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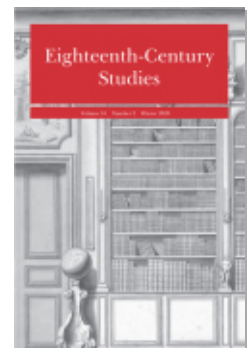
Creating Napoleon's Dynasty: Marie-Louise, House of Habsburg-Lorraine, and the Art of Statecraft

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CREATING NAPOLEON'S DYNASTY: MARIE-LOUISE, HOUSE OF HABSBURG-LORRAINE, AND THE ART OF STATECRAFT

Lindsay Dunn

After spending his first night with Marie-Louise, House of Habsburg-Lorraine (1791–1847), an event that occurred before their civil and sacred marriage ceremonies, Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) reportedly lauded his bride's nationality. He encouraged his friends to “. . . marry a German. They are the best women in the world, good naïve, and fresh as roses.”¹ This anecdote mentions Marie-Louise's national ties, highlighting her unprecedented position on the European political stage as the second wife of Napoleon and the second Empress of the French (1810–1814).² Despite her high-profile position, history quickly forgot Marie-Louise's contributions to politics and culture after Napoleon's abdication of the French throne (1814) and her installation as Duchess of Parma Piacenza and Guastalla (1815–1847).³ During her short time as the French empress, Marie-Louise was, first and foremost, a Habsburg archduchess, and a much-needed connection to this powerful ruling European family, an identity that Napoleon hoped would cement his fledgling regime's legitimacy on the European political stage. Her Habsburg ties promised dynastic stability, and Napoleon hoped, the birth of an heir thanks to the legendary Habsburg fertility.⁴ Marie-Louise's position as a woman with more dynastic legitimacy than her divorced and upstart husband encouraged, and even required, Napoleon's image makers and imperial art administrators to craft a different pictorial persona for the empress, one that combined her Habsburg heritage, hoped-for fertility, and resulting dynastic permanence.⁵ Marie-Louise's superior lineage presented her as dynastically potent, a term that encompasses the

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power of her descent, natal family, and the potential production of her womb.⁶ Marie-Louise's image makers not only stressed her foreign nationality, an aspect of French queenship artists often obscured, but also included references to the empress's artistic ability as an allusion to her ability to pro-create. These artists, essentially, rewrote consort portrait conventions, and imagined a more dynastically powerful empress.

Images dating from the first year of the imperial marriage communicate ruling fictions and aristocratic performances that corroborate the emperor's desired projection that his reign will be long-lasting, legitimate, and militarily powerful.⁷ Marie-Louise, and particularly her Habsburg lineage, offered Napoleon's image makers a rich iconographic vocabulary through which to articulate their projected imperial vision. The centrality of Marie-Louise's dynastic connections to the way in which artists portrayed her can enrich our understanding of the ways in which aristocratic women negotiated their dynastic potency and opened up new avenues for iconographic innovation. This study offers not only insight into the life of Marie-Louise and other aristocratic women, who all negotiated tenuous political positions, but also explores the role of painting and drawing in constructing Marie-Louise's public persona.

An image of Marie-Louise and her husband, Alexandre Menjaud's *Marie-Louise Painting the Portrait of Napoleon* (Musée National du Château, Fontainebleau, 1810; fig. 1), is the focus of this essay. Menjaud's painting is little-known today, but prompted much art criticism after its appearance at the Salon of 1810. With the exception of Menjaud's painting, the vast majority of the images in the Salon of 1810 portrayed the new empress with Napoleon, but at public or semi-public events, including Pauline Auzou's *The Arrival of Her Majesty the Empress in the Gallery of the Château de Compiègne* (Salon of 1810; Versailles, Musée National du Château), Étienne Barthélemy Garnier's *The Entrance of Napoleon and Marie-Louise at the Tuileries on the Day of their Marriage, April 2, 1810* (Versailles, Musée National du Château), and Louis-Philippe Crépin's *The Arrival of Napoleon and Marie-Louise at Antwerp, May 1, 1810* (Paris, Dosne-Thiers Foundation). These scenes articulate Marie-Louise's position as that of an accessory placed within the painting to be looked at, and the throngs of people gazing at her visage within these densely populated scenes serve a didactic purpose, inviting the world to be overwhelmed by the spectacle of the couple's majesty.

In Menjaud's painting, Marie-Louise is not a passive aristocratic woman. Instead, Menjaud depicts Napoleon's new bride actively at work on her husband's portrait while he poses in front of her.⁸ She sits at her easel, located at the composition's center, as she performs the only action in the painting: raising her brush to canvas. Napoleon stands immobile, even casting his signature tri-corner hat aside on the red upholstered chair in the foreground. Dressed in a light blue and fashionable empire-waist gown with lace detailing at the neck and hem, Marie-Louise sits in a relaxed, yet commanding, position with both legs resting slightly apart and feet positioned on a red cushion. An orange shawl, presumably discarded by the empress so that she could more freely practice her craft, drapes over the chair, obscuring it from view. Napoleon appears in his colonel of the cavalry uniform with snug white breeches and short military jacket decorated with medals. Napoleon's right hand nestles under his waist coat in a typical portrait gesture indicating dignity



Figure 1. Alexandre Menjaud, *Marie-Louise Painting a Portrait of Napoleon I*, 1810, oil on canvas (72 x 59 cm). Musée National du Château, Fontainebleau. © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.

and composure, while his left hand rests on the chair in front of him. Despite his military uniform that underscores his active role in the public sphere, Napoleon appears confined by Marie-Louise's easel to his right, neoclassical chair to his left, and table with a red tablecloth behind him.

The looks exchanged between the couple are ones of fond adoration. Their mutual gaze seems to indicate an equitable relationship between the couple, one founded on partnership and respect. Yet, Marie-Louise's role as artist in the painting and her appraising gaze towards her husband recalls the look of artists who worked to construct the images of kings.⁹ Although Marie-Louise's relaxed clothing and posture indicate domesticity in the home and Napoleon's military uniform recalls the homosocial world of men, the empress appears in command here.

MENJAUD AND THE SALON OF 1810

In the Salon of 1810, Menjaud's likeness of Marie-Louise garnered a great deal of critical attention. Art critics at the 1810 Salon did not miss the unconventional iconography of Menjaud's painting in the Salon commentary they produced, and sought to diffuse Marie-Louise's commanding visual presence. A critic writing for the *Journal de Paris* (1810) offered a fantasy narrative recalling that while executing the emperor's portrait the artist proclaimed like the romantic eighteenth-century poet Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657–1757): “Mon cœur s’occupe du sujet/ Et l’esprit laisse là l’ouvrage” [My heart is occupied by the subject and my spirit relishes the task]. As an explanation for the narrative in Menjaud's painting, this often-cited quotation in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century popular culture is ambiguous; this action could apply to either Menjaud's political loyalty to his emperor or to Marie-Louise's marital devotion.¹⁰ Caring glances between husband and wife, the private and intimate setting, and romantic, narrative quality of the quotation indicates that the critic refers to the empress's feelings and not those of Menjaud. The quotation also neutralizes Marie-Louise's powerful position within the image, suggesting that her intellect does not drive her act of creation but that her love for Napoleon invigorates her brush.

