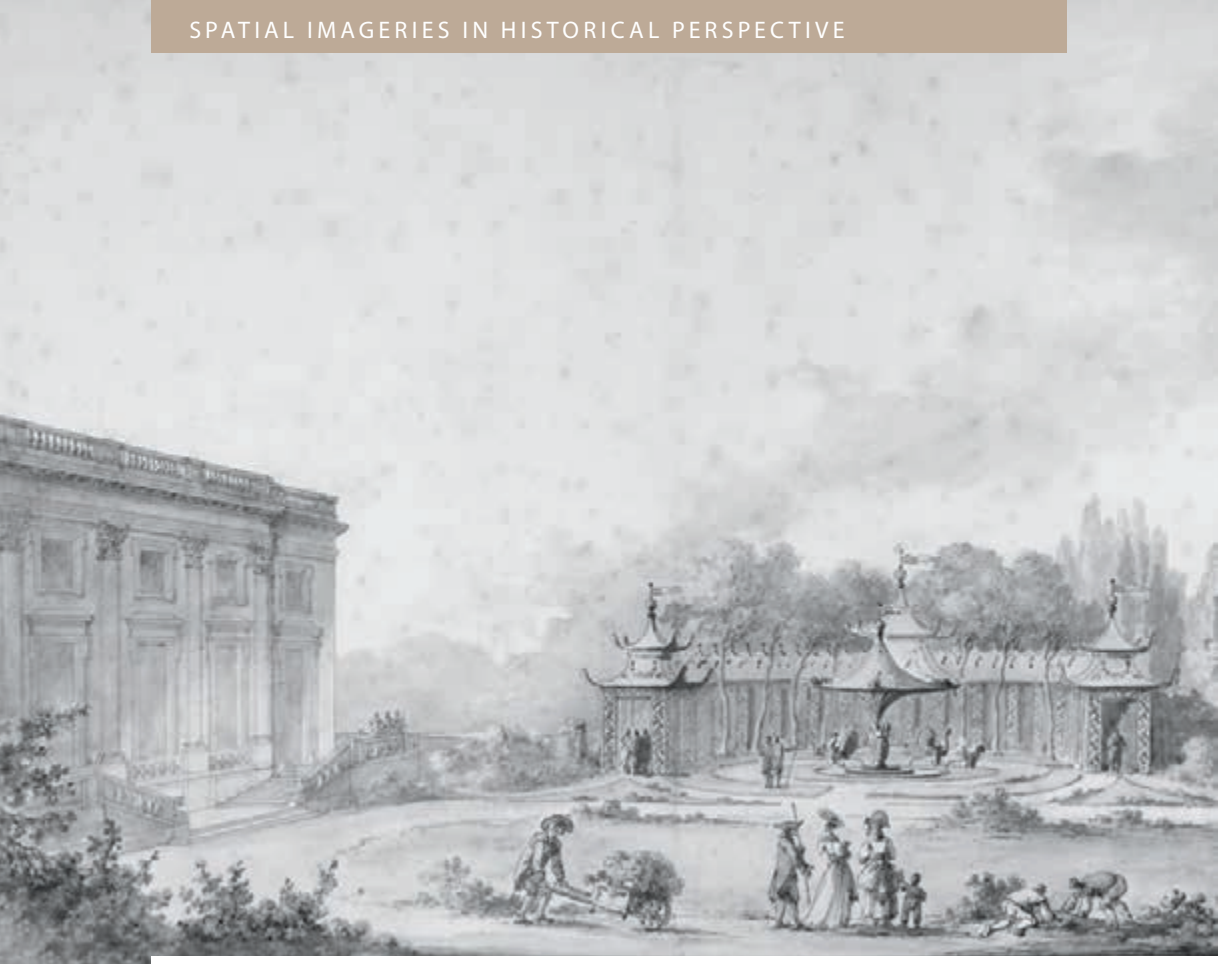
SPATIAL IMAGERIES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



Susan Taylor-Leduc

Marie-Antoinette's Legacy

The Politics of French Garden Patronage and Picturesque Design, 1775-1867

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Spatial Imageries in Historical Perspective

This series is looking for interdisciplinary contributions that focus on the historical study of the imagined space, or of spaces and places as sensorial, experiential or intellectual images, from the interior to the landscape, in written, visual or material sources. From (closed) gardens and parks to cabinets, from the odd room to the train compartment, from the façade to the prison cell, from the reliquary to the desk, a variety of spaces in the shape of imageries and images unveils historical attitudes to history, to the object, to the other and the self and presents a subject that experiences, acts, imagines and knows. Spatial imageries and images in this sense constitute a prominent theme in various fields within the Humanities, from museum studies, intellectual history and literature to material culture studies, to name but a few.

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Susan Taylor-Leduc

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Acknowledgments

In 1994, Hillary Clinton referenced an African proverb, "Every child needs a village," in her acknowledgments to her book of the same name. She reaffirmed the significance of the phrase when she wrote: "It takes a village to bring a book into the world, as everyone who has written one knows." Invoking the same sentiments, I would like to thank my village.

This manuscript was written when I was a visiting scholar at the Centre de recherche du château de Versailles. I thank the director, Alexandre Maral, and Mathieu da Vinha for welcoming me to the Centre and the scholars and staff whom I have met at Versailles, Gabriela Lamy, Flavie LeRoux, Benjamin Ringot, and Annick Heitzmann. Marie-Laetitia LaChèvre and Quitterie Pruvost at the Bibliothèque de Conservation du château de Versailles have been exceedingly kind and helpful. During the same period, I was introduced to the world of Napoleonic studies at the Fondation Napoléon. My sincere thanks to Chantal Prévot, librarian and scholar who has generously shared many insights over the past three years.

