

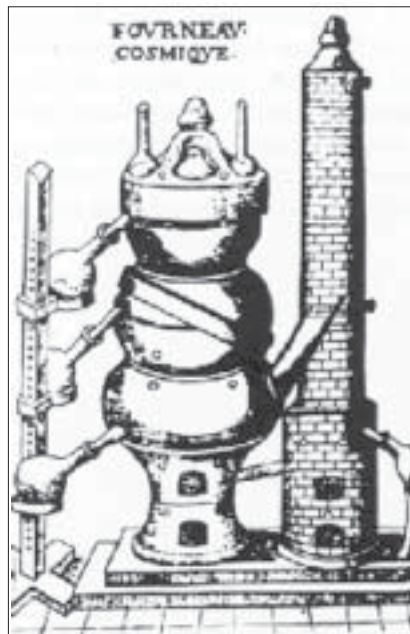
ATHANOR XIX



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: Three figurines, Inka, AD 1440-1540, hammered gold, average height 6 cm,
Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Washington, D.C.

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ATHANOR is indexed in *Bibliography of the History of Art* and *ARTbibliographies Modern*.

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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 2001-2002 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 (1993-94); Gerald Ackerman, Pomona College (1994-95); Marcel Roethlisberger, University of Geneva, Switzerland (1995-96); Robert Farris Thompson, Yale University (1996); Oleg Grabar, Princeton University (1996); Phyllis Bober, Bryn Mawr College (1997-98); Carol Duncan, Ramapo College (1998-99); Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, University of Toronto at Mississauga (1999-2000); Neil Stratford, ret. Keeper of Mediaeval Antiquities, British Museum (2000). 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.

Athanor and the Museum Press

In 1980 Professor François Bucher (University of Bern, *Medieval Art*) asked Allys Palladino-Craig (formerly of the variorum editions of *The Collected Works of Stephen Crane*, 10 vols., Fredson Bowers, Editor, University of Virginia Press) to take on the responsibility of general editor and publisher of the first volume of *Athanor* (1981). Professor Bucher served as faculty advisor until his retirement. During that time, Palladino-Craig won several grants for the publication, and in 1994 established the Museum Press of the Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts with Julianne T. Mason as principal editorial assistant and graphic designer. Since 1998 Patricia Rose has served as faculty advisor to this annual journal, which is a project of the Museum Press.

Günther Stamm Prize for Excellence

Identity Politics in Renaissance France: Cellini's Nymph of Fontainebleau by Katherine Marsengill won the Günther Stamm Prize for Excellence at the 2000 Art History Graduate Student Symposium.

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ATHANOR XIX

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MUSEUM of FINE ARTS PRESS

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PROGRESSIVE, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

Piety and Propaganda: John I Tzimiskes and the Invention of Class “A” Anonymous Folles

Jeremy J. Johnson

For almost a century now, scholars have attributed the invention and decoration of Class “A” Anonymous Folles to the piety of the Byzantine Emperor John I Tzimiskes (969-976 AD).¹ Evidence for such a claim has come not only from the ancient sources and archaeological record, but also from the decorative scheme of the coins themselves. With both the obverse and reverse of these coins solely dedicated to the name and image of Christ (Figure 1), it is no wonder that scholars think of these coins and the reasons behind their creation as strictly religious in nature. However, in the examination of the iconography of these coins and the social-historical events surrounding John I Tzimiskes, it becomes rather apparent that the motive behind the issuing of these coins was not only one of piety, but also one of propaganda.

Class “A” Anonymous Folles (folles being the term used for coins made of a specific type of copper) are the first in a series of thirteen other anonymous classes of copper coins mostly struck in the name and image of Christ.² The dates for

this series run from 969 to 1092 AD, and although not really anonymous, these classes have been identified as such because they represent the first examples of Byzantine coins to lack the traditional image and inscription relating them to a specific emperor.³

Over the years, numismatists have attended to this unique series of coins, specifically focusing their studies on those coins of Class “A.”⁴ Unfortunately, however, most of the studies dealing with Class “A” coins have been, on the whole, numismatic in nature. That is to say, in the words of Philip Grierson, these studies have taken on the following format:

The identification, classification, and description of individual coins, their attribution to specific rulers, dates, and mints, the elucidation of their types and inscriptions, and the ascertainment of their denominations...where, when, and how coins were struck and in what quantity, over what area

I wish to thank Dr. Cynthia Hahn and Dr. Jack Freiberg for their help and encouragement throughout the written and formal presentations of this paper. I am also grateful to the other involved faculty members of Art History and Classics at Florida State University, as well as my family and friends for their support. I owe special thanks to John McK. Camp II and the wonderful staff of the Agora Excavations for their permission to study the on-site collection of Class “A” Anonymous Folles. And, as always, I am indebted to Dr. William R. Biers, my mentor, for his commitment to excellence as a teacher, scholar, and friend throughout my academic and professional pursuits.

¹ A.R. Bellinger, “The Anonymous Byzantine Bronze Coinage,” *Numismatic Notes and Monographs* 35 (1928): 4; A.R. Bellinger, “The Coins and Byzantine Imperial Policy,” *Speculum* 31 (1956): 78-79; P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection III: Leo III to Nicephorus III, 717-1081* (Washington, D.C.: 1973) 635; P.D. Whitting, “The Anonymous Byzantine Bronze,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 6th ser. 15 (1955): 94-95; W. Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum* (Chicago: 1966) 51-52.

² The other thirteen classes are also identified by their associated letter, such as Class “B”, “C”...“N.” All the coins have an image of Christ on the obverse, but some have on the reverse an image of the Virgin, the Cross, and some other minor variants. For a discussion of all fourteen classes, see P. Grierson (1973), 634-647.

³ P. Grierson (1973), 634, mentions that the classes are not really anonymous because they are in the name and image of Christ.

⁴ For the numismatic studies consulted during the course of this study, see G. Bates, *Byzantine Coins: Archaeological Exploration of Sardis Monograph I* (Cambridge: 1971) 128-139; Bellinger (1928), 1-27; E.I. Dimian, “Cu privire la cronologia si atribuirea monedelor anonime bizantine de bronz,” *Studii se Cercetari de Numismatica* 3 (1960): 197-221; K.M. Edwards, *Corinth VI: Coins 1896-1929* (Cambridge: 1933) 138-143; Grierson (1973), 634ff; P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1982) 204-210; V. Ivanisevic, “Interpretation and Dating of the Folles of Basil II and Constantine VIII—The Class A2,” *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloshkog Instituta* 27-28 (1989): 19-41; D.M. Metcalf, “Provincial Issues among the Byzantine Bronze Coinage of the Eleventh Century,” *Hamburger Beitrage zur Numismatik* 5 (1961): 25-32; D.M. Metcalf, “The Coinage of Thessaloniki, 829-1204, and its Place in Balkan Monetary History,” *Balkan Studies* 4 (1963): 277-288; D.M. Metcalf, “The Byzantine Bronze Coinage in the East Mediterranean World,” *Congresso Internazionale di Numismatica, Roma, 11-16 settembre 1961* (Rome: 1964) 521-530; D.M. Metcalf, *Coinage in the Balkans* (Thessalonica: 1965) 41-57; D.M. Metcalf, “Bronze Coinage and City Life in Central Greece circa AD 1000,” *Annual of the British School at Athens* 60 (1965): 1-40; D.M. Metcalf, “Interpretation of the ‘Rex Regnantium’ Folles of Class ‘A’ c. 970-1030,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 10 (1970): 199-219; W.E. Metcalf, “Early Anonymous Folles from Antioch and the Chronology of Class A,” *Museum Notes* 21 (1976): 109-128; C. Morrison, *Catalogue des Monnaies Byzantines de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris: 1970) 581-611; D.R. Sear, *Byzantine Coins and their Values* (London: 1987) 375-389; M. Thompson, *The Athenian Agora II: Coins from the Roman through the Venetian Period* (Princeton: 1954) 73ff., 110-115; Whitting (1955), 89-99; P.D. Whitting, *Byzantine Coins* (New York: 1973) 179-181; Wroth (1966), 50-60.

they circulated, the role which they played in economic life.⁵

Thus, a typical numismatic examination of Class “A” coins includes the following: (1) the classification of the coins into different types based on their variations in size, weight, and additional decorative elements; (2) the chronology of these different types (*i.e.*, whether A-1 comes before A-2, or *vice versa*); (3) the attribution of these different types to specific emperors (John I, Basil II, Constantine VIII, and possibly Romanos III); and/or (4) the various mints at which these types were produced (Antioch, Corinth, Athens, etc.).⁶

This paper does not dwell on such numismatic issues, and it is important to note that during the discussion of these coins, distinctions will not be made within the class based on the aforementioned numismatic categories. Instead, what is important for this discussion is simply that the Class “A” coins were originally created during the reign of John I Tzimiskes, and that the major decorative elements of these coins remained the same throughout his rule, chosen by him for the specific religious and imperial propagandistic messages they conveyed.⁷ What this paper presents then is a new approach to the study of these coins, one not addressed by numismatists, focusing specifically on the iconography of these coins and the social-historical events surrounding their creation.⁸

The identification of John I Tzimiskes as the founder and creator of Class “A” Anonymous Folles is an easy attribution. Both the eleventh century AD historian, John Skylitzes, and the twelfth century AD historian, George Kedrenus, write the following about the coins:

And he [John I] ordered also the image of the Savior to be engraved on the nomisma

and the obol [*i.e.*, copper coin], which had not been done before this. And Greek letters were engraved on the other side to about this effect: “Jesus Christ, King of Kings.” And the emperors who succeeded him did likewise.⁹

Although the attribution to John of the creation of the first gold coins with an image of Christ is in error in this text, overall, the sources are still rather reliable, especially when supported by the archaeological record.¹⁰

A number of copper coins bearing an image of Christ on the obverse and the four-line Greek inscription reading “Jesus Christ, King of Kings” on the reverse have been found at Byzantine sites datable to the late tenth to early eleventh centuries AD, including Constantinople, Athens, Corinth, Sardis, and Thessalonike. As recently as July of 1999, a hoard of twenty-one Class “A” Anonymous Folles was found during the continuing excavations of the Athenian Agora.¹¹ Without a doubt, these coins must belong to the same class that the ancient sources claim John I Tzimiskes created.¹²

After attributing these coins to John I Tzimiskes, Skylitzes identifies John’s piety as the motive behind their creation.¹³ At first glance, this connection does not seem strange since instances of John’s piety are numerous throughout his reign. For example, in 971 AD, it was the emperor’s piety which brought about the appearance of the martyr Theodore at the battle of Dorostolon and inevitably led to a Byzantine victory over the Rus’.¹⁴ In the same year, after his victory over the Rus’, John demonstrated the benefits of his piety by marching triumphantly into Constantinople with an icon of Mary and other booty mounted on a lavishly decorated cart (Figure 2).¹⁵

⁵ P. Grierson, “Byzantine Coinage as Source Material,” *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, 5-10 September 1966*, eds. J.M. Hussey et al. (London: 1967) 317.

⁶ For classification into types, see Bellinger (1928), 1-27; Grierson (1973), 635-639; Grierson (1982), 204-210; Ivanisevic (1989), 19-41; Metcalf (1970), 199-219; Thompson (1954), 110-115; Whitting (1955), 89-99; Wroth (1966), 480-483. For chronology, see Bellinger (1928), 1-27; Dimian (1960), 197-221; Grierson (1973), 637-639; Grierson (1982), 204-210; Ivanisevic (1989), 19-41; Metcalf (1976), 109-128. For attribution to rulers, see all of note 1. For various mints, see Grierson (1973), 640-644; Ivanisevic (1989), 19-41; Metcalf (1961), 25-32; Metcalf (1963), 277-288; Metcalf (1964), 521-530; Metcalf (1965), 1-40; Metcalf (1970), 199-219.

⁷ Ivanisevic (1989), 37, suggests the possibility that Tzimiskes may have initialized the minting of the heavier Class A-2 Folles.

⁸ P. Grierson (1973), 635, suggests another reason for the creation of the coins: “Scylitzes gives John’s piety as the motive, and in view of his deeply religious nature this may well be correct, though one would like to think it was in part an act of contrition for the atrocious murder of his predecessor.”

⁹ G. Kedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum*, ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols. (Bonn: 1838-1839) 413-414. J. Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. I. Thurn, *Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae*, vol. 5 (Berlin: 1973) 311.74-78. For English translation employed here, see Grierson (1973), 634. For versions of text in original Greek, see Bellinger (1928), 2; Wroth (1966), 51-52.

¹⁰ For problems in the text, see Grierson (1973), 634-635; A.N. Oikonomides, “John Skylitzes on Anonymous Byzantine Bronze Coinage,” *The Turtle*:

North American Journal of Numismatics 6 (1967): 15-17. For first images of Christ on gold coins, see J.D. Breckenridge, “The Numismatic Iconography of Justinian II (685-695, 705-711 AD),” *Numismatic Notes and Monographs* 144 (1959): 1-104.

¹¹ The results of the 1999 season have yet to be published, but the author of this paper has been a continuing member of the excavations since 1998. A preliminary report of the 1999 season was presented recently: J. McK. Camp II, “Excavations in the Athenian Agora 1998-2000,” *Archaeological Institute of America Annual Meeting*, San Diego, 3-6 Jan. 2001.

¹² A reexamination of the coins by the author during the summer of 2000 showed that the folles were Class A-2, therefore probably not minted during the reign of John I Tzimiskes.

¹³ Grierson (1973), 635.

¹⁴ M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge: 1986) 171-174; S. McGrath, “The Battles of Dorostolon (971): Rhetoric and Reality,” *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, eds. T.S. Miller and J. Nesbitt (Washington, D.C.: 1995) 161-164.

¹⁵ H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago and London: 1994) 185-187; G. Dennis, “Religious Services in the Byzantine Army,” *EULOGEMA: Studies in Honor of Robert Taft, S.J.*, eds. E. Carr et al. (Roma: 1993) 116.

And finally, in what may have been his most pious act, John reconstructed a small chapel originally set up by Romanos I (920-944 AD). This chapel, located next to the Chalke gate, was dedicated to the specific icon decorating this gate, that of the Christ Chalkites.¹⁶

These examples of John's piety are in no way specific references to the man's humble nature, but rather express very strong imperial notions. The reconstruction by John of the small chapel dedicated to the icon of Christ Chalkites is no doubt one of these instances. Here, imperial propaganda is at its fullest. The icon of Christ Chalkites was an imperial image of Christ that appeared over the Chalke gate, the main entrance vestibule of the Great and Imperial Palace of Constantinople.¹⁷ This gate held throughout its history a strong relationship with the Byzantine emperor since it served as the ceremonial and triumphal center of the empire (Figure 3).¹⁸

In addition to these special functions, the Chalke gate also served as the physical location at which the emperor displayed himself to the people in all his power and might.¹⁹ The icon of Christ above the gate then, along with the other various imperial images appearing on its walls, would have no doubt represented evidence of the emperor's visual boasts of imperial glory. The sixth century AD historian, Procopius, in his description of the Chalke gate, attests to such visual displays of *imperium*:

We know the lion by his claw, as the proverb has it; so also will my readers know the impressiveness of the Palace from its vestibule. This vestibule, then, which is called the Chalke, is of the following kind. Four straight walls as high as heaven, are set in a rectangle, and they are in all respects similar to one another, except that the two facing south and north, respectively, are slightly shorter than the others...the entire ceiling prides itself on its pictures...these simulate all kinds of subjects including human figures...on either side are war and battle, and numerous cities are being captured...the emperor is victorious through his lieutenant...who returns to the Emperor, his whole army intact, and offers him booty, namely

kings and kingdoms and all other things that are prized by men.²⁰

To reconstruct a chapel dedicated to the icon of Christ that appeared on the Chalke gate on such a grand scale as John did, especially when its location was directly beside the gate, was surely a reflection of imperial power. In addition, the rebuilding of the chapel also brought greater attention back to the Chalke gate, the importance of which had possibly been lost during the reign of the previous emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969 AD), who surrounded the entire palace with a large circuit wall.²¹

Propagandistic reasons should also be attributed to the return of the triumphant John I Tzimiskes, in all his splendor and glory, to the city of Constantinople, after the battle of 971 AD. Clearly this act of displaying the spoils of war by John and other Byzantine emperors on arrival into the home city is paralleled by the Roman *adventus*, the formal arrival of an emperor or general with all pomp and circumstance.²²

Finally, as for the appearance of the martyr Theodore at the battle of Dorostolon, John I Tzimiskes' piety should seem no different from that of any other Byzantine emperor in time of war. In fact, this occurrence should bring to mind the Byzantine tradition of carrying religious images into the battlefield. This practice, beginning in the later sixth century AD and carried on consistently throughout the ninth to twelfth centuries AD, was a reflection of the highly religious nature of Byzantine warfare.²³ The following late tenth century prayer recited by soldiers before battle demonstrates this fact:

Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Come to the aid of us Christians and make us worthy to fight to the death for our faith and our brothers, strengthen our souls and our hearts and our whole body, the mighty Lord of battles, through the intercession of the immaculate Mother of God, Thy Mother, and of all the saints. Amen.²⁴

In light of these arguments, John Skylitzes' attribution of the creation of these coins to John's overwhelming sense of piety can no longer be accepted in its entirety. What was the reason for their creation then, if not purely for a religious impetus? For the answer to this question, we must turn to the coins themselves, which serve as the only surviving visual

¹⁶ C. Mango, *The Brazen House: A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen: 1959) 149-152; A.P. Kazhdan, et al, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. (New York and Oxford: 1991) 405-406; McCormick (1986), 174-175.

¹⁷ For the most complete study of the icon and the gate and its role in royal performances and displays, see Mango (1959).

¹⁸ L. Brubaker, "The Chalke gate, the construction of the past, and the Trier ivory," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999): 258-260. Also, see above notes 16 and 17.

¹⁹ Brubaker (1999), 259-260.

²⁰ C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (Toronto: 1986) 108-110.

²¹ J. Bardill, "The Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors and the Walker Trust excavations," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12 (1999): 218-219; Brubaker (1999), 259; R. Guiland, "Le Palais du Boukoleon: L'Assassinat de Nicéphore II Phokas," *Byzantinoslavica* 13 (1953): 101-136; Mango (1991), 406; C. Mango, "The Palace of the Boukoleon," *Cahiers Archéologiques* 45 (1997): 41-46.

²² McCormick (1986), 16.

²³ J. Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565-1204* (London: 1999) 17-27.

²⁴ Haldon (1999), 27 and note 62.

evidence for the reason behind John I Tzimiskes' invention.

The decorative scheme of Class "A" Anonymous Folles is rather complex in its combination of the image and name of Christ. These elements were not meant to stand as individual references to Christ, but instead reflect one another in meaning. On the obverse of the coins, the bust of Christ is shown as mature, fully frontal with a crossed nimbus surrounding his head (Figure 4). His left hand, barely visible, if at all, supports the Gospel book from beneath, while his right hand within the sling of the cloak pulls away from the body in a gesture of blessing.²⁵

The positioning of Christ's hands on these coins is unique. In fact, no other image of Christ with this exact same hand placement appears on Byzantine coins or any other form of media before 969 AD.²⁶ After that, however, types of Christ similar to the one on the coins become prominent in Byzantine art.²⁷ The unique hand placement of Christ on these coins, then, represents not a copy of one specific icon of Christ, but rather a hybrid of two different icons to form a new image of Christ.

An examination into the iconography of the various Christ images which appear throughout Byzantine art allows the identification of the Christ Chalkites and Christ Pantokrator icons as those images to which the Christ on the Class "A" coins makes reference. As stated before, the Christ Chalkites was that special icon that once stood over the Chalke gate, the main entrance vestibule of the Great Palace of Constantinople. Although this icon no longer exists, its original appearance has been demonstrated by Manolis Chatzidakis.²⁸

In an article of the late 1960s, Chatzidakis argued that the icon of Christ from Mt. Sinai (Figure 5) was a reflection of the icon of the Chalke gate based on its antique appearance and its similarity to the image of Christ on the seventh century AD gold coins of Justinian II, which he also identified as a reflection of the Chalke icon.²⁹ Chatzidakis related both the Mt. Sinai icon and Justinian's coins to a pre-iconoclastic tradition and saw the Chalke gate icon as the most likely source of inspiration for these representations of Christ because of

the gate's well-attested celebratory and imperial nature.³⁰ If we accept Chatzidakis' arguments and see the Mt. Sinai icon as a reflection of the icon of Christ on the Chalke gate, the resulting image of Christ, then, is the same as the Christ on the Class "A" coins but lacking the movement of the hand and arm within the sling of the cloak away from the body.

Continuing with the examination into the iconography of the Christ on the Class "A" coins, the next image of interest is the icon of the Christ Pantokrator. For this, a number of extant examples of this specific type of Christ do exist, but the original one would have most likely decorated the dome of the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.³¹ As seen in two examples of dome mosaics, one from the site of Daphni (Figure 6), which dates to 1100 AD, the other from St. Sophia in Kiev, which dates from the late tenth to early twelfth centuries AD, we once again have a Christ depicted in the same manner as the Christ on the Class "A" coins, but this time it is the left hand that differs, in that it does not support the Gospel book from beneath, but rather grasps the book with an outstretched hand.³²

Such distinctions in hand placement may seem to the modern eye unimportant, but it is such minor differences within the decorative elements of the coins that assist in identifying and understanding these images. Separately, the Christ Chalkites and the Christ Pantokrator have strong similarities to the Christ depicted on the Class "A" coins; at the same time, these icons also have strong differences. Together, however, it is from these two icons and the combination of specific elements from each that we achieve the image of Christ on the Class "A" coins. The combination of the left hand of the Christ Chalkites supporting the Gospel book from beneath and the right hand of the Christ Pantokrator within the sling of the cloak pulling away from the body visually creates the Christ on the Class "A" coins (Figure 7).

More importantly, it is the locale of these referential icons that inevitably defines this new image. The religious setting of the Christ Pantokrator, most likely in the dome of Hagia Sophia, and the imperial setting of the Christ Chalkites on

²⁵ For discussion of whether or not this is a blessing gesture, see Mango (1973), 150.

²⁶ Possible bearers of Christ images with a similar hand placement before 969 AD include two ivories, and coins of the emperor Alexander (912-913 AD). In all cases, however, problems arise in either the chronology of the objects or the stylistic relation of their Christ to the Christ on the Class "A" Anonymous Folles. The dates of the ivories are debated and range from the mid-tenth to late eleventh centuries AD. In addition, one of the ivories carries a full-length, standing Christ. The coins of Alexander depict a youthful Christ without beard. For the ivories, see N. Oikonomides, "The Concept of 'Holy War' and Two Tenth-Century Byzantine Ivories," *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, eds. T.S. Miller and J. Nesbit (Washington, D.C.: 1995) 62-86. For the Alexander coins, see Grierson (1973), 153 (fig. IVB), 167, 523ff.

²⁷ These similar types appear quite often on late tenth-early eleventh century AD ivories. For images of some of these ivories, see H.C. Evans and W.D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era AD 843-1261* (New York: 1997) 136, figs. 83A-83B; J.

Lowden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London: 1997) 216, fig. 123. Also, for the types that appear on late tenth century coins, see Grierson (1973), 153-154.

²⁸ M. Chatzidakis, "An Encaustic Icon of Christ at Sinai," *Art Bulletin* 49 (1967): 197-208.

²⁹ Chatzidakis (1967), 201-206.

³⁰ Chatzidakis (1967), 201-208. For images of Justinian II's coins, see Breckenridge (1959), plates.

³¹ Opposition to this viewpoint occurs in J.T. Matthews, *The Pantokrator: Title and Image*, Diss. New York University 1976 (Ann Arbor: 1976) 68. She actually states here that the image in the dome of Hagia Sophia was not a true Pantokrator.

³² For the Christ Pantokrator image that decorates the central dome in St. Sophia, Kiev, see Lowden (1997), 254, fig. 147.

the Chalke gate unite to form the true embodiment of the Byzantine empire, the icon of “Jesus Christ, King of Kings,” representative of heaven and earth, church and state. The inscription on the reverse of these coins (Figure 8) only serves to strengthen this visual manifestation as the letters themselves combine to form a religious and imperial text, thereby proclaiming to all, the introduction of *IhSYS XRISTYS BASILEYS BASILE* (“Jesus Christ, King of Kings”), that is Jesus Christ, savior of man and son of God, and King of Kings, divine protector and all powerful ruler of heaven and earth.³³

In addition to the iconographical evidence for John’s choice of imagery on his coins, the historical events surrounding John at the time of their creation clearly show that their introduction was in no way the result of entirely pious intentions. Only a few months before the initial production of the Class “A” coins, John had usurped the throne from his former friend and uncle, Nikephoros II Phokas. On the night of either the tenth or eleventh of December 969 AD, John in collaboration with the Empress Theophano, murdered Nikephoros in an imperial residence at Constantinople.³⁴ Whether for John’s own political gain or the result of a family quarrel between John, Nikephoros, and Theophano, the actual reason for the murder is not known.³⁵ The most important issue, however, was that Nikephoros II Phokas, “the people’s king” (Figure 9), was dead and John I Tzimiskes was responsible.³⁶

John was later absolved of the murder and crowned as emperor, but only after he carried out the demands of the Patriarch Polyuktos, former enemy of Nikephoros II. These demands included the banishment of Theophano and *damnatio memoriae*, the destruction of all images and texts related to the former emperor.³⁷

John I Tzimiskes was now king and had full support of both the court and the church, although not of the people. It was still too early in his reign to demonstrate his ability to

rule justly or prove himself militarily.³⁸ Thus, in order to win over the people’s support, the new emperor introduced the Class “A” coins (Figure 10), along with their innovative decorative scheme. As the base coinage, these coins spread rapidly throughout the empire displaying to all, both visually and verbally, a Christ in full religious and imperial support of the new emperor. John I Tzimiskes ingeniously veiled such propaganda as piety and quickly won support by appeasing the loss of the people’s beloved emperor Nikephoros II, confirming simultaneously his role as the rightful successor to the throne.

The Class “A” Anonymous Folles represent for the first time in the history of Byzantine coinage coins lacking an imperial image or inscription. Past scholarship on these coins and even the ancient sources have attributed this phenomenon to the piety of the Byzantine emperor, John I Tzimiskes. The coins themselves, however, relate something completely different. These coins, in both their visual and literal representations of Christ, do not relate a sense of piety alone, but extend their meaning into the realm of imperial propaganda.

The use of coins as conveyors of imperial propaganda is not unparalleled in the history of coinage. Other ancient civilizations such as those of the Greeks and Romans also utilized small metal tokens to promote various political agendas, but perhaps never in such an ingenious way as the coins of John I Tzimiskes.³⁹ What these coins represent, then, is the complex role coinage played in the political realm of the Byzantine world, as it did in other historical contexts. These coins also serve as a warning to scholars not to underestimate the subtlety of the messages of their various decorations, an aspect not often brought to light in traditional numismatic studies.

