Iconicity, History, and the Cultural Imageries of Body and Soul

Anna Kérchy, Attila Kiss, György Endre Szőnyi (eds.)

Iconicity, History, and the Cultural Imageries of Body and Soul

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Table of Contents

Iconicity, History, and the Cultural Imageries of Body and Soul: Preface 9

Part One: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

W. J. T. Mitchell
Image X Text 15

János Kelemen
Meta-representations, Impossible Images, History 27

David Graham
Assembling, Being, Embodying: Early Modern Emblem and Device as Body, Soul, and Metaphor 41

Zenón Luis-Martínez
Pathopoeia: Toward a Poetics of the Soul from Tudor Rhetorical Treatises to Shakespearean Texts 59

Marina Warner
Of Shimmering Flame: Zones of Enchantment and the *Arabian Nights* 85

Vilmos Voigt
On the Semiotics of the Rebus 127

György E. Szőnyi
What Can You Learn in Fez? Oriental Wisdom in Western Fiction Based on the Rosicrucian Mythology 139

Part Two: THE ICONOLOGY OF BODY AND SOUL

Ivan Gerát
Tormented Bodies in Late Medieval Paintings 161

Gábor Klaniczay
The Body as Image of the Suffering Christ 177

Erzsébet Stróbl
Dread of Disease and Disfigurement: Smallpox at the Court of Elizabeth I .. 203

Attila Kiss
Testing the Borderline between Body and Soul: *Macbeth*, Anatomy Theatres, and the Semiotics of the Early Modern Skin 215

Ferenc Veress
Conflicting Interpretations in Caravaggio's *Entombment*. Iconographic Tradition and Artistic Innovation 239

Anca Elizabeta Tatay and Cornel Tatay-Baltă
Gestures and Inner Feelings in the Graphic Representations of the Last Supper in Old Romanian Writings (1700–1829) 257

Zsombor Tóth
The Corporeal Reality of Post-feudal Clientelism. The (Body)Language of Fidelity. A case study 273

Andrea Hübner
Personhood and Authorship. The Dead Body as Lieu de Mémoire: a Theoretical Experiment a'propos Bentham's Auto-Icon 287

Part Three: REIMAGINING THE CORPOREAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

Lucia Rodler
The Morphology of Eyebrows in Works by Giovan Battista della Porta and Cesare Lombroso 309

Safet Ahmeti and Bujar Hoxha
A Semiotic Approach to the Parthenon as a Pillar of Modern Democracy .. 327

Anna Kérchy
"Mystic, awful was the process." Changing Meanings of Victorian Child Photography in Lewis Carroll's Darkroom and Bright Text 345

Francesca Chiappini
Bodies in Disguise. Graphic and Verbal Embodiments in Djuna Barnes.... 365

Florin-Aron Pădurean
Foreign Bodies, Foreign Souls: National Physiognomy in Modern Romanian Art 387

Ágnes Matuska
Producing the Reverend: Performing the Political and the Spiritual on the Global Stage..... 409

ILLUSTRATIONS

János Kelemen 425
David Graham..... 428
Vilmos Voigt 431
György E. Szőnyi 432
Ivan Gerát..... 440
Gábor Klaniczay..... 448
Attila Kiss 452
Ferenc Veress 455
Anca Elizabeta Tatay and Cornel Tatay-Baltă 464
Lucia Rodler 468
Anna Kérchy 470
Francesca Chiappini 474
Florin-Aron Pădurean..... 478

PREFACE

The late 1980s marked a significant turning point in the venerable discipline of art history, mirroring broader upheavals across the humanities. This period witnessed the rise and heyday of post-structuralism, which challenged foundational methodologies and interpretive frameworks. Three seminal works—W. J. T. Mitchell's *Iconology* (1986), David Freedberg's *The Power of Images* (1989), and Donald Preziosi's *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science* (1989)—served as cornerstones in this transformation. Together, they critically interrogated traditional art historical approaches, particularly those focused on the search for meaning. Established figures such as Ernst Gombrich and, especially, Erwin Panofsky came under intense scrutiny and criticism, and the methods of iconography and iconology were widely declared outdated.

It was during this intellectually turbulent time that a group of scholars at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Szeged began to revisit those very subdisciplines. What prompted this seemingly untimely return? Until the late 1970s, Hungarian research in cultural history operated under the strictures of an ideologically driven socialist cultural policy, mandating adherence to a rigid form of Marxist interpretation. One of the three editors of this volume, György E. Szőnyi, belonged to a generation that sought to escape these constraints in search of more nuanced, ostensibly objective theoretical frameworks—ones that could simultaneously avoid censorship and open new interpretive vistas for understanding cultural representations across diverse media.

The methodologies of the Warburg School, together with emblem studies, offered a compelling alternative. These approaches were adapted to analyze both literary and visual representations and eventually coalesced into what became known as the "Szeged School of Cultural Iconology." Founding members Professors Tibor Fabiny, József Pál, and György Szőnyi were soon joined by a new generation of enthusiastic students, among them Attila Kiss (now Professor and Head of the English Department), who also serves as a co-editor of this volume. This younger cohort integrated insights from emerging fields such as New Historicism, semiotics, visual culture, and gender studies.

This evolving body of research was institutionalized in the *Research Centre for Cultural Iconology and Semiography* at the English Department of the University of Szeged. In 1993, the Centre hosted its first international conference, *European Iconology, East and West*, which aimed to foster dialogue between scholars from the West and those from the recently liberated post-socialist bloc. The conference proved a success and established a tradition of quinquennial gatherings, culminating in a 30th anniversary event in 2023. Selected papers from these conferences have been published by JATEPress, the University's publishing house, as well as by other respected academic publishers.[1]

Due to institutional restructuring, the 2013 conference papers could not be published in Szeged, despite the scope and ambition of that year's "conference on the move," which spanned the University of Rijeka (Croatia), Central European University (Budapest), and the University of Szeged. However, papers from the Rijeka session were published in *IKON*, a journal hosted by Rijeka and published by Brepols. This collaboration laid the groundwork for the launch of a new book series, *IKON Studies*, which will include selected papers from the most recent Szeged conference, *The Iconology of Theatrum Mundi*.

1 Including the following titles: Tibor Fabiny (ed.), *Shakespeare and the Emblem* (Szeged: JATE, 1984, Papers in English and American Studies [PEAS] 3); Attila Kiss, *The Semiotics of Revenge. Subjectivity and Abjection in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Szeged: JATEPress, 1995, PEAS 5); György E. Szőnyi and Rowland Wymer (eds.), *The Iconography of Power: Ideas and Images of Rulership on the English Renaissance Stage* (Szeged: JATEPress, 2000, PEAS 8); György E. Szőnyi, *John Dee's Occultism. Magical Exaltatio Through Powerful Signs* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004); György E. Szőnyi, *Pictura & scriptura. Hagyományalapú kulturális reprezentációk huszadik századi elméletei* (Szeged: JATEPress, 2004, Ikonológia és műértelmezés 10); Anna Kérchy, *Body Texts in the Novels of Angela Carter: Writing from a Corporeagraphic Point of View (*Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008); Attila Kiss, *Double Anatomy in Early Modern and Postmodern Drama* (Szeged: JATEPress, 2010, PEAS 20); Ágnes Matuska, *The Vice-Device. Iago and Lear's fool as agents of representational crisis* (Szeged: JATEPress, 2011, PEAS 19); Attila Kiss, *Contrasting the Early Modern and the Postmodern Semiotics* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2011); Anna Kérchy, *Alice in Transmedia Wonderland: Curiouser and Curiouser New Forms of a Children's Classic* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2016); Anna Kérchy. *A nő nyelvet ölt. Feminista narratológiai, esztétikai, testelméleti tanulmányok* (Szeged: JATEPress, 2018, Ikonológia és Műértelmezés 14.), Anna Kérchy, Björn Sundmark (ed.), *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature* (London: Springer, 2020); Anna Kérchy. *A viktoriánus nonszensz poétikája és politikája, Metamediális játék Lewis Carroll fantáziavilágában* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2024); Attila Kiss, *Kettős anatómia Shakespeare színpadán: Angol reneszánsz tragédiák a kora újkorban és ma* (Szeged: Szeged Humanities Press, 2024); György E. Szőnyi, *The Mediality of Culture: The Emblematic Way of Seeing and Thinking* (Thurnout: Brepols, 2025, forthcoming).

Despite proclamations of the "death of iconology," the field remains vibrant. Research centers across Europe—in Glasgow, Leiden, Rijeka, and Szeged, to name a few—continue to thrive, and specialized journals provide forums for disseminating new scholarship.

By the 1990s, a third generation of scholars had joined the "Szeged School," including Professor Anna Kérchy, the third editor of this volume and Director of our doctoral program in *Literatures and Cultures in English*. Today, many of our doctoral students choose to explore topics in literary and cultural iconology as well as visual studies.

While some of our publications are now issued under the auspices of Brepols Publishers, we are especially pleased to present this volume through the newly founded Szeged University Press. *Iconicity, History, and the Cultural Imageries of Body and Soul* comprises a wide array of topics; yet, all contributions share a commitment to investigating the practices of cultural symbolization. The volume includes revised and expanded versions of selected papers from the 2013 conference, alongside newly commissioned essays. It is organized into three thematic sections: "From Theory to Practice," "The Iconology of Body and Soul," and "Reimagining the Corporeal and the Spiritual."

The twenty-one contributing authors represent a diverse international community of scholars from the United States (including W.J.T. Mitchell, a keynote speaker at the penultimate conference), Canada (notably David Graham, a constant participant since 1993 who has missed only one conference), as well as Bosnia, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain.

We hope this rich and varied collection—also available in open access digital format—will serve as a valuable resource and source of inspiration for scholars and students worldwide, whether they are practitioners of classical iconological methods or pioneers seeking to rethink and revitalize the field's enduring legacy.

Anna Kérchy, Attila Kiss, and György E. Szőnyi

Part One:
FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

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Image x Text

What is the "imagetext"? We might begin not by asking, what it means, but how it can be written down. In a footnote to *Picture Theory* (1994) I took a stab at a notational answer:

> I will employ the typographic convention of the slash to designate the "image/text" as a problematic gap, cleavage, or rupture in representation. The term "imagetext" designates composite, synthetic works (or concepts) that combine image and text. "Image-text," with a hyphen, designates *relations* of the visual and verbal.[1]

Rupture, synthesis, relationship. The essays in the present volume range over all three of these possibilities. On the one hand, there are what we might call "literal" manifestations of the imagetext: graphic narratives and comics, photo texts, poetic experiments with voice and picture, collage composition, and typography itself. On the other hand, there are the figurative, displaced versions of the image-text: the formal divisions of narrative and description, the relations of vision and language in memory, the nesting of images (metaphors, symbols, concrete objects) inside discourse, and the obverse, the murmur of discourse and language in graphic and visual media. And then there is a third thing, the traumatic gap of the unrepresentable space between words and images, what I tried to designate with the "/" or slash.

It is that third thing that I would like to re-open in this essay. And I want to do it, again, "literally," with an exploration of a typographic sign that might synthesize the three relationships of texts and images, and suggest further possibilities as well. My chosen sign is the "X," and I wish to treat it as a Joycean verbo-voco-visual pun that condenses the following meanings and inscriptions: 1) X as the "unknown" or

1 Mitchell 1994, 89. See also chapter three, "Beyond Comparison: Picture, Text, and Method," and the concluding chapter, "Some Pictures of Representation." Other key writings on the concept of the imagetext include Mitchell 1986 and "Word and Image," in Nelson and Schiff eds. 1996.

"variable" in algebra, or the "X factor" in vernacular usage; the signature of the illiterate; 2) X as the sign of multiplication, or (even more evocatively) as the "times" sign; also as a slightly tilted or torqued modification of the simplest operation in mathematics, the "plus" sign (+); 3) X as the sign of chiasmus in rhetoric, the trope of changing places and dialectical reversal, as in "the language of images" providing "images of language;" another way to see this is to grasp the ways in which image and text alternately evoke differentials and similarities, a paradox we could inscribe by fusing the relation of image *versus* text with image *as* text, a double cross that could be notated with an invented symbol, "VS" overlapped with "AS" to produce a double X in the intersection of A and V; 4) X as an image of crossing, intersection, and encounter, like the iconic sign at a railroad crossing; 5) X as a combination of the two kinds of slashes (/ and \), suggesting opposite directionalities in the portals to the unknown, different ways into the gap or rupture between signs and senses, indicating the difference between an approach to words and images from the side of the unspeakable or the unimaginable, the invisible or the inaudible; 6) X as the phoneme of eXcess, of the eXtra, the unpredictable surplus that will undoubtedly be generated by re-opening the variety of relationships subtended by this peculiar locution, the imagetext. This is the sign of everything that has been left out of my construal of the X.

Why is it possible, even necessary, to formulate such an abundance of meaning around a simple relation between two elementary, even primitive terms like "text" and "image"? One scarcely knows where to begin. A simple opening is provided by the innocent little phrase, "visual and verbal representation," that is often uttered as a kind of alternative to "word and image" or "text and image." But a moment's thought reveals a strange discontinuity, a shift of levels of meaning. In order to make anything specific out of the visual-verbal, we must ask, "visual as distinct from what"? "Verbal as opposed to what?" And the obvious candidates are: images or pictures as opposed to verbal signs; visual sensations as opposed to auditory. The visual denotes a specific sensory channel, the verbal designates a specific semiotic register. The difference between the visual and the verbal is actually *two* differences, one grounded in the senses (seeing versus hearing), the other in the nature of signs and meaning (words as arbitrary, conventional *symbols*, as distinct from images as representations by virtue of likeness or similitude). The phrase "visual-verbal," then, produces a productive confusion of signs and senses, ways of producing meaning and ways of inhabiting perceptual experience. The following diagram provides a picture of this confusion:

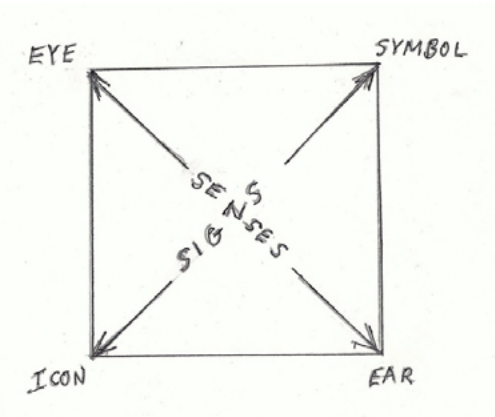


Figure 1: ImageText Square of Opposition

The "X" that links and differentiates images and texts is the intersection between signs and senses, semiotics and aesthetics. It becomes evident at a glance, then, that the apparently simple concept of the imagetext opens up a kind of fractal expansion of terms, as is captured in a more fully elaborated version of the diagram:

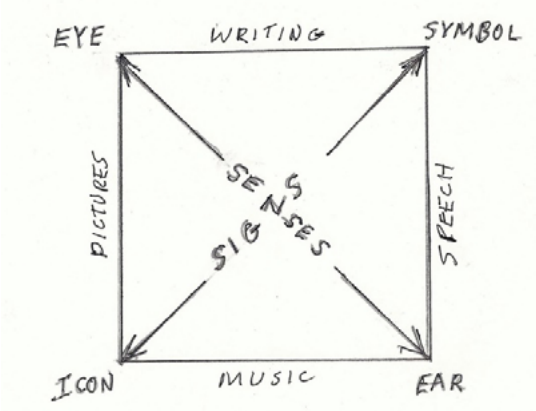


Figure 2: ImageText Square of Opposition Elaborated

As the sensory-semiotic dimensions of the word-image difference expand, they begin to demand some essential distinctions. When we talk about "words," for instance, are we referring to speech or writing? (Let us leave out, for the moment, gesture, which Rousseau saw as the original form of verbal expression, and

which is fully elaborated today in the languages of the Deaf.)[2] Does the "image-text" concept automatically rule out orality? On the side of the image, are we talking about visual images—e.g., drawings, photographs, paintings, sculpture? Or are we talking about auditory images, as in poetry and music? And what happens when we include the notion of "verbal imagery" (metaphor, description, etc.), which has not yet found a place in my diagram? Is this the "X" factor as an excess that overflows the boundary of any conceivable graphic diagram?

Any systematic analysis of the relation of images and texts, then, leads inevitably into a wider field of reflection on aesthetics, semiotics, and the whole concept of representation itself as a heterogeneous fabric of sights and sounds, spectacle and speech, pictures and inscriptions.[3] This is a multiply articulated fabric, in which the warp and woof are constantly shifting not only from sensory channels (the eye and the ear) to semiotic functions (iconic likenesses and arbitrary symbols), but also to modalities of cognition (space and time) to operational codes (the analog and the digital). The fractal picture of the imagetext has scarcely begun with the "visual-verbal." And then have to add the "thirds" that inevitably spring up between our binary oppositions, sometimes as compromise formations (could the "ana-lytical" itself be a demand for fusion or interplay between analog and digital codes?) and sometimes as blank spaces in which something unpredictable and monstrous might emerge. The gap between the Lacanian registers of the Symbolic and Imaginary is the black hole of the Real, the site of trauma and the unrepresentable (but clearly *not* an unnameable place, since there it is, the name of "the Real"). Could it be the "beach" or margin between sea and land that Foucault names as the frontier between the words and images in Magritte's *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*? Is it a contested zone in which, as Foucault puts it, "between the figure and the text a whole series of intersections—or rather attacks launched by one against the other."[4] Could we then see our "X" as crossed lances (/ \) or "arrows shot at the enemy target, enterprises of subversion and destruction, lance blows and wounds, a battle." (ibid) Leonardo da Vinci called the encounter of painting and poetry a *paragone* or contest, and Lessing described their relation as the frontier between two countries,

2 See my "Utopian Gestures: The Poetics of Sign Language," preface to H. Dirksen Bauman, Jennifer L. Nelson, and Heidi M. Rose eds. 2006, xv–xxiii.

3 See "Some Pictures of Representation," the conclusion to Mitchell 1994, 417–425.

4 Foucault 1983, 26. Foucault also refers to the blank space between the pipe and its caption as a "crevasse—an uncertain foggy region" (ibid, 28).

normally friendly and peaceful, but sometimes launching invasions into their neighbors' territory.

There are, then, normal and normative relations between texts and images. One illustrates or explains or names or describes or ornaments the other. They complement and supplement one another, simultaneously completing and extending. That is why Foucault focuses on the "common frontier" between Magritte's words and images, the "calm sand of the page," on which "are established all the relations of designation, nomination, description, classification"—in short, the whole order of the "seeable and sayable," the "visible and articulable," that lays down the archaeological layers of knowledge itself.[5] Word and image are woven together to create a reality. The tear in that fabric is the Real. Foucault makes the space between images and texts even more radical when he denies it the status of a space at all: 'it is too much to claim that there is a blank or lacuna: instead, it is an absence of space, an effacement of the "common place" between the signs of writing and the lines of the image.' X becomes, in this sense, the erasure or "effacement," not just of something inscribed, but of the very space in which the inscription might appear, as if the X signified a pair of *slashes*, like the tearing of a page, or cuts in a canvas left by a militant iconoclast—or an artist like Lucio Fontana.

Let's say, then, that the normal relation of text and image is complementary or supplementary, and that together they make up a third thing, or open a space where that third thing appears. If we take comics as our example, the third thing that appears is just the composite art form known as comics, combining text and image in a highly specific medium. But there is also a third thing in the medium of graphic narration that is neither text nor image, but which simultaneously links and separates them, namely, the *gutter*. These unobtrusive framing lines, as is well known, are neither words nor images, but indicators of relationships, of temporal sequence or simultaneity, or of notional camera movements in space from panorama to close-up. Avant-garde comics, from Smokey Stover to Art Spiegelman to Chris Ware, have often played with the gutter, cutting across it, treating it as a window that can be opened to hang out the laundry.

So the third thing, the X between text and image certainly does not have to be an absence. In fact, we might argue that there is always something positive, even in the blank space of the Real, the slash of the canvas, or the non-space beyond

5 For an account of the way Foucault's playful reflections on Magritte's imagetext composition serve as a basis for his whole archaeological method, see Deleuze 1988, 80.

blankness. Something rushes in to fill the emptiness, some "X" to suggest the presence of an absence, the appearance of something neither text nor image. In *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, I identified this third thing as my subtitle indicated, in the ideological framework that invariably suffuses the field of image-text relationships: the difference between the "natural" and "conventional" sign; the distinction between an illiterate viewer who can see what images represent, and a literate reader who can see through the image to something else (typically, a text). In the polemic of Lessing's *Laocoon*, the difference between image and text is not only figured in the relation of different nations, but rendered literal in his characterization of French culture as obsessed with effeminate "bright eyes" and spectacle, while German (and English) culture are described as manly cultures of the word.

And if we survey the history of semiotics and aesthetics, we find the positive presence of the third element everywhere. The *locus classicus* is, of course, Aristotle's *Poetics*, which divides the "means" or "medium" of tragedy into three parts: opsis, melos, lexis (spectacle, music, words). Or, as Roland Barthes would have it, *Image/Music/Text*. The X-factor in the imagetext problematic is music, or more generally, sound, which may be why "imagetext" has always struck me as slightly impoverished in that it confines *words* to the realm of writing and printing, and neglects the sphere of orality and speech, not to mention gesture.[6] Sometimes this silencing of the third dimension becomes explicit, most famously in Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," where the text not only conjures up the *sight* and image of its titular subject, but further attributes to it a silent music and speech—"a leafy tale" told "more sweetly than our rhyme," accompanied by an "unheard" music. The radio comedians Bob and Ray used to pose the riddle, why is radio superior to television? The answer: because the images we see while listening to the radio are better, more vivid, dynamic, and vital.

The triad of image/music/text must be the most durable and deeply grounded taxonomy of the arts and media that we possess, because it recurs constantly in the most disparate contexts, defining the elements of the Wagnerian *Gesamstkunstwerk*, the components of cinema, radio, and television, and even the order of technical media that constitute modernity. I am thinking here of Friedrich

6 A version of the Aristotelian and Barthesian triad was institutionalized some years ago in the University of Chicago's common core as a year-long course sequence in "Media Aesthetics" entitled "Image/Sound/Text."

Kittler's masterpiece, *Gramaphone/Film/Typewriter*, which is, on the one hand, an updating of the old Aristotelian categories, and, on the other, a trio of inventions subject to a new technical synthesis in the master platform of the computer. (Kittler 1999)

Finally, we must turn to the role of the imagetext in the constitutive elements of semiotics, the fundamental theory of signs and meaning. There we encounter Saussure's famous diagram of the linguistic sign as a bifurcated oval with an image of a tree in the upper compartment and the word "arbor" in the lower.

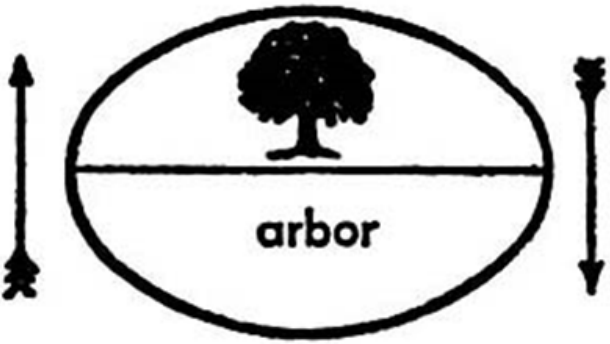


Figure 3: from Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (1915)

It is as if Saussure were forced to admit that even words, speech, and language itself cannot be adequately represented by a purely linguistic notation.[7] The image, which stands here not just for a tree but for the *signified* or mental image conjured by the verbal signifier, actually stands *above* and prior to the word in the model of language itself. Saussure is building upon a picture of language that could be traced back into the psychology of empiricism in which mental images are the content named by words, or all the way to Plato's discussion of natural and conventional signs in the *Cratylus*. But we also have to notice that the im-

7 Since Saussure's text was a compilation of lecture notes by himself and his students, it is not possible to be certain that this diagram was actually drawn by the great linguist. Nevertheless, it has become a canonical picture of his understanding of the linguistic sign.

agetext is not all there is to the sign, and there is a surplus of "third elements": the oval which is presumably a graphic rendering of the wholeness of the sign, despite its binary structure; the arrows which stand for the bi-directionality of meaning, a kind of circuit of alternating current between spoken words and ideas in the mind; and (most important) the *bar* between signifier and signified, the index of the fundamental duality of language and thought.

But this mention of the index must bring to mind immediately the most comprehensive analysis of the sign to date, the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce who identified three elements or sign-functions that make meaning possible. These are the elements he calls "icon/index/symbol," a triad that describes (very roughly) the distinctions between images (pictures, but also any sign by resemblance, including metaphors), indexical signs (arrows and bars, for instance, but also pronouns and other deictic words that depend upon context), and symbols (signs by "law" or convention). The relation of image and symbol, we must note, is merely analogous to and at a quite different level from the image-text relation. The reason is Peirce is not interested in classifying signs by their singular manifestations such as "words and images," but by their *sign function*, which depends upon the way in which they make meaning. The category of the icon includes pictures and other visual, graphic images, but it is not exhausted by those things. Icons can appear in language as metaphor and in logic in the form of analogy: *a* is to *b* as *c* is to *d*. They are signs by resemblance or likeness. Similarly, indices may be exemplified by arrows and bars, but they also include elements of language such as deictic terms (this, that, there, then) and pronouns such as I, we, and you. Indices are "shifters" or existential signs that take their meaning from context. They are also signs by cause and effect (tracks in the snow indicating where someone has walked; smoke as an indicator of fire). And finally, symbols are signs that take their meaning from arbitrary conventions (we will let the word "arbor" stand for this vertical object sprouting with leaves).

From Peirce's standpoint, then, the image/text is simply a figure for two-thirds of the semiotic field, awaiting only the recognition of its third element, the "/" as the index of a slash or relational sign in the concrete thing (a text, a work of art) that is being decoded. All these triads of aesthetics and semiotics can be seen at a glance in the following table, to which I want to add one final layer that will, as it were, bring us back to the surface of these reflections, and the original question of how to write these things down. I'm thinking here of Nelson Goodman's theory of notation, which examines the way marks themselves

can produce meaning, and which relies heavily on categories such as "density" and "repleteness" (where every difference in a mark is potentially significant), and "differentiated" and "articulate" (where marks belong to a finite set of characters that have definite meaning, as in an alphabet, in which the letter "a" still means "a," "regardless of whether it is written or typed or printed in Gothic or Times New Roman). (Goodman, 1976, 127–177) Goodman's categories, in contrast to Peirce's, take us back to the surface of inscription. His triad (sketch, score, and script) reinscribes the image/music/text triad, but this time at the level of notation.

Aristotle	Opsis	Melos	Lexis
Barthes	Image	Music	Text
Lacan	Imaginary	Real	Symbolic
Kittler	Film	Gramaphone	Typewriter
Goodman	Sketch	Score	Script
Peirce	Icon	Index	Symbol
Foucault	Seeable	[X]	Sayable
Hume	Similarity	Cause and Effect	Convention
Saussure		Bar	Arbor

I hope it is clear that this table does not postulate some kind of uniformity or even translatability down the columns. The rows are the strong elements, teasing out concepts of semiotics and aesthetics that happen to fall into these precise terms. The columns are merely iconic: they suggest a structural analogy between the ideas of radically different kinds of thinkers. Why, for instance, should we

want to link music with the Lacanian Real? Kittler provides a technical answer based in recording apparatuses and the physical structure of the ear. (Kittler 1999, 74) Nevertheless, the whole point of this table is to produce a set of diagonal, X-shaped reflections that would slash across the rigid order of the columns: the arrows in Saussure's picture of the sign are indices, for sure. But are they not also icons in that they resemble arrows and symbols in that we have to know the convention of pointing? Point at an object to the average dog, and he will sniff your finger, not at the object.

We still have not addressed the most fundamental question, which is why the image/text rupture, the image-text relation, and the imagetext synthesis should be so fundamental to aesthetics and semiotics. Why do disciplines like art history and literary criticism find themselves inexorably converging around encounters of visual and verbal media? Why does the theory of representation itself seem to converge on this primitive binary opposition? My claim is that the imagetext is the convergence point of semiotics, the theory of signs, and aesthetics, the theory of the senses. It is the place where the eye and the ear encounter the logical, analogical, and cognitive relations that give rise to meaning in the first place. David Hume understood the laws of "association of ideas" as a triad very close to Peirce's analysis of the sign. Similarity, cause and effect, and convention are his three laws, corresponding quite precisely to Peirce's icon, index, and symbol. The imagetext, then, is a principle of thought, feeling, and meaning as fundamental to human beings as distinctions (and the accompanying indistinctions) of gender and sexuality. Blake glimpsed this when he asserted that the great Kantian modes of intuition, space and time are gendered as female and male respectively. And Lacan revised the Saussurean picture of the sign by portraying it as a pair of adjacent doors labeled "Men" and "Women," as if the gendered binary (and urinary segregation) was the foundation of semiosis itself. Of course, some will say that we have transcended all these binary oppositions in the digital age, when images have all been absorbed into the flow of information, and transgender persons are moving across sexual binaries. They forget that the dense, sensuous world of the analog does not disappear in the field of ones and zeros: it re-surfaces in the eye and ear ravished by new forms of music and spectacle, and in the hand itself, where "digits" (i.e., fingers) are literalized in the keyboard interface and game controller. Hardly surprising then, that the imagetext can play such a productive role in the range of essays included in this text, embracing poetry and photography, painting and typography, blogs and comics.

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Meta-Representations, Self-Referentiality, Impossible Pictures

1.

Probably all natural languages have sayings and idioms attesting to how language looks after itself: it can cast light on its own nature, on its uses and on the meanings it may express. In other words, language contains a theory relating to itself. For instance, I am thinking of expressions in various languages indicating that an understanding of verbal communicative acts constitutes elementary understanding, or I am thinking of other expressions indicating that many actions must be performed verbally: for example, linguistic means are required in order to make a valid undertaking or oath, to call someone to account, or to give an explanation, and so forth. In Hungarian, such expressions are: "néma gyereknek anyja sem érti a szavát" [even the mother of a speechless child cannot understand his words], "szóból ért az ember" [only words that have been told can be understood], "szaván fogni valakit" [take someone at his word], "szavát adni valamire" [give one's word for something]. Perhaps a similar role is played in English by the following idioms: "a word to the wise is enough," "speak up if you want anything," "take at his word," "give his word," and so forth.

Based on this peculiar capacity of language or on a theory of language expressed in language, it is easy to argue that a comprehensible communicative intent always supposes an explicit act of speech or a comprehensible communicative intent is expressible – if necessary – with an explicit act of speech. This means we must assume that verbal communication takes precedence over other forms of communication. In this way we quickly arrive at the linguistic primacy hypothesis, or more precisely, we encounter the basic semiotic principle which, after Lotman, is understood to mean that our primary semiotic system is natu-

ral language. In the following, I shall call this the *primacy hypothesis.* However, we often feel encouraged to revise this hypothesis, as the relationship between language and the other semiotic systems, or between verbal communication and other forms of communication, raises numerous difficult questions that are worth reexamining.

In the following, having narrowed the problem to the relationship between the verbal and the visual, I should like to examine several *pro* and *contra* arguments. As Mitchell has pointed out, the debate on the relationship between the verbal and the visual has tended to be marred by the idea or attitude that one of them must defeat the other: "One must precede the other, dominate, resist, supplement the other." (Mitchell 1994, 28)

It is worth paying attention to Mitchell's warning, but an examination of the "primacy hypothesis" itself makes it hard to avoid the trap of describing the relationship between the verbal and the visual in terms of radical difference and otherness.

2.

What, indeed, is the primacy hypothesis and from what is it derived? In what sense can one say that elementary understanding is the understanding of a verbal communication?

In response to these questions, the following answers may be given:

a) The linguistic primacy is true in a quantitative sense because one can express more in words than in pictures or visual codes. For example, by using language, one can say something that cannot be depicted. The narratives of the battles of Austerlitz and Borodino in *War and Peace* (1869) or the narrative of the Battle of Waterloo in *The Charterhouse of Parma* (1839) outmatch any possible visual representations of the battles. Is it even possible to paint what even Fabrizio (Fabrice) del Dongo did not see? Nor can paintings and photographs compete with the long description of Lake Como in *The Betrothed* (1827). All this means that the domains the two forms of expression can address in a referential manner differ greatly from each other.

b) Yet just as Manzoni could describe in words Lake Como as a natural landscape, we can also use verbal means to describe pictures, sculptures and other visual works of art. And thus we arrive at the problem of ekphrasis, which is so much discussed nowadays.

Evidently, in most instances, words cannot replace the visual spectacle, or more exactly our experience of that spectacle. However, it is also true that words are needed in order to interpret pictures. We cannot dispense with words when giving meaning to pictures, for this is the very purpose of art history. Art history analyses and interprets pictures in the medium of language, while barely being able to avoid presenting their reproductions.

It may even happen that a verbal description almost replaces a picture in the sense that it precisely and completely conjures up and renders visible the picture for the reader, who then undertakes the work of analysis and interpretation on this basis. At any rate, Foucault's study of Velázquez's *Las Meninas* came very close to this ideal. I think the popularity of his study is due as much to this feat as to the hypothesis the author wished to prove through his analysis. I believe this to be so, even though Foucault adds:

> But the relation of language to painting is an infinite relation. It is not that words are imperfect, or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. (Foucault 1970, 10)

c) The relationship between the visual and the verbal expression is asymmetric. The content of visual representations can be expressed in words to a far greater extent than we can represent visually the content of verbal descriptions. While it appears to be evident that art history can only analyse and interpret pictures verbally, it is almost impossible to imagine the reverse of this. It would be difficult to visually represent (in pictures) the explications of art history. Of course, the question arises: what does "to a far greater extent" mean here? What general validity may we attribute to the statement concerning the asymmetry of the visual and the verbal? For it would be quite possible to provide several counter-examples to the asymmetry hypothesis, including such artistic illustrations in literary works as Botticelli's drawings for the *Divine Comedy*.

d) The primacy hypothesis has a strong structural purpose that has long been emphasised. This can be summed up in the assertion that other semiotic systems are also "languages." When, therefore, we speak of the "language of painting" or visual language in general, we are using the term "language" in a literal sense rather than metaphorically. This means that our visual expressions create structures

similar to linguistic ones (even though they do so with less strictness and formality): for instance, they include both syntactic and semantic dimensions, the *langue* and *parole*, or the distinction between code and text, multi-layer articulation and so forth. I mention here this problem of structural arrangement merely for the sake of order, and I shall not return to it in this paper.

e) An inherent possibility of language is to become the meta-language of itself and of other non-verbal "languages." This relationship does not hold in reverse, or, at least, special practices and certain cultural and institutional circumstances are necessary for it to be realised in reverse. Obviously, the relationship indicated in points b) and c) is also related to this. Yet, as Jakobson has clearly shown, we can speak of a metalinguistic function in the strict sense when in the course of the communicative act the message relates to the code, or when we seek to control, clarify or even alter the *code*.

For this reason, the following should be stated: Although the existence of a metatext is clearly made possible by a metalanguage, the metatext itself – for instance, a critical study of a literary work – is not a metalinguistic phenomenon, as it is still a *text.* It is not a part of the *langue*, but is a *parole-act.*

Concerning pictures, we ought to say the same. Without a doubt, there are examples of what we may call "metapictures." Still, a metapicture is a visual communicative phenomenon at the *parole* level, and it is not an element of a set of signals at a supposed visual metalinguistic level. The question arises: what makes the metavisual act possible? Is it some kind of visual metalanguage? Or is it a natural language serving as a metalanguage of the visual languages? The second answer seems to be the more plausible one.

3.

Let us examine the extent to which the foregoing statements can be criticised or defended and the degree to which they support the primacy hypothesis.

a) A criticism of the quantitative interpretation of the hypothesis could be that it reflects the traditional culture dominating verbal texts. The current range and increasing role of visual communication proves, however, that the visual form of expression is completely autonomous; it bears meaning in itself, and often cannot be replaced by a verbal form of expression. In my view, this current important cultural change does not affect the relationships identified in points

a), b), and c) of the previous section, that is, the quantitative differences between the referential domains of the two forms of expression, and the asymmetry arising between them. The fact that visual means have acquired an extraordinary role in all fields of life does not rule out, in a logical sense, the superimposition of the visual world that fills our culture onto language, which is still the ultimate basis for interpretation and the assignment of meaning.

Later on, it will be worthwhile examining separately the problem of the counter-examples undermining the asymmetry hypothesis – including literary illustrations – thereby it will be worthwhile comparing the visual transpositions of verbal communication with the cases of ekphrasis, that is, with the verbal descriptions of visual representations.

b) One of the strongest arguments for the primacy hypothesis is the "argument from metalanguage." It would seem difficult to deny that a peculiarity of language, not shared by any other human (and non-human) means of communication, is that the metalinguistic function is contained within it, and it is precisely this feature that allows language to serve as a metalanguage for non-verbal systems.

Yet even concerning this rather uncontroversial issue, doubts may arise.

On this point, the primary need is for exact definitions. First, as I have already mentioned, we must be able to differentiate clearly – and in a practical sense – between metalanguage, which relates to the code, and *metatexts*, which relate to texts. A *metatext* is, for example, criticism of a poetic text, inasmuch as it describes the given text in the critical metalanguage. In addition, it fulfils a *metalinguistic function*, inasmuch as it reconstructs the poetics serving as the basis for the text or the underlying code generating the text.

A complicating factor is that *poetic texts themselves also* speak of their poetic nature, rendering visible in some way or other the code that generates them. Put briefly, poetic texts are *themselves* self-referential, and this attribute also plays a role in evoking the poetic effect. This, is turn, gives rise to the need for a further distinction: we need to distinguish the *self-referentiality* that is peculiarly characteristic of poetic texts from the manner in which the *critical metalinguistic discourse* relates to the text.

At the same time, regardless of the extent to which this distinction is necessary, from the viewpoint of poetic self-referentiality, we can only draw a very thin boundary between the two poles – and so it is customarily ignored. Evidently, the poetic message can only refer to itself and can only render visible its own formal structure where it also reveals, in an explicit manner, the code that brought

into being. Accordingly, in this way a metalinguistic component is added to the self-referentiality of the poetic text; that is to say, it becomes a part of the operation of the poetic function guaranteeing the poetry of the text.

In terms of the critical discourse, it is much easier to determine the boundary. The metalinguistic components of the poetic text remain entirely *within* the text, for which reason it may be read as a *metatext of itself*. Criticism, however, in view of its basic function, always relates to *another text* as *its metatext*. It is not *self-referential* in character. Rather, it has a *referential* function, and as such it shares an affinity with scientific types of discourse.

Let us extend what has been said so far about the visual language. Is it not possible to discover in pictures, as works of art, the same kind of self-referentiality that characterises poetic texts? Cannot a picture as an aesthetic message refer to itself? And since the boundary here is so thin, can it not also take on a metalinguistic function?

It is difficult to give answers of general validity to these questions. At any rate, the presence of certain thematic elements can often assist us in interpreting a picture *as a metapicture* and in discovering in the picture the entwining of *poetic self-referentiality* and *metalinguistic logic*. If there is such an example, then it must be Velázquez's *Las Meninas*. I shall return to this below.

4.

First, however, I should like to say a few words about the issue of illustrations produced for literary works and ekphrasis.

a) Theoretically speaking, one of the most important issues is whether illustrations are *translations* or *interpretations* of the illustrated text. The answer clearly depends on the kind of relationship we suppose exists between translation and interpretation. Whatever this may be, it is apparent that an illustration cannot be separated from the literary text. To identify and interpret even Botticelli's Dante illustrations with their fully independent messages, we still require a title – which tells us, for instance, that the drawing in question depicts Beatrice and Dante ascending to the Heaven of the Moon.

The asymmetry hypothesis noted above also applies here. Unlike a pictorial illustration of a literary text, a verbal description is not an illustration of the picture. But nor is it always an analysis, interpretation or intermedial translation, as

it may be suitable for representing – without any reference to physical objects – an existing or non-existing picture. More exactly, it may function as if it were a picture. This is unadulterated ekphrasis; it is what Dante called, with reference to the works of art described in one of the most special parts of the *Comedy*, "visible speech" ("visibile parlare").[1]

The classic example of a description of a *non-existing* picture is the Shield of Achilles. Meanwhile, we find an excellent example of the verbal representation of an *existing* visual model in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (1980). Adso, the hero of the novel, describes the main gateway to the abbey as follows:

> Two straight and unadorned columns stood on either side of the entrance, which opened, at first sight, like a great arch; but from the columns began two embrasures that, surmounted by other, multiple arches, led the gaze, as if into the heart of an abyss, toward the doorway itself, crowned by a great tympanum, supported on the sides by two imposts and in the centre by a carved pillar, which divided the entrance into two apertures protected by oak doors reinforced in metal. (Eco 1984, 28)

This description, which goes on for several pages, acquaints the reader with the main gate of the Moissac Abbey. (Ickert-Schick 1986, 34) The description conjures up a visual image of the gate. More exactly, it creates this image, for in theory there is nothing to prevent a reader, with the necessary powers of imagination, from visualising the gate and from subsequently being able to identify it, even though he may never have seen the Moissac Abbey or a photograph of it. This is not altered by the fact that Eco merges into Adso's account a description of a very similar tympanum adorning the middle gateway of the Basilica of St. Mary Magdalene at Vézelay. (Ickert-Schick 1986, 35) We see here how the author uses verbal means not only to exert a general visual effect, but also to create a specific image of a clearly identifiable object. To emphasize once again, this achievement is not the result of an act of translation or interpretation, but is made on the plane of perception, in the sense that a verbal description is capable, in terms of content, of evoking almost the same objective perception as produced in us by visual stimuli.

1 "This was the speech made visible" (*Purgatorio*, X. 95. In Dante 1995).

b) For my next example, let me borrow from Dante who presents in Cantos X and XII of his *Purgatorio* a whole series of visual works of art – "live caryatids," reliefs, sculptures, and floor drawings. As already noted, for Dante all of this was "visible speech." The following extract is particularly instructive:

> At this, I turned my face and saw beyond
> the form of Mary–on the side where stood
> the one who guided me–another story
>
> engraved upon the rock; therefore I moved
> past Virgil and drew close to it, so that
> the scene before my eyes was more distinct.
>
> There, carved in that same marble, were the cart
> and oxen as they drew the sacred ark,
> which makes men now fear tasks not in their charge.
>
> People were shown in front; and all that group,
> divided into seven choirs, made
> two of my senses speak–one sense said, "No,"
>
> the other said, "Yes, they do sing;" just so,
> about the incense smoke shown there, my nose
> and eyes contended, too, with *yes* and *no.*
> (*Purgatorio,* X. 49–63)

Irrespective of whether or not the poet succeeds here in creating a realistic spectacle (in my view, he does), it is easy to see his expectation: the sculpture has to be perfectly realistic and to impact on all our senses. Meanwhile, he, as the poet, is resolved that his poem should depict the spectacle in an appropriate fashion:

> What master of the brush or of the stylus
> had there portrayed such masses, such outlines
> as would astonish all discerning minds?

> The dead seemed dead and the alive, alive:
> I saw, head bent, heading those effigies,
> as well as those who'd seen those scenes directly.
> (*Purgatorio,* XII. 64–69)

These purgatory works of art *do not exist*. We do not even know whether Dante was emulating models – and, if he was, what these models might have been. Accordingly, we can say that Dante *is not describing* existing works of art but *is creating* non-existent works of art by verbal means. This is a rare phenomenon, but it is not unique: it is sufficient to cite once again the Shield of Achilles or to think of Adrian Leverkühn's symphony.

For this reason, there is a theoretical difference between the description of the Moissac Abbey gate and the example taken from Dante. In terms of our topic, however, perhaps it is better to state that the two examples do not differ from each other in principle; rather, they represent different degrees of verbal evocative strength on the same scale.

c) The Purgatorio examples are noteworthy because Dante chooses a narrative language for the visual representation: in the case of the reliefs, he relates in detail the story they represent, while in the case of the floor drawings, he compresses the story into a single characteristic and dramatic motif. Evidently, this reflects the fact that for him visual art is narrative art in a certain sense.

Descriptive evidence of this narrative-like, or "historical," approach to imagery is the verb "storiare," which appears in the description of the relief depicting Trajan and the widow, and which means "to decorate with historical forms or scenes" ("Quiv' era storiata l'alta gloria del roman principato" [X. 73–74]). The poet's wish is that we should perceive the relief as a divine miracle, for as God's work it does not only seize the moment (as do works of men), but also expresses the successive motifs of the dialogue between the Emperor and the widow. Similarly, the expression "visible speech" aims to unify the simultaneity of vision and the successivity of speech.

Our example would seem to be an excellent instance of the old dilemma that arises when one interprets the relationship between the visual and the verbal, namely how to bridge the gap between simultaneous (visual) representation and narration. Pictures are conventionally regarded as the field of *spatial perception*, but expectations relating to pictures often include the assumption that visuality can also be granted narrative features – at least through some divine miracle.

d) We can add to the series of existing and non-existing works of art (evoked or created by verbal means) a further element: impossible pictures, among them the paradoxical drawings by the artist Escher. In their pictorial form, his paradoxical drawings cannot even exist, as they contradict the logic of space and the spatial and physical conditions of existence. Here too, language has resources that allow for descriptions outside the limits of visual representation, creating visual effects that cannot be achieved by visual means. Let me once again take an example from Dante who, in the final vision of the *Divine Comedy*, portrays the Holy Trinity as three circles of equal circumference and diameter, coincident with each other and in three colours. The poet apparently creates an impossible picture by using the medium of language:

> [...] In the deep and bright
> essence of that exalted Light, three circles
> appeared to me; they had three different colours,
> but all of them were of the same dimension.
> (*Paradiso,* XXXIII. 114–117)

Evidently, it would be quite difficult (indeed impossible) to represent figuratively Dante's last vision, as it is shown by the attempts of many artists. (See Figure 1 and 2 for some examples of illustrations of the final scene of *Paradiso*)

This visually impossible picture raises a further question, for it is part of a series of visions – indeed, it is one of the first visions –, which we can read as the synthetic image of the whole of history.

