

5. Victorien Sardou and the Legend of Marengo

(642)

William Laird Kleine-Ahlbrandt

The journey of Marshal Nicholas Luckner to the scaffold in 1794 was made even more unpleasant when the mob began chanting, "À la guillotine, à la guillotine." The revolutionary tribunal had sentenced the seventy-two-year-old war hero—formerly commander of the *Armée du nord* [Northern Army] and the man to whom the "Marseillaise" had been dedicated—to death for treason.¹ To the shouts of his tormentors, Luckner replied: "On y va, canailles" [One is going there, scum].

It was a great exit line, particularly admirable because of the extremely adverse circumstances under which it was uttered. Victorien Sardou liked it so much that he used it, only slightly changed, as the curtain line for his play *La Tosca*.

SPOLETTA (à Floria qui, pendant ce temps est allée au parapet): "A! Démon! . . . je t'enverrai rejoindre ton amant!" [(to Floria, who during this time has gone to the parapet): Ah! You witch! . . . I'll make sure you join your lover!]

FLORIA (debout sur le parapet): "J'y vais, canailles!" [(standing on the parapet): I'm going there, you scum!]²

Then she leaps off the terrace of the Castel Sant'Angelo to her death.³

Would the French audiences have connected Luckner's last words with those of *Tosca*? Many of them probably would not have. But some might have walked out of the theater thinking,

VICTORIEN SARDOU AND THE LEGEND OF MARENGO

"I've heard that *canailles* business somewhere; I just can't place it." Others, no doubt a minority, could congratulate themselves for getting it right. Luckner's put-down was somewhat famous; and France, after all, is a civilization with a strong appreciation for *bons mots*. Besides, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods, which had defined and epitomized the nation, had given certain episodes (such as the drama of execution) lives of their own.

This was also the case with other events such as battles, for example. In this category, none was more famous than the battle of Marengo, which was remembered for its dramatic details and for having helped carry the blessings of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité* to the rest of Europe. This civilizing mission of liberty, equality, and brotherhood was what the French Revolution was expected to accomplish—to be, as Jacques-Pierre Brissot had dramatically demanded in 1792, a crusade of universal liberty. Bonaparte took this as his goal on becoming First Consul in 1799. He pledged "to make the Republic beloved by its citizens, respected by foreigners, [and] formidable to its enemies." He further promised that the laws of his government would always be "imbued with the spirit of order, justice, and moderation."⁴ But he warned that this vision of order, justice, and prosperity could be guaranteed only if the Republic were protected against the reactionary regimes of the rest of Europe, specifically against its two main adversaries: Austria and England.

In May 1800, Bonaparte led a French army over the Grand Saint-Bernard alpine pass into Italy to show the Austrians the might of a nation in arms.⁵ The most famous battle of this campaign was of course Marengo, which as French schoolchildren know was really two battles. Such children might even remember some of its important details: how on the morning of 14 June 1800, when General Michaël-Friedrich von Mélas directed his battalions across the Bormida River to attack the

French positions on a flat stretch of land near the village of Marengo, Bonaparte, who had not anticipated the attack, had foolishly split his forces and subsequently faced a numerically superior enemy. Soon he was retreating with heavy losses. Mélas was so confident he had won the day that at mid-afternoon he left field direction to his second in command and returned to headquarters at Alessandria to write his victory bulletin.

However, in late afternoon, one of Bonaparte's separated units, the one under General Louis Desaix, rejoined the main army. "We have just lost the first battle; we have time to win the second," Desaix supposedly said. With Desaix leading, the invigorated French forced the surprised Austrians to withdraw. Desaix was killed in the first charge, but he had saved the day and Bonaparte's career.

