for the mass market (1889); bronze alloy; 2.48" diameter (6.3 cm)
Inscription: Front "Exposition Universelle 1889", "Louis Bottée"; Back "République Française" "Louis Bottée" "Sociétés des Spécialistes Mécaniques"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

I did not fully understand why this re-assignment of the workers' tools and labor to goddesses was particularly significant until I read Deborah Silverman's analysis of another, less rare and far more literal commemorative medal for the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* designed by Louis Bottée (*Figure II*). She referenced an illustration of the medal as a piece "to affirm the apotheosis of liberalism" (71) and described it as displaying "the prefiguration of the new world," with "the Marianne of the Republic bestow[ing] her garment on *Homo Faber,* man the maker, who [sits] amidst his tools and point[s] to the Exhibition, as the rays of the sun of a constructed technological world [rise] on the horizon" (72). I was able to find this medal, which seemed to be publicly available[44], in museum collections, and their understanding of the female figure differs

[44] Copies of this medal that I found bore engravings for all manner of individuals and organizations. My copy reads "Sociétés des Spécialités Mécaniques," the copy at the Musée national de l'Éducation reads "François Bigot" who was an "instituteur" of no particular renown ("Médaille de l'Exposition"), the Musée Carnavalet and Victoria &

significantly from Silverman's: the Musée national de l'Éducation's copy is documented as bearing a female "allégorie de la Paix"[45] ("Médaille de l'Exposition"), while the Musée Carnavalet's notice calls her "Minerve" ("Récompense de l'Exposition") and the Victoria & Albert Museum agrees that she is "Minerva" ("Paris International Exhibition of 1889"). Examining my copy of the medal closely, it seems that her identity is deliberately syncretic, for while the Musée Carnavalet correctly identifies that she wears "un pectoral orné d'une tête de Méduse," her hat is atypical of the warlike depiction of Minerva having conquered the Gorgons; what we see instead on this medal is a simple, pointed crown backed by a more fluidly draped portion whose folded tip suggests a Phrygian cap, albeit adorned with extra side-flaps that fly up in the wind. In most Greco-Roman statuary and numismatic art, while Athena's helmet does pitch forward, it is typically rigid and topped with a comb of feathers. This fluid treatment of the top of the helmet *could* suggest feathers[46], but the high degree of realism in the rest of the medal suggests that the ambiguous treatment of the peak of her headdress is intentional. Furthermore, the parallel with the large bust on the back of the medal, a much more classic depiction of *La Marianne*, is clear: while this second Phrygian-capped female head is crowned with laurels instead of a more bellicose metal crown, the drape of her cape and, most notably, the side flaps spilling over her ears and onto her shoulders

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Albert copies are blank ("Récompense de l'Exposition"; Paris International Exhibition of 1889), and copies I found for online auction bore names in Portuguese and one-name nicknames. This diverse grouping of engraved names suggests that the medal was not specifically awarded in any way, but likely available for purchase.

[45] This museum likely identified the figure as "La Paix" due to the very faint banner reading "Pax" underneath the female figure's left arm. However, the rest of the figure's adornments do not support this identification. Furthermore, in the following footnote, I explain how this designation may have even been a confusion between a pair of statues.

[46] Or even wings, as in the case of the goddess Gallia. However, Gallia is nearly always depicted with a metallic helmet, not a Phrygian cap.

establishes a comparison with the figure at the front, whose headdress bears billowing flaps on either side of her face. The only art historical precedent I could find for this exact headdress is a statue on the Southern side of the façade of the Grand Palais entitled "Minerve protégeant les arts," by Raoul Verlet. However, this work was not realized until 1900 ("Les Sculpteurs du Grand Palais")[47]. Regardless, this particular Minerva appears to be styled after *la Marianne*, and the fact that she adorns a medal for the *Exposition de 1889* and a *Palais* for the *Exposition de 1900* suggests that she is a specifically *French* recasting of Minerva, particularly claimed in the cases of grand events on the world stage.

The question of whether this figure is Minerva or Marianne becomes more important when we consider that the male figure, lacking in all adornment but a simplistic apron and an ensemble of ironwork tools in his hand and serving as his seat (again, we see the anvil-as-seat), is not subject to debate. Only Silverman calls him anything more than "un homme" or "un ouvrier," but her designation of this figure as "Homo Faber" does not have any apparent antecedents in visual culture, making it far more likely that she, however unwittingly, sought to elevate this humble figure in the face of a female fusion of a goddess and the personification of the *République*. While Silverman and the museum notices all take care to note that this masculine figure is nonetheless about to be crowned with laurels, the body language of the figure is ultimately more important for decoding this interaction. The male figure smiles and looks adoringly at the female figure crowning him, but it is nonetheless clear that he is subservient to her: he is not merely lowering his head to be crowned, but indeed he bends

[47] This statue's Northern counterpart on the façade is "La Paix," another female figure wearing a Phrygian cap. It is possible that this is where the Musée national de l'Éducation got confused in designating the figure on the Bottée medal as "La Paix" when they may have meant "Minerve" ("Les Sculpteurs du Grand Palais").

at the waist and drapes his hands, affecting a bow or a genuflection even as he is seated. Furthermore, his left hand dangling low and pointing to the *Exposition* park suggests that in bowing, he dedicates his hard work to the goddess who is crowning him.

It is in considering the two medals — the medal given to the workers and the Minerva/Marianne medal — together that the true aims of these figures emerge. Though "the worker" is honored — whether in the physical act of his being bestowed with a medal by the Paris Conseil municipal or the metaphorical act of his being crowned with laurels by a divine female figure — the medals suggest that his work is ultimately absorbed by others, his authorship disappearing in the process. Depicting Fortuna and Venus as endowed with the earthly tools of the worker (indeed both Fortuna and the male figure hold hammers and sit on anvils) and showing the worker as dedicating his labor to a goddess, demonstrates how, even as the workers' labor was acknowledged in their recompense and in a medal made publicly available, it was deliberately subsumed by a greater narrative of the accomplishments of the *République* on the occasion of the *Exposition de 1889*. While there was textual and material acknowledgement of the indispensable role of the worker in realizing the Eiffel Tower and the *Exposition*, his contribution was ultimately devalued in favor of showing how it was divine inspiration — goddesses literally equipped with tools — that ultimately led to the glory of their constructions.

Figure III
August Rodin's "La Tour du Travail" (1898-1899)
Plaster
Musée Rodin

Auguste Rodin recognized this tendency to subsume the worker, and, in trying to remedy it, made a gesture in his *Tour du Travail* that was even more out-of-touch with

what the workers actually achieved. In 1898, the sculptor, disturbed by what he saw as the fin-de-siècle triumph of the engineer in the artistic realm, presented a maquette of a new monument (*Figure III*), which his 1906 biographer Frederick Lawton described as a work to be "erected in some square — the Champ de Mars, for instance — where it might with advantage replace the Eiffel Tower" and be executed "in a manner worthy of the sculptor and his genius, [by] a band of skilled coadjutors…[with considerable] expenses in stone, marble and bronze" (116). The extravagance and expense of this would-be Eiffel Tower replacement presented only one of its dilemmas in getting off the ground, for artist and critic Armand Dayot devised the idea of such a project "as early as 1894, hoping for its realization at least in the plaster-model stage for the 1900 *Exposition Universelle*" and pitched it, in vain, to an imagined cohort of collaborators including "Jean Baffler, Camille Claudel, [Aimeé-Jules] Dalou, Jules Desbois, Jean-Alexandre Falguière, [Constantin] Meunier[48], and Rodin" (Elsen 144). Only August Rodin answered the call to "show the new tendencies in collaborations between architects and sculptors" and restore primacy to the worker — an "apotheosis of work" and "the glory of human effort" — in the new world overtaken by engineers and their machines, and even then not until after Dayot published an open letter in *Le Journal* on March 21, 1898 to persuade him (Elsen 144). Finally wooed to the project, Rodin picked up where Dayot left off, co-

[48] Albert E. Elsen writes that "[b]oth Meunier and Dalou already had their own dreams of monuments to laborers," referring to Constantin Meunier's *Monument au Travail*, a sculptural ensemble not fully realized until 1930 in Brussels, and Aimé-Jules Dalou's unrealized *Monument aux Travailleurs (Monument aux Ouvriers),* of which only drafts, including the *Grand Paysan (*circa 1897-1902; Musée d'Orsay) came to fruition (144). Both monument-ideas are far more contemporary-minded than Rodin's work, depicting workers in nineteenth-century working clothes equipped with modern tools rather than a classical allegory as in "La Tour du Travail."

opting the latter's "spiral of bas-reliefs rising from a pedestal to the summit" and producing a maquette that the writer Gabriel Mourey, an important fundraiser for *Le Penseur*, was the first to see. In the September 8, 1898 edition of *L'Écho de Paris*, he compared it favorably to other would-be didactic columns, positing that "Une colonne, comme la colonne Trajane ou la colonne Vendôme, a pour elle la noblesse et la beauté de l'ensemble, mais qui donc a jamais vu les bas-reliefs qui s'enroulent autour d'elle?" and contending that the *Tour du travail* remedied this by placing "autour de cette colonne un chemin en spirale d'où la vue pourrait aisément contempler les sujets qui la décorent" (2). Mourey's observation acted as proof-of-concept for Rodin's philosophy for the design:

> S'il y a quelque enseignement à tirer d'un monument consacré à la gloire du Travail…il faut que chaque partie en soit visible; il faut que ce monument, après avoir étonné et attiré le regard par son ensemble, satisfasse par chacun de ses détails la curiosité qu'il contient (2).

While we know that it was largely a lack of funds — and, most likely, the fantasy of placing something new on the *Champ de Mars* — that sunk Rodin's idea[49], it also seems that it was the sculptor's failure to live up to his own didactic mission that doomed the project. Though Mourey critiqued Trajan's column and the *Colonne Vendôme* for their illegible bas-reliefs, on the maquette of *La Tour du travail*, Rodin's signature gestural style presents an even greater challenge to the would-be visitor's understanding. Even seeing the maquette in-person did not give me much more clarity as to what kinds of workers were depicted, for the spiral design only augments the dizzying motion of the

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[49] This financial failure occurred in spite of the best efforts of a dedicated cohort of boosters, including the dancer Loïe Fuller, who launched a charm offensive in the United States. The maquette was shown at the National Arts Club of New York in 1903, Rodin wrote personally to Andrew Carnegie in 1906, and the *New York Times* reported on Armanda Dayot's campaign on August 25, 1907, but all promotional efforts ended in failure (Elsen 146; "Monument to Work…").

shallowly molded figures (Figure IV). Only the legend, carved into the back of the maquette itself (Figure V), offered any concrete detail as to what *kind* of work the figures were to be performing, stating that this was a

> Projet d'Un Monument Au Travail Dans La Crypte Les Mineurs Les Scaphandriers/ Autour De La Porte, Le jour Et LA Nuit Et Autour De La Colonne Les Métiers Les Maçons Charpentiers Forgerons Menuisiers Potiers Etc. Etc. En Costume DE L'Époque / En Haut Les Bénédictions viennent Du Ciel/ On A Essayé DE Rappeler La Ruche Et Le Phare.

The same, idiosyncratic sculptural style that made sensations out of two projects Rodin's atelier was developing at the same moment, the sensational chaos of *La Porte de l'Enfer* (finished circa 1890) and the poignant caricature of *Monument à Balzac* (finished circa 1897), fails to impart the same style and meaning for *La Tour du travail*. One gets the sense that the figures of the workers were not a priority when looking at the indistinct swirling forms, and this is borne out by the likelihood that Rodin himself probably only sculpted *Les Bénédictions*, *Le Jour*, and *La Nuit*, whose preparatory sketches are even then only dubiously attributable to the sculptor, with many suspecting they were in fact outsourced to a collaborator, the architect Henri Nenot (Elsen 144). The material proof of the maquette suggests that Rodin was interested in creating a more allegorical, symbolic ode to the worker, whose centering of divine figures is not unlike that of the two medals discussed earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, his plan valorizes intellectual work over physical labor. Biographer of *The Last Years of Rodin* Louis Tirel quoted the artist as stating that the column, "instead of recording historical events, will take us simply through the stages of the work of the human race" (113). The ascending structure of the monument can thus be read as a contention that the miners and divers in the "basement" of the Tower and even the masons, carpenters, blacksmiths ascending the column

represented literally lower, inferior stages in the progression of the human race. This becomes particularly stark compared to the summit of the monument, *Les Bénédictions*, which provides the divine inspiration that would presumably inspire the highest kind of work to which that Rodin himself was dedicated. Indeed, when interviewed by *The New York Times* about the monument, Rodin called himself a worker, stating that "[I] always return [to my studio] feeling that life can offer no greater satisfaction than work" and he even intended to use the piece as his tomb, making provisions to be buried in the sub-basement ("Monument to Work…"). *La Tour du travail*, though rhetorically positioned as a project championing the value of handwork in the era of mechanization, ultimately became something just as anonymizing as the Eiffel Tower it sought to replace.

Figure IV
Shallow, nearly indiscernible figures on Auguste Rodin's maquette of "La Tour du Travail" (1898-1899)
Musée Rodin
Photo by Damien Lieber

Figure V

Descriptive inscription on Auguste Rodin's maquette of "La Tour du Travail" (1898-1899)

Musée Rodin

Photo by Damien Lieber

Figure VI
Medal, probably for the mass market, by Alexandre Charpentier (1889); bronze; 1.61" diameter (4.1 cm)
Inscription: Front "Sommet de la Tour Eiffel / Souvenir de L'Ascension
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

Luckily for the memory of the workers' contribution in historical record, two artistic representations, a third medal and a block print, succeeded where Rodin had largely failed, elevating the role of the worker to that of constructor-author of the Eiffel Tower. Alexandre Charpentier, a medalist, sculptor, and furniture-maker of working-class origins[50], appears to have had particular empathy for the experience of his fellow metalworkers, depicting them as individuals central to the making of the Tower ("Alexandre Charpentier: Biography"; *Figure VI*). Even the commission for Charpentier's work seems to reflect his identity and artistic vision as an everyman: the medal, much smaller in size than those official medals discussed previously in this chapter, is an example of a publicly available "Souvenir de l'Ascension" reserved for the "Sommet de la Tour Eiffel." Charpentier's contribution appears to have been a later

[50] Indeed his background was so disadvantaged that his lack of elementary education forced him to drop out of the École de Beaux-Arts sculpture program ("Alexandre Charpentier).

rendition of the Tower souvenir, for the Musée d'Orsay dates its sterling silver copy to 1893 even though its beam bears an inscription of "1889" ("Alexandre Charpentier: Sommet de la Tour"), and the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya's copy, also in silver, bears an inscription of "1900" ("Eiffel Tower"). Because my medal has no particular inscription on the beam, it is even possible that this medal was used as a souvenir object between the two *Expositions Universelles* as well as through the end of the 1900 fair. While the side of the medal indicating its souvenir status presents what would then be a relatively common depiction of the Eiffel Tower's summit overlaying the Parisian cityscape, the far more unique face displaying the workers is accorded greater importance by the increased height of the bas-relief and the semi-photographic composition of the subjects covering the entire frame. The artist's choice to foreground the workers on something as pedestrian as a mass souvenir object gives voice to two radical whispers. First, depicting the workers with relatively-idealized nude torsos — when photographic evidence that I will discuss shortly suggests workers were likely always fully clothed at the chilling altitude — immediately recalls Gustave Caillebotte's 1875 oil painting *Les raboteurs de parquet*. Although the painting was quickly acquired by the Musée du Luxembourg in 1896, following Caillebotte's death, when the painter sought to present the work at the 1875 *Salon*, the jury rejected it and critics even called it a "sujet vulgaire" as it was one of the first known depictions of the "prolétariat urbain" ("Gustave Caillebotte…"). That Alexandre Charpentier, who had also been rejected by the artistic establishment[51], chose to place a kindred scene of workers on the ultra-public platform of

[51] Please see the previous footnote regarding Charpentier's rejection from the École de Beaux-Arts. The rejection of Caillebotte's painting would have occurred during

a souvenir medal indicates not only that attitudes towards workers in art had evolved, but that the definition of "art" itself was changing; this decorative object was not for the consumption of an elite jury but instead for the masses to take home and metabolize as part of their experience with another popular work, the Eiffel Tower itself. The second radical implication of Charpentier's artistic choices for the medal is in his rendering the specific as universal in order to cultivate empathy for the workers in each consumer of the medal. Even though the torsos of the workers are idealized, treated almost like classical statuary, the two visible faces of the figures are quite idiosyncratic. The profile of the crouching figure on the left displays a large, pointed nose and a meticulously waxed *Belle Époque* moustache, twirled to a fine point. Though his colleague, the central figure, also has a moustache and even a similar haircut, the points of his moustache are downturned and not as articulated, and his nose is altogether smaller, with a more rounded tip. The detail of these facial features invites the viewer to imagine these workers not simply as cogs in the Eiffel Tower-building machine, but as individuals who look like people one might know — or even oneself. It is in this manner that Charpentier suggests empathy to medal purchasers: these faces could belong to people you love and even look back at you in the mirror. Transitively, this suggests that you too could have built such a colossus of engineering. The medal urges those who behold it to consider that people just like them shaped the monument named for just one man, and, in continuing to ascend it and incorporate it into their own "souvenirs," each visitor had that same power.

Charpentier's training at the school, and it is possible that he would have seen it when it was exhibited in 1876 alongside Degas's *Repasseuses* ("Les raboteurs…").

Figure VII
The second of Henri Rivière's "vues de la Tour Eiffel," "Les Chantiers de la Tour Eiffel" (1902)
Lithograph on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

While Charpentier's medal inserted the Eiffel Tower worker into the visual vocabulary of the masses, painter and printer Henri Rivière entered their likenesses in the canon of fine art. Rivière's *Trente-six vues de la Tour Eiffel*, a limited-edition book of lithographs, dedicates no less than four of the thirty-six views to scenes depicting workers. Much like Charpentier, Rivière came from humble beginnings, making his name not through the *École de Beaux-Arts* but through his design of exquisite shadow-puppet shows at the Chat Noir ("Biographie…"). His four plates dedicated to workers, much like his *vues privilégiées* of Montmartre, attest to something beyond even empathy for the workers; the artist, in imbuing the scenes with his own personal experience as a fly-on-

the-wall during the Eiffel Tower's rise, elevates them to an essential part of urban life in Paris in 1887-1889 with an indispensable role in creating the city's new skyline. In her annotated edition of the *Trente-six Vues*, Aya Louisa McDonald writes that in his worker scenes, "Rivière attire l'attention sur le travailleur ordinaire, non sur les cadres ou les assistants d'Eiffel qui parcouraient le chantier dans d'élégantes tenues de travail, ni sur le grand ingénieur lui-même" (20). I would argue Rivière goes even further, insisting on each small worker's individuality and indispensable part to play in the Tower's construction and discourse.

The first time we see the workers in Rivière's plates sets the stage for their appearances throughout in capturing a particularly radical moment of possible labor unrest, since the workers are not actively working (*Figure VII*). In the forthcoming plates, we see the workers actively constructing the Tower, but here in "Les Chantiers de la Tour Eiffel" workers dressed for winter in front of a scarcely-begun iron construction seem to be idling, even socializing. McDonald posits that while it is possible that this is merely "l'heure de cesser le travail," the scene seems likely to pay homage to the workers' first strike for increased wages as the Tower rose to new heights in September 1888 (20). While McDonald hypothesizes that the plate itself depicts the beginning of the strike, depicting "l'atmosphère de malaise et d'indécision" in a moment that is nonetheless "étrangement paisible," the state of construction on the Tower, showing only the beginning of the rise of its pylons, does not match photographs taken in September 1888, at which point the first and second floors of the Tower were complete (20). A British Foreign Office report documenting many other strikes in Paris that year offers one of the most detailed descriptions of the stakes of the September strike:

> [T]here [were] 150 men at these works; they struck on the 19th ult. [*sic*] for an advance of 20 [centimes] an hour. They were reminded that rivetters [*sic*] already earned 70 c…and mounters 80 c… per hour at the Tower, whilst the average rates elsewhere were 55 c. and 60c…and that under these circumstances no advance could be conceded. Promise, however, was made from September 1 to November 1 that three successive increases of ½ [British Pound] an hour would be given to make up the loss naturally caused by shorter working days. The men accepted these terms at once, and the strike ended. (6)

The peace was short-lived, with workers mounting a second — and final — strike for increased pay in late December 1888, when the Tower was even higher and temperatures even lower. This strike was also considerably uglier, with *La Petite Presse* reporting on December 23, 1888 that "A l'heure du repas plusieurs ouvriers…ont été assaillis par les grévistes, qui voulaient renverser le vin et la nourriture qu'ils portaient" and only stopped when the third floor workers came to the rescue (3). While the first strike, possibly depicted by Rivière, was characterized by stillness, the second gave way to a literal food-fight, full of emotion and centered on the most basic of needs: one of the main conditions for ending the strike, aside from an augmentation in the rate of pay for the higher floors, was the construction of a second *cantine*, selling food for reduced prices at the higher levels and catering mostly to bachelor workers, who would not be able to "[prendre] leur repas chez eux" with wives and, moreover, did not want to make "l'ascension et la descente du second étage [qui] durent vingt-cinq minutes" since the elevators were not yet installed ("À La Tour Eiffel" 2). Rivière's choice to favor a more immobile, less messy version of labor unrest in his lithograph could then be viewed as yet another elision of the workers' own perspectives. However, the placement of this image in the whole of the *Trente-six vues* ultimately does the workers more justice than any other public-facing work at the time.

Because Rivière's plate matches neither chronological moment exactly, it seems

he may have chosen to display a moment of stillness to remind the viewer of the strikes less literally and more symbolically, suggesting that we must remember that, without this corps of workers, there would be no Tower. This allusion to more than just the isolated moment that Rivière depicts becomes even more important when we consider that it serves as the frontispiece — coming, indeed, just after the fantastical first place, the "Frontispiece" of the Tower peeking through the clouds — for the literal snapshots of workers that follow. When he started his project in the 1880s, Henri Rivière was a true pioneer in that he used nascent consumer photography as references for his paintings that would become the printed plates. Using the new technology, Rivière could quickly generate photographic "studies" for his work[52] and therefore conduct observations of the dangerous circumstances of the rising Tower from a safer distance and over a shorter, less perilous duration of time. While the fourth plate, "En haut de la Tour" (*Figure VIII*) and the thirtieth plate, "Ouvrier plombier dans la Tour" (*Figure IX*) are nearly exact copies of their photographic studies[53] (benefitting only from the addition of a bellows to highlight the presence of the riveters and a slight shift in the figure's position, respectively), the thirty-sixth plate's deviations from the photograph make it the most poignant of Rivière's documentary efforts. The final plate, "Le peintre dans la tour" makes subtle but substantive changes to Rivière's photograph (*Figure X*). While the

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[52] While these photographs are indeed extant, they do not appear to have circulated, functioning more as the artist's newfangled "sketchbook" and putting the lithographic representations forward. Although photographs allowed Rivière to quickly "sketch" what he saw at forbidding heights, his choice to favor the less avant-garde medium of lithography is ultimately part of what delayed the *Trente-six vues*' publication until 1902, which some critics thought missed the wave of Eiffeliana for the 1889 and indeed even the 1900 fair (McDonald 5).

[53] The twenty-fifth plate "Dans la Tour" is also based on photography, but its depiction of the city through the crossed beams of the Tower does not depict any workers.

photograph, whether through the constraints of the medium or the weather conditions of the day, shows a hazy sky, Rivière's lithograph displays what McDonald calls "[l]es derniers rayons du couchant [qui] ont une tonalité d'adieu qui ne trompe pas" (88). Furthermore, she posits that choosing this as a final plate demonstrates Rivière's desire to have "un dernier retour en arrière" to look back on the years he spent on the project, and even to make "un autoportrait" from the "silhouette éloignée du peintre" (88). While this is of course a possibility, I read the artistic and paratextual choices of this final plate differently. That Rivière begins[54] and ends his *Trente-six vues* of a monument with plates depicting workers makes a powerful statement that, though the Eiffel Tower is nominally the subject of the series, Rivière wants us to remember and focus on the human element of the Tower as a critical part of his aesthetic exploration. Beyond creating McDonald's "autoportrait," he seems to be employing the opposite technique of Charpentier's medal but to the same end: in rendering the worker in silhouette, Rivière allows the viewer to more readily imagine themselves or someone they know in the role of the laborer and recognize the impact of multitudes of hands on the structure. Certainly, this could be viewed as a form of erasing the individuality of the worker in favor of a silhouette, but the bookending of the lithographs with the strike as the first plate and this single worker as the last suggests the opposite. In this final ode to the worker, Rivière gives the ultimate

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54 The "Frontispice" is, of course, first in the series of plates. However, I interpret this less as a prioritization of this fantastical view of the Tower and more an attempt at creating a shared artistic vocabulary. This plate not only establishes the Eiffel Tower as the subject of the series, but is a direct formal homage to Hoshige and Hokusai's *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, the works in Japanese block prints that inspired Henri Rivière. Because of the fervor for *japonisme* from a culture freshly opened to the Western world at the turn of the century, and the enthusiasm for *ukiyo-e* block prints in particular, it is very likely that many viewers would recognize the style of the frontispiece if not the precedent composition itself.

credence to the demands of the 1888 strike by acknowledging the laborer as a physical being made to contend with "la rude période d'hiver," unprecedented heights, delays in mealtimes due to ascent and descent, and, perhaps most poignantly of all in this final plate, the dual dangers of extreme physical conditions and mental solitude (*Le Matin* 1). He also, in depicting a man alone, acknowledges the role of the worker-as-artist and even as a key thinker behind the Eiffel Tower. In his *Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin suggests that "just as the magnificent vistas of the city provided by the new construction in iron…for a long time were reserved exclusively for the workers and engineers, so too the philosopher who wishes here to garner fresh perspectives must be someone immune to vertigo — an independent, and, if need be, solitary worker" (459). Rivière's choice to show a lone man beholden to the extreme physical conditions, including "vertigo," in such a symbolic, interpretive way separates the individual worker from the labor corps and finishes the *Trente-six vues* by insisting on his personhood and all that he deserves.

