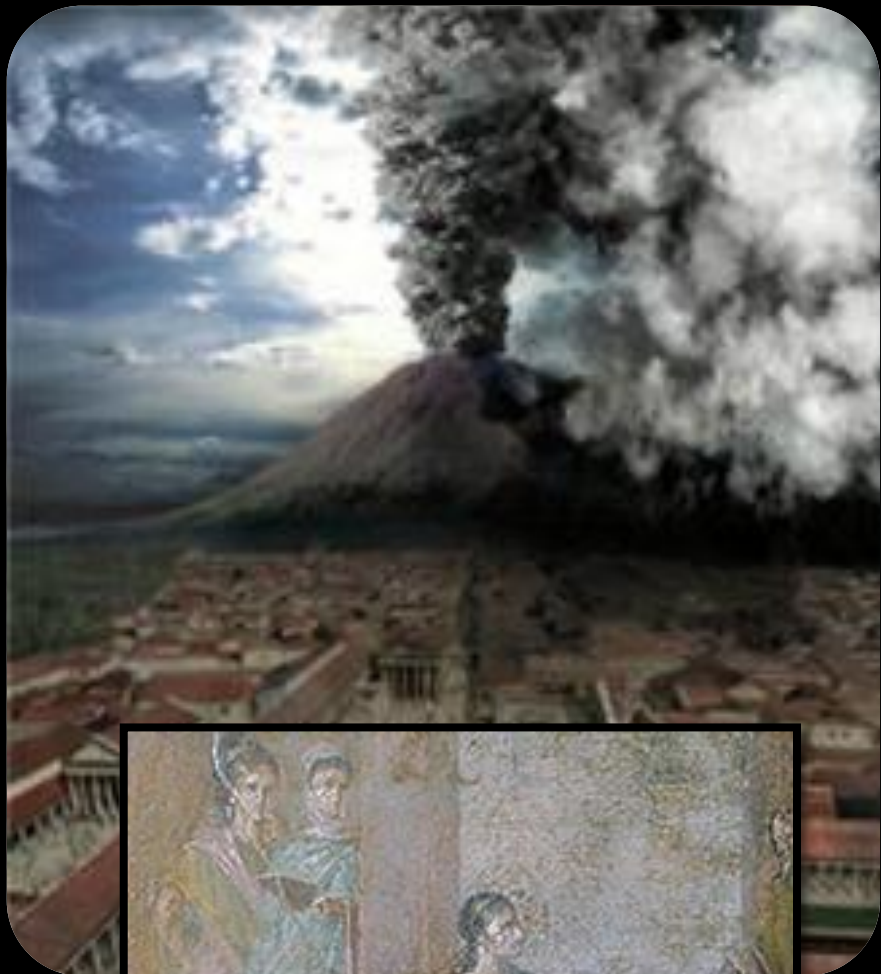


Neoclassicism

1765 - 1830

Style Influences

- **Age of Enlightenment**
 - Away from religious doctrine and toward reason, knowledge, science
 - Archeology: brand new science of the time
 - A burst in **archeological discoveries** in the 18th century led to new insights & attitudes towards ancient history.
 - The excavations of Pompeii & Herculaneum, the ancient Roman cities buried by the A.D.79 eruption of Mt. Vesuvius started in 1738 and resulted in the “Roman-mania” of Neoclassicism.



- **Classical art**

- Rome, the European art centre, was the breeding ground for Neoclassicism.
- Artists & writers flocked to Rome to study & then left to spread Neoclassical ideas abroad.