I have spent the majority of my career as an independent scholar in Paris. The advantages of writing as an art historian in Paris, close to the archives, national libraries, and the gardens that are the subject of this book, are manifold. I thank the many anonymous librarians and archivists at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Insitut Nationale d'Histoire de l'Art, Bibliothèque Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle and the Archives Nationales who have guided me. I would not have been able to continue my intellectual career without the unwavering encouragement of Dr. Susan Sidlauskas and Dr. Joseph Disponzio. For almost thirty years, they have provided inspiration, critiques, and compassionate empathy in ways I cannot begin to acknowledge; I am deeply indebted to them.

The community of art historians suffered a great loss in 2016: the untimely death of Mary D. Sheriff. Dr. Sheriff, whose singular ability to build a village of art historians joined by her friendship and inspired by her immense intellectual talents, continues to influence my work. It has been a privilege to belong to this village where I would like to thank Nina Dubin, Melissa Hyde, Dorothy Johnson, Meredith S. Martin, Jennifer Milam, Carole S. Paul, Susanna Caviglia, Kathleen Nicholson, Sarah R. Cohen, Katie Scott, Kevin Justus, and Anne Lafont. My colleagues Nancy Micklewright, Peter S. Reed, Christine Baltay, and Charlotte Daudon Lacaze have sustained my endeavors over the years. Irene S. Winter's scholarship has guided me my

entire career: she advocated cross-disciplinary studies before it became fashionable. It has been a pleasure to be one of her students.

Since I was welcomed as a Junior Fellow at Dumbarton Oaks, I have belonged to another village, a community of garden historians who generously share and support one another in a field that is often placed at the cusp of history, art history, and architecture. Dr. Margaret Maclean's insights, patience, and stimulating questions have inspired me and enriched this book. Therese O'Malley's integration of botanical history with garden design introduced me to the growing field of global plant studies. I am thankful to Therese, who has supported me from the outset of my career and has mentored me ever since. Garden historians Elizabeth Hyde, Elizabeth Barlow Rodgers, Amy Meyers, and Mark Laird have influenced my thinking about plants, and I continually admire and benefit from their expertise.

As gardens became recognized as designed spaces, I had the opportunity to belong to a village dedicated to design. I am immensely grateful to Sarah E. Lawrence and Lisa Debenedittis who have informed my thinking about design, decoration, and spatial studies. Unfortunately, David Raizman, a treasured mentor and colleague, passed away in 2021. His advocacy for a broad definition of design is threaded through these pages. His student, Kiersten Thamm has helped me to stay in tune with contemporary design theory and practice with great patience and insight.

Maintaining a career in academia as an independent scholar often requires explaining why it is so important to write a book, and in my case, why another book dedicated to Marie-Antoinette. I would like to thank Dominique Bauer for her ability to embrace how gardens fit so centrally to the wider field of spatial studies. Dr. Bauer and Dr. Camilla Murgia's colloquium, *Ephemeral Exhibition Spaces*, and edited volumes were central to my thinking about historic spaces. I would like to thank my readers, and the editors at Amsterdam University Press: Katrien de Vresse, Victoria Blud, and Chantal Nicoleaes.

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Introduction: Spatial Legacies

Abstract
Queen Marie-Antoinette and empresses Joséphine, Marie-Louise, and Eugénie are commonly perceived as profligate garden patrons pursuing ostentatious pleasures at the Petit Trianon, Versailles, and Malmaison. This book disrupts this narrative, arguing instead that their gardens were liminal zones at the epicenter of court societies, venues where each patron demonstrated her agency and cultural clout. Drawing upon scholarship in spatial, sensorial, and cultural memory studies, this book situates these four patrons and their picturesque gardens at the forefront of French garden history.

Keywords: Spatial turn, liminality, cultural memory studies, affect studies, sensory turn, gardens

When Queen Marie-Antoinette (1755–1793, r. 1774–1792) looked out the windows from the royal residence at the Petit Trianon in 1781, she was rightly proud of the view. In less than five years, she had redesigned the landscape, replacing a botanical garden with what contemporaries designated as a *jardin anglais* or English-style garden (Figure A). The queen dispensed with pre-existing axial alignments, creating her own flourishing enclave: verdant green lawns were bordered by trees and flowering shrubberies, colorful blooms perfumed the air, and a gurgling stream conjured auditory delight. A gleaming, white neoclassical temple imparted a cue that the garden was intended to encode an allusion to landscape painting: the gardens became "picturesque," worthy of a picture.[1]

1 The new style of gardening was alternatively termed *jardin anglais*, *jardin anglois-chinois*, *goût modern*, *style irregulier*, and *jardin pittoresque*. In the prologue, I address my decision to employ the term picturesque. For a brief introduction, see Michel Baridon, *Les jardins: Paysagistes, jardiniers, poètes* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1998), 816–18, 829–31, and Stephen Bending, ed., *A Cultural History of Gardens in the Age of Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

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Figure A *Vue des jardins du Petit Trianon avec au fond le Temple de l'Amour.* © RMN-Grand Palais (Château de Versailles) / Gérard Blot

In 1783, the queen was evidently so pleased with her artfully contrived landscape that she expanded her garden, commissioning twelve buildings to be built in a vernacular half-timbered style and placed in a semicircle around an artificial lake (Figure B). Each house was surrounded by a vegetable plot, and the entire complex was joined to a working farm. By the time of the Hameau's completion in 1788, the queen's carefully cultivated realm had become a site of semiotic chaos. Critics claimed she "dissimulated" in her garden, renouncing her queenly status, performing as milkmaid and shepherdess, confusing art and reality. The queen's alleged misperception is branded today as a "Marie-Antoinette moment," a moniker of social derision often invoked to satirize political and social gaffes notably made by women in the public eye.[2]