Another critic writing in *L'Observateur au Muséum* (1810) also ameliorates the empress's powerful position by introducing a romantic narrative. He describes the empress: “Non contente de posséder son bien-aim, elle veut le tracer sur la toile par son brillant pinceau” [Not satisfied to possess her beloved, she wants to trace him on the canvas with her brilliant brush]. The author uses the verb *posséder*, which has two meanings: either to possess, or, in the context of artmaking, to master something. This verb is an unusual choice, because it suggests that a woman is capable of mastering an emperor, and it positions Marie-Louise as the architect of Napoleon's image. The critic, however, softens this statement by using the additional verb *tracer* [to trace], which denigrates Marie-Louise's artistic prowess by asserting that her work merely imitates. The activity of tracing also links Marie-Louise to the figure of Dibutades. According to classical mythology, the young Corinthian woman Dibutades outlined the shadow of her beloved, a shepherd, when it appeared on a wall; Jean-Baptiste Regnault depicted this anecdotal narrative in 1785 and this classical event was firmly situated in the public's imagination at the time Menjaud displayed his painting at the Salon.¹¹ The popular subject of Dibutades tracing the silhouette of her lover appeared as the frontispiece to several eighteenth-century drawing manuals.¹² Together with the romanticized account, the use of the verb *tracer* emphasizes the idea that the imperial union was a love match. The *L'Observateur au Muséum* critic also adds that Marie-Louise will not succeed at her task, because the emperor's traits are already etched upon her heart.¹³ It seems, then, that Marie-Louise's affection for Napoleon will render her incapable of true creation and her work as futile and superfluous; she does not need to paint his image because her love for him makes his likeness unforgettable.

Art commentators at the Salon recognized this modification of traditional iconography and their commentary negated Marie-Louise's creative force by veiling it in terms of her adoration for Napoleon, which firmly placed their relationship within the heteronormative Rousseauian notions of the so-called “natural”



Figure 2. Robert Lefèvre, *Portrait of Pauline Borghese*, 1806, oil on canvas (216 x 151 cm). Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles. © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.

familial structure. The powerful position that Menjaud accords the empress within his domestic genre scene carves out a place for Marie-Louise that complicates the persona that other artists, such as Auzou, Garnier, and Crépin, constructed for her. She is not a passive object to be looked at, but capable of creating her own image and that of the emperor.

MARIE-LOUISE AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ART WORLD

It is no surprise that art critics attempted to neutralize Marie-Louise's powerful position by locating the genius of her creation in her love for Napoleon. This understanding of Marie-Louise's creative process hides her talent and power within the bounds of familial relationships. During the turn of the nineteenth century, society continued to embrace Rousseauian discourses on women and the family, ideology that corroborated the same thinking that prohibited professional women artists from life drawing. In his *Lettre à M. D'Alembert sur les spectacles* (1758), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) articulates that the relationship between the sexes exists due to man's "natural" impulse to be strong and active and woman's "natural" impulse to be weak and passive.¹⁴ Rousseau's line of thinking continued to dominate cultural ideology in the nineteenth century. In fact, philosopher Pierre Jean Georges Cabanis's 1805 treatise *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme* reiterates Rousseau's same "naturalized" argument for male dominance, or what Cabanis calls the "law of nature": women are weak and men are strong. For Rousseau and Cabanis, this "law" was "natural" and gave women modesty to compensate for their moral and physical weaknesses.¹⁵ As art historian Mary Sheriff has described, the cultural prescription of female modesty limited women's public roles and was so successful at stunting women's artistic growth because society perceived female modesty as "natural."¹⁶

Women's culturally prescribed modesty severely limited professional women artists' careers. The study of the male nude body was an activity that the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture required of its students due to its perceived importance in creating history paintings, the most prestigious genre of painting that typically focuses on narratives of heroic male action.¹⁷ Consequently, when women created art objects for sale in the art market, they typically excelled in still-life painting and portraiture, two genres of painting that did not require study of the male nude.¹⁸ After the dissolution of the French Royal Academy, an act that opened up the Salons to all artists, not just Academy members, women artists began to exhibit their art objects much more frequently, and thus had more access to buyers.¹⁹ The public generally viewed professional women artists who succeeded in the art world in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth century with suspicion, thanks to their perceived lack of modesty. The action of publically displaying their work for monetary gain positioned these women as public figures; they were not acting according to the cultural mores of passive female modesty but in a way more akin to the active male characteristic of virility.²⁰

Women's creativity was considered so dangerous that male artists and critics often stated that women merely imitated the work of men, a notion that underscored women's inferiority and inability to create inventive art objects. This

belief that women could not create innovative subject matter draws directly from contemporaneous views of reproduction; scientists and doctors believed that the sperm contained all the ingredients necessary to produce a child, positioning the female role in reproduction as passive and inconsequential.²¹ Cabanis echoes these sentiments in the early nineteenth-century context, suggesting that women are destined to be passive and inactive due to their roles in reproduction.²² These culturally-accepted philosophies make Menjaud's painting even more perplexing. Here the artist represents a dynastically powerful empress actively creating the likeness of her husband, an act that conflates artistic creation with dynastic creation. Her creativity, then, functions as a promise of her ability to reproduce.

Within the very public walls of the 1810 Salon, Menjaud's portrayal of Marie-Louise as a creator, a role bestowed exclusively on men at the time, presented her as a public female artist. This was a problematic designation in an environment that branded professional women artists as "transgressive" and "unnatural." Marie-Louise's portrayal would, then, negate the culturally-prescribed tenant of female modesty, but does so through referring to her very socially-accepted functions as wife and potential mother. Professional female artists, most notably Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, often used this same tactic to counter their very public personas. Vigée-Lebrun, for instance, depicted herself within the societal bounds of eighteenth-century femininity to temper her intellectual prowess, artistic skill, and public position. Her two self-portraits with her daughter, Julie, present her as a loving mother, situating her firmly within her "natural" biological role.²³ Although Marie-Louise, like all women in the public eye, constructed, or at least maintained, a public persona that corroborated the fictions necessary for her position, she did so within the constructs of the nuclear, "natural" family model, just like a professional female artist concerned about her social reputation. Menjaud used this same visual vocabulary in his portrait.

Despite the socially problematic portrayal of public female figures and the glass ceiling that limited women's artistic achievements in the public sphere, the aristocracy championed the creation of art objects in the private sphere as "ladies' accomplishments."²⁴ People considered the practice of art making, especially drawing, watercolor, and embroidery to be an occupation through which women could productively and virtuously occupy their leisure time.²⁵ The private practices of painting and drawing also severely restricted the types of subject matters that women could portray, and consequently, most aristocratic women, like their professional counterparts, painted landscapes, still lives, or portraits of family members or friends. Practicing artmaking in the privacy of their homes further segregated women's artistic achievements from that of professional men in terms of practice and subject matter while confirming their positions within the domestic sphere.

