ATHANOR XVII

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

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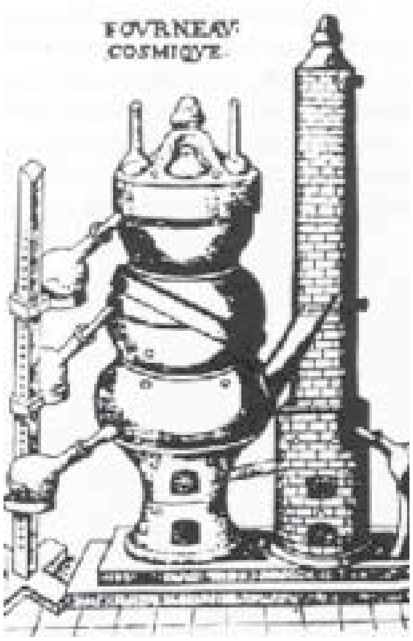

Cosmic oven or *Athanor* from Annibal Barlet,
Le Vray Cours de Physique,
Paris, 1653.

Cover: Hand Pictographs. Basketmaker II and Pueblo III, Painted Cave, Arizona. Photograph: Julia Stephens May.

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To obtain copies: ATHANOR is published annually by the Department of Art History as a project of the Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts Press. The issues are available for a suggested minimum donation of $10.00 to cover handling and contribute to subsequent issues; please request volumes through the Museum of Fine Arts, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-1140.

The Annual Art History Graduate Symposium for the 1999-2000 academic year will be held during the month of March; symposium paper sessions cover a wide variety of topics. Students from the Southeast make presentations which frequently become published essays in ATHANOR. The format of the symposium includes a lecture by the current year's Appleton Eminent Scholar, among whom have been: Fred Licht, Boston University and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection of 20th Century Art, Venice (1993); Gerald Ackerman, Pomona College (1994); Marcel Roethlisberger, University of Geneva, Switzerland (1995); Robert Farris Thompson, Yale University (1996); Oleg Grabar, Princeton University (1996); Phyllis Bober, Bryn Mawr College (1997); Carol Duncan, Ramapo College (1998). For details of date and for precis submission, please contact Professor Paula Gerson, Chairman, Department of Art History, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-1150.

The essays contained in ATHANOR are articles by graduate students on topics of art history and humanities. As such, ATHANOR exists as a critical forum for the exchange of ideas and for contrast and comparison of theories and research and is disseminated for non-profit, educational purposes; annotated allusions, quotations, and visual materials are employed solely to that end.

Günther Stamm Prize for Excellence

Reading the Heavens: An Eschatological Interpretation of the Signs of the Zodiac and the Ascension of Christ on the Quedlinburg Portable Altar by Evan Gatti won the Günther Stamm Prize for Excellence at the 1998 Art History Graduate Student Symposium.

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PATRICIA ROSE
Faculty Advisor

MUSEUM of FINE ARTS PRESS

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Editor
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Student Editorial Assistant

Printing
DURRA-PRINT, TALLAHASSEE, FL

Symbiotic Relationships: Abbot Suger and the Capetian Monarchy at Saint-Denis

Elizabeth S. Hudson

It is beyond debate that in modern discussions of Romanesque and Gothic art the abbey church of Saint-Denis, built under the leadership of Abbot Suger, stands at a transitional point. Traditionally, this status has been prescribed due to the organization, structure, and style of the building's twelfth-century façade and choir.[1] Yet, an investigation into the evidence reveals that the structure is more complex. Placing the monument within the context of its historical moment reveals the subtlety of Suger's Saint-Denis. As a whole, the building, its artistic embellishment, and contents provide valuable insight into the developments of Gothic spaces and the fundamental role of Suger's patronage. This furthers modern comprehension of the site not just as a pivotal point between Romanesque and Gothic, but as the result of a unique flourishing of purposeful creative activity during the time of Suger's abbacy.

Narrowing the scope of this investigation, a focus on the development of metalwork in conjunction with stone sculpture at this monastic center reveals a more subtle understanding of the functions decoration could serve. The interaction between the west façade sculptural program and liturgical vessels commissioned for use within sheds light on the ways Suger used material objects to enhance the position of the Capetian monarchy and the abbey. Under the leadership of Suger, Saint-Denis became the focal point for intense artistic activity. This singular occurrence, combined with a distinctive emphasis on the patronage of one man and Suger's written commentary on his 'creation,' places Saint-Denis in the forefront of artistic innovation *c.* 1140.

Although Suger did not explicitly discuss stone sculpture in his existing writings, sculpture played a vital role in his concept of the church of Saint-Denis.[2] The sculpture on the portals would not have been perceived as new or unique, perhaps explaining why Suger did not devote attention to chronicling their existence or iconography. On the other hand, the liturgical vessels were a featured aspect of the abbey church's decoration, in both their fabrication and donation. I propose that there are meaningful visual ties between these objects and the sculptural embellishments of the church which reflect their symbiotic roles. An examination of text and image leads to illuminating insights into subtle purposes of art at Saint-Denis under Abbot Suger.

Between 1120 and 1150, Saint-Denis, already situated at the pinnacle of French monastic prestige, emerged into the full light of royal prominence. This increase in status resulted from multiple factors, all of which provide a context for the development of art at the abbey. Scholars, such as Gabrielle Spiegel and Sumner Crosby, have charted both the historical and architectural growth of the abbey from its origin through the period of concern here.[3] Primarily, the church commemorated the burial place of France's patron saint, Saint Denis, martyred in Paris in the 3rd century. As the saint's popularity grew among inhabitants of the Île-de-France, Saint Denis gained the title "Apostle of Gaul." This title amplified the abbey church as a site of holy

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I would like to thank Jaroslav Folda and Dorothy Verkerk for their valuable contributions in helping to prepare this paper for presentation.

[1] Thomas Polk discusses traditional perceptions of the church and its impact on chronological and archaeological grounds in his published dissertation. Thomas Polk, *Saint-Denis, Noyon and the Early Gothic Choir: Methodological Considerations for the History of Early Gothic Architecture* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter D. Lang, 1982). This thesis will not address ideas of dating or explore detailed comparisons with other contemporary structures, such as Noyon and Chartres. Polk's dissertation does examine these ideas and provides insight into the traditional conceptions of Saint-Denis. For general and comprehensive discussions of the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, its history, and structure, see: Pamela Z. Blum, *Early Gothic Saint-Denis: Restorations and Survivals* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1992); Sumner McKnight Crosby, *The Royal Abbey of Saint Denis from Its Beginnings to the Death of Suger, 475-1151*, ed. Pamela Z. Blum (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987); Paula Gerson, *The West Facade of St.-Denis: An Iconographic Study* (Diss, Columbia University, 1970); Paula Gerson, ed., *Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis: A Symposium* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986); Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, second edition, ed. Gerda Panofsky-Soergel (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979); Conrad Rudolph, *Artistic Change at St-Denis: Abbot Suger's Program and the Early Twelfth-Century Controversy over Art* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990).

[2] Suger's corpus includes three treatises, *Liber de rebus in administratione sua gestis*, *Libellus alter de consecratione ecclesiae sancti Dionysii*, and the *Ordinatio AD MCXL vel MCXLI confirmata*, on the reform and functioning of the abbey and the renovation of the church, as well as a biography of Louis VI, *Vita Ludovici Grossi*. In addition, he began a biography of Louis VII. For the first three texts, I have used Erwin Panofsky's translation; it should be noted that this translation is abridged. See Panofsky, 1979. The biography of Louis VI was recently translated by Richard Cusimano and John Moorhead, *The Deeds of Louis the Fat* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992). For a more comprehensive discussion of the literary tradition at Saint-Denis, see Gabrielle Spiegel, *The Chronicle Tradition of Saint-Denis: A Survey* (Brookline, MA: Classical Folia Editions, 1978).

pilgrimage and recipient of religious fervor. The rulers of the Île-de-France seized on the legends surrounding Saint Denis, weaving a close relationship between their dynasties and the saint. The belief in specific royal and national protection by Saint Denis culminated under Louis VI when he declared the saint the patron of the state and second only to God as the protector of France. Suger recorded this relationship in his *Vita Ludovici Grossi*, writing:

> Then he [Louis VI] hurried to the blessed Dionysius, for common report and frequent experience had taught him that he was the particular patron and, after God, the foremost protector of the realm. Offering prayers and gifts, he begged him from the bottom of his heart to defend the kingdom, to keep safe his person, and to resist the enemy in his customary way. For the French have a special privilege from him.[4]

Suger's authorship of this text should not be understated; he could only gain from emphasizing connections between the Capetians and the saint whose relics he guarded. This text is also indicative of Suger and Louis' joint efforts to establish and solidify the Capetian monarchy and the supporting role of the abbey.

Saint-Denis could assert its status as the preeminent royal abbey from 1124 onward. The ties forged between the Abbey and the rulers of the Île-de-France began with royal burials at the abbey, architectural patronage, and the effort to claim the protection of the "Apostle of Gaul." Under the supervision of Suger, these ties were manifested in visual and ideological associations between the Capetians and Saint Denis. In turn, this alliance provided sacred endorsement for Capetian claims to the rulership of France. By enforcing this symbiotic relationship, Suger also emphasized the abbey's position as a religious center of the nascent state. In an effort to increase the status and power of his church, while simultaneously stabilizing and advancing the Capetian dynasty, Suger established himself as an influential figure in France and a prominent patron of the arts.

From the beginning of his abbacy in 1122, Suger worked to reform and renovate the abbey of Saint-Denis. The artistic elements of this are most clear; his writings regarding this process also provide valuable evidence for an examination of his efforts. Three main texts relating to the abbey and its renovation survive: the *Ordinatio ad MCXL vel MCXLI confirmata*, the *Libellus alter de consecratione ecclesiae sancti Dionysii*, and *De rebus in administratione sua gestis*.[5] Gabrielle Spiegel discusses the formation of a chronicle tradition at Saint-Denis into which Suger's texts fit neatly. These writings attempt to record the actions of and legitimize the monarchy, inform future leaders, and interpret the fundamental role of the Capetians in the future of the French state.[6] Of these, *De Consecratione* and *De Administratione* most directly address the contribution of visual arts in the construction of the church. In the introduction to his translation of Suger's writings, Erwin Panofsky discusses Suger and his work, noting Suger's tireless interest in the art he commissioned.[7] In presenting the issue of patronage, Panofsky substitutes Suger for the artist, creating an image of the abbot which has survived a great deal of modern scholarship. Suger occupies the role of creative genius, and Panofsky does not explore the ulterior motives for Suger's patronage. It is to this task that I would like to turn now.

In his discussion of art objects, Suger focuses primarily on liturgical vessels and interior decoration of the church. Danielle Gaborit-Chopin presents several rationalizations for Suger's obsession with these material objects. Above all these are beautiful items for the service of God, without which the liturgy could not be performed.[8] Beyond the liturgical, Suger was not only engaged with these precious vessels on an aesthetic and emotional level, but he also desired his church to surpass all others in terms of lavish furnishings.[9] Of the many works he describes, several have notable 12th century origins, and were donated by either Suger or a member of the Capetian family. Suger writes in *De Administratione*:

> Also, with the devotion due to the blessed Denis, we acquired vessels of gold as well as of precious stones for the service of the Table of God. . .Still another vase, looking like a pint bottle of beryl or crystal, which the Queen of Aquitaine had presented to our Lord King Louis as a newly wed bride on their first voyage, and the king to us as a tribute of his great love, we offered most affectionately to the Divine Table for libation. . .

---

[3] Spiegel, Chronicle, 1978; Gabrielle Spiegel, "The Cult of Saint Denis and Capetian Kingship," *Journal of Medieval History* 14 (1975): 314-325; Crosby, 1987. For a general treatment of both historical and artistic developments at the abbey of Saint-Denis see also: Gerson, 1970; Gerson, 1986; Panofsky, 1979, 1-37 and 141-259; Rudolph, 1990; and Otto von Simson, *The Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and the Medieval Concept of Order* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1956).

[4] Cusimano and Moorhead, 1992, 128.

[5] The titles of these treatises translate as: *Ordinance enacted in the year 1140 or in the year 1141*, *The other little book on the consecration of the church of Saint-Denis*, and *On what was done under his (Suger's) administration*. For the text of these, and a commentary, see Panofsky, 1979.

[6] Spiegel, Chronicle, 1978, 39-40, 44-52.

[7] Panofsky, 1979, 1-37.

[8] Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, "Suger's Liturgical Vessels," in Gerson, 1986, 282-293. Theophilus also uses this rationale for the creation of lavish objects, see Theophilus, *De Diversis Artibus*, C.R. Dodwell, trans. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 61-64. For general discussions of Suger's metalwork, see Gaborit-Chopin, in Gerson, 1986; William Wixom, "Traditional Forms in Suger's Contributions to the Treasury of Saint-Denis," in Gerson, 1986, 295-304; Blaise Montesquiou-Fezensac, and Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis* (Paris: Editions A et J Picard, 1977).

[9] Gaborit-Chopin, in Gerson, 1986, 281-283; Panofsky, 1979, 65.

> We also procured for the services at the aforesaid altar a precious chalice out of one solid sardonyx. . .[10]

The first object mentioned, today known as the Eleanor Vase, consists of a cut rock-crystal vial, mounted in a gold and jeweled setting (Figure 1). An inscription on the base of the vase reads, "As a bride, Eleanor gave this vase to King Louis, Mitadolus to her grandfather, the King to me, and Suger to the Saints."[11] The second object is perhaps the most famous item of the treasury from Saint-Denis, the chalice of Abbot Suger (Figure 2). The Chalice was constructed from a sardonyx cup, enveloped in a gold, bejeweled mount.[12] The cup itself is probably Alexandrian of the Ptolemaic period. Remounting these ancient vessels as liturgical furnishings was not an uncommon practice, as is evident from Suger's penchant for this activity.[13] An inscription, "Suger Abbas," has been removed from the chalice.

As Suger's comments about these objects indicate, he intended these precious vessels for the main altar of Saint Denis, in the choir of the church. The Eleanor vase would have held wine or water, prior to pouring into a chalice.[14] The chalice would have held the wine to be elevated at the climax of the Eucharistic rite. In addition to their functional import, these two vessels merited specific attention from the abbot in his writings. Although this results, in part, from the aesthetic appeal which they held for Suger, it is not unlikely that they were also important because of their donors. Suger himself gave the chalice, and his writings indicate particular concern for his own contributions to the abbey. Similarly, the Eleanor vase came from the king himself. It stands as a mark of continuous patronage at Saint-Denis by the rulers of the Île-de-France.

Turning to the west façade sculpture and the themes shown there, there is little written record of these portals, aside from Suger's comment regarding the placement of the Carolingian doors on the left portal, "beneath the mosaic which, though contrary to modern custom, we ordered to be executed there and to be affixed to the tympanum of the portal."[15] All three portals suffered damage during the French Revolution; what remains, however, provides valuable clues as to the original messages of the program. So we must base our understanding of the western sculptures on the extensive archaeological work of Sumner Crosby and Pamela Blum, as well as the iconographic interpretations of Paula Gerson's publications.[16] The west façade encompasses three decorated portals, which mirror the internal organization of the church. As they would have appeared after Suger's renovation, the left portal contained a mosaic tympanum of an unknown subject and sculpture on the archivolts and door jambs (Figure 3). The central door sculpture represented the Last Judgment on narrative and symbolic levels (Figure 4). The third, right entrance depicted the three imprisoned saints preparing for their imminent martyrdom (Figure 5).

Column statues, which no longer exist, occupied the outer jambs of all three portals. These figures are known through drawings published in Bernard de Montfaucon's book on French Royal Monuments.[17] The actual identification of these statues is uncertain, but it has been suggested that they are Old Testament kings, queens, prophets and patriarchs.[18] Adolf Katzenellenbogen examines these statues and their meaning in detail, ultimately concluding that the statues visually articulate the relation of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, or royal and sacred authority, with a special emphasis on *regnum*. The statues provide a visible Old Testament foundation for the Christian Church, illustrate a spiritual precedent for the Capetian rulers, and exemplify a harmonious relationship between secular and spiritual leaders.[19]

Looking specifically at the left portal, a bust of Christ appears in the center of the upper archivolt, flanked by angels, his outstretched hands holding a book and a flowering scepter. Below, to the left and right, stand figures identified as Moses and Aaron. This group of three figures again alludes to the relationship between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. Moses, recipient of the law, was the temporal leader of his people; Aaron was the first priest and a type for ecclesiastical leadership.[20] With this, the archivolt presents the relationship between Old Testament church and state, an antecedent for the ties between Saint-Denis and the Capetians. Who would have been inspired to surpass Aaron and Moses, but Suger, as abbot of the religious center of the emerging nation, and the Capetian monarchs?

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[10] Panofsky, 1979, 79.

[11] George Beech reconstructs the origins of this chalice, to decipher how it came into Suger's possession. The origins of the vase are not the focus here, although his discussions are of interest. For a specific discussion of this object, see George T. Beech, "The Eleanor of Aquitaine Vase, William IX of Aquitaine, and Muslim Spain," *Gesta* 32 (1993): 3-10; George T. Beech, "The Eleanor of Aquitaine Vase: Its Origins and History to the Early Twelfth Century," *Ars Orientalis* 22 (1992): 69-79; Gerson, 1970, 283; Crosby 1981, 102.

[12] For a general discussion of the chalice, and its provenance see Rudolf Distelberger et al., *Western Decorative Arts, Part 1: The Collection of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue* (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1993) 4-12, and Montesquiou-Fezensac, cat 71. For an analysis of Suger's chalice see also, Philippe Verdier, "The Chalice of Abbot Suger," *Studies in the History of Art* 24 (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1990): 9-29.

[13] Distelberger, 4.

[14] Beech, 1992, 74; Distelberger, 7; Verdier, 1990, 12.

[15] Panofsky, 1979, 47. The doors mentioned here are the Carolingian donation of the monk, Airardus. The inclusion and mention of the mosaic can, perhaps, be seen as a manifestation of Suger's recorded concern for the comparison of his abbey with the churches of Constantinople. Panofsky, 1979, 65. This comparison would be based on medium, not necessarily on the subject matter of the image.

[16] I would like to thank Paula Gerson for pointing out the need to be extremely cautious in interpreting the iconography and meaning of the heavily restored portal sculptures. Both Crosby and Blum provide detailed discussions of the original and restored sculpture. See Crosby, 1987, and Blum, 1992. Blum presents images which indicate nineteenth-century insets, in her publications. Unless noted below, the elements which I will discuss are either twelfth-century sculpture or iconographically justified by sculpture fragments, according to Blum's observations.

[17] These drawings are reproduced in Crosby, 1987, figs. 84, 85, and 87-89.

[18] Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959) 27-37; Gerson, 1970, 140-161; Crosby, 1987, 192-201.

[19] Katzenellenbogen, 27-37.

Moving to the right portal, the sculpture, although restored, reflects the original twelfth-century iconography and composition.[21] The tympanum depicts the Communion of the three martyrs; in this miraculous occurrence, Christ himself administers the Eucharist to the imprisoned Christians. Christ and the angels are separated from the earthly sphere by a strata of clouds, over which Christ reaches to offer the Eucharistic wafer to Saint Denis, standing in the center and wearing clerical garb. An altar rises above the prison walls surrounding the Saint and his companions; a chalice sits upon this draped altar.

The adaptation of the Eucharist scene to monumental imagery can be explained on several levels. This representation would glorify Saint Denis, and correspondingly, the abbey church dedicated to him. Above all, this image would emphasize the Eucharistic rite.[22] In so doing, the viewer would be impressed with a foretaste of the sacred events which would occur inside the church.

The central portal represents Christ in a bipartite role as Son of God, enthroned within a mandorla, and Son of Man, with his upper body symbolically positioned upon the cross.[23] Above Christ, angels carry the instruments of the Passion. To his left and right, below the arms of the cross, sit the Apostles; Mary is also shown to Christ's right.[24] To the proper right of Christ's feet, the figure of Abbot Suger crouches in adoration. In addition, Suger records a lintel inscription, "Receive, O stern Judge, the prayers of Thy Suger; Grant that I be mercifully numbered among Thy own sheep."[25] The damned and saved appear on the inner archivolts; the outer archivolts represent the twenty four Elders, with the Trinity at the center.

It has been shown that both the liturgical vessels and the portal sculpture each demonstrate sacred and secular concerns. Above and beyond their thematic conjunction the two media may be tied visually as well. On the central door, the twenty four elders carry vase shaped vials with banding across the top, not 'golden bowls' as in Revelation 5:8, which reads, "when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fell before the lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." (Revelation 5:8). As Gaborit-Chopin and Philippe Verdier observed, the carved vessels appearing at Saint-Denis (Figure 4) bear a remarkable similarity to the Eleanor Vase.[26] The manifestation of this treasured object in the portal sculpture can be read as evidence for Suger's preoccupation with the lavish liturgical vessels he collected for the church.

Extending this observation, liturgical objects appear elsewhere in the stone sculpture; on the right portal tympanum, a chalice rests on the altar where Saints Denis, Rusticus, and Eleutherius receive Communion (Figure 5). Although the sculpted chalice lacks handles, which would make it more visually similar to Suger's chalice, I would argue that there is a visual connection being made.[27] The probable existence of polychromy and gilding on these portals would reinforce this connection. Like the symbolic comparison between the image of communion on the south tympanum of the church and the actual event occurring inside, a parallel can be made between the physical altars and liturgical objects of the abbey, and those represented on the west façade.

Suger seems to have been a savvy politician and leader, working energetically to achieve the status he thought his abbey and the monarchy deserved within contemporary perceptions. There seems to be no reason to discount his desire to construct a visual manifestation of this status. Suger's efforts ultimately appear, specifically and symbolically, in the artistic and verbal products of his work at the abbey. What drives the visual associations between church and monarchy, and liturgical and sculpted objects, are their textual echo in Suger's writings. Educated secular viewers, members of the aristocracy and royalty, would certainly have comprehended both the images and their symbolism dealing specifically with *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, royal and sacred authority. These viewers, too, would have been the main audience for Suger's historical writings. Moreover, both the art and writings would set an example of support for the monarchy for monks at Saint-Denis to follow.

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[20] Crosby, 1987, 205, and nn. 103, 111; Blum, in Gerson, 1986, 209-218. Blum presents the textual sources and iconography for these sculptures, but does not venture a reason for their inclusion, aside from their ties to Dionysiac philosophy.

[21] Blum indicates that the main figures and composition of the tympanum are original, but the details are nineteenth-century insets or recarvings. Blum, in Gerson, 1986, 206-207.

[22] Crosby, 1987, 210-211.

[23] Blum, 1992, discusses in detail the authenticity of each element of this portal's sculpture.

[24] Crosby suggests that John the Evangelist appears directly to Christ's left evoking a Deësis image. Crosby, 1987, 186.

[25] Panofsky, 1979, 49.

[26] For a photograph of this detail, see Gerson in Gerson, 1986, figs. 8 and 9. Gaborit-Chopin, in Gerson, 1986, 289; Verdier, 1990, 13-14.

[27] This chalice, according to Blum, is a nineteenth-century insert or recarving. She does not indicate whether or not she believes this chalice to be an element of the original iconography. I would posit, however, the existence of a tradition including a chalice in the scene of Saint Denis' last communion. One example of this is a full page miniature from the mid-eleventh century Missal of Saint-Denis, (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. lat. 9436) f. 106v. For a reproduction of this miniature see Jean Porcher, ed. *Les manuscrits à peintures en France du VIIe au XIIe siecle* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 1954) cat 239, plate XXIV.

Despite this, Suger's writings do not directly address this relationship, or articulate this interpretation. Yet, the art produced at the abbey persuasively augments his texts. Ideas of lineage, history, and ties between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* are emphasized by inscriptions, and objects meant to elevate the viewer to the Christian 'truth.' In this case, the truth seems to hold a degree of secular, as well as theological content. What cannot be overtly depicted becomes inscribed through repetition, as in the reappearance of liturgical vessels in the sculpture of the west portals and their inclusion among Suger's writings. The need to defend this luxurious decoration provided a forum for Suger to record the subtle ways in which the art at the abbey worked to serve both sacred theological and secular monarchical aims. A closer reading of the portals, metalwork, and Suger's writings illustrates this relationship, especially when considered in conjunction with what we know about the abbey of Saint-Denis, its history, and its role within the context of the Île-de-France between 1122 and 1151, the year of Suger's death.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

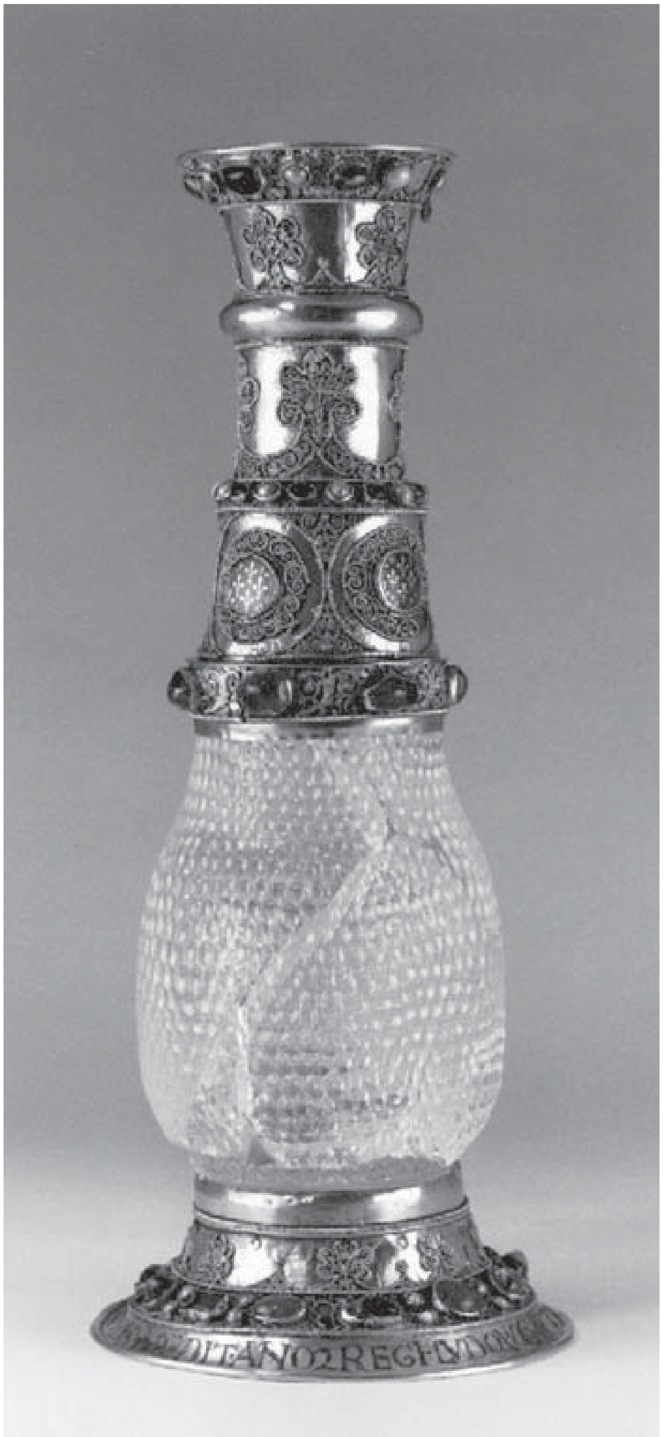

Figure 1. Eleanor Vase, rock crystal, gold, and gems, height 14 1/16 inches (35.7 cm), 1135-1140, Musée du Louvre, Paris, MC 340. © Photo RMN.

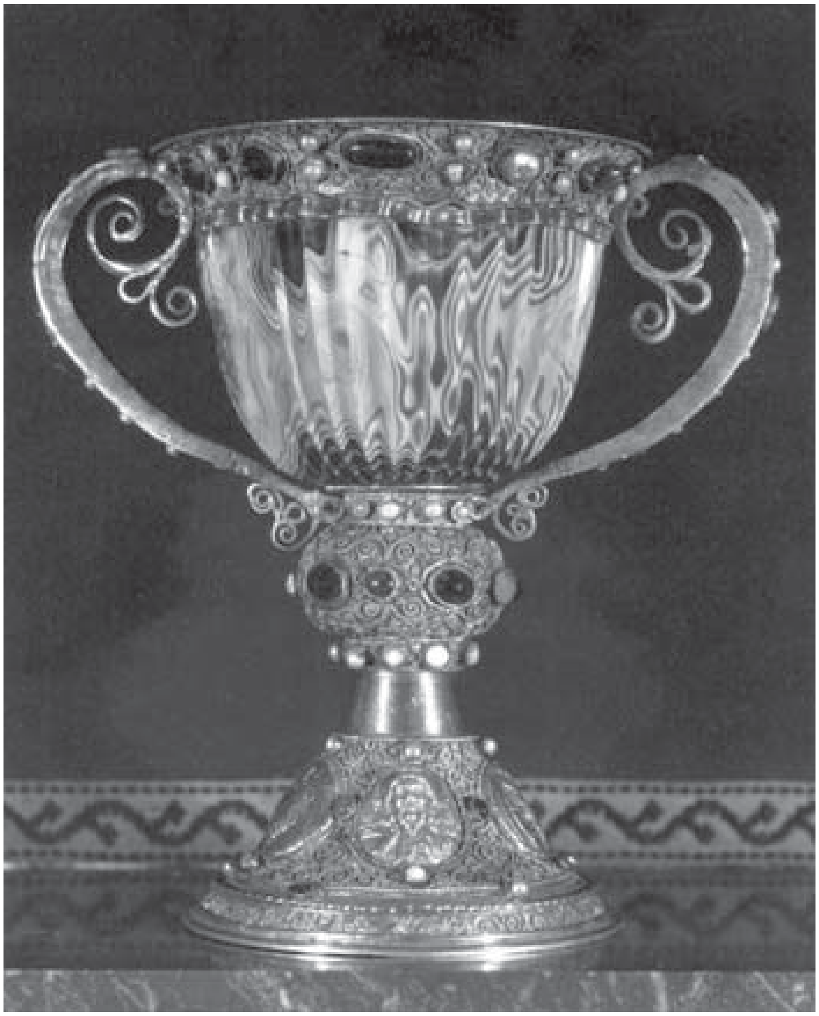

Figure 2. Chalice of the Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis, sardonyx, gilded silver, and gems, height 7 1/4 inches (18.4 cm), diameter at base 4 5/8 inches (11.7 cm), diameter at top 4 7/8 inches (12.4 cm), 1137-1140, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Widener Collection. (Photograph © Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.)

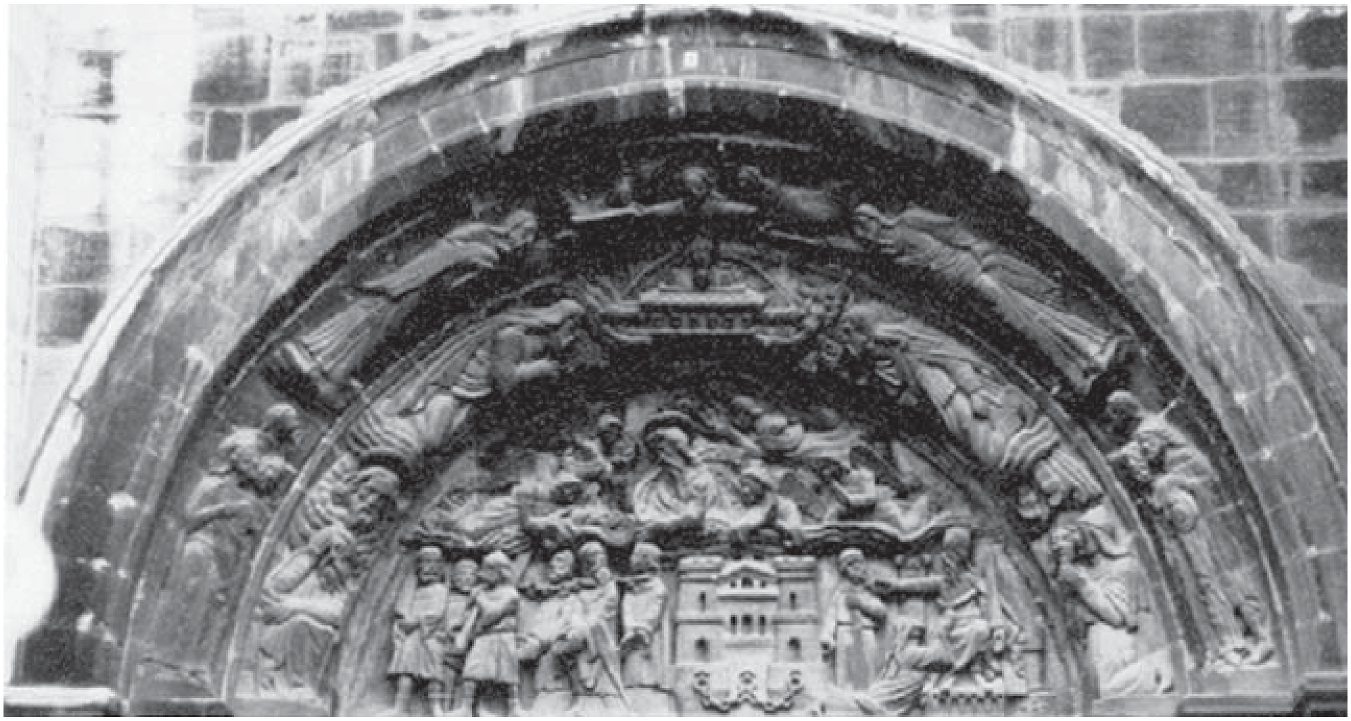

Figure 3. Left Portal, stone, 1135-1140, Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, France. (Photo: Elizabeth S. Hudson)

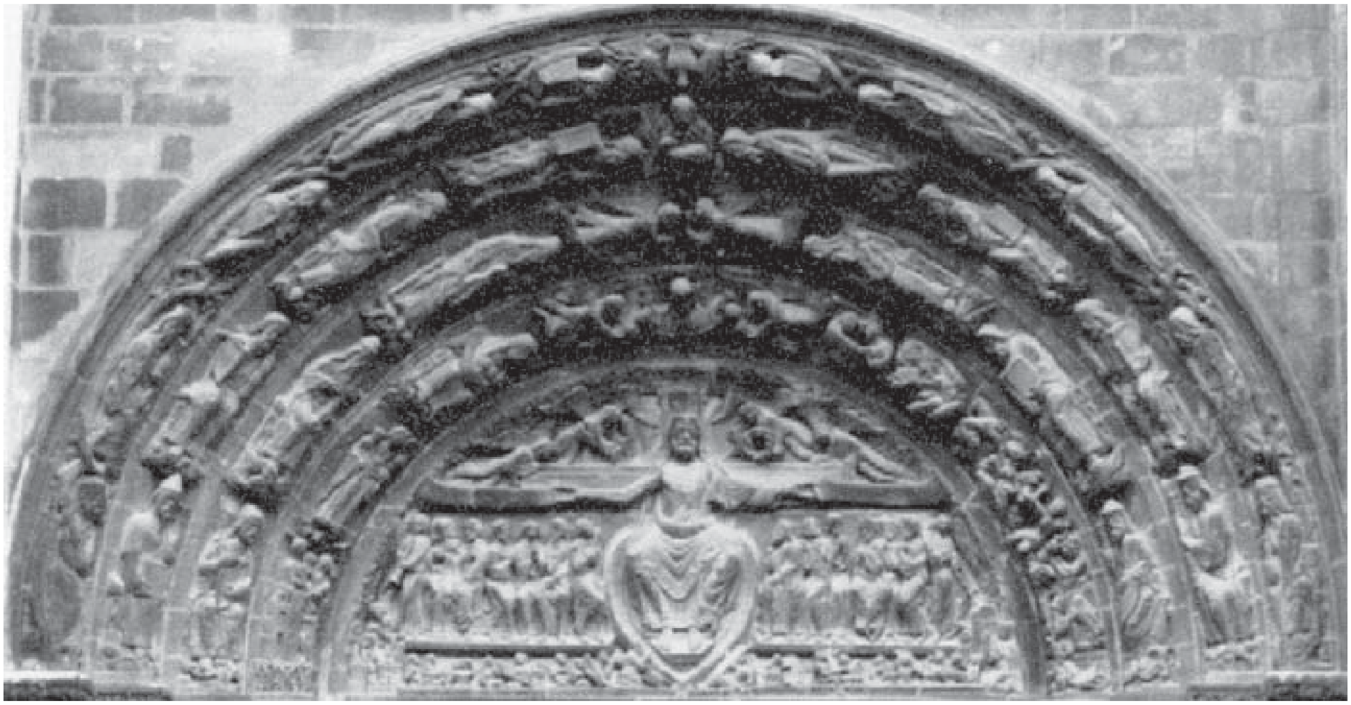

Figure 4. Central Portal, stone, 1135-1140, Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, France. (Photo: Author). The carved vessels are held by seated figures in the three outer archivolts and can be noted here in the right hands of the bottom-most figures in the second and third archivolts on the right side of this image. (Photo: Elizabeth S. Hudson)

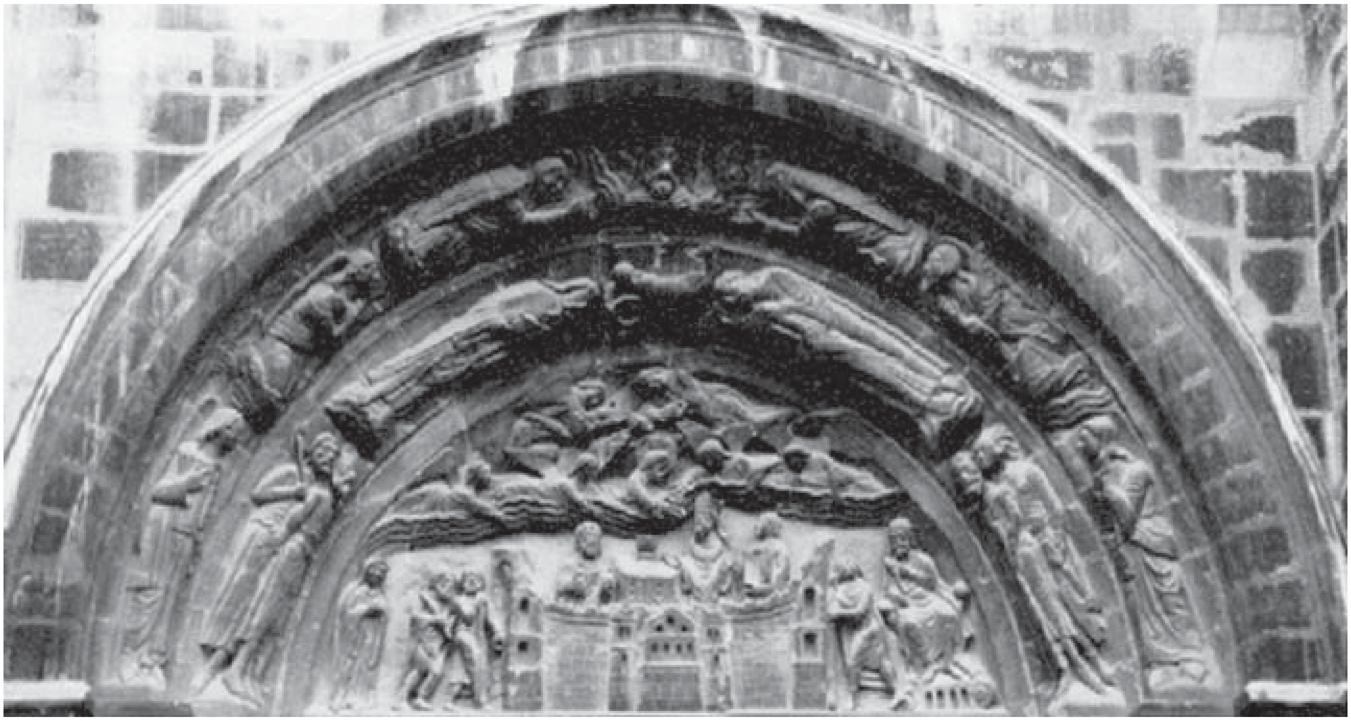

Figure 5. Right Portal, stone, 1135-1140, Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, France. (Photo: Elizabeth S. Hudson)

Sacred Receptacle and Sign of the Gods: Human Hand Imagery in the Art of the American Southwest

Julia Stephens May

Human hand images have been included in the artistic repertoire of the native peoples of the American Southwest since their earliest times. The Anasazi, for example, began to include human hands as elements in their rock art during the first four centuries of the first millennium AD and continued to do so without pause until they abandoned the area around AD 1300.[1] Though they seem benign when compared to other Anasazi rock art elements, human hand images were produced in almost infinite combinations of types, patterns and colors.[2] Human hands were created as single, isolated images (Figure 1) and in multi-layered compositions of over 100 (Figure 2). In most cases human hand images are juxtaposed with other motifs (Figure 3). Mutilated hands and hands that have more than five digits are also represented though they are rare.[3] The placement of multiple human hand motifs ranges from ordered, symmetrical compositions to those that appear random and haphazard. Most hand images are often rendered as prints and stencils of an actual person's hand and are thus life-size and natural in appearance. Painted replicas of hands constitute a smaller percentage. These are abstracted, often very small or very large in size with details such as fingers and palms distorted and disproportionate. The colors of human hand images in pictographs span the spectrum and designs of those etched into rock surfaces are likewise varied.

The period of Anasazi culture commonly referred to as the Pueblo IV period, AD 1300-1700, was a time of profound change. Due to severe droughts in the late thirteenth century, the Anasazi established communities to the south, west and east into Arizona and New Mexico in adobe compounds that the Spanish named *pueblos*.[4] As they migrated south they came into contact with other groups, among them the Sinagua, Mogollon and the Hohokam.[5] Many scholars believe that the Anasazi adopted religious practices, which led to the development of the kachina cult, and the tradition of using life forms in art from these cultures.[6]

Artistic production surged during the Pueblo IV period, which is perhaps best exemplified in painting.[7] Kiva walls, previously painted with static geometric designs, were decorated with brightly colored, energetic murals depicting scenes from mythology.[8] Pottery decoration underwent the most profound changes as it was transformed by the introduction of polychrome and glaze painting. Design elements inspired by the natural world such as animals, insects and the human figure were used in profusion.

Indicative of cultural and artistic continuity with their Anasazi forefathers and of influence from other groups, people of the new pueblo communities continued to use human hand imagery as a part of their symbolic expression. However, beginning in the fourteenth century, the tendency was to incorporate human hand imagery on other paintable objects in addition to lithic surfaces.

The Anasazi did not have a written language and did not tell us why they created hand images. Thus, concrete meaning has eluded researchers. However, ethnological data collected from the Pueblo descendants of the Anasazi as well as comparisons to the practices of other prehistoric groups have proven

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I would like to thank Dr. James Farmer, Claire Black, Eric Drongowski and Wendy Kagey for their helpful insight.

[1] Anasazi culture is divided chronologically into the following periods according to the Pecos Classification of 1927:

Pueblo V	AD 1700-present
Pueblo IV	AD 1300-1700
Pueblo III	AD 1100-1300
Pueblo II	AD 900-1100
Pueblo I	AD 700-900
Basketmaker III	AD 400-700
Basketmaker II	AD 1-400

Polly Schaafsma, *Indian Rock Art of the Southwest* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 1980) 107.

[2] For a hand image typology, see Campbell Grant, *Canyon de Chelly: Its People and Rock Art* (Tucson: U of Arizona P, 1978) 168.

[3] A discussion of mutilated hand images in the rock art of the Southwest can be found in Klaus Wellmann, *A Survey of North American Indian Rock Art* (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsansalt, 1979).

[4] Wellmann 86.

[5] Wellmann 79.

[6] Wellmann 86 and Schaafsma 244.

[7] J.J. Brody, *Anasazi and Pueblo Painting* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1992).

[8] Elegant examples of Pueblo IV kiva murals survive at the abandoned pueblos of Kawaika-a, Awatovi, Kuaua and Pottery Mound. For further information, see Watson Smith, *Kiva Mural Decorations of Awatovi and Kawaika-a: With a Survey of Other Wall Paintings in the Pueblo Southwest*. Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol. 37 (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1952); Bertha Dutton, *Sun Father's Way: The Kiva Murals of Kuaua* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1963); and Frank Hibben, *Kiva Art of the Anasazi at Pottery Mound* (Las Vegas: KC Publications, 1975).

useful in suggesting possible answers. Interpretations of hand imagery in rock art include hand images as prayer marks left by religious supplicants, hand images as components of adolescent initiation rituals, and, most frequently, the hand images as the signatures of the people who produced them.[9]

The marked shift in context of human hand imagery, in light of a "change in world-view" that began in the fourteenth century, leads to a supposition that the motivation to use human hand imagery is influenced by forces other than the impulse to record man's presence or leave prayer marks in homage to the gods.[10] I argue that the meaning of human hand images such as those that appear on the interiors of ceramic vessels, as elements of kachina regalia or in other contexts, have as their sources Pueblo mythology and traditional religious iconography. Besides being, as Campbell Grant argues, "the most important and valuable part of man's anatomy," the hand has a deep symbolic meaning in Pueblo thought—more significant than previous researchers have suggested.

A close reading of Zuni creation mythology reveals that the hand itself holds a special place deep within their cosmic belief structure. The hands are two of the four human body parts used by the gods in the creation of the universe. In this episode, the hands can be conceived of as "sacred receptacles," used to hold the primal essence of the cosmos and without which there would be no heavenly bodies:

> After the Supreme Being created the clouds and the great waters of the world, the rain god Shiwanni said to his partner Shiwanokia, "I, too will make something beautiful which will give light at night when the moon mother sleeps." Spitting into the palm of his left hand, he patted it with the fingers of his right hand and the spittle formed like yucca suds and then formed into bubbles of many colors which he blew upwards; and thus created the fixed stars and constellations. And Shiwanni was well pleased with his creation. Then Shiwanokia said, "See what I can do." And she expectorated into the palm of her left hand and slapped the saliva with the fingers of her right and the spittle formed like yucca suds, running over her hand and flowing everywhere and thus she created Earth Mother.[11]

Interestingly, the idea of the "sacred receptacle," while not yet identified in pictorial imagery, can be traced to actual Pueblo rituals where expectorating into the hands and slapping the saliva is common practice, as is using the hands to retain information learned in sacred ceremonies.[12]

Human hands in painted form refer to a number of Pueblo deities and spirit intermediaries called kachina. The first indicated by hand imagery are the Zuni Twin War Gods who are called, in the Zuni language, the *Ahayuta*. Individually they are known as *Uyuweyi*, the elder twin, and *Maisailema*, the younger twin. Ethnographer Frank Hamilton Cushing documented through Zuni informants that the *Ahayuta* are the twin sons of the Sun and Laughing Water and are inextricably linked to warfare.[13] Each is associated with a human hand, *Uyuweyi* with the right and *Maisailema* with the left.[14]

In their respective hand forms, the *Ahayuta* are represented on the Pueblo IV kiva murals of Kuaua, New Mexico.[15] The elder, right-hand twin, *Uyuweyi*, is found alone on the interior of a Pueblo IV ceramic bowl from the ancient site of Puaray, north of Albuquerque.[16] A collection of six vessels excavated from the Pueblo IV site of Pecos also bear the symbolic likenesses of the *Ahayuta*.[17] I suggest this interpretation because of stylistic similarities to the vessel from Puaray as well as to the close cultural similarities between the Pecos Indians and the Tiwa people of Puaray.[18]

In a similar fashion to their Zuni kin, the Hopi also used the human hand to symbolically represent powerful godhead. The god *Masaaw*, according to myth, is the deity who assisted the first people of the universe in their journey to this world and gave them the gift of fire. I believe that the human hand represents him, though this is not directly stated in the ethnographic literature.[19] *Masaaw* is a deity recognized as having a dual character: benevolent and malevolent, grotesque and handsome, indicative of life and death. As god of death and guardian of the dead, he has the appearance of a rotting corpse and lets off the foul stench of the grave.[20] His appearance and odor frighten people so terribly that they fall into an unconscious state as if dead.

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[9] For more information, see Victor Smith "The Human Hand in Primitive Art," *Publications of the Texas Folklore Society* 4 (1925): 96; Edwin Wade, *America's Great Lost Expedition: The Thomas Keam Collection of Hopi Pottery from the Second Hemenway Expedition, 1890-1894* (Phoenix: The Heard Museum, 1980) 35; and Grant 168.

[10] E. Charles Adams and Deborah Hull, "The Prehistoric and Historic Occupation of the Hopi Mesas," In *Hopi Kachina: Spirit of Life*, ed. Dorothy K. Washburn (N.P.: California Academy of Sciences, 1980) 16.

[11] Matilda Coxe Stevenson, "The Zuni Indians: Their Mythology, Esoteric Fraternities and Ceremonies," *Twenty-third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1901-02* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1904): 23-24.

[12] Ethnographer W.W. Hill witnessed one ceremony at Santa Clara Pueblo during which participants were admonished to hold sacred truths in the palms of their hands and other body cavities. W.W. Hill, *An Ethnography of Santa Clara Pueblo*, ed. Charles Lange (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1982).

[13] Frank Hamilton Cushing, *Zuni Folk Tales* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1901) 441.

[14] Cushing, *Zuni Folk Tales* 441. The *Ahayuta* have half-brothers, also twins, called the Divine Ones who are also associated with the human hand image. See Cushing, "Outlines of Zuni Creation Myths," *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1891-92* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1896): 381.

[15] The best example of the twins appears on Layer A-8 of Kiva III at Kuaua. See Dutton 181, fig. 1 and 182, fig. 2.

[16] Dutton 23, Plate 2, fig. C.