Less than six years after the queen's regicide, Joséphine Bonaparte (1763–1814, r. 1804–1809) gazed out her windows at Malmaison and contemplated a strikingly similar scene: a vast lawn encircled her country house, bordered by flowering shrubs and clusters of trees (Figure C). Joséphine strategically placed marble sculptures and vases along paths cutting through her lawns to enhance picturesque viewing. After she

2 Manohla Dargis, Wesley Morris, and A. O Scott, "'Moonlight', 'La La Land' and What an Epic Oscars Fail Really Says," *New York Times*, February 27, 2017: "The stunt with the tourists was a cringe-worthy moment of Marie Antoinette obtuseness—ah, look, little people!"

Figure B *Vue extérieure du Petit Trianon: Hameau de la Reine: Tour de Marlborough et la Maison de la Reine.* © Château de Versailles, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Thomas Garnier

was crowned empress in 1804, she expanded upon her program, commissioning a meandering river designed for pleasure-boat rides. She built an innovative greenhouse destined to receive exotic plants imported from the Atlantic and the Pacific regions. Over the next ten years, she invested in an ornamental farm where she raised a flock of merino sheep and kept Swiss cows in her dairy.

The Petit Trianon and Malmaison share design patterns: the S-curved paths unified the space, water features generated a soundscape, and the shrubs and trees not only tantalized the eyes with their colors and textures but also imbued the nose with floral scents. Irene J. Winter cautions that visual motifs alone do not reveal the meaning of style. Rather, Winter argues:

> The key to style as meaning lies … in the cultural context and in the emotional response invoked/provoked by the work … It is style that sets up the parameters for and the emotional linkages of affective *experience*, via the culturally conditioned sensory motors of visual perception. And in that respect, issues of style engage *both* properties of the work and the functions of the response.[3]

3 Irene J. Winter, "The Affective Properties of Styles: An Inquiry into Analytical Process and the Inscription of Meaning in Art History," in *Picturing Science Producing Art*, ed. Caroline A. Jones and Peter Galison (New York: Routledge, 1998), 72.

Figure C Antoine Ignace Melling, *Le Parc de Malmaison*, 1810. © RMN-Grand Palais (musée des châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau) / Gérard Blot

Winter's theorization about the meaning of style encourages us to question Marie-Antoinette's design choice and Joséphine's decision to employ a recognizably similar style that recalled the queen's gardens at the Petit Trianon. Both patrons seized upon the aesthetics of picturesque design because strolling the S-curve path became a means to experiment with the emerging psycho-social discourses about subjectivity and selfhood, and, in so doing, they transformed their gardens into places to assert their agency.[4]

This book focuses narrowly and delves deeply into the design history of the Petit Trianon, arguing that the queen's intervention in the landscape so significantly disrupted garden patronage that the afterlife of the garden was as exceptional as its creation. Despite the queen's destiny, three empresses—Joséphine, Marie-Louise, and Eugénie—appropriated memories of the queen's garden to forge their own garden legacies. Joséphine's decision to establish her own garden at Malmaison is considered an homage to the

4 Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Lynn Hunt, "The Self and Its History," *American Historical Review* 119, no. 5 (December 2014): 1576–86; Georges Vigarello, *Le sentiment de soi: Histoire de la perception du corps* (Paris: Seuil, 2014); Paul Ricoeur, *Soi-même comme un autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1990); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Melissa Hyde and Jennifer Milam, eds., *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2003), 1–19.

queen's agency, thereby positioning her own patronage at the forefront of imperial cultural and economic pursuits. The gardens at the Petit Trianon and Malmaison emerge as arenas of exceptional taste and emotivity at the epicenter of court societies, liminal zones that profoundly influenced the evolution of French garden design. This reappraisal of royal and imperial garden patronage debunks one of the central tenets of garden historiography that casts consorts' gardens as sites of excessive ostentation and frivolity at the margins of court society. Instead, consort-patrons privileged garden design precisely because they were uniquely endowed with the power to inscribe their actions onto the French territory, and, in so doing, ensured the perennity of their actions. At the crossroads of Enlightenment discourses about corporeality and the senses, French colonial ambitions and plantation slavery, botanical acclimation and naturalism, these women materialized hotly contested issues of power, gender, and identity in their gardens.

Since the French Renaissance, royal consorts adopted garden patronage as a means to metaphorically merge their bodies, destined for procreation, to the agronomic abundance of France.[5] The all-encompassing allegory of fecundity particularly appealed to Marie-Antoinette who did not conceive a child until seven years after her marriage to Louis XVI (1754–1793). Joséphine was ultimately repudiated because she could not conceive an heir for Napoléon Bonaparte (1769–1821). Developing flourishing gardens, where exotic and indigenous species thrived, signaled each consort's capacity to regenerate, cultivate, and propagate on behalf of the Crown.

Although consorts appropriated the iconology of gardens as sites of fertility and regeneration, this allegorical tradition was not gender specific.[6] Male rulers equally turned to gardens to assert their virility and legitimize their stewardship. Fissures in this allegorical messaging were breached during the French Revolution when the Nation was gendered

5 Alexander Samson, "*Locus amoenus*: Gardens and Horticulture in the Renaissance," *Renaissance Studies* 25, no. 1 (February 2011): 1–23.