Lastly, while it is of course probable that Rivière ended his series with a painter because he was a painter himself, it is also important that, in his proximity to the Tower workers and the process of constructing the Tower, Rivière almost undoubtedly would have learned that the Tower would need to be repainted regularly in order to preserve its puddled iron beams[55] ("La peinture…"). Therefore, the sunset Rivière has added on to the photographic study is less an epilogue and more a suggestion that the work of this silhouetted everyman figure — and the work of all beholders of the Tower — never ends,

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[55] In *La Tour de 300 mètres,* Gustave Eiffel writes, "On ne saurait trop se pénétrer du principe que la peinture est l'élément essentiel de la conservation d'un ouvrage métallique et que les soins qui y sont apportés sont la seule garantie de sa durée" (222). Indeed, the Tower has been repainted ninety-three times since its construction and there is a significant photographic history of workers in the process of repainting ("La peinture…").

subjecting the Tower to successive interventions by multitudes of hands, paintbrushes, pens, and imaginations.

Figure VIII
The fourth of Henri Rivière's "vues de la Tour Eiffel," "En haut de la tour" (1902)
Lithograph on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

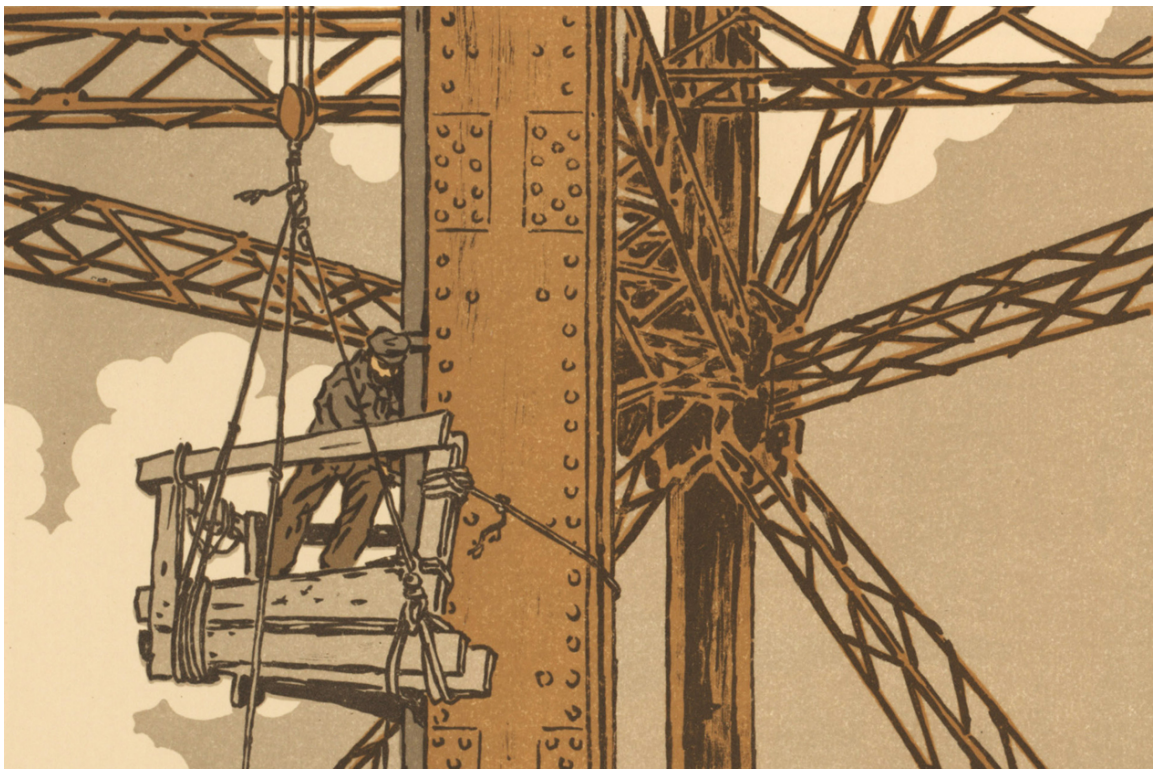

Figure IX
The thirtieth of Henri Rivière's "vues de la Tour Eiffel," "Ouvrier plombier dans la tour" (1902)
Lithograph on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Figure X
The thirty-sixth of Henri Rivière's "vues de la Tour Eiffel," "Le Peintre dans la tour"
Lithograph on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Ultimately, contemporaneous depictions of the Eiffel Tower worker sought to amplify the traces of labor in a modern marvel whose technological innovation and national symbolic importance nearly erased their handiwork. While medals given to long-term "faithful" Tower workers and sold to visitors of the *Exposition,* and even Rodin's proposed monumental *Tour du travail* attempted to re-center the worker, they perhaps inadvertently even further forged the narratives they sought to dismantle. By depicting workers as subservient to and even replaced by goddesses, these objects proffer an alternate narrative, recasting the work of hundreds of hands into the hand of a divinely-inspired Gustave Eiffel who worked for the glory of the Third Republic. The failure of these representations to assert the identity and unique material contributions of the worker, even with the best of intentions, makes the success of Alexandre Charpentier's

medal and Henri Rivière's block prints even more notable. In these small pockets of material counter-narratives, the threat of an individualistic, empowered worker held onto the threat of destabilizing the new Third Republic government through labor unrest even as the actual Eiffel Tower strike had been neutralized. Giving the worker a true, non-idealized face — in both the literal and figurative sense — produces not just one, State-sanctioned narrative of the Tower, but a plurality of individual narratives told in each worker's hands-on contribution to the modern marvel.

Restoring Alsace-Lorraine via a Restaurant

After the Eiffel Tower was completed, another kind of worker labored inside who has been even more forgotten: the waitress-cum-actress of the *brasserie alsacienne*. When a guest in the cavernous timber-framed room on the second floor became too rowdy, Adolphe Retté recounted a very revealing scene:

> Ces demoiselles entendent à merveille le français, — J'en veux pour preuve celle-ci qui, à un Monsieur l'interpellant dans un allemand…et lui pinçant le bras, répondit fort proprement : « F…donnez-moi la paix, animal ! » — et ce pur accent montmartrois ! (39-40)

The waitress, wearing the traditional Alsatian folk costume with its enormous black bow headdress was, in fact, a kind of actress hailing from Montmartre. She was one player in a burgeoning new scene of "*brasseries à femmes,*" which Susanna Barrows describes as a hot new trend: "by the late 1880s, literally hundreds of cafés offered their customers libations tendered by nubile young women in exotic attire" who might be dressed as "nursemaids…[or] fetching *paysannes* who could be seen milking a cow inside the brasserie every night at ten" (24-5). These establishments catered to various male fantasies to such an extent that the police became involved, raiding *brasseries* whose staff's costumes indecently bared their arms, legs, and *décolletage* (Barrows 24). The

customer in Retté's account of the Alsatian restaurant had perhaps become accustomed to the lubricious atmosphere of such establishments outside of the Eiffel Tower and the *Exposition* and thus invited himself to pinch the woman in the anecdote.

If her physical situation was suffocating, however, the Alsatian waitress's symbolic situation was even more fraught. The Alsatian waitress's sexuality and emotional appeal to guests was an integral thread in the *mise-en-scène* of the Eiffel Tower restaurant's weaving of an unofficial *revanchiste* narrative of the lost territory of Alsace-Lorraine. Much like the Tower laborers themselves, her individuality (which in this moment had escaped during the confrontation by an unruly patron) was glossed over in favor of instrumentalizing her attractiveness for political gain.

The 1889 *Exposition Universelle*'s timing was critical — and ultimately ideal — for France's politics at home and abroad in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War and the resultant loss of Alsace-Lorraine. Wolfram Kaiser writes that "all French [world's fairs…] were planned years in advance [and coincidentally] took place at times of domestic or external crises," which unwittingly made them decisive political tools (229). As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, in 1889 France was reeling not only from the Boulanger crisis of the previous four years and the transition from autocracy to democracy only nineteen years prior, but also from the continued fallout of the Franco-Prussian War. Although the 1878 *Exposition Universelle* — already the third world's fair held in Paris — already granted France the opportunity to show the world that Paris had overcome the scars of Prussian invasion and the Paris Commune, the constitutional crisis of 1877 loomed heavily over the proceedings and truncated the planning of the fair. The *Exposition* was ultimately a success in its showcasing of the peaceful, albeit fraught,

transition of power between the outgoing President Patrice de Mac Mahon, whose monarchism and favor of a strong presidency ultimately succumbed to the parliamentary system, and his replacement, Republican Jules Grévy, but the still-new Republic, though reveling in its "final victory," could not truly flex its wings in the safety of republicanism until the next international exhibition event (Kaiser 229). Though the *revanchards* gained a foothold at the 1878 fair via an exhibition for people from Alsace-Lorraine who defected to Algeria[56] and the singing of "Vive la France!," a song by chief *revanchard* Paul Déroulède, there was no overt metabolism of the trauma of the loss of Alsace-Lorraine until the 1889 fair (Bennett).

However, at the exact moment in time when the Tower restaurant was established, official *Revanche* politics were neither particularly popular nor politically advantageous. Though the founder of the ultra-nationalist, *revanchard* party the *Ligue des patriotes*, Paul Déroulède, was elected to the *Chambre des députés* in 1889's *boulangiste* wave, his fellow adherents were reeling from the General Boulanger's loss of the presidency and refusal to mount a coup against his newly-elected opponents. Without the full complement of *boulangiste* adherents to the *Revanche* movement,[57] the new government,

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[56] Directly behind the Algerian pavilion at the 1878 *Exposition* was an exhibition dedicated to refugees who went Algeria over assimilation with Germany — and over moving to another part of France — in the wake of the Treaty of Frankfurt in 1871 (Minozzi). The *Société de Protection des Alsaciens Lorrains Demeurés Français* displayed territories granted to them in the colony, with emphasis on the villages of Hanssonvillers and Bacckhalfa (Marthot). These "optants" who opted to stay French but leave the *métropole* were given free land in exchange for their becoming *pieds noirs* in early colonial Algeria. However, they needed to have a sufficient amount of money already so that their debts "ne tombent pas à la charge de l'administration locale," making the choice to defect an appealing but still somewhat exclusive option ("Les Émigrations des Alsaciens-Lorrains…").

[57] It is vital not to conflate the two: General Boulanger himself conspicuously avoided mentions of the *Revanche* even as he was generally a war hawk (Joly 332).

even with Déroulède finally elected after years of effort[58], lacked a mandate to exact revenge on Germany and take back Alsace-Lorraine. Bertrand Joly writes, "En réalité, pour la Revanche comme dans d'autres domaines, les ministres ont mené la politique souhaitée par le pays. Les Français, dans leur écrasante majorité ne veulent pas la guerre" (329). Because it was further war, not the retaking of Alsace-Lorraine that the public opposed, however, Joly contends that "[d]e 1871 à 1914, la France ne veut ni faire guerre ni tourner la page [;] elle veut la Revanche sans la guerre, ce qui est impossible, ou lègue la Revanche à faire aux générations futures, *sine die*" (335). This sort of impossible desire to have the *Revanche* cake and eat it without another war came out in a general affinity for the trappings of Alsace-Lorraine after the Republicans took power in 1879. Joly describes "une floraison remarquable de romans, de chansons, et d'images sur l'Alsace-Lorraine" without as much political bite as the *Ligue des patriotes* and other such overt *revanchard* initiatives (327). While it would be very difficult to establish that the sudden appearance of the Alsatian restaurant was overtly connected to the *Revanche*[59] (especially given its unannounced replacement of a planned Flemish establishment, which I will describe shortly), it is very likely that it fell under the surface-level, non-

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[58] Déroulède came closest to mainstreaming the *Revanche* when, as a commissioner for Léon Gambetta's short-lived government in 1881, he "developed ambitious plans for using paintings and sculptures in a program of national patriotic education," notably including works by his *Ligue de patriotes* cofounder Alphonse de Neuville that depicted "German mistreatment of innocent Alsatian civilians" (Thomson 154-5).

[59] The most compelling connection I have been able to find between Paul Déroulède and Gustave Eiffel is an infamous duel Déroulède provoked and fought with Georges Clemenceau in December 1892, after accusing the latter of corruption in the Panama Canal affair. Gustave Eiffel was notably fined and nearly imprisoned for his own embroilment in the affair as one of the Canal's engineers, though he was later acquitted. This does not prove that the two men knew each other or shared *revanchard* sentiments, despite Gustave Eiffel's contention that the shame of losing the Prussian War partially animated his desire to construct the Tower, which I discuss in the introduction to this Chapter.

bellicose *revanchisme* that Joly described: the presence of the restaurant in the Tower was not a call to action for the retaking of Alsace-Lorraine but instead a charm offensive seeking to remind the *Exposition* visitors just how compelling the culture of Alsace-Lorraine was and how someday, perhaps, it ought to be French again[60].

Before discussing the particularities of this restaurant, it is essential to specify that while it was billed as a "brasserie alsacienne-lorraine," it was ultimately an Alsatian establishment. While this is mostly manifest in the material presentation of the restaurant, there are two important underlying political concepts that shape the endeavor. First, "Alsace-Lorraine" in the hyphenate was a post- Prussian War concept that ultimately amounted to abstract, wishful thinking on the part of the German conquerors (and a useful all-in-one label for France to refer to the loss). Detmar Klein observes that "Alsatians and Lorrainers hardly had anything in common …in French times there had never been any administrative links between them" and, perhaps most importantly, while Lorraine was dominated by French speakers, the majority of the population of Alsace spoke not only their native Germanic dialect of Alsatian but High German, a closely

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[60] Interestingly, the October 13, 1889 edition of *Le Petit Parisien,* fronted by a full-page image of families watching pigeons be released from the first floor of the Eiffel Tower, bookends the description of this event with discussion of Alsace-Lorraine. After describing the release of the pigeons and the way the Tower was illuminated at night, putting its flag in stark display, writer Jacques LeFranc uses the next section of his "Courrier de la Semaine" to recount, "Ce n'est point seulement là où il flotte qu'on l'aime, notre drapeau: on lui est fidèle sur le sol même d'où on l'a arraché" (2). LeFranc then recounts a story wherein a German schoolteacher in Alsace-Lorraine asks a pupil to locate France on a map, and the boy instead proceeds to "frappe sur sa petite poitrine, à la place du cœur, d'une main ferme: — Tenez, la France, elle est là!" (2). Pairing the story of happy children with the parents watching pigeons from atop the Eiffel Tower, a newly-minted symbol of France, with the bittersweet anecdote of a little French loyalist in German Alsace-Lorraine is a great illustration of the kind of soft-pedaled, non-violent *revanchisme* that was percolating in the decades immediately after the loss of the territories.

related language (94). The manifestation of the restaurant as almost purely Alsatian is notable in that it illuminates how the thinking of the German conqueror had permeated French imagination of the lost territories.

Whisked away from the iron-framed view of Paris, guests to the first-floor restaurant would enter a cavernous hall replete with woodwork and surmounted by the classic Alsatian exposed beams on plaster. The old-fashioned atmosphere would have been a sharp departure from the modernity of the Tower itself, as warm as the Tower seemed cold, as rustic as the iron beams seemed modern. An engraving of the *brasserie* published in Henri de Parville's official guide to the *Exposition Universelle* also shows that the space was probably also warm in temperature, with close-seated, full tables that seemed to promote touching elbows and inebriated *bonhomie* (Parville 420; *Figure XI*). The *pièce de résistance* was the irresistible waitresses, brought in to recall the *brasseries à femmes* but more potently still, to put a crescendo on a unified statement of an inviting Alsace that felt like home — like France.

Yet, though the establishment materially presented as a "*brasserie alsacienne*" making a stab at a cultural claim to the lost territory, the gambit failed, since the bar's popular name became "*le bar flamand*." This crossing of cultural wires most likely came from the Tower's original plans, voiced by Gustave Eiffel at the *Scientia* conference in February — only three months before the *Exposition* opening — that provided for four restaurants, "un bar anglo-américain, une brasserie flamande, un restaurant russe et enfin un restaurant français" (25). While each of the other three restaurants came to fruition, the *flamande* did not, ceding its place to the Alsatian experience. However, the two names were used interchangeably to describe the restaurant. Henri de Parville, whose

volume on the 1889 *Exposition* furnished the clearest engraving of the *brasserie* in operation, does not label the *brasserie* as such in his text, citing instead the popularity of "*le bar flamand*," which "reçoit en moyenne 2,000 personnes par jour" even as the French restaurant, run by the illustrious Brébant, "donne environ 600 à 700 déjeuners et diners, les restaurants russes et anglais 500 à 600" (420). Additionally, the official Eiffel Tower website describes a restaurant as "côté Trocadéro…un bar baptisé 'flamand'; l'établissement est cependant voué à la cuisine alsacienne, avec des serveuses en costume régional", suggesting the that, in spite of ample material proof of the Alsatian ambiance, the public decided by acclamation that the restaurant was, in fact, Flemish ("L'histoire des restaurants"). This misinterpretation by customers becomes more interesting when we consider that there is a big enough cultural gap between the cuisines and décor of each culture to suggest that the change by the government organizers would almost certainly been deliberate. It is possible that last-minute cancellations from suppliers or chefs caused the sudden change in plans, but it seems far more likely that an intentional change was made, swapping the *Flamands'* Belgian-inflected foodways and architecture for the Germanic cuisine, interiors, and particular folkloric costumes of Alsace. It would have been very unlikely for planners to have accidentally confused the two given the vast material differences necessitating separate suppliers and projects between the two cultures. The public, however, did confuse the two, proving that any desire by the planners to distinguish the restaurant as coming from the lost territories was not fully transmitted. In a way, this cultural mix-up could seem to have succeeded: the public's confusing French Flanders for no-longer-French Alsace suggests that they accepted the all the elements of their immersion experience as being completely French. However, the

diners' acceptance of the culture of the *brasserie* as already French would not have roused any *revanchiste* desire to re-integrate the lost territories, since guests would not have felt any sense of loss for a culture they perceived as already being so French it may as well have been *flamande*. The failure of the bar to evoke a desire to make Alsace-Lorraine a part of France again was likely instrumental in its closure. Despite the *brasserie*'s serving over double the amount of customers as any of the other restaurants, it was converted into a theater later in the 1889 *Exposition* season, only to re-emerge for the 1900 *Exposition* as "un restaurant hollandais."

While this misfire in trying to provoke a sense of loss, longing, and nostalgia for Alsace-Lorraine in the French *Exposition* visitors was relatively ambiguous, the *Exposition de 1900*'s material presentation of the lost territories makes concrete exactly how badly the 1889 *Exposition* failed to provoke *revanchiste* feelings. In 1900, the Alsace-Lorrainers' presence was limited to a free-standing restaurant, no longer at the heart of the Eiffel Tower itself. Just off of the Avenue de Suffren, to the Southwest of the Eiffel Tower, lay a near-exact copy of the *Maison Kammerzell* of Strasbourg. That the manifestation of Alsace for this subsequent *Exposition* was located outside the Tower — and indeed in its shadow — indicates a shift in mentality: while *Revanchisme* had not gone away, twenty-nine years after the Treaty of Frankfurt ceded Alsace-Lorraine to Germany, the French government and its citizens were more used to the idea that these territories had a cultural affinity with France but were ultimately foreign. The *Exposition* planners, like the French government, had temporarily tabled the idea of re-integrating the territories — until they were taken back during World War I — but permanently given up on integrating Alsace-Lorraine into the Eiffel Tower. Notably, this

establishment did not include costumed waitresses, indicating not only that the vogue for *brasseries à femmes* had passed, but that even the most convincing, alluring fake would never be as good as the emotions roused by the real thing.

Figure XI
A depiction of the interior of the *Brasserie Alsacienne* in the twenty-ninth, special *Exposition de 1889* edition of Henri de Parville's *Causeries Scientifiques* (1890), page 420
Ink on paper
Internet Archive; Public Domain

Figure XII
The *Manufacture de Rouen*'s print depicting the Javanese dancers and the Eiffel Tower amidst other *Exposition de 1889* motifs
Block print on cotton
Musée d'Impression sur Étoffes, Mulhouse

Tangling Thread with the Javanese Dancers

An exceptional material testament to the unraveling of Republican Eiffel Tower fictions regarding the French colonies is, paradoxically, a woven textile (*Figure XII*). A block-printed cotton fabric designed by the *Manufacture de Rouen* in 1890 seeks to summarize the *Exposition de 1889* with representational vignettes (*Figure XII*). We see "le turco et le tirailleur Annamite [police de l'Exposition, troupes coloniaux]; le "Dôme central" (Palais des industries diverses); la Grande Fontaine du Jardin du Champ de Mars; la "Rue du Caire"" (Lombard 125). But perhaps most centrally, two Javanese dancers twirl, holding up their scarves in a diagonal line that points directly to the largest single motif of the textile, a gleaming Eiffel Tower. If their action of compositionally introducing us to the Tower was not sufficient proof of their influence upon it, the intermediary of the florid vegetation beginning at their feet and unfurling around the base of the Tower assures the connection. Though the framing of human and architectural motifs with vegetation recalls the eighteenth-century *Toile de Jouy* (often just called "toile" outside of France), the plant life depicted on the *Manufacture de Rouen* piece is not native to the *métropole* but instead decidedly tropical, featuring palms and flowers resembling the tropical hibiscus. The dancers then not only "give" us the Eiffel Tower with their gesture, but also inform its foundation, bringing their native plants to the very soil on which it stands. Of course, this textile's depictions are not all so subversive: the dancers' sensuous poses and exotic clothing are used to sell a fabric that frames them with symbols of colonial authority in the close surveillance of the police, French industrial might in the *Palais des industries* and even the swiftly-erected fountain[61], and

[61] Described in detail in Chapter I.

the complete takeover of a Cairo street via its wholesale replication and sanitization in the *Rue du Caire*.

The dancers depicted on the *Rouen* textile are none other than the Javanese performers that Patrick Young identifies as one of "[a]rguably the two main attractions for visitors to the 1889 *Exposition Universelle*" (339). Though he does not analyze the *Rouen* textile itself, he nonetheless draws the same parallel as the printed cotton between the "two main attractions" of the fair, the Eiffel Tower and the Javanese dancers. Young posits that analyzing the two parts of the *Exposition* together invites us to unearth "connections between nineteenth-century Western notions of progress and the intensified framing of colonial cultures at a time of feverish empire- and nation-building" (340). Specifically, analyzing the Tower and the dancers together concretizes the exhibition planners' and the French government's desire to make citizens of metropolitan France aware of and attached to the idea of a "Greater France" in which the technological innovation of the *mère patrie* — the Eiffel Tower — could benevolently watch over and guide the traditional, exotic Others of overseas colonies — here exemplified by the Javanese dancers. It is important to note that while the island of Java was in fact a Dutch colony and not a French one, the presence of the dancers and indeed the entire colonial exposition on the *Esplanade des Invalides* served not only to familiarize the public with France's colonies, but also to argue that the idea of European imperialism more generally was a valid and necessary political endeavor.