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³³ For interesting discussions on this inscription and the similar *Rex Regnantium*, see Breckenridge (1959), 46-62; Grierson (1973), 182, 632.

³⁴ For various locations of the murder, see F.A. Farello, “Niceforo Foca Imperatore di Bisanzio,” *Nuovo Rivista Storica* 83 (1999): 472-478; Guillard (1953), 101-136; R. Morris, “The Two Faces of Nikephoros Phokas,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 12 (1988): 108-109.

³⁵ As for the reasons behind the murder, see Farello (1999), 472-486; Morris (1988), 108-112; R. Morris, “Succession and usurpation: politics and rhetoric in the late tenth century,” *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th Centuries*, ed. P. Magdalino (Cambridge: 1994) 199-214.

³⁶ For evidence, discussion, and criticisms of Nikephoros as the people’s king,

see Farello (1999), 451-488; Kazhdan et al (1991), 1478-1479; Morris (1988), 83-115.

³⁷ For discussion of the banishment of Theophano and destruction of images by John I en route to his being named emperor, see Farello (1999), 486-488; Kazhdan et al (1991), 1696; Morris (1988), 83-115; Morris (1994), 206-207.

³⁸ Haldon (1999), 228-233, discusses the importance of the Byzantine emperor’s ability to demonstrate these two functions in order to establish a relationship with the people.

³⁹ L. Kurke, *Coins, Bodies, Games, and Gold: The Politics of Meaning in Archaic Greece* (Princeton: 1999) 3-23.



Figure 1. Class "A" Anonymous Follis, Agora P-1431 (obverse and reverse), c. 976-1030/35 AD, Agora, Athens, Greece. Photograph courtesy of Agora Excavations, The American School of Classical Studies, Athens, Greece.



Figure 2. John Tzimiskes Returns in Triumph to Constantinople with the Preslav Icon. Illustration from the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes, fol 172v(a), c. 1150-1175 AD, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, Spain. Photograph courtesy of Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, Spain.



Figure 3. Trier Ivory, c. sixth, ninth or tenth centuries AD, ivory panel, 13.1 x 26.1 cm, Cathedral Treasury, Trier, Germany. © Bischöfliches Generalvikariat Trier, Amt für kirchliche Denkmalpflege, Foto: Ann Münchow.



Figure 4. Class “A” Anonymous Follis, Agora IIA-187 (obverse), c. 976-1030/35 AD, Agora, Athens, Greece. Photograph courtesy of Agora Excavations, The American School of Classical Studies, Athens, Greece.

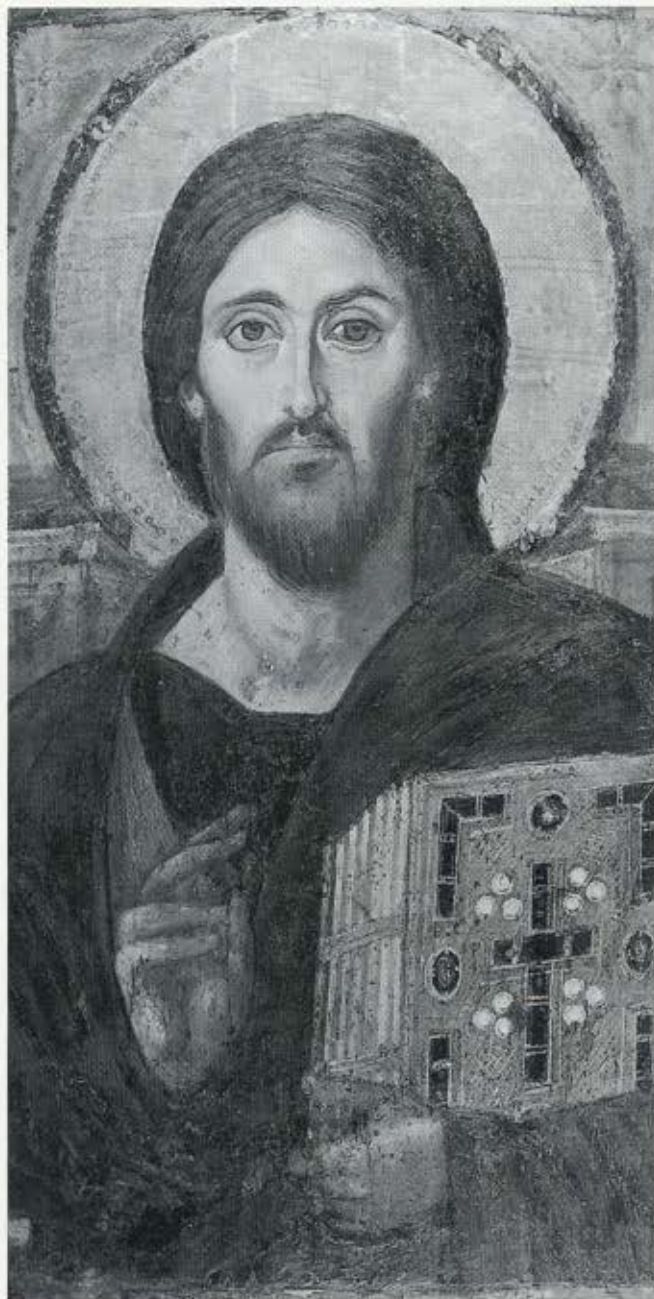


Figure 5. Icon of Christ, sixth century AD, encaustic, 84.5 cm x 44.3 cm (top), 43.8 cm (bottom), Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai. Reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai.



Figure 6. Christ Pantokrator, central dome mosaic, c. 1080 to 1100 AD, Church of the Dormition, Daphni, Greece. Photograph courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.



Figure 7. Class "A" Anonymous Follis, Agora IIA-400 (obverse), c. 969-976 AD, Agora, Athens, Greece. Photograph courtesy of Agora Excavations, The American School of Classical Studies, Athens, Greece.

Figure 8. Class “A” Anonymous Follis, Agora II-598 (reverse), c. 969-976 AD, Agora, Athens, Greece. Photograph courtesy of Agora Excavations, The American School of Classical Studies, Athens, Greece.



Figure 9. Nikephoros II Phokas Returns in Triumph to Constantinople. Illustration from the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes, fol. 145r(b), c. 1150-1175 AD, tempera on vellum, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, Spain. Photograph courtesy of Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, Spain.



Figure 10. Class “A” Anonymous Follis, Agora IIA-423 (obverse) and Agora IIA-411 (reverse), c. 969-976 AD, Agora, Athens, Greece. Photographs courtesy of Agora Excavations, The American School of Classical Studies, Athens, Greece.

White-robed Guanyin: The Sinicization of Buddhism in China Seen in the Chinese Transformation of Avalokiteshvara in Gender, Iconography, and Role

Jeong-Eun Kim

Guanyin, or Guanshiyin, the Chinese name for the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara is an excellent example of a being successfully transplanted into Chinese culture away from its Buddhist origin.¹ Starting in the late Tang dynasty, around tenth century, and during the next several centuries, Guanyin underwent a profound transformation to become the most popular Chinese deity. The first Chinese transformations of Avalokiteshvara were fundamental gender changes, showing all feminine forms. Once the sexual transformation of Guanyin was completed, she appeared in several variations. By taking on diverse forms with distinctively Chinese identities, roles, and iconographies, the foreign bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara became appropriate for Chinese religious sensibilities. Four main feminine forms of Guanyin with characteristic attributes appeared in China after the Tang dynasty. Of all the various human configurations of Guanyin, the White-robed Guanyin has become most popular and prominent among the Chinese because of the efficacy of this Guanyin's power to grant sons. This image of Guanyin was later related to a totally secular depiction of Guanyin as a "child-giving" deity. By the sixteenth century, Guanyin became a completely feminine and truly Chinese deity among all the imported Buddhist deities.

This paper is devoted to examining the process of the sinicization of Buddhism through the Guanyin cult in China, especially the iconography of the White-robed Guanyin. I will

trace the origin and popularity of the White-robed Guanyin as a "child-giving" deity to her relationship with a group of indigenous scriptures that especially emphasize Guanyin's ability to grant sons.² This study involves the broad outline of "new Guanyin" images in Chinese art, and will discuss the social circumstances and reasons related to the feminization and sinicization of the bodhisattva through which the foreign, male deity finally became not only feminine but also the most popular Chinese deity.

Guanyin has been widely worshipped throughout Buddhist countries, and is believed to be the embodiment of compassion and to be able to save sentient beings from suffering.³ Since the fourth century CE, a few hundred years after the introduction of Buddhism into China, Guanyin has become the most beloved of all other bodhisattvas.⁴ The popularity of the cult of Guanyin during this period is attested to by evidence of worshipping and devotion to Guanyin found in the caves of Dunhuang.⁵ Guanyin as the compassionate savior in times of danger was the favorite and most commonly found image at Dunhuang (Figure 1). All the paintings found at Dunhuang bear strong stylistic resemblance to one another.⁶ Guanyin figures are depicted in a conventional format: the bodhisattva is placed in the center and backed by an aureole and nimbus. Various dangerous situations are depicted around Guanyin. Guanyin is attended by his donors who are usually

¹ The Chinese name for the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara Guanyin literally means "the one who observes the sounds of the world."

² Chün-fang Yü, "A Sutra Promoting the White-robed Guanyin as Giver of Sons," *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. Donald Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996) 97.

³ For example, in Japanese Buddhist art, Kannon, the Japanese reading of Guanyin, has enjoyed the most popularity among Buddhas and other bodhisattvas. Donald S. Lopez, "A Prayer for the Long Life of the Dalai Lama" and Yü, "Chinese Women Pilgrims' Songs Glorifying Guanyin," *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995).

⁴ The growing popularity of the cult of Guanyin was begun in the Six Dynasties period (222-589). It was one of the most chaotic and desperate ages in the history of China politically as well as socially. Given the combination of the political and social upheavals caused by many natural disasters, warfare, and destructive rebellions during this period, people in peril seemed to want a miracle-working deity and ardently wished to be saved from the upheavals by Guanyin's great power and compassion. Therefore, it is no wonder that the cult of Guanyin became so popular in the cataclysms of the period. Robert Ford Company, "The Tales of the Bodhisattva Guanyin," *Religions of China in Practice* 83-5.

⁵ The *Lotus Sutra* and other sutras depicting Guanyin's saving people from danger were spread throughout many regions of China and became very popular until the seventh century. The great power and efficacy of Guanyin and the promises of instant rewards to worshipers are well described in the Buddhist sutras. The most influential among them is the *Lotus Sutra*, of which in the Guanyin chapter—twenty-fourth chapter (twenty-fifth chapter in some copies), entitled *Pumen Pin*—Sakyamuni Buddha enumerates the types of dangerous situations and promises the miraculous rescue of those who are in extreme difficulty and call upon the name of the bodhisattva with great power and compassion. Due to the efficacy of chanting this chapter, the twenty-fourth chapter was often translated separately from the rest of the sutra and circulated as an independent scripture known as the *Guanshiyin Sutra* or *Guanyin Sutra*. The growing popularity of the cult of Guanyin during the Sui and Tang dynasties was attested to by a large number of copies of the scripture from Dunhuang: there are 1100 copies of scriptures related to Guanyin, including 860 copies of the *Lotus Sutra* which outnumbered by far copies of any other sutra found in the cave and almost 128 individual copies of the *Guanyin Sutra*.

⁶ The wall paintings, banners, and hanging scrolls of Guanyin found at Dunhuang range over a period of about four hundred years, from the early seventh to the eleventh century.

from the upper class, as indicated by the late-ninth to the late-tenth century imagery.⁷ Guanyin figures are depicted as having round, chubby faces and full features, projecting the role of compassionate savior.

The Guanyin figures bearing a mustache clearly indicate the masculine aspects of the bodhisattva, and in the visual arts Guanyin was depicted as a young Indian prince throughout India and many Southeast and Central Asian countries.⁸ Even in China, until the late Tang dynasty, there was no change in his depiction as a male deity as we can see from the hanging scrolls of Dunhuang. The Guanyin's images as a male deity still show canonical evidences derived from the *Lotus Sutra* and numerous Buddhist scriptures (the Buddhist sutras) and traces of common iconographic elements attributed to the image of Avalokitesvara. However, the Chinese began to develop "new Guanyin" images which did not bear such Buddhist canonical foundations, but, rather, bore distinctive indigenous characteristics. One may regard Shuiyue Guanyin or Water-moon Guanyin as the beginning of the Chinese transformation of Avalokitesvara.⁹ One of the earliest dated Water-moon Guanyin paintings found at Dunhuang is done in mid-10th century (Figure 2). She is holding a willow branch in one hand and a water bottle in the other, which formed distinctive attributes of Guanyin during the Tang and later dynasties.¹⁰ Guanyin seated on a ledge of rock, is backed by an aureole of a full moon and surrounded by a bamboo grove. Although the large nimbus of the full moon and bamboo grove featured new iconography for Guanyin, they had been a traditional setting for Chinese paintings. A later depiction of the Water-moon Guanyin, done during thirteenth or fourteenth

century, shows a more feminized and indigenized image of Guanyin with no relationship to India (Figure 3). The pine tree which replaces the bamboo grove and the waterfall, typical features of Chinese landscape painting, combined with her relaxed, contemplative pose remind us more of Chinese literati paintings depicting a classical scholar retiring to a hermitage in the deep mountain, than of Buddhist scriptural depictions.¹¹ Thus, the origin of this new iconography might be decisively derived from the genius of creative Chinese painters, who took the Buddhist deity as their theme, dressed her in Chinese robes, and placed her in the traditional Chinese landscape setting. This new type of Guanyin served as the prototype for the later development of other indigenous, feminine images of Guanyin and also became the stylistic basis for the White-robed Guanyin.¹²

The growing popularity of the cult of Guanyin was strongly promoted not only by art but also by the production of indigenous scriptures and miracle collections.¹³ Incorporation of the miracle tales into the female image of Guanyin made her a representative Chinese goddess. The universal accessibility of Guanyin was probably a reflection of the foreignness of the cult, which had not yet become rooted in specific locations.¹⁴ In indigenous scriptures, all of these miracle tales were strongly related to figures of a specific name and place. Accordingly, the cult of Guanyin was especially colored by strong local traditions and firmly anchored in those places.¹⁵ The miracle tales greatly helped Buddhism which was of foreign origin, to sinicize into China by showing the compassionate as well as omnipotent being who responded to the praying of specific, named, and historically existing individuals at particular places

⁷ Miyeko Murase, "Kuan-Yin as Savior of Men: Illustration of the Twenty-fifth Chapter of the Lotus Sutra in Chinese Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 33 (1971): 43.

⁸ Although bodhisattvas do not have innate sexual characteristics, the Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* designates Guanyin as "good young man." Maria Reis-Habito, "The Bodhisattva Guanyin and the Virgin Mary," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 13 (1993): 62.

⁹ Yü, "Guanyin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokitesvara," in Marsha Weidner, ed., *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism 850-1850* (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, U of Kansas, 1984) 156. Some early Buddhist texts translated in Chinese refer to the name of the bodhisattva as Guang-shih-yin, the Voice that illuminates the world, emphasizing Guanyin's special power as provider of immeasurable light. Since *guang* means the character for light or radiance, one can easily arrive to the imagery of Water-moon Guanyin. However, there is no scriptural basis of the moon and water for linking with Guanyin. Thus, Cornelius Chang argues, "The choice of Kuang instead of Kuan in the Chinese translation of the *Lotus* made in 286 was probably a deliberate and carefully studied one." Cornelius P. Chang, "Kunyin Paintings from Tun-Huang: Water-Moon Guanyin," *Journal of Oriental Studies* (Hong Kong) 15.2 (1977): 143 n 107. According to Company, this usage of *guang* before seventh century was soon abandoned. Although the earliest dated visual image of the Water-moon Guanyin was depicted in the tenth century, the foundation of this result was already laid within the worshipers in China. Company, *Religions of China in Practice*, 83.

¹⁰ Guanyin usually carries a lotus in one hand and a water bottle in the other. These were typical attributes of the form of Avalokitesvara. Later, a willow branch replaced the lotus. However, this change was not an indigenous

invention of the Chinese but derived from an esoteric scripture called *Dharani Sutra of Invoking Bodhisattva Guanyin to Subdue and Eliminate Harmful Poison*, in which the Buddha tells that offering willow branches and pure water invokes Guanyin. Yü, *Latter Days of the Law*, 154. See also Chang, 148-150.

¹¹ Indeed, Yamamoto Yoko, in her study, *The Formation of the Moon and Water Kuan-yin Image*, convinces us that "the iconography of Water and Moon Guanyin should be viewed as a Chinese creation based on indigenous concepts of sages, retired gentlemen, and immortals, rather than on Indian prototypes." Yamamoto Yoko, "The Formation of the Moon and Water Kuan-yin Image," *Bijutsushi* 38.1 (March 1989): 28-37, cited in Yü, *Latter Days of the Law*, 157.

¹² Angela Howard, "The Creation of the Chinese White-robed Kuan-yin," paper delivered at the American Academy of Religion Conference, November 18, 1990, New Orleans, cited in Yü, *Latter Days of the Law*, 156.

¹³ According to Yü, "the sinicization and feminization of Kuan-yin went hand in hand." The contemporary literary descriptions of Guanyin in indigenous scriptures, folk traditions, artistic renderings, and even the visions of devotees in their dreams or on their pilgrimage played an important role in their cooperation in transforming the bodhisattva's gender and creating different identities and roles for him. Yü, "Feminine Images of Kuan-yin in Post-T'ang China," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 18 (1990): 61.

¹⁴ It was not until the Song dynasty (960-1279) that Guanyin was associated with an actual time and place in her miracles and legends. Reis-Habito, 63.

¹⁵ Yü, *Latter Days of the Law* 158.

and times.¹⁶ The miracle tales not only helped Buddhism infiltrate into the Chinese culture and religion but, more importantly, helped the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara develop an increasingly Chinese face and characteristics.¹⁷

Guanyin lived an actual life through assuming a human manifestation in each legend. Four main feminine forms of Guanyin have appeared in China since the Tang dynasty. To make the bodhisattva distinctly Chinese in its character, the Chinese people granted the four feminine images of Guanyin different identities related to regional locals. This process of feminization and indigenization in China was so successful and complete that “many Chinese, if they are not familiar with Buddhism, are not aware of her Buddhist origin.”¹⁸ The White-robed Guanyin, among others, has played a very interesting role and is most appealing to the Chinese. The other three female forms and their iconographies were coalesced into the formation of White-robed Guanyin.

Of the four images, the most popular and prominent legend is the story of Princess Miao-shan Guanyin. Miao-shan’s legend is anchored in Xiang-shan in Henan, an important Guanyin pilgrimage site. Miao-shan, the third daughter of King Miao-chuang, practiced Buddhism very devotedly and refused marriage. After saving many sentient beings, including her furious father, from a fatal illness by giving him her own eyes and arms willingly, she finally revealed her real identity in the form of the Thousand-armed and Thousand-eyed Guanyin.¹⁹ The story of Miao-shan Guanyin identifies her with an ideal model of virginal chastity and female filial piety both of which are emphasized in Chinese Confucian society. Since Miao-shan is quite a popular name for Chinese girls, one may reach the conclusion that the author/authors of the scripture of Miao-shan Guanyin intentionally gave Guanyin a very common Chinese girl’s name, “trying to make her as Chinese as possible.”²⁰ But interestingly, there is no visually represented image of Miao-shan Guanyin. However, the legend of Miao-

shan, among other sources, became the prime incentive to generate a feminine Guanyin and continually supported the basis and format of other feminine forms of Guanyin.

Nan-hai Guanyin (Guanyin of the South Sea) was another version of the Miao-shan Guanyin legend but was firmly anchored in Putuo island, which also became a national and international pilgrimage center of Guanyin worship.²¹ The Guanyin of this legend was accompanied by a white parrot and her two attendants, Shan-cai (Sudhana) and Longnü (Dragon princess), which formed the popular triad for this image of Guanyin and began to be represented in art from the twelfth century on (Figure 4).²² Because Buddhist scriptures do not designate Guanyin’s relationship with both attendants at the same time, Yü argues that “these two attendants are the Buddhist counterparts of the Daoist Golden Boy and Jade Girl who were depicted as the attendants of the Jade Emperors since the Tang.”²³ Although Guanyin of the South Sea can be solely identified with her two attendants and the white parrot, at times, she is only accompanied by the male attendant.

Another rather shocking transformation, developed during the Tang dynasty and in succeeding centuries, actually represented Guanyin as a seductress. Yulan Guanyin (Guanyin with a Fish Basket) was depicted as young, beautiful, and most surprisingly, sexually seductive (Figure 5).²⁴ The cult of Guanyin with a Fish Basket was originally worshipped in Shaanxi. She was called Guanyin with a Fish Basket because she appeared as a fishmonger, carrying a basket of fish on her arm. Unlike Miao-shan, Guanyin with a Fish Basket was deeply involved in secular relationships with men, offering first either marriage or sexual favor. But in the end, they remained virgins like Miao-shan, using sex as a didactic tool to educate people about the vice of their sexual lust and to free them of sexual desire forever. This last part might have been increasingly welcomed by the moralistic puritanism of Neo-Confucianism from the Song dynasty on.

¹⁶ Each tale informing a particular individual’s name and place helped Chinese people understand those miracles, which was impossible under normal circumstances, not as a superstitious belief or fairy tale but as a “divine response” or the “truth of Buddhism” without suspicion about their authenticity. Company, *Religions of China*, 84–85.

¹⁷ Makita Tairyō regarded them as valuable documents revealing contemporary understanding Buddhism as a reflection of Chinese people’s creative attempt to weave Buddhism of foreign origin into the fabric of Chinese culture. Yü, *Religions of China in Practice* 98.

¹⁸ Yü, *Latter Days of the Law* 151.

¹⁹ Thousand-armed and Thousand-eyed Guanyin, known as Dabai (Great Compassionate One) is the esoteric form and became popular during the Tang dynasty with the introduction of tantric Buddhism into China. Yü, *Latter Days of the Law* 168.

²⁰ The indigenous scriptures provide the names and specific places of the donors who paid for printing and distributing of the text of the miracle tales. Among those texts, the character miao as in Miao-shan quite often appeared as part of the names of women donors or the wives of the donors. Yü, *Journal of Chinese Religions*: 82.

²¹ Mount Putuo on the Putuo island is the Chinese Potalaka, which has been accepted as the abode of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara in an Indian island.

²² In Buddhist scriptures Guanyin is related with either Shan-cai or Longnü, not with both at the same time. The Gandavyuha chapter in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, which may provide the canonical source for Shancai (Sudhana), tells the story of the pilgrimage of the young Sudhana in search of the truth. Guanyin as the twenty-eighth “good friend” is visited by him. The canonical basis of Longnü may be found in the esoteric texts and *Lotus Sutra*. The scriptural basis for the white parrot comes from the *Smaller Pure Land Sutra* which describes parrots and other rare birds live in the Pure Land, the place for those who achieve rebirth. Yü, *Latter Days of the Law* 163–66. For more details on Longnü, read n24.

²³ Yü, *Latter Days of the Law* 163.

²⁴ The themes of fish and fish basket, however, seem not to be crucial elements in depicting Yulan Guanyin as a seductress. In some *baojuan* such as *Xigua baojuan* (Precious Volume of the Watermelon) and *Guanyin Miaoshan baojuan* (Precious Volume of Guanyin-Miaoshan), she is not presented as a fishmonger. Thus, the change of locale certainly played a significant role in composition of the Guanyin legend. Yü, *Latter Days of the Law* 166–9.

The legend of Baiyi Guanyin, or White-robed Guanyin, became associated with Hangzhou.²⁵ The White-robed Guanyin began to appear from the tenth century on, and her popularity, especially in visual art, has been unsurpassed since that time. Eventually, the White-robed Guanyin was the most successful in sinicization compared to the others. The White-robed Guanyin is an unmistakable female deity and is typically identified by her long, flowing white cape (Figure 6). However, images of the several different identities of Guanyin were often intermingled and superimposed. Therefore, when examining the iconography of each Guanyin, one may find traces of different images of Guanyin in juxtaposition. Those images did not compete with or replace one another, but mutually authenticated each other and reinforced the efficacy of Guanyin as the omnipotent and omniscient deity.²⁶ For example, the White-robed Guanyin could be also accompanied by the two attendants and the white parrot, the three companions of Guanyin of the South Sea. *Guanyin on a Lotus Leaf*, dated to the eighteenth century of Qing dynasty, prompts us to identify her with Guanyin of the South Sea because of the white parrot and the male attendant (Figure 6). But Guanyin is clothed in a white cape, her identifying garment, and is reclining on a lotus leaf in her pensive pose. Stylistically, the pensive pose and iconography of Guanyin of the South Sea assimilated the elements of Water-moon and White-robed Guanyin, as seen here. *Five forms of Guanyin* painted by Ding Yunpeng, active in the Ming dynasty, presents the images of Guanyin with the Fish Basket, the White-robed Guanyin, and Guanyin of the South Sea in a row and demonstrates the iconographic relation of the various images of Guanyin (Figure 7). Guanyin's identity in China, enriched by the miracle folk tales, absorbed all the different images at the same time.

The image of the White-robed Guanyin is the most interesting and complex. The origin and increasing popularity of the cult of the White-robed Guanyin, which occurred after the tenth century, can be traced to her relation with a group of indigenous scriptures which provided her with a very Chinese biography and a new iconography as a goddess capable of granting children, especially sons.²⁷ In this aspect, the White-robed Guanyin is recognized as a child-giving goddess and often portrayed surrounded by children who sport around her

and cling to her garments. It is noteworthy that in China the efficacy of Guanyin's power to grant sons was especially emphasized in the indigenous scriptures although the *Lotus Sutra* also mentions Guanyin's power of granting children to worshipers who desire one regardless of gender. The birth of a male heir is regarded as the most auspicious matter for congratulations in Chinese Confucian society. Due to her child-giving powers, the fame of the White-robed Guanyin spread and attracted pilgrims, and she was especially worshipped by women, whose most important duty after getting married, according to Confucian morality, is to give birth to a healthy male heir.²⁸ *Guanyin Bestowing a Son*, dated to the Ming dynasty (late sixteenth century), shows the Child-giving Guanyin holding a boy although she is not clad in a white cape (Figure 8). The robust boy, holding an official seal and wearing official belt, embodies the two greatest concerns of the Chinese in Confucian society: the desire for male heirs and for their success as government officials.²⁹

This idea of the White-robed Guanyin as the giver of sons developed the iconography of Guanyin most frequently presented (holding a baby boy in her arm or on her lap) in the *Blanc de Chine* porcelain figures produced in Fujien province during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.³⁰ This Child-giving Guanyin holding a baby boy is extremely similar to the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus.³¹ *Guanyin as the Christian Madonna* of c. 1675-1725 in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is a prime example (Figure 9). When one learns that these two different religious images were handled by the same artistic communities, it is not surprising to notice the iconographical resemblance between the Child-giving Guanyin and the Madonna and Child. Fujien was a coastal province where Christian missionaries visited as early as the thirteenth century. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, Spanish conquistadors and Jesuit missionaries brought sculptures to China and also commissioned Fujienese craftsmen, the very same artisans who produced the image of the Child-giving Guanyin, to create Christian images, most frequently of the Virgin and Child theme. As a result, "the Madonna looked somewhat Chinese and the Guanyin looked almost 'Gothic'."³² One also needs to recall that the development of the iconography and image of Guanyin was in progress at the time of the

²⁵ The legend of White-robed Guanyin follows almost same story line of the Miaoshan Guanyin, despite its various details.