The direct antecedents of Dante's three circles are Joachim of Fiore's Trinitarian circles in the *Liber figurarum* (Figure 3):

Evidently, the teachings of Joachim, which were considered heretical, could not be espoused openly by Dante. Yet, it has long been known that the prophetic beliefs of the Calabrian abbot exerted a profound influence on Dante's thinking. This is why Dante places Joachim in Paradise and attributes prophetic abilities to him:

> [...] and at my side
> shines the Calabrian Abbot Joachim,
> who had the gift of the prophetic spirit.
> (*Paradiso*, XII. 140–142)

Dante's reference to Joachim's "prophetic spirit" clearly relates to the abbot's prophecy of the third Age, the Age of the Holy Spirit, and to the idea of conceiving history as a whole as a Trinitarian structure. His three – green, blue, and red – circles symbolise the Trinity, but they are also an image of history. Joachim of Fiore, one of the first great Western philosophers of history, conceived history in the form of a Trinitarian structure that included both the past and the future. History, he thought, would pass through three theoretically separate and independent ages, progressing towards the final goal. In the *Divine Comedy*, as mankind's representative Dante travels through the three realms of the afterlife, and we are left in no doubt that his journey is also a historical one. Would it be overstepping the mark to see in his circles this image of history? Is it possible that history, like God, can be represented with the help of a single picture?

5.

Finally, I shall return to the *Las Meninas* (Figure 4).

The quotation below is an extract from Foucault's famous analysis that conjures up the painting:

> Rather than pursue to infinity a language inevitably inadequate to the visible fact, it would be better to say that Velázquez composed a picture; that in this picture he represented himself, in his studio or in a room of the Escurial, in the act of painting two figures whom the Infanta Margarita has come there to watch, together with an entourage of duennas, maids of honour, courtiers, and dwarfs [...] We could then add that the two personages serving as models to the painter are not visible, at least directly; but that we can see them in a mirror; and that they are, without any doubt, King Philip IV and his wife, Mariana. (Foucault 1970, 10)

I would like to add here that the canvas and easel can be seen from behind the left side of the picture, while the painter is looking at his invisible models or at us, the viewers, who are outside the picture and who occupy their place on this side.

Here I should note that Foucault's description and analysis of the picture were called into question by Daniel Arasse on the grounds that Foucault was unacquainted with the history of the painting's creation – which was first revealed during the restoration process – and that the original painting, which had been concealed by over-painting, revealed something quite different: the manner in which this originally dynastic painting had been transformed by changes in the order of succession within the royal family.

I think this historical circumstance does not alter what we see – and what Foucault saw. We find it unquestionable that the painting we see expresses strongly both self-referentiality in the poetic sense and the metalinguistic function relating to its own codes. This is precisely what Foucault is saying when he concludes that this painting by Velázquez is "the representation, as it were, of Classical representation" (Foucault 1970, 16), on which he subsequently bases his entire classical epistemology.

What interests us, however, is that we do seem to have found an example that calls into question our belief that the metalinguistic function is the privilege of verbal language. Of course, the example is an extraordinary one. As W. J. T. Mitchell says:

> The formal structure of *Las Meninas* is an encyclopaedic labyrinth of pictorial self-reference, representing the interplay between the beholder, the producer, and the object or model of representation as a complex cycle of exchanges and substitutions. (Mitchell 1994, 58)

But let us not rush to conclusions. In order to determine that *Las Meninas* is the representation of a representation – moreover a Classical one –, Foucault himself was required to employ a verbal analysis that covered every detail and utilised all opportunities of linguistic creativity. Metapictures – like all pictures – are embedded in the discourse about pictures. In this regard, the main consequence of Foucault's analysis was that it effected a change in the discourse that served as a condition for the picture's reception. Mitchell pointed this out when he wrote: "If Foucault had not written about Las Meninas, it would still be a great masterpiece, but it would not be a meta-picture." (Mitchell 1994, 58)

We see, therefore, that meta-pictures do exist, but their "meta" quality derives from their being used as metapictures. Indeed, one could obviously show that even in visual language the possibility of self-referentiality is far broader than

indicated by the famous cited examples. Even so, it seems likely that pictorial self-referentiality, even at this general level, is secondary to the discourse in which a given picture is embedded.

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Assembling, Being, Embodying: Early Modern Emblem and Device as Body, Soul, and Metaphor

In his *Imagination poetique* (Aneau 1552a, 9), the erudite French humanist Barthélemy Aneau published a clever personal device (Figure 1), whose point sprang from a witty pun on the names of his parents. The device consisted of a ring ("anneau" in French, represented as an ouroboros) and a rose with the motto "Pardurable, peu durable."[1] In an accompanying sonnet, Aneau advises his reader that not having been born into the nobility, he had had no alternative but to construct arms for himself in order to have any device whatsoever. My contention in this article is that Aneau's device is deliberately transgressive and subversive, socially and semiotically. As will become apparent, it is also a highly sophisticated metaphorical, polymorphic, and polysemous construction that neatly recapitulates, encapsulates, and anticipates some key developments in early modern theories of intermediality, and specifically those that concerned the function of text and image in those related bimedial genres, the device and the emblem. In concretizing the metaphorical fusion of body and soul on several levels (as lexical and visual, corporeal and spiritual, parental and filial, material and immaterial), Aneau's personal device, in fact, gradually transforms itself into a generalized "emblem of the device."

To understand how and why Aneau undertakes this transformative process, it will first be necessary to review some of the fundamental distinctions between

1 A rough attempt to capture the flavor of this motto in English might give "Everlasting, ever passing" (all translations are my own). The *Imagination poetique* is a vernacular French translation of Aneau's Latin emblem book *Picta poesis*, which had appeared earlier the same year. (Aneau 1552) His personal device appears there as well, with the Greek motto "B. Anuli Σφραγίδιον. Αιώνιον, καὶ Πρόσκαιρον" [the mark of B. Aneau. Eternal, and transient; note that all translations in this article are the work of the author unless otherwise indicated].

emblem and device, the two closely related genres cherished by early modern humanists. Both emblem and device are bimedial, combining pictures and textual fragments into a single coherent whole. The device, arising from the Italian *impresa*, is normally a bipartite form, with a single image accompanied by a short motto, while the canonical form of the emblem, the so-called *emblema triplex*, is usually tripartite, since the visual image normally has both a motto (often called the *inscriptio*), and a short text, usually in verse, called the *subscriptio*. Despite this apparent clarity, and despite a great deal of after-the-fact theorizing, both forms are in practice marked by a much higher degree of diversity than these simple formulae would suggest, and recent scholarship has been more inclined to see the emblem in particular as structurally indeterminate or multiform.[2]

Socially, however, matters are somewhat simpler: the device is considered a noble genre relative to the emblem; bourgeois or common, the latter is the province of learned moralizing humanists such as Andrea Alciato, whose *Emblematum liber*, published without authorization by the Augsburg printer Heinrich Steyner in 1531 from a manuscript copy of Latin epigrams written by Alciato and circulated to a few of his friends, laid the foundation for what became a pervasive fad that lasted through the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth. Both emblem and device are part of a context of bimedial genres related both to medieval heraldic practice and to such common punning forms as printers' devices and the rebuses commonly deployed by tradesmen.

Whatever their differences in origin, status, and form, however, the two genres are functionally quite distinct. The device encapsulates the history or aspirations of a noble individual, while the emblem develops and asserts a generalized moral lesson. In other words, the device is personal, aspirational, and self-contained, while the emblem is didactic, generalizing, and moralizing: it "breaks its own referential frame" in order to speak directly to the reader, who is thereby enlisted in a moralizing project of continuous self-betterment. (Graham 1993, passim)

2 Much has been written since the seventeenth century about the form of these genres, and scholars still disagree about many of the fundamental requirements. As will be clear, however, my own strongly held view is that while the forms of emblem and device are highly variable, they differ functionally in fundamental ways. While the emblema triplex is still frequently considered the standard form, actual authorial and publishing practice varied considerably, with emblems having as few as two parts (as in Guillaume de La Perrière's *Theatre des bons engins*) or sometimes many more: multiple titles, several commentaries, and so forth. For more on this topic, see Graham 2005, and Mödersheim 2005. For the most recent version of my definition of the emblem as a "unique bimedial (hybrid) moralizing polyform", see Graham 2016, 31.

These distinctions will be crucial to an understanding of how Aneau's personal device fits into the functional context of his own emblem book and of the emblem as a European genre.

Functionally, emblem and device are read and experienced very differently, as Daniel Russell and others have demonstrated. (Russell 1985; 1995) In the device, a short motto and simple visual image immediately combine or fuse into a gestalt symbol intended to stand ever after for the individual who bears the device. In the emblem, which is structurally and semiotically more complex, a lengthier, iterative, recursive reading of a picture and multiple textual fragments results in the gradual crystallization of an intended meaning, derived from the newly created whole that has been assembled (by author, by printer, then by reader) from the textual and visual fragments. Socially, the device—descending in a direct line from heraldic tradition—is associated with the nobility, and the most famous devices are those of kings and princes: the "Cominus et eminus" [From near and far] porcupine of Louis XII (easily seen at the Château de Blois), François Ier's salamander engulfed in flame with the motto "Nutrisco et extinguo" [I nourish and extinguish] (at Chambord and elsewhere), and Charles V's two pillars of Hercules with the words "Plus ultra" [Farther beyond] (now the national emblem of Spain) all come to mind immediately.[3] The device is thus associated with and expressed the aspirations of an individual; it displays these aspirations for all to see, and thus exalts its bearer in the public eye, but has nothing to teach. The emblem, on other hand, generalizes and moralizes its lesson, which is open to anyone who cares to read it. Structurally, as we have seen, the device is normally deemed to be not only bimedial but bipartite, with an image and a motto only;[4] the canonical form of the emblem is the *emblema triplex*, where these two parts are accompanied by a second short text (often called the *subscriptio*), usually in verse, which interacts with motto (or *inscriptio*) and the image or *pictura* to form a complex whole. From the point of view of the reading process, too, emblem

3 The latter two may be found in Paradin's well-known *Devises heroiques* (first published 1551, then again in 1557, with the addition of explanatory texts). For François Ier, see <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm815_b1r> (1551) or <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm816_p016> (1557); for Charles V, <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm816_p029> (1557).

4 As noted above, the first edition of Paradin displays the 118 devices in this form, with a motto and image on each page; the second edition, expanded to include 162 compositions, includes for each a prose commentary that in some cases acts to transform the device into an emblem, in a way entirely analogous to Aneau's treatment of his own device.

and device are experienced very differently by the reader: the device is perceived in an instant, as a gestalt in which image and text immediately fuse to create the stylized expression of noble aspiration; in the emblem, an image that is often far more complex and heterogeneous, interacts iteratively and at length with the textual components in a process of reading that acts in such a way as to resolve the tensions inherent in an enigma posed by the initial impression created by the first sight of image and motto.

Barthélemy Aneau was an erudite early modern humanist whose *Emblemes d'Alciat* (1549) was one of the first vernacular translations of Alciato's Latin epigrams. He was also a prototypical emblem theorist whose keen interest in emblem and device theory is demonstrated in his prefaces to Alciato and to his own works, and the author of emblem books and works of illustrated natural history, among others *Imagination poétique* (1552), itself a vernacular translation of his own emblematic *Picta poesis*, which had appeared in Latin a few months earlier. In both the Latin and the French editions of his emblems, Aneau includes near the front of the volume a witty personal device, designed, he says, by himself: the image consists of a ring (in the form of an Ouroboros) interlinked with a rose, and is accompanied by the punning, rhyming motto "Pardurable, peu durable." As with all puns, the motto is untranslatable, strictly speaking, though a rough English analogy might be "Everlasting, ever passing": "pardurable" means "everlasting," while "peu durable" means "ephemeral." Structurally, the device is anomalous, in that Aneau appends to it an explanatory sonnet (in the French version): functionally, it thus has three rather than the canonical two parts, and contemporary readers would have noted its structural resemblance to other emblems of the period.

In assembling an emblem from the components of his personal device, Aneau deploys a range of compositional, rhetorical, and intertextual techniques. As we have seen, the fundamental structural difference between device and emblem turns on the fact that the device is normally considered bipartite and the emblem tripartite, and Aneau uses this difference to advantage. As we shall see, however, his approach is far more sophisticated than this simple structural variation would immediately suggest. His use of self-referential rhetoric allows him to signal the status of his device as a rhetorical construct, not an inherited quasi-heraldic token to which he has any right by birth. His device thus calls out for validation, which he achieves through a multi-layered and multi-level process of intertextual embedding, in which his composition progressively achieves added

status through iconic (that is to say pictorial resemblance), indexical (the use of "pointers" embedded in image or text), and symbolic (or metaphorical/theoretical) means.[5]

He thus begins his sonnet which is clearly to be read in conjunction with the image and motto—note the use of deixis to refer to the two visual components of the image (the ring and rose) through the typographical emphasis given in the first quatrain to the equivalent names of his father and mother: "Aneau" (homophone of "anneau" [ring]) and "Rose" (his mother's first name, metaphorically represented by the image of the flower):

> EXTRAICT de gens non gentilz, n'apparens,
> Armes je n'ay nobles de mes parens.
> Mon pere eut nom ANEAU, ma mere, ROSE.
> Du nom des deux ma marque je compose.
> [Born of common folk, undistinguished, I have no noble arms
> from my parents. My father's name was Aneau, my mother's, Rose.
> From both their names, my mark I do compose.]

He thus deliberately and subversively appropriates the noble genre of the personal device, to which—as he is at pains to signal in the first two lines—he has no right by birth. Unlike the devices of kings and princes, which as we have seen represent aspirations and expressions of power, and which may be transmitted from generation to generation by line of descent,[6] Aneau's thoroughly bourgeois device is a new sign ("marque") derived from and punning on the names of his parents (l. 3), thus transferring effectively their immaterial names to the material dimension, and so presumably immortalizing them. Rather than being inherited, or granted, Aneau's device is thus invented, appropriated, and made or assembled ("je compose") from found fragments. Lacking the authority bestowed by history and familial status, it must therefore be validated somehow if it is to have any credibility beyond the mere claims asserted by its author.

5 I use these terms in the sense intended by the American philosopher and founder of semiotics C. S. Peirce, insofar as it is possible to discern his intention; for clarification, see below, and Graham 2011.

6 The porcupine device of Louis XII and its motto were thus derived from a device originated by his grandfather, Louis Ier, duc d'Orléans, who had founded an "Order of the Porcupine" with that motto at the time of his son's birth in 1394.

Aneau achieves this validation, gradually transforming his anomalous "device" into an emblem, through an intricately progressive series of intratextual and intertextual cultural insertions. It is worth noting that Aneau's emblem of marriage appears almost immediately after his device in his emblem book. The sense of the marriage emblem (Figure 2) is that man and woman become one in marriage, as is symbolized by the visual metaphor of the hermaphrodite. The ring, which, as we have seen, is an essential component of Aneau's device, reappears in this emblem where it is presented by the male half of the Hermaphrodite (or Androgyne) to the female half as a token of eternal union. The complicated knot visible in the center of the emblematic image conceals not only the hermaphrodite's female sex, but also the paradoxical ideal fusion of male and female itself, which is analogous to and reminiscent of the fusion of Aneau's own parents in his device, and thus of his own origins as their offspring. His marriage emblem thus takes up the themes previously articulated in his device, compounding and reinforcing them, as male and female, visual and textual, concrete and abstract, noble and bourgeois categories are united to give birth to a new, vigorous emblematic hybrid.

His next step, in the second quatrain of the sonnet, is to stake an implicit claim to ancient authority by inserting his device into an intertextual allegorical symbolic web, using the symbol of the ring as the focal point.

> L'Aneau, Serpent en soy se retordant,
> Par cercle rond, queüe en teste mordant:
> Et en figure Hieroglyphicque, Note
> Qui en Aegypte Aeternité denote.
>
> [The Ring, Serpent on itself bent back, in a round circle, biting tail with head: and in a Hieroglyphic figure, note which Eternity in Egypt denotes.]

By asserting this "hieroglyphic" authority, he immediately removes any need to claim originality or noble lineage for his device, which is thereby exempted from any further substantiation of its connection to any noble or heraldic context of origin—normally required, but absent here—and reinserted into a new metaphorical and symbolic framework, at whose center lies the Ouroboros that forms the wedding ring in his device. The Ouroboros has plenty of counterparts in the emblematic and symbolic literature. For Horapollo, the Ouroboros represents

both Time and the "machinery of the world": in the 1543 Kerver edition of the *Hieroglyphica*, it appears as the very first hieroglyph (A2v); the Basilisk covering its own tail represents eternity. As Christian Bouzy has pointed out in relation to emblematic frontispieces, however, these images—the Basilisk and the Ouroboros—soon become fused in the Renaissance, in what he calls

> ...la codification iconographique de l'époque, diffusée par Valeriano et dérivée de manière frelatée des *Hieroglyphica* d'Horapollon. En effet, il s'agit d'une confusion devenue habituelle à la Renaissance entre l'hiéroglyphique du serpent qui se mord la queue et l'hiéroglyphique immédiatement antérieur de l'*Uraeus* (le Basilic qui couvre sa queue). A l'origine, la forme du serpent circulaire qui prend dans sa gueule l'extrémité de son corps représentait l'univers."[7] (Bouzy 2009, 388)
>
> [...the iconographical encoding of the age, disseminated by Valeriano and derived in an adulterated way from the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollo. In fact, we have here a conflation that had become habitual in the Renaissance, between the hieroglyphic of the serpent biting its own tail and the immediately prior hieroglyphic of the *Uraeus* (the Basilisk covering its tail). In the beginning, the shape of the circular serpent taking the extremity of its own body into its jaws stood for the universe.]

As Bouzy intimates, Horapollo had indeed devoted not one but two of his "hieroglyphs" to these images, but the two soon fused, and in emblem books, it is typically the Ouroboros, and not the basilisk or Uraeus, that is taken to represent eternity.

The image is common in the early emblematic literature, beginning with Alciato, who included an epigram on the subject of literary immortality in the original version of his emblem book, first published in un unauthorized edition by

7 See Valeriano: "Mundum universum Aegyptii sacerdotes scribere volentes, Anguem qui caudam propriam depasceretur, eúmque variis insignem maculis pingebant...." [Wishing to write the universe, the priests of Egypt would paint a serpent that consumed its own tail, distinguishing it with various spots] (f. 102v). In Horapollo, the Baslisk and Ouroboros are the first two hieroglyphs cited (1543, A2v-A3r), and the distinction noted by Bouzy is indeed respected.

the Augsburg printer Heinrich Steyner in 1531. Aneau himself provided a French translation of Alciato in 1549, in which this emblem appears under the title "Par les estudes des lettres immortalité est acquise" [Through the study of letters, immortality is acquired]. (Figure 3) Following his translation of Alciato's epigram, Aneau adds the following brief explanation of the emblem: "Le Triton marin designe haulte eloquence, & profonde science, le rond & en soy revolu serpent, aeternité, la conque ou il corne. [sic] Renommée. Par lesquelles choses est signifiée aeternelle renommée de science, & d'eloquence" [The marine Triton designates high eloquence and deep learning; the round serpent bent back on itself, eternity; the conch or horn, renown.] Well before the publication of his own emblem book, then, Aneau had clearly grasped the significance of the ouroboros ring.

Alciato and Aneau were by no means alone in this: the ouroboros appears in one form or another in several other emblem books of the time, including La Perrière's *Le theatre des bons engins* (1540. Figure 4), Guillaume Gueroult's *Premier livre des emblemes* (1550), Pierre Coustau's *Le Pegme* (1555. Figure 5), Adrien le Jeune's *Emblemata* (1565), and Claude Paradin's book of "heroic devices" (1557. Figure 6). In most of these cases, as in Alciato, the Ouroboros stands for eternity,[8] and Aneau was thus by no means alone in using it as a visual metaphor to link his father's name with the kind of eternal glory promised by the study and practice of letters, his chosen trade. In doing so, he not only neatly circumvented his lack of noble antecedents (since belonging to a noble family would normally confer its own eternal glory), but once again subversively undermined the status of his device, transforming it from something usurped to something he fully owned.

> LA Rose aussi, qui flaistrit, & perit:
> Des le jour mesme auquel elle florit:
> Mortalité represente.
> [The Rose too, which withers and dies: on the same day on which it flowers; stands for Mortality.]

8 The exceptions are La Perrière, where the serpent symbol is attributed to the Phoenicians as a sign of prudent self-knowledge, and Guéroult, who takes up the traditional tale from popular natural history of the viper taking the snake's head in its mouth in order to conceive. Guéroult's image, though reminiscent of the Ouroboros, thus in fact deviates significantly enough from it to be set aside; La Perrière's is more akin to that of Alciato, though the focus is different. Coustau gives the image a neat twist of his own by making the point that the ancient Egyptian symbol of eternity might equally well be applied to the never-ending court cases of his own day!

Aneau's treatment of the rose in the first tercet of his sonnet is similar in some respects to his filtering of the ouroboros image, though in this case the intertextuality is poetic and literary rather than emblematic. The image of the rose "withering and dying in a single day" would have been immediately familiar to Aneau's readers as a contemporary commonplace. A famous ode by Pierre de Ronsard, the "Ode à Cassandre," neatly encapsulates the metaphor in its allegory likening the fleeting nature of female beauty to the rose which blooms and withers in a single day. As Paul Laumonier showed more than a century ago (Laumonier 1909, 113), Ronsard's use of the metaphor underwent rapid evolution between 1550, when he deployed it in the first book of his odes, and 1553, when the famous ode to his young lover Cassandre de Salviati first appeared in print: the early odes were inspired primarily by the aesthetic of Horace, while by the time he published the later ode, he was leaning far more heavily on other sources, including the Greek Anthology, Ausonius, and Catullus. In this, of course, Ronsard was drawing inspiration from some of the same sources as Alciato, and Aneau's use of the rose metaphor, like Ronsard's ode, was thus perfectly in tune with both the literary and learned climate of his time. By resorting to it, he seamlessly embedded his personal device into a literary and cultural matrix, derived from both contemporary and ancient literary practice that added substantially to its moral and intellectual authority.

> Et pourtant
> Que d'ame, & corps est mon estre constant:
> D'UN corps mortel, & d'une ame immortelle:
> Armes des noms je porte, en marque telle.
>
> [And yet, my being is constant in soul and body: from a mortal body, and immortal soul; arms from [their] names I bear, as a mark thereof.]

The final step in Aneau's sonnet, in which the second tercet is solidly linked to the first through the use of *enjambement*, fuses father and mother, body and soul, mortality and immortality, into his own personal device ("marque"). As the author performs his own device and merges with it, achieving the union of body (image) and soul (text), Aneau summons up a third intertextual web, namely that of contemporary early modern emblem theory, in which the body/soul met-

aphor occupied pride of place. Aneau's own commitment to this metaphor is quite explicit: in his preface to the *Imagination poetique*, he recounts how the work originated in his discovery of a set of woodcuts, owned by the printer Macé Bonhomme, which had no texts to accompany them: "Alors je estimant que sans cause n'avoient esté faictes, luy promis que de muetes, & mortes, je les rendroie parlantes, & vives: leur inspirant ame, par vive Poësie" [So I, reckoning that they had not been fashioned without cause, promised him that from mute and dead I would render them vocal and alive: instilling in them a soul through living poesy] (Aneau 1552a, 14). In other words, Aneau's texts, in his conception of the emblem, function to give both voice and life—and thus a soul—to the "dead body" of the visual images.

As evidence of the malleability of sixteenth-century emblem theory, it is worth noting that the prefaces to the first and third editions of La Perrière's *Theatre des bons engins* (1540, ca. 1542) contain at least one significant revision (Graham 2005, 71); the volume contains either "cent Emblemes moraulx, accompaignez de cent dixains uniformes, declaratifz, & *illustratifz d'iceulx*" [one hundred moral emblems, accompanied by a hundred ten-line verses that are uniform, declaratives, and *illustrative of them*] (1540), or "cent Emblemes, auec autant de dizains declaratifz, & *illustrez d'iceulx*" [a hundred emblems, with as many declarative ten-line stanzas *illustrated by them*] (1542; emphasis added). Do the texts illustrate the images, or vice versa? Even La Perrière, who wrote the texts, seems uncertain of this key point. Given this uncertainty, Aneau's device may provide important insights into the status of early emblem theory. Writing of Aneau's device, François Cornilliat has pointed out that at this stage, emblem theory was still in its infancy: "L'idéologie de l'emblème — encore balbutiante à cette date — se plaît ainsi à dessiner, entre le verbe et l'image, une symétrie « pour l'œil », dont la séduction ne va pas jusqu'à remettre en cause l'avantage spirituel du texte" [The ideology of the emblem—still in its infancy at this date—is thus pleased to sketch, between word and image, a symmetry "for the eye," whose seductiveness does not go so far as to call into question the spiritual advantage of the text]. (Cornilliat 1990, 26–27)

This metaphorical linking of text and image with body and soul in the device, and of related bimedial genres such as the emblem, would in fact become axiomatic, an uncontested commonplace of seventeenth-century Jesuit thinking on the subject; in fact, one might legitimately claim that the concept lies at the very heart of their theoretical treatises. Ultimately derived from Paulo Giovio

(1483–1552),[9] their oft-repeated analogy treats the image as the "body" and the text as the "soul" of the two main bimedial genres; as in human beings, the fusion of body and soul allows these genres to create new meanings from existing fragments. A glance at the works of the prolific Jesuit theorist Claude-François Ménestrier (1631–1705) quickly demonstrates just how widespread and deeply embedded this metaphor was. In his original *Art des Emblemes* of 1662,[10] Ménestrier describes the device as follows:

> LES DEVISES, sont des peintures ingenieuses, qui sous les proprietez des choses naturelles, ou artificielles & leurs representations accompagnées de quelques mots qui servent d'ame à ces corps, nous expriment les sentimens Héroïques des personnes illustres. (Ménestrier 1662, 11)
>
> [Devices are clever paintings which, under the properties of natural or artificial things, and their representations accompanied by a few words that serve as soul to these bodies, express for us the heroic feelings of illustrious persons.]

In *La Philosophie des Images* (1682), Ménestrier lists nearly 50 theorists of the device and emblem, of whom the earliest is Giovio. Ménestrier summarizes the rules that Giovio had articulated in his *Dialogo dell'Imprese* (1555),[11] of which the first, he writes, is: "qu'il y ayt une juste proportion entre le corps & l'ame; ce que l'Embleme demande aussi bien que la devise" [that body and soul should be proportionate; something the emblem requires as well as the device]. He then quotes Giovio's fifth rule as requiring that the motto of devices should normally be in a language other than that of the bearer: "La cinquième, qu'il y ait un mot, qui soit court sans estre obscur, et qu'il soit dans un [sic] autre langue que celle de la personne qui porte cette Devise" [The fifth, that there be a motto, which

9 For an interesting assessment of the French context for Giovio's *Dialogo*, first posthumously published in 1555, but presumably in circulation well before that date, see Maffei 2007, 35–38.
10 Ménestrier published two works under the same title, in 1662 and 1684: despite this superficial similarity, they differ entirely in their content, and should not be confused.
11 Though first published in 1555, the Dialogo was written earlier, as Giovio died in 1552; a French translation was published in 1561 by the prolific Lyons publisher Guillaume Rouillé under the title Dialogue des devises d'armes et d'amours. Rouillé also published a number of emblem books.

should be short without being obscure, and which should be in a language other than that of the person who bears this device].[12]

In his 1662 *Art des emblemes*, Ménestrier cites many other theorists, including Emanuele Tesauro. Ménestrier quotes Tesauro's *Cannocchiale Aristotelico* of 1654 as saying that any bimedial genre must be:

> composé d'un corps & d'une ame, c'est à dire de figures & de mots, & certes, quoy qu'en ayt dit au contraire Ruscelli. Les simples figures des choses naturelles, historiques, fabuleuses, ou artificielles, ne font jamais Embleme ny deuise, si ce n'est lors qu'on les explique, & cette explication leur tient lieu d'ame & de mot, autrement ce sont des representations simples d'une chose. Les seules figures Allégoriques peuvent estre Emblème sans mots, comme quand on represente la Fortune sur une boule ou sur une roue, pour apprendre qu'elle est inconstante. (Ménestrier 1662, 26)
>
> [composed of a body and a soul, which is to say, of figures and words, and most certainly despite whatever Ruscelli may have said to the contrary. The simple figures of natural, historical, fabulous, or artificial things never make an emblem or device, unless they are explained, and this explanation takes the place of their soul and motto, for otherwise they are simply depictions of a thing. Only allegorical figures can be an emblem without words, as when Fortune is depicted on a globe or a wheel, so as to teach us that she is inconstant.]

Ménestrier thus echoes Aneau's much earlier assertion that the images remain lifeless until the text breathes life into them. He was far from alone in this; in his *Elogia sacra* of 1664, for example, the Jesuit Pierre L'Abbé writes as follows:

12 In the *Dialogo dell'Imprese*, Giovio had articulated these principles somewhat differently. Speaking of them as "conditions," he suggests that they are as follows: "Prima, giusta proportione d'anima & di corpo; ...Quinta, richiede il motto, che è l'anima del corpo, & vuole essere communement d'una lingua diversa dall'Idioma di colui, che fa l'impresa, perche il sentimento sia alquanto più coperto..." (1555, 12) [First, correct proportion of soul and body; ...Fifth, the motto requires, that it be the soul of the body, and commonly expects to be in a language other than that of the person who creates the impresa, so that the feeling may be somewhat hidden...]

> Emblema picturis, & verbis constat plerunque, et totum corpus allegoricum est, aliud ostentans, & aliud adumbrans; admittit plures figuras humanas & divinas, easque integras; & plura carmina & verba allegoriam explicantia; Et pati potest lemma aliquod aut Epigramma, quod adumbratam personam appellet, eique emblema applicet; atque haec apodosis quamvis extranea emblemati, juvat tamen lectorem ne emblem quod videt, aenigma putet. (L'Abbé 1664, 427)
>
> [The emblem consists for the most part of pictures and words, and its entire substance [lit. "body"] is allegorical, both revealing and sketching in; it admits of several complete human and divine figures, and of several verses, and words expounding the allegory; and it may suffer some *lemma* or epigram, which may make known the person being sketched, may apply the emblem to him; and this *apodosis* however extraneous to the emblem, nevertheless delights the reader, lest he suppose the emblem that he is seeing to be an enigma.]

L'Abbé goes on to add that "Symbolum pictura et lemmate constat, seu ut loquitur vulgus corpore et anima" (L'Abbé 1664, 429) [The symbol consists of a picture and an epigram, or as people say, of a body and a soul]. In his second *Art des Emblemes* (1684), Ménestrier loosely translates L'Abbé as follows, making the body-soul metaphor more apparent and explicit in the process:

> Le Père l'Abbé donne ces quatre parties aux Emblêmes. La Peinture, qu'il nomme le Corps Allegorique; le Mot, qui applique l'Allegorie ou les Figures à un sujet particulier; les Vers, qui explique & les Figures & le Mot pour en faire un sens complet; & le Titre, qui marque la fin ou l'occasion de l'Emblême, ou qui en est l'adresse à une personne particuliere: & quelque fois au lieu de ce titre il veut que l'on y mette une Apodose ou une application plus expresse. (Ménestrier 1684, 170)
>
> [Father L'Abbé attributes these four parts to emblems. The painting, which he calls the allegorical body; the motto, which applies the allegory or figures to a particular subject; the verses, which

> explain both figures and motto so as to provide their complete meaning; and the title, which marks the end or occasion of the emblem, or which addresses it to a particular person; and sometimes, instead of this title, he wants it to have a *apodosis* or more express application.]

For Dominique Bouhours, in *Les Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* (1671), the device is simply an extended metaphor "qui represente un objet par un autre avec lequel il a de la ressemblance" [that represents one object by another with which it shares a resemblance]. (Bouhours 1671, 279) Like Pierre L'Abbé, Bouhours treats the body-soul metaphor for image and text as a well-established commonplace: "On a donné à la Figure le nom de Corps, & aux Paroles celuy d'Ame, parce que comme le corps, & l'ame joints ensemble font un composé naturel, certaines figures, & certaines paroles estant unies font une devise" [The figure has been given the name of body, and the words that of soul, because as body and soul conjoined make up a natural composite, certain figures and certain words, being united, make up a device]. (Bouhours 1671, 283)[13]

Aneau thus transforms his device in three phases. He begins by assembling the (existing) visual and (new) textual parts of his device to fuse image and text (body and soul), and by ironically and self-referentially appropriating a noble genre to which he acknowledges he is not entitled (thus cancelling it). As he then becomes the subject of his own device (as his parents' offspring), and as he explains, generalizes, and validates it through intertextual insertion, the device becomes a meta-device or emblem of the device (structurally and functionally). Both he and his device embody and thus actualize the polysemous body-soul metaphor used by theorists to characterize both form and process in the two bimedial genres, anticipating Aneau's own emblem of marriage as well as much later developments in emblem theory.

The analogy linking soul and body to text and image is in fact but the final facet of a complex series of extended metaphors. As the human being springs from the fusion of body and soul, so does the emblem and device arise from their in-

13 Many other antecedents for this tradition could readily be quoted, including Henri Estienne's well-known L'Art de faire les devises; among the most widely known theorists, Girolamo Ruscelli's Le imprese illustri of 1566 provides a rare exception to the general rule established in the wake of Aneau by Giovio and his successors, as Ménestrier acknowledges. On Ménestrier's emblem theory and the question of body and soul in particular, see especially Loach 1987 and 2002 and Graham 2016b.

trinsic bimediality (or fusion of text and image). Just as the human being proves to be a complex and frequently paradoxical creature—fusing the heavenly with the diabolical, the immortal with the mortal, and immaterial with material, the emblem and device inherit, through the body/soul metaphor, this inherent complexity and richness. Situated at the intersection of multiple conflicting and indeed diametrically opposite but inherent characteristics, the human being—like the device and emblem—is thus a fusion of opposites, combining the divine and the diabolical, the immortal with the mortal, and the immaterial with the material. Beginning with the strictly personal (his own father and mother, his humble origins, his lack of any entitlement to a noble device), he contrives to progress iteratively, with his next step being the material realm (the visual representation of those antecedents through the image of ring and rose, thus making the abstract concrete for his reader). He then manages to embed the physical objects that stand metaphorically for his parents in a higher and more abstract plane, moving smoothly to give them luster and legitimacy through repeated referential validation arising from the ancient (the "hieroglyphic" Ouroboros of eternity, the literary rose of ephemeral human beauty), all the while maintaining the fundamental tensions between male and female, noble and common, physical and immaterial, earthly and heavenly. The final step is for him to move the discussion away from himself completely by making clear that the construction of his "personal device" is in fact but one example of a widespread humanist phenomenon of bimedial composites, in which "body" and "soul" no longer stand for two individuals only but for the component parts of a new androgynous text-image composite whose significance extends far beyond the transient frame of his own existence.

Aneau's apparently simple "device" is thus in reality an astonishingly rich and complex emblematic construction. It begins by elevating biography to a symbolic level; lacking historical authority, it meticulously self-validates through multiple intertexts. Aneau not only ingeniously embodies himself and his parents in the device, but embodies the device itself by transforming it into an emblematic recapitulation of how his own body-soul picture theory actually works in practice, thereby brilliantly anticipating subsequent theoretical developments. He enacts and concretizes the transformation of ephemeral word/soul to durable text/soul, breathing corporeal reality ("life") into the "dead body" of the device image, transforming the "peu durable" to "pardurable," making what was mortal, immortal. In standing as bimedial symbol not just of one individual (and his parents), however gifted, but of the device itself and its place in contemporary so-

ciety, Aneau's ring, rose, and sonnet thus become a true emblem that generalizes and validates the entire Renaissance Humanist project.

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Pathopoeia: Toward a Poetics of the Soul from Tudor Rhetorical Treatises to Shakespearean Texts

Humoral vs. Rhetorical: Two Accounts of the Passions

Early modern understandings of the passions revolve around the problematic relations between body and soul.[1] *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1601, 2nd ed. 1604), a psychological treatise written by the English Jesuit Thomas Wright, provides the key to two different views of these relations that are at the basis of contemporary critical approaches. The first is the so-called *humoral* approach. If we attend to Wright's lengthy description:

> As the motions of our Passions are hid from our eyes, so they are hard to bee perceived; yet for the speculation of this matter, I think it most necessary, to declare the way and manner of them [...] First then, to our imagination commeth, by sense or memorie, some obiect to be knowne, convenient or disconvenient to Nature, the which being knowne (for *ignoti nulla cupido*) in the imagination which resideth in the former part of the braine, [...] when we imagine any thing, presently the purer spirites flocke from the brayne, by certayne secret channels to the heart, where they pitch at the doore, signifying what an obiect was pretended, convenient

1 The present research has been carried out under the auspices of the Research Project "English Poetic and Rhetorical Treatises of the Tudor Period" (FFI2010-19279).

> or disconvenient for it. The heart immediately bendeth, either to prosecute it, or to eschewe it: and the better effect that affection, draweth other humours to helpe him, and so in pleasure concurre great store of pure spirites; in payne and sadnesse, much melancholy blood, in ire, blood and choler; and not onely ... the heart draweth, but also the same soule that informeth the heart residing in other partes, sendeth the humours vnto the heart, to performe their service in such a woorthie place: in like maner as when we feele hunger (caused by the sucking of the liver and defect of nourishment in the stomacke) the same soul which informeth the stomacke, resideth in the hand, eyes, mouth; and in case of hunger, subordinateth them all to serve the stomacke, and satisfie the appetite thereof. Even so, in the hunger of the heart, the spleen, the liver, the bloode spirites, choler, and melancholy, attende and serve it most diligently. (Wright 1604, B4r-B4v)

In Wright's conception, a process that originates in the intellective soul takes immediate possession of the body through the workings of the animal soul, whose spirits animate a series of bodily reactions and effects. The soul acts as a herald, informing the heart and sending the humors to it. The passions are thus called — metaphorically — "the hunger of the heart." In consonance with Aristotelian ideas, body and soul, though independent of each other, seem to share one inseparable essence. Accounts like Wright's substantiate the "corporeal" or "humoral" turn in recent criticism towards what Gail Paster has labelled a "phenomenology of early modern passions." In Paster's words, "narratives of passion take place in an imagined physical and physiological environment epistemically prior to post-Enlightenment dualism" (Paster 2004, 244). Paster's work is representative of a challenge to dualistic interpretations of the early modern subject. Against post-Cartesian habits of imagining separate realms for body and soul, Paster draws attention to "the overarching unity of physical and psychological in early modern behavioral theory" (Paster 2004, 76). This embodied materiality of the passions should encourage interpretations that shun the risk of reading "abstraction and bodily metaphor" where "materiality and literal reference" to the body are meant (Paster 2004, 26). Thus in the First Player's tale in *Hamlet*, Paster suggests that we read Pyrrhus's passionate reaction, "roasted in wrath and fire," as proof of "an embodied subject spilling beyond the boundaries of

organized selfhood, a subject more like a material site, an intensity of desiring matter." (Paster 2004, 43)[2]

And yet, if passionate human beings were to be conceived as literally inflamed in a furnace of humors, then the allegorical logic behind many literary and emblematic representations would need to be put under question. How should we account for the status of love and sorrow in the following instance from Otto Vaenius' *Amorum Emblemata* (1608)?[3]

> *Sunt Lacrymae testes / Loues teares are his testimonies*.
> The teares of loue do serue for witnessing his wo,
> His ardent loue the fyre, the fournace is his harte,
> The wynd that blowes it, sighs, that rise from inward smarte,
> The limbeke his two eyes, from whence his teares do flow.
> (Vaenius 1996, Emblem 95)

Vaenius relies on previous emblematic sources in La Perriere's *Les theatres des bons ensigns* (1540, Emblem 79) and Daniel Heinsius' *Emblemata amatoria* (1607, Emblem 3). He presents a Cupid in tears facing a furnace connected to an alembic. But he alters this tradition, which has Cupid poking or blowing at the furnace, by diminishing the god's role as agent. His passive, enclosed body contrasts with the open, empty furnace. His real passions are, as Wright says, "hidde from our eyes," and we are invited to "speculate" on them through analogy. As self and furnace remain separate entities, the emblem invites allegorical reconstruction of the former through the latter. As George Puttenham puts it in *The Arte of English Poesie*, "*Allegoria* is when we do speake the *sence translatiue and wrested* from the owne signification, neuerthelesse applied to another not altogether contrary, but hauing *much conueniencie with it*" (Puttenham 1589, 155, X4r; second and third emphases added). Thus, the logic of Vaenius' analogy breaks if we elude the mediation of this rhetorical trope: the furnace enlightens our understanding of the self because it has "much conuenience with," but is "wrested from" the desiring self that the god embodies.

2 Hamlet 2.2.461. Unless otherwise stated, all other references to Shakespeare's works are cited from the Riverside edition. (Evans 1974) For a critique of this position, see Luis-Martínez 2010, 94–96.
3 For a complete list of sources and parallels, see the Emblem Utrecht Project. Dutch Love Emblems of the Seventeenth Century http://emblems.let.uu.nl/v1608095_compare_frame.html?position=left), last accessed 22 December, 2024.

Another instance — this one from Shakespeare's *King John* (1596) — shows a similar presence of allegory. In the play's last act, the Earl of Salisbury's formal lamentation over his decision to take arms on the French side against his own king after the death of Prince Arthur — a speech accompanied by the speaker's tears—is thus answered by the Dauphin:

> A noble temper dost thou show in this,
> And great affections wrestling in thy bosom
> Doth make an earthquake of nobility.
> O what a noble combat hast [thou] fought
> Between compulsion and a brave respect!
> Let me wipe off this honorable dew,
> That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks.
> My heart hath melted at a lady's tears,
> Being an ordinary inundation;
> But this effusion of such manly drops,
> This show'r, blown up by tempest of the soul,
> Startles mine eyes, and makes me more amaz'd
> Than had I seen the vaulty top of heaven
> Figured quite o'er with burning meteors (5.2.40-53).

The Dauphin's speech finds an apt gloss in Wright's treatise, this time favoring *rhetorical* over humoral explanation:

> For that we cannot enter into a mans heart, and view the passions or inclinations which there reside and lie hidden; therefore, as Philosophers by effects find out causes, by properties essences, by riuers fountaines, by boughs and floures the kore and roots; euen so we must trace out passions and inclinations by some effects and externall operations; and these be no more than two, words & deeds, speech and action: of which two, knowledge may be gathered from those affections we carry in our minds. (Wright H5r)

As Wright observes and as the Dauphin's words evince, a world of inner sensations is apprehended in the outer world at the rhetorical level of words (*elocutio*) and the no less rhetorical dimension of countenances, gestures, intonations, and

movements (*actio*). Speech and action are transmuted, both in Wright's account and in Shakespeare's speech, into spatial marks. Rhetorical matter becomes, as it were, the perceptible "riuers" whereby we trace the hidden "fountaines" of affections in the human soul. Salisbury's rhetoric constructs a similar geology of emotions whose allegorical accidents—"earthquake," "tempest," "inundation"—chart the play's woeful experience of history.

At hand Shakespeare had the tradition of rhetorical *progymnasmata*, or preparatory oratorical exercises, representing ethical qualities and passionate states, *ethopoeia* and *pathopoeia*. Drawing on classical rhetorical textbooks like Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (96 CE), 16th-century English rhetoricians made *pathopoeia* an entirely different category from *ethopoeia*, emphasizing in the former case the strength of the emotion, as well as its suitability for tragedy. For its part, *ethopoeia* was circumscribed to the imitation of milder emotions, and thus, its scope was confined to genres like comedy. (McDonald 1966, 53-54; Gill 1984, 160) Richard Sherry's *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550) included *pathopoeia* among the "figures of sentence," described it as the figure "expressing of vehement affections and perturbacions," and distinguished "two sortes":

> The firste is called *Donysis*, or intencion, and some call it imaginacion, whereby feare, anger, madness, hatered, envye, and lyke other perturbacions of mynde is shewed and described, as in Ciceros invectives. Another forme is called *[O]ictros*, or commiseracion, whereby teares be pyked out, or pyty is moued, or forgeuenes, as in Ciceros peroracions, and complaintes in poets. (Sherry 1550, E2v-E3r)

The treatise's second edition (1555) slightly modified these definitions, amplifying the list of passions in the first kind to "feare, sorowe, anger, furye, hatred, envy, unbridled desyre, lust immoderate, hope or gladnesse", and adding that "[e]xaumples of these bee everye where in Tragedies." (Sherry 1555, F6r-F6v) The augmented edition of Henry Peacham's *The Garden of Eloquence* (1593) followed Sherry in differentiating two kinds, although, in tune with the rest of this treatise, the focus is oratorical rather than descriptive. Not just a mere figure, *pathopoeia* becomes "a forme of speech" whereby "the Orator moveth the minds of his hearers to some vehemency of affection, as of indignation, feare, envy, hatred, hope, gladnesse or sorrow." (Peacham 1593, U4r) The first kind demands

that "the Orator being moved himselfe with anie of these affections (sorrow excepted) doth bend and apply his speech to stir his hearers to the same." (Peacham 1593, U4r-U4v) For these purposes, a whole roster of figures like "*Exclamatio*, *Obtestatio*, *Imprecatio*, *Optatio*, *Exuscitatio*, [or] *Interrogatio*" can be employed by the orator. Comedy and tragedy are mentioned as possible sources for *pathopoeia*. The second kind involves the poetic complaint through the declaration of "some lamentable cause." The expression of grief is thus given literary preeminence: "To move compassion, lamentable histories are oftentimes used, and likewise the lively descriptions of wofull sufferings, and pitiful miseries, and how they may be artificially expressed." (Peacham 1593, U4r-U4v) *Pathopoeia* then aims at, on the one hand, expression of the speaker's affective world and, on the other, intervention in the hearer's emotions—in the case of the theatre, characters and spectators alike. Even if its emotional content ranges from lighter affections (Peacham mentions "hope" and "gladnesse" as suitable subjects of comic *pathopoeia*), prevalence is bestowed upon gravity and seriousness, with a special emphasis on grief.