Textiles and fabric goods served to weave a tight material narrative between the colonial exposition and the imperial project at the 1889 *Exposition*, making the critical case that the "authenticity" — a sort of code for "primitiveness" — of colonized cultures

was, in fact, the very thing that necessitated their colonization. In the same families contracted by the Javanese exhibit managers as the dancers were textile artisans: one dancer's sister, Kariosmito, was a "dessinatrice sur étoffe" and another's mother, Kariodikromo, created batik textiles (Chazal 112). Young writes that, in addition to the dancers,

> [A]rtisanal activity was central in the display, as transplanted workers labored daily under the eye of exhibition spectators to produce pottery, carved wooden and ivory objects, and textiles which were judged by special juries for the awarding of medals. (352)

These displays were not only surveilled by "spectators" and judged by "special juries" on site, but tightly regulated by colonial authorities themselves. Zeynep Çelik, in her analysis of the 1900 *Exposition*, notes with regard to the contingent of Tunisian artisans on display at that fair, "The protectorate administration was particularly proud of this section because it considered itself a savior of the 'indigenous artistic industries' faced with the threat of modernization" (22). *L'Illustration* reported on September 15, 1900 in its summary of the Tunisian section of the 1900 *Exposition*, that the colonial administration was in fact so preoccupied by the idea that "les arts indigènes" would be "condamnés par la concurrence européenne" that ancient artifacts from pre-colonial Tunisia were restored to "le musée arabe du Bardo pour servir à réformer le goût des artistes indigènes, abâtardi par l'influence italienne" (160). In this scenario, the French colonial government paradoxically asserted its Western influence not by imposing European artistic standards, but by stifling any conversation between the colonizer and colonized cultures, freezing Tunisian artistic production in a distant past, cultivating its own, imperial definition of authenticity. This desire for artisanal "purity" transferred to

other cultures beyond Tunisia[62] and even the French colonies in the previous, 1889 *Exposition*, and proved vital for the government's colonialist messaging. First, keeping the artisanship in the past tense served to heighten the contrast between the European colonizers and their colonies. To create what he terms an "Orientalist reality" at colonial expositions, Timothy Mitchell writes that the colonies had to be presented so as to be "understood as the product of unchanging racial or cultural essences" making for a "polar opposite to the West" which is "passive rather than active, static rather than mobile, emotional rather than rational, chaotic rather than ordered" (289). Insisting on artisanal displays that did not necessarily accurately depict the modern state of artistic production[63] in their colonies at the time heightened the contrast and the distance between two cultures' artistic technology and ideology. Furthermore, these "pure," preserved performances of colonized artisans conformed to *Exposition*-goers expectations. Dana Hale notes that the *Commission d'Organisation de l'Exposition Coloniale* worried that, if the displays at the 1889 *Exposition* did not adequately furnish the exotic vision the public expected, "hopes would be disappointed," and visitors would "have difficulty understanding the utility of colonial policy" (17). It was programmatically imperative to

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[62] See also Rebecca Rogers's analysis of the praise given to Henriette Benaben's upholding of her grandmother's — the renowned Madame Luce's — dedication to teaching Algerian girls embroidery. Accounts of the Luce-Benaben school's displays at the *Exposition Universelle de 1900* expressed appreciation for "indigenous artwork and…the Frenchwoman who was capable of appreciating it" (200). Benaben's catering to her Western audience at the fair was so successful that she later dedicated herself to "promoting indigenous artwork and encouraging the new interest this sparked among colonial cultural authorities" (200).

[63] Sylviane Leprun notes that these displays did not even reflect modern sociability in their respective countries, favoring "le sens de la reconstitution villageoise et artisanale" for the Western visitors' perceptions of reality but ultimately creating "des configurations éloignées des formes traditionnelles de la vie sociale" (110).

fulfill the metropolitan French audience's dreams of what the reality of the colonies was in order to get them fully onboard with the Third Republic's colonial project.

Beyond merely conforming to the public's vision of what far-flung colonies ought to have looked like, the displays at the *Exposition* also sought to fully immerse visitors in their realities of colonized cultures to reinforce the colonial order. Mitchell writes,

> There was a contradiction, therefore, between the need to separate oneself from the world and render it up as an object of representation, and the desire to lose oneself in this object-world and experience it directly; a contradiction that world exhibitions, with their profusion of exotic detail and yet their clear distinction between visitor and exhibit, were built to accommodate and overcome. (307)

It was vital to facilitate the connection between metropolitan French visitors and the colonial exhibition in such a way that connected the audience to the colonial project but ended just shy of creating a true, personal connection of empathy between the colonizer and the colonized. In this delicate balance, the separation of the senses was critical. Mitchell describes Gustave Flaubert and Gerard de Nerval's manifest longing for the colonies — both at the fair and in their largely failed trips to the territories themselves — as "a desire for direct and physical contact with the exotic, the bizarre, and the erotic" (307). Furthermore, Walter Benjamin observed that the prescription for consuming both 1889 and 1990 Paris world's fairs was to "Look at everything [and] touch nothing" (201). By facilitating a specific, sanctioned view of the colonies but forbidding the messy emotionality of touch, the exhibition planners could maintain control of their pro-colonial initiative.

However, the Javanese dancers' performance came dangerously close to tearing down the barrier between the seen and the touched. Belgian architect and author Frantz Jourdain — on site to help with his mentor Charles Garnier's *Habitations Humaines* —

contributed several articles to the *Exposition*'s weekly gazette, but saved perhaps his most rapturous prose for describing how young women from Java moved:

> Elles glissent dans une marche de rêve, les pieds presque immobiles, imposant aux torses des ondulations de reptile, agitant mollement les bras, donnant une intensité extraordinaire d'expression aux mains, tantôt menaçantes et tantôt caressantes, agressives ou enlaçantes, haineuses ou tendres, passionnées et parlantes. Elles tournent doucement, leurs yeux d'émail fixés dans le vide ; d'un geste languide, enfantin ou lascif, elles écartent leurs ceintures, puis s'en couvrent chastement les épaules. Et leur pantomime raconte, sous une forme symbolique, les jours d'autrefois, les légendes sacrées, la vie et les amours de leurs rois, les faits de leurs héros, les splendeurs à jamais éteintes de la race hindoue. Il y a une navrance si résignée au fond de ces danses bercées par le rythme pleurard du *kamelong*, que, peu à peu, l'on se sent gagné par une tristesse ambiante indéfinissable (212-3).

Jourdain and his contemporaries (notably including the painter Paul Gauguin and the composer Claude Debussy; Chazal 110) let their male gaze wander into something more fleshly, observing the movements they had never seen a woman make in public before as a sexual spectacle. The drama of their physical attraction to the girls was only heightened by the idea that the girls were "*Tandak,*" or precious virgin maidens kept cloistered by the sultan in a society where "la profession de ballerine n'implique nullement la vie joyeuse et les mœurs passablement folichonnes…L'existence retirée et chaste que mènent ces vierges…[marque] un profond respect et [un] véritable prestige" (213). In minds like Jourdain's, it became more palatable to consume the image of these girls, "enfantin[es] et lasciv[e]s"[64] through the prism of their supposed purity in belonging to the harem of another, more powerful man. Moreover, consuming the otherwise lascivious spectacle of costumes that revealed more skin and danse that incorporated movements perhaps more

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[64] Jourdain's sexualization of the Javanese girl dancers seems positively tame compared to a description furnished by C. Milchoze, writing for *Le Plaisir à Paris*: "Palanquins avec femmes javanaises escortées de lanternes. Il y avait une délicieuse javanaise, surtout dont les gracieux déhanchements d'épaules ont dû tourner bien des têtes. Elle était croustillante au possible cette adorable javanaise teinte en jaune" (3).

suggestive than those at a Montmartre cabaret, went from low-brow to high-minded when it was understood that the women were sacred and performing a traditional routine that "[évoquait] tout un passé mort" (213). While the idea that these young girls were offered up for the European male gaze points to layers of exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer, the story of the girls from Java is ultimately more complicated, even turning the classic one-way exploitation on its head. Jean-Pierre Chazal reveals that the girls, named "Wakiem (13 ans), Soekia (14 ans), Sariem (15 ans) et Taminah (17 ans)," if not detectable by "leur attitude, assez éloignée des normes de maintien des princesses des cours javanaises de l'époque" would surely have been discernable to an expert of Javanese culture by the fact that "leurs noms (et ceux de leurs parents) indiquent avec sûreté qu'elles n'étaient pas de condition aristocratique" (113). It was only by exploiting the Western lack of familiarity with anything but an illusion of the royal courts of Java that the private company representing the Netherlands at the *Exposition*[65] could send impostor "*Tandak*" dancers who were likely the complete opposite: Chazal classifies them as "bayadères," or "danseuses-prostituées attachées aux cours princières de l'île" who would have been managed by a sort of madam (114). Their choreography was marked by significant influence from "cabaret aux traits occidentalisés, avec les positions lascives associées à cette activité" and what they ultimately presented was a bastardized version of a "spectacle alors en vogue au palais, le *langêndriyan* ("divertissement du cœur")" stripped of its typical sung, operetta element in favor of a dance-only show (115). The dance witnessed by Charles Jourdain and his contemporaries was ultimately

[65] At the time the government in The Hague was against any celebration of republicanism marked by the centenary of 1789 and refused to officially participate in the "fête française" (Chazal 111).

an artificial, ahistorical confection designed by the commissioners in charge of the Javanese village specifically to titillate *Exposition*-goers and hook consumers on a specific blend of the visual and the haptic that would keep them coming back[66].

However, it was not the men's reaction to the introduction of the sense of touch that threatened the *Exposition*'s need to keep a distance between the visitor and the performer, but the women's. So poignant was a scene that Jourdain describes of the dancers off-duty that women in Paris organized a collective, empathetic action. He writes,

> Les jours pluvieux de mai, rien n'était plus curieux que de voir le corps de ballet…se rendre, de la salle de concert, à la case qui lui est réservée…Gênées par les mules auxquelles leurs pieds, ordinairement nus, ne sont pas habitués, elles marchaient maladroitement, cahotant, sautillant, cherchant à éviter les flaques de boue où elles pataugeaient malgré elles, serrant leurs épaules de mauvais châles achetés chez le mercier du coin, qui juraient étrangement à côté de leurs splendides costumes exotiques…elles avaient l'aspect de ces pauvres petits oiseaux des tropiques mélancoliquement pelotonnés dans une cage, qui paraissent si désorientés et si grelottants. (213)

While the local women certainly partook in the spectacle of the faux-*Tandak* dance, unlike Jourdain, whose pity only serves to further dehumanize the girls as "petits oiseaux des tropiques," they saw familiar material circumstances, empathized with them, and extended a nonverbal gesture of solidarity. They organized a drive to send "de luxueuses sorties de bal" to the dancers, who "furent ravies de ces cadeaux" even if they did not end up wearing them but instead saw them "soigneusement placées dans des caisses où est empilé tout ce qui leur appartient" (213). This gesture could be viewed as charity, out-of-

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[66] Zeynep Çelik and Leila Kinney write of the troupe of "Egyptian belly-dancers" on the *Rue du Caire* that some of the dances performed there were so lascivious that even decades before, "in 1834…the dance [upon which the *Exposition* dances were based] was restricted to private quarters alone" (40). Worth noting also is that the troupes of belly-dancers were often from all over North Africa, and the dances themselves were also cobbled together from various cultural traditions.

touch with what the girls ultimately thought was appropriate attire ("elles gardèrent leurs tricots à vingt-cinq sous"), or an attempt to "save" the pitiful colonized peoples. Yet the gesture is too full of humanity: the women of the *faubourg* saw the girls dropped in a new, colder environment, read their universally-intelligible signs of physical discomfort, and reached out with clothing they knew worked in the Parisian rain and mud. The view of the girls suffering in the rain proved to be visceral, and the Parisian women responded with a physical solution, seeking to supplant the discomfort with the comforting embrace of clothing. That the girls did not ultimately wear the clothes in the situations for which they were intended is immaterial; their joy at receiving the gowns is not only a moment of marveling at the splendor of the gifts but feeling seen as humans with bodily needs, desires, and dreams. The dynamic even inverted one of the key tropes of the colonial exposition: if, as Zeynep Çelik writes, colonial expositions usually saw people "displayed as trophies…in special enclosures," here the dancers themselves were given trophies of Parisian ball gowns which they stowed away in their own private spaces (30). The emotional connection, however slight, that the Parisian and Javanese women were able to forge through an empathetic sense of touch and textile connection unraveled some of the carefully woven barrier between the metropolitan visitor and the colonized performer.

The *Manufactures de Rouen* artifact, in being a cloth testimony of the Javanese dancers' impact at the *Exposition*, reinforces this threat of an unraveling of the colonialist agenda and entangles the Eiffel Tower. The sashes streaming from the girls' hands point to the Tower, letting them present the new monument as part of their act. Perhaps even more importantly, the flow of vegetation from the feet of the girls and onto the soil holding the Tower's pylons entangles the very roots of these two main attractions of the

Exposition. The unintended connection between the dancers, the women of Paris, and their city's new Tower ultimately became one of the most enduring legacies of the fair and the monument itself. Even as their false identities as *Tandak* and the artificial, controlled choreography of their dances attempted to place them in a fixed past for comparison to metropolitain Europe, their emotional impact grounded them in the *Exposition*'s present and the global future. Though it is certainly possible the fair could have succeeded without the colonial exposition on the *Esplanade des Invalides*, without the deeply moving performance and empathetic connection of the Javanese dancers themselves, it may not fulfilled the goal of "the great expositions of the nineteenth century," which "sought both to instruct and entertain" assuring that "much of the success of the Paris exposition of 1889 was that it achieved a remarkable balance between the two" (Hall 115). The dancers, here printed in a textile, were critical in weaving the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* into the fabric of the city, with the Eiffel Tower itself as a central motif. Precisely because of the emphasis on the haptic, immersive delights of the colonial exposition, the would-be bellicose Eiffel Tower was, as we have seen in previous chapters with its other intended meanings, overwritten by popular trends. As the textile from the *Manufactures de Rouen* so aptly conveys, despite the ever-present strictures of political power, it was the soft, sensory power of people like seemingly voiceless dancers and women of Paris that made the Tower into a locus for diverse emotional responses that would carry it forward and allow it to outlast its initial exhibition.

Conclusion

In the process of extracting counter-narratives to the "grand récit" of the Eiffel Tower, the lens of materiality is critical. It is very tempting when studying *fin-de-siècle* history amidst a flourishing print culture to assign primacy to first-person texts, journalistic articles, and printed speeches — especially when the *auteur* in question was as prolific and connected a publisher and speaker as Gustave Eiffel. The other chapters in this dissertation present more straightforward material analyses, extracting the tangible from the textual and introducing more overt material culture studies with the popular souvenirs. Here, however, the material narratives are more threadbare, requiring more imagination of transitive states and emotions than is typically found in straightforward attempts to add new artifacts to historiographies. In the first part of this chapter, I triangulated the quashing of the Eiffel Tower worker's perspective by first furnishing two medals that ascribed his labor to goddesses incarnating the French nation and then examining yet a third medal and engravings that represent artists' attempts to re-center their efforts. In the second part of the chapter, my extrapolations went further still: I invited my reader to imagine the tense climate of *Revanchisme* that surrounded the walls of the cozy fantasy of the Alsatian restaurant inside the Eiffel Tower. Then, I demonstrated how the materiality of textiles, both through an artifact and an anecdote, makes literal the tangling of threads within the "colonial contradictions" of the Republic and the potency of human emotion and connection through the sense of touch. Although the material traces of these abstract states of being are quite evidentiary, the lengths to which one must go to extract the stories of the "little people" in the story of one of the most famous structures in the world points to a need for more of this kind of analysis in the cases of other histories. When the workers behind the *Exposition de 1889* expressed

themselves, their words were not deemed important enough — or, in the cases of the people on display at the colonial exposition speaking other languages — intelligible enough, for the official record, so in order to hear them and others like them, we must accord increased importance to the nonverbal. We must look harder for moments of individuality and emotion, reading between the official lines and seeing the smaller actors as players on the stage. In the case of the Eiffel Tower, their contributions proved absolutely vital to assisting the monument to become what it is today, a site of collective enjoyment through the physical climb, the shared experience of seeing the city below, and the ability to take memories of the Tower home with you — even intangibly — and diffuse them throughout the world. Although they did not draft alternative designs for the Tower, they reshaped it from its original design of being a programmatic object for the Third Republic to prove itself and even an object of war — as foreseen by Eiffel himself — into an emotional site that is malleable to the whims and needs of its visitors. Without the hundreds of hands that built the beams amidst a labor struggle, the women pretending to be Alsatian but ultimately letting their Parisian accents slip through, and the young women whose dance and emotional connection with high-society European women became embedded in the very roots of the Tower, it would not be the beloved, iterated icon it is today. In this story, there are no small parts, only small actors who deserve to be viewed as grand contributors.

Chapter III: Remodeling the Eiffel Tower Narrative in Souvenir Objects

"Il n'y a pas de petit objet."

— Hubert Cavaniol

Historical souvenir objects, while not absent from cultural and social histories, are often treated as entertaining marginalia rather than primary documents. Indeed, I first discovered the Eiffel Tower souvenirs I treat in this chapter at the 2014 *Petit Palais* exhibition "Paris 1900: La Ville Spectacle," where little information was furnished about the tourist objects, even though they were given pride of place in a gallery dedicated to the Exposition Universelle. When these items have figured in studies, they tend to be analyzed textually and visually[67], not haptically and thus archaeologically, as artifacts. The objects of my corpus are not extremely rare like those in the work of Bissera V. Pentcheva on Byzantine icons, yet her study of material remains of daily use and sensory engagement represents a model that can and should be applied to mass-produced souvenir objects. Just as extant precious objects of prayer bear witness to human experience with traces of touch, tears, and movement, so too do seemingly mundane travel mementos. Perhaps because these objects are not unique, having been remade hundreds if not thousands of times for throngs of tourists, evidence of their actual and possible use becomes even more informative as compared to mint-condition "control group" items. In the case studies presented in this chapter, I treat these objects not as purely visual entities,

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[67] On postcards, perhaps the most theorized of the souvenir objects, Bjarne Rogan writes, "[R]esearch perspectives on the postcard phenomenon have tended to be rather narrow and removed from their broader social and cultural contexts… little work has been done on the significance of what is on, or not on, the other side of the card" (2). I would argue that for less logocentric souvenir objects, this contextualization is even more lacking, and while they often do not have "sides" like print matter, whole sensory dimensions of their histories have yet to be plumbed.

but tactile testimonies. It was in spending hours turning objects over in my hands and experiencing them in three dimensions that I discovered how they enabled visitors to flout what Walter Benjamin describes as the prescribed way of taking in the *Expositions Universelles*: "Look at everything [and] touch nothing" (Benjamin 201). By bringing souvenirs home, exhibition-goers could touch the forbidden "everything" and form new bonds with and interpretations of their material world through sensory engagement with the objects.

The significance of mass-produced objects is particularly evident in the early years of the Eiffel Tower. When Gustave Eiffel, through the mouthpiece of *Exposition* planner Alfred Picard, declared in 1889 what the Tower was — a testimony to advances in iron construction, a celebration of civil genius, and a symbol of the centenary of the French Revolution — he went further, attempting to prescribe what it was *going to be*. While his interpretations of the Tower's meaning were put forth to persuade the city of Paris and the French Republic to keep the monument standing, they were unintentionally exclusionary. The decision-makers to whom Eiffel was directly making his appeal for permanence were men, but visitors to the structure, those who generated the ticket sales — and thus voted with their pocketbooks — to keep the Tower aloft also counted thousands of women and children. Even as their arguments to maintain the monument were silent in the verbal sense, their imaginative, tactile engagement with the structure both on the *Champ de Mars* and in the home made a strong case in favor of Eiffel; by buying tickets and souvenir objects to mark the ephemeral experience of climbing the tower, they were, in a sense, building an argument, based on economic consumption and public discursive endorsement, for the Tower's permanence. The items purchased were

mass reproductions of the tower that each contained idiosyncratic interpretations or repurposing of the official tower. As such, the formal modifications required to miniaturize and market these iterations of the Tower ultimately rewrote Eiffel's statement of what the Tower meant and advanced a simple yet powerful argument in its favor: the Eiffel Tower was *fun*. In their tactile, formal reconfigurations — and hence, rewritings — we see signs of bourgeois leisure and pure enjoyment of the monument's familiar shape and invitations to participate in the exciting new industrial age in Paris, *la vitrine du monde* (Winock 11). Indeed, today the Tower is still used as a radio tower from time to time, but its principal purpose in the twenty-first century is as one of the world's most notable tourist attractions. And, if the sparkly, filigreed designs of today's future historical Eiffel Tower souvenirs — bejeweled sweatshirts, nickel keychains, and tchotchkes and toys for the home — are any indication, who buys them and spreads them across the globe? Women and children[68].

When I brought up the gendered differences I observed in his personal collection of *Exposition Universelle* objects, *Petit Palais* registrar and *Exposition Universelle* souvenir collector Hubert Cavaniol reminded me "Qui achetait les objets souvenirs? C'étaient les femmes." He gave no explicit reason for why he found this to be a gendered practice, but implied in his tone that this was the case because souvenirs were — and often still are — considered frippery for the bourgeois, useless *bibelots* adorning a home or a housewife purely for the sake of conspicuous consumption. He went on to add, in jest, that the act of buying souvenir objects "doit combler un manque" in himself and

[68] Certainly, men buy these items as well. But when we think of people today wearing t-shirts with the Tower and miniature Towers in the home, these items are almost always feminized.

historical buyers. Although his self-effacing joke referred to a Lacanian psychoanalytical "manque," a congenital wound of psychological and physiological desire in the life of the collector, it is indicative in a larger sense of a "lack" of serious attention paid to souvenir objects simply because they were "plutôt pour les femmes" and therefore dismissed as frivolity[69].

Turning this idea of a "manque" over in my mind, I realized that, in the archival *Exposition Universelle* documents I read for this chapter and indeed in the artistic and literary representations I discussed previously[70], women's and children's voices are missing from the history of the Eiffel Tower. They are certainly described as enjoying the novelty of scaling to new heights — Gustave Eiffel himself noted that the altitude led to "une amélioration très sensible de l'état général" in the health and mood of the women employed in the official restaurants and souvenir shops on the Tower's floors (*Travaux Scientifiques* 212) — but there are no published accounts of the experiences of these two groups. A gendered social history[71] of the Eiffel Tower is then missing a key element: the *mentalités* of the period. Without them, we risk paying attention only to what Georges Duby calls "l'histoire exceptionnelle" (948) of decidedly "important," *male* figures and ignoring what Pierre Nora identifies as "the less extraordinary" testimonies which "more aptly…illustrate the average mentality" (14). It is here that souvenir objects, though they

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[69] The notion of scale is also interesting here, for miniatures evoke the diminutive statures and indeed the diminution desired for women at the time. Souvenirs targeted to men are typically larger-scale items such as decanters, inkwells, and tobacco paraphernalia.

[70] Please see Chapter I for discussion of literary and artistic representations.

[71] Joseph Harriss's *The Tallest Tower* is an authoritative social history of the monument from its inception until the 1970s, in which he writes, yet his is a holistic view of the cultural response to the Tower, declining to address any specific demographic's reception of the structure.

were doubtlessly designed and marketed by men[72], can play a crucial role in filling in the gaps of our understanding of women and children's experiences by providing alternative forms of the monument, its narratives both official and unoffical, and, more broadly, narratives of nineteenth-century commodity culture.

"Resistant Narratives," Irresistible Objects

As I began to prepare this chapter, I asked my husband what he thought was behind our desire to buy and display in our home two Venetian masks, an Indian silk scarf, and a British tea table. He stated with ease that "[Ces objets] déclenchent le souvenir dans la tête." In his mind, the physical presence of these objects evoked memories of our trips. Although I agree on the surface level, this popular idea that souvenirs merely serve as reminders to retread lived experience does not explain the abundance of objects in my turn-of-the-century corpus wherein the form of the Eiffel Tower is significantly altered. Tweaking and sometimes completely overhauling the form of this touristic site in objects meant to be brought home hint at desires beyond the mere recollection and physical representation of "having been there."

Those exploring the relatively new field of "tourist studies" have begun to unravel the deeper connection we have to mass-produced souvenir objects. Lisa Love and Nathaniel Kohn couch the acts of purchasing, displaying, and ultimately living among these objects in a theory of identity performance, or intentional efforts to narrativize one's life for others[73]. They build on Nelson H. H. Graburn's idea of souvenirs taming

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[72] Although, as I shall discuss later in this chapter, women often participated in the categories of manufacture designated as "women's work," most notably in the case of textile souvenirs.

[73] Pierre Bourdieu's *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* explores this idea of identity performance through consumption extensively, but for the study of souvenirs in

the "Other" of foreign travels by positing that these objects go one step further in becoming

> …touchstones for inspiring resistant narratives and performances … a kind of memory-morphing that opens up possibilities for tactical maneuvers of liberating performance in the play of everyday life. (47)

In this reading, souvenir objects become an accessible, even quotidian way of trying on new identities. The souvenir object becomes a literal "touchstone" for tactile, material engagement whereby one can temporarily inhabit the exotic aesthetics and lifestyles — the "resistant narratives" — inherent to the foreign object in the familiarity and safety of one's own home. This capacity for "memory-morphing," for re-imagining one's own existence, becomes materially evident in the likewise "morphed" forms of Eiffel Tower souvenirs. These objects provide evidence for "resistant narratives" embedded into the material of the new Towers. Love and Kohn's contention — based on the work of Dick Hebdige — is that souvenirs hold the power to rewrite the everyday with a *soupçon* of the exotic:

> …'humble objects' [that] can be magically appropriated, 'stolen' by subordinate groups and made to carry 'secret' meanings: meanings which express, in code, a form of resistance to the order which guarantees their continued subordination. (367)

That Hebdige identifies "subordinate groups" as those who ultimately imagine resistant narratives of their own lives through objects would suggest that it is no accident that

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the home, his exploration of how furniture acquisition reflects actual, material status as well as goals and aspirations is most relevant. Bourdieu's material *mise-en-scène* of society is relatively straightforward: bourgeois families amass antiques in order to affect a sheen of prestigious heritage whereas the intelligentsia rejects this entirely and acquires the stark, modern furniture of the avant-garde. In this chapter, I explore how souvenirs do not necessarily fit into any one aesthetic but rather bring a taste of fantasy into otherwise staid domestic spaces (Bourdieu 48).

women's and children's souvenirs present greater efforts to reconfigure the official Eiffel Tower.