²⁶ As the *Lotus Sutra* and other sutras state that Guanyin appears in many different forms to save sentient beings most effectively, the numerous personifications of Guanyin emphatically represent both the bodhisattva's compassion and omnipotent power.

²⁷ Yü, *Religions of China in Practice* 97.

²⁸ According to Confucian philosophy, there are seven vices which women should not commit throughout their lives. Among them, women's infertility was regarded as a sin. In the case of violating one of the seven vices, women could be expelled from their families or clan.

²⁹ Sons' success in governmental service meant ability to provide financial security for their aged parents.

³⁰ Forrest R. Brauer, *Blanc De Chine: In the Collection of Forrest R. Brauer*, with an introduction by Forrest R. Brauer (n. publ., 1970s?) 2. According to P. J. Donnelly, nine out of ten figures in *Blanc de Chine* were Guanyin in her human manifestation. P. J. Donnelly, *Blanc De Chine: the porcelain of Tehua in Fukien* (London: Faber, 1969).

³¹ This is the reason why many scholars of Chinese religion have compared the importance of Guanyin as a popular deity to that of the Virgin Mary and even called Guanyin "the Buddhist Madonna." The Jesuit missionaries also nicknamed her the "Goddess of Mercy." Reis-Habito, *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 61; Yü, *Religion of China in Practice* 97.

³² *Chinese Ivories from the Shang to the Qing*, catalogue of the exhibition organized by the Oriental Ceramic Society jointly with the British Museum, 24th May to 19th August, 1989, ed. Williams Watson (London: The Oriental Ceramic Society, 1984), 41, cited in Yü, *Journal of Chinese Religions*: 81.

importation of Christianity into China. Since the image of the Child-giving Guanyin holding a male child was never depicted prior to the Ming dynasty, and the majority of miracles reporting Guanyin's power to grant children are concentrated in the late Ming, one can conclude that the cult of the White-robed Guanyin as the giver of male heirs was firmly established during the years of the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries when Christian missionaries frequently commissioned the Fujienese craftsmen to produce the image of the Virgin and Child.³³ Chün-fang Yü, an expert in examining the sinicization of Buddhism in China, argues, "The religious basis for this iconography came from Buddhist scriptures, but its artistic rendering might have been influenced by the iconography of the Virgin."³⁴

Guanyin could be understood as the motherly form of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara for her kindness and susceptibility to the entreating devotees.³⁵ In many legends, Guanyin

strongly negated her sexual relation and embodied female purity and positive aspects of womanhood, stressing her role as mother rather than wife.³⁶ This aspect was greatly welcomed by the puritan Confucian society. The compassionate and maternal White-robed Guanyin, more widely recognized as the Child-giving Guanyin in later periods, had a great appeal to the supplicants who wished to have sons because her existence in the family-oriented Chinese society was indispensable. It is clear that Indian Buddhism became more and more Chinese in order to be acceptable to the Chinese and to fit into the Chinese situation rather than the reverse pattern of the Chinese being adapted to the foreign ideas and practices.³⁷ In this way, the originally foreign, male deity was transformed completely into a female deity first, and then, successfully sinicized into China.

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³³ Yü, *Journal of Chinese Religions*: 81.

³⁴ Yü, *Journal of Chinese Religions*: 81.

³⁵ Denise Lardner and John Carmody, *Serene Compassion: A Christian Appreciation of Buddhist Holiness* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996) 62.

³⁶ In *Female Gender in Chinese Religious Symbols: Kuanyin, Ma Tsu and the 'Eternal Mother'*, Steven Sangren argues that many Chinese female goddesses "embody purely positive aspects of womanhood," and "female purity as manifested in female deities involves the negation of woman as wife and affirmation of her role as mother." Steven P. Sangren, "Female Gender in Chinese Religious Symbols: Kuan Yin, Ma Tsu and the 'Eternal

Mother'," *Signs* 9 (1983): 14, cited in Yü, *Journal of Chinese Religions*: 84-5.

³⁷ Kenneth K. S. Ch'en understands the process of the sinicization of Buddhism in China differently from other Asian countries. The Southeast and Central Asian countries such as Ceylon, Burma, and Thailand, were lesser civilizations compared to that of India. When Buddhism was introduced to their countries, the people welcomed it in their hope that their own cultures would rise to the level of a superior civilization. However, China already possessed a high level of culture when Buddhism was introduced around 1 CE. Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973) 5.



Figure 1. *Guanyin as Savior from Perils*, hanging scroll of *Guanyin Sutra*, ink and colors on silk, mid-late 10th century; Five Dynasties or Northern Song, from Cave 17, Dunhuang, 84.4 x 61.7 cm. Stein Collection of Central Asian Antiquities, The British Museum, London. Courtesy of the British Museum.



Figure 2. *Guanyin*, ink and colors on paper, mid-10th century; Five Dynasty, from Cave 17, Dunhuang, 82.9 x 29.6 cm. Stein Collection of Central Asian Antiquities, The British Museum, London. Courtesy of the British Museum.



[above] Figure 3. Water and Moon Guanyin, hanging scroll, ink, slight color, and gold on silk, 13th-early 14th century; southern Song Dynasty, 111.2 x 76.2 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, Purchase: Nelson Trust.



[upper right] Figure 4. Guanyin, Dehua ware, molded and covered porcelain, height 22.9 cm, 17th-18th century; Qing dynasty. The Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, New York. Gift of Dr. Ralph Marcove.



[lower right] Figure 5. Ding Yunpeng (1547-c. 1628), *Guanyin with a Fish Basket* (detail of Five Forms of Guanyin), handscroll, ink, color, and gold on paper, c. 1579-80; Ming dynasty, 28 x 134 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, Purchase: Nelson Trust.



Figure 6. Guanyin on a Lotus Leaf, hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, c. 1700; Qing dynasty, 106 x 61 cm. Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana. Gift of Mrs. John H. Roberts, Jr.



Figure 7. Ding Yunpeng, Five Forms of Guanyin, handscroll, ink, color and gold on paper, c. 1579-80; Ming dynasty, 28 x 134 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, Purchase: Nelson Trust.



Figure 8. Guanyin Bestowing a Son, hanging scroll, ink, color and gold on silk, 16th century; Ming dynasty, 120.3 x 60 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase: Friends of Asian Art Gift, 1989.



Figure 9. Guanyin as the Christian Madonna, Blanc de Chine porcelain, c. 1675-1725; Qing Dynasty, 45.7 x 10.8 x 8.3 cm. The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia, Bequest of Forrest R. Brauer.

Mannerist Staircases: A Twist in the Tale

Valerie Ficklin

Scholars differ greatly in their opinions on Mannerism. Art historians debate how to best define this style and the qualitative value which should be assigned to these works. Compared with High Renaissance works, Mannerist art could be defined as “abnormal or strange” in order to stress evocative emotional content. A chart in Frederick Hartt’s *History of Italian Renaissance Art* demonstrates the differences between the two periods. Hartt describes Renaissance art as “normal, direct, controlled, harmonious, and natural” respectively on the following topics: content, narrative, space, composition, and substance.¹ Mannerism, he describes as “abnormal, elaborate disjointed, conflicting, and artificial,” using the same dimensions he employed to analyze the earlier period.² More often than not, the sense of a divergence from the norm clung to works in the Mannerist style, but modern day viewers need to understand the distortion of forms in Mannerist works as manifestations of sixteenth century artistic theories and the stories they tell.

This paper will explore a particular motif that has been deemed bizarre in comparison to High Renaissance standards, namely spiraling staircases as a setting for figures.³ By examining the staircase in a painting by Jacopo Pontormo, entitled *Joseph in Egypt* from 1518 (National Gallery, London, Figure 1), and a set of stairs in a fresco by Francesco Salviati, entitled *Bathsheba Goes to David*, from around 1552 (Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti, Rome, Figure 2), one can see that form follows content in Mannerist works.⁴ Both of these artists did distort the form of the staircases used as backgrounds in High Renaissance works, but with purpose and reason towards the total statement of their work. By explaining the artistic theories behind these spiral staircases and the content they were intended to convey, this discussion will place these forms in their proper historical context.

Mannerist artists did transform the style of the High Renaissance by manipulating forms. Pontormo’s narrow, surreal staircase in *Joseph in Egypt* turns the wide, stable staircase of Raphael’s *School of Athens* (Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican

Palace, Rome, 1511, Figure 3) almost literally on its side. Pontormo’s stairs cut diagonally across the middle of the picture, seeming to hang in mid-air but for the few supports which connect them to the building they mount. Most High Renaissance artists used stairs to create order, symmetry, and balance in their works. Pontormo, however, emphasized the staircase with its precarious position and twisting form, thereby drawing attention to an object normally relegated to the background.

The stairs in Salviati’s *Bathsheba Goes to David* exemplify how important twisting forms remained throughout the Mannerist period and the extreme degree to which the serpentine line was taken. The staircase dominates the work, and rather than being a straight spiral, the staircase now has an even more fanciful backwards “S”-shaped curve. The sharpest curve visible to us in the stairs completely frames the middle figure of Bathsheba. The figure of Bathsheba closest to the viewer stands on a small set of stairs that are parallel with the picture plane: these stairs seem to push her out and into the space of the viewer. The third figure of Bathsheba stands at the top of the stairs, with only empty space below her, which heightens the precariousness of her position. Salviati has completely integrated the shape of the staircase and the figures in his work. The twisting, serpentine form not only gives the work an elegant, polished look, but also emphasizes each figure.

The convolution of forms, in fact, defines Mannerism for many scholars. Craig Smyth lists the use of unmotivated, contorted poses as a major convention of the style.⁴ *The Rape of the Sabine Women* (Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence, 1583, Figure 4) by Giovanni Bologna demonstrates the *figura serpentinata*, or serpentine figure, so prevalent in Mannerist art. Just as Giovanni coiled the three figures in his sculpture in a search for beautiful forms and a show of virtuosity, Pontormo and Salviati twisted their staircases, for precisely the same reasons.

The spiraling forms of Pontormo and Salviati’s stairs rep-

¹ Frederick Hartt, *History of Italian Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1987) 580.

² Hartt 580.

³ Arnold Hauser, speaking of *Joseph in Egypt* says that “the most remarkable of the strange details of this architecture is the flight of steps ascending steeply into the air with no railings or support.” Arnold Hauser, *Manner-*

ism: The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1965) 186.

⁴ Edward Olzewsky and I discussed this idea at the Cleveland Symposium on March 4, 2000, in relationship to some of his own research. The idea that “content determines form” in Mannerism was first suggested by him.

⁴ Craig Smyth, *Mannerism and Maniera* (Vienna: IRSA, 1992) 47.

resent philosophical ideas of their day. The concept that a serpentine line has superior capabilities to convey movement has its roots in Neoplatonic theory. Plato and many other philosophers said that fire “is the most active of the elements,” and that the flame “is the most apt of all forms to movement.”⁵ Since heat constantly rises, the flame with its serpentine shape expressed movement and energy for these philosophers.

Ideas on the beauty of a turning human form had their origin in the work of the artists of the High Renaissance. Artists, such as Michelangelo and Leonardo, took up the Neoplatonic idea about the flame and translated this concept into the world of art to mean that figures which follow a serpentine line evoke the greatest movement. The first time the term *figura serpentinata* was used in reference to sixteenth-century art in Italy was in G. P. Lomazzo’s discussion of Michelangelo’s ideas on art in his book *Trattato dell’Arte della Pittura* published in 1584.⁶

Michelangelo once gave this advice to his pupil Marco da Siena, that one should always make the figure pyramidal, serpentine, and multiplied by one, two or three. And in this precept, it seems to me, is contained the secret of painting, for a figure has its highest grace and eloquence when it is seen in movement—what the painters call the *Furia della figura*. And to represent it thus there is no better form than that of a flame, because it is the most mobile of all forms and is conical. If a figure has this form it will be very beautiful... The painter should combine this pyramidal form with the *Serpentinata*, like the twisting of a live snake in motion, which is also the form of a waving flame... The figure should resemble the letter S... And this applies not only to the whole figure, but also to its parts... The figure will not appear graceful unless it has this serpentine form, as Michelangelo called it.⁷

Michelangelo’s figure of *Jonah* (Sistine Chapel, Vatican Palace, Rome, 1512, Figure 5) demonstrates his interest in twisting figures. The ability of an artist to create living, moving figures raises him to the rank of God, who created the first living human forms.⁸ The serpentine form, then, was only a means to an end, that of giving movement and life to the representation of human forms, and in Pontormo’s and Salviati’s

cases, even architectural forms.

The stairs, however, do not serve Pontormo and Salviati in a purely aesthetic function. This form also adds to the viewer’s understanding of the narrative represented in the work. In both Pontormo and Salviati’s works, the stairs help to convey information about time. A painting is limited to having only one, unmoving existence. However, by using a serpentine form these two artists were able to add a temporal element to an atemporal medium.

In order to discuss the part the stairs play in separating different periods of time in *Joseph in Egypt*, one must decide what event Pontormo portrayed in the left foreground. One sees Joseph talking urgently with the Pharaoh in the front left corner, while in the background on the right, one sees Joseph’s father dying. The stairs divide these two different periods of time, leading one to believe the difference between them must be significant. Two common interpretations of the scene in the left foreground inform the viewer with regard to which half of the painting shows the earlier event.

One interpretation of this group in the left foreground is that Joseph is presenting his father to the Pharaoh, which would make this earlier than the deathbed scene in the right background.⁹ Joseph led his father up the few steps to meet Pharaoh, and now his son seems to be leading him up the stairs. The Joseph who climbs the spiraling stairs, looks back over his shoulder, at himself as a young man, standing with his father. This, however, seems the weaker of the two possible interpretations of the foreground.

Another interpretation of the group in the lower left is that Joseph in purple, his sister in pink, and his brother in blue are asking Pharaoh for permission to bury their father in Canaan.¹⁰ This would, of course, be after the scene of Jacob dying in his bed on the right side of the painting. The latter idea makes more sense, because none of the figures with Joseph in the left foreground actually look like his father. However, the older woman in pink and white standing behind Joseph in the left foreground does resemble the woman leaning over Jacob on his deathbed and the bald man in blue in the front resembles one of those gathered around the deathbed in the upper right, making these figures Joseph’s siblings.¹¹ As support for this second interpretation, rather than the presentation of Jacob to Pharaoh, is the fact that none of the panels, of the cycle of which *Joseph in Egypt* was a part, repeats a scene from another work in the program and Granacci composed a panel called *Joseph Introduces His Father to Pharaoh* (Uffizi,

⁵ David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1981) 413.

⁶ David Summers, “*Maniera* and Movement: The *Figure Serpentinata*,” *Readings in Italian Mannerism*, ed. Liana Cheney (New York: Peter Lang, 1997) 273. According to Summers, though Lomazzo published his book twenty years after Michelangelo’s death, “few writers have found it possible to reject the notion of the *figura serpentinata* as Michelangelo’s, since it seems to correspond precisely to such works as the *Victory*, in which not only *contrapposto* but continuous spiral movement were explored with a clarity and consistency that argues for the conscious application of theoretical principles.”

⁷ John Shearman, *Mannerism* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967) 81.

⁸ Summers, *Michelangelo* 14.

⁹ Allan Braham, *Italian Paintings of the Sixteenth Century* (Toronto: Williams Collins Sons, 1985) 62.

¹⁰ Peter Lynch, “Patriarchy and Narrative: The Borgherini chamber decorations,” diss., Yale U, 1992, 148.

¹¹ Lynch 147.

Florence, c. 1515-17).¹² The scene in the left foreground simply makes more sense as Joseph and his siblings asking for permission to take their father's body back to their homeland. This would make the stairs a separation between a time when Jacob was alive and after he had departed this world, a very significant temporal difference. This division of space and time by the stairs adds to the viewer's understanding of the narrative and the theme of the work.

The stairs also add a philosophical dimension—about the passage of time and its cyclical nature. Joseph and his two sons who climb the spiral staircase seem to represent the cyclical nature of families.¹³ Joseph climbs to be at the deathbed of his father, with his two sons, who will, then, in turn, outlive their own father. The emphasis on the different generations of the family, represented by Jacob, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons, the continuation of the family with Jacob's act of blessing Joseph's second child, and finally the scene of the death of Jacob, bring forth the notion of the continually revolving nature of families. Jacob's wife, Asenath, makes one of her two appearances in the entire cycle, which consisted of fourteen works, at the top of the stairs. She embraces her son as he climbs to meet her. Pontormo's choosing to represent the mother of Joseph's children on the stairs underlines this section of the painting as symbolic of family.

Pontormo was also aware that his patron, Salvi di Francesco di Salvi Borgherini, was of an age where the continuation of his family reputation and name was utmost in his mind, since he was seventy-nine years old when the work was commissioned in 1515.¹⁴ The scenes of the imminent death of the father, the next two generations climbing the stairs, and the request for burying the father would all have been very meaningful to the elderly Salvi. As one generation passes, another rises to take its place, and history repeats itself. The form of a spiral does the same thing; it repeats itself. The serpentine form of the steps, not only allows for visual clarity in the composition, but also makes a philosophical comment on the nature of time and the life cycle.

These images about the cyclical natures of families would have had special resonance in their intended context; Borgherini commissioned this work for the bedchamber of

his son and his new wife. The painting of *Joseph in Egypt* would have served as a constant reminder to the newlyweds to continue the cycle of generations by raising their own children. The spiraling stairs symbolically convey the message that every family must experience the passing of one generation so that another can rise to take its place.

Another figure in the painting also serves to underline Pontormo's interest in "the sequence of generations."¹⁵ On the bottom step of Pharaoh's palace in the left foreground, sits Angelo Bronzino, a beloved pupil of Pontormo. Pontormo must have chosen to include Bronzino as a symbol of the next generation of artists. The younger artist is shown in contemporary dress and so points to Pontormo's own period. Pontormo realizes that he, too, is a part of this cycle of replacement that time and death make inevitable. The spiraling form of the stairs gives visual expression to the idea of the cyclical nature of time, a theme which Pontormo carried out even in the smaller details of his painting.

Salviati's winding staircase in *Bathsheba Goes to David* helps one to further understand Mannerist artists' reasons for distorting forms. Anyone who sees Pontormo's work and then Salviati's work can see the connection between the two staircases. The twist of Salviati's staircase, however, is even more dramatic than that of Pontormo. It follows an "S"-curve of Salviati's own invention.

Knowing the audience for which this fresco was intended helps to place the work in its proper historical context. *Bathsheba Goes to David*, part of the fresco series on the life of David that Salviati completed, decorated the *sala grande* in Cardinal Giovanni Ricci's palace, located on the Via Giulia, "the most fashionable street in Rome" during the High Renaissance.¹⁶ Ricci used the room as a place to receive guests; therefore, it had a very public role.¹⁷ Jan de Jong, in fact, purports that the reason Ricci chose Salviati, a well-known artist, to decorate this official room was "as a way to show off and to gain social prestige."¹⁸ *Bathsheba Goes to David* would have been seen by almost all of the visitors to the home of Cardinal Ricci. The fresco, would convey a message to the many prominent people who visited the churchman.

Salviati's stairs truly have a serpentine shape, which re-

¹² Lynch 148.

¹³ This idea about the cyclical nature of revolving stairs and of the process of a child growing to manhood, becoming a father and having his own child occurred to me upon contemplating the meaning of the stairs in Pontormo's work on Joseph. After reading about Pontormo's fresco called *Vertumnus and Pomona* and the word at the bottom of the fresco "GLOVIS", which reads "SI VOLG(E)" backwards or "it revolves," my thesis seemed to have support from the artist's other works. "It revolves" referred to the constant rule of the Medici over time. The fresco of *Vertumnus and Pomona* dates from 1519 to 1521, which means it was done almost immediately after the panel about Joseph's family. The information about the fresco comes from Doris Krystof, *Jacopo Carrucci, known as Pontormo* (Köln: Konemann, 1998) 78.

¹⁴ Lynch 211.

¹⁵ Krystof 37.

¹⁶ "The Palazzo Sacchetti," *The Connoisseur* 148.597 (1961): 181. The room is sometimes now referred to as *Salone del Mappamondo*, due to two large seventeenth-century globes which now stand in the room.

¹⁷ Jan L. de Jong, "An Important Patron and an Unknown Artist: Giovanni Ricci, Ponsio Jacquo, and the Decoration of the Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti in Rome," *The Art Bulletin* 73.4 (1992): 135. Jan De Jong mentions that Hewett and Andres call the *sala grande* the winter audience room, without citing their source. However, De Jong points out that since the room is located on the northeastern corner of the building this would have been a poor choice in that season.

¹⁸ De Jong 136. The artists who did the other private rooms in the palace were decidedly less well-known. Jan de Jong says we should perhaps "assume that Ponsio (Jacquo) spent some time assisting Salviati in painting the *sala grande*." De Jong 137. However, no other authors even suggest this and De Jong's only evidence for such a statement is that some of the figures in

lates to the message of the fresco. The serpent evokes ideas of sin and evil, due to its role in the story of Adam and Eve. Bathsheba climbs the serpentine stairs to commit the sin of adultery with David. One glimpses this sinful act through the window of the tower. The content of the fresco helped to determine the snake-like form of the stairs. Salviati and Ricci had special reason to emphasize the idea of sin with the serpentine stairs due to the debates current at the time.

"Sin" formed the core of one of the arguments during the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. The Catholics held to the belief that in order for one's sins to be absolved, a person needed to complete three actions: contrition, confession, and satisfaction, while Protestants thought contrition and faith alone were enough to receive forgiveness from God.¹⁹ Church theologians battled over sin and forgiveness; such discussions were topical. Christian scholars often scrutinized the biblical figure of David, as he sinned against God and then received forgiveness. The serpentine form of the stairs which supports Bathsheba's sinful ascent resonates strongly with the issues of the artist's own day. Salviati's choice of a snake-like staircase

in conjunction with the subject matter of the work supports a reading of the serpentine form as intended to evoke notions of sin, rather than a mere arbitrary distortion.

Traditionally, scholars have conceived of Mannerism as strange, bizarre, or abnormal. Mannerist art does include passages with forms which seem unusual to a modern-day viewer. However, when one contextualizes these works in terms of sixteenth-century Neoplatonic theories and the resulting love of serpentine forms, the spiraling staircases seem appropriate. Also in view of the narratives these works depict and the settings for which they were destined, the unusual forms in them speak not of mere artificiality, but of communication on the part of the artist through even the smallest details. Pontormo's stairs lead the viewer to contemplate the cyclical nature of families and Salviati's staircase reminds the viewer how all humans can fall into sin. The study of these staircases shows that for Mannerist artists, content determined form.

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the David series resemble some of those in the rooms done by Ponsio, which could be explained merely by the influence of Salviati.

Francesco Salviati's Fresco Cycle of the Life of King David for the Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti in Rome within Its Cultural Context," thesis, U of California, Riverside, 1994, 26.

¹⁹ Allegra Fortunati, "David as Penitent, David as Pope: An Interpretation of



Figure 1. Jacopo Pontormo, *Joseph in Egypt*, c. 1518, oil on wood, 96 x 109 cm, National Gallery, London. Printed with permission of the National Gallery, London.

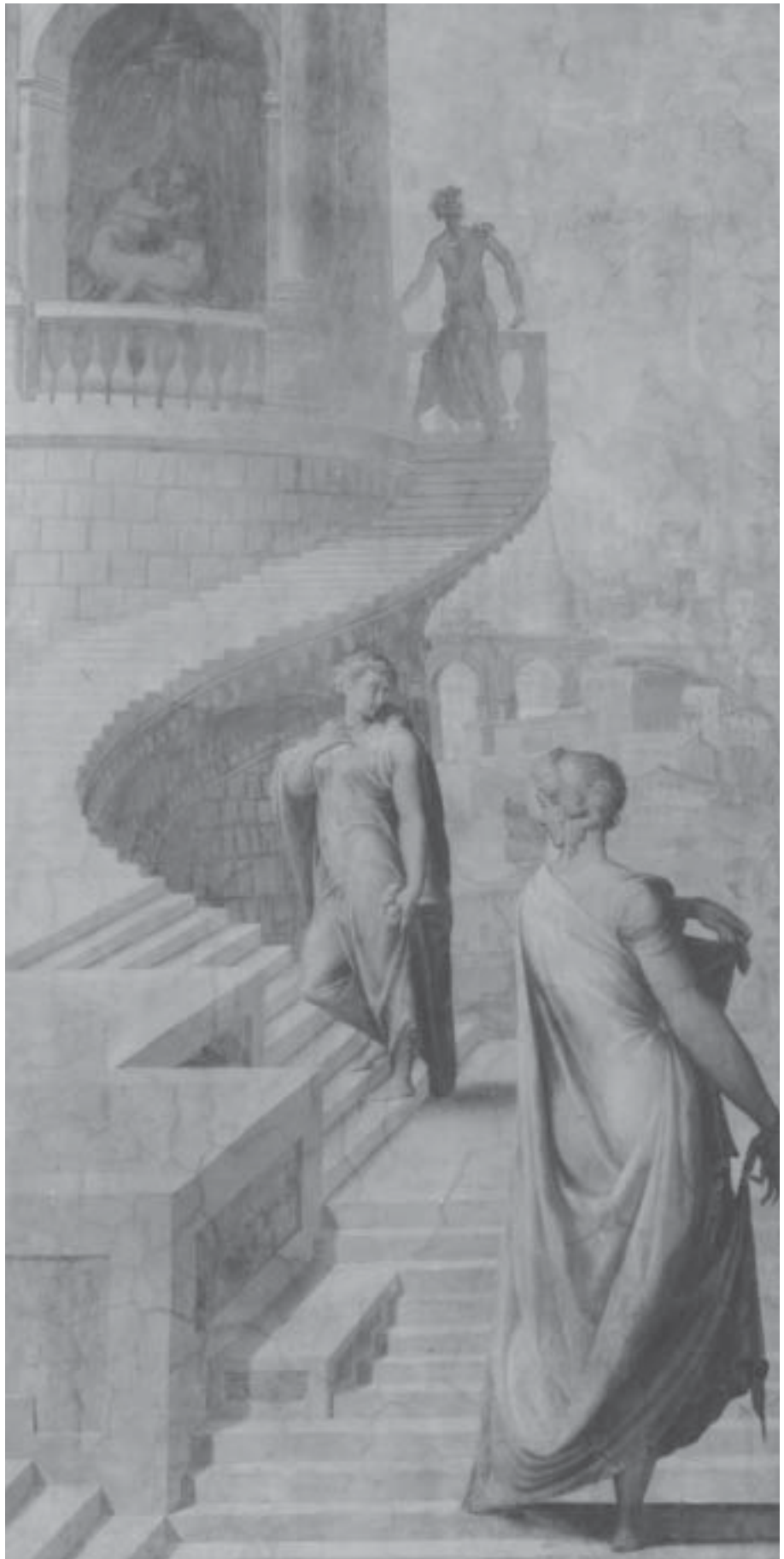


Figure 2. Francesco Salviati, *Story of David* [*Bathsheba Goes to David*], fresco, c. 1552, Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti, Rome. Printed with permission from Scala/Art Resource, NY.