[17] Alfred Kidder, *The Pottery of Pecos*, Vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale UP, 1936) 7, fig. D; 133, figs. C, D and E; and 180, figs. F and G.

[18] For a discussion of the relationships of the various Rio Grande pueblos see Dutton 3-18.

Masaaw is set apart from other gods in the Hopi pantheon because his movements are orchestrated in a sinistral motion.[21] When other gods move to the right, *Masaaw* moves to the left. Ethnographer Elsie Clews Parsons documented that the movement to the left is believed by many Pueblo groups to indicate death and is considered a sacred movement to the Hopi.[22] In addition, *Masaaw* carries a club in his left hand with which to strike his victims and throws a shawl over his left shoulder.[23]

Based upon *Masaaw's* close affinity with the direction left, I propose that images of the left hand placed on Hopi vessels may signify him. Of the sixteen known Hopi bowls made during the Pueblo IV period that have hand imagery, nine are of the left hand (Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6 and Figure 7).[24]

Kachinas play a significant role in both Hopi and Zuni mythology and ritual. Described by Barton Wright as "the spirit essence," kachinas act as intermediaries between the spiritual and earthly realms.[25] Most appeals to kachina involve the procurement of rain to quench the arid climate.[26] Male members of these religious societies don the regalia of the kachina not only to impersonate them, but also to become "invested by a specific kachina spirit."[27]

At Zuni it is the *Anahoho* kachina who has hand imagery as a part of his ensemble (Figure 8). The *Anahoho* are messenger-brothers who were lost during the migration of the first people to this world.[28] The *Anahoho* went back to the Middle Place to find their brethren, only to find the villages burned to the ground. The hand image on the mask of each *Anahoho* has been interpreted to symbolize the soot they wiped on their faces as they wandered, plaintively crying "Ana!" (Figure 9). During the initiation of adolescent boys into the kachina society, the *Anahoho* appear and whip the initiates in rites of purification.[29]

Among the Hopi, hands are included as a part of the regalia of the *Mastop*, the Death Fly Kachinas, who appear on the eighth day of the *Soyal* ceremony.[30] *Soyal* commences on the Winter Solstice (December 21) and signifies "the sun's arrival at his house."[31] In addition to its solstitial importance, *Soyal* initiates the beginning of the kachina cycle. *Mastop* bodies are painted black, and white hand images are placed on their calves, torsos and upper arms. Their masks are decorated with the Big Dipper and the Pleiades, which, Frank Waters argues, symbolize the celestial realm from which the *Mastop* come.[32] The rest of their regalia emphasize their role as the male aspect of fertility; the black body denotes earth and the grassy fringe around the neck is symbolic of vegetation.[33] The fertility connection is further enhanced as the *Mastop* simulate intercourse with female spectators as a part of their public performance.

I believe these white hand images serve as symbols of the sun, to which *Soyal* is primarily dedicated; though Waters feels that they "symbolize man's touch upon all."[34] According to Hopi

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[19] For a comprehensive study on *Masaaw*, see Ekkehart Malotki and Michael Lomatuway'ma, *Masaaw: Profile of a Hopi God* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1987).

[20] Malotki and Lomatuway'ma 31.

[21] Malotki and Lomatuway'ma 16.

[22] Elsie Clews Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion*, 2 Vols. (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1939) 461-462.

[23] Malotki and Lomatuway'ma 33 and fig. 5.

[24] Of this collection, six have right hands only and two have both right and left hands. The significance of human hand imagery inside ceramic vessels made by the Hopi and people of the Rio Grande pueblos can be suggested by an examination of the structure of the Pueblo universe and the relationship of the *Ahayuta* and *Masaaw* to it. The Pueblo universe is conceived of as a basket, which represents the sky and a bowl, which represents the earth. Each half has four horizontal levels. Rina Swentzell argues that the plans of Pueblo communities are this universal plan in microcosm and that the kiva, the semi-subterranean chamber used for ritual, is the symbolic place of emergence to this level. Most Pueblo groups believe that before they lived in their present locations they occupied the bowels of the earth only to be summoned by the Sun Father. Among their other duties, the *Ahayuta* (in Zuni and Rio Grande myth) and *Masaaw* (in Hopi myth) led the people on their migration to this world. They wandered in a spiraling motion through the four levels of the earth to reach their destination. Thus, on a smaller microcosmic level, the bowl symbolizes the Pueblo universe, and specifically the domain of the *Ahayuta* and *Masaaw*. See Rina Swentzell, "Pueblo Space, Form and Mythology," in *Pueblo Style and Regional Architecture*, eds. Nicholas Marcovich, Wolfgang F.E. Preiser and Fred Sturm (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992) 23-29.

[25] Barton Wright, *Hopi Kachinas: The Complete Guide to Collecting Kachina Dolls* (Flagstaff: Northland Press, 1977) 2.

[26] E. Charles Adams and Deborah Hull argue that the kachina cult, "which focused on environmental 'control'" was integrated in the fourteenth century in an effort to secure desperately needed rain after a series of droughts in the thirteenth century. Though it exists to some degree on all Pueblos, the kachina cult is most sophisticated among the Hopi and Zuni. See Adams and Hull 16.

[27] Wright *Hopi Kachinas* 4.

[28] Barton Wright, *Kachinas of the Zuni* (Flagstaff: Northland Press, 1985) 63-64 and Plate 18, A.

[29] Interpretation of the *Anahoho* and their associated hand images vary. According to Ruth Bunzel, the hand image is a lucky talisman said to ward off evil forces, specifically Navajo warriors. See Ruth Bunzel, "Zuni Kachinas: An Analytical Study," *Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1929-30*. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1932): 993-994 and Plate 29.

[30] Wright, *Hopi Kachinas* 30, fig. B. The *Matya* or Hand Kachina also has a hand image as a part of his regalia. He is a runner kachina who appears during spring festivities. His mask is found among Rio Grande petroglyphs of the Galisteo Basin, New Mexico. See Wright 74, fig. E and Wellmann, fig. 470.

[31] Frank Waters, *Book of the Hopi* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1963) 155-156.

[32] Waters 155-156 and Parsons Vol. 2, 556-567.

[33] Waters 156.

[34] Waters 156.

color symbolism, white is associated with the east.[35] East holds particular significance to the Hopi for it is the direction faced while honoring the gods and the direction a corpse faces in the grave. Most significantly, the direction of the rising sun and the direction faced while making offerings to the sun is towards the east.[36] Though the *Mastop* simulation of intercourse and other details of their costumes underscore fertility, it is only because of the sun, whom the Hopi call *Taiowa*, that man exists at all and reaps the life sustaining benefits of the earth. Thus, in the shape of the white hand image, *Taiowa* is present during the *Soyal* solstice festivities.

Typically, human hand images do not inspire the viewer to think of the mysterious and supernatural. They are immediately understood to refer to man and no other creature and certainly, on one level, serve to indicate his presence. However, previous scholars have neglected to consider the multi-referentiality of human hand imagery.

The image of the human hand is a universally recognized form and it was widely utilized in the art of the Pueblo people. Based on those facts, it is inevitable that many levels and depths of meaning can and should be considered when reviewing the function of the image in culture, art and society. An examination of Pueblo religion and mythology reveals that human hand images enable humans, as intelligent creatures, to access the power and energies of the sacred moments of creation, the deities who took part in the development of the Pueblos and the very sun which brings life to all. Operating within a worldview where the boundaries between the spiritual and physical are "fluid and permeable," human hand images are an integral conduit between the meaning and life of man and the spiritual realm.[37]

Virginia Commonwealth University

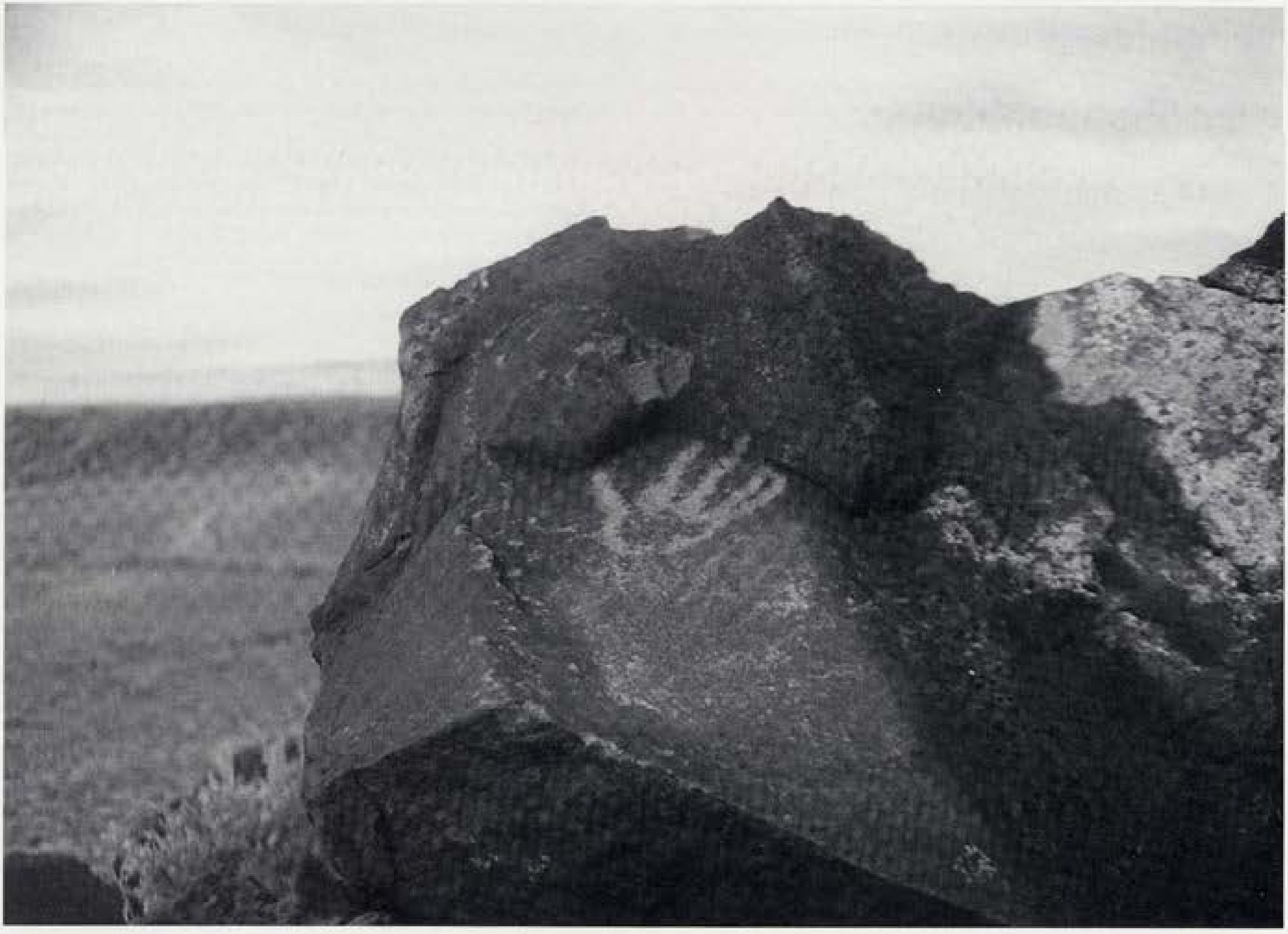

Figure 1. Hand Petroglyph, Pueblo IV, Boca Negra Canyon, Petroglyph National Monument, Albuquerque, New Mexico. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

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[35] Edward Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970) 204-208 and Table VII.

[36] The Zuni also use the color white to indicate the sun and incorporate it into kachina-related ritual. Refer to Parsons Vol. 2, 732.

[37] M. Jane Young, *Signs from the Ancestors: Zuni Cultural Symbolism and Perceptions of Rock Art* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1988) 116.

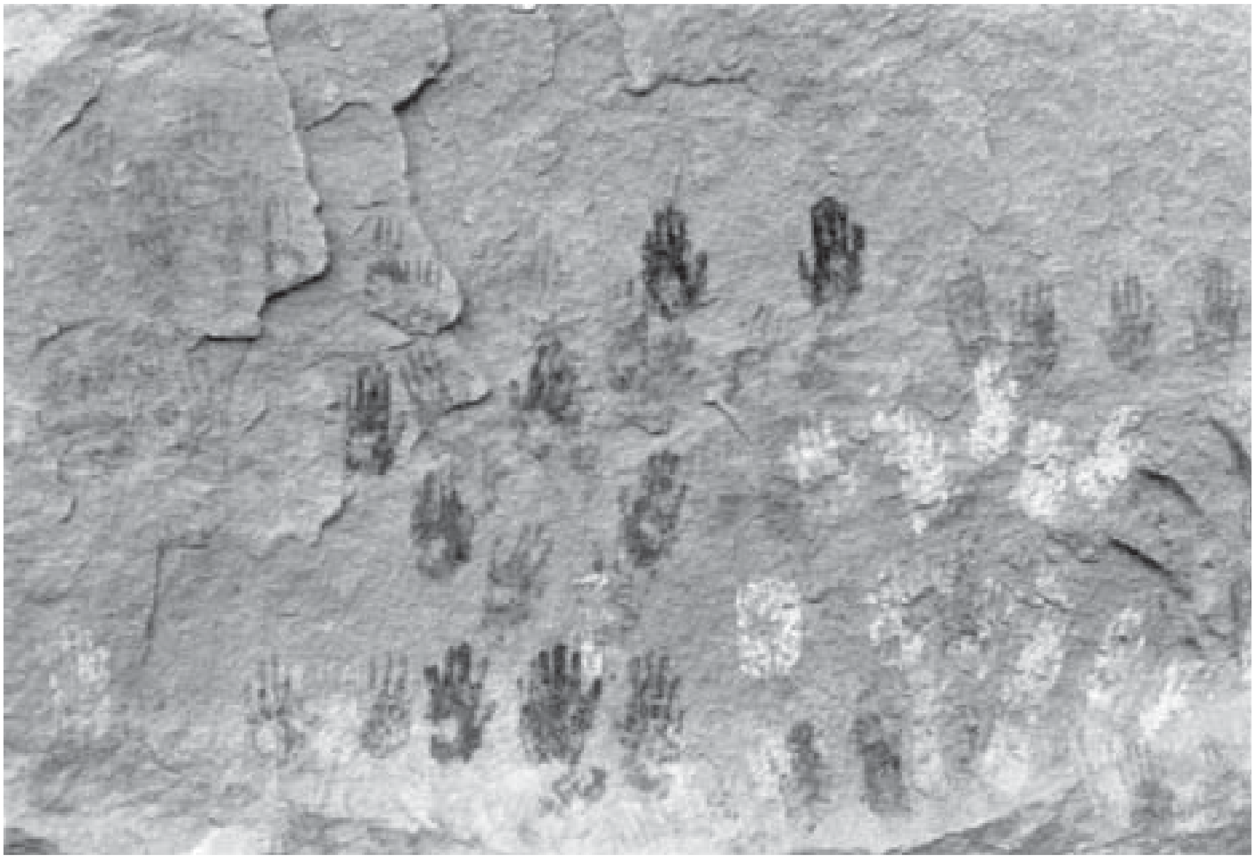

Figure 2. Hand Pictographs, Basketmaker II and Pueblo III, Painted Cave, Buttress Canyon, Arizona. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

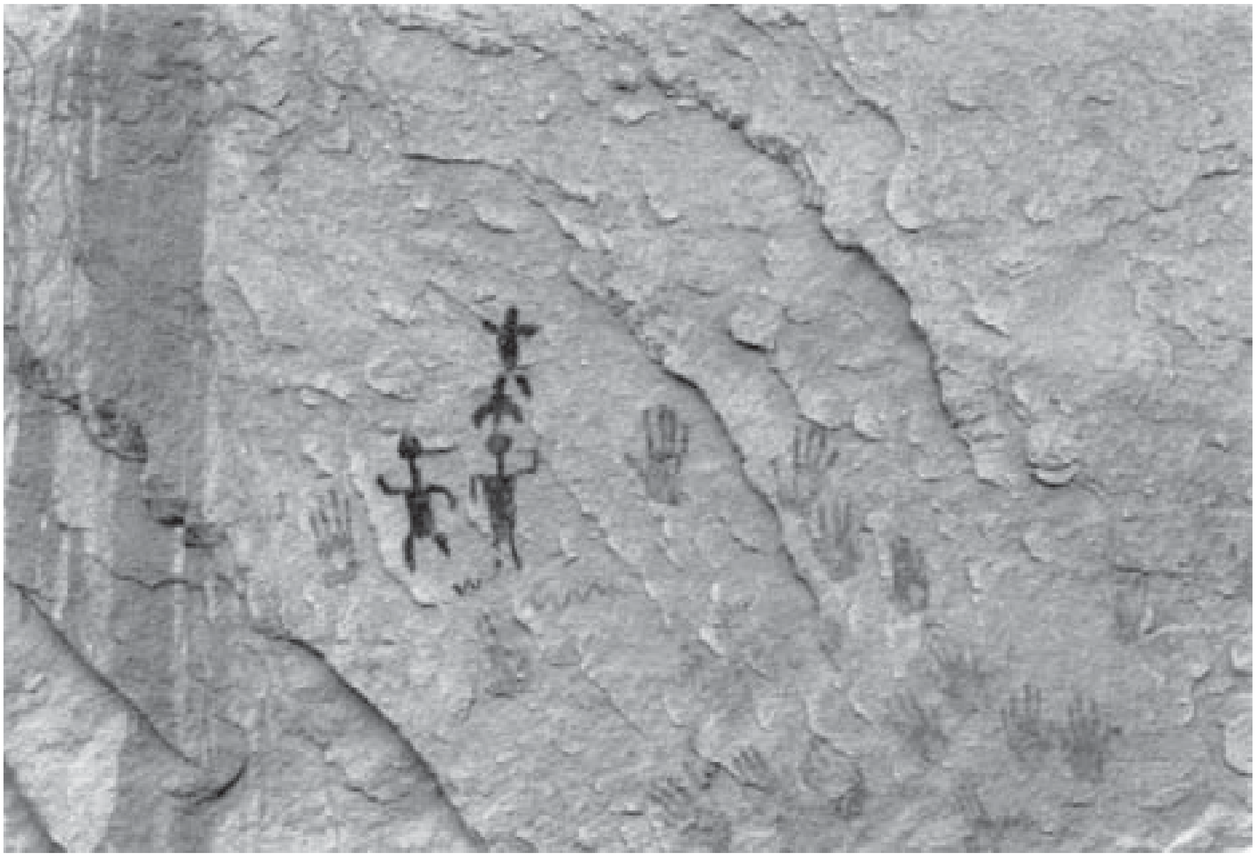

Figure 3. Hand Pictographs, Basketmaker II and Pueblo III, Painted Cave, Buttress Canyon, Arizona. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

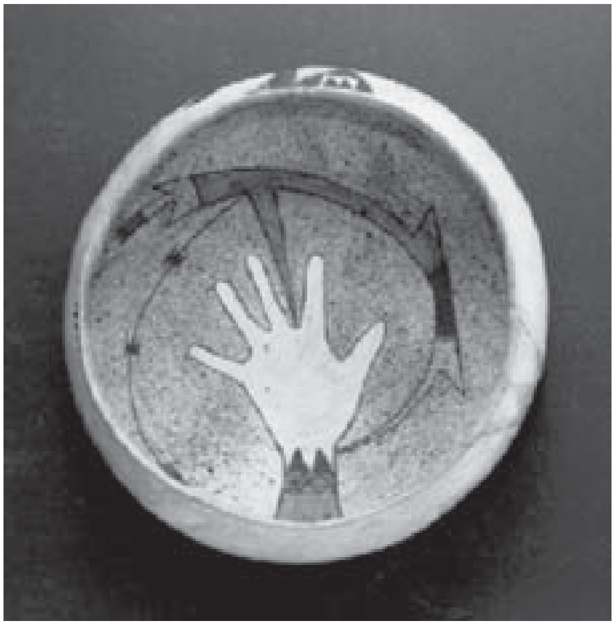

Figure 4. Sikyatki Polychrome Bowl, Hopi, Pueblo IV. Courtesy of the Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution. Catalogue Number 155468. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

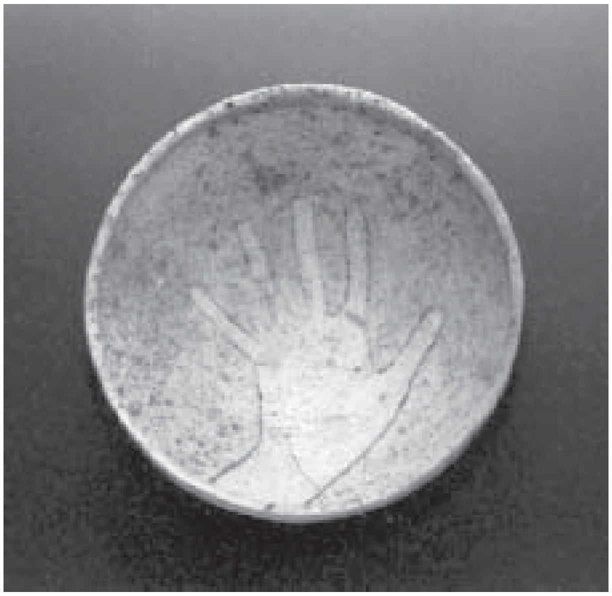

Figure 5. Sikyatki Polychrome Bowl, Hopi, Pueblo IV. Courtesy of the Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution. Catalogue Number 155470. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

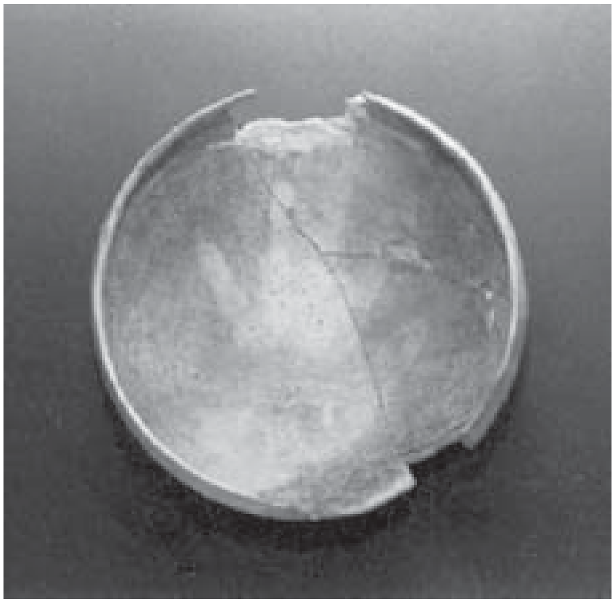

Figure 6. Sikyatki Polychrome Bowl, Hopi, Pueblo IV. Courtesy of the Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution. Catalogue Number 155471. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

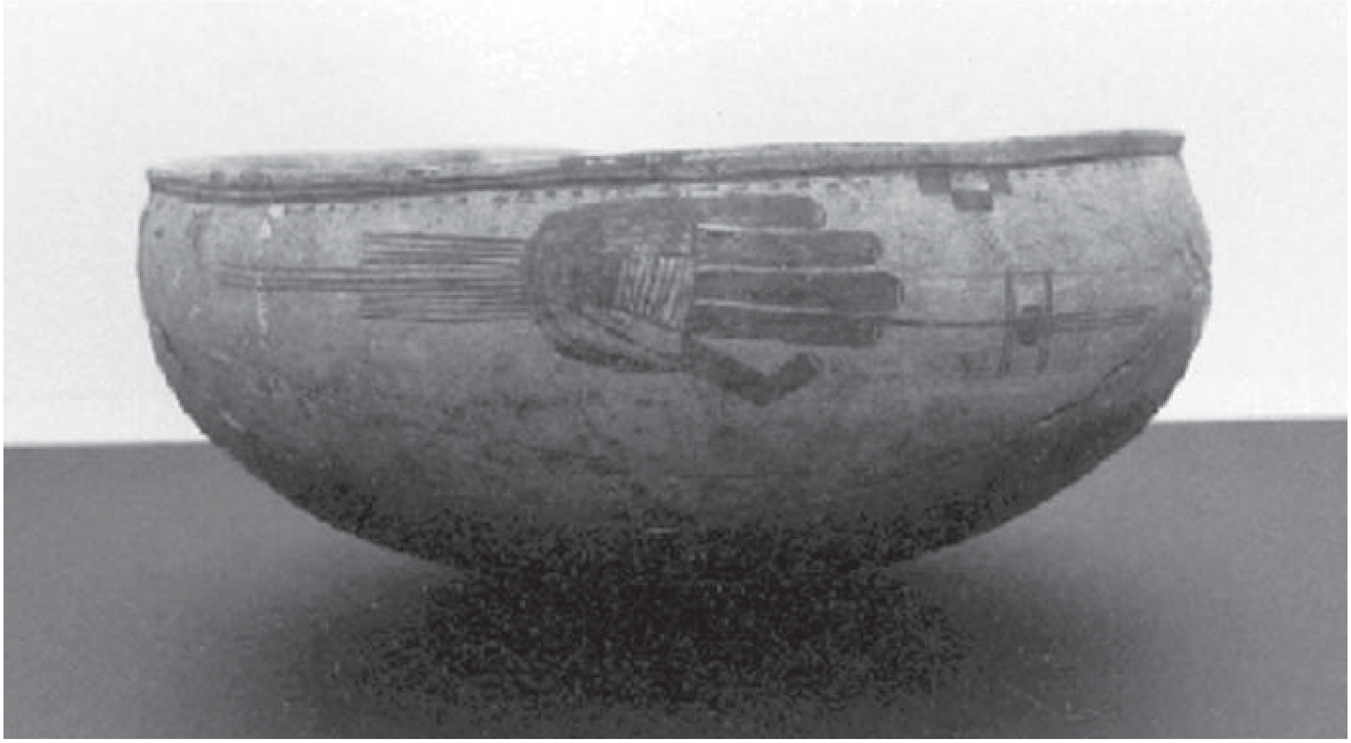

Figure 7. Sikyatki Polychrome Bowl, Hopi, Pueblo IV. Courtesy of the Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution. Catalogue Number 155472. (Photo: Julia Stephens May)

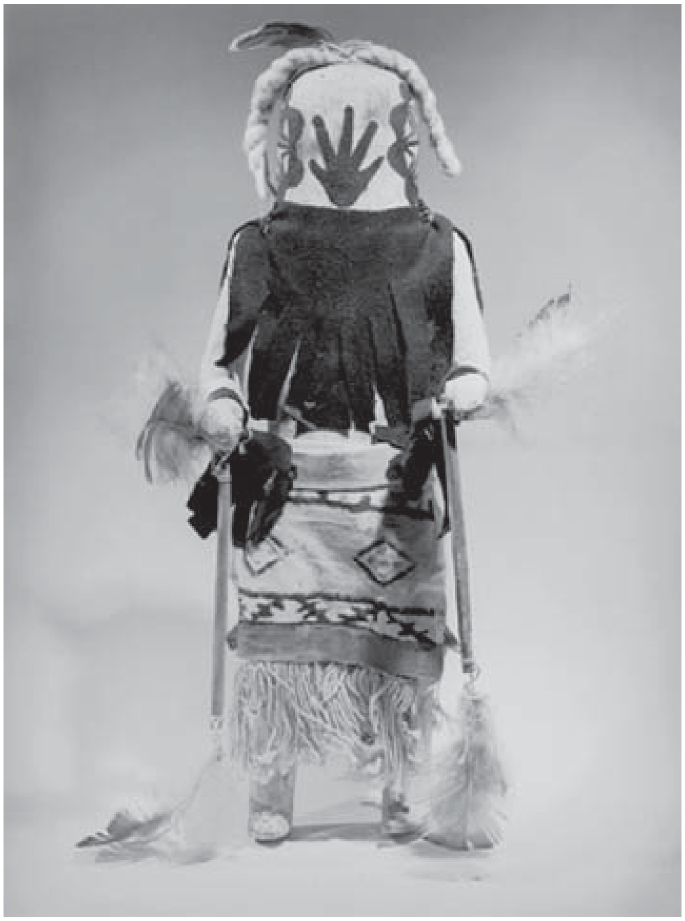

Figure 8. Salamopea Anahoho Kachina Doll, Zuni, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Museum Exhibition 1903, Museum Collection Fund. 03.269. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum of Art)

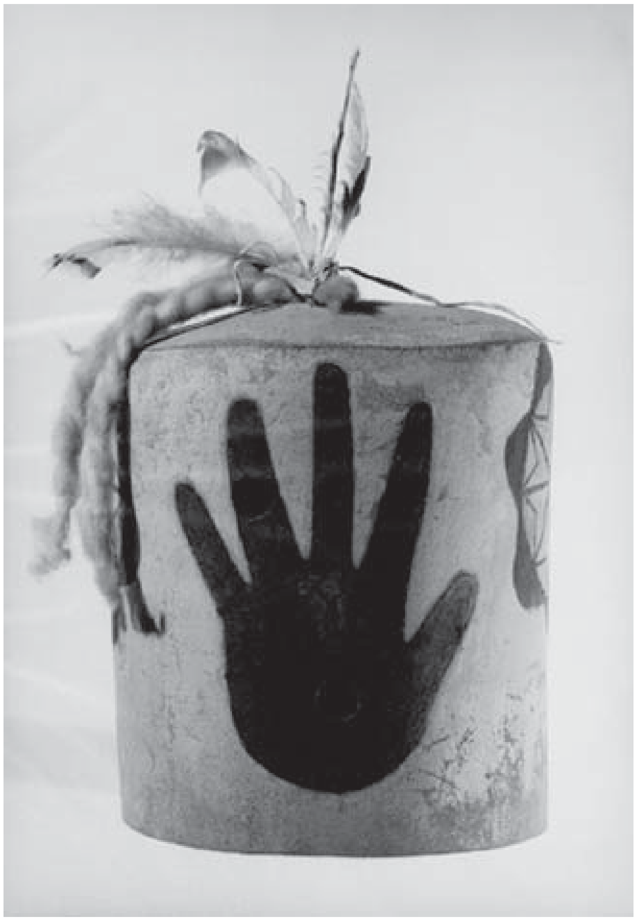

Figure 9. Anahoho Kachina Mask, Zuni, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Museum Expedition 1904, Museum Collection Fund. 04.297.5388. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum of Art)

Legendary Penance: Donatello's Wooden *Magdalen*

Kelly Barnes-Oliver

The Mary Magdalen we think of today does not exist as such in the Bible and her identity has been the subject of lengthy dispute among scholars. She is actually a combination of three distinct people: Mary of Magdala; Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus; and an anonymous female sinner who anoints Christ's feet with expensive perfume. Nothing certain is known about what Mary Magdalen did after the Resurrection. One popular legend claims that the Magdalen came to France and became the apostle of Provence. This has weak historical grounds and is based primarily on hagiographic writings. The most well-known and elaborate account was written in Jacobus de Voragine's collection of legendary lives of saints called the *Golden Legend*, from the thirteenth century.[1] In this story, she was said to have come from royal lineage, but had abandoned her body to the pleasures of the senses, and was therefore called sinner. After the Resurrection, the legend reports that the Magdalen, along with Martha and Lazarus, miraculously arrived in the south of France. It was there, in southern France, that Lazarus was made bishop, and together they worked to convert pagans and perform miracles. Mary Magdalen then went to Aix and retired to a cave in the wilderness for thirty years where seven times a day she was raised up to Heaven by angels to hear the glorious music.

In this paper I will argue that Donatello's wooden *Magdalen* (Figure 1) is illustrative of this particular period in her life, her retreat in the wilderness as described in the *Golden Legend*. Several factors concerning the statue identify it as such, including her age, specifics of her gesture and hair, and the fact that she appears to be standing on rocky ground. At the same time, I will contend that this image of the Magdalen becomes a "type" for penance. In this way, Donatello is working within the iconographic tradition of penitent Magdalens in Tuscany, but he takes it one step further by using realism as a vehicle for spirituality. This may seem contradictory since the statue is both illustrative of a specific moment and also an abstract image of penance, yet I will argue that these elements work together to explain the *Magdalen's* placement in the Baptistery at Florence and her function in the overall decorative program.

Donatello's wooden *Magdalen* now stands in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence, but its original location, patronage and date are unknown. The statue has always been thought to be a product of Donatello's later years, specifically after his return from Padua in the early 1450s. This is thought because Donatello's wo*oden John the Baptist* (Figure 2) from Venice, to which the *Magdalen* bears close stylistic affinities, was reported by Vasari to have been donated by Donatello to the chapel in Venice on his trip there in 1453. But a cleaning of the *Baptist*, in 1972, revealed in the inscription an earlier date of 1438, which has led to the re-evaluation of the *Magdalen's* date. Some scholars now argue that the *Magdalen* dates to the late 1430s, early 1440s, a time when Donatello is documented as being active in Florence.[2]

Thus, this depiction of the Magdalen may not be the work of an older Donatello, as an expression of emotion and uncertainty about his own situation in life, as has previously been thought. Rather, I contend that the expressive qualities of the *Magdalen* are illustrative of the saint's suffering and penance during her retreat in the wilderness as described in the *Golden Legend*. At first glance, her frail, wasted appearance dominates the representation. Her slender, emaciated body and leather-like skin attest to her thirty years of fasting and time in the sun. Her legs are long and thin, yet are physically able to support

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This paper developed out of a seminar under Dr. Jack Freiberg to whom I am indebted for his generous advice and encouragement. I wish to also thank Dr. Patricia Rose, Dr. Phyllis Pray Bober, and Dr. Cynthia Hahn for their insightful commentary and support.

[1] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1941) 355-62.

[2] H.W. Janson's monograph on Donatello was published before the discovery of the 1438 date on the Frari John the Baptist. He states that because of the close relationship between Donatello's Frari Baptist and his Penitent Magdalen, the date for the Magdalen is about 1455. He also cites that Semper believed that Donatello's Magdalen had been made in competition with Brunelleschi's wooden Magdalen for S. Spirito and would thus have been dated in the early 1420s. See H.W. Janson, *The Sculpture of Donatello* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1963) 191. J. Pope-Hennessy follows Janson and asserts that Donatello's Magdalen is likely to have been carved in 1454 immediately after his return from Padua. See J. Pope-Hennessy, *Donatello* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1993) 276. Strom, on the other hand, uses the discovery of the earlier date for the Frari Baptist to re-evaluate the Magdalen's date. She sets up a chronology for the extant wooden penitent Magdalens in Tuscany: Pescia Magdalen (dating no later than the second or third decade of the fourteenth century), Donatello's Magdalen (dating to the late 1430s or early 1440s), Empoli Magdalen (with the date of 1455 on its base). See Deborah Strom, "Studies in Quattrocento Tuscan Wooden Sculpture," diss., Princeton U, 1979; and "New Chronology for Donatello's Wooden Sculpture," *Pantheon* 38 (1980): 239-48. Bennett and Wilkins follow Strom's suggestion of the possibility of the late 1430s or early 1440s date. B. Bennett and D. Wilkins, *Donatello* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1984) 129.

her body. The musculature that developed from days spent wandering in the wilderness can be seen in her legs and arms. The polychromy on the statue was discovered after an extensive cleaning in 1967, and the rich reddish brown of her tanned skin was recovered.[3] She stands in elegant contrapposto, with the left leg supporting her weight while the right leg is slightly bent and twisted back. Her head, with its weathered features, turns to her left. Her eyes are carved deep into their sockets, and are ringed with prominent circles. Her cheeks are sunken and her toothless mouth appears haggard and aged. This is not the face of the beautiful, young Magdalen, seen in typical portrayals of the saint. Rather, it is the face of an older woman after thirty years in the wilderness. This figure is obviously at the end of her life, her physical features betray her age.

Mary Magdalen can almost always be identified by her long, abundant hair which alludes to her humble act of washing Christ's feet. Additionally, her hair often suggests her former life of sin. A late Medieval tradition maintained that the abundance of flowing hair may identify a woman as unmarried and her actions as unchaste,[4] suggesting the Magdalen's sinful existence as described in the *Golden Legend*. In Donatello's statue, her hair is not just plentiful, but is so long that it covers her whole body and acts as clothing. During her retreat in the wilderness, her hair grew long and lush while her clothes disappeared and her flesh aged and shrank. Donatello used an innovative technique to render the *Magdalen* and her hair more realistic. He not only carved into the wood to create the locks of hair, but also built up the surface with gesso and even fabric in some areas. This is especially apparent in areas such as the strands of hair that rest on her arms.[5] Furthermore, Donatello added to this realism by painting gold highlights throughout her tresses. He used a new method of application in which he could apply the gold in liquid form rather than gold leaf as was normally done. This makes the hair appear to be streaked with gold, a more naturalistic effect closer to blond highlights as compared to solid areas of gold leaf. Overall, the surface monotony of her hair is relieved by the glistening gold highlights and the casually draped hair belt at her waist.

The fact that the *Magdalen* stands on an uneven patch of rocky ground is also an element of the tale in the *Golden Legend*. It states that "Mary. . .moved by her wish to live in contemplation of the things of God, retired to a mountain cave which the hands of angels had made ready for her. . . ."[6] Furthermore, her left foot appears to be positioned on a steep slope of the rock. This indicates a raised surface, suggesting a high elevation or a mountain, and bears strong resemblance to the Magdalen's environment on a late thirteenth century altarpiece in Florence by the so-called Master of the Magdalen (Figure 3). This panel contains scenes from the life of the Magdalen which surround her central figure. A very interesting fact about this panel is that it contains scenes illustrating her life as described in the *Golden Legend*. The mountain from Donatello's statue can especially be noted in the scene where the Magdalen is being raised to Heaven by the angels. In contrast, an earlier wooden *Magdalen* from Pescia, that has been dated no later than the second or third decade of the fifteenth century, clearly shows the penitent Magdalen, but the sculptor has made no attempt to place her on a rocky base. She stands with flat feet on a smooth surface that in no way places her in the wilderness landscape. Donatello's *Magdalen*, on the other hand, is obviously situated atop her rocky retreat.

In addition to these other elements, the Magdalen's gesture of prayer in Donatello's statue also ties this depiction to the *Golden Legend*. The oldest and most common prayer gesture in the European tradition is the raising of the hands upwards to either side of the head.[7] But after the twelfth century, the new method of prayer where the hands are held in front of the body, became popular. Furthermore, there is a connection between this gesture and the act of penance. According to the rite of penance in a Roman Pontifical of the thirteenth century, the sinner places his hands into the hands of the priest and speaks three times the phrase "Into thy hands, o Lord, I commend my spirit."[8] Thus, it is probable that Donatello was aware of this gesture as one of prayer and its implications of penance, by now the predominant means of praying in his century. His *Magdalen* raises her hands in this gesture of prayer, yet they are not quite joined together. This is similar to the Magdalen's prayer gestures on the altarpiece by the Master of the Magdalen. In three of the scenes she is shown with her hands raised in prayer, but without them touching. There are further implications that link this gesture to the act of Holy Communion which will be discussed later in this paper in reference to the *Magdalen's* placement in the Baptistery. Thus, Donatello used the folded hand gesture, but changed it slightly to suit a particular illustration.

Representations of the Magdalen in penance in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are similar in type, usually showing her dressed only in her hair.[9] In addition to the wooden

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[3] Strom "Studies," 110.

[4] Moshe Barasch, *Giotto and the Language of Gesture* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1987) 177, n. 7.

[5] As noted by Strom "Studies," 5.

[6] Voragine 360.

[7] Barasch 56-71.

[8] Ladner's article mainly discusses portraits of popes in prayer from Innocent III to John XXII, with an explanation of the change that occurred towards the attitude of prayer during the central part of the Middle Ages. He states that this is taken from Ps. 30:6 and also corresponds to Luke 23:46, Christ's last prayer on the cross. Thus, this statement, spoken along with the gesture of the folded hands, emphasizes what Ladner described as the surrender of body and soul to God. See G. B. Ladner, "The Gestures of Prayer in Papal Iconography of the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries," *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies in History and Art* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1983) 225.

[9] Donatello's wood carving technique, and the chronology and observations concerning the Tuscan wooden penitent Magdalen tradition (of the long hair and three bony ridges on the chest) used for this paper

Magdalen from Pescia, the *Magdalen* from Empoli, dating 1455, is also covered entirely in hair. Yet despite the established tradition for penitent Magdalens and the subsequent influence of his work, Donatello strays from the established norms. His innovations transform the image into a complex expression of human anatomy and spirituality, while the other statues of the Magdalen appear to be lifeless and empty of emotional content. The hair of Donatello's *Magdalen* falls realistically onto her knees and thighs, and appears to have natural highlights. Her face tilts upwards in spiritual torment, which contrasts with the rather lifeless depiction of the penitent *Magdalen* from around 1455 attributed to Desiderio da Settignano, in Florence. Donatello's *Magdalen* is fully lifesize and stands naturally with the ease of potential movement. Her hands are not locked in a static gesture of prayer, but are ascending, thus emphasizing the heightened sense of turmoil and upward movement. Her spiritual fervor is made concrete by the careful articulation of physical anatomy and as such this religious emotion cannot be overlooked by the viewer.

An important aspect of Donatello's penitent *Magdalen* that still needs to be discussed concerns the intended location of the statue in the fifteenth century, and how it would have functioned in its original context. The fact that the original patron, location and purpose of the *Magdalen* is unknown makes this difficult. In Janson's monograph on Donatello, he has documented early literary sources which mention Donatello's *Magdalen*. The earliest dated document that names the statue is a notice in the *Spogli Strozziani* of Oct. 30, 1500, which states, "The image of St. Mary Magdalen that used to be in the Baptistery and was then removed and put in the workshop, is being put back in the church."[10] This statement implies that before the year 1500, the statue had already been in the Florence Baptistery, but had been removed. There are five additional notices of Donatello's *Magdalen* in sources before 1550, each saying that the statue is in the Baptistery.[11] Needless to say, they still do not give a clue as to whether or not it was originally intended for the Baptistery, or who may have commissioned it. Scholars have suggested its original placement to be anywhere from the Florence Cathedral to other smaller churches in Florence.[12] Because any conclusion concerning its location is speculative, and most of the documentation we do have points to locating the statue in the Baptistery, I will support the claim that this statue was originally intended for the Baptistery by illustrating how well it fits into the overall decorative program.

The first task is to demonstrate where the statue would have been placed in the Baptistery's interior. In 1550, Vasari stated that "in the Baptistery, opposite the tomb of Pope Giovanni Coscia, there is a St. Mary Magdalen in Penitence, of wood, by Donatello, very beautiful and well executed."[13] The Coscia tomb, begun around 1425 by Donatello and Michelozzo, is located on the northwest wall of the Baptistery (Figure 5, right), but because the building has eight sides, Vasari's statement can be interpreted in two ways. The statue could either be directly opposite the tomb on the southeast wall, or across from the tomb on the southwest wall (Figure 4). Both Janson and Pope-Hennessey have interpreted this to mean the southwest wall.[14] They state that it remained in this location on the southwest wall until 1688, when it was put into storage. Then in 1735 it was installed against the southeast wall in a niche, shown in a 1910 photograph. In 1921 it was removed from the niche and replaced in its old location at the southwest wall, where it remained until the Baptistery flooded in 1966. Thus, the indicated southwest location of the *Magdalen* mentioned by Vasari, despite all the moving around, will be used for the purpose of this paper (Figure 5, left). This may seem confusing and unimportant at this point, but in the discussion about how the statue fits into the decorative program, the location of the statue in the Baptistery is significant.

If indeed the *Magdalen* was originally meant to be placed on the southwest wall, how would it have functioned in relation to the architecture (Figure 5)? The niche in which the

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follows that which was set up by Strom in "Studies," and "New Chronology." See these resources for images of the *Magdalen* from Empoli and the penitent *Magdalen* attributed to Desiderio da Settignano which could not be reproduced in this paper.

[10] This reference recorded among the *Spogli Strozziani* is published by Karl Frey in *Le Vite. . .di Giorgio Vasari*, I (Munich, 1911) 347. See Janson 190.

[11] The following references are recorded in Janson 190:

1510 Albertini, p. 8: "In the Baptistery there is a St. Mary Magdalen by the hand of Donatello. . ."; (before 1530) Billi, pp. 32f, *s.v.* "Brunelleschi": "He did a St. Mary Magdalen for the church of S. Spirito, which was destroyed by fire, . . .a most excellent work, beyond comparison with those of Donatello in the Baptistery"; 40f, *s.v.* "Donatello": "He did the figure of St. Mary Magdalen which is now in the Baptistery"; (*c.* 1550) Gelli, 59: "Donatello did the St. Mary Magdalen which is in the Baptistery, a marvelous work."; 1550 Vasari-Ricci, pp. 48f (Milanesi, 400): "In the Baptistery, opposite the tomb of Pope Giovanni Coscia, there is a St. Mary Magdalen in Penitence, of wood, by Donatello, very beautiful and well executed. She is consumed by fasting and abstinence, and every part of her body shows a perfect knowledge of anatomy." (A shortened paraphrase in Borghini, *Riposo*, 318).

[12] Strom states that the Magdalen could have been moved to the Baptistery from the Duomo when the patronage of the original chapel which housed it declined. She also suggests that the statue could have been housed in one of the several churches and oratories that were dedicated to the Magdalen in fourteenth century Florence. These sites include the church of S. M. Maddalena ad Pedem S. Giorgio, which was destroyed in 1710, and the church of S. Giovanni dei Cavalieri, which was initially an oratory and home for fallen women called S. M. Maddalena. See Strom, "Studies," 107-8, esp. n. 33. Another scholar who does not think the Magdalen was originally meant for the Baptistery is Settesoldi. He bases this claim on the fact that the back of Donatello's Magdalen is fully carved. Settesoldi, *Donatello e l'Opera del Duomo di Firenze* (Florence: Firenze La Mandragora, 1986) 60-62, as cited in Pope-Hennessy 346, n.14.

[13] As cited in Janson 190.

[14] Janson 190, and Pope-Hennessy 346. n.14.

Magdalen stands in the 1910 photograph no longer exists and was not a part of the architecture of the Baptistery in the fifteenth century, either. It seems likely that the statue would have stood along the wall placed between the two central columns. These columns stand out from the wall, demarcating a natural space in which to place a large statue such as the *Magdalen*. Also, the gold on the statue provided a visual connection to the gold decoration in the Baptistery. Thus, the statue would have been well integrated with the architectural features of the Baptistery. Likewise, the Coscia tomb, just opposite the *Magdalen*, also had visual and structural links uniting it to the architecture of the Baptistery.[15] The canopy was originally painted in white, red and green brocade, matching the white and green marble of the Baptistery's walls, and the cornice of the Baptistery supports this canopy. Furthermore, like the *Magdalen's* proposed position, the Coscia tomb is placed between the two central columns.

Because Donatello's statue depicts the penitent Magdalen, emphasizing the transformation from her previous life of sin to her redemptive state, it plays a significant part in the overall decorative program in the Baptistery. Since the Middle Ages, Baptisteries were thought of as gateways leading the baptized into the Heavenly City. Baptism is the sacrament that washes away sin and opens the door to Heaven. St. Thomas Aquinas wrote that

> to open the Gate of the Kingdom of Heaven is to remove the obstacle that prevents anyone from entering the heavenly kingdom. This obstacle is sin and the guilt of punishment. It has been shown above all that baptism completely removes all sin.[16]

Eloise Angiola, in "*Gates of Paradise* and the Florentine Baptistery," states that the interior decoration of the Baptistery, along with the three sets of bronze doors, all conform to an overall theme of redemption through Christ and the sacrament of baptism.[17] Andrea Pisano's doors depict scenes from the life of John the Baptist, while Ghiberti's first set of doors illustrates the life of Christ. Thus, Angiola asserts that through John the Baptist and baptism, one can enter into life in the Church. Then, it is through Christ that one enters the Kingdom of Heaven. The scenes on Ghiberti's second set of doors depict acts of faith from the Old Testament. Angiola points out that Paul wrote in his letter to the Hebrews that it is through their faith that the men and women from the Old Testament are saved. Thus, each set of doors shows the way to the Gate of Heaven.

Like the bronze doors, the rich mosaics that decorate the dome of the Baptistery, dating from the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, include scenes from the Old Testament and from the lives of John the Baptist and Christ. The arrangement centers on the figure of Christ enthroned on Judgment Day. On this day the heavens are opened up to those who are baptized. Here Christ is seated, surrounded by angels, saints, prophets and Apostles, reminding the viewer of what is to come.

In addition, the Coscia tomb also ties into this overall theme of redemption. Baldassare Coscia had been Pope John XXIII, but after being accused of several crimes, was forced to abdicate the papacy and was imprisoned for three years. The fact that his tomb is placed in the Baptistery signifies a connection between his penance, death, and possible resurrection and salvation through Christ and baptism. Thus, it has been suggested that the placement of the *Magdalen* statue and the Coscia tomb opposite each other visually signifies their kinship as penitents.[18]

Donatello's *Magdalen* would have thus been viewed in this context of redemption through Christ and baptism. In the Baptistery, she is the shining example of the penitent sinner who has been washed clean of her previous sins. In a sermon, Bernard of Clairvaux discusses the gates of Heaven as described in the Book of Revelation.[19] He says that the eastern gate is the gate of innocence. It is through this gate that little children, born again in baptism, enter. The western gate, on the other hand, is the gate of penitence. Mary Magdalen, because of her sins, had to enter through this portal. He states "through this gate enter the penitents, who. . .when they receive light from the Sun of Justice, enter into Jerusalem above through the gate of penitence."[20] Thus, it is clear that Donatello's statue is in its proper place against the south*west* wall of the church, because the *west* is the gate of penitence. His statue perfectly illustrates the sermon's image of the repentant sinner and can be viewed as such in the overall context of redemption through Christ and Baptism in the decorative program.

