



Fig. 1 *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs (in situ)*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Château d'Anet
Photo: Brumaire, Ezy-sur-Eure

The Tapestries of Diane de Poitiers

Gail Patricia Lloyd

There are seven known tapestries and one fragment, representing the *Story of Diana*, which belonged to Diane de Poitiers. They are thought to have been gifts from Henry II for the decoration of the Château d'Anet.¹ The tapestries themselves support this possibility.

Located forty miles from Paris and situated in the forests of Dreux, Anet had originally been given in 1444 to the Brezé family by Charles VII and became in 1496 the property of Louis de Brezé, Grand Sénéchal of Normandy. Louis de Brezé was a widower, without issue, when he married in 1515, at the age of fifty-six, the fifteen-year-old Diane de Poitiers descended from the Counts de Poitiers of Saint Vallier. De Brezé died at Anet in 1531 and Diane remained Mme. la Grande Sénéchale until Henry II made her the Duchesse de Valentinois in 1548. Diane, fifteen years older than Henry, had formed a liaison with him prior to his marriage in 1533 to Catherine de Medici. She nevertheless remained devoted to the memory of her husband.²

At the time of the death of Louis de Brezé, Anet was not in the best of condition. The new château was commissioned by Henri II for Diane de Poitiers, and it was Diane who conceived the idea of rebuilding the château to suit her own personality.³ Her taste was both feminine and French, and for the major work, French artisans were called upon.

Motifs for the decoration of the exterior and interior of the château derived from a theme, found in earlier art and literature, that of the Roman goddess Diana, who was identified with Artemis, the virgin huntress of the Greeks, personifying chastity, and with the moon goddess Luna, protectress of the woods and mountains. The rebuilding of the château, under the supervision of the architect, Philibert de l'Orme, was undertaken between 1548-1552, and the decoration was completed in 1554. The tapestries, if they formed a part of the total decoration, because of certain political overtones, could have been commissioned about 1548-1549; their execution may date from about 1550-1555.⁴

Uncertainties regarding the tapestries exist. Their original location in the Château d'Anet is questionable. Because of their height of fifteen feet, except for the fragment, which is eight feet high, the tapestries could have been placed in the apartments of the first floor of the château, which measures almost fifteen feet in height. A reference was made in 1898 to their location in a building which encloses the grand staircase, where there are five piers, "filled in other times by five tapestries."⁵

While there is no historical documentation, it is thought that the tapestries were at Anet when Diane de Poitiers died in 1566, when the château passed into other hands, and they may have been seen at Anet in 1640. The *Description de la belle Maison d'Anet* of 1640 states that the rooms were “tapisées presque partout de vieilles tapisseries de particulière façon, fort rares pour leur antiquité.” The tapestries may have remained at Anet until about 1680-1690 when the duc de Vendôme redecorated the château. At some unknown date, according to Mme. Béguin, the tapestries were acquired by the Grillo family of Genoa. The Admiral Nicolo Grillo was ambassador to France in the sixteenth century, and his arms and those of his wife, née Spinola, were placed on the tapestries. The tapestries reappeared in France in the nineteenth century. Ferdinand Moreau, who acquired Anet in 1860 and was interested in its restoration, purchased four of the tapestries before 1875 at the “Hôtel de ventes” and returned them to Anet.⁶

These four, still at Anet and now the property of the French government, comprise: *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs*; *The Death of Orion*; *The Death of Meleager*; and *Diana Saves Iphigenia*. A fifth panel, acquired in 1898 by the Musée des Antiquités, Rouen, treats the theme of *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity*. Two other tapestries, *The Drowning of Britomartis* and *The Blasphemy of Niobe*, which are slightly narrower and may be “portières,” were formerly in the Whitney collection. They were given in 1942 to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The eighth tapestry, in a private collection, represents *The Triumph of Diana*. In addition, fragments of borders with a “DH” monogram, a tablet with a sun or star and the signs and emblems of Diane de Poitiers, such as deer antlers, Greek deltas, arrows and laurel branches, were found about 1976 in a trunk in the attic at Anet by Jean Feray of the Monuments Historiques.⁷

The scenes represented in the tapestries derive from various classical sources, primarily Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. A fourteenth-century copy, formerly in the library of Diane de Poitiers and now at the library of Rouen, carries the Poitiers emblem. The book may have belonged to Diane's grandfather, Aymer de Poitiers, thus possibly serving as inspiration.⁸

Each of the eight tapestries consists of a large central panel, framed by a wide border. The side borders appear as architectural columns and in addition to other motifs, are composed of bows, arrows, quivers, crescents, palms and laurels, deltas (the Greek letter “D” for Diane), and Diane's initial intertwined with that of Henry II, elements which relate not only to the main subject and protagonists but form a part of the ornamentation that appears throughout the château. Miss Standen has noted that the close relationship of tapestry border details to the central theme in the Diane series is characteristic of French borders.⁹

The lower borders contain various devices, Latin inscriptions and a small cartouche with a related scene. The upper borders also include devices and inscriptions

similar to the lower borders and a large cartouche with explanatory text in French verse, a device which had been employed in tapestries dating from the Middle Ages. Several authors have been suggested for the verse. One is Joachim du Bellay (1524-1560), one of the poets of the Pléiade, who was at the court of Francis I and Henry II and had written verse, some of which dealt with Diane de Poitiers and Henry II. The second and more likely candidate is Pontus du Tyard (1521-1605). Also a poet of the Pléiade, Tyard acted as an interpreter to painters as well as to poets and may have provided the program for a set of pictures for the Château d'Anet. A manuscript, said to have been found in Tyard's study and which contains a collection of twelve fables of rivers and fountains, was published in 1586 by Étienne Tabourat. Each fable was based on Greek or Egyptian mythology, accompanied by a poem and instructions as to how it was to be painted. In the last fable of the series, a fountain resembling that at Anet suggests that the fables were for works at Anet and that the tapestries, also based on mythological subjects, may well have owed something to Tyard. In addition, surviving examples of the verse, accompanying the fables, resemble the verses of the Anet series.¹⁰

On three of the four tapestries today at the Château d'Anet, the Grillo arms and initials, which were imposed probably sometime in the seventeenth century, have been replaced by those of Diane de Poitiers and Henry II. One of the four is *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs* (Fig. 1). On the outer borders, in columnar form, are crescent moons, crossed quivers and bows, cartouches with deltas, some of which form the seal of Solomon, antlered deer heads, the insignia of Diane de Poitiers and Henry II, masks and male and female terms, which are back-to-back, with arms interlinked. These linked figures must have derived from already existing motifs, since they also appear, along with masks and rams' heads, in the border of a tapestry belonging to an Italian set, relating the *Story of Joseph*. The set was designed by Bronzino and woven in Florence in 1549 by Giovanni Rost and Nicholas Carcher, who were employed in the factory established by Duke Cosimo I about 1546.¹¹

A device on the upper and lower borders that appears in all the tapestries shows a floating island attached by a double chain to a neighboring rock; and on the island, a nude woman holding a child is seated between an olive and a palm tree, symbolizing victory and peace. The woman is Latona, mother of Diana and Apollo; and the island is Delos, at first named Asteria, the star fallen from the sky. Asteria was the sister of Latona, who changed into a quail in order to escape Jupiter and threw herself into the sea, where she was transformed into the floating island, which Jupiter anchored by a chain. The island became the sanctuary of Latona, who was followed on earth by the wrath of Juno. Below the device is the Latin inscription: "Sic immota manet" ("So it remains unmoved"), alluding to the anchoring of the island where Latona gave birth to Diana and Apollo. Montaiglon had noted that "manet" contains the word for "Anet." The second device is that of crossed palm and olive branches, below which is the inscription: "Non frustra Jupiter ambas" ("Not in vain (gave) Jupiter both"), which in addition to the glories of war and peace, refers, as in the first device, to the children of Latona and to Henry II, Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de Medici.¹²



Fig. 1 *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Château d'Anet
Photo: © Musées Nationaux, Paris

The center cartouche of the lower border, which varies with each tapestry, shows two dogs peering over the frame; and within, a single figure, under which is the inscription, “Namque, Hoc Studium Tu Prima Dedisti” (“Truly to this end is what you have dedicated yourself to”). The large cartouche at the top, framed by stags’ heads, contains the text for the story of the center panel:¹³

“Latona encor fuyant vint en Lycie,/ pres d’un estang ou la chimere ardoit/ et pour de l’eau aux villains s’humilie/ mais d’en avoir chacun d’eux l’en gardoit/ dont l’oeil divin qui du ciel regardoit/ leur cruauté en grenoilles les mue./ D’autre coste Cypris d’orgueil esmue/ veut que d’amour Diane soit frappee/ il guette assez mais en vain se remue/ pour ce qu’elle est a la chasse occupee.” (Béguin 1972-73, p. 348 (456))



Fig. 2 *Latona in Lycia*
 Étienne Delaune
 Engraving
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

According to the verse, the tapestry presents three episodes (Met. VI: 339 ff.) In the left background, Latona is shown coming to Lycia, carrying the two children by Jupiter. In the foreground, Latona has arrived at the pond with the children, Apollo and Diana, as denoted by the sun and moon symbols on their brows. The peasants, cutting reeds, have prevented Latona from drinking; and the divine Eye, presumably the figure in the cloud at the upper left, who according to the verse, observed the peasants' cruelty, has already begun to transform several of them into frogs. At the upper right, the third episode represents Diana, chasing a deer through the woods, indifferent to Love and Venus¹⁴ (also known as Cypris, as indicated in the verse), who are in the sky above.