Figure 3. Raphael, *School of Athens*, 1511, fresco, c. 19' x 27', Stanze di Raffaello, Vatican Palace, Vatican State, Rome. Printed with permission from Alinari/Art Resource, NY.



Figure 4. Giovanni Bologna, *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, 1583, marble, c. 13' 6", Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence. Printed with permission from Alinari/Art Resource, NY.



Figure 5. Michelangelo, *The Prophet Jonah*, 1512, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican Palace, Vatican State, Rome. Printed with permission from Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

Identity Politics in Renaissance France: Cellini's *Nymph of Fontainebleau*

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In 1540, Benvenuto Cellini set out for Paris in order to secure the royal patronage of Francis I. Unlike his previous trip of 1537, Cellini was successful in gaining the favor of the French king, and immediately received various commissions as a metal worker.¹ Cellini, however, saw his sojourn in Paris as an opportunity to make the jump from metal smith to sculptor. He maneuvered himself into the renovation project underway at the Château of Fontainebleau, the favorite hunting lodge of Francis I, for which Cellini planned a monumental portal decoration illustrating the legend of the château's origins. The bronze relief, *The Nymph of Fontainebleau* (Figure 1), a lunette produced for the Porte Dorée, is Cellini's crowning achievement in monumental sculpture from the five years he spent in Paris. Yet in 1545, when Cellini left Paris in disgrace, this commission was incomplete. The lunette was never installed at the château for which it was made, but, instead, was placed over the main portal at the Château of Anet, where it became known as an image of Diana. Some scholars have characterized this appropriation as an unscrupulous re-use of Cellini's masterpiece.² Yet when the lunette was taken to Paris in the late eighteenth century, it was identified as a figure of Diana.³ Indeed, even André Chastel, in his posthu-

mous publication of 1995, calls it *Diana with a Stag*.⁴ Oddly enough, although Cellini himself does not refer to the figure in his relief as a nymph in either his *Vita* or his *Treatises*, most scholars refer to her as a nymph, believing that to be the proper, historical designation and a correction of the later misnomer "Diana."⁵ It is my contention that these various transformations of the female figure's identity reflect not misinformation, but are the result of a deliberate ambiguity originating in the French court.

The bronze lunette, 409 centimeters in width and 205 centimeters high, is the only sculpture executed by Cellini on this scale during his stay in Paris. It was cast in pieces, assembled, and chased during the first four months of 1543.⁶ The commission for the project had come just a year earlier when the king, together with his mistress, Anne d'Etampes, paid a fortuitous visit to Cellini in his studio at the Hôtel Petit Nesle.⁷ Cellini, in his autobiography, recounts with great pride both the mark of privilege this rare visit signaled and the delight his patron took in his talents. According to Cellini, the king awarded him the commission for the portal at Fontainebleau, but he notes that it was Mme d'Etampes who first urged Francis I to let Cellini do something for the royal

My sincerest gratitude to Dr. Shelley Zuraw for her support and advice throughout all stages of this paper.

¹ The primary source for the life and work of Benvenuto Cellini is his own autobiography, in which he describes his stay in France and his commissions for Francis I. An accessible English translation of Cellini's *Vita* is by G. Bull (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1956, revised edition 1998), see esp. 251-310. For Cellini's discussion of work from his stay in France in his *Treatises*, see "Della scultura," in *Opere di Benvenuto Cellini*, ed. G. G. Ferrero (Torino: Tipografia, 1980), esp. 751-53. For general information about Cellini in Paris, *The Nymph of Fontainebleau*, and Francis I, see: C. Grodecki, "Le Séjour de Benvenuto Cellini à l'Hôtel de Nesle et la Fonte de la Nympe de Fontainebleau d'après les Actes des Notaires Parisiens," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et l'Isle de France* 98 (1971): 45-80; J. Pope-Hennessy, *Cellini* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), esp. 133-146; and J. Cox-Rearick, *The Collection of Francis I: Royal Treasures* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1995), esp. 46, 288-94. A recent monograph of Francis I that includes a section on Cellini and other Italian artists of his patronage is by R. J. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), esp. 425-61.

² "Dix ans plus tard, Philibert de l'Orme adapte sans scrupule cette représentation de Fontainebleau au château de Diane." This interpretation of the royal architect Philibert de l'Orme's installation of the lunette at Anet, which reflects the general consensus among Cellini scholars, is stated by S. Pressouyre in her "Note Additionnelle sur la Nymph de Fontainebleau," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et l'Isle de France* 98 (1971): 81-92.

³ The lunette, believed to be a work by Jean Goujon, was taken to Paris during the French Revolution and identified as a Diana. Pressouyre, 86-90, states that E. Q. Visconti attempted to correct the mistake in a catalogue entry for the Louvre in the early nineteenth century; nevertheless, when Fontaine installed the lunette in the Salles des Cariatides in 1811, he renamed the room "Salle de Diane." Pope-Hennessy, 305 n 16, states that it was L. Cicognara who first reattributed it to Cellini in 1816.

⁴ A. Chastel, *French Art: The Renaissance 1430-1620*, trans. D. Dusinterre (Paris, New York: Flammarion, 1995) 173.

⁵ Except for Chastel (1995, 173), every scholar cited in this article uses the title the *Nymph of Fontainebleau*. For the sake of clarity, Cellini's bronze relief will be identified as the *Nymph of Fontainebleau* throughout this paper.

⁶ The chasing was completed by Thomas Dambry, Pierre Bontemps, and Laurent Mailleu. For a more detailed analysis of the casting and chasing including contemporary notarized documents, see Grodecki 59-61, 71-72.

⁷ A year after his arrival in Paris, Francis I gave Petit Nesle to Cellini. The residence had a foundry on site, which aided the production of the various *objets d'art* in precious metal that Cellini had been commissioned to do; as recorded by Cellini, *Vita* 268. The artist was working on the twelve Olympian gods and the saltcellar, as well as a silver vase and various bronze heads, when Francis I visited his studio.

hunting lodge:

Madame d'Etampes told his majesty that he ought to commission me to make some beautiful decoration for his Fontainebleau. The King at once answered: "That's an admirable suggestion, and I shall decide what he is to do this very instant"...and he commanded and implored me to exert myself to the utmost in effort to produce a work of beauty. I promised to do so.⁸

Mme d'Etampes' intercession is of particular interest because later she is to become Cellini's nemesis, and, according to Cellini, her enmity had been aroused by his work for the château.

After making plans to adjust the proportions of the existing Porte Dorée, which he found vulgar and unsuitable for his lunette, Cellini made his model. He describes the model for the doorway as a half circle with supporting elements flanking the opening. Over the lunette, Cellini intended to place an image of the king's emblem, the salamander. On either side of the doorway, "instead of two columns," Cellini's plan substituted two satyrs; they were never executed and are known today only from a drawing and a model in bronze possibly done by Cellini himself.⁹ In the spandrels of the lunette were intended to be two bronze reliefs of torch-bearing victories which were later installed, along with the nymph, at the Château of Anet.¹⁰ At the center of the portal program was the lunette itself, which Cellini describes in his own words:

In the half-circle I made a woman reclining in a beautiful attitude; she had her left hand resting on the neck of a stag, which was one of the King's emblems. On one side I had showed some little fauns in half-relief, and there were some wild boars and other wild beasts in lower relief. On the other side there were hunting dogs and hounds of various kinds since these are found in that beautiful forest where the fountain springs.¹¹

Cellini's phrase "that beautiful forest where the fountain springs," refers to the mythical discovery of Fontainebleau that the lunette was intended to recall. According to the local legend, a hunting dog named Bleau or Bliard found a nymph presiding over the source of a fresh-water spring. The spring and, consequently, the château both took the name Fontainebleau. The legend had been depicted in an image by Rosso that once formed part of the decoration of the *Galerie François Ier* in the château, but is now known only through an engraving by Pierre Milan (Figure 2). It is this image that most scholars agree is the basis for Cellini's version of the same subject and, indeed, his *Nymph* shares many of the same attributes as Rosso's image.¹² In the engraving, the reclining nymph lies among the rushes, with her left arm encircling an urn. She is nude, her torso twisted to exploit the view of her bare chest, but her legs are bent slightly at the knees for modesty's sake. The hunting dog—Bleau—appears on the left, emerging from among the rushes at the very moment of discovery.

Cellini expands this imagery to describe, not simply the narrative of the nymph's discovery, but the very idea of the nymph as the personification of the royal hunting lodge, Fontainebleau. The half-relief figure is stretched across the entire field so that her nude body is revealed in full. As the lunette was meant to be seen from below, Cellini tilts the figure, further aiding a view from ground level. She has three urns under her left arm from which flowing and curling representations of water pour. These, as well as the billowing drapery that frames her, identify the female figure as the presiding deity. Replacing the hunting dog which comes face-to-face with the surprised nymph in Rosso's image, Cellini represents a pack of hunting dogs on the right that does not noticeably interact with the nymph. She looks off to her left, her head tilted down as she gazes out of the relief. On the left, two wild boars intrude upon the scene. Behind the boars, in low-relief, are deer grazing against a backdrop of trees. Projecting outward from the top of the lunette is a stag-head trophy, a fully three dimensional form positioned above the

⁸ Cellini, *Vita* 268-69.

⁹ For more on the satyrs, see J. Pope-Hennessy "A Bronze Satyr by Cellini," *Burlington Magazine* 124 (July, 1982): 406-12, where he argues that the importance and prominence of the satyrs would have overshadowed the lunette and would have been the dramatic focus of the portal program. However, as the focus of the commission, the lunette seems to be the most prominent and iconographically significant feature.

¹⁰ The victories were installed with the lunette at the Château of Anet until the time of the French Revolution when they were taken to Paris. After the Revolution, they returned to Anet and were set up in the funerary chapel of Diane de Poitiers. In 1851, they were lost, but fortunately, casts had been made; Pope-Hennessy, (1985), 140; no records indicate whether or not the salamander was cast.

¹¹ Cellini, *Vita* 270.

¹² For a discussion of Milan's etching after Rosso's *Nymph of Fontainebleau*, see E. Carroll, *Rosso Fiorentino: Drawings, Prints, and Decorative Arts*,

exhibition catalogue (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1987), cat. no. 79, pp. 252-53. The inscription on the print reads: "O Phidias, O Apelles, could anything have been devised in your era more beautiful than this sculpture [whose representation you see here]: a sculpture that Francis I, most puissant king of France, foster father of *beaux arts* and *belles lettres*, left unfinished in his palace, under a statue of Diana reposing after the hunt and pouring from a jar the waters of Fontainebleau." Carroll argues that the inscription's identification of the figure as Diana is a mistake made by the etcher René Boyvin, who completed the work. However, as the image is also called a "statue" that was "left unfinished," Carroll suggests that Rosso intended a stucco relief to occupy the center of the south wall that was never completed. Both Pressouyre, 88-89, and Cox-Rearick, 46, make similar statements. H. Zerner's argument, in his *L'Art de la Renaissance en France: L'invention du classicisme* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996) 123, proposes that Milan recorded a design for a relief by Rosso intended to decorate the base of a statue of Diana. However, a comparison of the frame in the engraving, including the roundels of Apollo and Diana above the nymph, with the extant decoration of the section of the south wall, now filled with a fresco of Danaë, suggests that the image was designed for a place in the gallery, either in relief or fresco.

nymph. She is physically linked to it by her right arm which is draped over the stag's neck.

Given the subject and placement of the commission, Cellini operated under certain dictates for its production. Besides the restrictions of size and shape, Cellini had to combine a recognizable depiction of the legendary Nymph of Fontainebleau with the appropriate emblems of royal authority. Cellini turned, no doubt, to a host of Renaissance sources and antique examples of nymphs with which he would have been well-versed.¹³ As required in such representations, Cellini employed the image of the recumbent nude female with her urn to personify a fresh water spring. Her static, exposed pose explicitly designates the feminine role as the receptacle of the male procreative force, the result of which, in the case of the nymph, was life-giving water. In many Renaissance garden sculptures, water quite literally flowed from a female figure's breasts or from a womb-like urn. An example of this latter type can be seen in Ammanati's *Spring of Parnassus* of c. 1555, now in the Bargello, where, in an overt comparison between womb and urn, the urn is placed directly between the legs of the passively-posed female. Moreover, Cellini's intention to include the satyrs as columnar elements originated in a similar tradition of representing the sexual role of the nymph, where, passively reclining, she is encroached upon by a male presence. An example is a rather suggestive pair from the mid-sixteenth-century Grotto of Venus in Villa Lante: *Sleeping Nymph and Climbing Male*.¹⁴

That nature or, more precisely, the manipulated wilderness of Francis I's hunting lodge, is announced in terms of an explicit sexual fecundity should come as no surprise. The nymph invites the viewer to gaze at her life-giving form as she embraces the virile stag. The garland of ripe fruit and grapes she wears on her head, as well as the grapes she holds in her languorous hand, connote both sensuality and fertility.¹⁵ The woodlands populated by an abundance of wild beasts allude to sexual activity.¹⁶ The king, personified by the

stag, which was one of his emblems, is an active participant: poised directly over the genitals of the nymph, he partakes of the pleasures of nature just as he is the procreative source of her abundance.¹⁷ Francis I consciously played on the sexual subtext of the hunt and filled Fontainebleau with images of amorous pursuits. Inside the royal hunting lodge, representations of nymphs and satyrs, Mars and Venus, and Jupiter at his conquests abounded.¹⁸ Indeed, the inherent elitism of the hunt as an aristocratic pastime, in place since the Middle Ages, was associated with these other pleasurable pursuits of the ruling class.¹⁹ Cellini's placement of a stag's head in a relief intended for the entrance of the king's hunting lodge created a powerful expression of royal authority and privilege.

Cellini's account of his project for the decoration of the Porte Dorée at Fontainebleau ended when he left Paris forever in 1545. In the intervening two years, relations with his patron had deteriorated rapidly. By his own account, Cellini had made enemies that were threatening his life.²⁰ When Cellini left the lunette behind, cast and chased, but not installed at Fontainebleau, he quite literally closed his chapter of the history of *The Nymph of Fontainebleau* and his career in Paris.²¹ Scholars often follow his precedent as they, too, finish their discussions of the nymph in 1545, characterizing it as an unrealized and discarded commission. However, the story of Cellini's nymph did not end in 1545. In the years immediately after Cellini's departure, the meaning, indeed the very subject of the lunette, was transformed as Cellini's bronze depiction of the nymph of the Fountain of Bleau came to be regarded as the goddess, Diana.

Despite the termination of the portal project at Fontainebleau, Cellini's lunette was not discarded, but was given to Diane de Poitiers, mistress of Francis's son, the future Henri II. After Francis I's death in 1547, the royal architect Philibert de l'Orme, who had been at work at Fontainebleau, began renovating of the Château of Anet. The château belonged to Diane de Poitiers and it is here that

¹³ For the tradition of nymph imagery in the Renaissance, see C. Lazzaro, "Gendered Nature and Its Representation in Sixteenth-Century Garden Sculpture," in *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, ed. S. Blake McHam, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 246-73, and E. B. MacDougall, "The Sleeping Nymph: Origins of a Humanist Fountain Type," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 357-65; for the antique tradition of nymphaea from which the Renaissance versions originate, see M. Fagiolo, "Theaters of Water," *FMR*, no. 66 (1994): 22-46.

¹⁴ Images of both of these garden sculptures can be found in C. Lazzaro's article, figure 110, p. 263 and figure 107, p. 260, respectively.

¹⁵ Although I have found no written account of the fruit that decorates the garland around the stag's neck, Dr. Asen Kirin aided me by suggesting that they are representations of the small, round medlar fruit. In the sixteenth century, medlars were herbal remedies for women that were believed to increase fertility and ward off miscarriage; see Nicholas Culpeper, *The English Physician and Complete Herbal* (London: printed privately, 1802 reprint of 1652 original) 244. This idea can be linked to the belief that the stag also had curative powers, especially for pregnant women; see A. Strubel and C. de Saulnier, *La Poétique de la Chasse au Moyen Age: Les Livres de Chasses du XIVe Siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994), 242.

¹⁶ Lazzaro 252-54.

¹⁷ Cellini was correct in saying that the stag was an emblem of Francis I, *Vita*, 270. So strong was the association between the king, the stag, and hunting, that during the French Revolution the antlers of Cellini's bronze relief were torn off by rioters. Consequently, the stag in the lunette is not in its original state but was extensively restored in the mid-nineteenth century; Pressouyre 86-89.

¹⁸ See Cox-Rearick 96-130, and Zerner 55-89, for images of the paintings found at Fontainebleau.

¹⁹ For more on the history of hunting in the Middle Ages, as well as the analogy between romantic love and the hunt, see Strubel, esp. 127-72.

²⁰ Cellini, *Vita* 306; the king, Mme d'Etampes, and San Polo, who is given charge of Cellini, talk of hanging Cellini. Even though it may have been in jest, Cellini expresses his relief at having escaped Paris with his life.

²¹ Cellini, *Vita* 308.

Cellini's *Nymph of Fontainebleau* was installed over the entrance portal, most likely in the early 1550s (Figure 3).²² Diane de Poitiers, who identified herself with and likened herself to the goddess Diana, displayed the lunette as a representation of the goddess. She even had a sculpture for her garden modeled after Cellini's lunette with her own portrait serving as the model for the goddess' face.²³ Surrounded by the stag and her hunting dogs and with her bow prominently displayed, the sculpture unmistakably represents Diana, not a nymph.

Although it is quite clear that Diane de Poitiers deliberately chose to read Cellini's *Nymph of Fontainebleau* as Diana, and that consequently it became Diana through her assimilation of it, the question remains: when did the shift in identity occur? This association was established even before the lunette arrived at Anet. By 1549, Jean Cousin was already using Cellini's figure for his painting *Eva Prima Pandora*, a misogynistic image of original sin that would have been seen as a pointed attack on Henri's mistress.²⁴ This obvious appropriation of Cellini's figure in a context meant to disparage Diane de Poitiers, suggests that the female in the lunette was no longer commonly identified with the legendary Nymph of Fontainebleau. Thus, within four years of his departure, Cellini's nymph evolved into a Diana or, more correctly, into Diane de Poitiers.

To sixteenth-century spectators, the image of a nude or semi-nude female figure with a stag would typically signify the goddess Diana. Condensed from images of the most famous narrative of the goddess, the metamorphosis of Actaeon, the stag became Diana's attribute.²⁵ Dürer's engraving *Apollo and Diana* from c. 1504 juxtaposes the active figure of Apollo with the static figure of Diana, using only the most basic at-

tributes to identify the two deities—Apollo draws back his bow while Diana sits next to her stag, gently stroking its muzzle.²⁶ In Lucas Cranach's painting of the same subject, the nude figure of Diana sits with her stag, more specifically, on her stag, with her arm draped around his neck.²⁷ With none of her usual identifying objects, such as the bow and quiver or the crescent moon diadem, it must be assumed that the stag is all that is required by the viewer to recognize her, just as only Apollo's bow is needed to define his person. Like the Diana in Cranach's image, a portrait of Diane de Poitiers in the guise of the goddess shows the mistress with her arm around the stag.²⁸ Both Diane de Poitiers and the goddess Diana, needed only a single attribute to identify them.

The standard iconography of the stag as the identifying attribute of the goddess of the hunt might suggest, therefore, that Cellini actively conflated the imagery associated with Diana and the nymph. Moreover, Cellini's choice to present the stag as a hunting trophy makes the connection between the female and the hunt all the more apparent, further suggesting that the figure is, indeed, Diana. Diana, the goddess of the hunt and the moon who inspires amorous pursuits and procreation, would have been a fitting subject for the iconography of the hunting lodge, Fontainebleau. Cellini does not comment on this possible dual reading of his figure in his autobiography. However, female personifications of nature as nymphs and goddesses in the Renaissance often had overlapping poses and attributes, as can be seen in the Diana fountain of the Quattro Fontane in Rome.²⁹ There, a recumbent female figure personifying a source of fresh water also wears the half-moon diadem of Diana. A painting at Fontainebleau by Primaticcio entitled *Diana Reclining among Dogs and Sav-*

²² Grodecki 55, places the installment of the lunette between the years 1551 and 1555, the years that the portal was under construction, and states that the lunette was left discarded at Nesle until Philibert de l'Orme requested to use it as decoration at Anet. The date inscribed on the portal is 1552.

²³ The sculpture, *Diane*, done for the courtyard at the Château of Anet, is now in the Louvre. Once considered a work by Jean Goujon, the sculpture now lacks attribution; Zerner 360-61.

²⁴ J. Guillaume made this argument in his article about Cousin's painting, suggesting that the combined pagan and Christian mythologies of original sin cast Diane de Poitiers into the role of *femme fatale*, "Cleopatra Nova Pandora," *Gazette de Beaux Arts* 80 (1972): 185-94. See also S. ffolliot, "Casting a Rival into the Shade: Catherine de Medici and Diane de Poitiers," *Art Journal* 48 (Summer, 1989): 138-43.

²⁵ The idea that the female with the stag was identified as Diana serves as the premise for an article by N. J. Vickers, who argues that the Ovidian text had been re-interpreted by Cellini for the glorification of the king. Diana, who renders the hunter impotent, becomes herself the conquered as she, instead, embraces him. This refers to the privilege of the king, who alone accomplishes this brazen act of looking upon the nymph/Diana and lives, and to the sexual dominance and royal authority such a statement exerts; "The Mistress in the Masterpiece," in *Poetics of Gender*, ed. Nancy K. Miller (New York: Columbia UP, 1986) 19-39.

²⁶ For an illustration, see B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), cat. no. 62, pp.

318-19. Also included is Jacopo de' Barbari's print, *Apollo and Diana*, of 1502, cat. no. 63, pp. 320-21.

²⁷ Illustrated in M. J. Friedlander and J. Rosenberg, *The Paintings of Lucas Cranach* (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet, 1978), figure 271.

²⁸ The original fragments of the portrait are in the collection of the Earl of Spencer, but a copy exists in the hunting museum, Musée de Senlis. For an image, see I. Cloulas, *Diane de Poitiers* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), figure 8.

²⁹ B. L. Brown (1999, 497) states that the ambiguity of poses and attributes for depictions of Cleopatra, Venus, Diana, and nymphs was deliberate both in northern and southern Europe during the Renaissance. The Diana fountain of the Quattro Fontane is illustrated in F. Venturi and M. Sanfilippo, *The Fountains of Rome*, trans. Andrew Ellis (New York: Vendome Press, 1996) 101. In the Renaissance, Diana was often used to personify Nature; see M. Tanner, "Chance and Coincidence in Titian's *Diana and Actaeon*," *Art Bulletin* 56 (Dec. 1974): 535-50. Using sixteenth-century literary and pictorial traditions, Tanner argues that the goddess Diana in the Actaeon myth was presented by Titian as a personification of Nature.

³⁰ Bartsch no. 39. Primaticcio arrived in France shortly after Rosso in 1530. Although it may be impossible to date Primaticcio's painting of *Diana*, Leon Devant was working as the main engraver of Primaticcio's works between the years 1543 and 1546 and left Fontainebleau in 1547, suggesting that this painting existed at least simultaneously with Cellini's commission; for more on Primaticcio's work at Fontainebleau, and Leon D'Avant's engravings, see Zerner, esp. 65, 118.

age Beasts, known today only through an engraving made before 1546 by Leon Devant, shows the goddess of the hunt reclining in a natural setting.³⁰ Here the figure is clearly Diana, her accompanying dogs, beasts, and stag anticipating Cellini's design for his lunette.

Cellini's allegorical figure of Fontainebleau, as well as her attributes, then, were understood to be a depiction of both the legendary nymph of Fontainebleau and the huntress Diana. However, the political climate in which Cellini produced his nymph/Diana made his choice of imagery extremely volatile. During the last five years of his reign, Francis I was very ill.³¹ Diane de Poitiers, the mistress of his son, the future Henri II, was twenty years the dauphin's senior. With the imminent demise of the king, she stood to gain not only power in the court, but power over the very throne of France. She thus posed a serious threat to the position of the incumbent mistress, Mme d'Etampes. Persistent rumors of Diane de Poitiers' own relations with Francis I suggest that the hostility between the two women would have been both personal and political as they jockeyed for power at court.³² As Diane de Poitiers gained influence, their mutual animosity increased. Otherwise benign references to the goddess Diana became potential vehicles for political diatribe. Indeed, in the games of the French courtiers, various members were assigned the personae of pagan gods. Diane de Poitiers used her namesake, claiming the identity of Diana. Her rival, Mme d'Etampes was called the supreme beauty, the goddess of love, Venus.³³ Yet, clearly, Venus's ascendancy was not to be long lasting. The very year Cellini departs for Italy, 1545, a court poet, François Habert published a bold declaration of the passing of one mistress and the rise of another:

Certes Venus n'est pas encores morte,
Déesse elle est, grand honneur on luy porte:
Que pleust à Dieu la voir en mer plongée,
La République en serait bien vengée.
Mais peu à peu Venus s'abolira,
Et en son nom Diane on publiera.³⁴

Cellini's blatant depiction of a figure, implicitly both the legendary nymph and Diana, with her arm around the stag, the king's device, proved to be a political blunder. Cellini had vastly underestimated the power of Anne d'Etampes.³⁵

Time and again Cellini writes in his *Vita* of the enemy he had in Mme d'Etampes. Although, as has been noted, it was she who commended him to the king for the project at Fontainebleau, immediately after his presentation of the model to the king, Cellini detects the animosity of the king's mistress. He hears that her ire was aroused when she learned of the plans for Fontainebleau from the king, writing, "...such poisonous anger accumulated in her breast that she burst out: 'If Benvenuto had shown me his fine works of art he would have given me cause to remember him when the time comes.'"³⁶ Although Cellini explains her anger as a result of the fact she had not been present when the king approved the lunette design, her statement can also be read as a revealing glimpse at her immediate reaction to the imagery Cellini had proposed. And, it is at precisely this moment, when Mme d'Etampes hears of the plans for the portal decoration, that her approval of Cellini turns to venomous hatred.