6 This book builds on scholarly work about the intersection of gender studies and early modern queenship: works that have particularly influenced this study include: Regina Schulte, ed., *The Body of the Queen* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006); Susan Groag Bell, "Women Create Gardens in Male Landscapes: A Revisionist Approach to Eighteenth-Century English Garden History," *Feminist Studies* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1990): 471–91; Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe, 1600–1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, *Projecting Imperial Power: New Nineteenth-Century Emperors and the Public Sphere* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021); Joanna Marschner, David Bindman, and Lisa L. Ford, *Enlightened Princesses: Caroline, Augusta, Charlotte, and the Shaping of the Modern World*, exhibition catalogue (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017).

both masculine and feminine, as will be discussed in Chapter 2. When Napoléon installed his second wife, the lesser known Empress Marie-Louise (1791–1847, r. 1810–1814), Marie-Antoinette's grand-niece, at the Petit Trianon in 1810, the emperor deliberately provoked collective memories of the site. Restoring the Petit Trianon gardens for his young bride, Napoléon venerated Marie-Antoinette's original program. At the same moment that Napoléon ensconced his wife at the Petit Trianon, reedifying the picturesque garden as a feminine space, Joséphine, repudiated but retaining her title as empress, created another picturesque garden at her duchy at Navarre from 1810 to 1814. Consequently, during the First Empire, two empresses, Joséphine and Marie-Louise, promulgated the queen's legacy at the Petit Trianon and Malmaison, respectively. Napoléon's wives benefitted from his stewardship, adhering to Imperial dictates, yet by establishing spatial enclaves for themselves, they increased their own cultural and political clout, asserting their own place in the French empire.[7]

The defeat of the Napoléonic Empire followed by the restoration of the Bourbon monarchs from 1815 to 1848 did not diminish Marie-Antoinette's reputation; rather, royalist apologia reedified the queen's reputation. The fact that neither Louis XVIII (1755–1824) nor Charles X (1757–1836) reigned with consorts, and that King Louis Philippe's (1773–1850) queen Maria-Amelia (1782–1866) was not interested in garden patronage, meant that it was not until the Second Empire that gardens again became a focus for Imperial patronage. Upon the occasion of the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1867, Empress Eugénie (1826–1920, r. 1853–1870) inaugurated temporary exhibits respectively dedicated to Marie-Antoinette and Joséphine. These exhibits, committed to resuscitating the collective memory of the so-called "misfortunate princesses," marked a pivotal moment in French museography. Eugénie's exhibits inside the Petit Trianon and at Malmaison were among the first period rooms commemorating the taste of former queen and empress, respectively. Lending objects from her personal collections, Eugénie's souvenirs helped "redecorate" the interiors, summoning collective memories of their reigns. Eugénie's

7 Wider issues of imperialism that will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 are inspired by the foundational work of W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1996] 2002); Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); David Miller and Peter Hanns Rell, eds., *Visions of Empire: Voyages, Botany and Representations of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Nebahat Avcioglu and Finbarr Barry Flood, "Introduction: Globalizing Cultures: Art and Mobility in the Eighteenth Century," *Ars Orientalis* 39 (2010): 7–38; Nóemie Étienne and Yaëlle Biro, *Rhapsodic Objects: Art, Agency, and Materiality* (*1700–2000*) (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).

refurbishment of the interior spaces extended to the restoration of the gardens at each site. Eugénie's garden patronage coincided with the massive greening of Paris, highlighting the importance of historic picturesque gardens at the same moment that Napoléon III unveiled the park of the Butte Chaumont—the jewel of his public parks initiative—at the 1867 Universal Exposition.

Eugénie's temporary installations were dismantled after the exhibition, but both Malmaison and the Petit Trianon were acclaimed as historic monuments. Eugénie thus emerges as one of the first patrons to consider gardens as examples of living patrimony. After the collapse of the Second Empire in 1870, Eugénie's commemorative interventions were relegated to near oblivion; her reign, and by consequence, her patronage were criticized as a deleterious interference in public affairs. Criticisms of Eugénie recalled attacks launched at Marie-Antoinette one hundred years earlier: like the queen, she was accused of acting as a dangerous interloper in the public sphere of power politics. Forced into exile for the next fifty years, Eugénie's legacy as a garden patron was thus expunged until almost thirty years later, when she returned to France in 1904 to contribute to a second restoration of Malmaison, gifting personal souvenirs to the now national collections.

Situating the picturesque garden as part of the long eighteenth century—rooted in practices refined in *ancien régime* court culture that were profoundly influential for nineteenth-century sociability—distinguishes this study from the majority of extant scholarship that focuses primarily on the aesthetic appeal of picturesque gardens.[8] I call upon recent scholarship in anthropology, affect, and memory studies to reassess the spatial implications of each consort's patronage. The afterlife of each garden, its design and affective trace, promoted transgenerational dialogues among these women who were deeply implicated in one of the most salient debates of the period—the relation of self to the natural world—a debate that capitalized on the explicitly nonverbalized praxis of strolling in their gardens.

8 Daniel Mornet, *Le sentiment de la nature en France de J.-J. Rousseau à Bernardin de Saint-Pierre* (Geneva: Slatkine, [1907] 2007); Annie Becq, *Genèse de l'esthétique française moderne: De la raison classique à l'imagination créatrice, 1680–1814* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994); Sophie Le Ménahèze, *L'invention du jardin romantique en France, 1761–1808* (Neuilly-sur-Seine: Éditions Spiralinthe, 2001); David L. Porter, "Review: Rethinking the Aesthetic in the Century of Taste," in "The Culture of Risk and Pleasure," special issue, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2000): 587–92; Brigitte Weltman-Aron, *On Other Grounds: Landscape Gardening and Nationalism in Eighteenth-Century England and France* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001); Michael Jakob, ed., *Des jardins et des livres* (Paris: Metis Presses, 2018).