One final note which makes concrete this placement of the *Magdalen* on the southwest wall of the Baptistery concerns her gesture and the movement of her body toward the altar. If the viewer standing in the Baptistery in front of the southwest wall (Figure 5, left) visualizes the *Magdalen* in this position, it would be noted that she appears to be looking and moving toward the Baptistery's altar. Her head is turned to her left in the direction of the altar and her left foot seems to be pointing there as well. This is significant because directly above the altar in the mosaics is the image of Christ. In addition, not only does her gesture carry connotations of prayer and penance, it also has an important connection to Holy Communion. The fact that her hands are held up at chest level, and are somewhat open, could imply the moment just prior to receiving Communion, the body of Christ. Furthermore, this connection to Communion is even more evident when one again looks at the altarpiece of the Magdalen Master from the late thirteenth century (Figure 3). In the three scenes where the Magdalen is encountering the body of Christ, she holds her hands slightly open and apart in this raised position. This can be viewed in the scenes of the Resurrection, an angel bringing her Communion, and a priest bringing her Communion. Thus, in the position on the southwest wall of the Baptistery, the *Magdalen* is turning toward the image of Christ above the altar and is holding her hands in this gesture of prayer, penance and Holy Communion. As such, she truly is a part of the overall decorative program of penance and redemption through Christ.

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[15] For further information about the Coscia tomb, see S. McHam, "Donatello's Tomb of Pope John XXIII," *Life and Death in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, ed. Marcel Tetel, Ronald Witt, and Rona Goffen (Durham: Duke UP, 1989) 146-173.

[16] As quoted in E. Angiola, "Nicola Pisano, Federigo Visconti, and the Classical Style in Pisa," *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977): 7.

[17] E. Angiola, "*Gates of Paradise* and the Florentine Baptistery," *Art Bulletin* 60 (1978): 242-248.

[18] McHam 168.

[19] Angiola makes the connection between Bernard's sermon on the gates of Heaven and Baptisteries in *Gates of Paradise*, 245.

[20] As quoted in Angiola, *Gates of Paradise*, 245.

In conclusion, it is clear that Donatello's wooden *Magdalen* is illustrative of a particular period in her life, specifically her retreat in the wilderness as described in the *Golden Legend*. Elements of the statue identify it as such, including her age, specifics of her gesture and hair, and the fact that she appears to be standing on rocky ground. This image of the Magdalen also becomes a "type" for penance. This intense depiction of the penitent Magdalen takes its place in the Florence Baptistery as part of the decorative program of redemption. Through her rejection of her sinful life and her penance in the wilderness, as described in the *Golden Legend*, she now has access to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Florida State University

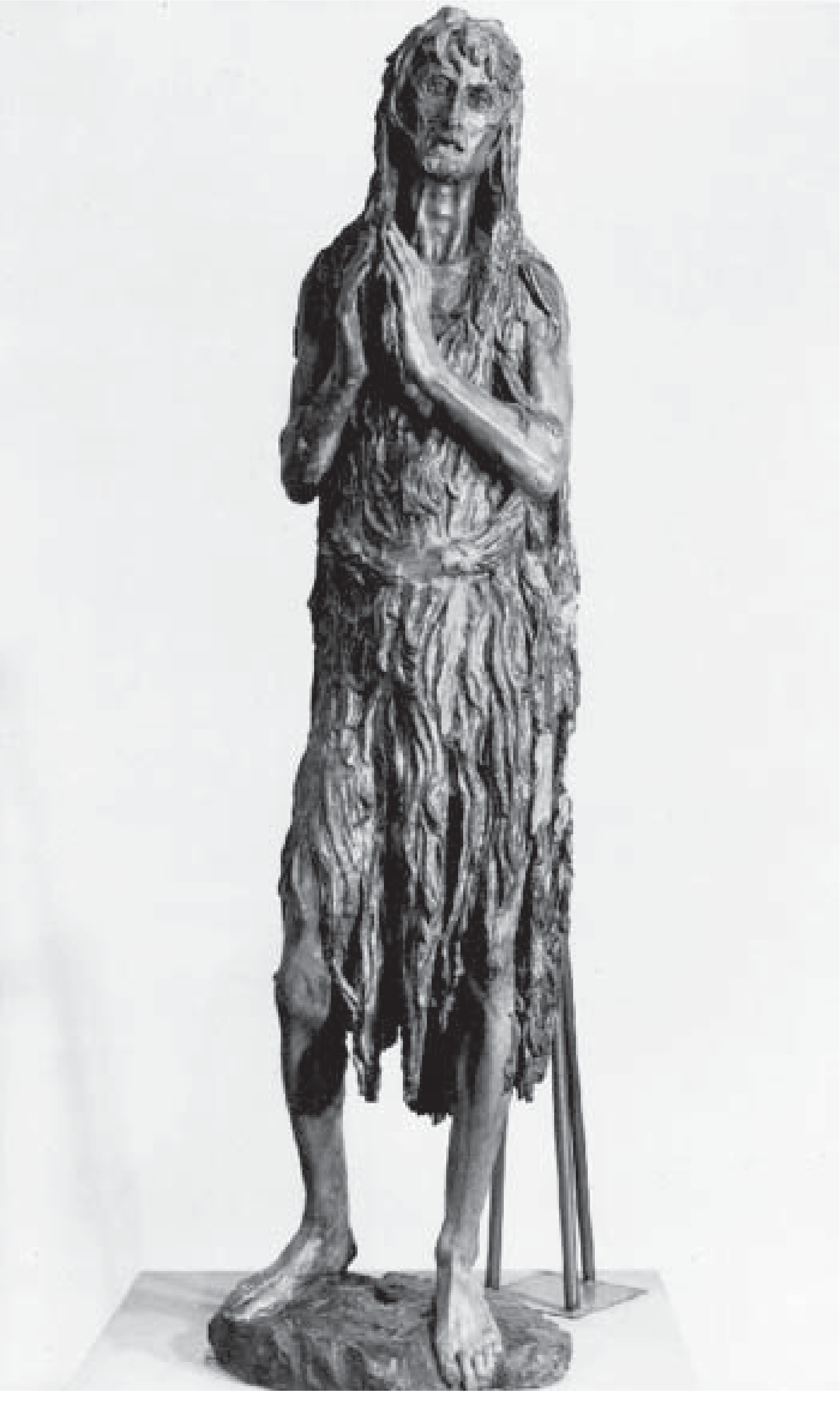

Figure 1. Donatello, *St. Mary Magdalen*, late 1430s-early 1440s, wood, h. 184 cm, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Florence. Courtesy of Alinari / Art Resource, New York.

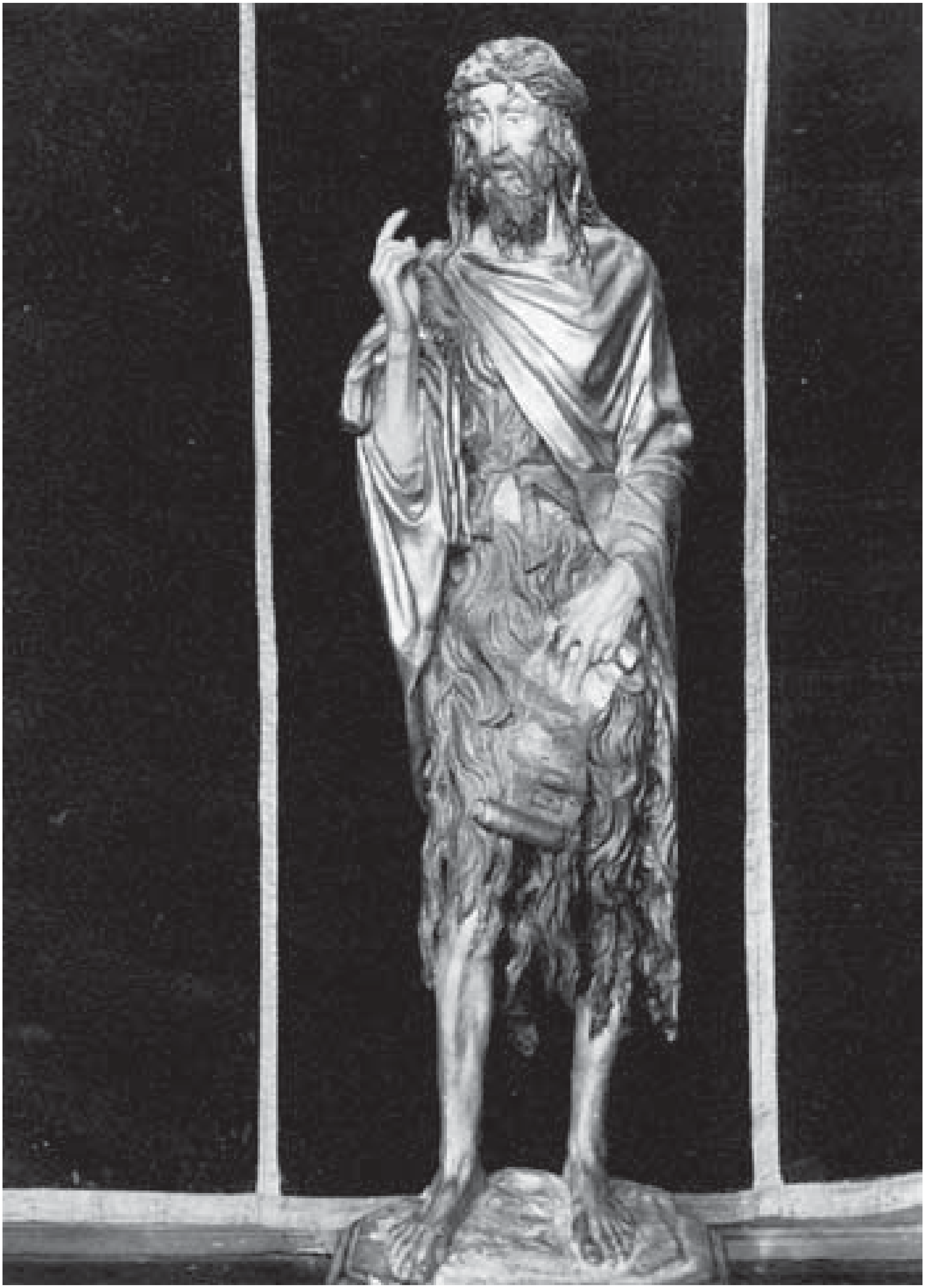

Figure 2. Donatello, *St. John the Baptist*, 1438, wood, h. 140 cm, Santa Maria dei Frari, Venice. Courtesy of Alinari / Art Resource, New York.

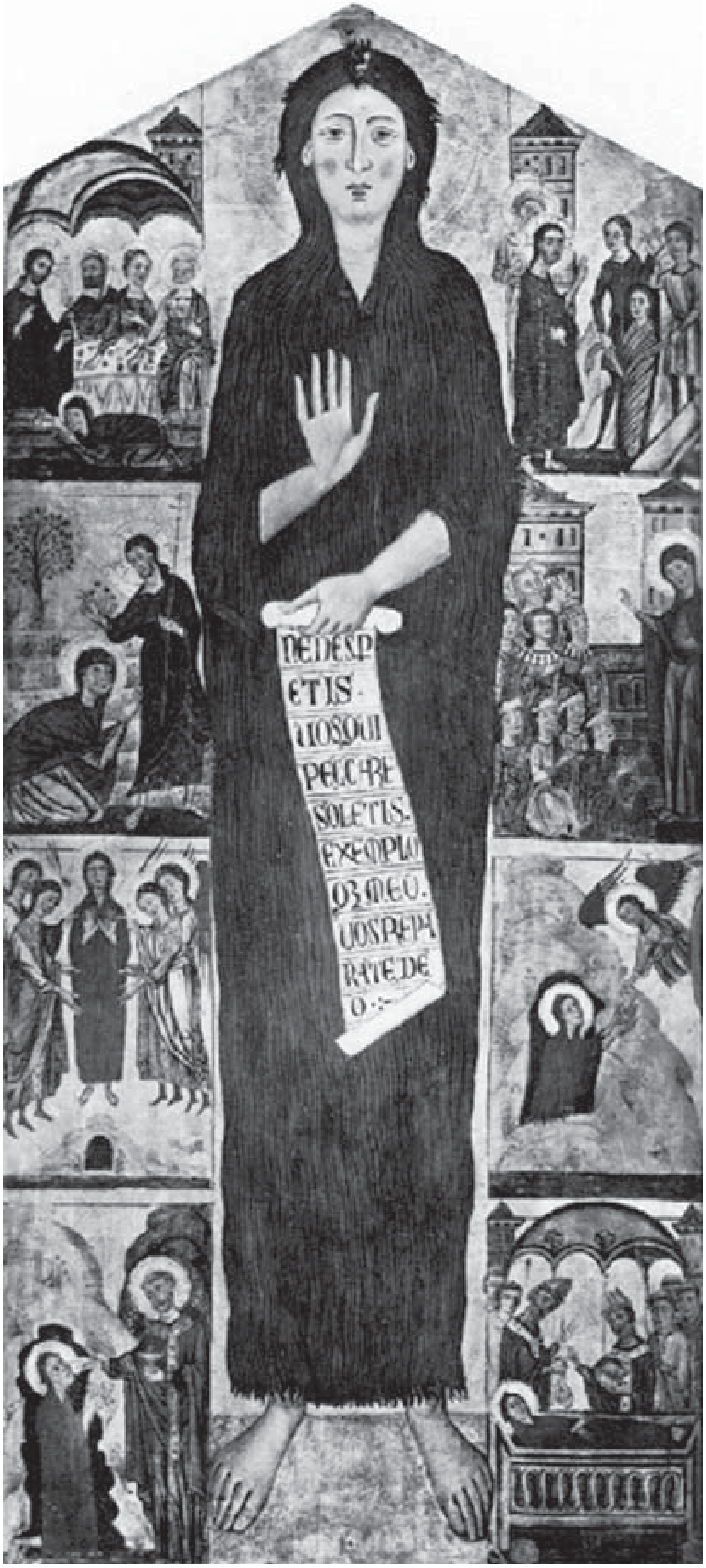
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Figure 3. Master of the Magdalen Altarpiece, *Altarpiece*, late thirteenth century, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. Courtesy of Alinari / Art Resource, New York.

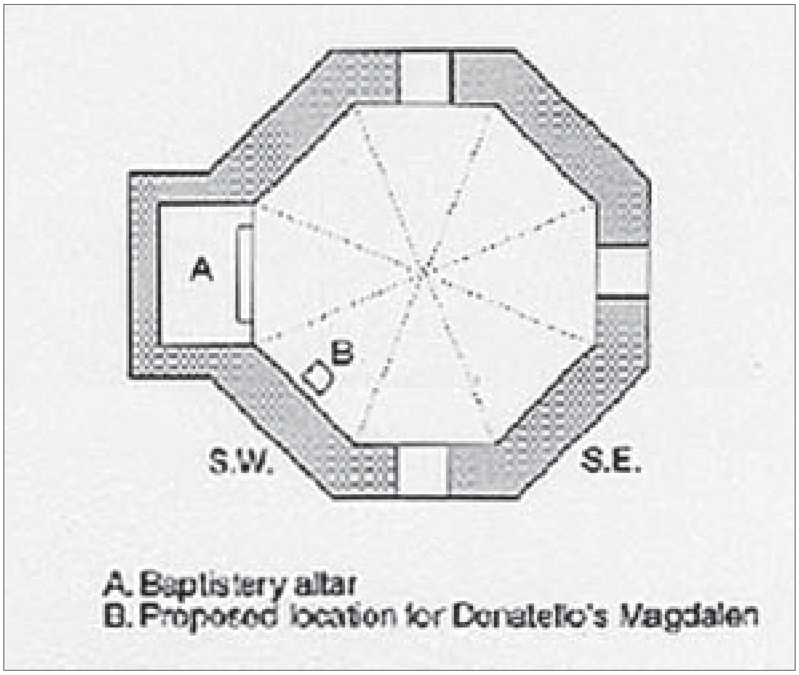
A
B
S.W.
S.E.
A. Baptistery altar
B. Proposed location for Donatello's Magdalen

Figure 4. Plan of Florence Baptistery. Courtesy of Peter Kraft, Florida Resource and Environmental Analysis Center, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

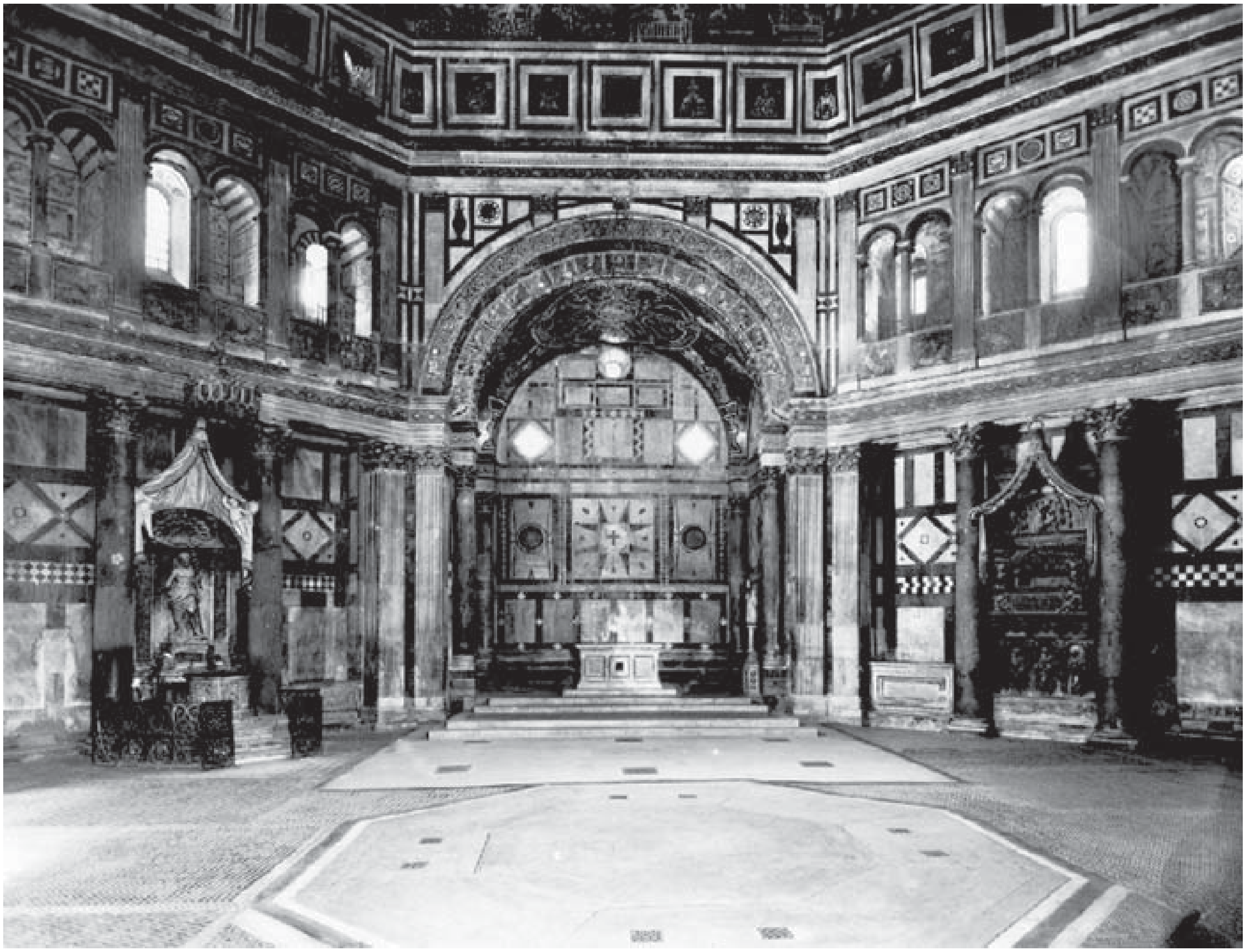

Figure 5. Interior view towards the altar, Baptistery, Florence. Courtesy of Alinari / Art Resource, New York.

Lux Mundi: The Vault Mosaic in the Cappella S. Elena, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome

Cynthia A. Payne

In the last two decades of the fifteenth century and the first decade of the sixteenth, the Spanish cardinals Pedro Gonzàlez de Mendoza and Bernaldin Lopez de Carvajal sponsored the refurbishment and redecoration of the Roman church of S. Croce in Gerusalemme, to which they successively held title. During Mendoza's tenure, Antoniazzo Romano and his assistants frescoed the apse of the early Christian basilica with episodes from the Legend of the True Cross.[1] Completed in 1495, the work had been initiated in response to the discovery at S. Croce in 1492 of the *titulus* from the Cross.[2] Significantly, this had occurred on the same day news reached Rome that Spanish forces had subjugated the Moors in Granada.[3] The vaults of the church's Cappella S. Elena were refaced with mosaic during Carvajal's tenure, which ran from 1495 until 1523 (Figure 1).[4] These images emphasize the chapel's role as the Roman site for the commemoration of Christ's death and burial. They include a *Maestas Domini* with angels (Figure 2); the four Evangelists; the Lamb of God; the *Arma Christi*; antique and New World decorative elements; four scenes associated with the Legend of the True Cross;[5] and four saints in shell-crowned niches.[6] Publishing in 1510, Fra Albertini provides a *terminus ante quem* for the mosaic of 1508.[7]

The Sienese painter Baldassare Peruzzi is normally credited with the Cappella S. Elena mosaic design. He is mentioned in association with the project as early as the seventeenth century;[8] and Frommel, in his monograph on the artist, concludes that the mosaic's figures have more affinity with those known to be by Peruzzi than with those produced by other major artists working in Rome in the first decade of the sixteenth century.[9] The attribution, however, is by no means secure. Stylistic comparison is impeded by the paucity of works from Peruzzi's first decade of activity in Rome. In addition, the mosaic evinces a range of figural treatments, from the flexible, animated body style of the Evangelists, consistent with Peruzzi's work, to the weightier, more volumetric style of the niche figures, explained by Frommel as the result of the artist's on-going study of Roman antiquities.[10] Seemingly incompatible with the Evangelists and niche figures is the installation's most striking feature, the subtly modeled, but hieratically posed, half-length representation of the *Maestas Domini* at the apex of the cross vault. It resembles an image of the Redeemer in tempera on panel from Morcione Cathedral attributed to the circle of Antoniazzo Romano, an artist whose deliberately archaizing style is the hallmark of the local Roman tradition in the second half of the

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The thoughts and research represented by this preliminary reading of the iconography of the Cappella S. Elena mosaic, which will be the subject of my doctoral dissertation, have been guided by Professors Shelley E. Zuraw and Caecilia Davis-Weyer. I am most grateful for their contributions and encouragement.

[1] For sources pertinent to the attribution history of these undocumented frescoes, see Meredith J. Gill, "Antoniazzo Romano and the Recovery of Jerusalem in Late Fifteenth-Century Rome," *Storia dell'arte* 83 (1995): 40-41n2. The article focuses on the frescoes and their historical context. Mendoza, who was represented in Rome by his nephew Iñigo López de Mendoza, the second count of Tendilla (Helen Nader, *The Mendoza Family in the Spanish Renaissance: 1350 to 1550* [New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1979] 190), began the renovation of the basilica of S. Croce in the late 1480s (Claudio Varagnoli, *S. Croce in Gerusalemme: La basilica restaurata e l'architettura del Settecento romano* [Rome: Bonsignori, 1995] 24, and Gill 34).

[2] Gill 34 and 43n35.

[3] Gill 33.

[4] Color photographs of the mosaic appear in Carlo Bertelli, ed., *Mosaics*, trans. Paul Foulkes and Sara Harris (New York: Gallery, 1989) 246-47. Carvajal lost the title of S. Croce after the 1511 Council of Pisa, but it was restored to him in 1513.

[5] Christoph Luitpold Frommel identifies the scenes as *The Destruction of the Three Crosses after the Crucifixion*, *The Emperor Constantine Preceded by the Cross in Battle*, *The Proving of the Cross*, and *The Adoration of the Cross* in *Baldassare Peruzzi als Maler und Zeichner*, Beiheft zum Römischen Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 11 (Vienna: Schroll, 1967/68): 58.

[6] They are Saints Peter, Paul, Silvester, and Helena, at whose feet Carvajal kneels. A detail with Paul appears in Frommel, pl. IXa.

[7] Frommel 57 and 57n219, who cites the sixteenth-century author's *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae urbis Romae*, ed. A. Schmarsow (Heilbronn, 1886) 6f. The Albertini text has been published more recently, as *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae & veteris urbis Romae*, in *Five Early Guides to Rome and Florence* (Westmead, Farnborough, Hants., Eng.: Gregg Intl., 1972), where the chapel entry appears in the author's third book under the sub-heading "De nonnullis aecclesiis & cappellis" (p. X, ii).

[8] For the first time, apparently, by G. Mancini in *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, as cited by Frommel (57 and 57n213), who refers to a 1956 imprint of the work (Rome) edited by A. Marrucchi and L. Salerno (vol. 1, 275 and 314, and vol. 2, 16, and 16n147).

[9] Frommel 57 and 58.

[10] Frommel 58.

fifteenth century and who, again, had frescoed S. Croce's apse.[11] Despite such technical and chronological problems, however, Peruzzi, who worked with Raphael in Rome, remains the artist most likely to have been responsible for the design.[12]

According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, the basilica of S. Croce was established by Constantine the Great in a hall of the Sessorian Palace, the Roman residence of his mother, the Empress Helena.[13] Legend held that, upon her return from the Holy Land, she endowed the tiny oratory adjacent to the basilica's apse with relics she had obtained in Jerusalem, including a fragment of the True Cross and soil from Calvary that had been soaked with Christ's blood. The chapel and, indeed, the entire church thus came to be referred to as *Jerusalem*.[14] How the chapel was decorated in the fourth century is not known, but in the fifth century the dowager Empress Galla Placidia, who ruled the western half of the Christian empire from 425 until her son's marriage in 438, is supposed to have sponsored a mosaic in its vault, a portion of which was said by the authors of sixteenth-century Roman guidebooks to have survived until late in the fifteenth century.[15]

No document has come to light that provides details about the imagery or composition of Galla Placidia's mosaic in the Cappella S. Elena, but Carvajal's eagerness to call attention to her antecedence as a patron there, attested to by the inscription he commissioned for the corridor that leads to the chapel, suggests that his design was influenced by what remained of her installation.[16] By identifying her as "Galla Placidia filia magni Theodosii hispani," he also emphasized her historic association with Spain.[17] Information about Galla Placidia was available to scholars in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in various histories of Ravenna, including Agnellus's ninth-century *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis* and a new chronicle written by Desiderio Spreti *c.* 1460 and published in 1489.[18] Such sources celebrate her support of papal efforts to reestablish Rome as an imperial city, ruled by law and moral authority rather than by might; they document her recognition of the Bishop of Rome as the supreme head of the Church; and they note the importance she attached to being the only surviving child of Theodosius the Great and his second wife, Galla, who through their marriage had united the Christian empire.[19] These themes correspond to Carvajal's longtime commitments to internal Church reform, the reestablishment of the principles of Roman and papal primacy, and the mounting of a new crusade, to be led by the Spanish monarchy, to recover the Holy Land from the Turks.[20] Not incidentally, a fifth-century inscription that survived in the chapel noted the *ex voto* character of Galla Placidia's commission, rendering it an appropriate model for Carvajal's mosaic, which commemorates Spain's 1492 victory over the Moors.[21] Having perceived parallels between his own concerns and the themes of Galla Placidia's patronage, Carvajal may well deliberately have emulated the type and the content of her chapel.[22]

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[11] The Redeemer panel, undated, is reproduced and discussed by Anna Cavallaro in *Antoniazzo Romano e gli Antoniazzeschi: una generazione di pittori nella Roma del Quattrocento* (Udine: Campanotto, 1992) 430, fig. 196, and 247, no. 114.

[12] As Frommel (57) notes, Gustavo Frizzoni argues for Melozzo da Forlì as the mosaic's designer, basing his conclusions on stylistic considerations ("Melozzo da Forlì: Ispiratore di una insigne opera di decorazione," *Bollettino d'arte* 33 [1916]: 257-65), while characterizing Peruzzi's later role as that of a restorer (265). Discounting Frizzoni's suggestion that the inclusion of the portrait of Carvajal is a modification (265), for Melozzo died in 1494, before Carvajal assumed the S. Croce title, Frommel rejects the Melozzo attribution (57). Vincenzo Golzio, however, revives Frizzoni's argument in part ("La pittura a Roma e nel Lazio," in Golzio and Giuseppe Zander, *L'arte in Roma nel secolo XV* [Bologna: Cappelli, 1968] 274-75), although he admits to the problem of the varied figural treatments. As a further complication, in 1593 Francesco Zucchi, who was later associated with the Vatican mosaic workshop, restored unspecified parts of the chapel's mosaic, and later restoration efforts may well have been necessitated by the chapel's damp conditions. Sergio Ortolani (*S. Croce in Gerusalemme*, Le chiese di Roma illustrate 106, 3rd ed. [Rome, 1997] 68) notes the high humidity.

[13] *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis): The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715*, trans. Raymond Davis (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1989) 22, and Louis Duchesne, *Le Liber Pontificalis: Texte, introduction et commentaire*, vol. 1 (Paris: Boccard, 1955) 179 and 196n75.

[14] The chapel was referred to as such as early as the fifth century and retained the designation throughout the Middle Ages (Richard Krautheimer, *Corpus basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, vol. 1, pt. 3 [Vatican: Pontificio istituto di archeologia Cristiana, 1937] 168). Also see Gill 42n17 regarding the application of the term.

[15] See, for example, Pompeo Ugonio's *Historia delle Stationi di Roma che si celebrano la Quadragesima* (Rome: Bonfadino, 1588) [Bb5v].

[16] See Ilaria Toesca, "A Majolica Inscription in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme," *Essays in the History of Art Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, ed. Douglas Fraser, Howard Hibbard, and Milton J. Lewine, 2nd ed. (London: Phaidon, 1969) 104-05 for a reliable transcription of Carvajal's inscription. I expect Professor Jack Freiberg's ongoing study of Carvajal's patronage at the Tempietto to shed additional light on the Cardinal's intentions at S. Croce.

[17] Galla Placidia's first, and apparently valued, husband was the Visigothic king Athaulf (d. 415), whom she accompanied to Spain *c.* 414 and with whom she had a son. Named Theodosius, the son died soon after birth. Initially, he was buried in a chapel near Barcelona, but Galla Placidia later had his coffin moved to the Theodosian family mausoleum at Old Saint Peter's (Stewart Irvin Oost, *Galla Placidia Augusta: A Biographical Essay* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1968) 103, 131, 133, and 134.

[18] Spreti's *De amplitudine, de vastatione et de instauratione Urbis Ravennae*, which was published in Venice, is cited by Linda A. Koch, "The Early Christian Revival at S. Miniato al Monte: The Cardinal of Portugal Chapel," *Art Bulletin* 78, no. 3 (1996): 540n50.

[19] Oost provides full coverage of Galla Placidia's activities and concerns, with references to supportive texts. See especially Oost 110, 124, 126, 217-20, 252-53, 268, 273, and 289.

[20] These commitments are discussed by Nelson H. Minnich, "The Role of Prophecy in the Career of the Enigmatic Bernardino López de Carvajal," *Prophetic Rome in the High Renaissance Period: Essays*, ed. Marjorie Reeves (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992) 111-20. See especially 112, 114-16, and 118-19.

[21] The inscription is now lost, but Oost provides an English translation of its text (270). Carvajal indicated his knowledge of the votive purpose of Galla Placidia's mosaic at S. Croce in his own inscription.

By the time the papal court returned to Rome from Avignon in 1377, after an absence of sixty-eight years, the city had fallen nearly into ruin. Several quattrocento ecclesiastics, among them Popes Nicholas V at mid-century, Pius II in the early 1460s, and Sixtus IV in the 1470s and 1480s, sponsored projects to refurbish both secular and sacred sites in order to restore the city to its ancient glory. These efforts were the physical manifestation of an even more deeply felt need to revive the moral authority of the Church, as it was embodied in the doctrines and the foundations of Rome's patristic past. Carvajal responded to both concerns by seeking visual and thematic inspiration for his mosaic in the physical and literary remains of Rome's ancient and early Christian heritage. The bust of the *Maestas Domini* explicitly revives a traditional form.[23] This Christ is, at once, the judge representing God the Father and, because he became human and submitted to sacrifice, the means of man's redemption and restoration to Grace. The roundel recalls the *clipei* in which portraits of the dead are framed on early Christian sarcophagi.[24] The Evangelists, who, through their Gospels, communicated this message to the four corners of the earth, mediate visually between Christ and the arrangements of *all'antica* elements that rise from the springing points of the vault. Reminiscent of the fanciful ancient embellishments so popular in the Renaissance, these grotesques represent both the pagan forerunners of the Evangelists who prophesied Christ's advent and unredeemed man to whom Christ's message is addressed. Some of these decorative elements, including the peacocks, recall incidental features of many an early Christian and medieval apse or vault mosaic.[25] Finally, the angels surrounding the bust of Christ indicate Carvajal's familiarity with the pseudo-Dionysius's treatise on the hierarchy of angels. This fifth- or sixth-century treatise explained that angels are the conduit of God's gifts to man, and thus are the agents of the soul's perfection and its union with the Divine.[26] The ordering of images in the vault echoes the directional movement down and then up, from Christ to man and from man to Christ, expressed in the treatise. The Evangelists provide God's message to unredeemed man, and unification with God may be achieved through acceptance of the message. This connection and the pseudo-Dionysius's characterization of God's gifts as transcendental light explain in part the text displayed in the *Maestas Domini*'s open book: "EGO / SVM / LVX / MVNDI / A ET Ω" ("I am the light of the world, the alpha and the omega"). The emphasis on light trades on the reflectivity of the mosaic's tiny glass *tesserae* and marble chips.[27]

Topping the fanciful constructions that support the Evangelists' frames are half-length, nude, winged male figures. They are central to tying this part of Carvajal's iconographic program to comparable designs from the early Christian period. Figures rising on the diagonal from the springing points of a vault and meeting at the vault's apex, where they support with their upraised arms and hands roundels with representations or symbols of Christ, may have been used for the first time in a now-destroyed chapel in Rome, the Oratory of the Holy Cross at the Lateran Baptistery.[28] It was for this chapel, established in the 460s, that Pope Hilary appropriated the relic of the Cross that had resided at S. Croce since the previous century.[29] Although the Oratory of the Holy Cross was razed in 1588, its appearance is recorded in numerous descriptions, engravings, and drawings, and Baldassare Peruzzi is known to have visited

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[22] I would like to thank Professor Davis-Weyer for calling my attention to an unpublished honors thesis by Natalie Loomis ("The Patronage of the Empress Galla Placidia," Tulane U, 1994), which introduced me to the themes of and sources for the empress's patronage.

[23] Compare it, for example, to the Christ Pantocrator in the crossing vault of the Cappella Palatina, Palermo, from *c.* 1143, reproduced in Bertelli (191).

[24] Among the many examples is a fourth-century sarcophagus at S. Ambrogio, Milan, a detail from the lid of which is reproduced in André Grabar, *Early Christian Art: From the Rise of Christianity to the Death of Theodosius*, trans. Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons (New York: Odyssey, 1968) 263.

[25] Note the portion of the mosaic in the annular vault at S. Costanza, Rome (mid-fourth century), that is reproduced in Grabar (191) and the peacocks near the base of the apse mosaic at S. Clemente, Rome (*c.* 1125), reproduced in Bertelli (184-85). The peacocks evoke the authority of earlier eras in the Cappella S. Elena, as well as the ideas with which they have traditionally been associated, including Paradise and resurrection. They also may be intended as specific references to the chapel's female patrons, for in Roman times the peacock symbolized an empress's apotheosis (Paul A. Underwood, "The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 [1950; rpt. 1967]: 88n186).

[26] This aspect of the role of angels is summarized in the chapter of *The Celestial Hierarchy* in which the author explains what the term angel signifies: "it is they who first are granted the divine enlightenment and it is they who pass on to us these revelations which are so far beyond us. . . . it was the angels who uplifted our illustrious ancestors toward the divine . . . ." (from Pseudo-Dionysius, the Aeropagite, *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid [New York: Paulist, 1987] 157). Renaissance interest in the old work was enhanced by Ambrogio Traversari's new translation from the Greek (Pal. lat. 148), which prompted his patron, Nicholas V, to express his admiration of and appreciation for its simple classical Latin text (Anthony Grafton, "The Ancient City Restored: Archaeology, Ecclesiastical History, and Egyptology," *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture*, ed. Grafton [Washington: Library of Congress, 1993] 112-14).

[27] Although the angels surrounding the *Maestas Domini* in the Cappella S. Elena are not differentiated visually, as they are by description in the pseudo-Dionysius's treatise, their disposition and their positions in the chains of images established by the mosaic's scheme argue for the treatise's relevance for the chapel program. I agree with, and am grateful for, Professor Paula Gerson's observation (in conversation) that the music-playing angels in front of the *Maestas Domini* will prove to have even greater significance for the program. Not only do they announce the advent of the Lord, but they also evoke the concept of a harmonized universe.

[28] Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980) 50-51 and 130.

[29] Richard Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983) 115 and 119. Thereafter, the popes carried the relic back to S. Croce in Gerusalemme on Good Fridays for the services they celebrated there. Hilary established the Oratory of the Holy Cross in a converted second or third century AD cruciform garden pavilion near the Baptistery (115).

the site.[30] The scheme was often used, thereafter, with clothed figures, in square funerary and martyrial chapels both in Rome and Ravenna.[31] It survives in the vault mosaic of the Cappella S. Zeno at the church of S. Prassede in Rome (Figure 3). This tiny, cruciform chapel was built by Pope Pascal I between 817 and 824 to honor the memory of his mother, Theodora Episcopa, and to house the relics of martyrs he had collected in Rome's ruined cemeteries.[32] Pascal's foundations demonstrate his own interest in the evocation of early Christian themes. His use of mosaic may have been part of this intention.

The figures of Peter and Paul in the barrel vault over the Cappella S. Elena's altar offer further evidence of Carvajal's interest in traditional Christian themes. In association with the Lamb of God, as they appear in the chapel, and along with representations of the four rivers of Paradise, the saints frequently were employed in funerary and other contexts in the early Christian period.[33] In the Cappella S. Elena, the rivers are represented by the Evangelists themselves.[34] Peter has additional significance in this space, ideated as Christ's funerary chapel, because Christ was said to have died a second time in Peter. Furthermore, it is tempting to see in the composition of the chapel's cross vault a reference to the Constantinian ciborium over the crypt at Old Saint Peter's.[35] The link with that church is strengthened by the disposition of Peter and Paul to the left and right of the altar in the Cappella S. Elena, recalling their positioning in the apse mosaic of Old Saint Peter's—and in the many early Christian and medieval Roman decorative programs based on its design.[36] In all cases, the pairing reinforces the principles of papal primacy and authority, claims challenged in the early sixteenth century, but argued for vehemently by Carvajal, who himself campaigned for the papacy in 1521.[37]

Finally, three seemingly incidental features of the mosaic demonstrate most convincingly the conjunction of the thematic concerns of Carvajal and Galla Placidia. They are the pineapples and ears of maize that embellish the vaults' lush garlands and the parrot that appears in the barrel vault over the altar. As decorative elements inspired by the flora and fauna of the western hemisphere, they refer to Spain's recently established claims to the New World. They announced the Spanish monarchs' intention of effecting the end of Islam and their anticipated dominion over a unified Christian world.[38]

The mosaic in the Cappella S. Elena represents the realization of ambitions more modestly expressed in numerous late quattrocento and early cinquecento decorative schemes in Rome. In the vault of the Stanza della Segnatura, for example, where the scenes are compartmentalized in the antique manner, as they are in Carvajal's vault, mosaic was simulated with paint. Invariably, the counterfeit mosaic appears in those portions of compositions that connote the eternal realm, providing backdrops for divine or allegorical figures and identifying the patron with the splendid donors of the city's imperial and early Christian past.[39] It is thus to be expected that, when true mosaics were made, their high cost and the difficulty of finding skilled workmen would underscore the spiritual value of the image and magnify the patron's importance.[40] This potential for aggrandizement reaches its highest level in the Cappella S. Elena, where the mosaic solidifies the funerary chapel's connection with the mosaic-encrusted Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and thus allies the church's custodian, Carvajal, and the monarchs he served, Ferdinand and Isabella, with Christendom's most distinguished imperial patrons, Constantine the Great and his mother Helena.[41] Perhaps the most important implication in the use of mosaic in the Cappella S. Elena, though, has to do with the place the chapel had in the long-established effort to cast Rome as a new Jerusalem.

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[30] Caecilia Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art, 300-1150: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1971) 34. the program of the Oratory's vault mosaic is preserved in a drawing by Giuliano da Sangallo (Vatican Library, Barb. lat. 4424, fol. 33r), who also visited the site c. 1500. The four semi-nude supporting figures may have been retained from the pagan building, and the roundel with the cross may have been Hilary's only addition to the decorative scheme (Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile* 51, where the drawing is reproduced [fig. 47]).

[31] Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile* 51. Karl Lehmann ("The Dome of Heaven," *Art Bulletin* 27 [1945]: 1-27) takes the tradition back to centralized pre-Christian funerary and martyrial buildings and chambers of the Hellenistic period and discusses thematic parallels between Christian and pagan caryatids.

[32] Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile* 123 and 130.

[33] This ensemble of images is found, for example, painted on the walls of the Crypt of the Saints in the catacomb of SS. Pietro e Marcellino, Rome (late fourth century; reproduced in Grabar 213), where Peter and Paul flank an enthroned Christ.

[34] Reliefs of Christ, Peter, Paul, the four rivers, the symbols of the Evangelists, the Lamb of God, and adoring angels decorate a ninth-century Roman silver gilt casket found in this century in the main altar of the Sancta Sanctorum (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Museo Sacro, Inv. No. 1888; see in *The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art* [New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982] 101). A statement made by John the Deacon in the twelfth-century suggests that the casket is one that contained a reliquary of the True Cross (*Vatican Collections* 101).

[35] The Constantinian ciborium is thought to be the shrine represented on the c. 400 ivory casket from Pola, Istria (Venice, Museo Archeologico), which is reproduced in *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century*, ed. Kurt Weitzmann (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979), 595, fig. 83. Professor Davis-Weyer has recently brought to my attention Margherita Guarducci's attempt to link the canopy represented on the Pola casket to S. Croce ("La capsella eburnea di Samagher: Un cimelio di arte paleocristiana nella storia del tardo Impero," *Atti e memorie della Società Istriana di Archeologia e Storia Patria* 26, n.s. [1978]).

[36] The lost apse mosaic was documented by Giacomo Grimaldi early in the seventeenth century in a watercolor that is reproduced in Grimaldi, *Descrizione della basilica antica di S. Pietro in Vaticano: Codice Barberini latino 2733*, ed. Reto Niggl (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica, 1972) 196-97. Its images include Peter and Paul flanking an enthroned Christ, the four rivers of Paradise, and the Lamb of God.

[37] Minnich 118. The cardinal's focus on Peter was not simply an expression of his ambition, however; throughout his career, because of his commitment to Church reform, he demonstrated devotion to the saint (Josephine Jungić, "Joachimist Prophecies in Sebastiano del Piombo's Borgherini Chapel and Raphael's *Transfiguration*," *Prophetic Rome in the High Renaissance Period: Essays*, ed. Marjorie Reeves [Oxford: Clarendon, 1992] 325).

[38] These themes permeate a homily Carvajal delivered before the Emperor Maximilian in 1508 at the collegiate church of St. Rumold, Mechelen (Minnich 113-16). The conjunction in date of the homily and the execution of the Cappella S. Elena mosaic suggests the relevance of the homily's content for the chapel's program. Color details of the pineapples, maize, and parrot are available in Simona Antellini, "Cappella di Sant'Elena: Restauro del mosaico e degli affreschi della volta," *La basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme a Roma: Quando l'antico è futuro*, ed. Anna Maria Affanni (Viterbo: BetaGamma, 1997) 133 and 134.

[39] The Stanza was Pope Julius II's library and a setting in which ties with pagan and patristic Rome were otherwise celebrated visually.

Today, the vault mosaics dominate the Cappella S. Elena, presenting a repertoire of images that can be read as independent entities or in concert. The design's significance cannot be fully understood in isolation, however; it must be interpreted in the context of the chapel's entire early sixteenth-century program of decoration. Little besides the mosaic survives, but much of the program's content may be deduced. In all probability, the chapel was fully outfitted with materials and images expressing parity with Christ's tomb. Like those in many contemporary chapels, the pattern of its marble floor may have mirrored that of the vault, and its walls most likely were sheathed in precious, colorful imported marbles. The window over the altar may have contained an image in stained glass, and below it there may have been an altarpiece reflecting the chapel's dedication and purpose, as did an earlier one with representations of the Crucifixion and the Deposition featured in a sketch of the chapel from the circle of Giuliano da Sangallo.[42] Of two features we can speak more certainly: in the chapel's lunettes were female figures whose significance is preserved in the allegories of the Virtues frescoed on those surfaces by Niccolò Circignani *c.* 1590;[43] and the existence of two lateral altars is indicated by the three scenes Rubens painted for the chapel in 1601 and 1602.[44]

In two unexpected sources may be found the means of reconstructing even more precisely the chapel's early sixteenth-century fittings—late quattrocento monumental wall tombs and the Chigi Chapel at S. Maria del Popolo. Visually stratified, wall tombs, such as Pius III's, divide their messages vertically, making reference near the bottom to the earthly deeds of the deceased; at a higher level to his virtues and his earthly fame; and at the highest level to his hopes for reunification with God in the afterlife.[45] The various tiers of the Cappella S. Elena—the floor, the marble-encrusted walls, the frescoed surfaces, the window, and the mosaic vault—may have functioned in the same manner, expanding on the pseudo-Dionysius's theme. Consideration of the way materials and images were used to express ideas in the Chigi Chapel may also shed light on the lost portions of the Cappella S. Elena's program. The cupola of the former includes the only other mosaic executed in Renaissance Rome. Along with its stucco matrix, the Chigi mosaic defines for this double tomb chapel the uppermost, celestial zone of a visually and notionally unified space—a space traversed, according to Shearman, by communication between the Virgin of the Assumption, once pictured in the altarpiece, and the image of God in the cupola.[46]

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[40] Carlo Bertelli, "Renaissance Mosaics," *Mosaics* 226-56 (see note 4), provides an overview of the incidence of mosaic use in the Renaissance. For the expense and difficulty of producing mosaics in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, see Martin Wackernagel, *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and Patrons, Workshop and Art Market*, trans. Alison Luchs (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980) 27; and, especially, Catherine D. Harding, "Economic Dimensions in Art: Mosaic Versus Wall Painting in Trecento Orvieto," *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honour of Nicolai Rubinstein*, ed. Peter Denley and Caroline Elam (London: Westfield College, U of London Committee for Medieval Studies, 1988): 503-14, and "The Production of Medieval Mosaics: The Orvieto Evidence," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989): 73-102.

[41] Various accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Land provided Europeans with knowledge of the Holy Sepulchre's appearance. The German pilgrim Theoderich, for example, who visited the site between 1171 and 1173, described "the most precious mosaic work, with which the whole of this little chapel is adorned." (See Theoderich, *Guide to the Holy Land*, trans. Aubrey Stewart, ed. Robert G. Musto [New York: Italica, 1986] 9.) Although the Holy Sepulchre was destroyed several times, it was always restored and rebuilt in a manner thought to imitate the Constantinian original (see E. Baldwin Smith, *The Dome: A Study in the History of Ideas* [Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971] 16-17).

[42] The sketch (Florence, Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe, AU 1800) is reproduced in Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "Progetto e archeologia in due disegni di Antonio da Sangallo il Giovane per Santa Croce in Gerusalemme," *Roma: Centro ideale della cultura dell'Antico nei secoli XV e XVI, da Martino V al Sacco di Roma, 1417-1527*, ed. Silvia Danesi Squarzina (Milan: Electa, 1989) 382. Varagnoli dates it to 1506 or 1507 (50n89), and Frommel (*Roma: Centro* 382) suggests the Crucifixion and Deposition frescoes it documents may date to the 1200s.

[43] Circignani is the artist to whom the Virtues normally are attributed, but Antellini, who reproduces a detail from the figure of Wisdom (135), notes (130) that their style has affinities with that of figures in Cristofano Roncalli's scenes from the history of Saint Domitilla in the nave of the church of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo (commissioned 1597).

[44] They are *The Triumph of Saint Helen*, *The Crowning with Thorns*, and *The Erection of the Cross*, panels now in the Chapelle de l'Hôpital, Grasse. The first served the chapel's main altar. Justus Müller Hofstede ("Rubens in Rom, 1601-1602: Die Altargemälde für Sta. Croce in Gerusalemme," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 12 [1970]: 109), discusses the paintings and reproduces the first two (66 and 79), as well as a copy on canvas after the third (89). Because of the chapel's humidity, *c.* 1724 the paintings were moved to the monastic library at S. Croce and thereafter sold (Ortolani 68).

[45] The tomb of Pius III (d. 1503) is reproduced in Daniela Gallavotti Cavallero, Fabrizio D'Amico, and Claudio Strinati, *L'arte in Roma nel secolo XVI: La pittura e la scultura*, Storia di Roma, vol. 29 (Bologna: Cappelli, 1992), vol. 2, pl. CCXIII.

