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DEATH PAINTING IMAGES IN THE WORKS OF JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID PAINTER

Prof. Monther Sameh Al-Atoum

Department of Plastic Arts – Faculty of Fine Arts
Yarmouk University – Irbid/ Jordan
E-Mail: monzeral@hotmail.com

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Abstract

The present study aimed at acknowledging the death painting images in the works of Jacques-Louis David Painter since French revolution throughout his return from Rome to Paris until the end of French revolution 1783-1793 AD. For this objective, the descriptive analytical approach was used. The study came up with the following findings: David depicted death by different paintings. Some of them before death, others during death, while some of them after death. The majority of his works are loaded with enthusiastic contents, slogans that contain political and national contents. He also innovated paintings that are loaded with championships in order to approximate the art into the life as well as achieve the goals of French revolution. It concluded that David works suggest the meaning of 'dying for principle' and the higher interest of the nation should take the priority over both personal and emotional interests.

Introduction

The discovery of the monuments in Herculaneum in 1738 AD and in Pompeii - Italy in 1748 AD, which has helped focus the attention of the ancient civilization arts. It is noteworthy that several works were published about it in both France and England. All of which enabled acknowledging the arts of ancient people (Al-Faqe, 2016). The field of depicting was one of the most successful fields concerning the depicts of themes taken from the history of people. As a result, the neoclassicism has invigorated when the French revolution leaders such as Robespierre and Napoleon encouraged the artists who asked for returning to Greek classical models whether in opting for the style of either the implementation or the theme, which added to the neoclassicism a new feature and the nobility of the tackled themes. Accordingly, its artists expressed the official view of the state. Consequently, a lot of photographers appeared, namely: Ingres, Gros, and Gerard, Fred

(2015), led by artist Jacques-Louis David, and the most famous of them is the artist who practiced politics, rebelled against the feudal system during the French Revolution, and fueled national ideas in society. He portrayed in many of his artistic works the idea of revolution and sacrifice for the sake of society and rebellion against the feudal class, as well as made many the publicity stunts for the anti-feudal party, and also worked as a representative of the party in Paris, and his political influence reached a great extent that brought him to the point of voting on the execution of King Louis XVI the last kings of France.

Although Jacques-Louis David was the pioneer of the neoclassical movement, who studied ancient art in Rome, and was influenced in many of his works by topics borrowed from the Greek and Roman civilizations during the French Revolution. However, the paucity of analytical studies that focused on the images of death in his works during this period, which is the basis for laying the foundations of the neoclassical school. Therefore, the present study aimed to identify the images of death in the works of the artist Jacques-Louis David during the French Revolution. It defined the period after the return of Jacques Louis David from Rome to Paris and the end of the French Revolution between 1783 - 1793 AD, in five works: (Andromache Mourning Hector, The Oath of Horatii, The Death of Socrates, The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons, and Death of Marat).

Personal and Artistic Background

Jacques-Louis David was born in 1748 in Paris, where his father was killed in a duel when he was nine years old. His mother left him in the custody of his uncles to raise him. David showed his interest in drawing at an early age. Thus, his uncles sent him to the Rococo artist (Francois Boucher) to teach him painting, who found David's tendencies towards historical subjects. Therefore, he decided to send it to his friend (Joseph-Marie Vien) to teach him. David joined at the age of eighteen the School of Art attached to the Royal Academy (Biography, 2020). During his studies at the French Royal Academy, he obtained the title David (History Painter). He was commissioned to create epic visual novels drawn from ancient history, literature and legend. In 1774, David won the Prize of Rome, which he obtained after getting acquainted to Jean Honore Fragonar. In 1775, he traveled to the prestigious French Academy in Rome, accompanied by his professor, Vien, who was appointed as its director, and he stayed there in the period (1775-1780), where he drew the treasures of the ancient city, Baroque art and architecture. Also, he was able to highlight classic aesthetics during his five years in Rome, producing more than (1000) sketches that served as his inspiration throughout his life (Brett, 2020)

Throughout his study in Rome, he became interested in the neoclassical ideas that arose among German painters, such as: (Anton Raphael Mengs) and the historian of German art (Johann Joachim Winckelmann). David was able to develop the style that he used in his later works, identifying the characteristics of French neoclassical work through the dramatic combinations and emotional formations in the work (Martin, 200). His work is attributed by a perfect beauty, as the philosopher (Quatremere de Quincy)

revealed to him the beauty of the Greek arts, and was influenced by Nicolas Poussin's classic quiet style and realistic (Caravaggio) style that was more attractive to his work, in addition to the influences of the Bologna school of dark color (Narmin, 2014).