The next few years were miserable for Cellini, who never was forgiven by Mme d'Etampes. Although what is written in his autobiography must be taken with at least one grain of salt, since Cellini blames the king's mistress for practically every one of his ensuing misfortunes such as spies in his home, lawsuits, and ultimately the withdrawal of the king's favor, it is generally accepted by scholars that she diverted the commission for Cellini's colossal fountain of Mars to Primaticcio.³⁷ According to Cellini, she prompted the king's famous censure of Cellini when, otherwise pleased with his work, Francis I formally reprimanded the artist for his overly-ambitious plans that had come at the expense of his initial commissions as a metal worker.³⁸ Mme d'Etampes' hatred of Cellini sabotaged his chances of obtaining other commissions and she quite possibly demanded the termination of his portal commission as well.

Mme d'Etampe's manipulation of court iconography, especially as it related to Francis's hunting lodge, might shed light on the fate of Rosso's lost image of the *Nymph of Fontainebleau*. If, as indicated by the inscription on the engraving, which describes the figure as Diana, resting after the hunt, and "pouring from a jar the water of Fontainebleau," Rosso's image was an homage to the château's nymph and to the goddess of the hunt, Diana, it seems highly significant

³¹ Knecht 495.

³² The debate on whether or not Diane de Poitiers had an affair with Francis I continues. However, the mysterious pardon of Diane's father, who had been condemned to death for treason, shortly after her initial arrival at court to plead for his life, as well as continued favoritism, indicate that she most likely had sexual relations with Francis I; see Cloulas 49-64. After the death of Francis I, Diane de Poitiers took her position, but now as the mistress of the king, Henri II, and Anne d'Etampes was banished; Knecht 551.

³³ Cloulas 223-24.

³⁴ Certainly Venus is not yet dead,
A goddess she is, great honor to her:
If only God could see her pitched into the sea,
The Republic would be well-avenged.

However, little by little, Venus will disappear,
And in her name, Diana will be published.

(Translation thanks to Catherine Parayre.) From *Exposition morale de la Fable des trois Déeses, Venus, Juno et Pallas*, Lyon, 1545, as cited in F. Bardon, *Diane de Poitiers et le Mythe de Diane* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963) 41.

³⁵ The Imperial ambassador at the French court described Anne d'Etampes as "the real president of the King's most private and intimate council;" as cited in Pope-Hennessy 105.

³⁶ Cellini, *Vita* 272.

³⁷ Pope-Hennessy 142.

³⁸ Cellini, *Vita* 303-04.

that sometime in the years between 1543 and 1545, Rosso's conflation of these two mythical females was deliberately destroyed and replaced with the presumably more innocuous Danaë.³⁹ Cellini claims that Mme d'Etampes first became angry with him immediately after the creation of his model for the lunette, and it is, therefore, not unreasonable to assume that Cellini's nymph may have been too replete with Diana imagery for the tastes of Mme d'Etampes. Cellini's nymph, and perhaps Rosso's as well, were seen by Madame d'Etampes as unpleasant reminders of her rival, Diane de Poitiers. The enmity of Mme d'Etampes, which can be directly connected to the portal commission, brought about Cellini's ultimate failure in Paris.

It would seem that the conflation of the nymph and Diana may have occurred almost at the moment of the relief's creation. Cellini's own account of Mme d'Etampes's anger following the presentation of the model for the lunette to the king coincides too closely to the rivalry between Anne

d'Etampes and Diane de Poitiers, as described by the poem, to be ignored. What scholars have disregarded in the history of *The Nymph of Fontainebleau* is its interpretation by the intended spectators—the king, his mistress, and her rival. Their responses have played an integral part in the history of the lunette, which was conceived of as an allegory of the fountain, but with multiple and ambiguous meanings. This paper has attempted to show that these spectators participated in the history of the work, investing it with their own meaning. Whatever Cellini intended when he made it, his nymph clearly allowed for an interpretation as Diana. More importantly, considering court politics during the years of Cellini's stay in Paris, Cellini's figure could have been construed as Diane de Poitiers in great detriment to his career in Paris. It is precisely this reading of the lunette's imagery that may directly relate to Cellini's failure as an artist under the patronage of Francis I.

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³⁹ See note 10 for the full inscription and citation. Bardon, 20–24, believes that the image was meant to be both the nymph and Diana, and that it was deliberately destroyed between 1543–45. Given the overwhelming evidence

that the goddess of the hunt and the nymph of Fontainebleau were purposefully treated as if interchangeable reigning deities of the royal hunting lodge, it seems very likely that this was, indeed, the case.



Figure 1. Cellini, *The Nymph of Fontainebleau*, 1543, bronze, 409 cm x 205 cm, Louvre, Paris. Courtesy Alinari/Art Resource, New York.



Figure 2. Pierre Milan after Rosso, *The Nymph of Fontainebleau*, 1534, engraving c. 1540-1557, completed by René Boyvin, from François Courboin, *Histoire Illustrée de la Gravure en France* vol. 1 (Paris: Maurice Le Garrec, 1923) fig. 303 (called *La Diane de Fontainebleau*).

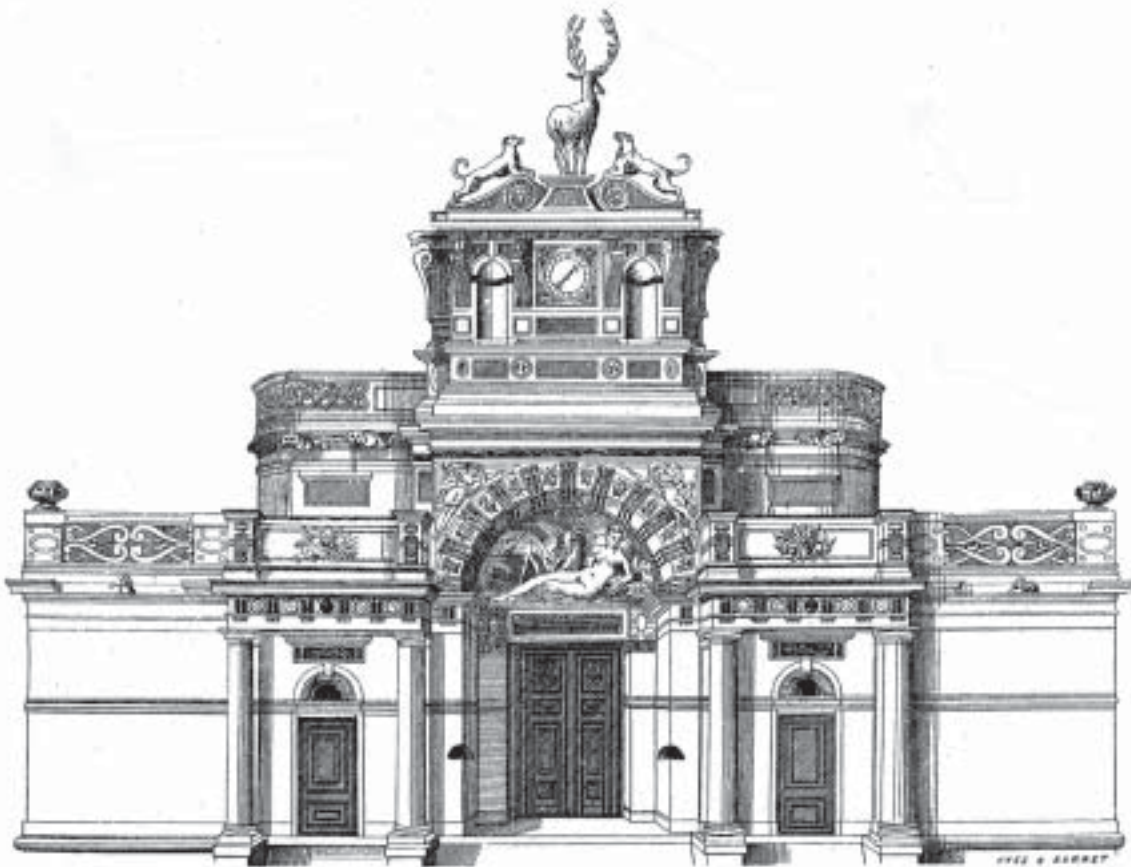


Figure 3. Copy of an engraving by Philibert de l'Orme, Portail de l'Entrée of the Château of Anet, Pierre Desire Roussel, *Histoire et Description du Château d'Anet* (Paris: D. Jouaust, 1875).

The Body and Its Manifestation in the Andean World: Corporality, Simulacrum, and Image

Samantha Kelly

Andean Concepts of the Body

Social constructions largely determine individual and collective perceptions about the human body. In return, concepts about the body—the organism upon which a human being's existence relies—are central to a society's ideology and world view.¹ Therefore, it is not surprising that Pre-Hispanic Andean concepts of universal order and power were grounded in the human body, specifically in the body of the Inka ruling elite.

It is the important nature of the Inka body that I wish to address in this paper. In so doing, my strategy is to examine both the periods before and after the conquest to gain a fuller understanding of the corporeal concepts that influenced pre-Hispanic Inka mortuary behavior and postconquest portraiture endeavors. In part, then, this is an exploration of how and why the precolonial Inka placed such a strong emphasis on the physical body of the ruler and not on his artistic representation. The special treatment afforded the king during his life and the elaborate measures taken to preserve his body after death emphasizes that the body itself was the singular entity of power in Inka society. This study also covers the Inka reaction to colonization and European artistic influences, and how, despite their subjugated position, the Inka managed to promote a powerful colonial identity based on Pre-Hispanic corporeal concepts.

The prevailing concepts of the Inka body were firmly grounded in Andean origin myths and infiltrated the metaphoric language of the Inka. According to these oral associations, the body and the earth were inextricably linked as reciprocal sources of power and fertility. The founding ancestors, from whom all Inka claimed descent, were envisioned as being both born from the physical earth and returning to it upon death.² Regeneration and renewal are concepts intimately linked with the fertility of the landscape, and the insertion of important ancestors and rulers into this equation charged the bodies of these individuals with concepts of fertility and provision. This corporeal association is what propelled the extravagant treatment afforded the king during his life and after his death.³ Bodies were, therefore, the essential conduits of power and fertility in the Andean world.

Bodies of Power

Prior to Spanish arrival, the Inka emperor, as well as his deceased predecessors, were an integral part of the social and political fabric of preconquest cultural dynamics. In addition to managing administrative and military affairs, the emperor was held to be responsible for meeting the needs of his people and maintaining the order and general well-being of the universe. The power of these individuals resided in their corporeal presence, evident from the strict taboos surrounding the

¹ Alfredo López Austin exemplifies the association between the body and ideology: "the concepts that are formed about the human body (like the body itself) are the essential receptors, regulators, and planners of the physical and social spheres that surround them." This approach is applicable, not only to his study of Aztec ideology, but also provides a point of departure for understanding the Inka body and its manifestation in the Andean world. See Alfredo López Austin, *The Human Body and Ideology: Concepts of the Ancient Nahuas*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: U of Utah P, 1988) vol. 1: 1.

² According to Sabine MacCormack, *Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991) 97 and Frank Salomon, "'The Beautiful Grandparents' Andean Ancestor Shrines and Mortuary Ritual as Seen through the Colonial Record," in ed. Tom D. Dillehay, *Tombs for the Living: Andean Mortuary Practices* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995) 323, the founding ancestors were considered superhuman figures or *huacas*, who were born from the land itself. These ancestral *huacas*, the fusion of sacred place and being, dotted the landscape as mountains called *apu* in Quechua, which means "lord." The origins of all Inka people were vested in these founding ancestors.

It was thought that the spirit of the deceased returned to the geographical point of origin of the ancestral *huacas*. Evidence of this ideology is

found in references to Manco Capac, the first Inka emperor. Considered a superhuman figure, it was believed that Manco Capac turned to stone upon his death, thus becoming an important sacred *huaca* in the natural world. See Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, *History of the Incas*, by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa; and *the Execution of the Inca Tupac Amaru*, by Captain Baltasar de Ocampo, trans. and ed. Sir Clements Markham (Germany: Hakluyt Society: 1907) 61 and Bernabé Cobo, *History of the Inca Empire*, trans. and ed. Roland Hamilton (Austin: U of Texas P, 1979) 112.

³ According to their ideology regarding the body, the Inka viewed death as a shift from temporal to permanent, from instability to stability. The mummification process represented the transition from living humans composed of fleshy soft parts to ancestors with a durable skeleton and hide. The perishable parts returned to the earth—providing an appropriate vegetal metaphor of ancestral fertility—leaving the deceased in a dry, hard, and permanent state. The provisional aspect of the ancestors was based on a reciprocal relationship between the living and the dead. Such relationship was founded on the ideology that mortality provided life and ancestors were an "important source for the continuation of fertility for the living," a concept not unique to the Inka, but important for understanding the attention provided the corporeal remains of their deceased. See Salomon 324-330.

living king. Because he was conceived of as a source of reciprocal fertility who governed with divine right, the king's body was considered superior to all others. The physical superiority he exercised was played out through performance, unique dress and the accouterments of rule, and taboos regarding his body. In this way, his physical presence commanded the power and authority of rule.

The king distinguished himself physically from the rest of the Inka population by his costume and grooming. The illustrations of the native colonial advocate Guamán Poma de Ayala, which accompanied his nearly 1200 page letter to the king of Spain entitled *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, provide the modern scholar with a visualization of the physicality of the Pre-Hispanic Inka ruler (Figure 1).⁴ As seen in Guamán Poma's depiction of the Inka sovereign and his royal council, the king kept his hair short, and the holes in his earlobes were larger than other Inka nobles, enabling him to wear the largest and most lavish earplugs.⁵ The red fringe, which signified royalty, adorned only the emperor's headband. Additionally, he donned the most elaborate clothing woven from the finest vicuña wool, including his highly decorated tunic (see also, Figure 4) and knee fringe; his wardrobe was quite extensive since he wore each garment only once.⁶

Certain items and activities were reserved for the king's use alone, including the consumption of certain foods, riding in a litter, the wearing of special garments, and taking his sister for a wife.⁷ The king's divinity also made him physically incapable of committing a punishable fault or crime and invested the king's body with extraordinary power such that whatever he touched must be burned.⁸

The Emperor's Embodied Effigy

Because the physical body of the emperor was the potent element in precolonial society, the Inka felt no pressing need to reproduce the royal body artistically. Contrary to other Pre-Columbian cultures, the Inka did not populate their empire with propagandistic portraits of their rulers. The closest thing we find in the material record that suggests a corporeal simulacrum of the ruler is what the Inka called a *huauque*, or "brother-statue." These *huauques* were considered more than a mere portrait of the king; the ruler's afterbirth, hair and fingernail clippings were kept either in a hollow in the statue or in a small box kept with the image.⁹ Literally referred to as the king's double, the statues embodied the presence of the ruler and, as such, were appropriately revered and venerated.¹⁰ They stood in for the king when he was unavailable during his lifetime and maintained power after the king's death.

Each emperor commissioned a statue particular to his specification. According to ethnohistorical documentation, the *huauques* took such varied forms as a bird, fish, or lightning bolt and were constructed of either wood, stone, or metal; the shapes and materials of the *huauque*, therefore, were extremely personal and significant to each king.¹¹

Unfortunately, most of these statues were seized and destroyed by the idol smashers attempting to save the souls of the Indians. Maarten Van de Guchte suggests that a fragmentary sculptural head, which is clearly carved with the royal headfringe, is perhaps the single surviving example of this artistic category of brother-statues (Figure 2).¹² This, in contrast to the more conceptual *huauque* figures, is a human likeness. The stone head, at a height of 38 cm, is larger than

⁴ See Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [1615], 3 vols., eds. John V. Murra and Rolena Adorno, trans. Jorge L. Urioste (Mexico D. F.: Siglo XXI, 1980).

⁵ Guamán Poma's pictorial description of the Inka ruler is corroborated by Cobo in his *History of the Inca Empire*, 244-245.

⁶ Cobo, *History of the Inca Empire*, 245 and El Inka Garcilaso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru, Part One*, trans. Harold V. Livermore (Austin: U of Texas P, 1946) 314.

⁷ The divinity of the king exempted him from the laws binding his subjects and distanced him from them further. Incest was strictly forbidden throughout the empire. Marriage and/or carnal relations with a first or second degree blood relative (which included sisters, mothers, daughters, and grandmothers) resulted in severe punishment. Inka kings, however, were exempted from these incest taboos, and took their eldest sister for a wife. Garcilaso de la Vega 207, suggests that such incestuous unions were embraced by the Inka, because the king and his royal sisters claimed descent from the Sun and Moon, who in turn were also siblings and spouses. To prevent diluting his sacred and divine blood with common blood, the Inka sovereign had to marry within his family.

⁸ Garcilaso de la Vega 101 indicates that the divine nature of the royal Inka body rendered it free from temptations of the flesh:

They say the Incas never committed any fault worthy of public or exemplary punishment because the teaching of their parents and example of their elders and the common repute that they were children of the Sun, born to instruct and benefit the rest, restrained and guided them, and made them and example rather than a scandal to the common-

wealth. The Indians said too that the Incas were also free from the temptations that are often the cause of crimes, such as the passion for women, covetousness, or the desire for vengeance . . .

Additionally, according to Cobo, *History of the Inca Empire*, 247, the Indians felt that, "since the Incas [kings] were children of the Sun, whatever they touched had to be burned, made into ashes, and tossed into the air, and no one was to touch it."

⁹ Pedro Sancho, *An Account of the Conquest of Peru*, trans. Philip Ainsworth Means (New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969) 170 and José Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, ed. Edmundo O'Gorman (Mexico City: Fonda de cultura economica, 1954) 146-148.

¹⁰ Bernabé Cobo, *Inca Religion and Customs*, trans. and ed. Roland Hamilton (Austin: U of Texas P, 1990) 37-38.

¹¹ See Cobo, *Inca Religion and Customs*, 37; Sarmiento de Gamboa 48, 63, and 101; and Maarten Van de Guchte, "Sculpture and the Concept of Double among the Inca Kings," *Res* 29/30 (1996): 256-268 for details about each Inka ruler's specific *huauque*.

¹² Maarten Van de Guchte 261-262 suggests that some of the *huauques* were anthropomorphic based on ethnohistorical references to the "face" of the sixth king, Inka Roca. The sculpture he proposes as a surviving *huauque* (see Figure 2) is questionable, however, because of its stylistic peculiarities, which do not correspond to Inka artistic traditions. Van de Guchte attributes this to postconquest retouchings. See also, Juan Larrea, *Corona Incaica* (Cordoba: Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades, Universidad Nacional de Cordoba, 1960).

life-size making the sculpture in its entirety (including the torso which was excavated separately) a significant physical stand-in for the ruler.¹³

What is perhaps most interesting about these statues, however, is the extraordinary position they occupy in the otherwise non-figurative artistic tradition of the Inka. Whereas Pre-Hispanic sculptors did produce representational art forms of humans and animals (Figure 3), textiles and ceramics with abstract motifs comprised the great majority of artistic production (Figure 4).¹⁴ This dearth of figural art attests to the power invested in the actual body rather than its depiction. This is further expressed through the physical use of textiles, which as garments, are body-centered artifacts. The physical body served as the important vehicle of artistic presentation, and the emperor maintained his prominent corporeal position by wearing the most elaborate textile garments of all. This confirms the high importance placed on the physical body and its presence as manifest in stylized sculpture, but not on artistic likeness.

Continued Corporeal Power

The mummies of previous kings and their embodied statue doubles continued to function as political entities charged with the presence of the ruler after his death. The ruler maintained all of his property and possessions posthumously and continued to “live” in his palace. The servants and wives of the deceased emperor were sacrificed and interred with the royal mummy in his palace to keep him company and serve him in his next life.¹⁵ Additionally, the mummies and statue effigies of the deceased kings were attended, cared for, and supplied with offerings of food and libations by their living descendants.¹⁶ We understand the veneration of the deceased through the illustrations of Guamán Poma. He depicts a royal mummy and his mummified wife receiving offerings from the current, living emperor, who is identified by the crown and royal fringe he wears (Figure 5). The mummies are shown with closed eyes symbolizing their deceased status. We know that this is the royal couple because the king wears his headfringe and his body is clearly preserved, whereas the deceased commoner occupying the tomb (pucullo) in the background appears as an unpreserved skeleton.

In addition to the service afforded them, the dead ancestors continued to be consulted about decisions, especially those concerning marriage, where the union depended on the ancestor’s consent.¹⁷ The mummy bundles were reported to have been brought out and paraded during important rituals and festivals, especially those that marked the transition from one ruler to the next. Sarmiento de Gamboa describes one such celebration ordered by Pachacuti Inca, the ninth emperor, to mark his renovation of the House of the Sun:

He disinterred the bodies of the seven deceased Incas, from Manco Capac to Yahuarhuaccac, which were all in the House of the Sun, enriching them with masks, head-dresses called chuco, medals, bracelets, scepters called yauri or champi, and other ornaments of gold. He then placed them in order of their seniority, on a bench with a back, richly adorned with gold, and ordered great festivals to be celebrated with representations of the lives of each Inca.¹⁸

Again Guamán Poma brings this information to life in his illustration depicting the procession of a royal mummy in his litter with his mummified wife and a servant (Figure 6). Such political celebration and parading of imperial mummies emphasized the ruler’s descent from his royal ancestors and, thereby, authorized his rule. In Andean ideology, therefore, the mummy both symbolized the “continuity of the state,” and legitimized the rights afforded the possessors of the body.¹⁹

Colonial Reactions to the Inka Body

European ideology could not find resolve in Andean practices, and the cultural clash of Christianity and Inka religious customs resulted in a disturbance of indigenous ways. The perceived idolatrous worship of the Inka was diametrically opposed to the civilizing efforts of the colonists. As such, efforts to break the Andeans of their *malas costumbres* were enacted with a sense of urgency.

The advent of Christianity and European customs gave rise to a new set of mortuary practices. The Spaniards ordered that the sculptural idols be destroyed and the deceased be buried in Christian cemeteries, which thereby removed the influ-

¹³ According to Van de Guchte 261 n 6, the head (Figure 2) was found in the 1930s during a construction project for the Palacio de Justia in Cuzco. Apparently a torso, “upon which the head could be fitted,” was excavated around the Palacio years later.

¹⁴ The human figurines, as seen in Figure 3, appear as generic armatures for the more highly valued textile garments they were meant to wear. John Howland Rowe, “Inca,” in ed. Elizabeth Boone, *Andean Art at Dumbarton Oaks*, 2 vols. (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996) vol. 1: 302, suggests that in addition to being clothed, these figurines were produced for offerings and were buried in shrines. The truncated bodies with non-distinguished facial features are not careful studies of the natural world. They do, however, in their votive roles as miniature human offerings to the gods, exemplify corporeal presence if not physical likeness, a role not that dissimilar from the *huauques*. For additional information on the figurines see, for example, Johan Reinhard, “Frozen in Time,” *National Geographic* vol. 195, no. 5 (1999): 36-55; Johan Reinhard,

“Peru’s Ice Maidens,” *National Geographic* vol. 189, no. 6 (1996): 62-81; and Colin McEwan and Maarten Van de Guchte, “Ancestral Time and Sacred Space in the Inca State Ritual,” in ed. Richard F. Townsend, *The Ancient Americas: Art of the Sacred Landscape* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1992) 359-371.

¹⁵ Garcilaso de la Vega 323.

¹⁶ Cobo, *Inca Religion and Customs*, 40-42.

¹⁷ Pedro Pizarro, *Relation of the Discovery and Conquest of the Kingdoms of Peru*, trans. Philip Ainsworth Means (New York: The Cortes Society, 1921) 205.

¹⁸ Sarmiento de Gamboa 100-101.

¹⁹ Salomon 332.

ential and powerful corporeal presence of deceased ancestors from the daily life of the Andean peoples.²⁰

As colonial institutions became established and indigenous roles redefined, the elite Inka class maintained a privileged position despite the unraveling of the Pre-Columbian imperial fabric. The office of the emperor was disbanded, but provincial elite called *kurakas* performed a similar role in postconquest life as they had before the arrival of Europeans. These local hereditary leaders originally functioned as intermediaries between the Inka ruling class and native villagers. With the demise of the Inka empire, however, the *kurakas* served Spanish needs for such intermediary relationships with the indigenous population and were charged with keeping colonial society in order.²¹ In return for their service, the *kuraka* received—as he had prior to European arrival—certain privileges.

In the colonial world, these *kurakas* owed loyalty to both their Pre-Hispanic past and their new colonial supporters. Drawing on newly introduced forms of European portraiture and precolonial concepts of the body of the ruling elite, these indigenous leaders carefully constructed empowered colonial identities.

Painted Bodies

The *kurakas* commissioned European-style portraits of themselves in order to assert their power as indigenous leaders in the colonial world (Figure 7). Because theirs was a controversial position bridging the gulf between an Inkaic past and postconquest society, the *kuraka* needed to prove his legitimacy as a native elite. To this end, the established canons of European noble portraiture were manipulated for native cause. As we see in the eighteenth-century portrait of Don Marcos Chiguan, the *kuraka* adopted the conventions of power and authority prevalent in European noble portraiture, such as confident posture, three-quarter profile, inclusion of formal drapery in the background, a coat of arms, a royal standard, and a textual cartouche detailing the honors and heritage of the person portrayed.²² The Inka tunic, crown, and red fringe signified his native elite status, but these elements were diluted with the introduction of European garments, such as the lace sleeves. The portrait format with the incorporation of earned honors became the marker of indigenous power, not the body itself. The *kuraka* came to project his power and authority via European conventions, but in so doing he maintained corporeal integrity and superiority over non-elite Andeans.

Another related genre that appears in colonial Peru is the portrait series of past Inka rulers. The eighteenth century portrait of the long-since deceased king, Tupac Yupanqui, is just one in a series of all twelve Pre-Hispanic rulers (Figure 8). Again the colonial artist utilized the same European conventions as seen in the portraits of the native elites, such as authoritative posture and setting. The historic king was depicted dressed in his garments of rule with all the accompanying paraphernalia including his crown and royal fringe, scepter, sumptuous tunic, and the addition of a throne. He also maintained a three-quarter profile and the confident carriage befitting a supreme ruler.

These paintings served to demonstrate visually the *kuraka's* foundations of power. The *kuraka's* ownership of such paintings was accepted by the Spanish crown and colonial courts of law as sufficient evidence of noble heredity. The *kurakas*, however, were not claiming actual descent from the represented kings, but “through analogy, these mimetic images assert the historic relationship between the litigants and their ancestors,” a relationship from which the *kuraka's* power was established and one that enabled the continued power of these indigenous leaders in the colonial world.²³ Additionally, the noble elite would often insert portraits of themselves into the royal series to further emphasize their claim to royal heritage.²⁴

Although he did not possess actual descent from Inka royalty, the *kuraka* and his family did value these paintings because they functioned as surrogates for the deceased kings and were, therefore, considered to embody the Pre-Hispanic past, specifically the presence of the figure represented.²⁵ The colonial portraits of past Inka kings, thus performed on an iconic level akin to the *huauques* and mummies of previous generations and were similarly endowed with power.