Aristocratic women artists who practiced within the domestic sphere avoided suspicion of becoming masculine due to the fact that they did not produce objects to sell on the art market, which relegated their creativity to the category of mere hobby.²⁶ In other words, they did not earn money for the art objects that they produced, situating these women beyond both the realm of commerce and the need for innovative subject matter that appealed to the market. Menjaud's painting corresponds directly to this function of aristocratic women's art making; Marie-Louise adoringly paints her husband's portrait within the domestic space

of their home, an act that could allow her time to ponder her “natural” functions: pregnancy and motherhood.

PUBLIC QUEENS

Elite aristocratic women, particularly queen consorts, were public figures, but existed within the bounds of family life. A queen consort is, firstly, a wife, and so her portrait articulates this relationship to the king. The official, French government commissioned representation of the queen consort, then, always functions as a pendant portrait to that of the king.²⁷ Scholars trace conventional consort portraiture to at least the sixteenth century, and artists maintained very similar iconography until the dissolution of the French second empire after Napoleon III's abdication.²⁸ This visual rhetoric appears in Carle van Loo's 1747 state portrait of Marie Leszczyńska (Musée National du Château, Versailles), which features the queen's full-length standing figure. Her formal pose and regal attitude suggest her stability, a point emphasized by the multitude of straight lines found in the portrait. The downturned fan in her right hand, large hanging pearl dangling from her choker, and two strong vertical lines of the columns to her left and right further articulate the implied line that runs the length of her body.²⁹ She wears a typically elaborate court costume and rich jewels in an elegant interior.

In a manner typical of official portraits of queen consorts, Marie Leszczyńska's authority in the image does not stem from her own merits or dynastic potency, but that of her husband, Louis XV. The queen's crown sits on a fleur-de-lys pillow on an ornately carved rococo table on which also rests a marble bust of her husband which gazes in the direction of his queen. The effigy of the king ensures that her image represents the king's authority and not her own. The gaze of Louis XV's sculpted likeness also reminds the public, who would view this painting at the Salon, that the main subject of the image is the king whose marble portrait bust seems more animated and active than the represented flesh-and-blood body of his consort. The queen appears immobile, confined both within her elaborate and constricting court costume and the palace interior. She is a regal embodiment of Rousseau and Cabanis' “natural” woman, restrained within her domestic role.

In fact, it is the woman's “natural” role as bearer of children that these official portraits portend. In the portrait, Marie Leszczyńska's physical body highlights the biological reality of her position, mother of the sons and daughters of France.³⁰ The king's bust in these official portraits aptly illustrates from whence the queen's power originates, her status as the king's wife. When she bears heirs to France, her physical body only contains and nurtures the power of the king, and when the child is born, the power simply passes through her body and acts around her. As articulated in van Loo's *Portrait of Marie Leszczyńska*, the queen does not have any real power of her own. Artist Robert Lefèvre draws from the same visual vocabulary when imaging Napoleon's female relatives. In Robert Lefèvre's *Portrait of Princess Pauline* (1806; Versailles; Musée National du Château; fig 2) and François Gérard's *Portrait of Madame Mère, Maria Laetizia Ramolino Bonaparte* (1803; Versailles; Musée National du Château), Napoleon's bust functions in a similar way as the bust of Louis XV in Carle van Loo's portrait of Marie Leszczyńska. In Lefèvre's portrait, Pauline appears elegantly and fashionably dressed

in a well-appointed interior; her right hand gently touches a mahogany table on which rests a marble bust of Napoleon as she slightly turns her head towards her brother's likeness. The iconography and composition is quite similar in Gérard's portrait of Napoleon's mother. She appears seated in an opulent interior and wears a fashionable gown while she holds a letter, presumably from her son who is away on a military campaign. Napoleon's marble bust oversees the scene, reminding the viewer of his centrality; his mother is worthy of her station by virtue of her son's success. In these images, each woman's authority operates through and derives from Napoleon.

Artists represented Marie-Louise's immediate predecessor, Empress Joséphine (1763–1814), in a way derivative of but separate from court portraiture conventions. Since no precedent existed for depicting a French consort born on a Caribbean island, artists, including François Gérard and Lefèvre, changed some elements of the formulaic visual rhetoric. They created a vision of fashionable, yet passive, queenship by including elements that refer to both her exotic heritage and her interests in horticulture and fashion.³¹ Gérard's *Portrait of Empress Joséphine* (1801; Saint Petersburg, Heritage Museum; fig. 3) and Lefèvre's official portrait commissioned by the imperial art administration, *Empress Joséphine* (1805; Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig Museum), include references to Joséphine's *créole* identity and interest in botany.³² In Gérard's portrait, Joséphine assumes a relaxed seated position on an imperial-style sectional sofa. She wears a dress in the latest style: an empire waist gown with a sheer white overdress. A stylish and casually draped Turkish shawl falls from her shoulders and bunches under her right arm. In this image, she appears both languorous and regal, a blending of her *créole* and French identities.³³ This casually imagined empress sits on a terrace overlooking her famed gardens at Malmaison, the beloved country retreat outside Paris that she purchased in 1799. Joséphine cultivated exotic tropical flowers at Malmaison, a passion Eleanor DeLorme suggests stemmed from her childhood on the Caribbean island of Martinique, where flowers bloomed year round.³⁴ A rich bouquet of flowers rests in front of her on a low table, further highlighting her identities. In Lefèvre's official portrait, Joséphine's hand rests on an open herbarium, drawing attention to her hobby. A vase of flowers, not a conventional crown, appears next to the herbarium on the table. Although some of the formulaic elements of consort portraiture remain, such as opulent interiors, marble columns, stately furniture, references to her husband thanks to the Napoleonic bees and Ns, and an opulently dressed and bejeweled sitter, Joséphine's image remains devoid of many of the conventions that artists deemed necessary when constructing images of her sister in law, mother in law, and monarchical predecessors. Joséphine's *créole* identity may have positioned her as not entirely regal, or at least outside the portrait rhetoric deemed necessary for the articulation of monarchical identities. This tension between her *créole* and French identities together with her love-based marriage likely exempted her portraits from iconographic conventions.³⁵

Napoleonic artists' decisions to highlight Joséphine's interests in botany and horticulture paved the way for their decision to incorporate iconography referring to Marie-Louise's painting and drawing skills. Robert Lefèvre's *Marie-Louise of Austria, Empress of the French* (fig. 4; Salon of 1812; Museo Glauco Lombardi, Parma) alludes to the empress's roles of wife and mother.³⁶ Lefèvre, however, be-



Figure 3. François Gérard, *Portrait of Empress Joséphine*, 1801, oil on canvas (178 x 174 cm). Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia. Scala/Art Resource, NY.

stows on Marie-Louise a great deal more agency than other artists gave to their female monarchical sitters. In this rather unusual official portrait commission, Lefèvre depicts the young empress just prior to her pregnancy, and he completed the painting shortly after the birth of the imperial heir, Napoleon François Charles Bonaparte (1811–1832), called Napoleon II and the King of Rome.³⁷ Marie-Louise poses in front of a throne and to her right is a small table. Thanks to Lefèvre's decision to include the familiar elements of throne, crown, table, opulent interior, and richly-dressed full-length portrait, this image evokes those of Marie-Louise's predecessors, which situates Marie-Louise within the lineage of French queens and other European royal women, including her great grandmother Empress Maria Theresa.³⁸ To articulate her new position at the imperial court, however, Lefèvre turns to iconographical elements that allude to design and craft.