He then returned to Paris in 1780, so he wanted to return to the stage in which Busan was in his work *Belisarius Asking Alms*, in which he combined an emotional and noble approach to antiquity with a photographic technique. Therefore, he turned to historical photography, his marriage in 1782 to Marguerite-Charlotte Pecoul enabled him for rapid development. His technical skills in the work of "Andromache Mourning Hector" led to his election to the Royal Academy in 1784. Therefore, he began to search in ancient history for noble national subjects. Thus, he created his painting for which he chose a historical subject related to a Roman national reality, "The Oath of Horatii". (McMullen, 2020). David continued to search in history for serious or revolutionary topics. He exhibited in the 1787 Salon (*The Death of Socrates*) to glorify serious philosophers, as well as the paintings "Paris and Helen" and "The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons" in 1789, symbolized In his last painting of King Louis XVI his weakness (Brookner, 1987).

The atmosphere before the French revolution helped David to be a major painter and hero of the republic through his reputation as a leading figure and supporter of the revolution through the political themes he was presenting, and he became an important figure in the reign of Robespierre (Bordes, 2007), when the doors of the last salon were opened, the French Revolution was on fire, and the people had smashed the doors of the Bastille prison 1789, which marks the beginning of the French Revolution (Brinker, 2004). David's position was politically strong because of his revolutionary paintings, and he became a photographer of the revolution. He was appointed a member of the Arts Committees and the Education Council, so he closed the Royal Academy, and established an Art Academy instead of it, which he put its teachings on, which was to focus on the importance of reason and philosophy as a guiding force of art (Al-Fiqi, 2016). He was an active artist and politically committed to the party to make the revolution a success. His works were revolutionary propaganda. He painted in that period a group of revolutionary works, such as: *Death of Joseph Bara*, *The Tennis Court Oath*, and *The Death of Lepeletier de Saint-Fargeau*. (Biography, 2020) David also tended to draw media panels recording the victims of the French Revolution, and among the most powerful of these paintings is the painting "Death of Marat" which he drew quoting from the truth in 1793 AD (Friedlaender, 1952).

In 1794 the voices of the counter-revolution loomed over Robespierre and his revolutionary allies after the people began to question his authority, and he was sent to the guillotine, and David was imprisoned. After a year of imprisonment, David was released to return to general life. Therefore, David devoted his time to teaching art enthusiastically, and trained many Artists who later became important, such as: (Gérard) and (Ingres) Nanteuil, 1990). However, he was interested in drawing portraits, distinguished by expressive accuracy of some French personalities, the most famous of these works is the


painting of "Madam Recamier" (Huguenaud, 2002). He also painted in 1777 the painting "The Intervention of the Sabine Women" with the aim of calling for an end to the wars and conflicts going on in France. Lerouge, 2010).

In 1799, Napoleon seized power, and David became an official painter for Napoleon I, and he portrayed him in many works, the most important of which is his famous work "Napoleon at the Saint-Bernard Pass" (National Gallery of Art, 2020). After Napoleon's founding the empire and crowning him emperor in 1804 Jacques-Louis David was appointed the first photographer for the imperial court, responsible for arts in Paris, imposing his neoclassical style on artists, and Napoleon's glory in many works on topics revolving around his life and his wars, including the painting "The Coronation of Napoleon, 1806". He painted it in a grandiose imperial style, of pomp and luxury befitting the emperor (Allam, 1978). After the exile of Napoleon and the takeover of the Bourbons family, the influence of David disappeared from the field of art altogether, and he was exiled to Belgium in 1816 during the reign of Louis XVIII, and he spent the rest of his life in Brussels, in Belgium, until he died in December 1825, (Fred, 2015).

