ATHANOR XXII

Florida State University
Department of Art History

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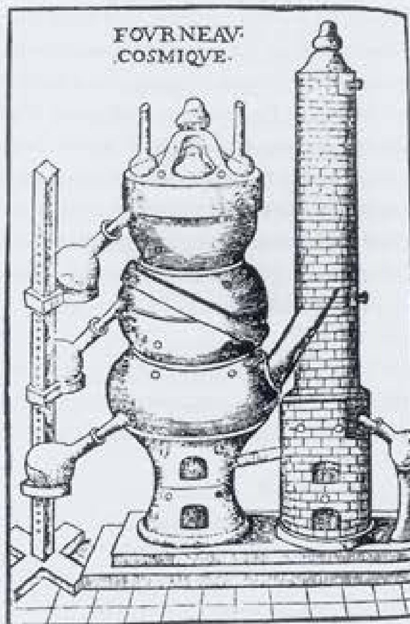
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY



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

Cover: Ramón Frade, *El Pan Nuestro (Our Bread)*, 1905, oil on canvas, 153.1 x 97.2 cm, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Courtesy of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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The Annual Art History Graduate Symposium for the 2003-2004 academic year will be held during the month of February; symposium paper sessions cover a wide variety of topics. Students from the Southeast make presentations which frequently become published essays in ATHANOR. From 1994-2002, the format of the symposium included a lecture by the Appleton Eminent Scholars, among whom were: 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); Deborah Pincus, Independent Scholar, Washington, D.C., Professor Emerita, University of British Columbia (2002). 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 Julienne T. Mason as principal editorial assistant and graphic designer. From 1998-2002, Patricia Rose served as faculty advisor to this annual journal, which is a project of the Museum Press.

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Ramón Frade's El Pan Nuestro*: The* Jíbaro *as a Visual Construction of Puerto Rican National Identity* by Ilenia Colón Mendoza won the Günther Stamm Prize for Excellence at the 2003 Art History Graduate Student Symposium.

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Portraying the Aztec Past in the Codex Azcatitlan: Colonial Strategies[1]

Angela Marie Herren

During the period of Aztec expansion and empire (*c.* 1325-1525), painter-scribes of high social-standing (*tlacuiloque*) used a pictographic writing system to paint hundreds of manuscripts detailing historical, calendric, and religious information on hide, paper, and cloth. Although none of these Aztec manuscripts survived the events following the Spanish conquest of Mexico (1519-1521), indigenous and mestizo artists continued to use prehispanic writing systems to record information about native culture throughout the sixteenth century. This paper examines some of the colonial strategies employed by indigenous artists in the Codex Azcatitlan, a post-conquest pictorial narrative that provides an extensive historical account of the origin and migration of the Mexica people, a genealogy of their rulers, and a brief history of conquest and post-conquest events. The Mexica are one of several indigenous groups collectively referred to as "Aztec." Focusing on the migration history in the Codex Azcatitlan, this paper considers some of the transformations that take place in indigenous pictographic expression in response to the profound social and cultural changes that occurred after the conquest.

Previous studies have looked at the migration manuscripts primarily as indigenous artistic and historical productions. In the last sixty years, scholars have periodically attempted to legitimate Mexica migration history archaeologically, searching unsuccessfully for the remains of Aztlan, the place the Aztecs called their homeland.[2] These studies have often debated the status of the migration accounts as history or myth. More recently, Elizabeth Hill Boone has explored indigenous production and use of migration manuscripts. Her work has examined the narrative structure of the migration story, proposed the idea of migration history as ritual performance, and has situated the histories in the wider context of central Mexican manuscript production.[3] Federico Navarrete Linares' work has offered a comprehensive historical overview of all Aztec groups migrating into the Basin of Mexico and has addressed alphabetic and pictorial accounts of the migration written by both indigenous and European authors.[4] The historical studies of both Navarrete and María Castañeda de la Paz have expanded our understanding of the political ramifications of the migration history.[5] This paper will not attempt to differentiate between historical and mythical aspects of the Mexica migration. Rather, it will situate the Codex Azcatitlan's migration account in colonial discourse, examining how and why the migration story is presented at this time. Using an art historical approach this paper looks at the way the definition and contextualization of visual signs helps to make the Azcatitlan "readable" to an audience living with mixed artistic and cultural traditions.

In addition to the Codex Azcatitlan, several sixteenth-century colonial sources contribute to our understanding of the Mexica migration. For example, the Codex Boturini, Codex Aubin, Codex Mexicanus, Codex Mendoza, Codex Telleriano-Remensis, and Codex Vaticanus A/Ríos are other pictorial manuscripts that address this theme. The Mapa Sigüenza is an important pictorial document in map form that features the migration. Several sixteenth-century religious and secular writers provide prose histories based on oral traditions and/or older pictorial manuscripts. These writers include Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc, Diego Durán, Toribio de Benavente Motolinía, Francisco de San Antón Chimalpahin [Cuauhtlehuanitzin], Juan de Torquemada, Juan de Tovar, and the unknown authors of the *Histoyre du Mechique*, *Leyenda de los Soles*, and *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas*. The *Historia de Tlatelolco desde los tiempos más remotos*

[1] Following North American usage, the term "Aztec" will be used to designate the inhabitants of Mexico-Tenochtitlan and their empire. "Mexica," the name the Aztecs called themselves, will refer specifically to the last indigenous group to migrate into the Basin of Mexico and found the Aztec empire. "Colonial" refers to the period 1521-1821.

[2] See for example, Paul Kirchoff, "Civilizing the Chichimecs: A Chapter in the Culture History of Ancient Mexico" *Latin American Studies* 5 (1948): 80-85; Wigberto Jiménez Moreno "La migración mexica" in *Atti del XL Congresso Internazionale degli Americanisti, Roma-Genova, 3-10 Settembre 1972* Vol. 1 (Geneva: Tilgher, 1972): 167-172; and Michael E. Smith "The Aztlan Migrations of the Nahuatl Chronicles: Myth or History?" *Ethnohistory* 31:3 (1984): 153-186.

[3] See Elizabeth Hill Boone, "Migration Histories as Ritual Performance" in *To Change Place: Aztec Ceremonial Landscapes*, ed. David Carrasco (Boulder: U of Colorado, 1991) 121-151; Elizabeth Hill Boone, "Aztec Pictorial Histories: Records without Words" *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Walter G. Mignolo (Durham: Duke UP, 1994) 50-76; and Elizabeth Hill Boone, *Stories in Red and Black: Pictorial Histories of the Aztecs and Mixtecs* (Austin: U of Texas P, 2000).

[4] Federico Navarrete Linares, *Mito, historia y legitimidad politica: las migraciones de los pueblos del Valle de Mexico* (Mexico City: UNAM, Facultad de Filosofia y Letras, Doctoral Thesis, 2000).

[5] Navarrete, *Mito, historia y legitimidad politica* and María Castañeda de la Paz, "De Aztlan a Tenochtitlan: Historia de una peregrinación," *Latin American Indian Literatures Journal* 18:2 (Fall 2002): 163-212.

and the *Anales de Gabriel de Ayala* are also relevant. Among these sources, the Codex Azcatitlan, housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Codex Boturini, located in the Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mexico City, and Codex Aubin, found in the British Museum, are closest in narrative, perhaps deriving from a single earlier source, and provide the most extensive pictorial recordings of the Mexica migration history.[6]

The Codex Azcatitlan uses painted images and glyphic signs to recount the origin and migration of the Mexica people, the last of several indigenous groups to depart from a place called Aztlan in the twelfth century. Depicted as a ragged band of hunters, the Mexica are led by their god Huitzilopochtli and endure great hardships during a two-hundred year journey, until they encounter the omen of an eagle on a nopal cactus, and, at last, settle at Tenochtitlan (an island in a lake that was located at the heart of present-day Mexico City). Though the last to arrive in the Basin of Mexico, the Mexica used the next two hundred years to build an expansive empire and to create and dominate the Triple Alliance of Tenochtitlan, Tlatelolco, and Texcoco. The Codex Azcatitlan is an annal and records each year of the migration. The migration sequence begins with the departure of the Mexica in the year 1 Flint (glossed as 1168) and records each year until the arrival at Tenochtitlan.

Consisting of twenty-five leaves, the Codex Azcatitlan is painted on both sides of European paper by two or more artists and is bound like a European book.[7] Three leaves appear to be missing from the whole, reducing the total number of images from fifty-six to fifty. The Azcatitlan presents three major subjects: (1) The migration sequence from Aztlan (glossed here as Azcatitlan) to the founding of Tenochtitlan; (2) the dynastic history of the Tenochca monarchs; and (3) the arrival of the Spaniards and events of the early conquest period.

While clearly a post-conquest document, the dating of the manuscript remains uncertain. Unfortunately, the European paper on which the manuscript is painted contains no watermark.[8] John Glass lists it as a sixteenth-century document.[9] Michel Grauhlich, in the recent 1995 facsimile edition of the manuscript, notes that the handwriting on the glosses resembles that on other works produced in the latter third of the sixteenth-century; he proposes a date from this period, arguing that the images and glosses on the Azcatitlan, both unfinished, are probably contemporary.[10] The degree and occurrence of European devices, including the binding in book format, rounded dimensional renderings of the figures, and interest in perspective, suggest a date that is no earlier than the latter half of the sixteenth century.

In the prehispanic period, painted manuscripts were used to record information and as part of an oral tradition. Painted by *tlacuiloque*, trained male painter-scribes from the noble class, the pictorial manuscripts served as mnemonic devices, reminding an orator of key points and details in the narrative. The images may or may not have been shown to the audience. As Federico Navarette Linares has pointed out, the narrative may have been read completely or selectively to suit various audiences which may have included members of the privileged class, the province (*altepetl*), rival groups, or neighboring *altepetl*.[11] Pictorial manuscripts were used to record a variety of information including histories, genealogies, geography, calendrical and cosmogonic information, songs, and poems.

After the conquest, production and use of pictorial manuscripts altered dramatically. In 1528, under the first Bishop of Mexico, Juan de Zumarraga, manuscript collections were systematically destroyed as a means of wiping out pagan belief systems and introducing Christian doctrine. In addition, decimation of indigenous populations from disease, disruption of elite indigenous educational and religious systems and society, and availability of new materials and artistic traditions all contributed to a profoundly different environment for manuscript production and use.

As a product of transculturation—cultural interchange between prehispanic and European traditions—the Codex Azcatitlan provides a microcosm for the study of changes in native pictorial tradition in the sixteenth century. These transformations reflect experimentation in artistic processes and attempts to communicate Aztec history in new ways. At the most basic level, change is registered in the materials, construction, and format of the Codex Azcatitlan (Figure 1). It is helpful to compare the Azcatitlan to the closely related Codex Boturini and Codex Aubin, two sixteenth-century annals that also use painted images and glyphic signs to recount a similar narrative of the origin and migration of the Mexica people (Figures 2 and 3). The Codex Boturini, initially believed to be prehispanic, follows indigenous pictographic conventions much more closely than the Azcatitlan.[12] Painted on native

6 Boone, *Stories in Red and Black* 213.

7 For a discussion on the multiple artistic hands at work in the Codex Azcatitlan, see *Codex Azcatitlan*, intro. Michel Grauhlich, commentary Robert H. Barlow (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France/Société des Américanistes, 1995) 22-23.

8 A watermark would indicate a date for the production of the paper and provide a guideline for dating.

9 John Glass, *A Census of Middle American Pictorial Manuscripts*, vol. 14, *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, ed. Robert Wauchope (Austin: U of Texas P, 1975) 92.

10 *Codex Azcatitlan* 17.

11 Navarette Linares, *Mito, historia y legitimidad politica* 38.

12 For arguments in support of the colonial dating of the Codex Boturini see Robert H. Barlow, "El Códice Azcatitlan" in *Journal de la Société des Américanistes* 38 (1949): 101-135; and Donald Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period* (Norman and London: U of Oklahoma P, 1994) 83-86.

paper and folded in a traditionally prehispanic accordion-style, the Boturini consists of twenty-one and one-half leaves and appears to be incomplete. The stylized images of the migration story are painted entirely in black, with occasional red lines connecting date cartouches, and breaks off at the period when the Mexica are subject to Coxcox, ruler of Culhuacan in approximately 1355. In contrast, the Codex Aubin, like the Azcatitlan visually incorporates European elements, including glosses in Spanish and Nahuatl (the language of the Aztecs), Roman numeral dates, and stylistic traits (e.g., linear perspective). It is painted on European paper and bound as a book. Although the eighty-one leaves of the Codex Aubin, *c.* 1576-1596 and 1597-1608, painted on both sides with a range of colorsrecord events similar to those in the Codex Azcatitlan, there is a much greater emphasis on alphabetic text.

These three manuscripts indicate different approaches to the problem of communicating Aztec history after the conquest. The Codex Boturini employs a traditional approach, inviting a traditional use of the manuscript, whether it was actually used as such or not. The book format of the Codex Azcatitlan and Codex Aubin acknowledge a new social context. The Codex Aubin, which is small in size, treats each page as a separate unit, and places a heavy emphasis on text. It particularly signals the shift from a public oral tradition to a private written one. The Codex Azcatitlan remains primarily pictorial, but adapts the pictorial content to a changing social context.

The visual imagery in the Codex Azcatitlan is defined, contextualized, and amplified. In contrast to the stylized depictions in the Boturini, the Azcatitlan is very detailed, utilizes more space to depict the same events, incorporates glosses, and often blends indigenous and European artistic techniques (compare Figure 1 and Figure 2). These tactics expand the possibilities for understanding the narrative content.

The glosses in Nahuatl that accompany many of the images in the migration sequence are a straightforward example of an additive way of defining some of the images in the Codex Azcatitlan. For example, although the place glyphs at the beginning of the Azcatitlan would have been readable to an informed prehispanic audience, they are accompanied by text here (Figure 4). The glyph labeled "Xochmillca" would have been understood by the images alone to be a phonetic combination of the Nahuatl words xochitl (flower), milli (cultivated land) and calli (house, place of). The neatly rendered alphabetic script duplicates the information rendered pictorially. In addition to a traditional audience, the glosses presume an educated reader of Nahuatl who may not fully understand the indigenous pictographic writing system.

Longer descriptive text accompanies some of the scenes depicted in the Codex Azcatitlan. On plate V, for example, the Nahuatl text reads "*homca mixpolloque tepetla cuauhtla texcallco can cani neneca mexica*" [here they were lost among the mountains, in the forests, in the place of the rocks, it is in every way that the Mexica proceeded] (Figure 5).[13] The words *tepetla*, *cuauhtla* and *texcallco* are repeated in the upper portion of the scene. The text next to the second female from left reads "*quimama inteo*" [she carries their god on her back].[14] These descriptions would have aided a reader familiar with alphabetic Nahuatl. Unlike text-heavy manuscripts such as the Codex Aubin, however, the burden of carrying the narrative still rests primarily on the images.

In Plate V, the image is a landscape, clearly influenced by western artistic traditions, that depicts the Mexica traveling through the wilderness. One of the most detailed and colored images in the manuscript, this scene is not referenced in the Aubin or Boturini. The undulations shown on typical prehispanic representations of a hill are here incorporated into the landscape (see also Figure 6). The trees, painted and shaded according to western models are also depicted with their roots, a prehispanic trait. The use of paint and layering of images attempt a European sense of depth and suggest the path's recession into space, but the footprints, a ubiquitous precolumbian symbol of directionality and movement, are retained. While the more summary images found in the Aubin or Boturini might have been sufficient for someone trained in the prehispanic oral tradition, the Azcatitlan records more detail visually. In this example, information about topography, flora, fauna, and dress is conveyed. The two figures being attacked by the animal at left serve to illustrate the perils of the Mexica journey. Traditional prehispanic forms of imagery are modified and contextualized in a western setting, making the scene accessible to viewers familiar with either artistic tradition. The female godbearers, having no Spanish equivalent, are labeled alphabetically.

Like the alphabetic glosses, the date cartouches combine glyphic forms and European characters. The dates are represented in typical prehispanic cartouches that refer to the 52-year calendar cycle (Figure 7).[15] The yearbearers are depicted in glyphic images, alternating flint, house, rabbit, and reed.[16] The related day count numbers, 1-13, are written in Roman numerals next to each image. The translation of the Mexica calendar count to a European year is written in at the top of the cartouche. The date cartouches are hybrid, rather than simply repeating information in two different formats. The Roman numerals one through thirteen take the place of the dots that represent these numbers in prehispanic art (Figure 7).

13 Translated to English from the Spanish translation in *Codex Azcatitlan,* 60.

14 Translated to English from the Spanish translation in *Codex Azcatitlan,* 60.

15 When the Mesoamerican 260-day and 365-day calendars were set in motion with one another, it took 52 years for a given date to repeat.

16 "Each Aztec year bore the name of the 260-day almanac that occurred on the last day of the 18th month. This works out to be one of four possible day names (with its number)." Mary Miller and Karl Taube, *An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993) 50.

The date cartouches are an integral part of the manuscript and help to shape the narrative and the layout of the page. Year cartouches are grouped together to represent a length of stay in a certain area or the time period of certain events. Clusters of year cartouches allow the artists to focus on selected events: they appear regularly throughout the migration sequence in the Azcatitlan, from the departure from Aztlan in 1168 to the events surrounding the death of Copil, dated 1354-1381. The last cartouche on Plate XIII shows a rabbit without the accompanying Roman numerals. Presumably the figures were produced first and the numerals added subsequently with the help of a straightedge.[17] There are several instances where the pictorial imagery and date cartouches overlap, demonstrating that they were considered part of the composition of the page (Figure 7).[18] Although there are no date cartouches in the ruler geneaology or conquest scenes, space seems to have been reserved for them.

Since the date cartouches combine prehispanic and European systems, they seem to be intended for an audience familiar with both. The Roman numeral years would have been clear to anyone familiar with the European calendar count. The native and mestizo populations may have understood the image-based date glyphs, but the Azcatitlan requires familiarity with the Roman numerals 1-13 that replace the prehispanic dot representation.

In addition to expanding visual representations, the artists are clearly experimenting with European artistic techniques. In the scene featuring the departure from Aztlan, the artist attempts perspective in the drawing of the temple (Figure 1). Additionally, the figures in Plate II and throughout the manuscript appear in a variety of forms and positions. While some figures appear very stylized, others demonstrate a European plasticity. Figures appear frontally displayed, in profile, from the rear, and in three-quarter views. In the departure scene (Figure 1), their bodies are shown interacting rather than just occupying communal space; this is particularly evident in the figures to the left of the hill. The multiplicity of figures throughout the manuscript allow the artists to present traditional stylized representations as well as the human form in a variety of new positions: with arms raised, legs crossed, pointing, rowing, in spatial relationship to one another. Although the results are often awkward, they document the dynamic innovations of an artistic tradition in transition.

The defining or contextualization of visual signs seems to represent a conscious attempt on the part of the artists to address mixed audiences in the era after the conquest. This audience may have included Europeans or European-educated indigenous populations, for whom the glosses were added. It may also have included various indigenous populations with cultural differences, or an indigenous and mestizo population that was beginning to forget older visual forms and/or understand new European-influenced forms.

Another possibility is that the expanded visual representation was intended to capture nuances in meaning that were also part of the oral tradition, but not necessarily recorded pictorially in such detail in the past. For example, in contrast to the six glyphic house representations in the Boturini's departure scene (Figure 2), the Azcatitlan shows four houses in a variety of forms (Figure 1). Each of these forms conveys slightly different information about the object, yet they are similar enough that we visually link them. The four houses on the hill most closely resemble conventionalized glyphic forms for house, comparable to those that appear in the Codex Boturini. The houses on the lower right of the rectangular island tell us as viewers that the glyphic house forms may relate to actual architectural units built up from cut stone as detailed here. From a late-sixteenth or seventeenth-century perspective, a person familiar with the quadripartite organization of the Tenochtitlan city and empire, might also recognize the houses with glyphs on top as signs that relate to geographical or political divisions and groups of people. The Azcatitlan artist links a human figure to each of the houses in the right half of the rectangle.[19] The various house forms convey different information, but they also link and define each other. We might compare this to the repetition (and perhaps rhythm) of certain descriptions, recorded textually, in Franciscan friar Bernaldino de Sahagun's Florentine Codex. For example, a description of the harlot recorded from Sahagun's native informants in the sixteenth century reads: "a young woman [or] an evil old woman, besotted, drunk—very drunk, much besotted; dejected, perverse. . .a free yielder of herself, a whore from the brothel, a deflowered one….She appears like a flower, looks gaudy, arrays herself gaudily; she views herself in a mirror."[20] The information is repetitive, but conveys slightly different information with each variation.

The colonial strategies employed in the Codex Azcatitlan reveal different ways of thinking about and shaping indigenous identity in the colonial period. The artists attempt to preserve an account of the earliest stages of Aztec history, while adapting and responding to cultural and linguistic changes. The fact that they are recording this particular part of Aztec history is significant. As Elizabeth Hill Boone writes, "The essential message being conveyed by the migration story is . . . the transition of the Mexica from a small and relatively insignificant band to the people destined to rule the world as it was then known."[21] In its sixteenth-century context, the Mexica migration history may have helped to establish a sense of identity for an indigenous population in post-conquest

[17] Two unfinished date cartouches also appear on Plate XII. As there is no gap in the year count, these appear to be a mistake on the part of the less-refined second artist.

[18] Images and date cartouches overlap on Plates VI, IX, X, and XII.

[19] These have been read as Cihuatecpan (a phonetic rendering of 2 jars represented as spiny cactus), Chalman (which has the glyph for jade with a cord running through it), Tlacochalco (2 javelins), and Tlacatecpan (which is represented by a banner). See *Codex Azcatitlan* n. 8.

[20] *Florentine Codex*, Book 10, 55.

[21] Elizabeth Hill Boone, "Migration Histories as Ritual Performance" 142.

Mexico. Just as the Mexica departed from Aztlan in a humble state, endured hardship and rose to noble status, so could their descendants. As the transformation of a people is represented throughout the course of this manuscript, so is it represented in visual images and changing sign systems on each page.

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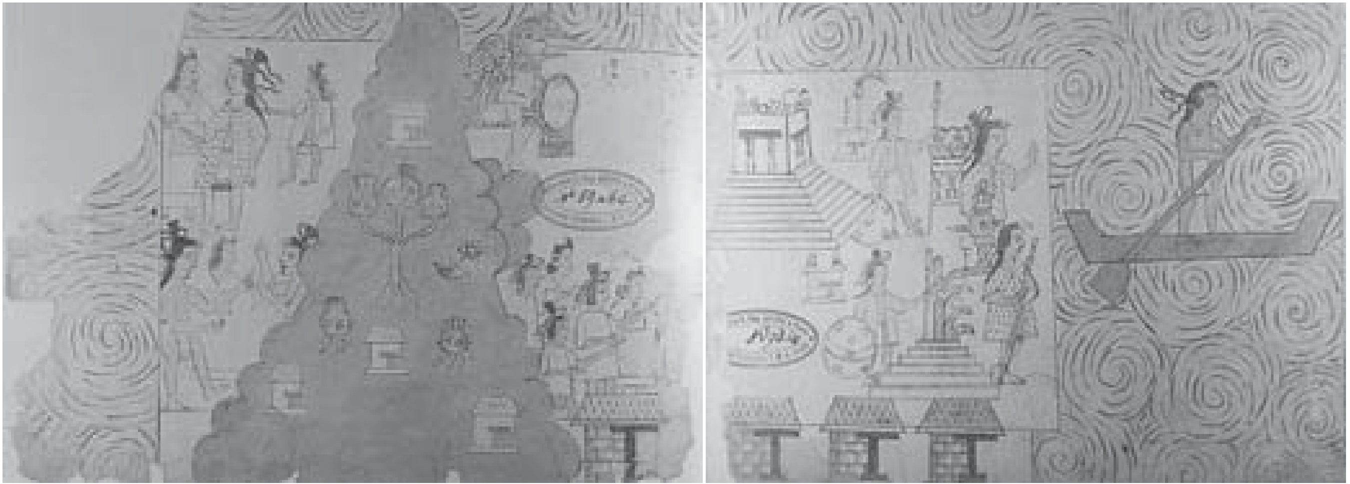
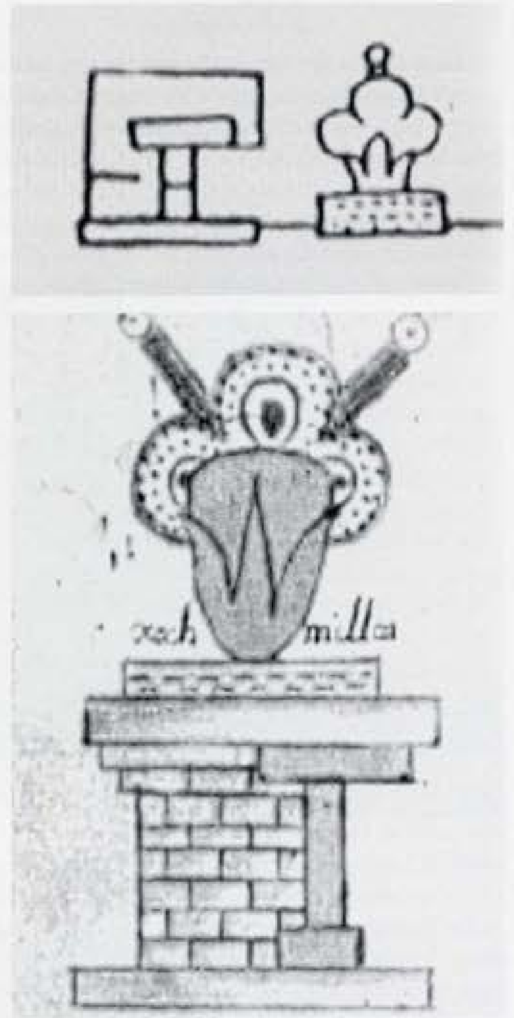


Figure 1: Departure from Aztlan in the Codex Azcatitlan, photograph from *Codex Azcatitlan*, 1995 (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France/Société des Américanistes) Plate II.

Figure 2: Departure from Aztlan in the Codex Boturini, Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

Figure 3: Departure from Aztlan in the Codex Aubin, folio 3, The British Museum.



[*above right*] Figure 4: Comparison of the glyphs for Xochimilco in the (top) Codex Boturini, Biblioteca National de Anthropologia e Historia, and the (bottom) Codex Azcatitlan, from *Codex Azcatitlan,* Plate III, right.

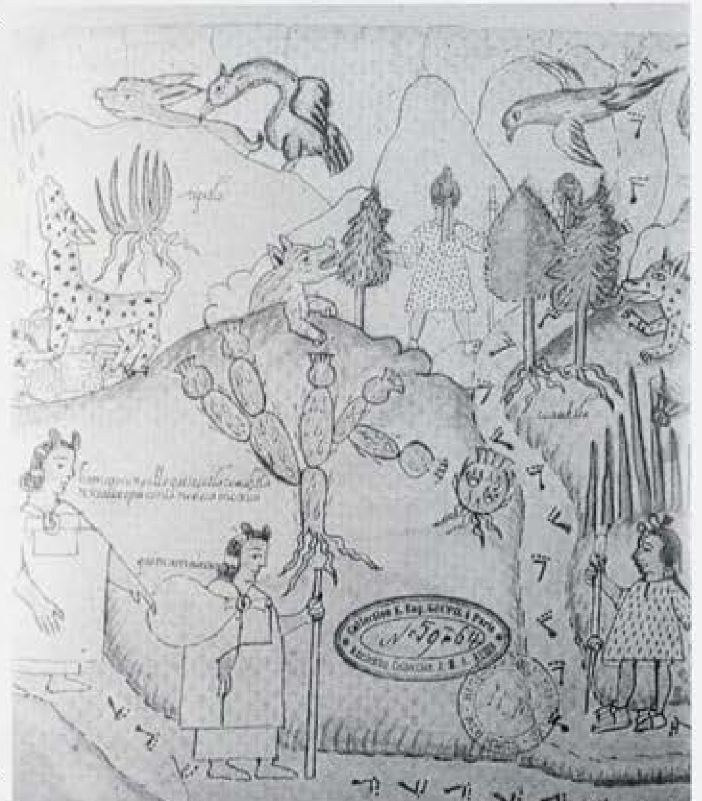


Figure 5: Wilderness scene from the Codex Azcatitlan, *Codex Azcatitlan*, Plate V, right.

Figure 6: Codex Azcatitlan scene depicting Mexica travels, *Codex Azcatitlan*, Plate VI, left.

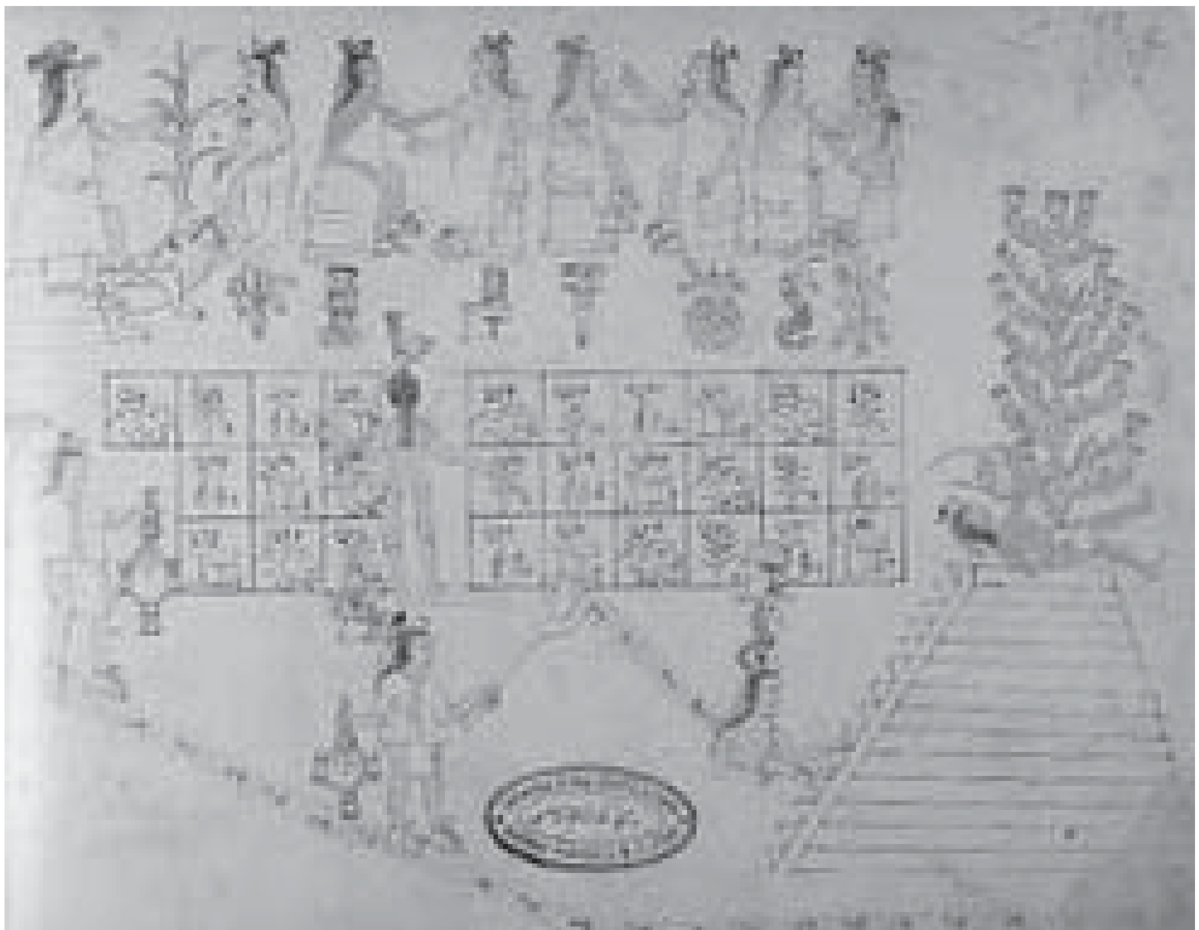


Figure 7: Overlap of pictorial image and date cartouche in the Codex Azcatitlan, *Codex Azcatitlan*, Plate VII, right.

“The Triumph of the Text:” A Reconsideration of Giovanni Vendramin’s Architectural Frontispieces

Lisandra Estevez

Giovanni Vendramin (active 1466-1508) was one of the most distinguished Paduan miniaturists of the Quattrocento.[1] Many of the manuscripts that he illustrated were commissioned by Bishop Jacopo Zeno of Padua (r. 1460-1481), an important humanist and patron of the arts.[2] This paper will consider the role of classicism and antiquarianism in the architectural frontispieces that Vendramin painted as a prominent introduction to many of the books he decorated and suggest a new source for them. These frontispieces are a major marker of the fascination with the revival of the Greco-Roman tradition during the Renaissance, but have been less studied than related phenomena in the monumental arts, for example, Mantegna’s paintings. The development of the new type of frontispiece coincided with the publication of newly translated, edited, or discovered classical texts such as Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History* and Cicero’s *Orations*, but Vendramin used the frontispiece to illuminate contemporary philosophical and religious treatises such as Giovanni Camphora’s *On the Immortality of the Soul*.

This paper argues that the format of the architectural enclosure for decorating frontispieces is, in part, derived from the canon table, and that this source was carefully chosen to reinforce visual and iconographic associations with late antique and Byzantine culture and to enhance the classical associations of fifteenth-century manuscripts and incunables. Before turning to the canon tables, allow me to present the key features of Vendramin’s architectural frontispieces. Their form and function was in response to the need to create the illusion of three- dimensional space on the two-dimensional surface of the printed page, enhancing the reader’s visual experience of the text. In one example of a frontispiece illuminated by Vendramin for Cicero’s *The Dream of Scipio* (Figure 1), the juxtaposition of text and image through the placement of the printed word in a triumphal arch or *stele* against a landscape emphasizes the treatment of the text as a monumental cultural artifact, evoking an idealized realm of classical learning, where the primacy of the written word is heralded. The colossal architectural forms employed to construct an illustrated frame for a particular passage are removed from their functional purpose and are converted to an ornamental scheme that ultimately serves as a support for a given text, highlighting the text as the central figural component. The addition of a monumental form in service of the text, thus, transformed the character of the architectural frontispiece.[3]

Now let us compare the frontispieces to canon tables. The canon table was developed in the fourth century by bishop Eusebius of Caesarae.[4] It served as a concordance for the Gospels in Byzantine manuscripts and functioned primarily within a religious context. Although extant examples of late antique canon tables are relatively rare, the tradition of the canon table was very strong in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The canon table demonstrates a complex level of architectural decoration that is comparable to the architectural frontispiece. In one example of a late eleventh or early twelfth century Byzantine canon table (Figure 2), the decoration is executed in gold-leaf and painted with deep-red and blue tempera; votive crowns are suspended from the architrave. Richly ornamented columns, peacocks in the capitals, and flowers add to the luxurious decoration of what was essentially a reference tool for the Gospels. This type of decoration removes architecture from its functional purpose and converts it to a decorative scheme.[5]

Furthermore, the format used for the canon table was employed to illustrate deeper levels of significance and meaning, underscoring the liminal effects of the rich ornamental decoration of the canon table, as noted by Jeffrey C. Anderson:

> Given a belief in the power of numbers to
> express underlying truths about the world,
> the tables may have also assumed a mysti-

1 The following studies provide further biographical information on Giovanni Vendramin: Mirella Levi D’Ancona, “Giovanni Vendramin da Padova,” *Arte Veneta* 32 (1978): 39-45; Giordana Mariani Canova, “Influssi mantegneschi nella miniatura padovana del Quattrocento,” *Santo* 38.3 (Sept.-Dec. 1998) 331-40; Michele Benetazzo, “Giovanni Vendramin miniatore padovano del tardo Quattrocento,” *Padova e il suo territorio* 4.78 (Mar-Apr. 1999) 43-45.

2 E. Govi, “La biblioteca di Jacopo Zeno,” *Bollettino dell’Istituto di Patalogia del Libro* 10 (1951): 34-118; Margaret L. King, *Venetian Humanism in an Age of Patrician Dominance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1986) 449.

3 Lilian Armstrong, “The Impact of Printing on Miniaturists in Venice after 1469,” In *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450-1520*, ed. Sandra Hindman, (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1991) 174-202.

4 Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843-1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997) cat. no. 46, 93.

5 Kurt Weitzmann, *Studies in the Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination* (Chicago, 1971) 19; for further discussion on the development of the canon table, see Carl Nordenfalk, “Canon Tables on Papyrus,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 36 (1982): 29-38.

> cal significance; indeed, from early on they were decorated with a degree of care that far exceeded what was required for their use as a reference tool.[6]

In their suggestion of deeper levels of knowledge, fifteenth-century frontispieces, such as those illustrated by Vendramin, paralleled the canon tables.[7] Given the power of the written word and the layering of different planes illustrated in the monumental frontispiece (the printed text unfolding as a parchment scroll, hanging from an architectural frame and set into a landscape), the reader would be initiated into the complex intellectual and spiritual experience to be encountered further into the text, gaining greater insight into its truths and meaning.[8]

A frontispiece decorated by Vendramin for an edition of Pliny's *Natural History* (Figure 3) exemplifies the artist's concern with antiquity, a heightened sense of illusionism, and the *trompe l'oeil* effects characteristic of Paduan painting in the fifteenth century. The printed text appears to have been handwritten on parchment on an ancient scroll that hangs from the top of a classical edifice and is unfurled by winged putti.[9] The building is made of green and purple marbles, flanked by two tall dead trees. Cherubs animate and "populate" the edifice, serving as foil to the dead trees in the background. They play musical instruments, support and hold up the parchment, and frame the abraded coat of arms (which were possibly those of Jacopo Zeno) at the bottom of the base.[10] Charles Dempsey has convincingly argued that the putti who inhabit the architectural frontispieces represent animated spirits or *spiritelli* that personify the random thoughts (as well as the flashes of insight and illumination) that arise when one is actively engaged in pursuit of knowledge.[11]

Further references to the antique are made in the decoration of the base of the structure, which imitate classical bas-reliefs painted in grisaille. These sculptural effects are enhanced by the large "*littera mantiniana*" rendered as fake carving against a purple background and richly decorated with acanthus leaves.[12] The elaborate Corinthian columns are shown as variegated marble with capitals and bases cast in bronze.[13] More significantly, the architecture acts as a scenic background, where the text is the "protagonist" of the action, similar to the architecture in Donatello's altar in Sant'Antonio, where the figures are "displayed like actors on a stage, or relics in a reliquary."[14]

Giovanni Vendramin also illuminated a different edition of Pliny's *Natural History* that was translated into Italian by Cristoforo Landino and published in Venice by Nicolas Jenson.[15] The frontispiece to this edition (Figure 4) displays the text hanging from four Corinthian columns of variegated marble on a base with nereids and tritons. As in the canon table, there are two peacocks resting on the edge of the entablature. A putto on the right cornice plays a trumpet. The letter "E" contains a portrait of Pliny the Elder as a Renaissance scholar, seated at his work, and surrounded by a red frame. His study contains books and a bowl of fruit featured on the top shelf. Pliny examines and points to a golden armillary sphere, which symbolizes his focus on investigating the cosmos.

At the bottom of the base, there are two standing putti with a staff and two other putti on the ledge restraining two deer on leashes. The peacock, deer, and hanging fruits are delicately modeled, enhancing the refined quality of this painted page. The peacock, the symbol of immortal life, is frequently depicted on both the canon table and the architectural frontispiece. Attention to the careful depiction of natural phenomena may suggest Vendramin's familiarity with the research in science and medicine for which the University of Padua was renowned. Vendramin's father was a *bidello* (university bookseller), who sold books on law and medicine; it is likely that Giovanni consulted with the faculty and experts in

6 Evans and Wixom 93.

7 For a discussion concerning the context of architectural decoration as memory devices in medieval imagery, see Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1990) 221.

8 Roland Barthes' semiotic interpretation of the experience of the text has partly informed this interpretation of how the Renaissance reader may have appreciated the decoration of the architectural frontispiece; see *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

9 Giordana Mariani Canova in Jonathan J.G. Alexander, *The Printed Page: Italian Renaissance Book Illumination*,1450-1550 (New York: Prestel, 1994) no. 78.

10 Giordana Mariani Canova, "Nuovi contributi per Giovanni Vendramin miniatore padovano," *Miniatura* 1 (1988): 91; Mariani Canova in Alexander, 1994, 64, cat. 78. In both sources, Mariani Canova has hypothesized that the abraded coat of arms on this page may have been that of Jacopo Zeno.