[46] John Shearman, "The Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24 (1961): 142-52. The altarpiece that has served the chapel since the 1530s is Sebastiano del Piombo's *Nativity of the Virgin*, commissioned in 1530 for a program set in most other respects by 1513 (147 and 130). Shearman sees no connection between the Nativity theme and the rest of the chapel's iconography and, basing his reconstruction on drawings, proposes a first plan calling for a composition with a Virgin who seems to be moving upwardly and out from the picture plane and whose glance and gesture are directed toward the equally communicative figure of God. The author's article (129-60) provides a comprehensive discussion of the chapel's iconography.

Raphael's concept of a religious theater enveloping its visitors and celebrants was anticipated in the Cappella S. Elena, where the hypnotic stare and speaking gesture of the *Maestas Domini* transfix the viewer; the rapt gazes of Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Helena (Figure 4) indicate their awareness of the presence of Christ as well;[47] and the different degrees of foreshortening evident in the Evangelists and the niche figures suggests that they exist in the same three-dimensional space as the worshipper. With the addition of the all-encompassing decoration of the floor, walls, and altars, Carvajal's chapel is revealed to be a visual parallel to the Chigi chapel.

The Cappella S. Elena mosaic commission, which re-established the chapel as a worthy proxy for Christ's tomb, provided Carvajal with a forum for the ideas that had given shape to his career. By means of its dependence on early visual and textual sources, his program evoked the material magnificence and moral authority that characterized the early Christian period. Through its references to the Church's most splendid imperial patrons and to current events, his program exalted his own sponsors, the king and queen of Spain, while also calling attention to his homeland's growing importance in secular and ecclesiastical affairs. As the crowning feature of the Cappella S. Elena, the mosaic visually and symbolically unites the past with the present, as it exalts the true glory of Christ, his Church, and his servants.

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[47] Antellini reproduces a detail with the head of John (128).

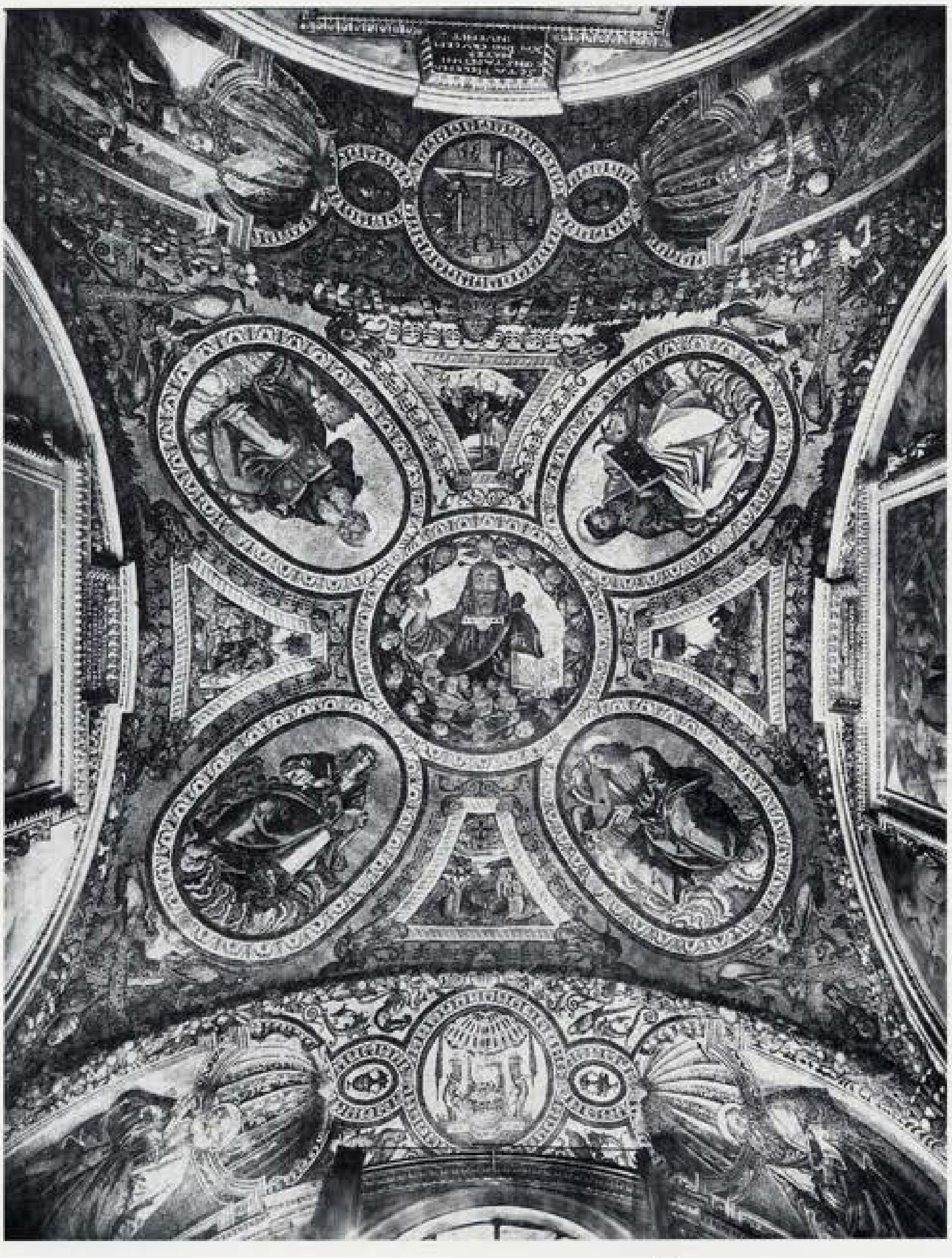

Figure 1. Attributed to Baldassare Peruzzi, vault mosaic, Cappella S. Elena, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome, completed by 1508. Alinari / Art Resource, NY.

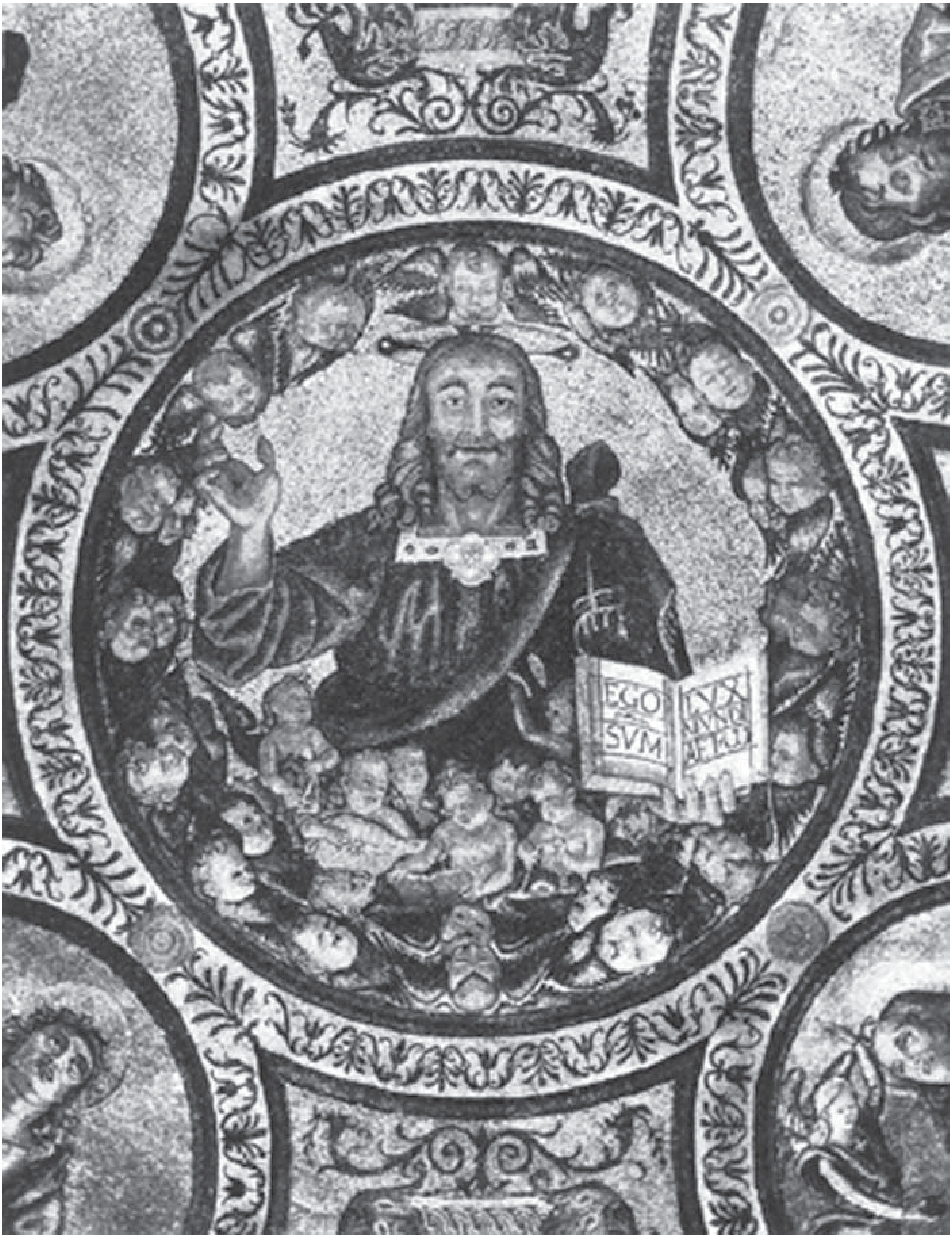

Figure 2. Attributed to Baldassare Peruzzi, *Maestas Domini*, detail of vault mosaic, Cappella S. Elena, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome, completed by 1508. Alinari / Art Resource, NY.

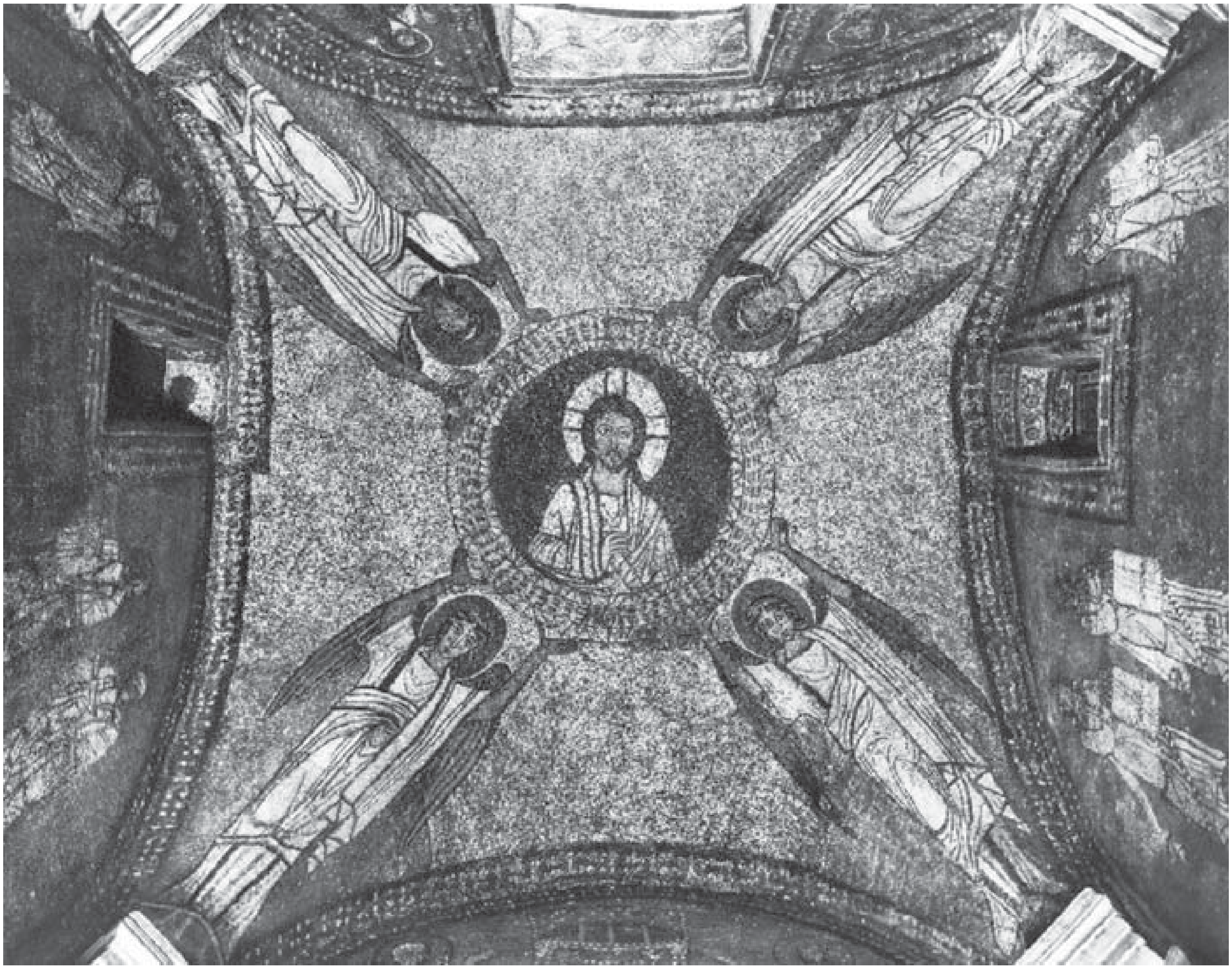

Figure 3. Vault mosaic, Cappella S. Zeno, S. Prassede, Rome, between 817 and 824. Alinari / Art Resource, NY.

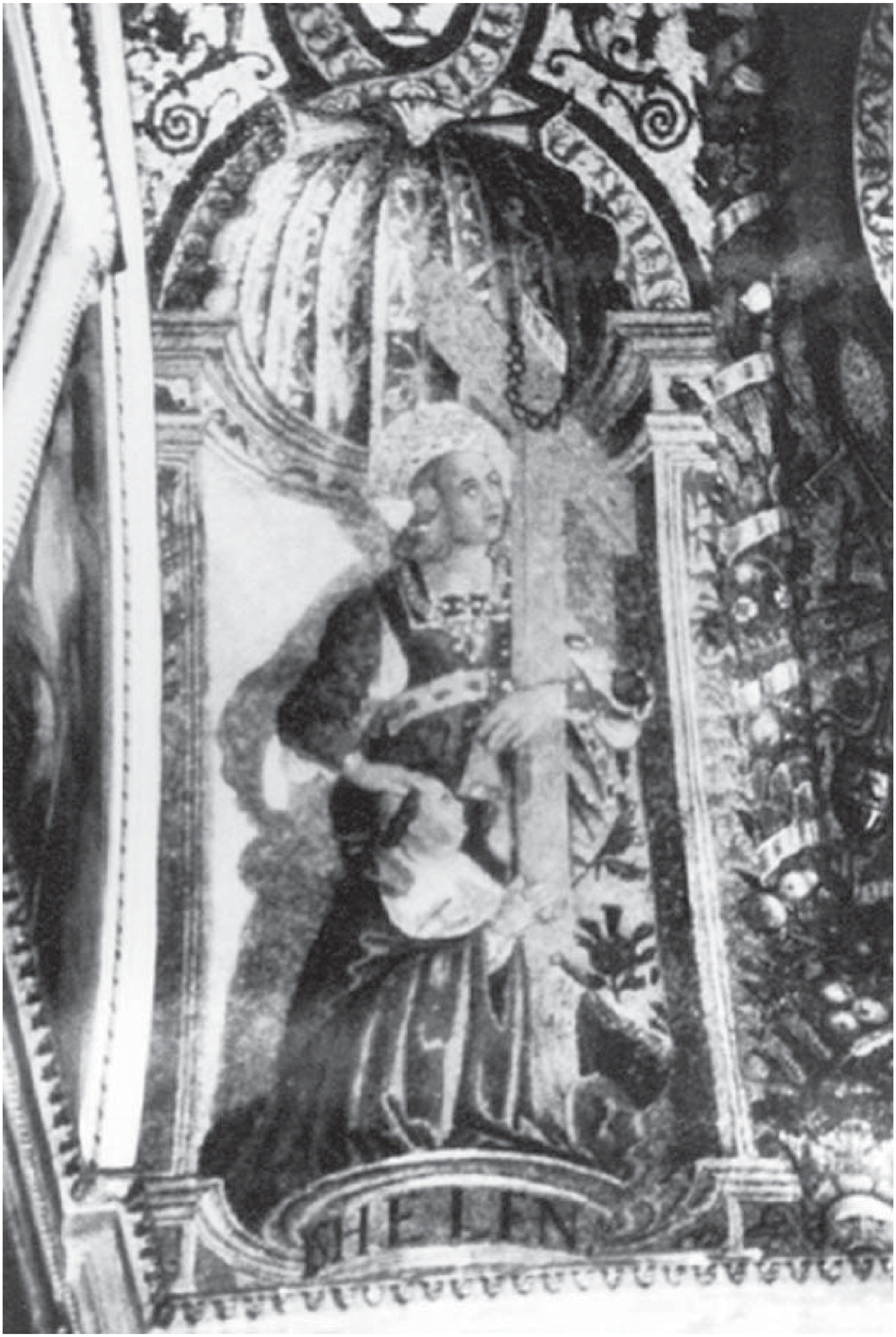

Figure 4. Attributed to Baldassare Peruzzi, Saint Helena and Cardinal Bernaldìn Lopez de Carvajal, detail of vault mosaic, Cappella S. Elena, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome, completed by 1508. Courtesy of Shelley E. Zuraw.

Domenico Guidi's Papal Portraits: A Point of Departure for Baroque Eclecticism

James F. Peck

For nearly three hundred years, the *oeuvre* of the Baroque sculptor Domenico Guidi (1624-1701) has, to a large extent, been ignored in the critical history of art. During the last twenty years, some scholars have begun to reverse this trend, in part re-establishing Guidi as one of the five most important Baroque sculptors of seventeenth century Rome. During the last decade of the seventeenth-century, the eclectic Guidi rendered the likenesses of several popes in a series of portrait busts. The firm reattribution of these busts, formerly thought to be by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) or his school, to Guidi has done much to clarify the nature of Guidi's portraiture, as well as aided in the continuing crystallization of Bernini's extensive *oeuvre*. The similarities, and the very real differences, between Bernini's and Guidi's portraiture that these attributions have emphasized result from numerous biographical and philosophical differences between the two sculptors.

Guidi's eclectic style of portraiture, as evident in his series of papal busts, will be explored through an examination of the formal characteristics of the papal portrait series. Guidi's style will be more clearly illuminated by contrasting these papal portraits with key portraits by Alessandro Algardi (1598-1654), and Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Next, an examination of Domenico Guidi's training, production method, associations, and the changing Roman art world he worked in will explain why he was disposed to a different interpretation of the high Baroque style in his portraiture. The genesis of his sculpting style will be traced from his early training in his uncle Guilano Finelli's Neapolitan *bottega*, to his mature assistantship in the Roman *bottega* of the classicizing sculptor Alessandro Algardi, from whom Guidi inherited his method of production. Guidi's associations with the eminent French painter Nicolas Poussin (1594 -1665), along with his involvement with the Academy of St. Luke in Rome, and his subsequent attachment to the French Royal Academy in Rome and later the Sun King Louis XIV will be discussed in an effort to contextualize Guidi and offer ideas as to why his interpretation of Baroque portraiture stands apart from the interpretations of his contemporaries.

Upon the death of his master, the classicizing sculptor Alessandro Algardi, in 1654 and later the death of the great Bernini in 1680, the eclectic Domenico Guidi became the leading Roman Baroque sculptor of the last quarter of the seventeenth century. During this time, Guidi sculpted the likenesses of the Popes Innocent X (1644-1655), Alexander VII (1655-1667), Innocent XI (1676-1689), Alexander VIII (1689-1691), and Innocent XII (1691-1700).[1] These Papal busts, long thought to be by the school of Bernini, offer a point from which a discussion of Guidi's sculptural style and professional success in late seventeenth century Rome can begin.

Guidi's series of papal portraits, like all sculpted portraits of the seventeenth century, owe a great debt to the ground breaking portraiture of *il maestro* Bernini. During the nearly seventy years of his career, Bernini's spirited likenesses, which incorporated intense naturalism, psychological insight, active drapery, and a sense of instantaneous familiarity revolutionized sculpted portraits in Baroque Rome. In a mature High Baroque portrait such as *Cardinal Scipione Borghese* of 1632 (Figure 1) all of Bernini's techniques are brought to bear. The cardinal is caught in a transitory moment, with his head turned and his eyes flashing. The ephemerality of the pose imbues the bust with a fierce vivacity; the viewer is invited to participate in whatever witticism is about to escape the cardinal's parted lips. Bernini renders facial details with great naturalism, while keeping the parts of the composition subordinate to the total concept of the great man. The simple drapery has been rendered in a very expressive, dynamic way, enabling light to dance across the bust, activating the sculpture and setting it in continuous movement.[2] It is not surprising that it was this naturalistic, highly energetic, and engaging portrait type that, as Rudolph Wittkower commented,

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I wish to thank Dr. Beverly Heisner for her many suggestions and comments, and Dr. Jennifer Montagu for her timely assistance and encouragement.

[1] David L. Bershad, "A Series of Papal Busts by Domenico Guidi," *The Burlington Magazine*, 112 (December 1970): 805-809 and Bershad, "Two Additional Papal Busts by Domenico Guidi," *The Burlington Magazine*, 115 (November 1973): 736-739. Bershad provides archival documents to substantiate his belief that these portraits are by the hand of Guidi and not Bernini and studio.

[2] Rudolph Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy* 1600-1750 (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982) 146.

"Baroque sculptors endeavored to imitate and emulate"[3] throughout the remainder of the century.

The extent to which Guidi's papal portraits imitate and emulate Bernini's formula dictates a relative amount of success to them because Bernini's prototypical portrait was in wide currency by the middle of the century. At the same time, this imitation would have naturally imposed limitations upon his portraits as well. The Victoria and Albert bronze *Alexander the VIII* of 1691 is of the finest quality, and will serve as an example of Guidi's style evident throughout the series of busts (Figure 2). The pope's head is turned slightly to his right, smiling imperiously, looking pleasant and yet aware of his superior status relative to the viewer.[4] The turn of the head and the smiling expression succeed to a limited degree in animating the pontiff, however the immediacy of the bust, central to Bernini's portraiture, is gone. Fifty years of emulation and imitation had an obvious dulling effect on Baroque portraiture. The elaborate, polymorphic folds of the Pope's alb seem to be little more than convention now as they bend and crease in a way that does not emphatically assert the presence of a solid body underneath.

Though the turned head and the active folds of drapery were obviously originally taken from Bernini's High Baroque portrait prototype, the attention to details in the drapery and verism in the facial features speaks of Guidi's mature master, Alessandro Algardi. A terra cotta bust of *Innocent X* by Algardi from around 1647 shows that the motif of the agitated alb and the decorative stole, which Guidi utilized throughout the series of papal portraits with little alteration, actually began in Algardi's studio (Figure 3). Guidi, who was a master bronze caster, interprets his bronze *Innocent X* (Figure 4), in much the same way Algardi did the terra cotta. Guidi incorporates the Berninian conventions of an active sitter with Algardi's verism, crisp lines, attention to detail in the stole and the stylized nature of the drapery folds to create his own unique, eclectic image.

In his *Alexander VIII*, Guidi has rendered a competent portrait of the Pope in the accepted High Baroque style, patterned after Bernini's prototype and using many of Algardi's formal devices. This bust has come a long way from Bernini's *Scipione Borghese*, though it represents neither a synthesis of Algardi and Bernini, nor does it slavishly copy either master's style. The bust is a bit more restrained than Bernini's portraits. This aspect of Guidi's work is usually attributed to the influence of Algardi, whose introduction of classicizing tendencies into Baroque sculpture often had a calming effect on the more theatrical aspects of Bernini's style. While Guidi's eclectic style as revealed in these portraits may very well be described as a tempered reading of Bernini, or a less classicizing reading of Algardi, a number of factors in Domenico Guidi's biography, as well as the state of Baroque sculpture in Rome in the last quarter of the seventeenth-century, must be explored before a full understanding can be reached.

Domenico Guidi began his training as a sculptor at age fourteen, spending most of his adolescence in his uncle Guiliano Finelli's *botegga*. Finelli, it should be noted, spent several years in Rome in the studio of the younger Bernini in the 1620s and 30s. In 1647, at the age of 22, Guidi fled his uncle's Neapolitan studio to seek his fortune in the Eternal City, where Bernini was still Rome's brilliant shining star. Interestingly, Guidi joined the studio of Alessandro Algardi, who along with Francesco du Quesnoy controlled one of only two studios able to coincide with that of the great Gian Lorenzo. His choice of studios would greatly influence his future. From 1647 until the master's death in 1654, Guidi enjoyed the status of "favorite student"[5] in Algardi's studio. Because of his favored position within the studio, Guidi inherited the lion's share of Algardi's tools, models, and unfinished works at his death.[6] This allowed him to quickly set up his own studio and establish a wealthy clientele which included businessmen, Cardinals, several Popes, and eventually the Sun King Louis XIV. Though the death of Bernini in 1680 left an unfillable void in the Roman art world, Guidi's fame and fortune, already rising, did increase due to the master's passing. In the last two decades of the seventeenth century, Guidi was the most successful sculptor in Rome.

His popularity with patrons, however, did not gain Guidi the respect of his fellow sculptors. Though he moved in learned circles, Guidi was not theoretically minded with regard to his profession. He viewed the many commissions he gained from his association with Algardi as an opportunity to support his extravagant social life, which included collecting rare books, purchasing *objets d'art*, and providing himself with expensive clothing and fine foods.[7] This led him to employ numerous lesser craftsmen or professional assistants, which in turn allowed him to complete commissions very quickly.[8] This aspect of his working method comes directly from his training with Algardi. It is worth returning here to Algardi to shed some light on Guidi's methods.

By the time Algardi entered the Bolognese *Academia degli Incaminati* circa 1609, Annibale and Agostino Carracci had both died, leaving Lodovico as the master of the *Academia*. Lodovico's emphasis on line and rhythm, gracefulness, and lyrical beauty were to have a greater influence on Algardi than Agostino's strict academic training.[9] This left Algardi an efficient studio artist yet poorly trained in theoretical academic matters. This would be a factor in a set of very real contrasts between Algardi and Bernini. Because Bernini held almost every major commission in Rome, he could employ master carvers such as Mochi, Bolgi, and du Quesnoy to carry out aspects of his designs, whereas Algardi had to employ lesser talents. While Bernini was reluctant to take on new commissions, Algardi had to accept almost any commission, and while Bernini worked very slowly and charged relatively high prices, Algardi worked very rapidly and often charged a fraction of Bernini's commissions.[10]

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[3] Rudolf Wittkower, *Gain Lorenzo Bernini—The Sculptor of the Roman Baroque* (New York: Cornell UP, 1955) 13.

[4] For Guidi's skill as a bronze caster, see Jennifer Montagu, *Roman Baroque Sculpture—The Industry of Art* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989) 62-63.

[5] Rudolf Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism," *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 2 (1938): 188-190.

[6] Jennifer Montagu, *Alessandro Algardi*, (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985) vol. 1, Appendix 1.

[7] Frederick den Broeder, "A Drawing by Domenico Guidi for a monument to Innocent XII," *The Burlington Magazine*, 117 (February 1975): 110-113.

[8] den Broeder 110.

Domenico Guidi was one of these lesser talents at Algardi's disposal. When Guidi created his own studio, he made Algardi's production methods his own, though he himself was once removed from the master's talent level. By employing numerous *giovanni*, literally boys or young assistants, and *scarpellini*, who were little more than common stone masons, Guidi could execute his works quickly and inexpensively. Additionally, few sculptors of merit would have been available to him, since nearly every master sculptor in seventeenth-century Rome was in the employment of Bernini. Guidi directed his workers to complete a commission as quickly as possible according to a predetermined set of criteria. Because of this, very little stylistic change is evident in Guidi's extensive *oeuvre*. [11] An illustration of the difference in quality of execution between Algardi and Guidi is provided by a comparison of the terra cotta and marble busts of *Cardinal Paolo Emilio Zacchia*.

The finished terra cotta sketch, along with the roughed-out marble bust were taken by Domenico Guidi after the death of Algardi. The marble bust was completed by him for the patron a short time later.[12] Comparisons between the terra cotta model and the completed marble bust provide a visual example not only of the stylistic differences between Algardi and his student Guidi, but also of the effects of Guidi's working method. Algardi's terra cotta model (Figure 5) is an expressive combination of calm and agitation. While the subdued activity of turning pages in a scholarly tome has a calming effect on the erudite Cardinal, the alb is realized in bold stokes and the excessive movements of the small folds of the alb reveal an inherent agitation which brings the bust to life.[13] The Cardinal's features are rendered with a high degree of verism and liveliness, which is no small task, as the sitter had been dead for some fifty years. This is a real person engaged in a real activity, and this rendering must have convinced the patron's family of Algardi's merit as a portraitist.

Unfortunately, Guidi's finished version does not live up to his master's sketch. Where the master succeeds, the student fails. Guidi's resulting marble bust (Figure 6) is a clumsy, spiritless interpretation as lifeless as the Carrara marble from which it was carved. As Jennifer Montagu relates, the bust exhibits "a tightness. . .as if the sculptor grudged every centimetre of marble employed."[14] This was, in fact, probably the case, because his emphasis on economy did not allow for a high degree of perfection. Lesser assistants likely completed much of the poorly realized drapery while Guidi probably carved the plain, uninspired facial features that were so lively in Algardi's model. Guidi's rendering has lost some of the dignity of the sitter by emphasizing the hands and the book rather than the facial features. Additionally, the Cardinal's gaze seems rather vacant compared to the penetrating, thoughtful look Algardi's terra cotta bust exhibits. This helps to emphasize, in part, the disparity in quality between Guidi's sculptures and those of Algardi and Bernini, but one must wonder what conditions existed in Rome in the last quarter of the seventeenth century that enabled Guidi to prosper so greatly.[15]

The answer begins with Algardi's involvement with the Roman Classicist circle, and ends with Guidi's involvement with the French Academy in Rome. It is ironic that Guidi, whose hatred of the *professori*, or academic teachers, is well documented,[16] reached the height of his career through his connection with the French Academy in Rome.[17] Guidi's involvement with the Academy is inextricably connected with his teacher Algardi. Owing in part to his Bolognese roots, Algardi was included in the Bolognese Classicist circle of artists that had formed in Rome during the second decade of the century. Their goal was to promote a calm, austere style of art that owed an equal debt to the Classical past, the great Renaissance masters, and the Carracci. During the first half of the seventeenth century, Andrea Sacchi, Domenichino, Guido Reni, and Algardi were some of the artists who formed this circle of mostly Bolognese artists in Rome who believed that simplicity, clarity, and naturalism should be the hallmarks of great art. Though Bernini was greatly influenced by a return to naturalism, the theatricality of his work was at odds with the aims of this group.

The eminent French painter Nicolas Poussin, who spent most of his life in Rome, soon became one of the leaders of the Roman Classicists. His leadership against Bernini's High Ba-

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[9] Montagu, *Algardi*, volume 1, 2-3.

[10] Montagu, *Algardi*, volume 1, 160. Montagu has pointed out that some of Bernini's working methods arose from his abilities as a salesman rather than any inherent academic qualities.

[11] David L. Bershad, "Domenico Guidi," *The Dictionary of Art*, volume 23, 814.

[12] Montagu, *Algardi*, vol. 1, 170. Montagu bases her assumption on the fact that Guidi, who was entitled by Algardi's will to take what he wanted from the studio, was subsequently commissioned to complete several portrait busts for the commissioning Rondanini family.

[13] Montagu, *Algardi*, vol. 1, 170-171.

[14] Montagu, *Algardi*, vol. 1, 168.

[15] David L. Bershad, "Domenico Guidi and Nicolas Poussin," *The Burlington Magazine*, 113 (September 1971): 544-545. Bershad notes that no less a mind than Carlo Cartieri, the 17th century archivist of the Castel Sant'Angelo and librarian to Cardinal Paluzzo Alteiri, thought enough of Guidi that he wished to write a Life of the Artist.

[16] L. Pascoli, *Vite de' Pittori, Scultore, et Architetti Moderni*, 1730, I, 252, cited in R. Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism," 188.

[17] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 189.

roque style eventually gave the classicist circle a modicum of influence in the Roman art world. Poussin's influence was predictably greater on painters such as Sacchi than on sculptors, however one sculptor who seems to have taken Poussin to heart was Algardi. His sculptures, imbued with Classical restraint and austerity, must have been admired by the Frenchman.[18] The French aristocracy was much taken by the idea of Imperial Rome as a metaphor for their own enlightened and absolutist rule, and as such saw Rome and her artists as a connection to this glorious past. Consequently, Roman sculptors were tempted to take lucrative offers from French patrons, and Algardi was courted by Louis XIII in 1639.[19]

The flattering offers from the French monarchy were declined, although Algardi remained predisposed toward French ideas of Classicism. It was in Algardi's studio that Guidi probably met Nicolas Poussin. Only two years after Algardi's death, Guidi was working on three herm statues, after Poussin's wax models, for the gardens of Versailles[20] (Figure 7). It may be assumed that it was Guidi's association with Poussin that put him in contact with the French Academy in Rome. In fact, his friendship with Poussin may have led him to increased involvement with the Academy of St. Luke, the official guild of Roman artists. The high point of Guidi's involvement in the Academy of St. Luke was from 1670 to 1675, when he served as the *Principe* of the organization.[21] It was in this position that Guidi came to interact on equal terms with Charles Le Brun, Louis XIV's Minister of Cultural Affairs.[22] In a significant political move, Guidi suggested in 1675 that Le Brun become the next *Principe* of the Academy of St. Luke.[23] Le Brun could not leave Paris, so Charles Errand, the Director of the French Royal Academy in Rome, took the post in his place. Because of this turn of events, Guidi secured for himself an appointment as one of four Rectors of the French Royal Academy in Rome. This appointment to the French Royal Academy would have, according to Rudolph Wittkower, "greatly strengthened the power of French academism which had been growing in Rome since the foundation of the French Academy there in 1666."[24]

The French commitment to Roman artists was, at least in theory, very strong. In 1680, Colbert, Louis XIV's Minister of Public Works, wrote to Charles Errand, the Director of the French Academy in Rome, that "it would be particularly desirable that you invite Cavalier Bernini to come and see the students at work, and also Carlo Marati [*sic*] and Domenico Guidy [*sic*], to whom the king has done the honour of appointing them his Painters and Sculptors."[25] That Colbert sought the opinion of Bernini, who fifteen years earlier had made a brief trip to France, as well as the opinion of Guidi, shows that the French hoped to gain expertise through their connection with the elite artists of Rome. The association with Guidi, in particular, was probably an attempt to find, as Wittkower says, a "refined academic interpretation of antiquity."[26] For Guidi, the desire to be connected with them was surely based on a desire for status and profit. He eventually gained large commissions from Louis XIV. One such example of a large-scale sculptural commission carried out by Guidi for the French monarchy is *Allegory of the History of France Holding a Portrait of Louis the XIV* from 1680-1686 (Figure 8).

The pre-eminent Guidi scholar David Bershad points out that "though Guidi's style does not reflect a 'classical approach,' certainly his work, thought and friends indicate a decided preference for the academic."[27] It is important to note that though he was connected with the Academy of St. Luke and the French Academy in Rome, Guidi was by definition the antithesis of an academic sculptor. The French Academy believed that an emphasis on artistic theory, mythology, religious study, drawing, and, above all, the emulation of the Classical past and the Renaissance masters could instruct a student in the making of fine art. The irony of the French patron seeking Roman sculptors to interpret their concepts of antiquity was that in Rome, according to Wittkower, "the foundation (for sculptors) was an accumulation of practical rules and personal observations, often handed down verbally."[28]

Perhaps the fact that Guidi's 'work, thought and friends' seemed to indicate a growing academism says more about Rome in the waning years of the seventeenth century than about the sculptor himself. By the last quarter of the century, the fiery, raw bravura talent and imagination that Bernini had introduced to Rome during the early days of Urban VIII's pontificate was gone. Increasingly, Louis XIV and his ministers looked to their own artistic apparatus to provide them with a proper interpretation of the Classical past, rather than entrusting this most important task to foreigners. Ultimately, when Rome lost the creative genius of Bernini, she could no longer compete for the title of art center of the world. Guidi provides a crucial link between the end of Rome as an artistic mecca and the dawn of French artistic dominance.

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[18] Montagu, *Algardi*, vol. 1, 145. Though Montagu stresses that Algardi is "not classical, but lyrical," she does admit that "Algardi observes certain classic principles."

[19] Montagu, *Algardi* 78.

[20] Bershad, "Guidi and Poussin" 547. Bershad points out, "It is. . .not surprising that after the death of Algardi, Poussin should turn to the favorite student of that sculptor to execute the three herms."

[21] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 189.

[22] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 189.

[23] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 189.

[24] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 189.

[25] Montagu, *Roman Baroque Sculpture* 11. Guidi and Marrati were never given a pension as Bernini was, and thus the distinction of being appointed Painters and Sculptors to the king was completely honorary.

[26] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 190.

[27] Bershad, "Guidi and Poussin" 547.

[28] Wittkower, "Domenico Guidi and French Classicism" 188.

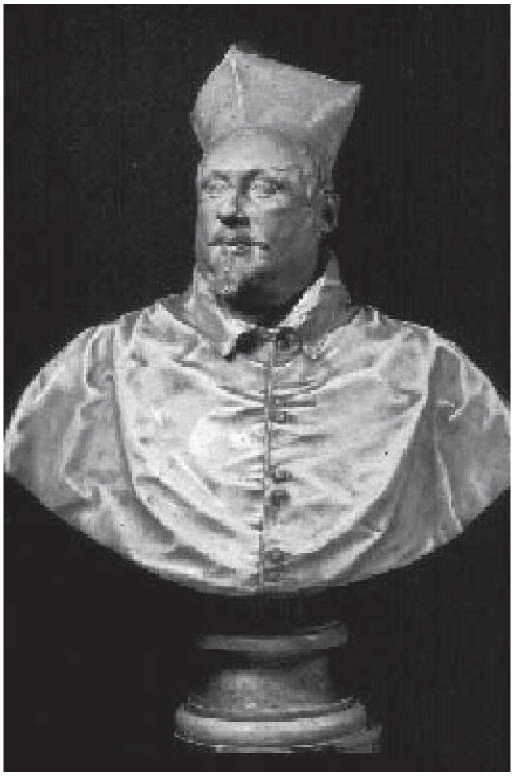

Figure 1. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Cardinal Scipione Borghese*, marble, 1632, Rome, Galleria Borghese. Photo Courtesy of Casa Editrice Bonechi Srl.

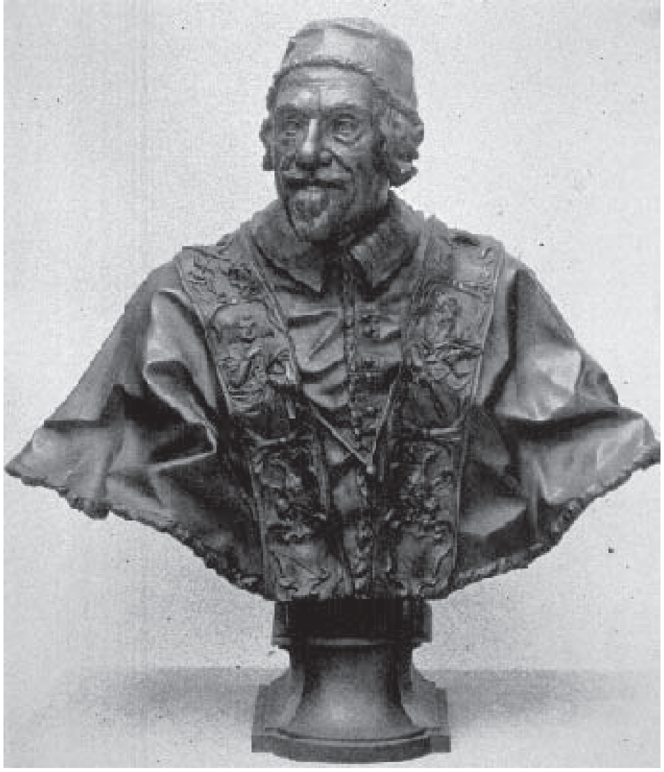

Figure 2. Domenico Guidi, *Bust of Pope Alexander VIII*, bronze, 1691,Victoria and Albert Museum. Photo Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

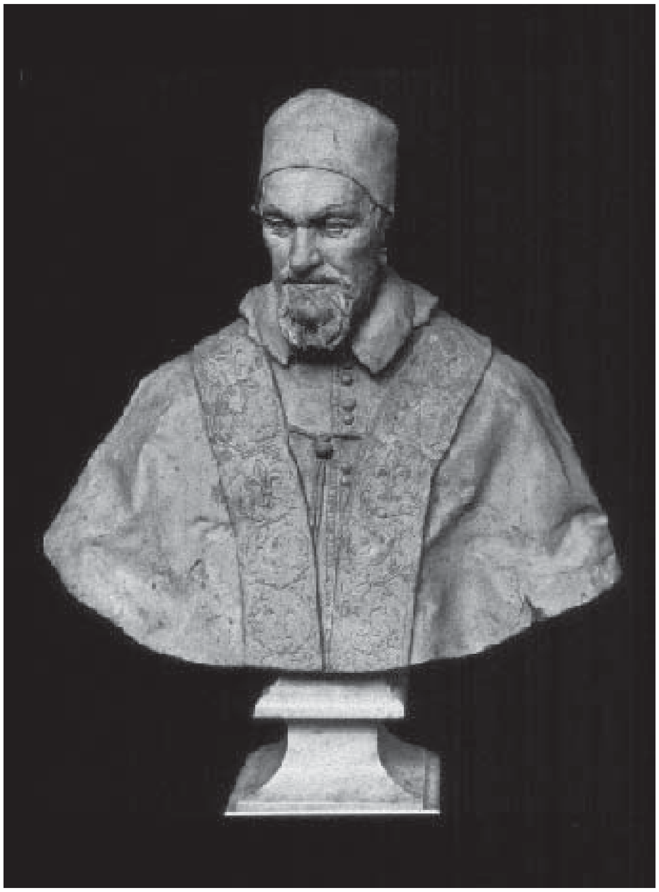

Figure 3. Alessandro Algardi, *Bust of Innocent X*, terracotta, *c*. 1650, Rome, Palazzo Odescalchi.

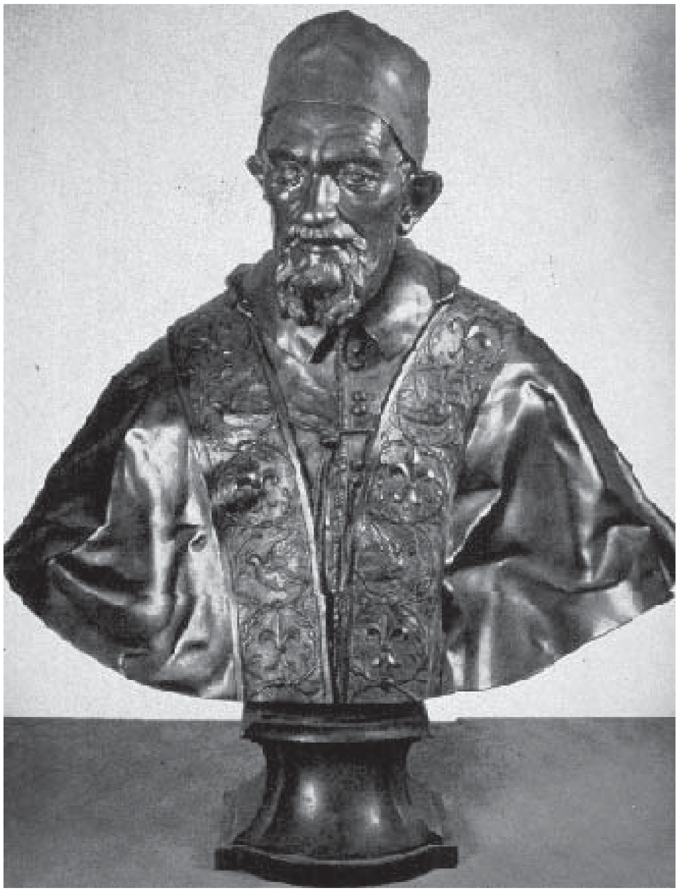

Figure 4. Domenico Guidi, *Bust of Innocent X*, bronze, *c*. 1654-70, Victoria and Albert Museum. Photo Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

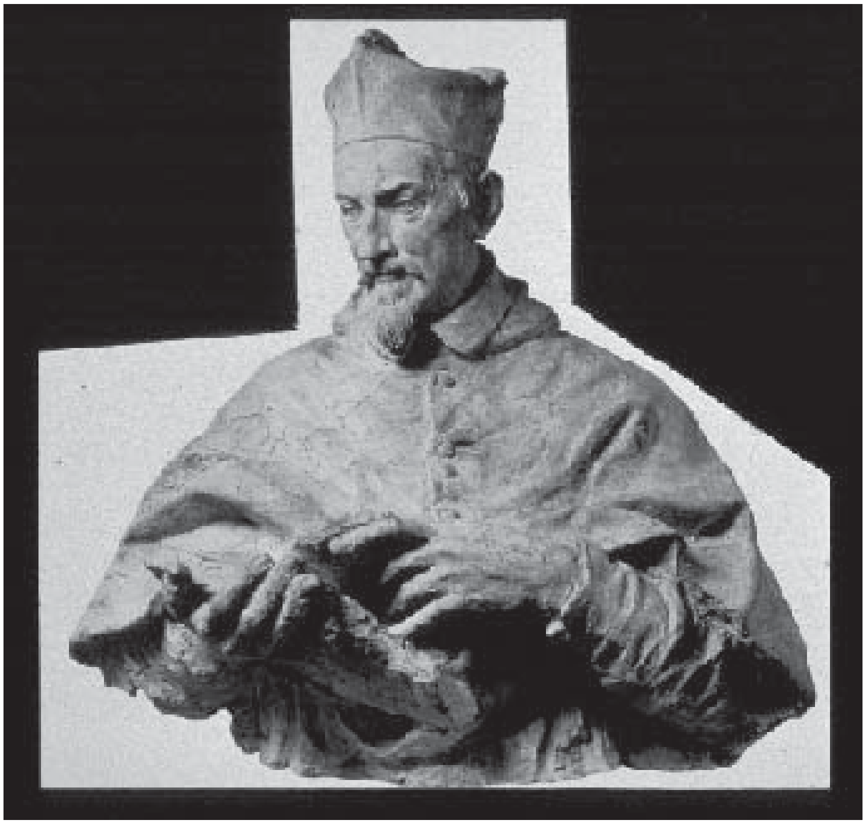

Figure 5. Alessandro Algardi, *Bust of Cardinal Paolo Emilio Zacchia*, terracotta, *c*. 1650, Victoria and Albert Museum. Photo Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

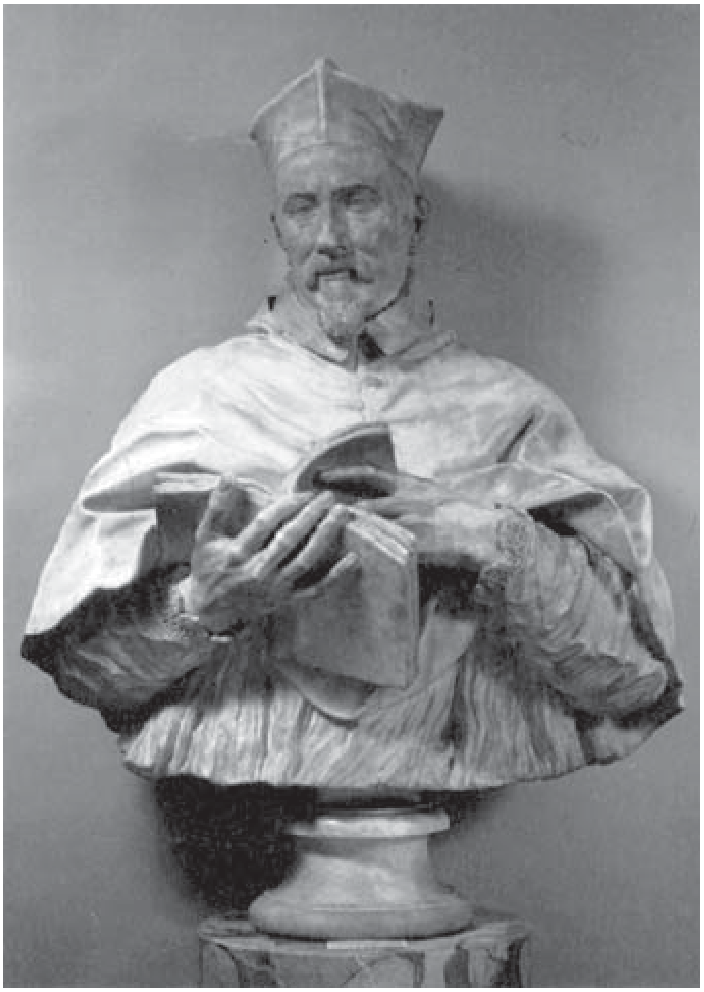

Figure 6. Attributed to Domenico Guidi, *Bust of Cardinal Paolo Emilio Zacchia*, marble, *c*. 1654, Museo Nazionale de Bargello. Photo Courtesy of Scala/Art Resource.