Although not always distinguishable or separable, the two accounts of the passions expounded so far rely on kinds of knowledge that could be broadly characterized as effects of scientific or poetico-rhetorical methods. The present essay privileges the second approach, and emphasizes the rhetorical component in humoral descriptions of the passions. In what follows, different instances from different Shakespearean genres—lyric, narrative poetry, tragic and historical drama—are analyzed in the light of rhetorical *pathopoeia*. The aim is to emphasize the importance of the theory and practice of passionate expression as constitutive of Shakespeare's lyrical vision, on the one hand, and his novel ideas of dramatic genre—more particularly his fusion of tragedy and history—on the other.

"To the Contemplation of the Mind": Shakespeare's Amatory *Pathopoeia*

The above-mentioned arguments by Sherry and Peacham serve to explain that *pathopoeia* was considered a rhetorical strategy rather than a mere figure. More specifically, Sherry reminds us of its being one of the many kinds of "*enargia*, euidence or perspicuitie called also descripcion rethoricall," that is, "when a thynge is so described that it semeth to the reader or hearer [that] he beholdeth it as it were in doing." (Sherry 1550, E1v) In the *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian had relied on a vast previous tradition to stress in this art of vivid description the

ability to bring to the mind's eye that which is not present to our organs of sight. Quintilian invokes the Ciceronian terms *illustratio* and *evidentia* as appropriate translations of Greek *enargeia*, and defines it as that "which makes us seem not so much to narrate as to exhibit the actual scene, while our emotions will be no less actively stirred than if we were present at the actual occurrence [*quae non tam dicere videtur quam ostendere; et adfectus non aliter, quam si rebus ipsis intersimus, sequentur*]." (Quintilian 1927, 6.2, 434–437)

This capacity of words for vividly showing and moving the mind through the act of telling was also stressed in English works. Its most notable discussion is found in Puttenham who justifies his classification of poetic ornaments ("auricular" and "sensable" figures or tropes) in terms of two different sorts of verbal appeal:

> This ornament then is of two sortes, one to satisfie & delight th'eare onely by a goodly outward shew set vpon the matter with wordes, and speaches smothly and tunably running: another by certaine intendments or sence of such wordes & speaches inwardly working a stirre to the minde: that first qualitie the Greeks called *Enargia*, of this word *argos*, because it geueth a glorious lustre and light. This latter they called *Energia* of *ergon*, because it wrought with a strong and vertuous operation; and figure breedeth them both, some seruing to giue glosse only to a language, some to geue it efficacie by sence, and so by that meanes some of them serue th'eare onely, some serue the conceit onely and not the eare: there be of them also that serue both turnes as common seruitours appointed for thone and th'other purpose. (Puttenham 1589, R2r)

In the introduction to their recent edition of the *Arte*, Whigham and Rebhorn have stressed Puttenham's "slippage" from the visual to the aural in his description of poetry's ability to affect "the heart by impression of the eare." (C3r) The same occurs in this instance, which in these editors' opinion "deliberately redefin[es] the term [*enargeia*] to apply to the auditory rather than the visual." (Puttenham 2007, 44–45) If Puttenham reserves the term *enargeia* to what Linda Galyon has called "a non-cognitive power, operating only at the threshold of the ear" (Galyon 1981, 37), it is then the term *energeia* that seems to gather in his treatise at least part of the visual appeal of classical *enargeia*.

The distinction is engaging in the context of discussing the relations between the passions and poetic discourse: poetry can then, through a merely aural appeal, excite the passions physiologically (through "auricular figures"), engage in their mental *representation*, that is, in bringing forth what is absent to the presence of the mind (through "sensable figures" or tropes), or both—through the third, mixed category that Puttenham terms "sententious" or "rhetoricall" figures. (1589, Y4r) But it seems as hard to assess in practice the effects of a purely aural conception of *enargeia*—as mere excitement at a sensual or emotional level–as it is to understand passionate arousal as a solely physiological operation. As Puttenham's classification proves unclear (his very etymology of *argos* is inseparable from visual effect), rhetorical figures of the different kinds defined in his treatise are brought forth here as indistinctively affecting our understanding by excitation of our senses—our sight particularly.

Two instances from Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry serve as illustrations of that other slippery realm where humoral and rhetorical conceptions of the passions come face to face. The first proposes a sequential reading of sonnets 44 and 45 in the attempt to question Paster's abovementioned claim that critics have traditionally read trope where literal reference to the humoral working of the passions should be understood:

> If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
> Injurious distance should not stop my way,
> For then despite of space I would be brought,
> From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
> No matter then although my foot did stand
> Upon the farthest earth remov'd from thee,
> For nimble thought can jump both sea and land,
> As soon as think the place where he would be.
> But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought,
> To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
> But that so much of earth and water wrought,
> I must attend time's leisure with my moan,
> Receiving [nought] by elements so slow
> But heavy tears, badges of either's woe. (44)

The other two, slight air and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide;
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present-absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppressed with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers returned from thee,
Who ev'n by now come back again, assured
Of [thy] fair health, recounting it to me.
This told, I joy, but then no longer glad,
I send them back again, and straight grow sad. (45)

To the extent that these poems present 1) a speaker possessed with desire, fluctuating between a lover's melancholy and hope, 2) a description or imitation of the motions of those passions, and 3) an attempt to affect the fictional addressee of those poems (the beloved), they must be considered an instance of rhetorical *pathopoeia*. To the extent that these are rhetorical exercises intended for a reader, *pathopoeia* should be read as one of Sherry's types of *enargeia*—that is, the representation of a passionate process "as it were in doing." Throughout its first two quatrains, Sonnet 44 develops the unlikely scenario of a human body ("the dull substance of my flesh") divested of its physicality to become mere "thought." The denial of this scenario—"thought kills me that I am not thought"—is endorsed rhetorically by *epanalepsis*, or repetition of a word at the beginning and end of a syntactic or metrical unit (for Puttenham a mixed, or sententious figure), and *amphibologia*—if we accept that the first "thought" means "sadness," whereas the second points to the act and the result of thinking. (Puttenham 1589, Z2r, Ff3r) In appearance, the sonnet invites the reader to interpret the fluctuations of grief and hope in the lover as mere effects of the imbalance and later "recur[ing]" of the humoral composition of the body. If "thought" means simply "grief," this reduction is operated by effect of the body's faulty constitution into "elements so slow" as mere "earth and water." Contrariwise, the lover's "thoughts" ("slight air") and "desire" ("purging fire") become the swift messengers between the lover and the beloved during the latter's absence, thus causing "melancholy" when they are

gone with the beloved, and joy and hope when they return with good news—a process depicted as the restoration of the lost equilibrium between the four humors.

The inevitable question arises as how literally the working of the humors in these sonnets should be taken in light of Paster's account of embodied passionate processes. Alternatively, these sonnets must be taken as illustrative of the descriptive energies and contemplative "efficacie"—the word is Puttenham's—of Renaissance allegory. As Henry Peacham defined it, "[t]he use of an Allegorie serveth most aptly to ingrave the lively images of things, and to present them under deepe shadowes *to the comtemplation of the mind*, wherein wit and judegement take pleasure, and the remembrance receiveth a long-lasting impression" (F2r, emphasis mine). In considering *pathopoeia* an allegorical exercise of poetic wit rather than a realist description of a physiological process, this reading accepts Stephen Booth's conclusion on these sonnets: "Shakespeare's primary attention is to the tenor of his statements, not to their vehicle—the technical details of traditional physics and medicine: a rigorous understanding of his conceit of the four elements demands that, being made of earth and water, the speaker should be oppressed with phlegm" and not melancholy—a possibility that Booth finds "ridiculous." (Booth 1977, 207) Shakespeare's unusual moistening of melancholy, traditionally a cold and dry humor, speaks to the fact that his force lies in creating a contrast between lightness and heaviness of mind through a malleable allegorical system rather than in propounding a literal or scientific account of how humors might embody the lover's passions. This system is presented to the reader as a "false semblant"—Puttenham's native term for allegory—of the ineffable truth of inner passionate processes. In the particular case of these poems, the aptness of the humoral tale as a plausible fiction justifies its "sence translatiue" and endorses its "conueniencie" as an object proposed "to the contemplation of the mind."

The second instance comes from a narrative poem, *Venus and Adonis* (1593), whose rhetorical and visual appeal has fascinated readers and critics.[4] By the end of the poem, an outburst of intense grief at the contemplation of Adonis's dead body impels the goddess to close her eyes and see no more:

4 For significant readings of the complementary modes of signification in the poem—the verbal and the visual—, see Gent 1974, and Hulse 1978.

As falcons to the lure, away she flies;
The grass stoops not, she treads on it so light,
And in her haste unfortunately spies
The foul boar's conquest on her fair delight,
Which seen, her eyes [as] murder'd with the view,
Like stars asham'd of day, themselves withdrew;
Or as the snail, whose tender horns being hit,
Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain,
And there, all smother'd up, in shade doth sit,
Long after fearing to creep forth again;
So at his bloody view her eyes are fled
Into the deep-dark cabins of her head... (1027–1038)

In a recent analysis of the concern with the visual in this poem, Richard Meek contends that in these two stanzas "the reader is compelled to imagine *what it is like not to see*" (Meek 2009, 47, emphasis added). In Meek's opinion, Shakespeare shows the potential of metaphor and simile to "disable vision," and nevertheless to "facilitate [our] understanding and empathy" with a character that refuses to see more in order to avoid pain (ibid). And yet, as the narrative continues, the focus is altered. Rather than what it is like not to see, this passage illustrates what it would be like to see that which is not accessible to our eyes—an act of *enargeia* making present what is hidden or unavailable. The poem continues:

... Where they resign their office, and their light,
To the disposing of her troubled brain,
Who bids them still consort with ugly night,
And never wound the heart with looks again,
Who like a king perplexed in his throne,
By their suggestion, gives a deadly groan.

Whereat each tributary subject quakes,
As when the wind imprison'd in the ground,
Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes,
Which with cold terror doth men's minds confound.
This mutiny each part doth so surprise
That from their dark beds once more leap her eyes... (1039–1050)

The whole process described here demands paraphrasing. As the eyes recede, prominence is bestowed to what happens inside Venus's body: her brain forbids her eyes to impress the passionate heart again, although the heart, still overwhelmed by the effect of what the goddess had previously seen, causes an inner turmoil which the rhetorical simile compares to an earthquake, at which the hidden eyes shake and are forced to open again. Colin Burrow has drawn attention to the "radically disturbing picture of the mind" that this passage offers (Burrow 2002, 40). The disturbing element is not only evident in its passionate arousal, but also in the fact that the allegedly invisible, inward mind is presented through the allegorical vehicle of a now visible, inner bodily organ—inwardness and inaccessibility being the marks of that "conueniencie" which, in Puttenham's description, makes these disparate realities of body and soul "not altogether contrarie" at a logical level. J. W. Lever has drawn attention to the "disparity between physical sight and the vision of the inner eye" in *Venus and Adonis*, a point that should serve as corollary of this commentary (Lever 1971, 121): allegory invites the reader to look inside the goddess' mind with the mind's eye (meaning here not only the eye with which the mind sees but the eye that sees the mind), thus proving that the figural potential of words in the imitation of the passions is much more enabling than disabling. The humoral depiction of the passionate self thus works as an allegorical pointer to its otherwise ineffable inwardness.

The Exception of Sorrow and the History Play

As stated above, Sherry and Peacham coincided in the classification of *pathopoeia* into two kinds, as well as in pointing to the abundance of examples of the first sort in tragic drama. That first kind involved the "imaginacion" or "shew" of violent emotions, a process that could be illustrated through a multitude of figures. A well-known instance from *Macbeth* (1606) discloses a mind torn between fear and ambitious desire through the use of "dilemma of *divisio*," a figure that, according to Peacham, occurs "when we divyde a thing into two partes, and reprove them both by shewing reasons" (1577, T2r):

> This supernatural soliciting
> Cannot be ill; cannot be good. If ill,
> Why hath it given me earnest of success,

> Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor.
> If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
> And make my seated heart knock at my ribs
> Against the use of nature? (1.3.130-137)

Macbeth's reaction to the Weird Sisters' prediction is expressed through alternate reproofs of "ill" and "good," thus stressing the importance of what J. B. Bamborough called "mixed" and "conflicting passions" in Renaissance tragedy. (Bamborough 1952, 43) Although the speech does not elude the description of the physical effects of fear, its full apprehension of Macbeth's divided mind is an effect of syntactic and semantic partition—and thus, Puttenham classified it as a "sententious figure," using bodily metaphor in his Anglicizing its name as "the Dismemberer." (Puttenham 1589, Bb3r)

However, the treatment of sorrow in a second, distinct category of *pathopoeia* in which instances from drama are not mentioned seems a less justifiable argument in the above-mentioned treatises. Contrary to this, the poetic "commiseracion" or "complainte" must be considered a constitutive element of tragedies and history plays. Wolfgang Clemen has argued that it was by influence of Senecan tragedy that English Renaissance drama integrated rhetorical lamentation as "an essential part of the events being enacted, whether these events were outward, physical actions or inward, spiritual processes." (Clemen 1961, 225) Such a conception puts grief in the ethical and emotional center of these plays. In this sense, Walter Benjamin's description of the European baroque *Trauerspiel*—or "mourning-play"—as a theatre of emblematic and rhetorical ostentation finds a practical model in Shakespeare's historical and tragic drama. Benjamin's differentiation of modern *Trauerspiel* from classical tragedy is established on grounds of the former's adoption of "historical life" as its true content to the detriment of the latter's focus on myth. (Benjamin 1977, 62) But for Benjamin history implies not only the choice of a historical subject: it is rather a mode of involvement in the play's universe, an experience of agency in a world divided between a hypertrophied faith in man's sovereign power and a pessimistic sense of his creaturely condition in the God-ridden present of post-Reformation Europe. The *Trauerspiel* addresses history as the staging of "the decisive confrontation between human-earthly perplexity and princely-hierarchical power." (Benjamin 1977, 84) The dissolution of action into lamentation—a principle which, according

to Benjamin, distinguishes *Trauerspiel* from tragedy—takes place upon a stage whose boards "metaphorically represent the earth as the setting created for the enactment of history." (Benjamin 1977, 119) Upon this stage mourning arbitrates between the inner world of feeling and the external world of action: "the confirmation of princely virtues, the depiction of princely vices, the insight into diplomacy and the manipulation of all political schemes" are observed in these plays through sorrow's perspective glass. (Benjamin 1977, 62)[5] The Prologue to Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII* (1611) epitomizes, in the characteristically stern and concise verse of this play, an integral poetics of this mode:

> I come no more to make you laugh; things now
> That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
> Sad, high, and working, full of state of woe:
> Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow
> We now present [...]
> Therefore, for goodness sake, and as you are known
> The first and happy hearers of the town,
> Be sad, as we would make ye. Think ye see
> The very persons of our noble story
> As they were living. Think you see them great,
> And follow'd with the general throng and sweat
> Of thousand friends; the then, in a moment, see
> How soon this mightiness meets misery;
> And if you can be merry then, I'll say
> A man may weep upon his wedding day. (*Prologue* 1–5; 24–32)

The archetypal narrative of the fall of the powerful is recreated in the repeated "now" of the speech, an adverb that connects the seriousness of the events onstage with the mournfulness it causes in the spectators. The gravity, excellence, and moving quality of the dramatic action—"sad, high, and working"—point to early modern definitions binding history and tragedy. Thus, the historical past subsides into the very "moment" in which tragic *peripeteia* transforms "mightiness" into "misery."

5 The classic Shakespearean instance binding sorrow to historical perspective is Bushy's consolation speech in *Richard II*. On this speech see, among others, Schickman 1977 and 1978; Gilman 1978, 88–128; and Luis-Martínez 2008, 683–685.

The awakening of grief in the spectator is made dependent upon the political nature and courtly setting of the play's matter.[6] Thus, Sir Philip Sidney argued:

> high and excellent Tragedy ... openeth the greatest wounds, and sheweth forth the V[l]cers, that are couered with Tissue: [it] maketh Kinges feare to be Tyrants, and Tyrants manifest their tiranicall humors: that with sturring the affects of admiration and commiseration, teacheth, the vncertainety of this world; and vpon howe weake foundations guilden roofes are builded. (1595, F3v-F4r)

Politics and mourning are thus fused in the "state and woe" of a historical action that nevertheless reclaims its position in the present of dramatic performance. As Thomas Heywood made clear in his *Apology for Actors*, "if we present a Tragedy, we include the fatall and abortiue ends of such as commit notorious murders, *which is aggrauated and acted with all the Art that may be*, to terrifie men from the like abhorred practises" (Heywood 1614, F3v; emphasis mine).

In their descriptions of the historical character of the new tragic drama of the Renaissance, Sidney and Heywood stressed its distance from classical tragedy. Rather than being a cosmic tribunal for the hero's trial around which the spectator is summoned, the stage of the *Trauerspiel* relies on the projection of the audience's inner emotions upon the feigned present of dramatic history—"[b]e sad, as we would make ye." In Benjamin's description, the spectator "learns how, on the stage, a space which belongs to an inner world of feeling and bears no relationship to the cosmos, situations are compellingly presented to him." (Benjamin 1973, 119) In accordance with this principle, what this prologue demands is a community of affections binding character, action, and spectator.

If Shakespeare's historical drama is thus understood as kin to the *Trauerspiel*, it is primarily for its representation of history as emotional experience rather than as mere fact, and for its reliance on rhetorical ostentation in its endeavor to depict this sort of historical consciousness. The main effect of this rhetoric of history is the dissolution of the lineal, sequential arrangements of the chronicle

6 "The disillusioned insight of the courtier is just as profound a source of woe to him as it is a potential danger to others, because of the use he can make of it at any time. In this light the image of this figure assumes its most baleful aspect. To understand the life of the courtier means to recognize completely why the court, above all else, provides the setting for the Trauerspiel." (Benjamin 1977, 97)

into the continuum of a dramatic present around which a web of experiential accounts of historical life are woven. This particular rearrangement reaches its most conspicuous form in *Richard II* (1595), a play whose action hinges upon multiple experiences of grief, culminating in Bolingbroke's absorption of the mournful load of Richard's fall: "Part of your cares you give me with your crown" (*R2*, 4.1.193), the usurper assures before making the definitive migration of Richard's sorrow to his own royal person the emblem of an illegitimate migration of the body politic to the new king:

> Lords, I protest my soul is full of woe
> That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow.
> Come mourn with me for what I do lament,
> And put on sullen black incontinent.
> I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land
> To wash this blood off from my guilty hand. (R2, 5.6.45–50)

The play closes with the prospect of purgation of Richard's mournful legacy, a prospect which nevertheless the opening lines of *1 Henry IV* finally cancel after a one-year delay:

> So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
> Find we a time for frighted peace to pant
> And breathe short-winded accents of new broils
> To be commenc'd in strands afar remote [...]
> But this our purpose now is twelve month old,
> And bootless 'tis to tell you we will go;
> Therefore we meet not now. (1.1.1–4; 28–30)

The optative mood of Henry's appeal to carry out in the present the postponed action of crusading—an action that will finally purge a mournful past and prevent new grief in the nation's future—is abruptly severed by the ambiguity of his expressed resolution—is bootlessness a predication upon the intention or the statement itself?—and by shifting the topic from delayed resolutions to urgent matters—"[t]herefore we meet not now." The refusal to carry out the purgative action aimed at suppressing mourning leaves in the rest of the tetralogy the burden of unhealed trauma—a feeling that the experimental and non-serial play

King John (1595–96) had already sketched in the mixture of overwhelming sorrow and wishful thinking of its closing speech:

> O, let us pay the time but needful woe,
> Since it hath been beforehand with our griefs.
> This England never did, nor never shall,
> Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
> But when it first did help to wound itself. (*KJ*, 5.7.110–115)

King John stands alone before readers and theatergoers, unsupported by a dramatic sequel. Whatever its spectators make of these lines seems more resistant to being interpreted in the light of progress from catastrophe to redemption, or from mourning to romance, than in the second tetralogy. *King John* may be no exception in the history play's need to envision better futures. And yet, it is certainly no exception to a Shakespearean idea of history as a sorrowful experience stuck in a congealed, hesitant present.

Docet affectus poeta per actiones: Enter the Intriguer

Whereas a focus on lamentation has the advantage of stressing emotional perspective and subjective experience, it risks ignoring the concern with action inherent to the genre in favor of an elegiac conception of history. The roles of action and affect in drama nurtured the debate in Renaissance poetic theory on the Aristotelian hierarchy of the dramatic constituents. Aristotle's theory of the preeminence of plot—*mythos*—over the other elements of tragedy was subject to contestation in 16th- and 17th-century treatises from Scaliger to Dryden. These reinterpretations insist on the primary role played by character—*ethos*—in dramatic design to the detriment of *mythos*. (Weinberg 1942, 340–341) Aristotle's affirmations that plot is the end of tragedy and that character-study is included for the sake of the action were subject to a profound revision.[7] Julius Caesar Scaliger's *Poetices libri septem* (1561) pioneered this critique in his discussion of mental and emotional dispositions (*affectus* or *pathos*) as primary objects of poetic imitation:

7 "The plot [mythos] then is the first principle and as it were the soul of tragedy; character [ethos] comes second." (Aristotle 1932, 6.19).

> So our inquiry is not as to whether the poet teaches character or action, but as to whether he teaches a mental disposition, or the outward expression of it. [...] The result of the inquiry is, then, that the poet teaches mental disposition through action [*docet poeta affectus per actiones*], so that we embrace the good and imitate it in our conduct, and reject the evil and abstain from that. Action, therefore, is a mode of teaching; disposition, that which we are taught. Wherefore action is, as it were, the pattern or medium in a plot, disposition its end [*Est igitur actio docendi modus: affectus, quen docemur ad agendum. Quare erit actio quasi exemplar, aut instrumentum in fabula, affectus vero finis*]. (Padelford 1905, 83; Scaliger 1581, VII.3, 902–903)

Representing the passions as the motivating force of *ethos*—which Scaliger understands in Aristotle's sense of inclination to a certain course of action (Aristotle 1932, 6.24)— entails a deep transformation of the early modern poetics of tragic drama. Primarily conceived as a didactic instrument, action hints at the invisible forces operating in a character's mind.

In his assessment of the impact of Scaliger's theory upon early modern drama, Walter Benjamin emphasized the arbitrating role of the intriguer: "the real purpose of drama was to communicate knowledge of the life of the soul, in the observation of which the intriguer is without equal." (Benjamin 1977, 98–99) Knowledge of the human soul allows for an arrangement of action in the history play in which events gravitate upon a spatial presence and a temporal present whose center is frequently the intriguer. He is the center in the epistemological sense, but also as a director of a *theatrum mundi* whose performances no longer have the gods as privileged spectators.[8] An action that centers around the intriguer has the effect of rearranging the temporal structure of chronicle history and the chronicle play. As Benjamin observes, "the *Trauerspiel* takes place in a spatial continuum, which one might describe as choreographic. The organizer of its plot, the precursor of the choreographer, is the intriguer." (Benjamin 1977, 95) In the world of Shakespeare's history plays the conception of historical time in terms that are primarily spatial becomes a fact when the intriguer makes its definitive entrance—an entrance emblematized by the Duke of Gloucester's central soliloquy in *3 Henry VI* (1592):

8 On the theatrum mundi as metaphor, see Righter 1962, 64–86.

> Why then I do but dream on sovereignty,
> Like one that stands upon a promontory
> And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,
> Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,
> And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,
> Saying, he'll lade it dry to have his way:
> So do I wish the crown, being so far off,
> And so I chide the means that keeps me from it,
> And so, I say, I'll cut the causes off,
> Flattering me with impossibilities. (*3H6*, 3.2.134–143)

Gloucester's words cast the passion of ambition as the ultimate referent of an allegory that measures the time of his political project in terms of physical movement in an imaginary landscape. The same idea is iterated a few lines later in the same speech: "And I—like one lost in a thorny wood, / That rents the thorns, and is rent with the thorns, / Not knowing how to find the open air, / But toiling desperately to find it out— / Torment myself to catch the English crown" (*3H6*, 3.2.174–179). Across its seventy-one lines, Richard's speech travels from the recognition of his passions as a mark of self-knowledge to the disclosing of his abilities to know the minds of others: "Then since this earth affords no joy to me / But to command, to check, to o'erbear such / As are of better person than myself, / I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown, / And whiles I live, t' account this world but hell [...]" (*3H6*, 3.2.165–169).

Gloucester's self-discovery reveals a new spatial concern with the allegorical stages ("heaven," "hell") of his individual drama. *Pathopoeia* acquires new meanings in his speech: not only concerned with imitation of the speaker's minds, they theorize their performative capacity for representing self-discovery and for intervening in the experiential universe of others. As Thomas Wright explained, his study of the passions

> comprehendeth the chiefe obiect that all Philosophers aimed at, wherin they placed the most of their felicitie, that was *Nosce teipsum*, Know thy selfe: the which knowledge principally consisteth of a perfit experience euery man hath of himselfe in particular, and an vniuersall knowledge of mens inclinations in common [...] (Wright 1604, B3v-B4r)

In accordance with this, Gloucester expounds the political benefits derived from his newly discovered method:

> Why, I can smile, and murther whiles I smile,
> And cry 'Content' to that which grieves my heart,
> And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
> And frame my face to all occasions.
> I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall,
> I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk,
> I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
> Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
> And like a Sinon, take another Troy.
> I can add colors to the chameleon,
> Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,
> And set the murtherous Machevil to school.
> Can I do this, and cannot get a crown? (*3H6*, 3.2.182–194)

Richard's finding is manifold. In the sense that it operates at oratorical and dramatic levels, it is the discovery of the stage as the ultimate space for the enactment of history and the theatrical type that performs that enactment. By becoming a stage intriguer, the Duke replaces former conceptualizations of history in terms of allegorical spaces—the "far-off shore" or the "thorny wood" that understand historical life as a painful voyage—with a *theatrum mundi* where he acquires sovereign authority over the rest of the actors. At a psychological level, the art of playing is one that reverses the straightforward operations whereby words, faces and actions became indices to know the passions. As Wright himself recognized, "we may not say, that th[e] face is the root & core where the Passions reside, but only the rinde and leaues, which shew the nature and goodness of both the root and the core." (Wright 1604, C6r) By breaking the natural shortcut from the rind to the core, Richard embraces art as the guiding principle of the intriguer's psychological and anthropological wisdom: the "artificial tears" of his rhetorical *actio* match Peacham's abovementioned concern with the "artificially expressed" nature of the passions in oratory.

But Richard's lore would be purposeless without its practical application in the world of politics. His subversion of the standard humanist position on the need to know and rule the passions can be here expressed through contrast with Juan Luis Vives' argument in *De disciplinis* (1531):

> For what greater practical wisdom [*prudentia*] is than to know how and what the human passions are: how they are roused, how quelled? Further, what influence they have on the commonwealth, what is their power, how they can be restrained, healed, put aside, or, on the contrary, aroused and fomented, either in others or in ourselves? [*quos motus, quemadmodum continendi, sedandi, tollendi, aut contra exagitandi, & com[m]ouendi siue in aliis, siue in nobis ipsis?*] What knowledge can be preferable for the ruler of a state, or more expedient for any of his subjects to know? and what so delightful, in the highest degree! and what more conducive to the happiest kind of practical wisdom! (Vives 1913, 232–233; 1531, 136)[9]

Vives' call for practical wisdom is transformed by the intriguer's emotional intellect into the instrument of his will-power: "[h]uman emotions as the predictable driving mechanism of the creature—that is the final item in the inventory of knowledge which had to transform the dynamism of world-history into political action." (Benjamin 1977, 96) Emerging in this role in the final stages of a three-part episodic chronicle, the Duke of Gloucester announces a shift in dramatic method visible in the last part of the tetralogy, *The Tragedy of Richard III* (1593). This consists in the intensification of the theatrical medium as the vehicle toward the knowledge of the passions. As Richard and Buckingham devise a strategy to justify Hastings' execution, their conversation turns into a rehearsal in which director helps actor to polish his art:

> RICHARD
> Come, cousin, canst thou quake and change thy color,
> Murther thy breath in middle of a word,
> And then again begin, and stop again,
> As if thou were distraught and mad with terror?
> BUCKINGHAM
> Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian,
> Speak and look back, and pry on every side,
> Tremble and start at wagging of a straw;

9 It needs to be emphasized that Vives' argument is part of his defense of history as a practical discipline for the instruction of the modern Christian prince.

> Intending deep suspicion, ghastly looks
> Are at my service, like enforced smiles.
> And both are ready in their offices
> At any time to grace my stratagems. (*R3*, 3.5.1–11)

The extent to which knowledge, manipulation and transformation of the passions become part of Richard's political choreography is made explicit in the play's opening soliloquy: "Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous, / By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams / To set my brother Clarence and the King / In deadly hate the one against the other" (*R3*, 1.1.32–35). Transforming hatred into love (Lady Anne's in 1.2), fear into hope (Clarence's in the play's opening), suspicion into sympathy (the Mayor's after Hastings's execution in 3.5) are instances of the intimate connections between Richard's interventions in the characters' emotional world and the play's representation of the progress of history. These connections also reveal the mechanism that makes possible the paradoxical attractiveness of Richard as a villain, namely the contrast between historical deed and theatrical action. On the one hand, Shakespeare's reliance on the methods of humanist *historia* serves to present Richard's evil deeds as proofs at the service of the orthodox version of the Lancastrian myth of Tudor succession. (Grennan 1978, 23) On the other, Richard's theatrical command of human emotions lies at the heart of his seductive capacity to engage sympathy and attraction.

Toward a Poetics of the Soul

Thomas Wright's above-quoted report of the impossibility to "enter into a mans heart," or "minde," and "view the passions or inclinations which there reside and lie hidden," found its boldest deconstruction at the end of the Renaissance, in John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633), a play whose "concept of the heart as a text of desire" impels his protagonist to "rip up" his sister/lover's bosom in order to "read" the truth of her passions there. (Silverstone 2010, 83) Ford's play identified his protagonist's will to trespass the limits of human knowledge with tragic madness. The present essay has explored other ways through which the symbolic power of language can circumvent those borders. Puttenham's concern with the "lustre," "light," and "glosse" that the poetic word confers on our mental depictions of the otherwise hidden realities of the soul has presided over its first

two sections. *Pathopoeia* is there explored mainly as a method whose rhetorical efficacy was put at the service of the poet's attempt to illuminate the dark corners of the human mind. Its second half has somehow left aside *pathopoeia* as a method in order to explore its effects and functions in the shaping of dramatic genre—more specifically in the Shakespearean ideas of the history play. Cueing on Wright's interest in "speech and action" as the two external indices to the emotions, the analysis of drama must consider their inevitable intertwining in the shaping of emotional experience as a vehicle of knowledge. The role of the passions in the self's dramatic discovery of its position in the convoluted courses of Shakespearean history reveals forms of historical being that range from elegiac passivity to mastery of political intrigue. In exploring the Renaissance concern with both the form and the function of the passions, *pathopoeia* enables routes to track down the fascinating literary voyage from the "rinde and leaues" to the "root & core" of the self.

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Of Shimmering Flame

Zones of Enchantment and the *Arabian Nights*

The cosmology of the *One Thousand and One Nights / Arabian Nights* (Lane 1850; Mack 1998) teems with jinn, intermediate beings who have doctrinal status in Islam. In the Koran (see Khalidi 2009), Solomon is given mastery over them, but not all are obedient to him or to the true God. Their character is consequently ambiguous, and their actions unpredictable; literally volatile, jinn carry the plots in constantly surprising directions, and open up questions about fate and ethics. Just as the Koranic Solomon resembles the Biblical figure, but differs from him in significant ways, so jinn have affinities with Judeo-Christian demons, but the distinctions between them are of profound interest, introducing subtleties to the landscape of the supernatural and to schemes of hope in fairy tales as well as religious scripture.

In the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest, there is a fabulous collection of Judaica, created by one of those extraordinary polyglot scholars of the l9th century, David Kauffmann[1], himself so learned that he could be called a magus. One of his most intriguing treasures is a mahzor, the liturgical book used for the holiest days of the Jewish faith (the word means "cycle").

The manuscript was created in southern Germany in the first half of the 14th century, and it includes some sumptuous illuminations. One has rightly become famous and to modern eyes it is a most entertaining and thought-provoking curiosity. It appears on the opening page of the *Song of Songs*, the biblical poetry which is traditionally attributed to Solomon; it pictures the wise king on the right of a lively diptych, seated on his throne, receiving two curious women with animal faces coming in from the left – one of these might represent the Queen of Sheba. They are preceded – perhaps ushered – by a winged dragon with hu-

1 http://kaufmann.mtak.hu/index-en.html

man hands. In the upper panel, two more women – one with a duck's head that resembles the famous Wittgensteinian rabbit-duck riddle – are also being led in by a wild trio, one tumbling upside down, red legs kicking aloft. They are accompanied by a musical duo, the winged rider sounding a drum and piping, his monstrous mount spotted green, with ostrich-like legs, sucking his own crimson tail, with a bell hanging from his neck. To contemporary eyes, these beings are grotesque, absurd, comical – and the representations irreverent. To western eyes trained in Judeo-Christian iconology, the miniature's subjects also look diabolical at worst, monstrous at best: the witty deformities of their appearance, the lack of harmonious symmetry, their mottled and particoloured skins, the phallic protuberances and hint of raucous charivari mark them out as aberrant, and the beast-like aberrations carry an ethical connotation associating them with wrongdoing and evil nature.

A scholar of Jewish iconography, Ruth Mellinkoff interpreted the women's bestial features as signs of established misogyny; others attribute their appearance to the ban on graven images. There is no agreement, and the imagery is unusual. However, the artist does show signs of Muslim influence, elsewhere in the manuscript too, and the Queen of Sheba, in Islamic belief, is a jinniya, with shaggy legs or donkeys' hooves. She is never however described in a story as animal-headed or metamorphosed, so the illumination here cannot be representing such a legend.

To draw out the meaning of these creatures, it is more fruitful to look at the jinn of the Koran and Middle Eastern folklore. Mahzor's beasts and hybrids do have a great deal in common with the imagery used to represent the intermediate beings of Koranic cosmology, who are allotted by God to be ruled by Solomon, the wise son of David and master of the winds. In sura 72, the jinn are invoked as "beings of shimmering fire" who can rise to the zenith to contemplate the stars, but they appear, in Persian, Turkish and Indian art, as motley creatures. Their combinatory appearances reproduce the plural nature of their character on their bodies: in the sura dedicated to them in the Koran, the jinn tell us, "That among us there are the righteous, and there are the less so – of diverse persuasions are we ... That some of us are Muslims and some are transgressors ... the transgressors shall be firewood for hell" (72:11–15). Significantly, however, the visual imagery does not distinguish between good and bad jinn by such signs as blackness or spottedness or horns or tails: the obedient, good jinn are just as monstrously embodied, in western eyes, as their malefactor kin.

In what follows, I am going to look at the affinities between the iconography of devils and jinn, and at the differences in their meaning, function, and ethical character. Reading signs requires acquaintance with narrative in their readers' and writers' and artists' settings. I will try and communicate some of the jinn's activities from the *Arabian Nights*, and illustrate them with the changing imagery of their appearance, in order to cancel the powerful equation of monstrosity with evil.

The demonic in Europe continued to be depicted as monstrous, mixed and strange, and the irregularity of the devils' forms often produces in the beholder a response that is itself mottled: fear and horror mingling with gaiety and even hilarity. To see the tradition and its tenacity, it is worth having a look at some pages from an exuberant magical treatise in the Wellcome Library, the *Compendium rarissimum totius Artis Magicae*. The manuscript has been created in earnest to all intents and purposes, but its population of demons cannot but help make a reader laugh out loud. Did anyone ever fear such a devil as this? More startlingly still, this is one of several occult manuscripts in the Wellcome collection which was created in the late 18th century. The *Compendium* was written in German and Latin in 1766. In it, we find a grotesque, hare-like creature who is Beelzebub himself,[2] while a bespectacled, perhaps scholarly fright is called Amakbuel.[3] The names of demons often reveal links to oriental esoterica – with both Hebrew and Arabic verbal formulations. But one cannot know whether the artist's humour is inadvertent, or an intrinsic element in the nonsense – the gibberish, cacophony and disharmony – central to unleash devils, in the Pandemonium. Perhaps more genuinely alarming is The Prince of Darkness: Dagol, a fiery, cannibalistic serpentine giant, mangling victims between his jaws like Dante's Satan.[4] The lateness of the manuscript and the persistence of demonic imagery reveal that malformation and combinatory bodies marked out dangerous and powerful agents of darkness long after the Middle Ages. Just as in late antiquity, Christian artists annexed features from the gods of pagan religion – from classical Europe and India above all – to portray the devil, so during the long and complex history

2 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Compendium_rarissimum_totius_Artis_Magicae...._Wellcome_L0027758.jpg

3 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Compendium_rarissimum_totius_Artis_Magicae._Wellcome_L0027817.jpg

4 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Prince_of_Darkeness;_Dagol;_c._1775_Wellcome_L0025428.jpg

of entanglement with the Muslim world, the concept of the jinn coloured the iconology of the forbidden in Christian iconography. Jinni is Arabic for genie or demon. Jinn resemble the daimones of Greek cosmology, neither angels nor devils but intermediate spirits, closer to Paracelsian elementals than to devils.

Visually, jinn are very close to the grotesque figures of devils in medieval Christianity, and to the fantasies of the witch-hunters in early modern Europe, and there may indeed be some cross-fertilisation from India and China, whose gods and demons influenced Christian artists' ways of depicting devils. The Islamic vision of the jinn differs fundamentally, since the obedient jinn who have accepted the true faith are Solomon's servants and are absolutely not evil. They have their disobedient counterparts – the renegade jinn, who in the *Nights* appear in the form of ghouls, marids and afrits – the chief agents of the supernatural. They can cause sickness, epilepsy and madness. A particular foul species (sayatin) haunts refuse pits, lavatories, and other spots of defilement. These apostates adhere to the old religions and their gods; Zoroastrianism from Persia comes in for especially fierce condemnation in the *Arabian Nights*, far greater than Christianity and Judaism, as it constitutes a rejection of Islam by close neighbours and cultural affiliates. It is interesting that it does so, because Zoroastrian cosmology is dualist, with a powerful dark force contending perpetually with the force of good, Ahriman.

The Muslim vision rejects any such arrangements, and this is important to the stories which consequently do not condemn all jinn as diabolical; they are ambivalent, contrary, often intent on doing harm but easily fooled, cravenly servile to their master or mistress as well as entirely subject to whomsoever chance places in that role: to hear is to obey is the jinns' watchword. The Koran warns against praying to them for protection (72:22) but custom over the centuries and into the present resembles rather the Catholic cult of the Virgin Mary, who must not be worshipped as such, while in practice... Solomon may be the divinely appointed master of the jinn, but his very mastery often places his famed justice and wisdom in doubt. Besides, he is not in control of all of them all of the time: he has to go to war on an epic scale to maintain his authority, and many of the jinn with whom heroes fall in love exist in zones of enchantment, sometimes under the sway of fantastic demon kings who thrive beyond Solomon's reach.

It is a mistake to think that the emphasis on symbolic patterning excluded all figurative picturing in Muslim art; the prohibition on the human face comes and goes when ordinary individuals are involved – portraiture was a strength of Moghul art, after all. In the 16th and 17th centuries, divine or holy men and

women are painted wearing little veils to cover their faces. But the jinn had their icon-makers, and they were highly inventive, possibly themselves in contact with Christian imagery, as well as subject to its influence. I am not setting out a claim for one supervening over the other, but asking for a view of the cultural mingling that takes place across borders and the moral inflections that then change their intended meaning.

However, one of the most important distinguishing qualities of Muslim belief allows a category of spirit being – the jinn – to be monstrous and yet, unlike the Christian or Judaid devil, jinn are redeemable. It is – was – heresy to believe that the devil could or would be converted –, and Origen, one of the greatest thinkers of the early church, was excluded from the pantheon of saints and the ranks of Doctors of the Church, and punished for proposing it. By contrast, jinn can be saved and the Koran relates how, when they recognize Allah and humble themselves to accept the rule of Solomon over them, they are faithful, good Muslims. And their demonic power is capable of good and ill, according to principles of intercession very close to Catholic doctrine. The jinn are ordered by the prophet to declare, "I merely convey a proclamation from God, and His messages" (72:23). They are more like daimones, the Greek spirits of energy and inspiration than Judeo-Christian devils. Jinn can be propitious, merciful in their power – and even blessed. The iconography of the jinn does not however lead to an immediate grasp of their complex nature and mysterious status in both Orthodox faith and in folklore, as conveyed by the *Arabian Nights*.

The translation 'demon' carries too strong an inference of evil in English; the alternative spellings 'daimon' or 'daemon,' which derive from Greek, capture better the character of Solomon's followers, especially since Philip Pullman in *His Dark Materials* (1995, 1997, 2000) used 'daemon' for the metamorphic animal souls of his characters. Solomon has been given control of these daemons or jinn, as is mentioned several times in the Koran: "We created man from dried clay, from fetid mud. The Jinn We created beforehand, from the fiery wind" (15:26–7). This fiery wind, close to the luminiferous ether of 17th-century New Science, becomes "shimmering flame" elsewhere (55:14–15), and the jinn appear before human beings, who are made of clay. They are consequently close to the element of air, over which Solomon is also given mastery: it is the jinn who carry the flying carpet, on which he can travel to the edge of the universe and encounter the angel who makes rain and the dragon who circles the world. One of the jinn who carry it is even sometimes named Rukha, a word close to Hebrew ruach (wind

of spirit), and to Rukh, the name of the gigantic birds of the *Nights*. Jinn are also at home in the element of water and Solomon can command them there as well: "And demons there were who dived deep at his command, and performed other, lesser tasks. Of them we took good care" (21:82).

One of the richest compendia of portraits of jinn, a luxurious treasure called *The Book of Felicity*, in Arabic *Matali' al-saadet,* was composed by Muhammad ibn Amir Hasan al-Su'udi. (Moleiro 2007) A Turkish translation was commissioned by the Sultan Murad III in l482, and executed in his workshop at Topkapi under the direction of Ustad 'Osman, the great artist of the Ottoman court, who took imagery into new territory. The book was made for the Sultan's daughter, Fatima, to bring her good fortune[5]. It comprises many different disparate sections: an account of the Zodiac with astrological wisdom for each sign, an analysis of physical characteristics, first male, then female, enumerating such features as "having a round tip of the tongue" and "when the behind sticks up towards the back." This scientific table is followed later by another detailed scheme of bodily spasms, illustrated episodes from the *Life of Alexander* and other Muslim wonder tales (*Gog and Magog*; *Sindibad*). But one of the strangest parts offers a rare study of occult divinatory methods. These are illustrated by full-page talismanic illuminations of jinn, each of them allotted a particular sphere of action. These powerful spirit beings could control all manner of harm and danger which varies in social contexts, as conveyed by so many stories in the *Nights*: protection against ill health, danger, poverty, nightmares; success in childbearing, love, status; justice before the law and freedom from slander; luck in love, wealth and dreams. Remedies for specific purposes require specific formulae: to assure a flow of milk for a nursing mother, to withstand the onset of melancholy. Often the talismanic document is written out on paper, then rolled or folded into a wallet or a phylactery. (The exhibition of the Khalili collection at the Institut du monde arabe in 2009 included a gilded talismanic wallet, signed by its maker and created specifically for a certain individual in 1712 to protect him against accidents and illness, and to liberate him should he be captured, see Arts de l'islam 2009.) Solomon is invoked, through pentacles and other symbols; his presence guarantees the orthodoxy of the entreaties.

King Solomon makes an appearance in Sultan Murad III's *Book of Felicity* (or *Book of Happiness*) FOl 131 v. The illumination shows Solomon's throne – the

5 https://docs.moleiro.com/book_felicity_vii_11.pdf

gold hexagon with a blue seat positioned between two angels, so we are in his richly appointed house, with a peacock above and two giant jinn beside the throne, one gently embracing the other. With large rolling eyes, horns, and vampire teeth, they should perhaps be frightening, but they rather communicate cuddly monstrosity on the lines of Maurice Sendak's *Wild Things* in his famous picture book. (Sendak 1975) And their behavior, in addition to their presence in the sanctum of Solomon's palace, gives every confidence they are not out to do us harm.

All over the classical and neoclassical world, Medusa masks and sirens with split tails displayed; *sheela na gigs* are some of the female demons placed over doorways to protect the household from such overwhelming magic such as petrification; ferocious dragons and *chi'lin* guard thresholds; in ancient Egypt and later in the Hellenistic Middle East, Bes the fat gargoyle was placed in nurseries to guard against cradle-snatchers. The danger that needs to be averted gives shape to the defence against it: the virgin martyr carries the weapons of her cruel death and protects against similar afflictions. St Apollonia carries the pincers which drew her teeth and is consequently the patron saint of toothache and dentists. By analogy, the talisman aimed to protect Fatima and other children against nightmares reproduces a fearsome, blue, monstrous jinn flowing into the head of a sleeping child – the very scene which the image repels, or so it is hoped.

The *Book of Felicity* includes several talismanic pages, each filled with a vivid portrait of a jinni or afreet. Fol 90r depicts a common jinni, Huma, responsible for Fever, in a talisman designed to repel illness. Fearsome, profoundly grotesque in accordance with the principles Longinus/Horace criticized, the jinni's enchantment depends on the apotropaic manoeuvre, which all of you know and recognize: magic homeopathy or vaccine. The danger that is feared is warded off by its double, or by some greater monstrosity that therefore can contain it or quell it. The vast majority of Islamic examples in contemporary collections are pious and benign. Talismans can turn hallowed or profane according to their maker or master, the powers invoked by them and the purposes for which they are made. They are ambiguous in the same way as the pharmakon – a remedy or a poison, depending on how they are applied. The picture given in the *Nights* reveals a broader, less principled and far more capricious activity on the part of jinn through the talismans where they sometimes dwell.