In *La Tosca*, Sardou plays these two battles of Marengo for dramatic effect, dribbling out the details, counting on the general knowledge of his audiences to add to the suspense. He first announces the battle by having Tosca's maid, Luciana, deliver a letter to her mistress at the church of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale (or St. André des Jésuites, as Sardou calls it), a letter written by the prolific opera composer Giovanni Paisiello.⁶ Paisiello has just received a commission to compose a cantata to celebrate Mélas's victory, and he wants Tosca to sing it at a reception that evening at the Palazzo Farnese. The letter contains a brief description of the Austrian victory during the first engagement. Tosca and Cavaradossi take turns reading it aloud: "Sa Majesté vient de recevoir une lettre du général Mélas qui lui annonce que, le 14 courant, il a livré bataille à l'armée française commandée par le général Bonaparte, dans la plaine de Marengo. . . . Le combat commencé à l'aube s'est prolongé avec un grand acharnement jusqu'à trois heures de l'après-midi et s'est terminé par la déroute complète de l'armée française. C'est une victoire éclatante pour nos armes."⁷ [His

Majesty received word from General Mélas informing him that on the 14th he fought the French army of General Bonaparte on the field of Marengo. . . . The combat began at dawn and lasted with great ferocity until three o'clock in the afternoon, ending with the complete rout of the French army. It was a stunning victory for our arms.]

Tosca is clearly annoyed. She was looking forward to some quality time with Cavaradossi and is angry that she will now have to forgo the lovemaking in favor of celebrating an event about which she could not care less. There are not only the rehearsals, she frets, but the reception at which the cantata will be performed will probably drag on until the early morning hours, and she might not see Cavaradossi until about noon the following day. Cavaradossi's mind, however, is not on sex. He is thinking of politics. He sees in Bonaparte's defeat the end of his hopes for the collapse of the old order and the beginning of a new age in the Italian peninsula. Had he been a bit more knowledgeable, he might have figured out that Bonaparte was really not interested in the liberation of Italy. In fact, Bonaparte detested those he had officially come to emancipate. The Italians, he thought, were lazy, irresponsible, and incapable of running their own affairs. And those Italians who had joined his army he dismissed as useless rabble from city gutters.⁸ But even had Cavaradossi known this, it might not have mattered. *La Tosca's* hero feels himself more French than Italian. His mother was the grandniece of the hedonistic philosopher Claude-Adrien Helvétius; his father lived most of his life in Paris, where Cavaradossi went to school and where he remained during the entire Revolutionary period. He only came to Rome to, as he says, "put my affairs in order."⁹

Sardou knew that French theatergoers would appreciate such associations with the culture of their country, and he also knew that they would recognize the shoe-dropping technique of theatrical exposition. But he had them wait until the next

act, before he drops the second piece of Marengo footwear. In the meantime, he winds down the first act with a *Te Deum*.

Unfortunately, he does not bother to make clear what battle this is intended to celebrate. Historical accuracy would clearly point to the surrender a week and a half earlier of the French forces at Genoa, and not to the battle of Marengo.¹⁰ Most playgoers would, though, have assumed that the celebration is for Marengo. After all, if Paisiello had found out about Mélas's "victory" and was busily composing a cantata to commemorate it, would not the episcopal authorities at Sant'Andrea al Quirinale also have had access to the same information? And if so, throwing together an appropriate *Te Deum* would not have been that taxing for a church choir already used to routinely performing at various religious services. Assembling the appropriate cast of dignitaries might have been more difficult, but in a play such disbelief can always be willingly suspended. In any event, Sardou did not think it important to clarify this point, probably because plot development was not affected one way or another.

Nor can we rely on Baron Scarpia to enlighten us. The chief of police appears to be an equal-opportunity celebrant. He would clearly welcome any event that reinforced the status quo and caused harm to his adversaries. But unlike what occurs in the opera, the Sardou *Te Deum* scene does not occasion Scarpia's engagement in a counterpoint between sexual lust and faith in God. The mind of *La Tosca's* villain is fixed, as is that of the hero, on politics: "Messieurs, allons rendre grâces au Dieu des Armées qui nous a donné la victoire! Et prions la sainte Madone de bénir nos efforts dans cette autre guerre que nous faisons à l'impiété!" [Gentlemen, let us give thanks to the God of Battles who has brought us the victory! And let us pray to the holy Madonna to bless our efforts in the other war we fight against the forces of impiety!]¹¹