Spatial Studies, the Liminal, and the Liminoid

Considering Marie-Antoinette, Joséphine, Marie-Louise, and Eugénie as curators of spaces borrows from Henri Lefebvre, who argued in his now-classic *The Production of Space* (1974) that decoding space helps us understand the construction of power politics that govern the relationships between individuals.[9] Lefebvre established that space can be historically coded (spatial practice, representations of space, and representational practices), but it is possible to break the codes by considering space as dynamic, contested, and constructed. Lefebvre provided a framework for scholars to determine how issues of power and agency are sited, created, and negotiated.

Whereas Lefebvre's work provides theoretical parameters for this analysis of gardens as historic spaces, Michel Foucault developed a critical framework for understanding the practical experiences of space. Foucault specifically cited gardens as "other" spaces, included in his speculations about heterotopias—real places that existed in relation with all other sites. Foucault argued: "The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible."[10] Garden historians have benefited from Foucault's formulation of the garden as a heterotopia to explain how gardens hold different meanings for different people that may align, or not, with the owner's or designer's intentions.

Recognizing picturesque gardens as "other" spaces reminds us that while time seemed suspended for the duration of the garden stroll, upon exiting the garden, visitors returned to contingent spaces that required temporal and structural constraints. In other words, visitors were invited into the garden, passed through a garden gate or threshold, shared experiences of the garden sensorium, and then exited the space. These three stages of entering, exploring, and exiting the garden recall the creation and function of playgrounds, a point to which I will return. For the moment, however,

9 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (1974), trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 15–18, 110–28, 140–47; Kathryne Beebe, Angela Davis, and Kathyrn Gleadle, "Introduction: Space, Place and Gendered Identities: Feminist History and the Spatial Turn," in *Space, Place and Gendered Identities: Feminist History and the Spatial Turn*, ed. Kathryne Beebe and Angela Davis (New York: Routledge, 2015), 1–10; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

10 Michel Foucault, *Le corps utopique: Suivi des hétertopies* (1966), ed. Daniel Defert (Paris: Lignes, 2009); Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias," *Architecture, mouvement, continuité* 5 (1984): 46–49; Peter Johnson, "The Geographies of Heterotopia," *Geography Compass* 7, no. 11 (2013): 790–803.

I want to focus on how stages of entering, interacting, and remembering the garden experience benefit from anthropological studies of liminality.

Arnold Van Gennep's observations and analysis of rituals, first published in his *Rites de passage* (1909), argue that rites of passage universally consisted of three interconnected patterns or stages: rites of separation, transition rites, and rites of incorporation.[11] Van Gennep called the middle stage in a rite of passage a liminal one. I am not attempting to clone Van Gennep's triumvirate to all gardens. However, I do claim that the notion of a liminal zone, where time is suspended for the duration of the garden stroll so that experiential practices can be played out, has specific resonances for understanding the evolution of picturesque gardens.[12]

Van Gennep's triumvirate provides a template that helps elucidate how patrons integrated liminal experiences into their own identity politics. Directly inspired by Van Gennep, Victor Turner argued that ritual passages, in the liminal phase, served as moments of creativity that encouraged new forms of sociability.[13] Turner posited that liminality not only identified the importance of in-between periods, but also suggested that human experience was in fact shaped by liminality. For Turner, the "betwixt and between" of the liminal transition provoked the foregrounding of agency and the possibility to tie together thought and experience. Turner went on to refine his analysis of the significance of liminality by suggesting that as societies moved from agrarian organizations to postindustrial modern society, they experienced liminoid transitions where creativity and uncertainty critical to identity politics unfolded in art and leisure activities.[14]

In this study, consort's gardens are considered liminal zones where visitors entered an *entre-deux*, or in-betweenness of space and place; the garden

11 I would like to thank Lisa Debenedittis for discussing liminality with me. Arnold van Gennep, *Rites of Passage* (1909), trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Cafee (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), 1–25; Arpad Szakolczai, "Liminality and Experience: Structuring Transitory Situations and Transformative Events," *International Political Anthropology* 2, no. 1 (2009): 141–72.

12 The garden stroll was often conceived as a circuit walk implicitly referencing sacred processionals: Max F. Schultz, "The Circuit Walk of the Eighteenth-Century Landscape Garden and the Pilgrim's Circuitous Progress," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 15, no. 1 (Autumn 1981): 1–25; Ronald Paulson, "The Pictorial Circuit and Related Structures in Eighteenth-Century England," in *The Varied Pattern: Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Peter Hughes and David Williams (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 165–87.

13 Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*," in *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), 93–111.

14 Victor Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbology," *Rice Institute Pamphlet—Rice University Studies* 60, no. 3 (1974): 53–92, https://hdl.handle.net/1911/63159.

functioned as a site of passage that allowed both patron and visitors to be aware of self and others as they shared the experience of space.[15] For female patrons, the very liminality of the garden experience enabled them to both sanction and contest the existing political order. In the last decades of the *ancien régime* and first decades of the nineteenth century, the garden as a liminal zone existed in a contentious space because the very notions of public and private were not yet rigidly proscribed.[16] The gardens discussed in this book were public in the sense that they were part of the state system; they were inscribed into landscapes that belonged to the kingdom/empire of France.[17] They were private spaces in that patrons determined who could enter them.