Even when absent in person from the tales (he often is), Solomon provides the basic structural plot on which Shahrazad's stories depend, and his powers underlie the whole narrative foundation of the magic in the *1001 Nights*. While

the dominant frame of the *Nights* concerns Shahrazad's mission to save herself and all other women from the rage of the Sultan, that salvation story is itself contained within another larger myth about origins, analogous, but not identical, to the Judeo-Christian account of the rebel angels. This relates that some of the jinn revolted against the true God and proclaimed allegiance to Eblis, the Satan of Islamic cosmology, consequently were punished by Solomon, and became the capricious and powerful agents of caprice and wickedness who work the wonders that transfuse the world of the stories. But unlike the biblical story, the Koran – and the *Nights* – include jinn who remained true to Solomon and Allah, as well as others who repent later, in the course of the tales told by Shahrazad.

The jinns' double character in the stories opens a crucial space of possibility for them in the narrative: as the agents of fortune. As Pier Paolo Pasolini commented, "every tale in *The Thousand and One Nights* begins with an 'appearance of destiny' which manifests itself through an anomaly, and one anomaly always generates another. So, a chain of anomalies is set up... The protagonist of the stories is in fact destiny itself."[6] Destiny is the chief character of the *Nights*. But destiny in the stories is multivalent and sets off the chain of anomalies which Pasolini describes: the jinn introduce a dynamic of pure chance which runs alongside the larger designs of fate, now meeting them, now parting from them, rather as the breeze on the sea will form cross-currents in the wave pattern on the surface, which sailors watch carefully to determine the direction of the wind they can catch rather than the current or the tide in the water. (Willemen 1997, 74)

Beings of Shimmering Fire

The jinn, good, bad and in-between, who flock in the *Nights*, add the energy of unpredictability to the plots in which they appear. They actually embody a tremendous narrative principle which gives the stories in the *Nights* their distinctive, enjoyable flavour. The jinn's role reflects how the collective poetic imagination that created the stories felt a need to identify intermediate agents, capable of both good and evil at whim; the invention constitutes an answer to the problem of evil existing in the monotheistic landscape, when a good, all-powerful deity allows terrible things to happen, including injustice.

6 https://fairytale.fandom.com/wiki/One_Thousand_and_One_Nights

"The Fisherman and the Genie"

An old fisherman living in great poverty with a wife, his son and two daughters throws his net into the sea one moonlit night, and has no luck: his first haul is the carcass of a donkey, his second an old jar full of sand and clay, his third a heap of bits of glass and pottery, bones and débris. In between each throw of his net, he rails against fortune and passionately laments his state: "Here virtue cries for misery, and the good-for-nothing disguises himself in his kingdom. The bird that soars high exhausts itself from west to east, while the canary in its cage feasts on sweets."

He then looks up at the sky, sees dawn is beginning to break and prays that his fourth and last attempt will bring his family something to eat from the sea, in the same way as God made it obey Moses. This time, he fishes up a copper bottle, sealed with a lead stopper, and is overjoyed because the copper will fetch at least six gold dinars which he can use to buy wheat. Before setting out for the market, he decides he must open it, and as he chisels away at the lead with his knife, smoke starts rising up and up, and darkens the blue of the morning sky before it rolls down to the ground again, gathers itself together to a great rumble and takes the form of a huge afrit: "his head, as high as a dome, touched the clouds, while his feet rested on the ground. His hands resembled gigantic pitchforks, his legs the mast of a ship, his ears shields, his mouth a cavern, his teeth rocks, his nose a jar, his nostrils trumpets, his eyes torches. He had a mane of hair, all tangled and dusty. A real monster!"

The fisherman is seized by a terrible fear, as he hears the jinni – for it is a jinni, of the fearsome species of the afrits – cry out a profession of faith in the true God and in Solomon his prophet, and promise that he will never disobey him again. The fisherman reproaches him, telling him Solomon has been dead more than 1,800 years: "We are living at the end of time," he says, and demands to know his story. The jinni tells him to rejoice; but he is being cruelly ironic for with his next breath he informs the fisherman that the hour of his death is at hand, and he must choose the method and the tortures he shall suffer.

The fisherman protests: he has delivered him from the bottle, and is to be rewarded by a terrible death? "Listen to my story," orders the afrit. He then tells the fisherman: "Know that I am a heretical demon. I refused to obey Solomon, son of David. My name is Sakhr." He relates how he was brought before Solomon by his vizier and ordered to embrace the true God, but persisted in his refusal, and so was captured and sealed up inside the flask with the lead stopper, inscribed

with the name of the true God, and thrown by the faithful jinn to the bottom of the sea. There a hundred years passed, and the jinni promised to bring riches to his deliverer. No one saved him, and another hundred years passed, and he swore to make his rescuer even richer. Another four hundred years passed, and by this time the jinni had become so enraged, he swore that he would kill anyone who freed him now.

The fisherman begs for mercy, but his enemy remains obdurate. "O master of demons," cries out the fisherman. "Is this how you return evil for good?"

He recites a pious proverb which warns against such behaviour – and adds an allusion to the fate that overtakes the ungrateful hyena in a beast-fable. "Stop dreaming," says the implacable jinni. "You have to die." The fisherman reminds himself that unlike this jinni, he is a human being, endowed with reasoning powers; he can work out a stratagem. He invokes the name of God as engraved on the ring of Solomon and pledges the afrit to answer a question truthfully. His antagonist is agitated at the invocation of God and the ring, and agrees. The fisherman then asks him how he got into the bottle, since even one of his hands and feet would not fit. "I'll only believe it when I see it with my own eyes," says the fisherman.

(It is the end of the third night in the cycle, and Shahrazad breaks off: with the dawn she must stop. But the Sultan wants to hear what happens next and so she is reprieved for another day – and night. On the fourth night, she resumes her tale.)

The fisherman watches the jinni shake himself all over and turn back into smoke which rises to heaven and then gathers together and enters the flask. From inside Sakhr calls out: "You see, fisherman, I am inside the flask. Do you believe me now?"

The fisherman rushes to seize the flask and the stopper of lead imprinted with the seal of Solomon, and stuffs it back into the mouth of the bottle. Now it is his turn to give the order that the jinni must die. He is going to throw him in the sea, he says, and build himself a house on the spot so that nobody else can fish there. The jinni struggles in vain to free himself, but he finds himself once more a prisoner of the seal of Solomon.

"No, no," he cries out as his jailer walks towards the sea.

"Yes, yes," replies the fisherman.

The rebel afrit tries to cajole him, sweetly and softly, and promises him wealth and blessings. But the fisherman does not believe his protestations. He knows

another story about kindness rewarded with death, and it has made him wary. And Shahrazad begins to tell the story of the fisherman telling that story...

The famous trickster tale of "The Fisherman and the Genie," at once alarming and funny, so satisfying in its (first) neat resolution when the pauper outwits the colossus, the enemy is hoist on his own petard, and the jinni inveigled back into the bottle, has rightly enjoyed a long and celebrated history (it was successfully restaged in the 2008 Disney Aladdin, with Robin Williams voicing the genie). But when Sakhr remembers the scene of his rebellion and punishment at the hands of Solomon, his story provides the fundamental background plot for the cosmology of the *Arabian Nights*, in which the wise king plays a pre-eminent role as master of the book's magic, with the jinn at his command.

The myth of Solomon's relation with this distinctive order of beings forms the deep and familiar backdrop of the *Nights*. It did not need to be spelt out by the storyteller but could be dropped into a plot where the focus lies elsewhere (on the fisherman's cunning and his ultimate salvation, for example). Shahrazad, and the real-life narrators who followed her, could assume the audience knew the backstory, just as Homer does not begin at the beginning with the story of the Trojan War, but plunges in, taking it for granted that his audience is fully aware of what took place at the Judgement of Paris.

Unexpectedly, the part of Solomon's story that concerns jinn in their bottles was known in the Middle Ages in Europe: a Middle English poem (Reames 2003) about St Margaret of Antioch includes her victory over the dragon sent by Beelzebub to destroy her. Beelzebub then appears; she binds him too. He plaintively reveals that the dragon was his brother and tells a variant of the story of their imprisonment by Solomon:

> "Salamon the wyse kynge, whyle he was on lyve,
> He closed us in a bras fat and dalfe us in a clyve.
> The men of Babylon that bras fat gunne ryve;
> And whanne that broken was, oute we gan dryve . . .
> Some swyfter then the wynde and some as swyfte as roo,
> And alle that byleve on Jhesu Cryste we werke hem mychel woo."
> ("Solomon the wise king, while he was still alive,
> Shut us up in a brass vat and buried us in the ground,
> The men of Babylon broke open that brass vat
> And when it was broken, we began to stream out.

Some swifter than the wind and some as swift as deer,
on all who believe in Jesus Christ, we work dreadful woe.")

The medieval poet may have heard the story as a pilgrim or a crusader, and it is after all from the same part of the world as Margaret of Antioch herself. Just as it is no longer true that audiences know the Greek myths, so it is with the traditions of Solomon in the *Arabian Nights*, for his Koranic persona is unfamiliar beyond the world of Islam.

The jinni Sakhr plays a dominant role in the legends about Solomon that precede the date accepted for the creation of the *Arabian Nights* in the form of the book known today. The earliest manuscript is given to the 15th century, though there are some scholars who place it earlier. Sakhr the Rebellious figures in the mythology of the days before the prophet, as one of the unenlightened, disobedient jinn. Unlike the biblical king, the Muslim Solomon understands the language of beasts and birds and commands the winds and the elements; he rules over the higher order of angels and, above all, is given mastery over the innumerable spirits, the jinn, who exist invisibly alongside angels, humans and animals and form a distinct order of beings, elemental and mortal, metamorphic physically and morally, shifting between states of visibility and invisibility, capable of redemption and goodness yet for the most part, especially in the stories of the *Nights*, capricious, arbitrary and amoral. The stories of the *Nights* take these aspects of Solomon for granted, and treat them to no exclamations of wonder, giving the impression that these qualities of his were generally known by the community of listeners as well as by the makers of the literature. There is, however, so much common ground between the Judeo-Christian tradition about the wise king and the Islamic and other Eastern material that it would be too blunt to argue simply that something intrinsically Islamic fostered the magus while Christendom preferred the wise judge.

Solomon belongs to the three monotheisms of the Middle East, appears in the Bible and the Koran, and in Judaic folklore and Kabbalistic belief. The wise king cuts a majestic yet enigmatic figure, and his deeds and characteristics, as related in the scriptures of three faiths, provide the seedstore from which the fantasies of the *Nights* have grown so richly.

The "sagest of all sages, the mage of all mages," he combines kingship and prophecy with magic, and passes from mainstream religion into mysticism and hermetic lore, with numerous wisdom books from the Bible as well as medieval and later grimoires or magic handbooks claiming his authorship (such as the

Clavis Salomonis – The Key of Solomon – and the *Ars notoria*); Solomonic wisdom, emerging from the Jewish-Hellenistic culture of the Middle East in antiquity, enjoyed remarkable longevity, and continued to be collected, copied, and revised in manuscripts in various languages well into the 18th and 19th centuries. His seal, his pentacle (Solomon's seal or pentacle has been a favourite cipher in 17th century Italy), and the temple he built remain salient throughout the history and practice of magic, both by marginal occult sects or by more respectable bodies, such as the Freemasons, above all.

Solomon is credited with authorship of the *Song of Songs*, *Ecclesiastes*, the *Book of Wisdom* itself, and with the *Book of Proverbs*, books which include the most intense lyric passages of the Bible as well as the Wisdom tradition of the Middle East; both these strong strands weave through the *1001 Nights*, where the stories are cadenced by bursts of ecstatic poetry on the one hand and fabulist exempla on the other. His myth meets and combines with those of others – of the hero-kings and prophets, Alexander the Great, Merlin, Hermes Trismegistus and Virgil. There are other figures of great wisdom in holy scripture – the three kings are called "the wise men from the east" in the New Testament, and there are numerous prophets, of course, but Solomon surpasses them all because, when asked in a dream what he most desires, he does not ask for money and power or long life but responds by praying to God for "an understanding heart to judge thy people and to know good and evil" (2 Chronicles 1:7–12). As a result, God answers his prayer and "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt" (1 Kings 4:30). The reference to Egypt, the most fertile and ancient repository of magical wisdom, gives Solomon explicit superiority to that knowledge, as Moses (and Aaron) surpass Pharaoh's magicians in the Bible. Middle East scholar Chester Charlton McCown, commenting on Solomon's character as a magus, writes, "Few [traditions] have a richer and more varied documentation than that which glorifies the wisdom of Solomon. It may well serve as an example of the manner in which the human mind works in certain fields." (McCown 1992, 1–24)

In the Bible, Solomon's wisdom translates into practical knowledge: he is no hermit or meditative philosopher, but pursues the *via activa* as an astronomer and natural scientist, as well as a judicious ruler handing out his celebrated and cunning decisions. God has given him knowledge of the stars and their relation to time, understanding of the properties of plants and roots; he can also read thoughts (Book of Wisdom 7:17–22). The folklore that the king inspires in the

Middle East, before Islam was founded, flows into the *Arabian Nights*. For example, *The Testament of Solomon*, a splendid phantasmagoria about Solomon drilling demons to build the Temple, is a Greek compendium composed in Jewish circles before 300 AD, with some Christian additions and many affinities with later Koranic and Middle Eastern folklore. The New Testament scholar (and ghost story writer) M. R. James commented in his 1899 introduction, "No one has ever paid very much attention to this futile, but exceedingly curious, work ... related to 'Greek magical papyri and ... fairy and demon stories of East and West." (James 1899)

Since then, there has been more interest in this richly imaginative catalogue of demons, which is vividly cast in the first person of Solomon reviewing his life; it recounts a series of conversations between Solomon and the devils, whom he summons by power of his ring and the sign of the pentacle engraved on its gemstone, which has been given to him by the archangel Michael. The devils include some who have since achieved fame, like Beelzebub and Asmodeus, alongside scores of others who have not; they each have different very specific victims and ingenious – diabolical – ways of doing harm. One by one they are conscripted against their will and set to perform tasks that match their spheres of activity: the demoness Onoskelis, who strangles her victims in a noose, is ordered to spin the hemp to make ropes to haul materials. Later in the story, one of the demons whom Solomon tames links interestingly to the *Nights*: the king's help is requested in a pitiful letter by the ruler of Arabia, where the people are suffering from a demon wind ("its blast is harsh and terrible"). Solomon sets the request aside, as he is concentrating on raising the keystone of the Temple, but it is so huge and heavy that more help is needed besides Onpskelis's rope-making. But later, he dispatches a servant to Arabia with a leather flask and his seal, and tells him to hold it open facing the wind like a windsock and when it has filled out to close the neck with the seal; he is then to bring the devil wind back to Jerusalem. He does so; and the wind duly dies down, to the relief and gratitude of the Arabs. Three days later, the servant returns to Jerusalem, and the story continues:

> "And on the next day, I King Solomon, went into the Temple of God and sat in deep distress about the stone of the end of the corner. And when I entered the Temple, the flask stood up and walked around some seven steps and then fell on its mouth and did homage to me. And I marvelled that even along with the bottle the de-

> mon still had power and could walk about; and I commanded it to stand up." (*Testament of Solomon*, 43[7])

This demon tells him his name – Ephippass – and promises to do anything Solomon wishes. The king orders him to lift the keystone into place, which he does, later going on mysteriously to raise a huge column on a pillar of air. With this miracle, the intermingling of air with spirits takes the form of physical currents – wind, even tornadoes – and the demon announces the feats of sprites like Ariel and the tempest he raises by enchantment. A later work, a commentary on the Koran – Qisas al-anbiya – includes Sakhr in this crew of demons working to build the Temple. (Al-Kisai 1997) He is given the task of helping the jinn to chisel the stones without making a noise.

The *Testament of Solomon* also provides some of the material that will be worked into the background of the *Nights*; its marked love of aerodynamic wonders – the flight of the jinn, of Aladdin's palace and other prodigious displacements and overnight sensations – can be seen taking shape in this storyteller's fantasy. The *Testament of Solomon* takes the form its title suggests: at the end of his life, the wise king is giving an account of himself, so, setting aside its anecdotal supernaturalism, the work makes a real attempt to make sense of Solomon's complex character as both a godly, wise man of sacred scriptures and an apostate who worships false gods. It does so by concluding with the story from the Bible that he fell in love with the daughter of Pharaoh and "many strange women" besides:

> "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines...
> For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods..." (I King 11:4).

Among these gods, the Bible mentions Ashtoreth, and Milcom "the abomination of the Ammonites," and how Solomon sacrificed to them. For this reason, the God of the Bible eventually prevents Solomon's son from inheriting his kingdom. In relation to the *Arabian Nights*, this fall from grace gives Solomon an equivocal, even lesser status in the eyes of Western audiences. In the Muslim sacred book, by contrast, the wise ruler is tested by God and tempted in different, often highly

7 https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Testament_of_Solomon.djvu/43

ambiguous ways. But his character is steadier – there are no temptress women to lead him away from the true God. In one passage, his virtue falters:

> "Remember when, on an evening, were displayed before him horses
> frisky and fleet.
> He said: 'I have a love of horses that makes me forget my Lord till
> the sun hides behind its veil. Bring them back to me.'
> And he proceeded to stroke their Shanks and necks."
> (Koran 38:31–33)

More crucially, he successfully withstands the lure of "disbelieving devils ... who taught mankind sorcery..."

> "They know full well that he who deals in sorcery has no share in
> the afterlife.
> Wretched is the price they pay for their souls, if only they knew!"
> (Koran 2:101–2)

So, his magical powers are clearly distinguished from the practice of sinners and apostates: theus is goety, his theurgy.

Both holy books reflect legends and folklore circulating in the region before the stories about Solomon were written down, but with these careful discriminations, the Koran establishes that some forms of magic can be divinely approved and benign. It presents Solomon as a man with a deep understanding of the heavens and the properties of things; it also describes the command God has given him over natural forces, embodied by jinn who inhabit distant kingdoms, worlds beyond this world often evoked as paradisal wildernesses filled with all kinds of rare and marvelous stones, animals and birds. These sides of Solomon's character subsequently give rise to yet more imaginative fantasies, ranging from the mystical to the scabrous. Solomon's mythopoeic fertility has not come to an end. Hans Werner Henze recently composed an opera called *L'Upupa* (*The Hoopoe*) for which he wrote the libretto, where he improvises with evident delight on motifs from the *Nights* about Solomon and his messenger bird (Henze 2003), while at the more popular end of culture, the World Wide Web today is packed, as one might expect, with Solomonic lore: the wise king is now identified as a shaman, and promises access to healing of mind and body.

The literature which gathers around his legend in Europe ranges through love magic, pharmacology, scatology, homespun lore, and rude common sense (when he finds himself in comic material, he plays the ultimate wise guy). But even in the most esoteric or coarsest passages, Solomon's supreme knowledge and insight remain his defining characteristics. Dante wrote the *Divine Comedy* around the same time as the Mahzor manuscript was produced, in which Solomon appears – an indication of the wise king's prominence. The Italian poet, who gives diviners and conjurors very short shrift in the *Inferno*, ignores any taint of necromancy or womanizing in Solomon's legend, and places him unequivocally in Paradise in the sphere of the sun where his starry soul shines gloriously as the fifth light. Thomas Aquinas indicates his starry soul:

> "La quinta luce, ch'è tra noi più bella,
> spira di tale amor, che tutto 'l mondo
> là giù ne gola di saper novella:
> entro v'è l'alata mente u' si profondo
> saver fu messo, che se 'l vero è vero
> a veder tanto non surse il secondo."
> (*Par*. X, ll. 109–15)
>
> ("The fifth light, which is the most beautiful among us, breathes from such a love that all the world below hungers for news of it; within it is the lofty mind to which was given wisdom so deep that, if the truth be true, there never arose a second of such vision." See Dante 1971)

Three cantos later, before another reverent evocation of King Solomon, Dante gives an elaborate account of the sphere of the sun, with the singing stars and their double dance (*Par*. XIII, ll. 1–27). The complex astronomical scheme which his dense verses evoke shows the poet's deep reading in hermetic and astrological texts, from later versions of Greek Neoplatonists which were transmitted – and preserved – through Arabic translations. But the harmony of the wheeling stars depends on Dante's identification of his own metaphysical strivings with the goals of geometry: in the closing lines of the *Divine Comedy*, he compares his awe at his vision of paradise to

> Qual è 'l geomètra che tutto s'affl ige
> per misurar lo cherchio, e non ritrova
> pensando, quel principio ond'elli indige
> tal ero io a quella vista nova.
> (*Par.* XXXIII, 133–6)
>
> ("Like the geometer who sets all his mind to the squaring of the circle and for all his thinking does not discover the principle he needs, such was I at that strange sight.")

The biblical Solomon, who combines kingship with unsurpassed wisdom, synthesises for Dante the ideal fusion of worldly justice, science and metaphysics. But the topological structure of the universe in *Paradiso* XIII, in which the shining soul of Solomon lives forever, displays the working of a particular practical mnemonic system credited to Solomon the magus and to sages after him. Dante invites his readers directly to picture in their mind's eye two turning gyres involving twenty-four stars; in this way, he invites us to use fantasia to understand the heavens. Such a practice of active imagination is central to magical thinking, invoked, for example, in the life of the magus Apollonius of Tyana by Apollodorus in the late second century AD, and adopted by such practitioners of natural magic as Pietro Pomponazzi and Giordano Bruno, for whom visualisation was an active force which can tune in to the forces of the cosmos and penetrate the secrets of phenomena.

Dante always shows great sensitivity to the dangers of magic, and is consistent in his repudiation: Virgil may be his guide to the underworld because his poem proves his special access to such secrets, but the Roman poet in Dante's poem bears no other trace of the many marvelous feats of magic attributed to him by medieval tradition. In the same way, Dante allows the associations of Solomon's occult wisdom to infuse the scenes in which he appears in *Paradiso*, while he himself enacts mentalist methods for committing knowledge to memory using geometrical forms, as advocated in the tradition of natural magic, and then enjoins his readers to follow the same process.

The glorious and blameless figure of Solomon in Dante's *Paradise* may seem remote from the colourful folklore that fills the *Arabian Nights*, but his Dantean character epitomises how acutely the poet needed to distance his work. The strong contrast between this Solomon and the Solomon who commands the jinn is crucial, I believe, to the eventual huge success of the Eastern stories in Europe.

While Christian orthodoxy, as defined by Thomas Aquinas's thought, must reject magic, the cosmology of the *Nights* gives magic space; it becomes a vision of natural order, and the magus, symbolised pre-eminently by Solomon, takes up a role within this territory of enchantment, which can be either beneficent or malignant depending on which story is being told. To contemporary readers, however, and to Jews and Christians whose angelology is more uncompromisingly dualist, Solomon's magical powers cast him in a very ambiguous light – in the realm of fantasy fit for (children's) literature rather than metaphysics. This alternative theology, however, does allow the concept of the good demon to flourish – and a demon who can be either good or bad, quite apart from the profound effects this possibility has on an ethics of redemption, is a catalyst of narrative surprise.

The moral potential for righteousness, as attributed to the jinn, leads to another development in the stories of the Middle East and the *Arabian Nights*. The worlds of humans and jinn can intermingle, and even marry – without necessarily leading to catastrophe. A human being can fall in love with a jinniya and marry her – in some cases, happily. Numerous fairy tales in the *Nights* tell of such unions – and of their fairy children, who can take up residence in Cairo or Baghdad without mishap. In "The Tale of the Second Old Man", for example, in the cycle of "The Merchant and the Genie" towards the beginning of the *Nights*, the protagonist relates how when he was young he met a slave in rags on a quayside who asked him to marry her, which he did, and how, later, his brothers plotted against him, robbed him, and threw him and his young bride into the sea. Whereupon, revealing herself to be a fairy, she plucked him out to safety:

> She took me upon her shoulders and, carrying me to an island, left me and disappeared for the whole night. In the morning she returned and said: 'Do you not know me? I am your wife. Know now that I am a jinniyah and that when I first saw you, my heart loved you, for Allah willed it so . . .'

She is in a rage against his brothers, she continues, and is flying off that very night to sink their boat and kill them. The old man pleads her to show mercy towards them, and she agrees; she carries him up into the air and deposits him back on the roof of his home. There he finds his brothers leashed and weeping. They have been changed into bitches by his wife's fairy sister when she heard of their wickedness; the spell cannot be lifted before ten years are up. The old man is now

wandering with his transformed brothers in search of his lost fairy wife. Women – human women – can also become the spouses, reluctant or otherwise, of demon lovers. In the frame story, the Sultan Shahriyar and his brother Shahzenan come across the colossal jinni's beautiful prisoner, a human woman who has been stolen by this disobedient and wicked jinni on her wedding day from her husband. They show no surprise that such a relationship should exist, but are only horrified at her ferocious desire to avenge herself through sex. The indeterminacy of the outcome of such jinn-human marriages lifts the stories into the realm of surprise. The stories give warnings about the complexity of these unions, however. The tales of Hasan of Basra and of Jullanar of the Sea, like legends about selkies in Scotland, or the fairy tale of Undine or Rusalka in Europe, unfold marriages to a fairy wife that are fraught with danger and heartbreak. But on the whole, it seems that men can love and marry jinn or perish, but relations between women and jinn are often violent and unhappy; tales of abduction, and captivity dominate – transparent allegories about abusive marriages.

Several magical unions do, however, take place between human grooms and fairy brides, and these marriages can prosper and do not need to end with the separation of worlds again. Janshah, Hasan of Basra and Prince Ahmed are some of the heroes who, spellbound by the beauty of a fairy they have once glimpsed, pursue her through thick and thin, and eventually succeed in winning her and returning home to the world with her as their wife. Similarly, the otherworldly romance of Sayf al-Muluk and Badiat al-Jamal dramatises Sayf's undying passion for the jinniya Badiat, daughter of the king of the true-believing jinn. Her portrait has been magically woven in gold into a jewel-studded robe, and given by Solomon himself as a reward for his conversion to Islam to Sayf's father, the King of Egypt. Sayf unfolds the robe and sees Badiat's beauty and is lost – his life becomes an epic quest to find her. Through a tangle of bizarre and wonderful adventures (monstrous races, fabulous islands, many near-death experiences) he does so. En route he rescues a maiden – Dawlat Kathun; she is captive to a rebel jinni, son of the Blue King of the jinn, who has stolen her away to his castle, 120 years' journey from her home in Serendip. This demon prince has been warned at birth by his horoscope that he will meet his death at the hand of a son of a human king, so he has hidden his soul in the stomach of a sparrow, which he has shut up in a box, then put the box in a chest, inside another chest, repeating the manoeuvre seven times seven, until the last coffer, which is made of marble; this he has sunk by the shore of the ocean stream that encircles the world.

But Dawlat Khatun has learned the secret of her captor's vulnerability, and she confides it to Sayf, who, when he hears it, cries out,

> I am that son of a king! And here on my finger is the ring of Solomon, son of David – blessed be their names! Come now with me down to the shore and we shall see if what is said is true!

With the magic of the ring, he raises the marble chest from the ocean depths, breaks through all the boxes within boxes and extracts the sparrow. The demon jinni in the form of a huge cloud of dust pursues them, wheedling piteously for his life. But Sayf strangles the sparrow, and the jinni collapses in a heap of black ashes. Dawlat Khatun is free: she turns out to be his beloved Badiat's milk-sister and she helps Sayf al-Muluk to find her. The romance ends in a double wedding which braids and knots together most satisfyingly the long tangle of the plotlines (I have hardly begun to comb them out here).

Solomon plays a distant role but his magic suffuses this epic romance, which stages a teeming population of jinn, both good and evil, inhabiting regions all around the world and far beyond its known borders. Dramatically capable of changing size, jinn have the edgeless forms of their elements, air and fire; whether rebels or not, they are intrinsically metamorphic beings and can take an infinite number of human, animal and monstrous shapes. Multiple, versatile, fluid and elusive, they incarnate energy in the stories. But they also feel things keenly, and they die: these mortal sympathies add depths and even pathos to their role.

The poet and scholar Amira El-Zein has commented in a recent book, *Islam, Arabs, and the Intelligent World of the Jinn*: "[...]it is captivating that beings from the two realms of the visible and invisible worlds travel freely from one realm to the other... The movement from one dimension to another is constantly open both ways. From the perspective of these folktales, it is quite natural for humans and jinn to constantly circulate between the two realms as the scriptures and the tradition certify, while many folktales and fairytales in the West display rather preserved domains for each species." (El-Zein 2009, 117) She goes on to compare this Eastern folk theme with the Mélusine legend, a tale which belongs in the family that inspired the "The Little Mermaid" by Andersen and Dvořák's opera "Rusalka", where the prohibition on mingling between the sea creature and a human prince demands that the heroine denature her fairy form: in Andersen's cruel imagination her tail is split to make legs. From Scotland to southern Eu-

rope, it is fatal to fall in love with a being of another world: the forlorn Merman in Arnold's poem ("The Forsaken Merman") pines for ever for his lost bride; the fisherman yearns for the selkie who vanished when he broke the prohibition and either looked at her on a forbidden day, or found her sealskin and tried to keep her from putting it on again.

Similarly, when the jinniya take the form of aerial beings and can also live in the depths of the sea, they resemble the swan maidens and sirens of European lore. But, again, they are not necessarily doomed to separation or death. The daimonic, spiritual and enchanted interpenetrate the earthly like the twisting threads of a tapestry.

A remarkable legal document was drawn up in Syria in the 14th century to determine the status of such unions in accordance with the faith, with the Koran and the Hadith as well as the biographies of the Prophet. Though the theological evidence comes down on the side of disapproval of such marriages, they are not deemed inconceivable: indeed, the very disapproval expressed by these highest authorities admits their possibility. Children can be born of these matches and the tales sometimes give warnings about their future; but the offspring of humans and jinn do not only occur in the fantasies of romances or the *Nights*: in Luxor in the 1970s, the Arabist Fred Leemhuis was told about a local man who had two wives, one a jinniya whom he saw every Thursday in the upstairs room of his house. They had five invisible children, while with his human wife, who lived on the ground floor, he had nine visible offspring. His transport business flourished as his jinn children lent a helping hand. Some of the learned opinion opposes this view, arguing that, quite apart from the unlawfulness of such procreation, jinn cannot take the fully human form necessary to conceive a human baby – the existence of the jinn is not in doubt, but suitability of their form.

In a plot, the supreme being can act as a narrative force embodied in providence, but there are limits to the spectrum of his behaviour. Even the furious God of the Old Testament does not possess the degree of idiosyncrasy and vitality that less strictly perfect beings, intrinsically various and unruly, can add to a story. It is not simply a question of the devil having the best tunes, but a reflection of the inherent demand that this kind of fairytale storytelling makes: for surprise, for wonder, for astonishment.

The Greek myths could imagine gods and goddesses behaving badly and they correspondingly fizz with inventive plots: with the fairytale and the tales from

the *Nights* this variety and spice, so necessary to a good story, move out of the ranks of the divine into the intermediate world of spirits.

The Koran does not describe the jinn in zoomorphic terms, but their traditional animal hybridity reciprocates Solomon's god-given mastery over the animal world, his understanding the language of the birds, and his attendant train of creatures, real and mythical, including his messenger the hoopoe. Several scenes of the Koran dramatise enigmatic relations between the wise king and the natural world, including that strange love of horses quoted earlier. Some of the jinns' activities on Solomon's behalf – their diving into the sea and raising a wind – associate them with the elements, and in many ways they are closer to nature spirits, to the elves and fairies and sprites of English and Celtic folklore than to the demons of the religious tradition. The jinn became portrayed with animal features in the context of the heavenly court, the artists reaching for a language that mediates between the visible natural world and the supernatural. In the visual tradition of Persia and India, where the ban on graven images was less strictly observed than elsewhere in the Islamic world, the Solomon of the Koran presides over a scene of paradisical enchantment, characterised by talking beasts and birds – including his messenger the hoopoe.

For example, in a wonderfully opulent and richly detailed miniature from the Deccan in Mughal India, painted c. 1610–30 AD, the hoopoe is perched on Solomon's shoulder; Solomon is seated on his throne with its seven steps and lions couchant; his deputy – the general in charge of the troops of the jinn, al-Damiryat – stands on his right, next to his vizier, al-Bahrakya. These are two of Solomon's four princes, with the lion as the prince of beasts and the eagle the prince of birds.

This Solomon of Islamic culture presides over animated phenomena, all obedient to his command, like the jinn. Many rich manuscript illuminations, painted in Persia or, again, in Moghul India illustrate these passages of the Koran, and show Solomon presiding in his court, usually in a garden paradise, surrounded by angels and jinn, birds and animals – the harmonious and varied Edenic world at his disposal. Yet the jinn in attendance are monstrous, with hooves and tusks and tails and hairy bodies, often luridly coloured, spotted and ill-assorted with exaggerated, often comical faces, rolling eyes, drooling mouths.

In a more extended passage, from Sura 27 "The Ants," the Koran gives more detail about Solomon's God-given gifts. It opens with apocalyptic passages about the plagues of Egypt obtained by Moses from God to punish Pharaoh and his people and then passes rapidly on to Moses's notable successors. Solomon makes

a mysterious appearance in a sequence of compressed yet vividly coloured scenes which draw on popular legends about the wisest of wise men. The sura tells us that Solomon said:

> O people, we have been taught the language of Birds, and granted of all gifts. This is truly a favour most conspicuous. [...] Solomon's host of jinn, men, and birds were marshalled in ordered ranks before him, and when they came to the Valley of the Ants, one ant said, 'O ants, enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his troops should crush you unawares.'
>
> (Koran 27:15–18)

Solomon, understanding the warning, "smiled in amusement at its words," and gives thanks for the gift, asking God to admit him to the company of his servants. In a highly elliptical manner, the Koran does not expand on the episode, but implies that Solomon, as he has been given power to understand the speech of all creatures, was able to take care not to harm the ants who, as puny, anonymous and labouring creatures, serve to remind us of the importance of humility.

Another insect, sometimes an ant, sometimes a termite, makes a further, highly symbolic appearance in Solomon's legend: the king has captured the most powerful of the jinn, including Beelzebub, and ordered them to build the Temple. But he realises that he will die before the work is finished, and that the jinn will down tools as soon as they see that he is near his end. So, he sets himself up to lean on his staff and remain there, standing, until an insect gnaws through the stick and Solomon's corpse falls to the ground. The Koran refers simply to "a crawling creature of the earth" (34:14) and this is variously translated, but in all cases the point is the paltriness of the agent in this episode when the great wise king's mortality is revealed.

Sometimes the ants are replaced by locusts, which are even lesser in status. But Solomon's wisdom consists in his appreciation of all human contingency, and his acknowledgement of his own littleness. Sura 27 then passes swiftly on to the scene in which Solomon calls for his messenger, the hoopoe, and when he does not come to his call, threatens to kill him for this lapse (27:21). But the bird soon returns and brings news of a queen living in the south – this is the Koran's account of the Queen of Sheba's encounter with Solomon, given rather differently in the Bible (1 Kings 10:1–13). Solomon forgets about punishing the bird and

becomes curious; through a series of magical prestiges, he summons the queen to come and meet him. The Koran then moves into phase briefly with the Bible; but the two accounts of the meeting soon part again as the Koran includes cryptic moments of mysterious magic, as when Solomon conjures a floor of glass which the queen mistakes for a deep pool of water... 'and exposed her legs.' Solomon then reveals to her that "This is a terrace burnished with glass." She instantly converts to his God.

The chapter then closes with stirring accounts detailing the doom that will fall upon unbelievers at the Day of Judgment – in terms recognisably echoing both the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation. As in the encounter with the ants, Solomon's reactions to the Queen of Sheba reveal above all his defining persona as magus, a man endowed with preternatural powers over living things and the elements, who can interrupt time and vault through space at will. Yet he is also mortal, fallible and flawed while the Queen of Sheba's mysterious nether limbs identify her as a jinniya in some versions of her encounter with Solomon.

An unusual moral twist on a ransom tale, told by the Persian romancer Nizami in *The Mirror of the Invisible World* (Chelkowski 1975), has a compelling emotive charge: Nizami relates how the child Solomon and the queen have together is born deformed, but they learn that they can heal him if they confess to each other the truth about themselves. The queen admits she lusts after young men, while Solomon, in this story, does not suffer from similar libidinousness but confesses he covets lavish gifts in return for dispensing his famous wisdom. As the two bare their weaknesses to each other, their child grows whole again.

[This child, known by several different names, will himself enjoy a great destiny, as the founder of the Ethiopian royal house, rulers of a most ancient Christian nation, and the spiritual ancestor of Rastafarianism, which traces itself in this way directly back to Solomon: Haile Selassie, the last emperor being the last earthly representative of the wise king.]

The legends of Solomon form the warp on which the *Nights* are woven in another respect. He commands the beasts and the airs, and the jinn are his agents, but none of his enchantments would be powerful without his seal, and the inscriptions stamped out by its means: the stoppers in the bottles which hold captive the renegade jinn are sealed with his pentacle and his motto. The talismans that control the jinni of the nightmare and of fever are written, material objects. In the concluding part of this lecture, I now turn to the spirit powers infused into the talisman by means of inscription; this ancient amuletic religious prac-

tice, widespread throughout the world of antiquity, was given an intensely scribal, rather than purely emblematic or rebus-like character in Muslim devotions. Talismans are still widespread in the Middle East, and they hold intrinsic interest, I believe, in relation to the phantasmic powers of encipherment in the modern era.

The connection with writing as an act introducing meaning and value proves crucial to defining the talisman as distinct from the amulet; although talismans are seen as a subset of amulets by the leading scholars in the field, they are distinctively characterised by inscription. Sometimes enigmatic, sometimes expository, the texts written on them pack them with power; they also sometimes define their function. The imagined outside forces, divine and usually benevolent, are activated chiefly by these words, and sometimes – but much less often – by depiction: word magic or image magic transforms raw matter into a symbolic object possessing power. These powers can be embodied in many different kinds of artefact, as long as the object is marked: words infuse the enchantment. And once done it can only be undone by applying immense knowledge of yet more powerful magic; the talismans' relationship to time appears to be central to their nature and they endure for aeons (Princess Tadmoura and Solomon have been lying there protected for hundreds of years). The jinn who animate things have transmuted into charmed things, activated by texts, which in turn become talismanic. The words of the story are transmuted into magic, into blessings.

The activity of jinn and their masters in myths and stories has explanatory force for the marvels that occur in them, but it also sets up troubling moral dilemmas for audiences in a monotheistic culture. Muslim theologians tackled the question of magic, jinn and Solomon's connection with them, and in general, orthodox thinking remained uneasy and cautious, while popular belief and custom, as reflected in the *Arabian Nights* and other stories, as well as in hundreds of amulets and charms of other kinds, stood firmly with the jinn and their powers.

In some of the stories of the *Nights*, a magic talisman takes the form of such a jewel. In the "Tale of Camar al-Zamas and Princess Badoura", for example, Camar becomes curious and takes Badoura's gem from inside her clothes while she is sleeping; he discovers it is "a carnelian engraven with unknown figures and characters." The early English version of this much-loved story goes on. This carnelian, says the prince to himself, must have something extraordinary in it, or my princess would not be at the trouble to carry it with her. And indeed, it was Badoura's talisman, or a scheme of her nativity, drawn from the constellations of

heaven, which the queen of China had given her daughter, as a charm that would keep her from any harm as long as she had it about her.

So here the storyteller associates the Princess of China with astrological magic, inscribed on to her special protective charm. Camar's act of curiosity is punished, an unusual occurrence with respect to a male protagonist, when a bird plucks the gem from his hands, and he finds himself wandering far from Badoura in pursuit of the bird. The talisman is evoked in other versions as "blood-red jewels;" its privy place on to Badoura's person, its hitherto unknown presence concealed in her clothes, ties it unmistakably to her most intimate and erotic persona, to her "jewels" which have been stolen earlier in the story while she slept. (In European languages the stone's name actually points to its associations with flesh: it comes from Latin *caro*, *carnis*; however, the root of the Arabic word, 'aqiq' comes from the verb 'to cut' – perhaps on account of its aptness for carving?)

The stolen talisman keeps drawing a scarlet thread between Camar and Badoura, from one improbable episode to another, as it makes its way back to her and acts as the token which sparks the recognition when Badoura, in disguise as a male prince, rediscovers her jewel in the jars of olives in which Camar has shipped his treasure. She waits to produce it during a remarkable bed-trick seduction scene. Badoura's charm is made of carnelian, as are many other talismans in the *Nights*, for example Maryam's in "Aladdin of the Beautiful Moles," which summons the magic flying bed for the newly wed lovers towards the end of the tale. Carnelian is the favourite material of such magic amulets, as can be seen from the collection in the British Museum, since the Prophet liked the stone best of all, it was said (though Muhammad himself recommended lack of ostentation).

Venetia Porter's superb British Museum catalogue (Porter 2011) includes numerous talismans and amulets in carnelian in different strengths of glowing reds to browns, ranging from pine resin to cranberry relish to caramelised demerara sugar; such amulets can be very small, and exquisite in translucency and workmanship – the engraving into the gemstone performed with fine pointed string-driven drills. The properties of stones were expounded in every aspect by the Arabic scholar al-Tifaschi in his book, *Best Thoughts on the Best of Stones*, written in the 13th century (Abul Huda 1997), but even without knowledge of this kind, the minerals in themselves offer richly satisfying surfaces and temperatures, for touching even more than contemplating: cool, dry, austere, almost lunar, pale or yellow-grey chalcedony, varied highly polished slippery streaked agates, sardonyx, jasper, obsidian, sard, jade. Rock crystal, perceived to be like

frozen water, was especially suited to spells for finding wells and against dying of thirst or drowning. Amuletic stones, for putting in your pocket or wearing on your finger or dangling from your belt, could be made of all these varieties of rock, but also of silver, brass and gold. The list sounds the kind of litany that evokes earthly splendour in the *Nights*, and punctuates the wondrous fortunes that fall into the hands of lucky protagonists. In spite of the Prophet's warning against display, one group of amulets are medallions struck in gold, closely resembling Byzantine coins and pierced for wearing.

"Abu Mohammed the Lazy"

Zubayda, the wife whom Caliph Haroun al-Rashid loves most of all, is making a head-dress of splendid jewels, but the central gem is missing and she wants a jewel bigger and brighter than any other. She sends a eunuch to the caliph and he immediately gives the order that the jewel she wants must be found; when he hears there are problems, he cries out in a rage, and is then told that the merchants have revealed that a certain merchant in Basra, nicknamed Abu Mohammed 'the Lazy,' the son of a mere barber at the public baths, has a marvellous jewel of the size and purity that Zubayda covets. Haroun instantly appoints the executioner Mesrour to act as his ambassador and summon Abu Mohammed to the caliph's presence. While he waits in Basra, Mesrour tastes the unimaginable luxury and grace of Abu Mohammed's palace: his bathing pools of marble and gold filled with rosewater, his guest robes of brocade and precious stones, the feasts of delicacies he spreads at his table. The magnificence rivals the caliph's, Mesrour thinks darkly to himself that all this princeliness will have to be explained.

Saddling a mule with silver and jewels, Abu Mohammed sets out for Baghdad. In audience with Haroun al-Rashid, Abu Mohammed lavishes gifts on the caliph: quantities of pearls and precious stones. Then, from another chest, he produces a brocade tent studded with jewels, its columns made of soft Indian aloe wood, the panels set off with green emeralds, with designs representing every kind of animal, bird, wild beast, all encrusted with more precious stones, jacinths, emeralds, topazes, rubies and others. Abu Mohammed then offers to show some of the tricks he can perform: at a nod of his head, the crenellations of the palace bow to him; at a roll of his eyes, closed tents appear before the company; at a word, a concert of songbirds starts up.

Haroun marvels that a son of a mere barber at the public baths could enjoy such powers and such fabulous wealth, and asks to know their source. Abu Mohammed shows no reluctance in telling him. He says: "It is an altogether strange tale, extraordinary, and if one wrote it, with a fine nib, in the corner of an eye, the whole world would learn from it." He launches into it: he was such a lazy boy, he says, that during the hot season if the sun reached him where he was dozing, he was too indolent to move into the shade. His father died when he was fifteen, but his mother, who worked as a servant, provided him with what he needed, and he just idled and dozed, until one day she gave him a small sum and told him to give it to Abu al-Muzaffar, a travelling merchant and a man known for his generosity to the poor, who was leaving for China on a trading mission. Abu Mohammed was to ask him to buy him something with it which he might be able to use. In those days, he was so lazy that he needed his mother's help to set himself upright, dress himself, and then had to lean on her for support as he stumbled on the hem of his clothes on their way to the quayside. Al-Muzaffar forgets all about the commission until the very last minute. But he's a man of his word and he orders the ship to turn back so he can use the small sum to buy something for Abu Mohammed, as he had promised. His fellow merchants refuse; he insists, but they still refuse, until he offers to reimburse them for the delay. This he does, handsomely. They set sail again and reach a populous island of pearl traders and jewel dealers, where al-Muzaffar finds a man sitting on the ground surrounded by monkeys; he keeps them chained and beats them as they fight among themselves. One monkey is mangy and miserable and the others turn on it with particular vengeance, which fills Abu al-Muzaffar with compassion. He buys the creature with the pittance Abu Mohammed's mother gave her son to help set him on his feet.