Lefèvre's portrait certainly follows the "consort type" by placing a luxuriously-dressed Marie-Louise inside a palatial interior amid strong vertical columns to signal the stability of the regime. Reminders of her husband's power



Figure 4. Robert Lefèvre, *Marie-Louise of Austria, Empress of the French*, Salon of 1812, oil on canvas (225 x 155 cm). Museo Glauco Lombardi, Parma, Italy. © DeA Picture Library/Art Resource, NY.

appear on the velvet-lined throne emblazoned with an *N* as well as the crown resting on the pillow decorated with Napoleonic bees. This image also refers to the young empress's own creative ability, a characteristic never before alluded to in official consort portraiture. Lying on the small table to the empress's right is a portrait drawing of Napoleon crowned in laurels with charcoal crayons resting on top. Half of the paper support drapes over the table's edge, and the color of the portrait echoes the color of Marie-Louise's own white, embroidered, empire-waist gown. The light colored paper and Marie-Louise's dress create a visual color rhyme within the image, equating the physical body of the empress with the effigy of the emperor. Although numerous juxtapositions of the queen's physical body and effigies of the king appear in monarchical portraiture, this situation is different. Marie-Louise was an amateur artist, so instead of the king's effigy drawing attention to the queen's powerlessness, Napoleon's image and the charcoal crayons refer specifically to Marie-Louise's ability to create, craft, and produce. Marie-Louise's hands, which presumably just laid aside her drawing, rest on the crown, an act that, perhaps problematically, underscores her dynastic potency, but more interestingly, draws attention to her facility at both art making and dynastic construction. Her hands, then, are active hands, at least in the private sphere of the palace, and her Habsburg inheritance of artistic skill gave her the authority to appear as an artist. In both Lefèvre's and Menjaud's paintings, Marie-Louise's capacity to paint or draw Napoleon confirms both her intimacy with the emperor and her authority over him.

MARIE-LOUISE, HABSBURGS, AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Prior to her imperial marriage, Marie-Louise lived at Schönbrunn Palace where she grew up taking embroidery, painting, and drawing lessons.³⁹ All Habsburg children learned painting and drawing, and female children learned embroidery. The Habsburg family's emphasis on artmaking in childhood education began when Marie-Louise's great grandparents Emperor Francis I and Empress Maria Theresa encouraged their many children's artistic talents and displayed their blue *chinoiserie* drawings in the empress's writing cabinet, called the Porzellan-Zimmer, at Schönbrunn Palace. Maria Theresa's former writing cabinet retained the same homemade and sentimental décor during Marie-Louise's childhood.⁴⁰ This design decision reifies the cultural notion that the Habsburg family was a happy and "natural" one. At the root of this reputation is the belief in Habsburg conjugal love, an idea propagated by Johann Wolfgang van Goethe, in his 1811 memoir *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.⁴¹ Through a romanticized account of Empress Maria Theresa's husband's coronation, Goethe describes the imperial marriage as based on love and not political expedience. Goethe credits the couple's mutual devotion to, as Michael Yonan describes, their "humanity, their similarity to the late eighteenth-century German bourgeoisie, and to their sensibility, conceptualized both mutually toward each other and between them, and their subjects."⁴² Their reported devotion to one another fueled these understandings of their family as more bourgeois and less formal when compared to other monarchical dynasties and encouraged an open, harmonious, and sociable family life.⁴³

Marie-Louise continued her Habsburg-sanctioned pastime after moving to Paris in March 1810. Shortly after her arrival, Marie-Louise began formal drawing

and painting lessons with Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, creating *Allegory of Innocence* (Musée Baron-Martin, Gray), an oval-shaped oil painting of a young girl holding a dove. *Allegory of Innocence* reveals her skill and awareness of popular subject matter and style, as it is done in the fashionable style associated with her instructor Purd'houn, and other *au courant* artists Angelica Kauffman, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, and Constance Mayer. Marie-Louise switched her focus from oil painting to water color and drawing and began to study with Jean-Baptiste Isabey in 1811.⁴⁴ Her sustained interest in art making while empress indicates that Marie-Louise was not a mere "hobbyist" but an active member of the imperial court's artistic community and was absolutely capable of performing the action Menjaud depicts.

The quiet domesticity of the scene in Menjaud's image refers to this Habsburg tradition by recalling her natal family's educational traditions as well as their bourgeois family life. Marie-Louise's practice of her craft within this relaxed interior space also alludes to the wedded bliss of the imperial couple depicted; as seen in the image, Marie-Louise and Napoleon's marriage recalls the legendary relationship of Marie-Louise's great grandparents, and the more relaxed and so-called bourgeois family life that Marie-Louise and her siblings enjoyed. Indeed, Marie-Louise's informal posture, discarded shawl, and Napoleon's cast-off iconic hat further indicate the comfortable atmosphere. This emphasis on family, and most importantly the family she will create for the Bonaparte bloodline, removes Marie-Louise from the problematic portrayal of her public and regal persona and her authoritative position as creator of the emperor's image. Marie-Louise's act of painting, then, is imbued with strong nationalistic overtones and offered artists an unusual way to visually explore and represent her position at the imperial court.