The reception at the Palazzo Farnese in Act II has been ar-

anged by Maria Carolina (on 17 June, the evening of the same day as Act I) to celebrate the capitulation of the French armies at Genoa. But battle talk is about Marengo.¹² And Paisiello has lived up to his reputation as a lickety-split composer and is ready to perform his cantata to celebrate that Austrian "victory." Tosca is also prepared to sing it, though she does so reluctantly and under duress. Scarpia has just convinced her that Cavaradossi is cheating on her, news that makes her eager to leave the Farnese as fast as possible and catch him with that other woman. To get her to stay, Scarpia threatens to arrest her, but he promises that after she sings he will help her track down her "faithless" lover. The cantata therefore begins. But no sooner does it get under way than Sardou lets the second shoe hit the floor.

An aide-de-camp of General Mélas arrives with a dispatch. Queen Maria Carolina takes it in her hand. And she announces,

C'est une lettre du général Mélas qui m'envoie de nouveaux détails sur son triomphe. (Murmures de satisfaction. Marie-Caroline rompant le cachet.) Je ne veux céder à personne le plaisir de vous faire connaître ce bulletin de victoire. Je vous le lirai moi-même. [I have a letter from General Mélas, who has sent me new information about his victory. (Murmurs of satisfaction from the crowd. Maria Carolina breaks the seal.) I don't want to give anybody else the pleasure of revealing to you the contents of this dispatch. I will read it to you myself.]¹³

Of course, Sardou is shamelessly milking the occasion for all it is worth. He is aware that his French audiences are way ahead of the queen, who now reveals what they must already know: "Madame. À la chute du jour, l'ennemi, renforcé d'une nouvelle armée, après un combat livré dans les mêmes plaines de Marengo, pendant une grande partie de la nuit, a battu nos troupes victorieuses dans la journée." [Madame. At nightfall,

the enemy, reinforced with a new army, again gave us battle on the fields of Marengo, and, after fighting most of the night, defeated our troops which earlier had been victorious.]¹⁴ These obviously are not the tidings of great joy that the monarch had expected, and, overcome with despair, she faints.¹⁵ The act is almost over—almost, because Sardou has one further bit of historical rodomontade to unleash.

At the beginning of the act, Sardou had introduced a character named Trévilhac, an émigré nobleman who fled France at the start of the revolution and has lived in exile ever since. The earlier news of the Austrian victory at Marengo seems to be his ticket home, but, as he admits, he has difficulty rejoicing at a French defeat. No matter what the advantageous consequences to himself personally, he is at heart a patriot.

Now comes the announcement of Bonaparte's victory and, with it, Trévilhac's awareness that his exile will continue. But, true to his Francophile sentiments, he shouts as the curtain comes down, "Je suis battu . . . mais nous sommes vainqueurs! . . . Vive la France!" [I have been beaten . . . but we have conquered! . . . Long live France!]

Such ambiguity was characteristic of the way the French in general, and Sardou in particular, had come to view Bonaparte and the Napoleonic legend. The image of Bonaparte as a power-mad dictator of unlimited ambition, one whose only continual dynamic was war, was disquieting. The French, after all, owed their legal and administrative system to his reforms. Napoleon's negatives, therefore, were often glossed over in favor of his achievements. But beyond the issue of how to judge the accomplishments of one man lay a more important question: to what extent should people owe allegiance to their leaders or owe allegiance to the legality of the state, irrespective of that leadership? Are they separate, or one and the same? Trévilhac clearly does not sanction men such as Bona-

parte, but he still apparently believes in his country, right or wrong—a dangerous proposition and part of the essential baggage for all ultranationalists.