11 Dempsey describes them as "…the childish follies, or empty daydreams, that fill the scholar's mind as he prepares to read the great exploits of the Caesars, diverting him from serious study and crowding his brain with distracting fancies…"; *Inventing the Renaissance Putto* (Chapel Hill and London: The U of North Carolina P, 2001) 94.

12 Mariani Canova in Alexander, 1994, cat. 78; Giordana Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova: dal medioevo al Settecento* (Modena, 1999) 271, no. 105.

13 The veined marble of the columns may also illustrate the archaeological references to Pliny, who in the thirty-sixth book of the *Natural History,* describes the appearance of colored marble in antiquity and its associations: "Marble marked with different colors first appeared, I believe in the quarries of Chios when they were building their walls."; *Natural History: A Selection,* trans. John F. Healy (New York: Penguin Books, 1991) 348.

14 Mariani Canova in Alexander, 1994, 163-4, cat. 78.

15 The seminal work on the impact and importance of Nicolas Jenson's press in Venice and North Italy is Martin Lowry, *Nicholas Jenson and the Rise of Venetian Publishing in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

medicine and natural sciences at the University of Padua.[16]

The writings of Cicero were accorded a premier position in the humanist movement in the fifteenth century and were printed numerous times. Poggio Bracciolini's discovery of a manuscript at Cluny in 1415 contained five of Cicero's orations that were previously unknown. In the Figure 5 example, the text is printed on a sheet of parchment that unrolls in front of a *stele* with a deep purple base and deep red on the sides. Gold letters spell out the title across a mottled green and red frieze. Two putti stand on the cornices holding strings that "support" the text. The brown-haired putti on the top cornices wear necklaces of red beads and classical sandals. The blond putto at the left bottom foreground points to the text and the one to his right holds a string that bears the weight of the text. In the left margin are foliage and a tree on which a peacock stands. Garlands and fruits dangle from the top plinth and a putto playfully sits on a garland along the right margin. The mountainous landscape in the background serves as a stage that reveals the different levels of illusionism that are presented to the viewer/reader, heightening the surreal aspects of the scene.

Indubitably, one of Vendramin's masterpieces is the frontispiece (Figure 6) for Giovanni Camphora's *On the Immorality of the Soul* (*De immortalitatae animae*). An inscription written in the colophon in red ink identifies the *scriptor* of the book as Giovanni Trotti: "De immortalitae animae opusculum in modum dialogi explicit per me Johannem de Trottis die 4 april is 1472." [On the immortality of the soul a work in the form of a dialogue as explicated by me, Giovanni Trotti, April 4, 1472][17] The book was dedicated to Ercole I d'Este by Naimerio Conti, a Paduan nobleman, whose family was once under the protection of the Este family. The text deals with the subject of the immortality of the soul in the form of a dialogue between the author Genoese Dominican Giovanni Camphora and the Paduan humanist Giovanni Marconova. The frontispiece shows a gilded figure of Hercules in a porphyry frame, topped by an arched typanum with purple cornices.[18] The duke's emblem, a ring with a carnation, is attached to the typanum with cords that are tied on either side of the arc and are held by putti. On the architrave an inscription in gold ink set in Roman capitals reads "A DEO FORTITUDO MEA" ["To god my fortitude"]. The verse inscribed on the face of the base in cursive script comments on Hercules' "Olympian" strength and the gruesome labor of battling with the destructive Lernean Hydra. Two putti hold the two blue Este coats of arms with the imperial eagle, the fleur-de-lis of France and the crossed keys of the papacy which the family had been given to use in 1470 when the Pope awarded them the freedom of the city.[19]

Scholars have supported the position that the Codex Calendar of 354 is the source of the fifteenth-century frontispiece have corroborated their argument by citing the figure of Hercules, which appeared in that manuscript, as the inspiration for the fifteenth-century illustration. However, a more likely source for the representation of Hercules is illustrated by a miniature of Hercules in Hyginus' *Astronomia*[20] (Figure 6) that has now been attributed to Giovanni Vendramin.[21] Vendramin's Hercules, in turn, probably derives from a compendium of drawings, the *Liber de imaginibus deorem*, dated *circa* 1420, which contained twelve images devoted to the labors of Hercules and was extremely influential in Ferrara in the 1460s.[22]

In conclusion, Giovanni Vendramin's architectural frontispieces illustrate the complex visual culture that developed in Padua in the mid to late Quattrocento. As a superb illustrator, Vendramin played a fundamental role in the development of the monumental frontispiece with painted architecture and printed texts that beautifully synthesized his patrons' interests in antiquity and classical learning. Vendramin's architectural frontispieces, moreover, exemplify the fluid character of antiquarian culture during this period, when images and ideas circulated widely across geographical boundaries.[23]

While this paper presents one possible source for the origins and development of the architectural frontispiece, fur-

16 Alexander, 1994, 70-72. See the following article regarding the culture of booksellers and book illuminators in fifteenth-century Padua: Myriam Billanovich dal Zio, "Bidelli, cartolai e miniatori allo studio di Padova nel secolo XV." *Quaderni per la storia dell'Università di Padova* (1973): 59-72.

17 Although one is tempted to hypothesize that Vendramin, the illuminator, and Trotti, the *scriptor*, possibly collaborated on this work, it is difficult to connect them at this time.

18 Mariani Canova in Alexander, 1994, 78, cat. 20; Although Mariani Canova describes the material of the frame as violet marble, I have suggested porphyry as the material of choice because of its imperial connotations, which would have greatly resonated with Ercole I d'Este. See also the following article for the meaning and significance of the color purple in fifteenth-century manuscript illumination: Giordana Mariani Canova, "La porpora a nei manoscritti rinascimentali a l'attività di Bartolomeo Sanvito," *La porpora: Realtà e immaginario di colore simbolico. Atti del convegno di Studio, Venezia 24 e 25 ottobre 1996,* ed. Oddone Longo (Venice: Instituto veneto di scienze, lettere ad arti, 1998) 339-71.

19 Mariani Canova in Alexander, 1994, 78, cat. 20.

20 The influence of astronomy and also astrology was especially strong in Padua; John Tiptoft, an English humanist and scholar produced an extremely influential edition of Basinius' *Astronomicon* in 1458 and 1461.

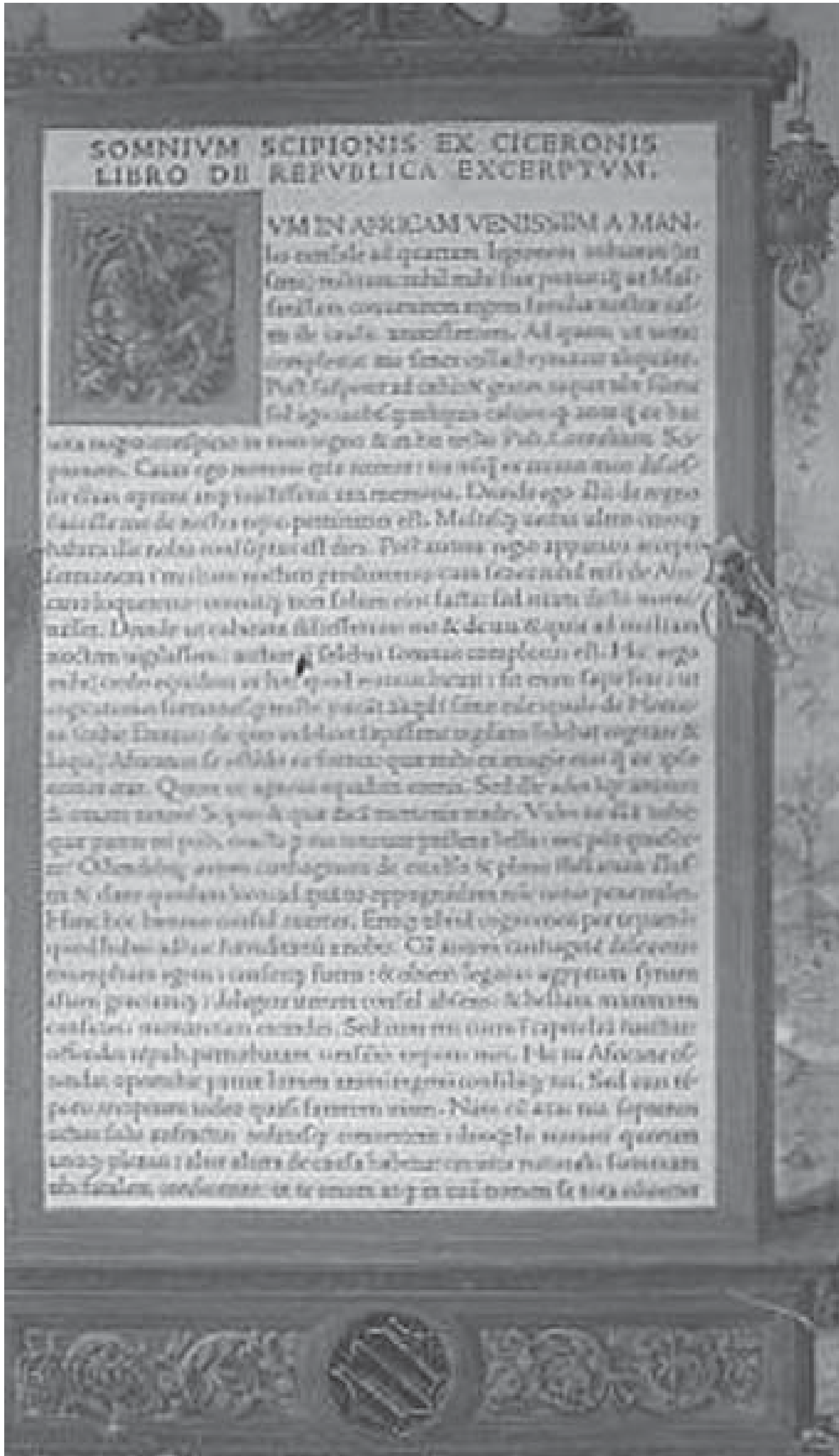
21 Mariani Canova in Alexander, 1994, cat. 20; Mariani Canova recently attributed the miniature to Giovanni Vendramin; *La miniatura a Padova: dal medioevo al Settecento* (Modena, 1999).

22 Armstrong, 1981, 60.

23 As rightly noted by Patricia Fortini Brown, the visual and literary arts of the fifteenth century "(i)lluminat(e) a tension between detachment and approach, these captivating mixtures of the real and the imaginary past reflect two contradictory, but intertwined, tendencies that dominated the art and literature of the period. On one side there is a growing sense of historical distance: that separation of the past and the present that defines a modern sense of history. On the other side, the same impulses that demanded separation also engendered synthesis and the desire to link the lost world of antiquity to the present." *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (London and New Haven: Yale UP, 1996) 206.

ther research focusing on a careful re-evaluation of related imagery and the conceptual significance of the architectural frontispiece in fifteenth-century manuscript illumination is evidently required. Vendramin's exquisitely decorated frontispieces, nonetheless, confer prestige and status to antique texts by presenting them in a monumental setting, celebrated as highly prized objects of learning and as works of great beauty and virtue.

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey


SOMNIVM SCIPIONIS EX CICERONIS
LIBRO DE REPVBLICA EXCERPTVM.

VM IN AFRICAM VENISSEM A MAN-

Figure 1. Cicero, *Dream of Scipio,* Venice, Printed by Nicholas Jenson, 1472. Padua: Biblioteca Capitolare, Inc. 249, f 1r.

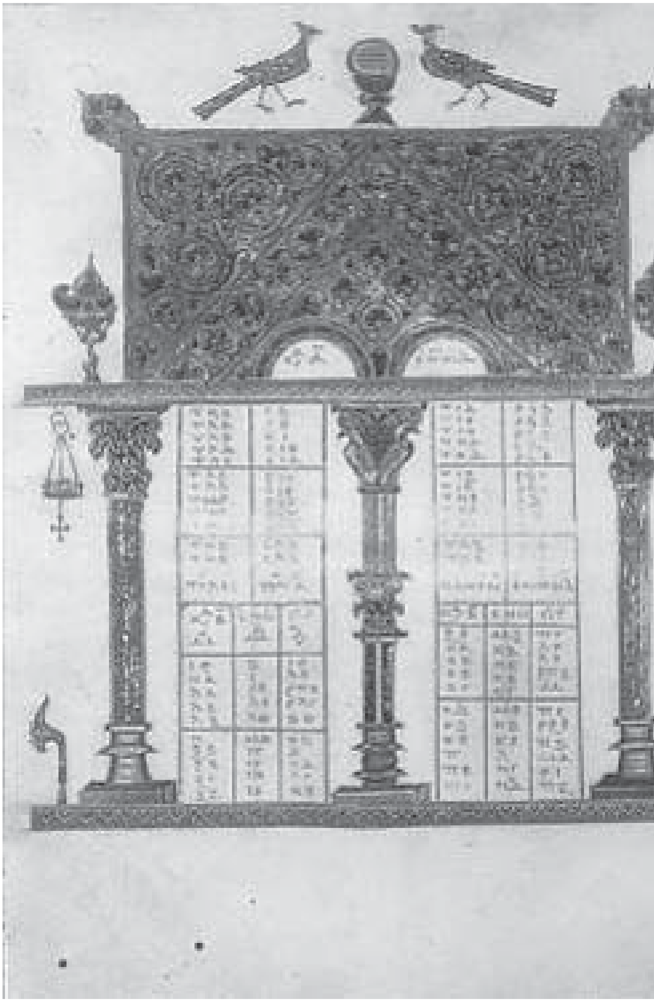


Figure 2. Canon table, fol. 60v, *The Four Gospels*, Byzantine (Constantinople), late 11th or early 12th century. Tempera on vellum; 192 fols. Scheide Library, Princeton University Libraries, Princeton, N.J. (Scheide Ms. 70).

Figure 3. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Caius Plinius Secundus. *Historia naturalis.* Printed in Venice by Johannes da Spira, 1469. Ravenna: Biblioteca Classense, Inc. 670/I, f. 1r.

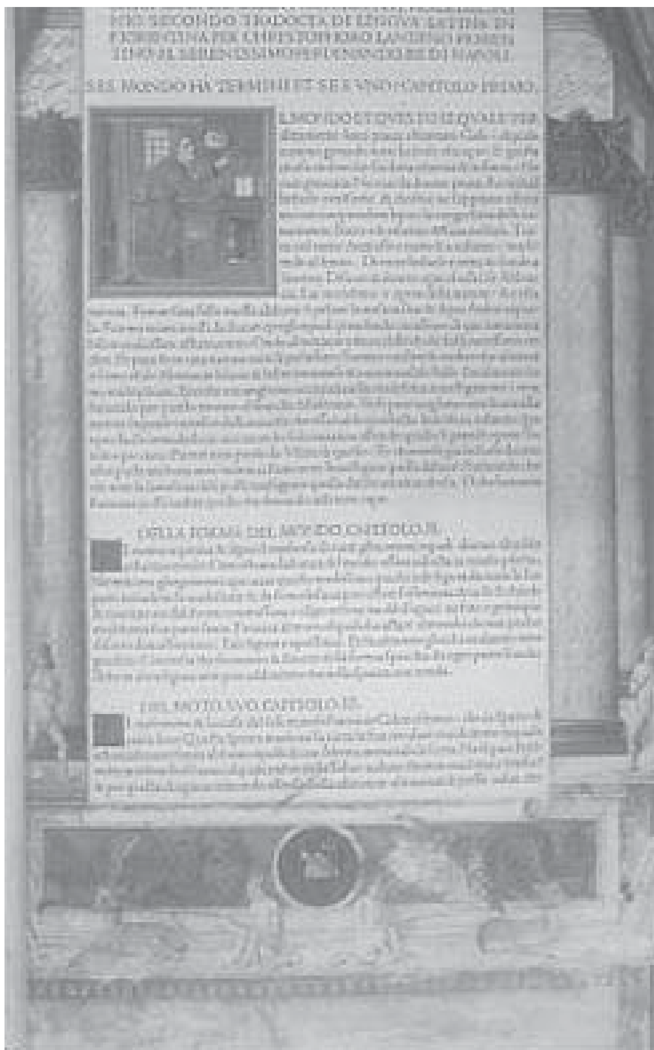


Figure 4. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History,* translated into Italian by Cristoforo Landino. Printed in Venice by Nicholas Jenson, 1476. Holkham Hall, Norfolk, The Earl of Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate. MLC52 BN 1985.

VANQ VAM . MIHI . SEMPER .
FREQ VENS . CONSPECTVS .

Figure 5. Cicero, *Orations.* Marcus Tullius Cicero. *Orationes*, edited by Ludovico Carbo. Printed in Venice by Christopher Valdarfer, [not after 9 November] 1471. Philadelphia: The Rosenbach Museum and Library, Inc. 471ci (1062/64).

Figure 6. Giovanni Camphora, *De immortalitae animae,* written in Ferrara, *c.* 1472. London: The British Library, Additional MS 22325. Frontispiece (*Hercules and the Hydra*, f 4).

Figure 7. Hyginus, *De astronomia.* Script by Francesco Buzzacarini and miniatures by Giovanni Vendramin, the Douce Master, and other collaborators (*c.* 1475-1480). New York: The New York Public Library, ms Spencer 28.

The Ca'Dario: A Message from a *Cittadino*

Julianne Parse Sandlin

In the fifteenth century the Republic of Venice was an oligarchy ruled only by the noble class. Its leaders promoted the idea that people in the various social classes were content with their positions and that each held a well-defined place in society. Giovanni Dario, a member of the social hierarchy's second tier, who were known as *cittadini* or citizens, did not adhere to this belief. He created a unique role within Venetian society where, in addition to being a successful merchant, he served as a diplomat to the Near East and held several high-ranking positions in Venetian social institutions. Through these positions Dario attained a special status that was as close to the elite class as he could realize within the Venetian law.

In the late 1480s Dario built a palace, known as the Ca'Dario (Figure 1), on the southern side of the Grand Canal, about a quarter of a mile before the waterway opens in front of San Marco Piazza. No documentation exists for the architect of the Ca'Dario. Because of stylistic similarities to the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli by Pietro Lombardo (Figure 2), scholars frequently attribute the design to him.[1] Regardless of who the architect was, the design of the Ca'Dario was the result of the patron's desires. While the decorative nature of the palace is discussed at length in the current literature, the focus of this paper will be the manner in which the patron and the social history of Venice affected the design of Dario's palazzo.[2]

Compared with other Venetian palace designs from the fifteenth century, the exterior of the Ca'Dario stands out by virtue of individual characteristics that depart from traditional influences, among them the use of vivid marbles, the rosette motif, and an inscription across the ground floor. Considering these distinctive features and Dario's special place within Venetian society, this paper argues that the building was an expression of his social self-image and desires. Dario believed that he, a *cittadino*, played a role virtually equal to that of contemporary patricians. His actions and the appearance of his palace demonstrate his efforts to align himself with the republic's elite and ruling class.

In addition to its non-traditional features, the Ca'Dario stands out from contemporary homes along the Grand Canal because of its asymmetrical façade and its profusion of ornament. Although most Venetian palazzi from the fifteenth century have some decoration, the typical home of a wealthy individual, whether a nobleman or a citizen, is not nearly as sumptuous as the Ca'Dario, and the majority of palaces have bilaterally-symmetrical façades. For example the central bay, which is designated by a series of arcaded windows on the upper stories, is framed by two side bays with either one or two windows on each level (Figure 3).[3] Because of its narrow site, the Ca'Dario's façade is divided into only two parts, which results in an asymmetrical design.

The ground floor of the Ca'Dario is sheathed in white, cut marble and consists of a central portal and two side windows. Beneath the four colored roundels, which are spaced evenly across the façade, is an inscription (Figure 4): "URBIS GENIO IOANNES DARIUS," or "Giovanni Dario, to the genius of the City."

The three upper stories are arranged in a different manner. Three round-arched windows, framed by columns or pilasters, make up the left side. The right side, separated from the left by a pilaster, has two round-arched windows on either end with a decorative element in the center. This element, a rosette design on the two main floors and a quincunx pattern on the top story, rests on a veneer of yellow-toned marble. Stone roundels in various shades of green and purple are also included at regular intervals throughout the upper stories.

Dario built his palace during a transitional phase of Venetian architecture. Prior to 1450, the city's gothic style was characterized by diverse motifs from the numerous cultures with which Venice had interacted during its long history. Around the middle of the century this style began to merge

This paper developed out of a seminar under Dr. Debra Pincus. I would like to thank her for her advice, encouragement, and enthusiasm with this topic. I would also like to thank Dr. Jack Freiberg and Dr. Robert Neuman for their comments and suggestions.

1 Ralph Lieberman, *Renaissance Architecture in Venice, 1450-1540* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1982) plate 16.

2 For a monograph of the palace, see Vittorio Sgarbi, *Ca' Dario: mito e storia di Giovanni Dario e del suo palazzo tra Oriente e Venezia* (Milan: Franco Maria Ricci, 1984). For discussions about the Ca'Dario in surveys of Venetian Renaissance architecture, see Deborah Howard, *Architectural History of Venice* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1980) 108; John McAndrew, *Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1980), 215-221; and Lieberman, *Renaissance Architecture* plate 16.

3 For a discussion of the characteristic layout of Venetian homes, see Richard J. Goy, *Venetian Vernacular Architecture: Traditional Housing in the Venetian Lagoon* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989) 126-35. Figure 3, the Palazzo Cavalli-Franchetti, is a fifteenth-century building that was heavily restored in the nineteenth century.

with the imported ideas of the classical revival. The resulting architecture was neither entirely gothic nor classical.

For example, the Palazzo Cavalli-Franchetti is typical of this eclectic phase (Figure 3). Various window styles differentiate each of the four levels. The two upper stories have the characteristic pointed gothic arch while the lower floors are distinguished by their rounded and rectangular openings. The regularized placement of motifs on the façade, however, indicates a growing awareness of classical designs.

The builder of the Palazzo Manzoni, which was also built during this transitional period, used fluted pilasters to divide the bays on the upper stories.[4] Furthermore, all of the windows on the main façade are simple, round-arches framed by engaged columns. In spite of its classical elements, the Palazzo Manzoni retained a distinctly Venetian look that would never be confused with a Renaissance palace from Florence. The distinct nature of the Ca'Dario accords perfectly with this stage of Venetian architecture; yet, at the same time it presents a noticeable departure from tradition.

The Ca'Dario was one of the first Venetian houses to be veneered entirely in marble.[5] Replacing the traditional brick and stucco exteriors, the luxurious layer of yellow-toned marble with red highlights, which is possibly the marble *giallo antico*, lends the palace a rich and sumptuous feel. Although palace façades clad entirely in stone only dated from the last two decades of the fifteenth century, the material had a long tradition in Venetian architecture.[6] Colorful marbles and expensive stones had long been used as a prominent building material on the most prestigious buildings, such as the Doge's Palace and at San Marco. These materials were also widely employed in more traditional settings as decorative details, including door and window frames, string courses, and carved reliefs.

Roundels, or circular discs made of fine stone, were a popular ornament for Venetian buildings.[7] Although some of the roundels were solely decorative, others, which often depicted demons, centaurs, and fighting animals, probably functioned as talismanic devices warding off evil or misfortune.[8] The use of Roman spoila asserted the status of the family by suggesting trading or military successes.[9] Numerous roundels adorn the façade of the Ca'Dario. These are in an assortment of colors and sizes, including the rich colors of *verde antico* and red porphyry, a type of spoila that signified imperial status. Although the discs certainly add to the decoration of the Ca'Dario, the expensive stone brings to mind the patron's success and helps to elevate his status. The combination of the numerous roundels and the completely veneered façade were two factors that made the Ca'Dario depart from traditional architecture.

The most striking features on the Ca'Dario are the rosette motifs on the two main floors and the quincunx pattern on the top story. This is the first instance that the rosette motif, which is a sequence of twelve marble discs around a larger porphyry disc, is used in domestic architecture in Venice (Figure 5); a previous version had only been used on the façade of the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli. The design of the quincunx, an arrangement of four circles around a larger circle, was a more prevalent motif.

Looking for the rosette motif's stylistic source, some scholars have suggested a relationship between it and the multiple-colored, interlaced patterns found in the mosaic floors at San Marco.[10] Deborah Howard thinks that the idea could have come from a decoration used on the façades of Egyptian palaces and mosques, which Dario would have seen on diplomatic trips to Cairo in 1473 and 1477.[11] Although these are possible sources of inspiration, the most obvious connection is with the two motifs in the segmented pediment of the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli (Figure 6).[12] Aside from the type of molding that frames the roundels and the number of discs that surround the central element, the two motifs are virtually alike. Pietro Lombardo built the church in 1481 as a permanent home for a painting of the Virgin and Child, suddenly linked to the performance of miracles.[13] Because of the substantial number of public offerings made in response to the miracles, construction on the foundation began within six months. By 1485, the building was complete except for the domed high altar.

Dario had several connections to the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli, which further the likelihood that it was the source of the Ca'Dario rosette. Prior to building his house on the Grand Canal, Dario lived in the Cannaregio district, the same area where one finds the Miracoli. Dario certainly would have been aware of the miracles attributed to the image and the

4 For a discussion of the Palazzo Manzoni, see Lieberman, *Renaissance Architecture*, plate 65.

5 Goy 57-59.

6 Goy 29-32, 57.

7 Goy 81.

8 Patricia Fortini Brown, *Art and Life in Renaissance Venice* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997) 118-120.

9 Deborah Howard, *Venice and the East: the Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture, 1100-1500* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000) 148-50.

10 The floors of San Marco resemble the Cosmatesque pavements from medieval churches in the vicinity of Rome. Howard, *Venice and the East* 154; McAndrew 220.

11 Howard, *Venice and the East* 153-54.

12 Lieberman, *Renaissance Architecture* plate 16; McAndrew 217. The rosettes at Santa Maria dei Miracoli have eleven roundels encircling a larger disk while the rosettes at the Ca'Dario have twelve roundels.

13 For the Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli, see Ralph Lieberman, *The Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Venice*, diss., New York University, 1986 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1986) especially 226-27 for the rosette motif. Lieberman remarks that the rosette motif does not exist as an architectural decoration before the 1480s, but that it has a long tradition in Venetian pavement decoration, such as at San Marco.

construction for the church. In addition, while Pietro Lombardo was working on the church he was simultaneously remodeling the entryway and courtyard of the Scuola San Giovanni Evangelista, a confraternity of which Dario was a member. As chief officer of the Scuola in 1480, it is likely that Dario knew of the architect's other building projects.[14]

Just as the source of the rosette at Dario's palace is interwoven with the history of the Miracoli, the message that Dario wanted the design to communicate is likewise connected to the church. While the previous literature dismisses the rosette design at both buildings as purely decorative, when one considers that roundels inserted in façades were often protective devices, the prominent position of this motif takes on new implications.[15]

In the middle ages, palaces and mosques in the Near East had architectural reliefs in the shapes of rosettes and discs that were considered as symbols of protection.[16] Likewise, Patrik Reutersward has argued that rosette motifs found on churches and sarcophagi from the early middle ages implied the protective hand of God.[17] These traditions, combined with the fact that the Miracoli sheltered a miraculous image, suggest that the rosette motif likely functioned as an apotropaic device for the church. Dario, who was familiar with the motif, would have appreciated that significance. As a decoration on his new home, he believed the rosette motif of rare and expensive stones helped to elevate his status, and would guard him from misfortune and help him to garner further achievements.

The inscription, "URBIS GENIO IOANNES DARIUS," was one of the first examples of classical epigraphy on residential architecture in Venice (Figure 4).[18] By using classical Latin with proper Roman letters, Dario alluded to a rich tradition of inscriptions on venerable buildings, which made his palazzo stand out from its contemporaries. Several scholars who interpret the text as a dedicatory statement to the city of Venice view it as an effort by Dario to avoid charges of building in an ostentatious manner.[19] In contrast, this discussion puts forth the suggestion that Dario included it as a means of creating a permanent honor to himself as well as to the city of Venice. In Latin, *genius* refers to spirit. When used with *urbis*, which can mean the idea of a city as well as its exact geographic location, the phrase becomes *to the guiding spirit of the city*.[20] Dario's inscription should be interpreted as honoring the actual city of Venice, and the ideas embodied by the Republic. By adding his name to the phrase, he placed himself in the exalted ranks of the Republic and equated himself with the guiding spirit of the city.

Even though his was one of the earliest buildings in Venice to include a Latin inscription, Dario was not the first Renaissance patron to employ an epigraph with personal and civic themes. At the Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini (1451) there are twin Greek inscriptions on its flanks which proclaim that Sigismondo Malatesta, the patron, dedicated the building to God and to the state.[21] Although Marilyn Aronberg Lavin stresses that these are part of a larger artistic program to show Sigismondo's twin allegiances, the prominent inclusion of his name at the beginning of the inscription ensures the commemoration of the Malatesta family. In terms of residential architecture, the Casa di Lorenzo Manilio of 1469 in Rome has a classical inscription carved into travertine blocks in the frieze above the ground floor (Figure 7).[22] The text begins with a reference to the rebirth of the city and follows with the name of the patron. Again, the inscription's essential purpose

[14] Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1988) 241-242.

[15] For discussions of the rosette motif as a decorative element, see Howard, *Architectural History* 108; Lieberman, *Santa Maria dei Miracoli* 226; McAndrew 217. For the apotropaic quality of the roundels, see note 9.

[16] Amulets in the shapes of rings, rosettes, discs, and knots made up of interlacing designs, were placed over the doors of houses and used as sculptural reliefs on pottery, water basins, and thresholds as apotropaic devices to ward off misfortune or evil. For further discussion, see Nigel J. Morgan, "Devotional objects and popular images," *The Dictionary of Art*, volume 8, 835; Robert Hillenbrand, "Islamic Art, Subject Matter (ix) Magic," *The Dictionary of Art*, volume 16, 136, 246.

[17] Patrick Reuterswärd, "The Forgotten Symbols of God," *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 51.3 (1982): 103-25.

[18] Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1996) 255.

[19] Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* 255-260; John Onian, "The Last Judgment of Renaissance Architecture," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 128 (1980): 708-709. Franz Babinger suggests that the inscription is a variation of a quote by the ancient author Ausonius, which reads: "Salve, urbis genius, medico potabilis haustu." For a further discussion, see Franz Babinger, *Johannes Darius (1414-1494), Sachwalter Venedigs im Morgenland, und sein griechischer Umkreis* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie de Wissenschaften, 1961) 89, n. 2.

[20] I would like to thank Dr. Jack Freiberg for assisting me with this translation.

[21] The inscription reads: "Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, son of Pandolfo, Bringer of Victory, having survived many and most grave dangers during the Italic War, in recognition of his deeds accomplished so felicitously and with such courage, for he obtained what he had prayed for in such a critical juncture, has erected at his magnanimous expense this temple to the Immortal God and to the City, and left a memorial worthy of fame and full of piety." For a transcript of the inscription in Greek and a further discussion of the meaning behind Sigismondo Malatesta's inscription, see Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, "Piero della Francesca's Fresco of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta before St. Sifismund: 1+S3! 1! ; ! I S35! 3I / 3A?7+3" *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974): 345-374; "The Antique Source for the Tempio Malatestiano's Greek Inscriptions," *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977): 421-422. For a different analysis, see Onian 707-708.

[22] The inscription reads: "Urbe Roma in pristinam forma[m r]enascente Laur(entius) Manlius Karitate erga patri[am gent(em) a]edis suo / nomine manlian(as) a s(olo) pro fort[un]ar(um) mediocritate ad for(um) iudeor(um) sibi poterisq[ue suis ipse] p(osuit) / ab urb(e) con(dita) MMCCXXIL an(nis) m(ensibus) III d(iebus) II p(osuit) (ante diem) XI cal(endas) aug(ustas)." Missing portions of the inscription are designated by the brackets. For a further discussion and analysis of the inscription, see Pier Luigi Tucci, *Laurentius Manlius* (Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2001) 187-224.

is to honor a city and to pay tribute to the person who created the monument.

Although Dario based his inscription on a long tradition of classical architectural epigraphy, he made one significant change. Instead of putting the text in the frieze as at the Casa di Lorenzo Manilio, he placed it across the middle of the ground floor. By positioning the text at eye level, it would be more noticeable to passengers along the Grand Canal and better serve to reinforce Dario's message.

To grasp fully the distinctive nature of the Ca'Dario, we must understand the patron's unique status within Venice. Dario performed many roles as a Venetian *cittadino*. Within the social structure of Venice, the *cittadini* ranked second behind the elite and restricted patrician class.[23] Nonetheless, Dario became a successful merchant who, around 1464, at the age of fifty, began to serve as a Venetian diplomat in the East.[24] Before he retired from diplomatic work in 1489, this position took him to many diverse lands including Egypt, Constantinople, and Persia.

One of Dario's most illustrious moments was in 1479 when he negotiated a peace treaty with the Sultan Mehmet II from the Turkish Empire. In return for his accomplishment, the Venetian Senate gave him property in Padua that would provide an annual income. In addition, he was able to keep a set of golden gowns given to him by the Sultan.[25] The combination of his mercantile and diplomatic successes allowed Dario to amass a great fortune with which to build his new house on the Grand Canal. Furthermore, he provided his only child, Marietta, with a substantial dowry that enabled her to marry the patrician Vincenzo Barbaro.[26] Although Dario could not become a patrician, he provided the means for his decendents to have this status.

As a civil servant, Dario did not spend all of his time abroad; he also held leadership positions in Venetian institutions. In 1480 and 1492 Dario served as the Grand Guardian, or chief officer, of the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista.[27] Although nobles were not excluded from membership within these philanthropic organizations, they were restricted from holding offices including the Grande Guardian.[28] Dario also served as secretary to the patrician senate, another role that was exclusively reserved for the citizen class. Positions such as these were eagerly sought, and allowed the *cittadini* a sense of power.[29]

Throughout the history of Venice little internal strife and few popular uprisings occurred. Despite the fact that the nobility controlled the government, an overall sense of harmony created the belief that the people of Venice were content with their positions and saw themselves as essentially equal.[30] Dario, however, was clearly aware of the limitations. In a letter from 1484 to Doge Giovanni Mocenigo, in which Dario was writing to be relieved of his diplomatic post in order to retire to Venice, he states: "And if I were there I would be silent as is suitable to my station, and I would leave speaking to those whom it is given from above."[31] With this acknowledgement Dario made it clear that he realized that upon returning to Venice his diplomatic position, with which he had achieved great success, would no longer offer him a leadership role in the city's government.

When Dario knew he was going to retire from his diplomatic work, he began to build his house on the Grand Canal. Knowing that he could never be a patrician, but cognizant of the fact that he had achieved greater power than most *cittadini*, he chose to create a house that reflected his unique position within Venetian society. The resulting product was the Ca' Dario, which, just like its patron, set itself apart from its contemporaries and departed from tradition.

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23 For a further discussion of the social structure of Venice and the distinctions between the classes see Brown, *Art and Life in Renaissance Venice* 34; James S. Grubb, "Elite citizens," *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797*, eds. John Martin and Dennis Romano (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2000) 339-364; and Brian Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1971) 99-112.

24 For the biography of Giovanni Dario see Babinger 71-117.

25 For a further discussion of the terms and conditions of the peace treaty as well as Dario's recompense and gift see Babinger 84-85.

26 The dowry was 1000 ducats. Babinger 86.

27 Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting* 241-242. The Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, which had a relic of the True Cross, commissioned artists such as Gentile Bellini and Vittore Carpaccio for a series of paintings recording the miracles associated with the relic. For an overview of the scuole organizations in Venice, see Brian Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: the Social Institutions of a Catholic State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1971) 33-131.

28 Pullan 73-74.

29 Pullan 108.

30 Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* 255. The author cites a quote from Sanudo's *De origine* of 1493, which reads "The poor live here with the wealthy under equality," to convey a sense of uniformity within the treatment of the various classes.

31 Babinger 72; English translation of quote taken from Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting* 65.

Figure 1. Ca'Dario, *c.* 1488, Venice. Photograph courtesy of Segundo J. Fernandez.

Figure 2. Santa Maria dei Miracoli,1481-1485, Venice. Pietro Lombardo, architect. Photograph courtesy of Segundo J. Fernandez.

Figure 3. Palazzo Cavalli-Franchetti, fifteenth-century; nineteenth-century restoration, Venice. Photograph courtesy of Segundo J. Fernandez.

Figure 4. Detail of the inscription, Ca'Dario, *c.* 1488, Venice. Photograph courtesy of Segundo J. Fernandez.

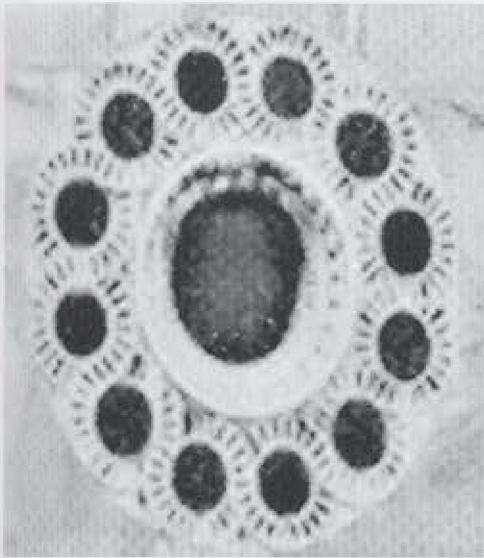

Figure 5. Detail of the rosette motif, Ca'Dario, *c.* 1488, Venice. Photograph courtesy of Segundo J. Fernandez.

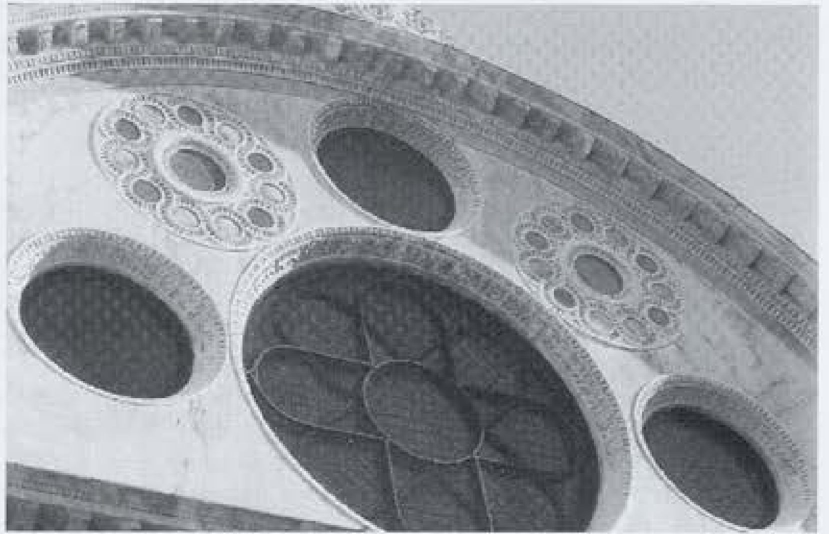

Figure 6. Detail of the rosette motif, Santa Maria dei Miracoli, 1481-1485, Venice. Pietro Lombardo, architect. Photograph courtesy of Segundo J. Fernandez.

Figure 7. Casa di Lorenzo Manilio, *c.* 1469, Rome. Photograph courtesy of Jack Freiberg.

Illusion and Deception
Construction of a Proverb in Hieronymus Bosch's *The Conjurer*

Elina Gertsman

"Ce visiteur encore inconnu […] qui serait peut-étre une déception."
—Jules Romains, *Poèmes*

Introduction

The Conjurer, one of Hieronymus Bosch's most enigmatic paintings, has long been a subject of scholarly interest. Often considered to be a genre painting with a moralizing purpose or a humorous little scene inspired by a real-life situation, this work has also been linked to medieval fables, interpreted in astrological terms, and considered as a representation of an anti-Mass.[1] This study will analyze the iconography of the *Conjurer* to show that the painting, on the level of composition and with the help of constant inversion and references to verbal similes and metaphors, represents its own proverb. By placing the painting in the artistic and theological contexts of fifteenth-century Flanders, this paper demonstrates that the *Conjurer* constantly calls for its own re-interpretation, subsequently revealing shifting layers of meaning.