The Death Images in the Works of David

The focus of this part of the research is on the most important works in which Jacques-Louis David portrayed death as follows:

Andromache Mourning Hector indicated in painting No. 1 represents a complete academic work, presented by David on August 23, 1783, for display in the salon. The work represents a scene from Homer's Iliad from the Greek era, as the artist depicts and narrates the story of the tragic death of the Trojan War Hero Hector who fell dead in battle at the hands of Achilles (Sitzi, 2012), who qualified him to lead the Royal Academy in 1784, (McMullen, 2020).

<p>Pic. No. 1</p>		
<p>Andromache Mourning Hector. 1783. Oil on canvas 2.75 m x 2.03 m. Louvre, Paris, France. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5a/Jacques-Louis_David_Andromache_Mourning_Hector.JPG</p>		

In this work, David embodied three characters: Hector, his wife, and his young son, where he portrayed the hero, leader of the brave knights of the dead, who was killed by Achilles, lying on an antique bed, his chest slightly raised, his head up and next to him his sword, shield and helmet, seated next to him the faithful wife Andromache with great sadness over her husband's brave body, as the son appears, who seems to still do not know the meaning of death by trying to console his mother in the midst of her grief, as the composition is characterized by clarity and simplicity, as the lighting on the white color worn by Andromache covers her entire body, against a background of Doric columns. In this work, people's gestures continue to greatly appear to be carved through the details that he focused on in a serious attempt to convey the feelings of those characters in the work, with a sad dramatic scene.

Also in another work, "The Horati Brothers Division", painting No. (2), David derived his idea from an incident from ancient Roman history in the seventh century AD, when the people of Rome and Palongo wanted to resolve the long conflict between the two peoples by organizing a duel. In which each of them would choose the best three fighters he has where Rome chose three brothers from the Horati family, while the Ballungo chose three brothers from Koriyati, the melodramatic aspect of the story is that both Horati and Korati families are united by lineage and childhood relations, as one of the sisters of the Koriyati brothers, Sabina, is married to one of the brothers Horati, and one of the sisters of Horati brothers, whose name is Camellia, was engaged to one of the Koreate brothers, which complicates the scene (Lerouge, 2009)



David chose in this work to depict the moment before the battle in a scene that inspires awe, this oath with swords by the three warriors, is considered as a document by men of the commitment to defend and protect the state. David portrayed them with strength and strong dress, reflecting the discipline of the strict and confident manly attitudes, swearing in front of their father by employing the father's arms forward and holding the swords

and extending towards the hands of the three brothers, forming a strong and cohesive bond from all angles of the scene. The father is so enthusiastic about fighting to the extent that blood is almost bursting out from the veins of his reluctant leg, and he is indifferent to the considerations of lineage and intermarriage that connect the two families, as he blesses his children in their battle, which gives an upscale sense of national duty, but behind the father we find another, different and contradictory scene. It is represented by the women who appear smaller and less important in this frightening scene, physically isolated from the males, in a state of weakness, fear, tension and indolent softness, which the artist deepened the struggle between love and duty, and the background of the scene is made up of three parts of an architectural background with curved arches linked with rotating columns, and the background of the work consists of three semicircular arches constructed on columns.