Picturesque strollers at court increasingly considered their experience a communal one, where behaviors in the liminal zone could be transposed into the (contingent) public sphere, or conversely, memories from outside the garden influenced reception of the space. The tension between liminal zones inscribed in the domain that functioned as "other" spaces, compared to contingent spaces, highlighted each patron's agency, increasing their status as influencers or generators of new trends in garden culture.

15 Bjorn Thomassen, "The Uses and Meanings of Liminality," *International Political Anthropology* 2, no. 1 (2009): 5–27; Robert Tally Jr., "A Utopia of the In-between, or Liming the Liminal," in *Landscapes of Liminality: Between Space and Place*, ed. Dara Downey, Ian Kinane, and Elizabeth Parker (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), ix–xiii; Dara Downey, Ian Kinane, and Elizabeth Parker, "Introduction," in *Landscapes of Liminality*, ed. Downey, Kinane, and Parker, 1–26.

16 The tension about public and private spheres is deeply intertwined with judicial edicts about property ownership: Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into the Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. T. Burger and F. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); Blandine Barret-Kriegel, "Sphère privée, citoyenneté, démocratie," in *La famille, la loi, l'état: De la Révolution au Code Civil*, edited by Iréné Thery and Christian Biet, CRIV, Histoire et Société (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 1989), 503–506; Jacques Poumarède, "La législation successorale de la Révolution entre l'idéologie et la pratique," in *La famille, la loi, l'état*, ed. Thery and Biet, 167–82; William M. Reddy, "Marriage, Honor, and the Public Sphere in Post-Revolutionary France: Séparations de Corps, 1815–1848," *Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 3 (September 1993): 437–72; Dena Goodman, "Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime," *History and Theory* 31, no. 1 (February 1992): 1–20; Temma Balducci and Heather Belnap Jensen, "Introduction," in *Women, Femininity and Public Space in European Visual Culture, 1789–1914*, ed. Temma Balducci and Heather Belnap Jensen (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 1–16.

17 William H. Sewell Jr., *Capitalism and the Emergence of Civic Equality in Eighteenth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021) argues that shared experiences promenading in urban centers were opportunities for civic equality. Inspired by Sewell's work, I argue picturesque gardens did not become places for shared civic experiences until the public park movement of the 1860s.

Embodied Strolling

Considering how the body moves through the liminal zone is critical to this study. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, in his pioneering work *Phénoménologie de la perception* (1945, translated into English in 1962), fundamentally conceived of the body as the primary site of knowing the world, a corrective to the long-established philosophical tradition of placing consciousness as the source of knowledge.[18] Merleau-Ponty postulated that seeing cannot be disentangled from the lived experience. The body is considered a vector for interpreting a range of sensations (broadly defined as embodied cognition), but the act of moving is equally critical to understanding place.[19] A phenomenology of place is helpful for understanding the garden as a location where subject and space interact. Phenomenological analysis brings attention to the fact that moving through an artfully designed landscape is very different from gazing at landscape paintings.

Merleau-Ponty's theorization of embodiment is particularly helpful to elucidate how exploring the garden provoked awareness of body and self in a specific place.[20] While phenomenology helps us understand the significance of the sensate, moving body, it is Michel de Certeau who established walking as a historical praxis.[21] Strolling in the garden was a novel enterprise in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century France. Laurent Turcot, in his *Promeneur à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (2007) has demonstrated that the art of strolling referenced other forms of walking, such as ceremonial processions

18 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945; translated by Colin Smith, London: Routledge, 1962); Jack Reynolds, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961)," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed April 7, 2021, https://iep.utm.edu/merleau/; Michel Conan, "Introduction: Garden and Landscape Design from Emotion to the Construction of the Self," in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, ed. Michel Conan, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquia on the History of Landscape Architecture 24 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 30–33.

19 The philosophical dimensions of the mind-body debate inform this study but will not be discussed in detail. Justin Skirry, "René Descartes: The Mind-Body Distinction," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed April 7, 2021, https://iep.utm.edu/descmind/#H4. For embodied cognition, see Monica Cowart, "Embodied Cognition," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed April 7, 2021, https://iep.utm.edu/embodcog/; Colin McLear, "Kant: Philosophy of Mind," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed April 7, 2021, https://iep.utm.edu/kantmind/.

20 Dylan Trigg, *The Phenomenology of the Uncanny* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012), 1–42, which includes a discussion of Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958); Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

21 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stephen Rendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

or meandering.[22] Garden strolling was distinct from urban walks or solitary wanders, as strollers at court remained highly attuned to maintaining their aristocratic comportments. Strollers were expected to move gracefully, with modulated gestures, never unbalanced, abrupt, or floundering while promenading in the garden. Picturesque garden strollers became aware of themselves, their personhood, as well as others in the experiential sensorium.

Sensory studies provide an interdisciplinary framework that expands our understanding of the embodied stroll. David Howes has characterized recent studies in space, affectivity, and sensorial studies as "the sensorial turn," emphasizing the body as a conduit to connect aural, haptic, and visual experiences.[23] Embodied strolling in gardens triggered visual, auditory, and tactile delights that promoted an awareness of the sensate self, encouraging patrons and visitors alike to be aware of their bodies in space. While scholars of eighteenth-century architectural theory have similarly evoked the importance of sensory studies, this book aligns more closely with garden historians who have explored how tactility and aromatology signify historically.[24]

Although strolling was a visible exercise, movement was also invisible as eighteenth-century philosophers and medical doctors attempted to determine how nerves—or the fluid that moved them—functioned. One of the great debates of the period attempted to establish how perceptions received by the sense organs were transmitted to the soul. For Catholic readers, the soul was a spiritual substance that interacted with the body in order to maintain its vital functions. In the Age of Enlightenment, how the senses acted on the soul was a mystery that needed to be subjected to

22 Laurent Turcot, *Promeneur à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007); John Dixon Hunt, "'Lordship of the Feet': Toward a Poetics of Movement in the Garden," in *The Experience of Motion*, ed. Michel Conan, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture 24 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 188–214, argued that the English garden was conceived for strolling and vice versa.