A reliable copy of the lost original, the *Conjurer* is now found in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, in the Musée Municipal (Figure 1).[2] The painting can be only approximately situated in the late 1480s, and its patron is unknown, a fact that further complicates the analysis of this already complex image.[3] The small oil-on-wood, measuring 53 x 65 cm, presents the viewer with a conjurer entertaining a crowd by making a frog jump out of a simpleton's mouth. The sex of this onlooker is hard to determine; both male and female traits are ambiguously blended together to create an androgynous figure.[4] This genderless person may be taken to represent all humanity, both men and women; in a sense, this is the Flemish *Elckerlyc* (Everyman) of the fifteenth-century morality play by the same name.[5] A large key hangs from *Elckerlyc's* belt, as does a purse, which is in the process of being snatched by the trickster's assistant; neither the dunce nor the crowd, staring at the conjurer with gullible stupidity, notices anything.[6] Among the crowd stand a nun and a child with a toy windmill who seems more amused by the tricked *Elckerlyc's* face than by the trick itself: he is staring into the simpleton's mouth. The table between the magician and his victim is set with various paraphernalia—beakers, balls, and a wand; a hoop leans against it. A small dog in a fool's cap, with a belt adorned with bells, sits at the conjurer's feet. At the magician's waist hangs a peculiar-looking basket with an owl visible within. A small frog, sitting on the table, seems to be as hypnotized by the ball in the magician's outstretched hand as the simpleton is. There certainly is an ironic relationship between the shiny eyes of the fool and the white gleaming spots of the frog's eyes. The horizon is blocked by a wall, parallel to the painting's picture plane, its monotony broken by occasional sprouts of vegeta-

I would like to thank Robert Carroll and Professor Jodi Cranston for their editorial help on various drafts of this paper. I also wish to thank the FSU faculty for inviting me to present this paper at their annual symposium.

[1] For the *Conjurer* as a genre scene, please see F. Schmidt-Degener, "Un Tableau de Jérome Bosch au Musée Municipale de Saint-Germain-en-Laye," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* I (1906): 153 and Walter Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991) 24-25. Schmidt-Degener perceives the painting as a warning to the simple folk against the trickster who will take your money and turn you into a laughing stock for the children, while Gibson compares it to genre scenes found among Dutch illuminated manuscripts, especially those executed by the Master of Evert van Soundenbalch, who infused jocularity into his miniatures. For the parallel between the *Conjurer* and a medieval fable about a woman who became pregnant by a toad, please see the monograph by Jacques Darriulat, *Jérôme Bosch et la fable populaire* (Paris: Lagune, 1995). Andrew Pigler perceives the protagonists of the *Conjurer* as Luna's children in "Astrology and Jerome Bosch," *Burlington Magazine* 92 (1950): 132-136. Finally, for the imagery of the painting as an anti-Mass, see Jeffrey Hamburger, "Bosch's *Conjuror*: an Attack on Magic and Sacramental Heresy," *Simiolus* XIV/1 (1984): 4-23.

[2] Copies of the *Conjurer* are now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Nicholson Gallery in New York, the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and a private collection in California. For further information on these copies see Gerd Unverhefrt, *Hieronymus Bosch: die Rezeption seiner Kunst in führen 16 Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Mann, 1980) 100-114 and Darriulat 15-19.

[3] Carl Linfert, *Hieronymus Bosch* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1972) 9.

[4] The identity of the simpleton has been debated; it is not clear whether the tricked person is a man or a woman. Although the facial features look male, the costume identifies the onlooker as a female. For those who see this person as a woman, see Dirk Bax, "Bezwaren tegen L. B. Philip's interpretatie van Jeroen Bosch' marskramer, goochelaar, jeisnijder en voorgrond van hooiwagenpaneel," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 13 (1962): 1-55.

[5] Written sometime before the end of the fifteenth-century, the Flemish play "Elckerlyc" (as well as its English counterpart "Everyman") is, as Arthur Cawley has aptly put it, "the spiritual biography of a microcosm man." Arthur C. Cawley, *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1959) XV.

[6] Indeed Charles de Tolnay once compared the crowd with a kind of an indefensible hydra at the mercy of preposterous magic in his *Hieronymus Bosch* (New York: Reynal and Company, 1966) 16.

tion and a circular aperture with a metal bar dividing the moon in half. A long-beaked bird appears in this opening, its head turned to the sky.

The First Deception: From Genre Painting to Iniquitous Parody

Often considered a didactic genre scene, the *Conjurer* appears to have been based on two Flemish proverbs.[7] The first states: "He who lets himself be fooled by conjuring tricks loses his money and becomes the laughing stock of children."[8] The child with a toy windmill and the magician's confederate who steals the dunce's money seem to have directly materialized out of this proverb. Another one, "No one is so much a fool as a willful fool," would also indicate that the tricked *Elckerlyc*, who, if not willfully, at least willingly submitted to the conjurer's spectacle and the subsequent theft, is doubly obtuse. The latter saying comes from *Proverbia Communia*, a collection of proverbs published *c*. 1480, right around the time of the creation of *The Conjurer*, in 's Hertogenbosch, the painter's native town.[9] Widely distributed, *Proverbia Communia* was no doubt known to Bosch and his contemporaries, and might have inspired the Saint-Germain-en-Laye piece. Such a connection with an adage is not unprecedented in Bosch's oeuvre; for instance, his *Hay Wagon* comes directly out of the Flemish proverb "The world is a haystack, and each man plucks from it what he can."[10]

However, the indices are evident that the *Conjurer* is not merely a didactic genre painting based, perhaps, on a couple of Flemish sayings. Instead of relying on a known proverb, the painting begins to construct a maxim of its own by using both symbolic and compositional devices. Firstly, the composition distorts and transforms the role of the magician as a mere trickster and thief. *The Conjurer* is clearly constructed according to the medieval canon of representing saints or Christ performing miracles and addressing a crowd, prevalent in fifteenth-century woodcuts.[11] Determined by the limitations of the medium, and especially by that of quantity, these prints had to be executed in a rather concise manner, which led to the setting of certain canons for the woodcut illustrations that popularized the symbolic form.[12] Just as the key hanging at the man's waist came to denote Saint Peter, so did a lonely figure with a raised hand counterbalanced by the crowd of spectators become a standard for representing Christ performing a miracle or preaching the Word.[13] Examples of such composition are numerous; it suffices to list only a few. Pictorial structures similar to Bosch's the *Conjurer* are found in *Die Neue Ehe Und Das Passional Von Jesu* "Christ Healing a Sick Man" and in Augsburg *Plenarium* "Christ Addressing the Pharisees" (Figures 2 and 3), where the holy protagonist on the right is counter-balanced by the mesmerized crowd on the left.[14] Of special interest are woodcuts, with representations of Christ casting out demons, found, for instance, in the same Augsburg *Plenarium* and in *Auslegung des Lebens Jesu Christi* from Ulm (Figures 4 and 5).[15] There, little demons jumping out of men's mouths are reminiscent of Bosch's frog getting ready to jump from the dunce's lips. The resemblance is even more remarkable since in the woodcuts others are assisting the miracle by holding up the afflicted men, not unlike the magician's associate "assists" the conjurer's trick by holding up the *Elckerlyc's* purse.

The Conjurer, then, appears as a parody of a miracle or preaching scene, and as such it gains an inverted meaning. A representation of Christ healing the sick or addressing people has been transformed into an evil magician, an impostor. The conjurer, dressed in a scarlet caftan, reminiscent of a minister's clothes, extends his hand as if for blessing, but instead a little ball, an instrument of hypnosis, is placed in this "benedictory" hand.[16] The figure of the disciple is here replaced by that of the accomplice in crime. The crowd has also undergone a similar transformation. The onlookers, who are supposed to be

[7] This notion is discussed in Schmidt-Degener, Linfert, Bax and Delevoy.

[8] Delevoy 26.

[9] "Nyemant so geck als willens geck." *Proverbia Communia,* ed. Richard Jente (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1947) 87. On page 10 Jente lists the places of the book's publications, mentioning the fifth location as 's Hertogenbosch.

[10] Tolnay 24. Here Bosch heralds a pictorial tradition, fully exploited by artists such as Pieter Bruegel and Adriaen Pietersz van Venne. On Breugel see Alan Dundes and Claudia A. Stibbe, *The Art of Mixing Metaphors: a Folkloristic Interpretation of the Netherlandish Proverbs by Pieter Bruegel the Elder* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1981) and Wilhelm Fraenger, *Das Bild der "Niederlandischen Sprichworter": Pieter Bruegels verkehrte Weld* (Amsterdam: Castrum Peregrini Presse, 1999). On van de Venne, see Annelies Plokker, *Adriaen Pietersz. van de Venne, 1589-1662: de grisailles met spreukbanden* (Leuven: Acco, 1984).

[11] The *Conjurer* is not an exception; other paintings by Bosch that derive or appropriate compositions from woodcuts are *Ecce Homo*, *The Last Judgement* and *The Hay Wagon*.

[12] Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch. German Woodcut Illustration Before 1500*, ed. Walter S. Strauss, 80 (New York: Abaris Books, 1981) 1.

[13] On Dutch and Flemish woodcuts see especially Martinus Joseph Schretlen, *Dutch and Flemish Woodcuts of the Fifteenth Century* (London: E. Benn, ltd., 1925); *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish woodcuts preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum,* ed. Campbell Dodgson, (Vaduz, Liechtenstein: Quarto Press in association with British Museum Publications, 1980); and F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings, and woodcuts, ca. 1450 -1700* (Amsterdam: M. Hertzberger, 1949)

[14] "Christ Healing a Sick Man" was published in Lübeck by Lucas Brandis 20 August 1478 (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 80, p. 15, woodcut no. 47 [10.138]); "Christ Addressing the Pharisees" was published in Augsburg by Anton Sort in 7 May 1478 (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 80, p.116, woodcut no. 389 [4.345], fol. 98v).

[15] For the first woodcut see *Plenarium* (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 80, p. 116, woodcut no. 387 [4.343], fol. 78r); for the second, see *Auslegung des Lebens Jesu Christi* published in Ulm by Johannes Zainer *c*.1478 (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 80, p. 153, woodcut no. 548 [5.359] fol. 74v).

[16] The gesture has also been interpreted as "iunctio digitis," which has eucharistic references in Hamburger 17.

attending the saintly miracles or divine words, have become the stiff spectators, mesmerized by the conjurer. A man standing next to a young woman draws her attention to the theft, but she pays him no heed. The unsuspecting victim's head is placed just above the edge of the table as if for sacrificial decapitation. It seems that Bosch is drawing a parallel between this figure and an innocent lamb, ready to be butchered by the mountebank. A table, bisecting the painting, appears to mimic the altar or the preacher's lectern; but instead of the holy book, the sorcerer's paraphernalia is neatly arranged on it. The hoop leaning against the table shines like a halo, which has been cast aside. Finally, the wall on the background seems to mimic a *hortus conclusus*, a common symbol of Mary's purity.[17] However, instead of a low wall enclosing the garden, here a high unkempt rampart, a parody on the *hortus conclusus*, obscures the view. When combined, all the aspects of this panel lead to the interpretation of the *Conjurer* as a parable of evil disguised as something innocuous. The viewer is confronted with the transmutation of a harmless trickster into a heretic turning people away from God by masquerading as a saint, and therefore blindly accepted by the crowd. The stolen purse of the tall stooge perhaps symbolizes the faith stolen by the advocates of the devil in the guise of the magician and his assistant. The painting, in its artful inversion of a common subject matter, already warns the viewer of a danger: the man in red is no mere trickster, his tricks are not so harmless, and the world may not be as it seems.

Symbolic devices support this interpretation. The prevalent colors of the painting are red and white, which, when used together, are emblematic of folly in Flemish lore.[18] The creatures that accompany the conjurer—the frogs, a dog and an owl—have a negative connotation in the indigenous folklore of the Netherlands.[19] The association of frogs with diabolical manifestations, and especially heresy, was established through the words of Revelation 16:13: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet."[20] Specifically in Flemish tradition, the frog was a symbol of the blasphemer and the embodiment of poverty because of its naked skin.[21] The word *puit* (frog) was a verbal simile that could also denote a bad and depraved person; Bosch also draws on a popular expression, "to swallow frogs," which connotes human credulousness and extreme naiveté.[22] According to Jan van Ruysbroek, the principal initiator of a great mystical movement in Flanders, credulity led to heresy.[23] Ruysbroek's followers opened two schools at 's Hertogenbosch in 1424 and 1480. Bosch, unquestionably, was acquainted with their dogmas, and may have alluded to them by representing the frog in the *Elckerlyc*'s mouth.

The small trained dog, often used by entertainers to amuse the public, stood for the greed and dishonesty of entertainers themselves. In Flemish legends dogs are involved in all sorts of tricks, usually gruesome and unfair.[24] Dog-headed demons haunt Bosch's works, and they are especially prevalent in his *Temptation of Saint Anthony,* where the dog-headed priest conducts a mass, with blood pouring out of his torn cloak, and nearby the diabolic creature of a dog in a jester's cap, not unlike the one sitting at the conjurer's feet, accompanies a minstrel-devil.

Finally, to best characterize the symbolic nature of the owl, we turn again to *Proverbia Communia*: "The owl is like the lie, she flies by night and wants to be secret." As an emblem of an informer and obscenity, the owl populates many of Bosch's paintings.[25] It is described in Dirk van Delf's characterization of Asmodeus—"this devil of unchastity roams by night like a barn owl,"—and in Van Spiere's play "De Christlycke Ridders," Huben and Ulen are two diabolical owls summoned by the devil.[26]

Common in Netherlandish verbal and pictorial traditions, a frog, an owl, and a dog become symbols not only pointing to the world of proverbs, but also designating the conjurer as a being of another order, and his world as a different world. Upon close examination, the painting sheds its misleading didactic genre layers and instead draws the viewer to witness an irreverent parody of a sacred scene. Lit by the crescent moon, itself a symbol of licentiousness and evil,[27] witnessed

17 George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford UP, 1989) 42. Initially, this concept was taken from the Song of Songs 4:12, "A garden enclosed is my sister; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" in *The Holy Bible* (New York: Ballantine Book, 1991) 617.

18 Dirk Bax, *Hieronymus Bosch, His Picture-Writing Deciphered* (Rotterdam: A. A. Balkema, 1979) 63.

19 For a full encyclopedia of Netherlandish folklore, see Kornelis ter Laan, *Van Goor's folkloristisch woordenboek van Nederland en Vlaams Belgie* (Den Haag: Van Goor Zonen, 1974).

20 Revelation 16:13, King James Version. For further discussion of frogs in biblical and medieval Christian literature see Hamburger 8-12.

21 Dirk Bax, *Hieronymus Bosch and Lucas Cranach* (Amsterdam, Oxford, New York: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1983) 57.

22 *Freidank, Bescheidenheit* (Aalen: O. Zeller, 1962).

23 For a wealth of information on Jan van Ruysbroek, see Cornelis Wilkeshuis, *Jan van Ruusbroec* (Zeist: W. de Haan, 1964) and Paul Mommaers and Norbert de Paepe, eds. *Jan van Ruusbroec: the Sources, Content, and Sequels of His Mysticism* (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven UP, 1984).

24 Charles de Coster, *The Glorious Adventures of Tyl Ulenspiegel* (New York: Limited Editions Club by Joh. Enschede en Zonen, 1934) 24. For more on Flemish legends see Charles de Coster's *Flemish Legends* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1920) and Antoon Joseph Witteryck, *Contes populaires, coutumes religieuses et superstitions* (Bruges, 1889).

25 Numerous representations of an owl are found in *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, *Ecce Homo* and *The Garden Of Earthly Delights.*

26 Bax, *Hieronymus Bosch,* 83. On Dirk van Delf(t) see Franciscus Antonius Maria Daniels, *Meester Dirc van Delf, zijn persoon en zijn werk* (Nijmegen, Utrecht: N.v. Dekker & van de Vegt en J.W. van Leeuwen, 1932).

27 The crescent moon may also designate heresy. See Jacques Combe, *Jérôme Bosch* (Paris: Editions Pierre Tisné, 1957) 14.

by unclean animals, the painting constructs a proverb that is a far cry from "No one is such a fool as a willful fool." It is rather a cautionary proverb warning that appearances are deceptive.

The Second Deception: From Impious Parody to Ridicule of the Church

The viewer, then, has been tricked, if not by the conjurer then by Bosch himself. Instead of a genre scene based on a harmless proverb, the viewer is presented with the charlatan as a source of malignancy, as an anti-Christian *par excellence*, a heretic in a magician's clothing. However, Bosch does not cease his deceptive tactics, and so he inverts our expectations once again. If the conjurer is a sinner leading simple folk away from the Church and its proper ways, then why is there a nun standing among the others in the crowd, as transfixed on the little hypnotizing ball in the conjurer's hand as everyone else? The only person to be shown in clothing betraying her social status, the nun in her black and white garb stands out in the crowd, almost becoming its focal point. Here Bosch seems to suggest that the Church has been lost to evil as well.

This view is not as unorthodox as it initially seems. A member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady, the artist was an advocate of the *devotio moderna.*[28] This movement originated in Flanders and the Netherlands in the fourteenth century, and one of its initiators was Jan van Ruysbroek, who retired to the Groenendael Hermitage, and while in this hideaway, wrote a number of books. One of his students, Gerhard Groote, instituted the Brotherhood of the Common Life, or *devotio moderna*, which became extremely successful, and, as was noted before, opened two schools in 's Hertogenbosch.[29] The precepts of this movement despised the pointless isolation of the monasteries and the corruption of the Catholic Church. *Devotio moderna* adherents also condemned the mendicant friars and the indulgences they sold. Ruysbroek wrote that these worthless pieces of paper brought "to each his heart's desire: the bishop has the money; the fools, their passing pleasure; and the devil, the souls of all."[30]

In the middle of the fifteenth century the Church turned magicians and sorcerers into actual symbols of heresy, giving the inquisitors the right to methodically destroy the Netherlandish population, which apparently abounded with theurgists. Flemish folk legends tell many stories about the cruelty with which innocent people were burnt or buried alive when accused by the Church of being magicians and witches.[31] In 1461 an exceptionally cruel wave of persecutions took place in the city of Arrace; the *Conjurer* was painted soon after it. In this context, the panel emerges as a commentary by a follower of *devotio moderna* on the merciless practices of the Church and the Inquisition.

This hypothesis may be examined in relation to the first edition of *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Witches' Mallot*), published around 1484-85.[32] Pope Innocent VIII wrote the preface to the book, in which he supported every effort of Henry Kramer and James Sprenger, the two Dominican monks featured in *Malleus Maleficarum*, in their quest against heresy.[33] A recently postulated argument proposes that the painting serves as a parody on the Pope and Inquisition inasmuch as the peculiar shape of the tall figure in red, awkwardly bent over the table to form the shape of the *malleus* (the mallet), wears the Pope's red and white attire, and carries a large key (that of Saint Peter's) on his belt.[34] The man who steals the Pope's money is dressed in the white and brown colors of the Dominican order, and no wonder—it is known that the most zealous executors of the Inquisition often kept a large part of the victim's money for themselves, instead of donating it into the holy treasury.[35]

In light of this interpretation, what becomes of the magician's role? The conjurer and the man stealing the purse are clearly accomplices; the connection between the two is made explicitly clear. The trickster's triangular-shaped nose is echoed in his co-conspirator's bespectacled proboscis; the position of the trickster's left hand that holds onto the basket is replicated by his assistant's right hand holding onto the purse; finally, both wear pseudo-scholarly robes, those of a teacher and his disciple.[36] If the assistant wears the colors of the Dominican orders, then the conjurer surely represents a mendicant friar, preaching at a pulpit, here replaced by a table

28 Although Bosch's adherence to *devotio moderna* is widely accepted, some authors believe he belonged to heretic sects—Fraenger calls him an Adamite (see Wilhelm Fraenger, *Hieronymus Bosch* [Basel: The Gordon and Breach Publishing Group, G+B Arts International, 1994]), while Harris believes him to be a Cathar (Lynda Harris, *The Secret Heresy of Hieronymus Bosch* [Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1995]). For good sources of information on *devotio moderna* see Albert Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance; a History of the "Devotio moderna"* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1965) and *Devotio moderna: Basic Writings,* translated and introduced by John Van Engen (New York: Paulist Press, 1988).

29 Combe 20. On Groote see also Karl Gruhe, *Gerhard Groot und Seine Stiftungen* (Köln: J. P. Bachem, 1883) and Regnerus Richardus Post, *Geert Groote: Levensschets* (Den Bosch: Geert Groote Genootschap verzendhuis Marienburg, 1940).

30 Quoted in Combe 20.

31 *The Glorious Adventures of Tyl Ulenspiegel,* based on such Flemish legends, tells of a young boy, the Spirit of Flanders, who never dies but travels around his land to help people in misery and trick the rich and dishonest monks and nuns.

32 Institoris Henricus, *Malleus Maleficarum*, trans. M. Summers (New York: Blom, 1970).

33 "Desiring with the most heartfelt anxiety … that all heretical depravity should be driven far from the frontiers and bournes of the Faithful…" *Malleus Maleficarum* xliii.

34 H. Stein-Schneider, "Le Charlatan de Hieronymus Bosch du Musée Municipal de Saint-Germain-en-Laye," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 100 (1985): 47-51.

35 Stein-Schneider further proposes that in this context the magician acquires a positive role as a mystic, but I believe otherwise.

36 Fraenger 473.

with magical paraphernalia. The conjurer, then, is cast in a few roles simultaneously. Positioned across from the mesmerized nun and the Pope figure—the two representatives of the Catholic Church—the conjurer may be seen as either an innocent entertainer about to be unjustly persecuted for heresy, or a trickster who mocks the Church by demonstrating its gullible folly, or a mendicant friar who profits from its stupidity and keeps the gold to use for his own pleasure. Is he a heretic, a mere thief, or something different altogether? His character is ambiguous, and so is Bosch's painting as it manipulates the viewer's perceptions, perpetually revealing new layers of meaning.

Conclusion

The proverb that the *Conjurer* constructs, then, is further strengthened: truly, appearances are deceiving; the role of the magician and his surroundings changes with every new look at the painting. As we peel off each layer, the conjurer turns from a trickster and a thief into a diabolical creature and then metamorphoses into an instrument of mockery of the corrupt clergy. The universe of this work is symptomatic of the late medieval worldview: it depicts a place lost and abandoned by God, immersed into ambiguity where vice and virtue, good and evil, are constantly inverted. The painting leads to interpretations that contradict one another—is the *Conjurer* an attack on the hypocrisy of the Catholic Church, or is it an affirmation of the Church's view of tricksters as evil sorcerers? Bosch is playing with the idea of the false and illusory, and his painting, like the conjurer himself, finds itself in constant flux as it builds up its own pictorial proverb about illusive appearances and their elusive meanings.

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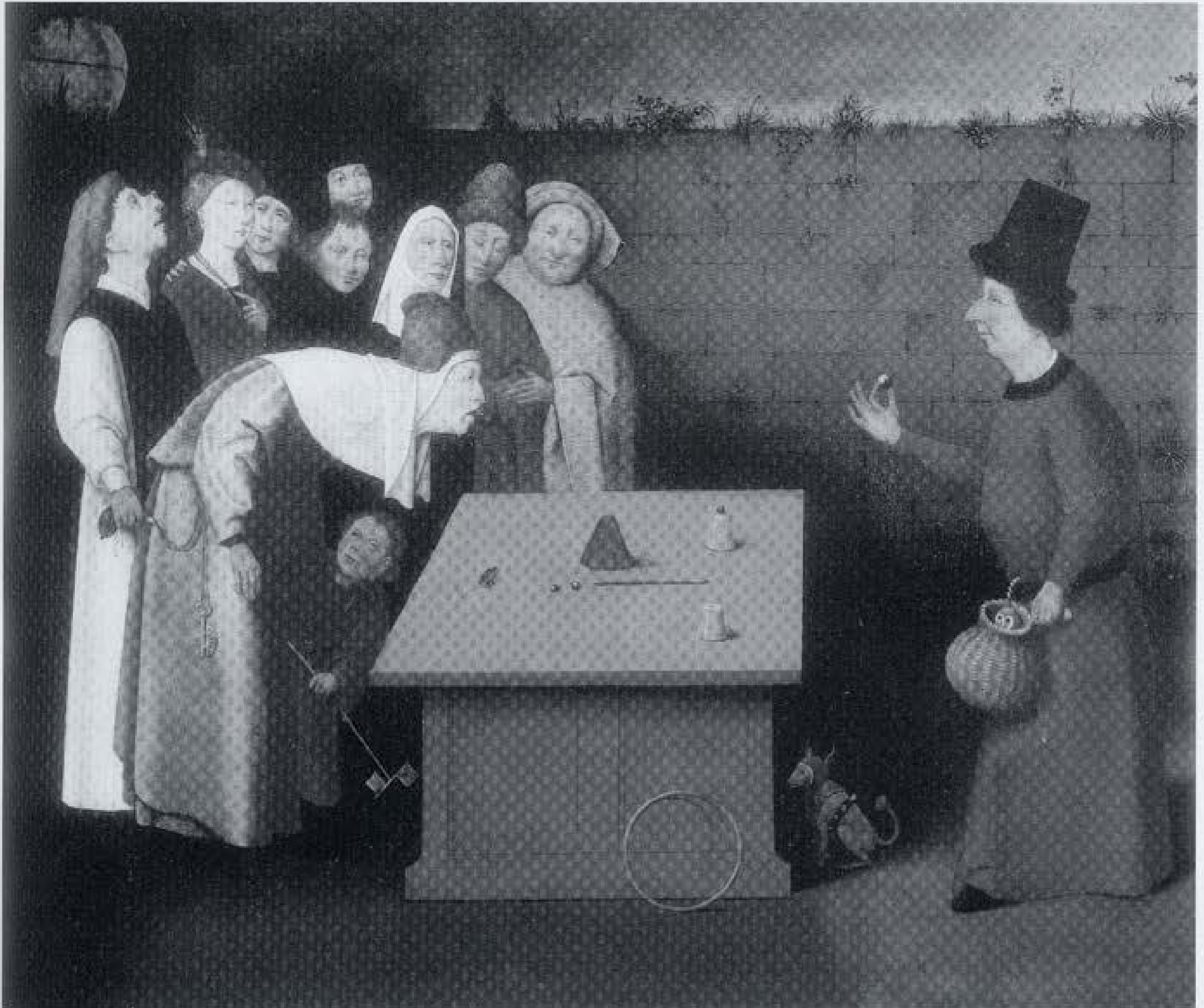

Figure 1. *The Conjurer*, Hieronymus Bosch, 1475-1480, oil on panel, 53 x 65 cm, Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Photo courtesy of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Musée Municipal.

Figure 2. *Christ Healing a Sick Man*, from *Die Neue Ehe Und Das Passional Von Jesu*, woodcut, published in Lübeck by Lucas Brandis, 20 August 1478. Photo courtesy of the Rare Books Division of the Library of Congress.

Figure 3. *Christ Addressing the Pharisees*, from the *Plenarium*, woodcut, published in Augsburg by Anton Sort, 7 May 1478. Photo courtesy of the Rare Books Division of the Library of Congress.

Figure 4. *Christ Casting Out Demons*, from the *Plenarium*, woodcut, published in Augsburg by Anton Sort, 7 May 1478. Photo courtesy of the Rare Books Division of the Library of Congress.

Figure 5. *Christ Casting Out Demons*, from *Auslegung des Lebens Jesu Christi*, woodcut, published in Ulm by Johannes Zainer *c.* 1478. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Giulio Romano's Garden of Venus as an Interactive Spatial Metaphor

Diann G. Montague

This paper is concerned with the treatment of real and fictive space in Giulio Romano's *Room of Psyche* (*c.*1527-30) at the Palazzo Te in Mantua.[1] In particular, it focuses on the fictive environment proposed by the wall fresco as a literary fantasy. Both this narrative/spatial concept and its formal means represent a departure from Giulio's known work with Raphael in Rome; and, for this reason, the present study looks to the artistic and literary tastes of the north-Italian region for the program's rationale. The regional context is inferred from: 1) the major decorative precedents that Giulio encountered in Mantua; 2) some conventions of contemporary romantic and pastoral novellas printed in Venice; and, 3) northern Italy's continuing interest in the garden of love as a literary and artistic motif.[2]

The *Room of Psyche* is the principal *sala* of the suburban pleasure palace designed and decorated in the early years of Giulio's tenure as court artist to Federigo II Gonzaga, fifth Marquis and first Duke of Mantua. It is located in the northeast corner of the hollow quadrangle and overlooks the gardens at the rear of the complex. As the crowning achievement of the palace's first decorative campaign (organized around themes of nature, art, and love), the frescoes reconcile, in artistic terms, the contrasting values of spiritual and physical love.[3] The vehicle for this neo-Platonic conceit is the myth of Psyche and Cupid, whose story from Apuleius is illustrated in episodes contained within the coffers and lunettes of the vault.[4] As a counterbalance to this idealizing program, the wall fresco deploys a Bacchic scenario that flows uninterruptedly around the room. A classicizing inscription at its upper margin announces the villa's function as an escape from the routine cares and duties attendant upon public life.[5] Together, the frescoes' subject, inscription, and enveloping spatial effects posit the *Room of Psyche* (and by extension, the Te) as a "modern Arcadia."

The real space of the room becomes the setting for the wedding feast of Cupid and Psyche, whose marriage is depicted, *di sotto in su*, at the apex of the vault. It represents a contemporary garden, delineated by a topiary grid on the plane of the west wall, a vine-trellised pergola on the south wall, and a pavilion on the north wall.[6] The room's proximity to the palace's actual gardens and fishponds (visible through the windows on the east wall) helps to blur the boundary between the illusory and the real. Vignettes of Venus, Mars, and Adonis identify the space as the Garden of Venus; appropriately, it

1 This paper was written under the direction of Dr. Charles R. Mack, whose expertise and encouragement have contributed much to its completion. Dr. Mack is a Louise Fry Scudder Professor of the Liberal Arts and the William Joseph Todd Professor of the Italian Renaissance at the University of South Carolina.

2 As demonstrated by numerous citations below, I am indebted to Joanna Woods-Marsden's interpretation of Pisanello's Arthurian fresco as an interactive decorative program and to Patricia Fortini Brown's characterization of the literary Arcadian milieu as an alternative reality. With regard to the northern context, it should be noted that, in 1959, John Shearman suggested in his review of Hartt's monograph that Giulio, in important ways, had become a north-Italian artist. See: John Shearman, review of Frederick Hartt, *Giulio Romano* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1958) in *Burlington Magazine* (1959): 459.

3 Frederick Hartt, *Giulio Romano* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1958) 130ff.

4 Hartt argued for the vault program as a neo-Platonic allegory based on Beroaldus' *Commentary* on Apuleius. See: Hartt 130ff. W. L. Gundersheimer's discovery of Sabadino's contemporary record of Ferrarese monuments revealed a regional precedent for a similarly episodic treatment of the subject as a narrative on "moral love" at the Estense villa of Belriguardo (lost). See Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, *De triumphis religionis*, 1497 (Vatican Library); cited in Werner L. Gundersheimer, *Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973) 260.

5 The border inscription in the *Room of Psyche* reads: "*Federicus Gonzaga II Mar. V.S.R.E. et Reip. Flor. Capitanus Generalis honesto ocio post labores ad reparandam virt. quieti costrui mandavit*." ["I, Federigo II Gonzaga, Fifth Marquis of Mantua and Captain Gereral of the Florentine Republic, built this place for innocent leisure work in quiet after labor."] Bette Talvacchia has discussed the erotic nuances of "honeste ocio" in this context—a pertinent insight, considering the tone of the room. See Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999) 60.

6 Giulio's trellis-roofed marble pavilion is quite similar to Sabadino's description of a pavilion in the garden of the Castello di Ferrara. See Giovanni Sabadino; cited in Gundersheimer 253. The pergola recalls illustrations in Crescenzi and resembles woodcut illustrations in the *Hypnerotomachia* (considered to reflect contemporary garden practice, albeit in an exaggerated manner). See Piero de' Crescenzi (1305), *De agricultura*, ed. Venice, 1495, *c.* Diiv, in Naomi Miller, "Paradise Regained: Medieval Garden Fountains," *Medieval Gardens*, ed. Elisabeth B. Maddougall (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1983) fig. 12; See also: Francesco Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice, 1499); cited in Claudia Lazzaro, *The Italian Renaissance Garden* (New Haven : Yale UP, 1990) 37. In the *Room of Psyche*, the east wall, which greets the visitor, features a fireplace with windows overlooking the real gardens on either side; above the fireplace is Polyphemus with a background consistent with the vistas on the other walls. Over the windows are panels of Jupiter and Olympias and Pasiphae and the Cow.

is set against a background of illusionistic coastal vistas evocative of the islands of both the mythical Cythera and the Mantuan Te. This scenario derives, in part, from Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, in which the dreaming poet accompanies Psyche and Cupid on a pilgrimage to Adonis' tomb.[7] The personal nature of the *painted* fantasy is suggested by the room's seeming allusions to Federigo's well-known relationship with his mistress, Isabella Boschetti, implying an analogy between the Mantuan couple and the immortal lovers.[8] In addition, contemporary genre figures, in company with satyrs, nymphs, and river gods, populate the landscape as though to deny the boundary between the Mantua of Federigo and the Arcadia sung by Virgil, Mantua's revered native son.

The interactive qualities of this fantasy are enabled by the spatial effects that Giulio built into the composition (Figure 1). Because the viewer is physically surrounded by the scenario and can appreciate it from many positions in the room, his/her attention strays gratuitously to any of a series of motifs that make up the fictive *environment*, rather than focusing on a chronological narrative or a dominant viewpoint, either of which would elicit a more distanced response. The figural groupings form a pattern of major and minor motifs that flow into one another in ways that privilege, first, the filling and unifying of foreground pictorial space, and, second, the expression of theme over narrative. This horizontal, additive, and rather flattened approach to composition has been characterized as scenography and linked to Giulio's probable experience with theatrical projects in Rome.[9] The extent to which the scenario encircles the viewer, however, renders him/her as much an *actor* as a spectator and facilitates viewer-participation in the shared fantasy. This element of "enactment" pervading Renaissance life, particularly its organized pageantry, led Johan Huizinga to characterize the splendor of the period as a "masquerade within the parameters of a fantastic and ideal past"—a past that had been gleaned from the mythic realms of both pastoral and chivalric literature.[10] Beyond the generalized taste for splendor, posturing and pageantry, however, the *Room of Psyche* appeals to a cultural fascination with "experiencing" imaginary places that is especially evident in the illusionistic art (including religious art and manuscripts) and the "dream" literature of northern Italy.[11]

As a fictive environment, Giulio's room had Mantuan precedents that included Mantegna's *Camera Picta* (1465-74) and Pisanello's unfinished Arthurian cycle (1448-9), both of which had been commissioned for the Ducal Palace. Although the *Camera Picta*'s influence is evident in Giulio's radical perspectives and in the extent of his illusionistic landscapes, it does not extend to his evocation of another world. In Mantegna's room, fantasy is confined to illusionistic vistas and architecture. His realistic portraits of the Gonzaga reinforce the actual world of the court; unlike Giulio's mythologized interpretation of the Te, they do not place the patron and his court in a mythic literary context. Pisanello's room, by contrast, evokes the world and characters of chivalric legend and attributes to them the qualities of Mantua and the *personnae* of the Gonzaga. In a manner similar to Giulio's later mix of Gonzaga emblems and Arcadian myth, Pisanello includes the Gonzaga *impresa* of a seated white dog, a castle resembling the contemporary Castello, and Arthurian heroes sporting the family colors.[12] Joanna Woods-Marsden has suggested that this conflation of Arthurian and Gonzaga iconog-

7 Egon Verheyen, *The Palazzo del Te: Images of Love and Politics* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1977) 25-6.

8 Verheyen 26. The year 1528 was a particularly intense period in the illicit relationship, involving the furious disapproval of Federigo's mother (Isabella d'Este), the attempted murder of Isabella Boschetti, and Federigo's revenge-killing of her husband. See Verheyen 20. Verheyen cites (as the room's allusions to this affair) the leitmotif of Federigo's salamander *impresa* and motto, "*Quod hvic deest me torquet*," (considered, on one level, to reflect his passion for Isabella) and the subject of the window-wall panel of Jupiter and Olympias whose offspring, Alexander, had the same name as the son (and successor) that Isabella had borne to Federigo. In the nineteenth century, Intra interpreted the room as a *poema d'amore* to Isabella Boschetti whom he considered to have been portrayed in Psyche. See Giovanni Battista Intra, *Mantua ne suoi monumenti di storia e d'arte* (Mantua: 1883). Verheyen's correlation of the biographical material with the broad decorative themes is not universally accepted. Notably, Amadeo Belluzzi disputes the personal and political preoccupations of the patron as influences on the content of the program. See Amadeo Belluzzi, *Palazzo Te a Mantova* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, 1998) 136.

9 Howard Burns, "'Quelle cose antique et moderne belle de Roma,' Giulio Romano, the theatre and the antique," *Giulio Romano*, eds. Paul Davies and Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 135. As court artist to the Gonzaga, Giulio would have continued to design sets and costumes for processions and pageants.

10 Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, cf. *Lex Jeux a la Renaissance*, ed. P. Aries and J.C. Margolin, Actes du XXIIIe collogue international d'etudes humanistes (Tours, July, 1980) 258-9; quoted in Manfredo Tafuri, "Giulio Romano: Language, Mentality, and Patrons," *Giulio Romano*, eds. Paul Davies and Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 50. See also: Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955) 180-1.

11 In addition to illusionist programs like Veronese's, I refer to the manuscript tradition where the impulse to "pierce the veil" between the real world and the world of the text is expressed in the device of the "torn" manuscript, *e.g.* Girolamo da Cremona's hand painted frontispiece for the *Opera* of Aristotle (Venice, 1483), Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. Through the "rents" in the "parchment," the reader "enters" the presence of Aristotle. A similar effect obtains in a Ferrarese *Madonna* (*c*.1470-80) at the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh. The veil between the physical and spiritual worlds is represented as peeling away in the *View of Verona over a Scene of the Holy Family*, attributed to Marco Agnolo del Moro, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio. In these works, real and imagined worlds are depicted as coincident in time and space, and the veil separating them is understood to have been breached through a visionary experience. These two-dimensional works are reproduced in Sybille Ebert-Schifferer, *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe l'Oeil Painting*, Exhibition Catalog (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art and Lund Humphries, 2002).

12 Giovanni Paccagnini and Joanna Woods-Marsden have called attention to the Gonzaga iconographic references in the Pisanello frescoes. See: Giovanni Paccagnini, *Pisanello* (London: Phaidon Press, 1973) 56; see also: Joanna Woods-Marsden, *The Gonzaga of Mantua and Pisanello's Arthurian Frescoes* (Princeton : Princeton UP, 1988) 69-71.

raphy (a natural affectation for a dynasty of military leaders) and especially the encircling and unframed nature of the design itself, were intended by Pisanello (and perhaps by the patron, Ludovico) to further an aristocratic self-identification with this legendary world.[13]

Traditionally, Mantua's *Sala del Pisanello* has not been considered a precedent for Giulio's literary/spatial fantasies at the Te. Its fairly recent discovery, its fragmentary and damaged condition, and (not least) its International Style aesthetic and chivalric content have militated against the connection. It is clear, however, that, whether as an indicator of the court's continuing taste for illusory mythic environments or as a possible formal influence, Pisanello's cycle (like the romance-derived program at the Castello di Manta) shares important qualities with the *Room of Psyche.* These include: 1) the blending of courtly and legendary worlds; and, 2) a formal treatment that facilitates this fantasy, *i.e*. an emphatically horizontal, scenographic, and continuous format involving all four walls, which, in turn, entails a multi-focal and patterned composition.[14] Was Pisanello's fresco available to Giulio? Although it is impossible to know conclusively, there seems no definitive evidence that it was not. In 1480, after the *Sala del Pisanello* had been damaged by the collapse of the ceiling, Federigo's grandfather had instructed that "everything possible should be done to preserve [the room]."[15] An old layer of glue (covering the fresco where the wall had been damaged by the collapse) may date from this injunction—indicating, perhaps, a desire to preserve the fresco itself.[16] When Paccagnini uncovered the cycle in the 1960s, the *sinopie* were encrusted with layers of dirt, a condition that suggested to him that the space had been empty and neglected at some point. The walls were not actually re-frescoed until the major remodeling undertaken by Duke Guglielmo in the second half of the sixteenth century, well after Giulio's activity at the Te.[17] It seems inconceivable that, if it were still visible, the Pisanello cycle would *not* have interested Giulio. In his time, Pisanello had been the most sought-after courtly artist in northern Italy.[18] The Arthurian project had represented a major commission, and its abandonment would have been a well-known chapter in the history of Gonzaga patronage.