As they are leaving, pearl fishers approach the boat to sell more of their finds, and the monkey breaks free and dives with them, fetching up quantities of precious stones which it tosses into its benefactor's lap. At their next landfall they are unlucky and find themselves among cannibals. Some of the company are eaten; the monkey once again demonstrates its prodigious nature and, when night falls, undoes the bonds on its new owner. Al-Muzaffar pays tribute to their saviour, endows the animal with a reward of a thousand dinars, and asks each of his fellow merchants to match his munificence. The monkey sets each one of them free, too, for an equal reward in every case. Because he is an honest and generous man, Al-Muzaffar does not forget his original pledge to Abu Mohammed, and he does not plan to keep the prodigious animal. On his return to Basra from

his voyages, now infinitely richer than he could ever have dreamed, al-Muzaffar seeks out Abu Mohammed, and finds him asleep. The young man bestirs himself reluctantly at his mother's pleas, and, still stumbling on the hem of his clothes, takes receipt of the monkey from al-Muzaffar's servants – cursing his mother for getting him out of bed just for this. But then al-Muzaffar arrives, and hands over the already vast treasure accumulated through the creature's cleverness. And so begins the story of Abu Mohammed's powers and riches.

Abu Mohammed is revived by the money; he gives up his idle ways and sets up a shop in the bazaar; helped by the monkey who brings him a thousand dinars every day at lunchtime, he begins to prosper. They become close, they live as one, eating and drinking together. Then one day the monkey opens its mouth and begins to speak, like a human being. He tells Abu Mohammed that he is "a marid of the genii," and that his next boon will be to marry him to a beautiful girl, beautiful as the full moon, the daughter of a trader in provender. And so, clothed in gorgeous robes, riding on his mule with the silver jewel-studded saddle, and with ten slaves in attendance, Abu Mohammed sets out to ask for the hand of the merchant's beautiful daughter.

A poem interrupts the unfolding of the tale, a neat, icy piece of proverbial wisdom, commenting on the way riches give a different perspective to events:

> If a rich man talks all at sixes and sevens, people say, 'What a true opinion, quite beyond refutation!' But if a poor man speaks according to the truth, he's taken for a liar, his sayings are set at naught.

The merchant at first rejects Abu Mohammed, as he has no family and no social standing. But his money speaks, as the poem has noted. The ape has given the bridegroom very exact instructions. When he collects his bride in ten days' time, he will find in her house a cupboard with a brass ring in the door. Under the ring he will find keys, which he must use to open the door; inside he will find "a chest of iron, at the corners of which are four talismanic flags; in the midst is a basin filled with money ... eleven serpents ... a white cock with a lacy coxcomb tied up in string ... and a knife ..." He must take the knife and use it to sacrifice the cockerel; he must then tear up the flags, and kick over the iron chest. Then and only then will he be able to lay a finger on his virgin bride.

Abu Mohammed forgets the order of the monkey's commands, and after the raptures of his wedding night, he gets up to fulfill them. As he comes to the end

of his grisly business, his young bride leaps up and cries out, "The jinn has taken possession of me!" For Abu Mohammed 'the Lazy' has undone the talismans her father has carefully contrived to protect her, and the ape appears and carries her off: he has been plotting for six years to abduct her "to the City of Brass where the sun never rises." The story, as related by Abu Mohammed to the caliph, turns into a passionate quest to regain his lost love and opens on to a series of picaresque adventures, which move it from the realm of romance into the genre of the epic voyage, as in the "Sinbad" cycle. At first, Abu Mohammed abandons himself to despair, and wanders in the desert, bewailing his fate. There he comes across two snakes – one white, one black – attacking each other; he picks up a stone to break up the fight and kills the black one, and soon discovers that the survivor is a jinni as well but one of the good jinn who have repented, believe in Allah and have sworn eternal enmity on the unregenerate rebel jinn, to whose number the wicked ape belongs. The good jinni's brother then appears, and in gratitude for the white snake's deliverance, offers to help Abu Mohammed in his quest for his lost love; he assures him they will overcome the evil ape in the end. More of his fellow jinn join forces, and they order one of their slaves to whisk Abu Mohammed into the air on his back – but he must remember not to call on the name of God while flying through the air. Up they soar, "so high that the world below disappeared to reveal to my eyes stars like mountains on their moorings, and in my ears angels singing the glory of God." But he forgets the jinni's warning and when a divine apparition orders him to sing the praises of God, he does so; the jinni who is carrying him crumbles into ashes under his legs, and Abu Mohammed plunges headfirst into the sea.

More wanderings follow – through a country that's a dependency of China where the inhabitants speak Arabic, and farther, with Abu Mohammed still helped by the brother jinn of the snake he rescued. They show him the way at last to the City of Brass. There, a jinni equips him with a magic sabre to keep him invisible in the huge crowds of monstrous inhabitants with their eyes placed in the middle of their chests. He reaches his bride, who tells him that the ape, in his mad passion for her, has revealed to her the secret talisman which gives power over all the jinns in the city. It takes the form of an eagle standing on a pillar with an inscription that she does not know. If Abu Mohammed fumigates it with musk, she tells him, the rebel jinn will muster and he will be able to command them to do whatever he wants. Abu Mohammed instantly orders them to seize and bind the ape, courteously asks his wife if she will consent to come back with

him to Basra and, on her agreement, transfers his wife, himself and all the riches of the City of Brass to his house there. With the eagle talisman's power at his command, he then summons the monkey and shuts him up in a copper bottle sealed with a stopper of lead to keep him out of mischief for ever – or until another hero lets him out in the interests of another romance, another story.

The caliph is astonished by the adventures of Abu Mohammed, and makes him as many magnificent gifts in return as Abu Mohammed lavishes on him. The crown Zubayda was making is not mentioned again, and the story has been so stuffed with riches of every kind that the stone she coveted as the centrepiece has become a trifle.

The Word of The Talisman

Tis true: there's magic in the web of it...
(William Shakespeare, *Othello* III. iv. 68)

"The Tale of Abu Mohammed the Lazy" combines two traditions: an Egyptian strand of eerie phenomena and powerful instrumental magic, and a story of trade and adventure in the East and the Far East which originates in Iraq. The monkey jinni begins as a poor maltreated creature, but changes into a malignant schemer; the effect is gripping, especially as his plans have been laid with such long-term foresight and have such a specific erotic purpose. By contrast with this willfulness, our wastrel hero lacks all definition and volition; he is the plaything of chance, with no hint from the storyteller that he has been chosen for some reason of merit. Rather the opposite: there is comedy in the telling, with the scruffiness, the dopiness, the sheer hopelessness of the fifteen-year-old recognisable to most parents in any era. André Miquel points out that while Abu Mohammed's adventures coincide with Sinbad's in some respects, he is Sinbad's opposite in character: he drifts into things whereas Sinbad sets out with a goal. (Bencheikh–Miquel 2005) Abu Mohammed the lazy, the lackadaisical, the good-for-nothing who makes good, is one of the models that shapes Galland's Aladdin and all the comic disasters of pantomime Aladdins since.

But he is also a living lesson in the ways of providence: what Allah gives, he gives according to his will, which is unfathomable. As Miquel wryly remarks, who is the caliph to deplore unmerited, unearned fortune beyond the wildest imagining? The riches Abu Mohammed acquires are the true subject of the story,

and al-Muzaffar is the ethical hero, the exemplary benefactor (a fairy godfather) who has no thought for his own gain. Throughout, the jinn occupy the ranks of the animals, in accordance with their heterogeneity in myth (monkey; cockerel; snakes; eagle). Through their agency, they bring the hero fabulous, manufactured treasures (money, jewelled mule saddles, brocade tents with jewel-encrusted skirts). Their connection to natural energies underlies the wealth they produce: the tale unfolds a story of international trade and literally animates the goods that form part of that trade. Jinn bring their owners measureless luxuries, as well as love and delight, a superfluity of pleasures and status made manifest in gold, jewels, fine cloths, perfumes and tableware. Yet the lists of riches punctuate the story so often that eyeskip sets in; listeners too would let their ears idle to the repetitions of jewels and the lovely words that name them. The flow is disrupted by the operation of talismans; these secure the natural forces which bring the riches, and they act as the instruments of reversal and counter-reversal in the narrative itself. The jinn and the talismans act in harness as the agents of the plot; they also embody happenstance itself, the workings of destiny.

By contrast with ensouled things like relics or fetishes, talismans form another class of charmed things, bringing luck or protection: things affected not by personal memories and feelings but by a kind of magnetic bond with an independent force – supernatural, divine or diabolical. The word 'talisman' enters colloquial English principally by means of the translations of such stories of spell-binding, and their active, sometimes baneful, sometimes benevolent force irradiates the atmosphere of the most outlandish and impressive of the plots. In the same way as the fetish was imported from the imperial encounter in order to grasp attachments to inanimate things and shifting ideas of exchanges, financial and erotic, the term 'talisman,' after it entered Western languages from the Middle East, also opens meanings accruing to things as they have circulated and exercised influence since the 18th century and into this new one.

The OED defines 'talisman' as "an object imbued with magical power to offer protection or to inflict harm". This limited definition could also apply to amulet, charm or periapt, but nuances in usage can be adduced to distinguish these magic objects and instruments. So how does a talisman differ, if at all? The derivation of the closely related term 'amulet' is not certain, but the a-here may be privative, from a-moliri meaning 'to avert' or 'remove' (soften?). Almost all dictionaries also characterise amulets as things worn on the person: the coral necklaces which baby Jesus wears in dozens of medieval and Renaissance paintings of the Ma-

donna and Child, for example, linger from Egyptian and eastern Mediterranean magic practices. The rarer word 'periapt' also evokes something kept closely in contact with the body, from the Greek 'peri-', 'about' and possibly 'apt' in fitting, or 'haptein', 'to touch'. In both cases, the charms remain small and intimate and are not necessarily inscribed with verbal formulae.

By contrast, talismans come in all shapes and sizes, and are imbued with their special properties and sphere of influence by the words written into them. Although they can be worn like lockets, they do not need to be kept about a person to work – indeed their efficacy even derives from their autonomy: their indwelling force can radiate regardless. The use of protective and divinatory charms was widespread in antiquity before the establishment of Christianity and Islam, in the whole of the Hellenic and Judaic Middle East, though it is the Arabic word that has taken root since the Enlightenment. 'Talisman' was introduced into English in 1638 from French, where it was taken from Arabic: 'tilsam' (also 'tilsim', 'tilism', 'tilasm'). These words were themselves adapted from Greek: 'telesma'. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* defines tilsamas "an inscription with astrological and other magic signs or an object covered with such inscriptions, especially also with figures from the zodiacal circle ..." (Bianquis et al. 1999, 500–502)

The words on traditional talismans take many forms: the Ninety-Nine names of God appear engraved on swords and scabbards; magic brass bowls are incised with prayers for the sick so that when filled with water, that water acquires healing powers by contact; sometimes such holy water was created by washing the hand-held blackboards on which children learned to read and write the Koran. Solomon is frequently invoked, his wisdom summoned by the pentacle or his seal or ring; sometimes all three combined. Storks and snakes and scorpions, powerful apotropaic symbols, are represented to secure the balance of the temperaments. The writings on the talismans need not be legible; indeed, they gain in efficacy through their enigma and resistance to decipherment. The arabesque knots and imbrications are labyrinths to confuse enemies (non-sense is crucial to magic).

The word spread in English gradually in 18th-century Oriental tales, and became properly naturalised in the 19th; a similar pattern occurred in French. It appears, for example, in the title of a lurid pamphlet of around 1770 about a magic gem belonging to Queen Catherine de' Médici, who was widely suspected of necromancy. (Fauvel 1770) The term also took hold in other languages in the same period. The shadow of 'telos' (Greek for 'goal') lingers in its meanings in these contexts: in ancient Greek, 'telesma' surprisingly means simply "money

paid or to be paid;" other uses include "tax," "outlay," and, most significantly with regard to the development of 'talisman,' "a certified copy or certificate," often stamped with the symbolic power of a seal to give it specific value, significance and authority. A promissory note, an IOU, a wager, would fall under this first meaning. However, the stem 'teles-' produces several related words applying in a religious context, as in 'telesmos', a consecration ceremony, for example, and 'teles-ter', a priest, or initiate, used by Plato in conjunction with 'mantikos', a seer. 'Telesphorion', still with the same root, describes a sorceress or ritual prostitute in the Greek translation of the Bible (Deut. 23:17-18). And that first attested use of 1638 simply adopts into English the word 'telesmata', used for consecrated statues set up in Egypt and Greece to protect city and community. 'Talisman' consequently entails something having been brought to fruition, completed, often a transaction or pact made for some sacred or religious purpose, with autonomous and often mysterious significance.

Unlike the fetish, it is not ascribed individual character or saturated with someone's presence. Instead, it significantly settles into a European term for a charmed object in its own right, an amulet. It is not difficult to see how the word eventually passed from practical acts of exchange towards a specified end, into the realm of the sacred where imagination is efficacious and changes reality. The connection remains especially strong in the case of seals: the power does not inhere in the object itself, but is released when it is used to stamp some other thing. This necessary act of transmission presupposes an inherent dynamic virtuality to the force inside the seal, easy to personify as a mobile energy force – a daimon, a jinni.

This origin of 'talisman' in forms of certification has rich implications. For looked at one way, money used to complete a payment possesses efficient power. The object's meaning radiates through the inscriptions it bears, often secret symbols authenticated by different, complex measures, like the emblems on banknotes and credit cards. But its function shifts according to its referents. Consider the difference between a will and an indulgence – a will disposes of things in the world, while an indulgence guarantees the remission of punishment in the hereafter. Catholic indulgences, often profusely elaborated with many layers of official authentication and sanction, are indeed a form of talismanic certificate, and it is suggestive that the practice, enthusiastically promoted by cardinals and bishops in the 15th century, grew in the climate of crusading propaganda: is this an effect of contact? The new printing presses were not kept busy with learned works, but were pouring out hundreds of broadsides assuring the faithful

that their sins could be ransomed by acquiring the document. The copy was as efficacious as the original: indeed, the original did not matter.

Though the religious authorities of Islam did not use print to disseminate their reserves of grace, the talisman was essentially reproducible, and repetition did nothing to diminish its effects. Scribes made copies, and calligraphic expertise enhanced the value – and the power – of the document. In Mecca, certificates, some of them gorgeously illuminated, were sold to pilgrims to take home with an assurance of the grace they had received by doing the Hajj; some of them are substitutes for the pilgrimage itself. In cases when it could not be performed, their purchase could bring equal blessings.

Metals are matter, and their value derives from certain material qualities (the untarnished glister of gold!) and the symbolic dimensions attributed to those qualities. By contrast, paper money acquires value only through the authority backing the value it has been ascribed and the trust placed in that authority by the users, collectively. The first paper money, stamped "Great Ming Circulating Treasure Certificate," was printed in China under the Ming dynasty in 1375. It carried a picture of heaps of coins to the amount it was worth and many inscriptions validating it from the emperor. The Chinese called it "flying cash" and it proved to be so – in a process that has become familiar, more and more notes were issued to keep up with their spiralling loss of value until, in 1425, printing was suspended. As Neil MacGregor, the director of the British Museum, puts it, "The fairies had fled – or, to put it in grander language, the faith structure needed for paper money to work had collapsed." (MacGregor 2010) The first paper money in the West also depends on faith. The worth of certificates issued by John Law in his pioneering schemes to finance the Mississippi Company in 1716–20, of "continental dollars" circulated by the United States during the War of Independence, and of *assignats* issued by the Revolutionary government in France to cover the spiralling debt, of share certificates, bills of exchange, cheques, IOUs, and all other forms of paper money, does not inhere in the materials in which they appear (even less so in the case of the phantasmic character of twenty-first century finance). Value is inscribed into them, as it is with talismans: intricate graphic ornament, multiple lattices and complex sprinkling of letters, emblems, mottos, names, symbols and distinctive numbers woven together, and embedded watermarks give the note such specificity that it cannot be forged.[8] (Cribb 1986, 116–19, 135, 151,

8 Balzac recognises the relation between inscription and value in *La Maison Nucingen* (1837), in

158–59, 163, 168–69, 170–89) The symbols which still transform worthless paper into effective currency sometimes exactly repeat those on talismans, especially those associated with Solomon and the building of the Temple. The five-pointed star of the Seal of Solomon is emblazoned on the US $50 banknote, for example, while the $1 note, itself a powerful emblem of the Union's self-image, carries the Great Seal of the United States, made up of hermetic emblems from the history of magic as well as scripture: the haloed eye of God at the summit of a pyramid with thirteen brick courses. Their presence reflects the success of Freemasonry since the 17th century, as a space where a secular form of ritual and esoteric wisdom was pursued and a secular priesthood established within a rational state.

The processes involved in the object's certification resemble the repetitive inscription of talismans, while the transformation achieved likewise produces an enchanted and special object, with active and powerful 'autonomous glamour,' independent of who is handling it. For financial dealings online today, encrypting the information is crucial: a plethora of codes – numbers, symbols, letters in jumbled series – is needed to protect the correct transfer of the monies. Nothing is ever quite enough to withstand the metamorphic antinomianism of lucre: "Money is chameleon-like, ever-moving, ever-changing, impervious to moral law." (Cribb, 1986, 121) Further invisible inscriptions, embedded in magnetic strips, also authenticate the card. In the United Arab Emirates, HSBC has issued a credit card, inscribed with symbols to comply with the Koranic ban on usury. Is this a development of a talisman which protects against evil?

The British Museum general catalogue applies 'talisman' to a varied set of items ranging in time and in geography from North Africa to Asia: an astrological spell inscribed on a mid-tenth-century Daoist Chinese apron or girdle; a child's scarlet talismanic jacket from Ottoman Turkey embroidered all over with protective inscriptions; plaques from medieval Egypt with directions for finding treasure; and a painted flag by a contemporary Algerian-French artist, Rachid Koraïchi. All these different kinds of things – clothes, flags, school and household implements, medallions and stones – involve inscription; it is writing above all that defines the talisman and can consequently deepen our understanding of word magic in its currency today.

which Rastignac's sudden wealth has been achieved through the new medium of the lithographic press, on which his collaborator, the financier Baron de Nucingen prints shares to issue to investors. I am very grateful to Stephen Bann for this reference.

But it is not any text that achieves the transformation of the thing in question from an ordinary object to a thing with talismanic power. The writings which charm it are magical, holy, and often hermetic. They are sometimes intelligible but not necessarily so, as they frequently depend on underlying enigmatic systems, such as casting horoscopes and geomancy.

In Christian and Islamic cultures, the use of talismans was fraught, because magical devices were suspect, and black magic was strongly disapproved in the commentaries on the Koran as it was in Christian doctrine. With regard to Islamic amulets, Venetia Porter writes that Black magic as practised by "illicit magicians" is condemned most strongly in the Hadith (Porter, 2011, 131–2), while later Muslim lawyers attempted to clarify the separation between licit and illicit magic and what was tolerated. Although in general terms that which did no harm to others was accepted, the situation is highly complex, with Ibn Khaldun, for example, regarding all magic as illicit but distinguishing between charms and talismans in discussing magic, licit and illicit talismans. But it is still writing that provides the particular and crucial characteristics, and writing figures in the *Arabian Nights* far more prominently than it does in the fairy tales of Perrault or the Grimm brothers. The picaresque events in the life of a hero like Hasan of Basra move from document to document – this is an early epistolary romance, with the difference that fairies and sorcerers are letter-writers too. The *Arabian Nights* often mentions without any particular astonishment that a heroine can read and write – even when she is apparently a slave, like Zumurrud in the tale of her love of Ali Shar. In "Hasan of Basra," we are told that Hasan is a good scholar, encouraged by his mother who cannot herself read and write, though she recites many poems by heart.

The Topkapi Museum in Istanbul holds the largest collection in the world of talismans in the form of clothes; nearly a hundred articles of dress, the earliest dating from the 15th century, such as the chemise made for Prince Djem (1425–95), and the most recent from the 19th century when the practice ended – officially – with the modernising of the Ottoman court. Shirts, skullcaps, tunics and other articles were worn for protection against every kind of harm – under armour in battle, for example – as well as for success in love and fertility. A child's talismanic shirt from the 15th or 16th century Mogul India, on exhibition in Paris, still shows dark stains of the child's sweat down the middle of the back, on the chest, and under the arms; stains also saturated with human hope, with parental wishing.

These talismanic clothes are astonishing artefacts: the robe of Sultan Selim II (1566–74), for example, is richly gilded, patterned with circles and densely

written all over in different coloured inks, with much gleaming decoration. Other Turkish noblemen's clothes from the same era have their entire surface damascened in exquisite geometric compositions, with diapers, medallions, and panels appliquéd on to the cloth, until the fabric becomes a different form of sacred illuminated manuscript or pilgrimage certificate.

The cotton from which the shirts are made has been treated with starch, so that they can be written on, indeed literally 'in-scribed,' written into, and the serried, calligraphic ornament mingles different scripts – one so feathery it is called 'ghubar î', meaning 'dust.' These inscriptions include the Beautiful Names of God, with certain ones emerging as the favourites; others reprise Sura twelve, 'Joseph,' from the Koran, which describes how Jacob, who had gone blind from crying over Joseph's disappearance, recovered his sight when he passed over his eyes a tunic which Joseph had sent from Egypt with his brothers. This passage gave clear approval to miracle-working garments, and was invoked especially for protection against such misfortunes as falling into wells and being held captive in dungeons.

These scriptural quotations and prayers are mixed with sacred emblems, such as Solomon's seal, and 'magic squares' in which numbers are substituted for letters to make arcane rebuses. The footprint of the Prophet, his sandals, his bow, arrows and sabre, the double-bladed sword of Ali (for putting out both eyes of his enemy), and, sometimes, protector animals such as serpents and scorpions, are included to support the prophylactic value of wearing the chemise or other dress.

Talismanic garments form a group of magical instruments, but they are clearly – each of them – unique, carefully customised for their intended wearer. Court astrologers were instructed by the chief physician at the court when such a garment was needed in the palace, and they cast the wearer's horoscope in order to determine the exact hour propitious for the specialist scribes to begin the work of inscription; several years sometimes passed before it was completed, and again the time was carefully divined and met, the hour recorded on the fabric. The enchantment, like an individual jinn at their command, has been infused into them in every possible pertinent and particular detail.

The custom had travelled to Turkey from the East with astrology and, like the ornamentation of Ottoman damasks, bears the imprint of Chinese aesthetics and manufactures; the process of their making echoes the elaborate horoscopes and geomantic procedures of imperial Chinese traditions. The Turkish talismans, taking the form of articles of dress, are not trifles, but precious and sophisticated artefacts, élite articles produced by learning and skill, and credited with powers

to hold sickness, death, disappointment and sterility at bay for the highest members of an intensely hierarchical society. They are above all produced as entirely characteristic artefacts by a literate culture which attaches very high value to the written word. Like other imported terms – totem and taboo, fetish and shaman –, the concept of the talisman, when it reaches Europe and takes root there, comes couched in a borrowed vocabulary in order to designate a form of other knowledge, developed in a non-Western culture.

How the imported word 'talisman' filled a semantic gap can be seen when reading Arrigo Boito's libretto for Verdi's *Otello* (1887). The mischief-maker itself – the handkerchief Othello gives Desdemona – has become a talisman. In 1604, as we heard, Shakespeare's Othello had limned the love charm's potency, magnifying its dark provenance by stressing its origins in the far distant magic of sibyls, and the ancient Egyptian art of mummification. But Shakespeare did not yet have to hand the word that came effortlessly to Boito in the late 1880s:

> Desdemona, woe if you lose it, woe!
> A powerful witch designed the secret thread
> In which is placed a talisman's deep bane.
> (Act III)

By the end of the 19th century the word 'talismano' had arrived in Italian to give, as words do, a habitation and a name to something long intimated but not clearly designated. Throughout the opera, the talismanic qualities of the handkerchief give it a quasi-autonomous power, greater than it possesses in the play. It becomes not only Iago's tool but in some way his emanation, his daimonic alter ego. Cassio and Iago sing a marvelous lilting duet to the transparent web, which takes on a spirit flimsiness:

> White and lighter than a snowflake,
> than a cloud woven from the air of heaven.
> (Act III)

The thing itself dissolves: as with a talisman, the agent of its magical power lies beyond sensory perception, instilled into the material handkerchief by invisible arts that have transmuted its nature, just as a banknote or an IOU ceases to be a mere piece of paper.

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On the Semiotics of the Rebus

> Paremiologists have even coined a special term for it, *riddle-proverbs.* Similar observations have been made with regard to riddles and spells, riddles and omens, proverbs and tongue-twisters, omens and proverbs and some other types of solutions. [1]

Rebus is a well-known expression of human culture. More precisely, it is a subgenre of riddles and puzzles, droodles etc. and a related genre to anagrams, pictographs, cryptograms, ciphers, crosswords, visual trickery, visual jokes, magic formulas, inscriptions, devises etc. Similarly to the motto of my paper: there are various forms and kinds of the *cliché,* which is a special group of short texts. (The early anthologies of the rebus give a rich collection of traditional variants, as *e.g.* Hoffmann 1869, Delepierre 1870. See also Schenk 1972 *etc*.) The rebus as a text is akin to several other literary and visual forms and genres. Unfortunately, the handbooks of riddles do not discuss rebus separately, see *e.g.* the main bibliography of riddle publications: Santi 1952. And about the rebus as a "genre," there are only very few publications, see Hain 1966, 52. In Koch 1994, 75–81 there is a summarizing entry "Droodle," but in the same handbook there is no proper entry for 'rebus'. A rebus combines written and visual expressions suggesting some witty, not beforehand expected meaning. Usually it contains at least two or more (simple) drawings, referring to at least two or more words or expressions of a recognizable topic, which would be deciphered together with the lingual text.

As for the language base of the rebus, in the simplest of cases a logical *conjunction* binds them together: a picture of a *bull* + a *dog* would be read as *bulldog.* In other simple cases, logical *disjunction* takes apart the words or expressions one from another. E.g. *mushroom* will be represented by two drawings: a bowl with

1 Grigory L. Permyakov. *From Proverb to Folk-Tale. Notes on the general theory of cliché* (Moscow: Nauka. 1979), 146.

porridge [mush] + a room in a house. The "solution" of the rebus may also have double meaning(s). A picture of a temple and of a mountain implicates not simply the meaning "A church standing on the top of a hill," but also hints to the name of the British statesman, "Churchill." If the solution (the deciphered word or expression) is not easy to be rendered into a visible form, speech act indicators or logical proposals may be involved. E.g. for the first part of *button*, the contrastive conjunction *but* may be used, and for the second part, *tone* meaning 'musical sound'. The first section may be depicted by any sign of "negation," the second one by any musical note. Letters, numbers, abbreviations, algebraic symbols, formulas and operations would be read as words. *E.g.* for a rebus 4 A -- /a picture of an eye/ **80** (the solution is: "For [four] a [A] long period [--] I [eye] ate [8] next to nothing [0]," which also refers to the distances between the printed signs). Very simple forms (as *e.g. O / A* with the meaning 'opera') are internationally well distributed. Numerals read as words are another common practice, and its force is greater, if the connected word is surprising: *A 10 10 10* 'Athens' [A + tens]. A printer in Paris (active 1483—1502), Guy Marchant used a picture of a shoemaker's workshop (!) as the printer's device with a rebus as its motto: two hands shake, and above them there are two musical notes combined into a sign of division with two words: *fides / ficit* written. The solution is: *Sola fides sufficit* [only the faith counts], where tunes *sol* and *la* form the Latin word: *sola.* (Figure 1) Musical notes and letters superposed one upon the other were very popular in Renaissance rebus, and this tradition reaches even the contemporary rebus publications.

A further specific feature of the language of the rebus is that in written texts the position and direction of the script will be interpreted as a picture. The super scribed *L* above *don* will be read as [L on don] = "London." Such constructions are at the first sight frapping ones, but the principle can easily be imitated, *e.g.*: *-if-* will be read as "midwife" ("if" is the middle of the word *wife*). And many similarly complex utterances can in that way be visualised. *E. g. sum night's dream mer* = "Midsummer Night's Dream." Here the main part of the title ("*night's dream")* is inserted into the word *summer*. The principle of *charade* (when the boundaries of the words will be regarded or disregarded in a special way) is extremely productive, especially with combining two languages: the Latin *pro libertate!* ("for liberty!") will be read in Hungarian as *Proli Berta, te!* ["Prole Bertha, you!"], using also the exclamation mark in both cases.

The picture part of the rebus will also be rendered as a "language text." It is easy to illustrate that statement.

The anarchist French cartoonist Siné in his famous collection of drawings (*Les Chats de Siné,* first edition 1958, several later extended editions, and translated into several languages) combines two words (following their phonetics) in a way that one of those refers to the word "cat" (in French *chat*, pronounced as *sha)*, and the whole composition refers to a something new and funny meaning. Typical cases refer to social groups, as *padishah, pasha, chat-noine* "canon," or person's names, like *Chat liapine* "the singer Chaliapin" and wittingly *Chat kespeare* "Shakespeare." The drawings combine both meanings: a cat is singing (Chaliapin), or the cat is wearing a clergyman's robe and his tail is formed into a cross (*chanoine*).

Picture and word are inseparably connected to personal names in rebus-like allusions. I will list only some well-known cases.

The *rebus* is as old as human culture, it has existed since the invention of written and visual texts. (Of course, I cannot present here a short world history of the rebus. For more examples see my summarizing essay on the cultural history of the rebus: Voigt 2013.) We know the samples from Ancient Egypt. And the hieroglyphs were also later interpreted as rebuses containing hidden meaning, as it is attested already by Horapollon's *Hieroglyphica*, the pre-Champollion interpretations of which were also summarized in the critical edition. (Boas 1950) The famous book by Valerianus (1556) describes the Egyptian signs, as well as the signs of other peoples. For a broader context, see Iversen 1993, Baltrušaitis 1985 etc. Picture plus meaning was combined by the Maya, too (see Dienhart 2010). It is important to notice that in non-alphabetic writing (as in Egypt or in Maya script), they could find out the rebus-technique. In the time of European Antiquity, especially in Rome, we find rebus-like usage and that continued also during the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque. (There are good works on Medieval and Renaissance rebus, *e.g.* Leber 1833, Volkmann 1923, Margolin-Céard 1986, Richer-Goyet 1986 – see as Tabourot 1986, Bässler 2003, *etc.*) Rebus-like tags are common for the identification of authors. In his writings, Cicero referred to himself with drawings of small peas (the Latin word *Cicero* means "chick-pea"). Albrecht Dürer signed his works with drawings of a small door (in German *Tür* means "door"). The Italian Philosopher Campanella used small bells in the same way (his name means exactly "small bell"). In modern times, *e.g.* Russian avant-garde poet, Mayakovsky referred to his verses with a drawing of a lighthouse (Russian *mayak* means "lighthouse").

Coats of arms, pictograms, emblems use the same technique of joining words and pictures as the *rebus.* However, in this paper I shall not discuss their interconnections.

And there are some more complex cases of combining words and pictures, usually with "more than one" meanings of their parts.

One of the most often quoted historical English rebuses was created by Hugh Oldham (his name then was pronounced as *owl-dom*), Bishop of Exeter in the early 16th century. (Figure 2) It is carved on the wall of Exeter Cathedral, showing a smart little *owl* bearing a scroll in its beak, which is showing the letters *d o m*. Thus, the solution is "owl" + "D.O.M.," i.e. the surname of Bishop Oldham. The latter part is also the abbreviation of the overall known initials *Deo Optimo Maximo* ("to the best and mightiest God"). The drawing looks like a simple piece of heraldry. But the two parts in the carving, the two words and the text using two languages show the typical multilevel *rebus* technique. Its meaning stands also at least on two levels: *don* refers both to the second syllable of the Bishop's name and to a devotional formula in Latin.

Italian and French Renaissance rebuses (and similar forms) are very rich, and artistic. Among others, we know the original *cifra figurata* of Leonardo da Vinci, the set of drawings in *Hypneromachila Poliphili* of Francesco Colonna (1499), the rebus combining capital letters and simple drawings in *Libro d'Arme & d'Amore nomato Philogine* (by Andrea Baiardo 1520), a love story narrative. A special form, "*Sonetto Figurato"* was published by Giovan Battista Palatino (1540), where the entire sonnet text is transcribed into rebuses. Italian poetic classes of rebus were later imitated and developed by French philologists and writers, including also Rabelais who knew and commented on several rebuses and similar texts.

In terms of the semiotics of rebus, both the visual and the lingusitic parts are inevitably "signs," where *something stands for something else in some respect* (as not only the Peircean semiotic slogan says). It is a pity that I do not know any proper semiotic analysis of the rebus, or, more precisely, no rebus analysis connected to semiotics. My actual attempt can show only some of the basic features of rebus semiotics. (For general terms of semiotics, see Sebeok 1986, an encyclopaedic dictionary with several updated editions.)

In spite of the outstanding and striking visual capacities of the rebus, the basic stratum is the *language,* the text, and not the imagery. Words, compound words, phrases, proverbs and maxims, sometimes even simple texts (referring to simple events and narratives) occur in *rebus*, and drawings or other pictorial strata are only the means to express them. We can exemplify this, if we mention some of the most widely known rebuses.

In rebus books there is an often-quoted story about the correspondence between the Prussian King, Frederick the Great, and Voltaire. The King sent an invitation card to the French philosopher who was then staying at the King's Court in Berlin, with the text: *deux mains venez sous Pé, cent sous scie?* ("Tomorrow will you come to a supper in [the palace] Sanssouci?") = in correct French: "*Demain venez souper à Sans-Souci*." The pictorial code was: "two hands" deux mains = [demain] under the letter P ("sous pé" = souper), then a letter *a*, and the fraction *6/100* [cent sous six] referring to the name of the palace *Sans-Souci*. By the way, the name of the palace means "without sorrow." The reply letter of Voltaire was equally ingenious: *Gé a grand, a petit* ("j'ai grand appétit" = I am very hungry). Here the pictorial code refers to the size of the letters: Big G and small a, which can be simply written as *G a*. Of course, using rebus letters was a well-known common practice in Europe, and Frederick's dinner invitation and Voltaire's reply is quoted in almost every history of rebus in Europe. The same *G grand **a** petit* letter rebus occurs already in the seminal book by Geofroy Tory's *Champ Fleury* (Paris, 1528: XLII), in a remark "font de ceste lettre G, & dun A. vne diuise resueuse en faisant le A, plus petit que le G. & le mettant dedans ledit G. puis disent que cest a dire. *J'ay grant apetit*."

A rebus text may be read in linear form (in our script tradition from left to right and from top to bottom). Also, while reading, usually two levels are contrasted: orthography and phonetics, and very often in two languages; or the official spelling with dialectal or innovative language variants are contrasted. Distortion and re-combination of the elements of the text are necessary for the understanding of the meaning. The style and shape of the letters will be understood in the same way. LAW means thus "lawful," and the same solution arises if we write the word "full" vertically ("low-full"), too. Letters and signs /abbreviations work together: a rebus for *Chou & Lai* [the Chinese politician Chou En-lai] uses the conjunction symbol in English, and for *Maots & Tung* [the Chinese Politician Mao Tse-tung] the same conjunction was used in French (*et*). Here again two languages are involved into one rebus text. The French writer, Georges Perec, has created text with the symbol '&' as for a *pastiche* of scientific publications, including also fictitious names as of "scholars" *Else &Vire* and *Mace & Doyne*. (I hope there is no need to explain the solutions.)

For the rebus-creator, the most important thing is to find the appropriate visual representation for the funny text. For the name *Montgomery* it is easy to find a *pun*: "a Mount goes to marry," but it is not simple to visualize the expression.

Also, for the visual part, the rebus pictures usually have double meanings. In art, the pictures denote the "object of art" (a portrait, a landscape, a battlefield etc.). In rebus, the picture is a representation of a word (phrase, etc.). Thus, the word "ham" may be the hollow of the knee – and a piece of smoked pork. The last part of the city name *Nottingham* can be visualized by either of the two. For the first part, the *Nothing* ~ *Notting* equation comes first to the mind. Then the two parts (nothing + ham) can be combined if (e.g.) the picture shows an empty ham can. Diligent rebus fans can figure out such solutions cleverly and almost automatically. For the meaning "nothing," it is typical in rebus to show "nothing," *i.e.* something is missing or not visualized in the text. (E.g. an empty O letter, or number 0 may serve for that purpose. And it is "nothing" else but Ophelia's "nothing." See *Hamlet* 3, 2: 115–119.)

In general, the visual technique of the drawing is simple, like in the case of cartoons or sketches. Human types are generalized and the distinctive features emphasized. Often seemingly unimportant details count (hairy ears, squint eyes, extremely slim or fat figures). "Father" may be drawn as a "fat heir." With semiotic terminology, by virtue of the resemblance, such pictures are *iconic signs.* (And neither are *indexical* or *symbolic signs.*)

The pictures follow a sequence, and they can demonstrate the whole story. A widely known rebus is showing a quick scribble on a sheet of paper, and the solution is a quotation from Heinrich Heine's poem *Loreley*: "*Ich weiss nicht, was soll es bedeuten*" ("I do not know what it means.") One possible solution for the phrase "the Merchant of Venice," is indicated by drawing a Jewish merchant, along houses built on "lagoon streets." The pictures may also have double meanings. A "secretary" may be a person, a state official, a piece of furniture, and there exists also the African secretary bird. Four different drawings may represent "a secretary." The picture of "goose flesh" or "goose foot" can be made by showing goose's flesh or foot.

Full sentences require long solutions, *e.g.* "Always look around you and see that nothing vexes nor crosses your eyes" can also be visualized in the same way: above the letter *U* in the mid of surrounding four times by the word: *look*; then the mark *&* follows, meaning "and;" and in the final line we read: *C that 0 VXS nor xx UR ii* "See that nothing vexes or crosses your eyes." (Here *C* means "see," 0 means "nothing;" *VXS* is "'vexes;" *xx* are "crosses;" *UR* means "Your;" and *ii* are similarly "eyes.")

A semiotic analysis of the rebus should cover all the three major parts (pragmatics, syntactics and semantics) of semiotics.

Pragmatics gives the context for a text to be understood as a rebus. In heraldry there exist cryptic solutions, anagrams, pen names, pseudonyms etc. See e.g. the references to the well-known figure of European farce literature: *Eulenspiegel* (German "owl" + "mirror"), which is easy to visualize. The French writer Stendhal used 171 cryptonyms, the Danish philosopher and writer Kierkegaard (also his original family name is a perfect rebus, means "church-yard") used concentric circles of pseudonyms. Special publications of rebus pragmatics date back to the Renaissance Age. But rebus pragmatics is in fact used world-wide. *E.g.* in the traditional Japanese theatre *Kabuki* the actors wear *yukata* cloth, whose pictorial designs are traditional rebuses.

Rebus pragmatics arose from the everyday practice of identifying pictures and drawings. Symbols upon female/male lavatory doors are often rather enigmatic, showing contrasted woman's/ vs man's clothing, hair style, hats, footwear, umbrellas, etc. And their pragmatics might be "urgent" to realize...

The other source of rebus pragmatics is the witty transformation of pictures and texts alike. A picture of a man cooking in the kitchen may be interpreted in many humorous ways. A calendar showing Friday 13th is bad omen. A clock-face showing the time five to twelve means: last time, or even hints to the soon coming end.

In the whole of human culture pictograms or drawings (especially the symbolic ones) are culture-bound. A lion's picture has different roles in African, Canadian or Chinese traditions, from King of the Animals to a dangerous beast. Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer's trademark logo, a roaring lion, is understandable to many, but not to all. If one does not know of the "eternal resurrection" complex of the imaginary phoenix bird, they will misunderstand the rebus with its reference.

The art of writing is important in rebus tradition. To write vertically is something extraordinary in Europe. On the other hand, the Chinese start reading the signs according to that (vertical) system. The difference of writing systems and forms gives good opportunity for rebus. For example, if we use the Hebrew letters *beth, aleph, nun, kaph* (or, in a better way: *kaph, nun, aleph, beth*), it will hint to the solution "Jewish Bank."

As for the *syntactics*, both the texts and the pictures follow their own syntax which differs from the everyday use. The two channels of syntactics are often interwoven. The rebus is more complicated if different languages are used in it, including the difference between orthography and phonetics.

In 1521 in Asti, a town in Western Liguria, Italian poet Giovan Giorgio Alione's book *Opera Jocunda Johannis Georgii Alioni Astensis, metro maccaronico, materno et gallico composita* was published. In this book, we find a series of rebuses composed in the poetic form of "*rondeau d'amours*". One of the texts begins with the lines: *Amour fait moult, sargent dely se mesle* (in the correct form: *Amour fait moût; sargent de lys se mesle)*. This line is depicted with five drawings: Amor in a tub pressing wine – sergeant [soldier] -- rasp – lily -- sole. The second line of the poem is simpler: *Car mes cincq sens sont en trauail pour celle*, which is depicted similarly by five drawings: two Carmelite nuns – V (cinq = five) – c (cent = hundred) -- man in works – sow. The two lines express the thought: love makes much trouble, and all of the five senses are affected by it. Alione was using in the text his Astian dialect, the local Italian, as well as the French. The form of the poem follows the *rondeau*, with 8 + 5 lines and a refrain: *Amour fait moult,* and altogether there are sixteen illustrations (depicting the lines or phrases with a simple set of visual signs, see the reprint of the text in Bosio 1993, 78–92). We know also the actual music to the text, from about 1501.

The syntactics of the pictures (and of the words) has to consider specific rules. Letters can be omitted or subsidized. The picture of a simple temporary building, plus the letter *r*, means 'barack' (with one "r"); and a picture of a banana, with one end cut off, plus the signs *n* = *m*, may stand for Barack Obama (the "end" – *na* was cut off). Another possibility is to combine the surname with the word: *baroque,* exemplified *e.g.* by a baroque building, with the *o* = *a* equation.

The *semantics* of the rebus is built again on the two levels of pictures and texts. There is the semantic difference between a direct "meaning" and a more general or deep "sense." If we see in a rebus a drawing of "wasp" or a "bee," we can choose either of the levels of the meaning. Similarly, a "fly" can be understood also as for airlines, air traffic etc. Rebuses also make use of *denotation/connotation* dichotomy. The word Capitol may mean "the temple of Jupiter in Rome" or "the building of the Congress in the United States" – and the drawing will be selected according to the levels of the meaning. A maiden with a Phrygian hat means "Marianne," *i.e.* France. A maiden with an arch may designate Joan of Arc, another symbol of France. A corpulent man, often dressed in the Union Jack, is, of course, the Englishman or England. A bear on the Moon may refer to Soviet astronauts. The pictures generalize, like the cartoons or the mocking pictures. A fat man looks like a tub, an old woman binds to her knee. One Panama hat or a *sombrero* means a Latin American person or a state of affairs there. The well-known *pal-*

indrome: *A man, a plan, a canal, Panama* is an excellent rebus (depicting a man, a plan, a canal and a Panama hat), with the "bonus" that it reads the same both backwards and forwards. The visual part of the text can easily be rendered.

If the drawings are simple, their meaning is simple, too. They follow the everyday pictorial language: waves stand for sea or lake, three arrows mean electricity or high voltage, skull and bones symbolize danger. A man with a skull in his hands suggest "To be, or not to be?" (And it is easy to elaborate it further on or to make a travesty of it. *E.g.* the same man has not a skull, but a bee in his hands...) The mass media shows thousands of visual signs and they can be borrowed from the basic units of the rebus. Red star, red cross, red crescent, several stars above hotel entrances or on cognac bottles can be understood worldwide – and we do not realize the originally enigmatic character of the picture. On the other hand, the decipherment is not always given to anybody. Not everybody knows that a "lone star" may refer to the State of Texas.

In confronting the orthography with phonetics, there are differences between languages. The standard rules of pronunciation are simple in Italian and Hungarian. On the other hand, French and English give a wide possibility of pronouncing something in various ways. The French *moi* ("me, I"), *moins* ("less") or *mois* ("month") sound very similar. The common phrase *c'est* ("it is") can refer to hundreds of different phrases*, i.e.* to hundred different pictures, too. The English *pear* and *pearl* evoke very different drawings, but both may occur in rebuses as [pearl]. Multilingual rebuses frequently use such forms. *Hamburger* in (American) English is a loan word from German, with the original meaning "of the city of Hamburg," and it is not related to "ham." Its continuations, as *Cheeseburger,* deepen the mistake for the word "ham." Language puns are not always translatable (as *e.g.* the "false" comparison *moth/mother/modest)*; language peculiarities (*e.g.* French *4 – 20 – 12 = 92* for the counting) are not transferable either. The names of the days of the week are sometimes apt for rebus. Russian *sreda*, German *Mittwoch* suggest "the mid of the week," meaning 'Wednesday' – whereas the English for it does not have the same capacity.

At the end of my preliminary sketch of rebus semiotics I have to offer two remarks.

I was dealing only with the simple forms of rebuses. There are many more developed forms. Italian Renaissance (see above), then the so-called *Rebus di Picardia* (1491–1506) already show highly elaborated sets of pictures and complicated texts (see *e.g.* Thorel 1902). Rebus journals and other publications have

been held in high esteem by the enthusiasts ever since. Marcel Danesi, professor of semiotics at the University of Toronto, published a summary of *The Puzzle Instinct: The Meaning of Puzzles in Human Life* (2002), framing the rebus into the larger context of human cultures.

My second remark is about the differences in rebus traditions. Even if the principles of the rebus are the same in the whole word, it is easy to find the differences between Dutch, French, German and Austrian, English and American (etc.) rebuses. The same may be said concerning the historical stratification of the rebus. To describe this will be the subject of another study. In the present paper, I could only outline some important features of the rebus, explained in Peircean—Morrisian semiotic terms.

I was not dealing with Hungarian rebus data which are not as rare as general opinion maintains. They might reflect the European tradition of riddles and rebuses. When writer Mór Jókai in his 1876 short novel, *A debreceni lunátikus* ["A Lunatic in Hungary"] is quoting a Latin maxim, *o quid tua te b bis bia abit,* he refers as to the source the 18th century Protestant college literature in Hungary. [The solution is around the Latin preposition *super* ("above, over, upon"), and the words read expressing the "upon" situation as *o, superbe, quid superbis, tua superbia te superabit* ("O, superb person! Why are you so proud? Your arrogance will overthrow you!")] In fact, the same play with words was printed earlier in Tabourot's *Bigarrures...* (1595). Not only was the Latin text used in several parts of Europe, during many centuries, but simple drawings of the rebus also shared the same cultural history.