An engraving by Étienne Delaune of the subject (Fig. 2) is identical to the tapestry with regard to the background, showing the flames issuing forth from the rocks. Similar also are foreground features, depicting Latona fleeing with the children and kneeling before the peasants changing into frogs. Delaune engraved the works of Luca Penni, Jean Cousin and Nicolo dell'Abate, and the engraving is one of six said to be the invention of Luca Penni, which represent the *Story of Diana and Apollo*. The

subjects of these engravings appear in several other tapestries of the Anet series and are considered to have been executed at the end of 1547 or beginning of 1548, although Miss Standen gives a date of about 1560.¹⁵

A drawing entitled *The Hunt of Diana* (Fig. 3), attributed to Luca Penni in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes, appears, with minor changes, to be similar to the scene of the upper right corner, in which Diana is seen running with several dogs after a leaping deer. The exact deer is found in an illustration to the *Orus Apollo* of 1543, attributed to Jean Cousin the Elder,¹⁶ with the inscription: “Comment ils paignoient ung Roy fuyant follie et imprudenc.” Also appearing in the *Orus Apollo* is the frog, sitting on the bank in the right foreground, turned to the left, noted as “ung homme qui ne fe peult mouvoir.”

The theme of the tapestry, which treats the divine origin of Diana, may allude to Diane de Poitiers as the huntress of Henry II; to Henry II as the deer; and presumably to Catherine de Medici as Juno, from whose wrath Latona continued to flee on earth.¹⁷

The style of the main scene of this tapestry is activated by the running figures of the background, floating figures in the sky, mountain bursting with fire, as well as the turning bodies and lively gestures of foreground figures.



Fig. 3 *The Hunt of Diana*
Luca Penni (att. to)
Drawing
Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes
Photo: Musées de Rennes

Similar in style is a second tapestry at the Château d'Anet, *The Death of Orion* (Fig. 4). The side borders contain at the bottom the linked term figures, which ap-

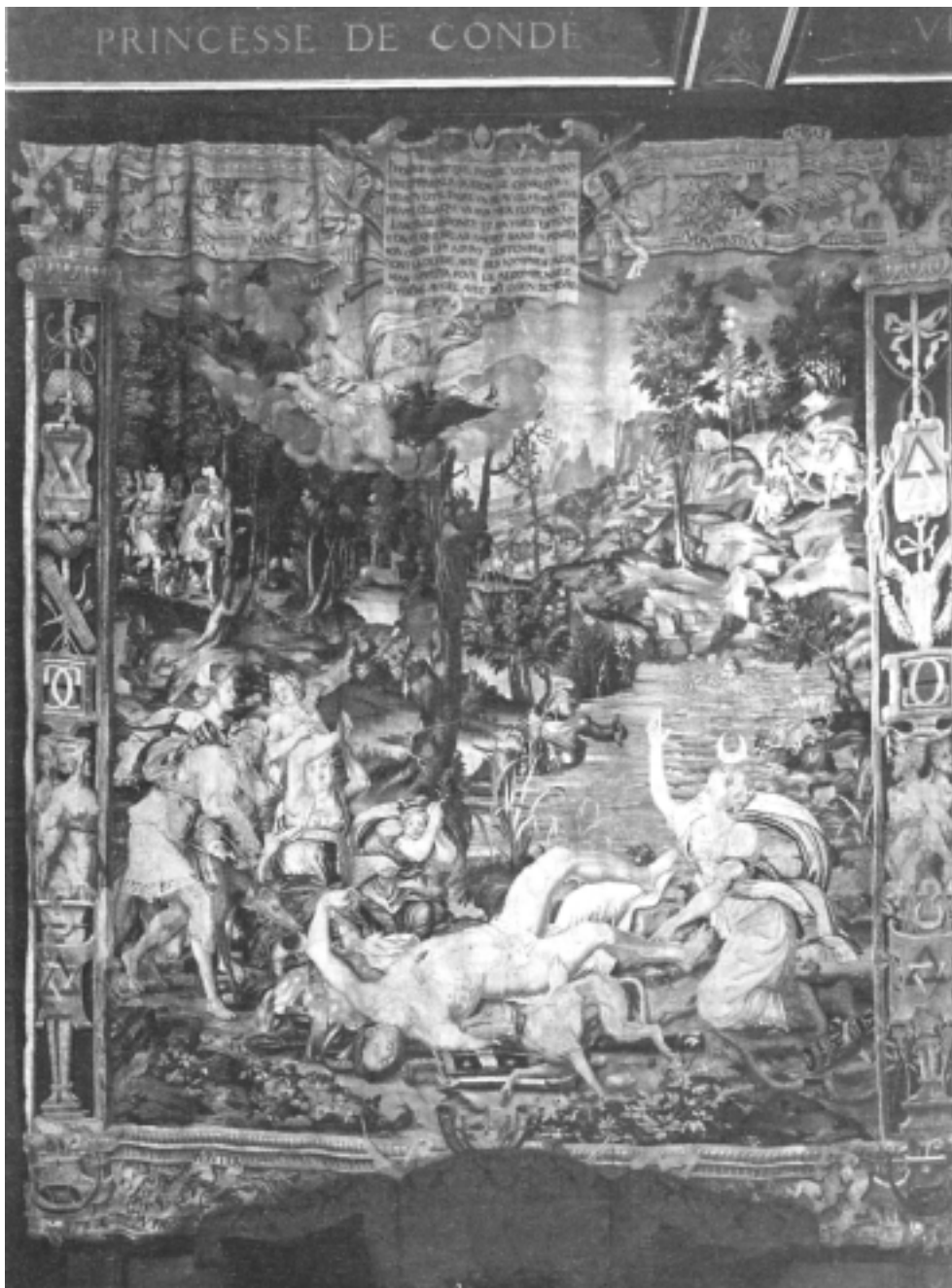


Fig. 4 *The Death of Orion (in situ)*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Château d'Anet
Photo: Brumaire, Ezy-sur-Eure

pear in *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs* (Fig. 1), and the insignia of the Grillo family at the center left and right. On the left border, suspended from a ribbon are a horn, game nets, a plaque with deltas forming the seal of Solomon, additional game nets and a quiver. At the right border, hanging from a tied bow with fluttering ribbons, is a plaque with deltas and another bow from which a deer head hangs.

Borders with similarly tied ribbons are found in framing devices, which existed in France and Italy during the sixteenth century. Examples may be seen in the work of Geofroy Tory, such as in the decoration of the letter "L," belonging to a page of *Champ fleury*, published in Paris in 1529, and in the framing device of the *Flight into Egypt*, which appears in Tory's *Book of Hours*, published in 1531. The use of tied ribbons with streamers also appears in borders of Italian tapestries, such as that of the *Story of Hercules*, an allegory representing the virtues of the Duke by that name, designed by Battista Dosso and woven during the first half of the sixteenth century by the Ferrara factory.¹⁸

On the lower border of the Anet tapestry, the center cartouche is decorated with two horns and shows a lone woman with bow and quiver, surrounded by hunting dogs. Below is the inscription: "Digna fides coelo" ("Faith worthy of heaven"), relating to the apotheosis of Orion.¹⁹

The large cartouche of the upper border, surrounded by quivers, as in the other tapestries, contains explanatory French verse:

"Phoebus mary que Phoebe vouloit tant/ s'accompagner d(°) Orion le chasseur/ veu
tu, dit il, faire un beau coup, ma soeur/ L(°) arc elle enforce et sa visee estent/ si
droit que helas a mort sans y penser/ son Orion lui advint d'offenser./ Dont la deesse
avec ses nymphes pleure/ mais Juppiter pour le recompenser/ luy donne au ciel avec
son chien demeure." (Béguin 1972-73, p. 351 (458)).

The story of the verse, which includes three episodes that are represented in the tapestry, appears to be based on *Hygini Astronomica* (2-34). At the upper left of the tapestry, Diana and her nymphs, accompanied by Orion, with whom Diana was in love, are shown running through the woods, where deer leap and graze. According to the verse, Apollo was angered by this love; and when he saw Orion swimming in the sea, he persuaded Diana, his sister, to shoot the object. At the upper right, Diana is shown with Apollo, shooting unknowingly at Orion, while his dog stands on the bank at the right, guarding his clothes. In the foreground, the third scene shows Diana dressed in garments which are embroidered on the hem with the initials "H" and "D." She kneels beside the body of Orion, which is pierced by an arrow and has washed ashore, his dog by his side. At the left, the maidens mourn as Diana appeals to Jupiter, who floats on a cloud above, and who, as written in the verse, will grant Orion and his dog a place in the heavens.