Basic to any encompassing spatial effect is the treatment of the room's corners. To achieve a sense of living in the romance, Giulio, like Pisanello before him, unfurled a free-form design that spanned the corners of the room in a scenographic treatment similar to a diorama. In the *Room of Psyche*, this suppression of the corners does not derive from any (known) prior work by Giulio for Raphael, nor from Raphael's designs themselves.[19] The frescoes for the Vatican *Stanze*, for example, while incorporating all four walls, feature cohesive individual narratives contained by architectural elements (real or illusory) or by *faux* tapestries. In the *Room of Psyche*, however, Giulio's purpose is to extend, rather than to contain narrative. The illusionistic setting involves only those "architectural" references that are consistent with a garden, such as topiary, trelliswork, a pergola and a pavilion; and while they articulate the windowless walls and allow for an organization of the narrative that reflects the coffered design of the vault, these minimal garden props also allow a fluid figural composition with multiple foci.[20] Giulio may have adapted them (to define the garden metaphor for the real space of the room) from Mantegna's tapestry rod, which tracks the planes of all the walls in the *Camera Picta* and reinforces the loggia metaphor. But, while Mantegna's fictive hangings and pilasters impose the visual logic associated with the view from within a loggia, they also function as transitions from scene to scene, easing disjunctions between scenarios on adjacent walls, as in the corner between the "landscape wall" and the "portrait wall" where a tapestry panel serves as a framing device. However, the *Room of Psyche*'s outdoor setting required that Giulio address the corners in ways that expand the illusion of a con-

13 Woods-Marsden 69-71, 88-92. Charles R. Mack has shown that several mid-quattrocento Florentine monastic cycles involved fictive environments that were designed to enhance architectural spaces with "enter-able" *devotional* fantasies. These cycles (which, like the romance-derived cycles, straddled Late Gothic and Renaissance aesthetic styles) dissolved the monastic walls to transcendent visions of biblical narrative or to a monastic earthly paradise. They "pierced" the architecture, however, without suppressing it. See Charles R. Mack, "Fictive Spaces for Monastic Places: Art and Architecture in Fifteenth-Century Florence," *Arris* 12 (2001): 30-43.

14 Woods-Marsden points out that Pisanello's room was a departure from the period's usually compartmentalized decorative programs, *e.g*. the *Room of the Months* at Schifanoia, as well as a departure from his own (surviving) works in Veronese churches that feature framing devices and a greater use of perspective. She does cite, however, the Tristan cycle at Castelroncolo, near Bolzano, and the Manta cycle as other surviving formats that are continuous and unframed. See Woods-Marsden 88-92. For the Manta cycle's textual source, see Evelyn Welch, *Art and Society in Italy, 1350-1500* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997) 294. Roman relief narrative (*e.g.* Trajan's Column) is usually cited as the likely source for Giulio's similarly horizontal composition. See Hartt 107.

15 Letters from Federico, third Marquis of Mantua to Fancelli and Andreasi; cited in Giovanni Paccagnini, *Pisanello* (London: Phaidon Press, 1973) 18. Paccagnini suggests that this concern for the preservation of the room's interior, without mentioning the frescoes *per se*, reflects a continuing regard for the work despite its unfinished condition and the reigning classicism of Mantegna. See Paccagnini, 7-19.

16 Paccagnini 19, n.14.

17 Paccagnini 19, n.15.

18 Pisanello had executed decorative programs for Leonello d'Este at Belriguardo. Gundersheimer 238.

19 While the centripetal style of Raphael's tapestry cartoons suggests an affinity with Giulio's attention to corners in the *Room of Psyche*, they were obviously designed with framing in mind and are thought to have been sized for specific spaces along facing walls, without regard to compositional continuity. See Sharon Fermor, *The Raphael Tapestry Cartoons* (London: Scala Books, 1996) 9-16.

20 This is not the case in Raphael's (Garden) *Loggia of Psyche* in the Villa Farnesina in Rome, where the garland frames and tapestries contain the figures. Giulio's use of a topiary idiom for a program on the same subject in a similarly garden-related space, however, may derive from the Raphael design.

tinuous panoramic vista and maintain the fiction of the garden. Instead of centering the distant perspectives on each wall, therefore, he places them on either side of a large figural motif, so that the perspectives dominate the corners of the room, which are spanned in the foreground with gestural language and figural and objective correspondences. This more effectively dissolves the walls themselves as both reminders of an *interior* space and as barriers between reality and fantasy.

Both the *Hall* cycle at the Castello di Manta (featuring the discovery of the fountain of youth and an erotic burlesque) and Pisanello's Arthurian cycle had submerged the corners of their respective rooms. In an effect that may have reflected the hanging of actual tapestries (not sized for specific walls), these late Gothic designs suppressed corners by allowing figures and objects to *straddle* the angles of the rooms (Figures 2-3).[21] This is a wrap-around technique that Giulio fully exploits in the *Room of the Giants*, where the corners disappear under the continuous narrative. In the earlier *Room of Psyche*, however, he downplays the corners by more tentative means suited to a less cohesive narrative/spatial concept. For example, he projects the plane of the south wall onto the east wall (Figure 4) to conjure a building that obtrudes into the extended space. Adonis runs from the north wall to a doorway depicted on the east wall where the overhanging gilt corbels suggestively reinforce it (Figure 5). In the southwest corner, the gushing urns of erotically conceived river figures on the west wall visually and symbolically echo the lustration motif on the south wall; here, too, the mountainous landscapes in the background merge to carry the scenario around the angle of the room (Figure 6). Mars, bathing with Venus on the north wall, extends his hand in the direction of another figure of Venus on the west wall; she returns the gesture in a communication that effectively rounds the corner between them (Figure 7). This unifying imperative extends to the vault, where the Muses shower their gifts onto the real space of the room below, from similarly overflowing jars and ewers, and at the apex where Giulio echoes the reaching gesture of Mars and Venus in the union of Cupid and Psyche.[22]

Obviously, Pisanello's use of the International Style in the face of his cycle's outdoor setting, had entailed a perspective-less and therefore a more radically unfocused design than Giulio's own outdoor solution. Even his knights were scaled and grouped without regard to spatial recession, in order to increase viewer recognition of each one.[23] Surrounded by the *pattern* of figures and landscape, the viewer was encouraged to identify with the fictive world by means of the artist's realism in natural details, his use of human scale, the Gonzaga iconography, and the inclusion of chivalric incident of a type still enacted in the Renaissance.[24] Giulio's use of figural pattern and his repetition of motifs—as devices to fill and unify the space and to continually involve a viewer strolling through the space—are *functionally* related to Pisanello's Gothic strategies of pattern and repetition. In each case, the three-dimensional evocation of a legendary world has required that an encompassing "narrative" be married to an additive aesthetic that does not privilege one motif over another. The consequently emblematic effect allows characters to be repeated in a unified picture space. Woods-Marsden relates this quality in Pisanello's fresco to the interconnectedness of the various Arthurian stories and the interlacing style of the romance genre.[25] In the *Room of Psyche*, the effect resonates with the similarly repetitive and inter-related events, themes, and characters of classical mythology. It also parallels the chronological anomalies found in the dream-journeys of Arcadian literature.

Sannazaro's influential *Arcadia*, a series of pastoral eclogues interspersed with passages of prose narrative, had been published in Venice in 1502. Favoring an eclectic combination of modes and motifs, Sannazaro claimed Arcadia as essentially a "country of the mind" that could accommodate any number of related source-traditions, as well as the occasional contemporary interloper.[26] The typical poet narrator entered this country by means of a persona who interacted with the characters of myth—a convention that enabled a commingling of real and mythological personages in a composite world of the literary and the real.[27] Just as Giulio juxtaposes contemporary genre figures (and mythological stand-ins for Federigo and Isabella) with satyrs and nymphs, so poet-narrators wander in Arcadia in the company of gods, shepherds, and shepherdesses. Sannazaro's entire narrative framework is bound up with the poet's confusing double persona as one of the shepherds. By definition, this narrative device playfully defies boundaries while fostering a fantasy that is entirely self-conscious.[28] It necessarily promotes narrative discrepancies that undermine consistency and call attention to the sense of make-believe; for example, the *Arcadia*'s second eclogue, careless of the demands of cohesive narrative, features characters who seem to be in two places at once.[29] This blithe unconcern for chronologically consistent and coherent storytelling is evident, too, in the narrative anomalies that exist side-by-side

21 Woods-Marsden 89.

22 Hartt 134-5.

23 Woods-Marsden argues that, although Pisanello was demonstrably capable of using perspective, he chose the qualities of the International Style as a means of continually involving viewers who were circulating around the space. She concludes, however, that he was striving, within this basic approach, to make the finished work more focused and legible than the *sinopie*. See Woods-Marsden 88-92, 103.

24 Woods-Marsden 70.

25 Woods-Marsden 103.

26 Ralph Nash, *Jacopo Sannazaro, Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1966) 22-24.

27 Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1996) 207.

28 Nash 12-25.

29 Nash 12, 14.

with spatial illusion in the *Room of Psyche*. Venus appears simultaneously in several locations; she is in the bath with Mars on the north wall and on the east wall where she reaches back toward him. They share the bath in the same implied time frame as that in which Mars discovers her with Adonis (Figures 5, 7). With no structural sequence to suggest chronology, these events seem to conflict in what is (in the totality) a unified picture space and thus, by inference, a unified time frame. The emphasis, in both painted and poetic pastorals, is not on internal consistency, but on the balance and flow of those motifs that evoke both the fictive world and its related "state of mind" and whose chronological and spatial lapses reveal a self-conscious fascination with the flickering interaction between the real and the illusory.[30]

The *Hypnerotomachia*, a source for the wall cycle in the *Room of Psych*e, is a hybrid production with roots in this pastoral tradition, as well as in the ornamental world of courtly romance. Published in Venice in 1499, it featured a garden of Venus that updated the medieval garden of love—a subject that had been a staple of courtly romance literature since its appearance in the *Romance of the Rose*. The literary currency of this motif reflects the continuing north-Italian interest in the garden as a setting for romantic and erotic narrative, while the familiar device of the (humanist) poet's dream allows the reader to vicariously experience the garden of love. This subject also had remained viable in the visual arts of northern Italy's Francophile courts.[31] Giulio's interactive setting, like the *Hypnerotomachia* itself, translates the long-popular motif of the garden of love into an ornate Arcadian idiom that corresponds to Colonna's rhetoric.

As a fictive environment, Giulio's garden of love had at least one Venetian precedent. Antonio Vivarini had painted a set of three (known) panels that, in the aggregate, would have suggested a garden setting. The cycle (*c*.1465-70) was executed in the International Style and represented different views of a contemporary garden whose attributes, including fashionable men and women, replicated in life-size and modern dress a traditional medieval garden of love. The panel in Melbourne (Figure 8) depicts two men and three women near an elaborate fountain in a space enclosed on three sides by a trellised rose hedge but entered from the fourth. A second panel (location unknown) reportedly shows a couple standing in a garden setting; and a third (also not located) depicts a rose arbor without figures.[32] The panels' original installation, assuming their pendant relationship and given their large scale, would have suggested a vaguely illusionistic setting whose contemporary details and traditionally erotic emblems would have resonated with the viewer's sense of the social and amorous nuances of the courtly garden.[33]

Such gardens had traditionally been the sites of courtly promenade, dalliance, and organized pageantry. The new *cinquecento* garden theatres associated with the revival of classical plays had reinforced this theatrical linkage. Indeed, Giulio's choice of a garden as both a spatial metaphor and a pretext for courtly role-playing invokes the courtly garden's time-honored function as a venue for playacting and show. Regional testimony to the garden-as-theatre survives in Sabadino's record (1497) of the nearby Castello di Ferrara, the seat of the Estensi dynasty that included Federigo's maternal grandparents, Ercole d'Este and Eleonora d'Aragona. According to Sabadino's account, the Castello garden was a favored resort of the court's ladies; and in the tradition of the garden of love, it was still the site of nocturnal concerts of love songs.[34] It also accommodated all kinds of spectacles, allegorical plays, and pastoral idylls—complete with mechanical devices for instant set changes and special effects, as well as topographical follies like the artificial mountain built by Borso d'Este to challenge the flatness of the countryside.[35] As in the romantic novella, the northern courtly garden was the locus not only of pleasure, but of fantasy. When Giulio selected it as a spatial metaphor for the Garden of Venus, he was drawing upon more than a set of literary conventions; he was evoking these multiple real-life functions of the garden (scenography, fantasy, alternative landscape, *amore*) to support the room's thematic issues, to underline its role as a fictive theatrical environment, and to elicit a performative response.

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30 Brown 204-6.

31 Paul F. Watson, *The Garden of Love in Tuscan Art of the Early Renaissance* (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press, 1979) 122.

32 The Melbourne panel (illus.) may have been cut at the bottom; it presently measures (4' 10" x 7' 10"); its two companions measure (4' 11" x 7' 7") and (5' x 7' 7 ½"). The companion panels have not been located. See Watson 122-4, 165, n.2,3,4,5.

33 See Watson for a full discussion of the erotic emblems associated with the garden of love.

34 Gundersheimer 253.

35 Sabadino; cited in Gundersheimer 155-6.

Figure 1. Giulio Romano, with Rinaldo Mantovano, Benedetto Pagni da Pescia, and Assistants, *The Room of Psyche*, 1527-30, fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua. Photo courtesy of Scala / Art Resource, NY.

Figure 2. Author's illustration of figure placement by Antonio Pisano (called Pisanello), corner between walls 1 and 4, *Sala del Pisanello*, *c.*1442-49, fresco. Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.

Figure 3. Author's illustration of figure placement by Antonio Pisano (called Pisanello), corner between walls 1 and 2, *Sala del Pisanello*, *c.*1442-49, fresco. Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.

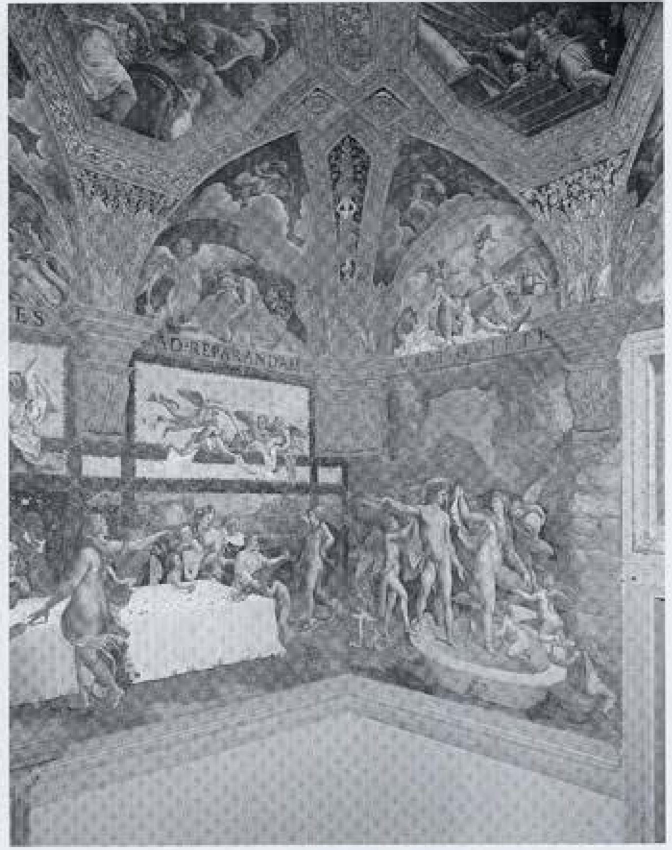
[*above left*] Figure 4. Giulio Romano, corner between the south and east walls, *Room of Psyche*, 1527-30, fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua. Photo courtesy of Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, Modena.

[*above right*] Figure 5. Giulio Romano, corner between the north and east walls, *Room of Psyche*, 1527-30, fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua. Photo courtesy of Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, Modena.

[*facing page top left*] Figure 6. Giulio Romano, corner between the south and west walls, *Room of Psyche*, 1527-30, fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua. Photo courtesy of Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, Modena.

[*facing page top right*] Figure 7. Giulio Romano, corner between the north and west walls, *Room of Psyche*, 1527-30, fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua. Photo courtesy of Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, Modena.

[*facing page bottom*] Figure 8. Antonio Vivarini *b.c.*1415-*d.c.*1476-84, Italian, *The Garden of Love*, *c.*1465-70, oil, tempera and gold on wood, 152.5 x 239.0 cm. Felton Bequest, 1947. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia. Photo courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria.



The Sacro Monte of Varallo as a Physical Manifestation of the *Spiritual Exercises*

Ryan Gregg

Still an active religious institution, the Sacro Monte, or Sacred Mountain, of Varallo in Italy's Piedmont region is the culmination of more than four centuries of construction, intention, and use. The complex now consists of forty-three chapels set within a forested park traversed by pathways (Figure 1). Each chapel displays a scene from the life of Jesus composed of three-dimensional polychromed figure groups, illusionistic frescoes, and assorted props, such as tables, chairs, and table settings (Figure 2). The created scenes resemble *tableaux vivants* in their lifelikeness, a quality enhanced by the original freedom of a pilgrim to physically enter the chapels and walk through the scenes, becoming, in effect, a participant in the action. First designed to be a surrogate Holy Land, the intention changed during the sixteenth century to one of Christological narrative. Following the dictates of the Council of Trent and the catalystic presence of St. Charles Borromeo (1538-84), archbishop of Milan, the pilgrimage site metamorphosed into a physical manifestation of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556).

The most recent literature dealing with the Tridentine period of the Sacro Monte has interpreted the site as a manifestation of the *Exercises*. Pier Giorgio Longo in his article "Il Sacro Monte di Varallo nella Seconda Metà del XVI Secolo" explains Borromeo's relationship with both Varallo and the *Exercises*.[1] The *Spiritual Exercises* were a tool used by Jesuits during and after Trent to reaffirm the faith of Christian believers. It required a practitioner to meditate on scenes from Christ's life, relying on realistic details to create a believable image in the mind's eye and inspire a relative degree of devotion.[2] Borromeo himself practiced the *Spiritual Exercises* on a regular basis, including a two-week practice at the mountain in 1584. Longo relates the responsibility of the archbishop for approving and encouraging a plan which followed the intentions of the *Spiritual Exercises* for the future construction of the Sacro Monte.[3]

Despite Longo's insightful discussion, scholars have failed to examine the most significant alteration made at the Sacro Monte during the sixteenth century, the addition of grilles. To aid in the implementation of Borromeo's plan, gates and grilles were added to all of the chapels, barring a pilgrim from entry and restricting his participation in the scene to that of distanced observer. This paper examines the addition of the grilles in terms of how it affected the spatial experience of the viewer as dictated by Post-Tridentine doctrine. Specifically, it considers these barriers in terms of the *Spiritual Exercises* and what Loyola termed the meditative "composition of place."[4]

Beginning with a brief discussion of the origins and early years of the Sacro Monte will serve to relate its history before Borromeo became involved with the project. This background will show how the early chapels used transitive devices to create liminality. The article next turns to the changes initiated by Borromeo as represented by the grilles. This section looks at the *Entombment* (1601-3) by Caravaggio (1573-1610) as a comparison for devotional works of art after the Council of Trent. The comparison allows for a proper understanding of how the pilgrimage site now functions as a devotional experience informed by the decrees of Trent. The article concludes with a discussion of how the spatial characteristics of the Sacro Monte, when interpreted through an understanding of Henri Focillon's discussion of space, work to enhance the experience as a physical representation of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

The Sacro Monte of Varallo began as the creation of the Franciscan monk Bernardino Caimi (1425-1500) in the 1480s. Caimi sought to create in Italy a surrogate Holy Land since the actual Middle Eastern sites were becoming inaccessible due to Muslim rule.[5] Caimi's ambitious plan called for reproducing the organization of the Holy Land sites and their physical appearances as closely as possible, though on a smaller scale. Caimi utilized the topography of the Sacro Monte in the organization of the site. For instance, the simulacrum of

1 Pier Giorgio Longo, "Il Sacro Monte di Varallo nella Seconda Metà del XVI Secolo," in *I Sacri Monti di Varallo e Arona dal Borromeo al Bascapè* (Novara: Interlinea s.r.l. Edizioni, 1995) 41-116.

2 Antonio T. de Nicolas, *Powers of Imagining: Ignatius de Loyola: A Philosophical Hermeneutic of Imagining through the Collected Works of Ignatius de Loyola with a Translation of Those Works* (Albany, N.Y.: State U of New York P, 1986) 41-2; H. Outram Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation: The Birkbeck Lectures in Ecclesiastical History Given in the University of Cambridge in May 1951*, ed. John Bossy (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968) 48, 54.

3 For Borromeo's two-week practice of the *Spiritual Exercises* at the Sacro Monte, see Longo, "Il Sacro Monte," 98-9. For the plan and Borromeo's alterations see Longo, "Il Sacro Monte," 45-81, 85-7.

4 De Nicolas, *Powers of Imagining*, 116.

5 Caimi inscribed his intention on the chapel of the Holy Sepulcher, built in 1491. Roberta Panzanelli, "Pilgrimage in Hyperreality: Images and Imagination in the Early Phase of the 'New Jerusalem' at Varallo (1486-1530)," diss., U of California, Los Angeles, 1999, 11.

Mount Calvary was located on a natural hill within the boundaries of the Sacro Monte. In addition, the spatial relationships of the replicated holy sites matched those of the actual Holy Land using scaled-down, proportional distances.[6]

About 1513 the artist Gaudenzio Ferrari (1475-1546) began to change the Sacro Monte both conceptually and formally.[7] He added more chapels, and, within the chapels, created scenes composed of sculpture groups and illusionistic frescoes, as can be seen in the Arrival of the Magi (1520-28) (Figure 2). Visitors were now actually invited into the depicted scene. With no counterpart for the new chapels in the Holy Land, Varallo lost some of its topomimetic qualities.[8] The artistic additions meant the beginning of a change in focus to one of Christological narrative.[9]

The participatory space of the Ferrari manifestation of the Sacro Monte is highly liminal. Here I borrow the definition of liminality given by John Shearman in *Only Connect.* It is the space connecting the viewer to the artificial space of the artwork, an effect achieved through the use of transitive devices, such as gestures and eye contact.[10] In creating such an artistic experience, Ferrari furthered the participatory nature of the pilgrimage. His use of transitive devices to engage the viewer as a participant within a constructed liminal space can be clearly seen in the chapel of the Crucifixion (*c.* 1514) (Figure 3). The walls and ceiling of the chapel were entirely decorated, encompassing viewers and scene alike. The frescoes opposite the scene offered a vista of the local landscape while doors and windows looked out over that same landscape. The surrounding decoration expanded the space of Calvary to include the visitors and mixed it visually with the real space outside the chapel.[11] The scene was created by an extensive and lifelike sculpture group consisting of thirty-four figures and animals placed upon the living rock, with a large, clamorous group of onlookers painted on the wall behind the sculpture. Upon entering the chapel, viewers first saw a composition of St. John and the three Marys serenely leading others to the Crucifixion. As the pilgrim moved further into the chapel his gaze was directed counterclockwise towards the center of the composition by the gazes of both sculpted and painted figures. On its sweep to the left, the viewer's attention first encountered naturalistic, informal elements such as children and dogs, commonly used as transitive devices to guide a spectator's eye. The emotion of the onlookers, both sculpted and painted, builds in intensity, affecting the empathy of the pilgrim, to reach a climax when the gaze reaches the Crucifixion.[12] Ferrari's blending of the interior and exterior spaces and his use of figures to engage the viewer informally and empathetically subsumes the viewer within the scene.

The temporal and spatial ambiguities inherent in Ferrari's version of the Sacro Monte ran counter to the later precepts on art mandated by the Council of Trent in 1563. In addition to prescribing how works of art should function with respect to aesthetic considerations such as creative invention and decorum, Tridentine decrees sought to reaffirm the church hierarchy, including the position of the congregant to that of the clergy. In the decree of the twenty-fifth session, Trent demanded the historical accuracy of, and eschewed ambiguity in, sacred works of art. It also affirmed the role of the bishop in approving sacred works of art.[13] Both of these precepts were meant to ensure that viewers received only the proper information, thereby avoiding any possibility of heresy which might result from leaving the artwork's subject open to interpretation by a lay believer.

The Council of Trent's decree contained little regarding the application of its precepts to sacred art, leaving elaboration to later authors. Borromeo was one of the first to publish a treatise regarding sacred art and architecture. His *Instructiones fabricae et supellectilis ecclesiasticae*, written in 1577, dealt with divisions of space and defined hierarchies of sacrality. Here Borromeo applied the Tridentine ideas to architecture, an area not dealt with by Trent. In order to divide the space of a church and define the sacredness of each division, the archbishop relied in part on railings, gates, and grilles.[14] A representation of his directives can be seen in the lay hall of San Maurizio al Monastero Maggiore in Milan, begun *c.* 1503 but modified at Borromeo's insistence in 1577-

6 Panzanelli is currently the most thorough source for a history of the beginnings of the Sacro Monte of Varallo, especially its origins and founding. For Caimi's topomimetic intentions, see Panzanelli 47.

7 Exactly when Ferrari began working at Varallo is not known. Scholars generally agree that he started working there about twenty years after its founding. Panzanelli 191-2.

8 Panzanelli 196-202, 240.

9 Panzanelli 132-3.

10 For Shearman's discussion of transitive effects see John Shearman*, Only Connect…: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*, The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts,1988, Bollingen Series XXXV, 37 (Washington, D.C.: The National Gallery of Art; Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992) 33, 39, and Chapter 1; for his discussion of liminality see 59-60, and Chapter 2.

11 Panzanelli 201.

12 For the discussion of the Crucifixion chapel, see Panzanelli, "Pilgrimage in Hyperreality,"198-202. For children as transitive devices see A. W. A. Boschloo, *Annibale Carracci in Bologna: Visible Reality in Art after the Council of Trent*, vol. 1, Kunsthistorische Studiën van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome Deel III - Band I (The Hague: Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Welfare, Government Publishing Office; Maarssen: Gary Schwartz, 1974) 90-1.

13 *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848) 233-6.

14 E. Cecilia Voelker, "Charles Borromeo's *Instructiones fabricae et supellectilis ecclesiasticae*, 1577: A Translation with Commentary and Analysis," diss., Syracuse U, 1977, 127. For the railings see for instance chapter 14, 179.

8 (Figure 4).[15] The more sacred spaces, such as the altar area, were clearly delimited by railings from the less sacred space of the nave, where the congregation gathered. The railings effectively created an authority of place. In addition Borromeo wrote on the use of sacred art in chapter seventeen of the *Instructiones*. He further emphasized the need for conformity and accuracy of sacred images, and insisted that art must also move the viewer to piety.[16] Post-Tridentine ideology, therefore, had allowed little to no room for artistic license, yet still demanded that a work of art inspire and edify. Under this new attitude towards sacred art, the compositional inventiveness and spatial ambiguity of Ferrari's chapels would no longer have been tolerated, yet alone embraced.

Caravaggio's painting of the *Entombment*, originally in S. Maria in Valicella in Rome, demonstrates how post-Tridentine sacred art acted on the layperson as viewer. The *Entombment* strikes a balance between didacticism, historical and visible reality, and clarity, while remaining strongly affective. In the painting, Nicodemus lowers the dead body of Jesus into the tomb. With the *Entombment* hung in its original position over the altar, the officiating priest would appear to stand in the tomb ready to receive the body of Christ, an act laden with Eucharistic implications. Caravaggio uses the transitive device of Nicodemus, who exists within the pictorial space, looking directly at the priest, standing in the chapel space, to create liminality.[17] The transitiveness of the painting reinforces the ecclesiastical hierarchy of priest to congregant, and thereby the ecclesiastical reality of priestly intercession.

Here, the image functioned in concert with Borromeo's directives. Railings separated the congregant from the altar area, already demarcating the position of the congregant in relation to the church and its privileged representatives. Since Caravaggio's painting hung behind the altar, the priest would be the only figure allowed to interact with it and thus participate actively in the mysteries of the church. The congregant, who is not allowed to interact with the painting, finds his place in the hierarchy as one of passive dependency. He receives the symbolic body of Christ—the eucharistic wafer—from the priest, while the priest implicitly receives the actual body of God's son. In other words, through this image and its placement within S. Maria in Valicella, the congregant learns of the historical act of the entombment, the mystery of the Eucharist, the authoritative place of the priest as the mediator between secular reality and spiritual reality, and of his own subordinate role within the church.

The grilles in the Sacro Monte function in the same way as the railings in Borromeo's treatise on architecture and, ultimately, the architectural space in which Caravaggio's *Entombment* was placed (Figures 1 and 5). They create a division between the interior of the chapels and the surrounding exterior and create a new hierarchy of sacrality within that division. The chapels' off-limits inner space becomes more sacred, while the outer space of the pilgrim is less sacred, just like the divisions of nave and altar in a church set forth in Borromeo's *Instructiones*. The liminality and ambiguity of Ferrari's Sacro Monte has disappeared. Nonetheless, the life-like naturalism ensures the ability of each chapel to inspire a high degree of devotion, just like the later *Entombment*. Through the addition of the grilles the Sacro Monte becomes a Tridentine work of art, reinforcing ecclesiastical hierarchy while remaining didactically affective.

By turning now to the definition of space as provided by Henri Focillon, one can see how the Sacro Monte in its new form as Tridentine artwork functions as a manifestation of the *Spiritual Exercises*. According to Focillon, space can be understood as an area lacking in physicality that is defined by surrounding physical contours. Forms that inhabit and move through a void create the contours of space. But the space contains those forms within itself, in effect acting to define the limit of the forms just as the forms limit the space.[18] The Sacro Monte space, then, can be understood in terms of its contours and the void, or volume, within those contours. The boundary of the site, the ground, the walls of the chapels and other buildings, and the visitors who move within the site are the forms that create the contours. The volume contained within those contours is the space.

The separation by the grilles of the participatory space of the pilgrims and the non-participatory space of the chapels creates pockets of voids in the overall space of the site (Figure 6). The participatory space becomes the real space, through which the pilgrims move from chapel to chapel. The non-participatory space becomes an unreal space, only recognized when a pilgrim comes to rest before it and peers through the grille. By following the course of the *Spiritual Exercises* by which the chapels are laid out, pilgrims continually alter the contours of the real space. Yet because they move through it in a prescribed direction, they always modify the real space in the same way. The pilgrims have become a part of the work of art in its form as *Spiritual Exercises*. They move along the points of meditation outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises*, from

15 Giovanni Battista Sannazzaro, "The Architecture of San Maurizio," in *Bernardino Luini and Renaissance Painting in Milan*, ed. Sandrina Bandera and Maria Teresa Fiorio, trans. Rhoda Billingsley, Adrian Hartley Cook, Andrew Ellis, and David Stanton (Milan: Skira Editore S.p.A., 2000) 20, 22.

16 For chapter 17 of the *Instructiones* see Voelker 1977, 228-32; for Voelker's comments on the chapter summarizing and clarifying what Borromeo was saying, see 233-5.

17 Georgia Wright, "Caravaggio's *Entombment* Considered *in Situ*," *Art Bulletin* 60 (1978): 35, 36, 38-9, 41.

18 Henri Focillon, "Forms in the Realm of Space," in *The Life of Forms in Art*, trans. Charles Beecher Hogan, George Kubler, and S. L. Faison (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, 1948. Reprint, New York: Zone Books, 1989) 65-94. See particularly 70-1, 79.

scene to scene, continuously kneeling and rising, just as they would if following the four-week practice of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

As a pilgrim comes before each chapel, he activates the unreal space inside the chapel. By focusing his meditation on the scene inside the chapel, the scene assumes reality.[19] When the pilgrim finishes the meditation and rises to move on to the next chapel, the scene loses its reality, returning to its non-real status. This corresponds with Loyola's directives in the *Spiritual Exercises* to picture the meditation as realistically as possible. Through Borromeo's initiative, each chapel of the Sacro Monte has become one of Loyola's "compositions of place," activated only when a visitor looks through the grilles, and otherwise existing only as a void in the space.

The addition of grilles was a profound physical alteration in the fabric of the Sacro Monte, and represents a significant change in both its intended purpose and its function. The original intention—a surrogate Holy Land—used a space which mixed the Varallese countryside with Middle Eastern locations in order to recreate the physical journey for a pilgrim. Ferrari's *invenzione* furthered the transformation by designing scenes that incorporated the viewer as participant, creating an enhanced liminality. The Tridentine focus on didacticism and authority, however, necessitated a change in the way the site operated. Borromeo sponsored a plan to turn the Sacro Monte into a physical manifestation of the *Spiritual Exercises*, which included alterations to the chapels to meet the demands of Trent. The grilles supported the authority of the church by delimiting the place of the pilgrim, dissolving the previous ambiguity. At the same time, the grilles heightened the experience of the Sacro Monte in its *Spiritual Exercises* configuration by transforming the chapels into physical foci for Loyola's recommended meditative practice.

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[19] Here I am distinguishing between the reality of the sculpture and painting making up the scene, and the scene itself, since it is not a real scene actually happening with real people in a real place. The scene only becomes real when given the focus of meditation by the viewer.

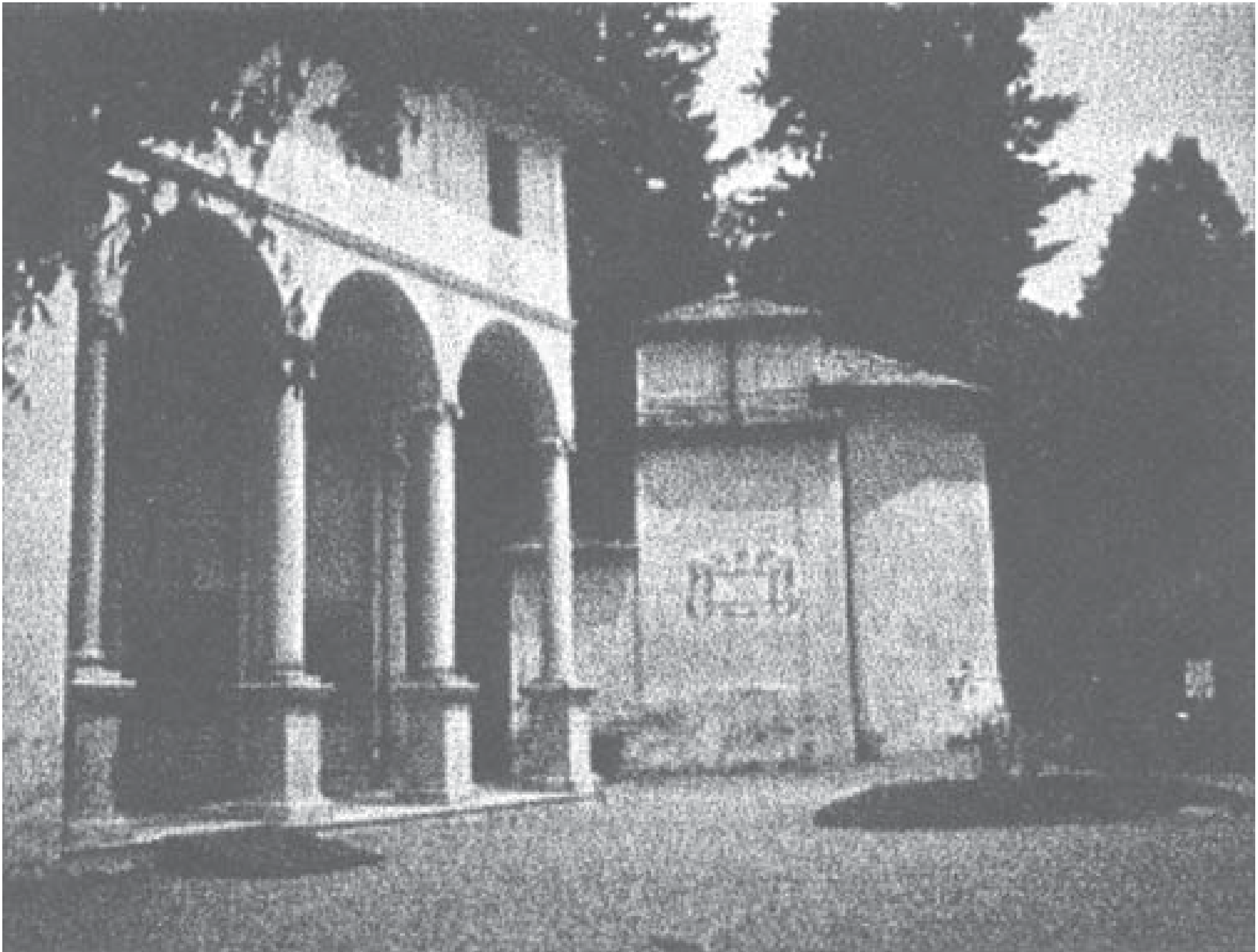

Figure 1. View of Sacro Monte chapels, The Sacro Monte of Varallo, Varallo, Italy. Photograph courtesy of Barbara Johnston.

Figure 2. Interior, Arrival of the Magi chapel, Gaudenzio Ferrari, mixed media, *c.* 1520–28, The Sacro Monte of Varallo, Varallo, Italy. Photograph courtesy of Barbara Johnston.

Figure 3: Interior, Crucifixion chapel, Gaudenzio Ferrari, mixed media, *c*. 1514, The Sacro Monte of Varallo, Varallo, Italy. Alinari / Art Resource, NY.

Figure 4. Lay hall, San Maurizio al Monastero Maggiore, *c.* 1503 and 1577–78, Milan, Italy, from Sandrino Bandera and Maria Teresa Fiorio, eds., *Bernardino Luini and Renaissance Painting in Milan*, trans. Rhoda Billingsley, Adrian Hartley Cook, Andrew Ellis, and David Stanton (Milan: Skira Editore S.p.A., 2000) 119.

Figure 5. Grille and interior, The Last Supper chapel, unknown artist and Antonio Orgiazzi, mixed media, late 15th century and 1780, The Sacro Monte of Varallo, Varallo, Italy. Photograph courtesy of Barbara Johnston.

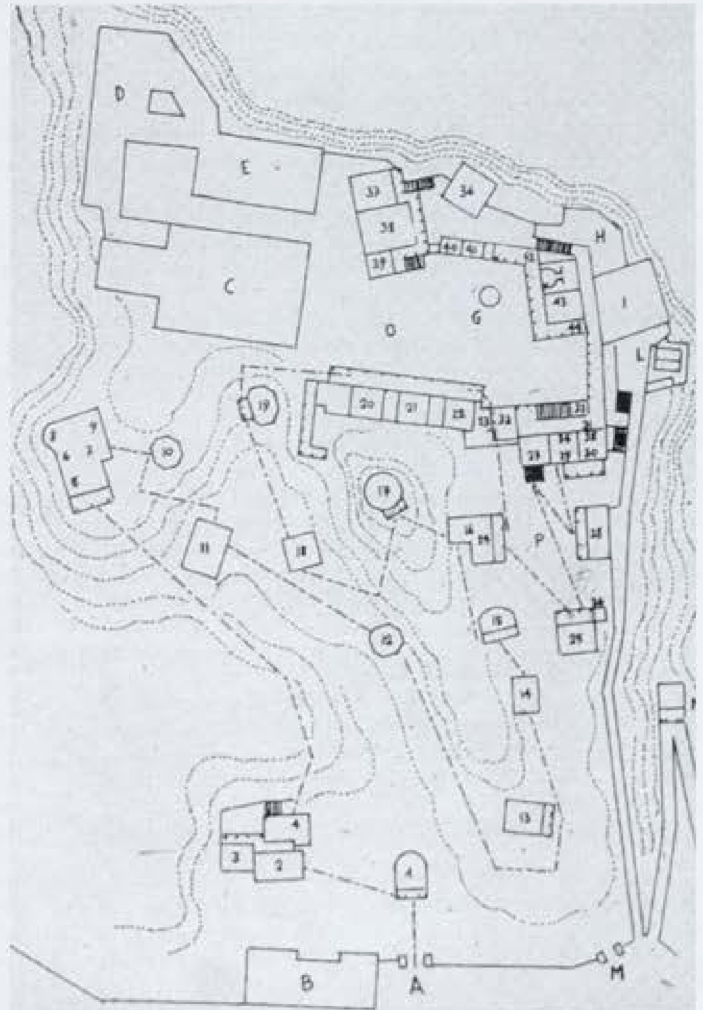

Figure 6. Map of present-day Sacro Monte, from Galeazzo Alessi, *Libro dei Misteri: Progetto di pianificazione urbanistica, architettonica, e figurativa del Sacro Monte di Varallo in Valsesia (1565–1569)* (Bologna: Arnoldo Forni Editore, 1974) 1: plan no. 8.

Disbelieving in Witchcraft: Allori's Melancholic Circe in the Palazzo Salviati

Guy Tal

When Alessandro Allori painted *Odysseus and Circe* (Figure 1) in the Cortile degli Imperatori in the Florentine Palazzo of the Salviati family *c.* 1575-76,[1] the mythological sorceress Circe was already notorious to the sixteenth-century Italian *intelligentsia* from a variety of treatments. Her figure was favored for maiolica dishes and *cassoni* decoration and was frequently included in *Odyssey* fresco cycles.[2] She was interpreted allegorically by Pico della Mirandola, utilized for emblems by Andrea Alciati, and featured in dialogues based on her myth written by Giovanni Battista Gelli. In contemporary poems, authors modeled enchantresses upon her figure—Alcina in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and Armida in Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*.[3] Most importantly for this argument, she was the archetypal witch whenever a discussion concerning belief in the magic of transforming men into animals emerged in witchcraft treatises. Within this latter context Allori's Circe will be discussed.