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What Can You Learn in Fez?

Oriental Wisdom in Western Fiction Based on the Rosicrucian Mythology

1. Introduction

Body and soul are often used as metaphors in connection with artistic creations, intermedial representations, or rhetorically informed utterances. You can say, the form is the body, while the meaning is the soul, and, like those two, they cannot be fully separated from each other. You can also say, in an allegory the body is the picture language, the soul is the overcoded meaning. In the case of emblems, it is more difficult to determine which is the body and which is the soul, since image and poem are inseparable, *Gesamtkunst*. In any case, the body has iconographic motives, the recognition and interpretation of which leads us to the soul. As Panofsky suggested, this interpretation is the iconological analysis that leads us to complex cultural meaning-creation corrected by our knowledge of cultural symbols. (Panofsky 1970, 51–82)

In the following essay I will concentrate on a special layer of iconographical motives in the Rosicrucian mythology, namely the lure of the East, as it appears in the original Rosicrucian manifestos and in later literary representations.

2. Christian Rosenkreutz

In 1614, as well known, a curious publication flooded Europe from the printing press of Wilhelm Wessel in Kassel, Germany. It was the *Allgemeine und General Reformation, der gantzen weiten Welt. Beneben der Fama Fraternitatis, des Löblichen Ordens des Rosenkreutzers...*, that is the soon to be infamous foundation document of the Rosicrucians. The volume contained the following items: "Epistle to the Reader"; "The General Reformation" (that is a German translation of a

section from Traiano Boccalini's *Ragguali di Parnasso*); the *Fama fraternitatis*; and a "reply" by Adam Haselmayer, a Lutheran from Tyrol who hails this publication.[1] What interests me now in this fascinating conglomerate is the story of the founder, Christian Rosenkreutz, especially his biographical iconology.

According to the legend propagated by the *Fama*, for a long time his grave was unknown until the second generation of brethren found it in a specially created vault, where, together with the corps, various documents were also deposited, relating to the foundation and the history of the order. Among these, a parchment book, called by the author "I" concluded with an *Elogium*, referring to the achievement of Brother CR as follows:

> Christian Rosenkreutz sprung from the noble and renowned German family of RC; a man, admitted into the mysteries and secrets of heaven and earth through the divine revelations, subtle cogitations and unwearied toil of his life. In his journeys through Arabia and Africa he collected a treasure surpassing that of Kings and Emperors; but finding it not suitable for his times, he kept it guarded for posterity to uncover, and appointed loyal and faithful heirs of his arts and also of his name. (Yates 1972, 248)

The examination of the crypt then follows to the opening of the grave. The body is found intact, and the vault is decorated with intriguing images of the sky with all the stars and planets, and in the middle an artificial sun is providing non-fading eternal light. The vault reminds us of contemporary alchemical allegories, such as the "Coniunction" in Stefan Michelspracher's *Cabala,* which was published two years after the *Fama*, and, in fact, was dedicated to the Rosicrucians. (See Figure 1) This fascinating engraving represents the stages of the alchemical process, taking place on a magic hill, showing the seven steps of the transmutation and surrounded by the signs of the Zodiac. In the hill there is a cave which hides a building with a cupola, the sealing of which is decorated with the Sun, the Moon,

1 The Rosicrucian manifestos (1614–15), translated into English by Thomas Vaughan were republished as Appendix to Frances Yates. *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (1972), 235–260. Another edition: Pryce, F. N. *The Fame and Confession of R.C.* (1988). On Haselmayer see Gilly. *Adam Haselmayer – Der erste Erkunder der Manifeste der Rosenkreutzer* (1995). Further information about the Rosicrucians: Arnold. *Histoire des Rose-Croix* (1955); Gilly. *Cimelia Rhodostaurotica* (1995); Hauf. *Der Mythos der Rosenkreuzer* (2000); Vanloo. *L'utopie Rose-Croix* (2001).

and the starry sky. The whole image is surrounded by the inscriptions of the four elements, while in front of the hill the Alchemist is standing blindfolded, looking for the Truth. Klossowski da Rola discovered in the British Library a handwritten copy of these allegorical emblems with some explanations, not included in the later printed editions. We read about this image:

> The fourth figure doth note conjunction together with putrefaction, solution, dissolution, resolution, digestion, circulation. [...] They who are to pass this way must ascend by these degrees, and by means of the four chiefest pillars which are Philosophy, Astronomy, Alchymy, and the Virtues... (Klossowski de Rola 1988, 53)

Another noteworthy piece of information is that the great, in fact supernatural knowledge of the founder originated from Arabia. Earlier in the *Fama* we learn about the details.

CR at the age of five was placed in a monastic school where he learnt Latin and Greek and eventually was inspired to go to the Holy Land. While his master and companion died in Cyprus, he proceeded to Damascus and Jerusalem; made friends with the Turks and at the age of sixteen started learning from the wise men of Damascus. "He learned there better the Arabian tongue, so that the year following he translated the book M. into good Latin, which he afterwards brought with him. This is the place where he did learn his physics, and his mathematics, whereof the world hath just cause to rejoice... (Yates 1972, 239)

From Damascus he moved to Egypt, studied nature through plants and other creatures; then he sailed over the whole Mediterranean Sea to come to Fez. Here, the author is sorry to say, that the European scholars are so viciously competitive that they do not share their knowledge with one another as opposed to the Arabs who every year exchange messages about their arts and experiences. At Fez, CR got acquainted with various sciences, including magic, of which that Arabic university was most famous. It is worth mentioning here that the Madrasa of Fez, also known as the al-Quarawiyyin School is competing for the title of the oldest university on the earth. It was founded in 859 by the daughter of a wealthy merchant and the subjects taught ranged from Islamic jurisprudence to grammar, rhetoric, and logic, to medicine, mathematics, and astronomy. (Lulat 2005, 70; Meri 2005, 257; see Figure 2) By the time the manifesto was written, Germany also abounded in learned magicians, Cabalists, physicians, and philosophers,

"were but there more love and kindness among them," adds the narrator with regret. (Yates 1972, 240)

Before one would become perplexed how the religious differences did not bother CR in an age when science and theology were inseparable from each other, we also read that

> he often confessed that their Magia was not altogether pure, and also that their Cabala was defiled with their religion; but nothwithstanding he knew how to make good use of the same. (Ibid.)

This "good use" included personal intellectual gain, CR becoming a writer of an encyclopedic *Axiomata*, "out of all faculties, sciences, and arts, and whole Nature..."; but also, a benefit for the European scholarship, since Rosenkreutz shared his knowledge and by the help of his Arabic wisdom contributed in Spain and in other countries to correct scientific methodology.

But how did this infusion of Arabic science and magic become so important for Western scholarship, exoteric and esoteric alike?

3. The Knowledge Of The Arabs In Reality And In Legend

The lure of Arabic wisdom has two aspects. One is a cultural and science-historical development, the other is rooted in sensationalism and orientalism. The influence of Arabic science and philosophy on the Latin Middle Ages is well known (see Al-Khalili 2011; Burnett 2016; Gázquez 2016; Rashed 2012-17; on the European influence of Arabic magic see the Hungarian translation of the *Picatrix* [2022] and its commentary). Since this is not my speciality, I will only mention the role of Arabic scholarship in the transmission of Greek philosophy, especially of Aristotle, together with individual Arabic thinkers, such as al-Farabi, Avicenna and Averroes who exercised great impact on Western philosophy and metaphysics, natural philosophy, physics and optics, medicine, and psychology. Among these thinkers many were esoterically minded, speculating about the concept of the Perfect Man (Suhrawardi's synthesis of Zoroastrianism, Platonism, and Islam); about the efficacy of magic rituals (the Picatrix tradition); or the influence of the stars (al-Kindi, and abu-Ma'shar).

Although medieval optics, physics, and medicine were largely dependent on Arabic thought, these were not that fueled the popular imagination. The alien other with its frightening and thrilling characteristics played a part here. The Muslims were fearful arch enemies, adversaries, fighting for the Holy Land; at the same time often friendly and profit-providing merchants, helpful doctors, cooperating architects, gardeners, or artists; occasionally faithful comrades. During different periods of the Middle Ages, fierce fights as well as instances of cooperation are documented in the Near East, around Byzantium, and the Iberian peninsula. Nevertheless, the Arabs were considered to have come from mysterious and faraway lands whose inhabitants were repelling, at the same time attracting and hard to know, even to imagine. This gave way to legendary stereotypes, one being the esoterically informed and superior wise man, also endowed with healing powers. How the Arabic "magicians" found their way in the popular European imagination is explained by Mikel de Elpaza (Elpaza 2007) and Benedek Láng. (Láng 2008; see Figure 3)

Beginning with the eighteenth century, this longstanding, mixed, medieval and early modern image became filtered through the curiosity and self-confidence of the European colonizer, thus creating human encounters within the framework of *orientalism*, as described famously by Edward Said. (Said 1979) Stories about white men learning superior magical knowledge in the Arabic East, à la CR, already appeared in the seventeenth century, but started proliferating with the advent of Romanticism, an attitude that was particularly interested in the historical past, the faraway and exotic lands, and their mystical customs and practices. The "orientalism" of the White colonizer carried along those very old ambiguous feelings that had been haunting the Western societies since the Middle Ages: fear and admiration, a feeling of superiority versus worrying about the possibility that the reality may be the opposite, the image of the savage infidels versus the noble and courteous enemy, appreciation for a sophisticated culture and manners versus the suspicion that under that surface there is something sinister, magical, dangerous. (See Figure 4) These are important aspects of literary orientalism and the novels, treating esoteric themes, very much capitalized on this conglomerate of knowledge and fantasy; emotions that contributed to the rise of new genres, the Gothic, and the horror, contaminated thickly with the mode and atmosphere of the *unheimlich*, or *uncanny*.

As Nicholas Royle explains, the uncanny is the psychological experience of something as strangely familiar, it may describe incidents where an everyday ob-

ject or event is experienced in an unsettling, alienating, or taboo context. This experience is accompanied by a discomforting effect and often leads to an outright rejection of the object. (Royle 2003, vii–1) As we know, the identification of the phenomenon goes back to Freud's 1919 essay, *Das Unheimliche* (for an English translation, see Freud 2003), although in that he acknowledged that the idea originated from the psychologist Erns Jentsch in 1906. Since then, generations of psychologists, philosophers and literary critics have been elaborating on the rather slippery concept of the uncanny (Lacan, Kristeva, Žižek) and a wide array of related subjects have been associated with it, from abjection, doppelgangers, ghosts, to alter egos, and zombies. Each of these have their rich literary iconography. Scholars of Western esotericism cannot bypass this topic, either. Now I would like to turn to the imaginaries of Arabic wisdom in some modern literary fiction, connected to Wester esotericism.

4. The Esoteric In Fiction

The fascination and fantasizing about the supernatural world and eventual human interaction with it goes back as far as the most ancient cultures and has been represented since the emergence of literature. Enough to think of the magic of *Gilgamesh* (2100 BC), the magical legends associated with Egyptian religion and the pharaohs (*Khufu's tale*, 1500 BC), or the many esoteric scenes in Homer, including Odysseus's encounter with the magician Circe (800 BC). But the list can be continued with Latin magic in Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* (150 AD), and the magic-laden stories of the Hellenic romances (100-300 AD). Around the same period we have an abundance of esoteric motifs in Jewish, Merkabah mysticism (100–600 AD), just to give way to the magical world of the medieval and Renaissance romances from the Arthurian legends to Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. From the Middle Ages we have specific esoteric themes, such as alchemy, astrology, divination.

To understand all this, one has to have a working definition of magic and the occult sciences. I've tried to do this elsewhere,[2] here I recap: esotericism is rooted in the dualistic, antropomorphic, and organic world picture in which the

2 See among other publications the introductory chapters in my monograph on John Dee (Szönyi 2004).

transcendental and material have been separated and isolated; according to most mythologies this resulted from the mistakes of humans. But since the desire for a unification with the divine has always been persisting among them, they have been trying to conceptualize various ways, methods, practices to reestablish the lost contact with the god(s). The "normal" way, accessible to the masses, would be the rituals of religions. But humans have always been seeking "shortcuts." I differentiate three degrees of these efforts: 1/ *mysticism* opens up a special way and attains illumination, experiences the manifestation of the divine, *epiphany*. 2/ The *occult* consists of a mystical, secret lore, knowledge, by the help of which illumination can be catalyzed. 3/ Finally, *magic* means the active will of Man to manipulate nature by means of occult knowledge; his/her power to contact the supernatural beings; procedures to elevate humans to divine *exaltation* (white) or perverted supernatural power (black). As can be seen, through the three degrees there is an amplification of human willpower, from passive mystical experience to very active magical practices.

The above can be completed by a general definition of Joscelyn Godwin:

> The word *esoteric* refers to the inner aspect of a religion or philosophy, of which the outer aspect is *exoteric*. Thus, Christianity once had its esoteric side in theosophy, the science of the knowledge of God; Judaism in Kabbalah; Islam in Sufism; Hinduism in the various yogas; Paganism in its mysteries. These esoterisms were not for the majority of the faithful, but for those with sufficient interest, motivation, and capacity to benefit from them. Entry was through initiation. (Godwin 2007, ix)

However, the belief in initiation is a double-edged ambition. No doubt, its goals are pious, but the program inherently carries in itself hybris, human pride, the trust in the possibility of self-deification. This is how we know about deeply ambiguous characters from the past ages, such as Cornelius Agrippa, or John Dee, or the literary character, Doctor Faustus.

No wonder that literature has always been intrigued by the more extreme forms of esotericism, there was nothing too risky to writers to inflate hearsay and human fears, or ambitions. White and black magicians equally feature in Western fiction: Prospero versus Faustus, Gandalf versus Saruman.

5. The Esoteric Arabic Wisdom In Modern Novels

Romantic fiction writing discovered and promoted esoteric themes as subjects and plot-forming *sujets* for novels. One of the first such novels was (if one disregards, perhaps unjustly Mary Sidney's *Frankenstein*, 1818, of which H. P. Lovecraft noted, "it has the true touch of cosmic fear"[3]) James Hogg's *The Private Memoires and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824). Perhaps the Scottish writer was the first to use the motif of the *doppelganger* and he also capitalized on ghosts. Angels and demon possession strongly feature in this haunting work. As for its genre, it is a part-Gothic novel, also a part-psychological mystery, part-metafiction, part-satire, part-case study of totalitarian thought. Furthermore, it is also an early example of modern crime fiction, as the story is told from the viewpoint of its criminal anti-hero. But there is no eastern motif in that, for which one had to wait till 1862, when Edward Bulwer-Lytton published his *A Strange Story*. The author-politician was very popular in his days, however today is much less read, I would argue, undeservedly, because at least the *Strange Story* is quite a page-turner and covers a number of interesting issues in connection with rationalism and irrationalism, science and occult, even offers anthropological insights and covers great geographical distances from Arabia, through Europe, to Australia. As one of its critics wrote:

> Bulwer was a highly symptomatic novelist, sensitive not merely to changes in the barometer of taste but to changes in the intellectual atmosphere. Consequently, though none of them is really satisfying, taken all together his novels have a historical excitement that makes them valuable documents of the intellectual and literary climate over some forty years of the century. (Fradin 1961, 2)

All in all, *A Strange Story* is quite an extravagant specimen of the "novels of the supernatural."

The novel's hero is Dr. Allen Fenwick who comes to practice modern medicine in a small English town and with his rational and scientific methods manages to ridicule and destroy the practice of Dr. Lloyd, a mesmerist-enthusiast. Patronized by Mrs. Poyntz, the leader of the genteel society of the town, Fenwick

3 Lovecraft. *Supernatural* (2017), Chapter V., "The Aftermath of Gothic Fiction."

falls in love with the innocent and spiritual Lilian and with the support of Mrs. Poyntz, marries her. But before their happiness could thrive, a mysterious stranger turns up in the town, the powerful and energetic Margrave who recognizes Lilian as a suitable medium for spiritual experiences. Margrave is an adept of Eastern magic and possesses an elixir of life which has helped him to keep youngish, but the power of the potion is fading, and he does not know its secret. So, he wants to use the young woman to search for the secret of the elixir.

He also wants to exploit Fenwick's rationalistic science, but at the same time produces for him phenomena that the doctor cannot explain without acknowledging the supernatural. We have a multiple conflict here: between rationalism and esotericism, love and exploitation, purity and vice, power and weakness. "Though resolutely refusing to give up his beliefs, Fenwick finds that his intellect is helpless in the face of the powers which Margrave has at command." (Fradin 1961, 3) Since Fenwick cannot defeat Margrave, decides to move to Australia with Lilian, however the fiend finds them there too. By now he is old and weak and convinces the doctor to assist in a magic ritual to restore his youth and power. Fenwick agrees, but the magic goes astray and in the explosion Margrave dies.

The literary iconography of the novel is very rich. The English small town and the countryside with a haunted ruinous castle are graphically presented as well as the Eastern vistas, the back lanes of Aleppo, and the Australian wilderness, homeland of threating aboriginal others.

What interests me here is the presentation of Eastern magic in the novel. There are two characters who had learnt their magical skills in the Middle East: one is the representative of evil, Margrave (originally called Louis Grayle), the other is a "white magician," Sir Philip Derval, descendant of Sir Miles Derval, who supported one of the notable occultists of Elizabethan England, Simon Forman.

After an unsuccessful love affair with an unattainable lady, Derval moved to the East where he had been tutored by an Arabic sage, Haroun of Aleppo, who had a reputation of extraordinary wisdom, and was considered popularly a magician. "He appears to have resembled those Arabian sages of the Gothic age to whom modern science is largely indebted, – a mystic enthusiast, but an earnest scholar." (Bulwer-Lytton 1862, 80; recap Figure 4) This Haroun one day was murdered, probably by an old and wealthy Englishman, who had been unexpectedly staying with the sage while Derval was out of town. The Englishman was known to be

> of evil and sinister repute. He was regarded with terror by the attendants who had accompanied him to Aleppo. But he had lived in a very remote part of the East, little known to Europeans, and, had there established an extraordinary power, strengthened by superstitious awe. He was said to have studied deeply that knowledge which the philosophers of old called "occult," not, like the Sage of Aleppo, for benevolent, but for malignant ends. He was accused of conferring with evil spirits and filling his barbaric court (for he lived in a kind of savage royalty) with charmers and sorcerers. (81)

When Mrs. Poyntz inquiries about his name and learns that it was Louis Grayle, she drops her teaspoon in surprise. It turns out that she has heard about him, as he was her father's schoolmate at Eton. Grayle's father was a rich usurer, and the boy grew to be a fierce character. As a schoolboy he had stabbed an older boy who tried to command him, later in Cambridge he became "haughty, quarrelsome, reckless, handsome, aspiring, brave." After an unlawful duel he was charged and escaped from England, never heard of again. Now he is back in the town of *L* as Margrave. By means of magic he regained his youth, and first charms Fenwick, then Lilian.

Derval comes back and wants to remove this devil from the earth, but instead, Margrave murders him and robs his magic medicines originating from the house of Haroun. Fenwick is entrusted with Derval's autobiography from which he learns the story of the two adversaries in Arabia.

> "It was," wrote Sir Philip, "in an obscure suburb of Aleppo that I at length met with the wonderful man from whom I have acquired a knowledge immeasurably more profound and occult than that which may be tested in the experiments to which I have devoted so large a share of this memoir. Haroun of Aleppo had, indeed, mastered every secret in nature which the nobler, or theurgic, magic seeks to fathom. (169)

All in all, Bulwer-Lytton successfully managed to fuse Western mythologies of alchemy, the quest for the elixir on the one hand, and demonology with Eastern legends on the other, at the same time creating some genuine literary quality. As Lovecraft summarized in 1927:

> In *A Strange Story* Bulwer-Lytton shows a marked improvement in the creation of weird images and moods. The novel, despite enormous length, a highly artificial plot bolstered up by opportune coincidences, and an atmosphere of homiletic pseudo-science designed to please the matter-of-fact and purposeful Victorian reader, is exceedingly effective as a narrative; evoking instantaneous and unflagging interest, and furnishing many potent – if somewhat melodramatic – tableaux and climaxes.

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A few decades after Bulwer-Lytton, the accomplished British writer, Somerset Maugham, successfully capitalized on many of his predecessor's literary devices in his novel, *The Magician* (1908). Here we also have a doctor-surgeon, a rational man of science; a fiancé with sensitive and weak nerves, who gets under the wicked spell of a criminal black magician; we have a benevolent sage trained in the higher occult sciences and having acquired most of his skills in the East; we also endure travels from Paris to the remote corners of Britain, exotic journeys in the land of the pyramids – just like in *A Strange Story*.

The couple in love is Doctor Arthur Burdon, an honest but rather down-to-earth rational medical doctor, and Margaret Dauncy, the latter studies art in Paris before their planned wedding. In a restaurant, they accidentally meet Oliver Haddo, a British expatriot and famous occultist, who keeps his court there and immediately becomes interested in Margaret. In Haddo's company Arthur meets his former mentor, Dr. Porhoët, a physician, who adheres to the organic-hermetic philosophy and is well versed in Eastern wisdom, too. He had lived in Egypt for a long time, and this is where he acquired his less than common syncretic lore.

When Arthur offends Haddo and they even have a fight, the magician uses all his powers to seduce Margaret. He is so successful, that the young woman unexpectedly leaves Arthur and marries the magus. He takes her back to his home castle in a far corner of England. Some time later Arthur accidentally meets the Haddos at a dinner party in London and he tries to snatch Margaret away from his husband, because the woman looks frail and unhappy. But Arthur's efforts are to no avail, Margaret returns to Haddo.

Further unnerving news trigger Burdon and Dr. Porhoët to go to Haddo's home in England, where they are informed in the local inn that the lady died in a heart attack. Upon suspicion that she was murdered, Arthur asks the Doctor to raise Margaret's ghost from the dead to reveal her fate. It is done and proves that she was indeed killed by Haddo, who, by means of his magic, appears in Arthur's room and they fight again. The surgeon stabs the magus to death, whose body miraculously disappears.

Next day the inquirers break into the castle and find there a secret laboratory: Haddo was experimenting with creating life (following the philosophy of Paracelsus) and for these experiments needed to sacrifice his wife. The place is full of hideous creatures and among them there is the dead body of the magus. Arthur sets fire at the laboratory to eliminate all evidence of Haddo's occult project.

An interesting historical-biographical detail behind the novel reveals that Maugham had spent some time in the artistic society of Paris, and, in 1902, he met there the infamous Aleister Crowley. (Figure 5) The two immediately felt clear antipathy to each other and Maugham used the character of Crowley to create his literary Oliver Haddo. Many think Haddo is meant to be a caricature of Crowley. In return, Crowley charged Maugham with plagiarism when he wrote a review about this novel using the pseudonym Haddo.[4]

The Eastern background seems to be just a decorative motif in the novel, but not quite so. Gradually it is revealed that not only Dr. Porhoët came from Egypt, but in fact Arthur spent his childhood there, too. Although these memories and his supernatural experiences among the Arabic magicians only gradually break out from his subconscious, he has to acknowledge in the end that no matter how his rationality tried to subdue his esoteric self, the complexities of the world far outreached his reason.

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The confines of this article permit only the mention of one more novel. But it is important, because, to my best knowledge, this is the only piece of modern fiction which retells the Rosicrucian mythology in detail and seamlessly weaves

4 Booth. *A Magick Life* (2000), 164–7; Sutin. *Do What Thou Wilt* (2000), 105–7; Kaczynski. *Perdurabo* (2010), 112–3.

those legends into the fabric of the narrative. The work in question is *The Pendragon Legend* (1934), written by the Hungarian Antal Szerb, and available in an award-winning English translation by Len Rix (2006).

The author, Szerb, was one of the most brilliant literary minds in between-wars Hungary. Born in 1901 into a converted Jewish Budapest family, he studied Hungarian, German, and English philology; however, he wrote his doctoral dissertation on Castiglione's *Il corteggiano (The Courtier)*. He spent some time in France and Italy, and in 1929/30 received a year-long scholarship in England. On the one hand he became a witty and engaging literary historian, his *History of Hungarian Literature* (1934) as well as his *History of World Literature* (1941) are still bestsellers in Hungary. Parallel with his scholarly work, he started writing fiction, extremely entertaining short stories, and four novels (also translated by Len Rix).[5] First of these was *The Pendragon Legend*, clearly inspired by his study-year in England. Although working amid increasing harassment, he refused to emigrate abroad; in 1944 he was taken into a forced labor camp, and, just a few days before the end of the war, beaten to death by Hungarian fascists.

The hero of *The Pendragon Legend* is János Bátky, a Hungarian philologist working on old esoteric manuscripts in the British Museum. At a party he gets acquainted with the Earl of Gwynedd, a Welsh aristocrat who invites him to his castle to investigate his private collection of occult and magical books. From here the novel superbly manages several plotlines. On the one hand there is a crime story: the Earl's one time beloved, Eileen St. Claire tries to kill him with a gang of criminals, their purpose is to get hold of the Earl's inheritance. Another plotline reveals the Earl as an amateur biologist, who, following in the footsteps of his ancestors and the early modern occultist doctor, Paracelsus, researches the origins of life and tries to create artificial life by using some mysterious water-creatures, axolotls. Soon it also turns out that one of Gwynedd's ancestors was Asaph Pendragon, being no other than the Brother CR. On this occasion Szerb very intelligently and with the prowess of an accomplished cultural historian retells what in the 1930s was possible to know about the Rosicrucian manifestos and about the early history of the Brotherhood, focusing on the motif that the Founder's tomb opens every 120 years and CR appears among later generations of humans. No wonder that the 120-year terminus coincides

5 *The Pendragon Legend* (1934); *Journey by Moonlight* (1937); *Oliver VII* (1943); *The Queen's Necklace* (1943).

with Bátky's visit on the estate and he witnesses the horrible happenings when a Midnight Rider snatches away a peasant boy from the village. The reader gradually realizes that old Asaph was also engaged in Paracelsian research, and to accomplish the work on the homunculus (Figure 6), he used magic, eventually sacrificial black magic.

To make a long story short, in the end the Earl forces him to release the peasant boy, in exchange he kidnaps the wicked woman, Eileen. Bátky accidentally is present when among the ruins of the old family fortress Asaph sacrifices her to Satan, however the magic goes astray, the Great Work comes to a halt, and the place of the ritual burns down. The Midnight Rider disappears, while the awakening Bátky has no idea if all this really happened or was just a bad dream.

Szerb was not capitalizing too much on the motif of the Eastern wisdom clearly present in the original legends, still, he diligently includes the information about the schooling of Rosenkreutz in his cultural historical narrative. As Leigh Penman has pointed out, "the manifesto's condemnation of the Catholic monarchy in Spain, who rejected the ancient magical wisdom of the Arabs – which could help reform the world – as worthless, is a pointer to the document's polemical early seventeenth-century Protestant context." (Penman 2009, 39)

And there is one more noteworthy aspect: it is known that Szerb's vibrant mind, throughout his life, oscillated between faith and skepticism, lyrical emotionalism and intellectual, sometimes parodistic humor. In these capacities he more than once discussed the questions of esotericism, alchemy, and the Rosicrucians. Already at the age of 18, as a graduating student, he wrote a fantasy, adapting and interestingly subverting the German legend about the *Pied Piper of Hamelin* (1919).[6] (See Figure 7 and 8) It is amazing to see how easily the young student, at the beginning of the twentieth century, speaks about Paracelsus and his concept of the "Azoth", the alchemical solvent alcahest, the *Rosarium philosophorum*, Arnoldus of Villanova, and the Rosicrucians.[7]

Later, sometime around the writing of *The Pendragon Legend*, he also wrote an essay about the Rosicrucians, the tone of which is quite different from that of

6 Also known as the *Rat-Catcher of Hamelin*, the story goes back to the Middle Ages, later was reworked by Goethe (*Rattenfänger von Hameln*), the Grimm brothers and, among others, Robert Browning. See Mieder (2002), and the correct and very informative article in Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pied_Piper_of_Hamelin, access: 2018-03-18.

7 This work survived only in manuscript, written in Szerb's school-notebooks, and was only recently rediscovered and published as a literary sensation (see Szerb 2018).

the novel. While the latter, in spite of its ironic attitude, leaves the plausibility of the esoteric and supernatural happenings completely undecided, in the cultural-historical essay he speaks about the secret societies with biting sarcasm and tries to explain their aims and existence with a fully rationalistic argument[8] – interestingly, somewhat anticipating Frances Yates views in the 1970s:

> In the heart of the Rosicrucian myth there was the desire for the new science. In the 16th and 17th centuries people cast a new glance toward nature. At that time Nature was still full of secrets: the course of the planets, the behavior of minerals in the crucible, illnesses and optical phenomena were still veiled in some superstitious twilight and everything corresponded with everything else. Scientists were astronomers, physicians, chemists, and theologians in one person. This was the age in which the legend of Faust was born.
> Scientists were busy working on reading the *signatures*, the secret code, inscribed in Nature by the Creator. At that time, natural science and theology were inseparable from each other. The *pansophists*, as scholars were then called, did not seek the exact natural laws, rather God's signature waiting for humans to decipher it. Perhaps this is the most fundamental meaning of the Rosy-Cross: the rose is Nature and the cross is God.[9]

In this interpretation the Rosicrucian and Freemason mysticism is nothing else but delusion of a transitory age, the antechamber to rationalism. In Szerb's critical world there is no place for real transcendence, mysticism is explained away from a rationalistic platform. On the other hand, the denouement of *The Pendragon Legend* creates such a perfect ambiguity that can only be produced by literature, seasoned with the uncanny.

8 András Wirágh has compared in details the speaker's differing strategies in the novel and in the essay: "A kedvező megvilágítás 'hermeneutikája'" (Wirágh 2011), 126ff.
9 Szerb, "A rózsakeresztesek" (1969), available online (see bibliography).

Conclusion: Perfect Ambiguity In Literature

In a brief conclusion I would like to claim that it is precisely the uncanny *cum* perfect ambiguity which makes literature so suitable to speak about esotericism, the occult, and magic, while discursive science is often halted while not finding the suitable language to interpret these phenomena. No matter if the writers of the three discussed novels were believers (Bulwer-Lytton was definitely one, to some extent), or skeptics (like Maugham and Szerb), the nature of literary fiction allowed, even compelled them to create ambiguities and leave their works completely open. In this strategy, fiction writers have been assisted and inspired by the iconography of magic, alchemy, and the secret sciences, from early modern illustrated prints to outstanding artists of our own days. Even one of the most skeptical and sarcastic writers about the occult, Umberto Eco (1990, 1992) left his (in)famous *Foucault's Pendulum* unnervingly undecided, and, while on hundreds of pages he tried to rationalize the logic of esotericism, in the end left the reader at the edge of the dark abyss. After all, he was the father of the concept, "Opera aperta."[10]

While writers are in a favorable situation by having the freedom to play with the uncanny, the literary critic and the cultural historian are facing sometimes insurmountable difficulties when talking about literature, which in itself has a different representational logic from that of discursive explanation. To complicate things even more, what happens when literary fiction represents the unspeakable, the sublime, the fantastic, and the esoteric? Perhaps we should go to Fez and study with the Arabic wisemen.

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10 Eco. *Opera aperta* (1962, 1976; English translation: *The Open Work*, 1989). See also his *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (1979); *I limiti dell'interpretazione* (1990 – *The Limits of Interpretation*, 1990); *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (1992 – with R. Rorty, J. Culler, C. Brooke-Rose; edited by S. Collini).

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Part Two:
THE ICONOLOGY OF BODY AND SOUL

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Tormented Bodies in Late Medieval Paintings

In many legends the rulers use violence as a means of suppression against individuality which embodied alternative values.[1] The torture and execution of the opponents of the ruling regime may also be staged – even as a public performance – to have an intimidating effect also on those members of society who are not directly affected. (Burschel-Distelrath-Lembke 2000, 10) However, martyrs triumph over their torturers precisely by not being broken, but by remaining true to what is meaningful to them and to what lies behind the horizon of the ruler's power, simultaneously.

The depiction of the torture of saints reflects several of the artist's ideas on the psychological experience of suffering – from spiritual superiority to the transitory terrors of this world to the picture of natural human suffering. Apart from this, the frequent repetition of scenes of torture also raises the question of the motivation of the patrons. What did they wish to achieve through portraying such barbarity? Consideration of the surviving visual sources and texts that inform us about the meaning of the pictures provides a partial answer.

Torture on the wooden frame

Torture scenes are already displayed in the Rotunda of St. Margaret at Šivetice where Olibrius strives to break the saint's will and faith. Initially she was the object of his erotic desires but when Olibrius found that his private emotions and needs were unsatisfied, Margaret's body became an object for torture, subject to

1 The text of the article is based on Chapter 6 of my book *Legendary Scenes: An Essay on Medieval Pictorial Hagiography* (Gerát 2014).

the public authority of the secular power. Sexual desire changed into desire to control religious faith and practice. (Fromer 2005, 96, 97)

In one of the scenes in the cycle, a saint is fastened to a wooden frame consisting of two verticals and a crossbeam. Her hands nailed to the vertical beams at the sides are blood stained bearing a resemblance to those of Christ. The features of the Šivetice picture emphasizing Margaret's *Christoformitas* are combined with a reference to her femininity. The saint's long brown hair twisted around the upper beam is arguably the only poetic feature of the scene which has no subsequent occurence. However, the basic arrangement of this torture scene was to appear regularly in later works.

The extraordinary popularity of this pictorial composition can be attributed to the fact that it expressed the essence of torture so well. The tortured person is bound, thus it is clear that there is no chance for resistance. Her body has ceased to be an expression of her own will or decisions, because she has become the victim of other people who have power over her. From an earthly point of view, this is tantamount to total humiliation and defeat for the person tortured. The Christian interpretation emphasizes the latent meanings of the situation, in which defeat is interpreted as victory. Since the viewers within the picture are sometimes torturers themselves, their representation does not provide the models of reaction or testimony which are often found in the cases of other so-called assistant or accompanying figures. Their depiction also allowed painters to express sceptical views of human nature.

The composition of a body tied up for torture first appeared in Central Europe around the year 900 in the Life of St. Barulas. (Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 264. 137; see Hahn 2001, Plate I.) Saint Margaret herself is subjected to a similar treatment in a picture produced at Fulda around 970. (Hanover, Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek MS I 189, fol. 28v., see Hahn 1988) Similar compositions are found in illuminations in the Stuttgart Passionale from the 12th century (see Boeckler 1923, ill. 12; Caviness 2001, 103–104). Stained glass windows at Ard agger in Lower Austria show the survival of this tradition in the 13th century. Saint Margaret's bound body is shredded by two torturers with hooks.

Details could substantially influence the meanings of the depiction of torture. One of St. Margaret's torturers at Šivetice is wearing a pointed hat, which in medieval paintings usually indicated Jews. This detail of the picture is of particular significance if one considers an idea expressed by St. Augustine, according to which "cruelty is a natural feature of those, who have not yet received grace" (*De*

civitate Dei 2:18; 3:15) – in this instance, pagans and Jews. Details that recall the discourse of medieval anti-Semitism, could sometimes add real political significance to a picture. The possible social significance of this statement in the wider culture was not lost even after the 13th century when Thomas Aquinas shifted the meaning of the word 'cruelty' to a psychological level and proposed using the term "injustice" to designate similar external expressions. It was in the Late Middle Ages precisely that the image of cruelty began to be used for political, social and religious manipulation in order to delegitimize those who differed from devout Christians. (Baraz 2003, 20–23, 179)

A picture of the Altar of St. Sophia from Sásová (today in the Museum of Central Slovakia in Banská Bystrica) represents the basic composition of torture on the frame in an adapted form. (Figure 1) St. Agatha, who can be recognized by the large bleeding wounds after the removal of her breasts, was hung upside down on the wooden frame. Two torturers are cutting her exposed legs. The saint bears the barbaric torture with a peaceful expression, hands folded in a gesture of prayer and trust. Many tortured martyrs in pictures maintain a calm expression, driven as they were by their deep faith in definitive victory over death. In his famous address to the martyrs, Tertullian promised that if the soul was going to heaven, the body would not suffer during torture (*Ad martyras* II, 10: "*Nihil crus sentit in nervo, cum animus in caelo est*."). According to Thomas Aquinas, saints can bear pain because the comforting *visio beatifica* flows into their bodies. (see Bynum 1995, 310)

The deepening of the pictorial space and the multiplication of the number of depicted motifs are characteristic of the further development of compositions during the course of the 15th century. On a wing of the Altar of St. Catherine in Levoča (1469), an interest in the articulation of space is evident. (Figure 2) This can be seen in the overlapping of the figures of the torturers and the imperial retinue, too. An unusual motif of the scene is the angel which has come down from heaven to release the saint's hands from the wooden frame. The faces of the torturers, who threaten with whips, are deformed almost into caricatures. The expressions of these primitive men betray a perverted predilection for torture. It is noteworthy that the negative physiognomic stylization does not include the stern face of the Emperor who is in discussion with two other men in the left part of the picture. It seems that there was an increasing preoccupation with ideas about people's social status being reflected in their personal appearance even in such an extraordinary situation.

The body, tortured on the wooden frame, is clearly visible, displayed at the centre of the composition so that it immediately attracts the viewer's attention. It addresses the beholder with a many-faceted emotional message containing an appeal to personal sacrifice, provoking sympathy and possibly erotic associations as well. Clearly, when considering viewers' reactions to the picture of a tortured body, various possible explanations should be considered: perhaps only a distanced approach to the body as an object, or a kind of a dialogue and sometimes even self-identification. (Carlson 2002, 15) Modern notions aside, the concept of catharsis can be meaningfully applied to the interpretation of these pictures. (Caviness 2001, 93)

The visual analysis of the picture, especially its comparison with other works in which similar problems are dealt with, helps us understand the prevailing perception and interpretation of the tortured body at the time. The carefully calculated staging of the nakedness of female martyrs with the help of veils and loin cloths appears to be a characteristic feature of the art of the 15th century. Various authors have expressed the view that in the minds of the viewers, the Christian interpretation of the story of the tortured naked body was combined with other approaches. To be sure, the torture scenes did not serve only to present uncovered *female* bodies. Male bodies are depicted in the paintings of the Hrabušice Altar of St. Lawrence and Spišská Sobota Altar of St. George. Both saints have naked torsos and limbs. Some authors have emphasized erotic associations of a different sort in connection with such images. The more radical versions even speak of "sado-erotic spectacles." (Caviness 2001, 84–124) Such terms belong to modern sensibilities. The perception of nakedness is culturally coded; it depends on the situations in which nakedness occurs. (Jütte 1992, 120) It is questionable how far erotic associations were of relevance when looking at paintings situated in contexts which deliberately steered viewers towards substantially different mental images. It is probable that under the pressure of the situation, at least the conscious components of their imagination took other directions. If, in some viewers, a picture still aroused desires that were evaluated and sanctioned as inappropriate in their culture, they had good reason to hide these desires, perhaps even from themselves. Therefore, the lack of historical testimony of such perceptions of images by medieval viewers may be evidence that such an approach did not exist in this period, or it may only indicate censorship or self-censorship.

The representation of witnesses of torture can also serve as a source of information about the perception of the essence of the depicted event in the period.

Social differences were sometimes inherent in the level of active participation or in the way the witnesses of the tormenting reacted. Personal physical involvement in the torture is absent from the Spišská Sobota picture of the torturing of St. George where a man in ostentatious burgher' dress and another man wearing fashionable knightly armour are depicted. The clawing of the martyr's body with metal rakes or burning with torches is left to hirelings.

Boiling in a Cauldron

The pictorial Legend of St. George at Spišská Sobota includes another scene which is repeated in many cycles. (Figure 3) According to the legend, being boiled in a cauldron of molten lead was as refreshing as a pleasant bath to the saint. A similarly conceived torture of St. John the Evangelist is depicted on the wing of the main altar in Levoča. In both cases, the elderly bearded man in charge of orchestrating the execution is wearing a turban instead of the traditional imperial crown, a detail allowing us a topical reference to the Turkish threat. A disparity can be seen in the background. The torture of St. George occurs in natural surroundings, while the Levoča picture of St. John being boiled in oil includes an up-to-date motif, namely the gate of a medieval town. The familiar element brings the event closer to the medieval viewer's experience. It is also an indirect reference to the Latin Gate, mentioned in the legend as the place where the Emperor Domitian ordered that the Apostle should be put in a barrel of boiling oil. Thanks to a miracle, John survived this torture, and this led to his exile to the isle of Patmos. Inspired by 15th-century Netherlandish painting, the painter of the Košice picture of the torture of St. John created a natural scenery, which enabled him to place John's vision on Patmos in middle distance. The inclusion of the vision of the Apocalyptic woman in the upper part of the vertical axis of the picture is extraordinarily inventive. The structure of the picture uses later visionary experiences of the saint to express the spiritual escape he experienced during his torture.

Boiling of saints also appears in the stories of the saintly virgins. On the Altar of St. Margaret in Mlynica (around 1515), the uncovered body of the long-haired saint appears at the centre of the composition. Folded hands express immersion in prayer. A white dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit, swoops down to place the crown on Margaret's head. This picture is a synthetic scene not only because of

the emphasis placed on the spiritual escape, but also because it includes the motif of stones falling from heaven as a punishment upon the torturers. The stones fall from a dark cloud in the upper-left corner of the image, while the dove swoops down from the right. There is no support for this punitive miracle from the text of the Golden Legend. The scene of the punishment of St. George's torturers at Spišská Sobota could be the visual source.

Other Forms of Torture

Other types of torture were depicted more rarely. The pictorial legend of St. George being dragged behind a horse in Slovakia appears only on his altar at Spišská Sobota. (Figure 4) In spite of his halo, the saint's long blond curls are pulled along the ground behind the noble countenance with an open mouth resembling that of a Greek tragic mask. While being dragged, his white robe with a red cross on the chest is drawn inwards, and his bound hands are held over his abdomen. A similar form of torture is depicted on the Altar of St. Barbara (1447) from Wrocław (see Labuda 1984). In his analysis of a similar picture by Bernard Martorell, Lionello Puppi pointed to the precision of detail in the depiction of torture, which must have been informed by personal observation of similar punishments, involving a growing intensity of ridicule and humiliation in the ritual of public execution. The harness of the horse in Spišská Sobota is simpler than that in the Paris work while the figure of the torturer covers the precise spot where the saint's legs are bound. The torturer wielding a club shuts off from view the saint's ankles. Less detail means less evidence in favour of personal observation of a similar punishment. Of particular interest is also the motif of armed men who increase the saint's suffering with blows from clubs. Naturalistic observation of the details of movement, of brutal physiognomy, and shadows are combined with the exaggerated size of the figures which reach the second storey of a house. The physical size of the men by no means indicates their spiritual power as was customary with hierarchical perspective in the Middle Ages. It was motivated more by an effort to improve the clarity of the altar picture, which the faithful viewed at a distance of several metres.

The torture of Felix, Regula, and Exuperantius was painted around 1480 by the Viennese Master of the Apostolic Martyrdoms in the region of Košice. (Mucsi 1975, 15–17; Figure 5) This picture is an outstanding example of torture: we

see two of the saints with broken limbs tied to wheels, raised on a wooden support. The third lies almost naked, his right arm broken and attached to a sort of wall bar. He watches fearfully the torturer who is about to hurl a wheel onto him. This scene shows no trace of the elevation of the pious martyrs above the suffering of their executions: the fear of the tortured human being appears in all its existential urgency. It is highly likely that at least some martyrs experienced fear of death and suffering. This is also shown in the description of the martyrdom of St. Adalbert (Vojtech) by Bruno of Querfurt: "*nunc magnus Adelbertus timet; quasi homo amare mortis gustum exhorret, ultra quam solet consternata mens ignavia laborat, moritura caro colorem mutat, pavore vita tremula hebet.*" (Querfurtensis 1996, 116) The author was to become a martyr himself several years later.

In Sabinov, a drastic scene of the dismemberment of a saint is depicted. (Figure 6) A woman in the background is holding his severed hands, while the executioner is hacking a foot off. The picture bears a close resemblance to an illustration of the story of St. Adrian in the *Lives of the Saints* from 1488. (*Heiligenleben* 1488, 152) Saint Adrian of Nicomedia, whose limbs were chopped off, was originally a well-to-do pagan and an officer in the Roman army. (Varazze 2007, 1640) He was converted to Christianity after being impressed by the testimony of the Christians who were executed for refusing to worship pagan gods during the visit of the Emperor Maximianus to Nicomedia. The woman, who devotes her attention to the severed hand or hands, is Adrian's wife, the zealous Christian Natalia. After her husband's martyrdom, she succeeded in saving one, or in some versions, both, of his hands. Natalia's slightly bowed head is surrounded by blue sky visible through a window in the background. Pain prevails in the expression with which she looks at her husband's severed hands or at Adrian, although according to the text of the legend, she accepted his suffering as something that would increase his merits.

The Sabinov painting gains even greater importance if we consider that this dramatic theme was depicted almost exclusively in book miniatures (for details, see Gerát 2013). It is likely that the Sabinov picture is the only extant document we have of the daring attempt to portray the brutal image of Adrian's martyrdom in a format and space accessible to the wider community of the faithful.

The originality of the Sabinov work becomes clear when we compare it with other existing representations of the theme. It seems to be the only picture in which a vision of the Crucified Christ gives comfort to the mutilated Adrian. The martyr's face, his relaxed mouth, the weariness evident in the expression

around the eyes with partially lowered lids, and the carefully painted, light curly hair do not conspire to make a tragic impression. The picture does not exclude the possibility that the saint is looking at Natalia as well as at the Crucifix, because his unfocused look is redolent with contemplation or reflection. The way the painter presents the Crucified Christ, with a light cloth around the hips and a large blood stain on the forehead, appears more like a timeless reference to the sacrifice bringing salvation than a depiction of a sculptural artwork in the torture chamber. It is possible that the picture was enriched with this motif under the influence of the mystical meditations on the meaning of the Crucifixion, in keeping with the mentality of the Late Middle Ages. The inclusion of Christ's sacrifice in the Sabinov picture provides both a model and support during humble endurance in extreme situations. In the context of the programme of the Sabinov altar, this scene can be understood as a storyteller's interpretation of the central motif of the altar shrine – the Crucifixion.