23 David Howes, "The Expanding Field of Sensory Studies," *Sensory Studies* 1, no. 1 (August 2013); Anne C. Vila, ed., *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Age of the Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); David Howes and Constance Classens, *Ways of Sensing: Understanding the Senses in Society* (London: Routledge, 2014); Constance Classen, *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and across Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1993).

24 Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986); D. Fairchild Ruggles, "Introduction," in *Sound and Scent in the Garden*, ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture 37 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2017), 3–11; Mark S. R. Jenner, "Follow Your Nose? Smell, Smelling, and Their Histories," *American Historical Review* 116, no. 2 (April 2011): 335–351.

empirical review. Most famously, at mid-century, the Abbé Étienne Bonnet de Condillac (1714–1780) posited a fictive statue that came to life, one sense at a time, imagining how the body "feels."[25] Condillac, implicitly referencing the great debates of the previous century by the likes of Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke about personhood, implied that subjectivity was possible through sensorial awareness. In the closing decades of the century, the garden became the preeminent venue for empirical experimentation where personhood and affectivity were joined.

Connecting sensorial studies, liminality, and phenomenology reveals that the picturesque garden was one of several venues—like the salon, the café, and the masonic lodge—that encouraged what Raymond Williams has described as a possibility for new "structures of feeling."[26] Williams postulated that sharing emotions bound individuals to each other, causing interactions that transcended specific historical and political events. Williams's focus on the significance of affect suggests that garden strolling provoked powerful, nonverbalized, and thus difficult-to-define sets of behaviors.[27] Consequently, when queen Marie-Antoinette appropriated these nonverbalized practices as liminoid experiences, her cultural capital transformed embodied strolling into an expression of her agency at the epicenter of the picturesque garden movement.

Cultural Memory Studies

From the 1770s until 1815, when modern notions of interiority were still inchoate, embodied strolling encouraged "feelings" that were remembered both intellectually and collectively, when one moved beyond the garden gate. I turn to recent research in memory studies to elucidate how the nonverbal or partially verbalized traces of picturesque strolling were transmitted from

25 Etienne Bonnet de Condillac, *Traite de sensations, à Madame la comtesse de Vassé* (London, 1754).

26 Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 128–35; Antoine Lilti, *Le monde des salons: Sociabilité et mondanité à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2005); Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Daniel Roche, *La France de Lumières* (Paris: Fayard, 1993).

27 Devika Sharma and Frederik Tygstrup, eds., *Structures of Feeling: Affectivity and the Study of Culture* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 1–19; William M. Reddy, "Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 3 (June 1997): 327–51; William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

one generation to the next. An outgrowth of the corpus of work dedicated to collective memory, Astrid Erll has argued for the development of cultural memory studies that focus on the "interplay of present and past in sociocultural concepts."[28] Erll encourages scholars to acknowledge a structured memory (intentional remembering, narrative, identity) but also attend to the exploration of unintentional and implicit ways of cultural remembering.[29]

Although today's visitors certainly consider these gardens as *lieux de memoire* (places of exceptional patrimony), by foregrounding the diachronic relationships between these consorts, I argue that collapsing the gardens into sites of collective memory overlooks not only each patron's personal ambition but also her public imprint.[30] As Susan Sontag notes, collective memory is not necessarily remembering, but stipulating "that *this* is important and *this* is the story and how it happened," which is a key aspect of this study.[31] From 1789 until 1867, the ways in which the queen's gardens were memorialized—as signs of exquisite taste or crass indicators of anti-Republican values—became central to the historiography of the picturesque and the role of women as part of that narrative.[32]

For garden historians, it is precisely the interplay of the history of place with the sensorial that is critical to the garden experience. Remembrance of place and experiences of it are entangled, incorporating what Alison Landsberg has called "prosthetic memories."[33] Landsberg argues that prosthetic memories are actually worn on the body; they are sensuous memories, which fit on the body like artificial limbs so that sensate experiences felt on

28 Astrid Erll and Ansgard Nünning, *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 2. For entangled memory, see Gregor Feindt, Felix Krawatzek, Daniela Mehler, Friedemann Pestel, and Rieke Trimçev, "Entangled Memory: Toward a Third Wave in Memory Studies," *History and Theory* 53, no. 1 (February 2014): 24–44; Siobhan Kattago, ed., *The Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies* (London: Routledge, 2020); Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

29 Erll and Nünning, *Cultural Memory*, 2.

30 Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3 vols. (Paris: Editions Quatro, 1997).

31 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003), 67–68.

32 Günter Oesterle, "Révolution des jardins et culture du souvenir," *Revue germanique internationale* 7 (1997): 19–29; Jennifer A. Jordan, "Landscapes of European Memory: Biodiversity and Collective Remembrance," *History and Memory* 22, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2010): 5–33; Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levi, eds., *The Collective Memory Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

33 Alison Landsberg, "Prosthetic Memory: The Ethics and Politics of Memory in an Age of Mass Culture," in *Memory and Popular Film*, ed. Paul Grainge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 149.

the skin can be remembered. For Landsberg, the observer-visitor *feels* the memory through the sensate experience, which, in turn, can shape a person's identity politics.[34] I am adapting Landsberg's terminology of prosthetic memory for this study precisely because eighteenth- and nineteenth-century garden visitors were in many ways "prosthetic" thinkers struggling with empirical sciences to connect mind and body, linking how the body felt to philosophical discourses about sentiment, empathy, and inter-corporeality.