There are a number of related drawings and engravings. In the Cabinet des Dessins of the Louvre is a drawing attributed to the French School, sixteenth century (Fig. 5), which is identical to the tapestry. There are also three other drawings attributed to Luca Penni, which relate to the same episodes in both the tapestry and Louvre drawing.

The upper right section of one of the drawings, *The Death of Orion* (Fig. 6), also in the Cabinet des Dessins of the Louvre, corresponds with some changes to the upper right corner of the tapestry and Louvre drawing, attributed to the French School, sixteenth century (Figs. 4, 5), with its tall tree at the left, dog standing by the water and background architectural features. The three foreground figures at the left of the drawing, attributed to Penni (Fig. 6), also appear in an engraving dated 1547, by the Master L.D. (Léon Davent), after a composition attributed to both Luca Penni and Primaticcio.²⁰



Fig. 5 *Diana Mourning the Death of Orion*
French School, XVI c.
Drawing
Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Paris



Fig. 6 *The Death of Orion*
Luca Penni (att. to)
Drawing
Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Paris



Fig. 7 *Diana Mourning the Death of Orion*
Luca Penni (att. to)
Drawing
Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Paris

A second drawing attributed to Penni, in the Cabinet des Dessins of the Louvre, represents *Diana Mourning the Death of Orion* (Fig. 7), in which the mourning women at the left, the body of Orion and dog by his side and kneeling figure of Diana appealing to Jupiter on the cloud above reflect similarities to the figures and their placement in the Anet tapestry and the Louvre drawing of the French School, sixteenth century (Fig. 4, 5). Comparable to the tapestry and the Louvre drawing in the scene represented at the upper left sections is a third drawing attributed to Penni, *Diana and Orion* (Fig. 8), in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes. Diana and Orion are shown walking together as a deer leaps in front of them, and in the background are buildings and grounds, suggesting those of Anet.²¹

The three drawings, attributed to Penni were engraved by Étienne Delaune, with modifications (Figs. 9-11). These drawings, which are inscribed with the names of the principal figures in the same hand, and engravings, may have been designs for tapestries which were never executed, since they had been utilized in the Anet tapestries.

It has been suggested that the tapestry of *The Death of Orion* is an allusion to the death of La Châteigneraie (1520-1547), who rose to the court through Francis I and was known for his large size and physical strength. His death came about as the result of a duel with Jarnac, a gentleman of the courts of Francis I and Henry II, of which the real motive was the rivalry between the Duchesse d'Étampes and Diane de Poitiers. Francis I would not permit the duel; but upon the accession of Henry II to the throne, the demand was renewed. The duel took place and Jarnac was successful. A symbolic value was given to the duel, which stood for the triumph of a new reign.²²

The Death of Meleager (Fig. 12), a third tapestry at the Château d'Anet, which may also have political overtones, has several new motifs incorporated in its borders. On the outer borders at the top are female heads, framed by crescents. Motifs such as these existed earlier and may be found in the stucco work at Fontainebleau, in the framing device for the fresco of *Cleobis and Biton* in the Gallery of Francis I, part of the decoration designed and partially executed by Rosso between 1534 and 1537 and completed by Primaticcio after Rosso's death in 1540. This fresco and five others, together with their frames, were reproduced as tapestries at the atelier at Fontainebleau, founded by Francis I, and form a set now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.²³

Other motifs on the side borders of the Anet tapestry include palm and laurel branches, which intertwine with crossed bows, cartouches with variations in the designs of deltas, horns, bearded sphinx figures with flowers atop their heads and the insignia of Diane de Poitiers and Henry II. The sphinx, which has multiple meanings—wisdom, power, vigilance—as a motif, was not new and is found in a print of an Italian illuminated manuscript of the late fifteenth century by Cola Rapicano, who worked for the kings of Naples from 1451 to 1488. The manuscript depicts *Cicero's Orations*, and the motif of the sphinx plays a similar role to that in the tapestry, in that it forms a part of the column.



Fig. 12 *The Death of Meleager (in situ)*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Château d'Anet
Photo: Lauros-Giraudon, Paris

In the cartouche of the lower border is a reclining nude figure, under which is an inscription: “VROR Et Deigneis” (“Fire and burning”).²⁴ In the cartouche of the upper border, the verse describes the scene in the center panel and appears to be based on Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, although Meleager’s story is found in other accounts:

“En Calydon occist Meleager/avec le porc de Phoebe mesprisee/ deux oncles siens,
qui vouloyent outrager/ Atalanta sur tous de luy prisee/ dont Althea leur seur fut
attisee/ d’ire et de pitie, mais en fin l’ire a peu/ tant qu’elle mit le tison en un feu/
avec lequel son filz devoit fin prendre/ a(i) nsi sentit l(’) outrageux peu a peu/ et
le tison et son corps venir cendre.” (Béguin, 1972-73, p. 348 (457))

There is a drawing, entitled *Story of Meleager* (Fig. 13), attributed to Jean Cousin the Elder, in the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, which depicts almost identically the left side of the tapestry. At the upper left of both the tapestry and drawing is the scene of Meleager killing Phoebe's or Diana's boar (in Calydon), which had been sent to ravage the country (Met. VIII: 271 ff.). Meleager was in love with Atalanta to whom he presented the spoils (Met. VIII:424). According to the verse, two of his uncles offended Atalanta, and so Meleager killed them (Met. VIII:434 ff.), which is the episode shown at the center left. At Meleager's birth, it was decreed that his life depended on the burning of a log of wood, which had been placed on the fire and which his mother withdrew and preserved (Met. VIII: 451 ff.). In the verse of the tapestry and also according to Ovid, Meleager's mother was so incensed by the slaying of her brothers that she placed the billet in the fire (the scene presented in the portico at the left), by which the body of Meleager was consumed (Met. VIII: 515 ff.).

The principal scene, in the right foreground, shows Meleager seated on a bench, with his arms raised and a pained expression, indicating his oncoming death. The curving position of his figure and muscular body recall the figure of Adonis in the Fontainebleau fresco and tapestry, *The Death of Adonis*, which derived from figures of Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling. The small figure of the lower cartouche reflects that of Meleager in reverse and resembles the figure of an engraving of Adonis by Fantuzzi, dated 1542-1543.²⁵

The figures surrounding Meleager in the center panel observe him while others lament. One of the male figures at the right, bearded, who looks on, may represent Henry II. Above in the sky, on a cloud, is Diana observing the incident.

The architecture of Meleager's surroundings is classical. The columns are of the Doric order and the frieze above is decorated with a swag and animal heads. These features may be seen in the tapestry after Raphael, *The Sacrifice at Lystra*, in which columns of the architecture and the decoration of the pyre with its rams' heads and garlands are comparable. The tapestry belongs to the famous set of *Acts of the Apostles*, comprising ten tapestries, designed by Raphael for the Sistine Chapel between 1515-1521. Artists working at Fontainebleau and of the period would have been aware of these tapestries, since a set was owned by Frances I.²⁶

Similar architectural and decorative features are found in the work of Sebastiano Serlio of Bologna, who had been in Rome, where he made studies of Roman remains and architectural orders. Having published his theory of architecture in Venice in 1537, based on Vitruvius, Alberti and studies from nature, Serlio arrived in Paris about 1539. The fourth volume of his seven volumes contained the five orders of building and ornament. This volume Serlio gave to Francis I, who invited the architect to become supervisor of the royal buildings.²⁷



Fig. 13 *Story of Meleager*
Jean Cousin the Elder (*att. to*)
Drawing
École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris
Photo: École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris

The fourth tapestry belonging to the Château d'Anet is *Diana Saves Iphigenia* (Fig. 14), which relates to the Fontainebleau frescos and tapestries. The side borders are composed of quivers and bows, female heads with crescent moons, antlered deer heads, bows with fluttering ribbons, cartouches with the insignia of Diane de Poitiers and Henry II and terms with strapwork, which are similar to those of the Fontainebleau stucco work and corresponding tapestry of the *Combat between the Lapiths and Centaurs*. Miss Standen has written that the strapwork employed originated as curling paper in the late 15th century, later becoming stiffened into the appearance of cardboard and leather.²⁸

The lower and upper borders of the Anet tapestry have the customary devices and inscriptions. In the cartouche of the lower border is a single figure. The large upper cartouche is framed with deer heads surmounted by crescents and the verse:

“Sur tous mortels la belle Iphigenie/ doit a Diane une grace immortelle/ elle devoit par mort estre punie/ car des haultz dieux l'ordonnance estoit telle/ mais par pitie de la sainte pucelle/ pour qui les rois et capitaines grecqs/ souffroient au cueur mil ennuyeux regretz/ Diane ung cerf sur l'autel leur presente/ et pour servir a ses honneurs segretz/ osta du feu la victime innocente.” (Béguin, 1972-73, p. 351 (459))

According to mythology, Iphigenia was the daughter of Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek forces against Troy, who was prevented from sailing by unfavorable winds. When he went to consult the seer, Calchas, Agamemnon was informed that because he had killed a stag which was sacred to Diana, he must propitiate the goddess by sacrificing Iphigenia. The verse of the tapestry explains the central scene (Met. XII: 25 ff.), which depicts the moment in which Iphigenia is lifted from the altar by Diana, who appears in a cloud, just as the youth at the right lights the fire. At the left is a high priest in a mitre with a knife in hand, by which he will perform the sacrifice of the deer behind him, which Diana has presented, according to the verse. At the right are the Greek captains and probably Agamemnon, who is often present in art representations in helmet and armor. In the left background are the tents of the Greek army and in the right distance, a view of a town and the Greek fleet.²⁹

The tapestry recalls the fresco of *The Sacrifice* at Fontainebleau but appears closer to the engraved work of the scene in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, by René Boyvin, after Rosso. There are similarities in the placement of background architecture at the right, arrangement of figures to the right and left of the altar and in the depiction of the bearded high priest with mitre.