Marie-Louise's natal ties were not only on the minds of Alexandre Menjaud and Robert Lefèvre, but also Dominique Vivant Denon, Napoleon's Director of Museums. After the display of Menjaud's *Marie-Louise Painting the Portrait of Napoleon* at the 1810 Salon, Napoleon and the imperial art administration immediately contacted Menjaud to purchase the work, but on one condition. In a November 22, 1810 letter, Denon states that he will pay the impressive sum of 1800 francs for the work if Menjaud re-paints the empress's likeness in the manner of Lefèvre, who was well known for rendering truthful portraits.⁴⁵ Denon's request, then, directs Menjaud to fashion a portrait of the empress that is more true to life, and indeed, more recognizable. The fact that the work entered the imperial art collection points to Menjaud's acquiescence to this request.⁴⁶

Denon's proposal that Lefèvre make Marie-Louise appear more recognizable is an unusual one, since historically artists occluded physiognomic features that marked a French consort as the member of a specific dynasty. These natal ties were typically softened, or even erased, in portraiture because the French government believed that a queen's foreign ties were dangerous and could lead the queen to disloyal machinations that threatened the French state. Consider, for example, Elisabeth Vigée Lebrun's *Portrait of Marie Antoinette* (1778–79; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) in which the artist, famous for flattering her sitters, softens the long jaw that physically marked the queen as a member of the Habsburg family.⁴⁷ Recall also the harsh criticism levied at Marie-Antoinette that questioned her loyalty to the French crown by highlighting her Habsburg heritage.⁴⁸ Menjaud's and Denon's decision to emphasize Marie-Louise's natal ties suggests that Marie-Louise's

Habsburg ancestry was essential to the government's construction of her imperial persona. By harnessing the power of the Habsburg bloodlines, Napoleon's image makers articulate dynastic health and monarchical stability, which approximately thirty years prior, was the source of many diatribes against Marie-Antoinette. This complete reversal of monarchical portraiture conventions occurred, in my opinion, because of the very unstable notion of queenship and empire during this period. Napoleon's image makers needed to cast a wide net to articulate the legitimacy of Napoleon's dynasty.

In Menjaud's painting, the artist refers to Marie-Louise's Habsburg heritage not only by portraying the empress creating an art image but also by including a carefully articulated portrayal of her visage. She appears in three-quarter view to allow a better look at the empress's face and to show off, to full advantage, the fullness of her long and recognizably-Habsburg jaw. Her honey-blond hair, pale skin, and heavily lidded blue eyes are also clearly visible and point to her heritage. The carefully turned head and upwardly-gazing facial expression showcase the empress's stereotypically Habsburg features and adhere to Denon's guidelines that Menjaud revise his painting to include a more truthful likeness.

Her dynastic ties were, arguably, Napoleon's most prized possession because they foreshadowed the advent of his own long-lasting dynasty, legitimized his dominion over Europe, and offered Napoleon a way to celebrate his own empire thanks to his displacement of the Habsburgs. Marie-Louise's ability to *hopefully* produce a male heir also hinged on the success of the marriage and her family's legendary fecundity, and Menjaud included iconographical elements that point to the empress's ability to pro-create. In Menjaud's painting, a door opens directly behind the empress, revealing a fecund forest. The concepts of fertility, open doors, and motherhood also appear in Amanda Strasik's discussion of Maurice-Quentin de La Tour's *Marie-Josèphe of Saxony and One of her Sons* (1761; Musée Antoine Lécuyer, Saint-Quentin), which includes an open door overlooking a terrace occupied by the dauphine's younger children. Marie-Josèphe's younger children who occupy the terrace underscore the dauphine's maternity and fertility.⁴⁹ The open door behind the empress indicates that Marie-Louise's great work, the production of Napoleon's heir, will be successful as the fertile scene alludes to the bevvy of heirs she will produce.

Napoleon and his imperial government connected Marie-Louise's hoped-for ability to produce an imperial heir to her Habsburg heritage and natal realm. Napoleon's alleged statement after his first night with Marie-Louise in which he instructs his entourage to "marry a German" is not only part of the imperial propaganda machine intended to publicize his soon-to-be bride's fitness for her role, but also reflects contemporaneous stereotypes about German women as described by writer Madame de Staël, one of Napoleon's outspoken critics.⁵⁰ In *De l'Allemagne*, de Staël describes German women as loyal of heart with pure feelings. German women, according to de Staël, exemplify patriotism and try to give back to their country. Included in her discussion of Germany is a chapter on Austria, which confirms that Austrians share similar personality traits with their northern neighbors. De Staël describes Austrians as having a particular "*génie national*" and patriotic sentiment, characteristics that enhance their desires to contribute to their nation. In fact, Marie-Louise's acquiescence to her father's request to marry

Napoleon confirms Madame de Staël's description of German women, who put their nation's interests above their own. When Prince Klemens Wensel van Metternich (1773–1859) informed Marie-Louise that she would marry Napoleon, she reportedly responded: "I want only what my duty commands me to want. When it is in the interest of the Empire, it is the only duty that must be consulted, not my desire."⁵¹ Marie-Louise's patriotism and loyalty at the expense of her own wishes, as expressed in this anecdote, correspond perfectly with the sentiments Napoleon expressed on his wedding night; Marie-Louise is a sweet, loyal, and patriotic woman of Germanic heritage who will, ultimately, ensure the longevity of France through her ability to put her new empire first.

Menjaud, and through his request, Denon, and even Napoleon himself, stressed Marie-Louise's national ties as a way not only to legitimize Napoleon's regime by highlighting the lineage of his new wife, but also to consolidate Napoleon's power over his vast territories, specifically the Confederation of the Rhine, a collection of German-speaking vassal states of Napoleon's empire.⁵² The Confederation of the Rhine was the most powerful of Napoleon's vassal states, and as a former Habsburg archduchess, Marie-Louise's visibility in Napoleon's regime demonstrated the power of the emperor, and his dominion over the Habsburg's dynastic territory. Napoleon and his government also sought to communicate the vastness of the French empire and its domain over additional former Habsburg territories, including the Netherlands.⁵³ The imperial couple, in fact, honeymooned in Belgium, arriving on April 27, 1810; Napoleon's decision to travel to the former Habsburg Netherlands following the marriage was a strategic one, and no doubt, Marie-Louise's presence in the territory was meant to rally disillusioned former citizens of the Austrian Habsburg Empire. Louis Crépin visually documented the Antwerp stop on the imperial honeymoon trip in the jubilant aforementioned painting, *The Arrival of Napoleon I and Marie-Louise in Antwerp*.

Marie-Louise's political persona and national identity, as imagined in art objects, drew from her Habsburg dynastic identity. Moreover, Napoleon capitalized on Marie-Louise's heritage and presumed German national identity to articulate the young empress's fitness for her position. We might even say that Napoleon's artists rewrote the conventions of consort portraiture to create an image of an empress that has an active, albeit intimate and "natural" role, within the imperial court apparatus. Marie-Louise's status as a former Habsburg archduchess anchors this revision of traditional consort portraiture.

CREATING NAPOLEON'S DYNASTY

Menjaud's *Marie-Louise Painting the Portrait of Napoleon*, like most publicly displayed Napoleon-era portraits, was created to attract an imperial buyer (which it did) and reflects the stylistic conventions of the era. Because it represents members of the imperial family, this portrait also engages within the centuries-old visual rhetoric of monarchical portraiture. This painting furthermore manifests the period's social and political ideologies, namely its understanding of Marie-Louise's role in the imperial court.

Marie-Louise, like countless other aristocratic women before her, needed to produce an heir to the empire, and the question of her fertility and the succes-

sion of the French throne was central to her position as empress. Having more dynastic capital than her husband necessitated that artists produce an innovative visual rhetoric that conveyed Marie-Louise's unprecedented position while also adhering to recognizable aristocratic portrait conventions to position her status within the visual genealogy of queenship. The vehicle through which these artists, like Menjaud and Lefèvre, chose to depict Marie-Louise's status was, cleverly, her ability to create, an acknowledgement of her Habsburg heritage, dynastic potency, fertility, and status as an aristocratic female artist.