David portrayed another image of death and sacrifice for the sake of principle in his work "The Death of Socrates." painting No. (3) The end of the famous Greek philosopher and thinker Socrates in the last moments of his life at the age of seventy, during which he was accused by several charges by the court in Athens represented in corrupting young minds and inciting them to despise the Greek Gods. The disbelief in it, and he was sentenced by one of the two options, either death by poison or exile, except that he chose death by poison. Accordingly, David used to represent the facts of the trial that took place in (399 BC) with Plato's account of the event, there are important figures according to numbers as in the work, Socrates No. (1), and his followers Simmias (2) and Cebes (3), Crito (4), and Plato (5), Apollodorus (6). Members of his family, "Xanthippe", wife of Socrates (7). As for the other characters, they are not that important. (Richman-Abdou, 2019)

Pic. No. 3	
The Death of Socrates. 1787. Oil on canvas. 129.5 x 196 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA.	
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Death_of_Socrates#/media/File:David - The Death of Socrates.jpg	

Although Socrates's trial was carried out at the age of seventy years, David was able to portray Socrates as if he was younger, more powerful, and

with a strong and coherent force that does not care about death and does not have the features of fear, sadness, surprise, confusion and pain. His image as a source of strength in a majestic position that is indifferent to the death is balanced, adhering to his principles, in the implementation of the decision stemming from freedom of choice, in a position facing death in need of meaning. Therefore, Socrates's death came as a result of his belief in salvation from oppression, believing the survival and justice of his ideas and how he can be an example of sacrifice for the sake of his principles and not to abandon them even if that led him to his death.

In another work implemented by Jacques-Louis David that is derived from Roman history, "The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons," painting No. (4), depicting an important episode in the life of Lucius Junius Brutus, who put an end to the last kings of Rome and overthrew the brutal regime of king Tarkions. Establishing the first Roman Republic in history, and his story with his sons Tiberius and Titus who conspired to restore the monarchy after its overthrow and convert it into a republic, and this behavior is punishable by death according to the laws of the new republic, which forced him as the father to order their elimination. Thus, Brutus became a true defender of the republic at the expense of a family and the sacrifice of his children for the freedom of the nation, thus David presented a new symbol of civic virtue and society by presenting the public interest over personal and emotional interests (Crow, 2020).


Pic. No. 4



The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons. 1789. Oil on canvas. 323 x422 cm. Louvre, Paris, France.

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/70/The_Lictors_Returning_To_Brutus_The_Bodies_Of_His_Sons.jpg

In this work, we find that David distributed his main characters in the work in an innovative way, in addition to furniture, accessories, and the antique background, where David placed his main character Brutus on the far left, sitting alone on his chair, crosses his tense legs, and in a complex position with harsh features holding on his left hand 'the order of execution' written with a fist Claw-like. David also used light and shadow to distinguish between him and his wife and two daughters on the other side with clear lighting, so we find his wife holding her first daughters who seem to have fainted and the second in front of her raises her hands defensively in a state of shock and panic.

<p>Pic. No. 5</p>	
<p>Death of Marat. Oil on canvas. 1793. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, Belgium. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/aa/Death_of_Marat_by_David.jpg</p>	

Work No. (5) represents the story of the death of a friend of Jacques Louis David, Jean-Paul Marat, who held several leadership positions in the anti-ruling party, and worked as an editor for the newspaper "L'Ami du Peuple" and was an eloquent and honest patriot who was assassinated by a young pro-feudal woman named Charlotte Corday, in the bathtub (Puchko, 2015). David painted it in a majestic dramatic way that reflects his terrifying death, a decomposing body, and the separation of a friend, his images in the highest degree possible describing the pain and pain experienced by a friend in this painful incident and the torment that he lived and his recent suffering, indicates the painful end of a great man in a creative, innovative and elaborate manner, in a manner that moves Emotions, and the triumph of spirituality, in a message that the sacrifice for the nation can be the price of life.

Findings

Jacques-Louis David depicted death in various ways, including before, during, and after death. The majority of his paintings were charged with enthusiastic messages and slogans that have political and national connotations. David was inspired by the events of history, and he redraws and projected them to the prevailing political and social reality in France during the French Revolution, Jacques-Louis David is considered one of the artists who promoted many of the values of enlightenment and the French Revolution to convey specific ideological messages in most of his works of that period. The first four works that were shown are stories of historical origins. As for the fifth work, the death of Marat occurred during the French Revolution. David also depicted three paintings of death, namely: Andromache Mourning Hector, The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons, and Death of Marat. Also, two paintings that depict the life before death, namely: The Oath of Horatii. And The Death of Socrates.