To have "resistant narratives" in these souvenir objects, there must then be an "establishment narrative" against which to resist. In the case of the Eiffel Tower, the official story was inescapable. Gustave Eiffel, eager to keep his namesake creation standing past 1909, refined his sales pitch and philosophical appeal in a series of six published volumes dedicated to the structure. While he had laid out the argument himself in earlier volumes, listing engineering specifications and implications, in his *Travaux scientifiques exécutés à la tour de trois cents mètres de 1889 à 1900*, published in 1900, he proudly cited Alfred Picard, the official "rapporteur général" of the 1889 *Exposition*, who granted him the perfect distillation of his desired message:

> Dans la pensée de M. Eiffel, cette œuvre colossale devait constituer une éclatante manifestation de la puissance industrielle de notre pays, attester les immenses progrès réalisés dans l'art des constructions métalliques, célébrer l'essor inouï du génie civil au cours de ce siècle, attirer de nombreux visiteurs et contribuer largement au succès des grandes assises pacifiques organisées pour le Centenaire de 1789. (7)

I have already discussed the more explicitly political implications of this official message[74], addressing the "génie civil" and the "grandes assises pacifiques" of the centennial of the Revolution, but the material systems enumerated in this interpretation of the Tower — "la puissance industrielle," and "l'art des constructions métalliques » '— are reinterpreted and explicitly re-*formed* on the micro- scale of souvenir objects.

In close readings of souvenir objects, I will demonstrate precisely how their miniature scale re-forms the systems described in the official narrative of the Eiffel Tower. But I also wish to highlight that this body of artifacts inherently questions the

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[74] Please see Chapter II for discussion of the politics behind the Eiffel Tower.

official story of the monument as conveyed through souvenir objects in a much broader historical sense. Many studies of French nineteenth-century material culture — and *Exposition Universelle* material culture more specifically — are rooted in Walter Benjamin's theories of commodities and phantasmagoric visuals delineated in *The Arcades Project*, with particular emphasis on the essay "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century." Amy Ogata, in her 2002 study of paper "peep show" souvenir objects from the 1900 *Exposition* takes Benjamin at face value when he calls the *Expositions* "training schools in which the masses, barred from consuming, learned empathy with exchange value" under the dictate to "'Look at everything; touch nothing'" (Ogata 73; Benjamin 201). She accepts Benjamin's emphasis on the visual in her own analysis of how consumers might have used paper "peep show" souvenirs — predecessors to pop-up books — to "[learn] to consume the carefully ordered information as amusement, through a scrim of phantasmagoria; gazing on it again through a peephole [to affirm] the lesson" of official, bourgeois-mannered history (80). Yet in building on Benjamin and Ogata's work, I wish to emphasize that the experience of souvenir objects was not only visual but also inherently tactile. In her chapter on miniature versions of "colossal" monuments including the Eiffel Tower, Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby gets one step closer to where I would like to take the analysis of souvenir objects depicting the monument: she acknowledges that "a tiny colossus lends itself to use as a personal fetish, held close to the body, in a pocket or on a chain around the neck or the wrist. This is a relationship that challenges [Claude] Lévi-Strauss' notion that possession is a primarily visual experience" (159)[75]. Grigsby's emphasis on possession specifically as the mode of consumption for

[75] In formulating this idea, Grigsby also refutes Susan Stewart's oft-cited work on

these objects is largely couched in her project's focus on political and technological power. This axis, however, mostly applies to the tactile relationships of those *with* power and the miniature towers. I want to extend this understanding of the importance of the haptic dimension of souvenirs not only to possession of the objects, but also to self-possession.

While *Exposition* marvels were indeed outside of tactile comprehension, mediated by *vitrines* or otherwise viewed at a distance, souvenir objects to be purchased, taken home, and enjoyed privately presented infinite opportunities to flout the interdiction of touch. At the core of the broader scholarly omission of the tactile in everyday life is the historiographical tendency to emphasize the public over the private, which Naomi Schor classifies on gendered lines in her study of (largely feminized) postcards:

> Two widely shared but diametrically opposed views inform what theories we have on the everyday: one, which we might call feminine or feminist…links the everyday with the daily rituals of private life carried out within the domestic sphere traditionally presided over by women; the other, the masculine or masculinist, sites the everyday in the public spaces and spheres dominated…in modern Western bourgeois societies by men. (188)

Restated simply, for Schor the public sphere, constructed from men's experiences and testimonies, is inherently masculinized, while the private sphere of the home is feminized to match its *doyenne*, who, particularly in eras like the fin de siècle, held court over her own, gender-segregated world. The public act of viewing at the *Expositions Universelles*

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miniatures, stating that "[Stewart] fails to recognize the ways in which miniatures invite fantasy" (159). While Grigsby's exploration of the fantastical side of miniatures is largely focused on possession both physical and intellectual, my own ideas of miniatures as sites for minute acts of resistance also pushes back against Stewart's conclusion that miniatures offer "a diminutive, and thereby manipulatable, version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination" (69). I certainly agree that the Eiffel Tower miniatures are ripe for manipulation, but I argue that they are only outwardly made for a domesticated space, since in their magical smallness they offer surfaces ripe for "contamination" of the status quo for women and children.

took place in the masculinized public sphere, but this was complemented by a private analog: the behind-the-scenes joys of the tactile in the feminized private sphere. It is in the latter space that the orderly spectacle that Ogata identifies in the "peep show" is infused with the disorder and intimacy of everyday touch as the object is opened…by hand. In my analysis of souvenir objects of the Eiffel Tower, I will not only elaborate on how they rewrite the official narrative of the monument, but also the accepted narratives of fin-de-siècle commodity culture through their irresistible invitations to touch.

Taking the Tower Home

Before the Eiffel Tower was even close to being completed, Jules Jaluzot, the savvy founder of Printemps, one of the new *grands magasins,* anticipated his customers' desire to bring the Tower home. Gustave Eiffel, no doubt quite preoccupied with the completion of the monument, was easily persuaded by Jaluzot's proposal to grant Printemps the exclusive right to replicate and sell the Eiffel Tower's image in the form of souvenir *bibelots*. Little did Eiffel know that what seemed like a straightforward licensing deal would incite "les réclamations unanimes des grands et petits artisans qui voulaient profiter d'une aussi belle aubaine" (Poncetton 221). The "grands artisans" — manufacturers — and "petits" craftsmen moved quickly to voice their discontent, filing and ultimately winning a lawsuit against Eiffel and Printemps that dissolved Jaluzot's exclusivity contract and opened the door to truly proliferating the form of the nascent monument.

While what Phillip Dennis Cate calls "the pervasiveness of the Tower's image in popular culture" may seem like aesthetic dilution in today's age of the omnipresent Eiffel Tower keychain, during the structure's early years this omnipresence served instead as an

aesthetic and symbolic fortification. In theorizing that the Eiffel Tower was the first historical instance of an "urban icon," Philip J. Ethington and Vanessa R. Schwartz build on Jérôme Monnet's initial definition that "[urban icons] are images or symbols that circulate through material supports such as books, postcards, or billboards." They add that these circulated images "embed the materiality of experience but also de-territorialize it through the mobility of the circulation of images" (12; 13). Therefore, for Monnet, Ethington, and Schwartz, there is no iconicity inherent to the monument itself; icons are instead born from replication and circulation of their image via souvenir objects. In the case of the miniature *bibelot* entering the home, the "de-territorialization" is quite literal: the monument is unmoored from its initial geospatial context and, in the private sphere, set free to become the locus of multiple idiosyncratic meanings, uses, and understandings.

This theory of iconicity-via-replication, much like that of Benjamin on "looking but not touching," assigns primary importance to the sense of sight in this "circulation of images," with only a brief nod to the impact of touch. At the end of the introduction to their project, Ethington and Schwartz acknowledge a "tactile relationship [to icons as] part of the traditional Christian notion of icons in the first place" (19), yet their conception of the haptic — and that of the scholars they cite — considers only very minimally the sense of touch at the sites and structures themselves. This focus primarily on sight deprives them of valuable evidence to support their thesis that icons are born in circulation. Even in the "traditional Christian notion," these authors point to how "icons" were often either massive, monumental paintings, or small, mobile objects representing sacred figures in painted or relief form, often made of wood or in the form of bejeweled

"triptychs." In her study of the sensory nature of icons, Bissera V. Pentcheva first reminds us that the Greek *aesthesis* describes *all* sensory and sensual understanding. She stresses this Greek origin in order to demonstrate that the emphasis we too often place on purely visual forms of icons narrows our experience of these objects. She details the multisensory experience one may have in the presence of an icon: "The eye seeks the tactility of textures and reliefs. Sight is understood and experienced as touch," which then leads to even greater understanding beyond *aesthesis:* "In saturating the material and sensorial to excess, the experience of the icon led to a transcendence of this very materiality and gave access to the intangible, invisible and noetic" (Pentcheva 631). The transcendence of "touching with the eyes" can perhaps be most easily understood in the case of the most well-known of icons Pentcheva treats, the brightly colored, gilded paintings and jewelry of the Byzantine empire. These Orthodox depictions of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and Saints were highly ornamental, employing multiple artisans to create multimedia works with such techniques such as gold leafing, mosaic, and oil paintings. Two interpretations of how one could touch these icons with the eyes — and with the hands, in the case of smaller pieces — in fact led to the infamous iconoclast crisis. Proponent worshippers believed that the rich colors and decorative techniques, evoking not only the tactile acts of the artisans who created the icons but also of the potential for worshippers to feel those textures with their own hands, represented devotion and brought them closer to "touching" divinity. The opposing iconoclasts feared that the faithful, by taking sensory pleasure in touching personal jewels and wooden figures (and finding potential for tactile intimacy with larger works), were substituting intimate, material experiences with the decorative objects themselves for the transcendent,

immaterial experience of the higher powers they were made to represent — worshipping "false idols" like the Book of Exodus's golden calf (Brooks). Although the "urban icons" Ethington and Schwartz describe are not often subject to the same intensities of opinion, they nonetheless elicit interpretation and comprehension through touch or the potential to touch. When we consider architect Juhani Pallasmaa's assertion that

> …[a]n architectural work is not experienced as a series of isolated retinal pictures, but in its fully integrated material, embodied, and spiritual essence. It offers pleasurable shapes and surfaces molded for the touch of the eye and the other senses, but it also incorporates physical and mental structures, giving our existential experience a strengthened coherence and significance. (29)

While Pallasmaa's architectural works seem inherently public, his theory of the primacy of touch reinforces the centrality of intimate experiences in the same manner as Pentcheva's Byzantine icons. These two instances of touching with the eyes, whether in in public or prayer, further Ethington and Schwartz's notion of the process of "de-territorialization" by mediating icons through the privacy of the body and, most importantly for my study of souvenirs, bringing them into the home.

In order to understand how these hitherto rarified experiences of icons entered the home in the era of the Eiffel Tower, we must consider the idea that the mass-produced, secularized souvenirs of the industrial age settled into the roles and routines long held by religious icons and relics in the private sphere[76]. Jean-Claude Vimont argues that,

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[76] Sometimes these objects were one and the same. Suzanne K. Kaufman explores the late nineteenth-century tourism machine behind the shrine of Lourdes, filling in the historiographical gaps of the shrine's history. Her primary argument is that the flashy media rollout, dedicated rail station, and plethora of souvenirs — stereographic slides, postcards, and even curative *Pastilles*, or pills, made from its water — of the shrine were not anti-clerical, as previous work on shrines has implied, but in fact part of the "modern spectacle" of pilgrimage in the industrial era (18). In Kaufmann's reading, the commercial was an integral part of the spiritual for visitors to Lourdes.

because we grant historiographical importance to "les reliques…et les reliquaires [qui] contribuèrent au rayonnement de certaines églises, cathédrales et abbayes du Moyen Âge," we must also consider that their spiritual successors, "les objets-souvenirs [qui] tant dans la forme que dans l'esprit," were influenced by religious relics "même s'ils ne peuvent être rangés dans cette catégorie" as important historical artifacts (219). The principal difference between religious relics and tourist souvenirs is then material rather than spiritual. Because the organic matter of relics — body parts of saints, pieces of parchment, wooden artifacts — is extremely fragile and vulnerable to degradation, these objects were rare and thus often held in shared sites of pilgrimage, places of communal religious experience. In contrast, the "relics" of commercial tourist souvenirs for shrines and secular sites alike were fashioned out of relatively more durable, plentiful, and inexpensive materials that enabled them to be more widely distributed and enjoyed by more diverse populations than those who could pay for and were indeed socially "allowed" to go on pilgrimages[77]. Crucially, even if the owner of such a new relic could not go to the site it depicted, they could be given as a souvenir and come to enjoy and interpret it in the comfort of their own home.

However, objects brought home by those who visited the Eiffel Tower or for those who could not make the trip to the *Expositions Universelles* were not only

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[77] While women did go on pilgrimages, "[i]n medieval Latin Christendom, women's travels, and their movement in public space, were typically frowned upon…lest their natural inclinations to vice lead them to misbehave" (Craig). Another group who was excluded from the religious travel tradition were the chronically ill, who nonetheless benefitted from sanctified souvenir objects. Starting in the fifteenth century, monks sold medals that had been touched by the king — *le roi thaumaturge* — and accompanied by ointments that were said to have curative properties. These objects served as intermediaries of touch: the king touched the medal as a benediction and then the sufferer touched the medal to receive the cure (Bloch 311).

designated for women. Merely by coming "home," these objects entered the feminine sphere and the feminized everyday. Moreover, the most tactile of the souvenir objects I have encountered — miniature decorative frames, frivolous pen-nibs, and sewing scissors — are closely aligned with domestic and feminized activity and lifestyles. While high-end objects such as liquor services, postal scales, and crystal goblets[78] entered the home to be used by both men and women, it is the comparatively inexpensive objects intended for women's daily activities of decorating, sewing, letter-writing, and general "home-making" that bear the most evidence of touch and the capacity for transformation of the monument's form and official narrative.

The primary work of the three most tactile objects of my corpus is quite remarkable: they make the revolutionary curved and arched shape of the Eiffel Tower utterly *unremarkable* by suggesting it looked like common photo stands, pen nibs, and scissors. While, as Poncetton points out, with the lifting of Printemps's exclusive rights to reproducing the form of the Eiffel Tower, "les copies de cette silhouette fabuleuse" began to adorn almost every object imaginable. Specifically, these objects were "…breloques que l'on accrochait à la chaîne de montre ou au bracelet, manches de canne ou de parapluie, presse-papier, porte-plume, canifs, fioles à liqueurs, épingles de cravate ou de chapeau, etc., etc." that were transformed "à la mode de la Tour Eiffel" (221). The aforementioned liquor services, scales, and goblets, as well as miniature iron replicas of the monument, were often made to resemble the Tower rather than engaging in the far more interesting act of pointing out that the Tower resembled objects with which consumers were *already* familiar. In doing so, they undercut Eiffel and Picard's assertion

[78] Lucien Paris, a Drouot-affiliated auction house, has many fine examples of these items in their catalogue of pieces sold in their "Paris, Mon Amour" auctions.

that the Tower “[atteste] les immenses progrès réalisés dans l’art des constructions métalliques" by foregrounding how the seemingly revolutionary arched, pyramidal iron form that enabled the Tower to climb into the heavens was not entirely novel (*Travaux scientifiques* 7).

Figure I
Miniature photo frame circa 1889-1900; brass, tempered glass, and daguerreotype; 2.38” x 2.38” (6.04 x 5.08 cm)
Inscription: “E * C / Paris Deposé”
Author’s personal collection; Photos by author

The first object that performs this demystification of the Tower's form, rendering it quotidian and even banal, is a portable photo frame[79] (*Figure I*). From the front, this frame made of thin, hammered brass in a floral motif does not even appear to be a Tower souvenir. However, the back of the frame is adorned with a foldout stand in the shape of the Eiffel Tower. By "filling in" the negatives space — the openwork — of the Tower's construction to make a solid miniature tower and framing the stand itself with the cut-out shape of a more conventional photo frame stand, this piece equates the seemingly novel form of the Eiffel Tower with the banal, trapezoidal shape common to industrial photo frames intended to stand independently upright on flat surfaces. In scaling down the monument and making its form immediately comprehensible and even banal, this miniature Eiffel Tower fulfills what Monique Mosser calls "the dual function of the [architectural] model…On the one hand it serves the creative process and on the other hand it is supposed to be an immediate comprehensible means of communication with non-specialists" (85). This frame, and other daily objects that I will discuss in this chapter, enable "non-specialists" to ignite their own "creative process" of reconfiguring the Tower narrative by making it a known entity. The ways in which these objects were

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[79] I have not been able to tell for sure whether this item dates from the1889 or 1900 *Exposition*. I found several examples of it in online auctions but purchased a copy with a daguerreotype in it. This photo technique and the hammered relief design on the front of the frame (as compared to confirmed souvenirs objects from the period) are what led me to determine it is indeed from my time period. Additionally, despite the loop at the top of the frame that seems too flimsy for most nails, the object does not appear to have this loop as a method to make it wearable, such as on a chatelaine. First, no examples of open photo frames on chatelaines are discussed or photographed in Genevieve Cummins and Nerylla Taunton's extensive work on the objects. Second, I am inclined to believe it was not intended to be worn on the body in any way due to its scale as well as it relative fragility; the thin brass of the frame bends extraordinarily easily, and with these bends comes a risk to the glass. If a person wore this item, they would be not only in danger of damaging the frame but also the photograph, and, indeed, their body from shattered glass!

intended to be handled push against the notion of the Eiffel Tower's position as a wholly macro- marvel on a world stage by showing how the monument's form was already integrated into private life. It is this micro- scale that wove the Eiffel Tower's extraordinary form into the fabric of everyday, ordinary life. Its physical omnipresence, achieved with burgeoning technologies of reproduction, indelibly integrated the Tower into modern life and consciousness.

The brass photo frame presents the most ready example of this integration. While not explicitly coded as feminine, the item's primary purpose as a decorative *bibelot* suggests that it was purchased to adorn a domestic space, likely a wall (with space for a thin nail in the loop at the top) or a shelf (with its Eiffel Tower-shaped fold out stand). Furthermore, I argue that the objective data of its materiality and its spatial logic point to feminine experience. First, the object invites the holder to bend the thin, Tower-shaped stand in and out (a functionality the now-permanent kinks at the joint of the stand indicate was often enjoyed). This manipulation is not only in the most literal sense of touching but also on a more abstract level: while Eiffel's colossus was a nearly unavoidable sight on the Parisian skyline, here on a small frame in the home, bending the photo stand allowed the private citizen to obscure the form of the Tower in favor of the front of the object and, perhaps most importantly, the photo within. Second, the copy of this object that I examined came with an inserted daguerreotype of a little girl, so when the Tower-stand is bent and the photo frame turned to its face, it is her likeness that takes spatial precedence over the Tower. The framed subject(s) could very well have been masculine in other instances, but the young girl in this example reminds us that, in the form of this object and in the prescribed lifestyle of a woman at the time, the private life

of the family supersedes the public excitement of the *Expositions Universelles* and the Eiffel Tower. This primacy of the private[80], and the intimacy of family life, however, does not erase the marvel but rather compounds it. Michael Haldrup contends that welcoming souvenirs into the home "enable[s them] to enchant the lives of their human cohabitants; animating them with affects and emotions, feelings of remembrance, affection, appreciation and loss" (52). The frame, therefore, loses much of its connection to the idea of having visited the Eiffel Tower itself and becomes instead a way to beautify a home with the likeness of a loved one. Its fusing of an exciting architectural marvel with a cherished image allows the object's user to gain a hands-on understanding of the excitement of the monument and its modernity, whether they had visited it or not, as being akin to the intimate passion felt for a beloved person[81].

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[80] In her introduction to the fourth volume of *A History of Private Life* (edited by Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby), Michelle Perrot declares that "The nineteenth century was the golden age of private life, a time when the vocabulary and reality of private life took shape" (2). In the same volume, Lynn Hunt notes that, in the wake of the French Revolution, "Woman became the figure of fragility who had to be protected from the outside world (the public); she was the representation of the private" (45). Yet, in her state of "protection" from the outside world, the bourgeois woman became the primary architect of the "vocabulary and reality of private life" in an era when the private began to eclipse the public.

[81] Nicole Hudgins seeks to dismantle historians' contention that early photographic portraits merely sought to prove that "their subjects either conformed to bourgeois ideals of materialistic display and 'family values,' or they aspired to do so" by reminding us of the emotional content of these images (560). She reminds us that "We view our own posed portraits with a grain of salt (i.e., humor, irony, tongue-in-cheek, embarrassment, even horror), and I see no reason to think that families in the past were less capable than we are of separating illusion from reality" (562). Therefore, the portrait of the little girl in the Eiffel Tower frame, while indeed a primary document attesting the modernity of the photographic technology and her family's ability to afford and preserve its products, is also a vital source of emotional history.

Figure II
Pen nib circa 1900; steel; 1.25" x 0.44" (3.18 x 1.12 cm)
Inscription: "Blanzy Poure et Cie. / Plume Grand Prix / N° 798 F"
Author's personal collection; Photo by author

Whereas the photo frame comments on the familiarity of the monument in isolation, a pen nib comments more broadly on the greater "puissance industrielle" of the Tower in its capacity as a tool — specifically, a tool most likely designated for women. The era of mass-production — which engendered and was exemplified by Gustave Eiffel's achievement in iron — also saw tools for artistic creation landing in a greater number of hands. The founding of Blanzy, Poure & Cie. in 1846 heralded the end of the age of feather quills and ushered in the era of more durable and inexpensive metal pen nibs in France. Yet, despite the new abundance of steel nibs sold by the box, this new marvel of manufacturing did not do much to change gendered writing practices. The true symbolic might of "the [literary] pen," while not confined entirely to masculine hands, was only accorded to the palatable *femme banale* in the public sphere, with only few Belle Époque women writers — notably Louise-Marie Compain, Gabrielle Reval, Renée-Tony d'Ulmès, Colette Yver, and the particularly prolific Marcelle Tinayre — known for writing specifically for a female audience, with only a limited ability to speak to more radical, underlying women's issues (Waelti-Walters 537). And yet, women were some of

the most prolific, unpublished writers in the private sphere when the definition of "writing" is expanded to the act of correspondence. Marie-Claire Hoock-Demarle asserts that even the *écriture ordinaire* of these *femmes ordinaires* was notable in that the ensemble of epistolary texts "élaborent de fait un nouvel espace à soi spécifique aux femmes" away from the prying eyes of husbands and fathers (74). Though a superficial reading of this pen nib might indicate that it was merely ornamental, of little consequence, and used for frivolous decoration, it, like the women it may have belong to, attested to a limitless creative potential embedded in the imagined Eiffel Towers at women's writing desks. Though this particular "novelty nib" was never used to write[82] — and most extant copies show no signs of ever having been used to write[83] — its possibilities for feminine creative production are perhaps even more inspiring than any sign of heavy use.

[82] The Pen Museum in Birmingham — the birthplace of the metal dip pen — even consigns Eiffel Tower nibs to a separate display case (Kent).
[83] I recognize that this is probably survivorship bias at play; unused, "pristine" copies of these mass-produced items are more commercially viable and therefore "lesser" copies are not photographed for online sale.