In effect, what transpired with the introduction of European writing and painting techniques was the replacement of the physical body, invested with authenticating power, with the European tools of power: text and pictorial image. European forms of written and artistic legitimation, rather than physical descent, now served to authenticate the *kuraka's* rights and privileges.

Conclusion

The body played a central role in Inka origin mythology and continued to occupy the visual and mental spheres of the Inka as the empire developed. The king's strong physical presence was perpetuated with notions of divine creation and the

²⁰ MacCormack 92.

²¹ Irene Silverblatt, “Family Values in Seventeenth-Century Peru,” in eds. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Tom Cummins, *Native Traditions in the Postconquest World* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998) 65.

²² John Howland Rowe, “Colonial Portraits of Inca Nobles,” in ed. Sol Tax, *The Civilizations of Ancient America: Selected Papers of the XXIXth International Congress of Americanists* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1967) 258.

²³ Tom Cummins, “We are the Other: Peruvian Portraits of Colonial *Kurakakuna*,” in eds. Kenneth Andrien and Rolena Adorno, *Transatlantic Encounters* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1991) 217.

²⁴ Carolyn Dean, *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ: Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco* (Durham: Duke UP, 1999) 117.

²⁵ Maria Manzari Cohen, catalogue entries No. 93-97, in ed. Diana Fane, *Converging Cultures: Art and Identity in Spanish America* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996) 238-239.

ability to provide for his subjects. The corporeal power of the king and his sculptural double persisted after the ruler died, and both were treated as if still alive. Colonization of Peruvian natives dismantled Pre-Hispanic ways of life. New political and social structures replaced the Inka empire, and the bodies of powerful kings were replaced by European paintings. Despite all of these changes, however, the corporeal concepts that helped build an empire assisted the colonial natives in presenting themselves as empowered and not subjugated individuals.

The Andean desire to maintain indigenous customs in the face of European colonization finds voice in the native elite colonial portraits, which managed to convey some Pre-Hispanic beliefs about the body. The portraits not only dressed the Inka kings in symbols of their royal status (similar to the treatment of the mummies), they also, through their physical presence and depiction of ancestors, legitimized the power of indigenous elite in the colonial system and there-

fore, continued to celebrate the foundations of precolonial Inka rule and identity. In so doing, the Inka placed their bodies at the center of two converging cultures. This corporeal bridging of disparate cultures was not a concept altogether new to the Inka. The Quechua concept of *tinkuy*, “the powerful conjoining of complimentary opposites,” was firmly grounded in native Andean ideology.²⁶ In approaching colonization through the lens of *tinkuy*, native elite strategically positioned themselves in an empowered place: the intersection of two opposites, Pre-Hispanic history and European society.²⁷ The Andean manipulation of European forms and customs, therefore, managed to secure and establish Indian power in a colonial world dominated by Spain. As the fabric of Andean society took colonial shape and the indigenous perceptions of the royal body merged with Western notions, native beliefs found expression in new forms but ultimately remained an integral thread of the tapestry.

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²⁶ Dean 3-4.

²⁷ Dean 159-163.



Figure 1. Illustration of Inka king and his council, Guamán Poma, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, [1615] 1980, page 364, original manuscript housed in the Royal Library of Copenhagen, Denmark.



Figure 2. Sculptural head with postconquest retouchings, Inka, sixteenth century, diorite, height 38 cm, Museo de America, Madrid. From Larrea 1960: pl. XXVII.



Figure 3. Three figurines, Inka, AD 1440-1540, hammered gold, average height 6 cm, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Washington, D.C.



Figure 4. All-T'qapu Tunic, Inka, AD 1440-1540, camelid fiber and cotton, height 91cm, width 76cm, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Washington, D.C.



Figure 5. Illustration of a royal Inka mummy and his spouse receiving offerings, Guamán Poma, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, [1615] 1980, page 287.



Figure 6. Illustration of a royal mummy on procession, Guamán Poma, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, [1615] 1980, page 377.



Figure 7. Anonymous, *Portrait of Don Marcos Chiguan Topa*, c. 1745, oil on canvas, Museo de Arqueología, Cusco.



Figure 8. Cuzco School, *Portrait of Tupac Yupanqui*, mid-eighteenth century, oil on canvas, height 23 1/8", width 21 1/4", Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, 1995. 29.11.

Inventing the Past: The Representation of Florida in *Picturesque America*

Elizabeth B. Heuer

The nineteenth-century perception of Florida as a lush, tropical paradise was constructed through numerous fictional and nonfictional pictorial and verbal accounts. This vision—fueled by associations with the biblical garden of Eden and the Classical Elysian fields, its indigenous peoples frozen into perpetual and blissful Golden Age—was intended to entice settlers to colonize the region. Similar themes run through noted eighteenth-century botanist William Bartram's accounts of Florida in his *Travels of William Bartram* (1773), while Florida was described by one of its most famous nineteenth-century residents, Harriet Beecher Stowe, as "the sweetest paradise God ever made."¹ During the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of artist-tourists, attracted by the mild winters and resorts, made readily accessible by new railroad lines, perpetuated the notion of Florida as an edenic paradise of palms, tropical foliage, serene rivers, and white sandy beaches.

At mid-century, a landmark publication, *Picturesque America*, presented a pictorial collection of the nation's picturesque landmarks and localities, appealing to armchair travelers and creating a composite image of national reconciliation and resurgent pride in post Civil War America. Scholars have invariably discussed the representations of Florida contained within as consistent with the paradisaical view outlined above. This is true of the only comprehensive studies devoted to this publication: Allen L. Ramsier's *Picturesque America: Packaging America for Popular Consumption* (1985) and Sue Rainey's *Creating Picturesque America: Monument to the Natural and Cultural Landscape* (1994). Each argues that all the illustrations featured within its pages are representative of European conventions of the *picturesque*, as theorized in the many published essays on the topic penned by the eighteenth-century British artist and theologian William Gilpin.

However, in contrast to Ramsier and Rainey, I will argue here that a more critical analysis of the imagery reveals a new vision of Florida, an inhospitable land of death and decay, as seen in *A Florida Swamp* (Figure 1). Further, I will argue that the editors and publishers of *Picturesque America* intended to present a hierarchical view of the country, with an implicit ordering of the land into regions in various stages of social and economic development, consistent with popular theories

of social evolution. Finally, I will demonstrate that the unflattering portrayal of Florida, as largely populated by poverty-stricken, racial "others" unable to govern themselves wisely, was consistent with post-war representations of the South more generally. Cynically, it denies the existence of Florida's scenic beauty and fashionable watering holes, the very basis of picturesque tourism.

Picturesque America was one of the nineteenth-century's most popular and important publications. In its final bound form containing more than 900 wood engravings and 50 steel engravings, this multi-volume text was conceived of as an art object itself and as a monument to American nationalism, permitting readers virtual travel to American locales without venturing beyond the comfort of their Victorian parlors. Originating as a magazine series in *Appleton's Journal*, it was later serialized as a subscription book and published in bimonthly parts from 1872 to 1874 by D. Appleton & Co. The series was advertised by *Appleton's Journal* as "one of the most valuable pictorial series ever issued of American localities."²

Editor-in-chief, Oliver Bell Bunce led a team of twenty-eight staff writers and thirteen artists. The name of poet and Hudson River School advocate William Cullen Bryant was added as Editor in order to increase the series' appeal.³ Harry Fenn, who illustrated twenty-five of the sixty-five articles, was the first artist commissioned to travel the United States and gather sketches for the work. *Picturesque America* became an unprecedented success; nearly one million subscriptions were sold, satisfying a nation hungry for a comprehensive representation of American identity.⁴ The resulting publication was a constructed vision of greenery, church steeples and smoke stacks that signaled a fictitious harmony of pristine wilderness, industrial progress and middle-class morality, thus representing the nation as a blend of urban sophistication and natural wonder.

Florida was the first locality to be featured. "St. John's and Ocklawaha Rivers, Florida," published in *Appleton's Journal* on November 12, 1870, is a pictorial essay with illustrations by Harry Fenn and accompanying text by Thomas Bangs Thorpe. The following month, *Appleton's Journal* published a second installment featuring St. Augustine, Palatka, Picolata and Anastasia Island. Both essays, with minor modifications,

¹ Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Palmetto Leaves* (Gainesville: U of Florida P, 1968) 18.

² *Appleton's Journal* Nov. 1870, 620.

³ Sue Rainey, *Creating Picturesque America: Monument to the Natural and Cultural Landscape* (Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1994) 46.

⁴ Rainey 274.

were later included in the first bound volume of the *Picturesque America*.

Picturesque America, unique in its combination of literary and pictorial travel accounts, offered readers a strikingly unusual vision of Florida. *Scene in St. Augustine—the Date Palm* (Figure 2), focuses upon the palm tree, an established symbol of the Florida landscape. However, the environment that encompasses this palm is far removed from the lush, tropical habitat one would expect. Instead, Fenn has represented the palm surrounded by a dilapidated garden that is strewn with evidence of social entropy.

Implicit in the representations of Florida are popular notions of social evolution. During the nineteenth century, theories on evolution were affecting American perceptions of ethnic, racial, and class differences. Until now, the participation of *Picturesque America* in the discourse on evolution has remained unexamined.⁵ However, social evolutionary theory played an important role in regards to the overall mission and interests of D. Appleton & Co. Before assignment as editor of the *Picturesque America* series, Bunce was the assistant to Edward Livingston Youmans, Science Editor of *Appleton's Journal*, whose own scholarship focused on evolutionary theory. Although not an original thinker, he has been called “the most fervent admirer and popularizer of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer in early America.”⁶ Under Youman's guidance, *Appleton's Journal* became the American publisher of Darwin and Spencer. The firm had great success in 1860 with the first American edition of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. In 1871, it published Darwin's *Descent of Man*, a work that was so popular that it was more widely discussed than the most popular novels. D. Appleton & Co. also published Herbert Spencer's theories of social evolution, including his *Education* (1860) and *First Principles*, the first volume of his *Synthetic Philosophy* (1864).

Despite these emphases, scholars have neglected to consider popular theories of evolution on the publication of the *Picturesque America* series. Yet, Appleton's organization of the publication suggests an agenda to construct and organize American society into an evolutionary framework providing Americans with a vision of where the nation had been and where it was headed. This deliberate “ordering” of the country was part of a larger global paradigm that situated the United States at the evolutionary apex. This notion is evidenced by the fact that the publication of *Picturesque America* was followed in succession by *Picturesque Europe*, and *Picturesque Holy Land*. This established a pictorial collective that, taken on whole, clearly traces the emergence and entire evolution of Western culture from the Pre-Christian Mediterranean, through the rise and decline of Europe, to America's perceived ascension towards a utopian democratic society.

In representing the United States' place within this evolutionary

paradigm, *Picturesque America* organized the South, Northeast and West into evolutionary metaphors of the past, present and future played out economically according to relative works of industrial development. This portrayal of America was intended to appeal specifically to a Northeastern audience since this vision reflects a self-satisfying representation of this geographic region as the epitome of ideal, industrialized civilization, as seen in *City of New York from Brooklyn Heights* (Figure 3). In contrast, the relatively newer cities of the Mid-West offered Americans a vision of the future, wherein cities, such as *Cincinnati, View from the Carlisle Hotel* (Figure 4), represent the fulfillment of the American prophecy of Manifest Destiny. Other images of the West, including *Yosemite: Cathedral Spires* (Figure 5), offer a view of America's celebrated natural landmarks while simultaneously highlighting the wealth of natural resources and the seemingly limitless expanse of land. The South, as I will demonstrate, remained pre-industrial, evidently unable to evolve socially or culturally. Such a depiction justifies Northern intervention in and reform of the South, politically and economically, in post Civil War America.

Previous scholarship has argued that *Picturesque America* sought to convey a harmonious vision of reconciliation between the North and South. However, this interpretation fails to account for the underlying attitudes of Northern superiority that are evident in these illustrations. Rather than focusing on the industrial and civic progress of Southern reconstruction in cities such as Jacksonville, Florida, or Atlanta, Georgia, Fenn and Thorpe offer selected visions of the South, including *A Road-side Scene near Charleston* (Figure 6), which in their contrast to illustrations of the Northeast reinforce the social and cultural progress of the North while promoting the “primitive” society of the South. In accounting for this reductive portrayal, it is important to note that while Thorpe lived most of his adult life in the South, he was born in the North, and during the Civil War, served as a Colonel in the Union army. These political affiliations clearly appear to have had an effect on how he and Fenn represented the South to America.

Fenn's pictorial essays of Florida thus act as a metaphor for America's pre-industrial past, itself partitioned into three eras: the pre-historical, characterized by allusions to an edenic paradise; the colonial with references to European discovery and occupation, and the recent ante-bellum period.

The pre-historic past is suggested in the first plate of the *Picturesque America* series, *Mouth of the St. John's River—Looking in* (Figure 7), in which Fenn represents a desolate view of a sand bar rising from the ocean. The beach features the skeletal remains of an alligator and is populated by palm trees and birds. In his accompanying text, Thorpe writes, “The time was when Florida was an immense sand-bar...as barren as can be conceived, until through the course of ages seeds

⁵ Rainey 10. In discussion about the D. Appleton and Co. publisher, Rainey notes the *Appleton's* interest in promoting social evolutionary theorists in accord with the company's mission to educate America.

⁶ Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought 1860-1945* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1997) 106.

were carried to its shores...by the sea and wind...clothing it in luxuriant vegetation.”⁷ Blending allusions to biblical creation and theories of evolution, this pictorial and verbal narrative suggests an image of Florida as a symbol of the dawn of time. However, sand offers few of the nutrients of the soil supporting agriculture to the North, and Thorpe cynically undscores the fiction of this image, whose “main features illustrate the absurdity of the common notion that landscapes of tropical and semi-tropical latitudes are superior in luxuriance of vegetable production to those of the temperate zones.”⁸

Fenn’s *Waiting for Decomposition* (Figure 8) and its pendant *A Florida Swamp* are fantastic representations of a North Florida swamp. In *A Florida Swamp* Fenn focuses upon the dense foliage and wildlife that inhabit the dark recesses. These shallow waters appear to ripple with the movement of snakes, alligators and exotic water fowl, who stalk the murky waters for frogs and fish. The thick vegetation and protruding cypress knees render the alcove inaccessible for exploration. *Waiting for Decomposition* features the body of a dead alligator floating in the swamp waters. Overhead buzzards attracted by the carrion gather ominously in a dead cypress tree. While these scenes illustrate Florida’s evolution from a barren sandbar to a primordial jungle, inhabited by lower animal species, such as snakes, alligators and turtles, these scenes simultaneously suggest entropy. The nightmarish quality of this swamp, filled with dead vegetation and writhing with serpents, offers a new version of post Civil War Florida. Fenn’s images are neither inviting nor picturesque, but, in their reference to death and decay denote that something has gone awry in this garden of Eden.

Published in the second edition of the *Picturesque America* series, illustrations such as *St. Mark’s Castle* (Figure 9) recall the era of European discovery and occupation. Thorpe’s narrative for “St. Augustine, Florida” outlines the history of St. Augustine, making constant parallels between it and the old towns of Spain and Italy.⁹ By focusing upon the ruins of European landmarks and noting the community of St. Augustine, cited as the oldest European settlement in the United States, Fenn provides a visual transition between Europe and America.

In this regard, Florida is established as the site of the development and demise of European culture in America.

These images of Florida as a crumbling civilization also allude to the demise of the more recent ante-bellum era. Scenes of decrepit European architecture provide a stark contrast to those of the modern industrialized North and prosperous Midwest.

Unlike the sophisticated figures featured in images of the North East, the population of the Southern states is portrayed as consisting of recently freed slaves. Images of the South feature stereotypes of African Americans as poverty-stricken, inhabitants of a un-modernized society deny the true ethnic diversity of the South. It was, however, the newly-freed African American who was now symbolic of the South during the turbulent years of Reconstruction. In the context of popular social evolutionary thought, African Americans were perceived to be on the lowest rung of the evolutionary scale. The Florida Crackers ran a close second, perceived by Northerners as the lowest stages of Southern white civilization. Like the Native Americans, who were invisible in *Picturesque America* as obstacles to Mid-Western industrial development, these peoples were social-evolutionary children in need of paternal guidance and supervision. In the visual rhetoric of reformism beginning to take form in the 1870s, the South was the implicit “before” to the North’s “after.”

In conclusion, these unorthodox images of Florida challenge popular notions of Florida as a lush, topical paradise. In the subsequent publication of *Picturesque America*, titled *The Land We Live*, Florida is represented as a re-civilized Eden thanks to Northern intervention and reform (Figure 10). However, *Picturesque America*’s original construction of Florida as a vision of death, decay and cultural stagnation is representative of opportunistic Northern attitudes towards the South. Florida and the South were thus metaphors of a past that American culture had left behind. I suggest that within these leather bound books is a not-so-subtly manipulated representation of American cultural identity that is clearly conceived to “order” America geographically and culturally into a constructed paradigm of evolutionary ascension in order to promote American, especially Northern, attitudes of self-identity.

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⁷ “St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers, Florida,” *Appleton’s Journal*, 186.

⁹ “St. Augustine, Florida,” *Appleton’s Journal*, 189.

⁸ “St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers, Florida,” *Appleton’s Journal*, 186.



Figure 1. *A Florida Swamp*, 1874, wood engraving by F.W. Quartley after drawing by Harry Fenn, 8 3/16 x 5 1/8 inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. I.



Figure 2. *Scene in St. Augustine—The Date Palm*, 1874, wood engraving by Harley after drawing by Harry Fenn, 8 3/16 x 5 1/8 inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. I.



Figure 3. *City of New York from Brooklyn Heights*, 1874, steel engraving by G.R. Hall after drawing by A.C. Warren, 5 5/16 x 9 1/2 inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. II.

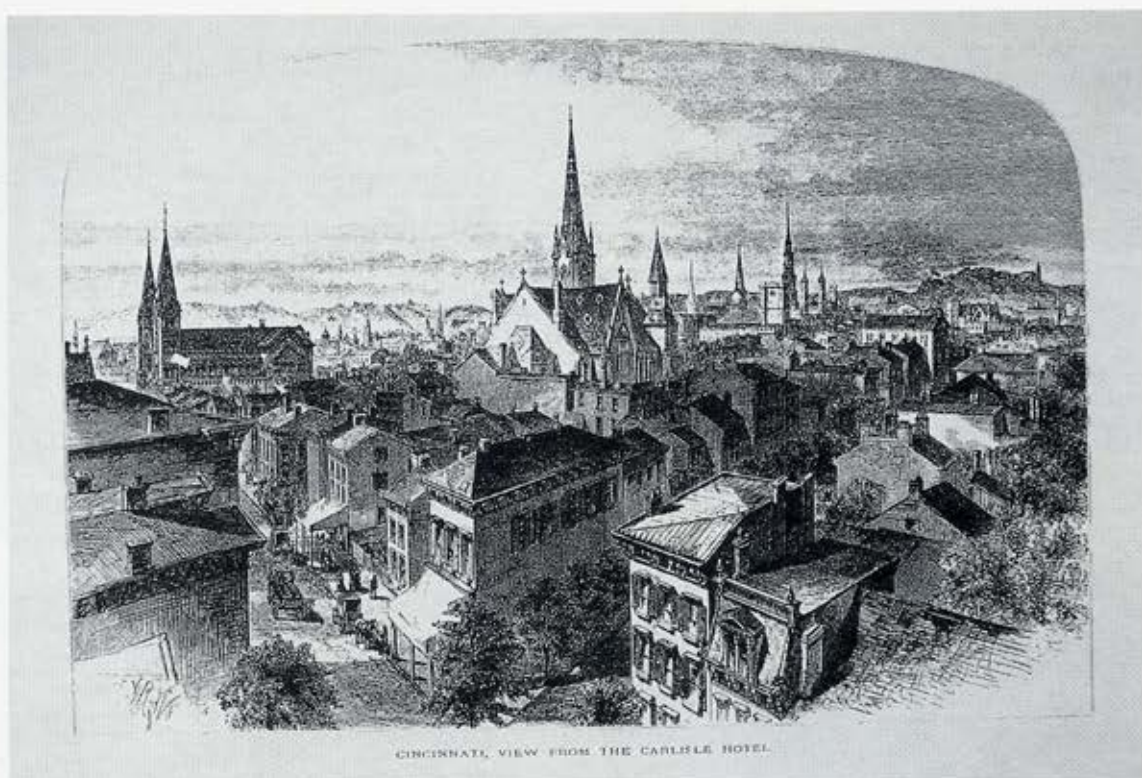


Figure 4. *Cincinnati, View from the Carlisle Hotel*, 1874, wood engraving by Philip Meeder and F.Y. Chubb after drawing by A.R. Waud, 7½ x 6 3/8 inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. II.

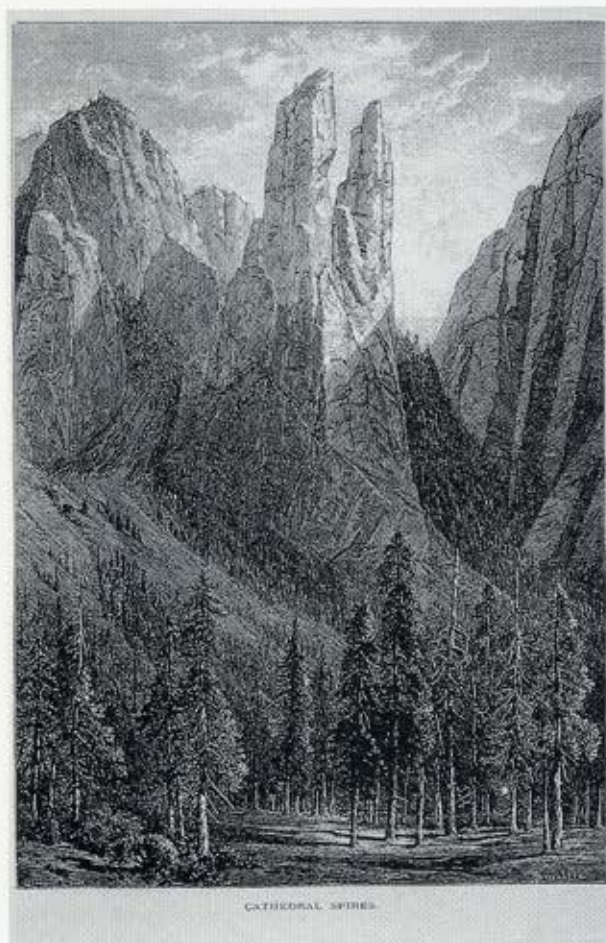


Figure 6. *A Roadside Scene near Charleston*, July 1871, wood engraving by A. Bobbet after drawing by Harry Fenn, 5 15/16 x 6 7/16 inches, *Appleton's Journal*, page 1.

Figure 5. *Yosemite: Cathedral Spires*, 1874, wood engraving by James David Smillie, 8 15/16 x 6 1/4 inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. II.



Figure 7. *Mouth of the St. Johns River Lookin-in*, November 1870, wood engraving by F.W. Quartley after drawing by Harry Fenn, $1\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ inches, *Appleton's Journal*, page 1.



Figure 8. *Waiting for Decomposition*, 1874, wood engraving by F.W. Quartley after drawing by Harry Fenn, $8\frac{3}{16} \times 5\frac{1}{8}$ inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. I.



Figure 9. *Watch Tower, St. Mark Castle*, 1874, wood engraving after Harry Fenn Drawing, 6½ x 5 inches, *Picturesque America*, vol. I.



Figure 10. *A Florida Orange-Grove*, 1886, wood engraving, 5 x 3 ½ inches, *Picturesque America*.

The Uncanny Memories of Architecture: Architectural Works by Rebecca Horn and Rachel Whiteread

Alla Myzelev

Rebecca Horn and Rachel Whiteread are two contemporary artists whose architectural installations address such important issues as collective and individual memory, social oblivion, and the place of public sculpture in contemporary society. They attempt to challenge the traditional vision of the relations between architecture and sculpture, private and public, old and new, as well as notions of nostalgia and the uncanny. Horn's *Concert in Reverse*, 1987 (Figure 1), and Whiteread's *House*, 1993 (Figure 2), question the concept of the public memorial as a commissioned work that represents those events the audience wishes to remember forever. They dismantle this conception and demonstrate that a public monument can also challenge the collective memory by bringing to life specters of a half-forgotten past. Both monuments no longer exist in their original form: *House* (Figure 3) was destroyed because of a decision made by a local governmental body. *Concert in Reverse* was a part of sculptural project in 1987 in Münster, Germany, then it was taken down and later reinstalled in the renovated tower in 1997. Although *Concert in Reverse* is now a permanent installation in Münster, it lost its immediate connection to the past and, therefore, partly ceased to question and challenge our perception.

Both pieces could be defined as architectural installations and motifs of the home that are familiar and domestic. *Concert in Reverse* and *House*, albeit in different ways, take familiar structures such as a tower or house, and bring forth from them previously neglected qualities such as secrecy, isolation, and oblivion. By doing so, Horn and Whiteread radically separate the universally familiar sense of domesticity from the viewer. This process of bringing up strange, unfamiliar, and, at times, ghostly qualities of known buildings makes reference to Freud's and Heidegger's discourses on the uncanny.

Both Freud and Heidegger agree that in order to experience an uncanny feeling one has to be surrounded by a familiar realm within which something becomes radically estranged.

Freud explains this feeling through the death-drive principle.¹ In his 1920 article "Beyond Pleasure Principles," he states that the repressed death drive can be seen through a repetition-compulsion mechanism. Since repetition-compulsion can be defined as a constant return to the traumatic situation long after the event itself, the uncanny can be seen as a part of this process. The uncanny, an unsettling feeling that one experiences in a familiar surrounding, is an attempt to relive previous trauma, which signifies the death-drive.² Unlike Freud's definition, Heidegger sees the uncanny as a manifestation of real "being toward death." Living in an everyday world or, in Heideggerian terms, in an unauthentic condition, a human being is reminded of the existence of the authentic world through an uncanny feeling.³ In both cases, the definition of the uncanny is connected to the connotation of death. Moreover, the reminder of death occurs in the familiar realm such as the home, be it native home or house. However, according to Mark Wigley neither Freud nor Heidegger destroy the familiar status of the house. They only define unfamiliar scenes within it. "The house becomes the site of a violence of which it is innocent."⁴ *House* and *Concert in Reverse* are based on revealing hidden characteristics and memories within familiar surroundings. Moreover, *House* and *Concert in Reverse* demonstrate that the house itself—its walls and edifice—is no longer secure. It conceals violence and the fundamental insecurity of humanity.