Her production of art objects within the domestic sphere softened her powerful position, since she did not perform publicly or create objects to appeal to the art market. Although she created the image of the most powerful man in Europe on the public walls of the 1810 Salon, the recasting of her virile brush as merely an amusement and a loving exchange between husband and wife ameliorated her authority. In fact, by divorcing her artistic ability from the realm of professional artists, Napoleon and his image makers further cemented her "naturalized" role as a bearer of Napoleon's hoped-for heir and reified social and cultural norms. Her creativity, as pictured by Menjaud, becomes a euphemism for her ability to produce a dynasty for Napoleon. By articulating Marie-Louise's unprecedented position in the imperial court, Menjaud's painting provides an interesting case study that offers further understanding of aristocratic women at the turn of the nineteenth century who often had to navigate unusual positions while maintaining their culturally-assigned and so-called "natural" roles of preserving the familial structure, and in the case of Marie-Louise, Napoleon's dynastic succession.

Napoleonic artists also recognized the significance of Marie-Louise's Habsburg bloodlines to supporting and upholding the emperor's ruling fiction, and recast the French consort as an active and capable woman whose familial role tempers her authoritative position. This tension in Marie-Louise's persona, as articulated in the art objects that include her likeness during the first year of her marriage to Napoleon, is a tension experienced by countless other aristocratic women whose painterly talents, aristocratic status, and so-called "natural" familial roles and performances informed their identities.

NOTES

1. "Mon cher, épousez une Allemande. Ce sont les meilleurs femmes du monde, bonnes, naïves et fraîches comme des roses," quoted in Emmanuel Starcky, "Une nouvelle Iphigénie à Compiègne," in *1810, Politique de l'amour: Napoléon I^{er} et Marie-Louise à Compiègne*, 31.

2. Napoleon married his first wife, Joséphine de Beauharnais (1763–1814), in March 1796. Joséphine's first husband, Alexandre de Beauharnais (1760–1794), was guillotined during the French Revolution. Although both Napoleon and Joséphine were unfaithful in their marriage, their union likely dissolved due to Joséphine's inability to give Napoleon an heir to the throne.

3. I began my exploration of Marie-Louise and her image-makers' portrayals of her in my Ph.D. dissertation, "A Revolutionary Empress in the Age of Napoleon: Marie-Louise, Archduchess of Austria, Empress of the French, and Duchess of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 2014). This article is an expansion of the ideas found in the first chapter of my dissertation manuscript.

4. Empress Maria Theresa, Marie-Louise's great grandmother, gave birth to sixteen children throughout her life and her daughters went on to give birth to several children after their marriages. This abundance was a hallmark of Habsburg women, and was one of the prized attributes of Habsburg

brides, whose reproductive fertility ensured dynastic successions and facilitated strategic marriages to serve the dynasty. Michael Yonan further discusses this concept in his book *Empress Maria Theresa and the Politics of Habsburg Imperial Art* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 2011), 23, 27–28, 54. The legendary Habsburg fertility stereotype negatively affected Empress Maria Theresa's daughter, Queen Marie-Antoinette. Although Marie-Antoinette gave birth to four children during her marriage to King Louis XIV, she was childless for the first nine years of their marriage, a fact that led to many salacious rumors and negative press that circulated at court and in the French press. For more information on Marie-Antoinette and the ways in which the press affected her see: Chantal Thomas, *La Reine scélérate: Marie-Antoinette dans les pamphlets* (Paris: Seuil, 1989); Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie-Antoinette," in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1991), 108–30.

5. I chose the terms "imperial image makers" to encapsulate both the official painters of the imperial court, such as François Gérard (1770–1837) and Robert Lefèvre (1755–1830), and those artists who created art objects of the imperial family to attract buyers for these images during their public display at the Salon. These artists who created works to attract imperial buyers include Alexandre Menjaud, whom I discuss in this article, Pauline Auzou, Louis-Philippe Crépin, Étienne Barthélemy Garnier, and several others. When Napoleon became emperor, the reliance of artists on royal commissions decreased. Thanks to the opening of the Salon to artists who were not members of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, a developing art market emerged. In this burgeoning art market, the Salon was the place to exhibit and sell art objects. Jennifer Germann discusses these changes in the art market in "Tracing Marie-Éléonore Godefroid: Women's Artistic Networks in Early Nineteenth-Century Paris," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 41 (2012): 67.

6. This definition of dynastic potency came from an anonymous reader of an earlier draft of this manuscript who offered valuable insight on this term and encouraged me to more fully articulate the term in this essay.

7. Marie-Louise, House of Habsburg-Lorraine, and Napoleon Bonaparte married by proxy on March 11, 1810, and their religious ceremony took place on April 2, 1810 in the Salon Carré of the Louvre Palace, Paris.

8. Given Marie-Louise's artistic ability, this scene could have taken place in the imperial apartments, yet to my knowledge, no images of Napoleon by Marie-Louise's hand exist.

9. Several famous relationships existed between kings and their image makers, including the relationships between Alexander the Great and Apelles, seen in Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdaine and Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich's *Alexander and Apelles* (1773–74, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), and Hyancinthe Rigaud and Louis XIV, as seen in Rigaud's *Portrait of Louis XIV, King of France* (c.1700, Musée du Louvre, Paris). The job of these great image architects was not to simply create an image of the king but to create an image that stands in for the actual physical body of the king. This understanding of aristocratic images stems from Louis Marin's *Portrait of a King*, trans. Martha M. Houle (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1988), 3–25. According to Marin, the power of the king exists in and through his representation; therefore, the artists who produce portraits of the king work as the king's agents, creating symbols of the king's power to circulate throughout the realm.

10. "Alexandre Menjaud" in 1810, *La politique de l'amour: Napoléon I^{er} et Marie-Louise à Compiègne*, 193. This *Journal de Paris* (1810) quote is from Fontenelle's *La Macreuse*, and is discussed in Jean-Jacques Bel's *Dictionnaire néologique à l'usage des beaux esprits du siècle* and in Antoine-Denis Bailly's *Dictionnaire poétique d'éducation* to help illustrate the concept of *galanterie*. The appearance of this quotation in these handbooks of popular sayings indicate just how common Fontenelle's phrase from *La Macreuse* was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. No doubt the readers of Salon criticism would have immediately understood the reference. See: Antoine-Denis Bailly, *Dictionnaire poétique d'éducation*, vol. 1 (Paris, chez Vincent, rue des Mathurins, hotel de Clugny, 1775), 653; and Jean-Jacques Bel, *Dictionnaire néologique à l'usage des beaux esprits du siècle, avec l'éloge historique de Pantalon-Phoebys* (Amsterdam: chez Michel Charles le Cene, 1726), 26.