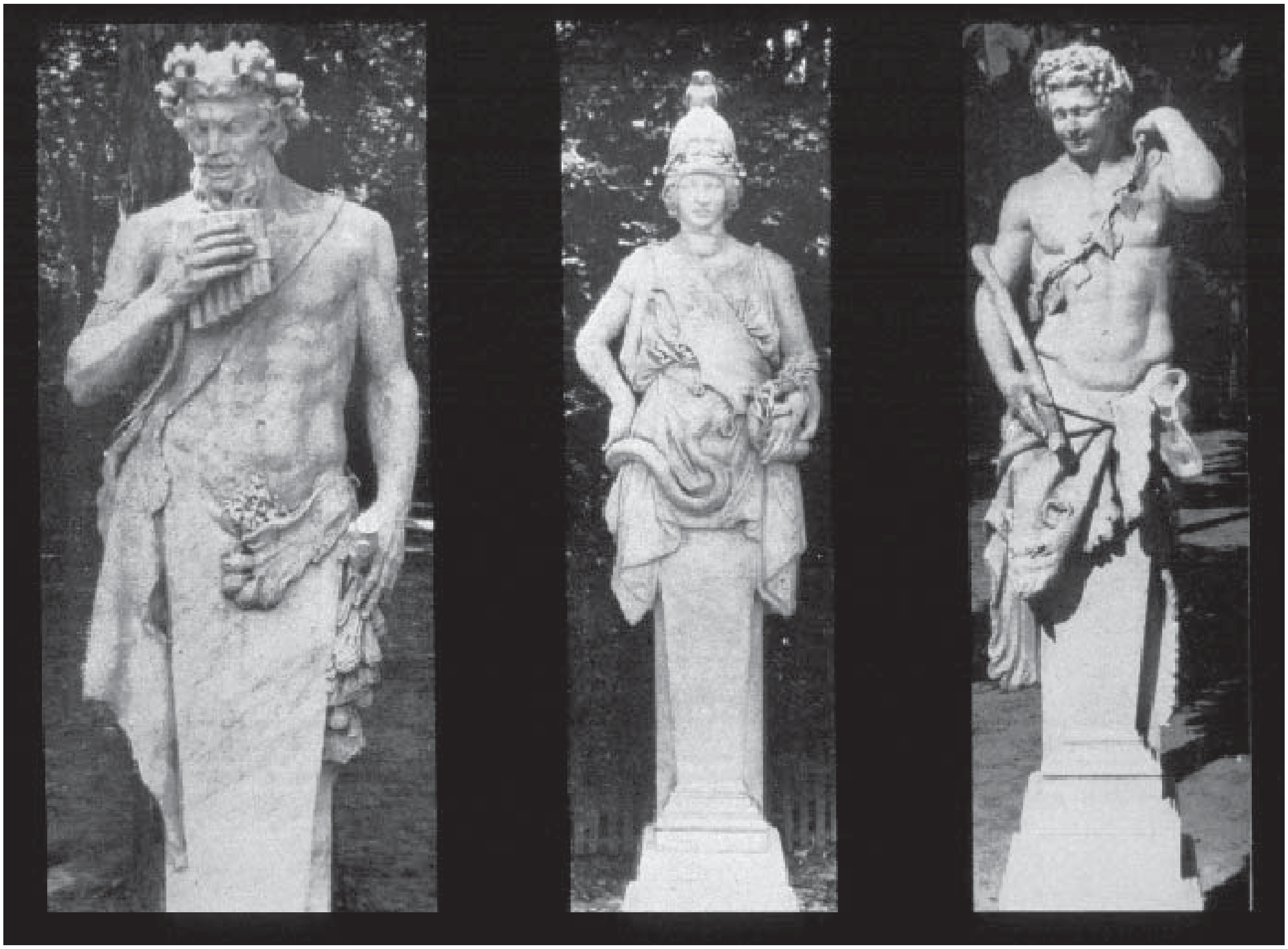

Figure 7. Domenico Guidi, *Pallas, Faunus, and Pan*, marble, between 1656 and 1661, Quincornces du Midi, Versailles.

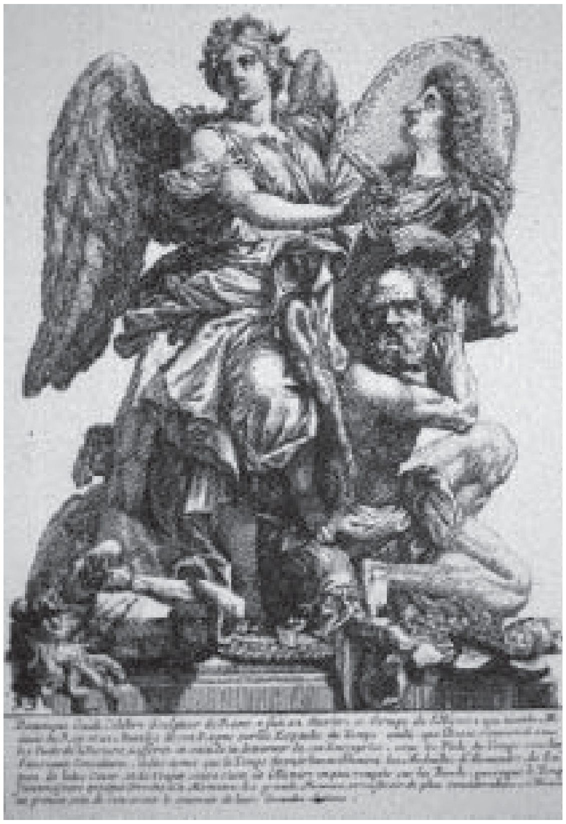

Figure 8. Nicolas Dorigny, engraving after Domenico Guidi, *The Fame of Louis XIV*, from C.F. Menestrier, *Histoire du régne de Louis le Grand par les médailles*, Paris, 1693. Photo by permission of Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Portraits of Madwomen: Another Look at Dr. Hugh Welch Diamond's Photographs of the Insane Female in Victorian England

Shari Addonizio

The history of the madwoman conjures up from the past a succession of images suggesting an irresistible mixture of science, sexuality, and sensationalism. Some of these dramatic images include the wandering womb of classical Greece, the witch of Renaissance Europe, and the salon lady of eighteenth-century Paris swooning with the vapors.[1] The madwoman was portrayed in scientific texts by means of the various traditional graphic media. We should not be surprised, then, to find photography joining other methods for depicting the female lunatic in the middle of the nineteenth century.

This paper examines photographs and photo-based lithographs of the madwoman produced by British psychiatrist Dr. Hugh Welch Diamond, superintendent of the Surrey County Lunatic Asylum in the 1850s. Between 1848 and 1858 Diamond systematically photographed the female lunatics under his supervision. According to Diamond, these pictures of the insane benefited patient, doctor, and the asylum in three ways. First, photographic portraits could be used diagnostically, to record the external phenomena of each form of insanity as they were manifested by the diseased brain on the facial features. Second, they could be used as a treatment to counteract this diseased brain, for, when shown to the patient, the portraits allegedly produced a reaction of pleasure and interest facilitating recovery and often leading to a cure. Finally, portraits of the insane were valuable to administrators of the asylum for identification purposes in cases of readmission.[2]

A discussion of photographic medical illustration during this period brings up issues of realism and the very nature of representation. How reality is represented has been a concern for art historians for many years, although it has taken on heightened significance in the last decades in the writings of feminist and cultural studies theorists. Moreover, an important concern for feminism has been the representation of women in visual culture as it functioned under patriarchy; similarly, this paper will demonstrate how the juncture of art, science, and representation of women plays itself out in nineteenth-century psychiatric practice.

Diamond's pioneering photographs were assembled and published by psychiatric historian Sander Gilman, who sees insanity as a culturally specific entity. Gilman's writings have focused to a large extent on racial and sexual stereotypical representation. In his 1976 book on Diamond's photographs, titled *The Face of Madness*, he discusses the doctor's medical practice and theories.[3] While Gilman identifies Diamond's conviction that photographs represented scientific truth, he does not specifically deal with the role of photography in the hierarchy of gender or in the larger culture. More broadly, feminist writers have worked specifically with issues surrounding the female mental patient, including literary depictions of the hysteric. Notable is Elaine Showalter, whose 1985 book *The Female Malady* is often cited in studies of the gender-specific roles of doctors and their patients in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[4] A vast amount of work has also been done on the photographic practices of the famous Jean-Martin Charcot, the nineteenth-century psychiatrist at Salpêtriere, whose photographs of female hysterics had a dramatic impact on the Surrealists, particularly Andre Breton and Max Ernst.[5]

Since both Gilman's and Showalter's books offer valuable insights into the psychiatric portrait, I rely heavily on both authors in this investigation. However, Allan Sekula's work in "The Body as Archive," which explores the body as it is articulated in the photograph, provides further insight into the method by which Diamond, as a pioneer photographer in the middle of the century, presented the portrait photograph as empirical evidence of insanity. According to Sekula, every portrait produced during this period took its place within the social and moral hierarchy of the culture. He argued that the photographic portrait had a dual function that both celebrated the status and individuality of the sitters and recorded them as members of a class vulnerable to measures of social control. The first aspect

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I wish to thank Dr. Karen A. Bearor for her guidance, encouragement, and commitment to excellence during the development and completion of this article. I would also like to thank Dr. Lauren Weingarden and Dr. Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk for their helpful suggestions and criticism.

[1] Mark S. Micale, *Approaching Hysteria: Disease and Its Interpretations* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1995) 3.

[2] Hugh W. Diamond, "On the Application of Photography to the Physiognomic and Mental Phenomena of Insanity," read before the Royal Photographic Society, May 22, 1856. Reprinted in Sander L. Gilman, ed., *The Face of Madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography* (New York: Brunner/Mazel Publishers, 1976) 20-23.

[3] Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 3-13.

[4] Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1985).

[5] For a recent publication on this topic, see Sander L. Gilman, "The Image of the Hysteric," in *Hysteria Beyond Freud* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1993).

of this duality he termed “honorific,” the second “repressive.”[6] The British public mental hospital, where the doctors were drawn from the middle and upper classes and most of the inmates came from the lower and working classes, is an apt example of a moral and hierarchical structure within the larger culture. Adding gender to Sekula’s model, I have applied his theory to the residents of the Surrey County Lunatic Asylum to examine how photographs functioned in psychiatric texts and practices. Sekula’s approach allows the Surrey Asylum portraits and Diamond’s three-fold theory of the photographs’ effectiveness to be understood in relation to each other. His honorific function is most evident in the female patients’ positive response to their portraits which indicate a recognition of established representations of both madness and normality. His repressive function is played out as the psychiatric portraits reaffirmed the traditional hierarchies imposed by class and gender, both of which informed the authority of the doctor and the legitimacy of the asylum system.

In this heyday of phrenology and physiognomy, which presumed the exteriorization of mental and behavioral processes, Diamond, like his contemporaries, believed photography to be the ultimate means by which to record an “objective,” and therefore scientific “reality.” A founding member and early officer of the Royal Photographic Society, in 1856 Diamond presented his findings in a paper titled “On the Application of Photography to the Physiognomic and Mental Phenomena of Insanity,” concluding:

> Photography gives permanence to these remarkable cases, which are types of classes, and makes them observable not only now but for ever, and it presents also a perfect and faithful record, free altogether from the painful caricaturing which so disfigures almost all the published portraits of the Insane as to render them nearly valueless either for purposes of art or of science.[7]

However, by working within the existing visual code, Diamond’s portraits weld science and art together in a common pursuit. His subjects exhibit a passivity or a habitual facial expression supposedly enabling the medical expert to detect the dominance of a single passion (Figure 1). But in their frontal or three-quarter poses, often sitting or standing before drapery, they reflect early nineteenth-century portraiture as much as the “science” of physiognomy. To wit, Diamond’s portraits recall those painted by Théodore Géricault between 1821 and 1824.

Furthermore, Diamond frequently overtly intervened in the photographic process. His subjects are often shown posed with props evoking literary and visual models of femininity. In one photograph from the Surrey Asylum group, the patient was wrapped in a black mantle and posed as Ophelia, the Shakespearian madwoman so often depicted in Victorian art and literature (Figure 2). Diamond went so far as to place a garland on the head of his lunatic in this photograph.

Showalter points out that Ophelia was indeed a prototype for the madwoman in the asylum. Victorian psychiatrists were often enthusiasts of Shakespeare and turned to his plays for models of mental aberration that could be applied to their clinical practices. As British doctor J. C. Bucknill remarked in 1859, “Every mental physician of moderately extensive experience must have seen many Ophelias. It is a copy from nature, after the fashion of the Pre-Raphaelite school.”[8]

The English Pre-Raphaelites, in fact, returned often to the theme of the drowning Ophelia. Renditions by Arthur Hughes (Figure 3) and John Everett Millais (Figure 4) were both exhibited in the Royal Academy show of 1852, where Hughes’s juxtaposition of childlike femininity and Christian martyrdom, also published in *Art Journal* the same year, was overpowered by Millais’s treatment of Ophelia as an actual drowning victim, as well as a sensuous siren.[9]

In Britain during the 1840s, the use of physical restraint was losing ground in favor of “moral management.” Eventually widely-practiced in newly built asylums, the term was used by reformers to indicate humane treatment of mental patients who were exhorted to exercise willpower and moderation in their personal habits to cure their insanity.[10] One of these asylum reformers was John Connolly, a Professor of Medicine at the University of London. In 1858, Diamond’s photographic portraits became the basis for a major series of essays by Connolly extolling the virtues of moral management.[11]

Lithographic reproduction of photography, of course, engenders another level of mediation away from “reality.” Indeed, lithographs were used by nineteenth-century authors to privilege or confirm both photography and text. Contemporaries of Diamond and Connolly were aware of the lithograph’s potential for distortion, especially in the rendering of detail. But, while the lithograph of the photograph altered the value of the illustration for medical purposes, it did not destroy it, and, in any case, both doctors considered the photo-based lithograph to be a more accurate portrayal of insanity than any interpretive sketch or drawing. As if to attest to the verisimilitude of both media, Diamond and Connolly used original photographs as well as lithographic reproductions in their practices, believing their theories to have more empirical worth because they were based on photographs.

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[6] Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” in Richard Bolton, ed., *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992) 345.

[7] Diamond in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 24.

[8] J. C. Bucknill, *The Psychology of Shakespeare* (1859). Reprint. (New York: AMS Press, 1970) 110.

[9] Showalter 90.

[10] Showalter 30-31.

[11] Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 11.

Other forms of mediation on the part of the photographer are evident in the portraits of the Surrey County Asylum patients. One of these depicts a young woman as she was posed by the photographer, seated while leaning her arm on top of a table (Figure 5). The patient has been diagnosed as suffering from religious melancholia, a disease considered to be more prevalent in women than men. Indeed, her position recalls the classic pose of the melancholic depicted throughout much of art history. As Connolly explained to his readers, the patient, a young Irish girl who had left the Protestant faith to become a Roman Catholic, had insufficient education to argue effectively for either religion.[12]

Connolly noted her "high and wide forehead," indicating "intelligence and imagination." The well-formed lips and ears, and the rather large jaw, all demonstrate her "force of character." Her deeply set eyes and long eyebrows are all characteristic of her present mood, as well as her general temperament, he theorized. Furthermore, since the patient's conflict was mostly intellectual, her large brain had been engaged in meditations that were too powerful for it to overcome.[13]

However, to postmodern eyes the image presented in the portrait exhibits obvious signifiers that would readily convey "religious mania" to a nineteenth century educated viewer. If the pose alone were not enough to signify such a characterization, the prominent cross dangling from the young woman's neck and her high, bare, "intellectual" forehead visually serve both to confirm Diamond's diagnosis and to communicate it to British subjects well aware of the religious conflicts plaguing the Empire for generations.

Thus, we see this portrait of the young female melancholic function repressively in Diamond's and Connolly's hands, as it served to uphold the religious and psychiatric wisdom of the period. As Showalter explains, despite any awareness of possible environmental factors influencing insanity on the part of nineteenth century medical men, the prevailing view was that the statistics proved what they had suspected all along: women were more vulnerable to mental illness than men because their reproductive systems were unstable and thus disturbed their emotional and rational control. Indeed, it is Showalter's opinion that the rise of the psychiatric profession may well have been linked to the rise of the Victorian madwoman, complete with medicine's attitudes toward women and its monopoly by men.[14]

The accomplishment of a cure was the salient feature of a collection of four of Diamond's psychiatric portraits (Figure 6). Diamond described these images as representing stages which mark the progress and the eventual "perfect cure" of one of his young female patients.[15]

Connolly diagnosed the patient as a victim of puerperal mania. He related how the patient had become a mother shortly before the onset of her disease. Her husband, in the meantime, fearful that he would not be able to provide adequately for his new family, had left them to find work in Australia. Apparently discounting the effect the departure of the family breadwinner may have had on a new mother in such uncertain economic circumstances, Connolly described the household as it was suddenly interrupted by her behavior. She began to speak sharply to those around her, losing both her cheerfulness and her interest in her infant, "adopting a levity of manner and a fantastic arrangement of her head-dress and apparel," as he wrote in one of his essays.[16]

He went on to describe each of the portraits. In the first (at upper left) a short initial stage of dullness and apathy is represented. The patient spent nearly all day in one posture, sitting with her hands crossed on her knees, refusing conversation and even food.[17]

However, he continued, by the sitting for the second portrait eight days later (upper right), Diamond's patient exhibited the lively, even mirthful, expression typical of this affliction. While the patient sits in a posture nearly identical to that in the first sitting, in the second she looks as if she might be persuaded to get up and dance, he wrote. She now spent her days singing, tearing her clothes and voraciously consuming her food.[18]

Six weeks after the onset of her disease, a great change took place in both the patient's countenance and behavior, indicating the beginning of recovery. In the third portrait (lower left), she is shown standing neatly attired in a dress and a shawl. She had begun to spend her time at her needlework and had indicated her desire to leave the asylum. However, Connolly warned, due to the tension still visible in her facial muscles, the experienced physician is able to determine that she is not yet completely cured.[19]

However, following a month or two of observation, the patient was allowed to leave the asylum. The fourth portrait

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[12] John Connolly, "Case Studies from the Physiognomy of Insanity," *The Medical Times and Gazette* (1858). Reprinted in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 27-31.

[13] Connolly in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 27-31.

[14] Showalter 55.

[15] Diamond in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 21.

[16] Connolly in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 59-62.

[17] Connolly in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 59-62.

[18] Connolly in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 59-62.

[19] Connolly in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 59-62.

[20] Connolly in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 59-62.

(bottom right) commemorated this event. Connolly concluded his essay by noting that her features were composed in an animated, yet not excited, expression, indicating the restoration of her health and sufficient strength to resume her role as wife and mother in Australia.[20]

Diamond wrote that the "poor maniac" herself could scarcely believe that this final portrait was preceded by the others. She was given copies of the photographic portraits to take with her, presumably to remind herself of her previous "fearful" condition. In Diamond's opinion, with these "faithful monitors in her hand," she would never cease to be extremely grateful for her marked and unexpected recovery at his hands. In fact, he speculated that the chaplain of the asylum would support him if he were to draw a moral truth from these portraits attesting to the validity of his psychiatric approach.[21]

Thus, what Sekula terms the honorific function of the portrait is fulfilled in this instance as the mental patient accepted a new vision of herself as a cured woman. At the same time, the depictions of herself in a deranged condition acted repressively as prophylactic admonitions, warning, "See what will happen to you again if you fail to play your proper role in life."

Moreover, Victorian psychiatrists had strong convictions about their female patients' physical appearance. Madwomen were expected to care more about the way they looked than madmen, and, in many instances, their sanity was predicated on their compliance with middle class standards of fashion. Connolly, especially, worried about bareheaded female patients, believing it unnatural for a woman to neglect her headdress. Her tendency to be concerned with the external condition of her head could be encouraged or restored by presenting her with a neat cap for Sunday wear, he noted. Indeed, as Showalter points out, inmates who wished to impress the asylum staff with their progress could do so by conforming to prevailing ideas of a proper feminine *toilette*. Connolly wrote, in fact, "Dress is women's weakness, and in the treatment of lunacy it should be an instrument of control, and therefore recovery."[22]

Diamond's third application of psychiatric photography, that of identification of the recidivist madwoman, is more completely repressive (Figure 7). The madwoman in this lithograph represents two states of mental disease: the one on the left termed religious melancholia, the other on the right labeled convalescence. However, the fortuitous consequence of a cure is not indicated here. These portraits depict one of the many unfortunate creatures who will never be cured, one whose illness consists of a series of alterations between these two states lasting a lifetime. We do not know if this woman was released and later readmitted, in which case Diamond's photographs presumably would have been available to identify her. However, in his assessment of the patient, Diamond confided that he often found a portrait of more value in recalling one of his relapsed cases than any notes he may have made when she was previously in his care.[23]

It should be noted that Diamond also took photographs of male lunatics (Figure 8). However, perhaps in part because he was in charge of the asylum's female ward, his depictions of men are vastly outnumbered by his portraits of woman. Both psychiatrists seemed to prefer to concentrate on their female patients, especially on aspects of their physical appearance and demeanor.

Thus, Diamond's illustrations of the madwomen at Surrey County Lunatic Asylum can be seen to weld the honorific and repressive functions of portrait photography together, as Sekula's binary model proposed. At the Surrey County Lunatic Asylum, both the honorific and repressive functions of Diamond's photographs rest on a shared belief, by the madwoman and her doctor, that the body as depicted in the portrait was incontrovertible evidence of the inner condition of the mind.

Florida State University

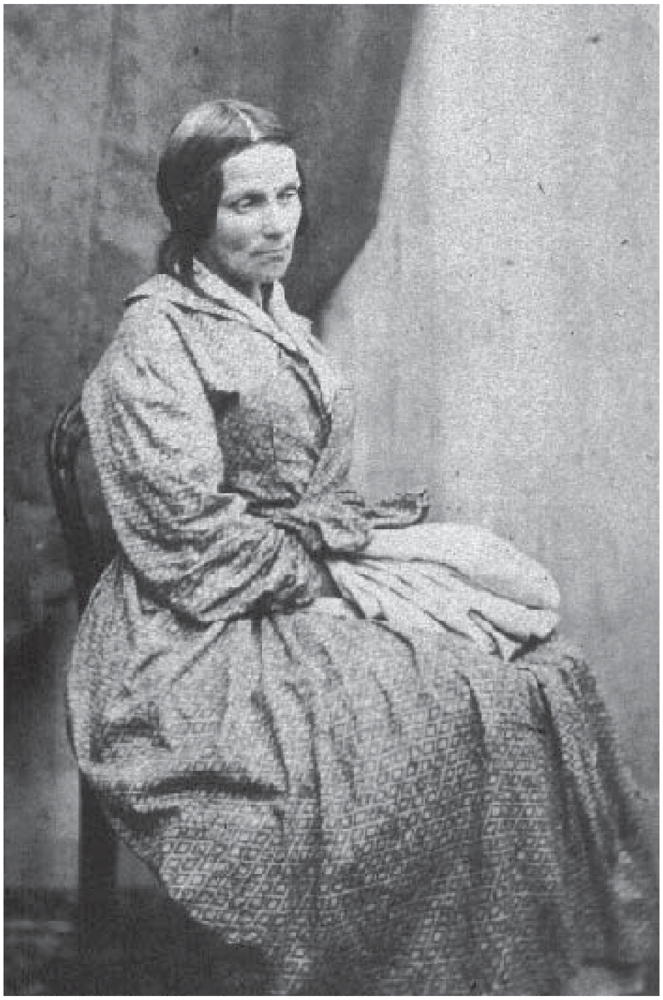

Figure 1. Hugh W. Diamond, Patient posed before drapery, photograph, 1848-58. Photograph courtesy the Royal Society of Medicine, London.

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[21] Diamond in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 21.

[22] Showalter 84. Connolly, *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane* (1847). Reprint. (London: Dawsons, 1968) 61.

[23] Diamond in Gilman, *The Face of Madness* 24.

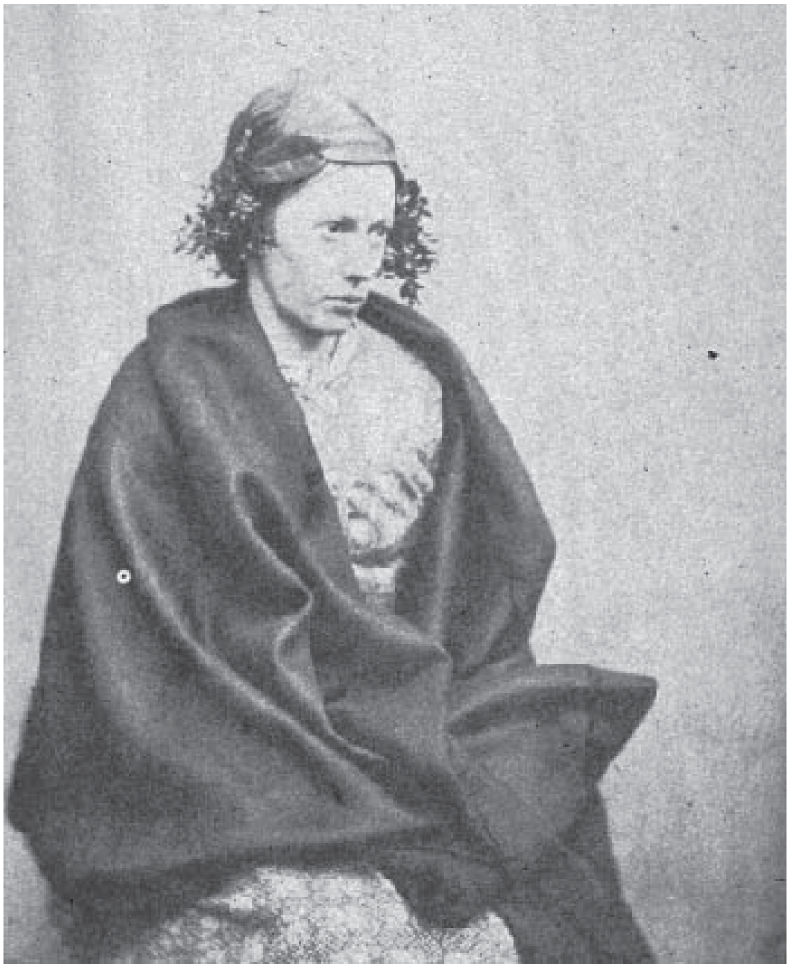
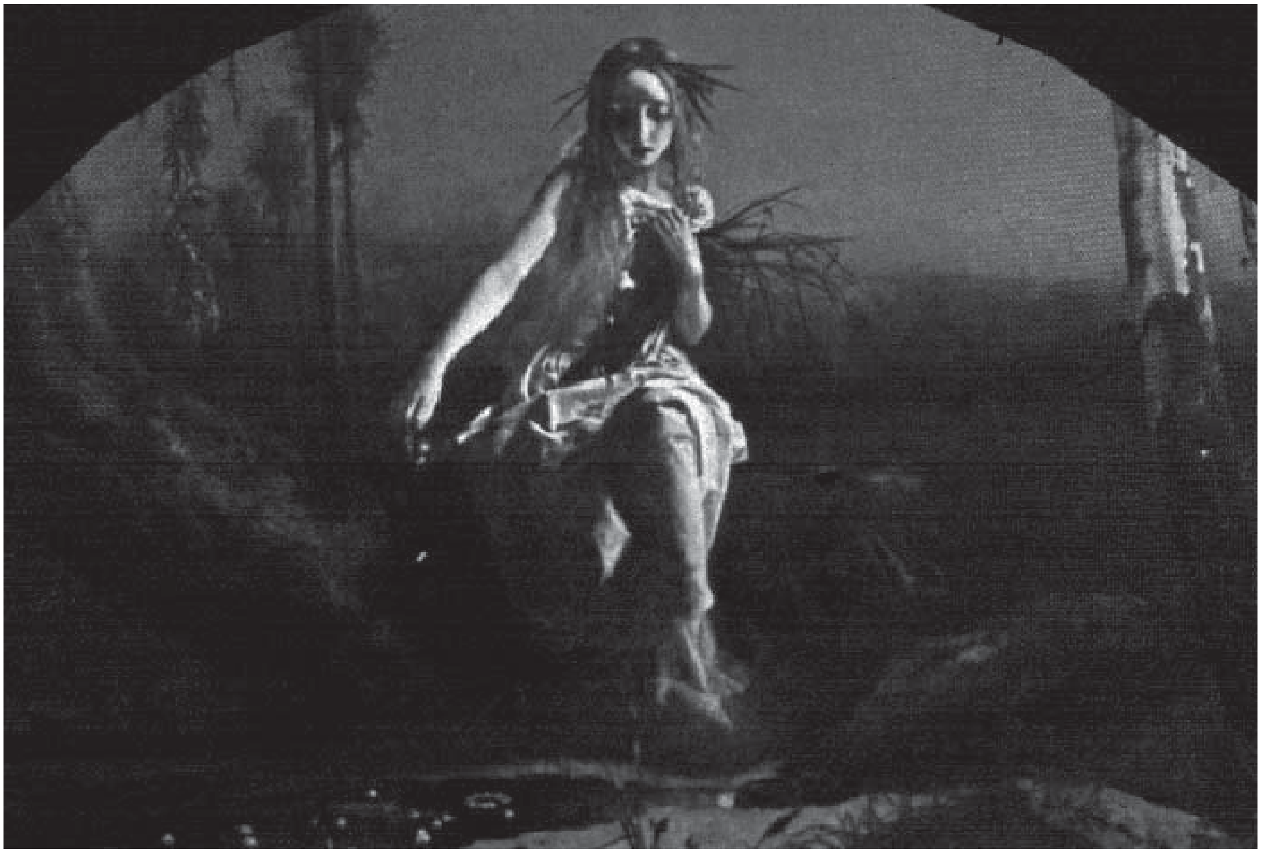


Figure 2. Hugh W. Diamond, Patient posed as Ophelia, photograph, 1848-58. Photograph courtesy of the Royal Society of Medicine, London.

[*below*] Figure 3. Arthur Hughes, *Ophelia*, oil on canvas, 1852. Photograph courtesy the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C



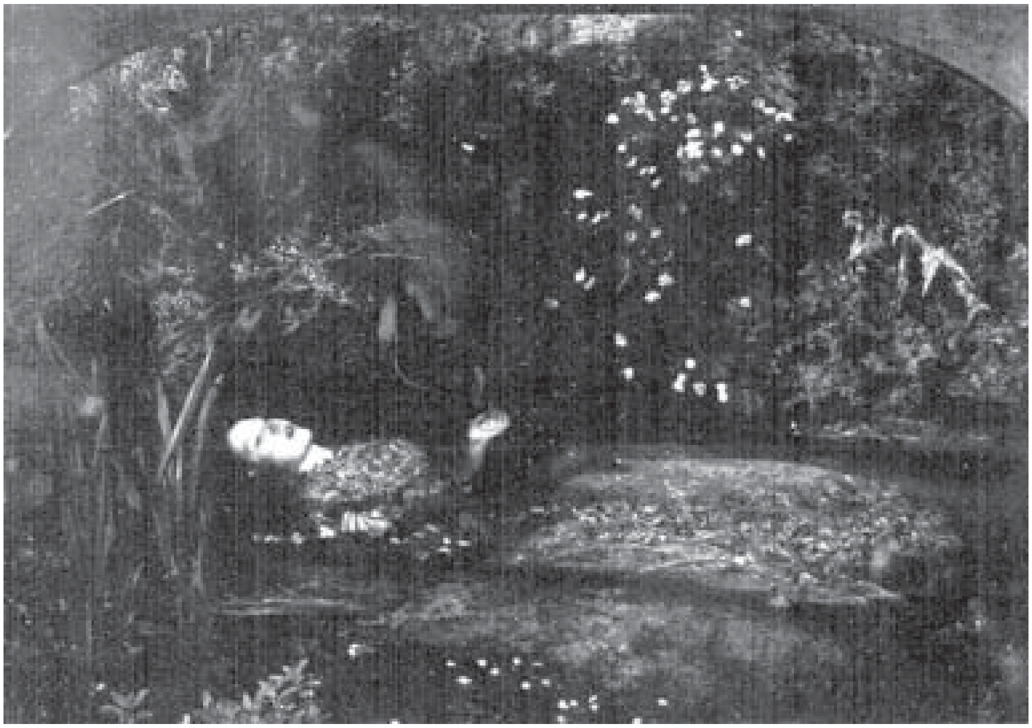


Figure 4. John Everett Millais, *Ophelia*, oil on canvas, 30 x 44 inches, 1852. Photograph courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C

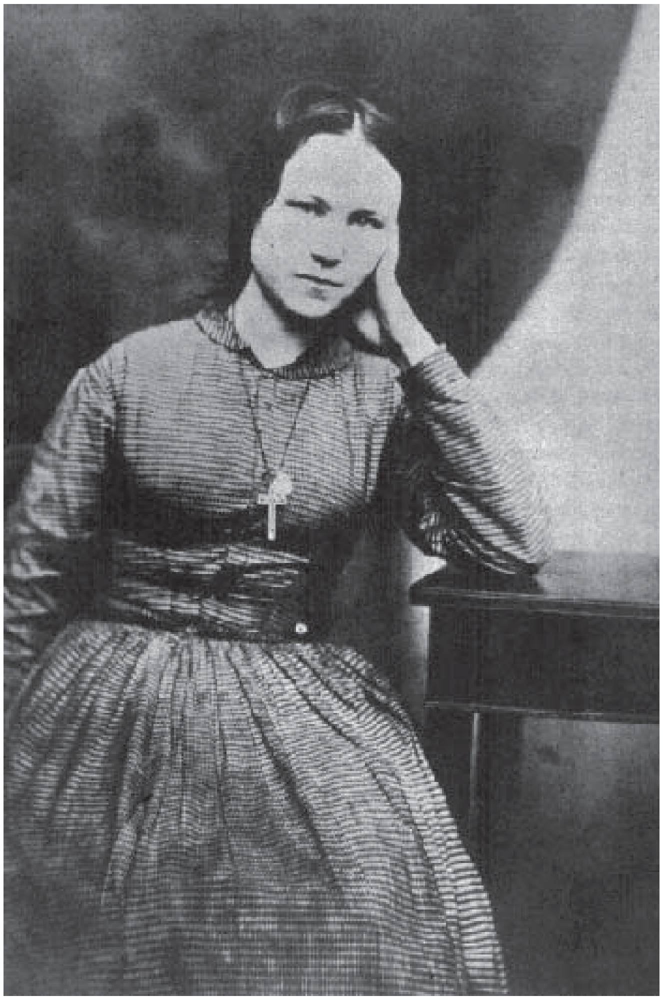


Figure 5. Hugh W. Diamond, Patient diagnosed with religious mania, photograph, 1848-58. Photograph courtesy the Royal Society of Medicine, London.

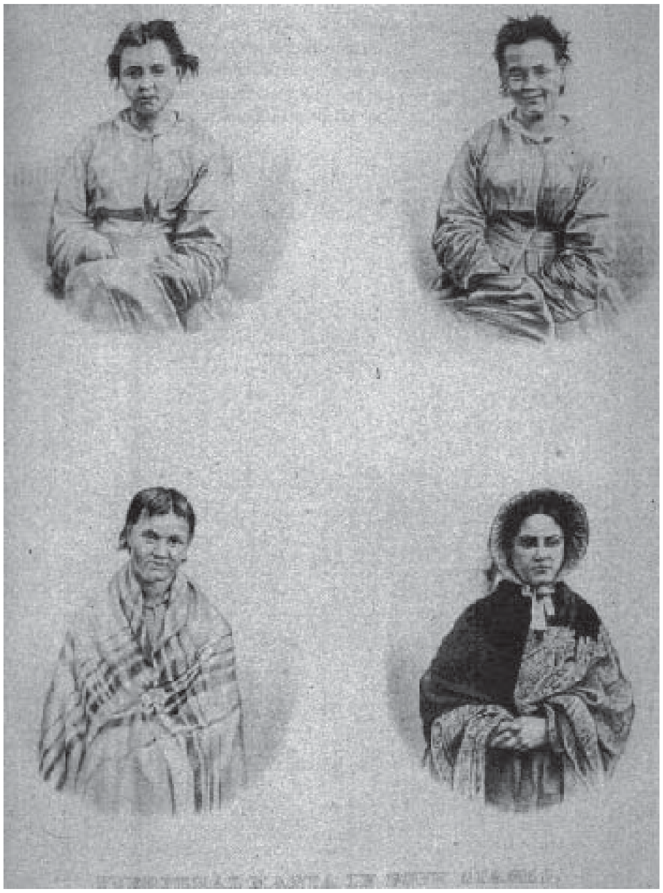


Figure 6. Anonymous, "Puerperal Mania in Four Stages," lithograph after Diamond photograph, 1848-58. Photograph courtesy of Sander L. Gilman, Cornell University.

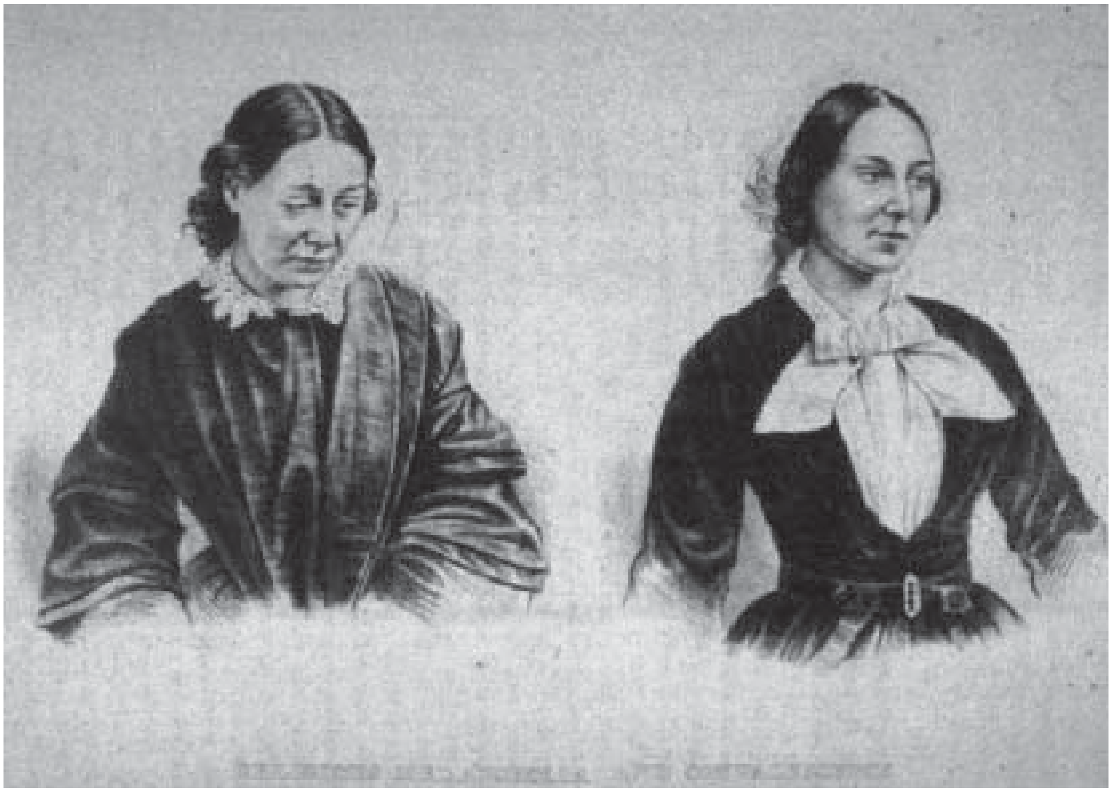


Figure 7. Anonymous, "Religious Melancholia and Convalescence," lithograph after Diamond photograph, 1848-58. Photograph courtesy of Sander L. Gilman, Cornell University.

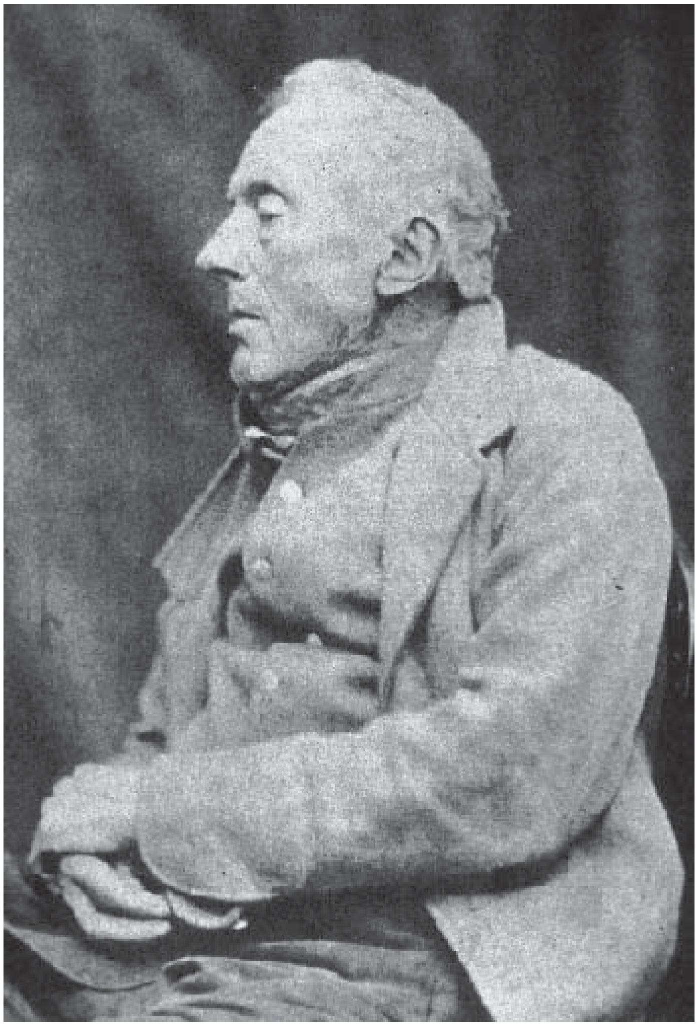


Figure 8. Hugh W. Diamond, Male patient, photograph, 1848-58. Photograph courtesy of the Royal Society of Medicine, London.

The Creation of Le Corbusier's "Primitivistic" Regional Style: a Study in Resolved Dialectic Oppositions

Irene Nero

At the outset of this paper, I would like to clarify my usage of the term "primitivism." Rather than implying any value judgment, I am using the term as a means of conveying information about forms and motifs in their primordial, essential, or primary states. Furthermore, I am using the term as Le Corbusier used the term in reference to his works of the period under discussion. Additionally, Le Corbusier refers to the Greeks as a "primitive" civilization, from which he drew much inspiration.

Clearly, one of the most influential architects of the twentieth century, Le Corbusier (born Charles Edouard Jeanneret, October 6, 1887-August 27, 1965) had a celebrated, although rocky career from 1910-60.[1] Early in his career, he utilized a balanced harmony of proportion so important to the ancient Greek civilization, which he admired and regarded as a "primitive" or primary civilization. His use of essential geometric forms, based on the Golden Section, was a result of his desire to evoke primordial, familiar chords within people. Le Corbusier felt he was expressing universal feelings in his quest for harmony and balance. His reduction and synthesis of all that was around him helped him derive "type-objects," which he also considered primordial due their reductiveness and universal appeal. His early "primitivism" was, therefore, based on Classical ideas which he merged with French Classical tastes and the modern functionalism of new materials. These early Classical works are exemplified by his masterwork, the Villa Savoye. Built in 1929, at Poissy, near Paris, the Villa is a beautifully proportioned International Style building based on strict geometric forms. During this period, he also painted in the Purist style—a strict geometric style with an emphasis on essential forms.

Towards the end of 1929, however, his renowned career took another twist. Fully retaining the ideas of Classical "primitive" harmony, he promoted a new style of regionalism.[2] His world-wide travel had exposed him to folk, peasant, and vernacular dwellings. Distinct from what had been seen before, his new style incorporated Classical proportion, primordial natural forms, new technology, and new materials, which were innovatively altered and juxtaposed. Softening his machine aesthetic, he embraced a more emotionally evocative style.

Kenneth Frampton and William Curtis have both remarked that Le Corbusier's change reflected a change in personal ideology, as he lost hope that the machine could better mankind.[3] As usual, Le Corbusier was the vanguard, presaging both the biomorphic movement of the 1950s and the post-modernists' vernacular movement in the 1970s. After a disastrous commission in Soviet Russia, from 1926-30, and trips to North Africa, Spain, and Greece, Le Corbusier sought a genial blend of landscape and vernacular traditions. He was acutely aware that local styles and traditions were valid signs of regional importance. Rather than remain artistically within the confines of a particular regional style, however, he extracted local signs from several areas, and subsequently recombined them elsewhere, changing the signification. Le Corbusier's actions reflect, once again, a conscious choice on his part to make his style universal. His innate dialectic mind allowed him to continually reconcile oppositions such as these. In his early career it was the reconciliation between Classical harmony and modern materials and techniques that occupied his thoughts. From the 1930s forward, his predominant thought was the resolution of vernacular styles and traditions with modern materials and techniques.

In this paper, I will show how Le Corbusier employed "primitivism" in his later works, developing a regional style based on primordial elements. In 1935, Le Corbusier wrote about his quest for the "primitive," stating, "I am attracted to the natural order of things. . .in my flight from city living I end up in places where society is in the process of organization. I seek out the primitive men, not for their barbarity, but for their wisdom."[4]

His use of modern tectonics, that is, construction and structure, did not constrict his ability to provide a new primitive vocabulary. Rather than confine him, his use of tectonics gave rise to new forms and techniques. However, these innovations did not replace or dismiss his use of Classical proportion. Le Corbusier rarely dismissed an idea, instead, he constantly reinvented it. I will use three of his buildings to exemplify his use of "primitivism" and its change from its former classicism. The Petite Maison de Weekend, built in 1935, for example, is an early, fully integrated "primitive" statement of a Parisian suburban dwelling intended as a getaway house (Figure 1).[5] It is a blend of sophistication and rusticity, which serves as a metaphor for its function. Secondly, the Unité d'Habitation, Marseilles, built from 1947-53, is a multi-family dwelling still in use today (Figure 2). The huge apartment block differs from the previous example in size and function, but like the Petite Maison de Weekend, it incorporates numerous "primitive" symbols. The third building under discussion is the Chapel of Nôtre-Dame du Haute, at Ronchamp, 1951-53 (Figure 3). An impressive example of wholly incorporated "primitive" symbols, techniques, and materials, Ronchamp is a unique building which still resists description. Little attention is given by scholars to this period, with most preferring to discuss Le Corbusier's earlier landmark International Style. However, with the current emphasis on the vernacular accent of Post-Modernist architectural language, Le Corbusier's prescient works of this period require a closer examination.

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[1] Le Corbusier was a French-speaking Swiss, born in La Chaux de Fonds, near the French border.

[2] William J. R. Curtis, *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1986) 116. Curtis is the only author to attach a name to Le Corbusier's style of the 1930s-60s. Others refer to it chronologically.

[3] Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992) 224. Curtis 115. Both authors feel that Le Corbusier was disenchanted by the manner in which the machine aesthetic had been appropriated by architects and designers who displayed little respect for proper proportion.

[4] Curtis 115.

The earliest break from Le Corbusier's International Style comes in the form of a small holiday house in St. Cloud, on the outskirts of Paris, the Petite Maison de Weekend. Built in 1935 for a wealthy client, the structure is based on a butterfly vaulted construction. Its "primitive" association to a cave cannot be overlooked; however, its creative origins are a sophisticated combination of modern and local materials, most of which are left exposed. Concrete, glass block, brick, wood, stone, and turf all merge into a harmonious composition. Frampton calls it a tectonic montage, meaning that the construction and the structure are pieced together as a whole.[6]

Based on the bay-like proportion of the vaulted pavilion in the garden, the dual-vaulted interior is constructed of reinforced concrete with an integrated asbestos compound and covered in finished plywood (Figure 4). The roof is partially buried under the hillside turf, keeping the house naturally insulated, and providing the majority of the cave-like interior as a retreat. In writing about the house, Le Corbusier stated:

> The designing of such a house demanded extreme care since the elements of construction were the only architectonic means. The architectural theme was established about a typical bay whose influence extended as far as the little pavilion in the garden. Here one was confronted by exposed stonework, natural on the outside, while on the interior, wood on the walls and ceiling and a chimney out of rough brickwork, with white ceramic tiles on the floor. Nevada glass block walls and a table of Cippolino marble.[7]

Always aware of the grand approach and automobile reception areas, Le Corbusier placed a rubble wall along the entrance façade. Besides framing the area for guests to park, it set the tone for the house to be understood as a rustic retreat. Created largely out of local stone, this house represents a clear break with his International Style buildings, with their sleek, geometric façades and pristine white walls. Here, Le Corbusier exposed the natural and man-made elements of construction, evoking a primordial response tinged with a sophisticated sensibility. The building has been called "womb-like," and an "elegant cavern, [or] ironic grotto. . . . Ironic, because there is an intelligent distance [from] the building."[8] The dialectic between "primitive" and modern is resolved with the aesthetic merging of "primitive" elements and machine-made materials. The viewer must pause to visually dismantle the building in order to fully ascertain what is natural and what is manufactured. Tucked into its site and blending with its natural setting, the small house clearly evokes the sense of a retreat from urbanity, but remains urbane in its precise elocution.

Less overt in its "primitive" qualities is the multi-family dwelling built by Le Corbusier in Marseilles from 1947-53. The site was an ancient Roman one, containing cypress trees, olive trees, and boulders. Based on Le Corbusier's use of Classical proportion, the building reflects his interests in ideal cities, the machine aesthetic of ocean-liners, and a number of "primitive" elements which resonate from his travels to the Mediterranean and North Africa; the block structure commands the north-south axis of a city block. On the exterior, Le Corbusier arranged the apartments so that they capture the daily trek of the sun from its rise to its setting. However, the effects of a blazing sun are offset by the façade's honeycomb element, called a *brise-soleil*, or sun-breaker. Deriving this device from vernacular architecture in North Africa, Le Corbusier used this "primitive" element numerous times throughout the 1930s - 1960s as a means of keeping glare and heat on interiors to a minimum. At Unité, he painted the *brise-soleils* in primary colors, which he likened to the concept of polychromed surfaces of the Parthenon.[9] The concrete façade was designed in *béton brut*, or raw concrete, in order to accommodate the uneven surface work of the many local construction workers. However, it was not solely for practical purposes that Le Corbusier initiated the use of *béton brut* in this building; he sought another

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[5] The Petite Maison did have predecessors created by Le Corbusier, but not as fully realized. They are the 1919 Monol development in which he experimented with the butterfly vaulting found at Petite Maison, as a component of modular housing. Additionally, a 1930 house in Chile, is an early example of his use of local stone and rubble on the exterior.