The study of Italian images of Circe within witchcraft discourses has been neglected by art historians who have regarded Circe merely as a standard participant in a commonplace narrative of Odysseus's adventures. Her absence from the modern research on witchcraft imagery can also be explained by the fact that she was young and beautiful, and she worked during the day, both of which represent a substantial departure from the stereotype of the hideous old witch practicing *maleficia*, or harmful magic, within a dark eerie location.[4] This neglect of art historians to incorporate Italian representations of Circe into witchcraft studies reflects their general attitude towards imagery of witchcraft, which has hitherto focused almost entirely on Northern Europe. This is partially due to the relatively modest number and variety of Italian images compared to Northern ones, yet witchcraft was widely practiced in the peninsula, and witchcraft treatises written by Italian humanists prove their great interest in the subject.[5] The following argument demonstrates the response and contribution of Italian art to the witchcraft debate, which is exemplified here by one of the controversial topics extensively discussed in witchcraft treatises at the time: whether

The present paper grows out of research in progress for my doctoral dissertation "*Imago Maleficarum*: Witchcraft in Italian Art and Culture, ca. 1520-1700" with Bruce Cole as the advisor. Versions of this paper were presented at the Florida State University Annual Symposium, Tallahassee, and at the Cleveland Symposium, Cleveland Museum of Art. I would like to thank Daniel Unger, Giles Knox, Diane Reilly, and Efrat El-Hanany for their comments on earlier drafts of this essay. Reasearch in Italy in the summer of 2002 was sponsored by the Friends of Art Award of the History of Art Department at Indiana University, and the travels to conferences were supported by the College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University.

1 The Salviati family bought the palazzo in 1546 from the Portinari family who had lived in the palazzo since it was built in 1470s (today the palazzo is the seat of the Banca Toscana). On the palazzo see Leonardo Ginori Lisci, *The Palazzi of Florence: Their History and Art* (Florence: Giunti Barbera, 1985) vol. 1, 471-477. For documentation of the commission to Alessandro Allori and his collaborators Giovanni Bizzeli, Giovanni Maria Butteri, and Alessandro di Benedetto, see Guido Pampaloni, *Il Palazzo Portinari-Salviati* (Florence: F. Le Monnier, 1960) 50-52.

2 For a concise survey on Circe in Italian art and literature consult Patrizia Castelli, "L'immagina della strega: La maga Circe," *Arte e dossier* 89 (1994): 22-26. For sixteenth-century fresco cycles of the *Odyssey*, see Marco Lorandi, *Il Mito Ulisse nella pittura a fresco del cinquecento Italiano* (Milan: Jaca Books, 1996) 450-473. On Circe in Italian maiolica dishes and *cassoni*, see Wendy M. Watson, *Italian Renaissance Ceramics from the Howard I. and Janet H. Stein Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2002) 205-206, cat. 72; Julia E. Poole, *Italian Maiolica and Incised Slipware in the Fitzwilliam Museum*, *Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995) 285-286, 338-340; Edmund W. Braun, "Circe," *Realexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, ed. Ernst Gall and L.H. Heydenreich (Stuttgart: Alfred Drukmüller, 1954) vol. 3, 784-786.

3 Circe was the witch who was mostly identified with Italy. See Gareth Roberts, "The Descendants of Circe: Witches and Renaissance Fictions," *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief*, ed. Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996) 188-190; *Giovanni Boccaccio Famous Women*, ed. and trans. Virginia Brown (Cambridge and London: Harvard UP, 2001) 151. On various interpretations of Circe by Italians, see Merritt Y. Hughes, "Spenser's Acrasia and the Circe of the Renaissance," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 4/4 (1943): 381-399; Elisabetta Framba, "Alcune osservazioni sull'interpretazione di Circe nella tradizione mitologica Rinascimentale," *L'idea classico a Ferrara e in Italia nel Rinascimento*, ed. Patrizia Castelli (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1998) 203-226.

4 Circe was included in the chapter "Nascita della strega" concerning Italian imagery of witchcraft, in the groundbreaking study by Eugenio Battisti, *L'antirinascimento* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1962) 138-157, esp. 140-141, but was not analyzed in the context of witchcraft discourses. A recent attempt to interpret her figure with regard to witchcraft debates, mostly in Northern art, was made by Charles Zika, "Images of Circe and Discourses of Witchcraft, 1480-1580," *Zeitenblicke: Online-Journal fur die Geschichtswissenschaften* 1 (2002) *<http://www.zeitenblicke.historicum.net/2002/01/zika/zika.html>*.

5 See, for example, Giuseppe Bonomo, *Caccia alle streghe: La credenza nella streghe dal sec. XIII al XIX con particolare riferimento all'Italia* (Palermo: Palumbo, 1971).

witches and their *maleficia* really existed. One of the significant viewpoints was skepticism about their existence, and this position is embedded in Allori's scene.

Allori's *Odysseus and Circe*, one of sixteen scenes of Odysseus's adventures decorating the lunettes and vaults of the two arcades in the Emperors' Court, primarily derives from book ten of Homer's *Odyssey*.[6] After a shipwreck near Circe's island, a group of Odysseus's companions seek shelter in her palace, but Circe greets them with unconventional hospitality. Using a magic wand and a bowl of poison, she transforms them into swine, lions, and wolves. Odysseus, however, is saved from the metamorphosis by Mercury who had given him an herb that would render ineffective any drug Circe might administer. When Odysseus enters Circe's house, she offers him the potion, but she then realizes he is immune. After he brandishes a sword, she swears not to harm him. Eventually, following a year-long amorous relationship with Odysseus, Circe transforms the men back to their original form and allows them to continue their journey.[7]

Allori chose to depict the moment when Odysseus, on the way to Circe, receives the herb from Mercury. Isolated in front of a huge rock and accompanied by a wolf-like animal and two lions (the transformed men) Circe sits relaxed in the foreground, unaware of the agitated figures in the rear: Odysseus hurrying to confront her, the nude Mercury on his urgent mission to provide Odysseus the apotropaic herb, and the running figures in the far background, probably Odysseus's companions, who escape from Circe to the harbor. While completely ignoring the open book leaning on the rock next to her, she supports her cheek with her left hand, and in the other hand holds her magic wand pointed toward the wolf. Her dreamy gaze at the wolf indicates her interior contemplation, and the wolf's mutual gaze at her echoes the lions' gaze at the spectator.

Only by comparing Allori's scene to its visual sources and understanding the extent to which he adopted the conventional depiction of the Circe legend, can one appreciate his innovative approach in employing the figure of Circe to embody the witchcraft debate. Allori was influenced by two versions of *Odysseus and Circe* decorating two rooms in the Palazzo Vecchio, both of which were painted by the Flemish artist Giovanni Stradano (Jan van der Straet). The earlier scene is part of the *Odyssey* fresco cycle, dated 1562, in Eleonora da Toledo's work room, known as the Sala di Penelope (Figure 2), and the later scene from 1570 is an independent oil painting in the Studiolo of Francesco I de' Medici (Figure 3). Both Allori and his patron who commissioned him to execute the fresco cycle, Jacopo di Alamanno Salviati, had close ties to the Palazzo Vecchio. Allori executed the *Odyssey* cycle only five years after collaborating with Stradano, among other artists, on the decoration of the Studiolo. By then Stradano was already an old colleague of his from the time they organized the annual dissection of 1563.[8] As to the patron, Jacopo Salviati was a family member of the Palazzo Vecchio's inhabitants, as a nephew of Maria de' Medici and cousin to Duke Cosimo I (who often visited the Palazzo Salviati, where a statue of him was later installed).[9] Thus, we can assume that both Allori and Salviati were highly motivated to draw on the Palazzo Vecchio decoration.

In comparing Allori's work with Stradano's Studiolo scene (Figure 3), we see that Allori favored lions and wolves as the prominent animals instead of the swine, which are placed in the background of the Studiolo scene although they are the animals most often associated with the story.[10] The location of the meeting of Odysseus and Mercury in the foreground of the Studiolo scene might have led Allori to comprehend it as a crucial episode of the narrative.[11] Inspired to an extended degree from Stradano's 1562 version (Figure 2), Allori preferred a rustic atmosphere to Circe's palace, and placed Circe in the foreground while relegating the meeting between Mercury and

6 The scenes are listed in Marco Lorandi, "'Sic Notus Ulixes?', *Antichità viva* 26 (1987): 19 and 27, n. 5. The first printed edition of the Homeric story was published in Florence in 1488. For the Italians' interest in Greek culture, see Judith Yarnall, *Transformations of Circe: The History of an Enchantress* (Urbana and Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1994) 99; Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1987) 232. The *Odyssey*, however, was known to fourteenth-century Italian humanists, such as Giovanni Boccaccio (Brown 150-155) and Dante Alighieri (*The Divine Comedy: Inferno* 26). For the medieval interest in Circe, see Roberts 190.

7 The story appears in later classical texts, such as Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4:662-752; Virgil, *Aeneid* 7:10-24; Horace, *Epistles* 1.2:18-27; and Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 14:276-415. For a complete list of the classical and contemporary texts about Circe, see Lorandi 435-450. See also the discussion in Yarnall 9-25 and 53-98.

8 Frederika Jacobs, "(Dis)assembling: Marsyas, Michelangelo, and the Accademia del Disegno," *Art Bulletin* 84 (2002): 436.

9 Lisci 472.

10 The episode of feeding the swine in the background of the Studiolo scene is mentioned in the Homeric story (10.241-242), but is unprecedented in the Italian scenes of Circe. This image was common in Northern art, therefore Stradano, as a Flemish artist, most likely knew it. For more images of pigs' feeding (including the *November* scene in the Limbourg Brothers' *Les Trés Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*) see Paolo Scarpi, *Tra Maghe, Santi e Maiali: l'avventura del porco nelle lettere e nei colori* (Milan: Gallone, 1998) 6-8 and 23.

11 The importance of the meeting between Odysseus and Mercury and the place of the herb exactly in the middle of the composition are interpreted in the Studiolo context as a reference to the herbs that might be stored in the closet behind the painting. Although Circe also used herbs for her magic, in this scene she is a marginal figure and we cannot see the ingredients of her magic potion. Cf. Scott J. Schaefer, *The Studiolo of Francesco I de'Medici in the Palazzo Vecchio*, diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1976 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1976) vol. 1, 269, who prefers Circe's harmful poisoned herbs as a reference to the closet's contents over the apotropaic herb of Odysseus (whose identification with Francesco de'Medici is a possibility). A relation of Mercury to the quicksilver in the closet is suggested by Larry J. Feinberg, "The Studiolo of Francesco I Reconsidered," *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, ed. Judith A. Ruskin (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2002) 56.

Odysseus to the second plane.[12] Allori, however, reversed Stradano's positioning of the figures, adjusting the scene to the right-to-left reading of his cycle instead of the left-to-right direction of the Sala di Penelope cycle.

While Stradano's two scenes furnished the basis for Allori's composition, he radically modified them. The most substantial change was the elevation of Circe to the single protagonist in the scene. Allori not merely enlarged her figure and projected her by placing a screen-like dark rock behind her, but also eliminated her confrontation with Odysseus (who, in addition to meeting with Mercury, attacks her in the Sala di Penelope scene and drinks from her potion in the Studiolo scene).[13] Deviating from his visual sources by emphasizing and isolating Circe, Allori constructed the foundations for the underlying message of the scene.

Along with Circe's solitude, Allori enriched her figure with three unusual motifs—her posture of resting the cheek on one hand, her dreamy gaze downwards, and the open book she ignores—and in so doing, identified her with the well-known personification of Melancholy. The artist's primary intention to depict Circe as a melancholic figure becomes obvious when perceiving her resemblance to traditional images of Melancholy.[14] Although Dürer's famous *Melencolia I* immediately comes to mind (the closed book rests on Melancholy's lap), other melancholic figures, which were certainly paraphrased from Dürer's engraving, more closely coincide with Allori's Circe, such as the woodcut in Antonio Francesco Doni's *I Marmi*, published in Venice in 1552 and widely known throughout Italy (Figure 4).[15] Similar to Allori's Circe the mournful maiden in Doni's woodcut sits on a lonely rock, her left leg stretches forward, the right leg is higher and bent backwards, and she supports her cheek with her left hand while the other hand rests on her knee. The isolation of the maiden by the surrounding sea perhaps reminded Allori of Circe's solitude on the island, and thus made this image more appealing for him to imitate. Other images of Melancholy as a single female figure supplied Allori other features of her image: Circe's elbow which rests on a flat surface and her isolation by the dark rock.[16] Circe's fixed gaze at a certain object, the wolf, is the only unusual motif among Melancholy personifications which are conventionally depicted with closed eyes or an unfocussed gaze.[17] The physical and psychological isolation of Circe from the other figures can now be understood as an iconographical necessity. She is in melancholy, a temperament or a physical illness which is characterized by solitude. There is no place for another figure in the realm of a melancholic person.

Circe's melancholy, however, is not justified by any textual source, nor does any account of the story—classical or contemporary—refer to her contemplative state. Thus, it is even more surprising that this image of a melancholic sorceress survived through the next century in Italy and even became popular.[18] Ann Percy, who rationalized Circe's melancholy by asserting that "Circe serenely contemplates the re-

12 On the *Odyssey* cycle in the Sala di Penelope, see Piero Bargellini, *Scoperta di Palazzo Vecchio* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1968) 238-248. The emphasis on Circe, as well as other female figures in the cycle (including four personifications of Virtues that are inserted in the narrative), is appropriate to the decoration of a separate social space of women, where Eleonora, assisted by her maidens, was working.

13 In sixteenth-century fresco cycles in Italy, Circe is usually depicted in confrontation with Odysseus: Bologna, Palazzo Poggi, Sala di Polifemo, 1550-51; Rome, Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti, 1553-56; Bergamo, Palazzo della Prefettura, 1555; Genova, Palazzo della Meridiana, 1560-65; and Rome, Palazzo Farnese, Camerino Farnese, 1595. Allori did not refrain from using the continuous narrative method in other scenes in the fresco cycle: in the scene following Circe's, *Odysseus and Tiresias*, Odysseus appears twice, once in the background and once in the foreground meeting Tiresias. In the next scene, *Odysseus and the Sirens*, which is the scene opposite to *Odysseus and Circe*, Allori uses the mutual gaze to link Odysseus and his companions sailing in the background with the Sirens occupying the first plane. For the scenes see Lorandi, "Sic Notus," figs. 32, 33.

14 The fundamental study of the iconography of Melancholy remains Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* (New York: Basic Books, 1964).

15 Klibansky et al. 386-387, n. 37. Doni's woodcut was used as an emblem of Melancholia by Cornelis Massys. Abraham Bloemaert's *Melancholy*, which is claimed to be influenced from Doni's woodcut (Klibansky et al.,386-387, n. 37, and fig. 133), surprisingly has some characteristics of Allori's Circe, which cannot be found in Doni's emblem: the elbow rests on a flat rock and the overlooked open book is on the same surface. Perhaps Allori's Circe is the missing link in the sequence of influences, unless there is another unexplored source for both works.

16 In Klibansky et al., fig. 123, Melancholy and her human representative, the cosmographer, are topographically isolated from the daily scenes surrounding them (in a smaller scale) by a hill behind them. In another image Melancholia's elbow is resting on an elevated flat surface (Klibansky et al., fig. 122). Both images precede Allori's Circe.

17 In addition to Dürer's *Melencolia I* see Klibansky et al., figs. 114-116, 118, 122, 126, 128-130.

18 Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione's etching, for instance, incorporates elements from Allori's image, although the exclusion of Odysseus enables one to identify the woman as Circe, Ariosto's witch Alcina, or a generic sorceress figure. For works by Castiglione, see Ann Percy, "Magic and Melancholy: Castiglione's *Sorceress* in Hartford," *Wadsworth Atheneum Bulletin* 6.3 (1970): 2-15; Idem., *Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione: Master Draughtsman of the Italian Baroque*, exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971); Bertina Suida Manning, "The Transformation of Circe: The Significance of the Sorceress as Subject in 17th Century Genoese Painting," *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Federico Zeri*, ed. Mauro Natale (Milan: Electa, 1984) vol. 2, 689-708. Both Manning and Percy overlooked Allori's image and consequently related the image of the melancholic sorceress as beginning only in the seventeenth century. Paulus Bor's *Enchantress* is another melancholic sorceress. She holds a magic wand, and instead of animals, she is surrounded by classical sculpture. See Denis Mahon and Denys Sutton, *Artists in 17th Century Rome* (London: Wildenstein, 1955) 11-12. A more debatable figure by the Neopolitan artist Francesco Solimena was identified as a meditative Circe by Odoardo H. Giglioli, "Unpublished Paintings by Francesco Furini, Valerio Castello and Francesco Solimena," *Burlington Magazine* 90 (1948): 289-290, fig. 21. Allori's Circe might have inspired the young sorceress in a tondo painted by Salavator Rosa in 1640s during his stay in Florence (although she is not in melancholy). For the tondo see Luigi Salerno, "Four Witchcraft Scenes by Salvator Rosa," *Cleveland Museum of Art Bulletin* 65 (1978): 224, fig. 2.

sults of having changed Ulysses' men to beasts,"[19] overlooked the complexity of this image, which embodies the disease of melancholy rather than a contemplative state, and is based on contemporary debates on witchcraft.

To decode the meaning of Circe's melancholy we should first examine the broad association of witches with melancholy. One of the main debates in the discourse of witchcraft in sixteenth-century Europe concerned the existence of witches and the reality of their *maleficia*. The common skeptical view regarded the riding to the witches' Sabbath and the pact between witches and the Devil as hallucinations that were planted in women's heads by devils as dreams and fantasies. Among the defenders of witches who rationalized the witchcraft phenomenon by giving natural and medical explanations, the Dutch physician Johann Weyer is the most famous. In his *De praestigiis daemonum*, first published in 1563, Weyer claimed that witches had a predisposition for psychological traits like despair, and illnesses like melancholy.[20] Their melancholy did not refer to their inner mental condition but to a physical illness caused by an imbalance of humours in their bodies, which left them with an excess of black bile.[21] Melancholy, Weyer diagnosed, was a female disease of the uterus, and thus, women were more vulnerable to the power of delusion by the Devil.

Weyer was affected by Italian writers, who expressed their skeptical attitude toward witchcraft by including in their treatises the medical justification of melancholy for the witchcraft phenomenon. The Italian humanist Pietro Pomponazzi had suggested in *De immortalitate animae*, published in Bologna in 1516, that victims of black bile, the cause of melancholy, became irrational with extraordinary visions, such as demonic possession.[22] A direct connection between melancholy and witches' delusions was established by the Italian physician Girolamo Cardano, whose *De rerum varietate* from 1557 was heavily cited by Weyer. In his essay Cardano described witches as "showing in their faces black bile and melancholy" and that "they see and hear some things and the cause of this is to be assigned to black bile, which arises partly from food and drink and air and grief . . . and partly from association with other crazy folk."[23] Those who opposed melancholy as a plausible explanation for the witches' delusion devoted great effort to explaining their resistance. In referring to the witches' fallacious activities mentioned in the Canon *Episcopi*, the Milanese professor of logic, Girolamo Visconti, dedicated a whole chapter to the subject in his *Opusculum de striis* (Milan, 1490) entitled "Six arguments to prove that the deception *does not* originate in the melancholic humor."[24]

Allori used the conventional image of Melancholy, usually interpreted as a state of despair, to depict the physical disease of melancholy. In this respect Allori's understanding of Circe agrees with the association of witches and melancholy by Northern artists who included a group of witches among various melancholic symbols or figures.[25] In Lucas Cranach's *Melancholia* series, for example, amidst symbols of melancholy, the riding of witches on beasts to the witches' Sabbath is one of the deceitful visions by female victims of melancholy.[26] In a late sixteenth-century French engraving

[19] Percy refers to a different image of Circe, painted by Castiglione, but so far this is the only explanation for any image of a melancholic Circe. See Percy, "Magic," 8. Manning 689, neglects the connection between melancholy and witchcraft, and explains the melancholic state with regard to Vanitas: "The triumphant sorceress turns into the powerless Melancholia, imbued with the realization that all facets of human endeavor, together with life itself are irrevocably temporally fixed and ultimately doomed to cessation." The Melancholy, however, was the first association with Circe, prior to the Vanitas concept. On Melancholy and Vanity see Klibansky et al. 387-391.

[20] Johann Weyer, *On the Deceits of the Demons* (the translation is from the second edition in 1583) in *Witches, Devils, and Doctors in the Renaissance: Johann Weyer, "De praestigiis daemonum,"* ed. George Mora, trans. John Shea (Binghamton, New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1991) 181-186. See Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1997) 199. On melancholy in witchcraft treatises, see Sydney Anglo, "Melancholia and Witchcraft: The Debate between Wier, Bodin, and Scot," *Folie et deraison à la Renaissance*, ed. Aloïs Gerlo (Brussels: Editions de l'Universite de Bruxelles, 1976) 209-222; H. C. Erik Midelfort, *A History of Madness in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999) 182-227. Cf. Juliana Schiesari, *The Gendering of Melancholia: Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Symbolics of Loss in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1992) 251-255. Schiesari argues that witches mourn for the lost phallus and that "female melancholia is the result of a breakdown in the patriarchal order."

[21] Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (London: Harper Collins, 1996) 378.

[22] Pietro Pomponazzi, *On the Immortality of the Soul*, chapter 14. See the translation by William Henry Hay in Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall Jr., *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1948) 372.

[23] Girolamo Cardano, *Concerning the Variety of Things*, book 25, chapter 80 in Henry Charles Lea, *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft*, ed. Arthur C. Howland (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1939) vol. 2, 446-447. On the immediate success of this treatise and its influence on Weyer, see Clark 221, 238.

[24] [Editorial italics.] Girolamo Visconti, *Opusculum de striis*, chapter 1 in Sergio Abbiati, Attilio Agnoletto, and Maria Rosario Lazzati, *La Stregoneria: Diavoli, streghe, inquisitori dal Trecento al Settecento* (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1984) 94-96. See also Bonomo 156-159.

[25] A Northern drawing depicting a witch standing near a melancholic male is Klibansky et al., fig. 139. An interesting case is a witch who has just castrated a melancholic man. Of course, the castrated man has all the reasons to be in melancholy; nevertheless, he can be compared to Saturn who was both castrated (in Klibansky et al., fig. 47, a woman, not Zeus, castrates him) and associated with melancholy. For the illustration see Charles Zika, "'Magie'-'Zauberei'-'Hexerei': Bildmedien und kultureller Wandel," *Kulturelle Reformation: Sinnformationen im Umbruch 1400-1600*, ed. Bernhard Jussen and Craig Koslofsky (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1999) 330, fig. 22.

[26] For the delusion of the witches' ride, see Sigrid Schade, *Schadenzauber und die Magie des Körpers: Hexenbilder der frühen Neuzeit* (Worms: Werner'sche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1983) 76-78. For further discussion on Cranach's *Melancholias*, see Patrizia Castelli, "'Donnaiole, amiche de li sogni' ovvero i sogni delle streghe," *Bibliotheca Lamiarum: Documenti e immagini della stregoneria dal Medioevo all'Età Moderna*, exh. cat. (Pisa: Pacini, 1994) 56-62.

Saturn and his Children witches fly and dance under the figure of Saturn who rides in his chariot in the sky above them.[27] This engraving demonstrates the theory of associating planetary influences with particular social groups, occupations, and temperaments, in which Saturn was linked to melancholic illness, and influenced those associated with death, violence, and evil, including necromancy and devilish arts.[28]

The illness of melancholy may be applied specifically to Circe's sorcery. Most writers on witchcraft could not accept the phenomenon of the metamorphoses of the witches themselves or their victims into animals as real magic. Even those who believed in witchcraft doubted confessions of witches that contained the magic of transformation. As the modern historian Stuart Clark explains, "It was philosophically and morally distasteful to suppose that the human *anima* could function in an animal body."[29] This category of magic could not be explained by the common demonological theory that witches were capable of practicing *maleficia* through the assistance of devils, otherwise metamorphoses would constitute a second creation to that of God. Demonologists and authors of witchcraft treatises solved the problem by rationalizing metamorphoses as deceptive illusions, caused in some cases by devils.[30]

This skeptical view corresponds to a comment about Circe in the famous witchcraft treatise *Malleus Maleficarum* (*Hammer of the Witches*) written by the two Dominican inquisitors Heinrich Kramer (Institoris) and Jacobus Sprenger and published in 1487. Known and quoted in Italy almost immediately after its publication, the *Malleus* gained a revived interest when it was first published in Italy in 1574, a year before Allori painted the fresco cycle, with a second impression a short time after the first, in 1576. In the chapter entitled "Of the manner whereby they change men into the shapes of beasts" Circe's enchantment was explicitly considered a delusion:

> Now when the companions of Ulysses were changed into beasts, it was only an appearance, or *deception of the eyes*; for the animal shapes were drawn out of the repository or memory of images, and impressed on the imaginative faculty. And so imaginary vision was caused, and through the strong impression on the other senses and organs, the beholder *thought* that he saw animals. . . . But how these things can be done by the devil's power without any injury will be shown later.[31]

Circe's melancholy is an illness that causes her to hallucinate she is a witch practicing *maleficium* of metamorphosis, but this magic happens only in her imagination. Her melancholic state is the only signifier of the illusory animals, and her gaze at the wolf, which is reinforced by the magic wand pointed in the same direction, elucidates the vision she imagines. Circe, of course, does not understand the animals as merely phantoms; only the spectator, who, like a physician, diagnoses her disease, identifies the animals as symptoms of the melancholic illness. Accordingly, this image comprises two levels of narrative—reality and illusion—which could not be comprehended by any visual convention for distinguishing indirect narrative from direct narrative, such as clouds containing dreams, apparitions, or visions.[32]

To further eliminate any indication of the corporeality of the magic, Allori refrained from depicting the transformation as a physical process. He also excluded the bowl of the poisoned concoction Circe was supposed to hold, perhaps in order to express his disbelief in the poison as the magical means for transformation. The preference for the magic wand over the poison echoes the distinction of Weyer between the two: "But it is clear that human beings are not transformed by the herbs and poisons on this basis, and so it follows that the efficacy is bestowed upon them by charms."[33] According to Weyer, the fake, ineffectual poison used by Circe differs from a real poison, an evil medication that harms people, and is practiced

27 The engraving of Martin de Vos was the source for two versions by Henri Leroy (Klibansky et al., fig. 53) and Crispin de Passe. For the witches in the engraving of Crispin de Passe, see Charles Zika, "Fashioning New Worlds from Old Fathers: Reflections on Saturn, Amerindians and Witches in a Sixteenth-Century Print," *Dangerous Liaisons: Essays in Honour of Greg Dening*, ed. Donna Merwide (Melbourne: U of Melbourne, 1994) 270-274; repr. in Charles Zika, *Exorcising Our Demons: Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003) 438-442.

28 Zika, "Fashioning," 260. See also Klibansky et al. 383.

29 Clark 191-192.

30 Clark 192.

31 [Editorial italics.] In part 2, question 1, chapter 8. See *Malleus Maleficarum by Jacobus Sprenger and Heinrich Kramer*, trans. Montague Summers (London: The Folio Society, 1968) 97. The idea of Circe's falacious magic was based on St. Augustine's *City of God*, chapter 18. It was cited and analyzed in later treatises, such as Weyer 337-342 (book 4, chapter 22), who announces the discussion in the title "Nothing has the power to transform men into beasts. An explanation of the stories concerning the transformation of the companions of Ulysses and Diomedes, and the transformation of the Arcadians." For discussion on Circe in witchcraft discourses, see Roberts 183-206, esp. 187-190.

32 For pictorial conventions of narrating dreams and visions, see Sixten Ringbom, "Some Pictorial Conventions for the Recounting of Thoughts and Experience in Late Medieval Art," *Medieval Iconography and Narrative: A Symposium*, ed. Flemming G. Andersen et al. (Odense: Odense UP, 1980) 38-69; Michael Cole, "The Demonic Arts and the Origin of the Medium," *Art Bulletin* 84 (2002): 628. Northern artists also demonstrated Circe's illusory magic by comparing the witch to the daily life figures of a conjurer and a trickster. In a woodcut from the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, dated 1493, Circe exercises her sorcery with trickery apparatuses on a table beside her, and is assisted by a maidservant. For the woodcut see James Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, the Graphic Arts from 1350 to 1575* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985) 320, fig. 354; Zika, "Images of Circe," fig. 2.

33 Weyer 339.

not by witches but by poisoners.[34]

The patron's—or the artist's—interest in showing his disbelief in witchcraft, particularly in Circe's sorcery, is rooted in Christian ideology. Through the ages, in laws concerning witchcraft belief, those who believed in the existence of transformation were convicted of heresy, even if the law deemed the transformation an illusion. The ninth-century Canon *Episcopi*, which established the propaganda against witches and was the starting point for discussions about witchcraft by Renaissance humanists, includes a reference to the belief in transformation: "Whoever therefore believes . . . that any creature can be changed or transformed to better or to worse or be transformed into another species or likeness, except by the creator himself . . . is beyond doubt an infidel."[35] This conviction is restated in the twelfth-century collection of ecclesiastical law, Gratian's *Decretum*, and initiates the chapter about transformation in the *Malleus*. In *De strigiis* written in 1505-10 by the Lombard inquisitor, Bernardo Rategno da Como, Circe's magic is directly associated with the heretical belief in transformation and the condemnation of its believer as "infidel and worse than a pagan."[36] This close association between Circe and heresy clarifies the motive of the patron Jacopo Salviati to express his disbelief in witchcraft, and hence his Catholic faith, by showing a melancholic Circe. In contrast to the faithful, the figures of Mercury and Odysseus, pagans who believed in the reality of Circe's sorcery, might allude to the opposite side of the controversy about the existence of witchcraft.

Lastly, the lions' gaze at the spectator, just as the wolf's gaze at Circe, invites the viewer to experience the delusion of the transformation. Once again, the Palazzo Vecchio decoration served as a source of inspiration: the left lion was copied from one of the tapestries designed by Allori's master, Bronzino, for Duke Cosimo I (Figure 5).[37] Enlivened by naturalistic appearance and animated frontal faces, the lions' existence is intensified for the beholder, who is in conflict between his knowledge considering their status as phantoms (signified by Circe's melancholy) and their corporeality through the gaze that announces their awareness of the beholder's presence and accordingly their own. To be sure, the lions' ambiguity (whether real or illusory) was not created by Circe, but by the artist, and in that sense, the witch and the artist are comparable—for both attempt to challenge nature by creating new images, albeit a mere illusion.[38]

The spectator's confusion regarding the gaze of the lions demonstrates the paradox between the two readings of the scene, first as a myth and then as a message about a contemporary debate: the melancholic illness of Circe cancels her magic and her own identity as a witch. Allori, of course, had no interest in questioning the reality of an old pagan myth. Instead, he aimed his skepticism at two contemporary debates: the preposterous belief in the magic of transformation that a faithful Christian must reject, and a more controversial belief concerning the existence of witches.

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[34] Weyer 267-273, 559-561. On poison in witchcraft discourse, see Clark 196, 199.

[35] *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700: A Documentary History*, ed. Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2001) 62-63.

[36] Cited in chapter 7 (Abbiati 206). Circe is absent from the Canon *Episcopi*, but is mentioned in the *Malleus* in the same chapter with the story of the transformation of Diomedes's companions and St. Augustine's discussion on Circe's magic. Thus, it seems likely that Bernardo's main source was the *Malleus*. The idea is repeated in Weyer 341 (book 4, chapter 22): "And the *Decretum* declares that a man who believes that any creature can be transformed . . . into another appearance or likeness . . . is worse than a Pagan or an infidel."

[37] Janet Cox-Rearick, "Art at the Court of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici (1537-1574)," *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, ed. Judith A. Ruskin (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2002) 39.

[38] For a stimulating discussion on the dog's gaze at the spectator in Dosso Dossi's Borghese *Sorceress*, see Giancarlo G. Fiorenza, *Studies in Dosso Dossi's Pictorial Language: Painting and Humanist Culture in Ferrara under Duke Alfonso I d'Este*, diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2001 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 2001) 284-289. For the illusion in art and witchcraft, see Cole 621-640; Rebecca Zorach, "Despoiled at the Source," *Art History* 22.2 (1999): 260-261, who compares Titian's creation of illusion to illusion in witchcraft.

Figure 1. Alessandro Allori and collaborators, *Odysseus and Circe*, c. 1575-1576, fresco, Cortile degli Imperatori, Palazzo Salviati, Florence. Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

Figure 2. Giovanni Stradano, *Odysseus and Circe*, 1562, fresco, Sala di Penelope, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Scala / Art Resource, NY.

Figure 3. Giovanni Stradano, *Odysseus and Circe*, 1570, oil on panel, Studiolo of Francesco I de'Medici, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Scala / Art Resource, NY.

Figure 4. Antonio Francesco Doni, *Melancholia*, woodcut from *I Marmi*, vol. 2, Venice, 1552. Courtesy of Cornell University, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Carol A. Kroch Library.

Figure 5. Agnolo Bronzino, *Justice Rescuing Innocence*, 1546-1553, tapestry, Museo degli Argenti, Florence. Scala/Art Resource, NY.

Emblem of Victory: The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Colonial Painting of the Viceroyalty of New Spain

Iraida Rodríguez-Negrón

Countless images of the Immaculate Conception were produced in the Spanish Americas during the colonial period. Undoubtedly, this Virgin was one of the most popular Marian advocations in the new territories. That popularity was not surprising considering that the Immaculate Conception was so highly venerated in the Spanish mainland.

During the years of discovery and colonization of the Americas, the Crown and the Catholic Church in Spain relied on the spiritual assistance of the Virgin Mary for their efforts of conquest and evangelization. This sentiment is directly expressed by the Spanish Friar Antonio de Santa María in his 1682 publication entitled *España triunfante y la iglesia laureada, en todo el globo del mundo por el patrocinio de María Santísima en España* ["Triumphant Spain and the Church honored, in all the world thanks to the patronage of the Holy Mary in Spain"], where he writes: "No one can doubt that the triumph of the conquest is due to the Queen of the Angels."[1] In the frontispiece of the publication, Augustin Bouttats translates Santa Marías's ideas into images (Figure 1). At the lower right corner, an allegorical image of "Spain Triumphant" bears a standard with the image of the Immaculate Conception.[2]

Images of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception were displayed soon after the conquest in the territory of New Spain, what is now Mexico and Central America. The reoccurrence of this theme can only attest to the profound devotion exercised towards this Marian advocation despite the fact that, at that time, the Catholic Church was immersed in intense theological debates concerning the doctrine. This paper will examine the representations of the Immaculate Virgin in the Viceroyalty of New Spain, addressing the development of the iconography and considering the influence of European models; but at the same time, and of utmost importance, it will take into account the devotion exercised towards the *Inmaculada* in the New World. Evaluating these images in the context in which they were created is the best course by which to achieve a full understanding of their significance in the colonial period.

The belief in the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary became a dogma of the Catholic Church in 1854, when Pope Pius IX proclaimed: "We believe that the most blessed Virgin Mary at the first instant of her conception was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin."[3]

This conviction originated in the Early Christian Church and by the ninth century was transported to the West.[4] Later, theologians in the Middle Ages struggled to define and support the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. On the other hand, among those who opposed the doctrine was the Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas (*c*. 1226-1274). Under his leadership, the Dominican order would oppose it, too, believing that the Virgin was not purified in the womb of her mother until after her conception; but they would represent the minority. Almost all the other religious orders supported the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, among them the Benedictines, Jesuits, and especially the Franciscans.[5] The latter would be the champions of the doctrine in Spain, and

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1 Quoted in Barbara Duncan, "Statue Paintings of the Virgin," *Gloria in Excelsis: the Virgin and the Angels in Viceregal Painting of Peru and Bolivia* Exh. Cat. (New York: Center for the Inter-American Relations, 1986) 32.

2 Suzanne L. Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994) 139. The mystery of the Immaculate Conception is accurately explained in a 1999 Columbian exhibition catalogue: "El título "Inmaculada Concepción" no se refiere a la concepción de Cristo en el seno de María, tema que se representa en el arte como la "Anunciación," sino a la concepción de María en el seno de santa Ana. De acuerdo con este dogma, la Virgen fue escogida por Dios desde el principio de los tiempos para contribuir al Misterio de la Redención. Por lo tanto ella misma debía ser concebida sin la mancha del pecado original." [The "Immaculate Conception" refers not to the conception of Christ in the womb of the Virgin Mary, which is represented in art as the Annunciation, but to the conception of the Virgin in Saint Anne's womb. According to the dogma, the Virgin was chosen since the beginning of times to contribute to the Redemption of mankind. Therefore, she had to be conceived without the stain of original sin.] Teresa Morales de Gómez, "La Inmaculada Concepción," *Tota Pulchra: Exposición de la Inmaculada* (Bogotá: Museo de Arte Colonial, 1999) 7.

3 Quoted in Helen Hills, "Iconography and Ideology: Aristocracy, Immaculacy and Virginity in Seventeenth-Century Palermo," *Oxford Art Journal* 17.2 (1994): 20.

4 Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance* (New York: College of Art Association of America in conjunction with The Art Bulletin, 1957) 6.

5 Levi D'Ancona 10.

consequently in New Spain.

Soon after the conquest of New Spain, between the years 1519-1520, Hernán Cortes, leader of the *conquistadores*, wrote to King Charles V requiring the presence of missionary orders to aid in the conversion of Indians to Christianity.[6] Around 1523 the Franciscan friars were among the first to come from Spain, and were soon followed by others like the Carmelites, Jesuits, Augustinians, all devoted to the Immaculate Conception and responsible for the introduction and evolution of local cults.[7]

A 1637 work by the Mexican artist Basilio de Salazar (active *c*.1624-1645),[8] entitled *Franciscan Exultation of the Immaculate Conception*, documents the devotion to this Marian advocation by the Franciscans of New Spain (Figure 2). A gigantic image of the Virgin hovers above and illuminates a multitude of Franciscan monks and nuns with her golden radiance. Just below the *Inmaculada* is an image of Saint Francis of Assisi.

It is safe to assume that the Spanish ecclesiastical authorities had the goal of acquiring more devotees to the doctrine in hopes that popular devotion would contribute to the cause of having the Immaculate Conception embraced officially as dogma.[9] In 1585, the Third Provincial Council in Mexico proclaimed as mandatory the celebration of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, under penalty of mortal sin to those who did not oblige. These feasts were celebrated with the same enthusiasm and grandeur as those in the Spanish mainland, for it was one of the most important in the liturgical calendar. One of these was recorded in the year 1618 when the bishop of the city of Mexico ordered celebrations after Pope Paul V expressly prohibited any disputes concerning the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin.[10] The viceroy of New Spain himself was in charge of the celebration that took place in December of that same year. Ephemeral decorations were created for the event, like temporary altarpieces and a triumphal arch, decorated with the attributes of the *Inmaculada*, along with the celebration of "triumphal processions and literary competitions."[11]

A number of literary works in honor of the Immaculate Conception were composed at the time. Among the most famous are those by "New Spain's most illustrious woman of letters," Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. One example is a carol that was sung for the celebration of the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1676 at the Cathedral of Mexico.[12] In addition, Sor Juana Inés participated in literary contests held by the University of Mexico to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1682 and 1683.[13, 14]

Every social class in New Spain at the time was devoted to the *Inmaculada*. It is understandable that the Spaniards and those of direct Spanish descent would share the fervor that originated in the mainland. But it is also known, as William B. Taylor documents, that the Indian population also participated in devotion towards the Immaculate Conception. For example, since the sixteenth century, the hospitals for Indians had been dedicated to and placed under the protection of this Marian advocation.[15]

Considering these facts, it is safe to assume that the images of the Immaculate Conception produced in New Spain during colonial times are closely related to and influenced by the immense devotion that the population of the territory professed to her. But what did the viewers see in these images? What were the interpretations made of them? A brief analysis of the evolution of the Immaculate Conception in Spanish colonial painting of the Viceroyalty of New Spain can provide

6 Donna Pierce, "New Spain: Metamorphosis in Spanish Colonial Art," *Cambios: The Spirit of Transformation in Spanish Colonial Art* (Albuquerque: Santa Barbara Museum of Art in cooperation with the U of New Mexico P, 1992) 74.