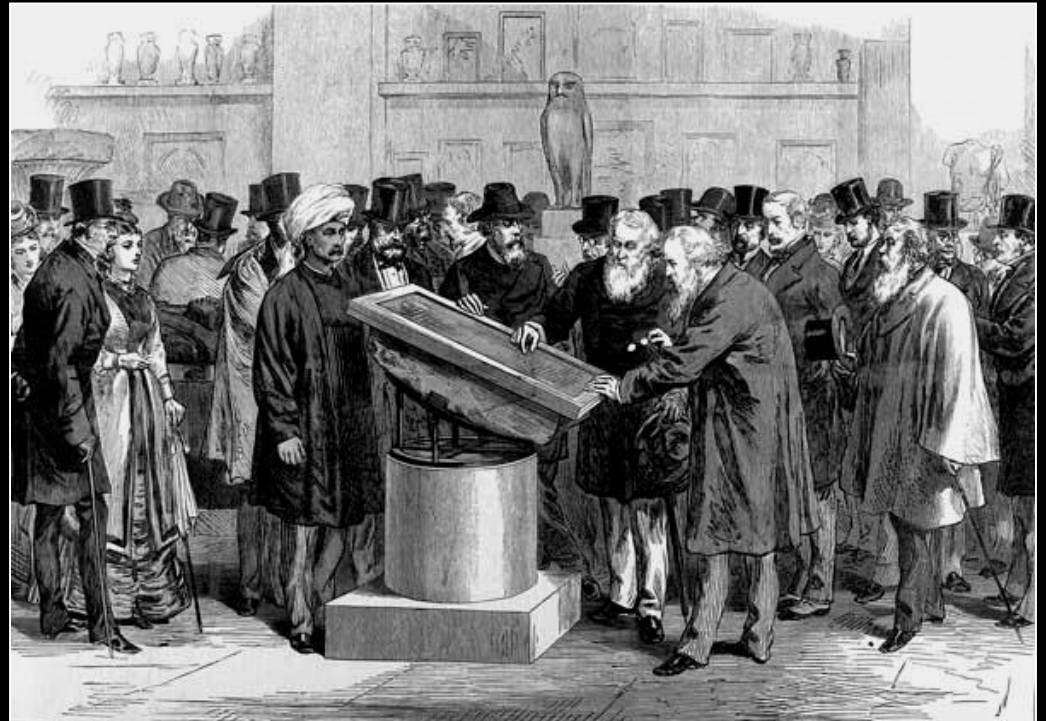
Also happening during this time:

- Rise of Art Academies
 - to improve the intellectual training of artists and architects and to ensure that the objectives of these "academics" were aligned with those of the state.
 - These academies became the official dictators of artistic styles.



- Publicly displayed art

- From the private collections of the rich, PUBLIC MUSEUMS & GALLERIES began opening.
- Art would begin to educate, moralize, inspire and motivate the masses instead of being viewed by just the privileged collector.



The Rosetta Stone on display in the British Museum in 1874

Neoclassicism

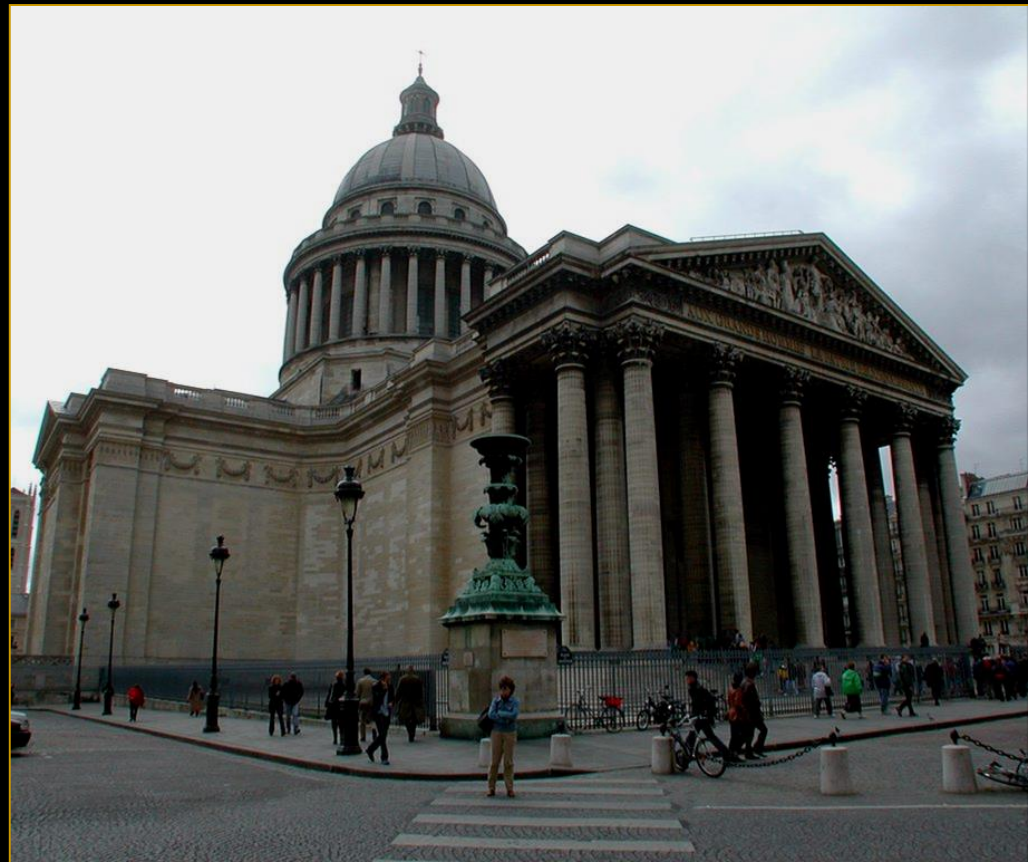
- Began as a desire to return to the perceived "purity" of the arts of Rome, and the "ideals" of Ancient Greek arts.
- Revival of ancient classical styles
- Art of this time reflected calm, serious subjects presented with simple lines and a sense of order and purpose.