Figure III
Scissors circa 1889; steel; 5.94" x 2.38" (15.09 x 6.05 cm)
Inscriptions: Front "A & G Déposé / Exposition Universelle" Back "Paris 1889 / Exposition Universelle"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

Alongside private epistolary writing, feminine creative energy found other outlets. Luckily, just as innovations in metalworking led to the rise of affordable pen nibs, they also produced economical sewing supplies. Survivorship bias[84] in the antique *nécessaires*

[84] In archaeology, "survivorship bias" refers to a tendency to draw historical assumptions based on extant material proof. One must acknowledge that the specimens that survived likely survived for a reason. For example, some of the scissors that I go on to describe are plated in gold and silver. This precious composition imparts value to the objects, making it more likely that they would be kept and handed down within families. More conventional, utilitarian scissors would be more likely to fall by the wayside. Therefore, in drawing conclusions, one must consider those lost specimens that did not "survive" the ravages of time.

de couture, or sewing kit, market might lead the modern online auction browser to believe that sewing supplies in Belle Époque France were rarified objects plated with silver and gold and fashioned in a diminutive scale for ladies' *chatelaines*, a sort of feminine "tool belt"[85]. Though the items clipped onto a chatelaine, such as sewing needle holders, miniature notebooks, and scissors gave the impression that this wearable item was a sort of feminized utility belt, they were often designed to be aesthetically pleasing first and functional second. Perhaps the primary function of a chatelaine and its dangling objects were to adorn a lady's corseted waist — arguably her most feminine part in the age of the constricting, wasp-waisted *corset pigeonnant* — with a sheen of bourgeois domesticity for the lady of the house. The preponderance of chatelaine scissors in auctions and collectors' guides makes the pair of relatively simple 1889 *Exposition Universelle* scissors all the more surprising. Although fashioning scissors after the architectural darling of the *Exposition Universelle* indicates a certain flight of fancy, the scissors themselves are surprisingly utilitarian. They are at least fifty percent longer than most chatelaine scissors at almost five and three-quarters inches (about fourteen and a

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[85] Genevieve E. Cummins and Nerylla Taunton's striking book on chatelaines takes care to separate those objects which were marked as status symbols versus those intended to be heavily used. They note that the vogue for chatelaines began in the 1880s with the culture of the "lady of the castle," but ultimately "The housekeeper, nanny, and governess wore a more basic version of the standard chatelaine," and nurses in particular adopted it as a way to "have the tools of her trade close to hand" (220). While many of the chatelaines that make collections today (including my own mother-in-law's many pieces) and indeed many of the fashionable objects photographed for Cummins and Taunton's book — including its cover — were rendered in silver, those accorded to working women were often fashioned of hardier materials such as leather and steel (221). There were "base metal" chatelaines intended for the mass market, but these were, first, as highly ornamental as their silver cousins, and second, presented scissors in reduced scale or even in folding form. My scissors are almost half as long as the chatelaines themselves. It is on these material lines that I have concluded my scissors were less objects of artistic virtuosity and social signaling than humble tools intended for everyday use.

half centimeters) long, making them more practically scaled for the hand, and their fabrication in relatively dull steel makes them close cousins to inexpensive Singer factory-grade scissors. Their minimal engraving, while nonetheless ornamental, contrasts with the floral reliefs common to chatelaine scissors. All signs point to these utilitarian Eiffel Tower scissors being destined to be purchased for a relatively low price, taken home from the *Exposition* or a souvenir boutique, and *used* for daily household sewing tasks.

And yet, signs of touch on my copy of the scissors tell an entirely different story. While the flowers at the base of each handle are nearly worn off on the right side of both the front and the back of the item (indicating that a right-handed person would have operated them) the blades show no signs of use, with none of the telltale scratches of wear from the blades crossing each other from being used to cut or, even more tellingly, signs of having been sharpened, for the original beveled edge is intact with no signs of having been revised by abrasive sharpening methods — whetstones and files. There are two explanations for these peculiar signs of tactile engagement. First, the scissors are markedly unpleasant to hold. While early mass-produced scissors were not manufactured with today's ergonomic "right-handed" and "left-handed" curves, they certainly did not have the pointed shapes these scissors have on both sides of each rounded handle and on either side of the "first floor" to mimic the shape of the Eiffel Tower. One can imagine that these efforts at whimsy would be most unwelcome during serious sewing endeavors, as they would cut into the user's hands when they worked with the scissors. The second, far more interesting explanation is that the manufacturer's intent to create an inexpensive and useful souvenir was ultimately thwarted by actual use. The signs that the scissors

were manipulated so often as to wear off the floral motifs without any signs of wear on the blades suggests that their owner[86] often caressed the item, holding it for the sheer pleasure of examining it rather than using it to cut.

These almost worshipful touch patterns convey a certain "magical" capability in the scissors. In her investigation of the appeal of architectural miniatures in Enlightenment-era France, Monique Mosser posits that the appeal of miniature objects made to resemble architecture may come from the "symbolic — relatively magic — implications of the reducing process…[a miniature] creates, as it were, a concentrated picture, the quintessence of the monument in small format" (73). Michael Haldrup unpacks what this "magic" of the miniature means for souvenir objects — citing Nissa Ramsay — when he writes,

> [T]ourist objects such as souvenirs form part of broader flows and networks that connect ordinary homes and lives with extraordinary places, sites and events. Souvenirs are capable of producing 'refracted enchantment' through 'the material qualities and affordances of things in barely noticed habitual encounters.' (209)

The scissors, repeatedly touched in "habitual encounters" with their female owner, defy their masculine manufacturer's intended use — cutting household textiles or paper — in the "ordinary home" to give a new, "barely noticed" life to the caressed object as well as to the woman doing the caressing. Haldrup extends the magic of the souvenir to the beholder, positing that

> [Souvenir objects] establish relations to distant places by 'personalizing' them and presenting them in the home; continually enabling us to establish who we are (or

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[86] I acknowledge that this wear may also be from those who owned the scissors after their original owner and before me, but the consistent pattern of the wear as well as its being covered in patina over the years makes me confident that an early owner wore off the flower engravings. Regardless, the consistency of the patterns of touch leads me to believe it was one individual only who repeatedly held the scissors, rather than a "show-and-tell" situation where it was passed within a group.

> want to be), with whom we are (or were) and the stories and fantasies of ourselves and our present (or absent) loved ones, that we live by in our everyday. (57)

This fantastical identity-formation afforded by the scissors flouts not only how they were intended to be used but the foundations of the "puissance industrielle" the Tower was meant to symbolize. Even as the scissors seemed to never be used to cut, their owner repeatedly picked them up, holding them in her dominant hand as if she were about to use them, making them an object of *possibility*. Encoded in this object is the idea that women could participate in the industrial age as well, engaging in small-scale manufacturing as sewing supplies grew more abundant and accessible[87]. Holding the familiar form of household scissors, ever so slightly tweaked to liken them to the marvel of modern, masculinized industry, the possibilities of mass-production became personally comprehensible to a bourgeois woman and she could see and *feel* herself participating in it.

Comparing the two tool souvenirs, the scissors and the pen nib, yields even greater interpretive implications for the Eiffel Tower. Despite the ways in which both objects comment on and modify the visual form of the Eiffel Tower by drawing an equivalence between its supposedly novel shape and banal household tools, patterns of tactile engagement — a bend in the photo frame stand, lack of touch on the pen nib, repeated touch on the scissors' handles — lead to new conclusions. Female beholders of the Tower did not engage with it in expected ways, writing postcards with fanciful novelty nibs and dutifully sewing with mass-produced steel scissors, but instead came to

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[87] I will address women in the burgeoning textile industry later in the chapter with regard to an embroidered postcard. I have examined these scissors, based on their non-utilitarian patterns of touch, as a bourgeois plaything, but working class women were the primary participants in the new, mechanized culture of sewing.

their own conclusions about what the Eiffel Tower meant for them. Just as the brass frame layers a personal memento in front of a souvenir depiction of the monument, the scissors' evidence of unexpected use puts the personal before the programmatic. For female beholders of the Tower, the true "art des constructions métalliques" lay not with its visions of modernity but with its infinite possibilities for physical engagement and reciprocated transformation. In manipulating these miniatures of the Tower, a bourgeois woman could assert herself over her domestic environment. That the tools in these acts resembled the Eiffel Tower also gave her a chance to physically manipulate and transform the monument in parallel to more abstract transformations of her own potential. Although Michel de Certeau's "tactiques de consommation" were theorized with regard to new, twentieth-century media, the idea that they are the "ingéniosités du faible pour tirer parti du fort, [qui] débouchent sur une politisation des pratiques quotidiennes" aptly describes the subversive ways in which bourgeois women of the Belle Époque could, in transforming souvenir objects physically, resist prescribed social norms to transform their own roles in life (xvii). By putting a photo of a loved one before the Eiffel Tower-shaped photo stand (and indeed bending, and deteriorating that stand), refusing to write with a novelty nib that cast their written production as frivolous, and flouting conventional uses for scissors to foreground personal pleasure, the owners of these souvenir objects manifested silent acts of resistance against expectations for women in the home and expectations for what the colossus on the *Champ de Mars* would come to mean.

Accessing the *Ascensionniste*

One of Gustave Eiffel's scientific arguments for the utility of the Tower in his book *Travaux scientifiques exécutés à la tour de trois cents mètres de 1889 à 1900*

(1900) was that the unprecedented altitude of the monument generated positive effects for visitors' health. Eiffel invited Dr. Albert Hénocque to conduct physiological experiments on the Tower and publish his findings in *Travaux scientifiques*. The resulting essay largely presents empirical data, but one anecdotal conclusion stands out:

> Un air d'une grande pureté et particulièrement vivifiant, détermine, principalement chez les femmes, une excitation psychique se traduisant par la gaieté, des conversations animées, joyeuses, le rire, l'attrait irrésistible à monter plus haut encore, jusqu'au drapeau, en somme une excitation générale qui rappelle aux voyageurs celle que provoquaient chez eux des ascensions dans les stations de hautes montagnes. Pour peu que le séjour au sommet se prolonge, cette impression s'accentue. (195-6)

Hénocque's medical language in the rest of his essay as well as his more figurative depiction of women displaying "une excitation physique" towards "l'attrait irresistible" of the Tower experience recalls the fascination with the feminine mind-body connection — and paroxysm — ignited by Jean-Martin Charcot's work on hysteria in the late nineteenth-century. This pathologized testimony is one of many views of female experience on the Tower through the masculine lens: anonymous women adorn front-page engravings in the popular press, enrich written descriptions of visitors in official accounts, and are choreographed into the exact same poses in Neurdein Frères' official Eiffel Tower souvenir photographs[88]. Even postcards I have encountered that either depict the Tower or were sent from its post office by women usually have messages of personal significance rather than pointed observations of their ascent. Women were observed on the Tower, but did not make their own observations in a public forum; the public space and discourse of the Tower remained thoroughly masculinized despite this

[88] These I saw in numerous online auctions and I own one that depicts a pair of men. None appear to be in major collections, so the names of the women — and men — in them are largely lost to history.

female presence.

Despite their nonverbal testimonies, souvenir objects are among the most valuable of primary documents of women's experiences for this significant portion of early Eiffel Tower tourism. Just as with items destined for the home, it is less the design of the objects themselves than the traces of tactile, bodily engagement with these objects that testify to women's experiences with the Tower.

While the breathless accounts of visiting the Eiffel Tower fit into a long tradition of textual records of touristic experience, it is essential to understand tourism as a primarily physical act. In his history of domestic tourism in the French Middle Ages, Léonard Dauphant notes that towers, perhaps more than other manmade touristic sites, elicited a particular desire for corporeal experience:

> Avant le tourisme organisé…existait le tourisme qui consistait à faire l'ascension des hautes tours rencontrées en chemin. En arrivant dans une nouvelle ville, monter sur la tour la plus haute est un rite pour les voyageurs…Le rituel est bien fixé: compter les marches en montant, jouir du "joyeux spectacle de la vue." (85)

This medieval enjoyment of the panoramic spectacle at the top of a tower recalls Michel de Certeau's highly influential theory, advanced in "Marches dans la ville," that the modern urbanity of skyscrapers taps into the erotic desire to "en jouir violemment" and "voir l'ensemble" (2). Just as de Certeau evokes an all-knowing, erotic conquering in "l'érotique de savoir," Dauphant concludes his passage on tower tourism with a more literal domination: "Dominer du regard la région n'est pas une nécessité militaire, mais un symbole de pouvoir" (85). Yet, understanding the act of mounting towers through erotic and physically strategic lenses is to understand the experience of the ascent in thoroughly masculinized terms of sexual and martial domination. On the other hand, the souvenir objects that encapsulate women's experiential enjoyment of the Tower focus

less on these ultimate ends and more on the means of arriving; it would appear that women were able to focus more on the joy of what Dauphant describes as “compter les marches en montant” in forming their own, intimate histories of the Tower.

Figure IV

Coins 1889; copper (unpolished, polished); 1.75" diameter (4.45 cm)
Inscriptions: Front "Les Travaux ont commence le 27 jan 1897 / Le Monument a été inauguré le 6 mai 1889/ Invalides 105, Not. Dame 66, Cologne 159, Opéra 56, Pyramide 146, Panthéon 83, St. Pierre 132, Arc de Triomphe 45, Rouen 150, Obélisque Washington 159, Tour Eiffel 300" ; Back (coin at top) "Cuivre / Souvenir de mon ascension au 1er étage de la Tour Eiffel / M. Lavenère/ 11 juillet 1889 / 1889 / Usine Métallurgique Parisienne"; Back (coin at bottom) "Cuivre / Souvenir de mon ascension au sommet de la Tour Eiffel / Loisy/ 1889 / Usine Métallurgique Parisienne"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

Before I address souvenir objects for women specifically, I would like to demonstrate how one "unisex" souvenir came close to *embodying* enjoyment but ultimately gives in to the homogenizing effect of the totality. One abundant category of extant *Exposition Universelle de 1889* objects is that of coins commemorating "mon ascension" of the levels of the Tower (*Figure IV*). One such coin, sold exclusively at the Tower and manufactured at the same iron foundry as its beams, Levallois-Perret[89], commemorates having reached the first floor and another the summit[90]. Each is engraved with a name ("M. Lavenère" and "Loisy" respectively) in two different fonts and indeed varying levels of embossing, indicating that, while the coin was purchased at the Tower, visitors would have gotten it engraved elsewhere[91]. This level of personalization linked to discrete physical locations would seem to suggest that the likely male visitors who got their coins engraved enjoyed the act of "counting the steps," but the reliefs on the other side of the pieces reveal a different perspective. The two coins share the same motif, a comparison of the (formally unmodified) Eiffel Tower to other world monuments[92]. Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby calls such assemblies of world monuments "ahistorical

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[89] The coin itself only reads "Usine métallurgique parisienne," but Lucien Paris (Drouot) has sold several examples with paper covers denoting that it was Gustave Eiffel's factory that made these coins.

[90] Coins for the second floor exist as well, but they are less common. This does not necessarily reflect the reality that the first floor was the most popular (ticket sales yielded 1,987, 287 francs), the second floor the second-most popular (1,283,230 francs), and the summit the least popular (579,384 francs) (*La Tour de trois cents mètres* 229). However, receipts cannot account for sentiment. People may have felt that taking the first step of ascending to the first floor and completing the ascent by reaching the summit were more worthy of commemoration.

[91] Indeed, some coins have names scratched onto them unevenly, suggesting manual carving. Lucien Paris (Drouot) has sold some coins in mint condition without any engraving.

[92] These are noted by name and by height in meters: "Invalides 105, Not. Dame 66, Cologne 159, Opéra 56, Pyramide 146, Panthéon 83, St. Pierre 132, Arc de Triomphe 45, Rouen 150, Obélisque Washington 159, Tour Eiffel 300."

[because] they appear to be products of a linear progression in which buildings of one era surpass those of another," attesting to a spatio-temporal "flattening" of each monument (17). Although this collage of colossi does not represent the view a visitor would have from the summit, it recalls Ben Highmore's observation that "the 'view from above…has been associated with the planner's perspective, privileging the demands of a generalized urbanism" over more unique lived experiences of those actually living in the planner's design (3). In such arrays, as in Highmore's "planner's perspective," the experience of the monument is depersonalized. Therefore, though these objects' commemoration of reaching different floors of the Tower and the invitation to engrave visitors' names would seem to nod to an enjoyment of the journey over the destination, the coin — quite literally — prefaces this micro- experience with the macro- view of the conqueror of heights, of the "érotique du savoir," and of architectural eras.

Figure V
Fan 1900; paper, wood, and metal fastener; 11.41" x 20.87" (29 x 53 cm)
Inscription: Edge "Le Pratique, utile et agréable guide éventail de l'Exposition Universelle de Paris 1900 par Albert Fourrier"
Hubert Cavaniol's personal collection; Photo by Damien Lieber

In a similar manner, the first *Exposition Universelle* souvenir I encountered, a handheld paper fan specifically designed for women, foregrounds personalized experience of the Tower. Yet, when it fell into the hands of male collectors in the late nineteenth century its intimacy was conquered and possessed. In the 2014 exhibition "Paris 1900: La Ville Spectacle" at the *Petit Palais* museum, I was first introduced to historical souvenir objects through a folding paper fan from Hubert Cavaniol's private collection (*Figure V*). When I visited Cavaniol personally in 2018, he was glad to unfold the fragile item for me, but he insisted that "il n'y a pas de Tour Eiffel là dedans." And yet, my memory did not betray me, for there it was: at the bottom of the orange rectangle of the *Champ de Mars* on the right side of the fan, four green (to represent the trees at the

Tower's base) and orange (to represent the iron arch feet) rectangles are labeled "Tour Eiffel." It is easy to understand how Cavaniol missed the Tower depiction on one of his prized possessions; this is a very unique formal mutation indeed, marking out only the base of the Tower insofar as it framed other *Exposition* attractions.

Though the Tower was significantly less popular at the 1900 World's Fair[93], it was still an enormous attraction and certainly a considerable presence. Therefore, while the fan's functionality as a walking map could explain that the monument is depicted as it would physically impede a stroll through the fairgrounds, its formal reduction seems more purposeful than that. Just as the sheen of the Tower's novelty had somewhat worn off, the *Exposition Universelle de 1900* represented less of a novel event than that of eleven years prior — albeit a no less popular one. Perhaps because the best practices of the 1889 event were still fresh in planners' minds, there was a neatly prescribed way to visit the *Exposition*. In his study of "mobile visualities" at the 1900 *Exposition Universelle*, Erkki Huhtamo addresses the role of maps and other prescriptive guides at this event: "[the fair was] a highly 'scripted' space. The visitors' movements are part of the overall design. Their steps are as if taken in advance, routes trodden, maps and guidebooks printed, and signs posted" and yet, he concedes, "people don't always do what they are told" (64). Perhaps because visitors already had metabolized the model of the 1889 fair, they were more likely in 1900 to "[draw] their own 'psychogeographies' over a pre-mapped terrain" and therefore "countless idiosyncratic maps, all different and yet all strangely reminiscent of each other, were drawn by animated feet at any one time" (65). The fan's treatment of the Eiffel Tower is perhaps the ultimate invitation for its

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93 Proof that the novelty of the monument had worn off is in the numbers: "half as many sightseers — a million — ascended its heights during the 1900 fair" (Jonnes 295).

holder to pursue their own psychogeography of the *Exposition*, regarding the massive monument at its center as secondary to their own experience of the fair. The fan's reduced Eiffel Tower serves as the polar opposite of the ascension coins even as it remains rooted in space; it is perhaps a "souvenir de *non*- ascension," should its holder have chosen not to partake.

The bold psychogeographer armed with a copy of this map-fan was almost certainly a woman, yet the near-mint condition of this extant example suggests that the item, and through it her experience, was then co-opted and conquered by a man. Erin Edgington calls the folding fan "a ubiquitous component of women's dress" in the late nineteenth century that "also attracted the attention of some prominent collectors and Orientalists" — who were almost invariably male. In Edgington's reading of Octave Uzanne's *L'Éventail* (1882), she determines that the principal erotic interest men held for this women's accessory was in its function "as a semi-permeable boundary between the public and the private," which Uzanne hails as "l'interprète de vos sentiments cachés" (Edgington 666). This masculine fascination with the eroticism of the fan translated into an impulse to take the fan out of women's hands and place it on a pedestal; Edgington notes that numerous published volumes towards the end of the century and a crowning exhibition at the Grolier Club in 1891 solidified the fan's status "as a serious collector's item only partially trivialized by its connection with women"[94] [95](665). Indeed, when I

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[94] I will discuss a very similar, gendered evolution of postcard collecting later in this chapter.

[95] Gustave Eiffel had his own souvenir fan: "Eiffel kept an autograph book in the form of a folding fan decorated with views of the tower." It was signed by such luminaries as composer Charles Gounod, Ernest Meissonier, Frédéric Mistral, and Thomas Edison Historian Joseph Harriss observed the fan in-person circa 1970 at the private residence of Henriette Venot, a descendant of Gustave Eiffel (Harriss 140).

asked Hubert Cavaniol why the *Exposition* fan was one of the jewels of his collection, he remarked that, beyond their inherent vice as paper objects, they were "souvent jetés; elles auront utilisés les éventails pour se rafraîchir en baladant l'Exposition et puis elles les auront jetés." Therefore it is quite likely that the reason Cavaniol's pristine copy of the fan exists today is because it was seized by a male collector who viewed the object as a piece of art or ephemera he wanted to "save" rather than use as a tool. Though the fan ultimately fell prey to a physical conquest, its depiction of the Eiffel Tower as only one of an infinite number of stops a woman could take on her unique journey at the event fans away efforts to truly temper her physical and psychogeographical experience.

It is when we get closer to the body that we get closest to unadulterated accounts of feminine Tower experiences. The coins intended for both sexes are almost entirely divorced from the body (even as there is some pleasure in stroking the relief of the monuments on the face) and eschew individual experience to focus on a macro- view, whereas the fan comes close as an intermediary between the outside world and the internal world of its holder but ultimately does not bear significant evidence of tactile testimony. Wearable souvenir objects, such as garments and jewelry, peel back these depersonalized layers and give testimony to women's lived experiences in their traces of bodily engagement. In a similar manner to how household objects like the frame, pen nib, and scissors translated the novelty of the Eiffel Tower into something familiar and accessible, items meant to be worn allowed the consumer to literally immerse herself in the new monument without necessarily undertaking the climb. This desire for immersion was a popular one, as a sadly non-extant — and not even depicted — souvenir dress enjoyed great popularity. The May 31, 1889 edition of *Le Figaro* responded to a reader's

query about the dress with a description:

> L'Eiffel-ascensionniste, madame, se compose, comme je vous l'ai dit, d'une série de petits collets étagés, dont le plus grand couvre les épaules en descendant à peu près jusqu'au coude. Les collets sont, ou de même nuance claire, ou, ce qui est le plus grand chic, de nuances allant par gradation : gris foncé, gris perle, clair, blanc…Très léger, pas embarrassant, il peut servir de sortie de bal ou de théâtre. (Le Liseux 2)

While the *Figaro* writer emphasized the aesthetics of the garment, historian Joseph Harriss attributed its construction to a more practical use, noting that its "superposed collars [had] the pretext of protecting the adventurous wearer against cooler temperatures at high altitudes (122). While I have not been able to locate an extant copy or even a photo of the *ascensionniste* dress, its physical aspects set the stage for other wearable souvenirs. First, the dress from Rue Auber did not, according to Harriss's account, iterate the form of the Tower itself but instead reflected the physiological experience of ascent. Even if the "superposed collars" did not actually fulfill their promise of insulating the visiting woman from the cold, their inclusion prioritizes the physicality of a woman's climb. Infusing the visual and fashionable with the physical and practical indicates that this design, while still certainly charming and in-demand, valued women's internal experience as well as external perception. It made a direct appeal to the aesthetic values of bourgeois female society while recognizing its wearer as a sensory individual. Second, the clothing item represents a mutable souvenir object. While even the tools I described earlier in the chapter remain in a static, metallic form of the Eiffel Tower, the *Eiffel ascensionniste* dress would have had to conform to the body of its wearer. This accommodation of the body would happen not only in the custom tailoring in this era before ready-to-wear clothing but also in the actual experience of wearing the dress. Although I have not found extant copies of the garment, the physical experience of

wearing clothing transcends eras, and we can imagine how the wearer's body would have interacted — and left traces on — this artifact. If an *ascensionniste* donned the dress as she scaled the Tower, at the end of the day it would bear wrinkles from climbing stairs, deformations from body heat or cold wind, and stains from the elements as well as *Exposition* crowds' debris. These seemingly quotidian signs of wear, when paired with an unprecedented experience, would constitute evidence of an intimate micro-history, pointing to how an otherwise silent female visitor experienced and embodied the Eiffel Tower ascent.

Figure VI
Locket circa 1900; sterling silver, daguerreotypes; 1.00" x 0.75" (2.54 x 1.91 cm)
Inscription: Photo Captions "La Tour Eiffel," "Le Dôme des Invalides," "Tombeau de Napoléon," "Notre-Dame," "L'Opéra," "L'Arc de Triomphe," "Le Palais du Trocadéro"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

While the *Eiffel ascensionniste* dress has eluded posterity and did not modify the form of the Eiffel Tower itself[96], other objects such as a locket furnish similar physical evidence that interprets the monument (*Figure VI*). "Charm"-style keepsakes were very common, leading Parisian Paul Bluysen, who authored the volume, *Paris en 1889: Souvenirs et croquis de l'Exposition* just after the titular *Exposition*, to complain:

> "Is it necessary to enumerate the models of the tower in leather, gold, silver, lead, nickel, rolled gold, zinc, crystal which have no practical usefulness and which one puts in one's pocket simply to possess as a good luck charm the colossus of the Champ de Mars?" (qtd. in Grigsby 159)

Today, the ubiquitous "good luck charms" of Bluysen's lament, while still plentiful in online auctions, are much rarer, with only the finest examples surviving the ravages of time. One such object, depicted in Figure VI, is a diminutive example of the popular book-shaped miniature album, reminiscent of the normative *Exposition* guides, rendered in

[96] It could, however, be noted that the "petits collets étagés" of the garment represented a meta-commentary on the construction, in stages of the Tower. Yet, the arches, pylons, and ironwork that exemplify the Tower's visual form were not present in the dress.

sterling silver. Unlike the similarly shaped lockets in Hubert Cavaniol's collection, whose enameled covers profess to encapsulate the entirely of the *Exposition,* the front cover of my charm bears an Eiffel Tower specifically. The miniature daguerreotypes inside Cavaniol's lockets and my own are also formally comparable, depicting long-distance shots of architectural sites in isolation, but mine dedicates its pages not to the ephemeral pavilions of the exhibition but instead to canonical Parisian sites[97]. Its photos include Le Dôme des Invalides (and a separate photo of the Tombeau de Napoléon inside), Notre-Dame, L'Opéra, L'Arc de Triomphe, and Le Palais du Trocadéro. All of these monuments are not only encased in a sterling silver cover depicting the Eiffel Tower in relief, but indeed the first photo of the set, affixed to the back of the cover, is of the Eiffel Tower. On its surface level alone, this souvenir object dating from approximately 1900 makes the statement that, in the eyes of the object's designer and its owner, Paris's newest grand structure was equivalent to and perhaps even surpassed the monuments of past centuries.