Even before the wounded and dead had been cleared from the field at Marengo, Bonaparte had begun to elevate his role in the victory. According to his official dispatch, "The presence of the first consul recharged the troops' morale: 'My children,' he said to them, 'remember that it is my custom to sleep on the battlefield.' To shouts of 'Long live the Republic! Long live the first consul!' Desaix hastened to attack the center. In an instant the enemy was thrown back."¹⁶

Bonaparte claimed that, before the mortally wounded Desaix died (from a shot through the heart), he had just enough time to gasp, "Go tell the first consul that I die regretting not having done enough to live in posterity."¹⁷ This was a very operatic death line, and one that fit conveniently into the great hype surrounding "the fulfillment of one's destiny" with which the age in general, and Bonaparte in particular, has been associated. Bonaparte made the most of the valor of Desaix while it suited his purpose. But it did not suit his purpose for long.

Bonaparte celebrated "his" victory at Marengo with an "imposing and superb" ceremony in the cathedral at Milan with a *Te Deum* by the best composers of Italy.¹⁸ And he commissioned Jacques-Louis David to paint him as a warrior crossing the St. Bernard Pass on a fiery steed (he actually crossed on a mule), hell-bent on the business of liberation.

Bonaparte hailed Marengo as the "start of a brilliant and decisive campaign for the peace of Europe and the glory of the nation."¹⁹ But, in fact, the battle had led only to a withdrawal of Austrian troops from Lombardy. It did not bring about the end of the war. That occurred six months later with the battle of Hohenlinden, whose victor was General Jean Moreau.

Small wonder that Moreau was never given his due; Napoleon routinely ignored the contributions made to victory by other commanders.²⁰

Treaties of peace were signed with Austria in 1801 and with Great Britain the following year. But these were not sufficient to satisfy Bonaparte. Treaties, to him, were no more than armistices. He believed his destiny lay on the battlefield. Even in exile on Saint Helena he spoke incessantly of fighting. He especially revisited the battle of Waterloo, trying to convince himself that he should have won it. Among his discernible last words were "à la tête de l'armée" [at the head of the army].²¹

Yet as France tried to pick up the pieces after the fall of the Empire, memories of Napoleon's bloodletting began to fade. The successor monarchies—those of the Bourbons and the Orleanists—were orderly, business-minded, and comparatively peaceful; and, unlike the Napoleonic regime, they were neither tyrannical nor bloodthirsty. But they were boring, and they could not compete with the legendary image of Napoleon as a tireless fighter against the forces of reaction, a staunch advocate of careers open to merit, and a defender of religious toleration and the rule of law.

Expanding on this theme, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, Napoleon's nephew and the future Napoleon III, wrote in 1839 that Napoleon I had contributed "more than any other person to hasten the reign of liberty, by preserving the moral influence of the revolution and dimming the fears which it inspired. Without the consulate and empire the revolution would have been merely a great drama, leaving grand recollections, but few practical results."²²

Thus, Napoleon should be seen as the "messiah of new ideas," as the man who had seized the "regenerating spirit" and guided the people "boldly toward the end which they desired to reach." Napoleon was no warmonger; he wanted to ally

France "to all governments which are willing to cooperate with her in common interests."²³ Napoleon was no aggressor, but a protector of France against hostile coalitions.²⁴ He had no thoughts of conquest, only liberation, and his mission was to cure misery and promote the liberation of peoples. He wanted peace, but England "would never listen to any propositions of peace."²⁵ Napoleon wanted to establish a great European confederation designed to protect individual liberty and promote the progress of civilization. He was "one of those extraordinary beings whom Providence creates to be the majestic instruments of His impenetrable designs."²⁶