In the tapestry, before the altar, with crescent moon on its base, is a bowl filled with fruits and an ewer decorated with masks. Although it may be coincidental, the exact arrangement of such ware is found in the fresco of *The Marriage Feast of Cupid and Psyche* by Giulio Romano and assistants in the Sala di Psyche, Palazzo del Tè, Mantua, where Primaticcio was also employed as a painter and stucco worker after Romano's designs, before being called to Fontainebleau in 1531.



Fig. 14 *Diana Saves Iphigenia*
 Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
 Château d'Anet
 Photo: © Musées Nationaux, Paris

Because of Diane de Poitiers' association with the Guise family, the tapestry has been read by some to be an allegory of Mary Stuart (1542-1587), daughter of James V of Scotland and Mary of Guise, possibly represented as Iphigenia. Mary Stuart was considered to be next in line to the succession to the English throne after the death of Mary Tudor, daughter of Henry VIII. She was betrothed at the age of six to the French Dauphin Francis, later Francis II (1543-1560), son of Henry II and Catherine de Medici, and went to France in 1548 where she was brought up at the French court and in the Roman Catholic faith. Diane de Poitiers, protectress to the Guises, is said to have devoted herself to the education of Mary Stuart, who loved her.³⁰ After her marriage in 1558 and the death of Francis II in 1560, Mary returned to Scotland in 1561.



Fig. 15 *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity*
 Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
 Musée des Antiquités, Rouen
 Photo: © CNMHS/Arch. Photo. Paris

The fifth tapestry, at the Musée des Antiquités, Rouen, represents *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity* (Fig. 15). The side borders, in the form of columns, are decorated with items suspended from a ribbon: quivers, cartouches with linked deltas, a horn, game nets, spurs, the intertwined initials of the Grillo family, deer hoofs and antlered deer heads. Supporting these items are term figures, human in appearance, placed on pedestals designed with cartouches of deltas representing the seal of Solomon.



Fig. 15 *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity (detail)*
 Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
 Musée des Antiquités, Rouen
 Photo: Ellebé, Rouen

The supporting figures, probably part of a general vocabulary of motifs, are reminiscent of the half-nude male and female figures that appear at the lower left of the tapestry after Raphael, *The Conversion of the Proconsul*. The manner in which the motifs are hung from a ribbon in the borders of the Anet tapestry and use of bow and quiver are not original ideas and compare with the borders of the *Holy Trinity* from the *Book of Hours* by Geofroy Tory of 1531.

The small cartouche in the center of the lower border, which includes crescents at the left and Grillo initials at the right, shows in this instance, two figures, under which is the inscription “Tu michi sola places” (“You alone please me”), referring to the main subject of the tapestry.

On the upper border at the left are the Greek deltas, probably original, of Diane and at the right, the later imposed arms of the Grillo-Spinola family under a coronet. In the center of the upper border is a large cartouche, framed by rams' heads, referring to Louis de Brezé. According to a document, which agrees with a passage describing the ceremonies of the funeral of Louis de Brezé, the standard bore a ram, signifying Brezé; the same motif appears on a cartouche on the tomb of Louis de Brezé in the Rouen Cathedral³¹

The French verse, inscribed on the cartouche, announces the story of the center panel:

“Depuis pour mieux aux chasses s’() adonner/ a Juppiter ses prieres adresse/ le suppliant chastete luy donner/ comme a Pallas des guerres la maistresse/ en mesme temps Phoebus ses armes dresse/ contre Pytho et par sa grand vertu/ de mille traitz il l’a mort abbatu/ le peuple lors qui s’() estonne et contemple/ voyant des dieux l’() enemy combattu/ pour son honneur luy a dresse un temple.” (Béguin, 1972-73, p. 348 (355))

Three episodes related in the verse, which are inspired by Ovid and yet are inventions of the poet and artist, appear in succession, extending into the background space of the tapestry. In the foreground is the scene in which Diana addresses Jupiter and begs him for the same chastity that he granted to Pallas, goddess of war, so that Diana may devote herself to the hunt (Met. I:487, 697). At the left is Diana, daughter of Jupiter and Latona, thought to have the features of Diane de Poitiers. The initials “H” and “D”, embroidered on her hem, further identify the goddess with Diane de Poitiers. She kneels before Jupiter, considered to represent Henry II,³² who is seated and identified by his attributes of the eagle and thunderbolt. These are placed at the base of the rustic throne, which is under a draped canopy, tied to what may be the oak tree of Jove (Met. I:106). Diana and Jupiter point to Minerva, seated to the right of Jupiter. Minerva, daughter of Jupiter and goddess of war and wisdom, with her plumed helmet and shield ornamented with the mask of Medusa whose head had been given to her by Perseus, in turn points to Diana. At the right of Minerva is Mars, a son of Jupiter and god of war, with his attributes of the helmet, sword and spear. At the left of Jupiter is his wife Juno, the peacock at her side. Juno, as the wife of a faithless husband who was always plotting revenge on her husband’s lovers, undoubtedly represents Catherine de Medici, wife of Henry II. Beside her is Mercury, son and messenger of Jupiter, with his winged helmet and caduceus.

The foreground scene thus presents the protagonists in allegorical form: Henry II as the ruler, Jupiter; his wife, Catherine de Medici, as Juno; and his mistress, Diane de Poitiers, as Diana, who seeks the gift of chastity, reflecting the attitude of Diane, who in her life and relationship with Henry II desired to create an impression of respectability.³³

In the background at the right is the second scene, as stated in the verse of the cartouche, which shows Phoebus or Apollo preparing arms against Python, the serpent born of mud, whom Apollo killed with a thousand arrows (Met. I:440-446). As a result, the crowd, depicted at the far right, was so astonished at seeing the enemy vanquished, that to honor the victor, they erected a temple. The story is completed by the circular temple with columns, surmounted by a lantern, placed on the hill in the distance.

The temple on the hill, according to Ovid (Met. XV:866), is Jupiter’s temple on the Capitol at Rome, which was destroyed in 455 A.D. The building appears to derive from Bramante’s Tempietto, S. Pietro in Montorio, Rome, built in 1502, which



Fig. 16 *Apollo and the Python*
 Étienne Delaune
 Engraving
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

is shown in the tapestry after Raphael, *St. Paul Preaching at Athens*. The building also recalls the design of a dome found in the *Hypnerotomachie* by Francisco Colonna, published in Paris in 1546.

The entire background scene of the tapestry reproduces with some alterations an engraving by Étienne Delaune (Fig. 16). The episode of *Apollo Killing Python*, seen both in the engraving and tapestry may have been inspired by the same subject painted by Primaticcio on the ceiling of the Gallery of Ulysses at Fontainebleau. The event has been thought to have a political meaning and to represent the battle against heresy. Diana is omitted in this scene; but according to one legend, she participated with Apollo in the killing of the serpent of heresy. This indeed corresponded to the real role of Diane de Poitiers, who exercised considerable influence in the condemnation of Protestants. The type of hunt, mentioned in the verse of the tapestry cartouche, for which Diana asks for chastity, is not clear.³⁴ However, since Mercury, Minerva and Mars, the goddess and god of war, are included in the scene, it may be that the hunt refers to the combat against heresy and the participation of Diane de Poitiers.