There were many paintings of death in the works of Jacques-Louis David that were reviewed in the current study, as the artist expressed them each time in a different manner and content. Taking care of his father, he sacrificed his life and the future of his family, beating the supreme interest of society and the people's victory over the personal interest.

As for his work "The Oath of Horatii", he portrayed the section that preceded the fighting with a two-part work. The first part relates to men, extreme strength, and determination to fight whose end was tragic. The second is related to women in a state of extreme sadness and fear. In spite of that, the presentation of the national duty and its protection does not make them hesitate to engage in a battle whose end may be fatal. Thus, we see them take an oath in front of their father to fight that fight without hesitation. The father, in turn, blesses that for the victory of justice, and this work represents the intertwining of art with politics, during which the artist tried to reveal the contradictions between personal feelings and the national duty, and this work symbolizes the principle of national devotion.

As for his work "The Death of Socrates" David depicted an important moment in the life of the philosopher who preferred to ingest poison over exile, in this work he documented an incident in an artistic and philosophical form that depicted a historical incident in a genius way, as it was not dealt with before, he highlighted the impact of human existence, to reveal the truth in an exceptional way that reveals the truth in a stranger way. The exciting thing in this work is what Socrates wanted to say, as Jacques- Louis David represented it doubly, in this work we find the Socratic dialogue and the interaction of gestures and signals that make us feel the greatness of the scene and its dimensions, A thought and philosophy that besieges and pursues its creator, and he is the one who puts an end to this tragic end, and an existential choice that expresses the death of the present, just as he portrayed that the demand for death can be easy for the sake of principle and not giving up. Therefore, the images of Socrates, while he administered the poison calmly and with coolness of nerves, despite the presence of his students who suffer about the way things have turned out, and their inability to deter him from retracting his decision, and thus it was a final message from him to his students, preferring the principle that indicated the sacrifice of the soul, and the last lesson that can be delivered, which is that the philosopher should not fear death in defense of his principles and values, glorify the spirit and sacrifice for the sake of principle, and not be afraid and submissive of death.

As for his work "The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons", it is considered the ultimate sacrifice, as it drew its idea from the Roman era. This is a dramatic, tragic work that depicts the cruelty of the father towards his traitorous sons and sending them to death if necessary in order to preserve the supreme national values, as David dealt in this work with the subject of death in the service of the nation and the sacrifice of the body and the bond of blood for the sake of higher values, and the artist in this work depends on a clear geometry of shapes and lines that help to raise the mental and visual image of the work.

In the last work is "Death of Marat" David portrayed a real fact from the reality of the French Revolution, although in this work a situation of Marat is very similar to the incident of the crucifixion of Christ, especially in the part related to the hand. In this work, he wanted to explain to the people that to succeed in achieving the demands and the revolution, highly significant and important people must be lost in order for the rest to live in dignity.

Conclusion

Based on the forgoing, it is observed that Jacques-Louis David created paintings full of heroism and sacrifice in order to bring art closer to life and achieve the goals of the French Revolution in a way that serves the supreme values of the state and achieve social justice and freedom by playing an active role during the revolution. He wanted to serve the nation, by linking its themes to the ancient times and the old classical world, in all works, we find that David used shadow and light to create contradictions in a single scene, which fluctuates between weakness, pain, and cruelty, as he portrayed heroic scenes with difficult compositions that need precise details related mainly to the title of history drawing.

The genius of Jacques-Louis David is represented in the process of producing coherent and integrated works of art and the smooth transition between its parts and reading them with ease, but rather his genius indicates his ability to depict important historical facts that formed dialogue and interaction with important events in the development of human thought throughout history that presented human and political figures that made an intellectual development in the history of humanity, as David wanted through his works to convey an important message to the French revolutionaries and the French people that it is possible to die for the sake of the principle for the sake of the elevation of the homeland. The death of one or more people will not affect the struggle, the adherence to values, and the non-retreat, no matter what it costs. This includes a moral message of sacrifice and fear, and an explicit call to the French people for resistance.

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