Like many other French people in this period, Victorien Sardou was introduced to Bonapartism via the Napoleonic gospel. Sardou was born in 1831, when the legend was becoming a potential political force. Because the monarch at that time, Louis-Philippe, could not crush it, he decided to co-opt it. In 1833, the king had Napoleon's statue (*en petit caporal* [as the little corporal]) restored to the Vendôme Column. Three years later, he presided over the completion of the Arc de Triomphe, including a major statuary group showing Napoleon *en apothéose* [deified]. In 1840, Louis-Philippe sent his son, the Prince de Joinville, to St. Helena to escort Napoleon's body to Paris. Sixteen horses pulled the funeral carriage through the Arc de Triomphe down the Champs-Élysées. The cortege (including the four sons of the king and members of the government, various dignitaries, and legislators) made its way to the Hôtel des Invalides, where it would remain until a permanent resting place was constructed in the royal chapel of St. Louis. This *translation des cendres* [recovery of the ashes] was commemorated with no fewer than twelve official medals. "France pays homage to his military genius," said one. Two others quoted the familiar line in Napoleon's will: "I wish my remains to be buried on the banks of the Seine among the French people whom I have loved so much."²⁷

Sardou never seemed to lose the mushy view of Napoleonic history that he received during his adolescence, when he came into constant contact with those who had known the period firsthand. His own father had seen Napoleon when the emperor returned from Elba.²⁸ Sardou became fascinated with the history of this whole era and claimed that this passion started him on his life's work. He recalled that in 1852, while he was in Paris studying to be a doctor, he often strolled along the Quai des Fleurs near where he roomed, and that he frequently stopped to chat with the anglers who cast their lines into the Seine by the old bridge of Nôtre Dame. According to Sardou, one of the fishermen was "a redheaded fellow who played a leading part in the massacres of the reign of terror. His stories sometimes made me think of incorporating them into a play for the stage. In fact, it was at this time that I first turned my thoughts in the direction of playwriting."²⁹

Sardou developed a strong attachment to the libertarian ideals of the republic. (In 1851, he even dated the entries in his diary with the dates of the republican calendar.) But from his experiences during the bloody June Days of 1848, when he witnessed a soldier slitting the throat of an insurgent, he also learned to value law and order.

Whether his Jacobin sympathies were sincere or were an example of Jacobin-chic was not really important, because Sardou usually avoided the kind of politics that might endanger his career, a career that flourished under the Second Empire of Napoleon III. The emperor liked his plays and had him promoted to Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

By the 1860s, Sardou had finally arrived, popularly and financially.³⁰ In 1863, he purchased Verduron, a seventeenth-century chateau located in the park at Marly-le-roi. It had been built by Mansart for Blouin, Louis XIV's governor of Versailles. Sardou was proud to own his piece of the past, and he never tired of boasting about how he acquired it and how

loaded with history it was. He proceeded to stuff it with *ancien régime* furniture, paintings, and bibelots. But he still insisted, "I was never a courtesan under the [Second] Empire, and I would not be so today even if it were to rise from the ashes."³¹

The formula for success Sardou had established during the Second Empire stuck with him throughout his life. He occasionally would skirt the edges, but he had too much at stake to be really politically controversial. Still, he loved a good brouhaha, especially if it added to box office receipts.

Thus he wrote of the disturbances that took place at the premiere of *Daniel Rochat* on 16 February 1880 at the Comédie Française: "In spite of this [disruptive behavior], each evening [the play] takes in between 7,500 and 7,700 francs in sales. It is sold out until the end of the month of March and if that continues it will have an enormous financial success."³² Sardou added that he could not tell about public taste, but he clearly knew that the publicity emanating from the disturbances helped give him another hit.

Such serendipity also occurred at the premiere of *La Tosca* (24 November 1887, Théâtre Porte Saint-Martin). In the third act, when Dumény, the actor playing Cavaradossi, appeared in torture-scene makeup a bit too garish, some in the audience began to boo. Sardou commented with obvious delight: "The obstructionists believed that their opportunity had come. They let out four catcalls which were drowned out by three bursts of applause. And knowing this would happen again they didn't try it again for the rest of the performance."³³ Sardou was particularly gratified when there was no disruption of the curtain calls and the audience began to cry, "Author! Author!" Again, Sardou knew that he was going to make scads of money.