The two panels, slightly narrower than the others, measuring 15'3" by 9'7", are those in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Both have the usual Latin inscriptions and devices found on the upper and lower borders of the wider tapestries. At the upper corners the arms of the Grillo-Spinola family, a shield under a coronet, have replaced the arms of Diane de Poitiers.³⁵

The Blasphemy of Niobe (Fig. 17) shows in its decorative outer borders: rams' heads, quivers, cartouches with deltas, jar-like designs or urns, the Grillo initials (also later replacements), female heads with crescents, arrows and bows interlaced with laurel and larger jar shapes that resemble those in the borders of the fifteenth century Italian manuscript of *Cicero's Orations*. On the lower border is the small cartouche surmounted by the monogram "HD" and flanked by crescents, a censer, ribbon and fruit, with the emblem of a lone woman, shivering before a bonfire, under which is the Latin inscription: "Hei mihi qualis eram" ("Ah me! Such once was I"), referring to Niobe's fate.³⁶

The poem of the upper cartouche explains the composition:

"Quant un mortel des biens que Dieu luy donne/ esmue d'orgueil gloire ne luy veult rendre merveille n'est si soubdain l'abandonne,/ et si malheur ou mort le vient surprendre. Niobe sort de Tebes pour reprendre/ le peuple offra(n)t a Latona priere/ et la blasmant soy et ses filz prefere/ aux dieux par qui s() esclaire tout le monde/ Latona lors a ses enfans referre/ le juste esmoy de sa douleur profonde." (Béguin, 1972-73, p. 351 (460))

In the foreground, a man with arm outstretched seems to be preventing the other man from leading a sacrificial bull to Latona's altar. In the middle distance is the barefoot Niobe with her seven daughters (Met. VI: 181 ff.). At the left, Niobe is shown, as the verse indicates, hurling insults before the altar of Latona, whose wrath she aroused (Met. VI: 165 ff.). In the heavens at the upper right, Latona describes her humiliation to her children, Diana and Apollo, who will avenge their mother (Met. VI: 204 ff.). In the far distance are Niobe's seven sons and a view of pyramids and a mountain.³⁷

The composition of the tapestry, as that of the other tapestries, appears to be composed of sections which recall various sources. The foreground figure of a rustic leading a bull, close to the picture's edge, exists in a scene of a fresco by Giulio Romano and assistants in the Sala di Psiche, Palazzo del Tè, Mantua, entitled *Pasiphaë Enters the Cow Constructed by Daedalus*. The temple structure in the Anet tapestry, with arches, Corinthian capitals and spiralling Solomnic columns, recall columns from Raphael's tapestry, *Healing of the Lame Man*. The unit with temple and figure within may be found in the Fontainebleau fresco and tapestry of *Cleobis and Biton*.

Scholars have thought that the Diana series should have included a sequel of the death of Niobe's children, which would have completed the allegory of Python, in treating the pretensions of a foreign enemy. A drawing of *The Death of Niobe's*



Fig. 17 *The Blasphemy of Niobe*
 Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the children of
 Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, 1942
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Fig. 18 *Apollo and Diana Killing the Children of Niobe*
French School, XVI c.
Drawing
Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Paris
Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Children (Fig. 18), by a French artist of the sixteenth century, exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Upon examination of the background of the Niobe tapestry, certain architectural features, such as the pyramids and cluster of buildings with landscape to the left and right are comparable to those in the drawing. The drawing has also been compared stylistically to the Louvre drawing of *Diana Mourning the Death of Orion* (Fig. 5) in the treatment of landscape, architecture, figures and drapery, suggesting that they may be by the same hand.



Fig. 19 *The Drowning of Britomartis*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the children of
Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, 1942
Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The Drowning of Britomartis (Fig. 19) is the second work in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Its side borders are decorated with arrows and laurels, around which are wound scrolls with an inscription found at Anet and on book bindings belonging to Diane de Poitiers: "Consequitur quodcumque petit" ("It attains whatever it seeks"), referring to Diane in that "She gets what she wants."³⁹ There are hearts, the Grillo initials (which are later replacements), additional hearts, bows, arrows and Greek deltas, urns and hooped satyr faces, which were part of an earlier vocabulary. These faces can be seen in examples of fifteenth-century Italian manuscript borders and in the border to the frontispiece of Serlio's fourth book on architecture, published in Venice in 1537.

The story of the tapestry is a more obscure one and occurs in *Historiae Deorum* by Giraldi and in the *Mythologie* of Callimachus, which quotes various classical authors and in which the name of Dictynna is said to have been given to Britomartis because she invented hunting nets. A further source of the story is the poem *Ciris*, attributed to Virgil, which was published in the Renaissance a number of times, including an edition by Aldo Manuzio in 1517.⁴⁰ The poem (lines 285-310) also relates the story on which the verse in the cartouche elaborates:

"Britomarte par Minos poursuivie/ qui par les boys a force la veut prendre/ aime trop mieux en mer finir la vie/ qu'a son vouloir outrageux condescendre/ lors po(u)r sa mort voulant gloire luy rendre/ Phoebe les retz et filez inventa/ dont au lieu saint le corps on raporta/ et puis les Grecs Dictynna l()ont nommee/ o sainte mort qui au monde apporta/ par tel malheur chose tant estimee." (Béguin, 1972-73, p. 351 (461))

In the left background Minos is seen pursuing Britomartis. The king reappears in the middle foreground looking down upon Britomartis, who as the verse indicates, has thrown herself into the sea, rather than submit to his passion. The statuesque figure of Diana, with the insignia of Henry II embroidered on her hem, appears with her dog and nymphs. In Crete, Diana was also identified with Britomartis or Dictynna, goddess of the nets (Met. II: 441). In the background on the hill by a small temple, Diana is shown making nets, the means by which Britomartis is rescued by the figures in the boat at the center right.

The emblem in the cartouche, decorated with a delta and nets, on the lower border, shows a woman holding a fish net and adored by fishermen, accompanied by the motto: "Hoc tua mors valuit" ("This has thy death availed"), which also pertains to Britomartis.⁴¹ At the left and right edges are ovals with peaked rocks within.



Fig. 20 *The Death of Britomartis*
 Étienne Delaune
 Engraving
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

An engraving entitled *Death of Britomartis* (Fig. 20) by Étienne Delaune, after Luca Penni, although taken to represent the punishment of Tityus, according to its inscription, reproduces the upper right section of the tapestry. The figure of Minos standing on the embankment, Britomartis in the sea, the boat in the right distance and surrounding landscape are similar. The temple on the hill, as shown in the tapestry, seems reminiscent of one of the woodcuts, with some changes, from the *Hyperotomachie* of 1546.



Fig. 21 *Pan and Syrinx*
Jean Cousin the Younger
Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Paris
Photo: © Musées Nationaux, Paris

The landscape background at the left, showing two crossed trees and Minos chasing Britomartis, is comparable to scenes in two drawings, attributed to Jean Cousin the Younger. One, *Pan and Syrinx* (Fig. 21), is in the Louvre. The other, entitled *Landscape with Mythological Figures* (Fig. 22) is in the Hermitage, Leningrad.

The theme of the tapestry appears to deal with love as indicated by the hearts and arrows of the borders and the chase, as well as with the virtue of Britomartis, who personifies Diana, goddess of chastity. By token of the initials embroidered on her hem, the goddess also represents Diane de Poitiers, while Minos presumably is Henry II.



Fig. 23 *The Triumph of Diana*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Private collection
Photo: Private collector

The eighth panel, which is in a private collection, *The Triumph of Diana* (Fig. 23), is considered to be a fragment in which the upper and lower borders have been interchanged. The tapestry has characteristics in common with the other tapestries. On the upper border are crescent moons, quivers and palm and olive leaves with the motto: "Non frustra Jupiter ambas" ("Not in vain (gave) Jupiter both"). The lower border contains rams' heads, crescent moons and emblem of a lone woman on an island, representing Latona, with the inscription below: "Sic immota manet" ("So it remains unmoved"). The side borders are modern except for the rams' heads and consist of double crescents, which appear to form a type of pattern used in metalwork.⁴²

The center panel represents the triumph of Diana and depicts the goddess of chastity with her bow and arrows, seated on a chariot, decorated with a spear and bow. Seated in the back of the chariot are Venus, bound, and Cupid, both bound and blindfolded. Behind, a group of nymphs follows with laurel wreaths and branches; two carry long lances on which are tied a quiver and bundle of arrows. Beside the chariot, a female figure, crowned with laurel, walks with a chained dog. The woman and dog have been compared to the figures in a painting of *Diana Hunting* in the Louvre, that has been attributed to both Jean Cousin the Elder and Luca Penni.



Fig. 22 *Landscape with Mythological Figures*
Jean Cousin the Younger
Drawing
Hermitage, Leningrad
Photo: Hermitage, Leningrad

Depictions of triumphs belong to a tradition, and there are a number of engravings of the subject to which the tapestry can be related. One is an engraving by Léon Davent, executed about 1547 as one of eight prints of the *Capital Sins* after Luca Penni. There is a similarity in the position of the seated female figure with head in profile and torso shown in three-quarter view, as well as in the placement of arms, one of which is bent behind the figure, while the other is extended towards the front. Another is *The Triumph of Chastity*, engraved by George Pencz (c. 1500-1550). The principal female figure is seated in a high position on the chariot; the winged Cupid, whose body turns, is bound and blindfolded; and tall female figures follow behind carrying branches.

