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Eugene Delacroix

Word count: 1069

In nature, no matter where we are in this materialistic world, there exists the law-- the law in which we are governed by every day and night living or dead. It is the law of cause and effect. Imagine if there is no Nicolaus Copernicus, not only that all his great works will not be invented, but Galileo Galilei's also. Since Galileo's works relied heavily on Copernicus's speculation, Galileo would not have invented a telescope to refute Copernicus's concept of Copernican heliocentrism¹ if there is no such theory in the first place. Similarly, if there is no Galileo Galilei, Isaac Newton's works will not be present as well. Not only that Newton will not be able to observe astronomical objects and prove the gravitation² between planets or space objects, but the world we are living in today would be significantly altered. Everyone rarely knows that many of our worldviews and environments are greatly influenced by the ideas of Copernicus that influenced Galileo and Galileo's ideas that influenced Newton. Like Nicolaus Copernicus, Ferdinand Victor Eugene Delacroix is also the man who triggered off the latter generations by showing conceptual ideas leading people to recognize themselves

¹ Dept. Physics & Astronomy, University of Tennessee. "Copernican heliotrism." *Web Syllabus Dept. Physics & Astronomy, University of Tennessee*. 9 Feb. 2013. <<http://csep10.phys.utk.edu/astr161/index.html>>

² Wikipedia contributors. "Mechanics and Gravitation." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 9 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Newton#Mechanics_and_gravitation>

via brushstrokes. In this essay, the discussion will be mainly about two main artworks of Delacroix.

When the Greek war of independence from Ottoman Empire happened between years 1821 to 1832, in 1824 Delacroix portrayed the painting, *Massacre of Chios*³. The painting depicts the conditions of citizens on Chios. Illuminated components of the painting include mainly cruelty of the Turks, including the Greek being brutally slayed and the suffering of Chios inhabitant. These are portrayed by an infant climbed to its mother's breast to clutch but she passed away already⁴ and how living people embraced their loved one's corpses. Another work was done in 1826 to be the medium of the historic incident in the Third Siege of Missolonghi⁵. The painting was named *Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi*⁶. This material also illustrates the war, similar to the previous painting but it differs in expression. He depicted Greece as a woman wearing traditional costume. Her stance was on the collapse of city and men while the foes were not too far. Delacroix implicitly told the concept of how Missolonghi was not what it exactly was by using symbols. Two paintings of Delacroix's prospered with contents of history leading the Greeks to recognize their motherland. It was stated that the works of Delacroix's were instilling people in that period with nationalism to continue the fight with their foes, Ottoman Empire, releasing their nation from Dependence to Independence. Hence by

³ Guy Brett." *Eugene Delacroix*. ". 1965. plate 1-11

⁴ Wikipedia contributors. "Massacre of Chios." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 7 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Massacre_at_Chios#Composition>

⁵ Wikipedia contributors. "Third Siege of Missolonghi." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 9 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Siege_of_Missolonghi>

⁶ Guy Brett." *Eugene Delacroix*. ". 1965. plate 1-11

expressing feeling through his painting, it had affected people complied with context that he would like. Apparently his works were an inspiration or legacy which influenced people in doing what they ought to do and declared their Independence in 1832. Without Delacroix, Greek war for Independence might still happen but the result would vary. Without this painting triggering patriotism in people, the war could broke out much later leading to prolonged exploitation.

Notably, another Delacroix's work had affected French people in many ways. In 1830 Delacroix depicted the Second French Revolution namely the July Revolution of 1830⁷. Taken place between July 27, 28 and 29, the Parisians rose up to protest the governance of Charles X. Results were Charles X's abdication and establishment of Constitutional July Monarchy of Louise-Philippe. He painted *Liberty Leading the people*⁸ as the depiction of July incident. The painting was Liberty, Roman goddess, guiding Parisians for point, a victory. Explicitly, it implies that Goddess liberty was on their side purposing a victory and implicitly, it projects liberty and freedom that the Parisians yearned for would be a guidance leading them to triumph. At that time, even though Delacroix was not a part of the uprising, he was in Paris. He sent a letter later to his brother stating that even though he had not fought to protect the fatherland, he could instead paint on its behalf. That is why he painted *Liberty Leading the people*.⁹ Therefore

⁷ Wikipedia contributors. "July Revolution." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 9 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/July_Revolution>

⁸ Guy Brett. "Eugene Delacroix. ". 1965. plate 1-11

⁹ RCN. "Delacroix's Liberty Leading People- What's does it stand for?" *Emancipation & Liberation*.

he had a clear vision about what had happened. The question is “Why is this painting of historical event so influential to many people disregarding their nationalities?” The painting answered the question by itself. To elaborate, the subject matter is obviously about nationalism. Carefully examining, it was the discovery of the universal ideology for mankind, Rights of Man: stated on 26 August 1789 in *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*¹⁰ of France. The Rights are words of rational human and Freedom is an evident of the existence of the Rights. That is why Delacroix’s work has a vital role in sustenance of humanity. Consequently, not only that *Liberty Leading the people* had influenced people in revolutionary age of French, but the latter generations are also manipulated and inspired. This permitted them to have a free recognition of where we live, what we are or how we do hereafter. Implicitly, this is the evidence of an idea of freedom which he was obliged to express and lead people to new edge of freedom. Explicitly, the statue of Liberty¹¹ in New York, United States was influenced by *Liberty Leading the people*. It was a gift from France, a work of Frederic Bartholdi, and set for celebration of American Declaration of independence. In recent years, the artists, Coldplay, used the painting as an album cover, Viva La Vida (Spanish language meaning “Live Life”) or Death And All His Friends. Some music has a content mentioning the incident of revolution.

20 Mar. 2009. < <http://republicancommunist.org/blog/tag/declaration-of-the-rights-of-women-and-the-citizensess/>>

¹⁰ Steven Kreis. "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (August 1789)." *The History Guide*. 8 Feb. 2013. < <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/declaration.html> >

¹¹ The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. "History of Statue of Liberty." *Statue of Liberty*. 9 Feb. 2013. < http://statueofliberty.org/Statue_History.html >

Delacroix had left many works to sustain our society and each of which was painted to declare its story and ideology of its painter. They are successful in fulfilling their roles. Like how Copernicus influenced Galileo and Galileo influenced Newton, Delacroix had influenced Bartholdi and Coldplay. They might be an inspiration to other people. Hence our world can keep accumulating knowledge from time to time, crystallizing knowledge to further influence others. When another people has projected his idea and it became their work, the work will be an inspiration to other people. The process goes on and on. Certainly, with all his contributions, we can count him as one of the painters who affected the world and later generations. He led something to create other things. Similar to a Hebrew phrase "*Mitzvah goreret mitzvah*"¹² - "one good deed will bring another good deed."

¹² Wikipedia contributors. "Mitzvah goreret mitzvah." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 9 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitzvah_goreret_mitzvah>