La Tosca, despite its vaunted revolutionary ideology and sordid plot situations, was a fairly routine period thriller,

and—despite some derogatory reviews whose significance as an indication of public opinion has been exaggerated—it must not have been terribly shocking to French audiences. The Third Republic might have been known for its bourgeois respectability and love of order, but it also had its duels, political *affaires*, and wall-to-wall sex scandals. The French did not go to the theater to be treated to the drama of a Sunday school class. Any age, of course, produces people who are offended at something, but much worse could be seen on the Paris stage than *La Tosca*.

Sardou wrote the play primarily to entertain, not to provoke. But he also wanted to educate. At Marly, he amassed a library of eighty thousand volumes spread over thirteen rooms, their weight so heavy that the floors had to be specially reinforced. Sardou was a man who read voraciously, never forgot anything he read, and was determined to fit it all in somewhere. *La Tosca* shows how well he succeeded.

Modern audiences would be maddened by Sardou's chattiness, leisurely pace of exposition, and pedagogical passages. But in his day, people accepted the fact that going to a Sardou play often meant that the well-constructed plot would include one historical reference after another. In *La Tosca*, such references come fast and furiously.

The first two acts, especially, show off Sardou's historical erudition. Before things really get cracking in *La Tosca*, Sardou has referred to such *philosophes* as Voltaire, Abbé Fernando Galiani, Jean d'Alembert, and Claude-Adrien Helvétius. He has mentioned the painter Jacques-Louis David and the composer Domenico Cimarosa. He has included a scattering of French generals.³⁴ He has described a couple of notorious cutthroats, Gaetano Mammon and Michele Pezza (also known as Fra Diavolo). He has woven in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, plus a discourse on Jacobin politics, and has written about the unsavory past of Lady

Emma Hamilton, together with her current nefarious position at the Neapolitan court. If that were not enough, he adds references to contemporary opera houses; to kings, queens, and popes; to wines, social customs, card games, and hair and clothing styles. In addition to material concerning the battle of Marengo, the audience gets an account of General Masséna's defeat at Genoa.³⁵

Sardou expected that anything having to do with the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras would be red meat for the carnivorous French audiences. His theatergoers presumably would get a vicarious thrill from picking up on the references, much as today's television viewers are thrilled when they guess the answers along with the contestants on quiz shows. Sardou also counted on his audiences to accept a sympathetic treatment of Napoleon Bonaparte, at least concerning the less controversial part of the great man's career (the period known as the Consulate, when Bonaparte reputedly was the true heir of the revolution and the embodiment of the general will of the French people). That Marengo's promise was later betrayed by the Empire's continual lust for military glory did not erase the fond memories of that past.

This two-period approach to Bonaparte's career was mainly how history was being taught in French secondary schools at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century. The great twentieth-century pedagogue Ernest Lavis, whose textbooks became classroom standards, wrote that in the period prior to 1804 the French were proud to be a great people whose mission was the liberation of all people from their *ancien régime* misery. However, the period of the Empire, he judged, was an almost unmitigated disaster. Napoleon "caused the sovereigns and the peoples [of Europe] to hate our country. In the final analysis, he left France less great than when he first rose to power."³⁶

Sardou prided himself on his ability to see history with in-

tegrity: "There is no dramatic necessity which has ever prevented me from expressing thoughts which I sincerely hold,"³⁷ he wrote. Thus, for him, the legend of Marengo correctly epitomized the clash of wills between a new world and a reactionary one.

This dualism makes Marengo the perfect backdrop for the struggle between a liberal, revolutionary protagonist and an *ancien régime* villain, Cavaradossi versus Scarpia—a confrontation over which Tosca herself has no control. The play might have been created to produce a great role for France's best-loved actress, Sarah Bernhardt, but it also epitomizes great historical drama. French audiences recognized this and loved *La Tosca* for its historical élan, grand scenic display, and melodramatic ingenuity more than they did for its immortal art. Sardou would have accepted this assessment with grace.