Greater stylistic similarities may be seen between the tapestry and a triumph represented in the *Hypnerotomachie* of 1546, which is inscribed at the bottom: "Ce chario estoit tiré de six Licornes consacrees a Diane, ressemblantes." Comparable are the design of the chariot with its box-like shape and curved scroll-shaped ornamentation and decorative wheels; the position of the seated female figure with billowing drapery; and figure types with softly curved limbs, defined features and Greco-Roman hair styles. The theme of *The Triumph of Diana*, as *Diana Saves Iphigenia* (Fig. 14), *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity* (Fig. 15) and *The Drowning of Britomartis* (Fig. 19), is that of Diana's virtue.

Another work, which may be related to the Anet tapestries, is a painting in the Louvre of *Diana and Actaeon* by an anonymous artist, thought to have been painted about 1540-1550. The same splashes of red color, used in the tapestries, appear in the painting, which also seems to derive in part from the tapestries designed by Raphael.⁴³ In the lower right corner are birds that resemble those in the *Miraculous Draught of Fishes*.

Designer

It has been difficult for scholars to ascertain the designer of the Anet tapestries. The two artists that have been primarily considered are Luca Penni and Jean Cousin the Elder. It has also been suggested that there may be more than one designer.⁴⁴

Of Luca Penni it is known that he was born in Florence between 1500 and 1504 to a family of weavers. He is said to have studied with Raphael and to have worked under Perino del Vaga in Lucca and Genoa. Penni arrived in France about 1530 and is mentioned in the royal accounts of 1537 to 1540 as a painter of Fontainebleau, where Primaticcio was active, having arrived from Mantua in 1531.



Fig. 14 *Diana Saves Iphigenia (in situ)*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Château d'Anet
Photo: Brumaire, Ezy-sur-Eure



Fig. 11 *Diana About to Go Hunting with Orion*
 Étienne Delaune
 Engraving
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

After Rosso, who had been made official painter to the king in 1532, died in 1540, Primaticcio became the head of the projects at Fontainebleau. Penni continued to work on painting projects and apparently received payment for tapestry designs; he also worked away from the court. After 1547 Penni seems to have settled in Paris and primarily executed works for engravers, such as Jean Mignon, Davent, Boyvin and Delaune. One point in favor of Penni as the author of the tapestry designs is that since Philibert de l'Orme was in charge of the building of Anet, he would have favored a royal artist and would have preferred an artist not connected with his rival, Primaticcio. Penni appears to be the only cartoon designer mentioned in the Royal Archives at this time, except for Primaticcio's pupils.⁴⁵

Some suggest that Penni is the artist of the tapestry cartoons on the basis of drawings and engravings attributed to him, which are related to the tapestries of *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs* (Figs. 2-3) and *The Death of Orion* (Figs. 6-11). However, the fact that these drawings and engravings form a part of the

pictorial content of several of the tapestries does not appear to be sufficient evidence in favor of Penni as the designer of the entire Anet series.

The lack of complete agreement between the graphic works and tapestries may point to the use of the drawings for both the prints and tapestry cartoons. Several scholars observe that, while the drawings and prints relate to the tapestries, some of the prints are labeled with different stories, such as that of Britomartis, which is inscribed with the story of Tityus (Fig. 20). These prints are not reversed, indicating they were not copied from the drawings. It has further been suggested that the prints may have derived from the works by one of the Cousins, Jean Cousin the Elder or Jean Cousin the Younger, who worked for a time under the direction of his father. This suggestion was made on the basis of an album frontispiece in Berlin, which states that the book contains drawings by "Mr. Guido et Jean Cousin, designers d'environ toute L'oeuvre de Stefanus," the Latin name for Étienne Delaune. The prints may be later than the tapestries, dating after 1560.

A number of scholars have attributed the Anet tapestries to Jean Cousin the Elder: Edith Standen, John Goldsmith Phillips, Charles Sterling, Philippe Verdier and Philippe de Montebello. Cousin was born in Soucy near Sens about 1490 and died about 1560-1561 in Paris. By 1526 he was a qualified painter, stained-glass designer and geometry expert; he was also considered to have talent in sculpture and architecture. Cousin left Sens for Paris in 1538, where he resided. By this time, the influence of works of the Italian school was apparent at the court of France, where Cousin appears to have been pensioned about 1550 as "imager."⁴⁷ In 1541 the artist was commissioned to furnish three tapestry cartoons of the *Life of Saint Geneviève* for the Confraternity of Sainte-Geneviève-du-Mont. Also attributed to Cousin are the illustrations of the *Orus Apollo*, published in Paris in 1543, and the illustrations of the *Hypnerotomachie*, published in 1546 in Paris. Among the artist's principal known works are the painting *Eva Prima Pandora*, which is variously dated, the designs for the *Entrance of Henry II at Paris* of 1549 and the *Livre de Perspective* of 1560.

Jean Cousin the Elder as the author of the Anet tapestries was originally proposed by John Goldsmith Phillips on the basis of a stylistic comparison with another set of tapestries, documented as designed by Cousin for the Cathedral at Langres. In 1543 Cousin was commissioned by Claude de Longwy, Cardinal de Givry, to prepare designs for a set of eight tapestries, representing the *Life of Saint Mamas*, a third-century Cappadocian and patron saint of the Langres Cathedral. Three of the tapestries, woven by Pierre Blasse II and Jacques Langlois of Paris,⁴⁸ remain: two are at the Cathedral at Langres and the third is in the Louvre.

Each of the panels is framed by a border decorated with strapwork, fruit, vegetables and masks, with an inscription in French on the lower border relating the story of the center panel, in a similar fashion to the Anet tapestries.



Fig. 24 *St. Mamas Preaching to the Animals*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Cathedral, Langres
Photo: CNMHS/ARS NY/SPADEM 1987

One of the tapestries (all of which are based on the legend by the tenth-century Simeon Metaphrastes) is *St. Mamas Preaching to the Animals* (Fig. 24) at Langres. In the tapestry, St. Mamas appears in the foreground with the animals he has tamed; then he is shown farther back on the mountain, addressed by the angel, who brings him a wand. According to a version of the legend, a gospel book will spring from the ground, when the angel touches it with a wand. St. Mamas is next seen milking the animals at the center left and beyond is seen making cheese. On the right side of the tapestry, the saint is shown feeding the poor under the portico and being arrested for not worshipping the gods by soldiers in front of the temple-like building.



Fig. 25 *St. Mamas Presenting Himself to the Governor of Cappadocia*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Musée du Louvre, Département des Objets d'Art, Paris
Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The second tapestry, in the Louvre, is *St. Mamas Presenting Himself to the Governor of Cappadocia* (Fig. 25). The saint is shown at the left by the tree, meeting with the soldiers. According to the legend of Simeon Metaphrastes, the saint invites them to a feast of cheese and bread, presented in the scene at the upper left, after which the soldiers leave, shown at the left of the triumphal arch. In the foreground, St. Mamas is portrayed accompanied by the lion, as mentioned in the verse, surrendering to Alexander by the portico. Finally, under the triumphal arch in the center is the martyrdom of St. Mamas, in which the saint is bound to a column and tortured.



Fig. 26 *The Burning of St. Mamas*
Tapestry, French School, XVI c.
Cathedral, Langres
Photo: © Musées Nationaux, Paris

The third tapestry, which is also at Langres Cathedral, is *The Burning of St. Mamas* (Fig. 26). According to the *Metaphrastian Vita*, St. Mamas is placed in prison, the circular building at the left, from which the prisoners escape. In the center, the saint is shown in a furnace, where the legend says he had been placed with other believers of the faith and where he remained for three days. Above are consoling angels; and at the right, the crowned figure, thought to represent the Emperor Aurelian, directs the soldiers in feeding the fire.

John Goldsmith Phillips observed consistent details in both the Anet and St. Mamas tapestries, such as foreground figures larger than background figures; the individualization of facial features; intricate draperies with floating panels; and use of buildings in the background and the “luxurious” trees. Mr. Phillips also noted in the drawing of some of the hands the way in which fingers are extended and spread apart but for the two middle fingers, which are placed together.⁴⁹



Fig. 27 *Martyrdom of a Saint*
 Jean Cousin the Elder (att. to)
 Drawing
 Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Paris
 Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Besides parallel details, a similar pattern of compositional organization between the Anet and Langres sets lends additional evidence to support the authorship of Cousin. Also pointing to an attribution of the tapestries to Cousin are several drawings considered to be by him, as well as several signed engravings.

A drawing of *The Martyrdom of a Saint* (Fig. 27), in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, has been assigned to Cousin because of its relation to the story in the St. Mamas panels and because of certain stylistic similarities to the tapestries.⁵⁰ The drawing represents several episodes based on the Metaphrastian legend, showing St. Mamas saved by an angel as he was hurled into the sea with a lead weight hanging about his neck, in the center background; the men of Aurelian fleeing at the left; and the angel touching the ground with a wand in the right background. In the foreground, St. Mamas is shown kneeling before the angel, who holds the weight in one hand. Similarities were also seen between the drawing and tapestry of *St. Mamas Preaching to the Animals* (Fig. 24), in the position of the figure of St. Mamas with drapery with a short mantle worn across the back, in architectural features and barren trees. The drapery of the angel also appears twisted in the same manner as that of St. Mamas in the tapestry of *St. Mamas Presenting Himself to the Governor of Cappadocia* (Fig. 25). An additional reason for attributing the drawing to Cousin is the position of

one stone on top of another, as seen in the foreground of the drawing, which also appears in three etchings by Cousin, *The Annunciation*, *The Holy Family*, and the *Descent from the Cross*.