Though this parallelism of images would seem to refute the idea that the Tower, unlike these colossi of the past, was ephemeral, evidence of physical engagement with the locket points to a far more interesting conclusion. When I visited Paris in 2018 to acquire souvenir objects for this chapter, I gleefully wore my locket while visiting my favorite postcard vendor, Patrick-René Prins in the Passage des Panoramas. As I sifted through his offering of Eiffel Tower postcards, I shared the locket with him. After careful examination, he concluded, "Même s'il vous plait de porter cette jolie pièce, je vous conseille de ne pas le faire. Il vaut beaucoup mieux conserver l'objet dans une boîte sans humidité ni lumière." Due to the chemical composition of the early photographs inside

[97] Indeed, the relief on the back cover of the monument is the official Paris coat of arms, finalizing a hyper-local frame for the object.

the locket, my body heat posed a significant threat to their preservation even if I kept the locket itself closed and away from any light source. Prins's advice not only led me to stop wearing the locket, but also to look for any signs that such chemical change had already occurred. After comparing the clarity of the photos in my locket to those in Hubert Cavaniol's three specimens, I concluded that my locket was likely worn (or at least kept outside of a jewelry box) frequently: while Cavaniol's photos are dark brown and white, mine are yellowed and faded — especially that of the Eiffel Tower.

This unique chemical reaction between the locket's photos and the wearer's body is what creates a formal, intimate revision of the monument itself. Though photography is necessarily an iterative art form, the fundamental instability of these early daguerreotypes leads to the slow blending and even erasure of parts of the Tower. In my example, only the first and second floors of the Tower are truly intact; the rest of structure soaring into the sky is foggy and its famed openwork is almost completely obfuscated. It is nearly impossible to say whether it was the original owner's body heat or that of the item's subsequent collectors that caused these changes in the photograph, but regardless of who set the process in motion, it is the *possibility* of intimate physical modification that is important. A feminine wearer of this locket, simply by holding the item close to her body, could personalize her view of the monument after-the-fact by idiosyncratically modifying a mass-produced depiction of the Tower. Perhaps even more compellingly, although the public-facing miniature silver Tower on the front of the locket's faithful reproduction of the monument would remain intact, the internal photo would inscribe — however inadvertently — a unique, private version of the structure onto the pages of its album.

The increasing degrees of proximity to women's personal experience afforded by

the ascension medals, the fan, and the locket ultimately interrogate Roland Barthes's dichotomy of Tower vistas. In *La Tour Eiffel*, Barthes presents the juxtaposition between the extremely close view of the ascent with the extremely far view in the urban landscape:

> …pour [ceux qui prennent] l'escalier, c'est le spectacle grossi de tous les détails, plaques, poutrelles, boulons qui *font* la Tour, la surprise de voir comment cette forme toute droite, que l'on consomme de tous les coins de Paris comme une ligne…sorte de démystification apportée par le simple grossissement du niveau de perception…Ainsi la Tour-objet fournit à son observateur…toute une série de paradoxes, la contraction savoureuse d'une apparence et de sa réalité contraire. (50)

Annette Fierro further distills these contrasting viewpoints: "for Barthes [there are] two diametrically opposed states of the observer's consciousness—mystification and rational engagement" (56). On the surface, the medals, fan, and locket seem to be definitive proof that a "grossissement du niveau de perception" and Fierro's "rational engagement" are made concrete; as the beholder held these depictions of the Eiffel Tower close to them, they would theoretically come to understand it more clearly. And yet, these objects are miniature; materially, they are the opposite of "grossissement." By representing the Tower as a whole (or the impression of a whole, in the case of the fan), these "Tours-objets" in fact capture the far view, the mystified Tower. In this sense, they turn Barthes's dichotomy inside-out: by engaging closely with the far view of the Tower, the original owners of these souvenir objects ultimately created their own personal "myths" of the structure, rendering the common material experience of the ascent unique and immaterial. Barthes's polarized paradigm therefore seems to lack space for female *ascensionnistes*, whose material testimonies left behind in these objects demonstrate that "rational engagement" with the Tower up close during the visit gave way to its "mystification" in

miniature.

To whom did the Eiffel Tower belong?

One of the numerous *avant-première* events Gustave Eiffel held for his new construction was “une fête intime donnée aux ouvriers du chantier" on March 31, 1889. Yet, since Eiffel also chose this occasion to formally raise the French flag, this intimacy was only a pretext: he also invited government officials and *Exposition* directors to publicly witness the event. After thanking his lead engineers, architects, and metalworkers by name, he addressed the more anonymous members of the crowd in a speech, describing the Tower as “notre œuvre”:

> Je dis notre œuvre; en effet, c'est bien une œuvre qui nous est commune à tous et dont nous pouvons être fiers d'être les collaborateurs à des degrés divers. Vous y avez tous mis ce quelque chose qui ne se paye pas, ne s'achète pas, ne se vend pas; je veux parler du dévouement à l'œuvre elle-même, sans lequel aucune grande chose n'est possible. (*La Tour de trois cents mètres* 312)

It is true that, at this early point in time, the monument’s official title as “La Tour Eiffel” — inextricably belonging to its creator — was not yet canonized and was more likely to appear as “La Tour *de* M. Eiffel” in the popular press. Indeed, Eiffel himself titles the volume wherein this speech is faithfully transcribed *La Tour de trois cents mètres* (1900). However, the presence of officials (“Ministre du Commerce, M. Tirard, Directeurs de l'Exposition, MM. Alphand et G. Berger, les Présidents du Conseil municipal, M. Chautemps, et du Conseil général, M. Jacques”) and Eiffel’s conclusion in the same speech that the workers would remember the evening because of “les témoignages de sympathies qui vous ont été donnés par la présence des éminentes personnalités qui nous entourent” undercut his nod to solidarity in favor of fame and politics (311). Furthermore, the erection of the French flag on this occasion frames Eiffel’s use of “nous” in very

specific, Republican terms.

Regardless of the bounding box of this specific "nous," in this evocation of belonging, Eiffel sets the intriguing precedent that the Eiffel Tower was a co-created monument. His definition of belonging as being the addition of "quelque chose qui ne se paye pas, ne s'achète pas, ne se vend pas," specifically "dévouement à l'œuvre elle-même," while clearly meant to refer to the construction workers, is open to interpretation. Couldn't each and every beholder or visitor to the Tower equally co-construct it with "dévouement?"

Souvenir objects that specifically evoke the act of physically constructing the monument — materially and symbolically — were often made by or for women and children. As I have mentioned earlier in this chapter, many souvenirs for men presented faithful Tower iterations that did not explore its construction (and deconstruction) in the hands of the objects' owners. Certainly, all souvenirs were constructed in the factories from whence they came, but the specific acts by which female and juvenile consumers interacted with their copies of the monument solicited another layer of co-construction. Women's sewn objects and children's toys demonstrate how activities prescribed to them in society allowed these actors to become part of the "nous" in "notre œuvre" by reinterpreting, repossessing, and redefining the most famous monument of their time.

Figure VII
Postcard circa 1904-9; paper, silk gauze, silk floss; 3.50" x 5.38" (8.89 x 13.67 cm)
Inscription: Embroidered Text "Souvenir de la Tour Eiffel"; Printed Text "Carte Postale," "La Correspondance au recto n'est pas acceptée par tous les pays étrangers," "(Se renseigner à la Poste)," "Correspondance," "Adresse"; Handwritten text "A vous petite Simone, un affectueux souvenir et à vos parents, respectueux bonjour. Julie Bammens, Neuilly, le 16-9-1919," "Mademoiselle Simone Godin, 78 rue Fanny, Seraing"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

I evoked sewing as an alternative form of textual engagement earlier in this chapter when discussing the Tower-shaped scissors, but my analysis has not yet extended to the end products of this feminine creative outlet. One of the only extant sewn objects I encountered was an embroidered postcard depicting the Eiffel Tower that I purchased from the aforementioned Patrick Prins (*Figure VII*). Before I analyze the item itself, it is essential to identify a few assumptions I have had to make in identifying its construction techniques and approximate year of creation. First, textile objects are incredibly difficult to find and even more difficult to preserve from the light, heat, and humidity that can lead

to their decay. Just as with the paper fan, it is only due to the enthusiasm of contemporary French collectors for late nineteenth-century postcards that my example and another, similar (but less adorned) one in M. Prins's catalogue exist in such excellent condition. However, those that have endured are likely to be older than the era of my study. Indeed, my card is inscribed with a message dated "16-9-1919," ten years outside of my time frame. Yet, with M. Prin's help, I have been able to authenticate the card itself as being from the period of 1904-1918 because its back permits a written message beyond the address — as authorized by the Post in 1904 — and it bears the inscription "La Correspondance au recto n'est pas acceptée par tous les pays étrangers (*Se renseigner à la Poste*)" which reflects that the international community did not uniformly authorize messages on the backs of cards until 1918. Second, I believe the card and its embroidery date more specifically from 1904-1909 — within my time period — due to the relatively imperfect nature of the embroidery. When I first obtained the card, I believed it to be embroidered by hand since the Eiffel Tower is quite crooked after the second stage, even though the embroidered word "Souvenir" that crosses the beams just before its summit is almost perfectly aligned. However, the relative uniformity of the stitches and the long, automatic stitch connecting the words "Tour" and "Eiffel" at the bottom indicate that this is an example of early mechanized embroidery. Indeed, the Textile Research Centre in the Netherlands identifies embroidered postcards like mine as the most famous products of Josué Heilmann's "*machine à coudre à main"* patented in Mulhouse in 1835. This machine, much like the more famous Jacquard loom (invented in Lyon in 1804), used an early punch-card programming system that required a worker to trace a large-scale pattern to communicate colors, stitch length, and stitch type to Heilmann's machine,

which would then transfer multiple copies of the design onto silk gauze with silk floss. While the vogue for embroidered postcards is largely associated with the first World War, this association may be tainted by survivorship bias, for the society Colombes Philatélie notes that "Les premières cartes brodées connues ont été réalisées en Suisse à la fin du XIXème siècle, mais c'est l'Exposition universelle de 1900 qui marque vraiment l'apparition de ce type de cartes postales" (Colombes Philatélie). Because the card bears the Eiffel Tower, a motif of the *Exposition Universelle de 1900*, and its technique is crooked — unlike the precise cards from the 1910s when the method was truly *de rigueur* — I believe that my example dates from the first decade after the *Exposition* even if it was purchased and written on much later in 1919.

That this card is a product of early mechanical embroidery is of great significance in its acting as a testament to women's participation in the co-construction of the Eiffel Tower's meaning. Mechanized embroidery was only the latest development in a long French tradition of embroidery as a tactile means of forming feminine collectivity. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, Lorraine was the epicenter of European embroidery, much of which was produced by women in the home. Although the painstaking task could be completed independently, it was often a social occasion. Whitney Walton notes that "manufacturers and regional officials indicate that embroiderers often worked together in groups of ten or twelve at a worker's home to share heat and light" and that these working evenings often became "veillées… evening gatherings of local inhabitants for work and socializing [that] were lively, cheerful occasions that strengthened community ties while providing a congenial and relaxed atmosphere for needlework" (51). This convivial atmosphere, while decidedly less

intimate, continued into the factories: though men are depicted as being the operators of Heilmann's machine (while women checked the bobbins), postcards circa 1905 show large groups of women performing the hands-on tasks of generating sample pieces, finishing products, and operating the Singer-like Cornely machines used for large-scale projects (Collins). Though male foremen and engineers supervised the experience, it was female hands that generated the bulk of the embroidered products, making this industry one of the earliest fields that saw female participation in industrial production.

My card was likely produced by women, for women, facilitating a unique rewriting of the Eiffel Tower. While the goldenrod, pink, and magenta colors of the embroidered Tower are largely faithful to the Venetian red paint and golden lights of the monument at the time, the chromatic equivalence drawn to the flowers around the structure is what makes this a uniquely feminine rewriting. The pink floss that makes up the openwork of the Tower is dyed the same hue as three pink flowers just above the first stage and underneath the arches, and the blue bounding lines (around all but the lights of the Tower) echo the small blue flowers above the second stage as well as the text "Souvenir de la Tour Eiffel." Beyond the equivalence of color, there is also a degree of parallelism of form: the vines of flowers reach almost to the summit of the Tower — making room only for the text — and create a reverse arch shape around the arch of the Tower. The Tower, made to harmonize with these floral, feminine motifs, is then refashioned to appeal to a female consumer. Although the message on my card is from 1919, that it is from "Julie Bammens" to a "Mademoiselle Simone Godin" suggests that this aesthetic invited one woman, pleased by a feminized Eiffel Tower, to send it as "un affectueux souvenir" to another woman. The item is a *mise-en-abîme* of female

connection: it is manufactured in a feminine technique, with a feminine design, for feminine communication.

The card shows how Gustave Eiffel's "nous" expands beyond the all-male gathering of builders and officials by making the monument merely a vehicle for all-female communication and women's participation in the industrial age. The card's embroidery process allowed female factory workers to manually participate in the construction of an Eiffel Tower, and its invitation to communicate through it solicited their symbolic involvement in constructing its reputation. Here, as in a contemporaneous Singer advertisement where "a winged sewing machine [flew] over the Eiffel Tower, a rainbow spanning the horizon,"[98] the monument became not only a symbol of "la puissance industrielle" of the *fraternité* but also, in modified form, one of the sisterhood (Coffin 768).

[98] I have not been able to find images of this Singer advertisement.

Figure VIII
Puzzle 1900; paper, wood; Dimensions unknown
Inscription: "Vue Générale de l'Exposition," "Exposition Universelle de Paris 1900"
Hubert Cavaniol's personal collection; Photo by Damien Lieber

Tower souvenir objects also enabled children to experience and participate in the industrial age when they were fashioned as means of play-acting the building — and demolishing — of the Eiffel Tower. Much like textile objects, toys did not often survive the ravages of time since early examples were often made of inexpensive — and easily damaged — paper products. Moreover, these items were intended for play and subject to the often-untidy whims of children, making complete sets from the late nineteenth century extremely rare. A paper and wood puzzle in Hubert Cavaniol's collection is in nearly mint condition, suggesting that it was not played with and, like his paper fan, probably kept out of reach of the children for whom it was likely intended (*Figure VIII*). This item does not modify the Eiffel Tower — save for necessary liberties taken by the illustrator to render it in miniature — but it does indicate a trend in consumer products

that is important for other, more creative objects. Museum conservationist Alison Norton notes that

> Dissected puzzles…originated in eighteenth century England and quickly became very popular toys. The earliest puzzles were high quality items; however changes in the nineteenth century involved the use of poorer materials and the puzzles tend to have deteriorated to a great extent. (Norton)

Cavaniol's puzzle may be flimsy and likely made of the "poorer materials" Norton laments, but it nonetheless has the "wooden puzzle pieces onto which hand coloured prints on paper were adhered" that she goes on to describe. The object is then in an intermediary state indicative of its era: it is made of the lower-quality, mass-produced materials of the industrial age, but its painstakingly hand-colored prints attest to the growing tenderness towards children that coincided with the onset of manufacturing[99]. Although child labor was instrumental to France's industrial might in the early nineteenth-century, by the end of the century bourgeois morality and a lack of economic need to put children to work won out: two laws named for Jules Ferry, minister of public education in the Third Republic, established free and compulsory public education (*loi du 16 juin* 1881) that was soon extended to both sexes (*loi du 28 mars* 1882) and ushered many children, particularly those in urban, industrial areas, out of the workforce (Weissbach). The puzzle reflects this monumental social shift in French childhood. By re-assigning what had once been a luxury parlor game for adults to children, the object manifests not only a political and social prescription for the new childhood of recreation

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[99] Just as manufacturing is "artificial," so too is the state of "childhood," according to Philippe Ariès. He contends in his landmark *Centuries of Childhood* that there is no biological threshold that separates children from adults but instead a barrier of sentiment erected under the Ancien Régime. From sentiment came social customs and representation. In the flurry of material goods in the industrial era, representations of childhood became not only more numerous but more authoritative (Ariès).

but also an aesthetic contention: youth in the *Belle Époque* was to be — or at least aspire to be — veneered with the hand-colored sheen of leisure.

Figure IX
Advertisement card 1889; paper; 3.19" x 4.75" (8.10 x 12.07 cm)
Inscription: Front "Au Bon Marché,""Jouet — La Tour Eiffel," "Lithographie artistique J. Minot & C$^{ie.}$ Editeurs, 5, Rue Béranger Paris"; Back "Au Bon Marché," "Paris," Written twice "R. du Bac, R. de Sèvres. R. Velpeau & R. de Babylone," "Le système de vendre tout à petit bénéfice et entièrement de confiance est absolu dans les magasins du BON MARCHÉ et leur a valu un succès sans précédent, " "The system of selling every article at a minimum profit and of thoroughly reliable quality is the ruling principle of the BON MARCHÉ which has established a success without precedent," "Maison Aristide Boucicaut," "Lithographie artistique J. Minot & C$^{ie.}$ Editeurs, 5, Rue Béranger Paris"
Author's personal collection; Photos by author

A lithographic publicity card for an Eiffel Tower play-set from my personal collection exemplifies the bourgeois desire to editorialize childhood — and suggests a means to bring that idealized vision home (*Figure IX*). The full-color, gilded image on the front of the card paints childhood in glowing terms: fashionably-dressed children with rosy cheeks play with an Eiffel Tower and *Exposition Universelle* model set in a light-

filled *appartement Haussmannien.* Even the social dynamics of the image are orderly and polite: two girls wait to the right of the Tower's first stage and assist the taller, likely older boy to the left as he places the rest of the structure, and two more girls to the far right patiently curb their excitement as they wait their turn. A small inscription on the front of the card — nestled in the foliage visible through the window — hints that this entire spectacle is made possible by the Bon Marché. The back of the cards is more explicit, bearing the title "Au Bon Marché, Paris" and listing the locations, philosophy[100], and founder of the department store. The two sides of the card promise that, should the card's recipient take their business to the Bon Marché, they too could give their children a stylish, healthy bourgeois childhood.

Even as the card presents a carefully ordered, idealized vision, the advertised Eiffel Tower toy embodies potential for disorder. In addition to advertisements like the card, the Bon Marché published some of the most authoritative printed guidebooks to the *Expositions*, texts which sought to "prepare the tourist to recognize — more precisely, to reproduce — the meaning" of sights as desired by *Exposition* planners and sponsors (Wilson 132). On the surface, this idyllic spectacle of children serves a similarly prescriptive function: not only were bourgeois parents *supposed* to surround their children with the new, commercial trappings of childhood, but the children themselves were to patiently and safely engage with the *Exposition* through toys in the home. Yet the actual form of these toys betrays these notions of order.

First, the two girls waiting patiently in the far right clutch architectural models painted with the same cream siding and russet roofs as the *Exposition* pavilions already

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[100] This is in French and English, hinting to its having been distributed on-site at the *Exposition* to an international audience.

put in place to the left of and underneath the Eiffel Tower model. That they are preparing to place these models at will calls to question the placement of the other model buildings surrounding the Eiffel Tower toy. While these miniature buildings, rendered in minute scale on a card intended to foreground the Eiffel Tower, are nearly impossible to identify, certain architectural traits liken them to structures that populated the *Exposition de 1889*. The largest model building just underneath the window recalls the Hôtel des Invalides with its tall central dome and surrounding galleries and courts that obstruct free passage to the center court. In front of it and slightly to the left is a smaller building, whose sloped roof on its central tower and flanking arched windows create a strong resemblance to the 1889 Palais des Colonies, which would have been at the center of the colonial portion of the *Exposition* on the Esplanade des Invalides. While these two buildings are somewhat correctly placed to the East of the Tower — if one faces it on the Left Bank — the two buildings underneath the Tower are incorrectly placed. These two buildings' small scale, ornamental domes and, in the case of the structure further back under the Tower, a single turret, most closely resemble one of the greatest attractions of the *Exposition* buildings placed along the Rue du Caire. This reconstruction of a Cairo street, while possibly visible looking through the Tower's arches on the Left Bank, would have been much further South along the *Champ de Mars*. In fact, in 1889 there were no buildings underneath the Tower, as that space was conserved for gardens and ticket booths. That these buildings are "misplaced" reminds us that children who owned the play-set, like the girls waiting to place their buildings on the card, could literally reshape the geography of the *Exposition* to fit the space in which they played and, most importantly, to meet their own desires. The set's inclusion of the Hôtel des Invalides, the foremost monumental

symbol of France's military might in the nineteenth-century, and of two manifestations of France's colonial power in the Palais Colonial and the Rue du Caire makes the children's reorganization especially disorderly: not only are they rearranging the *Exposition* but they are indeed spatially reconfiguring symbolic pillars of the French empire.

Second, the Eiffel Tower toy itself exhibits possibilities for a similar reorganization and even more loaded possibilities of destruction. The model itself represents a formal departure from the Tower in 1889 in several ways. Perhaps to highlight the advertised toy's novelty, the Tower's color scheme has been inverted on the card: the iron beams are gilded rather than red, and the red paint is transposed to the lights under the first floor and its galleries' interiors. Furthermore, the second floor has been eliminated entirely, for the boy is about to place the square base of the tower's summit directly onto the first stage. This elimination of the Tower's original formal traits is underlined by the idea that, while the card shows the children constructing the Tower, this toy also allows for the Tower to be demolished. These orderly, idealized children work together to put the parts of the Tower in place in the prescribed manner, but it is easy to imagine another, less well-behaved boy placing his Tower top directly onto the ground. Here, the Tower is not treated as a permanent whole but instead as a fractured construction whose deconstruction is not only easy but also inevitable.

In the end, this shining example of a consumerist bourgeois childhood gives children unprecedented power to physically reshape the world around them. Although we do not have written testimonies from children themselves enjoying the *Expositions*, toys like this highlight how they could rake a hands-on approach to understanding and architecturally reordering the fairgrounds and the centerpiece of the Eiffel Tower. Even

as the Bon Marché prescribed ways for children and their families to take in the fair, this souvenir set of toys unwittingly invited children to participate in the construction and even deconstruction of carefully laid plans.

The invitations to women and children to construct their own Eiffel Towers via embroidery and play allowed these actors to not only form their own understanding of the novelty of the Tower but to reconstruct it. Sewing a new feminized monument or playfully reconfiguring a toy model presented socially acceptable means of hands-on engagement that could lead to a sense that the Tower belonged to more than just the men who designed, built, and governed it. Through these objects, feminine and juvenile owners became a part Gustave Eiffel's "nous" of belonging by establishing their own, idiosyncratic "je" in reforming the monument.

Conclusion

When selecting the souvenir objects I wanted to treat in this chapter, I questioned whether I was personally biased as a female researcher when I was drawn to items designated for female audiences. Regardless of whether my contention that the objects made for what Dick Hebdige calls "subordinate groups" — in my case, women and children — were more "interesting" for my study is subjective, I believe there is great value in my having accidentally formed this particular corpus. Many have asked me if "there is anything left to be said about the Eiffel Tower," and the unique primary sources of these souvenir objects bolster my answer that there remains plenty to add to this monument's history. Even in my own research — indeed, in Chapters I and III of this dissertation — the testimonies of male visitors, viewers, and critics of the Eiffel Tower have been the building blocks of its history. In this chapter, I have discussed the concept

of survivorship bias in archaeological objects, but perhaps even more powerful is the survivorship bias in the historiography of the Eiffel Tower. Certainly, the Tower itself is often described as female, women and children are often depicted artistically and photographically near the Tower, and journalists described their often gleeful reactions to visiting the monument, but we must remember that these testimonies are all secondhand accounts furnished by men: male writers, male engravers and photographers, and male journalists. We know that women and children went to the Tower and we have some idea of how they experienced it, but thus far the actual record of how they *lived* the Tower has been missing from its illustrious historiography.