At the time of his death on 8 November 1908 at the age of seventy-seven, Sardou's plays were being performed all over the world and in most of its major languages. During nearly half a century of productive years, he had created more than 350 dramatic works, sometimes completing as many as seven plays a year in a variety of types: social and political satire, farce, and, of course, historical melodrama. He did not have much time, or apparently patience, to polish or refine what he had written, but for the latter part of the nineteenth century, he set a standard for popular French playwriting.

Critics dogged him all his professional life. Some denounced him for a lack of political correctness, for falsification and plagiarism. And there were those who lamented his concentration on the mundane and his lack of social commitment. But again, Sardou's main goal was to excite and thrill an audience, even to teach them some history—and in this he succeeded. In the process, he made himself very rich and very famous.

For a time it looked as if that fame might last. A fund was established to build him a proper monument, to be located in a prominent part of Paris. The famous sculptor Albert Bartholomé was engaged to create it. The official inauguration took place on 24 May 1924 near the famous church of the Madeleine, Premier Raymond Poincaré presiding. But only seven years later—about the same number of years for renting the cheapest burial site—the statue was moved to a more obscure location: on the Boulevard Lannes, near the Port Dauphine, a place far away from the grand boulevards where Sardou's grand reputation was once fashioned.

But Sardou was never one to contemplate how his passion for the events of the past would play out in the future. He was writing for the spirit and values of the age in which he lived. "Theater," he once remarked, "is a reflection of manners and customs; today we like to be comfortable, and the theater must reflect that if it is true to itself."³⁸ Sardou felt that his main obligation was to his contemporaries and that history could judge him as it might.

NOTES

1. He was called "vil courtesan et esclave titré d'un tyran conspirateur" [vile toady and chief lackey of tyrannical treachery].
2. *Editors' note*: Kleine-Ahlbrandt's more idiomatic translation of this final line reads, "I'll join him myself, you scum!" in *La Tosca: The Drama behind the Opera* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1990), 128, Act V, scene ii.
3. *Tosca-savvy* visitors to this ancient fortress know the impossibility of anyone's jumping from the terrace into the Tiber River, the preferred landing spot for Sardou's heroine. Even hitting

the bank of the river would have been improbable. A falling body most likely would have ended up in one of the courtyards a level down, a dangerous drop but one not necessarily long enough to guarantee death.

4. John Edward Howard, ed. and trans., *Letters and Documents of Napoleon*, Vol. I (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), 327-328.
5. This *armée du reserve* was under the formal command of General Louis-Alexandre Berthier, the minister of war, but Bonaparte took personal command during its active periods.
6. During his active career, Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816) created thirty-three masses, forty motets, twelve symphonies, over one hundred operas, and countless other works, an oeuvre that attracted the patronage of the rulers of Europe, including that of Napoleon Bonaparte. *Editors' note*: See Handt, chapter 2, this volume.
7. Kleine-Ahlbrandt, "*La Tosca*": *The Drama behind the Opera*, 52, Act II, scene v.
8. Howard, *Letters and Documents of Napoleon*, Vol. I, 205.
9. Kleine-Ahlbrandt, "*La Tosca*": *The Drama behind the Opera*, 41, Act I, scene iii.
10. That is, the surrender of the French General André Masséna in Genoa on 4 June 1800 after a bitter and exhausting six-week siege. *Editors' note*: See also Handt, chapter 2, this volume, and Susan Vandiver Nicassio, *Tosca's Rome* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 176.
11. Kleine-Ahlbrandt, "*La Tosca*": *The Drama behind the Opera*, 59, Act I, scene viii.
12. The time here conforms with history because the actual news of Marengo did begin to arrive in Rome on the evening of 17 June, the date of the Act II Farnese palace reception.
13. Kleine-Ahlbrandt, "*La Tosca*": *The Drama behind the Opera*, 84, Act II, scene v.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Making Queen Maria Carolina appear ridiculous must have pleased Sardou, who held her in little regard; see Georges

Mouly, *Vie Prodigieuse de Victorien Sardou, 1831-1908* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1931). *Editors' note*: Maria Carolina did actually faint at hearing this news, but she was in Livorno, not in Rome. See Deborah Burton, "The Real Scarpia: Historical Sources for *Tosca*," *Opera Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1993-94): 81-82, and Schickling, chapter 7, this volume.