7 Santiago Sebastián, "Diffusion of the Counter-Reformation Doctrine," *Temples of Gold, Crowns of Silver: Reflections of Majesty in the Viceregal Americas*. Exh. Cat. (The Art Museum of the Americas; the Organization of the American States; the George Washington University, Dimock Gallery, Washington D.C., 1991) 76.

8 Active in New Spain.

9 The brotherhood or *cofradía* of the Immaculate Conception was instituted in Mexico by a papal bull signed by Paul V in 1612. Juana Gutiérrez Haces, "Purísima Concepción," *Cristóbal de Villalpando, ca. 1649-1714*, Juana Gutiérrez Haces, Pedro Angeles, Clara Bargellini, Rogelio Ruiz Gomar (México: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1997) 232.

10 The bishop of the city of Mexico declared: "su santidad había mandado que no se disputase de la Inmaculada Concepción de Nuestra Señora cosa que había causado grande alegría en España y se había celebrado, que a esta ciudad correspondía hacer las mayores demostraciones." [The Pope has ordered that there can be no more disputes concerning the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, which calls for celebrations in Spain, and this city should celebrate immensely.] Quoted in Gutiérrez Haces, 232.

11 Gutiérrez Haces 232.

12 Alfonso Alfaro, "La Virgen y su Enemiga," *Artes de México* 37 (1997): 49. The publication of this carol included a frontispiece with an image of the *Inmaculada* as the *Tota Pulchra* (see footnote 20). Published in: Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Obras Completas*, ed. Alfonso Méndez Plancarte (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951) 17.

13 In both competitions, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz participated using two different pseudonyms. She won the first prize at one of the competitions. José Rojas Garcidueñas, prologue to: Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora, *Triunfo Parténico, que en glorias de María Santísima, inmaculadamente concebida, celebró la pontficia, imperial y regia Academia Mexicana en el bienio que como su rector la gobernó el doctor Don Juan de Narváez* (México: Ediciones Xochitl, 1945) 11-12.

14 These festivities were extensively documented in Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora's *Triunfo Parténico, que en glorias de María Santísima, inmaculadamente concebida, celebró la pontífica, imperial y regia Academia Mexicana en el bienio que como su rector la gobernó el doctor Don Juan de Narváez* (see footnote 13). In it, the author describes the events that took place during these festivities, including processions, theatre representations, and poetry contests (see footnote 13). He also devotes a whole chapter to the decorations of the events. Sigüenza y Góngora 75-123.

15 William B. Taylor, "The Virgin of Guadalupe in New Spain: an inquiry into the social history of Marian devotion," *American Ethnologist* 14.1 (February 1987): 11.

some answers.

European prototypes exercised the most influence in the iconography of religious images produced in New Spain. The Spanish missionary orders, who initially brought many of these to the Americas, established workshops within their institutions where they taught European subject matter and techniques to the Indians.[16] Thus, Indians were the first active artists in the colony of New Spain, employed mainly for the decoration of religious buildings. According to Gerónimo de Mendieta, a friar who documented the events of the first half of the sixteenth century, the Indians were quite accomplished in copying the images brought by the missionaries. He wrote, "After they were evangelized and saw our images, there is no altarpiece or image difficult for them to execute."[17] In fact, one of the first images of the Immaculate Conception produced in New Spain is thought to be that in a mural at the Franciscan Monastery of Saint Michael in Huejotzingo, Puebla (Figure 3).[18] Created in the sixteenth century by the Tlaucilos Indians, it could have been inspired by the *Tota Pulchra*, one of those many prints imported from Europe of the image of the Immaculate Conception.[19] The *Tota Pulchra* was the most common iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century: in the work, the Virgin is surrounded by many of her attributes clearly identified with phrases of the scriptural prefigurations and religious literature quoted to support the idea of Mary being conceived without original sin.[20]

Many European artists arrived in New Spain as soon as the colony was established. Concentrated in the city of Mexico, they considerably reduced the artistic production of the Indians and changed completely the path of colonial art. One reason was the establishment of the painter's guild in 1557, after which the Indians were prevented from working on important commissions, and therefore, unable to participate first hand in the establishment of the Mexican Colonial School of Painting.[21]

One of the first Immaculate Conceptions executed in New Spain by the hand of a Spanish-born painter was a *Tota Pulchra*, the only surviving painting from an altarpiece of the Augustinian Church at Yuriapundaro, Guanajuato; it was painted in 1576 by Francisco de Morales, who moved to the colony in 1562 (Figure 4).[22]

Baltasar Echave Ibía (*c*. 1595-1644), one of the pre-eminent Mexican artists working at the beginning of the seventeenth century, depicted an image of the Immaculate Conception hovering above an anthropomorphous "demon," half human, half serpent (Figure 5). The inclusion of this very peculiar demon below the Virgin may respond to the popular identification of the Immaculate Conception with the Apocalyptic Woman described in the book of Revelations, as seen by Saint John the Evangelist in his vision at Patmos; the attributes of this figure began to appear in the depictions of the *Inmaculada* in the latter part of the sixteenth century. In addition, the inclusion of the demon serves to accentuate the role of Mary as the New Eve. The first Eve was responsible for the fall of man and the second Eve, free from original sin, was to play a major role in the redemption of humanity.

The next generation of important artists in New Spain was clearly influenced by the styles that were in favor in seventeenth century Europe, the beginning of the Mexican Baroque. The European influence is clear in the *Purísimas* created by locally-born artists working in the colony. Considered the image best expressing the Immaculacy of the Virgin, the *Purísima* came to maturity during the second half of the seventeenth century. The Virgin now dressed in a white robe and blue mantle,[23] the most famous figures are those painted by

[16] Guillermo Tovar de Teresa, *Pintura y Escultura en Nueva España (1557-1640)* (México: Grupo Azabache, 1992) 47.

[17] Tovar de Teresa 193.

[18] This mural was published in Santiago Sebastián, *Iconografía e Iconología del Arte Novohispano* (México: Grupo Azabache, 1992) 46.

[19] This mural is very similar to an engraved frontispiece of a *circa* 1500 French Book of Hours entitled "Heures de la Vierge à l'usage de Rome," published in Stratton, 41. Many prints and paintings were shipped to the New World, coming mainly from the Spanish port city of Seville, through the lucrative art market that developed, especially during the seventeenth century. For a comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon see: Duncan Kinkead, "Juan de Luzón and the Sevillian Painting Trade with the New World in the Second Half of the 17th century," *Art Bulletin* 65 (1984).

[20] The title of the *Tota Pulchra* is drawn from chapter 4 verse 7 of the Song of Solomon: "Tota Pulchra es. Amica mea, et macula non est in te." ["Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."] This verse had been associated with the Immaculate Conception since the twelfth century. Among the attributes, the most popular was the spotless mirror, the "speculum sine macula," which came from the Book of Wisdom, chapter 7 verse 26, which reads: "For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God." St. Bernard was the first to apply Song of Solomon 4:7 to the Virgin. The Song of Solomon was first associated with the Immaculate Conception in the twelfth century by Abelard, in his treatise about the doctrine. Stratton, 40, 42.

[21] Tovar de Teresa 43.

[22] Tovar de Teresa 70.

[23] Up to the end of the seventeenth century, the "Inmaculadas" were dressed in a pink robe and blue mantle, as the Virgin's robes were described in the Holy Scriptures. The change in color of the Virgin's robe occurred after the founder of the Conceptionist Order (1511), Beatriz de Silva, attested to seeing the Virgin dressed in white robe and blue mantle. Manuel Trens, *María: Iconografía de la Virgen en el Arte Español* (Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1974) 171. In addition, the Spanish art theoretician, Francisco Pacheco (1564-1644), also recommended, in his 1648 publication entitled *Arte de la Pintura*, that the Immaculate Conception should be dressed in a white robe and blue mantle. Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la Pintura* (1638) vol.II (Madrid: Instituto de Valencia D. Juan, 1956) 209.

[24] The Lowe Art Museum, in Coral Gables Florida, owns one of the "Purísimas" by Murillo, which is believed to have been in the collection of an Archbishop in the city of Lima, Peru. Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *La obra pictórica completa de Murillo*, (Barcelona: Editorial Noguer, 1978). The painting was also published in Carol Damian, *The Virgin of the Andes: Art and Ritual in Colonial Cuzco* (Miami Beach: Grassfield Press, Inc., 1995) 40.

the Spanish Master Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1618-1682).[24] Worthy of mention are those created by Cristóbal de Villalpando (1649-1714), a prolific and creative artist of Mexican Baroque art, who worked during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Figure 6).[25]

Villalpando also created Immaculist images clearly influenced by the devotion professed to the doctrine at that time. An example is his image of the *Archangel Saint Michael*, the assistant of the Virgin in the battle against evil, as described in the book of Revelations (Figure 7). After his vision of the Apocalyptic Woman, St. John narrates, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon."[26] St. Michael, dressed in military armor, bears a standard with the image of the Immaculate Conception. A closer look at the banner reveals the *Inmaculada* surrounded by her attributes. This image suggests that St. Michael is not only the defender of the Church, but also the defender of the Immaculate Virgin.

Villalpando's Archangel can be compared with the allegorical figure of *Spain Triumphant* who also bears a standard with an image of the Immaculate Virgin in the aforementioned frontispiece by Bouttats for Antonio de Santa María's treatise (Figure 1). Similar is the posture, the manner in which both hold their standards, their helmets, and their capes fluttering behind them. As the title of Santa Maria's work expresses, the Virgin Mary was credited with the victories of Spain in the world, and, consequently, the Immaculate Virgin was perceived as protector of the conquest and evangelization of the people in the Spanish Colonies of America.

At that time, a clear correspondence between the Virgin and the Church had been established. Even before the twelfth century, as John B. Knipping states, the Apocalyptic Virgin was interpreted as a symbol of the Church.[27] As mentioned earlier, the iconography of the Virgin was transplanted, becoming identified with the Immaculate Conception, victorious over original sin and a symbol of victory over heresy. This interpretation is evident in another type of *Inmaculada* in Colonial painting, the *Matter Intemerata*, like the one created in the eighteenth century by the Mexican Juan Patricio Morlete Ruiz (1715-1770) (Figure 8). Inspired by European models, this type of Immaculate Conception was disseminated in the colonies by the Franciscan and the Jesuit Orders.[28] In these images the Virgin is isolated from the usually chaotic apocalyptic scene and confronts the demon by herself.

The identification of Morlete's Virgin as an Immaculate Conception is substantiated not only by her vestments and by the twelve stars around her head, but also by the inscribed banderoles that are entangled in the whip and in the reins, the instruments that she uses to control the apocalyptic beast. The names of supporters of the doctrine are inscribed in these, among them the Franciscan Duns Scotus and the Spanish king Philip IV. In addition, two crossed keys acting as a bit for the dragon are clearly associated with the Roman Catholic Church, not only because of the symbolism of the key and its connection with St. Peter as the founder of the church, but also because the banderole entangled in them is inscribed with the names of two of his successors: popes Alexander VII (1655-1667) and Clement XIII (1758-1769). The Immaculate Virgin is seen by two witnesses as she stands over the head of the dragon, a scene that can be interpreted as the culmination of the promise of redemption found in Genesis chapter 3, verse 15, which foretells the role of the Immaculate Mother of God, free from original sin, in the redemption of humanity.[29] The Virgin as representative of the Church triumphs over evil and heresy.

The territory of New Spain was infested by millions of "apocalyptic dragons." When the Spaniards arrived in America they saw the abundance of serpents as a sign of the many pagan souls that needed to be evangelized. Under the European mentality of the *conquistadores*, this essential symbol of pre-Columbian society became the devil in disguise.[30] Only the conversion to the Catholic Faith would liberate these souls from damnation. William B. Taylor suggests that this association between the Virgin and the Church was understood in colonial times, where records often referred to the Church as a "pious mother." In addition, both Mary and the Church were considered as the "intercessors between the Christians and God."[31]

Possibly related to a carol composed by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz for the celebration of the feast of the Immaculate Conception in the Cathedral of Puebla in 1689 is the iconographic program created by Villalpando for the dome of the same Cathedral, which further evidences the relationship between the Virgin and the Church and alludes to Immaculist ideas of the time (Figure 9). The *Glorification of the Virgin*, completed in 1689, is a particularly inventive composition. In a depiction of the heavens, the main section of the dome is that of the Virgin Mary holding the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist,

[25] The 1997 superb catalogue raisonné of Cristobal de Villalpando's oeuvre published, for the first time, all his different versions of the "Purísima." Juana Gutiérrez Haces, Pedro Angeles, Clara Bargellini, and Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, *Cristóbal de Villalpando, ca. 1649-1714* (México: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1997).

[26] Rev. 12:7. King James Version of The Bible.

[27] John B. Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands* vol. II (Nieuwkoop: Nieuwkoop and Leiden, 1974), 348.

[28] Trens 180.

[29] This corresponds to the Catholic Theological interpretation of the verse "ipsa corteret caput tuum" (She will bruise thy head), instead of the Protestant interpretation "ipse" (the Son will bruise thy head). Stratton 153, n. 53. Further proof of the correlation between the Immaculate Virgin and the Church is offered by comparing Morlete's composition to a Netherlandish frontispiece by Gaspard Bouttats, dated 1690, that illustrates *The Church Vanquishing the Seven-Headed Dragon*. For illustration see: Knipping 354.

[30] Domingo Dufetel, "Entre Quetzalcóalt y el maligno," in "La Serpiente Virreinal," *Artes de México* 37 (1997): 7.

[31] Taylor 20.

thus uniting in one powerful image the two most controversial dogmas of the Catholic Church in the Counter Reformation period, the Immaculate Conception and the Sacrament of the Eucharist, both essential for the redemption of mankind.[32]

The colonial art historian Clara Bargellini has established the relationship between the carol and the iconography conceived by Villalpando. For example, Sor Juana Inés identifies the Immaculate Virgin as the "Throne of God…and of the Trinity seat," the idea echoed by the composition of the dome where the Trinity is positioned above the Virgin.[33] In addition, in the pendentives below the Dome, Villalpando depicts four Old Testament heroines who prefigure the immaculacy of the Virgin: Esther, Judith, Jahel and Ruth.[34] Esther and Judith are alluded to by Sor Juana Inés in her carol.[35] Esther had been associated with the Immaculate Virgin since Medieval times; just as she was exempt from the law decreed by her husband, Mary was exempt from the law decreed by God, the law of original sin.[36] The other heroine, Judith, killed the evil Holofernes just as the Virgin killed the dragon.[37] Therefore, these Biblical women played an important role in the salvation of their people, as does Mary in the redemption of mankind.

The Virgin of the Immaculate Conception was declared patroness of the Spanish dominions in the year 1760, but for centuries, artists had already been successful in communicating the idea of the immaculacy of the Virgin, regardless of the abstract qualities of the doctrine. Untouched by original sin, to which all others are exposed, she hovers in the heavens, over everything. Thus, it was Mary, the Immaculate Virgin, who would be the most appropriate soldier against evil and sin. These ideas, as it has been illustrated, were deeply rooted in the minds of those devoted to the Virgin. The Spaniards brought them to the Americas where the Virgin's battle against paganism and heresy would be reciprocated with innumerable conversions.

The population of New Spain learned from these images of the Immaculate Conception. They would follow the example of saints and religious personages who also venerated the Virgin, as seen in the aforementioned *Franciscan Exultation of the Immaculate Conception* (Figure 2).[38] And just like them, they acknowledged the sovereignty of the Immaculate Conception.

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[32] The relationship between the Immaculate Conception and the Eucharist is presented also in a silver guilt monstrance of the colonial period, encrusted with jewels, dated to *c*. 1780. This artifact was published in *México: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*. Exh. Cat. Introduction by Octavio Paz (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Boston: Little, Brown, 1990).

[33] Quoted in Clara Bargellini, "Glorificación de la Virgen," *Cristóbal de Villalpando, ca. 1649-1714*, Juana Gutiérrez Haces, Pedro Angeles, Clara Bargellini, Rogelio Ruiz Gomar (México: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1997) 220.

[34] Various female personages from the Old Testament were considered "typological counterparts" of the Virgin Mary. The most popular is Eve. The Virgin is the "Second Eve" who comes to amend the mistakes of the original one. Damian 32.

[35] "Judith a Holofernes venza,/ Esther a Asuero mitigue,/ Raquel a su Jacob prenda,/ Sara a su marido libre:/ ¡Judith, Esther, Raquel, Sara,/ sólo en vislumbres la pinten!" Juana Inés de la Cruz 105. Villalpando's "Heroines" are published in Bargellini 220-221.

[36] The story and iconography of Esther, from the Book of Esther in the Vulgate, was analogous to the Immaculate Conception. Ahaseerus decreed the extermination of the Jews, ignoring the fact that his wife Queen Esther was a Jew. In order to save her people, Esther pleaded before him. The act of presenting herself, uninvited, before the king was forbidden and punishable with death, but the king saved her, touching her with his scepter, saying: "This law was made for all human beings but not for you." Like Esther, Mary was exempt from the law which condemned all men. And like Esther, Mary intercedes for her people. Levi D'Ancona 30.

[37] The altarpiece of the chapel of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the Monastery of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid, Spain, has an iconographic program in which the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception is accompanied by the heroines of the Old Testament. The altarpiece symbolizes the "triumph of the biblical women, that are prefigurations of the Virgin Mary." Santiago Sebastián, *Contrareforma y Barroco: Lecturas Iconográficas e Iconológicas* (Madrid: Alianza, 1981) 227-28.

[38] Many paintings in Colonial Art of Latin America represent the Immaculate Conception accompanied or surrounded by saints and other religious personages. Among them we can mention the Immaculate Conception by the Mexican Miguel Cabrera, dated to the eighteenth century, where the Virgin is revered by genuflecting saints, among them Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Ignatius of Loyola. This painting was published in *Pintura Novohispana: Museo Nacional del Virreinato* (México: Americo Arte Editores S.A. de C.V., 1994) 90.

Figure 1. Augustin Bouttats, engraved frontispiece of Fray Antonio de Santa María, *España triunfante y la iglesia laureada, en todo el globo del mundo por el patrocinio de María Santísima en España*, 1682, Courtesy of The Hispanic Society of America, New York.

Figure 2. Basilio de Salazar, *Franciscan Exultation of the Immaculate Conception*, 1637, oil on canvas, 118 x 100 cm, Museo Regional de Queretano, Queretano, Mexico. CONACULTA.-INAH.-MEX. Reproduction authorized by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

Figure 5. Baltasar Echave Ibía, *The Immaculate Conception*, 1620. CONACULTA.-INBA.-MEX. Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico, D.F.

[*far left*] Figure 3. Anonymous (Tlacuilo Indians), *The Virgin "Tota Pulchra,"* sixteenth century, fresco, Franciscan Monastery of Saint Michael in Huejotzingo, Puebla. CONACULTA.-INAH.-MEX. Reproduction authorized by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

[*left*] Figure 4. Francisco de Morales, *Inmaculate Conception*, oil on wood, 1576, 211 x 160 cm, Museo Nacional del Virreinato, Tepotzotlán, Mexico. CONACULTA.-INAH.-MEX. Reproduction authorized by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

[*right*] Figure 6. Cristóbal de Villalpando, *Immaculate Conception*, c. 1680, oil on canvas, 206 x 142 cm, Cathedral of Puebla, Mexico. CONACULTA.-MEX. Reproduction authorized by Dirección General de Sitios y Monumentos del Patrimonio Cultural. (Photo: Rafael Doniz - Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C.)

Figure 7. Attributed to Cristóbal de Villalpando (*c.*1680-1689), Archangel Saint Michael, unsigned, oil on canvas, 165 x 106 cm, Private Collection. (Photo: Rafael Doniz - Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C.)

Figure 8. Juan Patricio Morlete Ruiz, *The Immaculate Conception*, eighteenth century, oil on copper, 60 x 56 cm. CONACULTA.-INBA.-MEX. Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico, D.F.

Figure 9. Cristóbal de Villalpando, *The Glorification of the Virgin*, 1689, oil on canvas mounted on wall, 1050 x 1250 cm., dome of the Cathedral of Puebla, Mexico. CONACULTA.-MEX. Reproduction authorized by Dirección General de Sitios y Monumentos del Patrimonio Cultural. (Photo: Rafael Doniz - Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C.)

Ramón Frade's *El Pan Nuestro*: The *Jíbaro* as a Visual Construction of Puerto Rican National Identity

Ilenia Colón Mendoza

In Ramón Frade's painting, *El Pan Nuestro* (*Our Bread*) an oil on canvas dated to 1905, the figure of a Puerto Rican peasant, a *jíbaro*, imposingly occupies the center of the canvas (Figure 1). In Frade's interpretation of the *jíbaro*, the farmer walks towards the viewer carrying plantains, the literal and metaphorical fruits of his labor. The figure strides through the deep space of the Puerto Rican landscape towards the picture plane. Mountains and vegetation fade in a haze of atmospheric perspective. Land and peasant are rendered in the same palette of earth tones under a blue-white sky. The low horizon line allows the sky to frame the *jíbaro*'s hands and face. The aureole of a golden-colored hat surrounds the *jíbaro*'s face while his hands cradle the plantains that provide the central focus of the painting. A *machete*, both his tool and weapon, hangs from his waist and completes the *jíbaro*'s attire.

For many Puerto Ricans, *El Pan Nuestro* and its monumental *jíbaro* are both familiar and revered visual icons of Puerto Rican culture. Reproductions of *El Pan Nuestro* and other representations of the *jíbaro,* including small wooden sculptures, can be found in many households. The peasant's image may be seen on the packaging of everyday objects such as "*El Jibarito*" brand pigeon peas. The *jíbaro* can also be seen in political propaganda relating to the Popular Democratic Party.[1] The party's logo is a silhouette of the *jíbaro*'s face and *pava* hat painted in red with the words: bread, land, and liberty written at the bottom (Figure 2).[2] Upon its creation the party's political agenda supported autonomy; at present, this middle-of-the-road party upholds Puerto Rico's current commonwealth status, in opposition to movements for statehood or independence. The image of the *jíbaro* is ever present in Puerto Rican life, it is found in the household and seen on television, appears at the supermarket and at the voting booth, and has profound, multivalent political and cultural implications.

Puerto Rico had been under Spanish rule since its colonization in 1493, and remained so until the Spanish-American War of 1898. The nineteenth century was marked by substantial political change and turmoil under the Spanish crown.[3] Two key events at the end of the century triggered broad sociocultural changes: the granting of autonomy by Spain on November 25, 1897, and the U.S. invasion of July 25, 1898.[4] Thus, Puerto Rico's short-lived autonomy was put to an end by the U.S. invasion, and the Treaty of Paris, signed on December 10, 1898, granted Puerto Rico to the United States as a territorial possession.[5] Nationalist sentiment had gained strength both before and after the Spanish-American War. It was in this socio-historical context of emerging nationalism that Ramón Frade produced his painting *El Pan Nuestro.*

Popular costumes and landscapes had become the leading themes in Puerto Rican art during the last decades of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century; art seemed to provide a means of salvaging and celebrating national culture and identity under the United States occupation.[6] The prevailing social concerns were focused on peasant and country life and may be described as regional in character. Most of the paintings produced at this time focused on

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1 Antonio Colorado designed the logo sometime between 1937 and 1938. The insignia was inscribed together with the party itself on July 22, 1938; it was created in order to remember "the forgotten man of the country." See Luis Muñoz Marín, *La Historia del Partido Popular Democrático* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial El Batey, 1984) 13, 99.

2 The red as pointed out by German Rieckehoff in an interview was significant because it was meant to disassociate the party with people of color, a black colored silhouette might have been misinterpreted as a pro-black campaign. Furthermore, the color red was not meant to have socialist or Marxist associations. See Germán Rieckehoff, Interview with Luis M. Rodríguez Morales, Oral History of the Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation Archives, Section XIV, Puerto Rico, 21 Oct. 1985. For development of the logo as an idea see Antonio J.Colorado, Interview, Oral History of the Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation Archives, Section XIV, Puerto Rico, 12 Nov. 1981.

3 Francisco A. Scarano, *Puerto Rico: Cinco Siglos de Historia* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: McGraw Hill, 1993) 460. I am indebted to Dr. Scarano for assistance in regards to the chamber of delegates and its members.

4 Scarano 528.

5 Scarano 543.

6 Ana Riutort, *Historia Breve del Arte Puertorriqueño en su Contexto Universal* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial Plaza Major, Inc., 1994) 207.

genre and as such were called "*costumbrista*" (from the Spanish word for custom, *costumbre*).[7] As a "*costumbrista*" artist, Ramón Frade painted landscapes, figures and other themes of traditional culture, and one of his most popular subjects was the *jíbaro.* Indeed of his 541 catalogued paintings, drawings, and sketches, up to eighty works present the *jíbaro* (Figure 3).[8] Frade's *El Pan Nuestro* went beyond the traditional *costumbrista* painting as it addressed issues of national culture and identity together with Puerto Rico's current political status.

El Pan Nuestro has strong ties to European painting traditions of the romanticized peasant. Frade presents us with an old *jíbaro* peasant whose monumental representation recalls Millet's *The Sower* of 1850 (Figure 4).[9] In both paintings the large figure of the peasant is shown in movement; the sower's action is stronger, he seems to run while the *jíbaro* walks towards the foreground of the painting. The *jíbaro*'s feet are firmly placed on the ground while those of the sower blend into the soil. Close to the picture plane, the figures advance as if they are about to step out of the canvas. The landscape functions to frame the peasants whose agricultural labors intrinsically relate them to the land. While the sower and his land appear anonymous, the *jíbaro* in *El Pan Nuestro* is portrait-like and the presence of a palm tree and *bohío* (hut) identify the *jíbaro*'s land as tropical. Millet's *The Sower* has been interpreted as a criticism of the social conditions in France during the late nineteenth century; likewise the *jíbaro* in Frade's *El Pan Nuestro* is a criticism of the social and political conditions in Puerto Rico at the turn of the century. Furthermore, the *jíbaro* is a visual construction of national identity as it demonstrates the mythification process carried out by the Puerto Rican elite.

In *El Pan Nuestro* the portrayal of the figure and his surroundings reveal a great deal about the *jíbaro* as a national symbol of Puerto Rican culture. The low horizon line behind the figure calls attention to and establishes the strong relationship of the two, highlighting the land, for this is the country and the natural resource that is being taken over by end of the century colonization and industrialization. In this way the painter addresses both the invasion by the United States and the *jíbaro*'s resulting loss of agricultural self-sufficiency. Land and peasant become one not only because of the relationship to each other, but also as a response to the parallel historical processes that threatened to annihilate both. Culture in its basic definition means tillage of the soil; as such, land and culture are inextricably linked to the *jíbaro*.[10] The plantains he carries are products of the land and environment that are key to his subsistence, literally his daily bread as the title suggests, since plantains were the staple food of the Puerto Rican peasant and were often eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The title *Our Bread* (*El Pan Nuestro*) also has a religious connotation and can be referenced directly to Millet's favorite quotation from the Bible as noted by T.J. Clark: "In thy sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread…".[11] Thus, we see that the *jíbaro* is a complex symbol because in all his monumental glory he represents a country in a state of great change and great despair; his old age is a direct reference to himself as a symbol of a dying era. At a time immediately following the United States invasion and the devastation of the hurricane *San Ciriaco* in 1899*,* the *jíbaro* stands like "a flower in a ravaged garden," a symbol of the struggles of a population, and the last glimpse of hope for Puerto Rican culture.[12]

The romanticized image of *El Pan Nuestro* parallels the development of the *jibarista* movement in literature and reveals the construction of the whitening myth carried out by the elite. Nineteenth century *jibarista* writings are characterized by a social progressive outlook in search for betterment of the *jíbaro* while those of the twentieth century present a nostalgic longing for the past. These writings and the *jíbaro* myth they perpetuate are seen by literary scholar Jose Luis González as an absolute rejection of afro-mestizo culture in which writers denied the true nature of ethnic composition of the island and the *jíbaro* in particular.[13]

If we were to apply what was occuring in literature with similar occurances in art, Ramón Frade's work consequently fills our expectation of the nostalgic glorification of the peasant, and his painting, *El Pan Nuestro*, may be considered a manifestation of the *jibarista* movement. The painting's *jíbaro* is shown in a large and imposing manner, in his glorified state he occupies the foreground of the painting. Frade's por-

7 J.A. Torres Martinó, "Puerto Rican Art in the Early Twentieth Century," *Puerto Rico: Arte e Identidad*, eds. HAGPR: Myrna Báez and José A. Torres Martinó (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1998) 84. Martinó points out that a rare exception to the *costumbrista* artistic currents was Julio Tomás Martínez and his pseudo-surrealism.

8 Osiris Delgado Mercado, *Ramón Frade León, pintor puertorriqueño (1875-1917)* (Santo Domingo: Editora Corripio, 1988). The biography written by Dr. Osiris Delgado Mercado, his art pupil, and the most eminent art historian in Puerto Rico, is very complete in accounting his triumphs, vicissitudes, loves, and joys.

9 Interestingly enough the hand gesture of Millet's *The Sower* has been referred to as a violent curse upon the rich charged with socialist commentary. The painting was seen as a revolutionary weapon. See Alfred Sensier, *Jean-François Millet: Peasant and Painter*, translated by Helena Kay (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1881) 111.

10 Lilian Guerra, *Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico, The Struggle for self, community and nation* (Gainesville: U of Florida, 1998) 89.

11 T.J. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France 1848-1851* (New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1982) 89. Also see The Holy Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989) Genesis 3:19.

12 Banco Santander de Puerto Rico, comments by Dr. Osiris Delgado Mercado, *Cuatro Siglos de Pintura Puertorriqueña* (Madrid: Sociedad Editorial Electa España) 22.

13 José Luis González, "Literature and National Identity," *Puerto Rico: the Four Storeyed Country and Other Essays*, trans. Gerald Guiness (New York: Markus Wiener Publishing, Inc., 1993) 66.

trayal of the *jíbaro* also corresponds to the mythical belief that the *jíbaro* was of Spanish descent. Although the morel skin color of the *jíbaro* seems to provide evidence to the contrary, the figure's darkness is related to the extended amounts of time he has labored in the sun. Because the *jíbaro*'s association with a European Spanish identity played a key role in his being accepted as a symbol of Puerto Rican national identity, Ramón Frade conformed to the myth that surrounded the *jíbaro*.[14] The Spanish-ness of Frade's figure also played to the prejudices of his intended audience, the Puerto Rican elite politicians whose own self-identities were based on a deeply held claim of Spanish ancestry. Thus, although Frade lived in the interior of the island and was intimately familiar with both the social and ethnic realities of the *jíbaro*, he portrayed the *jíbaro* with predominantly Spanish features. Frade's work is akin to the contemporary *jibarista* literature that promoted the whitening of the Puerto Rican peasant who was refashioned to meet the tastes and aspirations of the native elite. It is, therefore, a romanticized, sanitized and compromised image. As an upper middle class artist, Frade not only manipulated the *jíbaro*'s image but also identified himself romantically with the peasantry and the lower class.

The conditions of the production of *El Pan Nuestro* simultaneously reveal the underlying national symbolism of the *jíbaro* as well as Frade's use of the image to navigate turn-of-the-century racial identity politics. Ramón Frade produced the painting to support his request for government funding for his studies abroad in Italy (Figure 5). He sent the painting and an accompanying letter to the Chamber of Delegates. In order to evaluate Frade's request, a prominent artist was consulted regarding the painting's value. The Chamber Secretary, Felix Matos Bernier, received a positive response from the renowned Impressionist artist Francisco Oller (1833-1917).

After Oller's favorable response, Frade's petition was forwarded to the Beneficence Commission with an accompanying recommendation from Matos Bernier. The decision of the Beneficence Commission was to recommend an allowance of $720 be granted towards Frade's expenses. The petition was then passed on to the Treasury and Budget Commission and approved on February 25, 1905.[15] It was only then, at this late stage, that the American auditor and Secretary of State Regis H. Post vetoed the decision and denied Frade's funding.[16]

It is, perhaps, not surprising that the American authority put a stop to the approval of Frade's grant. Frade was familiar with the tastes of his Puerto Rican audience. The members of the Chamber of Delegates were all Puerto Rican, and a majority belonged to Puerto Rican Union Party, which supported autonomy and independence and was devoted to the defense of all things Puerto Rican: native industries, self-government, and culture (Table I).[17] Frade was careful to provide the members of this body with an image that they wanted to see when he sent them a *jíbaro*, a visual representation of Puerto Rican national identity.

What Frade did not take into consideration was the ultimate powerlessness of the Chamber of Delegates. The real power rested in the hands of the governor and the Executive Chamber, which was composed of a majority of Americans (Table II). Post, who was a member of this ultimate granting body, denied the request further scrutiny because he, too, understood the painting's message. As an American, Post undoubtedly found the painter's application unworthy of funding because of the *jíbaro's* nationalist and therefore presumably anti-American sentiment.

After Frade's petition was submitted and denied a second time, the painter sought an alternative means to fund his studies. On March 3, 1907, Frade proposed the sale of two portraits by his hand to the governor's residence, the Executive Mansion.[18] One of the portraits depicted the U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, and the other the Governor of Puerto Rico in 1907, Beckman Winthrop (Figure 6). At this point Frade not only recognized who his real audience was, but moved quickly to give them what they wanted, paintings that commemorated and celebrated U.S. control over Puerto Rico. Subsequently, the Executive Chamber approved the sum of $1,200 in exchange for the two painted portraits of the American leaders. Thus, it would seem that in order to elevate his status and advance his artistic career, Frade was all too willing to compromise his nationalist ideals. And he was, of course, successful, and began his European travels the following year.[19]

Ramón Frade as a nationalist opposed Spanish domination over the island but he also resented the subsequent U.S. occupation.[20] His feelings towards the United States are revealed in a letter in which he criticizes the modern world that lacks focus on the noble arts. He holds the United States re-

[14] Guerra 9. Also see Francisco Scarano, "The *Jíbaro* Masquerade and the Subaltern Politics of Creole Identity Formation in Puerto Rico," *American Historical Review* 101 (Dec. 1996) 1398-1431.

[15] Delgado, *Ramón* 70. Original document: Dictamen de la Cámara de Delegados (February 25, 1905).

[16] Delgado, *Ramón* 72. Letter from Frade to Mr. Regis H. Post. (San Juan, P.R., February 15, 1906).

[17] Scarano 628, 630, 632. The Union Party's ideals for independence furthermore served as the institutional origin of the Nationalist party of 1922. See Juan Manuel Carrión, "The Construction of Puerto Rican National Identities under U.S Colonialism," *Ethnicity, Race and Nationality in the Caribbean*, ed. Juan Manuel Carrión (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Institute of Caribbean Studies, 1997) 181.

[18] Delgado, *Ramón* 81. Original document: Copy of House Bill 150 (March 4, 1907).

[19] Delgado, *Ramón* 82.

[20] Delgado, *Ramón* 57 and Osiris Delgado Mercado, Personal Interview, May 31, 2001. In the brief interview Dr. Delgado answered the question: "To what political party, if any, did Frade belong to?" His reply: "Frade was not of political parties, he was a nationalist…." Original interview in Spanish.

sponsible for modernity and its vices, he writes "Yankeeland [United States] has been the pathogen that has propagated such calamities."[21] Ramón Frade believed the U.S. occupation had seriously damaged the indigenous Puerto Rican culture. Nationalists saw the political domination of the U.S. as an impediment to Puerto Rico's progress and development as a nation. They felt that only through political and cultural independence would Puerto Rico attain its potential.

Frade's nationalist ideals are exemplified in *El Pan Nuestro*. The *jíbaro* strides forward as he holds his plantains and carries his *machete* as if to question what will become of his culture. Just as the *machete* was the principal tool and weapon of the *jíbaro*, *macheteros* was the name given to a group of *jíbaros* who provoked insurgence after the American occupation.[22] Still today, the *machete* serves as a symbol for those with independence sympathies. Puerto Rican revolutionary nationalists during the late 1970s and 1980s adopted the name *Macheteros* (The Machete Wielders) and chose the *machete* as their symbol of rebellion.[23] The *machete* is further linked to socialist and populist labor movements,[24] so that its appearance turns the *jíbaro* into a symbol of nationalism and independence. Although the *jíbaro* is not severely threatening, he is by no means passive, and the underlying significance of the implement was surely understood by Regis H. Post, as he vetoed Frade's funding. Ramón Frade's, *El Pan Nuestro* reflected the political ideals of its creator; the *jíbaro*, central to the imagery of the work, was the ultimate symbol of those nationalist ideals.

The Spanish-American War served as a cultural turning point. It was after Puerto Rico came under U.S. rule that the growing nationalist sentiment crystalized. The arts of the turn of the century focused on solidifying a sense of Puerto Ricanness. A feeling of cultural belonging became understood as national identity and was defined by a collective consciousness.[25] National identity was expressed through the internalization of such symbols as the *jíbaro*; this symbolic manipulation is the result of the construction of both a nation's past history and its identity.[26] The *jíbaro*'s identity was the product of a mythifying process promoted by an elite that strove to idealize the popular class while establishing the "noble" peasant as the nation's identifying symbol. As a nationalist supporter of independence, Frade formulated the *jíbaro* as a cultural and political icon. By portraying the *jíbaro* in such a grand manner Frade elevated the *jíbaro* to the status of a heroic liberator. The real entity of the *jíbaro* had a mythological counterpart whose positive attributes were highlighted to define a national character that epitomized the ideal Puerto Rican. The historic peasant was taken beyond his reality to a mythical plateau as a liberator. Nationalism was the moving force in creating a sense of national identity while the arts served as the principle means of establishing the *jíbaro* as cultural icon in an effort to keep Puerto Rican identity afloat at a time of political crisis.

The changes at the turn of the century before and after the Spanish-American War greatly affected the entire Puerto Rican population and the peasant in particular. Real *jíbaros* suffered through the epoch's economical, social, cultural, and political transformations. Implementations of new labor systems, new areas of habitation, and a short lived autonomy put to an end by American colonization created a critical situation in the lives of peasants. As a liberator with *machete* at his side, the *jíbaro* signified opposition to colonial rule and served as guardian of Puerto Rican culture. Frade illustrated in painting the peasant as a symbol of the chaos of the late nineteenth century. As a counterpart to the *jibarista* movement in literature, Frade glorified the *jíbaro* and established him as an icon of Puerto Rican national identity. Ironically for Frade, the painting that today is revered for its cultural and political implications did little to advance his artistic career.

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21 Delgado, *Ramón* 140. Original Spanish quotation: "…ha sido Yaquilandia el 'agente patógeno' que ha propagado tales calamidades."

22 Oscar Vázquez, "'A Better Place to Live'": Government Agency Photography and the Transformations of the Puerto Rican *jíbaro*," (Unpublished, 2000) 29. My sincerest gratitude to Dr. Vázquez for sharing his research.

23 The underground publication of the *Macheteros*, *El Machete* features a prominent machete on the cover. The tri-monthly publication regards itself as the official "organ" of the popular *boricua* militia and it includes such features as *machetazos*, caricatures and the addresses of incarcerated patriots. For more information on the *Macheteros* see Ronald Fernández, *Los Macheteros: The Wells Fargo Robbery and the Violent Struggle for Puerto Rican Independence* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1987).

24 Vázquez 29.

25 Carrión 159.

26 William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity, and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990) 52.

[*right*] Figure 1. Ramón Frade, *El Pan Nuestro (Our Bread)*, 1905, oil on canvas, 153.1 x 97.2 cm, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Courtesy of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

[*below left*] Figure 2. *Silueta del Jíbaro: Pan, Tierra y Libertad*, Logo of the Popular Democratic Party, 1937 to 1938, red ink on paper, Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico. Courtesy of the Puerto Rican Popular Democratic Party.

[*bottom left*] Figure 3. Ramón Frade, *Jibarito en la vereda (Peasant on the foot-path)*, n.d, oil on canvas mounted on board, 17.8 x 12.7 cm, University of Puerto Rico in Cayey. Courtesy of the Dr. Pío López Martínez University Museum, University of Puerto Rico, Cayey.

[*bottom right*] Figure 4. Jean-Francois Millet, *The Sower*, 1850, oil on canvas, 101.6 x 82.6 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gift of Quincy Adams Shaw through Quincy A. Shaw, Jr., and Mrs. Marion Shaw Haughton. Photograph © 2003 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

[*facing page and above left*] Figure 5. Photographs of Ramón Frade, 1904, University of Puerto Rico in Cayey. Courtesy of the Dr. Pío López Martínez University Museum, University of Puerto Rico, Cayey.