[6] Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Culture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996) 345.

[7] Frampton 345.

[8] Curtis refers to the building as "womb-like," while Vincent Scully calls the building an "elegant cavern." Scully is quoted in Curtis 115. As a post-modern architectural historian, Scully has interest also in the ironic as found in architecture.

[9] Le Corbusier took several trips to Greece, however, his first one left an indelible mark on him. In 1907, the young, unformed architect developed an attachment to the proportion and harmony of the architecture. Further, he recognized the oppositional dialogue between nature and architecture; he strove to resolve this. The Parthenon featured prominently in his *Vers une Architecture* of 1923, and was never far from his mind in any of his work.

"primitive" element in his design repertoire. *Béton brut* is a surface finish that exposes the rough, unfinished look of cast concrete, with its pebbles, air pockets, wood frame marks, and—at Unité, seashells—as a symbol of the Mediterranean. With the imprinted seashell, Le Corbusier has left an indexical sign of the site in the slab. Furthermore, much like the chisel marks of wooden sculpture, the grain of the wooden frames is imprinted into the concrete, leaving a record of the construction process for all to see. This rough-hewn look is countermanded in the Unité, however, by the building's Classical proportions and its precise execution in joining of the slabs. Based on the repetitive quality of Roman aqueducts, and of the Coliseum's façade, the Unité is abstractly rhythmic as well as "primitivistic." Further, it serves as a modern metaphor for Classical architecture located on an ancient site.

There are other references to "primitive" conditions, as well, at the Unité d'Habitation. For instance, the pilotis which hold up the building, are also "primitivistic" in their form, resembling the morphology of bones. In addition, the vertical ridging, created from the wooden framework of its production, can be read as fluting. Therefore, an indexical mark of production becomes a Classical quotation. Pilotis are Le Corbusier's modernist sign of anticanonical French Classicism. He subverted the French Classical use of columns, as usually decorative or symbolic architectural elements, by making them actually support the building. Of course, this structural use of columns originated with his beloved "primitive" Greeks.

Additionally, Le Corbusier took advantage of the original rocky site which overlooks the Bay of Marseilles. These features evoke other associations with the designs and tectonics of the "primitive" Greeks. His favorite site, the Parthenon, counts among the associations. The rustic view inspired Le Corbusier to integrate the feeling of living in nature into the building. His merging of architecture and nature is exemplified by the panoramic view experienced from the roof top terrace of the rocky terrain, with trees, and the bay beyond. The roof top terrace which houses a children's pool, a running track, a garden, and a gymnasium, is also enmeshed with references to the ancient Roman geological site by its irregularly placed artificial concrete mounds, which significantly echo the surrounding landscape. A feeling of nature is evoked by the view from the roof, because the view places nature within the observer's realm, distorting the reality of the surrounding modern aesthetic. Yet, paradoxically, one can feel as though atop the deck of an ocean liner, with a view of the bay beyond. This oppositional dialectic is intentional: once again, Le Corbusier resolves the tension between "primitivism" and the machine aesthetic. The viewer must disassemble the elements in order to reveal the symbolic underpinnings of the design. Le Corbusier's painting of the time also reflected his change to a softer, more organic shape. For example, in 1931 in his *atelier* in Paris, he had several paintings in progress which reflected an organic, more curvilinear form emerging in his work.

If the viewer must struggle to untangle the signs and symbols of Petite Maison de Weekend and of the Unité d' Habitation, then the challenge reaches heroic proportions when viewing the Chapel of Nôtre Dame du Haute at Ronchamp. Placed at the crest of a hilly site, near the Swiss border, the pilgrimage chapel is only fully visible when one arrives at the summit. Like the Acropolis, the natural site was capped with a man-made structure. Le Corbusier saw this relationship as an opposition of architecture versus nature, and from the beginning of his career, he felt compelled to resolve its tension.

The rocky terrain, and site of the building create the first "primitive" association for this unique building. That is, the feeling of being in nature, is evoked here. Like the Petite Maison, and the Unité, the building is located within a natural setting. At Ronchamp, however, nature is also reflected in the fluctuating, splayed walls, and crustacean-like roof. The use of curvilinear forms abstracted from their natural sources indicate that Le Corbusier had not forgotten his early education in La Chaux de Fonds under the tutelage of Charles L'Eplattenier, a Ruskin follower.[10]

Constructed of both manufactured and natural materials, the Chapel signifies the harmonious blending of the natural and man-made world. Therefore, it represents the world of spirit where all is in balance. The concrete frame is infilled with the rubble remaining from the previous chapel, and is sprayed with two inches of gunnite, rusticated to look like stucco. Lacking the sleek and smooth appearance of Le Corbusier's International Style façades, the textured white gunnite surfaces offer a warm Mediterranean feel to a high altitude building, creating a feeling of warmth in a cold climate. This juxtaposition distorts the reality of place and climate in the viewer's mind. Exterior walls undulate in various positions from one another, to suggest an organic animation of the whole. The concave façade on the east side of the chapel offers its comforting curve as shelter to the priest during outdoor services. The interior of the chapel is finished in *béton brut*, recalling the interiors of great churches constructed of stone. Furthermore, the interior is lit by natural light which flows in from irregularly placed windows and a nine-inch glazed section which runs lengthway along three walls between the roof and the top of the wall. There are wooden pews, a high altar, and two semicircular side chapels. The floor rises organically, echoing the hilly site, and the crustacean-inspired roof droops like a rain-soaked tent. The building is often seen as a mystery, and scholars seem at a loss for words when discussing the unrivaled roof, yet Le Corbusier seemed unruffled for an explanation of its design origin. In 1965 he wrote, "A crab shell picked up on Long Island near New York, in 1946, lay on the drafting table. It became the roof of the chapel."[11] What better "primitive" source than the life-giving sea?

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[10] Le Corbusier's early education is discussed by numerous authors. His first artistic training was achieved in an applied arts school in La Chaux de Fonds. Throughout his life, his teacher Charles L'Eplattenier, performed as a mentor, and helped Le Corbusier get scholarships and commissions. L'Eplattenier taught in an Arts and Crafts manner, following the teachings of Ruskin. Therefore, many years of Le Corbusier's early training were spent in abstracting nature.

Signifiers of "primitive" sources abound in this chapel. In addition to the site, and the placement of the building, previously mentioned, there is the obvious reference to a "primitive" form in the design of the shell-like roof, derived from nature but abstracted. Moreover, chapels lit from above evoke the grotto at Hadrian's villa in Tivoli and refer to the oculus at the Pantheon in Rome. Le Corbusier makes sole use of the primary source of natural light to illuminate the entire building. It is also interesting to note that there was a pagan sun temple on the site previously, which, of course, was oriented to the trajectory of the sun. Le Corbusier invokes this previous "primitive" temple as he positioned his chapel with its windows and skylights to capture maximum natural light. Light dances off of the whitewashed and painted walls, subtly changing with the constant movement of the sun.[12] Yet, an evocation of the Gothic use of light as spirit or pure life force cannot be dismissed here, nor can the vaulting which appears in response to the sagging roof. In both cases the evocation of medieval references can be seen as a primordial signifier of the divine. Therefore, another oppositional dialectic can be seen as resolved here, that of the Classical and the Gothic. Furthermore, the roof does not join the wall proper on three sides of the building. This allows for the illusion of the apparently heavy roof floating above the wall, evoking the feeling which occurs with the great dome at Hagia Sophia. Granted, the seemingly floating dome of Hagia Sophia is banded by framed windows at its base, but the same expression of primordial light lifting the weight of the canopy is present at Ronchamp. Additionally, we can view the narrow band of glazing as a self-referential symbol of his *fenêtres en longueur*, or long, ribbon-like windows which Le Corbusier originally designed for his International Style buildings as subversions of canonical French windows.

Finally, we see an amalgamation of references to ships, such as the prow of the roof; the rounded tower resembling a ship's horn, also seen at Villa Savoye and Unité; and references to vernacular dwellings in Greece, Algeria, and Spain. For example, the whitewashed exterior is derived from Greece, the Chapel cross unit from Spain, and the south wall with its perforations—an Algerian Mosque.[13] The forms are tightly knit to one another, evidencing Le Corbusier's mania for meticulous precision, but at the same time the building changes its character from one façade to another. As in the interior of the Villa Savoye, there is a continual vista with every progressive turn. Multi-faceted, wholly incorporated with "primitive" and modern materials, techniques, and motifs, the unique building is an exemplary vernacular construction.

In conclusion, we have seen Le Corbusier bring the full force of his career into motion during the 1930s when he began to develop his regional style. We have seen that this style is based on his earlier Classical "primitivism," but enjoins his new quest for "primitive" and vernacular forms which could be transmitted universally. Usually seen oppositionally, the universal use of the vernacular was just another antithesis to be reconciled. Furthermore, Le Corbusier's entire *corpus* was built on oppositions, and subsequently, his merging of classical "primitive" and regional "primitive" designs was just part of his ability to reconcile seemingly disparate concepts.

Furthermore, Le Corbusier resolved the opposition of a primary or essential vocabulary versus modern technology by utilizing modern materials, which he "primitivized." In the case of reinforced concrete, he left the maker's mark, so that it signified hand-crafted stone; and, he even left the mark of the primordial sea at Unité. He created symbolic Mediterranean stucco exteriors by blowing synthetic-based gunnite on his buildings. He created vernacular buildings by utilizing local stone, designs abstracted from nature, and a precise understanding of the site. He evoked the primordial past with his use of light, and his references to ancient sites. He transformed time, repeatedly, by conflating images which distorted the viewer's acclamation to temporality. He juxtaposed modernity against whichever primordial past he was culling, and thereby created a new present. Le Corbusier simply synthesized everything he saw, and recombined it to fit the construction task at hand. But nowhere is that more apparent than in his later works, those of his regional style beginning in the 1930s.

Florida State University

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[11] Stanislaus Von Moos, *Le Corbusier: Elements of a Synthesis*, 1979. Quote from Le Corbusier attributed to his writings of 1965, *Textes et Dessins pour Ronchamp*, Paris.

[12] Von Moos is the only author who mentions that some portions of the interior walls were painted; two colors he mentions are liturgical purple and a light yellow.

[13] Von Moos 98.

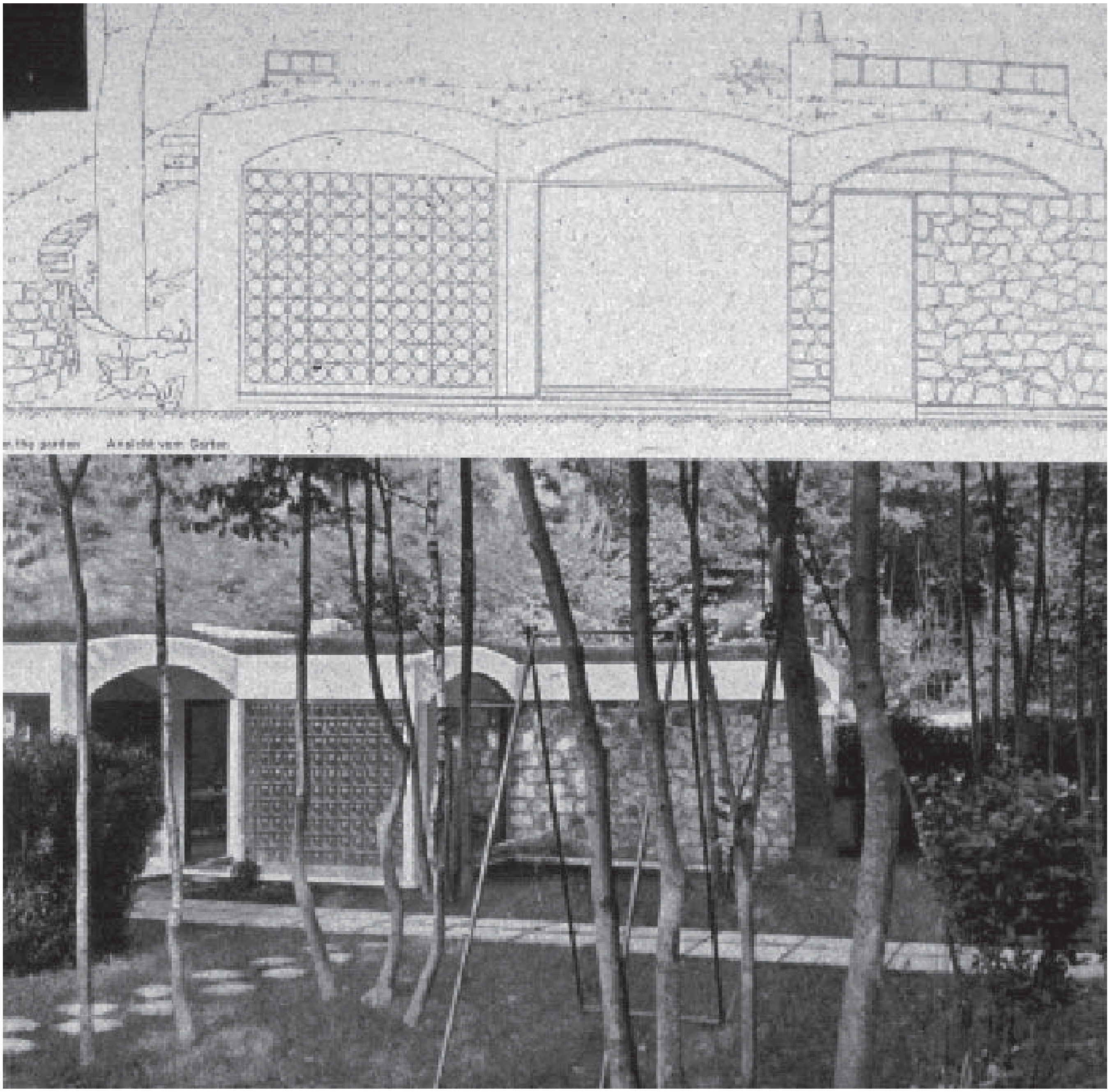
the garden
Ansicht vom Garten

Figure 1. Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, Weekend House, La Celle Saint-Cloud, France, elevation and exterior, 1935.

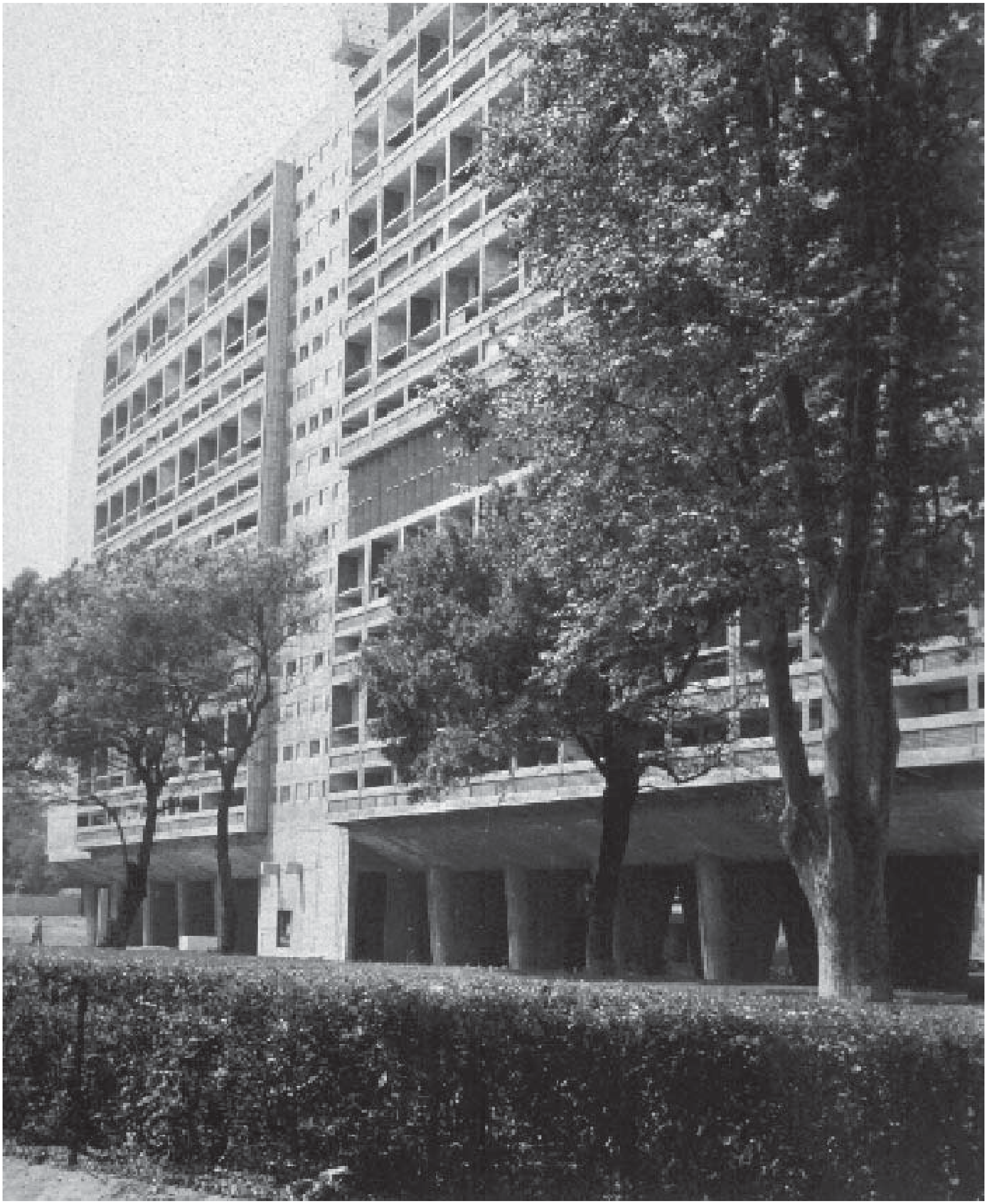

Figure 2. Le Corbusier, La Cité radieuse (Unité d'Habitation), exterior, Marseilles, France, 1947-53. Credit: Giraudon/Art Resource, NY.

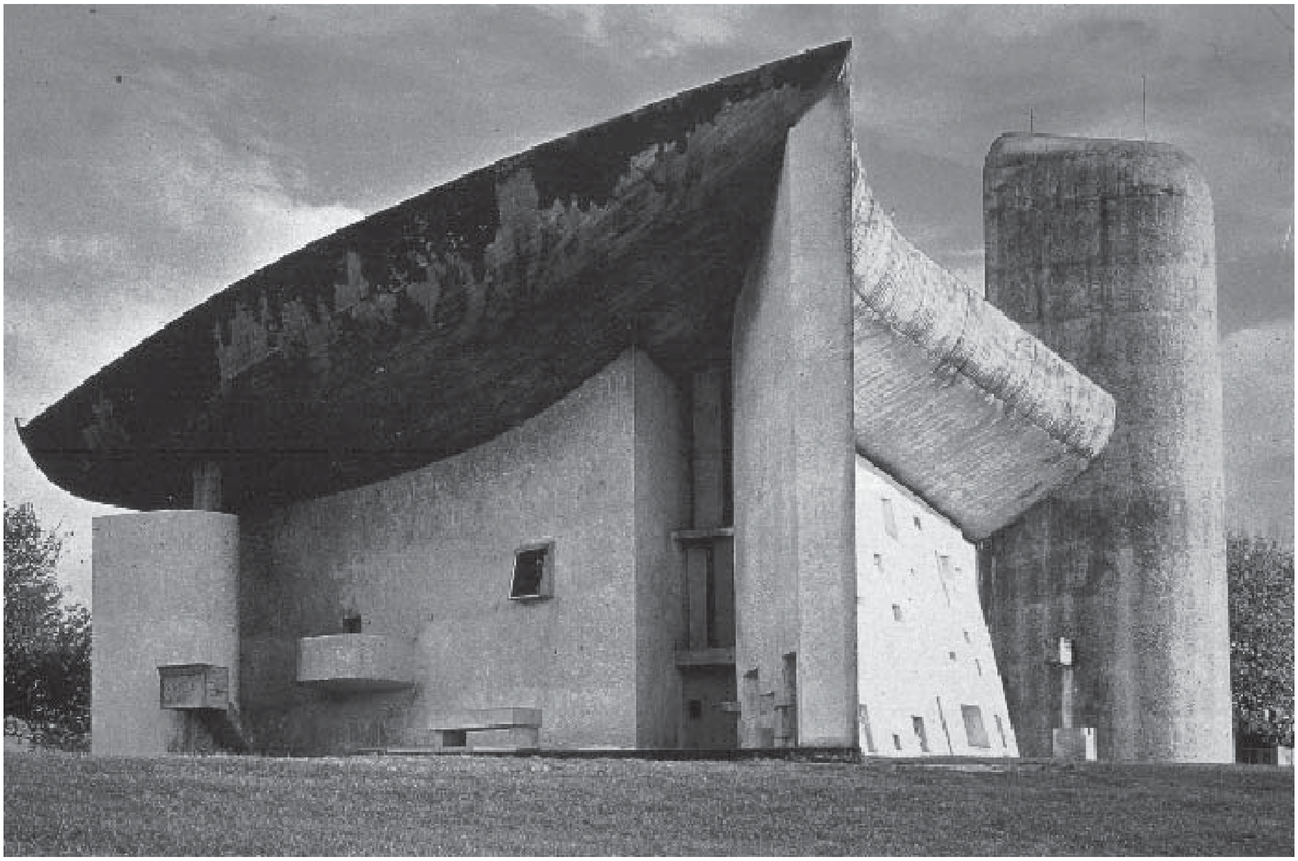

Figure 3. Le Corbusier, Chapelle de Nôtre Dame du Haute, Ronchamp, France, exterior, 1951-53. Credit: Giraudon/Art Resource, NY.

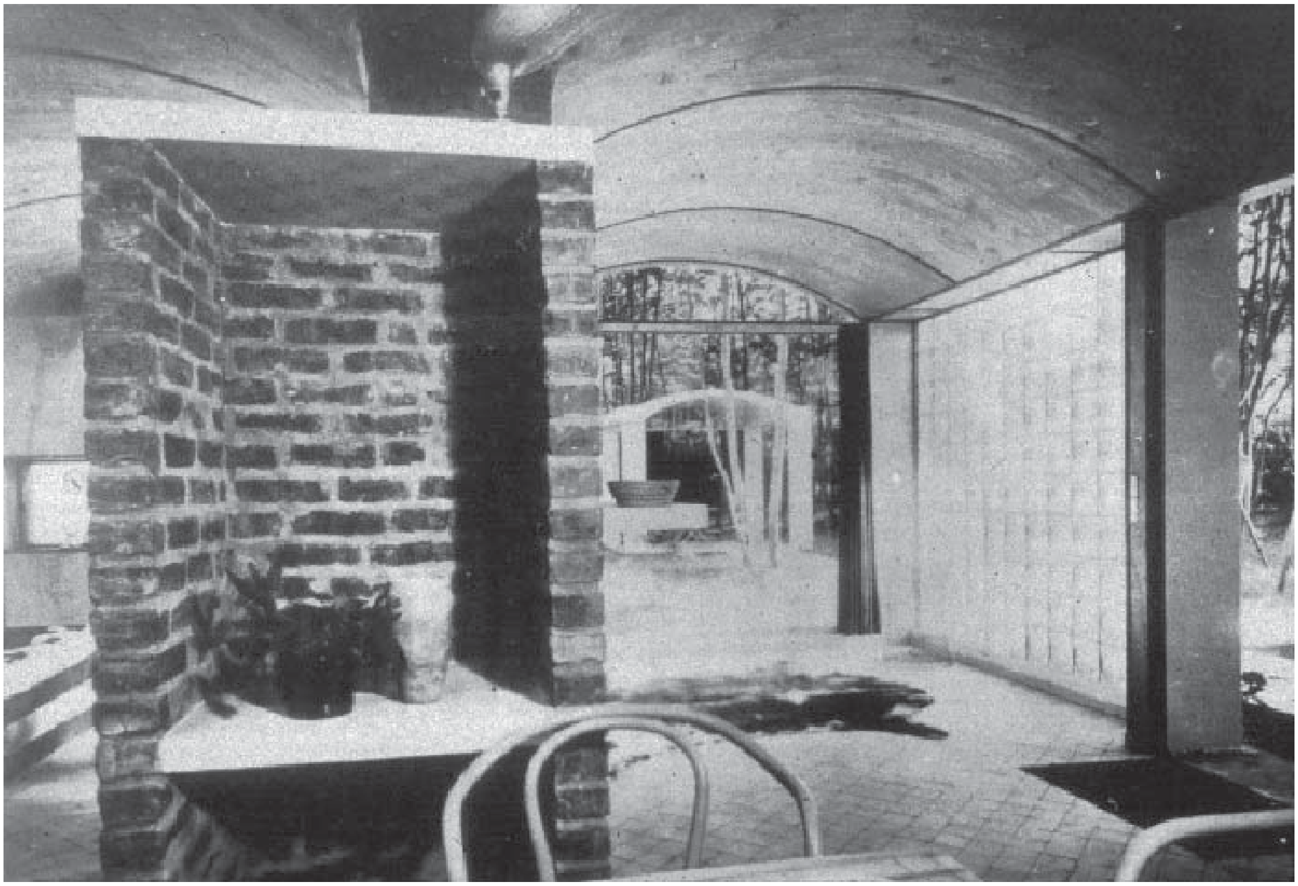

Figure 4. Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, Weekend House, La Celle Saint-Cloud, France, interior, 1935.

Calligraphy as Image in Japanese Abstract Art

Ginger Russell

In the discourse of art history, W.J.T. Mitchell has examined the differentiation between words and images. In his writings, he relates the intertwined relationship of word and image and has addressed abstract painting and language. However, he is dealing strictly with the western tradition of painting and art. He had not tackled the issue of calligraphy as an art form. This paper will examine the use of calligraphy in Japanese abstract art, using Mitchell's theory of language in art.

A brief definition of abstract art, to be used throughout this paper, is provided but I will comment later upon the changing definition of abstract art given the relationship between word and image in a post-modern environment. Abstract art can be defined as art that seeks to create an image of that which cannot be understood literally; it is usually based on forms that are extrapolated from the environment and interpreted expressively, but without any direct mimetic reference.

To begin, I will examine the tradition of calligraphy in Japan before the modern era and the influence of Zen Buddhism on calligraphy, as an art form, in ancient Japan. I will then examine its position in 20th century art and its use as an extension of the abstract tendency. To continue, I will compare works by Japanese abstract artists and American abstract artists and how interpretations of their paintings will differ from knowledge of the inherent meanings in calligraphy. This paper will investigate the unique position of Japanese calligraphic artists who have the resource of layered meanings in the signs of calligraphy and will compare this position to American artists. I will conclude by discussing Mitchell's theory of word and image and the aptness of his theory in a semiotic approach to calligraphy.

Prior to the Heian period, dated 794 to 1185 AD, Japan did not develop a writing style for any literary or poetic function; they depended on the oral tradition in their native language. The aristocratic elite depended upon Chinese writing for any government or religious documents. Due to the differences in the spoken language of each country, however, Japan developed an indigenous form of writing that included Chinese characters for concepts and simplified strokes to indicate suffixes and other word variations. This evolved into the *on-yomi*, a phonetic system that correlated sounds with characters, and *kun-yomi*, which was the ideographic system that correlated concepts with characters. In addition, the ideographic and pictographic Chinese system evolved from pictures and images that represented concepts and words, and is in itself an abstraction of form. The Japanese system advanced through its use by the centralized Japanese government, conducted in the native tongue, and in diplomacy with other countries.

The indigenous Japanese system was perfected during the Heian period by the courtiers for the purpose of literature and poetry. By the ninth century, writing had developed into two distinct forms, a masculine *katakana* and a feminine *hiragana*. The feminine form evolved into *onnade*, a purely indigenous form perfected for literary use.[1] With this new writing system, poetic and literary styles developed along with a new aesthetic in calligraphy.

As a writing form, calligraphy was more dependent on its visual effect than maintaining any standardized presentation. Artists often employed backgrounds and graphics, emphasizing the writing as a visual element in an arranged composition and a more creative use of the materials for calligraphy such as decorative paper and colored ink. It was even used in decorative arts such as ceramics, textiles, and fans (Figure 1). More than just a convenient form for their language, though, their writing system took on the personality of their native poetry and literature, striving to illustrate with the forms of the characters the meaning of the writing.

Both Chinese and Japanese artists have viewed the tradition of calligraphy as expressionistic and personal. The expressive individuality of the writer is highly prized, as evidenced by connoisseurship and collectors. It was popular for secular and religious use; particularly, it was adopted by the Ch'an in China and Zen Buddhists in Japan as an exercise in personal meditation. The process of investing one's self in the production of the work meant the direct transference of one's personality, thought, and spirit to the art. It was felt that the painting would have a direct communicative relationship with the viewer by expressing the artist's individuality and beliefs. In this sense, calligraphy developed *with* poetry as a personal expression, and as a unique Zen exercise.

The form of the calligraphy reiterates the idea that is written and the individuality of the writer. Often, the same text written in different styles can convey different moods and different ideas. Stephen Addiss provides an example that illustrates differences in the personalities of the writers and reception of their work (Figure 2). The two writings say practically the same text: on the left, "First Patriarch Bodaidaruma Great Teacher" and on the right "First Patriarch Daruma Great Teacher." According to Addiss, the difference in style suggests that the first is proud and exclamatory, celebrating the religious leader, while the second seems more like an invocation of the teacher or a chant.[2] In addition, variations in spacing, symmetry, size, thickness of line, heaviness of ink, materials, as well as choice of script style all determine the communicated meaning.

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[1] Joan Stanley-Baker, *Japanese Art* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1984) 96-105.

Modern Japan still has a strong tradition of calligraphy. Annual exhibitions of Chinese style, Japanese style, avant-garde and literary styles attest to the prevalence of this form in art. Moreover, modern Japanese artists can utilize fully the abstract tendency inherent in calligraphy. Calligraphy as an individualized and expressive medium was perfectly suited for the movement towards abstract art in post-World War II Japan. Its concentration on formal qualities and the importance of process from Zen Buddhism naturally extend to abstract art.

Following the war, in 1952, a group of artists interested in preserving traditional Japanese art in the face of modernization formed a group called *Bokujin-Kai*, or the Ink Human Society, which advocated an avant-garde approach to calligraphy. Members included Morita Shiryu and Inoue Yuichi; other artists, such as Yoshihara Jiro, contributed to their journal.[3] The work of these artists demonstrates the influence of the formal quality of calligraphy and characters as well as the admission of calligraphy as invested with eastern philosophy.

Yoshihara completed a series of circle paintings inspired by the Zen tradition of painting and calligraphy. *Red Circle on Black*, 1965, and *White Circle on Black*, 1968 (Figure 3), can be interpreted as the *enso* form used in Zen painting and meditation. Yoshihara's process of painting resembled the Zen practice of spiritual discipline, with repetition until the form is perfected. According to Alexandra Munroe, the *enso* can represent "void and substance, emptiness and completion, union of painting, calligraphy, and meditation."[4] Regarding formal arrangements, Yoshihara was relying on the calligraphic tradition that already considers composition, space, form, thickness of line, ink or paint, background, and materials, in the abstract depiction of images for personal expression.

Yoshihara differs from western abstract artists because he has not just abstracted a physical form, but also the concept that the shape / form signifies in calligraphy. By removing the context of the *enso,* and isolating the image to be the sole occupant of the canvas, Yoshihara has effectively extrapolated the meaning of the *enso* to the extreme, until it no longer has a literal translation. This represents a new dimension for Japanese modern art: abstracting a form that is in itself an abstracted pictograph. In addition, the Japanese viewer, who has an orientation to calligraphy, Zen Buddhism, and the *enso* form, will better understand the subtleties of meaning within the image as opposed to a viewer who can only understand its formal qualities. This painting can be considered a re-creation of the evolution of Chinese characters, or abstracted pictographs, combined with the religious aspect of perfecting form.

Morita Shiryu was interested in the use of calligraphy as a trademark and preservation of eastern thought. Morita was the editor of the calligraphy journal, *Bokubi*, which advocated *sho,* or calligraphy, as the foundation of eastern religion, philosophy, and poetry. According to Munroe, this group "sought to reconceptualize calligraphy as a form of contemporary expressionist painting."[5] This movement was in response to attitudes before World War II that calligraphy could not be modernized due to the restrictive connection with Chinese literature, the use of traditional materials, and its lack of recognition by western artists as "fine art." However, Morita believed that *sho* could transcend technical arts such as painting because of its connection to religion, philosophy, and literature.[6] According to Munroe, Morita was recalling the attitudes of ancient Japan and Zen Buddhism in viewing the brushstroke as "'imprint of the mind'—a sign of the artist's intellectual, psychological, and spiritual state of being. . .[that] like modern abstract art, represents a formal and conceptual rather than real or descriptive image. . . ."[7] Munroe goes on to explain how this serves as a solid foundation for calligraphy's use in abstract art.

In Morita's painting, *Offing (Okitsu)*, 1965, the abstraction of character is present, almost to the point of being unrecognizable as calligraphy. The same can be said of Inoue's painting *Muga*, 1956 (Figure 4). Unlike Yoshihara, Inoue has left the trace of his own hand visible, reminding the viewer of the artist's presence in the work. This painting reveals meaning in its form, its process of creation, its materials and its iconography as an ideogram. Regardless of the attempt to isolate the form, the viewer can read a meaning in the calligraphic form if he is knowledgeable in reading the text. Morita and Inoue were continuing the Japanese tradition of calligraphy by transcending the word and using it as an image, an image indicative of the artist's presence and individuality, and incorporating abstraction. The modernist aspect is the presence of the personality and individuality of the artist in the work. The post-modern influence is the very use of calligraphy, its history and tradition, and its duality as word and image. Other artists working with Morita and Inoue were Teshigahara Sofu and Ueda Sokyu. Their work ranges from a more traditional appearance to pure form, showing also modernist and post-modernist tendencies.

As part of the growing trend in Japan to emerge seriously in the art world, Morita was expanding overseas to artists in New York. He was promoting a common, universal gestural language that did not involve words and could be used by all artists in a calligraphic capacity. Herein lies one of the contradictions that Morita faced, the preservation of the Japanese form of calligraphy, while abandoning the inherent meanings of the ideograms. This is impossible, though, in a post-modernist atmosphere given that Japanese artists will always have Japanese contextual associations in their work, such as the association of *enso* as a Zen exercise and its meanings. Like Yoshihara, the use of the calligraphic characters will always lend meaning besides its formal appearance to the painting or image. To a Japanese viewer, with the prevalence of calligraphy in their lives, the translation of the meaning of the character is unavoidable.

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[2] Stephen Addiss, *How to Look at Japanese Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996) 82-83.

[3] All Japanese names are listed in the traditional Japanese fashion, with the surname first, followed by the given name.

[4] Alexandra Munroe, *Japanese Art after 1945: Scream against the Sky* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994) 94.

[5] Munroe 129.

[6] Munroe 129.

[7] Munroe 129.

To illustrate this added dimension of meaning that is derived from the use of ideographic calligraphy, we will compare the work of Yoshihara to the American painter Adolph Gottlieb. Gottlieb produced a series of paintings called *Burst* that employed certain formal calligraphic elements very similar to Japanese calligraphy. One example is *Rolling*, 1961 (Figure 5). While no direct ideogram can be seen, the formal qualities of line, thickness of paint, and space are all elements that this painting has in common with a painting such as Yoshihara's *White Circle on Black*. Gottlieb however is dependent on strictly these formal qualities to convey his meaning. While most critics, such as Karen Wilkin, Stephen Polcari and Lawrence Alloway, admit the calligraphic reference, they rarely explore any literal meaning in Gottlieb's work, concentrating instead on formal analysis.[8] In my research, only Manfred Schneckenburger, in his essay for the 1972 Munich Olympic exhibition, applies the calligraphic meaning to his analysis and interpretation.[9] He acknowledges the visual *and* linguistic function of calligraphy but relies too heavily on the connotation of eastern calligraphy as mystical and spiritual, because of its association with Zen Buddhism. In any case, these critics, Schneckenburger, and other western viewers do not have the luxury of a history of calligraphy to determine their interpretations. Other western artists using calligraphic elements include Pierre Soulages, Robert Motherwell (Figure 6), and K.R.H. Sonderborg; analyses of their work, too, are more dependent on calligraphy's formal qualities and cultural associations, rather than linguistic meaning.

Calligraphy as a visual form is not a tradition native to western forms of art and it truly does not have a comparable equivalent in the history of western art. Most western artists are appropriating eastern emphasis on the formal qualities of calligraphy only and viewers are unable to access the literal meaning of calligraphic forms or characters, because of a western predilection for separating word and image. Japanese art has been able to use calligraphy, or words, as part of the meaning *and* the visual composition, throughout its history. It is this tradition that modern Japanese artists are able to rely upon in abstract art and allows Japanese viewers to *see* meaning in a work of art.

Few western artists are able to include the meanings of calligraphy in their work because abstract art developed as a form that has no literal association. While Japanese artists were extrapolating words to the point of abstraction, western artists were abandoning words and literalness completely. These artists sought to abandon the academic institution of narrative in painting, leading to abstract art as a purely visual personal expression. This meaning of abstract art changes in view of W.J.T. Mitchell's theory of word and image, which states that word and image are linked in a fluctuating relationship of "word vs. image" and "word as image."[10] Words and images are at once antonyms and synonyms, each conjuring the other as an opposite or equivalent. It is imperative to understand that Mitchell's theory tends to contradict established opinions, such as Clement Greenberg's, about abstract art. According to Mitchell, critics such as Greenberg defend Abstract Expressionism, using artists from the United States, by suggesting that abstract art is that which eliminates the literal from the visual. In this sense, Abstract Expressionist works should lack a narrative, a literal subject, and an explanation. Mitchell goes on to explain that this is contradictory to the entire discipline of art history and to Greenberg's own written defense of abstract art.[11]

Mitchell claims that through a variety of avenues, a literary environment is created around a work of art, regardless of an artist's intentions.[12] In the critique of any painting, in applying a personal interpretation, in merely commenting on the color, many actions create a verbal or written association with that work. This literal interpretation exists because viewers have been conditioned through the traditional medium of narratives in art to associate words with images. Hence Mitchell's word and image conundrum is created. Seeing the word conjures an image; or the image conjures the word. There is a direct relationship either as opposites since the word is not the image and/or as synonyms, since they are associated. This semiotic approach illustrates well the vast post-modern interplay at work when viewing a painting. An artist can choose to be dependent upon that viewer's past experiences or not. This brings us to the unique position of those abstract artists who employ calligraphic elements in their work.

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[8] ". . .the permutations of his now famous 'Burst' image—the confrontation of a vigorous calligraphic tangle and a smooth hovering disc. . ." 33. Karen Wilkin, "Abstract Expressionism Revisited" *The New Criterion*, 9 (February 1991): 28-34. Stephen Polcari, "Gottlieb and Kline" *Art Journal*, 55 (Spring 1996): 87-91. Lawrence Alloway, "Adolph Gottlieb and Abstract Painting" *Adolph Gottlieb: A Retrospective*, Sanford Hirsch and Mary Davis MacNaughton, eds. (New York: The Arts Publisher, Inc. in association with the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, Inc., 1981) 54-62.

[9] Manfred Schneckenburger, "Zen Buddhism, Ink Painting and Modern Art," Dr. Siegfried Wichmann, ed., *World Cultures and Modern Art* Exhibition catalog on the occasion of the Games of the XXth Olympiad (Munich: Bruckmann Publishers, 1972) 216-233.

[10] W.J.T. Mitchell, "Word and Image" *Critical Terms for Art History*, Robert S. Nelson and Richard Schiff, eds. (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1994) 53.

[11] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1994) 229-230.

[12] Mitchell, *Picture Theory* 223-226.

These artists are drawing upon a well-established tradition that already provides a literal translation, calligraphy. In the case of Japanese artists, it serves the function of maintaining their cultural identity in manifesting a personal expression that will be recognized in the international art community. Calligraphy has long been a medium that allowed personalized expression, in its varying scripts, multitude of characters, and ambiguous meaning. The distinct problem that these artists faced was the serious consideration of calligraphy without associations of Orientalism or Japonisme. This led to the desire to create a universal, gestural calligraphy that is not made up of words but signs that are abstracted from calligraphy.

However, as stated before, in the post-modern atmosphere, nothing is without its signified. Interpreting signs is intrinsic to calligraphy, but cannot be so easily integrated in the western tradition of art. To the Japanese viewer who has been educated in its use and origin, an immediate understanding and enhanced interpretation of images of calligraphy are possible. It will add another layer of meaning implied by the artist who chose the symbol not just for its formal appreciation. For example, the choice of *enso* by Yoshihara involved more than its form as a circle but also its meaning in his culture. To one unfamiliar to his culture, this meaning is lost. Western artists do not have a resource like this, because of their attempt to separate words and images. Though Gottlieb's work contains calligraphic references, its result is a cultural distinction rather than poetic or literal.

A new definition of abstract painting can make allowances for the linguistic references of calligraphy and the post-modern tendencies of the viewer and acknowledge Mitchell's theory. Abstract art that includes calligraphy is no longer restricted to the non-literal definition of abstract. Japanese artists understand the interrelationship between word and image, and despite attempts to separate them, are bound by viewers who live in a tradition that intrinsically combines them, as Mitchell suggests. Even if calligraphy evolves into a sign-making enterprise, it will still depend on its long history of writing as a visual aesthetic.

Virginia Commonwealth University

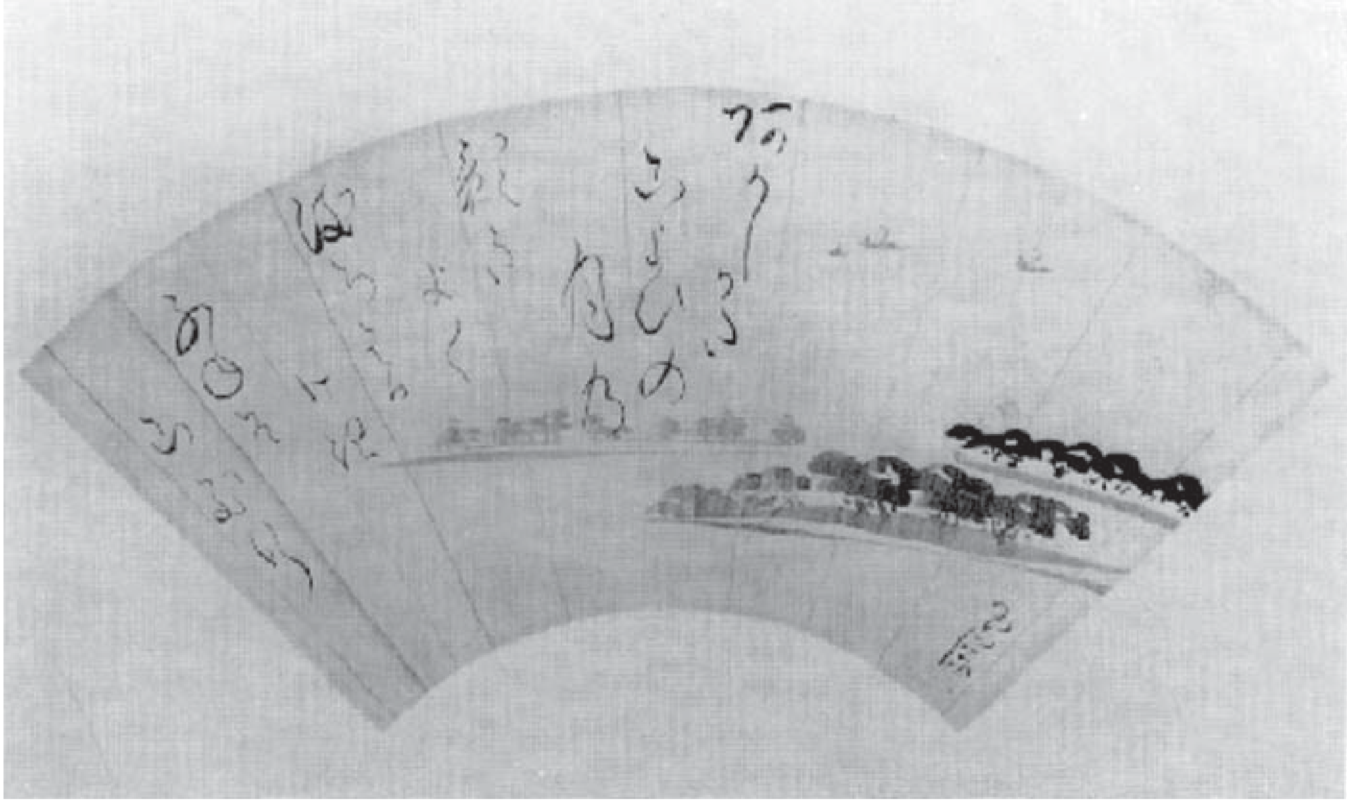

Figure 1. Ike Gyokuran (1728-1784), *Akashi Bay*, ink on mica-covered paper, 17.3 x 44.8 cm., Private Collection. Reprinted with permission from Stephen Addiss, *How to Look at Japanese Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996) 72.

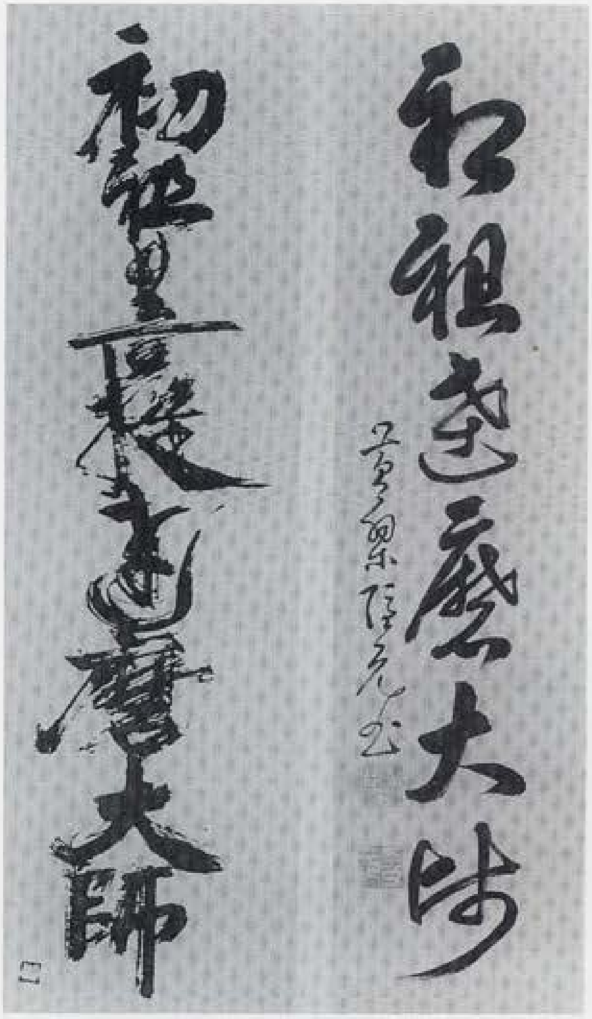
初祖菩提達磨大師
初祖達磨大師

Figure 2. Ikkyu Sojun (1394-1481), *"First Patriarch Bodaidaruma Great Teacher,"* ink on paper, 130.8 x 34.6 cm. Obaku Ingen (1592-1673) *"First Patriarch Daruma Great Teacher,"* ink on paper, 106 x 28.9 cm. Both from Collection of Kimiko and John Powers. Reprinted with permission from Stephen Addiss, *How to Look at Japanese Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996) 82.

[*below*] Figure 3. Yoshihara Jiro, *White Circle on Black (Kuroji ni shiroi en),* acrylic on canvas, 194 x 259 cm, 1968. The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto.