The drawing in the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, assigned with question to Jean Cousin the Elder (Fig. 13), which appears to be a study for the Anet tapestry *The Death of Meleager*, compares stylistically with that of *The Martyrdom of a Saint* (Fig. 27). The manner of drawing tree foliage with loops and curved lines and architecture with crisp and definite strokes is similar as is the depiction of figures and drapery. The expressive movement of Meleager plunging the sword into one of his uncles also compares with that of the angel touching the ground in the right distance of the St. Mamas drawing. Therefore, it suggests that the Meleager drawing is by the same hand. This drawing is reproduced almost identically in the left section of the tapestry *The Death of Meleager* (Fig. 12), which reflects the influence of the Fontainebleau fresco and tapestry *The Death of Adonis*, and in which details and compositional organization are similar to the documented *St. Mamas at Cappadocia* (Fig. 25).

Both tapestries are based on a vertical tripartite division, with the columns of foreground architecture placed on a slight diagonal leading back in space to another unit consisting of pillars and arches in which a scene takes place. A third unit at the left in both tapestries, in which figures are intermingled with landscape features, consists of space boxes that extend upwards and into the distance. The compositions are also arranged in three horizontal planes: a frontal area with larger figures; a middle zone; and a distant zone with smaller figures. In addition, there is a similarity in the depiction of hands, with the center fingers placed together, as seen in the figure of Meleager and that of St. Mamas.

A comparison between the tapestries of *The Death of Orion* (Fig. 4), in which three drawings attributed to Penni appear to form part of the left and right background sections and foreground (Figs. 6-8), and *St. Mamas Preaching to the Animals* (Fig. 24) also illustrates a comparable internal structure and shows similarities in certain details. The composition in both the Anet and Langres tapestry is based on a circular pattern, with foreground figures arranged in a semi-circle that leads to a space zone at the upper left and continues to another zone above, in which a figure appears in a cloud, and on to the right where there is another space pocket with an episode which leads down to the point of origin. In both tapestries, there are also horizontal divisions into foreground, middle-ground (where a partially dead tree divides the middle plane into two sections) and distant background.

There are also similarities of particular details in the Anet and Langres tapestries, such as the foreground foliage placed close to the border; the hands with pointing fingers, as seen in the hands of St. Mamas and Diana; the arrangement in both figures of the drapery of the sleeves with puffed effect; and similar facial features as shown in the clearly defined profiles of St. Mamas and the maiden at the left in the Anet tapestry.

A third example, illustrating another type of internal structure, similar to both the Anet and Langres sets, may be seen in a comparison between *Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs* (Fig. 1), in which the upper right section reproduces a drawing attributed to Penni (Fig. 3) and deer from the *Orus Apollo*, and *The Burning of St. Mamas* (Fig. 26).

A wedge shape, formed by figures in the Anet tapestry and by the furnace and foreground figures in the Langres tapestry, divides the picture plane into a left and right, where there are additional scenes, and provides the center of visual focus. The mountain bursting with flames in the Anet tapestry and the flaming furnace in the Langres tapestry add to the central thrust.

The turning and twisting figures at the center of the Anet tapestry have similar attitudes and relationships to one another as do the turning and bending figures at the left of the Langres tapestry. In addition, the hands which grasp poles in each tapestry display similar tensions and finger formations.

The remaining Anet tapetries may also be related to the Langres series and to each other on the basis of internal structure as well as common details.

Jupiter Changing the Inhabitants of Lycia into Frogs (Fig. 1) and *Diana Saves Iphigenia* (Fig. 14), which is related to the engraving by René Boyvin after a fresco at Fontainebleau, have the same basic structure, that consists of a central focal point, formed by a wedge shape of figures, which divides the picture plane into a left and right as in *The Burning of St. Mamas* (Fig. 26). There are also similarities in the type of tree placed at the left in both of the Anet tapestries, with tall trunks and spiky leaves, and in the hand shapes, such as the upraised hands of Latona and those of the soldier at the right of *Diana Saves Iphigenia*.

The same sort of flying drapery worn by Diana in the latter tapestry may be seen in the figures of Diana and Jupiter in *The Death of Orion* (Fig. 4), in which the small face and thickly-drawn arms of the figure kneeling before the half-dead tree resemble the head and arms of Diana in *Diana Saves Iphigenia* (Fig. 14).

With regard to *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity* (Fig. 15) at Rouen, the pictorial organization compares with that of *St. Mamas Preaching to the Animals* (Fig. 24) in the division of composition into foreground with similar alignment of figures, middle ground and far distance and division into a left and right section, created by trees placed in a center position. Foreground foliage, executed in detail in both tapestries, is placed close to the border, and similar temple structures are represented in the right backgrounds. A comparable depiction of hands with pointed fingers is seen in the hands of Diana and St. Mamas. The type of hand in which the two center fingers are together, as shown in the left hand of Minerva, is also similar to that of St. Mamas in the scene at Cappadocia (Fig. 25), while the claw-like fingers of Jupiter are not unlike the fingers of Orion in *The Death of Orion* (Fig. 4).



Fig. 8 *Apollo, Diana and Orion*
 Luca Penni (att. to)
 Drawing
 Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes
 Photo: Musées de Rennes

The manner in which drapery is executed in *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity* (Fig. 15), so as to fall in crisp folds, as seen in the drapery of Diana's skirt and Minerva's hem, resembles that of the saint in *St. Mamas Preaching to the Animals* (Fig. 24). The material of the canopy in its linear quality and usage is similar to that of the engraving of *The Holy Family*, which is signed by Jean Cousin the Elder and dated 1544.

The Blasphemy of Niobe (Fig. 17), one of the narrower tapestries, which shows the influence of the Fontainebleau fresco and corresponding tapestry, *Cleobis and Biton*, and possibly the influence of a fresco at the Palazzo del Tè, may be compared with the tapestry of *St. Mamas at Cappadocia* (Fig. 25). The arrangement is similar in the division of the tapestry plane into foreground with larger figures, middle ground and far distance with smaller figures. Similarities may be seen in the diagonal placement of the portico columns and relationship of middle ground architecture to trees, which divide the background into several sections. Intricate drapery, tree forms and striding and turning figures also correspond. The type of figure with hat by the tree at the right in the Niobe panel resembles the figure with hat and spear at the center left of the St. Mamas tapestry.

Comparable in structure to the Niobe panel in its horizontal divisions of foreground with larger figures, middle ground and far distance, as is the case in all of the tapestries, and tripartite division of the background, is *The Drowning of Britomartis* (Fig. 19), also a narrow panel, which incorporates drawings by Jean Cousin the Younger (Figs. 21-22) and an engraving by Étienne Delaune (Fig. 20). Figures



Fig. 9 *The Death of Orion*
 Étienne Delaune
 Engraving
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

which stride and turn, fluttering drapery and landscape foliage correspond. In addition, the hand of Diana with the two middle fingers placed together may be found in *St. Mamas at Cappadocia* (Fig. 25), as well as in other tapestries of the Anet series, such as *Diana Imploring Jupiter for the Gift of Chastity* (Fig. 15) and *The Death of Meleager* (Fig. 12). The figures and features of the nymphs on the left of the Britomartis tapestry also show similarities to those represented in *The Death of Orion* (Fig. 4).

While the fragment of *The Triumph of Diana* (Fig. 23) appears to differ somewhat in style from the other tapestries of the set, detailed foreground foliage and draperies are comparable. The figure types seem close to those of the *Hypnerotomachie* of 1546, which, if the illustrations are by Cousin the Elder, would strengthen the attribution of the tapestry design to the artist.

Since there are a number of prints and drawings by anonymous artists, some by Luca Penni, and several by Jean Cousin the Younger, which relate to the Anet tapestries, it has led to the suggestion that there may be several designers for the tapestries.⁵¹



Fig. 10 *The Death of Orion*
 Étienne Delaune
 Engraving
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931
 Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The fact that similarities in the compositional organization and certain details exist between the Anet tapestries and the Langres set, documented as designed by Jean Cousin the Elder, would seem to indicate that the same author had been responsible for the designing of both series.

Since the various drawings and engravings appear in the background sections of the tapestries, it may suggest a borrowing from the several artists or perhaps a collaboration and corresponds to the way in which a fresco cycle has a master and assistants. That some tapestries contain awkward or clumsy passages, such as several of the figures in *Diana Saves Iphigenia* (Fig. 14), may be the result of the weaving and translation from cartoon to tapestry. In any event, evidence points to Jean Cousin the Elder as the designer or at least the master designer of the Anet set, executed about 1550-1555.