San Carlino alle Quattro Fontane,
1638-41 Italian Baroque by Borromini

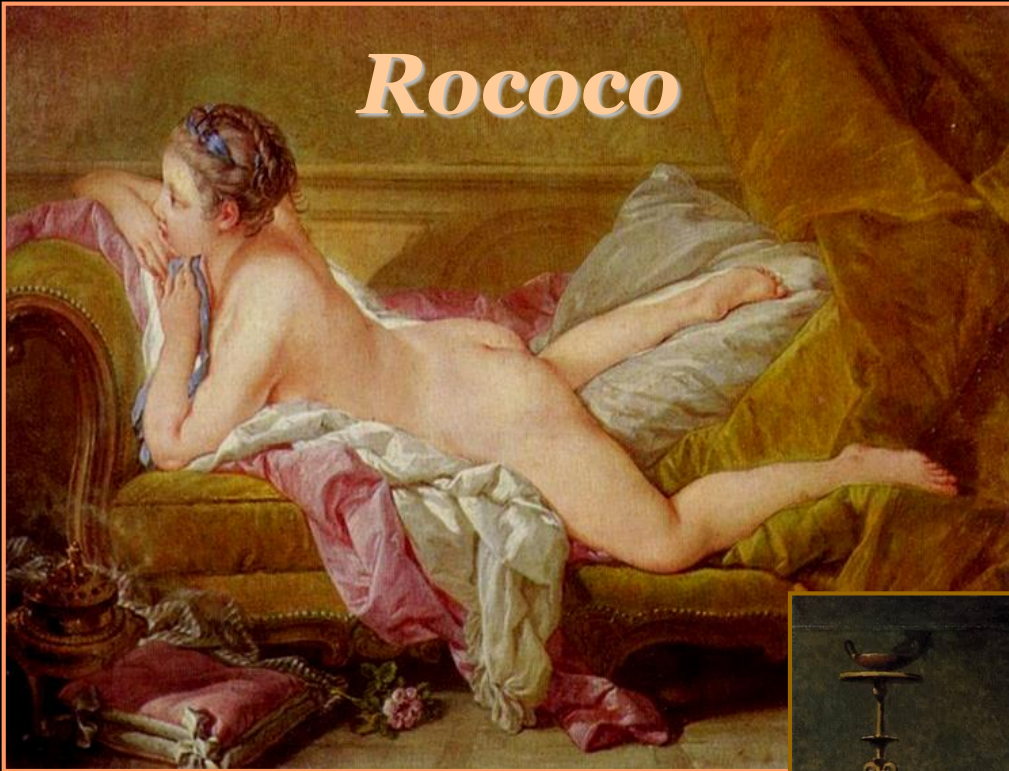


Architectural differences?