Souvenir objects, bearing material traces of these otherwise silent actors' interactions with the Eiffel Tower, are vital in filling in this historiographical gap. Kinks in a photo frame, refusal to write with a pen nib, and unexpected ways of holding and using a pair of scissors demonstrated that the home was the epicenter for women's reshaping of Paris's newest attraction. While the form of these items, in transmuting the novelty of the Eiffel Tower's form into domestic banality, furnished comments on the structure, the archaeological traces of these items' owners bears greater implications for what the monument would actually come to *mean*. By allowing the souvenir owners to foreground photos of loved ones, reject the classification of letter-writing as frivolous, and put imaginative reverie over domestic tasks, these items hinted at the Eiffel Tower's future as a cultural phenomenon of pleasure tourism that transcended its builders' political and scientific agendas. Likewise, the psychogeographical possibilities of the fan-cum-map of the Exposition and the inherent mutability of the *ascensionniste* dress and souvenir locket bore witness to women's constant personal rewriting of established

programs for the Tower. Even though the fan eventually was likely snatched by male collectors and any physical changes to the dress and locket were probably inadvertent, the intention here matters far less than the space for possibility embodied by these objects and by the Tower itself. By allowing women to create their own path on the fan's map and leave their own bodily marks on the wearable items, these objects point to the Tower's modernity in creating a space for women to take small steps in breaking free from prescribed ways of being and forging their own path to liberation and enjoyment. Lastly, the embroidered postcard and the Bon Marché advertisement card indicate how women and children were active participants in the modernity signaled and exemplified by the Eiffel Tower. As an example of the novel *machine à coudre à main*'s largely female generated output, the embroidered postcard demonstrated that women were not only consumers of industrial products but active participants in new — as well as ancient — modes of manufacturing. Likewise, behind the careful veneer of bourgeois domesticity depicted in the Bon Marché card's advertisement for *Exposition* toys was the chaotic possibility for children to reorganize and reconstruct the fairground and the Tower as its centerpiece, indicating their ability, however infantile, to also shape material modernity. In all of these souvenir objects, the Eiffel Tower and its female and juvenile beholders entered into an exchange: the structure provided the space — both literally and figuratively — for material, social, and aesthetic experimentation, but it was in turn rewritten, reconceived, and reformed by even the most unlikely of authors.

Conclusion: Remaining, but Recasting

"La Science aux yeux clairs et l'Industrie active,
Ont érigé, parmi les palais spacieux,
La Tour de fer, par où l'on croit monter aux cieux.
Spectacle unique, étrange, et vraiment grandiose!
Là dans un radieux décor d'apothéose,
Les Nations verront resplendir au soleil
Tous mes trésors en leur plus superbe appareil:
Ce qui fait mon orgueil et ce qui fait ma force…"

— From "Le Chant du siècle," by Émile Blémont[101]

Ultimately, why *is* the supposedly ephemeral Eiffel Tower still standing in — mostly — its original form? While I have examined the answer to this question analytically through multiple lenses, I have not yet spelled out the logistical reasons why the Tower remained. To wrap up this project, I propose a relatively novel format for this Conclusion. I will first discuss the "official" reason the Tower remains standing, then, in summarizing my arguments from the chapters of this dissertation, describe the myths that remain standing with it and how we must dispel them. Finally, I will take the somewhat unconventional step of adding new material for analysis by way of a conclusion: official plans for changing the Eiffel Tower. These artifacts belong at the very end not because they do not fit elsewhere in my chapters, but because they neatly wrap up those arguments in a final object lesson that dispels the Tower's myths and recasts the official story of why the Tower stands today.

The Official Reason the Tower Remains

[101] "Le Chant du Siècle," a dialogue in verse between "La Poésie" and "La France," was performed at the *Comédie Française* on May 6, 1889, the day after the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* opened. The text in its entirety was printed in the *Exposition*'s official weekly bulletin five days later on May 11, 1889.

The official record would have us believe that the only reason the Eiffel Tower still stands is due to a certain kind of inertia. Increasingly worried about the impending end of the *concession* contract for the use of the *Champ de Mars*, Gustave Eiffel and his *Société de la Tour Eiffel*, formed in 1888 as a collective trust to manage the financial side of the Eiffel Tower[102], worked tirelessly to keep the Tower aloft, and believed that their best bet lay in proving its scientific utility. In 1900, Eiffel published his third monograph on the Tower, *Travaux scientifiques exécutés à la tour de trois cents mètres de 1889 à 1900*, a work far more technical than his previous public-facing efforts. However, it was not until the largely theoretical or preparatory findings published in the *Travaux scientifiques* became evidently practical that the Tower was truly saved. In the original *concession*, "Article 13" allowed for the full ownership and use of the Tower to automatically revert to the state in times of war. Persuaded by Eiffel to investigate its wartime utility further[103], according to a 1903[104] report prepared for the *Conseil municipal de Paris*, "En raison de cette clause, le Ministre de la Guerre a fait procéder à des expériences sur la possibilité d'établir des communications entre la Tour et différentes localités, jusqu'à Rouen et Fontainebleau" ("Procès-verbal de la Commission…" 20). The experiments, started in 1903, proved to be a great success,

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[102] Eiffel writes in *La Tour de 300 mètres* that he initiated the creation of the *Société de la Tour Eiffel* because he was "désireux de m'épargner les préoccupations de surveillance d'une exploitation qui ne rentrait pas dans mes habitudes de constructeur" (227). He was the first president of the organization, but appointed administrators and commissioners to keep him and the project accountable.

[103] I detail Eiffel's suggestions, from the outset, concerning his vision for the Tower's military use in Chapter III. In order to make this a reality, he persuaded Captain Gustave Ferrié, in charge of the military applications for wireless transmission, to use the Tower as a laboratory, installing antennae and eventually an underground station ("La tour Eiffel et les sciences").

[104] This report is enclosed in the 1906 proceedings of the *Conseil municipal de Paris*.

allowing radio signals to not only reach the stated goal locations of Rouen and Fontainebleau but, as of 1904, even Bizerte, a city in Northern Tunisia (Lyonnet du Moutier, *L'Aventure*... 147). It was this scientific and strategic achievement that clinched the first renewal of the Eiffel Tower that was set to last until the thirty-first of December, 1914. The subsequent renewal of the *concession*, granted until December 31, 1925, was for the "rémunération des frais liés à l'installation d'un poste de radio-télégraphie," but, as fate would have it, it became much more important because France entered the conflict that would become World War I on August 3, 1914 (Lyonnet du Moutier, *L'Aventure*... 147). During the war, the Eiffel Tower proved indispensable, famously intercepting signals from Berlin that revealed such critical information as General Georg von der Marwitz's critical delay in reaching the Battle of the Marne as well as the identity of spies including the now-legendary Mata Hari ("La tour Eiffel et les sciences"). The second prolongation of the Tower's *concession* was therefore extended yet again due to the state's seizure of the structure under Article 13, with the third prolongation fatefully lasting until 1945. Although by that point in time the Eiffel Tower was no longer at the technological vanguard of war instruments, its significance in World War II was also due to a matter of strategy: General Dietrich von Choltitz disobeyed Adolf Hitler's orders to raze the city of Paris in 1944, seeing it as impractical and too risky for the German troops (Bell). While the Eiffel Tower was not the specific object of Hitler's notorious query, "Is Paris burning?", the series of photos of the Führer and his officers both striding across the *Champ de Mars* Tower and nonchalantly slouched in front of a far view of the monument attest to the Nazis' keen understanding of the importance of the Tower. Indeed, General von Choltitz would cite his appreciation for the beauty of Paris in his contribution to his

mythologizing as the "savior of Paris," implying that the aesthetic beauty of the city, including what Hitler himself had handpicked as its symbolic centerpiece, was what saved it (Melvin). But just as it was a form of inertia that was actually at the heart of von Choltitz's sparing of Paris, so too was it at the center of the final prolongations of the Eiffel Tower: it was spared during the period of occupation until December 31, 1949, and hereafter its lease was merely transferred, leaving the State's control — and the confines of Article 13 — as of January 1, 1950, and hereafter being given back to the (renamed) Société d'exploitation de la Tour Eiffel on January 1, 1980, with another renewal on January 1, 2006 whose arrangement lasts until the present day.

Officially speaking, "war" saved the Eiffel Tower. The initial impetus to prolong the *concession* came from the Ministry of War's radio transmission experiments, and all of the subsequent extensions were directly or indirectly linked to wartime[105]. Yet, to ascribe its preservation purely to war would be to fail to analyze the proceedings of the *Conseil municipal* and the *Société de la Tour Eiffel* in full. While neither entity appealed to any significance for the Tower outside of its scientific utility or its economic possibility, one detail stands out in the transcript of the October 10, 1903 notes enclosed in the 1906 report:

> A la suite de l'Exposition de 1900, l'affluence du public avait diminué, par suite de la réaction qui se produit généralement après des manifestations de cette nature…Mais on a constaté, en 1903, un progrès sensible, surtout dans le nombre de visiteurs de province et de l'étranger. (20)

[105] The official Eiffel Tower website — and subsequently, popular myth — reframes this as the idea that "science" saved the Eiffel Tower, but if this were truly the case, one of Gustave Eiffel's other, multidisciplinary scientific efforts could have also won out ("La Tour Eiffel et les Sciences").

The rise in visitors in 1903 cannot be readily explained; there was no large event that would have drawn visitors to the Tower, certainly not on the scale of the two *Expositions*. Therefore, the qualification at the end of the note takes on greater importance: the visitors were coming from "la province et de l'étranger." Certainly, this could indicate that those coming at this later date were "stragglers" of a sort who took their time making it to the tower. But far more likely is that these were the more economically and socially marginalized populations who were taking advantage of a less busy (and costly) moment to travel to Paris, and who were not of the cognoscenti who had to see the tower when it was a novelty. It attests to a certain "trickle down" and expansion of the Eiffel Tower's appeal. A writer credited only as "Romi" in the June 1939 issue of *La Renaissance* imagined a poignant scene of this diffusion of the Tower's renown:

> Durant les dix premières années, de 1888 à 1898, les objets-souvenirs sont uniquement destinés à commémorer et à prouver dans les foyers le voyage à Paris, la visite de l'Exposition et l'ascension du monument. En province, l'homme qui avait rapporté le thermomètre ou la pelote à épingles délicatement encastrés dans une Tour en métal faisait figure de héros. (36)

While my analysis of souvenir objects for women and children somewhat undercuts Romi's idea that souvenirs were only for those who ascended, this anecdote neatly embodies the idea that the dream — and material form — of the Tower spread far and wide, even to those who would have to wait years to see it. There is no real way to conceivably verify this anecdote, but it serves as a reminder that "l'homme" or the "héros" who brought back the souvenir in those first ten years had the opportunity to go early to the Tower and bring back objects to thrill those in his community who lacked the same opportunity. These delighted onlookers were likely those from the lower classes, women, children, and immigrants. Save for the mention in the 1906 report of the uptick

of ticket sales in 1903, the official justifications for prolonging the Tower's life did not outwardly seem to be focused on the desires of these populations left behind in "les foyers." Gustave Eiffel and the *Société de la Tour Eiffel's* decision to foreground the monument's strategic importance was strategic in and of itself, designed to appeal to the priorities of the elite government officials in the *Conseil municipal de Paris*, who were invariably affluent, urban, white, and male. To say, then, that "war" saved the Tower is not at all the full story, but simply the story that comes the most readily from official documents. Reading between the lines, one can begin to understand that there were other, more abstract reasons to keep the Tower aloft in 1908, reasons that only intensified with the increased emotional importance the Tower would have gained as a symbol of cultural resistance — both active and passive — in the World Wars.

The Myths that Remain with the Tower

In the same manner that this idea that only "war" and "science" saved the Eiffel Tower, many of the persistent myths in its history are also predicated on a refusal to look beyond the surface and consider demographics other than the *métropolitain* male elites. While I have discussed each of these myths throughout this dissertation, reuniting them here illuminates the persistent pattern.

Popular understanding, fueled by Roland Barthes's dramatizing of Guy de Maupassant's Eiffel Tower anecdote[106], remains that "people" did not like the Eiffel Tower's appearance at first. In Chapter I, I emphasize how this is a mischaracterization of the public's reception of the Tower that overly privileges the "Protestation des Artistes." The artists involved in this outcry represented an elite, not necessarily altruistic — and

[106] Please see the Introduction for the discussion of how Barthes embellishes Maupassant.

even petty — class, and examining representations of the Tower from lowbrow, popular artists paints a much more representative picture of how people really felt about the new structure. It is vital to understand the greater public's enjoyment and fascination with this new form on the Parisian skyline and not roll it up into the elites' repulsion, because it is from mass culture that the Tower derives its strength and significance.

These "little people" did more than just enjoy the Tower, for their efforts even authored its iconicity. Even though the structure quickly became known as "la Tour Eiffel," the monument had no one author. In a literal sense, some three hundred men — a quantity trimmed over time due to workers' strikes — executed the cutting-edge design and braved hitherto-unseen working conditions at its great heights. While, at times, there is a popular acknowledgement that "Eiffel did not design the Eiffel Tower" since the first blueprints were in fact drawn by firm engineers Maurice Koechlin[107] and Émile Nouguier in 1884, there remains very little acknowledgement of those who actually brought the "tour de trois cent mètres" so vividly to life that it swiftly became the single-author marvel of "la Tour Eiffel." If these direct material contributors are forgotten, even more ignored is the reputational contribution of women working in the *brasserie alsacienne* and as Javanese dancers. Even though we lack firsthand accounts of their attitudes about working at the *Exposition Universelle de 1889*, their contribution to and ultimate undercutting of the official messages the Third Republic wanted to convey through the fair is inextricable from the monument in whose shadow they worked. In the end, their

[107] Indeed, in the village of Buhl in Alsace, the birthplace of Maurice Koechlin, there is an Eiffel Tower in the roundabout by which one enters the village. This acknowledgement of the engineer's efforts even gets dressed up in lights and tinsel for Christmas!

presence added an emotional, human touch that was baked into the Tower's allure at the time and continues to be present today.

The final myth is that only official, written documents, such as proceedings from *ministres* of the *Troisième République*, statements great writers and artists like the "Protestation," articles from important *journaux* like *Le Figaro* and *Le Parisien*, and monographs Gustave Eiffel himself, ought to be included in the early historiography of the Eiffel Tower. In Chapter III, I demonstrated that we can and must "read" the nonverbal traces of souvenir objects in order to glean the histories of those whose interactions with the monument were not committed to the page. It is vital to consider these items as documentary evidence; they are not merely a manifestation of how mass production intersected with the making of a modern marvel but how the monument was actually *made* monumental by the interventions of otherwise silent women and children.

Why the Tower Remains and Endures

This brings us to the greatest myth of all: the official story that the Tower remained only because of war. While this project focuses on the stories of the *unofficial* that give us a view of the unsung heroes in the Tower's history, examining the *official* proposed revisions provides a final object lesson in why the Tower on the *Champ de* Mars was not modified — save for in its myriad representations.

Leading up to the *Exposition de 1900*, there was a public competition to design the fairgrounds, and the revision of the 300-meter star of the 1889 exhibition was on the table. While the numerous submissions held at the *Archives Nationales* and published for

tradesmen in *Les Concours publics de l'architecture*[108] largely conserved the essential form of the Eiffel Tower, Gustave Eiffel's two favorites, now held in the *Fonds Eiffel* at the *Musée d'Orsay*, were not so reverent. The first, and probably most well known, of these proposals came from Stephen Sauvestre, who was brought in to the original Eiffel & Cie. design efforts in 1886. Because Eiffel and his associates were engineers by training and Nouguier and Koechlin's 1884 design was quite spare, they enlisted the help of the more traditional Sauvestre to add crowd-pleasing ornamental flair to the otherwise stark Eiffel Tower ("History and Construction"). It was Sauvestre who added the flourishes of the Tower we know today, augmenting the structurally unnecessary arches and adorning them with filigree that complemented an even more flamboyant scalloped gallery on the first floor whose removal in 1937 I will discuss shortly. Sauvestre's 1896 sketch and watercolor for a revised Eiffel Tower presents an even stronger desire to assimilate the iron beams into the Beaux-Arts architectural vernacular of Paris, adding two "turrets" that not only house additional elevators but create more surface for décor (*Figure I*). He here extends the filigree of the Tower's original arches onto the bridge-like structures that join the flanking turrets to the central structure, and he echoes the gallery to new heights with the turrets' domed roofs adorned with turned finials. Gustave Eiffel's other favorite revision moved less towards aesthetic assimilation and further towards the pole of the scientific-as-aesthetic that Eiffel had ushered in with the "age of the

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[108] Perhaps the most outlandish of these general public submissions reprinted in the trade publication was a proposal from a "Monsieur Ch. -A. Gauthier" to take the Tower's iron beams as a sort of skeleton for a ziggurat-like structure that would feature "douze étages. Au premier seraient reconstitués des cafés, des restaurants célèbres. Le deuxième serait affecté à des salles de conférences, à des réunions de Congrès." (Tomel). The Eiffel Tower could have been a New York multiuse skyscraper *avant l'ère.*

engineer." Architectural painter Henri Toussaint outfitted the Tower with a "une sorte de jupe métallique cernée de tourelles et de fanions" in joining the original monument with a new *Palais de l'Electricité* (*Figure II*; Leribault 74). While Sauvestre extended the motif of the arch, Toussaint erased it almost entirely, adding simpler arches to its doorways, almost as an afterthought. Furthermore, in this revision, Toussaint asserts that the Eiffel Tower itself had become vernacular, repeating its openwork spire form in miniature at each turret of his pavilion to make a new motif entirely. These structures are now the vestigial, even ornamental elements, and they are the essential engineering work of the Tower laid purposefully bare. That Gustave Eiffel kept the sketches of these two proposed revisions hints that, in his desire to keep the Tower aloft and relevant, he remained scarred by the invective of the "Protestation des artistes": with Sauvestre's revision, he could placate fears that an ugly Tower would be an incongruous blight on the Paris skyline, and with Toussaint's proposal, he could lean all the way in to the modernity and innovation of his structure, proving once and for all that it was not "inutile" and served to usher in the age of electricity.

Figure I
Stephen Sauvestre's "Projet de transformation de la Tour Eiffel" (1896)
Engraving
Musée d'Orsay, Fonds Eiffel

Figure II
Henri Toussaint's "Projet d'habillage de la Tour Eiffel pour l'Exposition universelle de 1900 : élévation" (n.d.)
Watercolor
Musée d'Orsay, Fonds Eiffel

Yet, despite Gustave Eiffel's approval of these revised versions of his magnum opus, even these "insider favorites" did not become reality. It is difficult to say exactly why, but the most immediate answer is that the Tower, no longer the novel centerpiece of Paris's *fin-de-siècle* exhibition, did not seem to merit additional expenditures; as previously discussed in this Conclusion, the original *Conseil de Paris* decision that kept the Tower aloft was largely predicated on finding ways to make it more profitable for the city. Perhaps more interesting, though, in the *longue durée* of the structure, is that it became less complicated, not more ornamented or augmented, over time. In 1937, forty-

eight years after the Tower's début on the world stage, Sauvestre's scalloped arcades on the first floor were removed. Hollis Clayson writes,

> The modification was a stylistic update; the Tower was to appear less old-fashioned in the context of that year's self-consciously modern *Exposition internationale des arts et techniques dans la vie moderne*. Its stripped-down appearance was meant to fall in line with, even mirror, the reductive style of the new structure across the Seine…the aerodynamically sleek Art Déco Palais de Chaillot [which replaced] the elegant Palais du Trocadéro. (Clayson)

Clayson's work to determine just why the first-floor gallery was stripped of its ornament is ongoing, so I do not feel I am being fractious in reinterpreting the primary source on which she bases her analysis that the Tower's new appearance was meant to assimilate to a new architectural reality. In a footnote to the above statement, Clayson cites André Granet, the lighting designer for the Tower in 1937, who described the revision: "Indiscutable dans sa forme purement rationnelle, elle avait été à sa naissance de décors qui marquaient un peu trop leur époque et qui avait été une concession aux clameurs du moment" (qtd. in Clayson). Though Clayson interprets Granet's tone as "snide" towards the original décor of the Tower, looking at its possible revisions in light of this change that actually took place leads me to believe it is not snide that brought about the change but instead a sign that the Tower had earned enough aesthetic respect to, in Granet's view, stand on its own. It did not need Sauvestre's additional ornamentation or Toussaint's augmented modernity, as Gustave Eiffel feared, but instead a purification that laid even more bare its open iron beams. With the passage of time and the progress of technology, the once avant-garde structure had realized Gustave Eiffel's dream of becoming intrinsically beautiful with no more need for vernacularization or justification.

The idea that only the Tower in its purest form could survive adds validity to the one myth about the monument that I believe holds some truth: there is something special

about the Eiffel Tower that is linked to its exact temporal and spatial situation. This was not for lack of trying, because London's attempt to install a similar crowd-pleasing, profitable structure in what is now Wembley Park came close to feasibility. Only one day after the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* closed, an intrepid group of Englishmen, calling themselves "The Tower Company, Limited" sent out a call for designs to construct London's answer to Paris's newest attraction. Fred C. Lynde's breathless 1890 recounting of this endeavor for the Tower Company manifests no lofty goals of promoting England or London but instead a naked intent to replicate the Eiffel Tower's financial success. Indeed, Lynde recounts that "[t]he popularity of the Eiffel Tower may be fairly gauged by the receipts in connection with it," citing its £ 260,000 gross during the Exposition and earnings of £ 1,148 per week immediately following the Exposition (Lynde 4-5). The report nods only briefly to any stab "The Great Tower for London" may have taken at becoming an important, iconic monument, when it declares: "in the course of short time, every important country will possess its tall Tower" (5). The chief logistical backer of this initiative was Sir Edward Watkin, a railroad entrepreneur turned Liberal Member of Parliament whose rebuffed offer to Gustave Eiffel himself to design a London structure led to the open call for designs. Watkin and the Tower Company got what they wanted in sixty-eight designs that very clearly pull from the shape, scale, and even ornamentation of the Eiffel Tower, influenced not only by its now-famous aesthetic but also the technological innovations it had presented. Although the designs clearly pandered to the Tower Company's desire for an equivalent structure, they were likely limited by precedent at the time, for which, of course, the Eiffel Tower was the only viable model. From the winning submission of Stewart, McClaren, and Dunn of London

came an enhanced and even more audacious design that bore not the competition's name of "The Great Tower for London," but instead Eiffel-copycat "Watkin's Tower" (*Figure III*; Botham). While Watkin's gamble might have paid off had his structure, proposed to be just fifty meters taller than the Eiffel Tower in a gloriously petty move, been executed, his tying of his name and reputation quickly became a terrible decision when the project devolved into "Watkin's Folly" (de Lisle). Deviating too far from the original, more sound design, the first stage, built from 1892 to 1895, began to sink when its foundation, rendered for eight pylons, could not withstand the weight of the reduced set of four pylons. The project was doomed, resulting in a haunting single stage, which even still remained incomplete. It was torn down starting in 1904, its only lasting legacy the public's embrace of the parkland around it, a development now called Wembley Park which, in 1923, became dedicated turf that would later be the first iteration of London's massively popular Wembley Stadium.

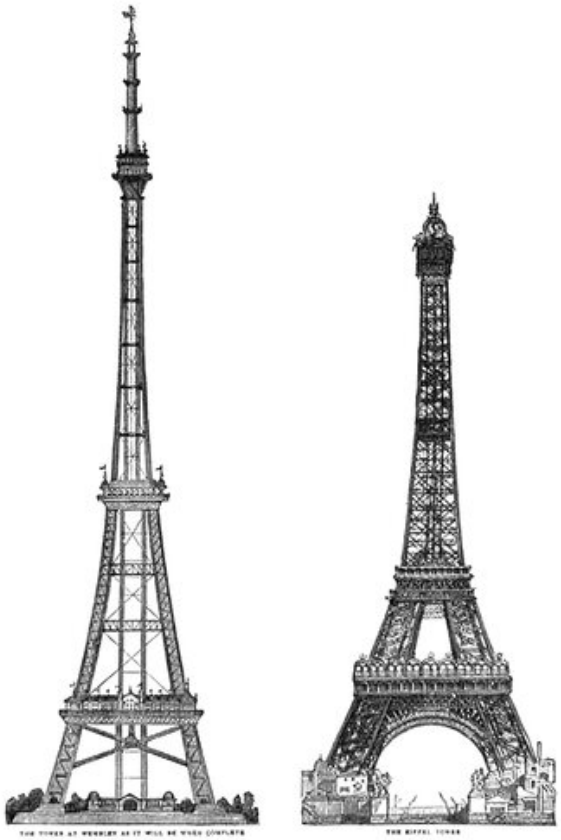

Figure III
Watkin's Tower versus the Eiffel Tower
Printed in *The Graphic* (1894)
Public Domain

Watkin's Folly proved that it was not enough to imitate the scale and even the form of the Eiffel Tower. Certainly, the project largely failed due to engineering errors and a particular sort of hubris from its namesake, but there is more to learn from the debacle than the purely technical. Londoners' subsequent embrace of the parkland, unfinished tower notwithstanding, hints at the secret sauce behind the Eiffel Tower: it was what the people wanted, not just what the government or the *auteur* needed, in the right place at the right time. The unofficial modifications to the Eiffel Tower that I have discussed in this dissertation, in meditating on its celebrated material form, generated its celebrated material themselves. Because they were able to graft new forms of artistic

emotion, desires for increased social agency, and the heterogeneity of empire onto its openwork, it became what it is today. Scientific innovation and bureaucratic inertia could only get it so far; it needed the pure power of the people's emotional scaffolding to keep it aloft. The people of London could perhaps have gotten the chance to do the same for Watkin's Tower had it been fully executed, but they would not have had the same socio-emotional context in which to take the intentional monument to the French Revolution and the Third Republic and make an unintentional monument to hope, longing, and even unbridled joy. Though the form of the Tower has largely become a cliché today, as its representations ornament the most seemingly unrelated articles of mass-production, it has, over time, only become even more of a shorthand for this kind of emotional investment in a specific structure, in a specific city, at a specific time. Clichés are clichés for a reason: they, like the Tower, resonate infinitely with "the little people" and go on to recast, reframe, and reinvigorate our culture.