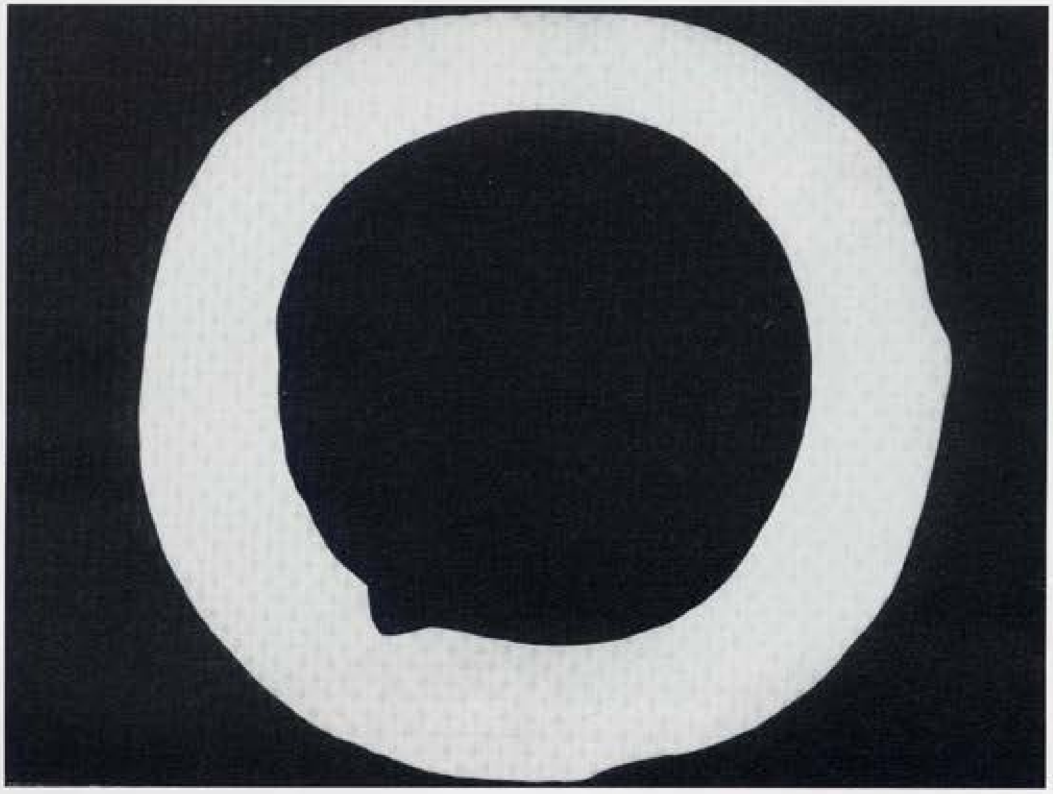

Figure 4. YU-ICHI (Inoue Yuichi), *Muga* (state of perfect selflessness in Zen philosophy), paste ink on Japanese paper, 185 x 142.5 cm, 1956. The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto. © UNAC TOKYO.

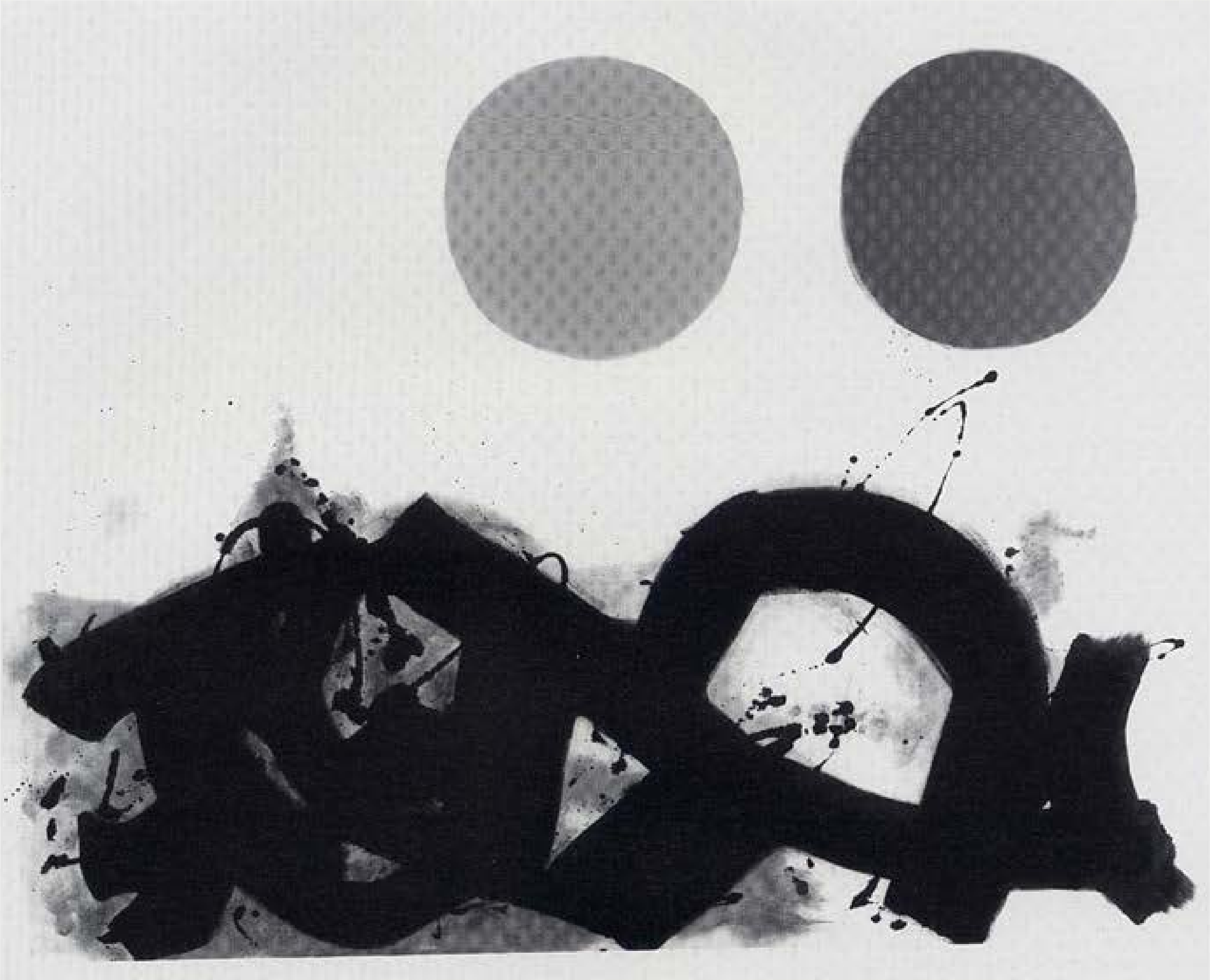

Figure 5. Adolph Gottlieb, *Rolling,* oil on canvas, 183 x 228.6 cm, 1961. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia. Gift of Sydney and Frances Lewis. © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. © Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation / Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

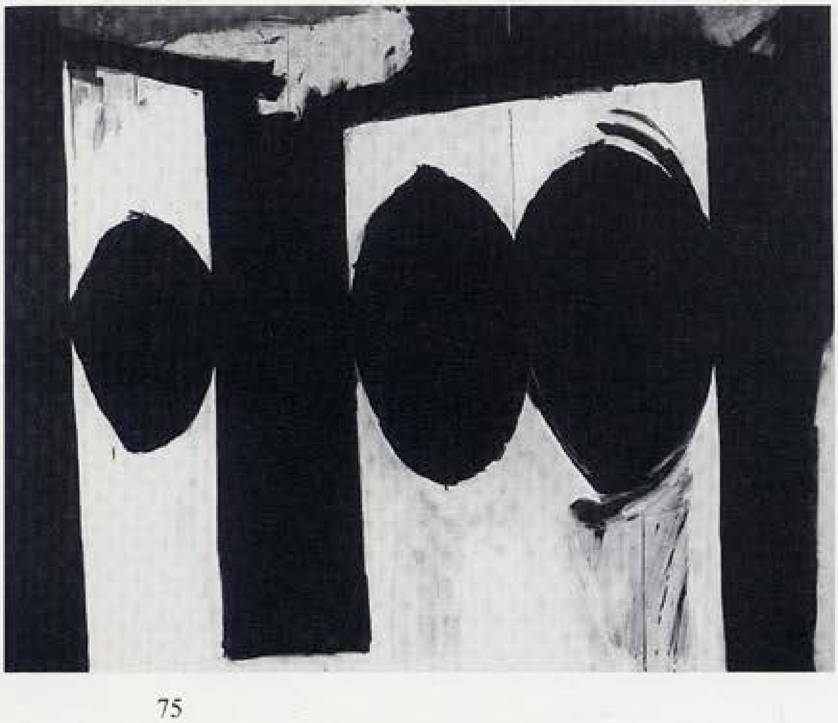

Figure 6. Robert Motherwell, *Elegy to the Spanish Republic, 54,* oil on canvas, 178 x 229 cm, 1957-1961. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Given anonymously. Photograph © 1999 The Museum of Modern Art, New York. © Dedalus Foundation / Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

Not For Sale: Yoko Ono's Discounted Advertising Art

Kevin Concannon

The life and work of artist Yoko Ono has attracted considerable attention, both critical and journalistic, over the past forty years. Yet, for most of those years, Ono has benefited less from serious critical attention than journalistic derision. And while there is considerable evidence to place Ono in the vanguard of the Conceptual art movement of the 1960s, most histories of Conceptual art continue either to marginalize or completely ignore her.

Tony Godfrey's *Conceptual Art*, for example, published last year by Phaidon Press in its Art & Ideas series, mentions Ono only twice, in both cases in a series of names of Fluxus artists and without any reference at all to her work.[1] Yet Godfrey makes five references to John Lennon, and his introduction, "What is Conceptual Art?" *begins* with seven lines from Lennon's 1970 song, *God*! Another chapter begins with six lines from Lennon's 1971 song, *Imagine*. This latter chapter concludes with an explanation of Conceptual art in terms of these two Lennon songs.[2]

However, Alexandra Munroe has pointed out:

> Although Joseph Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs* (1965)—which presented the dictionary definition of 'chair' alongside a real chair and a photograph of a chair—is recognized as one of the earliest works in the history of conceptual art, in fact it was Yoko Ono who first announced that language, by itself on a gallery wall, is a justifiable form of art.[3]

Munroe was referring to Ono's 1962 exhibition of *Instructions for Paintings* at Tokyo's Sogetsu Art Center, an example of which is *Painting to Be Constructed in Your Head*. Rendered calligraphically in Japanese characters, this work translates as:

> Go on transforming a square canvas in your head until it becomes a circle. Pick out any shape in the process and pin up or place on the canvas an object, a smell, a sound, or a colour that came to your mind in association with the shape.[4]

In taking this very radical step of exhibiting instructions only at Sogetsu, however, Ono's conceptual intentions were somewhat obscured by Japanese tradition, in which calligraphy is seen as an art form in and of itself.[5] Ono specifically addressed this point in a catalogue of that Sogetsu show published 33 years later in 1995:

> To make the point that the instructions were not themselves graphic images, I wanted the instructions to be typed. But in those days, regular typewriters for the Japanese language were not available. Only professional printers and newspapers had typesetting machines. So I thought of the next best thing, which was to ask Toshi Ichiyanagi to print out the instructions by hand. He complied. My handwriting was too emotional, even when I tried to print—it looked like I was asking people to appreciate the visual aspect of the writing itself. Toshi was able to do a very neat job—close to typesetting, since, as a composer, he had experience in copying his own scores for print.[6]

Thus Ono's Japanese background seems to have simultaneously inspired and obscured this important early step toward Conceptualism.[7] As this paper hopes to demonstrate, while histories of Conceptual art continue to neglect her, Ono can rightly claim precedence not only in the employment of text as art but for the use of advertising as a medium for Conceptual art as well.

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[1] *Tony Godfrey,* Conceptual Art *(London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1998).*

[2] Godfrey 144.

[3] *Alexandra Munroe,* Japanese Art after 1945: Scream against the Sky *(New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994) 218.*

[4] Jon Hendricks, ed., *Instructions for Paintings by Yoko Ono* (Budapest: Gallery 56, 1993) unpag.

[5] Ono had exhibited written instructions (in English) alongside several objects in her exhibition at the AG Gallery in New York the previous year. One of these instructions was recently found and is featured in the exhibition, *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin: 1950s-1970s* originated at the Queens Museum of Art in New York in April 1999.

[6] *Yoko Ono,* Instruction Paintings *(New York: Weatherhill, Inc., 1995) 5-6. Toshi Ichiyanagi is a composer to whom Ono was married at the time.*

[7] *The issue of Conceptualism as an international phenomenon was compellingly addressed in the exhibition,* Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s, *originated at the Queens Museum of Art in April 1999. My conversations with Reiko Tomii, co-curator of the Japanese section of this exhibition, have been extremely helpful.*

Ono is, of course, widely known for the 1969 poster action, *War is Over!*, created in collaboration with John Lennon. For this event, launched 15 December 1969, the couple commissioned billboards and posters in 12 cities: Athens, Berlin, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Montreal, New York (Figure 1), Paris, Port-of-Spain (Trinidad), Rome, Tokyo and Toronto.[8] In the language of each city where they were sited, the billboards declared "War is Over!/ If You Want It/ Happy Christmas from John and Yoko." *War Is Over!* extended its impact through other media as well, including postcards and The Peace Station Network, as detailed in *Billboard* magazine in an advertisement Ono and Lennon placed on 24 January 1970 offering "Free John and Yoko Station Breaks and ID'S, Plus the Regular John And Yoko Peace Report" (Figure 2).[9]

It had, in fact, been Ono's long-standing vision to turn advertising—and the mechanisms of the media and the marketplace—to humorously ironic and critical ends within the context of her multi-media artistic practice. While it remains little known to this day, Ono had been making art with advertising—and with great wit—for several years prior to getting together with Lennon. In the March 1965 issue of *The New York Arts Calendar*, for example, Ono placed a full-page display advertisement for "Circle Events" at the "IsReal Gallery" (Figure 3).[10] The advertisement offered "Circle Events" on "leather, silk, glass, canvas, or other material to order, 3 1/2" x 2" to 40 x 24, about $250." The exhibition dates were March 3-31, and the gallery was open 24 hours. No address was offered, but a telephone number was listed. Of course, the IsReal Gallery existed only in the pages of *The New York Arts Calendar* and in the minds of the artist and her readers. In fact, the IsReal advertisement is among the earliest examples of conceptual art in an advertising medium, coming a full three years before Dan Graham's *Figurative* in the March 1968 issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, the work that scholars generally cite in this regard—and generally with an incorrect date. (Kosuth's 1965 date for *One and Three Chairs* has been challenged in the literature as well.[11] It is clear that he first *exhibited* his Conceptual works no earlier than February of 1967.)

Graham's *Figurative*, for example, was featured in the 1995 exhibition *Reconsidering the Object of Art 1965-1975*, with a date of 1965. This confusion may stem from the fact that, while the actual advertisement did not appear until 1968, Graham has dated to 1965 a related work, "Scheme for Magazine Page 'Advertisement'"—in the same 1995 exhibition. This latter work shows a cash register tape 'framed' in a drawn box with the title, date, and signature at the bottom. The 1968 publication of *Figurative* featured a similar cash register tape with the title "FIGURATIVE BY DAN GRAHAM" to the right of the register tape.[12] In *Harper's Bazaar*, the ad appeared sandwiched between advertisements for Warner bras and Tampax tampons.[13] The coincidence of *Figurative*'s placement immediately adjacent to an ad for bras extends the pun inherent in the work, which—to an art-savvy reader—already suggests a play between 'figurative art' and the column of 'figures' on the tape. In an essay titled, "My Works for Magazine Pages: 'A History of Conceptual Art,'" Graham offered this explanation of the work:

> I became involved with the art system accidentally when friends of mine suggested that we open a gallery. . . . At our gallery, John Daniels, we gave Sol LeWitt a one-man show, and presented several group shows that included all the proto-Minimalist artists. . . . However, the gallery was forced to close at the end of the first season due to bankruptcy . . . . Through the actual experience of running a gallery, I learned that if a work of art were not written about and reproduced in a magazine, it would have difficulty attaining the status of "art." It seemed that to be defined as having value (that is, value as "art"), a work had only to be exhibited in a gallery and then to be written about and reproduced as a photograph in an art magazine. It was this record of the no-longer-extant installation, along with more accretions of information after the fact, that became the basis for the art work's fame and, to a large extent, its economic value. . . . Furthermore, with few

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[8] *Dorothee Hansen, "War is Over!" in* John Lennon: Drawings, Performances, Films, *eds. Wulf Herzogenrath and Dorothee Hansen (Stuttgart: Cantz Verlag, 1995) 172.*

[9] The advertisement appeared in *Billboard* (24 January 1970): 49.

[10] Thanks to Janis Ekdahl of the Museum of Modern Art Library in New York for assistance in locating this citation.

[11] *Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, for example, has characterized Kosuth's claimed dates for his* Proto-Investigations *(the series in which* Chairs *is included)—1965 and 1966—as unverifiable. He cites interviews with several artists, including Graham, who were close to Kosuth during this period yet had not seen or heard of these pieces until their first exhibition in February 1967 at a show Kosuth himself had organized at the Lannis Gallery. Buchloh also states that On Kawara, whose studio Kosuth visited frequently at that time, produced documented word paintings during the same period. See Buchloh's "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions,"* October *55 (1990) 122-23, note 18.*

[12] While the cash register tapes featured in the two Graham works are clearly not identical, the exhibition checklist for *Reconsidering the Object of Art 1965-1975* presents both works under a single listing (dated 1965) as "original source materials and publication documentation." In both cases, store name and date are lacking. See Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer, *Reconsidering the Object of Art 1965-1975* (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1995) 124-25, 325.

[13] *Harper's Bazaar* (March 1968): 90.

> exceptions, art magazines are supported by advertisements from art galleries. When the advertiser's exhibitions are reviewed and made a matter of record in the art magazines, the works shown are guaranteed some kind of value as "art" and can be sold on the art market. Sales yield profits, which allow galleries to purchase additional advertisements in art magazines and to sustain the art system in general.[14]

The "IsReal Gallery," of course, was a fiction.[15] But Ono had actually proposed her *Circle Event* for exhibition at the Leo Castelli Gallery. In her letter to gallery director Ivan Karp dated 4 January 1965 Ono discussed her proposal for the exhibition of blank canvases on which gallery visitors would be invited to draw circles. The letter refers to a meeting between Karp and Ono's husband at the time, Tony Cox. She begins: "Dear Ivan, Thank you so much for seeing Tony Cox. Yes, it is necessary to sell the paintings, isn't it, if you have to spend $3000 for a show."[16] Karp apparently declined her proposal, and she countered with an alternative which called for Castelli's artists to draw the first circles, after which they could be sold. Karp's reply, simply dated "Winter," and in his own handwriting, says in part:

> Dear Yoko, Thank you so much for your urgent missive. It is indeed laden with pungent metaphysics and adventurous aesthetics. It seems now, however, after your clarified and detailed exposition that the kind of show you have in mind fails to suit our temperament which is essentially, restless, driven, fiercely Western and concrete—not materialistic, mind you—perish the thought, but terribly concrete.[17]

Ono had previously realized the *Circle Event* as a postcard distributed in 1964, and in a 1962 article titled "Word of a Fiction-Teller" in the Tokyo-based *Sogetsu Art Journal*, Ono wrote about the significance of circles and lines, stating that "[m]y current interest is in such a world of fictional rules—[t]he assumption and realization of a perfect circle and a perfect line that we have not encountered except for in our conceptual world.[18] Ono's conceptual intentions with her *IsReal Gallery Circle Event* are thus well documented.

Curiously, in the same March 1965 issue of *The New York Arts Calendar* in which Ono's *IsReal Gallery* ad appeared, Graham had an advertisement as well—for his very real, soon-to-be-bankrupt gallery, John Daniels. When asked recently if he was familiar with Ono's *IsReal Gallery* ad, Graham replied that he was not. And when informed that it was one of only a handful of full-page ads in the same issue in which his own ad for the Neo-Plastics exhibition at Daniels appeared, Graham stated "I didn't look at my ads."[19] Although Ono's humorous appropriations of advertising media for her art predate the advertising works of Graham by three years—and her text-based works arguably predate Kosuth's by five years—her work remains little known, while that of Graham and Kosuth has achieved canonical status within the history of Conceptual art.

In the April/May 1965 issue of *The New York Arts Calendar* Ono placed another ad for "IsReal Gallery," this one offering "Hole Events," also on "leather, silk, glass, canvas, or other material to order" (Figure 4).[20] As with *Circle Events*, the *Hole Event* focuses on an abstract concept. While a circle might in fact be rendered in one material or another, a hole is defined by the lack of a given material; it is immaterial by definition.

The following year, Ono placed three advertising pieces in the London-based magazine, *Art and Artists*.[21] As with the *New York Arts Calendar* pieces, the ad space was donated by the publisher, in this case, Ono's friend Mario Amayo. The three pieces/ads were: *Fountain Piece*, October 1966 (Figure 5); *Mouthpiece*, November 1966 (Figure 6); and *Do It Yourself Dance Piece/Swim in Your Sleep*, December 1966 (Figure 7). *Mouthpiece* was first published in Ono's *Do It Yourself Fluxfest* (designed by Fluxus founder George Maciunas) as part of *Fluxus 3 newspaper eVenTs for the pRicE of $1 (Fluxus News-*

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[14] *Dan Graham, "My Works for Magazine Pages: 'A History of Conceptual Art,'" in* Rock My Religion *(Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993) viii-xvi.*

[15] In 1966, Tony Cox (to whom Ono was then married) distributed a "Prospectus" for the "Is-Real Gallery Incorporated" with a budget for the rental and operation of an actual gallery in which the installation of *The Stone*, first presented at the Judson Gallery in March 1966, was to have a "permanent home." While the prospectus promised an early June opening, the project was never brought to fruition. In a conversation with the author on 28 April 1999, Ono stated that Cox simply appropriated the name for an unrelated venture. The document's past-tense reference to the Judson Gallery installation and promise of an early June opening place it within a two-month period between the end of March and the end of May, 1966—at least one year after the IsReal ads were placed in the *New York Arts Calendar*. A copy of this document is held in the Jean Brown Archives at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

[16] Copy of letter sent to Ivan Karp Jan 4, 1965. Courtesy Yoko Ono.

[17] Reply from Ivan Karp to Ono's letter of 4 January 1965. Courtesy Yoko Ono.

[18] *Yoko Ono, "Word of a Fiction-Teller,"* Sogetsu Art Journal *24 (May 1962). Draft translation by Midori Yoshimoto; edited by the author.*

[19] Telephone interview with Dan Graham, 1 March 1999.

[20] Thanks to Barbara Moore of Bound and Unbound in New York for locating this citation.

[21] The three pieces/ads were: *Fountain Piece*, *Art and Artists*, 1.7 (October 1966): 44; *Mouthpiece*, *Art and Artists*, 1. 8 (November 1966): 39; and *Do It Yourself Dance Piece/Swim in Your Sleep*, *Art and Artists*, 1.9 (December 1966): 73. *Mouthpiece* was first published in Ono's *Do It Yourself Fluxfest* (designed by George Maciunas) as part of *3 newspaper eVenTs for The pRicE of $1* (*Fluxus Newspaper No. 7*, February 1966). Another piece from *Do It Yourself Fluxfest* was published in the January 1968 issue of *The Promethean: A Symposium for Liberal Religious Youth* (Boston), apparently unknown to Ono until pointed out to her by this author in 1996. Thanks to Clare Storey and Adrian Glew of the Tate Gallery in London (Library and Archives, respectively) for assistance in locating these citations.

paper No. 7) of 1 February 1966.

Perhaps the best-known of her published print advertising pieces is *Museum of Modern (F) art* of 1971. No longer the starving artist, Ono placed a paid display advertisement in *The Village Voice* announcing her (again, purely conceptual) one-woman show at the Museum of Modern Art (Figure 8).[22] A "this is NOT here" notice placed in the MoMA ticket window is possibly a humorous reference to the title of the exhibition Ono did have at the time—in Syracuse, New York, at the Everson Museum.[23] The ad also included a mail-in order form with which one could purchase the catalogue (which did exist). Not only did Ono publish a catalogue for the putative 'exhibition,' she also documented it—through the responses of visitors interviewed as they left the museum—in her 7-minute 1971 film *The Museum of Modern Art Show*.

After her 1971 exhibition in Syracuse was overrun by Beatles fans who literally stole the show—or at least parts of it—Ono did not have a one-person museum exhibition again until 1989. Since then, she has been prolific, returning often to her strategy of advertising intervention.[24] In 1994, for example, Ono's *A Celebration of Being Human*, a project in the small German town of Langenhagen, featured thousands of black and white images of a pair of bare human buttocks, reproduced on billboards, bus stops, kiosks, banners hung from lampposts, posters hung in shop windows, T-shirts, umbrellas and "postcards handed out free in this suburb of 50,000 inhabitants."[25] A text accompanied the image: "A Celebration of Being Human. We are beautiful. We are fun. We are mammals without tails." Upon being asked if she wasn't a bit behind the times, as advertising executives had long been exploiting the promotional value of a well-formed bottom, she told the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* "Sure, but those are small, stylish, cute arses. I'm advertising a really nice average bum."[26] The exhibition, she told *The Independent*, "is designed to make viewers wonder about the subject and to prompt thoughts of peace. Art, as a part of peace, is beautiful."[27]

The Langenhagen project, of course, is related to her 1967 *Film No. 4 (Bottoms)*, a collection of 365 human bottoms filmed at close range as their owners walked on a specially constructed turnstile, creating four constantly shifting quadrants on the cinema screen.[28]

Her 1996 *Fly* project for the Anderson Gallery in Richmond, Virginia, used a variety of advertising media. Beyond the walls of the Anderson Gallery, on billboards, T-shirts, and posters throughout Richmond, Ono's enigmatic word art engaged its audience in a simple yet rich flight of the imagination: fly—noun; verb; adjective; work of art. A word alone, lacking grammatical context—the viewer was left to create its meaning. As a noun, it might refer to an insect or a pant zipper. In British slang, 'fly' is an adjective, meaning 'alert; clever; sharp.'[29] An African-American speaker might describe someone as 'fly,' meaning 'fast and ecstatic; brash; good or great.'[30] And as a verb, it might suggest fleeing—or more hopefully—the boundless freedom of unaided human flight. She said:

> I like the idea of flying. I'm not talking about the idea of flying on a plane or anything like that. It's just [that] a conceptual idea of flight is beautiful. And so I did a lot with flying. It's a conceptual flight. And I want to encourage people to do that. [31]

In *Fly*, language itself is a medium for visual art, and a broad range of information and experience lies compressed in these three letters, awaiting realization and actualization in the mind of the viewer. Ono's art is less an object than an active verb. Taking the form of billboards, posters, banners, and T-shirts, as it did in Richmond, *Fly* operates in the wider social realm of advertising, deliberately encountering viewers in places and situations that are unexpected.

For Ono, the fascination with language and word play came quite naturally. "My first language is Japanese. When you learn English, you always say 'Is this an adjective or adverb or a verb or a noun?' And we're always aware of the fact that some words are both." Speaking of her *Fly Piece* (1963), a related work published in her 1964 artist's book, *Grapefruit*,[32] Ono has stated "My feeling is that I'm just throwing a pebble in the water, and it is going to create a ripple. I'm not going to control the ripple."[33] The viewer must construct his or her own mental image when confronted with a piece such as *Fly* (1996).

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[22] The Village Voice, *2 December 1971, 25.*

[23] "This Is Not Here," Ono's first museum retrospective exhibition, was presented by the Everson Museum in October and November of 1971.

[24] While numerous examples could be cited, due to space limitations, this paper details only a small sampling of such projects since 1989.

[25] *"Yoko Ono Inundates Hanover Suburb with 70,000 'moon-shots,'"* Agence France Presse *(wire report), 26 October 1994. See also Kai Bauer and Michael Stephan,* Vor Ort 1994, *exhibition catalogue (Langenhagen: Schul- und Kulturamt der Stadt Langenhagen, 1994). In September and October 1996, one of these billboards was erected near London's Euston Station as part of the project* The Visible and the Invisible: Re-presenting the Body in Contemporary Art and Society *(21 September-26 October 1996, Euston, London), sponsored by the Institute of International Visual Arts. A series of satellite exhibitions, installations and events occurring simultaneously in 'non-art' sites in the Euston area during the autumn, 1996, it combined new commissions and work not previously seen in the UK by fifteen international artists.*

[26] *As reported in* The Herald *(Glasgow), "Yoko Touches Bottom as Town Takes Cheek to Heart," 1 November 1994, 4.*

[27] *Yoko Ono, in Maryann Bird, "People: Artful Yoko's Piece of Cheek,"* The Independent, *28 October 1994, 15.*

[28] The original (much shorter) version of *Film Number Four* was featured in the *Fluxfilms* collection of 1966. In that version, the actors walked through a space with the camera following. The turnstile was created for the feature-length version of 1967.

[29] *William Morris, ed.*, The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language *(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978) 507.*

[30] *Clarence Major, ed.*, Juba to Jive: A Dictionary of African-American Slang *(New York: Viking/Penguin Books USA Inc., 1994) 177.*

[31] Telephone interview with Yoko Ono, 4 September 1996. All unattributed quotes are from this interview.

Language and geometry are both implicated in the *IsReal Gallery/Circle Event* piece. The name itself suggests the nation of Israel (enough to confuse the typesetter who listed it as such on another page of *The New York Arts Calendar*), a nation literally materialized only 16 years earlier in 1948, but in existence for more than two millennia. As Ono had pointed out in her 1962 Sogetsu article, circles and lines are abstract concepts—"a perfect circle and a perfect line that we have not encountered except for in our conceptual world." Ono's 1965 *IsReal Gallery* ads clearly fit Graham's conception of his 1968 ad as institutional critique.

The *IsReal Gallery*, however, is not the first such use of a published advertising medium. Art historian and independent curator Reiko Tomii has recently rediscovered an earlier related work that she included in the exhibition, *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s*, which originated at the Queens Museum of Art in New York in April 1999. The work is by Ono's fellow Tokyo Fluxus artist Yasunao Tone. The Tone ad known as the *Tone-Prize Composition* ad, pokes fun at the independent exhibition system and award exhibition programs then common in Japan. The ad, which appeared in the September 1964 issue of *Ongaku Geijutsu*, begins:

> Call for Entries: 1st Tone-Prize Composition
> Tone Prizes are given to all entries.
> Deadline: October 1.
> Certificates will be mailed in lieu of official announcement in early October.
>
> There is no restriction on form or content. However, phenomena will not be accepted for they are impossible to present; instead, please submit texts, etc. . . .[34]

Contact information and other details are followed by the announcement that all winners automatically qualify for a series of other awards, each named after an artist or composer—one of whom is Yoko Ono. A request for further information would have yielded a *Tone-Prize Application*, which included the following special note regarding qualification for the Ono Award: "Ono Prize, given by Yoko Ono, will be open to works by male composers only. [Entrants] are required to present 'face and forms,' i.e., a photograph and data for weight, height, bust size, etc."[35] In a recent conversation, Tone confirmed that Ono did indeed provide this information for the ad.[36]

While the *Tone-Prize Composition* ad appears to be the first use of magazine advertising space as a medium for Conceptual art, Ono had on at least two previous occasions used direct mail advertising for similar purposes. In a postcard from early 1964, Ono invited recipients to her *touch poem no. 3* in Nigeria, Africa, on March 33rd, 1964 (Figure 9). And in another direct mail piece of the same period, recipients were invited to an unspecified event on May 31, 1964 (Figure 10). In this latter case, the location is given simply as "YOKO ONO ROOF" with no street address; in the former case, the date of March 33rd makes it clear that this event takes place only in the reader's mind.

Within the history of Conceptual art then, Ono is clearly a leader—not only in terms of text as art (as Alexandra Munroe has already demonstrated), but also in the use of advertising as a medium for art, and as institutional critique.

Virginia Commonwealth University

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[32] Originally published in a limited edition of 500 copies by the Wunternaum Press in Tokyo in 1964, it was republished by Simon and Schuster in 1970 and by their Touchstone Books division in 1971 (as a paperback).

[33] Telephone interview with Yoko Ono, 4 September 1996.

[34] Cited in Reiko Tomii, "Concerning the Institution of Art: Conceptualism in Japan," in Philomena Mariani, ed., *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin 1950s-1980s* (New York, Queens Museum of Art, 1999) 21.

[35] Tomii 21.

[36] Telephone Interview with Yasunao Tone, 23 February 1998.

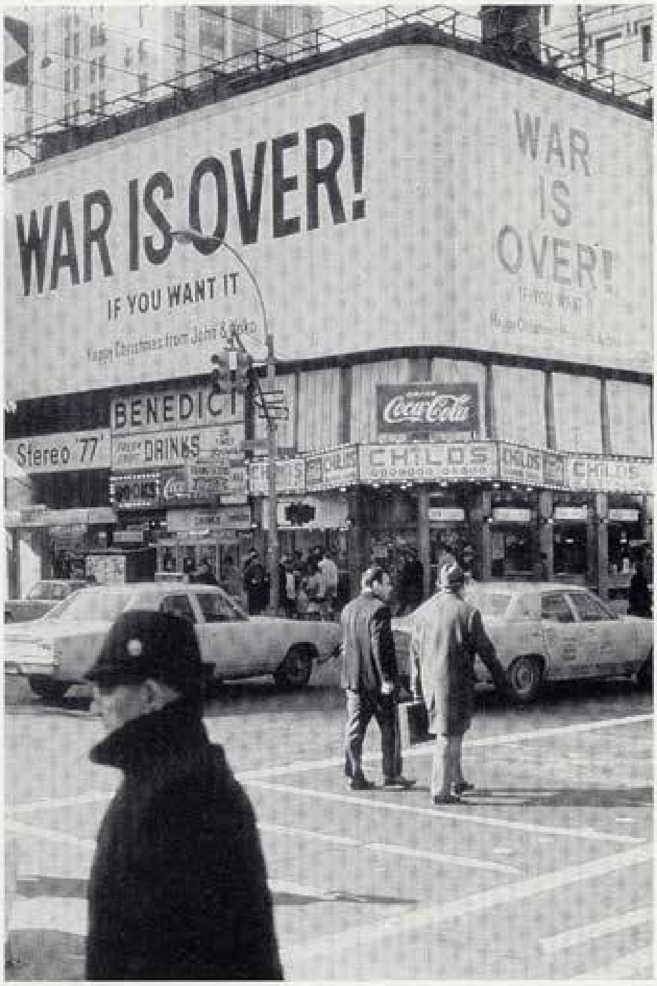
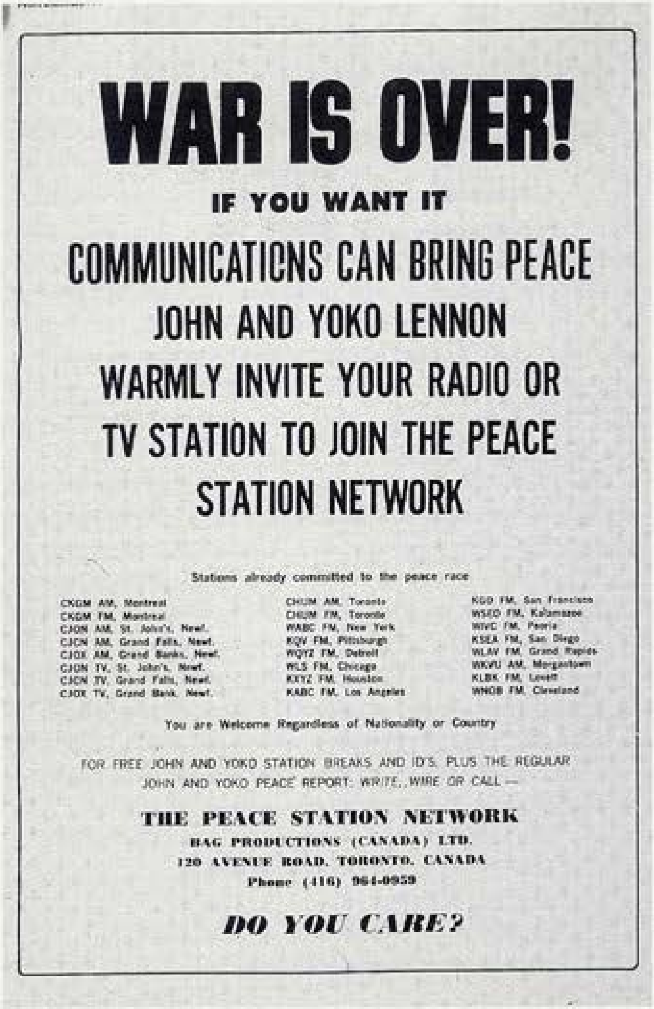


Figure 1. Yoko Ono and John Lennon, *War Is Over!,* billboard installed in Times Square, New York City, 1969. Copyright Yoko Ono; courtesy Lenono Photo Archive.



WAR IS OVER!

IF YOU WANT IT

**COMMUNICATIONS CAN BRING PEACE
JOHN AND YOKO LENNON
WARMLY INVITE YOUR RADIO OR
TV STATION TO JOIN THE PEACE
STATION NETWORK**

Stations *already* committed to the peace race

CKGM AM, Montreal
CKGM FM, Montreal
CJON AM, St. John's, Newf.
CJCN AM, Grand Falls, Newf.
CJOX AM, Grand Banks, Newf.
CJON TV, St. John's, Newf.
CJCN TV, Grand Falls, Newf.
CJOX TV, Grand Bank, Newf.

CHUM AM, Toronto
CHUM FM, Toronto
WABC FM, New York
KQV FM, Pittsburgh
WQYZ FM, Detroit
WLS FM, Chicago
KXYZ FM, Houston
KABC FM, Los Angeles

KGO FM, San Francisco
WSKO FM, Kalamazoo
WIVC FM, Peoria
KSEA FM, San Diego
WLAV FM, Grand Rapids
WKVU AM, Morgantown
KLBK FM, Lovell
WNOB FM, Cleveland

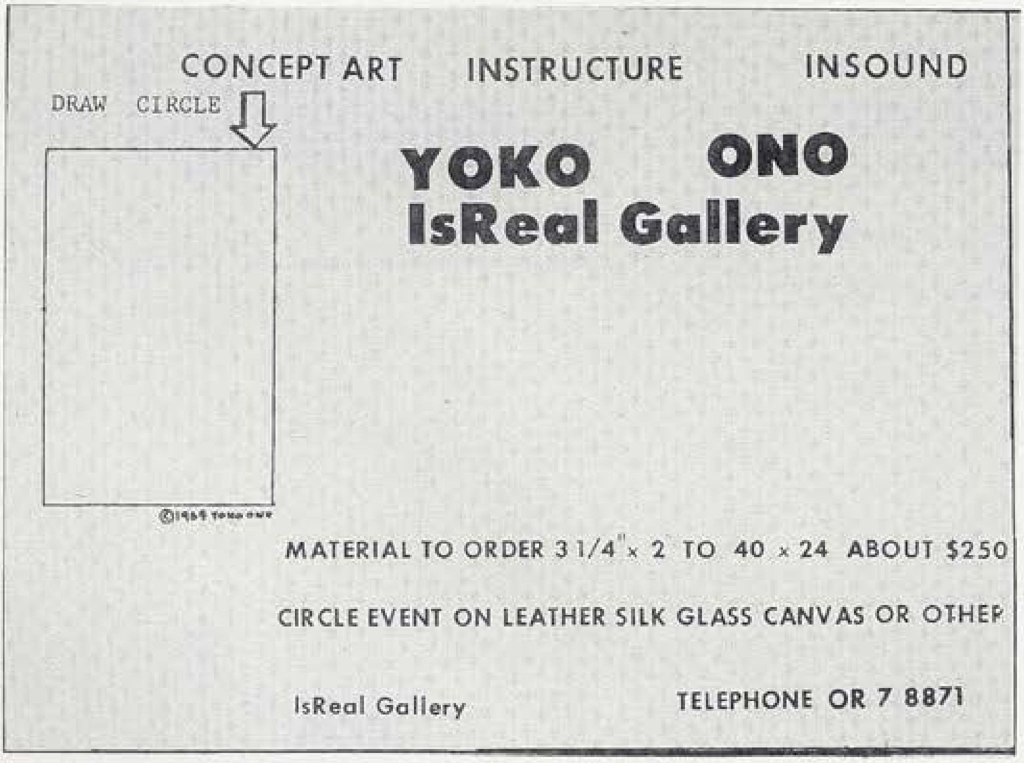
You are Welcome Regardless of Nationality or Country

FOR FREE JOHN AND YOKO STATION BREAKS AND ID'S. PLUS THE REGULAR JOHN AND YOKO PEACE REPORT: WRITE, WIRE OR CALL —

THE PEACE STATION NETWORK
BAG PRODUCTIONS (CANADA) LTD.
120 AVENUE ROAD, TORONTO, CANADA
Phone (416) 964-0959

DO YOU CARE?

Figure 2. Yoko Ono and John Lennon, *War Is Over!,* advertisement in *Billboard*, 24 January 1970.



CONCEPT ART INSTRUCTURE INSOUND

DRAW CIRCLE

©1964 YOKO ONO

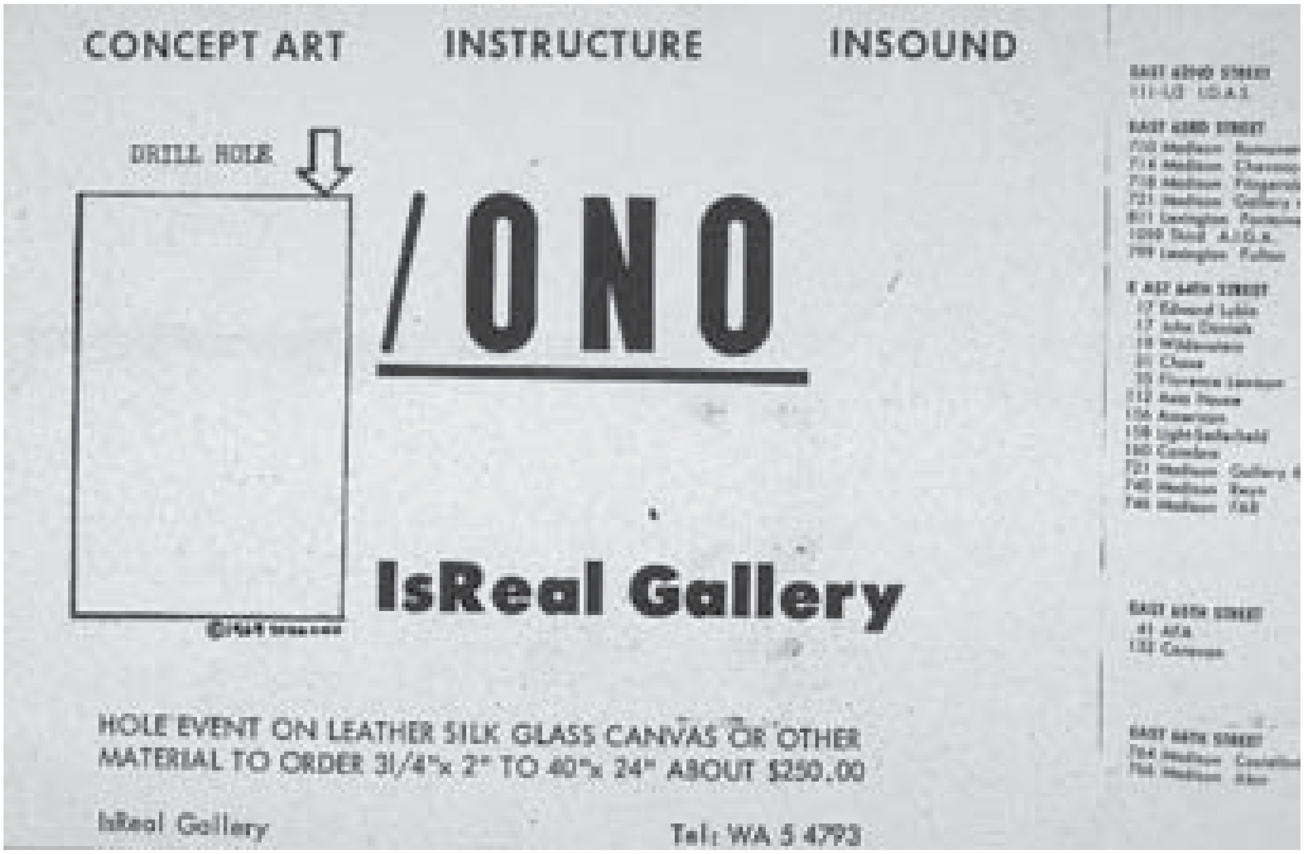
YOKO ONO
IsReal Gallery

MATERIAL TO ORDER 3 1/4" × 2 TO 40 × 24 ABOUT $250

CIRCLE EVENT ON LEATHER SILK GLASS CANVAS OR OTHER

IsReal Gallery TELEPHONE OR 7 8871

Figure 3. Yoko Ono, *IsReal Gallery: Draw Circle Event*, advertisement in the *New York Arts Calendar*, March 1965. Courtesy Barbara Moore.



CONCEPT ART INSTRUCTURE INSOUND

DRILL HOLE

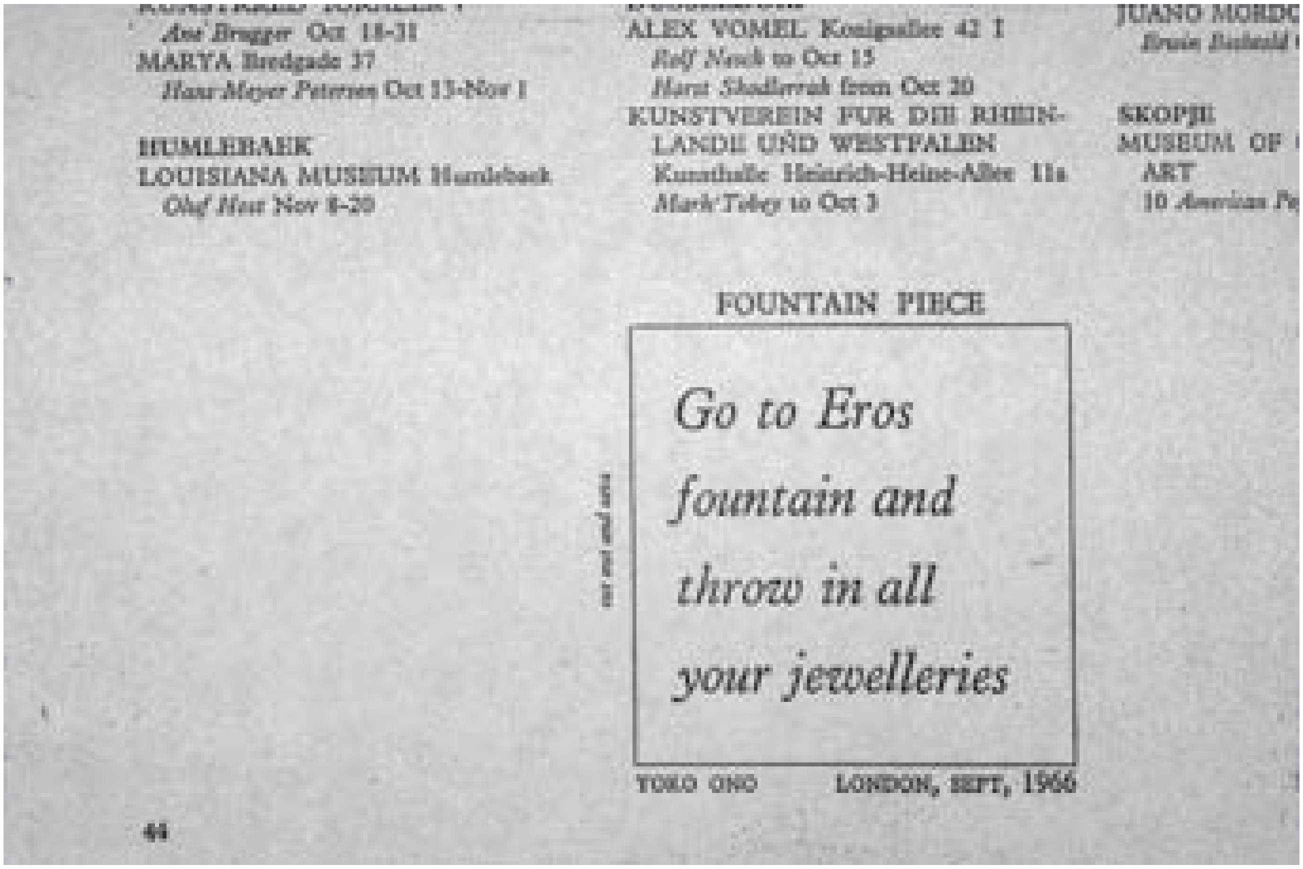
/ONO

IsReal Gallery

HOLE EVENT ON LEATHER SILK GLASS CANVAS OR OTHER MATERIAL TO ORDER 31/4"x 2" TO 40"x 24" ABOUT $250.00

IsReal Gallery Tel: WA 5 4793

Figure 4. Yoko Ono, *IsReal Gallery: Drill Hole Event*, advertisement in the *New York Arts Calendar*, April/May 1965. Courtesy Barbara Moore.



Ase Brugger Oct 18-31
MARYA Bredgade 37
Hans-Meyer Petersen Oct 13-Nov 1

HUMLEBAEK
LOUISIANA MUSEUM Humlebaek
Olaf Hest Nov 8-20

ALEX VOMEL Konigsallee 42 I
Rolf Nesch to Oct 15
Horst Skodlerrak from Oct 20
KUNSTVEREIN FUR DIE RHEINLANDE UND WESTFALEN
Kunsthalle Heinrich-Heine-Allee 11a
Mark Tobey to Oct 3

SKOPJE
MUSEUM OF
ART
10 *American*

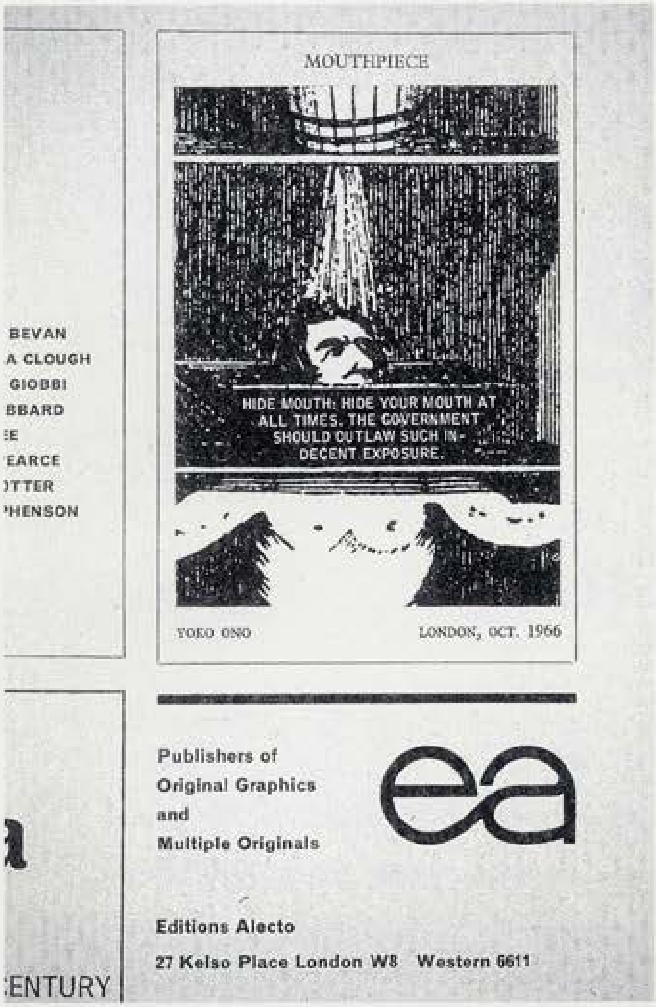
FOUNTAIN PIECE

Go to Eros fountain and throw in all your jewelleries

YOKO ONO LONDON, SEPT, 1966

44

Figure 5. Yoko Ono, *Fountain Piece*, advertisement in *Art and Artists*, October 1966. Courtesy Jon Hendricks.