I contend that the sensate and nonverbal or partially verbalized aspects of strolling in a picturesque garden constitute a critical aspect of Marie-Antoinette's garden legacy. The queen's creation of her garden *and* adoption of embodied strolling engendered powerful feelings of subjecthood that challenged court ritual and protocols. These nonverbalized interactions compelled a change in social comportment that survived the Revolutionary decade.[35] When Joséphine, Marie-Louise, and Eugénie occupied the former queen's gardens, they cultivated collective and prosthetic memories that were expressly linked to the place **of** the queen's legacy—her agency developed in her garden.

Recent scholarship in affect studies provides tools to help refine the historical context for bodies in space, and it gives a broader basis to Raymond Williams's definition of "structures of feeling."[36] William Reddy's work over the past thirty years is very beneficial to this study, because he argued that the evolution of sentimentalism (the cult of *sensibilité*), concurrent with developments in scientific empiricism from 1760 until 1815, reveals that emotions motivated identity politics.[37] Reddy's analysis of the role of "emotives" has important ramifications for garden strollers, who were encouraged to "feel" their surroundings, bridging the gap between inside (soul) and outside (empirical sensationalism). Garden strollers constituted "emotive communities" who transferred memories of shared affective experiences

34 Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 2.

35 Hunt, "The Self," 1584–85.

36 Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigniworth, eds., *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 1–27. One of the first garden historians to mark this shift was R. G. Saisselin, "The French Garden in the Eighteenth Century: From Belle Nature to the Landscape of Time," *Journal of Garden History* 5, no. 3 (1985): 284–97.

37 William M. Reddy, *The Invisible Code: Honor and Sentiment in Postrevolutionary France, 1814–1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); William M. Reddy, "Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 3 (June 1997): 327–51; William M. Reddy, "Sentimentalism and Its Erasure: The Role of Emotions in the Era of the French Revolution," *Journal of Modern History* 72, no. 1 (March 2000): 109–15. Many of these articles are synthesized in William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

to different venues, prompting new forms of sociability that consciously or not provoked political agency.[38]

Today, the lush, resplendently beautiful gardens at the Petit Trianon and Malmaison attract millions of tourists, who contemplate the alluring verisimilitude of the sites while ignoring the hotly contested issues of sovereignty that informed their creation. This study argues that Marie-Antoinette's patronage constituted a living legacy. Three empresses converted Marie-Antoinette's accomplishments into possibilities for female agency, savvy cultural politics, and dedicated acts of stewardship that substantially contributed to the development of modern landscape aesthetics, botanical history, and discourses of self-hood.

The prologue reviews the institution of queenship and the role of the French consort. I examine each consort's marriage contracts, arguing that their status as queen/empress/consort determined their agency within the regulated world of court society. Building on the rich corpus of Versailles studies, the prologue thus establishes how gardens functioned as liminal zones within the judicial parameters of French absolutism. I then problematize that this institutional history raises doubts about that preconceived notion that French patrons willingly imported a foreign style, the English garden, to France.

Chapter 1 establishes Marie-Antoinette's leading role in the creation and dissemination of the French picturesque. This chapter does not revisit the queen's biography or attempt to correlate her garden patronage to political events; rather, this chapter establishes how the curation of space allowed the queen to develop a venue for self-expression that was critical to providing meaning for the picturesque style as an aesthetic and social phenomenon. I argue that the queen developed a gamescape—a place of ludic liminality—that enabled her to promote novel behaviors and enhanced opportunities for subjecthood. Chapter 2 argues that the queen's picturesque garden legacy was not decimated by vandalism during the Revolutionary decade, but in fact, the nonverbalized and embodied comportments of picturesque strolling survived and re-emerged in a new venue, the *jardin spectacle*. Moreover, the afterlife of the Petit Trianon informed how the keywords—nature, naturalism, and regeneration—were integrated to Republican garden initiatives.[39] Chapter 3 turns to Joséphine's decision to

38 Barbara H. Rosenswain, "Worrying about Emotions in History," *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (June 2002): 821–45.

39 Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); Mona Ozouf, "Regeneration," in *A Critical Dictionary of the French*

emulate the defunct queen's patronage and analyzes the ways she expanded upon her legacy at Malmaison. Joséphine's patronage symbolically placed the picturesque garden at the center of imperial colonial ambitions and domestic economic initiatives. Joséphine's personal knowledge and exploitation of imperial colonial practices, particularly plantation slavery, are considered against the backdrop of estate management following the economic turmoil of the Revolutionary decade. Chapter 4 shifts to Napoléon's decision to support Joséphine's patronage at Malmaison and Navarre, while installing his second wife, Marie-Louise, at the Petit Trianon. Chapter 5 focuses on Eugénie's restoration of the gardens at Malmaison and the Petit Trianon as sites of living patrimony. Eugénie' patronage is considered in comparion to the concurrent development of the public park movement in Paris.[40] The epilogue turns to the historiography of the French garden—a narrative that has consistently considered the patronage of the queen and each empress as "frivolous, disorderly, and luxurious"—revisiting how gender biases have marginalized these patrons from the garden history canon.

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40 Some of the works on gender that informed my thinking include: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Eliane Viennot, *Et la modernité fut masculine: La France, les femmes et le pouvoir 1789–1804* (Paris: Perrin, 2016); Éliane Viennot, *L'âge d'or de l'ordre masculin: La France, les femmes, et le pouvoir* (Paris: CNRS, 2020).

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