Weaving

The tapestries are woven in wool and silk in the high warp technique. The weaver works from the back of the tapestry while a movable mirror allows him to check the appearance from the front, the cartoon being transferred by the use of tracing paper.⁵²

Where the Anet tapestries were woven is not known. They may have been executed at the factory of Fontainebleau, founded by Francis I in 1539 in order to satisfy the needs of the court and placed in the charge of the superintendent of Royal Buildings, Philibert Babou de La Bourdisier. There is evidence that the factory was active after the death of Francis I in 1547, as indicated in a letter of April 24, 1565, written by Primaticcio, who had earlier furnished tapestry designs for the factory at Fontainebleau and had a number of weavers working under him and who succeeded Philibert de l'Orme as superintendent of Royal Buildings after the death of Henry II in 1559. Primaticcio's letter of 1565 to Catherine de Medici mentions materials for tapestries at Fontainebleau.⁵³

That the weavers of the Diana series may be Pierre Blasse II, who was also one of the weavers at Fontainebleau, and Jacques Langlois, who wove the St. Mamas tapestries, is suggested by a distinctive yellow-green color, which appears both in *St. Mamas Presenting Himself to the Governor of Cappadocia* and *The Death of Meleager*. Since Cousin, who designed the St. Mamas tapestries, and Blasse and Langlois, who wove them, lived and worked in Paris, the Anet series might have been woven there. In view of the fact that Luca Penni is a contender for being the designer of the tapestries, it might be remembered that by 1547 he was also in Paris, where he lived until his death in 1556. Henry II had established a workshop at the hospital and orphanage of the Trinity in Paris in 1551, where orphans were instructed in various crafts, including tapestry weaving; and there may have existed in Paris even another atelier.⁵⁴

A further reason in favor of the Anet set being woven in Paris is that the sketches for the Diana series must have been available when a similar, later set, now in the Mobilier National, Paris, partially designed by Toussaint Dubreuil about 1597, was woven at the house of the Jesuits in Paris, founded by Henry IV.

The tapestries of the *Story of Diana*, executed for the Château d'Anet, with their decorative framing and the intricately woven stories of their center panels, simulate paintings. The motifs of the borders include those found in earlier and contemporary framing devices of French and Italian manuscripts, tapestries and fresco work. They are combined in an original manner with other motifs which are personal and symbolic of Diane and Henry II, such as deltas, crescent moons, the initials "D" and "H," palms and laurel and olive branches.

The center panels are comprised of various pictorial components. Some are original; others reflect the frescoes and tapestries of Fontainebleau, after Rosso, and derive influences from Michelangelo and Raphael, as well as from the drawings and engravings by other artists. Once again, originality results from the new combination of existing elements.

The themes of the tapestries, whose legends are based on classical sources, primarily Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, treat love, death, transformations of beings and rebirth. The stories, some of which have religious and political connotations, are allegories of Diane de Poitiers and Henry II in the guise of antique gods. Diane is deified and her virtues of wisdom, charity and chastity are brought forward, while tribute is paid to Henry II in the role of Apollo and Jupiter.

That the decoration of the Château d'Anet contains symbolic meaning, not to be understood by the general public at that time, contributes to its quality of enchantment. The tapestries representing the *Story of Diana* would have been an important addition to the magical totality of the château, innovative in that it was conceived for the glorification of one personality—Diane de Poitiers.

FOOTNOTES

1. Edith A. Standen, "The Tapestries of Diane de Poitiers," *Actes du Colloque International sur l'Art de Fontainebleau, Fontainebleau et Paris, 18, 19, 20 octobre 1972. Études réunies et présentées par André Chastel* (1975), p. 81. Hereafter cited as Standen 1972; Sylvie Béguin, "Tenture de l'histoire de Diane," (Cat. of Exh.), *Défense du patrimoine national-oeuvres acceptées par l'État en paiement de droits de succession, 1972-77*, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 1978, p. 57. Hereafter cited as Béguin 1978.
2. John Goldsmith Phillips. "Diane de Poitiers and Jean Cousin," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 2, No. 3 (November 1943), p. 109. Hereafter cited as Phillips 1943.
3. Alphonse Roux, *Le château d'Anet* (Paris, 1931), pp. 7, 8, 11. Hereafter cited as Roux 1931; Phillips 1943, p. 104.
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8. Bardon 1963, p. 67.
9. Edith A. Standen, "Some Sixteenth-Century Grotesque Tapestries," *Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire*, 6th ser., 45 (1973), p. 232. Hereafter cited as Standen 1973.
10. Standen 1972, p. 91.; Bardon 1963, pp. 73, 75.; Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the 16th Century*, 2nd ed. (1947; rpt. Liechtenstein, 1968), p. 135.
11. Béguin 1978, p. 58.; Mercedes Viale Ferrero, *Arazzi italiani del cinquecento* (Milan, 1961), pp. 22, 59.
12. Anatole de Montaiglon, "Diane de Poitiers et son goût dans les arts," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 19 (1879), p. 153. Hereafter cited as Montaiglon 1879.; Phillips 1943, p. 112.; Montaiglon 1878, p. 299.
13. Latin translation courtesy of Dr. Helmut Nickel, 1988; Sylvie Béguin, (Cat. of Exh.) *L'École de Fontainebleau*, Grand Palais, Paris, 1972-73, p. 347; Hereafter cited as Béguin 1972-73.
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16. Standen 1972, p. 92.
17. Bardon 1963, p. 69.; Montaiglon 1879, p. 153.
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20. Béguin 1978, p. 58 (16b).; Béguin 1972-73, p. 307 (387).
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24. Latin translation courtesy of Dr. Helmut Nickel, 1988.
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31. Standen 1985, p. 249.; Le Breton 1898, p. 105.
32. Fenaille 1923, p. 100.
33. Bardon 1963, p. 50.
34. Ibid., pp. 70-71.
35. Standen 1985, p. 247.
36. Ibid., p. 256.; Phillips 1943, p. 112.
37. Ibid.
38. Standen 1972, p. 88.; Bardon 1963, p. 70.
39. Edith A. Standen. "Studies in the History of Tapestry 1520-1790: III. Renaissance and Mannerism," *Apollo*, 114 (July 1981), p. 20.
40. Standen 1972, p. 88.; Standen letter, November 5, 1981.
41. Phillips 1943, p. 112.
42. Standen 1972, p. 96.; Heinrich Gobel, *Wandteppiche. Part II: Die Romanischen Länder*, I (Leipzig, 1928), p. 43.
43. Béguin 1972-73, p. 207 (253); Standen 1972, p. 98.
44. Ibid., pp. 91, 96.
45. Golson 1957, pp. 32-33.
46. Standen 1972, p. 94.
47. Ibid., p. 91.; Standen letter, November 5, 1981.; Le Cte de Laborde, *La Renaissance des arts à la cour de France*, I, 2nd ed. (1850; rpt. New York 1965), p. 423.

48. Standen 1972, p. 94.; Maurice Roy, *Artistes et Monuments de la Renaissance en France, Recherches nouvelles et documents inédits*, I (Paris, 1929), p. 50.; J. Beaudoin Ross, "Jean Cousin the Elder and the Creation of the Tapestries of Saint Mamas," *Art Bulletin*, 5, No. 1 (March 1978), p. 28. Hereafter cited as Ross 1978.
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Acknowledgments

To those who helped to make the publication of this paper possible, I would like to extend my appreciation: Colin T. Eisler, Professor of Fine Arts, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, for suggesting the topic as a seminar subject and guidance; Miss Jean Mailey, Curator, Textile Study Room, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for her initial interest and consideration of the paper; Miss Edith Appleton Standen, Curator Emeritus, Textile Study Room, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, whose work on the subject provided invaluable material, for her thoughtful reading and illuminating comments and for generously lending from her photographic library; Mrs. Anne Dahlgren Hecht, Associate Editor of *The Bulletin of the Needle and Bobbin Club*, for her editorial suggestions and continued patience in all matters regarding publication; and Dr. Helmut Nickel, Curator of Arms and Armor, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for his assistance in translation matters.

For their enthusiastic response and photographic help, I would like to thank: M. Charles de Yturbe, present owner of the Château d'Anet; Mme. Sylvie Béguin, Curator Emeritus, Department of Paintings, Musée du Louvre, who has published extensively on the period and topic; M. Amaury Lefébure, Curator, Department of Decorative Arts, Musée du Louvre; M. Laurence Flavigny, Curator, Musée des Antiquités, Rouen; M. Patrick Ramade, Curator, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes; and a private collector. Special thanks is also extended to the Bibliothèque Nationale; the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris; the Department of Prints and Drawings, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; and The Frick Art Reference Library, New York, whose holdings provided much of the necessary research materials.

For their most courteous cooperation, I would like to acknowledge the following photographic services: Brumaire, Ezy-sur-Eure; Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques et des Sites, Paris; Photo Ellebé, Rouen; and Réunion des musées nationaux, Paris.

G.P.L.