16. *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, Vol. 6 (Paris: Henri Plon, 1861), 361.
17. *Ibid.*, 362.
18. *Ibid.*, 377.
19. *Ibid.*, 389.
20. Before the marginalization of the efforts of Desaix at Marengo and Moreau at Hohenlinden, there was the failure to give Augereau his due for really having won the battle of Arcole in 1796. Later Napoleon would play down Davout's vital contribution at Jena and Soult's audacious maneuver at Austerlitz.
21. Jean Savant, *Napoléon* (Paris: Henri Veyrier, 1974), 297.
22. Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, *Napoleonic Ideals*, trans. and ed. James A. Dorr (New York: D. Appleton, 1859), 25-26.
23. *Ibid.*, 113.
24. This theme of oppressor as victim was displayed in the official Waterloo medal, which showed a valiant eagle defending itself against four rapacious vultures—representing Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia; see *Catalogue Générale Illustrée des Éditions de la Monnaie de Paris* (Paris: Service des Médailles, 1978), 85.
25. Bonaparte, *Napoleonic Ideals*, trans. Dorr, 122.
26. *Ibid.*, 116.
27. *Ibid.*, 148-151.
28. Mouly, *Vie Prodigieuse de Victorien Sardou*, 19-24.
29. Jerome A. Hart, *Sardou and the Sardou Plays* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1913), 24.
30. His prestige increased under the Third Republic when on 7 June 1877 he became one of the *quarante immortels* [forty immortals] of l'Académie française.
31. Mouly, *Vie Prodigieuse de Victorien Sardou*, 260.

32. Sardou's letter is dated 2 March 1880; see Georges Mouly, *Les Papiers de Victorien Sardou, notes et souvenirs rassemblés et annotés par Georges Mouly* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1934), 361.
33. Mouly, *Vie Prodigieuse de Victorien Sardou*, 243.
34. For example, Barthélemy Joubert, André Masséna, Jean-Victor Moreau, Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult, Jacques MacDonald, and Jean-Etienne Championnet.
35. Bringing up this capitulation, as we have seen, has some value because this Austrian victory becomes a device for alerting the audience to the subsequent mention of the battle of Marengo.
36. Ernest Lavis, *Histoire de France, Cours Moyen* (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1923), 244-245.
37. Mouly, *Vie Prodigieuse de Victorien Sardou*, 259.
38. *Ibid.*, 215-216.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bonaparte, Louis-Napoleon. *Napoleonic Ideals*. Translated by James A. Dorr. New York: D. Appleton, 1859.
- Burton, Deborah. "The Real Scarpia: Historical Sources for *Tosca*." *Opera Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1993-94): 67-86.
- Catalogue Générale Illustré des Éditions de la Monnaie de Paris*. Paris: Service des Médailles, 1978.
- Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*. Vol. 6. Paris: Henri Plon, 1861.
- Hart, Jerome A. *Sardou and the Sardou Plays*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1913.
- Howard, John Edward, ed. and trans. *Letters and Documents of Napoleon*. Vol. 1. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Kleine-Ahlbrandt, W. Laird, trans. and ed. *La Tosca: The Drama behind the Opera*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1990.
- Lavis, Ernest. *Histoire de France, Cours Moyen*. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1923.
- Mouly, Georges. *Les Papiers de Victorien Sardou, notes et souvenirs rassemblés et annotés par Georges Mouly*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1934.

- . *Vie Prodigieuse de Victorien Sardou, 1831-1908*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1931.
- Nicassio, Susan Vandiver. *Tosca's Rome*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Savant, Jean. *Napoléon*. Paris: Henri Veyrier, 1974.