BEVAN
A CLOUGH
GIOBBI
BBARD
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EARCE
TTER
HENSON

MOUTHPIECE

HIDE MOUTH: HIDE YOUR MOUTH AT ALL TIMES. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD OUTLAW SUCH INDECENT EXPOSURE.

YOKO ONO

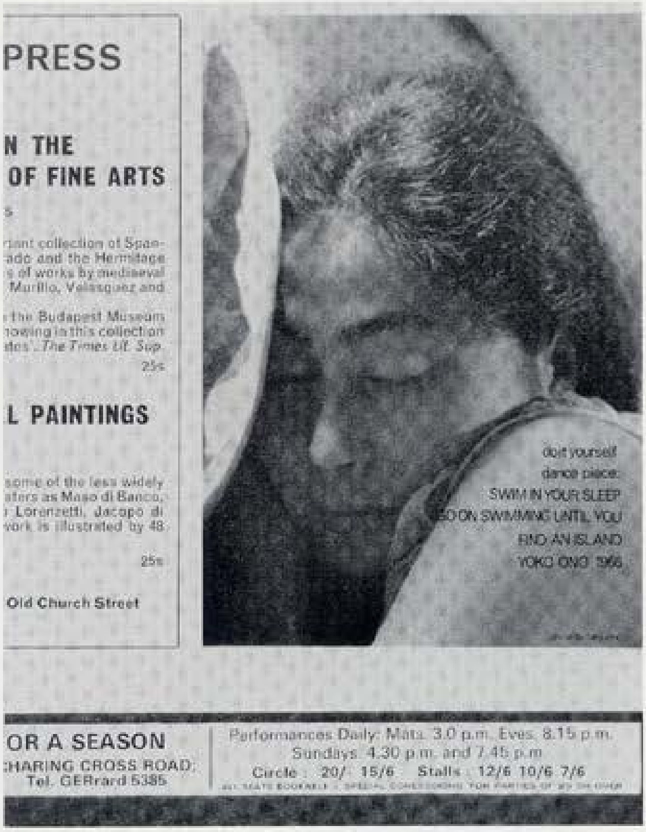
LONDON, OCT. 1966

Publishers of
Original Graphics
and
Multiple Originals

Editions Alecto
27 Kelso Place London W8 Western 6611

ENTURY

Figure 6. Yoko Ono, *Mouthpiece*, advertisement in *Art and Artists*, November 1966.



PRESS

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OF FINE ARTS

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Murillo, Velasquez and

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25s

L PAINTINGS

some of the less widely
afters as Maso di Banco,
Lorenzetti, Jacopo di
work is illustrated by 48
25s

Old Church Street

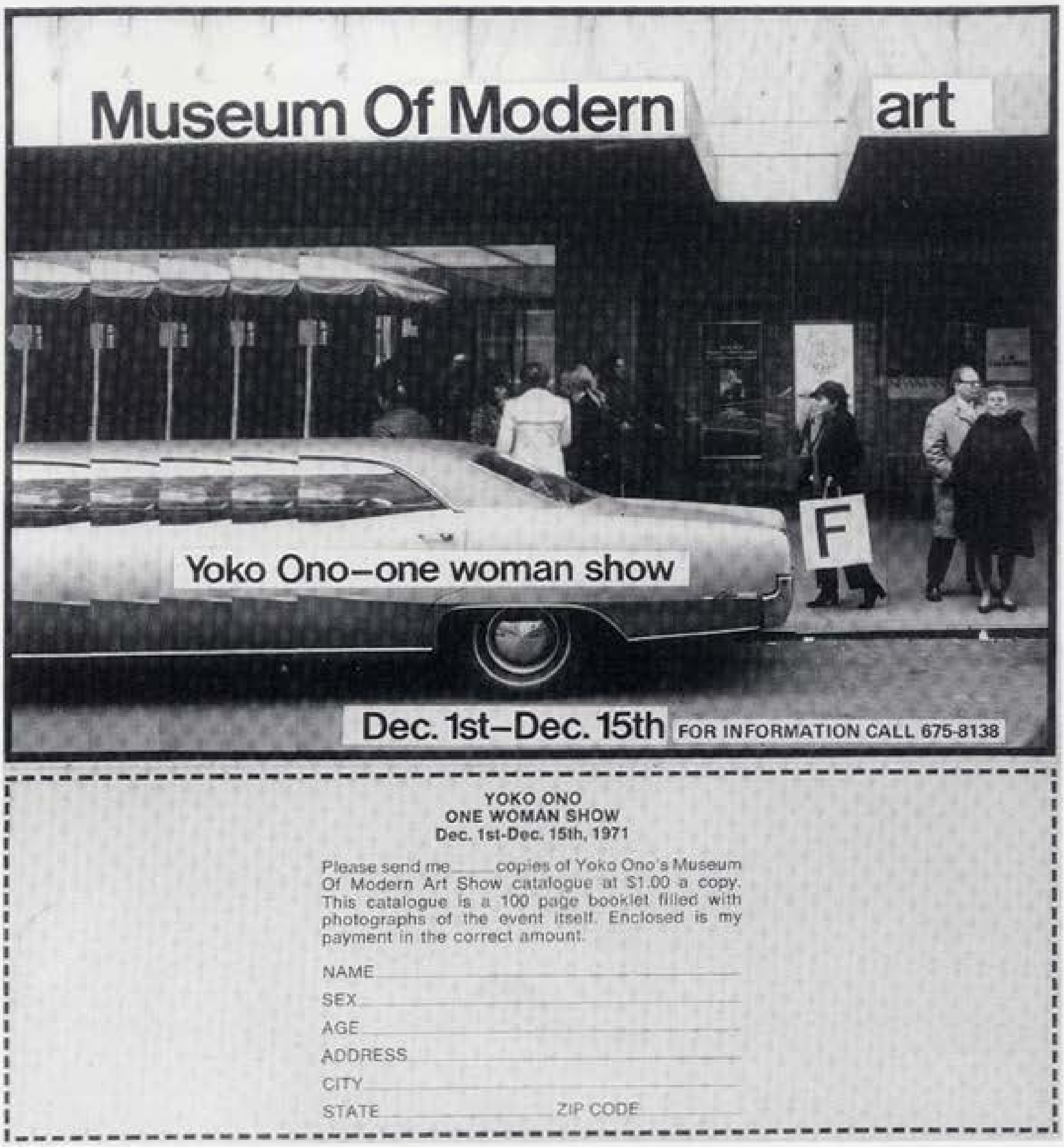
doit yourself
dance piece:
SWIM IN YOUR SLEEP
GO ON SWIMMING UNTIL YOU
FIND AN ISLAND
YOKO ONO 1966

OR A SEASON
HARING CROSS ROAD:
Tel. GERrard 6385

Performances Daily: Mats. 3.0 p.m. Eves. 8.15 p.m.
Sundays 4.30 p.m. and 7.45 p.m.
Circle: 20/- 15/6 Stalls: 12/6 10/6 7/6

Figure 7. Yoko Ono, *Do It Yourself Dance Piece/Swim in Your Sleep*, advertisement in *Art and Artists*, December 1966. Courtesy Getty Research Institute.

Figure 8. Yoko Ono, *Museum of Modern (F) art*, mechanical for advertisement in the *Village Voice*, 2 December 1971. Copyright Yoko Ono; courtesy Lenono Photo Archive.



Museum Of Modern art

F

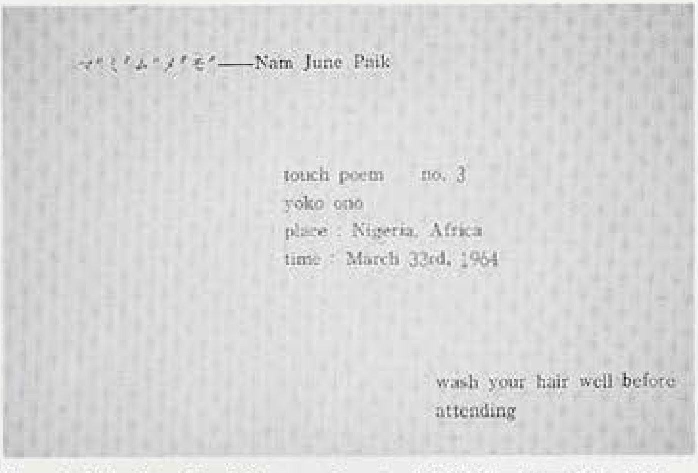
Yoko Ono–one woman show

Dec. 1st–Dec. 15th FOR INFORMATION CALL 675-8138

YOKO ONO
ONE WOMAN SHOW
Dec. 1st-Dec. 15th, 1971

Please send me____copies of Yoko Ono's Museum Of Modern Art Show catalogue at $1.00 a copy. This catalogue is a 100 page booklet filled with photographs of the event itself. Enclosed is my payment in the correct amount.

NAME__________
SEX__________
AGE__________
ADDRESS__________
CITY__________
STATE__________ZIP CODE__________

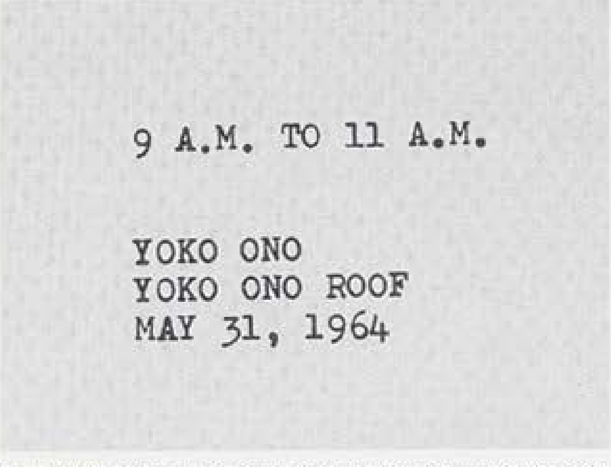


ま゛み゛む゛め゛も゛—Nam June Paik

touch poem no. 3
yoko ono
place : Nigeria, Africa
time : March 33rd, 1964

wash your hair well before
attending

Figure 9. Yoko Ono, *Touch Poem no. 3*, postcard, 1964. Courtesy of the Artist.



9 A.M. TO 11 A.M.

YOKO ONO
YOKO ONO ROOF
MAY 31, 1964

Figure 10. Yoko Ono, *Invitation to Yoko Ono Roof Event, May 31, 1964*, typescript on letter-size paper, 1964. Courtesy of the Artist.

All artworks reproduced with the permission of the Artist.

Effacing Difference: Larry Rivers' *History of Matzah (The Story of the Jews)*

Samantha Baskind

In *Drawings and Digressions*, a compilation of drawings and autobiographical prose, the artist Larry Rivers writes of a fellow artist:

> He's from a rather old American family from Kansas. . .I've always considered him to be a real American, while I am a fake American—sort of American by mistake. After all, my mother came here when she was twenty-six, my father was fourteen; and all I saw were foreigners in my house, and I spoke Yiddish till I was six years old.[1]

By invoking aspects of his life as a Jew, Rivers reveals much about who he is as a first-generation Jew in America. Through an examination of *Before the Diaspora*, the initial panel of Larry Rivers' triptych *History of Matzah* (1982-84), this paper seeks to understand how a first-generation American Jew expresses his identity in a world to which he feels he can never fully belong, neither as a Jew nor as an American. *Before the Diaspora* provides an opportunity to analyze American Judaism on two levels. Because the triptych was designed by an American Jew, it will be discussed in terms of how Rivers views his Jewish identity and how this reflects the sentiments of American Jewry as a whole. Additionally, how Rivers manipulates and transforms biblical history in the panel, and the choices he makes about what iconic images from the history of art he chose to include/efface will also be discussed.

A consistent theme in discussions of American Jewry is that of difference. In *The Jews in America: A History*, Rufus Learsi writes "the desire 'to belong,'. . .seemed capable of fulfillment only by shedding as many differences as possible, by being as much as possible like the rest."[2] Irving Howe, too, comments on a desire to eliminate difference: "To be an American, dress like an American, look like an American, and. . .talk like an American became a collective goal."[3] Manheim S. Shapiro states that "immigrants saw. . .differences as a possible block to progress or achievement. . .(and) the ideal society seemed to be one in which all such differences . . .would disappear."[4] Finally, Neil and Ruth Cowan describe Reformers who wanted

> to eliminate many of the rules governing daily life so that Jews would not be obviously different from their Christian neighbors (no *payess* for men, no wigs for women, no *yarmulkes*, no food restrictions); in general, as they put it, to modernize an ancient faith and make it more attractive.[5]

This reiteration of replacing the old with new, be it language, dress or customs, is echoed in the way Rivers approaches traditional art historical imagery in the initial panel of *History of Matzah*.

An artist who explored 'history painting' in past works such as *Washington Crossing the Delaware* (1953, New York, Museum of Modern Art) and *The History of the Russian Revolution*: *From Marx to Mayakovsky* (1965, Washington, D.C., Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution),[6] Rivers seemed an appropriate artist to give the commission for *History of Matzah* because of his past success with history painting, his ability to incorporate dense amounts of material in small spaces, and his own Jewish heritage. In the 1950s Rivers painted *The Burial* (1951, Indiana, Fort Wayne Museum of Art), inspired by the memory of his grandmother's funeral and *Europe I* (1956, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts) and *Europe II* (1956, New York, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Weisberger),[7] based on a formal portrait of Polish relatives. Though not his first venture with a Jewish subject, *History of Matzah* was Rivers' first large-scale composition on a Jewish theme.

It was in 1982 that Rivers received the commission from Sivia and Jeffrey H. Loria to create a historical narrative of the Jewish people.[8] The result of prodigious literary research, this three-paneled history's full title is *History of Matzah (The Story of the Jews)*. A self-described spiritual and ethnic Jew,[9] Rivers presents 4000 years of history on three enormous nine by fourteen foot triptych canvases. Created in a collage-like form, images and stories overlap in Part I, entitled *Before the Diaspora* (Figure 1), Part II, *European Jewry* (Figure 2), and Part III, *Immigration to America* (Figure 3). Originally intended to be only one canvas,[10] the project expanded due to the enthusiasm with which Rivers embraced the project, and the impossibility of representing 4000 years of a people's history on one canvas.

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[1] Larry Rivers, *Drawings and Digressions* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., Publishers, 1979) 91.

[2] Rufus Learsi, *The Jews in America: A History* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1954) 76.

[3] Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1976) 128.

[4] Manheim S. Shapiro, "The Social Tradition of the American Jew," *Traditions of the American Jew*, ed. Stanley M. Wagner (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1977) 39 and 44.

[5] Neil M. Cowan and Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *Our Parents' Lives: The Americanization of Eastern European Jews* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1989) 254.

[6] Good illustrations of all of these paintings can be found in Sam Hunter, *Larry Rivers* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1989), pages 16 and 36, respectively.

[7] Again, fine reproductions of these images can be found in Hunter, pages 14, 63 and 47.

The third canvas of the triptych is entitled *Immigration to America*. This final panel focuses on the Jewish immigration to and settlement in the United States, up to World War I. Superimposed on matzah is a map of Europe, depicting the many countries and cities from which the Jews escaped. The Statue of Liberty dominates the lower left corner and an influx of Jewish immigrants subjected to compulsory medical exams at a port of entry covers the upper left corner. A large grouping of traditionally dressed Eastern European Jews are shown reading *Der Tog*, a Yiddish daily published at the beginning of the century. Another example of the proliferation of Jewish culture and the Hebrew language in the early Jewish-American community is found in the form of a poster in the upper center area advertising a Jewish version of William Shakespeare's play *King Lear*.

Part II of the triptych, *European Jewry*, is also painted on a background of matzah with a map of Europe upon the unleavened bread, this time symbolizing the dispersion of the Jewish people after the Temple was destroyed.[11] Largely historical, the images proceed from left to right depicting, for example, the Jews of Spain during the oppressive years of the late fifteenth century, the Jews of Lithuania in the eighteenth century and Russian Jews from the nineteenth century. The religiosity of the Jewish people in this period is emphasized by the large figure of a Jew at center, dubbed by Rivers as the "Happy Hasid."[12] Additionally, at the top of the panel the large bust of a male dominates, wearing a tallis and phylacteries, the traditional garb of a praying Jewish male. The final overt symbol of Jewish piety in the canvas is a representation of Rivers' cousin Aaron Hochberg traditionally clothed, head bowed in deep concentration in front of a Torah scroll.

The large grouping at the center of the panel highlighted by a male Jew holding a torah includes portraits of Sivia and Jeffrey Loria, the couple who commissioned *History of Matzah*. A modified version of Maurycy Gottlieb's *Jews Praying in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur* (1878) (Figure 4), the Lorias' inclusion is in the tradition of donor portraits in medieval and Renaissance altarpieces.[13] Along the left side of this canvas animals from fourteenth and fifteenth century medieval Hebrew manuscripts are included to demonstrate Jewish creativity during a period which has been believed to be aniconic.[14] As we shall see in the discussion of *Before the Diaspora*, Rivers' incorporation of the work of other artists is an important component of *History of Matzah*. Though not chronological, *European Jewry* summarizes religious practice, oppression, and vocations of Jews during their long history in Europe.

Part I of the triptych covers the period beginning with the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai through the Fall of Jerusalem to the Romans. Peeking behind images is the flat dry rendering of matzah, the unleavened bread which resulted from the Jews' haste when fleeing Egypt (Exodus 12:34, 12:39). During the yearly celebration of Passover in the Spring, Jews substitute matzah for leavened bread as a means for remembering the Exodus, when the Jewish people wandered in the desert for forty years. Remembering seems to be at the core of the triptych and is thus an appropriate background for a canvas commemorating the history of the Jews. More chronologically oriented than the second and third canvases, and arranged in three horizontal planes, beginning with Moses with the tablets of the Law and culminating with a rendering of Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, this first panel tells a story not only of the Jews in the biblical era, but Larry Rivers, American Jew from the twentieth century.

The personalization of this panel begins with the first image in the upper left corner. 'Moses' is a representation which uses Rembrandt's *Moses* (1659) (Figure 5) as a model.[15] By individualizing the largest figure in the initial panel, and the image who begins the long journey of the Jews, Rivers overtly links himself with the Jewish people as a whole.[16] Rivers' cousin Aaron Hochberg, the same figure who supplied the physiognomy for the scribe in the second panel of the triptych, is transformed into Moses. Jews through the ages have always felt that they belong to a people, not just themselves;[17] that they identify Judaism as "a group of Jews who see themselves as 'Israel,'" that is, the Jewish people who form the family and children of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and

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[8] Helen A. Harrison, *Larry Rivers* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984) 104.

[9] Harrison 104.

[10] Norman L. Kleeblatt and Anita Friedman, *History of Matzah: The Story of the Jews* (New York: The Jewish Museum, 1984) 8.

[11] Kleeblatt 20.

[12] Kleeblatt 20.

[13] See, for example, Robert Campin's (Master of Flémalle) *The Merode Altarpiece* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *c.* 1425-28), also a triptych.

[14] Kleeblatt 20.

[15] Rembrandt's reputed rapport with the Jews of Amsterdam is well-documented. Susan W. Morgenstein and Ruth E. Levine, *The Jews in the Age of Rembrandt* (Rockville, MD: The Judaic Museum of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington, 1981).

[16] Kleeblatt 11.

[17] James Jaffe, *The American Jews* (New York: Random House, 1968) 319.

Rachel, the founding fathers and mothers.[18] This genealogical reference, Hochberg as Moses, and Hochberg, a relative of Rivers, implies Rivers' acknowledgement of Moses as his own ancestor and the idea of the Jewish people as a tribe.

Of particular interest is the biblical text on the tablets of the Law. Rembrandt's Hebrew lettering is an accurate display of Hebrew letters, but they do not spell out biblical text nor recognizable Hebrew words. Rivers' Hebrew lettering, however, is legible. The tenth commandment is inscribed on the tablets held by Rivers' Moses. This final commandment is about covetous desires, translated as: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's (Exodus 20:14). The American Jew did not always take this commandment to heart upon his move to the United States.

Newly immigrated Jews desiring acculturation in America changed many aspects of their lifestyles to 'fit in' with fellow-countrymen. By the late nineteenth century, religious services were read in English, not Hebrew, traditional dress, such as hats and prayer shawls were discarded, and attempts were made to efface differences in religious practices. Mimicking their Christian counterparts, organs were introduced in religious ceremonies, some congregations adopted a Sunday morning service, and the sermon became the centerpiece of the religious service. Furthermore, Reform religious education was reduced to Sunday school[19] and Jewish religious songs often adopted Christian melodies and motifs.[20] One of the most noticeable changes the Jews were to make upon their arrival to America was the modernization of their names. Changing one's name to reflect a non-Jewish character became popular practice from the nineteenth century onward[21] and was viewed as a way to 'cover up' Jewishness.[22] For example, performers in the public eye such as Nathan Birnbaum, Benjamin Kubelsky, and Issure Danielovitch are better known as George Burns, Jack Benny, and Kirk Douglas, respectively.

Larry Rivers was born Yitzroch Loiza Grossberg. Rivers expressed shame at his name change, albeit in a roundabout manner, when he wrote of his family's reaction to this change:

> My family always used to say, "Well, why do you have to change—are you ashamed of Grossberg?" And I never would admit that. But in all probability it was whatever Jews go through with those things—names and noses. I had 'em all.[23]

Rivers more directly acknowledges his 'shame' at changing his name when detailing a conversation with the art historian Clement Greenberg. Before even saying hello, Greenberg asked Rivers what his name was before he changed it. Meekly, Rivers replied "Grossberg." To which Greenberg responded "Sounds like you're ashamed of being Jewish."[24] Rivers then infers that Greenberg probably saw his changing his name as "an odious weakness of character."[25] When discussing Greenberg later in his autobiography Rivers writes:

> Perhaps I never forgave Clem for criticizing my change of name to one that didn't carry the identity his name stuck him with, which stung me all the more because somewhere not too down deep I agreed that changing my name was shameful.[26]

Effacing difference seems to be at the core of Rivers' name change.

The great Italian artist Michelangelo is also quoted in the first panel of *History of Matzah*, but again with Rivers' amendments. From the knees up, initially Michelangelo's *David* (1501-4) (Figure 6) looks perfectly rendered. On close inspection, however, David's face appears altered. Rivers has taken David's fine, thin features and transformed them into Semitic features, while also circumcising the classical sculpture. Preoccupied with the differences between Jews and Gentiles, Rivers mentions his physiognomy several times in his autobiography. When discussing his son Steven, Rivers states that he liked Steven's looks because he didn't see the beginning of (his) big nose in Steven's.[27] When talking about his adolescence, Rivers states "My nose was beginning to lengthen and turn down at a disturbing pace. My friends not only noticed this, they began warning me that I was going to wind up 'looking Jewish.'"[28]

Fascinated with non-Jewish features, in his writings Rivers constantly mentions those without Semitic qualities such as his blond, blue-eyed third grade teacher.[29] When discussing his first girlfriend Molly Adams, a woman who could trace her ancestry back to the Adamses, Rivers' states "She was quite beautiful and very different from me."[30] Further, in the late 1950s through the 1960s Rivers drew several works with the subject of noses, including *How to Draw: Noses* (1962, Connecticut, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby), *Polish Vocabulary Lesson* (1964, Private Collection), and *Golden Oldies: Bunch of Noses* (1968, New York, Private Collection). Continuing on the subject of physiognomy, Rivers describes the drawing *Miss New Jersey*, (1959, Private Collection)[31] a portrait of his girlfriend Maxine as follows:

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[18] Jacob Neusner, *Introduction to American Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994) 31.

[19] Nathan Glazer, *American Judaism*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1989) 46.

[20] Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992) 113.

[21] Geoffrey Wigoder, *The New Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, 7th ed., (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1992) 689.

[22] Barry Rubin, *Assimilation and its Discontents* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1995) 78.

[23] Rivers, *Drawings and Digressions* 30.

[24] Larry Rivers and Arnold Weinstein. *What Did I Do? The Unauthorized Autobiography* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992) 182.

[25] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 183.

[26] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 191.

[27] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 39.

[28] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 89.

[29] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 91.

[30] Rivers, *Drawings and Digressions* 92.

> She had a beautiful nose—and even though the drawing is quite abstract, you can see that I was aware of her nose with these two dots. I was very aware of it because I've thought about a nose job since I was eighteen. I mean you live in a culture where everybody's nose is going up, or is straight, and you walk around looking like some Arab or an anti-Semitic notion of an elder of Zion—well, you sort of consider it. My sister had a nose job.[32]

Finally, Rivers makes a point of mentioning that his Uncle married a Jew who did not look Jewish and did not have an accent.[33] These frequent allusions to difference are inscribed in action with the 'erasure' of David's classical features. While here Rivers does not eliminate difference, he tries to make mainstream what has always been viewed in America as different, or foreign.[34]

And the circumcision of *David*—circumcising one of the most over-produced icons of art history is an overt gesture. The last section of Larry Rivers' autobiography is a synopsis of what he perceives he did in his life and one that takes up the theme of circumcision in his writing. Entitled "Okay, what did I do!" Rivers writes, among other things:

> I arranged for the mutilation of my son's cock, a surgery that was not necessary unless I took seriously the biblical covenant with God. I hope that when Sam grows up he won't think he needs the bit of skin and forgive me. I'm not sure if that decision to have him circumcised made me anymore Jewish than my decision ten years before to halt ingestion of the pig.[35]

Rivers' statement, along with his 'marring' of David, implies that he seriously believes in the distinguishing mark of the Jewish male. Genesis 17:10-14 establishes the oldest rite in the Jewish religion, the circumcision of a male child eight days after his birth, an external binding symbol of the child to his religion. Circumcision traces back to the covenant that Abraham, the first Jew, made with God. Known as the sign of the covenant (Genesis 17:11), the covenant in the flesh (Genesis 17:13) and the covenant of circumcision (Acts 7:8), this was the rite upon which the Lord stated he would be a God to Abraham and his offspring. According to Exodus 2:24-26, even Moses would have died if his son had not been circumcised.

For Rivers circumcision is not only a Jewish custom, but a sign of difference. While as far back as the 1820s Jews in America desiring acculturation refused to circumcise their sons,[36] twentieth-century Reform Jews interested in modernizing the Jewish religion continued to circumcise their male children. The sociologist Nathan Glazer concludes that holding on to such an ancient practice demonstrates "a simple unreflecting attachment to the Jewish people, a subconscious insistence that the Jews be maintained as a people."[37] Thus, while wanting to efface difference, the American Jew cannot at the same time help but hold onto some ethnicities. Barry Rubin sums up this tendency well: "For a variety of reasons. . .[a] group. . .from Jewish backgrounds outwardly, often passionately, rejected any Jewish identity, while still being, inwardly, heavily influenced by it."[38] Larry Rivers appears to fall into this category.

On the far right corner of this first panel, Rivers recasts the roles of the major players from the Florentine master Leonardo Da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-98) (Figure 7). Leonardo intended for the mural to be a commemoration of Jesus Christ's last meal with his disciples before his crucifixion, the meal where Christ asked his followers which one had betrayed him. The New Testament gospels imply that Christ's last supper was a Passover meal,[39] and Rivers stresses this idea with his rendition of Leonardo's masterpiece. Aaron Hochberg again resurfaces, occupying Christ's central place, echoing his pose at the dinner table. Rivers leaves no doubt that this is a seder, the ceremony observed in the Jewish home on the first night of Passover, one of the most celebrated Jewish holidays in America.[40] In addition to matzah, the dry flat bread which serves as a background to his four millennia history, being noticeably placed on the plate in front of Hochberg, "The Last Seder" is printed in capital letters above Hochberg's head. While unable to make the seder part of mainstream American practice, Rivers presents an important ritual of his people through a cultural icon. Many Jewish immigrants were eager to rewrite the past,[41] and in part that may be what Rivers is doing with *The Last Supper*, but other factors appear to be involved here as well. Rivers' *Last Seder* is almost an assertion, an assertion of presence. The history of art *did* depict Jews—Christ was a Jew, David was a Jew, Moses was a Jew. Rivers makes this apparent through Moses, David and Jesus, his reworked art historical icons. This assertion of Jewishness in the history of art through easily recognizable images is a retelling of Jewish history, of art history, and an attempt to make Jewish tradition, ritual and physiognomy part of the mainstream.

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[31] Reproductions of these drawings can be found in Sam Hunter, *Larry Rivers* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis UP, 1965) 13 and Rivers *Drawings and Digressions*, 146, 255, 103, respectively.

[32] Rivers, *Drawings and Digressions* 103.

[33] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 97-8.

[34] American Jews in the late nineteenth century were viewed as "Oriental," or figures that were "gothic or medieval in style." Howe 395.

[35] Rivers, *What Did I Do?* 461-2.

[36] Jacob Rader Marcus, *The American Jew, 1585-1990: A History* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Company, 1995) 84.

[37] Glazer 54-5.

[38] Rubin 72.

[39] See, for example, Luke 22:15.

[40] Neusner 43.

[41] Rubin 78.

The desire to retell history, is in part, a phenomenon of the American Jew. Often ashamed of his 'Jewishness,'[42] the American Jew would attempt to conceal his identity, as previously discussed, through the discarding of traditional rituals, clothing and names. Rivers himself writes of the shame he felt of his immigrant background when discussing his parents. He writes: "They were foreigners, they couldn't speak English, they were a constant embarrassment."[43] However, along with this shame came an effort to assert a Jewish identity. In Paul Cowan's autobiography, *An Orphan in History: Retrieving a Jewish Legacy*, he discusses his father, who changed his name from Cohen to Cowan (the Welsh word for stonecutter), would not let his children meet their relatives, sent his children to an Episcopalian prep school and ate ham at Easter, yet in his old age collected oral histories of Jews.[44] Collecting oral histories, histories which die with the death of a generation was a conscious way for Cowan/Cohen to preserve a Jewish past and to propagate his tradition. Rivers behaves in a similar way. Embarrassment, shame, name changes and intermarriage all 'sully' his ethnicity, yet in his sixties, Rivers paints a momentous history of the Jews. Rivers no longer hides his past as he did in his transition from Grossberg to Rivers. He asserts his identity in *History of Matzah* so strongly that he even attempts to appropriate the history of art as a way of expressing his Judaism, projecting aspects of his culture upon the mainstream.

History of Matzah (The Story of the Jews) is one in which Larry Rivers/Yitzroch Grossberg asserts his presence as a Jew. Rivers himself states "I began to wonder if making paintings that have a Jewish theme was some way of proving that I'm not ashamed of [Judaism] at all. I'm not."[45] His shame, a shame that he admits to in his own autobiography, was typical of a newly immigrated Jew in America. An attempt to discard and later affirm one's heritage was a common pattern among first-generation American Jews. Through an examination of the initial panel of Larry Rivers' four-millennia history of the Jewish people, this paper has attempted to examine the sociology of a Jew inserting himself into a world where he feels he can never belong as an American, and of an American trying to live in a world where he feels he cannot be a Jew.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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[42] Howe 262.

[43] Rivers, *Drawings and Digressions* 27.

[44] Paul Cowan, *An Orphan in History: Retrieving a Jewish Legacy* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1982) 3, 90-91.

[45] Hunter, *Larry Rivers*, 1989, 11.

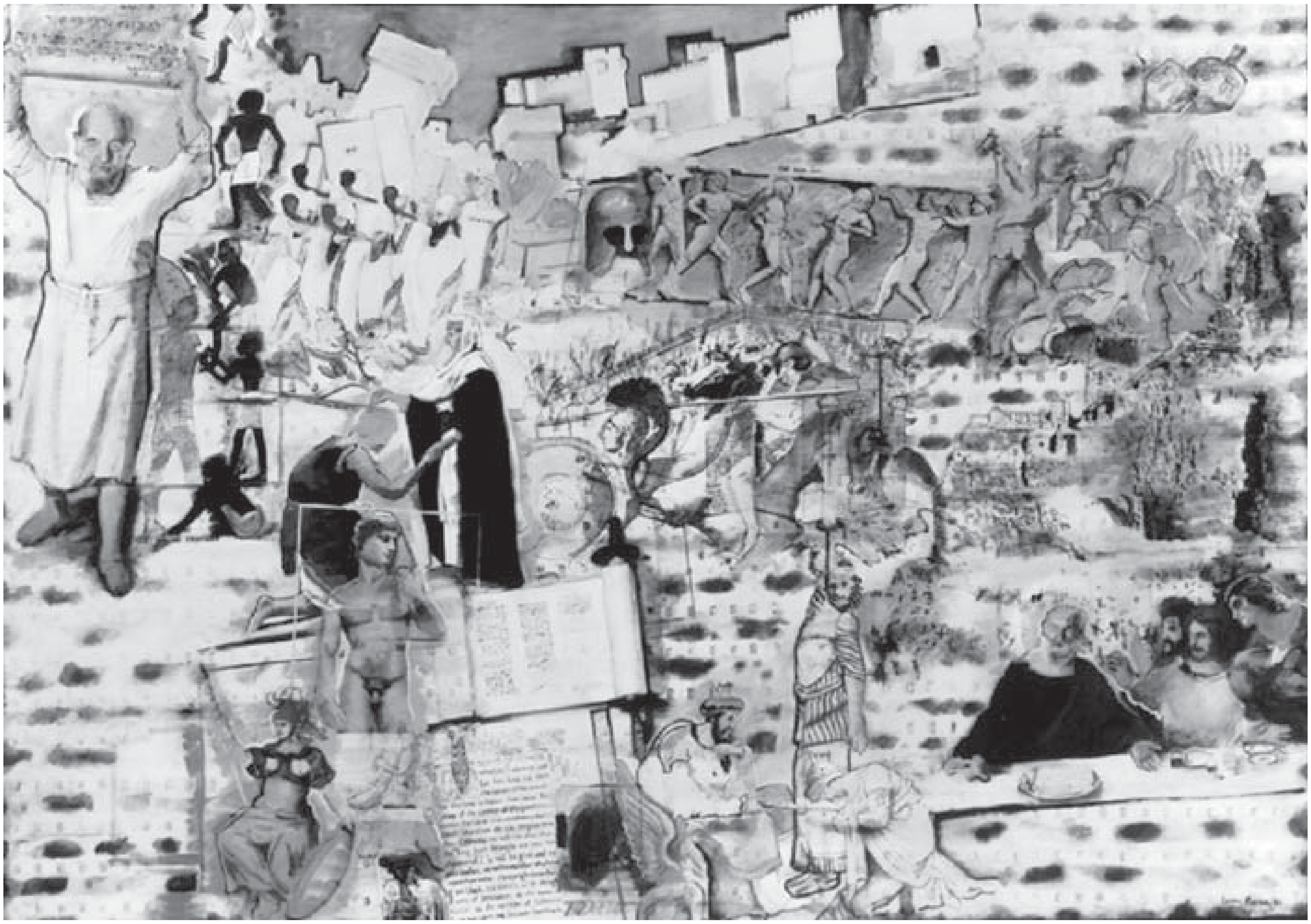


Figure 1. Larry Rivers, *History of Matzah (The Story of the Jews), Part I—Before the Diaspora*, acrylic on canvas, 116 3/4 x 166 1/2 inches, 1982. Collection Sivia and Jeffrey H. Loria, New York

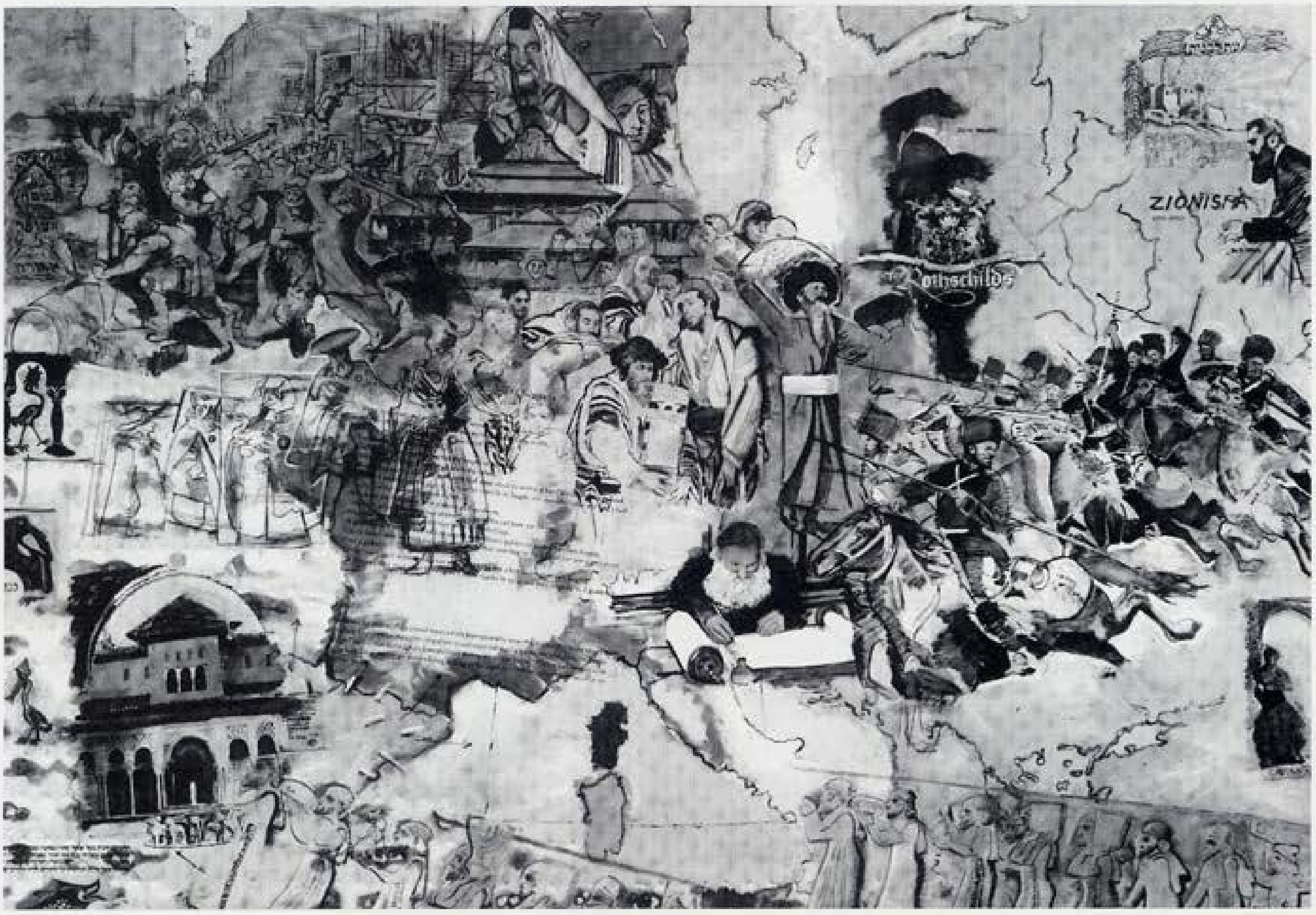


Figure 2. Larry Rivers, *History of Matzah (The Story of the Jews), Part II—European Jewry,* acrylic on canvas, 116 3/4 x 168 inches, 1983. Collection Sivia and Jeffrey H. Loria, New York.

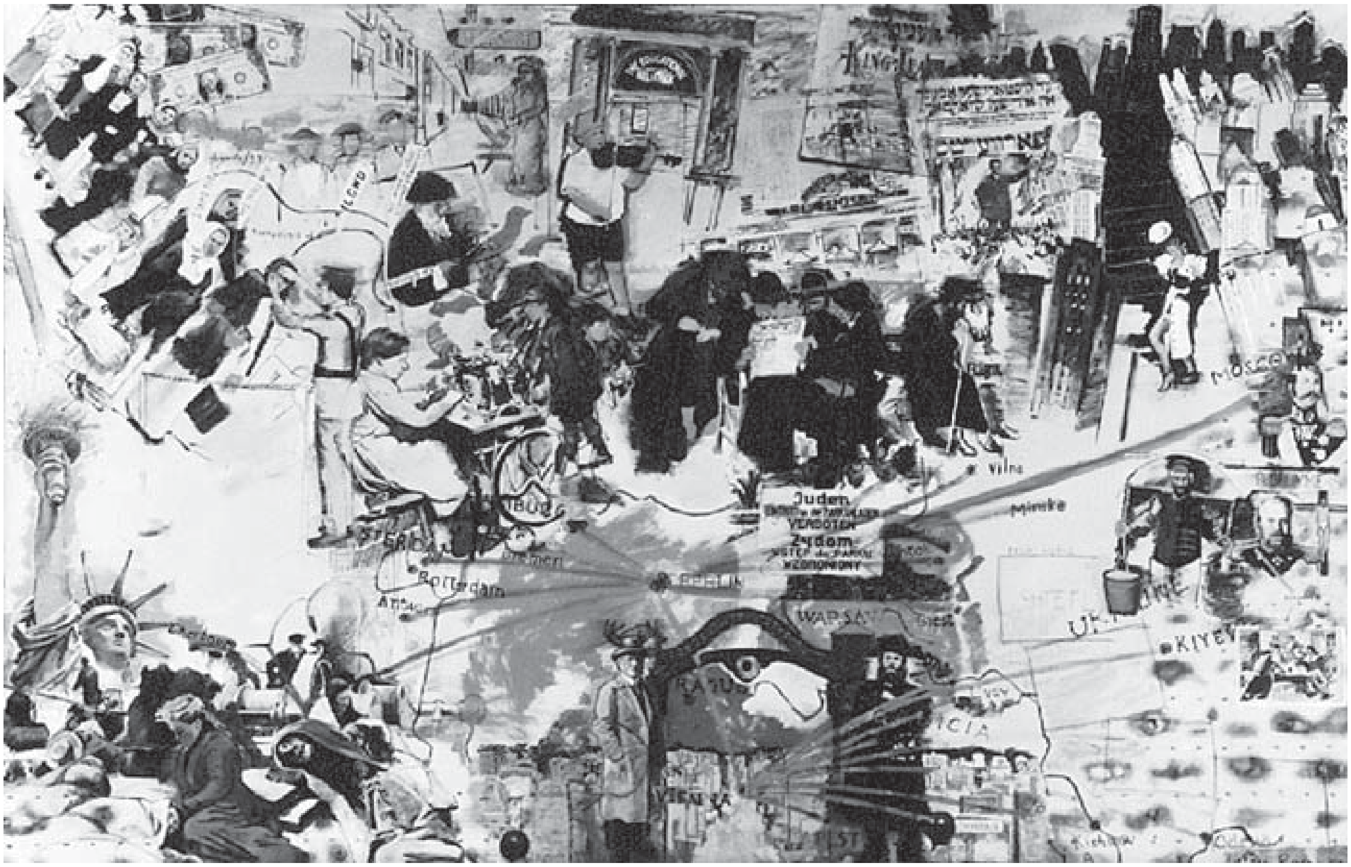
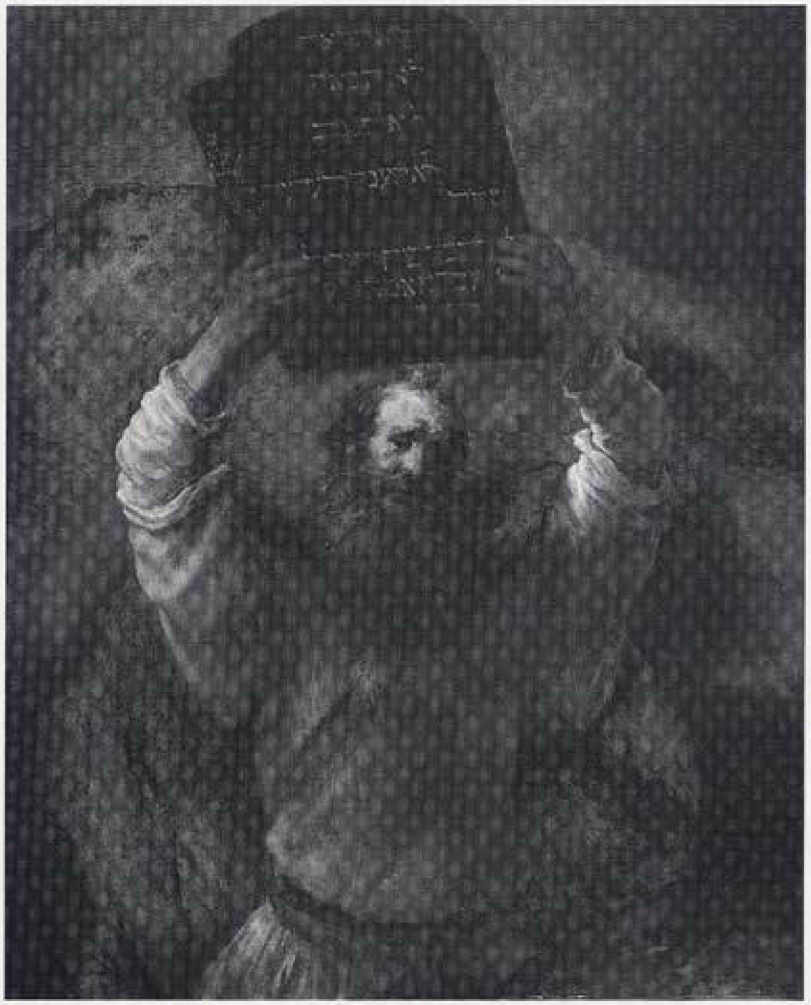


Figure 3. Larry Rivers, *History of Matzah (The Story of the Jews), Part III—Immigration to America*, acrylic on canvas, 116 1/4 x 180 inches, 1984. Collection Sivia and Jeffrey H. Loria, New York.

Figure 4. Maurycy Gottlieb, *Jews Praying in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur*, oil on canvas, 96 1/2 x 75 1/2 inches, 1878. Tel Aviv Museum, Israel. Gift of Sidney Lumon, New York. (Photo: Tel Aviv Museum of Art)

Figure 5. Rembrandt, *Moses*, oil on canvas, 66 1/2 x 54 inches, 1659. Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen, Berlin.



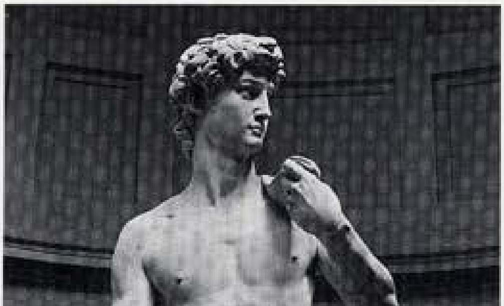


Figure 6. Michelangelo, *David*, marble, height 13 feet 5 inches, 1501-4. Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. (Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY)

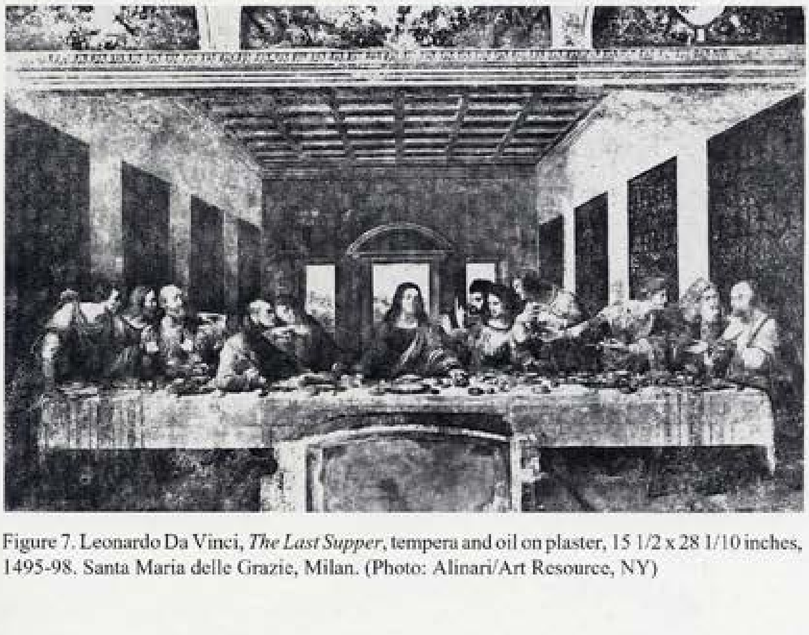


Figure 7. Leonardo Da Vinci, *The Last Supper*, tempera and oil on plaster, 15 1/2 x 28 1/10 inches, 1495-98. Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan. (Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY)

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