11. Dibutades' story appears in *Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*, trans. K. Jex Blake (Chicago: Argonaut Publishers, 1968), 336. Several images of Dibutades, also called the Corinthian Maid, appeared in the art world during this period, including John Mortimer's *Origin of Drawing* (c. 1771), Alexander Runciman's *Origin of Painting* (1773), David Allen's *Invention of Painting* (1775), and Joseph Wright's *Corinthian Maid* (ca. 1782–85). For more information on the myth of Dibutades

and its relationship to the art world, see Frances Muecke, "'Taught by Love': The Origin of Painting Again," *Art Bulletin* 81, no. 2 (June 1999): 297–302.

12. See Simon Gribelin, frontispiece to Charles-Alphonse Dufresnoy, *The Art of Painting*, 1718; Fischer Library, University of Sydney, Australia.

13. This type of language was quite conventional during the early modern period in both France and England. For example, Thomas Stanley places himself as Chariessa's true reflection: "But if thou dost desire thy form to view, Look in my heart, where love thy picture drew." See "The Chariessa, beholding herself in Glasse," in *The Poems and Translations of Thomas Stanley*, Galbraith Miller Crump, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 238–39. In addition, Mary Sheriff mentioned that this same type of language exists in the enormously popular mythological tale of Rinaldo and Armida, when Rinaldo tells Armida that her best traits are better written on his heart. She further explores the portrayal of Rinaldo and Armida in *Enchanted Islands: Picturing the Allure of Conquest in Eighteenth-Century France* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2018).

14. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Lettre à M. d'Alembert sur les spectacles* (1758), 110.

15. Cabanis, *Physical and Moral Aspects*, 1:234. Mary Sheriff's discussion of the relationship between Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theories and those of Cabanis informed my understanding of these "natural laws." Mary D. Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman: Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun and the Cultural Politics of Art* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1997), 105–08.

16. Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman*, 106–07.

17. Melissa Hyde provides an account of eighteenth-century women's artistic education and lack of visibility in the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, and consequently, the Salon in "Women and the Visual Arts in the Age of Marie-Antoinette," in *Anne Vallayer-Coster: Painter to the Court of Marie-Antoinette* (Dallas Museum of Art, 2002), 74–93.

18. Although women artists typically exhibited portraits or still-life paintings, less prestigious and generally less lucrative genres, the overall number of women artists who publically displayed their art objects increased throughout Marie-Louise's life time. For information on women artists and their increased visibility in the Parisian art world, please see: Paris Amanda Spies-Gans, "Exceptional, but not Exceptions: Public Exhibitions and the Rise of the Woman Artist in London and Paris, 1760–1830," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 51, no. 4 (2018): 393–416. Séverine Sofio also discusses the rise in the number of women artists who publically displayed their works. See Séverine Sofio, *Artistes femmes: La parenthèse enchantée, XVIII^e–XIX^e siècles* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2016).

19. Germann, "Tracing Marie-Éléonore Godefroid," 60–62.

20. Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman*, 110.

21. Fredrika Jacobs, "(Pro)creativity," in *Defining the Renaissance "Virtuosa": Women Artists and the Language of Art History and Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997), 27–63.

22. Pierre Jean Georges Cabanis, *De l'influence des sexes sur le caractère des idées et des affections morales* (Paris: Fortin et Masson, 1843), 45.

23. Mary Sheriff explains Vigée-Lebrun's self-portraits in conjunction with her discussion of Joan Rivière's "Womanliness as Masquerade" (1929) in *The Exceptional Woman*, 198–200. The two self portraits I mention are Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun's *Self Portrait with her Daughter* (1786; Paris, Musée du Louvre) and *Self Portrait with her Daughter* (c. 1789; Paris, Musée du Louvre).

24. Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2000), 188.

25. Drawing and painting continued to be prized skills for upper middle class women and members of the aristocracy. Madame Campan's boarding school employed Jean-Baptiste Isabey and Marie-Éléonore Godefroid to teach its students necessary skills for advancing in society. See Germann, "Tracing Marie-Éléonore Godefroid," 66. In this same article, Germann also discusses that Madame Campan sought to "inculcate in her students a vision of femininity that carefully balanced modesty with the need to function in public," 67. Clearly, drawing and painting were considered polite and feminine skills.

26. Michael Yonan discusses this concept in "Nobility and Domestic Conviviality in the Paintings of Archduchess Maria Christina" *Theatrum historiae* 4, Pardubice (2009): 135–54.

27. Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman*, 151.

28. An anonymous portrait of Catherine de' Medici (1556; Uffizi Gallery, Florence) and Martin Kober's *Portrait of Anne of Austria* (c. 1600; Uffizi Gallery, Florence) include the canonical portrait iconography that I discuss in relationship to Carl van Loo's *Portrait of Queen Marie Leszczinska*.

29. For more information on Queen Marie Leszczinska, see: Jennifer Grant Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska (1703–1768): Representing Queenship in Eighteenth-Century France* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015).

30. The sons and daughters of French kings and queens were called "children of France," a designation that erased their relationship to their mothers, who usually married in to the French royal family and came from foreign realms.

31. During the Directory (1795–1799), Juliette Récamier, Thérèse Cabarrus Tallien, and Joséphine Bonaparte were collectively known as "the three graces," underscoring the empress's identification with Antonio Canova's sculpture, *The Three Graces* (1812–1816; St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum), which she commissioned. The sculpture group appears both graceful and elegant, and as Carol Solomon Kiefer discusses, serves as an extension of Joséphine's own elegant persona. Carol Solomon Kiefer, "The Empress Joséphine and Royal Identity," in *The Empress Joséphine and Royal Identity*. Exhibition catalogue (Amherst, Massachusetts: Mead Art Museum, 2005). For more information on Canova's relationship with Joséphine, see Christopher M.S. Johns, "Canova, Napoleon, and the Bonapartes," in *Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1998, 88–112, 119–22.

32. Based on the definition of *créole* during the late eighteenth century, Joséphine could claim French national identity. According to *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (1798), *créole* was "un nom qu'on donne à un Européen, qui est né en Amérique" [a name given to a person of European origin born in America]. See *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 5th Edition. 1798.

33. In Médéric Louis Elie Moreau de Saint Méry's *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint Domingue*, volume 1 (Philadelphia, 1797), the author describes white creoles on the island of Saint-Domingue as having easy-going personalities and active imaginations. Moreau de Saint Méry explains that their frivolity leads creoles to pursue their own pleasures, namely excessive spending, when they visit France. He explains further saying that the creole "lives only for sensual pleasures" (12). Joséphine reportedly captivated the French public with her *Créole* languer, a characteristic Moreau de Saint Méry associated with all Europeans born in the Americas. See Moreau de Saint Méry, 5–14.