The Emperor ordered the scholars who turned to the faith of St. Catherine to be put to death by burning. This theme appears in the legends from her earliest *Passio* up to the four sermons written by the Hungarian Franciscan Pelbartus Ladislaus de Temesvar (present day Timişoara in Romania), active before 1504. His output exerted a considerable influence on his successors, including the author of the verse legend in the Nové Zámky Codex. (Rajhona 2003; see also Mészáros 1996, 187) Thus, in this case, we also have the contemporary preacher's interpretation of the legend, which can be compared with the pictures. On the Lent side of the *Vir Dolorum* Altar in Bardejov, the burning of the scholars was placed immediately next to the picture of the disputation, in which the saint persuaded them by force of argument to convert to Christianity. The painter concentrated on the essentials, and depicted the scene against a plain dusky background, although the legend says that the burning happened in a town centre "*tyrannus nimio furore succensus omnes in mediu ciuitatis cremari iussit*". (Varazze 2007, 1354) In the left part of the composition, the scholars, licked by flames, are portrayed kneeling calmly while an angel bears their souls aloft in a cloth. The suffering caused by the fire is depicted indirectly in the picture, by means of two witnesses, who stand in the right part of the picture and cover their faces against the radiating heat.

Roasting on a gridiron, which later became the attribute of St. Lawrence, was a special variant of burning. In the Hrabušice picture, the naked body (apart from the loin cloth) of the saint lies parallel to the lower edge of the picture.

(Figure 7) Two torturers are rolling him into the fire with two-pronged forks. The Hrabušice painter may have drawn inspiration from older wall paintings portraying the same theme: a similar motif also occurs in the wall painting of the burning of the sisters of St. Dorothy in the Parish Church of St. James in Levoča (see Buran 2002, 77). The figure of the Emperor covering his face with his cloak is another noteworthy detail in the Hrabušice painting. He differs significantly from older pictures in which he is shown confidently enthroned and issuing orders. (cf. Swarzenski 1913, 87) The torturers with forks do not appear on the burning of St. Lawrence scene on the Altar of the Virgin Mary and St. Erasmus in Bardejov. As a result, the picture gives the strange impression of St. Lawrence being burnt without direct physical violence.

Beheading

In the final stage, martyrs were most frequently beheaded. This method also worked in cases when other methods failed thanks to miracles, as discussed above. From the ancient Roman point of view, beheading was a privileged method of execution, especially in comparison with the much more painful crucifixion.

The basic motif of the scene is the image of the executioner swinging his sword above the martyr who, in turn, kneels in an attitude of resigned prayer. Thus, painters most frequently chose to depict the psychologically dramatic moment just before the definitive completion of the execution. The images are too numerous to be analysed here in detail. The earliest pictures of such executions are enacted against a plain backdrop and include relatively few secondary motifs. In a wall painting in the parish church at Levoča, a boy carrying a basket of flowers from the garden of paradise can be seen in front of the kneeling St. Dorothy even though the legend says that the event took place in February. The miraculous escape at the moment of death is also confirmed by an accompanying flying angel in the upper right-hand corner. A picture of miracles accompanying an execution also provided a promise of some protection in situations of extraordinary difficulty for the individual believer. This positive aspect was crucial in disseminating the influence of the Church in the eyes of observers. (Hahn 2001, 79)

Around the middle of the 15th century, delight in depicting details of figures and the background begins to appear even in pictures of beheading. Pictures usually show greater elaboration with an increased number of secondary motifs and

additional meanings. On the Altar of St. Catherine in Levoča, the saint is waiting patiently with her hands crossed on her chest, while the executioner with a demonic-looking face is brandishing his sword before the final strike. The noble lady behind the saint is standing with a gesture similar to the orant figure, even if she witnesses the atrocity with a malicious smile. An angel in the upper right-hand corner is waiting to bear the saint's soul aloft.

The beheading of martyrs from Zlaté Moravce shows John the Baptist, identifiable by his typical garment made of camel's hair. Salome stands watching the execution and holding a dish. The second martyr is traditionally regarded as James the Greater, although the apostle is not dressed in his traditional clothing and salient attributes. (Kakucs 2003, 347) A noteworthy detail in this picture is the demonization of the figure of the ruler who has claws instead of feet. The turbans of the ruler and the executioner may be a reference to the impending Turkish threat. This motif makes an appearance in later pictures, too.

The majority of the pictures of beheading show the culmination of the event – either the actual execution, or the moment of tension immediately before it, but specific motifs in an individual story may justify shifting the chosen moment to the final phase. If Salome has to stand holding a dish bearing the saint's severed head, the moment after the culmination of the execution of John the Baptist must be depicted.

In the case of St. Paul, the artists chose the already completed execution to justify the motif of the three miraculous springs which appeared at the places where the saint's head fell. In the Levoča Beheading of St. Paul, the apostle's head is already severed, the body with clasped hands falls to the ground, blood pours from the arteries of the neck, and the executioner is putting his sword back into its scabbard The oldest legends of the martyrdom of St. Paul say that the soldier, who beheaded the saint, splashed his clothes with milk. The miracle with the springs appears later.

In the picture of the execution of Sts. Felix, Regula, and Exuperantius, the third saint is actually being beheaded (see Mucsi 1975, 15–17; Figure 8). The other two saints are kneeling and confronting the viewer with their severed heads. This may capture the attention of the audience less that St. Denis carrying his own severed head, but it is essentially the same miracle. Even physical execution did not entirely deprive the martyrs of life.

Crucifixion

A picture of an execution usually evokes horror. However, for the medieval believer, martyrdom was also the culmination of Christian life. Therefore, the *Golden Legend* also cites a testimony, according to which St. Peter "rejoiced greatly" at the sight of his wife being led to execution: "*cum uxor Petri ad passionem duceretur, Petrus ingenti gaudiu exultauit*". (Varazze 2007, 628) The apostle himself did not consider himself worthy of a death like that of Jesus, allegedly because of modesty. When he as a foreigner in Rome was condemned to this humiliating method of execution, he asked to be crucified with his head upside down. Leaving aside the difference between him and Christ, by turning the cross upside down he wanted to indicate that he was called from earth to heaven: "*Petrus* (...) *dum uenisset ad crucem ait: «Quoniam dominus meus de celo ad terram descendit, recta cruce sublimatus est; me autem quem de terra ad celum reuocare dignatur, crux mea caput meum in terra debet ostendere et pedes ad celum dirigere»*." (Varazze 2007, 636) In this simplified explanation, the apostle's request to have the cross turned upside down seems almost banal. However, the earliest source has Peter, immediately before his crucifixion, present a complex theological consideration, directed towards the interpretation of the cross and its position. (Zwierlein 2009, 415–421) Peter was attempting to express the deepest mystery of human existence, which he himself describes as ineffable, or at least expressible only by an imperceptible voice from the innermost depths of the human interior: silence. The cross itself is a paradox, and the cross turned upside down further accentuates the profundity of this paradox by emphasizing the need to overturn all hierarchies: "If you do not turn right into left, bottom into top and front into back ... you will not enter the Kingdom of God." (Zwierlein 2009, 419) In the light of these sources, the picture of Peter's crucifixion with head downwards appears to be an invitation to contemplation, beyond words.

Saint Peter crucified in an upside-down position was painted on the Altar of Sts. Peter and Paul in Levoča (before 1500). The presence of the Emperor in this scene is at variance with the sources, according to which Nero was enraged when the Prefect Agrippa had Peter executed, because he had wanted to torture Peter in a more savage way. The same applies to the relief wings of the Altar of St. Barbara in Banská Bystrica (1509), although in this case, the ruler's crown does not have the transverse arch spanning the width of the crown which was characteristic of the imperial crown. Dressed in a long tunic, Peter is attached to the cross

with a rope on his hands and feet. Such a picture corresponds to the iconographic tradition, as does the placing of the cross at the centre of the composition parallel to the surface of the picture. (Andergassen 2002, 54–55)

The background of both pictures shows a symbolic landscape and a townscape. Although these are not realistic pictures, it is clear that very little attempt has been made to depict Rome. In Banská Bystrica, there is a small building which might be seen as a vague reference to the Coloseum, and even the form of the city wall can be interpreted in several ways. In Levoča the episode seems to be located in a kind of typical Central European environment.

The crucifixion of St. Andrew is also individually typical.

A painting on a wing of an altar from Liptovský Ondrej (1512) shows the placing of the apostle on an X-shaped cross (now in Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery 53.569). The shrine of the same altar contains one of the results of this method of execution with a relevance for art history, namely a special form of cross which became the saint's salient attribute in art. It allows the scene to be identified, even when – as in the cycle of martyrdoms of apostles in the chancel of the Church of St. Giles at Poprad – only a fragment survives. However, the picture of the crucifixion of St. Philip from the Mošovce altar (1518) shows that a change in the form of the crucifixion compared to that of Christ does not need to be so substantial. (Glatz 1985, 56–58, ill. 37)

Conclusion

From a theological point of view, original sin is the cause of unjust violence and also of the martyrs' physical suffering. Jesus broke the power of sin, but he did not renew the lost paradise. (Schreiner 1992, 46) Justice will be fulfilled only at the end of the world.

The voluntary death of the martyrs followed the example set by Jesus. The sentence in the Gospel, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13), was also valid in the late Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas emphasized martyrdom as the most perfect of virtuous acts, because it best showed the perfection of love: "Martyrium autem inter omnes actus virtuosos maxime demonstrat perfectionem charitatis." (*Summa Theologiæ* II-IIq. 124a 3c) Martyrdom served as the orienting point of Christian existence. (Gemeinhardt 2009, 322) The authors of legends regarded martyrs mainly as witnesses to

their faith who had sealed their testimony with their blood. They were writing at a time when the Greek word martus (μάρτυς, witness) and the derived word marturuon (μαρτύρυον, testimony) had not yet acquired their specific Christian meaning (see Campenhausen 1964, 20–55). Martyrs were described as heroes who sacrificed their earthly lives in the name of the Christian faith in eternal life. (Schockenhoff 1999) However, the story of martyrdom is not only about honouring a heroic death. Providing hope of victory over death, or escaping dissolution played an equally important role. (Halbfas 2002, 141) To Christians, a cruel act acquires a higher meaning. The tortured person remains faithful to his or her truth. The ruler may destroy his victim physically, but he has no effect on the cultural system within which the martyr's action has meaning. As far as popular piety was concerned, martyrdom remained the decisive criterion for sanctity.

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The Body as Image of the Suffering Christ

Preliminaries

This essay was born to the inspiration of György Endre Szőnyi, prepared for his "Transregional Iconology 3" conference at the Central European University in 2014. He was urging me for a few years subsequently, asking the delivery of the manuscript of my lecture for the planned conference volume. I kept promising, yet the text remained unfinished till today. Now that the conference proceedings of a decade ago are finally developed into a book format, I decided to use the present occasion for saving this half-finished paper to posterity, offering it equally to a Festschrift celebrating Gyuri at his 70th birthday[1] and, with some additions, to the volume where it originally belongs.

My excuses for this unfinished stage have a scholarly dimension. Since the conference I kept on researching, documenting and updating the subject, which will become the introductory part of a large project, a book titled *The Discourses on the Stigmata from Saint Francis to Padre Pio.* While in the fractions of time that remained in the past decade, besides my university-occupations, I kept on working on this probably too ambitious enterprise, and several smaller parts have been published as individual studies.[2] Yet, this part on Saint Francis and the beginning of the stigmata rivalry remained unfinished, partly because every year a

1 Gábor Klaniczay. "The Body as Image of the Suffering Christ." In Attila Kiss, Ágnes Matuska, and Róbert Péter eds. 2022. *Fidele Signaculum. Írások Szőnyi György Endre tiszteletére. Writings in Honour of György Endre Szőnyi.* Szeged: University of Szeged. 481–504.

2 Gábor Klaniczay. "Estasi e stigmatizzazione: Il miracolo vissuto e presentato." 2019, 152–172; Id. "Padre Pio and Francis of Assisi: The Emulation of Models in the Lives and Cult of a Contemporary and a Medieval Saint." 2019, 197–212; Id. "The Mystical Pregnancy of Birgitta and the Invisible Stigmata of Catherine: Bodily Signs of Supernatural Communication in the Lives of Two Mystics." 2020, 159–78; Id. "Doubts in the Reality of Stigmata – Stigmata as a Weapon against Doubt." 2020, 69–90; Id. "Le stimmate: la narrazione e le immagini." 2023, 299–316.

new important book appeared on him and on his stigmata, and I felt I needed more time to keep pace.[3] Then, in 2024, the 800 years anniversary of the stigmatization of Saint Francis opened another torrent in which my participation was also involved,[4] and the digestion of its results of will take a few more years.

The present text has been last updated in 2018, and now I polished it only a little bit for this occasion, as a token of the long-time (about half a century long) scholarly partnership with Gyuri Szőnyi.

The founding event

Shortly after the death of Francis of Assisi, on October 3, 1226, Elias of Cortona, Vicar General of the order founded by Francis, announced, in a letter to Gregory of Naples, the Provincial Minister of France, together with the sad news, "a great joy, a novelty among miracles":

> Throughout the ages such a sign has not been heard of, except in the Son of God, who is Christ the Lord. Not long before death our brother and father appeared crucified, bearing in his body the five wounds which are in truth the stigmata of Christ: for his hands and feet had as it were the punctures of nails pierced through on either side, retaining the scars and showing the blackness of nails; his side appeared to have been lanced and often oozed blood (Menestò–Brufani 1995, 254).

It is not by chance that his devout followers saw in Francis of Assisi a bodily replica of Christ: more than anybody else in his age, he managed to bring to triumph a new ideal of the imitation of Christ, both in his way of life guided by voluntary

3 The most important ones: Jacques Dalarun. *François d'Assise en questions*. 2016; Id. *La Vie retrouvée de François d'Assise*. 2019; Donna Trembinski. *Illness and Authority: Disability in the Life and Lives of Francis of Assisi*. 2020; Carolyn Muessig. *The Stigmata in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. 2020; Adelaide Ricci. *Apparuit effigies: Dentro il racconto delle stigmate*. 2021; Roberto Rusconi. *Studi francescani*. 2021; Cordelia Warr. *Stigmatics and Visual Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Italy*. 2022.

4 Gábor Klaniczay. "Prima e dopo San Francesco: le polemiche intorno al miracolo delle stimmate." 2024.185–200; Id. "Histories and Historians of Stigmata. Old and New Approaches." 2023, 33–53.

poverty, in his apostolic action of converting the world around him, and in his emotional, compassionate devotion around Christ's suffering.5 After his death he was increasingly regarded as *Alter Christus,* and the fascinating miracle of his stigmata, told again and again in his legends and represented by medieval paintings and illuminations, became the principal touch-stone of this identification, a rich core symbol of thirteenth-century Christianity. The evolution of this motif and the reactions it provoked have been amply debated in recent historiography: from André Vauchez (Vauchez 1968, 595–625) and Rosalind Brooke (Brooke 2006) to Solanus M. Benfatti (Benfatti 2011) and Ulrich Köpf. (Köpf 2012, 35–60)

In the present study I will discuss one specific aspect of this vast theme, the "iconicity" of the stigmata, addressed first by Chiara Frugoni (Frugoni 1993) and Arnold Davidson (Davidson 1998, 101–24), then further discussed by Jean-Claude Schmitt speaking on the "body of images" (Schmitt 2002) and George Didi-Huberman in his book on the "open image" (Didi-Huberman 2007), and more recently by Hans Belting in a fascinating study on Saint Francis. (Belting 2010, 3–14) Belting cites what Saint Bonaventure said on Saint Francis's stigmata in his authoritative *Legenda maior*:

> The true love of Christ turned him into that image [... when the saint had...] on his body the physical effigy of the Crucified Christ, but not the one, as artists have in stone and wooden panels. Instead, it was written in his limbs of flesh and blood by the hands of the living God.[6]

This "iconic" statement comes after decades of passionate debates on the teachings and the *stigmata* of Saint Francis. Before commenting it, we must make a step back, and have a look at the "precedents" of Francis's *stigmata* and the contemporary challenges, rivalries related to it.

5 For a general appreciation of Francis see Roberto Rusconi. *Francis of Assisi in the Sources and Writings,* 2008, and two recent monographs: André Vauchez. *Francis of Assisi: The Life and Afterlife of a Medieval Saint,* 2012, and Augustine Thompson, O. P. *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography,* 2012.
6 "[...] verus Christi amor in eamdem imaginem transformavit amantem [...] secum ferens Crucifixi effigiem, non in tabulis lapideis vel ligneis manu figuratam artificis, sed in carneis membris descriptam digito Dei vivi." (Bonaventura de Balnoregio, "Legenda maior, XIII, 5.") In Menestò–Brufani 1995, 863; cf. Belting 2010, 3–4.

Precedences

The oldest Christian mentioning of *stigmata* comes from Saint Paul, who declared in his letter to the Galateans: *Ego enim stigmata Xti in corpore meo porto.* (Gal. 6:17) This enigmatic sentence, which kept on recurring later in the self-designations of medieval and modern stigmatics, at that moment certainly did not refer to the five wounds of Christ – *stigma* meant the brand-mark, the bodily stamp of criminals or slaves, and it has been brought in contact with Christ's wounds only since Paulus Orosius in the fourth century CE. (Adnès 1988, 1211–43; Bouflet 1996)

Carolyn Muessig recently analysed how the commentaries of the Church Fathers and doctors, such as Jerome, Augustine, and later Peter Damian, pinned down more and more precisely that *stigmata* refer to Christ's wounds and suffering and also to the signs of those who emulate him. (Muessig 2013, 40–68) Giles Constable examined how Christ's human figure became more and more central in twelfth-century Latin Christianity, how his suffering got more emphatically represented in Italian visual arts where the painted crucifixes started to show his bleeding wounds, and how the "imitation of Christ" started to be understood increasingly as the imitation of the body of Christ. (Constable 1995, 143–247) Constable was joined by Richard Trexler who argued in a vigorously polemic study that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries any type of self-inflicted ascetic wounds, especially those resulting from self-flagellation would qualify as "stigmata Christi." (Trexler 2002, 463–97)

They called attention to two examples where contemporary sources already stated that some ascetics had the "*stigmata Christi*" in their bodies: the Italian hermit Domenico Loricato (d. 1060) whose life was written by Peter Damian, a great populariser of the idea of penitential self-flagellation (Muessig 2013, 51–7), and the French abbot Stephen of Obazine (d. 1159), imposing the harshest penitential flogging both to his monks and to himself. (Melville 2005, 85–1029) Religious laywomen also adhered to this new kind of devotion: the life of Marie of Oignies (1177-1213), a leading figure of the Beguine movement in the Low Countries, written by Jacques de Vitry, includes the description, how after the compassionate weeping over Christ's passion, "she cut out a large piece of her flesh with a knife" from her palms and feet and side, "as if inebriated." (Jacques de Vitry 1990, 22) Self-flogging and harsh ascetic penitence belonged to the discipline these devout women imposed upon themselves, or were imposed to by their

stern confessors, such as Conrad of Marburg did it to St. Elizabeth of Hungary (Elliott 2004, 85–117; Westphälinger, 2007, 22–31)

The stigmatic self-mutilation showed up in a remarkable case in Oxford in 1222 (i.e. four years before the stigmata of Saint Francis had been announced by Elias of Cortona), where during the Holy Week a layman playing Jesus performed a public self-crucifixion, assisted by a laywoman playing Mary, a case that was followed by a judicial condemnation of the "pseudo-Christ." (Powicke 1964, 104–5)[7]

All these cases show that the miracle ascribed to St. Francis of Assisi was not so "unheard of" as Elias of Cortona claimed, it was rather giving a forceful expression to a largely popular new trend in Christian spirituality – the emotionally heated compassion with Christ's redemptory suffering on the Cross, and the attempt to understand this suffering by bodily emulation.

St. Francis of Assisi - Stigmata and stigmatization

In 1992 Chiara Frugoni entitled provocatively her book as "Francis and the invention of the *stigmata*," which pointed out both from textual and pictorial evidence that it took almost a century, until the presently known story of the stigmatization of Saint Francis took up its canonical shape, because of heated debates and diverging interpretations of this miracle. (Frugoni 1993) Her book renewed the old debate: what trustworthy proofs do we have of his Christ-like wounds, and their origins? While there are irrefutable witnesses – listed by Octavian Schmucki (Schmucki 1990, 234–48), Giovanni Miccoli (Miccoli 1991, 101–21) and Solanus Benfatti (Benfatti 2011, 105–10) – that Francis indeed had these wounds on his body, and some saw it already before his death, the question of their origin remained unclear, this was "the great secret of Francis" of which he never spoke to anybody. (Dalarun 2002a, 9–26) Were they, as suggested by Richard Trexler (Trexler 2002, 490) or Jacques Dalarun, (Dalarun 2013, 43–93)[8] self-inflicted wounds, perhaps in a state of ecstasy, or did they result from a miraculous, supernatural intervention? Jacques Dalarun convincingly argues that the true novelty attached to the person of Saint Francis was not so much his *stigmata,*

7 cf. Trexler. "The Stigmatized Body of Francis", 481.
8 Reprinted now in his *François d'Assise en questions,* 55–83, 288–308.

but the account of how these wounds have been acquired, his stigmatization – an account given to us by his first hagiographer, Thomas of Celano, in his *Vita prima,* written around or shortly after the canonization of Francis in 1228 (Paciocco–Accrocca 1999; Michetti 2004), which related this event to a vision he received on Mount La Verna on September 14, 1224.

> While he was staying in that hermitage called La Verna, after the place where it is located, two years prior to the time that he returned his soul to heaven, he saw in the vision of God a man, having six wings like a Seraph, standing over him, arms extended and feet joined, affixed to a cross. Two of his wings were raised up, two were stretched out over his head as if for flight, and two covered his whole body. When the blessed servant of the most High saw these things, he was filled with the greatest awe, but could not decide what this vision meant for him. Moreover, he greatly rejoiced and was much delighted by the kind and gracious look that he saw the Seraph gave him. The Seraph's beauty was beyond comprehension, but the fact that the Seraph was fixed to a cross, and the bitter suffering of that passion thoroughly frightened him. Consequently, he got up both sad and happy as joy and sorrow took their turns in his heart. Concerned over the matter, he kept thinking about what this vision could mean, and his spirit was anxious to discern a sensible meaning from the vision. While he was unable to perceive anything clearly understandable from the vision, its newness very much pressed upon his heart. Signs of the nails began to appear on his hands and feet, just as he had seen them a little while earlier on the crucified man hovering over him. His hands and feet seemed to be pierced through the middle by nails, and their points protruding on opposite sides. Those marks inside of his hands were round, but rather oblong on the outside; and small pieces of flesh were visible like the point of nails, bent over and flattened, extending beyond the flesh around them. On his feet, the marks of nails were stamped in the same way and raised above the surrounding flesh. His right side was marked with an oblong scar, as if pierced with a lance, and this often dripped blood, so that his tunic and under

> garments were frequently stained with his holy blood. (Thomas, of Celano 1999, 263–64)[9]

Let us note that in Thomas's description the bodily signs, the stigmata are caused by the intense commotion, by the "anxious meditation on what the vision could mean", by the "alternation of joy and grief," by the "preoccupation of his heart."

We should dedicate now a brief glimpse to the century-long process, how the Franciscan order strove to authenticate, accommodate and reinterpret this extraordinary miracle. While Gregory IX might have alluded to the stigmata of Francis in his canonization bull *Mira circa nos* dated 19 July, 1228 (Dalarun 2002, 17–9), he certainly avoided to mention them. It took nine years until he decided to take an open stand for the stigmata in his bull *Confessor Domini* dated April 5, 1237. (Schmucki 1990, 273–74) The same uncertainty is reflected by the contradictory reports on the stigmata by Roger of Wendover, transcribed by Matthew Paris, which still ignore the vision of the seraph, dates the stigmatization to two weeks before the death of Francis, who, according to Roger, did show his wounds in public, and which had perfectly healed before his death. (Hewlett 1886–1889, 2:328–33; Robson 2015, 86–8)

The uncertainty concerning the stigmata of Francis made also their imprint upon the iconography of this miracle, which became a very popular theme of late medieval painting and book illumination. One of the earliest depictions is to be seen on an enamel reliquary from Limoges, now in the Louvre, which shows with clear marks the separate spheres of the Seraph and Francis, the consecutive sequence of vision and stigmatization. (Davidson 1998, 106) (Figure1)

The oldest extant panel painting representing the stigmatization as one of the six miracle episodes beside the large central figure of Saint Francis, showing the stigmatic wounds on his hands and feet, is an altarpiece for Pescia (1235), made by Bonaventura Berlinghieri. It frames the event as a parallel to Christ's vision on the Mount of Olives (an appropriate way to see Francis as "*Alter Christus*"), and having an unsurmountable distance and separation between the divine Seraph-Crucifix and the kneeling, praying Francis. (Frugoni 1993, 321–30; Cook 1999, 165–8)[10] (Figure 2)

9 Thomas de Celano. *Vita Prima S. Francisci Assisiensis et ejusdem legenda ad usum chori.* Analecta Franciscana, X. vol. 1–267; c. 94.

10 cf. also Paloma Chatterjee. *The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy: The Vita Image Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries,* 2014, 168–84.

The illustration in the autograph copy of the *Cronica maiora* of Matthew Paris,[11] prepared by the chronicler himself after 1236, provides a different suggestion. Contradicting the narrative of Roger of Wendover, included in a preceding part of Matthew's chronicle, he certainly used Thomas of Celano's legend, so he included the seraph in the illustration. Nevertheless, in opposition to Thomas, he depicts the vision according to the dream-convention: Francis is shown in a reclining position, asleep on a green grass, while the red stigmata become visible on his hands, feet and his side. (Luard 1872–1883, 132–33; Lewis 1987, 31. Figure 201; Brooke 2006, 192–202; Robson 2015, 90–3) (Figure 3)

The confusion surrounding the stigmata illustration, as shown by Chiara Frugoni, continued for several decades. For instance, in the *Book of Hours* from Carpentras (c. 1250), instead of the mountain wilderness the scene is set in a church where the seraph appears on the altar. (Frugoni 1993, Figure 10) The Spirituals (*zelanti*) develop an iconographic theme showing the visionary contact of Francis and the Seraph as an illumination coming to him through three rays, making him an eschatological prophet – this is to be seen on the panel of the Bardi Master (1243). (Frugoni 1993, 357–98; Cook 1999, 98–102) (Figure 4)

In the meantime, one could witness the creation of a new series of legends of Saint Francis, nourished by the controversies and tensions between the Spiritual and the Conventual branch of the order. (Dalarun 2002b; Uribe 2002; Dalarun 2010) An increasing significance attributed to the stigmata is clearly discernible in the recently discovered abbreviated version of the *Vita prima* by Thomas of Celano (ca. 1232–1239). (Dalarun 2015, 23–86) Further legends included the one by Julian of Speyer (c. 1240)[12], the *Assisi Compilation* (c.1240–1260)[13], the *Legend of the Three Companions* (1240). *The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul*, known as the *Second Life of St Francis* (*Vita Secunda*), completed in 1247[14] and supplemented in 1254 by the *Tractatus de Miraculis*,[15] was composed at the re-

11 Corpus Christi College Library, Cambridge, MS. 16, fol. 70vo.

12 Iuliani de Spira. "Vita s. Francisci." In Menestò–Brufani 1995, 1025–95.

13 Marino Bigaroni ed. *"Compilatio Assisiensis" dagli Scritti di fr. Leone e Compagni su s. Francesco d'Assisi...*; see also in Menestò–Brufani. *Fontes Franciscani,* 1471–1690; Armstrong et al. eds. *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents II. The Founder,* 118–230. On the *Compilatio Assisiensis,* see also Rosalind Brooke ed. *Scripta Leonis, Rufini et Angeli sociorum S. Francisci...;* and Theodore Desbonnets. "Introduction à la *Légende de Pérouse*".

14 Thomae de Celano. "Vita secunda s. Francisci." In Menestò–Brufani 1995, 441–639; Armstrong et al. *The Founder*, 393.

15 Thomae de Celano. "Tractatus de miraculis b. Francisci." In Menestò–Brufani 1995, 643–50.

quest of minister general John of Parma. While the episodes of the *Assisi Compilation* surprisingly avoided speaking of the stigmata, and only mentioned the vision of the Seraph; the *Legend of the Three Companions*, and the *Vita secunda* enriched the supernatural bond of Francis by the earlier communication with the *croce dipinta* at San Damiano, and developed thus substantially the concept of stigmatization:

> From that hour ... his heart was wounded and it melted when remembering the Lord's Passion. While he lived, he always carried the wounds of the Lord Jesus in his heart. This was brilliantly shown afterwards in the renewal of those wounds that were miraculously impressed on and revealed in his body. (*Three Companions*)[16]
> [...] the wounds of the sacred Passion were impressed deep in his heart, though not yet on his flesh. (*Vita secunda*).[17]

The *Tractatus de miraculis* continues in this vein "just as, internally, his mind had put on the crucified Lord, so, externally, his whole body put on the cross of Christ...."[18] The most interesting new aspect, making its appearance in this legend, is the series of miracles intended to prove the truthfulness of the stigmata in the eyes of those who have doubts in it. These ocular and juridical testimonies of those, who "have seen these things ... and have touched with our own hands... and what we once swore, while touching these things",[19] though curiously missing from the first, rather rushed canonization examination, made their comeback already in the 1230s, when a notarial list of several testimonies was compiled in Assisi, and added to the papal confirmation by Gregory IX. (Schmucki 1990, 273–74; Penacchi 1904, 129–97; Dalarun 2010, 2: 3059)

The *Memoriale* makes a special place for John Frangipani, the son of Lady Jacoba, who by that time became proconsul of the Romans, and who was one of the first people having the privilege to see and touch the sacred wounds immediately after the death of Francis. (Armstrong et al. 2002, 417–19) The treatise also enumerates a series of further miraculous events attesting to the mir-

16 Armstrong et al. *The Founder,* 76.
17 *The Founder*, 249.
18 *The Founder*, 401.
19 The words of Pope Gregory IX, quoted by Thomas of Celano in *Vita prima,* see Armstrong et al. *The Saint*, 293.

acle: a doubting cleric of Potenza who is punished by having similar wounds on his hand; a noble woman in Rome whose devotional image of Francis lacked the depiction of the stigmata, but these did miraculously appear on the panel; a doubting Franciscan friar to whom Francis appears in his dream and lets him touch his wounds; and a mortally wounded man saved and healed by the appearing St. Francis, who touched the mortal wounds with his own stigmatic wounds. (Armstrong et al. 2002, 404–8)

All these testimonies have been completed by the words and above all the most precious relic of Leo, the closest companion of Francis, who had been there with Francis on the Mount La Verna and had received a parchment with the autograph words of the hymn *Laudes Dei Altissimi* written down by Francis after his vision there, and to which Leo added a brief factual note concerning this donation, stressing that he had received it "post impressionem stigmatum." (Bartoli Langeli 2002, 31–2) Though the precise date of this note is much debated, it seems clear that at least from the 1240s on Leo, who is now also identified as the most probable author of the *Assisi Compilation*, has also accepted to step in as the principal witness of the stigmata. (Frugoni 1993, 72–105; Benfatti 2011, 44–51, 170–76)

The debates were finally settled by the *Legenda Maior* of Bonaventura, finished in 1263, which gave a new account of the vision received by Saint Francis and the causality of his bodily transformation. (Bonaventure 2002, 525–683)[20] His principal novelty was to emphasize that the man crucified appearing between the wings of the seraph is no other than Christ, Bonaventura called him by his name several times. (He rejoiced because of the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the appearance of the Seraph... He wondered exceedingly at the sight of so unfathomable a vision, realizing that the weakness of Christ's passion was in no way compatible with the immortality of the Seraph's spiritual nature.) He also added the new description of the psychological modalities of the stigmatization: "Eventually he understood ... that he was to be totally transformed into the likeness of Christ crucified, not by the martyrdom of his flesh, but by the fire of his soul." And finally, the wounds were not external protrusions as in the version of Thomas, but were directly caused, imprinted by the body of Christ upon that of Francis. "And the vision disappeared, it left in his heart a marvellous ardour and

20 Recently Adelaide Ricci elaborated a detailed analysis of Bonaventure's legends, see n. 3, Ricci 2021, 57–111.

imprinted on his body marks that were no less marvellous... His hands and feet seemed to be pierced through the centre by nails."

The authoritative account by Saint Bonaventure, after the acceptation of which the general chapter of 1265 ordered the destruction of all preceding legends of Saint Francis to stop the internal debates around his personality, did not fully eliminate the question marks. The ongoing interrogations are reflected by the fact that in 1282 a curious document is produced by Philip, minister of Tuscia: *Instrumentum de stigmatibus beati Francisci*. This is an inquisition of the visions of a lay brother who made a pilgrimage to Mount Alverna in 1281, where St. Francis appeared to him when called upon. The lay brother interrogated him in detail about precisely how the reception of the stigmata took place, with the same kind of factual, inquisitorial questions, as what is received by the witnesses of canonization investigations. The account he claimed to have received from Saint Francis in his vision is quite different from the one to be read in the legends of Thomas of Celano and Bonaventure: the Lord touched him three times with his hand, at the hands, the feet and the side, and "printed in him his stigmata that caused such a violent sensation of pain that he had to cry out each time loudly. (Heullant-Donat 2013, 96)

Chiara Frugoni and Arnold Davidson also analysed the parallel iconographic evolution where a similar change of interpretations could be observed as in the texts. After a large initial variety, it was Giotto who elaborated the new iconographic canon, based on the new interpretation in Bonaventure's text. Let us observe here some basic traits. The earliest one from the Upper Church of the Basilica of St. Francis at Assisi (prepared by Giotto and/or his assistants), has the caption: *vidit Christum in specie Seraphim crucifixi.* We are also told in the caption that the crucified seraph "impressed" the stigmata in his body. A new feature in the iconography is that this "impression" did not occur, as in the *Vita prima,* after the vision had disappeared, but became simultaneous with it, operated by five luminous rays emanating from the wounds of Christ and piercing the body of St. Francis.[21] A similar logic can be observed on the panel painting in the Louvre, originally exposed in Pisa, where Saint Francis becomes the dominating figure of the scene, almost soliciting this supernatural encounter, and not merely subject to it. (Gardner 2011, 17–46) (Figure 5) A further development of this motif is that while on the Assisi and the Louvre paintings the rays impress the

21 A recent detailed analysis of Giotto's works is provided by Serena Romano. "Giotto, Francesco, i Francescani", 2018.

wounds as if coming from a mirror-image (from the left hand of Christ to the right one of Saint Francis, and so forth), the Bardi Chapel fresco corrects this by an even further bodily identification: the left hand and feet wounds are beamed to the left ones of Saint Francis and the right ones to the right: thus Francis is not "mirroring" Christ, but becomes simply identical with him. (Frugoni 1993, 210–16)[22] (Figures 6 and 7)

This strong claim then became the principal source of the identity of the Franciscan order. Despite the vicissitudes of the order during the persecutions from Pope John XXII, the uniqueness of Francis got further strengthened in the 14th century by the broad popular reading of his legends, new compilations such as the *Actus beati Francisci* (c. 1320), the *Speculum Perfectionis*, and their new vernacular versions, above all the *Fioretti*, and the attached anonymous treatise, *Considerazioni sulle stigmate*. (Armstrong et al. 2002, 207–660). In 1390 Bartolomeo da Pisa could resume this tradition in a magisterial, two volume work: *De conformitate vitae Beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Jesu*.[23] One should not wonder that this claim also provoked very hefty counter-reactions.

The stigmata contested

André Vauchez was the first to draw the attention, in 1968, to the strong resistance to the claim of the stigmata. (Vauchez 1968, 595–625) Among those who were the most reluctant to accept the attribution of this prestigious emblem to St. Francis, thus making him an *alter Christus*, were the two rival religious orders of the age, the Cistercians and the Dominicans. Robertus de Anglia, the Cistercian bishop of Olomouc (Bohemia) opposed to this new cult so heftily (labelling it a sacrilege) that he accepted rather the mandate of Pope Gregory IX constraining him to resign from his episcopal see than withdraw his criticism.

22 Recent restoration of the Bardi chapel frescos revealed, that the change of the direction of the rays was a posterior change of the original, probably made by the disciple of Giotto, Taddeo Gaddi. According to this discovery Giotto remained faithful to his original concept, that the body of Francis just "mirrored" the body of Christ. But after his death the change of the order of the rays did impose itself. Cf. Fabrizio Bandini et al. "I recenti interventi di restauro sulle pitture murali di Giotto e del Maestro di Figline nel transetto della basilica di Santa Croce," 2014, 268–90, at p. 276. Special thanks to Dóra Sallay for this reference.

23 Bartolomeo de Pisa. *De Conformitate vitae beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Iesu*. Analecta Franciscana, IV–V. vols (1906–1912).

> Because the son of the eternal Father alone was crucified for the salvation of mankind, and the Christian religion ought to adore his wounds alone with suppliant devotion, neither blessed Francis nor any other of the saints is to be depicted with stigmata in the Church of God, and who asserts the contrary, sins. (Vauchez 1968, 601; Mencherini 1924, 8–11)

In the same year Gregory also issued a condemnation of a Dominican a friar named Evechardus, who was preaching in Oppava (also Moravia) against the authenticity of the stigmata of Saint Francis and named the Franciscans "false preachers."

The envy among the Dominicans – and from now on I will concentrate upon them – got also expressed in several different manners. The first could be named rivalizing imitation: a long series of rival claims of having the stigmata. This series starts with the case of Walter of Strassburg, about whom we read in the *Vitae fratrum* by Gerhard Frachet, written around 1260.

> He entered to pray in Colmar in the house of the Friars minor and meditated on the bitter suffering of the Lord, and felt in his body on five places such a strong pain that he could not withhold himself and he cried out in a loud voice, and since then he keeps feeling bitter pain on these five places. (Gerardus de Fracheto 1896, 223)

This interesting idea of the invisible but painful Christ-like wounds shows also a meaningful difference in the spirituality of the two mendicant orders. Instead of the theatrical religious manifestations that the Dominicans reproached the Franciscans, they proposed a more disciplined, ascetic and interiorized assimilation to Christ's suffering.

The stigmatization of Francis has been tackled by the Dominicans, in a very sophisticated way, also from another angle: the supernatural origin of these bodily signs. We find this in the preachings of James of Voragine (1230–1298), in one of the four sermons he had dedicated to the stigmata of Francis. (Bériou 2015, 279–313)

> His ardent imagination (*vehemens imaginatio*) imprinted the stigmata on his body as is evident in two examples which are in Je-

> rome's writings. The first is the account of a certain woman who gave birth to an Ethiopian baby, because of this she was suspected by her husband of having an affair; but it was discovered that this happened to her as a result of a certain image of an Ethiopian which she could not get out of her mind. Another example is that a woman had given birth to a son who looked nothing like her or her husband; and because of this it was suspected that she had an affair; but it was found that she had a painting of a man in her bedroom which looked like her baby. If therefore, Francis in a vision had imagined the crucified Seraph, so great was his imagination that it impresses the wound of the passion on his flesh. (Jacobus de Voragine 1926, 113–14)

Despite all of James' praise of Saint Francis elsewhere, this explanation and the accompanying naturalistic and psychological arguments undermine the claim of the supernatural origin of these *signa*. The Franciscans tried in vain to refute such reasoning in university *quodlibet* debates (Mohan 1948, 284–94; Petrus Thomae 1957; Boureau 1995, 159–73); this interpretation – the precursor of the modern psycho-somatic explanation of stigmata – remained popular. Petrarch wrote this in 1366:

> Concerning the stigmata of St. Francis, this is certainly the origin: so assiduous and profound was his meditation on the death of Christ that his soul was filled up with it, and appearing to himself to be also crucified with his Lord, the force of that thought was able to pass from the soul into the body and leave visibly impressed in it the traces. (Petrarca 1868, 465; Vauchez 1968, 625)

Another Dominican sermon went much further: we learn that in 1292 Pope Nicholas IV (the first Franciscan pope) excommunicated a Dominican friar named Thomas of Aversa and forbade him from preaching and teaching for seven years because he asserted that the stigmata of the passion were in fact obtained not by Saint Francis but by Saint Peter Martyr who indeed suffered and died the martyr's death and five rivulets of blood had sprung from his wounds. He added that Francis only received the signs of the "dead God" while Peter Martyr received those of the "living God." (Prudlo 2008, 123–24; Ames 2009, 74)

A similar animosity is recorded in one of the complements to the *Actus beati Francisci* where a Dominican friar was angered by a fresco depicting Saint Francis's stigmatization, and tried to erase the stigmata from the painting, but these stigmata miraculously reappeared on the painting.

> [...] when the friar sat down at table, he looked at the picture of Saint Francis and he saw those sacred Stigmata seeming more beautiful and new than they had ever appeared before. ... And he said to himself: "By God, I am going to erase those Stigmata so that they will never appear again!" ... Then with intense fury he took a knife and carved the marks of the Stigmata out of the picture, cutting out the colour and the stone. But just as he finished digging, blood began to flow from the openings, and it gushed out violently and stained the friar's face and hands and habit. He was terrified and fell to the ground as if he were dead. Meanwhile the blood was flowing in streams from the openings in the wall which the unhappy man had made where the Stigmata had been. (Armstrong et al. 2002, 559)[24]

The appearance of female stigmatics

While these polemics continued till the end of the Middle Ages, the Franciscans constantly reasserting the uniquely miraculous origin of the stigmata and excluding any rational explanation by the "vehement imagination," the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries have seen repeated attempts to appropriate this special sign of perfection, precisely by the two religious orders that had been so sceptical about the stigmatization of St. Francis.

In 1267 Philip of Clairvaux, from the Cistercian abbey of Herkenrode, diocese of Liège, reported that a Beguine living nearby in the village of Spalbeek, named Elizabeth,

> bore most openly the *stigmata* of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is, in her hands, feet, and side, without ambiguous simulation or doubt-

24 See *Actus Beati Francisci,* cap. 65, 2214–2215. For a detailed recent analysis of this episode see Warr, *Stigmatics and Visual Culture,* 2022, 43–47.

> ful fraud. The visibly open, fresh wounds are bleeding frequently and especially on Fridays.[25]

Philip of Clairvaux colourfully described how Elizabeth presented, in a series of ecstatic raptures, a meticulously precise performance of Christ's sufferings from the moment of his arrest till the deposition from the Cross, and fitting this presentation, in addition, to the rhythm of the seven canonical prayers. Philip also underlined that "he himself with his companions, abbots and monks" could observe with his own eyes the blooddrops or streams coming from the eyes and the wounds of the virgin. (*Vita Elizabeth* 1886, 371)

After his detailed description of the miraculous bodily signs (where Elizabeth added to the bodily imitation of the wounds also a series of passion-related postures), Abbot Philip raises the question how the divine choice for representing "this glorious victory, this wonderful virtue" could fall upon "a representative of the feeble feminine sex", and tries to justify it with eloquent arguments.[26] He points out that "in the members and the body of this girl as a vivid and unmistakable Veronica, a living image and an animated history of redemption" could be read, even by the illiterate people.[27] A passionate controversy ensued, initiated by the Franciscan master of Paris, Guibert of Tournai, who wrote a treatise entitled *On the Scandals of the church (Collectio de scandalis Ecclesiae)* mentioning this attempt to steal the privilege of stigmatization from St. Francis. (Guibert of Tournai 1931, 62)

Almost simultaneously, in the Rhinelands there emerged another stigmatic Beguine: Christina of Stommeln (1242–1312), a devout laywoman near Cologne, discovered and promoted by Peter of Dacia, a Dominican friar from Gotland. He met Christina in 1267, who was already bearing the stigmata on her body then; Peter visited her thirteen times before leaving for Paris in 1269, and he provided a detailed description of the divine experiences of Christina, the

25 "[...] praefata puella manifestissime stigmata Domini nostri Jesu Christi in corpore suo portat: in cujus scilicet manibus et pedibus necnon et latere absque simulationis ambiguo aut fraudis scrupulo evidentissime patent plagae recentes, frequenter et maxime sextis feriis sanguis irriguum emoventes" (*Vita Elizabeth* 1886, 362–78, at 363); cf. Simone Roisin. *L'hagiographie cistercienne,* 1947, 69–73; Walter Simons and J. E. Ziegler. "... Elisabeth Spalbeek and the Passion cult", 1990, 117–26; Susan Rodgers and Joanna E. Ziegler. "Elisabeth Spalbeek's Trance Dance of Faith", 1999, 299–355.

26 "[...] infirmitatem sexus muliebris...exhibitione tam gloriosae victoriae, tam admirabile virtutis [...] praesignavit". *Vita Elizabeth,* 372.

27 *Vita Elizabeth*, 373; I quote the English translation from Walter Simons. "Reading a saint's body..." 1994, 11.

appearance of bleeding stigmata on her body, and the diabolic tribulations that tortured her. (Coakley 1990, 222–45; Kleinberg 1992, 40–98; Ruhberg 1995)

Another very detailed description was transmitted from Germany about the stigmatization of Lukardis, a Cistercian nun of Oberweimar, Saxony, who had a Dominican confessor, Friar Eberhard. The story of this paralytic nun who could give sense to her suffering from enduring illnesses by assimilating her passion to that of Christ has been analysed by Aviad Kleinberg and, from the point of view of the history of emotions, by Piroska Nagy. (Kleinberg 1992; Nagy 2009, 323–53) The life of Lukardis presents her stigmatization as the high point in a sequence of visions producing also different bodily manifestations. She is being fed by the Virgin, then she is also allowed to taste the milk of the Virgin (the first female version of the *lactatio*), Christ breathes the Holy Spirit into her mouth in the form of a kiss, Lukardis even had a mystical pregnancy for being able to experience that the Virgin gave birth to Christ without any pain.