Appendix I: Signatories of the "Protestation des artistes" by Profession

The following is a list of all of the signatories of the "*Protestation des artistes contre la tour de M. Eiffel*." *Precedence is given to the "finalized," published version that appeared in the February, 14, 1887 issue of* Le Temps*, but any discrepancies with the handwritten document held at the* Musée d'Orsay *are enumerated in footnotes.*

Signatories are listed first by profession (with a short description of their works) and then by the order of their signature. One name was impossible to identify: a "Limbo" appears to have signed with a nickname, which, without additional biographical data, makes him almost completely anonymous.

The following denote professional affiliations and honors as of 1887*:*

**= Attended l'École des Beaux-Arts (de Paris)*
***= Won le Prix de Rome*
****= Taught at l'École des Beaux-Arts or L'Académie Julian*
†*=Elected to l'Académie des Beaux-Arts*
‡*=Awarded a rank in la Légion d'honneur*

Painters[109]

Jean Louis Ernest Meissonier[110]
Signed: "E. Meissonier"
Painter of military scenes † ‡

Tony Robert Fleury
Signed: "Robert Fleury"
*Painter of historical scenes * ‡*

Jean-Léon Gérôme
Signed: "H.[111] Gérôme"
*Orientalist * *** † ‡*

Léon Joseph Florentin Bonnat

[109] All biographical information is from *Benezit Dictionary of Artists* unless otherwise noted. *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*. *Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, 2019.
[110] In the original, handwritten "Protestation" draft, this name is misspelled "Meissonnier." Its spelling was corrected for publication in *Le Temps*.
[111] I have concluded that this must have been an erroneous transcription — as with Meissonier, above — because no artist "H. Gérome" (note the lack of circumflex, as transcribed in the handwritten document) was active at the time of the "Protestation." Furthermore, several of his students signed the document, presumably in agreement with their mentor.

Signed: "L. Bonnat"
*Painter of religious motifs and portraits * ** *** † ‡*

William-Adolphe Bouguereau[112]
Signed: "W. Bouguereau"
*Painter of classical motifs, detractor of Impressionism * ** † ‡*

Jean François Gigoux
Signed: "Jean Gigoux"
*Painter, lithographer, and illustrator of genre scenes * ‡*

Gustave Clarence Rodolphe Boulanger
Signed: "G. Boulanger"
*Painter of classical and orientalist motifs * ** *** †*

Jules Eugène Lenepveu
Signed: "J.E. Lenepveu"
Painter of religious and classical motifs, decorative artist ** † ‡*

François Louis Français
Signed: "Français"
Painter of portraits, landscapes, and figures †

Jules Élie Delaunay
Signed: "Elie[113] Delaunay"
*Painter of portraits and classical motifs * ** †*

Louis Pierre Henriquel-Dupont
Signed: "Henriquel"
*Painter and engraver of portraits and religious scenes *** † ‡*

Albert Alexandre Lenoir
Signed: "A. Lenoir"
Painter of portraits and landscapes

Louis Émile Bertrand
Signed: "E.[114] Bertrand"
Portraitist, miniaturist, and orientalist [115]

Gustave Jean Jacquet
Signed: "G. Jacquet"
Painter of portraits, nudes, and genre scenes, student of Bougereau †

Jean Richard Goubié
Signed: "Goubié[116]"

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[112] "Biography." *William-Adolphe Bouguereau — The Complete Works.* bouguereau.org.
[113] Neither *Le Temps* nor the handwritten document present the *accent aigu* of Delaunay's first name.
[114] Neither *Le Temps* nor the handwritten document present the *accent aigu* of Bertrand's first initial.
[115] "Louis-Émile BERTRAND," *Art Lorrain*, artlorrain.com.
[116] *Le Temps* omits the *accent aigu* of Goubié's last name.

Painter of animals, student of Gérôme *

Ernest Ange Duez

Signed: "E. Duez"

Painter of portraits and landscapes, *Realist*

Gustave Claude Étienne Courtois

Signed: "G. Courtois"

Painter of portraits and classical motifs, decorative artist, student of Gérôme *

Pascal-Adolphe-Jean Dagnan-Bouveret

Signed: "P. -A.-J. Dagnan-Bouveret"

Painter and illustrator of religious motifs, student of Gérôme * **

Joseph Wencker[117]

Signed: "J. Wencker"

Painter of religious motifs and genre scenes, student of Gérôme * ** ‡

Henri Lucien Doucet[118]

Signed: "L. Doucet"

Painter of genre scenes and portraits, student of Boulanger * **

Jules Joseph Lefebvre

Signed: "Jules Lefebvre[119]"

Painter of figures * **

Albert Julien

Signed: "Albert Jullien[120]"

Painter and architect

Other Visual Artists[121]

Jean Baptiste Claude Eugène Guillaume

Signed: "Eug. Guillaume"

Sculptor of busts, figures, and public decoration * ** *** † ‡

Gabriel-Jules Thomas

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[117] Wencker does not appear on the handwritten document, but was added for publication in *Le Temps*.

[118] Doucet does not appear on the handwritten document, but was added for publication in *Le Temps*.

[119] There was also a sculptor, member of the Académie, and Officier de la Légion d'Honneur active at the time named Hippolyte Jules Lefebvre. However, he signed his medals "Hippolyte Lefebvre" and it is therefore unlikely he would have used his second name for the "Protestation."

[120] I have concluded that this must have been an erroneous transcription (as with Meissonier and Gérôme). There was an "Albert Jullien" who wrote travel literature, but he was not active until a decade after the "Protestation."

[121] All biographical information is from *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, cited in full above.

Signed: "G. -J. Thomas"
Sculptor of figures *

Alphonse François[122]
Signed: "François
Engraver * † ‡

Charles René de Saint-Marceaux
Signed: "de Saint-Marceaux"
Sculptor of busts and monuments ‡

Charles Baude
Signed: "Ch. Baude"
Engraver ‡

Marius Jean Antonin Mercié
Signed: "A. Mercié"
Sculptor of monuments and groups of figures * **

Architects[123]

Jean-Louis-Charles Garnier
Signed: "Charles Garnier"
Architect of the Paris Opéra, architecte de la Ville de Paris * ** † ‡

Charles-Auguste Questel
Signed: "Ch. Questel"
Architect of public buildings in Versailles, restorer of churches * *** † ‡

Pierre Jérôme Honoré Daumet
Signed: "Daumet"
Architect of the West façade of the Palais de Justice*, excavator in Macedonia* * **

Joseph Auguste Émile Vaudremer
Signed: "E.[124] Vaudremer"
Architecte de la ville de Paris * ** †

André Legrand[125]
Signed: "André Legrand"
Architectural draughtsman * ***

Cheviron[126] [127]

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[122] I concluded that this must have been the "François" who signed, among several other contemporary artists, due to his prominence, his connection to Henriquel-Dupont, and his proximity to other engravers in the list of signatures.

[123] All biographical information, unless otherwise noted, is from biographies by Marie-Laure Crosnier-Leconte on *AGORHA: Bases de données de l'Institut national de l'histoire de l'art.* agorha.inha.fr.

[124] Neither *Le Temps* nor the handwritten document present the *accent aigu* of Vaudremer's first name.

[125] David de Pénanrun, Louis and Edmond Augustin Delaire, Louis François Roux. *Les architectes élèves de l'Ecole des beaux-arts 1793-1907.* Librairie de la construction modern, 1907.

Signed: "Cheviron"
Architectural draughtsman, designer of funerary monuments

Writers, Playwrights, and Composers[128]

Charles Gounod[129]
Signed: "Ch. Gounod"
Composer of operas **
Victorien Sardou
Signed: "Victorien Sardou"
Playwright †
Édouard Jules Henri Pailleron
Signed: "Edouard[130] Pailleron"
Poet and playwright †
Albert Wolff[131]
Signed: "A. Wolff"
Journalist with Le Figaro
Alexandre Dumas, *fils*
Signed: "A. Dumas"
Playwright and novelist †
François Coppée
Signed: "François Coppée"
Poet, playwright, and author of short stories †
Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle
Signed: "Leconte de Lisle"
Poet of the Parnassian movement †
Sully Prudhomme (René-François-Armand Prudhomme)
Signed: "Sully Prudhomme"
Poet, Leader of the Parnassian movement †
Guy de Maupassant[132]
Signed: "Guy de Maupassant"
Short-story writer

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[126] Jouin, Henri Auguste. *La Sculpture dans les cimitières de Paris*. Protat frères, 1898.
[127] Sargent, René, ed. *Le Moniteur des architectes*. A. Levy, 1873.
[128] All biographical information, unless otherwise noted, is from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 2019. britannica.com.
[129] Gounod's son, Jean Charles Gounod, was also active at this time but signed his paintings with a "J" or a "Jean" to distinguish himself.
[130] Neither *Le Temps* nor the handwritten document present the *accent aigu* of Pailleron's first initial.
[131] Vapereau, Gustave. *Dictionnaire universel des contemporains, vol. 2.* Hachette et Cie., 1870.
[132] Maupassant does not appear on the handwritten document (save for in pencil at the end, in a different hand), but was added for publication in *Le Temps*.

Henri Amic[133]
Signed: "Henri Amic"
Author of novels and autobiographical writing, friend of George Sand
Charles Jean Grandmougin
Signed: "Ch. Grandmougin"
Poet of the Parnassian movement, playwright
François Bournand[134][135]
Signed: "François Bournand"
Author of cultural and artistic criticism

[133] "Henri AMIC." *Association L'Art Lyrique Français*. artlyrique.fr.
[134] I believe that *Le Temps* misread the handwritten document and transcribed "Bornaud" from "Bournand." While there was an author "François Bournaud," he was not active until a decade after the "Protestation" was published, where as Bournaud had published several works on art history before February 1887.
[135] *Catalogue Général des livres imprimés de la Bibliothèque Nationale: auteurs.* Imprimerie Nationale, 1904.

Appendix II: Linear Transcription of Armand Bourgade's "La Tour de 300 mètres en 300 vers"

The stanzas are transcribed as they appear on the shape of the Tower from top to bottom and left to right. Grammatical and spelling errors as well as idiosyncratic capitalizations are preserved.

1. Eiffel Titan Eiffel
2. Ta nouvelle Babel
3. Immense, audacieuse
4. Superbe et gracieuse
5. Qui monte au firmament
6. Fait notre étonnement
7. O sublime merveille
8. Belle Tour sans pareille
9. Le Monde admirateur
10. D'Eiffel ton créateur

11. Lanterne de la tour, tu planes sur Paris
12. Cité sublime et forte, Enfer et Paradis
13. Tu regardes la haut, la magnifique ville
14. Comme un Phare Géant qui protège ton Ile

15. DIT DE L'AUDACE HUMAINE, EIFFEL DONNANT L'EXEMPLE
16. DU HAUT DE CETTE TOUR LE SIÈCLE LE CONTEMPLE /
17. Cette Tour préside la Fête
18. Que chante aujourd'hui le Poète
19. Chant et Fête de Liberté,
20. Et que grandit sa majesté!

21. O Paris sois fier de la Tour
22. Qui prouve ta magnificence
23. Elle montre au grand jour
24. La grandeur de la France

25. O quatorze juillet, sublime anniversaire
26. Tu rendis au Français la chère Liberté
27. Oui notre cœur est plein d'une mâle fierté
28. En fêtant aujourd'hui l'immortel centenaire

29. L'AMOUR ET LE PROGRÈS

30. Oui je chante l'amour, le Magnifique amour
31. Vaste comme le monde et beau comme le jour

32. Qui soutient le courage et forme la vaillance
33. Entraine le cœur aux Enfants de la France!
34. Je veux chanter aussi le bienfaisant Progrès
35. Qui commence par l'homme et les choses après.
36. Aujourd'hui, le Progrès est en pleine puissance.
37. Il donne un libre cours à notre intelligence
38. Il abat les Prisons, inutiles tombeaux
39. Il rassemble des Arts, les glorieux lambeaux,
40. Il ouvre à tout le monde une Ecole publique
41. Et forme des soldats pour notre République!
42. L'Amour et le Progrès par de fermes liens
43. Sont unis dans les cœurs des vaillants citoyens
44. Oui, le Progrès préside à la juste opulence;
45. Bientôt il détruira la mortelle indigence
46. On ne reverra plus courant il ne sait où

47. Français pour vous distraire
48. Je dessine la Tour
49. Mais je fais le contraire
50. D'Eiffel l'homme du jour
51. D'Eiffel illustrissime
52. Le géant Constructeur
53. Montrait, c'est une rime
54. Qui par de sa hauteur;
55. Du sommet, je rimaille
56. Pour redescendre en bas,
57. Et puis vaille qui vaille
58. Je descend *[sic]* pas à pas
59. Enfin coûte que coûte
60. Sans prendre l'ascenseur
61. Je construit *[sic]* sur ma route
62. Un poème encenseur,
63. Notre progrès je chante
64. Et l'admirable Tour;
65. Et puis aussi je vante
66. Ce qu'on voit à l'entour;
67. Et d'une voix tonnante;
68. Je déclame ces vers
69. Devant tout l'Univers!

70. Le père que la faim rend fou
71. Traîner sa nombreuse famille
72. Mendier et chercher un asile
73. Ces malheureux auront du pain
74. Devant eux pour le lendemain!
75. On ne verra plus de ces filles

76. Que la misère à leurs familles
77. Arrache, pour les acquéreurs
78. De leurs impudiques faveurs,
79. Triste exemple de décadence
80. D'un peuple au sein de l'opulence,
81. Progrès, Travail, Fraternité,
82. Amour, Honneur et Liberté;
83. Sont les mots dont la noble flamme
84. Elève l'esprit et puis l'âme
85. Français votre imagination
86. Etonne toute autre nation,
87. Car nous vivons plein d'espérance
88. D'agrandir le Progrès en France.
89. Oui français nous sommes contents
90. Car les étrangers Continents,
91. Sont jalouse, — cela nous honore —
92. De notre drapeau tricolore!

93. ODE A PARIS ET À LA FRANCE
94. O Paris, cher Paris, Cité toujours nouvelle,
95. Immense paradis, Ville riante et belle
96. Et de l'esprit humain admirable flambeau;
97. Sublime et grand Paris que tu me semble *[sic]* beau

98. On ne peut en effet découvrir entre mille,
99. Sur la sphère terrestre une rivale ville
100. Ton esprit si fécond qui répand partout
101. Ne connais point d'arrêt, engendre et brave tous
102. Paris impérissable! — Toi seul Paris, sur terre
103. Te relève toujours! Tu supportes la guerre,
104. La lutte politique et ses divisions
105. Le flux et le reflux de toutes passions
106. Séjour de la fortune et gouffre de la misère,
107. Je te vois tour à tour agréable et sévère.
108. Tu montres ta beauté, tes splendeurs, tes plaisirs,
109. Et sitot *[sic]* exprimés, tu combles les désirs!

110. ST. PIERRE DE ROME
111. EN A CENT TRENTE-DEUX
112. ET STRASBOURG, 142
113. EIFFEL est le seul HOMME
114. QUI BÂTIT PLUS HAUT QU'EUX

115. LA FLÈCHE DE ROUEN DE MÈTRES: CENT-CINQUANTE
116. ET CELLE DE COLOGNE À PRÈS DE CENT-SOIXANTE

L'écrivain quotidien qu'on nomme journaliste,
C'est le grand messager c'est le grand réaliste.
Il est un personnage un lutteur érudit:
Il jouit près de tous d'une immense crédit,
Il raconte et prévoit, il augure et dispute;
Il défend l'opprimé, raisonne, rit, discute,
Controverse, analyse; est toujours au combat;
Et, juge impartial du plus petit débat,
Sa plume absout, condamne et toujours déblatère
Contre tous les tyrans empoisonnant la terre.
Son style noble et sûr, plein de mâle fierté,
Est le souffle puissant de notre liberté !!!

TON DÔME PANTHEON, ET LE TIEN INVALIDES
NE SONT AUPRÈS DE MOI QUE DES DÔMES TIMIDES

O FRANCE, BELLE FRANCE! O MA CHÈRE PATRIE,
A toi ma lyre, à toi, notre sang, notre vie!
Etrangers, acceptez notre hospitalité
Et tous nos sentiments de confraternité,
A L'Exposition, la France vous convie
Vous plaire et vous charmer est notre seule envie!
Venez donc Etrangers soyez admirateurs
Du progrès de la France et de ses bons auteurs.
Vous irez au Théâtre ou l'esprit se délasse
Et vous y conviendrez que tout ce qui s'y passe

O FRANCE O REVOLUTION
VIVE VIVE LA RÉPUBLIQUE
ET VIVE CETTE TOUR UNIQUE
ORGUEIL DE NOTRE NATION

LÉGER OU SÉRIEUX MÈNE A CE DÉNOUEMENT:
Le mal trouve toujours un juste châtiment
Et la vertu triomphe en immolant le traître
Le Théâtre aujourd'hui n'a pas qu'un seul grand maître:
Les deux Dumas, Sardou, Dennery [*sic*], Montépin,
Meilhac et Halévy, Clairville et Richepin,
Sont les auteurs plaisants, mordants et satiriques
Dont les savants écrits tristes ou pathétiques
Ecrits, souvent empreints de pure *[sic]* vérité
Deviendront les joyaux de la postérité!

MA HAUTEUR EST SANS EGALE
Notre-Dame, la vieille et haute Cathédrale
Dont les sculptures sont d'admirables bijoux

158. NE PEUT M'ATTEINDRE QU'AUX GENOUX

159. Tous les français sont fiers de nos vaillants auteurs
160. Dont les savants esprits, sont les admirateurs
161. Les deux Dumas, Sarcey, Goncourt, Zola (Emile),
162. Grim-Escoffier, Houssaye et Lecomte de Lisle.
163. [Puisque je parle en vers, l'orthographe des noms
164. Me force de passer les noms et les prénoms
165. De nombreux érudits, hommes illustrissimes,
166. Que ne peut pas grouper l'exigence des rimes]
167. Inventeurs, médecins, ingénieurs, amiraux,
168. Peintres, sculpteurs, tribuns, poètes, généraux;
169. Sont les rudes lutteurs dont la vertu stoïque
170. Régénère le siècle et le rend héroïque!!
171. Tout le monde est soldat et sans distinction;
172. Chacun doit cultiver la noble instruction
173. Le soldat, de ses chefs, écoute la parole;
174. Il suit avec amour notre savante école!
175. Braves Officiers! O vous futurs héros!!
176. Votre voix dans nos cœurs y trouve des échos.
177. Elle répand sur nous cette sublime flamme
178. Qui fait bondir le corps et fait palpite l'âme!

179. Ce siècle a produit de grands hommes
180. Flammarion, roi des astronomes
181. Connaît du ciel l''immensité
182. Son style avec sublimité
183. Nous apprend la marche du monde
184. De l'étoile, la terre et l'onde
185. Il la voit, la nomme et fait tant
186. Qu'il pourra préciser quel est son habitant.
187. Popp a comprimé l'air; Pasteur, guérit la rage;
188. La mer est soumise à l'hélice de Sauvage;
189. Eiffel nouveau titan, élève vers les cieux
190. La nouvelle Babel, au faîte audacieux
191. Le Téléphone, agent de la parole humaine
192. L[']a transporté au lointain, sur le fil qui l'entraine.

193. Oui nous ne formons tous qu'une immense famille
194. Nous somme tous soldats, et dans notre âme grille
195. Une force héroïque, un courage vainqueur;
196. Qui fait bouillir le sang et fait battre le cœur
197. Allez les baves soldats, allez à la caserne,
198. Manœuvrez le fusil et ceindre la giberne.
199. Qui dit que l'exercice est l'abrutissement?
200. Non! il est le travail et le relèvement!

Le soldat citoyen embrasse sa famille,
Abandonne le champ, le marteau, la faucile *[sic]*
Et ses petits enfants, doux fruits de ses amours,
Pour faire au régiment vingt huit ou treize jours
Certes, c'est embêtant...mais le devoir l'appelle
Il s'en va manœuvrer, manger à la gamelle
Et travailler beaucoup pour ce maigre festin,
Il se couche assez tard et se lève matin;
Il pivotte *[sic]* au soleil et s'endort sur la dure;
Endosse les habits, sans en prendre mesure
Qui ne sont pas bien neufs, ni de fraîche couleur
Mais, ils sont malgré tout les habits de l'honneur

Battez, battez tambours,
Courage, plus d'alarmes!
Clairons, sonnez toujours,
Soldats portez vos armes!
Saluez par le cœur
Les vertus militaires
Dont les soldats vainqueurs
Sont tous héréditaires
Aimons notre drapeau,
Aimons plus que la vie
Cet emblème si beau
De la chère Patrie!
Sublime expression
De la France chérie!
Battez, battez tambours,
Nous chantons l'espérance
De conserver toujours
La grandeur de la France.
Battez, battez tambours
Clairons sonnez toujours.

ADMIREZ LE PORTIQUE
DE L'ŒUVRE TITANIQUE! N'EST QUE LILLIPUT, L'ÉCHANTILLON TIMIDE.
PRES DE TOI BELLE TOUR LA GRANDE PYRAMIDE

LA FRANCE EST LE PHÉNIX QUI RENAIT DE SA CENDRE, ELLE MONTE TOUJOURS ET NE PEUT REDESCENDRE

La *[sic]* haut près des nuages
Quel spectacle nouveau

IMMENSE GÉANT PIED QUI SUPPORTE LA TOUR

DANS LA POCHE ON PEUT METTRE
LA TOUR DE 300 MÈTRES
LE PLUS MONUMENT DIT:
ACHÈTE MOI DE GRÂCE
CAR JE TIENT *[sic]* PEU DE PLACE
SUR CE PAPIER JE SUIS PETIT
JE SUIS POÈME ET JE RESTE GRAVURE
TOUT EN AYANT DOUBLE FIGURE

TEL QU'HERCULE SOUTINT A LUI SEUL LES DEUX TÔLES
SUR TES LARGES ÉPAULES
TU PORTES FIÈREMENT
CE LOURD ET CE BEAU MONUMENT

LA TOUR DE 300 MÈTRES
ETONNE L'UNIVERS
J'AI VOULU ME PERMETTRE
DE FAIRE EN 300 VERS
SANS TIRER UNE LIGNE
LA BELLE TOUR
LES MOTS ET INTERLIGNE
DESSINNENT *[sic]* SON CONTOUR

ADMIRABLE TRAVAIL ET MERVEILLE DU JOUR!

L'ARMÉE EST DE LA FRANCE ET LA FORCE ET L'ESPOIR
Nous ferons vaillamment chacun notre devoir!
De l'amour du pays que notre ame *[sic]* animée,
Sois digne pour toujours de notre belle armée;
Car cet amour sacré, c'est l'amour le plus beau,
QUI NOUS PREND TOUT ENFANT ET NOUS SUIT AU TOMBEAU!

QUEL IMMENSE TABLEAU
Et quels brillants mirages
Dont ne se doutent pas
CEUX QUI RESTE EN BAS /
MON SOMMET PLANE SUR LA VILLE
A 300 mètres de hauteur
Mon poids 6 millions 500 mille
Oui, mais malgré ma pesanteur
Je ne suis qu'une belle masse
QUI NE PEUT PERDRE DE SA GRACE

O TOUR DE WASHINGTON

La nôtre te dépasse
Car auprès de sa masse
Tu n'est qu'un avorton
Reconnut devant elle
QUE TU N'EST *[sic]* PAS SI BELLE

FRANCE! TOUS TES SOLDATS SONT FIERS DE TON EGIDE
Ils prendrons *[sic]* ton drapeau pour soulier et pour guide,
Ils se disputeront la marche au premier rang!
Tous, heureux de t'offrir leur courage et leur sang!
Ils iront en chantant, la démarche altière
MOURIR AU CHAMP D'HONNEUR À LA VIELLE FRONTIÈRE!

VISITEUR
Sois sans peur!
L'Ascenseur,
Avec douceur
Te donne le bonheur
DE GRAVIR MA HAUTEUR

MES 300 VERS SE TERMINENT ICI.
Ils ne sont pas d'une seule enfilade.
Faut-il lecteur qui je finisse ainsi?
Mon poème, est-il un peu réussi?
Veux-tu savoir quel est mon nom aussi?
AMI LECTEUR, JE SIGNE: ARMAND BOURGADE.

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