34. Eleanor P. DeLorme, *Josephine: Napoleon's Incomparable Empress* (London: Harry N. Abrams, 2002), 73.

35. A tradition exists for artists depicting French consorts more informally, including Jean-Marc Nattier's *Portrait of Marie Leszczinska* (1748; Versailles, Musée National du Château), and the images of Queen Marie-Antoinette sent to her mother in Vienna, such as Joseph Krantzinger's *Portrait of Marie-Antoinette en Amazone* (1771; Vienna, Schönbrunn Palace). When Vigée-Lebrun imaged Queen Marie-Antoinette *en chemise* in 1783, an image that received harsh criticism when displayed at the Salon, she was, in the minds of late eighteenth-century viewers, depicting the queen too informally and giving the public too much access to the queen in her private life, namely her informal adventures on the grounds of the Petit Trianon. For more of a discussion on this painting and the tensions between French consorts public and private identities, see Mary Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman*, 165–68.

36. Robert Lefèvre's *Marie-Louise of Austria, Empress of the French* was acquired by the Museo Glauco Lombardi from Giovanni Sanvitale, sole heir of Albertina, Marie-Louise's daughter with her second husband, Count Adam Albert von Neipperg (1775–1829). Marie-Louise had three children with Neipperg, and the couple married four months after Napoleon's death in 1821.

37. Robert Lefèvre painted the empress three known times during his career and all were finished after the Salon of 1810 when Menjaud's image was displayed. Lefèvre's *Marie-Louise of Austria, Empress of the French*, located at the Museo Glauco Lombardi, Parma is the earliest known portrait of Marie-

Louise and the artist signed and dated it. The version at the Museo Glauco Lombardi is considered to be the original and is the only version that includes a charcoal drawing of the emperor.

38. Michael Yonan's analysis of Empress Maria Theresa's image and how it is at once rooted within and yet different from conventional portraits depicting elite aristocratic women appears in *Empress Maria Theresa and the Politics of Habsburg Imperial Art* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 2011), 13–43.

39. Art historian Heidi Strobel discusses the artistic education of Queen Charlotte of England (1744–1818) in “Royal ‘Matronage’ of Women Artists in the Late-18th Century,” *Woman's Art Journal* 26, no. 2 (2005): 3. Queen Charlotte and Marie-Louise received similar art educations.

40. Napoleon would also have been aware of this Habsburg tradition, as he occupied Schönbrunn Palace in 1805 and 1809.

41. My understanding of Goethe's role in creating this myth of conjugal love draws from the analysis provided in Yonan, *Empress Maria Theresa*, 70–72.

42. Yonan, *Empress Maria Theresa*, 70.

43. Yonan, *Empress Maria Theresa*, 67.

44. Jennifer Germann discusses Isabey and other artists' studio practices in relation to women artists in her article “Tracing Marie-Éleonore Godefroid.” See especially page 58.

45. Marie-Anne Dupuy, Isabelle Le Manse de Chermont and Elaine Williamson, eds., *Vivant Denon, directeur des musées sous le Consulat et l'Empire. Correspondance (1802–1815)*, 2 vols. (Paris, RMN, 1999), 675. For information on Lefèvre's reputation as a portraitist see: Paul C. Landon: *Annales du musées et de l'Ecole moderne des Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1810* (Paris, 1829), 97–98.

46. Menjaud's oil painting, now in the Musée National du Château, Fontainebleau, is the only known version of this painting, *Marie-Louise Painting the Portrait of Napoleon*. This fact indicates that Menjaud must have modified his existing work to make the figure of Marie-Louise more recognizable. Therefore, the extant version is the modified version.

47. Other representations of queen consorts, including Carle van Loos's *Portrait of Marie Leszczyńska*, Martin Kober's *Portrait of Anne of Austria* (c. 1600; Uffizi Gallery, Florence), and an anonymous portrait of Catherine de' Medici (1556; Uffizi Gallery; Florence) eliminate references to the queen's natal origins.

48. Several instances of libelous criticism of Marie-Antoinette stemming from her Habsburg heritage exist. For example, Marie-Antoinette's retreat, the Petit Trianon, was called “little Vienna” or “little Schönbrunn” to emphasize the idea that Marie-Antoinette was setting up a foreign presence near the heart of the French monarchy. See Jeanne Campan, *Mémoires de Madame Campan, première femme de chambre de Marie Antoinette*, ed. Jean Chalon; notes by Carlos de Angulo (Paris: *Mercur de France*, 1988), 83–84. In addition, one of the more well-known jibes at Marie-Antoinette is that she was *autrichienne*, a feminine adjective for being Austrian, that contains the word *chienne*, the word for a female dog. The term *Autrichienne*, then, translates to Austrian bitch. For more of an explanation of the term *Autrichienne* please see Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman*, 172–75.

49. Amanda Strasik, “Portraying The Royal Self: Maurice-Quentin De La Tour's 1761 *Portrait of Marie-Josèphe of Saxony and Her Son*,” *Women in French Studies*, 25 (2017): 114. The comparison between La Tour's portrait of Marie-Josèphe and Menjaud's *Marie-Louise Painting a Portrait of Napoleon* is an apt one, because both images address representations of second wives in the context of fertility and lineages.

50. “Mon cher, épousez une Allemande. Ce sont les meilleures femmes du monde, bonnes, naïves et fraîches comme des roses.” Quoted in Emmanuel Starcky, “Une nouvelle Iphigénie à Compiègne,” in 1810, *Politique de l'amour: Napoléon I^{er} et Marie-Louise à Compiègne*, 31.

51. “Je ne veux que ce que mon devoir me commande de vouloir. Quand il s'agit de l'intérêt de l'Empire, c'est lui qu'il faut consulter et non pas ma volonté. Priez mon père de n'obéir qu'à ses devoirs de souverain et de ne pas les subordonner à mon intérêt personnel.” This quote was found in Jean Tulard, “Jeux diplomatiques et problème dynastique: le mariage de Napoléon et Marie-Louise,” in 1810, *Politique de l'amor, Napoléon I^{er} et Marie-Louise à Compiègne*, 17.

52. On July 12, 1806, sixteen German states left the Holy Roman Empire, which Marie-Louise's father Francis II of Austria governed; these sixteen German states joined the Confederation of the Rhine. Over the next eight years, twenty-three more German states joined the Confederation, dissolving the Holy Roman Empire, and stripping Marie-Louise's father of the title, Holy Roman Emperor. The founding members of the Confederation of the Rhine included The Grand Duchy of Bade, Kingdom of Bavaria, Grand Duchy of Berg, Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, Principality of Regensburg, Kingdom of Württemberg, Duchy of Arenenberg, Principality of Hohenzollem-Hechingen, Principality of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Principality of Isenbourg Birstein, Principality of Leyen, Principality of Liechtenstein, and Principality of Slam.

53. Members of the Habsburg dynasty controlled the Netherlandish region from 1482–1798, when the First French Republican forces defeated the Coalition army, an army composed of soldiers from Great Britain, Hanover, the Dutch Republic, and Habsburg Austria, at the Battle of Fleurus. This victory prompted the complete withdrawal of Coalition troops from Belgium, allowing French forces to push into the previously named Habsburg Netherlands.