[*above right*] Figure 6. Attributed to Ramón Frade, *The Governor of Puerto Rico, Beckman Winthrop* (1874-1940), 1907, oil on canvas, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Courtesy of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Table I: Third Legislative Assembly
Members of the Chamber of Delegates of Puerto Rico: 1904-1905

Member	Party
Abril y Ostaló, Mariano	Puerto Rican Union Party
Aponte, Clotilde	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Arrigalla García, Rafael	Puerto Rican Union Party
Bernardini de la Huerta, Tomás	Puerto Rican Union Party
Besosa, Pedro Juan	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Camuñas Grau, Manuel	Puerto Rican Union Party
Carrión Maduro, Tomás	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Coira, Francisco	Puerto Rican Union Party
Col Cuchí, José	Puerto Rican Republican Party
De Diego Martínez, José	Puerto Rican Union Party
Delgado, Rafael M.	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Del Valle, Rafael	Puerto Rican Union Party
Domenech, Manuel M.	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Feliú, Francisco	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Franco Soto, Carlos	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Gandía Córdova, Ramón	Puerto Rican Union Party
García Salgado, Octavio	Puerto Rican Union Party
Giol Texidor, Alejandro	Puerto Rican Union Party
González, Fernando	Puerto Rican Union Party
González García, Matías	Puerto Rican Union Party
Matienzo Cintrón, Rosendo*	Puerto Rican Union Party
Medina González, Julio	Puerto Rican Union Party
Méndez Cardona, Ramón	Puerto Rican Union Party
Méndez Serrano, Aurelio	Puerto Rican Republican Party
Montalvo Guemard, Luis	Puerto Rican Union Party
Palmer Irizarry, Santiago R.	Puerto Rican Union Party
Quintero, Arturo	Puerto Rican Union Party
Ramos, Isidoro	Puerto Rican Union Party
Romero Rosa, Ramón	Puerto Rican Union Party
Santoni, Félix	Puerto Rican Union Party
Soler Martorell, Carlos M.	Puerto Rican Union Party
Vías Ocoteco, Juan F.	Puerto Rican Union Party
Virella, Federico E.	Puerto Rican Union Party
Virella Uribe, Valeriano	Puerto Rican Union Party
Zabala, Romualdo J.	Puerto Rican Republican Party

*President: Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón, 1905-1906
Secretary: Felipe Matos Bernier, 1905-1906

Total number of Republicans: 10
Total number of Unionists: 25

Table II: Members of the Executive Council

Member	Position	Years
Barbosa, José Celso	Counselor	1900-1912
Crosas, Andrés	Counselor	1900-1907
Del Valle, Rafael	Counselor	1905-1913
Díaz Navarro, Hermino	Counselor	1904-1908
Elliot, William H.	Interior Commissioner	1900-1905
Falkner, Roland P.	Instruction Commissioner	1904-1907
Feuille, Frank	General Procurator	1905-1907
Grahame, Laurence H.	Interior Commissioner	1905-1910
Hynes, Thomas H.	Auditor	1905-1906
Post, Regis H.*	Auditor, Secretary, and Gov.	1903-1907
Sánchez Morales, Luis	Counselor	1905-1917
Stewart, Albert G.	General Procurer/Attorney	1905
Sweet, Willis	General Procurer /Attorney	1903-1905
Willoughby, William F.	Treasurer	1901-1909

*Secretary 10/1904-4/17/1907 and Governor 4/18/1907-11/5/1909
The American members are noted in bold.

Table I & II were compiled based on the research of two scholars:

Ortiz Mac Donald, Tomás, *Legisladores y Funcionarios de la Asamblea Legislativa de Puerto Rico 1900-1972* (San Juan: Senado de Puerto Rico, 1971).

Rigual, Néstor, *Legisladores Puertorriqueños 1900-1996* (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Rigual, 1994) Pages: 43, 115, 116.

One Portrait of One Woman: The Influence of Gertrude Stein on Marsden Hartley's Approach to the Object Portrait Genre

Christal Hensley

Marsden Hartley's 1916 painting *One Portrait of One Woman* is an object portrait of the American abstractionist poet and writer Gertrude Stein (Figure 1). Object portraits are based on an object or a collage of objects, which through their association evoke the image of the subject in the title. In this portrait, the centrally located cup is set upon an abstraction of a checkerboard table, placed before a half-mandorla of alternating bands of yellow and white, and positioned behind the French word *moi.* Rising from the half-mandorla is a red, white and blue pattern that Gail Scott reads as an abstraction of the American and French flags.[1] On the right and left sides of the canvas are fragments of candles and four unidentified forms that echo the shape of the half-mandorla. Inside the cup floats a yellow cross and behind the cup is a vertical projection that ends in a circle. The prominent position of the cup suggests that it is a metonymic substitute for the physical likeness of Stein.

Most scholars agree that the publication of Stein's literary word portraits of Picasso and Matisse in Alfred Stieglitz's journal *Camera Work* in August of 1912 provided the inspiration for the invention of the object portrait in the visual arts.[2] Susan Elizabeth Ryan notes that "within the cultural context surrounding Hartley's artistic development before and after World War I, portraiture was a signature genre, and the liberation of portraiture from its traditional focus on faces was the avant-garde practice par-excellence in Paris and New York."[3] Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Marius de Zayas, Charles Demuth, and Georgia O'Keeffe were among those in Hartley's circle that assembled abstract and/or symbolic forms in works called "portraits."[4]

Although several monographs address Stein's impact on Hartley's object portraits, none explores the formal aspects of this relationship.[5] This paper first argues that Hartley's initial approach to the object portrait genre developed independently of that of other artists in his circle. Secondly, this discussion posits that Hartley's debt to Stein was not limited to her literary word portraits of Picasso and Matisse but extended to her collection of "portraits" of objects entitled *Tender Buttons: Objects, Food, Rooms,* published in book form in 1914. And finally, this paper concludes that Hartley's *One Portrait of One Woman* pays homage to Stein's objective in *Tender Buttons,* which was to align poetry to painting through the formal elements of their structure.[6]

Months before their publication in *Camera Work*, Stein's literary word portraits of Picasso and Matisse were displayed in manuscript form at Stieglitz's gallery at 291 Fifth Avenue. Ryan suggests that Hartley would have seen the manuscripts before he left America for Europe in the spring of 1912.[7] Among his first stops in Europe was the home of Stein in Paris where he became a participant in her legendary Saturday evening discussions on art.[8] Hartley's dual interest in poetry and painting contributed to a long-standing friendship between the two.

In terms of locating Stein's influence on the other members of the Steiglitz circle, however, the contact comes later. For example, Mabel Dodge introduced Picabia to the word

1 Gail R. Scott, *Marsden Hartley* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1988) 39.

2 James R. Mellow, *Charmed Circle: Gertrude Stein and Company* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974) 189. Not only Ryan and Mellow note this influence, but also Wanda Corn in her book *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935,* notes the influence of Stein's word portraits on this circle of artists as well. (Los Angeles: U of California P, 1999) 202. Stein's word portraits of Picasso and Matisse can be found in Gertrude Stein, *Portraits and Prayers* (New York: Random House, 1934) 12-20.

3 Susan Elizabeth Ryan, "Marsden Hartley: Practicing the "Eyes" in Autobiography," in Marsden Hartley, *Somehow a Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997) 9.

4 Ryan 9.

5 Very little research has been done on this period in Hartley's life or on *One Portrait of One Woman*. Other than brief discussions in Scott's book, Barabara Haskell's *Marsden Hartley* (New York: New York UP, 1980), and an entry from Patricia McDonnell's catalogue *Marsden Hartley: American Modern* (Seattle: The U of Washington P, 1997), no substantial research has been done. The majority of the research on Hartley's work has focused on his first and second European period, from 1912-1914 and 1914-1915, and rightly so since these paintings, especially the German series, are quite significant. Gail Levin has done extensive research on Hartley's German series. There has also been much research done on Hartley's later work from Maine. The influence of Stein's work on Hartley is often mentioned, but not given the same attention as has been given to the relationship between Picasso and Stein.

6 Michael J. Hoffman suggests in *The Development of Abstractionism in the Writings of Gertrude Stein*, that Stein wanted to continue the traditional liaisons between poetry and painting by dropping subject matter from her literary portraits. (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1965) 162.

7 Ryan 211. Ryan notes this in footnote 11.

8 Scott 37.

portrait of herself written by Stein after his arrival in New York for the Armory Show in February of 1913.[9] By that time Hartley had been in Europe for almost a year. Picabia did not meet Stein until he returned to Paris in April.[10] His exploitation of the genre did not fully develop until his return to New York in 1915, where he renewed his friendship with Steiglitz. With Marius de Zayas he helped create *291,* the central publication of the Dada movement in America. It is to the period of this collaboration that Picabia's machinist portrait of Stieglitz entitled *Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz,* belongs (Figure 2).[11] Not until the 1920s did other artists of the Stieglitz circle produce object portraits, long after Hartley's initial response to Stein's work.[12] For this reason, their object portraits must be considered second generation.

Hartley's portrait of a word, *Raptus,* 1913, can be considered his first step towards the new object portrait genre (Figure 3). *Raptus* was intended to be the first in a series of word portraits.[13] The word *raptus* refers to a chapter in William James's 1902 book *Varieties of Religious Experience* in which the author describes the state of *raptus* experienced by Christian mystics, like Saint Teresa. Stein and Hartley shared a common interest in James, who had been Stein's mentor at Harvard. Stein lent Hartley a copy of James's book in the summer of 1912.[14]

In *Raptus*, Hartley adopts the cubist convention of incorporating incidental words into the composition. The painting focuses on the word itself, which lies across a white recessed plane below concentric circles. The letters are intersected by one of the converging planes, symbolizing the mystical union achieved in this state.[15] Jo Anna Isaak notes in "Gertrude Stein: Revolutionary Laughter" that there is a "correlation between the introduction of typography into painting and the decrease in representation of analytic cubism." She further notes that it is just at the moment when the conventions of pictorial representation were breaking down that language was introduced into painting. This introduction asks the viewer to respond to a sign system alien to the canvas, but one that can equally "provide visual counterparts to reality." In this, the reading of the page and painting are aligned. Picasso acknowledged the importance of this correlation to Stein's writing in *The Architect's Table,* 1912, when he included a hand-painted version of her calling card within the painted reality (Figure 4).[16]

In much the same way, Hartley equally acknowledged the alignment of the written word and the painted reality by illustrating a concept plastically. This type of illustration is traditionally reserved for the written word or illustrated in painting and sculpture through the expressive gestures of the human form. Hartley's elimination of the physical body to illustrate the concept *raptus* is closely aligned with Stein's *Tender Buttons*. In *Tender Buttons,* Stein's attempt to emulate the techniques of painting culminates in a set of "portraits" of still lifes, a traditional subject of painters. Michael J. Hoffman suggests that Stein chose this subject because it is unobtrusive and lends itself completely to matters of technique. This is of course one reason why artists choose the subject as well.[17]

The emulation of the techniques of painting leads Stein to dispense with the figure and turn instead to objects. This switch is often related to Picasso's use of collage as a means of portraying the fragmented world of things.[18] The central concern of *Tender Buttons* is diction, the selection of words based on association. Stein's "portrait" of an apple from *Tender Buttons* is a good example.

> "Apple"
>
> Apple plum, carpet steak, seed clam, colored wine, calm seen, cold cream, best shake, potato, potato and no no gold work with pet, a green seen is called bake and change sweet is bready, a little piece a little piece please.
>
> A little piece please. Cane again to the presupposed and ready eucalyptus tree, count out sherry and ripe plates and little corners of a kind of ham. This is use.[19]

In the portrait "Apple," the nouns used in the poem are

9 *Portrait of Mabel Dodge at the Villa Curonia,* 1913, can be found in Stein's *Portraits and Prayers,* 98-102.

10 Dodge wrote a letter to Stein on February 13, 1913 stating that Picabia understood the portrait. The letter stated: "Picabia the painter is here & very intelligent & understands it all [the portrait] perfectly. I asked him to write down what he said & I will send it to you. I will give him a letter to you as you & Leo will both (strangely enough) like him." See Patricia Everett, *A History of Having a Great Many Times Not Continued to Be Friends: The Correspondence Between Mabel Dodge and Gertrude Stein, 1911-1934* (Albuquerque: U of Mexico P, 1996) 167. Stein wrote to Dodge on May 2, 1913 that she had been seeing the Picabias [Francis and Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia]. See Everett 183.

11 Mellow 191. Picabia produced an object portrait of the exotic dancer Stacia Napierkowska entitled *Mechanical Expression Seen Through Our Own Mechanical Expression* in 1913 while in New York for the Armory Show. But this appears to have been an isolated experiment. For a discussion of this object portrait see Willard Bohn, "Picabia's Mechanical Expression and the Demise of the Object," *The Art Bulletin* (December 1985): 673-677, or Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "Francis Picabia, Radiometers, and X-Rays in 1913," *The Art Bulletin* (March 1989): 114-123.

12 Mellow 192. With the exception of Marius de Zayas whose abstract caricatures can be considered a precursor to the object portrait. See Willard Bohn, "The Abstract Vision of Marius de Zayas," *The Art Bulletin* (September 1980): 434-452.

13 *Raptus* was the only painting done in this series. Hartley never followed up on the idea. Scott 39.

14 Scott 39.

15 Scott 39.

16 Jo Anna Isaak, "Gertrude Stein: Revolutionary Laughter," in *The Ruin of Representation in Modernist Arts and Texts* (UMI Research Press, 1986) 100. The calling card is located in the lower right.

17 Hoffman 181.

18 Hoffman 176.

19 Stein's "Apple" can be found in *Tender Buttons: Objects, Food, Rooms* (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1990) 48.

referential but do not provide a description of the object. Joanna Isaak notes that the poem is instead a series of "quasi-metaphoric expressions relating to apples and various dishes made from apples."[20] Stein's explanation of this mode of writing captures the difference between description and resemblance. She states:

> I became more and more excited about how words which were the words that made whatever I looked at look like itself were not the words that had in them any quality of description.[21]

The question is, can a collection of nouns in a written work "look like," or resemble, the object without the use of adjectives intrinsic to description?

The problematic nature of this question as it is addressed to Stein's work and the aspect of this question that correlates with the invention of object portraits in painting may best be addressed by looking at the elements that determine the object portrait genre. As mentioned earlier, object portraits are based on an object or a collage of objects, which through their association, "look like" the subject, as Stein states. In Hartley's *Portrait of a German Officer,* 1914 (Figure 5), the artist uses an arrangement of objects associated with the German military to capture a "likeness" of the German officer Karl von Freyburg.[22] The letters *KvF* are his initials and the letter *E* stands for his regiment, the Bavarian Eisenbahn. Elsewhere are regimental patches, flags, banners and the Iron Cross that von Freyburg was awarded.[23] Here, Hartley arranged objects in the same freely associative way that Stein arranged nouns in "Apple" to capture the "likeness" of the object. He then synthesized this approach to "likeness" with synthetic cubism's appreciation of the materiality of the object. This kind of synthesis is the objective of Stein's experiment with language in her attempt to explore the "plastic" potentialities of language itself. Thus, Hartley's approach to object portraiture at this point is a by-product of his exposure both to cubism and to Stein's experiments with the formal aspects of language in *Tender Buttons.*

However, Stein's "portraits" are nominally of objects. Yet, as Wendy Steiner notes, the author's capricious use of genre designations and her merging of genres like portraiture and still lifes makes it difficult to tell which of her works are portraits.[24] But at the same time, the merging of the two genres is consistent with tendencies begun in painting in the late nineteenth century. For instance, is Edgar Degas's *Woman with Chrysanthemums,* 1865 (Figure 6), a portrait or a still life? Similarly, in Vincent Van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet,* 1890,[25] the viewer is given as much information about the subject through the inclusion of the two books by the Goncourt Brothers and the digitalis plant as through the pose and the rendering of Gachet's physical appearance. Distinctions between genres become more problematic in *Gauguin's Chair,* 1888 (Figure 7), when van Gogh suggests that one can know Gauguin through a chair, an arrangement of objects, and the space within which these objects are placed. As James R. Mellow notes in his article, "Gertrude Stein Among the Dadaists," Stein's contribution to this transaction was "the notion of a species of 'portraiture' that was far different from the old fashioned likeness." He further notes that New York Dada artists like Picabia used the object portrait as a "protest gesture, a putdown of an academic convention."[26] In contrast, Stein and Hartley recognized the merging of still life and portraiture as the next step towards the exploitation of the "plastic" potentialities of their art.

It has often been noted that Picabia's portrait of Stieglitz is less than flattering in its depiction of him as a broken camera with the eye of its lens pointed toward the ideal realm. For this reason, *One Portrait of One Woman* may have been produced in response to both Picabia's satire of Stieglitz and to his disregard for the formal aspects of Stein's writing. Yet, at the same time, Hartley's collection of objects can hardly be considered a continuation of the portraiture genre. Wanda Corn notes that object portraits often escape detection and decoding because they are very private or "intentionally elusive." She further notes that these non-mimetic portrayals are often called symbolic portraits, which is equally problematic because the symbols have no fixed meanings but are instead dependent upon the context within which they are placed.[27] This observation further acknowledges Stein's contribution to this genre because her literary portraits were highly personal and could only be understood within the context of her immediate circle.

So then, how are we to read a likeness of Stein in *One Portrait Of One Woman*? The best place to begin is with the title of the painting, which is a play on Stein's repetition of the word *one* in her word portraits of Picasso and Matisse.[28] For instance, the first line of the Picasso portrait states "One

[20] Isaak 115.

[21] Isaak 115.

[22] World War I began in August of 1914. Only twenty-four years old, Karl von Freyburg was killed near Arras on October 7, 1914. He and Hartley were good friends. Noted in W. H. Robinson, "Marsden Hartley's Military," *Bulletin of the Clevland Museum of Art*, v. 76, no.1 (1984): 10.

[23] Scott 53.

[24] Wendy Steiner, *Exact Resemblance to Exact Resemblance: The Literary Portraiture of Gertrude Stein* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978) 64.

[25] A black and white reproduction of Vincent van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* can be found in Robert Rosenblum and H. W. Janson's *19th-Century Art* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1984) 416. Oil on canvas, 26 x 22 3/8 in., Private Collection, United States. For a color reproduction see Jan Hulsker, *Vincent and Theo van Gogh: A Dual Biography,* edited by James H. Miller (Ann Arbor: Fuller Publications, 1990) colorplate 16.

[26] James R. Mellow, "Gertrude Stein Among the Dadaists," *Arts Magazine* (May 1977): 124.

[27] Corn 203. Corn defines symbols as surrogate images for qualities or abstract thoughts that people in a common culture understand and agree upon.

[28] Scott 39.

whom some were certainly following was one who was completely charming." This line is repeated four times in the first paragraph. Throughout both portraits Stein never mentions the artists' names but only refers to them as *one.* Thus, the title of Hartley's painting references his appropriation of Stein's literary style in the painting.

At the same time, the title can also be linked to a curious play Stein wrote entitled *IIIIIIIIII* (*one* or *I*) which included Hartley as a character.[29] The title of the play can be taken as a series of the Roman numeral one or as ten instances of the first person singular pronoun. This is further referenced by the word *moi* in the foreground of the painting. A segment of the play was published in the catalogue for an exhibition of Hartley's paintings at Stieglitz's gallery in January of 1914.[30] As a result, the play on the word *one* in Hartley's painting would have been well understood by those people who frequented Stieglitz's gallery and read *Camera Work.* For this reason, Hartley did not have to include Stein's name in the title.

In much the same way, the cup itself may allude to Stein's "portrait" of a cup in *Tender Buttons.* In "Cups," Stein refers to the rendering of the illusion of objects in painting through the phrase "a cup is readily shaded."[31] Considering that Hartley has rendered most of the forms in the painting through flat planes of pure color, the suggestion of shading on the cup must allude to Stein's "portrait" of this object. Also, in "Cups" Stein includes the word *candle,* the forms of which are also shaded in the painting. But, at the same time, these forms are more than just objects abstracted from the text. In fact, some forms not only escape decoding but also appear to be more mystical than physical.

For instance, the circular shape behind the cup is repeated in several paintings from Hartley's German period, like *Forms Abstracted,* 1913 (Figure 8). Gail Levin notes in her article "Marsden Hartley and Mysticism" that an interest in esoteric religions was a shaping force in his development as a painter.[32] Hartley often combined motifs from both Eastern and Christian religions in a style he referred to as "cosmic cubism."[33] As a metonym of Stein then, the placement of the cup before the half-mandorla suggests that she is an icon of sorts with attendants. This is further confirmed by the floating cross shape in the cup, the color of the cup, which in theosophy is symbolic of spirituality, and the cup itself, a container of holy wisdom. Many scholars note that Stein and Hartley often had tea during their discussions of painting and poetry.[34] The cup, then, would have been a private symbol, which suggests that she was his own personal spiritual and intellectual adviser as well as an important figure in the transatlantic dissemination of modern art.

After Stieglitz, Stein was arguably the second most influential person in Hartley's career.[35] Her presence in Paris was crucial to the development of an American avant-garde. For this reason, the flag at the top of the painting is not only symbolic of Stein's identity as an American expatriate living in France but also of her contribution to modern art on both continents. The flag may also allude to American support of the French at this juncture in World War I. In 1916, when this painting was done, Stein was actively engaged in the American Fund for the Relief of the French Wounded in France.[36] Hartley, forced to return to New York because of the war, suffered the repercussions of anti-German sentiment regarding the paintings he had done in Berlin.[37] As a result, he was forced to abandon his German subject matter and "reconsider his artistic objectives;" thus an American subject was an appropriate choice.[38]

This leads me to conclude that Hartley conceived of this portrait not only as an homage to Stein's influence on the development of his approach to the object portrait genre, but also as a symbol of his admiration for her both as a friend and mentor. Furthermore, Hartley was a defender of modernist principles even as a participant in New York Dada.[39] Therefore he may have resisted Picabia's satiric approach to this genre. *One Portrait of One Woman* not only illustrates Stein's experiments with language, but also questions the construction of the portrait genre in the visual arts. In this, Hartley satisfies Stein's objective in *Tender Buttons,* which was to align poetry and painting through the formal elements of their structure.

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29 A copy of this play can be found in Gertrude Stein, *Geographies and Plays* (New York: Haskell House Publishers Ltd., 1967) 189-198. I could not find anything in the play that could be linked to the objects in the painting other than a reference to a "check board."

30 Mellow, *Charmed Circle*: *Gertrude Stein and Company,* 187.

31 Stein's "Cups" can be found in *Tender Buttons: Objects, Food, Rooms,* 49; There is also a "portrait" entitled "A New Cup and Saucer" in *Tender Buttons,* 20. Ryan notes that the cup is a recurrent subject in *Tender Buttons.* See Ryan 212, footnote 31.

32 Gail Levin, "Marsden Hartley and Mysticism," *Arts Magazine* (November 1985): 16.

33 Levin 16.

34 Ryan 19.

35 Ryan 15.

36 Elizabeth Hutton Turner, *American Artists in Paris, 1919-1929* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1988) 77.

37 Haskell 52.

38 McDonnell 49.

39 Estera Milman, "Dada New York: An Historiographic Analysis," in *Dada/Dimensions,* edited by Stephen C. Foster (Michigan: UMI Research Press) 173.

Figure 1. Marsden Hartley, *One Portrait of One Woman, c.* 1916, oil on fiberboard, 30 x 25 inches. Collection Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Bequest of Hudson D. Walker from the Ione and Hudson D. Walker Collection.

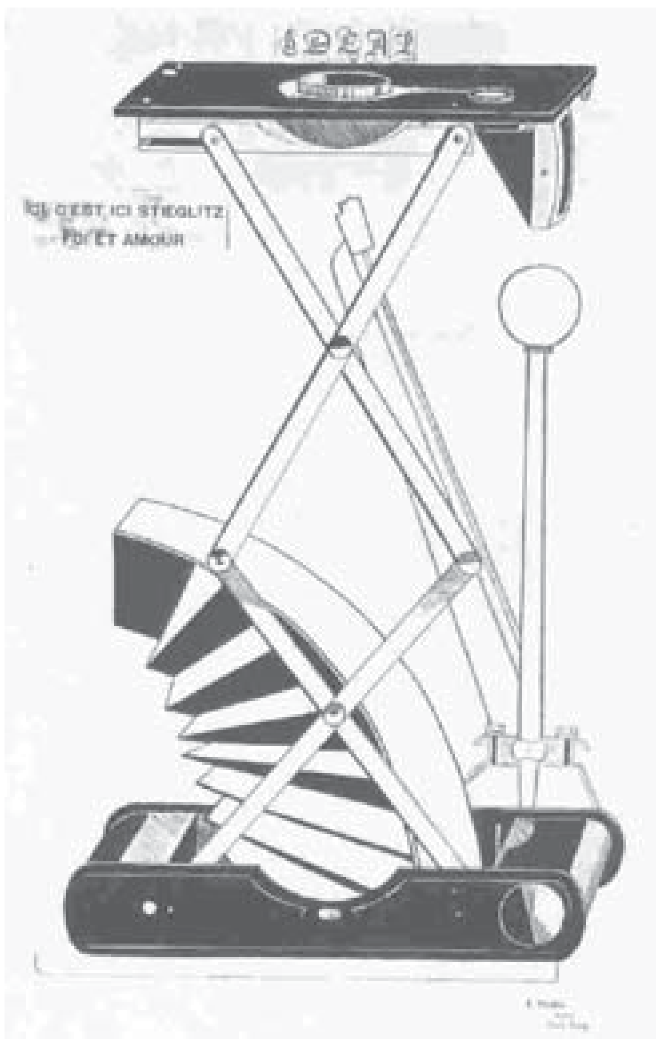

Figure 2. Francis Picabia, *Here, this is Stieglitz Here* [*Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz*], 1915, pen and ink on paper, 29 7/8 x 20 inches (75.7 x 50.8 cm). ©Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949. (49.70.14)

Figure 3. Marsden Hartley, *Raptus, c.* 1913, oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 32 inches. Gift of Paul and Hazel Strand in Memory of Elizabeth McCausland. (1965.4)

Figure 4. Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *The Architect's Table,* 1912, oil on canvas, mounted on oval panel, 28 5/8 x 23 ½ inches. © Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. The William S. Paley Collection. (697.71) Digital Image (c) The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, U.S.A.

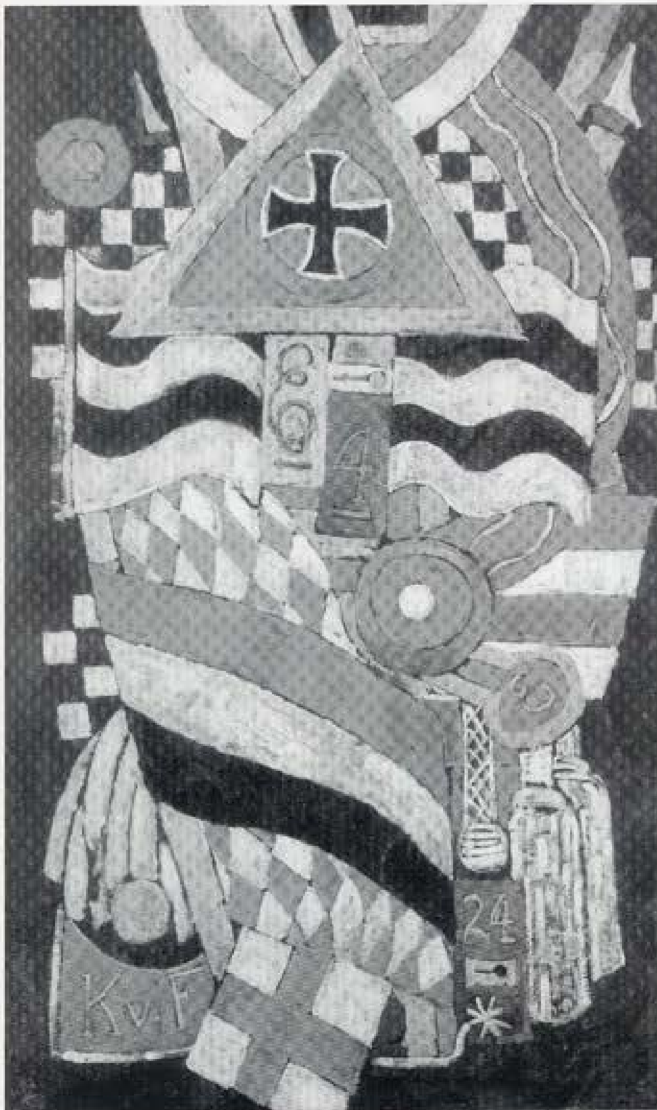

Figure 5. Marsden Hartley, *Portrait of a German Officer,* 1914, oil on canvas, 68 1/4 x 41 3/8 inches. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949. (49.70.42)

Figure 6. Edgar Degas, *A Woman Seated Beside a Vase of Flowers* (*Madame Paul Valpincon?*), 1865, oil on canvas, 29 x 36 1/2 inches. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H.O. Havemeyer Collection. Bequest of Mrs. H.O. Havemeyer, 1929. (29.100.128)

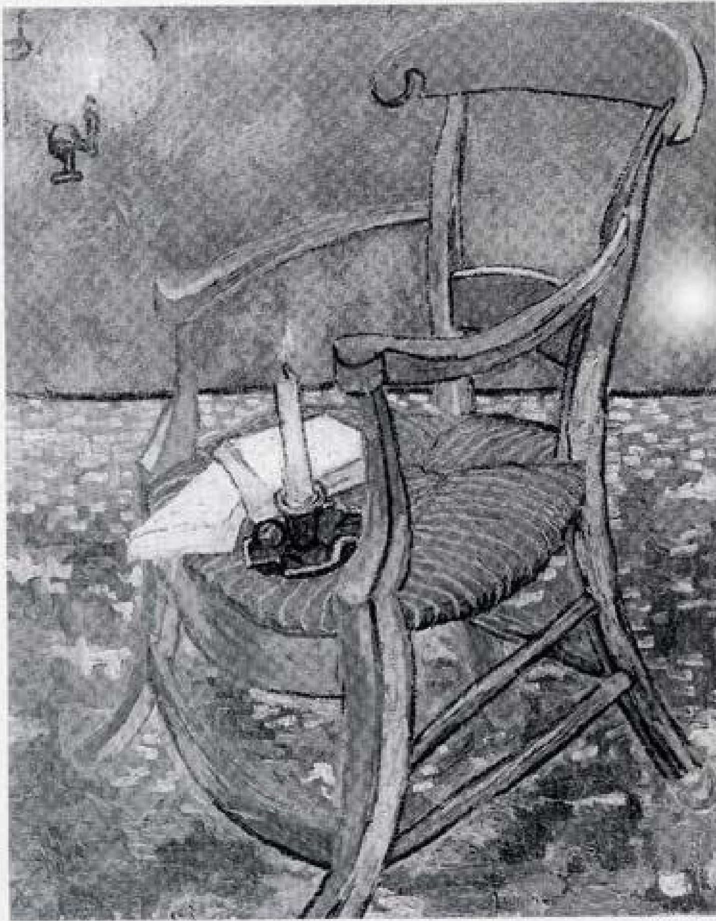

Figure 7. Vincent van Gogh, *Gauguin's Arm Chair,* Arles 1888, oil on canvas, 90.5 x 72.5 cm, Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum (Vincent van Gogh Foundation).

Figure 8. Marsden Hartley, *Forms Abstracted,* 1913, oil on canvas, 39 1/2 x 31 3/5 inches (100.33 x 80.65 cm). Whitney Museum of Art, New York; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hudson D. Walker and exchange, 52.37.

The Effacement of Myth: A Study of the Work of Roland Barthes, Isidore Isou, François Dufrêne and Daniel Buren

Jennifer Farrell

In 1953, Roland Barthes published his celebrated text *Writing Degree Zero* in which he described the crisis facing contemporary literature.[1] Barthes's basic premise was that literature had moved from the Classical to the modern or bourgeois form. As a result, language had ceased to function as a transparent means of communication, becoming instead an object, and in this capacity, was something the modern writer was forced to confront. It was this confrontation that structured modern writing. The work of the *décollage* artist and *lettriste* poet François Dufrêne reflected a similar conception of language as object in his search for a neutral or "colorless" form of language. Dufrêne, however, did not approach his investigation solely as a theoretician, but rather as an artist and a poet who utilized the very forms he deconstructed to structure his art. Central to his visual work was the removal, or the literal effacing of "language," namely, the texts of the found posters that were the basis for his visual work. The removal and separation of text from meaning in his visual work was paralleled by the aural investigations of his poetry, which explored the liberation of language through the reinterpretation of literary devices, such as alliteration, *crirythmes*, and other such methods, to ultimately lead to the construction of "a purely phonetic language that would eliminate all semiotic and semantic conventions."[2] Through the process of extinguishing language, Dufrêne had sought to reinvigorate and reinvent it and to expand the role of the artist beyond art and language to society itself. Dufrêne's work not only addressed the political, social and cultural climate of post-war France, but the paradox of what it meant—politically, artistically, theoretically—to be an artist whose work was structured by language at the very moment of its crisis, the moment when it was exposed as myth. Yet Dufrêne's work engaged language as one form of myth while using its very systems and manifestations—literature, language and writing (or what Barthes more specifically referred to as *écriture*)—to create new myths, the most extreme being the possibility of erasing language in its current, bourgeois form to create an alternative linguistic structure.

Dufrêne originally became interested in *lettrisme* through the writings of Isidore Isou, a poet, critic, and philosopher of language and art who claimed credit for the invention and development of *lettrisme*. Also known as *hypergraphie*, and *super-écriture*, *lettrisme* was a movement based on the plastic use of the letter or sign which was not to signify anything other than itself, thus transcending traditional conventions of meaning by emphasizing the figure or form of the sign of the letter over representation.

In addition to revising language, Isou proposed a radically revised history of modernism that was to be almost exclusively French, beginning with Impressionism and culminating in *lettrisme.* Aside from taking the time to settle scores with almost everyone in contemporary French arts and letters,[3] Isou explained how *lettrisme* was to be fundamentally different from movements that preceded it as it represented the complete shift from figuration and abstraction to the plastic use of the symbol of letters or signs. While Isou acknowledged that some artists associated with the Bauhaus and Cubism and artists like Marcel Duchamp approached qualities of *lettrisme*, Isou declared that these artists ultimately faltered by subjecting letters to function and burdening them with meaning, rather than granting them independence and allowing them to become pure form.

According to Isou, *lettrisme* allowed a reexamination of Cubist works by Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso and the witnessing of the origins, albeit the failed origins, of *lettrisme*, as Cubism did not, in his view, liberate the sign from meaning. As Isou wrote "...the important thing was not to introduce letters into painting, but to reduce the whole picture to letters, or rather, to the order of letters."[4] Isou's complaint becomes more concrete when one compares a *lettriste* work by Dufrêne, such as *Decoration of the Reverse Side* of 1960 (Figure 1), with Picasso's *Still Life with Chair Caning* of 1912 (Figure 2). While both works possess some obvious similarities, such as a high/low dichotomy through references to quotidian existence and both possess a fractured pictorial surface

[1] Barthes published *Le Degré Zéro de l'Ecriture* in 1953 although several sections were printed in the journal *Combat* in 1947, contemporary with Jean-Paul Sartre's *What is Literature*?

[2] Benjamin Buchloh "From Detail to Fragment: Décollage Affichiste" *October*, 56 (Spring 1991): 108.

[3] Incurring Isou's wrath were the critics Pierre Restany and Michel Tapié and the Informel artist Georges Mathieu, and in a footnote, Jean-Paul Sartre and Dufrêne. Although originally close to Isou, in the grand tradition of many 20th century French artistic groups, Dufrêne had recently fallen out of favor and found himself duly excommunicated and reprimanded in print.

[4] Isidore Isou, *Le Lettrisme et l'Hypergraphie dans la Peinture et la Sculpture Contemporaines, Poésie Nouvelle*, Numéro Spécial 3 (Juillet-Août-Septembre 1961): 41.

that contains lettered forms, the fundamental critical differences become obvious when examining how language and letters function in the two works.

In a work such as *Still Life with Chair Caning*, Picasso utilized letters in the context of language; the letters carry meaning and are intended to communicate. Language, as Barthes noted, is a system common to a society, a social structure designed to communicate, structured by History, or to take it one step further, a social structure designed to communicate its very structure as representing History. It is through the use of the letters as Language that Picasso created a specific frame of reference—a Cubist illustration of contemporary Parisian café life—that could be "read" by the viewer.

In contrast, Dufrêne's works began as ready-made assemblages literally ripped from the streets of Paris. Rather than coherence, the viewer encountered fragmentation in the bits of text and letters that were reversed and isolated as plastic forms. Dufrêne utilized letters and text to deny their meaning, or rather, to illustrate multiple layers of meaning, which served to negate both their individual signification and the possibility of a single text or meaning existing. His work can be read as being defined by multitudes—a multitude of meanings, texts, histories and surfaces. The posters Dufrêne utilized were found objects, like Marcel Duchamp's ready-mades—banal, anonymous objects taken from the outside world, which in Dûfrene's case, meant literally from the exterior, the outside of the streets—that were recontextualized through placement in a fine art context. Yet unlike Duchamp's "neutral," hermetic presentation of pristine mass-produced objects, Dufrêne's posters reflected a history—their own—through their ripped and torn surfaces.

To return to the comparison with *Still Life with Chair Caning*, Picasso's work is a collage, taken from the word *coller* referring to the act of pasting, gluing or sticking, while Dufrêne's work was part of the *décollage* movement, literally meaning to unstick, to unglue, to dissolve the bond.[5] However, it is in the less common definitions that the meanings of the two words may become clearer, as *coller* also means to adhere closely to, while *décoller* means to loosen, disengage or release. These second definitions can be read not only as referring to the literal processes, but to the principles that structured the two movements. Collage refers to the construction, the piecing together of disparate elements to reference a whole, albeit a fragmented whole, and can be read as an attempt to create a new form of realism. The letters "JOU" written across the canvas adhered to the approved definitions, usage and requirements of language, such as possessing visibility, clarity, and providing a connection between a sign and its meaning. However, *décollage* works involved not only the physical disengagement of the posters from their support and their reversal and subsequent release from a functional context, but also the liberation of language from its primary functions—communication and the conveyance of information.

As Robert Rosenblum has noted, the letters "JOU" play a critical role in *Still Life with Chair Caning*.[6] With these letters, Picasso not only references "le Journal," but also evokes "jour" or day, referring to the eternal present, both the present of the daily newspaper and of the work. The fact that elements can be read as references to quotidian café life illustrates the fact that the canvas is organized in order to be read, to convey a meaning. The work then, is one that engages, one that appears waiting to be deciphered, like an envelope ready to be opened, or a riddle awaiting an answer. The "jou" could also be read as referencing "jouer," to play, referring to the act of decoding, the ultimate game of the collage. Indeed, "jouer à quelque chose" means to play at something, "faire jouer quelque chose" means to bring something into motion, in this case, the act of deciphering, whereas "jouer quelqu'un" means to simulate or to deceive, as does "tromper," as in "trompe l'oeil," which the collage clearly is. To further elaborate and stress the connection, "jouer sur les mots" means specifically to play with words, the game that drives the collage. The fact that there are endless word associations invoked by "jou" is itself the point, as the work is always, in a sense, in the present and able to be read on many levels, able to enter into a dialogue, or rather a game, with the viewer. The latter point is a critical distinction for it stresses the fundamental importance of interaction with the viewer, since it is ultimately the viewer who structures the work.

By the 1950s, collage was no longer a revolutionary form. As Benjamin Buchloh noted, collage never reached the utopian potential Léo Malet had anticipated. Instead, it had become a recycled avant-garde strategy that had long since ceased to be oppositional. However, there was still radical potential in using something from the street, something found in daily life such as the debased fragments of commercial culture that the *décollagists* used. In addition, the *décollage* artists did not merely incorporate quotidian debris into their work, rather, as Buchloh has noted, they relocated their site of production from the studio to the street.

Unlike Picasso's *Still life with Chair Caning*, Dufrêne's posters already existed in the world in a specific location—that of the street—where they had a particular context and audience. In the art gallery, the posters were decontextualized and would encounter a different audience. A critical difference would divide the art audience from the original audience, who had encountered the posters on the street, before they became art, when they were merely text, or rather, a series of texts. This audience—vast, formless, and essentially anonymous (although socio-economic levels were always

5 As Benjamin Buchloh notes, the term décollage was invented in the 1930s by the second-generation Surrealist, Léo Malet, considered a predecessor to many décollagists. Paradoxically, Malet wrote a utopian account of collage as the new art form occurring in public spaces throughout the city. Buchloh 105.