Concert in Reverse, which is part of a project that took place in the German City of Münster, is executed in a medieval tower which was erected between 1528 and 1536 to defend the city, that is now located in a public park. In the eighteenth century, Conrad Schlau renovated it, transforming it into a prison with three floors of cells, some with windows, many without. Later, it was used as a shelter in World War I, and in 1938, it was allocated to the Hitler Youth. Then, from 1939 until the fall of the Nazis, the tower was used by the

I wish to thank Dr. Brian Grosskurth for his suggestions and comments and Sharona Adamowicz for her suggestions and encouragement.

¹ In his article "The Uncanny" of 1919, Freud concludes that a primary source of uncanny feeling is the fear of being castrated. Considering the ambiguity of such a conclusion in my analysis I will rely on a less problematic discussion of the uncanny as a manifestation of the death drive taken from "Beyond Pleasure Principles." Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, vol. 17 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953-1974).

² Sigmund Freud, "Beyond Pleasure Principles," *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, vol. 18 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953-74) 38.

³ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein and Zeit*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State U of New York P, 1996) 6.

⁴ Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt* (London: The MIT Press, 1993) 108.

Gestapo for holding, torturing, and executing Russian and Polish prisoners.⁵ After the war, the tower was closed, the windows were filled with bricks. It remained in this condition, barricaded but roofless, for the next fifty years. With great difficulty, Horn succeeded in gaining permission to reopen the tower and install *Concert in Reverse*. Horn describes some of the public reaction to the installation:

I developed *Concert in Reverse*, where I had forty silver hammers banging on the walls of the prison cells like a communication from the past. And, here and there, were small candlelights of white energy for the souls. Above, from the highest trees, I hung a large glass funnel, from which water dripped, like a metronome or a kind of Far Eastern water torture, nine meters down into a black pond. Then to bring more life energy into the building, I added two pythons, which I think were in love with each other. Their diet of mouse twice a week so upset the organizers and the people of Münster that the show became a political scandal. Perhaps the symbolism of the snake upset their solidly Catholic spirit. But the hysteria over the death of a couple of mice was ironic, if not lamentable, after the silence about what had happened there fifty years ago.⁶

The tower itself, while not built by Horn, represents the basis of the work. The choice of the site reveals the desire to raise issues of memory embedded in the collective sub-conscious.⁷ Therefore, by choosing a given site, Horn shows her desire not to let the horrors of history become forgotten past. In this case, this need is particularly acute because the tower signifies not only the desire to forget but also the impossibility of forgetting. After all, the local population did not destroy the tower but barricaded it. Even without the installation, the tower would have maintained a ghostly quality of something that should be destroyed but could not completely disappear from the earth.

The spectral quality of the tower is, however, countered by the tower's resemblance to a monument. By reminding people of what happened in it during World War II, it bears an indexical quality like any other monument.⁸ On the other hand, any monument that stands in one place for a significant amount of time risks having its indexical quality references forgotten. It becomes "just another object," ceasing to represent the past

with any real sharpness.⁹ Robert Musil notes that, "the most striking feature of monuments is that you do not notice them. There is nothing in the world as invisible as a monument. Like a drop of water on an oilskin, attention runs down them without stopping for a moment."¹⁰

By re-opening the tower, Horn, therefore, renews the actuality of the structure and brings up the ghost of a seemingly forgotten past. It also can be argued that this work may be seen as recalling the uncanniness of a haunted house. The tower in the park had become so familiar to the population of Münster that it can be equated with a home—their hometown. By re-opening the tower, Horn not only brings up ghosts of the past, she also unsettles the familiarity of everyday life. By changing the tower, Horn haunts the whole park and city with an uncanny past that was either forgotten or never experienced by the majority of the population.

The process of the installation and its elements also create the ghostly, uncanny quality. Consisting of hammers that knock quietly but distinctly, the installation recalls prisoners knocking to communicate among themselves. The candles, which are located in various places in the tower, could symbolize the Judaic traditions of remembering the dead by the lighting of candles. The black bath and pythons symbolize death. Lastly, there is the glass funnel from which the water drops every twenty seconds down to the pool below. The sound of dropping water refers to a grotesque torture, in which the victims took a long time to die; therefore, the sound of monotonously falling water orchestrates viewer response.

Although Horn herself referred to the site in Münster as having acquired new energy as a result of her installation, most components of the work—candles, water, snakes—relate to death not to life. Horn succeeds in raising ghosts of the past, revealing the horror contained in the space to a new generation of Münster's population. She also attempts to show another dimension of time because in her work time has several circles. The first, the twenty-second cycle of the water dropping, gives the viewer the feeling of an uncanny repetition. The knocking of hammers gives another dimension of time, an individual's measure of human life and experience. Lastly, the re-opening of the tower gives the time a historic dimension. However, the historical aspect of Horn's installation is less important than the notion of human existence. Her objective is to communicate the life cycle of the human being.

In addition, the work as a whole, like many others of Horn's installations, refuses to allow a full interpretation. The space retains an inexplicable mysterious feeling even when all the parts of architecture and installation are deciphered

⁵ Germano Celant, "The Divine Comedy of Rebecca Horn," *Rebecca Horn* (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1993) 50.

⁶ Rebecca Horn, interview with Germano Celant, "The Bastille Interviews I, Paris 1993," *Rebecca Horn* 20.

⁷ The word sub-conscious is used here to show that this kind of historical memory lies not in people's unconscious, from whence this awareness of historical memory would be almost impossible to raise, but closer to the conscious.

⁸ The word "indexical" is borrowed from Rosalind Krauss' discussion of Rachel Whiteread's *House*. Rosalind Krauss, "X Marks the Spot," *Rachel Whiteread: Shedding Life* (Liverpool: Thames and Hudson, 1996) 74-82.

⁹ For more detailed discussion of this phenomenon see James Lingwood, introduction, *House* ed. James Lingwood (London: Phaidon, 1995) 7-11.

¹⁰ James Lingwood cited Robert Musil in his introduction to the *House* (11). Lingwood did not indicate the source of Musil's remark.

and explained. This resistance to full interpretation proves that the work, although based on known historical facts and created in a given space and time, remains uncanny.

The destiny of *Concert in Reverse* also demonstrates the spectral quality of the tower and the installation. Sometime after 1987, Münster's local government decided to renovate Zwinger tower and install *Concert in Reverse* permanently. Finally, in 1997, the sculpture was bought and reinstalled in Zwinger in a somewhat altered condition: the funnel expanded so that it almost covered the structure as a giant Plexiglas roof. The infamous snakes were replaced by two metal tongues, which moved around and away from each other, reminiscent of wired, electrical snakes.¹¹

This further development of the tower demonstrates that the specters of the past that Horn evoked could not disappear completely. *Concert in Reverse* permanently disrupted the perception of the past by Münster's population and, therefore, became part of the unforgettable past. The change of the most problematic part of the installation—the snakes—can be seen as an attempt to make unpleasant memories less traumatic, or, in Heideggerian terms, to adapt the being-toward-death to the unauthentic condition of everyday life.

On the whole, however, the 1997 version of *Concert in Reverse* loses a significant part of its immediacy and site-specificity and, therefore, becomes just a monument, similar to other public monuments which in time become unnoticed and lose some uncanny qualities.

Concert in Reverse fits into Schellig's definition of something that is supposed to be hidden coming to light.¹² However, this installation also shows that in order to be uncanny, it has only partially come to life. Hidden elements of the tower come back to life, but the space is still enigmatic. The uncanny quality of *Concert in Reverse* is inherent in its capacity to show the co-existence of life and death, which was expressed by symbols such as candles, representative of the souls of the dead, and by goose eggs, which, conversely are representative of the cycle of life. Therefore, *Concert in Reverse* offers hope by showing the possibility of new beginnings, however, it simultaneously rejects this hope by reminding the viewer of death through the dark past of its spatial setting. In a Heideggerian sense, *Concert in Reverse* reminds the human being (Da-sein) about its being-towards-death. The work reveals human anxiety over death, which in society is usually masqueraded by the elaborate formalities of funerals and funerary monuments.¹³ In Horn's work, the viewer cannot escape the totality of life. *Concert in Reverse* is an uncanny work because it uncovers

the essence of death within the everyday realm of Münster's park and, consequently, of another home.

Whiteread's *House* conveys the theme of death using different materials and a different context. *House* was produced in 1993 as a cast of a Victorian terrace house that was slated for demolition. By virtue of coming to life, it destroyed its original. This occurred because of Whiteread's technique of non-traditional casting in which the stage of "lost form" is omitted and the object itself becomes the lost form. In the case of *House*, Whiteread stripped the walls of the original house, sprayed the structure with concrete, let the concrete dry, and then dismantled the original house giving life to the gray, mute, and minimalist monument that stood vulnerable but solid in East London's Bow Neighborhood.

Similar to *Concert in Reverse*, *House* was not created as a public monument in the strictest sense of the word. However, it raised and perpetuated important matters concerning memory and loss. Being a temporary monument, *House* also had the advantage of being new and, therefore, easily noticeable. Furthermore, it brought attention to itself by raising issues that society wanted to forget, such as homelessness and political and racial exclusion. *House* remained visible because, as Nietzsche observed, "only that which does not cease to hurt remains in memory."¹⁴

House raised a great deal of controversy. People either liked it and considered it to be an original and interesting piece, or they aggressively hated it calling for its immediate demolition.¹⁵ This can be explained by *House*'s raising of the notions of memory and nostalgia which, consequently, gave the viewer uncanny feelings.

In many critical essays, *House* was connected to memory for bringing up not only the sweet memories of a long-gone peaceful past, but also the darker memories of the Thatcher years. During this period the surveys indicated that homelessness has risen dramatically throughout Britain in the early 1990s and that the problem in London was especially acute.¹⁶ One can argue, however, that the reason why the viewer experienced such negative feelings was not primarily the connection of *House* to the political and historical past, but the uncanny, ghostly quality of the work.

House connotes death through its repetitive nature. It is a negative cast of an architectural space—it functions on the same level as photography because it makes indexical references to its original. The original house destroyed by the time *House* was assembled is embedded in the sculpture as specter or ghost. This representation of the past is comparable to

¹¹ Permanent re-installation of the work, "The Contrary Concert" contribution to the Sculpture Project 1987, Skulptur Projekte in Münster '97. Internet. 18 June 2000. Available FTP: <http://www.museenmrw.de/landesmuseum/ausstellungen/index.html>.

¹² Freud, "The Uncanny" 225.

¹³ Heidegger 25.

¹⁴ Andreas Huyssen, "Sculpture, Materiality and Memory in the Age of Am-

nesia," *Displacement*, ed. Jessica Bradley and Andreas Huyssen (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1998) 18.

¹⁵ My statement is based on the articles that James Lingwood attached to the edition of *House*. For example in the *Guardian* of 22 November 1993 out of five passersby two hated the work and three stated that they liked it.

¹⁶ For a more detailed discussion of memory and nostalgia regarding *House* see Doreen Massey, "Space, Time and Politics of Location," *House*, ed. James Lingwood (London: Phaidon, 1995) 36-49.

Barthes' connection of photography to death:

[Photography] is the living image of a dead thing. For the photograph's immobility is somehow the result of a perverse confusion between two concepts: The Real and the Live: by attesting that the object has been real, the photograph surreptitiously induces belief that it is alive, because of that delusion which makes us attribute to Reality an absolutely superior, somehow eternal value; but by shifting this reality to the past ("this-has-been"), the photograph suggests that it is already dead.¹⁷

Therefore, photography and an architectural cast, by the very virtue of their creation, signify the death of the moment. Whiteread's cast allows the viewer to see the "naked death" without its elaborated masks of social ceremonies. Because the cast is not an exact replica, it has a life of its own. But this is a life that always references death. In the case of Whiteread's work, this is even more enhanced by the mausoleum-like appearance of her work. The familiar "house" refers to death through the uncanny in a way similar to photography, in which death is embedded as permanent "has-been." Therefore, *House* can be seen as referencing both the death that is embedded in reproduction as well as the potentiality of death through the uncanny.

Moreover, *House* as an architectural work can be explained within the tradition of metaphysical architectural metaphors. By casting a non-functional structure, it can be argued that Whiteread has built a metaphor for the house. Rooted in traditional architectural education, *House* as a cast of the solid space of an interior can be read according to Wigley, as representing the very essence of metaphysics:

As the traditional figure of an interior divided from an exterior, [house] is used to establish a general opposition between an inner world of presence and an outer world of representation that is then used to exclude that very figure as a 'mere' metaphor, a representation to be discarded to the outside of philosophy.¹⁸

Therefore, *House*, which consists only of a solidified interior, represents the embodiment of the architectural metaphor within

metaphysics. It represents the very entity, the being, and the presence, which in metaphysics can be sustained only by the form of the house.

Whiteread's *House*, however, does deconstruct the architectural notion and, therefore, the architectural metaphor itself. By casting interior space outside, by depriving the structure of its usual functionality, and by reversing the viewers' conception of the house as an inhabited place, Whiteread dismantles traditional notions of architecture within the architectural domain. While non-functional, *House* is undoubtedly still definable as architectural structure. Architecture is represented here as being stripped of all its ornamental and representational decorum.¹⁹

In Horn's *Concert in Reverse* and in Whiteread's work, the house is not seen as a metaphor for innocence; it is no longer just about keeping violence in the interior. These works deconstruct the essence of home and domesticity by estranging the architecture they are dealing with from such notions. In *Concert in Reverse*, this happens through the process of "destruction" of the viewer's familiar notion of tower, making it instead a reminder of death and eternal homelessness. *House* literally turns the walls of the structures inside out. By solidifying the interiors, Whiteread brings all the repressed desires and thoughts outside. Ultimately, this process deconstructs notions of domesticity through radical practices in art and philosophy.

Horn and Whiteread create works that deal respectively with the 'deconstruction' of the notion of home. *Concert in Reverse* and *House* bring forward the dark side of the familiar space of the house. They demonstrate that within the familiar realm there is always something uncanny hidden, something which in its turn can completely change the meaning of the object and the viewer's the relationship with it. Horn's and Whiteread's pieces undermine not only the viewers' perceptions of a tower in Münster or a Victorian terrace home, they disrupt the normal relationship between being and house—between any human being and his/her presumed place in the world. Therefore, they deconstruct the notion of architectural shelter as well as the philosophies on which they are built.

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¹⁷ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997) 79.

¹⁸ Wigley 102.

¹⁹ Wigley, 118.

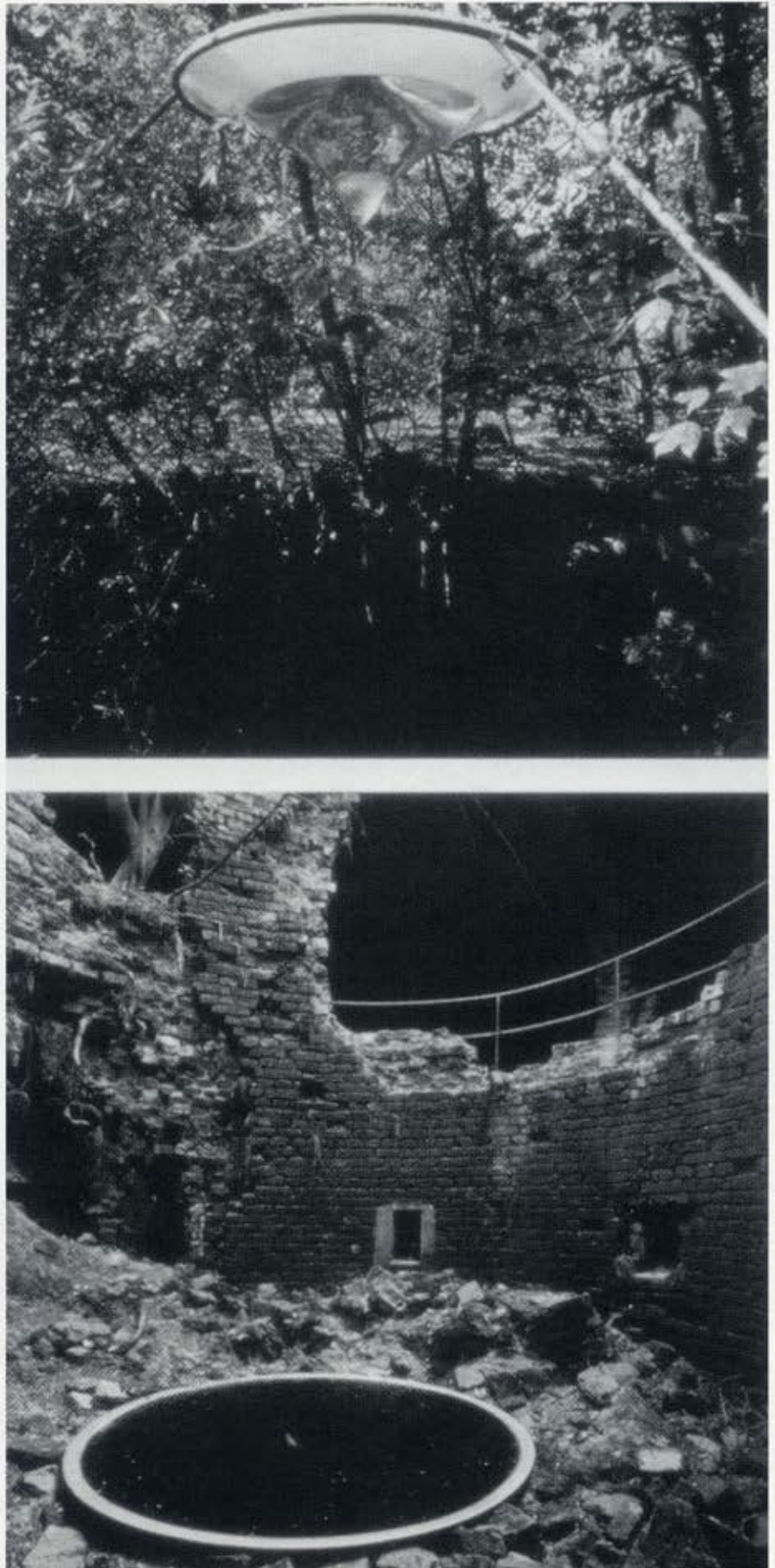


Figure 1. Rebecca Horn, *Concert in Reverse*, 1987, plexiglas funnel, forty steel hammers with motors, forty candles, two steel funnels, glass cage with two snakes, goose eggs and two steel rods, site specific installation for Skulptur Projekte in Münster. Courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery, New York.

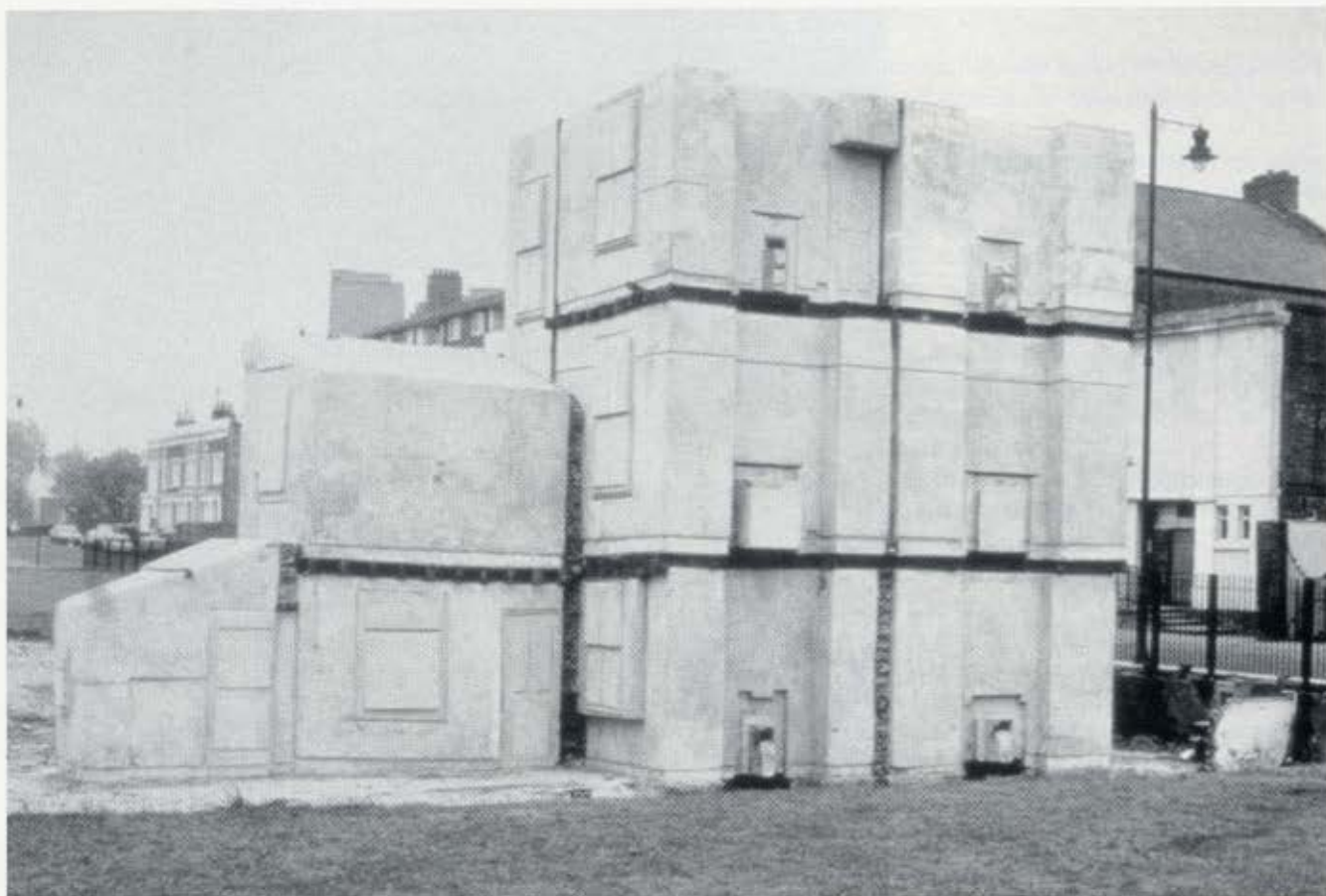


Figure 2. Rachel Whiteread, *House*, 1993, plaster and cement, 193 Grove Rd., London, October 25 - December 1993. Courtesy of the Artist and Luhring Augustine.

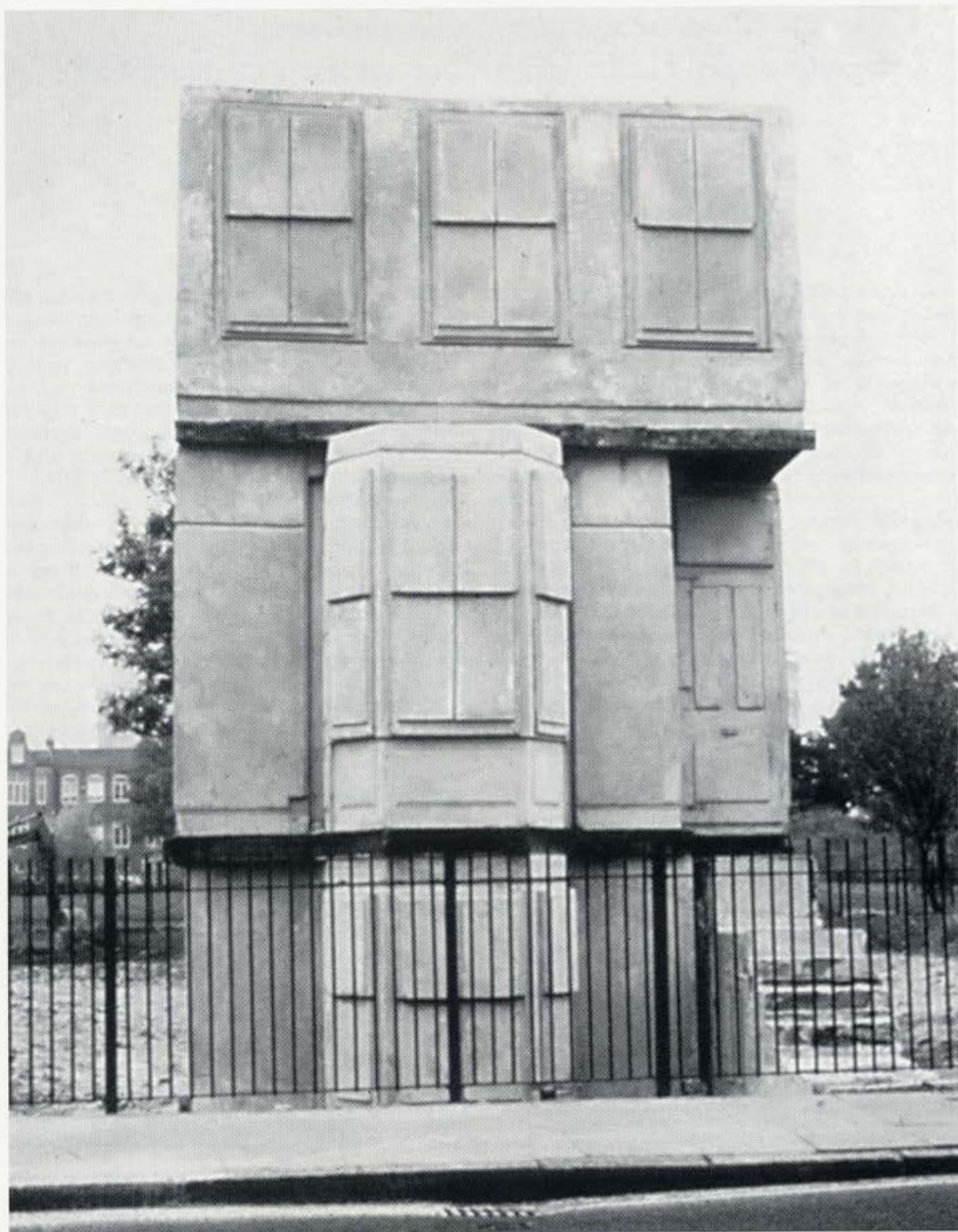


Figure 3. Rachel Whiteread, *House*, 1993, plaster and cement, 193 Grove Rd., London, October 25 - December 1993. Courtesy of the Artist and Luhring Augustine.

Lorna Simpson's *Public Sex* Series: The Voyeuristic Presence and the Embodied Figure's Absence

Nicole De Armendi

The highly acclaimed African-American artist, Lorna Simpson has acquired a strong reputation for images of 'blackness' that counter stereotypes by persuading viewers to acknowledge those aspects of black identity that are usually overlooked in a white patriarchal society. To address the invisibility and anonymity of black individuals in a white supremacist culture, Simpson explores such power relations as the colonizing gaze and the dichotomy between public bodies and private selves.