Panthéon (Paris), 1755-1792, Neoclassical
church



Rococo

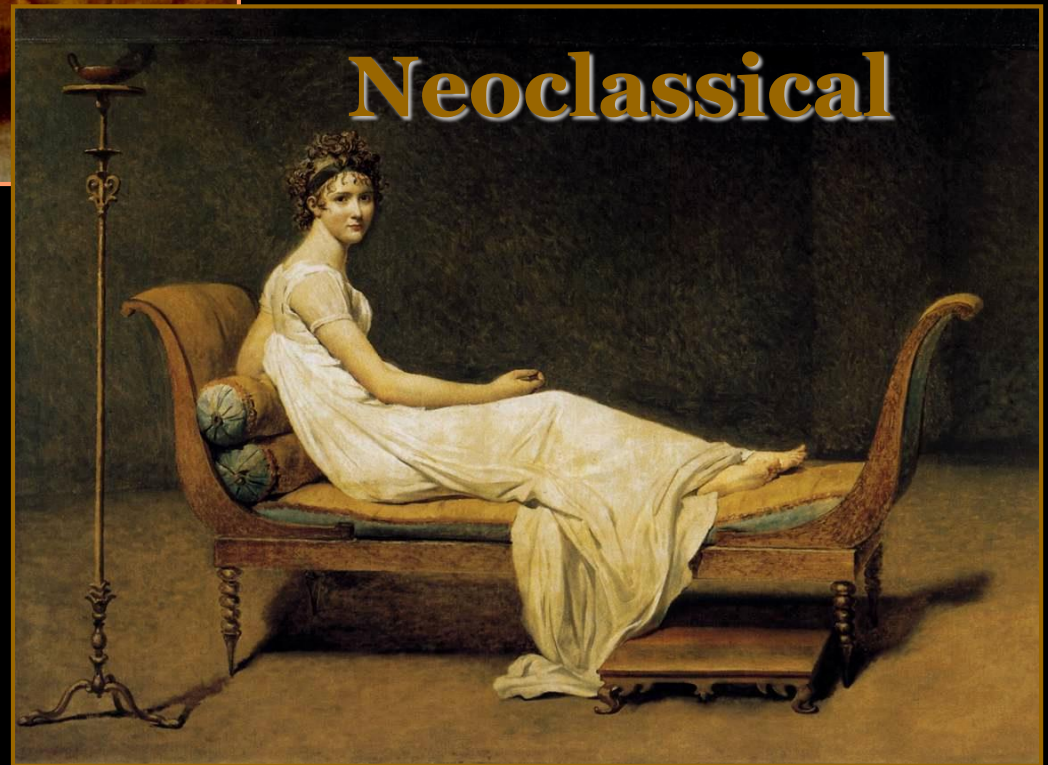


Compare these two depictions of women:

What differences can you perceive in design of the composition and the décor?

What about differences in subject matter or the message of each?

Neoclassical



Themes

Moral virtue

Civic dedication

Heroism

Self-sacrifice

Patriotism

(these are emotionally driven themes, yet painted in a calm and composed way)

Painting Style Characteristics

PRINCIPLES:

- Order
- Harmony
- Simplicity
- Noble gestures such as courage, sacrifice & love of country
- Calm
- Proportionality
- Rational, rejecting the flamboyant & sensual art of the Baroque & Rococo eras

SUBJECT MATTER: Greek & Roman history

PAINTING STYLE FEATURES & TECHNIQUES:

- a. Precisely drawn figures, with hard, crisp edges that often seem frozen in action.
- b. Backgrounds simple, uncluttered to avoid the Rococo melodrama and generally included Roman touches like arches or columns.
- c. Compositions were balanced precisely laid out in almost stage like settings, straight lined symmetry replaced the irregular curves of Rococo art.
- d. No trace of brushstrokes to produce smooth surface.

Leading French Artist: Jacques Louis David



Political propaganda
Dutiful patriotism

- Classical story with modern message
- 3 brothers swear to defeat their enemies or die for Rome
- Symbolizes French common people's need to unite in the fight to overthrow the tyranny of the king and nobility



Oath of the Horatii, 1784

- invisible brush strokes, hard edges, symmetry, “staged”-like compositions, heroism, Roman touches, geometric arrangement, perfect anatomy

David, *The Death of Socrates*, 1787

- Represents a scene of the death of Greek philosopher Socrates
- Condemned to die by drinking hemlock, for the expression of his ideas against those of Athens' and corrupting the minds of youth.
- Plato sitting remorsefully at the edge of the bed (made Socrates famous)
- Socrates had the choice to go into exile (and hence give up his philosophic vocation) or be sentenced to death by drinking hemlock
- Socrates heroically chose death
- Red-robed student hands a confident Socrates the goblet of hemlock
- Socrates' hand pointing to the heavens indicating his respect of the gods and fearless attitude to his death (and is probably influenced by the central scene of *The School of Athens* by Raphael).
- Curling figures in anguish vs confident, geometric Socrates, teaching his final lesson (death is not to be feared but embraced)
- Moral virtue, symbol of strength, commitment to ideals





Death of Marat, **David**, 1793

- Depicts a radical journalist lying dead in his bath after his murder. (Marat had a skin condition and would often seek comfort of a cold bath)
- Marat was a French Revolutionary and was stabbed to death by a member of an aristocratic family.
- David was a good friend of Marat, which is probably why this painting is idealized.
- David painted this to commemorate a martyred hero.
- Patriotism, civic dedication, heroism
- Human anatomy, simple background, idealism, frozen in action

Jean-Auguste-Dominique

Ingres became the leader of the Neoclassical painters after David's death in 1825.

- Student of David's
- Realistically rendered textures
- Precision of line
- No brushwork



Famous for
portraiture



Princesse de
Broglie, 1853

- Brilliantly rendered texture
- Contrast between precision of cloth and softness of skin
- No musculature or bone



Ingres, La Grande Odalisque, 1814

- Caused a scandal, female nude, not Venus
- Woman of a harem (one of the wives of a polygamous man)
- Ingres' interpretation
- Voluptuous and sensual expression of human body
- Sensuality vs accurate anatomy (elongated back, leg in impossible position)
- Bridge to Romanticism
- Distance in gaze, uninviting
- Real-like texture