6 For a detailed and early account on Picasso's use of text in collage and *papier collé*, see Robert Rosenblum "Picasso and the Typography of Cubism," eds. John Golding and Robert Penrose, *Picasso in Retrospect, 1881-1973* (New York: Praeger, 1973).

present, determining the production and the placements of such texts)—encountered the work as part of their daily routine, and it was for this audience that the posters were originally created. In such a context, the piece need not say "jouer" to invoke the quotidian since the work was not merely composed of the everyday, but literally was the everyday. The second audience was an elite who encountered the work not on the street but in the rarefied environment of the art institution where the posters were decontextualized, reversed, effaced, framed and presented not as "texts" (which had been literally erased) but as "works," specifically works of art.

While the original text of *Decoration of the Reverse Side* was essentially rubbed out and negated by tears, rips, glue stains, layering and scratching, some letters are discernable in the bottom corner. In contrast to the faint outlines of the ghostlike forms of the colored letters, are letters written in fine script spelling "fdufrêne" as in François Dufrêne, the artist of the work.[7] Although Picasso's hand may be visible in the overlapping planes, the arrangement of forms, the shimmering brushstrokes, and the stenciled lettering, he did not add those letters that would claim the piece as his own, thus he conferred an anonymity on his clearly manufactured work. By signing the work, Dufrêne claimed it and essentially negated the anonymous collaborative process that located the work in opposition both to the commodified spectacle and to the precious studio creation.

Dufrêne's posters reflect an alternate history—the history of exposure—in their archeological appearance which reveal the physical passage of time through faded colors, torn paper, rough edges, staining from changing weather conditions, abrasions and the stains of graffiti from anonymous passerbys—which Dufrêne peeled away, layer by layer, like an onion. As Buchloh noted, the posters also represented a form of nostalgia as the location and mode of advertising represented in the work (literally, as the work) had already changed, with advertisers abandoning the city for the private realm of television, radio and magazines. Therefore, the process of placement, of encounter, and of vandalism within the city had already changed, making the posters more of an artifact than a contemporary production. A connection can thus be seen between an outmoded form of advertising and an archaic concept of language. The literal ripping, removing, reversing and subsequent display of the posters can be viewed as an embalming of a corpse, paralleling what Barthes called "the crowning achievement of this creation of Literature as Object, and this by the ultimate of all objectifying acts: murder. For we all know that the whole effort of Mallarmé was exerted towards the destruction of language, with Literature reduced, so to speak, to being its carcass."[8] In contrast to Picasso's collage, the posters reflect the past and simultaneously allude to the perpetual future promised by advertising, while references to the present are absent. It is in this schism, between the history of the object, the promise for the future, and the present encounter that a tension exists which can be said to structure the work.

In *Writing Degree Zero*, Barthes wrote of the crisis of literature that began around 1850 when the writer encountered the "problematics" of language and "when Literature (the word having come into being shortly before) was finally established as an object."[9] Barthes established the categories of *Language,* referring to the common, social usage that was structured by History, or style (which Barthes noted "is never anything but metaphor"), and *écriture,* which could encompass art and writing. *Écriture* would play a critical role in the establishment of a new form as it offered a solution, a way to transgress the confining history of Language and the personal nature of style. In *écriture* the writer found freedom and a reprieve from style and from the public form of Language. For Dufrêne, the liberation of *écriture* was found not in writing but in the act of erasing, the literal rubbing out and negating, which served to ultimately fold meaning back in on itself to reveal Language as being merely empty forms.

Barthes began *Writing Degree Zero* by dividing writing into specific stages: "the object of a gaze, then of creative action, finally of murder, and…a last metamorphosis, absence" ideally resulting in "neutral modes of writing …'the zero degree of writing.'"[10] The question then becomes what happens after the last stage, after language has been removed and History denied, when the letters and words carry no meaning other than their own. The "neutral, colorless writing," called *l'écriture blanc* by Jean-Paul Sartre, or the "the zero degree of writing" by Barthes represented a utopian state, a myth Barthes created to replace the myth of Literature, where "it is now writing which absorbs the whole identity of a literary work."[11]

Dufrêne searched for a similar state, one in which poetry would be reduced to pure phonetics and visual art reduced to erased bits of found text turned inside out and where meaning itself would be erased and language simply reduced to empty plastic forms. Yet although the forms were emptied, their very invocation was essential to the work as they provided proof of denied meaning. Like Mallarmé, Dufrêne was still held to the conventions of Literature, even if it was, as Barthes declared, in order "to produce a carcass."

In contrast, Daniel Buren's work appears to be more closely aligned with Barthes's conception of a zero degree art. Buren attempted to create a new form of art, one in which the conventions of Art, such as aesthetics, would be erased and the work allowed to achieve a state of neutrality or "pure form."

7 It is interesting to note that Dûfrene's name itself can be read as having two meanings. The signature then, has the potential to be another example of word play, similar to the numerous Duchampian puns involving either his own or fictitious names.

8 Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968) 5.

9 Barthes 3.

10 Barthes 5.

11 Barthes 85.

In Buren's work, the stripes—his "visual tool" employed since 1965—act as a code, providing a flow of information, such as the name of the artist if one recognizes Buren's "signature" or "visual tool," but not meaning. As the works are *in situ*, specific to particular places and contexts, their setting acts as a "frame" to increase awareness of the conditions under which culture is presented and processed. Rather than imparting a particular meaning or message, the stripes act as conveyors of information, allowing multiple simultaneous meanings. Essentially, the works are "open," a description based on Umberto Eco's 1962 text *The Open Work*, in which he wrote that "Certain forms of communication demand meaning, order, obviousness….Others, instead, seek to convey to their readers sheer information, an unchecked abundance of possible meanings."[12]

As the works provide information as opposed to a message, viewers are able to construct meaning based on information perceived. Experiencing one of Buren's *affichages sauvages* (Figure 3) from a distance, one may not be able to distinguish them from advertisements until one notices a lack of text, a lack of photographs, a lack of product. After acknowledging what they are not (perhaps still wondering what they "are"), one is able to examine how the works interact with the posters and messages beneath them, the wall or kiosk on which they are placed, the location and conditions in which they are being viewed. Being an open work, the work is a field of possibilities and, ultimately, the more information provided, the more ambiguous the message.

Yet although Buren's works are read as neutral, the visual equivalent of *l'écriture blanc*, Buren's "tool" is instantly recognizable, having kept the same basic format (vertical stripes 8.7 cm in width) since 1965. Simultaneously anonymous and a signature, his works evoke the death of the author although the author is very much present, particularly when the visual works are viewed in relation to his writings. As Jean-François Lyotard has noted, Buren's writings act as the frame for his work, and it is through the writings that the works can be viewed.[13]

The work of Buren and Dufrêne thus expose the impossibility of achieving a state of pure form and ultimately the myth of creating "a colourless writing, freed from all bondage to a pre-ordained state of language."[14] Buren and Dufrêne, in fact, can be read as showing the ultimate fallacy of a "degree zero," a state which Barthes himself acknowledged as myth. Yet as Susan Sontag has noted "myth doesn't mean that a concept (or argument or narrative) is false. Myths are not descriptions but rather models for description (or thinking)."[15] The failure to attain a pure state of literature and the subsequent lapse into myth should not be read as a failure per se, for myths serve a powerful function. Therefore, while "degree zero" can never be attained, it is in the struggle, the tension between the search for an emerging form and a mourning of the older, outdated forms that perhaps new forms, new constructions and ultimately new myths may be created.

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12 Umberto Eco, *The Open Work* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989) 93-4.

13 See Jean-François Lyotard "The Works and Writings of Daniel Buren, an Introduction to the Philosophy of Contemporary Art," *Artforum*, 19 (February 1981).

14 Barthes 76.

15 Sontag, Preface, *Writing Degree Zero*, xx.

Figure 1. François Dufrêne, *Decoration of the Reverse Side*, 1960, poster on canvas, 185 x 155 cm. © 2003 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.

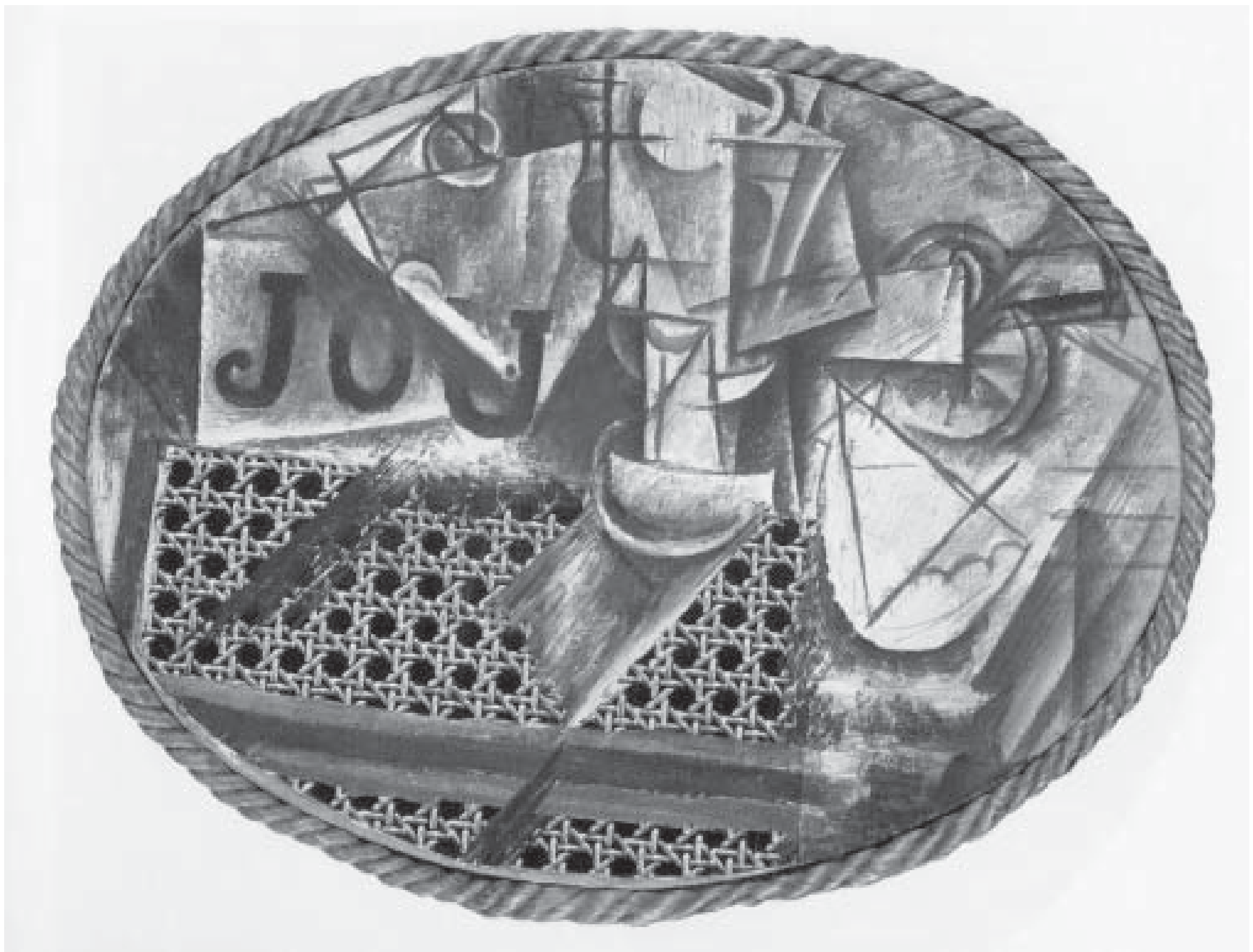


Figure 2. Pablo Picasso, *Still Life with Chair Caning*, May, 1912, collage of oil, oilcloth, and pasted paper on canvas surrounded by rope. © 2003 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Figure 3. Daniel Buren, *Affichage Sauvage*, work in situ, Paris, April 1968. © 2003 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.

Absence of Evidence: Depicting the Truth of War

Tienfong Ho

On European Ground is a group of photographs taken by Alan Cohen between the years of 1992 and 1998. The images feature close aerial views of the ground from the distance of Cohen's own standing height, recorded with a very wide-angle lens. They depict three pivotal moments of relatively recent history: World War I and its battlefields, the Shoah and its camps, and the Cold War and its icon, the Berlin Wall. Cohen took the photographs while standing on the actual ground where the events had occurred. He titles the images simply with a general name of the site.

Somme is the title for several photographs of the ground at different sites of the same battle, all taken in March 1998. The images are of intact trenches at Newfoundland Memorial Park near Auchonvillers, France (Figures 1 and 2).[1] Cohen's silent images of the earth fail to evoke the more familiar signs associated with sites of historical trauma, for example images of dead, dying, or mutilated bodies, general chaos and mass suffering. The sequence of photographs, following historical chronology, as presented in the book accompanying Cohen's 2001 exhibition at The Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, does not correspond with the order in which they were taken. All the images are black and white.

Cohen's work addresses the issue of war and memory, and particularly the question of how to represent historical tragedy in a manner that makes sense in our moment, following a century of mass death. Often the discussion of war is accompanied by a level of discomfort or perhaps, as presented by John Lennon and Malcolm Foley, "anxiety and doubt" about the project of modernity. The "project of modernity" can signify the use of rational planning and technological innovation deployed in the Jewish Holocaust, the industrial scale of death in several wars of this century, or the doubt pervading infallible science and technology (notable examples: the sinking of the Titanic, the use of agent orange in Vietnam, and the bombing of Hiroshima).[2]

The depiction of war complicated by anxiety and doubt surrounding the nature or preventability of war, however, is not new. In her very recent article "Looking at War," Susan Sontag traces the visual representation of war beginning with the voyeurism of torment. Torment, Sontag says, is a canonical subject in art, often portrayed as spectacle to be either watched or ignored.

She compares the invented horror featured in Hendrik Goltzius's *The Dragon Devouring the Companions of Cadmus* (1588), in which a man's face is being chewed off, with the "real" image of horror in a photograph of a World War I veteran's mutilated face, such as those featured in *War Against War!* by Ernst Friedrich.[3] The mutual assumption suggested by such depictions of torment is that torment is something that can not be stopped, and thus can only be subject to passive spectatorship, where the only decision a viewer need make is whether or not to look.[4]

Sontag distinguishes Francisco Goya's *The Disasters of War* (1810-1820) as "a turning point in the history of moral feelings and of sorrow."[5] She contends that the sequence of eighty-three etchings, which depicts atrocities committed by Napoleon's army when it invaded Spain in 1808, set a new standard in that the images are "an assault on the sensibility of the viewer."[6] A factor in the "assault" is the coupling of images with subversive captions (such as the one declaring "One can't look") calling attention to the *difficulty* of looking.[7] In other words, Goya's assault is an awakening of the viewer to his or her own emotional conflict in viewing political horror.

1 Alan Cohen, *On European Ground* (Chicago and London: The U of Chicago P, 2001) 119.

2 John Lennon and Malcolm Foley, "Intimations of Dark Tourism," *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* (London and New York: Continuum, 2000) 7-8, 12. John Lennon and Malcolm Foley are senior lecturers at Glasgow Caledonian University's Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism Business Development. They argue that what they define as "dark tourism" can be most characterized by the manner in which tourism sites qualified as "dark," commodify the condition of "anxiety and doubt" harbored by visitors.

3 Originally published in 1924, *War Against War!* was a pacifist effort attempting to show the horrors of war to the masses.

4 Susan Sontag, "Looking At War: Photography's View of Devastation and Death," *The New Yorker* (9 Dec. 2002): 88. Sontag makes a complete reversal in this article against the conclusion she had proposed in *On Photography*, stating that the effectiveness of images to incite emotional response from viewers was diminished by the media's constant and overwhelming barrage of images. In "Looking at War," Sontag critiques her own former viewpoint, calling it "breathtaking provincialism." Such a viewpoint would have to assume that there is no reality existing independently of media representations, and no real suffering in the world, only spectators, 97. Her critique offers viewers liberation from passive spectatorship.

5 Sontag 90.

6 Sontag 90.

7 Sontag 90.

A more ambivalent reading about the nature of war can be viewed in *Der Krieg* (1924), the series of fifty etchings by Otto Dix summarizing his military experiences in the First World War. The images reveal simultaneously a horror and fascination with war, and unlike Goya, Dix omitted the emotion and despair and instead represented war as a natural phenomenon, dissecting "war's varying phases of physical devastation and desecration."[8] It is possible to compare Cohen's photographs of Verdun (Figure 3) to these etchings by Dix. By focusing on the war-ravaged earth, Dix's pictures ironically critique the German landscape tradition, which insists on seeking the spiritual in nature in order to transcend earthly existence. In *Field of Craters Near Dontrien, Illuminated by Rocket Flares*, bomb craters are likened to "eyesockets of the earth."[9] Curators Stephanie D'Alessandro and Richard A. Born describe *Field of Craters*: "The result of incessant bombing is an uninhabitable, rubble-strewn, pock-marked land, a vista reminiscent more of a lunar, than earthly, landscape."[10]

Trusted as documentary evidence (as opposed to a statement molded by the artist, like a painting), photography assumed a role as the logical medium through which wars were depicted. Dix had utilized the authority of the photograph to emphasize the immediacy of his prints even earlier than the photos taken in 1945 just after the liberation of Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, and Dachau. Studying photographs for inspiration, Dix imitated the visual effects of hasty processing and over-exposure in some of his etchings, using actual war photographs as references.[11] Sontag states that one impetus for war photography was the government initiative to augment public support for war. In 1855, Roger Fenton (called the first war photographer) was sent to the Crimea by the British government. His task was to take photos emphasizing the positive aspects of an increasingly unpopular war. Fenton avoided the chaos and terror of battle, and instead portrayed the Crimean War as "a dignified all-male group outing," posing the soldiers at tasks such as staff meetings and tending cannons.[12]

Fenton is of particular interest to the discussion of Alan Cohen's photographs because of one photograph Fenton titled *The Valley of the Shadow of Death*. It memorializes the unfortunate demise of six hundred British soldiers, the same disaster memorialized in Lord Tennyson's poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade." Sontag describes the photograph as follows:

> Fenton's memorial photograph is a portrait of absence, of death without the dead. It is the only photograph that would not have needed to be staged, for all it shows is a wide rutted road, studded with rocks and cannonballs, that curves onward across a barren rolling plain to the distant void.[13]

However, the site selected by Fenton is not where the charge was made. Stranger still, the second of two exposures of this image reveals that Fenton had the cannonballs moved onto the road and strewn to achieve a desired effect.[14] Regardless, Cohen's imagery may be considered as having descended from the mode of war photography inaugurated by Fenton, i.e. the portrayal of absence. Although the work of both photographers may appear similiar, what sets Cohen's images apart is the way they question the authority of the photograph. By critiquing the documentation of evidence Cohen circumvents the difficulty of depicting truth and paves the way to a method of war photography that counteracts passive spectatorship.

Similar issues surrounding Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Polish death camps, illuminate the issues around "truth" or "authenticity" as portrayed in Cohen's photographs. These issues arose mainly due to the designation of Auschwitz I as a permanent exhibition in order to facilitate tourism. The result is that the identity of Auschwitz I has been altered. For example, the crematoria II has been relocated from Birkenau to Auschwitz I, along with spectacles, hair, suitcases, etc. The International Auschwitz Committee (IAC) reconstructed the crematoria in Auschwitz I because it "felt a recreated crematorium was necessary as a culmination to the Auschwitz I tour. Consequently a chimney, gas chamber and two to three furnaces have been re-created. Reality is the crematoria and gas chambers of Birkenau some three to four miles away yet this is rarely the tourists' experience."[15] It was in Birkenau that 1.6 million people (ninety percent of whom were Jews) were killed, not in Auschwitz I.[16] The process of restoration itself is responsible for the removal of much of the original structure, placing the status of the authenticity of the site even more in question.

These restoration efforts to recreate the experience of the Shoah in the most concrete terms possible are meant to achieve several goals, including educating visitors about history. Originally the museum-site was meant to demonstrate the evils of Fascism as a Polish/Internationalist commemorative, and also to remind visitors of the triumph of communism. According to Lennon and Foley, "This method of interpreting the Holocaust as a Polish tragedy was part of an overly political ap-

[8] Richard A. Born and Stephanie D'Alessandro, "Otto Dix, Der Krieg (The War), 1924," *The German Print Portfolio 1890-1930: Serials for a Private Sphere* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers Ltd., 1992) 121-122. Born and D'Alessandro are curators at the University of Chicago Smart Museum of Art.

[9] Born and D'Alessandro 123.

[10] Born and D'Alessandro 123.

[11] Born and D'Alessandro 124. The war photographs were supplied to Dix by his friend Hugo Erfurth of Dresden.

[12] Sontag 90-91.

[13] Sontag 91.

[14] The first exposure shows the cannonballs mostly to the left of the road. Sontag 91-92.

[15] Lennon and Foley 62.

[16] Lennon and Foley 46-47.

[17] Lennon and Foley 52.

proach to history and distortion of heritage under the former Communist authorities."[17] The tragedy of the Jews was used to further the lessons of communism. To create a new context for Jewish suffering, it was extracted out of the whole of history and analyzed or appropriated as an independent event. Cohen precisely addresses the mistake of "dissecting history" in his photographs.

To understand Cohen's stance requires the consideration of another photographer, the medical doctor Etienne-Jules Marey. Starting in 1861, Marey was an associate of Jean-Baptiste Chauveau, head of anatomical research at the Veterinary School of Lyon. While attempting to measure the speed of blood flow, Marey discovered the complication arising from having to make an incision in order to place measuring instruments in contact with the bloodstream.[18] Incisions would introduce an unwanted variable that altered the actual conditions within the subject organism. Whatever measurements taken would vary necessarily from those measurements of an intact animal. Removal of organs for study and vivisection exaggerate the error in any data collected. Marey's understanding was greatly influenced by Hegel's pupil, Johannes Muller, who wrote in *Handbuch der Physiologie des Menschen fur Vorlesungen*:

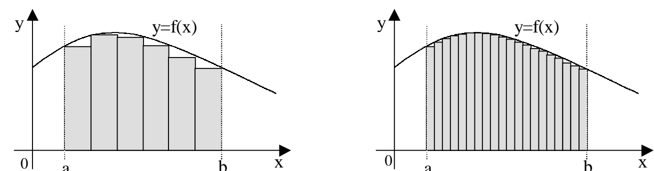
> each part has its cause, not in itself, but in the cause of the whole....It is highly unlikely that the vital principle which produces all the parts of an organism according to one idea or one type should itself be made of parts....A thing that is by nature made up of parts changes its nature when it comes to be divided.[19]

Another critical experiment affecting Marey's contributions to photography beginning in the 1880s was the ticker-tape acceleration experiment in physics.[20] In this experiment, a mass connected to a stylus was dropped, causing the stylus to brush against a coated cylinder (revolving at a constant speed). The stylus would leave marks of the black coating on a long piece of paper, the distances between which could be measured in order to compute acceleration of the falling mass. The distances between marks were due to a combination of the cylinder revolving at a constant speed, while the falling mass changed speed. If the mass had not accelerated (changed speed) while falling, the marks would have all been placed the same distance apart, just as if the recording were taken with only the revolving cylinder. In this way, the *means* by which data was recorded shed light on the data's significance.

By 1883, Marey discovered a new method of recording movement, for example a horse walking or man running, called chronophotography. His objective was to make photography more directly record continuous motion, on the order of the ticker-tape recorder. He wanted to somehow *connect* the independent phases or moments of movement (like those shown in Eadweard Muybridge's photos of a woman descending an incline plane) in order to include all the intermediary moments as well.[21] To Marey, this would be a more truthful *recording* of movement, if not a more truthful representation. Rather than use Muybridge's thirty or so cameras lined up, Marey's method utilized a single camera and maximized the number of exposures on a single plate, in order that the greatest number of phases of movement could be shown in a single photograph. Marey also realized that the nature of photography itself, the ability to capture minute details, actually obscured the clear expression of movement. To deal with this problem of surfeit information, Marey constructed special suits for his human subjects which simplified the body into only the lines and points best indicating the body's changing positions.[22]

Marey's chronophotography served as a metaphor for Alan Cohen's images in *On European Ground*.[23] In order to keep history whole, Cohen required an alternative to depicting independent scenes or parts of war, something that would alleviate the problem of representing war as a series of tableaux.

Cohen, originally a chemist working at Argonne National Laboratory in Aurora, Illinois, likens Marey's photographs in their attempt to record continuity to definite integrals in calculus. One can approximate an area under a curve by dividing the area into narrow rectangles and then adding up the areas of those rectangles. The narrower the rectangles, the more closely the approximation matches the actual area. Definite integrals can be thought of as the case in which the rectangles have become so infinitely narrow that their area sum *is* the area under the curve and no longer an approximation.[24]



[18] Francois Dagognet, "Early Principles," trans. Robert Galeta and Jeanine Herman *Etienne-Jules Marey: A Passion for the Trace* (New York: Zone Books, 1992) 24-27.

[19] Dagognet 27-28.

[20] Dagognet 31. Francois Dagognet specifically cites the device made by Arthur Morin and Jean Poncelet in *Cours de Mecanique Appliqué Aux Machines*. According to Dagognet, it was the most consistent reference Marey made in his writings. My explanation is possibly more general and applicable to many similar recording devices.

[21] Dagognet 96.

[22] Marta Braun, "Reinventing the Camera: The Photographic Method," *Picturing Time: The Work of Etienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904)* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1992) 79-83.

[23] Alan Cohen, personal interview, 22 November 2002. Cohen did not use the term *metaphor*, but he did point to slides of Marey's work he happened to have on his light table, and to the kinship he felt they had to his own work.

[24] Approximating the area under a curve by adding the areas of rectangles. Author's diagram. The graph on the right shows the same area divided into even thinner rectangles, thus permitting a closer approximation. If the rectangles were infinitely thinner, the sum of their areas would *be* the area under the curve and no longer an approximation.

For Cohen, the summation of the area of rectangles as an approximation is comparable to the representation of war through bits and pieces—the chaos of combat, the destruction of architecture, the dismemberment of bodies, and so on. But in the project of photographing the earth, one records the summation of *all* the events of a war, and even on the largest scale, the events of history, without extracting them from the *whole* of history. Cohen's photographs refuse to depict history as fragments to be analyzed or as separate aspects independent of one another to be dissected out of context of the whole.[25]

The matter of recording history without "vivisection" has even farther-reaching implications. For a start, there is the issue of continuity. One of several images titled *Berlin* (Figure 4), shows the stone bricks that had marked the Berlin Wall path near the Martin-Gropius-Bau.[26] Here again, Cohen has chosen to leave out the image of the Berlin Wall itself, and photographs the ground, instead. The picture also reveals the delineations and surfaces of modernity: painted lines necessary for safe traffic and a section of asphalt which cuts through another surface of asphalt, perhaps laid at a different time. The painted lines are interrupted by the changes in surface textures, due to the different ground coverings of asphalt and stone. At various places, it is difficult to tell which layer has been put down first: the stone or the paint stripe. Cohen has created a visual montage of history, where the sequence of cause and effect are unclear, even though all the surfaces are of the present. Because his photograph fails to serve as a document revealing the actual chronology of the surfaces as they were laid, it begs the question of the authority photographs have been accorded in showing evidence.

It is tempting to consider Cohen's montage of surfaces in light of Ernst Bloch's discussion of asynchronism. Bloch writes, "History is not merely chaff, and all the corn is already removed at the last stage, on the last threshing floor in each case: but precisely because so much of the past has not yet come to an end, the latter also clatters through the early dawnings of newness."[27] Cohen's choice of three moments of history, the First World War, the Shoah, and the Cold War, have been selected for the purpose of examining the continuity between events in time. Sander L. Gilman points out that the Germans see the Berlin Wall as embodying "the Nazi defilement of the city...a late symptom of trauma experienced during the 1930s and '40's."[28] The Berlin Wall is not just a symbol of the Cold War, our fear of communism, and so forth, but a continuation of Nazism. By fusing asynchronism to the concept of definite integrals, Cohen's images defy the logic of chronology. Cohen believes they show historical events instead as they are—individual, "backward, and particalized. Atomized...."[29]

Returning to Marey's intention to keep his photographic record untainted (i.e. free of the human hand or eye) another layer of meaning can be found in Cohen's work. In his book *Physiologie Medicale de la Circulation du Sang,* Marey openly refuses information obtained from the senses:

> If a doctor gifted with a subtle sense of touch and great patience manages, through observation, to recognize important features in the pulse of certain patients, how will he explain to his students what he himself senses? Will he find in them a sense of touch naturally delicate enough to discern immediately sensations that he himself could only distinguish after much effort? Will he hope to explain the nature of tactile sensation through definitions or metaphors?[30]

By being uninterested in devices that extended the senses, like the stethoscope, Marey further denied the phenomenal. If the photographs taken by Cohen contain traces of truth, the ultimate objective of Marey, the philosopher Levinas can provide some illumination. Levinas describes a trace as something that can neither disclose nor conceal, and thus not subject to phenomenology. Instead, Levinas believes the trace obliges with regard to the infinite and does not answer to "concrete duration." Furthermore, the trace does not indicate the past, but instead disturbs order, which is consistent with asynchronism.[31] What Levinas's philosophy suggests is that Cohen has found a way to memorialize without recourse to the reconstruction and preservation of sites such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, which sacrifice authenticity in the attempt to replay an experience that so defies logic, it is simply impossible to copy. Gilman repeats Zygmunt Bauman's claim about the reconstruction and preservation of these sites, *i.e.* that they are "apotropaic (intended to ward off evil), a magical gesture to avoid the repetition of the past," invoking yet another way of looking at site reconstruction and preservation as a "preserved mummy" of the Shoah. For film critic Andre Bazin, the "mummy complex" is the origin of art. In "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," from *What Is Cinema?*, Bazin explains, "The reli-

25 Molly Nesbitt, "Picturing Time," *The Art Bulletin* 77 (March 1995): 3. In her book review of *Etienne-Jules Marey: A Passion for the Trace*, Molly Nesbitt of the Department of Art at Vassar College comments "Marey himself did not regard knowledge to be a collection of fragments. He knew solid fact to be shot with unshakable emptiness, return, a turn, again."

26 Cohen 125.

27 Ernst Bloch, "Summary Transition: Non-Contemporaneity and Obligation to Its Dialectic," trans. Neville and Stephen Plaice, *Heritage of Our Times* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1990) 144.

28 Sander L. Gilman is Distinguished Professor of Liberal Arts and Medicine at the University of Illinois in Chicago, and director of the Humanities Laboratory. Sander L. Gilman, "Alan Cohen's Surfaces of History," *European Ground*, by Alan Cohen, 9.

29 Cohen, "Interview: Alan Cohen and Roberta Smith," interview by Roberta Smith, *European Ground*, 116.

30 Dagognet 19.

31 Emmanuel Levinas, "The Trace of the Other," trans. Alphonso Liugie *Deconstruction in Context*, ed. Mark Taylor (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986) 356-357.

gion of ancient Egypt, aimed against death, saw survival as depending on the continued existence of the corporeal body. Thus, by providing a defense against the passage of time it satisfied a basic psychological need in man, for death is but the victory of time."[32] The passage of time is an interference preventing the *action* noted by Sontag; without the *action*, war as spectacle is perpetuated, and viewers are voyeurs without the opportunity to suffer deeply and truly from history, and to move beyond war. Returning to Levinas, "The traces of the irreversible past are taken as signs that ensure the discovery and unity of a world."[33] This means that traces are taken as evidence of a possibly false world we have constructed, a manner of dealing with memory that prioritizes the future. Edward Casey clarifies this point: "Memory is a matter of control in the interest of constructing a well-protected refuge where thought can be free to reverse the course of time....Most seriously, memory brings with it a *nostalgia* that locks it into a circuit of return to the same."[34]

In looking at the original negatives taken by Cohen, one will notice in almost every photograph Cohen's own feet on the ground.[35] This information is cropped away by the artist: his final gesture for each image is that of cutting himself out as witness. He refuses to allow his photographs to become documents of evidence that prove, yes, he was really there and that the site was indeed before his lens. His purpose for doing so may relate to Derrida's observation: "And as for the witnesses of Auschwitz, like those of all extermination camps, there is here an abominable resource for all 'revisionist' denials."[36] The point is that there is a difference between seeing and believing, in that believing in something does not require that the thing be present. Michael Newman refers to Derrida's passage: "The evidence of the 'eyewitness' has an essential juridical role, but that does not necessarily mean that the event in question can ever be represented nor, indeed, that such an 'unrepresentable' can be said to have been an 'event,' even though its consequences might be devastating."[37]

In Cohen's studio hang two lunar photographs. They are meant to be scientific, to prove that we reached the moon and left our mark there. They are evocative because they describe "in uncanny detail the 'traces' of our fleeting presence on the barren lunar surface."[38] But Cohen's experience of Europe was also such a voyage. Unlike Dix's topographical subjects resembling lunar landscapes, Cohen's photos provide the viewer with a similar opportunity. (Figure 5) Reflecting on his experience at Dachau, Cohen writes

> Within the camp walls, more than thirty thousand people had been destroyed, but there was no evidence, nothing, in the present tense. I was in a real place where something unreal had happened and that, to me, was like travel to and being on the moon.[39]

And finally, he states about his photographs:

> They are not reliably forensic. They are not evidential enough. And anyway the camps already provide plenty of evidence, if that's what is wanted....Though fiction is a perfectly wonderful vehicle for real ideas and real emotions, I am scrupulous about the truth in my photographs.[40]

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[32] Andre Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," *What Is Cinema?* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1967) 9.

[33] Levinas 345.

[34] Edward Casey is Professor of Philosophy at State University of New York at Stony Brook. Edward Casey, "Levinas on Memory and the Trace," *The Collegium Phaenomenologicum* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988) 245.

[35] Cohen personal interview.

[36] Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1993) 104.

[37] Michael Newman, "Derrida and the Scene of Drawing," *Research in Phenomenology* 24 (Fall 1994): 226.

[38] Gilman 3.

[39] Cohen 109.

[40] Cohen 116.

Figure 1. Alan Cohen, *Somme*, 1988, gelatin silver print. Image courtesy of the artist.

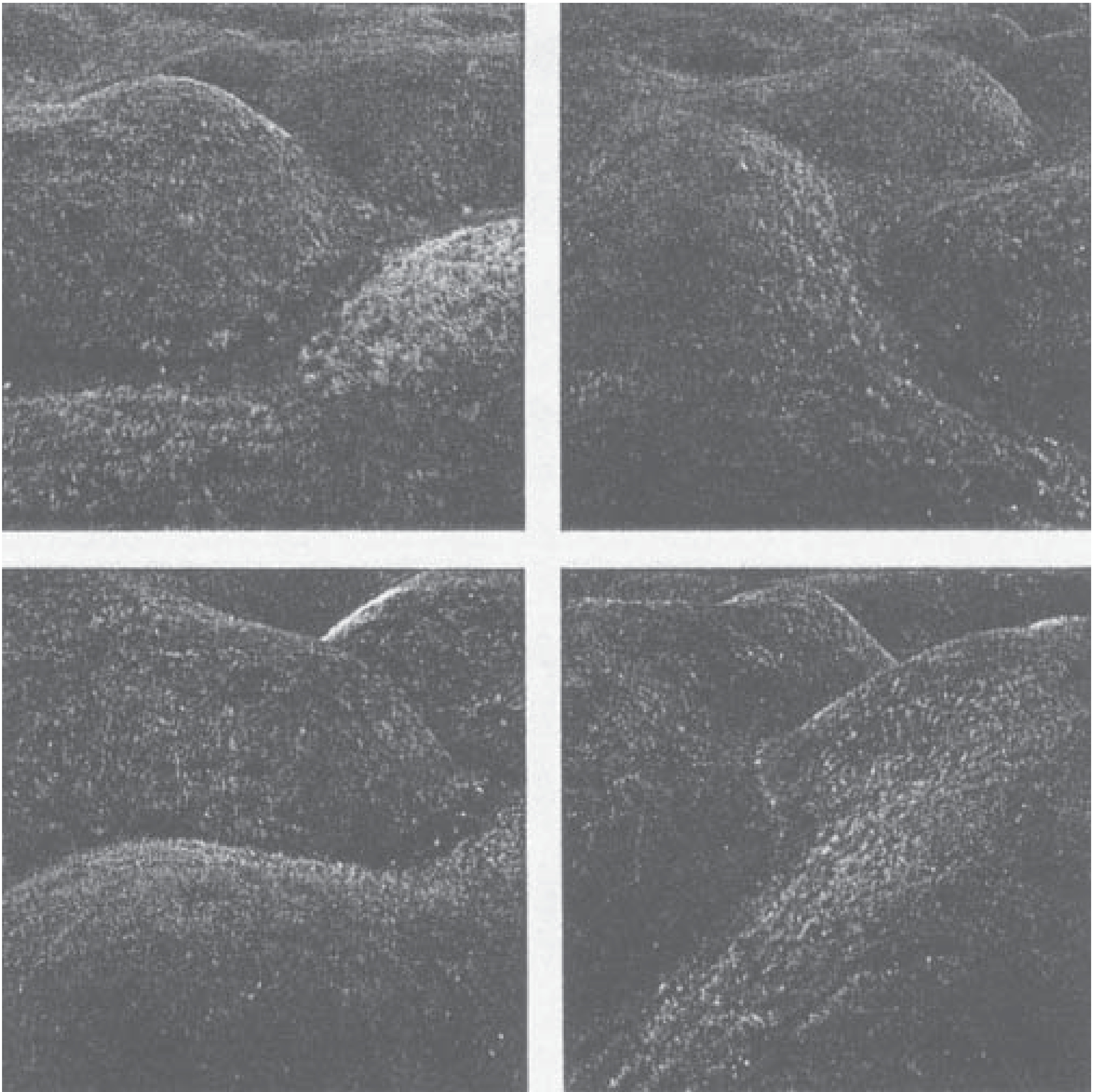

Figure 2. Alan Cohen, *Somme*, 1998, gelatin silver print. Image courtesy of the artist.

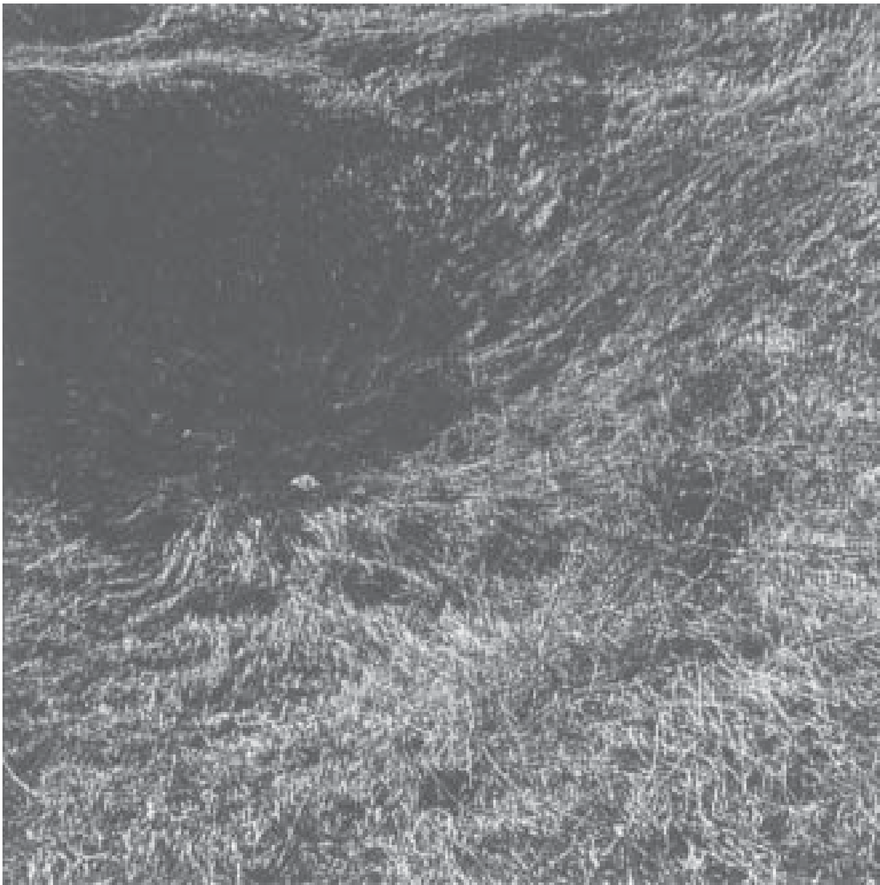

Figure 3. Alan Cohen, *Verdun*, 1998, gelatin silver print. Image courtesy of the artist. Cohen's photograph is reminiscent of Dix's depictions of bomb craters.

Figure 4. Alan Cohen, *Berlin*, 1996, gelatin silver print. Image courtesy of the artist.

Figure 5. Alan Cohen, *Buchenwald*, 1994, gelatin silver print. Image courtesy of the artist.

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