In 1995 Sean Kelly's SoHo gallery debuted Simpson's *Public Sex* series that introduced a new visual approach to the presentation of bodies defined by socially constructed norms and prejudices that promote the power structures of dominant groups. The series is composed of six large-scale, multi-paneled photographs silk-screened on felt. Consisting of elliptical texts paired with straightforward imagery, the images are constructed around the theme of private activities taking place in public spaces. Inspired by a book on public sex that deals with the laws and social mores surrounding this activity, Simpson photographed the following seven public sites potentially associated with private sexual acts: a rock, a parked car, a fire escape, an office building, a park and two beds.¹ Accompanying the photographic image are one or two text panels, which contain a phrase or narrative suggesting sexual encounters, illicit activities and voyeuristic pleasures that might relate to these surprisingly unpopulated sites.

What appear to be objective photographs, or seamless representations of reality, are actually somewhat nebulous and fragmented images that deny a straightforward reading and interpretation.² The division of the photographic image into multiple felt panels evokes the constructed nature of photo

collages and photomontages—techniques that rupture the belief in the seamlessness of reality, insist upon meaning and thereby urge interpretation.³ The photographs in the *Public Sex* series, through this literal emphasis on the constructed nature of the images, lead viewers outside the photographic field in search of a lucid reading of the image. The initial response is to read titles and captions. The nondescript titles of the works in the *Public Sex* series, however, function in a manner similar to the image and offer no immediate explanation.

Efforts to decipher a direct meaning from the documentary-style photographs are further circumvented by the texts, which supply the content, context and possible interpretations of each image without ratifying a particular reading. This juxtaposition of apparently unrelated texts consisting of seductive imagery redirects observers' attention away from mere observation and toward the more complex act of reading representations dialectically. The dynamic relationship between text and image destabilizes traditional rules of reading and looking by prompting viewers to formulate readings of the piece that the images may not validate or support.

Simpson manipulates spectatorship by utilizing the Brechtian method of distancing that relies on audience participation through speculative detachment.⁴ The playwright Bertolt Brecht was an advocate of the epic theater, an anti-representational performative style that incorporates audiences in the production of art's meaning by forcing them to view the work from a detached critical standpoint rather than passively identifying with the fictional characters on stage. Using such estranging devices as actors addressing the audi-

I would like to thank Dr. Robert Hobbs, M. Kathryn Shields and Michael S. Holko for their insightful commentary and generous support. My gratitude also extends to Susan Kelly of Sean Kelly Gallery for her invaluable assistance with the illustrations.

¹ In a videotape about the series, Simpson recounts how she found this book on public sex. David Bowden dir., "Lorna Simpson," *A World of Art, Works in Progress*, Program 1 (Portland, Or.: So. Burlington, VT: Oregon Public Broadcasting [producer]; Annenberg/CPB Project [distributor], 1996).

² Thanks to Dr. Jack Freiberg for pointing out the unseaming of reality in these images and the subsequent emphasis placed on the construction of these photographs.

³ Rosalind Krauss refers to the seamless nature of photography in the following terms: "By carrying on its continuous surface the trace or imprint of all that vision captures in one glance, photography normally functions as a

kind of declaration of the seamlessness of reality itself." After establishing this premise, Krauss discusses how dada and surrealist photographers challenged this notion of seamlessness through the use of collage and photomontage. In her discussion of how collage and photomontage reveal another sense of reality that carries a particular reading, Krauss argues that the reliance upon interpretation in these constructed photographic images indicates a textual structure at work in the image. Replacing the notion of photorealism in the constructed photograph is what Krauss calls the "language effect." The fragments function as signs or words and the spacing surrounding them provides the syntax. Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," *L'Amour Fou: Surrealism and Photography* (New York: Abeville Press, 1985) 25-35.

⁴ Marianne Kurylo-Litvak, *The Art of Lorna Simpson: Challenging Preconceived Notions with Invisibility Imagery*, thesis, Queens College, City University, 1998, 17.

ence and holding placards, back projections and unfamiliar settings, Brecht focused on creating a sense of discontinuity and unfamiliarity that generated an alienating effect for the audience.

The *Public Sex* series evokes Brecht's epic theater: documentary-style photographs serve as backdrops for a non-linear narrative comprised of commentary, abstract conversations, and excerpts from movie scripts. The combination of Simpson's textual collages and multi-paneled grainy photographs ruptures any sense of reality by underscoring the constructed nature of the works. Similar to Brecht's montages, Simpson's text/image relationship encourages a critical examination of contemporary social, economic and political practices.⁵ In the way the works are experiential, they require the delays of looking, reading, comparing and contrasting. The dialectical process involved in viewing this series leads viewers to critically explore how prejudice is constructed and transported by way of power mechanisms invested in social and political structures.

Power enforced through tactics of surveillance is a central issue in this series. Focusing on *The Park* (Figure 1) and *The Bed* (Figure 2), two of the most complex works in the series, this essay examines how Simpson addresses the role surveillance plays in the development and reinforcement of prejudice based on skin tone and sexual tendencies. The theories of French philosopher Michel Foucault, a major late twentieth-century authority on surveillance, are introduced to elucidate the mechanics of power at play in Simpson's *Public Sex* series.

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault examines the rise of the prison and those techniques through which disciplinary power functions.⁶ The system of power that serves as Foucault's major model is Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, which was developed in the nineteenth century. Bentham's design for the Panopticon depicts a circular building divided into glass-walled cells with a tower at its center from which a warden, doctor or other institutional figure can observe the inmates in their daily lives.⁷ This disciplinary system, in which surveillance serves as a means for enforcing acceptable behavior, is successful when the subjects under observation end up policing themselves because they cannot anticipate or even know when they are being watched. Foucault uses the example of the Panopticon to demonstrate how knowledge, based on observation and theories of discipline, infuses power. He conjectures that power depends on relations between entities: it is not controlled by individuals or groups.

Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there...not only do individuals circulate between its thread; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power.... Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.⁸

The objectifying result of surveillance is summarized by Foucault as: "An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing it to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over and against himself."⁹ This policing of the self is a consequence of not knowing when one is being watched, and the effect of disciplinary power is diffused to the point that the external eye is internalized and self-directed.

In the *Public Sex* series, Foucauldian notions of power surface in Simpson's analysis of the invisibility and discrimination against people of darker skin as well as those participating in sexual conduct not sanctioned by society. Exploring how race, class and sexuality affect power, she hits upon three major aspects of Foucault's theory: power relations, the Panopticon, and the subject's internalization of the external eye.

Serving as the "projective eye" of surveillance, the camera transports both the photographer and the work's audience to a position of dominance not unlike the tower of Bentham's Panopticon. From this elevated vantage point, consistent with that of the photographer and characters Simpson introduces in the narratives, viewers of *The Park* are immediately positioned in a voyeuristic position of surveillance, which affords knowledge and thus power. The identity of the text's narrator is central to the analysis of *The Park*. It is unclear whether the narrator is another voyeur, the artist, or the viewer. The text shifts from first to third person, from participant to spectator, puzzling viewers and in turn increasing their curiosity. Mirroring Brechtian techniques of distancing, Simpson prevents her audience from identifying directly with any specific character in the narratives through a disjunctive use of language, which prompts new readings and distinct interpretations of the artworks. Presented with various perspectives from within the network of power, viewers are introduced to the way power functions via knowledge gained through the observation of others.

On the text panel located to the left of the image, Simpson writes: "Just unpacked a new shiny silver telescope. And we

⁵ The epic theater allowed Brecht to encourage "a rational critique of contemporary social, economic and political practices." Roger Fowler, "epic theater," *Dictionary of Theories*, ed. Jennifer Bothamley (London: Gale Research International Ltd, 1993) 178.

⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

⁷ For an illustration of Bentham's Plan of the Panopticon refer to Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, plate 3.

⁸ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980) 98.

⁹ Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 154.

are up high enough for a really good view of all the buildings and the park.... On the sidewalk below a man watches figures from across the path." In response to this account, the panel on the right states: "The lone sociologist walks through the park...he decides to adopt the role of voyeur and look out in order to go unnoticed and noticed at the same time." The fragmented and elusive narrative brings viewers into the work and produces an awkward feeling of complicity. During a videotaped interview, Sean Kelly states: "It's almost like you're eavesdropping on something and that refers back to the voice in the text in the way that you're almost hearing something you're not meant to hear, you're finding something you weren't quite supposed to find."¹⁰

Knowledge resulting from surveillance grants observers the authority to codify and enforce, through social practices, accepted truths and tolerable infractions. In *The Park*, Simpson demonstrates how science plays a part in the construction of these social norms. The figure of the sociologist in her text introduces the scientific treatment of the body as an instrument for securing power relations through the justification of such categories as normalcy and deviancy. The sociologist in *The Park* is a reference to Laud Humphreys who in the 1970s studied homosexual activities in the men's public bathrooms, known as tearooms.¹¹ Situated in the center of the sexual activity he is monitoring, Humphreys serves as a lookout announcing the arrival of police—a position that granted him unmediated access to witness sexual developments.

The flexibility of power positions is a prominent theme in *The Park*. In the text panel on the left, the narrator comments on the man watching "figures from across the path," thereby stressing how he too is observed and further integrates viewers into the piece by highlighting the sociologist's role as a surrogate voyeur. In the same manner that he evaluates the sexual conduct of tearooms, those observing the sociologist could reach their own assumptions about his sexuality because of his apparent involvement with these men.¹² The impossibility of unbiased reading, the misleading quality of appearances and the importance of context are thus indicated in this piece to emphasize the unreliability and inaccuracy of generalized knowledge.

Through these ambiguous positions in which viewers are placed, Simpson sets up a parallel between watching and being watched, demonstrating how power is transmitted via the objectifying gaze and invested in a system rather than in a hierarchical structure. She creates a complex chain of voyeurism that includes the viewer, the photographer, the sociolo-

gist, and his subjects. This voyeuristic chain demonstrates how systems of power become mechanisms in which viewers and voyeurs are subjected to the gaze of public surveillance as well as being its promoters. The ambivalent locus of the gaze in this piece echoes Foucault's description of power relations.

Applying the existential dilemma of the internalization of surveillance to black identity and consciousness, African-American feminist scholar bell hooks reflects:

Most black folks in the United States are colonized—that is think about "blackness" in much the same ways as racist white mainstream culture. Living in white-supremacist culture, we mostly see images of black folks that reinforce and perpetuate the accepted, desired subjugation and subordination of black bodies by white bodies.¹³

In her *Public Sex* series, Simpson may be commenting on this internalization of the objectifying gaze. *The Bed* plays an interesting role in the series since it is the only piece depicting an interior view, using a double image, and referencing racial and economic discrimination. This distinction raises several profound questions. The first is a reaction to critical reviews of the series itself, which typically analyze its theme of sexuality in universal terms by asserting that it is unconcerned with race.¹⁴ If this assertion is accurate, why does Simpson specifically refer to skin tone in the text for *The Bed*? The text panel states:

...decided to have a quick nightcap at the hotel having checked in earlier. Hotel security is curious and knocks on the door to inquire as to what is going on, given our surroundings we suspect that maybe we have broken the too many dark people in the room code.

The mysterious imagery and the slippery arrangement of the text place viewers in the narrational 'we,' even before 'we' connotes a collective concerting of 'dark' people. Later, the narrator addresses issues of surveillance and privacy in terms of 'you.' "More privacy is attained depending on what floor you are on, if you are in the penthouse suite you could be pretty much assured of your privacy, if you were on the 6th or 10th floor there would be a knock on the door." Viewers simultaneously penetrate and stand outside the indeterminate 'you' that may refer to viewers, general human subjects, the dark bodies discussed or their light-skinned counterparts.

Simpson employs textual ambiguity and equivocal lan-

¹⁰ Sean Kelly in Bowden's "Lorna Simpson," *A World of Art, Works in Progress*.

¹¹ The reference to Laud Humphreys was pointed out by Kurylo-Litvak in *The Art of Lorna Simpson*. Kurylo-Litvak 32.

¹² This visual interplay also functions like a chain of signifiers where actions, postures and appearances become signs that are (mis)read.

¹³ bell hooks, "Female Difference: The Black Female Body," *Lorna Simpson* (Vienna: Wiener Secession, 1995) 9-10.

¹⁴ Most of the publications dealing with the *Public Sex* series address the "universality" of the works and discount the significance of discrimination based on anything other than gender and sexuality. Eleanor Heartney, for example, stated the following: "Race, previously one of Simpson's dominant themes, is played down here." Eleanor Heartney, "Figuring Absence," *Art In America* (Dec. 1995): 87. While issues of race or skin color may not be the theme of the series or accentuated in many of the works, this paper hopes to reveal that Simpson's sensitivity to the subject of racial prejudice plays a more complex and critical role than these critics claim.

guage in *The Bed* to challenge viewer's response to racial and economic difference. The term 'dark' is another enigmatic device, a slippery signifier, interjected to provoke an unmediated response based on racial assumptions. Using the term 'dark' Simpson demonstrates how stereotypes play into everyone's reading of images and text by prompting viewers to immediately conclude that she is referring to blacks or people of color.¹⁵ Those familiar with her previous works concerned with issues of black identity could be conditioned to read the *Public Sex* images, particularly *The Bed*, as a statement on black invisibility.

In this piece, however, Simpson introduces broader prejudicial issues by presenting 'dark' bodies in opposition to 'light,' a quality not solely defined in terms of the white dominant class. This other-than-light-skin classification may not only reference the marginal position of blacks, Latinos and American Indians in white society, but also discrimination against darker skinned people of the same race. The emphasis on gradations of skin color, rather than generalizations of race, revert the work's focus to the individual.

The next question is: Why does Simpson choose to present the issue of racial identity within the context of a hotel room, the least 'public' of the sites in the series. Perhaps, the anonymity of a hotel room parallels the public/private faces of those prisoners in the cells of a Panopticon who are known from the outside, and whose bodies and minds are objectified as they are being surveilled. In both spaces—the hotel room and the Panopticon—the gaze of public surveillance penetrates the boundaries of the private and personal.

These 'dark' individuals that populate the text, like the sociologist and other voyeurs mentioned in *The Park*, are invisible in the photographs, further revealing a deliberate disparity in the information provided to viewers. The body, which is simultaneously absent and present in these works, may reference the invisibility of socially marginalized and oppressed bodies. In the same way that these existing bodies are denied visibility in these public sites, the presence of those subjected to the dominant group's oppressive position is overlooked and erased in social spaces. Even within the relatively private realm of the hotel room, the individuals have internalized the objectifying and controlling eye that only sees in terms of generalities and appearances according to regulated norms and knowledge. Simpson's viewers, on the other hand, are informed of

the presence of these individual or private bodies through the dialectical relationship between the text and photograph that forces them to acknowledge the notion of invisibility.

When juxtaposed with the other images in the series, *The Bed* also stands out in its use of a double image. The photographic technique of doubling, its semiological significance and its implications of dispossession are extensively discussed by Rosalind Krauss in *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*. Defining doubling as the "signifier of signification," Krauss demonstrates how the double image communicates signification, a meaning beyond the purely visual or documentary image.¹⁶ More than an illustration, the bed becomes the signifier of an underlying meaning in the same way the fragmentary surface of the print accentuates its construction. By doubling the object portrayed and refraining from presenting the title in plural form, Simpson further complicates the interpretation of this piece. The beds are not identical and the title implies one bed, while two beds are represented. The deliberately inexact duplication and inconsistent titling opens the reading of the image onto more subjective levels of interpretation.

Beyond serving as an indicator of signification, a wedge in the seamlessness of reality and a reminder of subjectivity's role in the attribution of meaning to these works, doubling also refers to the issue of invisibility that is central to *The Bed*. Krauss associates the use of the double in surrealist photography with the sociobiological theory on mimicry that Roger Caillois set forth in the seventh volume of the surrealist publication *Minotaure*.¹⁷ In this 1935 publication, Caillois asserted that conscious subjects, upon blending with the surrounding space, become dispossessed.¹⁸ Furthermore, Krauss indicates how this notion of dispossession is developed by the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan in his mirror theory "in which the subject occurs only as alienated from himself—for he is defined or inscribed as a *being-seen*...."¹⁹ Basing her argument on Caillois and Lacan's theories, Krauss concludes that the doubled subject in the photographic prints of surrealist Maurice Tabard is "a subject that is dispossessed within its very being by the fact of being seen."²⁰ The duplication of the represented image in *The Bed* also introduces the notions of invisibility and dispossession. Simpson's subjects, which are visually absent in the photographed space, are dispossessed by their objectification via observation and subsequent anonymity.

¹⁵ Further complicating signification and increasing the audience's awareness of their own subjective interpretation, the signifier "dark" can also connote such notions as mysterious, suspicious, evil, death, etc.

¹⁶ Krauss explains, "In being seen in conjunction with the original, the double destroys the pure singularity of the first. Through duplication, it opens the original to the effect of difference, of deferral, of one-thing-after-another." She compares doubling in surrealist photography with the notion of reduplication in linguistics that attributes signification to the reduplication of a sound, rather than dismissing it as mere babble, since it suggests the intent of the speaker. "Repetition is thus the indicator that the ... sounds ... have been rendered deliberate, intentional, and that what they intend is meaning." Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism" 28-31.

¹⁷ Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," *L'Amour Fou: Surrealism and Photography* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985) 74.

¹⁸ Krauss translates: "Mimicry, Caillois argues, is the loss of this possession because the animal that merges with its setting becomes dispossessed." Krauss, "Corpus Delicti" 74-78.

¹⁹ Caillois' article influenced not only the surrealist group but also the psychoanalytical circles in Paris at the time. The focus on doubling, in this case "replication of a conscious subject by his pictured duplicate," serves as the foundation for Jacques Lacan's mirror stage. Krauss, "Corpus Delicti" 74.

²⁰ Krauss, "Corpus Delicti" 82.

The works in the *Public Sex* series challenge the power relations and social values that pass judgment upon these bodies. While maintaining a sense of bodily presence, Simpson avoids any visual reference to specific bodies. Some of the text panels directly refer to the body. For example, in *The Fire Escape* (Figure 3), "...they ended up with impressions on their skin in the shape of stripes." In others, it manifests itself as a voyeuristic eye, an eavesdropping ear, conspiring voices, and the passions and desires described in *The Rock* (Figure 4), *The Car* (Figure 5), and *The Clock Tower* (Figure 6). Her unpopulated images are statements about the private self and its identity within the public space where its politicization is placed in high relief.

Considering (1) Lorna Simpson's ability to have anyone from any culture identify with her images, and (2) the importance of audiences in her work, it appears that she assessed the venue of these works and acknowledged that her audience would consist mostly of the empowered art world population. Perhaps in an attempt at equalizing the traditional power relations of the gaze, particularly the subject-spectator paradigm, Simpson used a seemingly neutral imagery that would be a

more effective way of drawing this audience into her work and communicating the invisibility of certain minority groups, as opposed to images laden with references to a specific racial and sexual identity. Her allusive treatment of racial issues in this series is most likely yet another subversive tactic aimed at having viewers, regardless of race, discover their prejudices in the process of looking at the works.²¹

Just as audiences of Brecht's plays do not suspend disbelief, viewers of Lorna Simpson's works become aware of their role in the construction of its meaning through broken imagery and paired text/image presentation. The disparity of visual evidence and text not only creates the stage for the exposition of prejudicial issues of a sexual and racial nature, it also displays inherent assumptions made about the images. By deconstructing both the imagery and possible meanings implied by Simpson's polysemous photo-text works, viewers question their own methods of reading, challenge their own preconceived notions, and ultimately initiate the process of reconstructing a positive identity from negative stereotypes.

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²¹ In the *Public Sex Series*, Simpson also explores the preconceptions and positions of power that result from socioeconomic classifications and the value systems placed upon sexuality. Unfortunately, the length of this ar-

ticle does not permit a thorough discussion of the pertinent issues that Simpson raises and challenges in connection with these constructions of power.



Figure 1. Lorna Simpson, *The Park*, 1995, serigraph on six felt panels with two felt text panels, 33.5 x 22.5 inches each panel. Courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

Text panels for *The Park*

[left panel] *Just unpacked a new shiny silver telescope. And we are up high enough for a really good view of all the buildings and the park. The living room window seems to be the best spot for it. On the sidewalk below a man watches figures from across the path.*

[right panel] *It is early evening, the lone sociologist walks through the park, to observe private acts in the men's public bathrooms. These facilities are men's and women's rooms back to back. He focuses on the layout of the men's room—right to left: basin, urinal, urinal, urinal, stall, stall. He decides to adopt the role of voyeur and look out in order to go unnoticed and noticed at the same time. His research takes several years. He names his subjects A, B, C, X, Y, and O, records their activities for now, and their license plates when applicable for later.*



Figure 2. Lorna Simpson, *The Bed*, 1995, serigraph on four felt panels with one felt text panel, 36 x 22.5 inches each panel. Courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

Text panel for *The Bed*

It is late, decided to have a quick nightcap at the hotel having checked in earlier that morning. Hotel security is curious and knocks on the door to inquire as to what's going on, given our surroundings we suspect that maybe we have broken the too many dark people in the room code. More privacy is attained depending on what floor you are on, if you are in the penthouse suite you could be pretty much assured of your privacy, if you were on the 6th or 10th floor there would be a knock on the door.

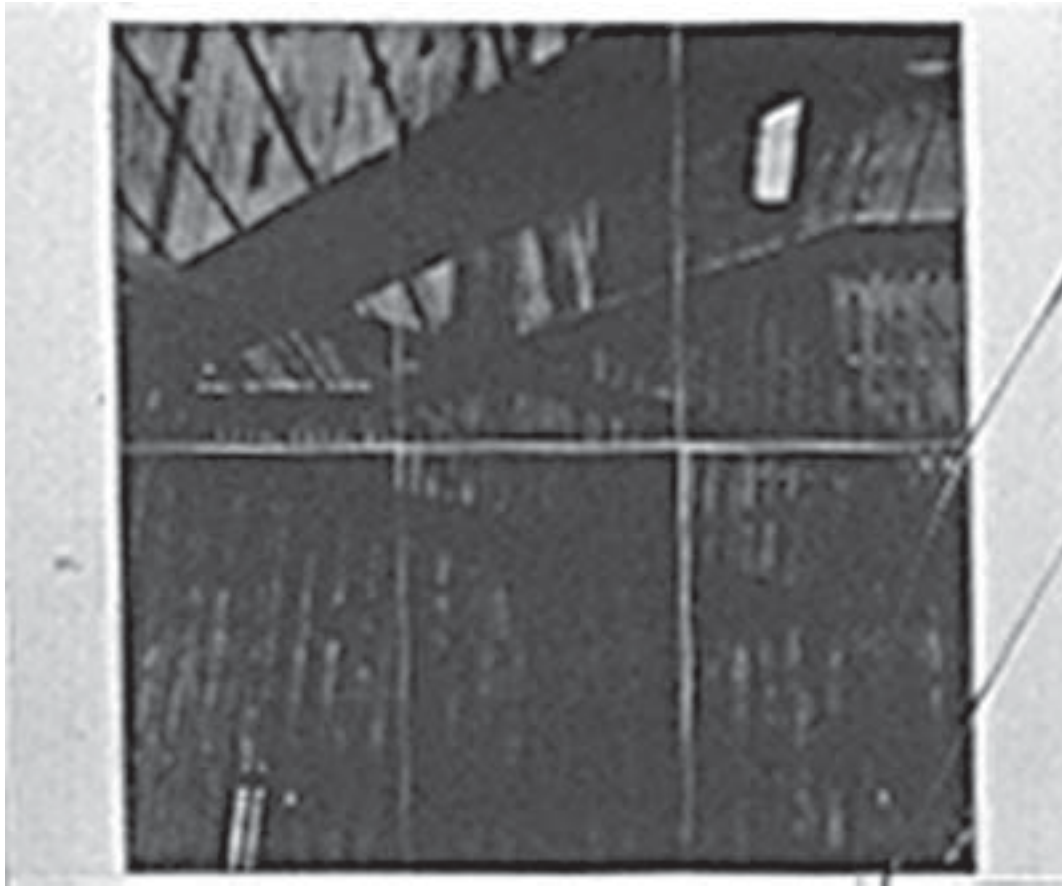


Figure 3. Lorna Simpson, *The Fire Escape*, 1995, serigraph on six felt panels with one felt text panel, 34 x 23 inches each panel. Courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

Text panel for *The Fire Escape*
... and then, they ended up with
impressions on their skin in the
shape of stripes.

Figure 4. Lorna Simpson, *The Rock*, 1995, serigraph on twelve felt panels with two felt text panels, 33.5 x 22.5 inches each panel. Courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

Text panels for *The Rock*

[left panel] *Female Trouble*: Divine has just left home after an argument over a Christmas gift, and storms out of the house. She is picked up on the highway by an auto-mechanic (played by Divine). They approach a wooded area and have frantic sex on a mattress, by the side of the road.

[left panel] Driving all day long, has induced a hypnotic state upon both of us. It is definitely time to pull over. I recognize the state park that we are now in the middle of, and can endure a few more minutes of this drive in order to find the same spot I went to last time I was here. Hoping that this search will not turn into another journey, since I didn't make any mental notes of the surroundings during my last visit, I'm ill prepared, and not really wanting to appear too familiar with the area. I make an effort this time to commit this trip to memory. But here we are, sick of driving. We get out of the car and start to hike to find a spot and it will probably replace the last one, completely. Haven't seen any weekend hikers for a while and since we are miles away from any rest stops it seems plausible that we will not be patrolled. I asked, How's this? Is it secluded enough for you?





Figure 5. Lorna Simpson, *The Car*, 1995, serigraph on twelve felt panels with one felt text panel, 34 x 26 inches each panel. Courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

Text panel for *The Car*

I could hear the voices of a couple arguing in the distance. It sounds as though they have entered the arcade, but only their voices have entered, and linger for a while even after they have passed the opening and continue on their way. The intensity of their voices indicates an argument, but I am not really concentrating on them completely. It seems as though even if they had walked through they would not have noticed the presence of anyone, let alone anyone having sex. It is around noon time, other than that and you can hear a pin drop in this echo chamber. An open car door, the perfect hour, perfect opportunity. We get into the car, which becomes a small cramped room within a larger room.

Figure 6. Lorna Simpson, *The Clock Tower*, 1995, serigraph on twelve felt panels with one felt text panel, 33.5 x 22.5 inches each panel. Courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery, New York.

Text panel for *The Clock*

He can hear sighs and conversations of people collecting in the hall waiting for elevators, heading out of the building, the telephone rings. Good, I hoped that you were still here. Yeah, well I thought that it might be you. Where do you want to meet? Well, they are still under construction on the 15th floor and the union guys are out of there by now and I think they have finished a few of the offices with good views. Wait a second... I don't hear the muffled power tools. Want to go there? Sure, I have not been down there as yet. What about the rooftop conference room? Was there anything scheduled today? I don't think so, but we will have to take the stairs to get up there.... the west staircase is always an option a little later if you still have work to do. Naw, I'm almost finished. What time do you have? 8:20. I'll meet you in the hall at a quarter to. Okay.



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