Her desire to receive Christ's wounds surfaced in 1279, with a spectacular vision of the Crucifix. In the vision she saw the crucified Christ whose right arm was loosened from the cross, pathetically hanging down; this seemed to her to sharply amplify the suffering Christ's pain. Approaching him with great compassion, the beloved handmaiden tried to tie the arm back to the cross with a silken thread but could not succeed. She then began to lift his arm with her hands and, with groans, to hold it in place. The Lord then said to her: "Attach your hands to my hands and your feet to my feet and your breast to my breast, and thus shall I be helped by you to find relief." Once the handmaiden of God had done this, she instantly sensed within herself the harshest pain of wounds in her hands, feet and breast, even though no wounds were visible to the eyes. [28]

Two years later, however, in 1281, Christ appeared again; gently pressing his wounded hands to hers, the five holy wounds gradually appeared. These wounds, like those of Elisabeth of Spalbeek, also obeyed a liturgical rhythm: they started to ache more and bleed every Friday, and especially in Lenten period and mostly on Holy Friday. And finally, after the stigmata also the other wounds of Christ appeared on her body: the scars of the flagellation, and of the crown of thorns. We also get a detailed explanation of all these mystical wounds in the legend:

28 "Iuge, inquit, manus tuas manibus meis et pedes tuos pedibus meis et pectus tuum pectori meo, et sic ero per te adiutus út levius habeam" ("Vita venerabilis Lukardis," ed. J. de Baker, *Analecta Bollandiana* 18 [1899]: 305–67, at 314); Kleinberg. *Prophets in Their Own Country,* 101–11.

> So it happened that the handmaid of God, who has been bearing the image of the passion secretly inside her soul for a long time, was revealed by the Lord, and marked on the outside of her body for a multitude of people to be seen.[29]

Maybe this is the point where I should suspend the narration of the medieval history of stigmatics, which is continuing until the present day. The stigmata rivalry between Franciscans and Dominicans continued throughout the Middle Ages, the Italian Dominicans first attributed stigmata to the saint-candidate Margaret of Hungary,[30] and then managed to get recognition, with considerable difficulty, for the "invisible stigmata" of their biggest late medieval mystic, Catherine of Siena.[31] For supporting the claims of the Dominicans that Catherine's "invisible stigmata" were still truly existent, in the late fifteenth century several "new Catherines" appeared, among whom Lucia Brocadelli was the most noteworthy. (Herzig 2013)

With more and more stigmatics continuing this tradition, stigmatization became a special, privileged type of ecstatic and somatic spirituality, cultivated above all by women. In the 19th century, when new stigmatics attracted public attention, a deeply religious French doctor, Antoine Imbert-Gourbeyre considered these stigmata as a response to the "*libre-penseurs*" of the age and became an assiduous collector of all historical data on the stigmatized, compiling the first and to date most complete encyclopaedia of stigmatics, amassing 321 cases. (Imbert-Gourbeyre 1873; 1996; [1890]) The far most popular 20th century Italian saint is again a stigmatic, Padre Pio. (Luzzatto, 2007) A recent ERC research project in Antverp, directed by Tine van Osselaer, examining 19th and 20th-century stigmatics in Catholic Western Europe identified 350 stigmatics only in these two centuries. (van Osselaer et al 2021)

The body ranks very high in Christianity: *Verbum caro factum est* – the Word became flesh (John 1:14), the Son of God was incarnated in a human body; it was his bodily suffering that redeemed humanity. And since Saint Francis of Assisi, as we could see, some very specially devout men and women have provided live, tormented, bleeding bodily images of the suffering Christ in order to propagate this message.

29 "Vita venerabilis Lukardis", 324.
30 I have dealt with this issue in several studies; in English see Gábor Klaniczay, "On the Stigmatization of Saint Margaret of Hungary", 2009, 274–84.
31 See my 2020 study "The Mystical Pregnancy..." mentioned in n. 1.

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Dread of Disease and Disfigurement

Smallpox at the Court of Elizabeth I

Just four years into her reign, on 15 October 1562 Queen Elizabeth abruptly finished off her letter to Mary Queen of Scots claiming, "My hot fever prevents me writing more."[1] The following day Bishop de Quadra, the Spanish Ambassador informed the Duchess of Parma "the malady has now turned to smallpox... [t]he eruption cannot come out and she is in great danger.... If the Queen die it will be very soon."[2] The condition of the twenty-nine-year-old Elizabeth worsened, she lost consciousness, and during the night it was reported from Hampton Court that people were "all mourning for her as if she were already dead."[3] The councillors gathered in despair. Finally, on 17 October Elizabeth regained consciousness. Yet the terror caused by the disease did not subside, nobody knew how her body would heal. The possibility of an infection was still acute, and the rashes on her face could cause lifelong scarring or even blindness. However, the next dispatch of de Quadra on 25 October was reassuring, the queen was out of bed, and she quarantined herself "attending the marks on her face to avoid disfigurement."[4]

Elizabeth's illness brought about an instant political turmoil. The Queen had no issue, she had refused consistently to name a successor to the throne, and there was no guarantee for a peaceful Protestant succession. The severity of her afflic-

1 "Elizabeth to Mary, 15 October, 1562", *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland: 1547-63*. Ed. Joseph Bain. Edinburgh: General Register House, 1898. 660.
2 "Bishop Quadra to the Duchess of Parma, Letter of October 16", *Calendar of State Papers, Spain (Simancas), Volume 1, 1558-1567*. Ed. Martin A. S. Hume. London, 1892. 262.
3 "Bishop Quadra to the Duchess of Parma, Letter of October 17, 1562", *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*. 262.
4 „Bishop Quadra to the Duchess of Parma, Letter of October 25, 1562", *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*. 262.

tion highlighted the precariousness of an unsettled succession to the throne, focused attention on the urgency of the Queen's marriage, and brought about an assertiveness of male conciliar advice. For the Protestant political elite, the experience was shocking. For the next decade the belief that advice of councillors should be enforced upon a monarch became the norm. Furthermore, the propaganda value of the incident, the miraculous healing of the Queen as a sign of God's hand and a blessing on her reign, was substantial and contributed to many later works that set out to legitimize the Queen's female power. However, on a more personal note, the young Queen's pain and suffering proved to be a unique experience that shaped her female rule. As Robert Dudley remarked in his letter of 27 October to the Scottish Secretary William Maitland, it had more than just political reverberations: "... this sharp sickness hath been a good lesson and as it hath not been anything hurtful to her body, I doubt not but it shall work much good otherwise... [f]or ye know seldom princes be touched in this sort." (Adams 2002, 137–138)

The present paper examines the Queen's encounter with the near fatal attack of smallpox and her personal testimony of it as reflected in a set of prayers that was published under her name within a year. Her writings as well as her visceral aversion from those whose face was marred by the scars of the disease highlight a specific feminine concern about the nature of smallpox accompanied by the heightened awareness of the importance of the soundness of one's body.

Elizabeth's illness

In 1562, the disease probably entered the palace through a visit of Margaret St John in the summer, who died after her return to Woburn on 27 August. (Merton 1992, 95) Smallpox was highly contagious, and with an incubation period of twelve days, the virus was transmitted widely, visiting people of all walks of life. It was one of the most agonizing diseases of the period with extreme high temperatures, splitting headaches, vomiting and rashes appearing first on the tongue and throat making eating, drinking and speaking very painful. After another three days rashes also spread to the hands, arms, body and face of the patient covering even the eyelids. The sixth day was the worst when the disease attacked the central nervous system causing delirium (Snowden 2020, 83–101).

As the Queen survived this most hazardous turning point of her illness, 17 October, the Privy Council issued an order to Edmund Grindal, the Bishop

of London to make the news public and offer thanksgiving the next day at Paul's Cross in order to prevent that gossip "maye be spread abroade of this matter." (Mears et al. 2013, 55) The Spanish envoy's account about the same period sheds light on the Queen's private emotions and actions. According to de Quadra, Elizabeth

> ... on recovering from the crisis which had kept her unconscious and speechless for two hours the first thing she said was to beg her Council to make Lord Robert protector of the kingdom with a title and an income of 20,000 *l.* Everything she asked was promised, but will not be fulfilled.[5]

Although it is difficult to establish how far de Quadra's letter may be accepted at face value, his report mirrors the shaky position of Queen Elizabeth's female rule.

De Quadra's letter also hints at anxieties about Elizabeth's moral stance in the eyes of her subjects:

> The Queen protested at the time that although she loved and had always loved Lord Robert dearly, as God was her witness, nothing improper had ever passed between them. She ordered a groom of the Chamber, called Tamworth, who sleeps in Lord Robert's room, to be granted an income of 500 *l.* a year.[6]

Rumours were ripe about the Queen's relationship to Dudley, but it was not until April of 1562, just six months before contracting the virus, that Elizabeth was confronted with the devastating effect of such reports through a leaked document shown to her by the secretary of the Spanish envoy. (Doran 1996, 58–59) Elizabeth's worry highlights that in early modern England women were judged first of all by the moral principle of chastity from which not even queens were exempt. De Quadra's dispatch, while reporting about Elizabeth's insistence on her virginity, also hints at the possibility of silencing servants with bribes. Thus, although seemingly exonerating the Queen, the letter deliberately cast doubt on her conduct. The report's truth value may be confirmed by the rash action of

5 "Bishop Quadra to the King, Letter of October 25, 1562," *Calendar of State Papers, Spain.* 263.
6 "Bishop Quadra to the King, Letter of October 25, 1562," *Calendar of State Papers, Spain.* 263.

promoting Dudley to the Privy Council in late October, even before she had fully recovered from smallpox. (Adams 2002, 137) A further significant aspect about Elizabeth's position as a female ruler is the account in the letter of such a humiliating incident where Elizabeth on her sickbed is compelled to explain her conduct in front of male councillors. If this is how it really happened, it would signify a severe emotional trauma and physical weakness on the part of Elizabeth, one that she would not display any more during her reign.

The effects of smallpox

As the Queen recuperated, a further tormenting anxiety loomed ahead of her: the extent of the recovery of her looks. The threat of becoming disfigured was perhaps even more threatening for women than the extreme pain entailed by the illness that lasted nearly a month. The speckled monster – as smallpox was often referred to – was especially frightening for women as it could ruin their future. Though the fatality rate was considerably lower than in the case of plague, yet more than two thirds of the survivors were marred by permanent pockmarks and pits on the face, one third suffered significant scarring, and about ten per cent were disfigured, some beyond recognition. (Williams 2010, 22) Mirrors around the survivors were often hidden until patients were deemed strong enough to deal with what they saw in it, and – especially in the case of women – the effects sometimes led to suicide. (Williams 2010, 34–35) Smallpox was often dreaded by women more than plague or childbirth. (Guy 2009, 67) An analysis of the female diaries surviving from the 17th century – a corpus of 20 out of the 332 extant writings – shows that smallpox was the most feared disease, as it could destroy one's chance to success in life, and could reverse the fortune of envied young beauties among rivals as a scarred face meant an impediment to the possibility of a good marriage. (Reinke-Williams 2018, 474–472) The significance of looks in both male as well as female complexions in early modern England can be gauged from a pamphlet of 1567 which claims that a woman could lawfully decline her guardian's choice of a husband if he was "disfigured."[7]

Though no effective ailment was known against smallpox, there was attention given to save the face from excessive pitting. While hygiene could lower the risk

7 *A Letter Sent by Maidens of London.* London: Henry Binneman, 1567. B1v.

of infection, a more ancient and traditional belief was to apply the red treatment to patients. Described by the tenth century Persian physician Rhadez, it meant that only red things were allowed to be placed around an ill person's bed. (Finer 2004, 24) In 1314 John of Gaddesden gave an account of this procedure which he applied to Edward I's son: "take a scarlet or other red cloth, and put it about the pox; as I did to the King of England's son when this disease seized him, and I permitted only red things to be about his bed, by the which I cured him, without leaving a trace of the smallpox pustules on him."[8] Queen Elizabeth was handled similarly, yet after she was out of bed, she kept to her own rooms to further attend to her scars, presumably to carefully open up the pustules with a golden pin and apply some ointment as described in a treatise of 1656.[9]

The letter of Mary Queen of Scots sent on 2 November to Elizabeth further underlines this important aspect of the virus. Putting aside all political disagreement about not reclining her right to the English throne, she expressed deep sympathy with Elizabeth, offered comfort by reference to her own afflictions, and established a sisterly bond on the basis of a shared female anxiety about good looks:

> I cannot but rejoice ... that so soon after evil, comes the good news by your own hand of your recovery, for which I thank God with all my heart, especially since I knew the danger you were in, and how you have escaped so well, that your beautiful face will lose none of its perfections.[10]

There is no precise information about how much damage Queen Elizabeth's face suffered. Robert Dudley's letter of 27 October claims that no hurt was done to her body. (Adams 2002, 137) It seems that Elizabeth was spared the worst

8 John Gaddesden. *Rosa Anglica*. Ed. Winifred Wulf. London: Simpkin Marshall Ltd, 1929. 315.
9 "Short Treatise of the Small Pox, shewing the Means how for to govern and cure those which are infected therewith." In *Queen Elizabeth's Closet of Physical Secrets, With certain approved Medicines taken out of a Manuscript found at the dessolution of one of our English Abbies: and supplied with the Child-bearers Cabinet, and Preservative against the Plague and Small Pox. Collected by the Elaborate paines of four famous Physitians, and presented to Queen ELIZABETHS own hands*. London: Will Sheares Jr., 1656. 59.
10 "Mary to Elizabeth 2 November, 1562." *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland*. 666. Mary Queen of Scots contracted smallpox during her childhood in France where Henry II's royal physician, Jean Fernel attended her.

effects of the disease. However, de Quadra reported on 7 February that she did suffer some irreparable harm to her skin. According to him, when Elizabeth was petitioned in Parliament by the Lords to marry, she retorted angrily that "the marks they saw on her face were not wrinkles but pits of smallpox."[11] It is also conspicuous that her early "fresh" look admired by the Venetian ambassador at the beginning of her reign changed on her portraits by the mid-1560s to a face pattern characterized by the excessive use of cosmetics. (Borman 2017, 321; Finer 2004, 24)

The unhappy memories of smallpox meant that Elizabeth did not return to Hampton Court for the next five years, and even after so long an interval she was uneasy about the place: "she does not like the house, and would never go to it only that she does not wish it to fall into decay... [s]ince she was ill of smallpox, she has been much afraid of the place, and this is the first time she has returned to it."[12] (Cole 1999, 19–20) A similar aversion was responsible for the emotional alienation of Elizabeth from one of her most intimate companions, Mary Dudley Sidney, the sister of Robert Dudley. Mary, a gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber, nursed Elizabeth through her attack of smallpox and contracted the disease herself. While she survived, she became severely disfigured. Her husband, Henry Sidney twenty years later still remembered the shock of first seeing her wife after returning from France: "When I went to Newhaven I left her a full faire Ladie in myne eye at least the fayerest, and when I returned I found her as fowle a ladie as the small poxe could make her."[13] Mary's ruined looks led to her partial withdrawal from court as Elizabeth emotionally discarded her, and finally to her retirement in 1579. (Guy 2017, 44–45)

While the young Queen's encounter with pain and suffering was in no way unique, yet the record left about her emotional trauma and personal reflections is exceptional. The most telling testimony of the psychological effect of her afflictions is a bunch of prayers composed within a year of her recovery. These render a rare insight into the female experience of smallpox and the anxiety about the soundness of the female body.

11 "Bishop Quadra to the King, Letter of 7 February, 1563." *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*. 296.
12 "Letter of 13 October, 1567." *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*. 445.
13 Quoted in Kay 1992, 19.

Prayers about the health of the body

Diaries written by women at this early age are very rare, but educated ladies often expressed their innermost feelings in devotional works that were considered a proper literary genre for female authors. These texts included translations, paraphrases, or original meditations and prayers. By the time Elizabeth became queen she already completed several translations, among which her rendering of Marguerite de Navarre's *Le Miroir de l'âme pécheresse* at the age of eleven for her stepmother Catherine Parr was printed in 1548.[14] This early public image that associated Princess Elizabeth with devotional writing was further strengthened by the first document to be published about her reign, the account of her entry into London preceding the day of her coronation in 1559. Rather than reporting a political speech by the new Queen, the pamphlet recorded a prayer uttered by her at the Tower. Her words emphasized humility and God's grace associating herself with the prophet Daniel who was delivered by God.[15] Four years later, regaining her health after the attack of smallpox, another set of prayers in Latin was published under her name (*Precationes privatae*) which also had a similar tone.[16] At a time when sickness was regarded as God's punishment for sin, the prayers served as a means to position the Queen's infirmity and recovery as another divine deliverance. The choice of writing in Latin – at a time when all religious services were held in English – meant that the pamphlet was conceived with an eye to an international readership to which it proclaimed that Elizabeth was spared by God's grace, and her female Protestant rule was maintained by God's will. However, the words and ideas within the prayers also shed light on the Queen's private thoughts.

The set consists of four prayers complied from free paraphrases of the psalms. The topic of the first three follow the basic structure of prayers – preparation to meet God, confession of sins, and thanksgiving for benefits – to which a fourth prayer was added, a supplication for the kingdom. Each piece was accompanied by a collect stressing Elizabeth's humble position as the handmaid of God ('Ancilla

14 Marguerite de Navarre. *A godly medytacion of the Christen Sowle, concerninge a loue towardes God and hys Christe.* Wesel: Dirik van der Straten, 1548.

15 *The Passage of our most drad Soveraigne Lady Quene Elyzabeth through the Citie of London to Westminster, the daye before her Coronacion, Anno 1558.* London: Richard Tottel, 1559. E4r–v.

16 Elizabeth I. *Precationes privatae.* London: T. Purfoot, 1563. See the modern edition in Elizabeth I. *Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals.* Ed. Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003. 109–123.

tua'), a major trope in the early self-fashioning of Elizabeth. After these collects, three more prayers closed the group that emphatically addressed concerns connected to Elizabeth's position as Queen: her sickness, her female rule, and her prayer for wisdom. All of them echoed the theme of deliverance from danger and her elevation to the throne of England by God's mercy alone, arguments that were used to justify her female sovereignty. However, beyond the political propaganda value of the collection, Elizabeth's heightened attention to the soundness of her physical body conspicuously points at her female experience of smallpox. Though ample space is given to highlight the importance of spiritual features and mental abilities, the physical fitness and the health of the body is treated as a major issue.

This voice stands in marked contrast to Elizabeth's earlier self-representation where she regarded only her mental capacities as worthwhile. Accompanying a portrait sent to her brother Edward VI in 1549, her lines call attention to the insignificance of looks:

> For the face, I graunt, I might well blusche to offer, but the mynde I shal newer be asshamed to present. For thogth from the grace of the pictur the coulers may fade by time; may give by wether may be spotted by chance, yet the other nor time with her swift winges shal overtake, nor the mistie cloudes with ther loweringes may darken, nor chance with her slipery fote may overthrow.[17]

As opposed to this stance, the prayers of 1563 also appreciate the physical characteristics of the Queen. Though still esteeming mental and spiritual qualities, the Queen turns to God not only for spiritual benefits and wisdom, but also for a sound body. In her "Thanksgiving for Benefits" she indulges in mentioning bodily traits as well, and her tone little disguises her pride in them:

> When I consider how many – not only from among the common people but also from the nobility as well as royal blood ... – some are miserably deformed in body, other ... destitute of wit and intelligence, still others ... disordered in their mind and reason... Indeed, I

17 Elizabeth I. *Collected Works.* Ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002. 35. For the original Latin see *Autograph Compositions.* 26.

> am unimpaired in body, with a good form, a healthy and substantial wit, prudence even beyond other women, and beyond this, distinguished and superior in the knowledge of literature and languages ...[18]

A similar emphasis appears in her "Thanksgiving for Recovered Health" where the Queen prays for a sound body. Although it comes after the supplications for a healthy soul and mind, the ultimate position of the request does not diminish its importance, on the contrary, it adds emphasis on the significance of a healthy physique:

> ... and furthermore at the same time heal my body, so that it may straightway be without any remains of sickness ... Impart purity and restore soundness throughout, so that Thy handmaid, by medicine made by Thee Thyself, may recover from all sickness equally of body and soul...[19]

God's healing of the body is a special aspect of these first published prayers of the Queen. The theme disappears in her second set printed six years later as part of the *Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek, and Latin.*[20] This bunch of foreign language prayers served as a political statement, as the individual compositions targeted through their language specific nations and moulded their subject matter accordingly, fashioning the image of both the country and its sovereign with an eye to its audience abroad. (Clement 2008, 1.1–26) Another aspect of this collection was that its compilers attached a veiled message to the Queen through the manipulation of the margins. The editorial decision of John Day to print a sequence of a female *dance macabre* next to the lines of the Queen foregrounded the opinion of the radical Protestant fraction at court who demanded in both of the Houses of Parliament a decision from Elizabeth on her marriage and the succession. The illustrations emphasized a general warning about the last judgment day which all people had to face, and served as a menacing *memento mori* addressed to the Queen. (Stróbl 2012, 26–30) Thus neither the text nor the borders mirrored any intimate female concern over the soundness of the body that could be found in the earlier compositions.

18 Elizabeth I. *Collected Works.* 141; for the original Latin see *Autograph Composition.* 121.
19 Elizabeth I. *Collected Works.* 140; for the original Latin see *Autograph Compositions.* 120.
20 *Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek, and Latin.* London: J. Day, 1569.

However, in front of the officially proclaimed royal prayers of the 1569 publication, John Day placed several well-known English language prayers that were mostly lifted over from Henry Bull's compilation published a year earlier.[21] Among these, two prayers were included that were the English translations of two pieced from the Queen's earlier 1563 Latin volume. Their appearance in the section of common prayers is momentous, as it shows that in six years the Queen's prayers were popular and used widely in the vernacular. One of these prayers was the English translation of "Gratiarum Actio Pro Sanitate Recuperate," the Queen's thanksgiving for recovery from illness. It was added to other compositions to be used in time of sickness, yet it stands out with its emphasis on "having a whole minde in a whole body."[22] While the other prayers in this section treat afflictions as "bitter, but yet wholesome medicines" of the soul, and ask for "joy after this sorrow," the Queen's words reflect a deep concern about one's physical body.[23] Thus within this second volume both the official royal voice and the more private concerns of the Queen are documented.

Conclusion

Queen Elizabeth was not the only royal to contract smallpox, and especially the 17th century saw a row of royal children, queens and siblings who lost their life to the disease.[24] However, Elizabeth's near fatal experience of smallpox is exceptional as it offers a rare glimpse into a woman's personal thoughts and emotional reaction to the dreaded speckled monster. Evidence suggests that the Queen suffered a considerable trauma which had a specifically gendered aspect: letters and rumours register her anxiety about her moral uprightness. Furthermore, her prayers written shortly afterward her illness mirror her dread of disfigurement and a fear about bodily blemishes which could ruin earthly possibilities despite all heavenly rewards.

21 Henry Bull. *Christian Prayers and Holie Meditations.* London: Thomas East, 1568.
22 *Christian Prayers and Meditations.* L2r.
23 *Christian Prayers and Meditations* I3r, K1r.
24 The best-known example is Mary II who died at the age of 32 in 1694.

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Queen Elizabeth's Closset of Physical Secrets, With certain approved Medicines taken out of a Manuscript found at the dessolution of one of our English Abbies: and supplied with the Child-bearers Cabinet, and Preservative against the Plague and Small Pox. Collected by the Elaborate paines of four famous Physitians, and presented to Queen ELIZABETHS own hands. 1656. London: Will Sheares Jr.

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Testing the Borderline Between Body and Soul

Macbeth, Anatomy Theatres, and the Semiotics of the Early Modern Skin

In the middle of 2013, passersby in Budapest may have seen three unusual anatomical representations not far from each other on public advertising surfaces in the city, and all three of them had something to do with the theatre. The latest poster advertised the new production of Maladype Theatre, *Macbeth/Anatomy*, which premiered in September 2013 at the Trafó House of Contemporary Arts.[1] The other two had been left over from the previous year, and both advertised the postmodern heir of early modern anatomical theatres: an anatomical exhibition featuring plastinated bodies. Preceded by the first exhibition in Budapest in 2008, two anatomical attractions competed in the capital in 2012. The materials of "The Human Body" and "Bodies 02" exhibitions[2] were almost identical in many respects, the implemented technology was based on a process patented by Gunther von Hagens[3], and after the first anatomical show in 2008, which attracted three hundred thousand people, these new sensations proved to be even more popular. The pervasive postmodern anatomical interest is well illustrated by the curiously simultaneous presence of advertisements for theatrical anatomy and anatomical exhibitions, and it is explained by the epistemological stakes which are very similar in the early modern and the postmodern period. Due to the resonance of our present time with the anatomizing habits of early modern culture, this perspective also appeared on the contemporary Hungarian stage, casting Shakespeare's tragedy in a unique light. The persistent staging of corpo-

1 https://www.maladype.hu/hu/eloadasok/archivum/macbeth-anatomia.html
2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodies:_The_Exhibition ; https://human-bodies.eu/en/ ; https://index.hu/kultur/2012/03/03/test_test_ellen_budapesten/
3 https://bodyworlds.com/ Websites accessed on April 09, 2025.

real inwardness and the dissected body in the English Renaissance public theatre, and the growing presence of dissection and anatomical scrutiny in postmodern productions have been observed and discussed by much critical literature in the past two decades, but we must go back to the emergent semiotic theories of the early modern emblematic theatre to fully account for these practices.

In Shakespeare criticism, performance-centred semiotic approaches gained impetus and started to proliferate after the 1970s. The debate on "word versus image" and "verbal versus visual" in early modern theatre scholarship reached a milestone with the canonization of approaches that examine the material conditions and the representational logic of the emblematic theatre: the logic of the semiotic space for which English Renaissance dramas were specifically intended. I will only mention the most important early research achievements: Glynne Wickham's investigations played a pioneering role in revealing the properties of the emblematic stage and the difference between the emblematic and the photographic logic of representation. (Wickham 1963, 155) Robert Weimann, who "very usefully bridges the gap between historicist literary criticism and studies by performance-oriented critics and theatre historians" (Lin 2012, 26), investigated the legacy of medieval popular traditions of role-playing, and developed insights on the difference between *platea*- and *locus*-oriented characters and action that have remained indispensable ever since. (Weimann 1978, 33, 212)[4] Alan Dessen sought to make Shakespeare's theatrical vocabulary and the structure of contemporary theatrical reception accessible to the modern spectator. (Dessen 1977; 1984; 1995) Andrew Gurr established a comprehensive reconstruction of the Shakespearean stage (Gurr 2009), and Michael Hattaway applied the findings of this theatre history to the interpretation of the acting habits and the extremely self-reflexive signifying practices of the Elizabethan interactive popular theatre. (Hattaway 1982; 2010) New companions and research guides more and more systematically concentrated on the interdisciplinary synthesis of studies in material culture, theatre history, and textual instability.[5] Scholars pursuing this line of research continued to expand on the importance of the stage setting, the

4 Weimann's theory of the difference between *platea* and *locus* had a long-lasting impact on Shakespearean studies, although the binary spatial separation of *upstage* and *downstage* in this theory was later shown to be too strict and artificial. For an appraisal and a revision of Weimann's concepts, see Lin 2012, 23–37.

5 For a lucid and concise survey of the development of these orientations, leading to what she calls the "stage to page" approach, see Stern 2004, 1–7.

theatrical space, and the interactive nature of the playhouses, and emphasized "that the early modern theatre made no simple, clear distinction between onstage and offstage. The structural relation between the main stage and the spaces behind, above and below provided Shakespeare and his contemporaries with a wide range of possibilities for different aural and visual effects". (Ichikawa 2013, 150) The influence arriving from the "spatial turn" in critical cultural studies also had a fruitful impact in the field, and early modern conceptions of space started to constitute a significant aspect in the study of the early modern drama. Space was of great importance in the emblematic theatre not only because it was understood as a microcosmic representation of the larger macrocosm, representing, as the Prologue to Shakespeare's *Henry V* proclaims, a multitude of things "in little place" (16), but also because the contemporary ways of thinking expressed almost everything in terms of space, in relation to space, with metaphors representing space. Thus, in the theatre embodying cosmic space, the actors appearing on stage entered not only the vertical system of connections of the universe and the order of the spatial, hierarchical arrangement of social strata, but also the language conceived as space and place, the discourses and rhetorical rules of the time operating on the basis of cartographies. As Russell West points out, "Early modern modes of codifying knowledge emphasized tangible, concrete qualities of experience, often fixing upon the spatial dimensions of existence. Even more, social ruptures and transformations abruptly cast spatial structures into question, making them more particularly the focus of discursive attention." (West 2002, 12) In this early modern conceptual system, where "the mind participated in the objective order of things, within an epistemological configuration in which subject and object of knowledge were not fully distinct from one another" (West 2002, 13), the theatre functioned as a liminal cultural practice which always acted in and on space. It involved its participants in a continuous redrawing and reconfiguration of social, epistemic and political boundaries, or, as Russell West-Pavlov explains, "In the very functioning of the theatre, intensified by an extraordinary degree of self-reflexive observation, the early modern theatre system constituted its own boundaries and playfully had them oscillate. The theatre marked a line between theatrical fiction and environmental reality, but in the act of autopoetically reasserting that border, never ceased to ingest its own environment, producing out of that digestive process, theatre." (West-Pavlov 2006, 76) Since the early modern public theatre did not observe the authority of the text or that of the director in a way which later came to be characteristic of the bourgeois

photographic, illusionistic theatre, we can define this social theatrical phenomenon, in line with Hans-Thiess Lehmann's observations, as a predramatic theatre (Lehmann 2016, 7), a cultural interface which functioned as a topological node that connected different spatial and temporal dimensions. (Habermann–Witen 2016, 2–3) Historically, this predramatic theatre emerges in the transitory period which leads to the age of the dramatic theatre of modernity (Kotte 2010, 105), and, just as in the Lehmannian postdramatic theatre, the essential dramaturgical elements of modern drama are already present, but theatrical performances, especially those in the public theatre, are not yet defined by the written text and a codified dramatic structure, but by the live semiotic space based on stage-audience interaction, operating with many levels of meaning.

Each of the above orientations leaves no doubt that we must recreate, even if only hypothetically, the original representational logic of these plays. Only with knowledge of this logic is it possible to activate the plot, the symbolic-iconographic network of associations, and the emblematic codes in which these performances were enveloped. The representational logic of the stage is crucial to the interpretation of any drama, since, as a characteristic of the genre, the dramatic text typically withholds a significant amount of information, and these blank spaces are only filled with meaning when the text is staged and actualized in a theatrical performance. This actualization is even more significant in the case of the early modern emblematic theatre, where the standard elements of the stage, the position of objects, and the various directions of space were all part of a system of symbolic associations. Much of the emblematic ambiguity will escape our attention if contemporary iconographic, theatrical, or religious traditions of understanding are not decoded in our reading. This decoding inevitably necessitates consideration of the theatrical space that accommodated the dramatic text in live performance.

The emerging performance-oriented approaches to early modern drama generally considered only the horizontal axis of the stage of the emblematic theatre, which includes the representational logic of the *locus* and the interactive, liminal space of the *platea*; this latter, interactive space was the dimension in which the world of theatrical illusion and the world of actual reality merged, fusing both worlds and, at the same time, questioning the autonomy, the independent existence of both. (Weimann 1978, 212) One example of the complex manifestations of the horizontal dimension is when Puck, at the end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in his final dream-inducing monologue, amalgamates the world

of the play and the world of the audience into one single cosmos. However, less critical attention has been paid to the equally significant component of the larger theatrical space, the vertical dimension, through which each early modern play was embedded in a cosmic, universal system. In this extension, the plot and the signifying networks of the drama were embedded in a system stretching out between the underworld and the heavens, representing the vertical, analogical world order inherited from the medieval roots of Renaissance theatre. The early modern public theatre itself, based on analogical thinking and the philosophy of microcosm-macrocosm interrelationships, was seen as a powerful emblem of cosmic order and universal harmony. The audience at the Globe Theatre could feel that they were in the microcosmic laboratory of the world, in which cosmic questions were being dissected. At the same time, English Renaissance theatre was able to powerfully represent chaos, disharmony and confusion precisely because it functioned primarily as an emblem of order. The reversal of the verticality of the theatrical space was a frequently recurring technique for foregrounding cosmic and social disorder. This inversion is a characteristic feature of carnivalesque social practices, but it often meant more than just "topsy-turvydom" or chaos. The release of sexual energies on May Day, or the destructive confusion of "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" at the very beginning of *Macbeth*, were indeed visions of chaos, but in my opinion much more spectacular and effective are those cases when positions within the verticality are exchanged, and the topmost metaposition is occupied and usurped by representatives of the underworld. The verticality of the theatre could very powerfully display this kind of inversion, which often led to an all-encompassing tragic irony. One of the best early examples of the reversal of vertical orientation is found in the prototypical English Renaissance revenge drama, Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, where the metaposition of heaven, from which some divine plan might be expected to unfold, is occupied by the Allegory of Revenge and the Ghost of Don Andrea. These two agents of the underworld probably arrived in their place on the contemporary stage moving upwards from below, passing through the trapdoor, presumably to some balcony above the stage. Thus, the representatives of the underworld are placed in the highest metaposition here – the transcendental position of God is disrupted and usurped, but this is not realized by the characters in the play. In the intricate web of revenges, the characters must outwit each other in intrigue and scheming. They strive to rise above the others but are unaware that the place of the supreme avenger, for which they are all fighting, is already irrevocably occupied.

A similar vertical inversion is the building block of the world of many other tragedies. In *Hamlet*, the Ghost is an agent active both below and above, thus denying the possibility of a divine, transcendental reference point – the omnipresence of the Ghost is also often present in postmodern adaptations, such as the one directed both on stage and in a TV film version by the Hungarian visionary Gábor Bódy. In *Titus Andronicus*, Aaron rises from below and later often occupies the highest metaposition, which is also strongly emphasized in Julie Taymor's film adaptation, where Aaron is given the only position that provides a metaperspective that encompasses the entire film. At the beginning of *The Revenger's Tragedy*, Vindice presents Gloriana's skull as a representative of the underworld, which, returning from the afterlife, accompanies him to the corrupt royal court; later, after Vindice has clearly elevated it above all else, the skull becomes the driving force of the tragedy. Whenever we read these early modern plays, we must try to stage them in our imagination in order to situate the action in the semiotic space of the theatre, both horizontally and vertically. Gloucester's first soliloquy in *Richard III* will lose its most important implications if we do not imagine him in the position of the Vice, a *platea*-oriented character who acts as a driving force of engagement on the interactive boundaries of the stage, and maintains a continuous, lively relationship with the audience. Vindice is also best imagined at the beginning of the play – again based on the emblematic codes and theatrical traditions of the time – as a representative of the *memento mori* tradition, who at the same time is not only the usual moralizing agent presenting and mobilizing the course of events, but he also places the iconographic skull above everything else, which leads to another example of inversion. The skull, lifted from the grave, that is, from the underworld, is placed at the highest point in the world – only to be demetaphorized in the blink of an eye when, unveiled as the skull of the revenger's beloved former wife, from an emblem saturated with iconographic signifying traditions it turns into a shockingly raw piece of material reality.

Inversion and the confusion that follows are often expressed with anatomical precision and through anatomical imagery in English Renaissance tragedies: new methods were needed to address new questions about knowledge – methods that transcend traditional answers, break through superficial appearances, and uncover the depths of authentic knowledge. Anatomical attention focuses on how the opened human body can reveal the secrets of some previously unknown reality. As Suzan Zimmerman argues, "Caught in a double bind during the Refor-

mation's challenge to Catholic hermeneutics due to its own anthropomorphic imaging, early modern theatre interrogated the properties of the material body, including that of the performer, amid an ideological crisis about that very issue." (Zimmerman 2005, 16) Anatomical theatres and the public theatres that staged these dramas were interconnected, with their development running along parallel historical tracks. Hillary Nunn asserts that "early Stuart playwrights capitalized on the similarities between anatomical and commercial theatres to add new layers of meaning to both the dramatic portrayal of physical mutilation and the act of witnessing such staged violence." (Nunn 2005, 4)

The European history of anatomical theatres dates to the 14th century when the first public dissections were performed. By the 16th century, the public anatomy lesson had become an institutionalized social spectacle throughout Europe, from Leiden and Padua to Bologna and Montpellier, and by the end of the Elizabethan period it was rivalling the popularity of public theatres in London. In 1636, when dissections could no longer be held in the great hall of the barber-surgeons' guild headquarters, the London guild hired the famed architect and stage designer Inigo Jones to design a permanent anatomical theatre. While later anatomical theatres were housed in universities, churches were frequently used for dissections before large academic institutions were established. One of the most famous permanent anatomical theatres was built in the 1580s in Leiden, inside a church. The location was significant because the dissected body, in its complex harmony, was considered a holy temple that illustrated divine creation. It could only be opened for carefully considered reasons, within a ritual framework akin to public repentance.

The anatomical theatre's popularity grew to the point where, alongside public dissections, the exhibited collection – containing exotic animal preparations and human corpses, particularly those of individuals who died under special circumstances – became a major sensation. A detailed catalogue from 1687 describes numerous exhibits, including elephant heads, a rhinoceros, a lute used by lightly armed Cossacks, and, in the circular anatomy room, visitors could also view "rarities" such as the skeleton of a donkey, on which a woman who killed her daughter is sitting, and a man sitting on an ox, executed for stealing a fattening cow. (Schuyl 1687, 3–4) Anatomical theatres, in addition to hosting dissections (sometimes only for brief periods), also functioned as sensational exhibition spaces, resembling the Kunstkammer, Wunderkammer, or Cabinets of Curiosities – precursors to modern natural history museums.

The performances in anatomical theatres were dramatic in nature, with the cadaver, the anatomist, and the viewer all becoming actors. This aligned with the contemporary belief that every human body was a structure capable of dissection, yet within its structure echoed the order of the entire world. It is no coincidence that dramas investigating early modern subjectivity frequently thematized the body, and the emblematic theatres staging these plays mirrored the anatomical theatres, transforming the performances into theatrical anatomy. Public dissections were driven by individual curiosity, but within this curiosity lay the tensions and contradictions of the early modern age: clashing forms of knowledge, power structures, and religious convictions. Religious conservatism and scientific experimentation, superstitions based on beliefs and early empirical science existed in constant tension.

Legal and political considerations also permeated dissections. By law, the body being dissected was always that of a convicted criminal, for dissection was considered part of the punishment, thereby reinforcing the institutionalized presence of justice. This provided justification for violating the religious prohibition on dissection. The complexity of public dissection was further influenced by folk beliefs, such as the superstition that corpses could come back to life. It was widely believed that the dead remained "not completely dead" for some time after death and might even rise from the autopsy table at any moment. These contemporaneous reactions could also be activated in the spectators of the tragedies performed in public theatres, for example, when in the climax of one of the most popular Renaissance plays, *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hieronimo pulls back a curtain and reveals the corpse of his son which had been unburied for several days.

Modern audiences may find the extreme or irrational scenes in English Renaissance tragedies perplexing. However, David Hillman suggests that we must "climb back into our own bodies and read as fully embodied readers in order to understand the highly somatic nature of the age and its language" (Hillman 2007, 2) and recognize the connection between identity and visceral knowledge in these tragedies. The self-presentation and self-dissection staged in anatomical theatres find parallels in the early modern tragedy, where the protagonist – the revenger – employs dramatic poetry as a scalpel to penetrate both the body of society and the bodies within it.

Anatomization had overarching epistemological stakes in the period. The whole of early modern culture is characterized by an expansive inwardness: the expression may seem paradoxical, but paradox is a concept that characterizes the

entire era well. This period is marked by new inventions, discoveries, opening epistemological horizons, the omnipresent intention to penetrate the surface of things, to gain insight into the depths that lie behind the facade of the world, to achieve some kind of immediacy of experience, some assurance in times of uncertainty. This ever-expanding inwardness is one of the building blocks of the imagery and dramaturgy of the dramas that Shakespeare and his contemporaries designed for the stage of the time. The breakdown of harmony and order is examined in a world where physical and mental unity is truncated, opened up, torn apart, and dissected. Limbs and other body parts go on a journey, but the all-encompassing inwardness is not limited to the level of the body. As if in a laboratory of consciousness, we can also glimpse again and again the anatomy of mental processes.[6] Early modern drama engages in a double anatomy, physical and mental, testing the limits of meaning, knowledge, and identity.[7] In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, just like in *Hamlet* and *Othello*, we encounter a drama of the mind, in which the imagery of anatomy effectively transforms the play into a continuous live dissection of the protagonist. We witness a self-anatomization filtered, processed and magnified through the consciousness of the early modern subject, but this mental penetration is always accompanied by images of the opened body, flesh, decay, contamination and disease. Jonathan Sawday points out that in the history of Renaissance anatomy there was a shift from public autopsy to a communal spectacle functioning as a dramatic performance, that is, the figurative self-dissection of the anatomist. "The science of the body was to become not something to be performed only on dead corpses removed from the execution scaffold, but on the anatomist's own body." (Sawday 1995, 110) The self-presentation and self-dissection staged in anatomical theatres find parallels in the two-way, mental and corporeal self-anatomy of the protagonist of early modern tragedy.

6 This concentration on mental processes was already observed by John Bayley who argued that three of the four „great tragedies" can be interpreted as tragedies of consciousness. "[...] *Hamlet, Othello* and *Macbeth* [...] all enter and possess the mind and instantly become a part of it. Indeed, immensely realistic as they are, they seem to take place in an area of thinking, feeling and suffering that has taken over from life, in the same way that the area of the play has taken over, while it is in progress, from the lives of the audience. This sense of entrance into mental being, rather than into a world of action and suffering, distinguishes these plays". (Bayley 1981, 164)

7 As Richard Sugg points out, the epistemological stakes and prestige of early modern anatomy were analogous to the demand for an anatomy of the soul, which later found its echo in psychoanalysis with the transformation of the word anatomy into analysis. (Sugg 2007, 210)

With the Maladype Theatre performance, we arrive at a contemporary production in which one of the main organizing principles of early modern tragedy, the double anatomy, is realized, and the dissection of consciousness, which places mental processes at the centre, begins to work together with the radical anatomization of the body. The experimental production *Macbeth/Anatomy* is one of the recent examples of the affinity between the early modern and the postmodern interest in anatomy and anatomical representation. At a dramaturgical turning point in the performance, Zoltán Lendváczky, who could be Banquo, Macduff or Malcolm due to the fusion of roles, enters the stage and throws Macbeth's flayed skin onto the ground next to him. (Figure 1–3) The external covering of his body, with a precisely recognizable replica of his face, is taken by the tyrant into his own lap, and for a long moment Macbeth stares at his own skin.[8]

It seems that, contemplating his own skin-image, he arrives at some final recognition, a point of anagnorisis. I consider this depiction to be a remarkable solution in this bold adaptation of the tragedy, and I am convinced that, when interpreted in the light of early modern anatomical depictions and representations of postmodern anatomical exhibitions (Figure 4), the staging as a whole establishes a meaningful and intriguing production, at least partially refuting the almost unanimously negative criticism that followed the performance.

The Maladype Theatre production took place in front of a packed audience at the Trafó performance space in Budapest, but it was not a success with the critics, and it also thoroughly tired the audience. As the critics unanimously noted, the over-exaggerated symbolism, the original technical solutions that proved to be inoperable on the big stage extinguished the potential meanings of the performance. However, I believe that the critics were not sensitive to the "dermatological" perspective on which the production was built. Tamás Tarján's opinion was that the Maladype performance was not free from contrived artificiality, and the production fell into the trap of misunderstood postmodernism, drowning in the pursuit of self-evident alternativeness (Tarján 2013), while Andrea Tompa thought that the production could not convey either the intellectual or the sensual content that would have filled this contrived form. (Tompa 2013)

8 Maladype Theatre, September 06, 2013, Trafó. Director and set design: Zoltán Balázs; costumes: Mari Benedek; music: Péter Pál Szűcs. Cast: Zoltán Lendváczky, Ákos Orosz, Andrea Petrik, Péter Pál Szűcs, Erika Tankó. I would like to thank the theatre management for making the recording of the performance available to me.

It is undeniable that the Maladype Theatre created a very divisive but extremely powerful and effective performance in which the body was presented ingeniously to a postmodern audience that is so corporeally sensitive. We must, however, note that the "skinning", the flaying of the body, which has come to the fore in both early modern and postmodern anatomical representations, is a general metaphor for the subject's attempt to reach the material beyond the visible, the depth beneath the surface, the reality beneath the appearance of things, the skin. It symbolizes the inward curiosity and anatomical attitude common to early modern and postmodern epistemological crises. The central symbolic stage element of the performance, the giant rat skeleton, creates an anatomical atmosphere in several senses from the beginning, constantly projecting before us the idea of a double anatomy aimed at the joint dissection of consciousness and body. At the same time, the rat skeleton also foreshadows the process by which animalistic, bestial instinctual energies triumph in Macbeth: the passions that the early modern era believed were present in animals as well as in humans. (Paster 2004, 136) As Gail Kern Paster has demonstrated, the characters of Renaissance tragedies cannot yet be held to the psychological consistency that Western thought, based on the concepts of sovereign self-identity and disembodied consciousness, has associated with the category of the individual and consequently the dramatic character after the Enlightenment. The characters of early modern dramas are materially embedded beings based on contemporary ideas about the balance of bodily fluids, in whom the overflow and spillover of passions can easily tip towards the animal pole of existence. (Paster 2002, 45) The prophecy of the Weird Sisters spreads like poison in Macbeth's consciousness, prompting him to engage in role-play and question his identity, until doubts, suspicions, and self-torture finally lead to the gradual disintegration of his consciousness. It is not only ambition, sexual drives, and desire that rise to the surface in Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, who ride the rodent's skeleton like wild beasts and then gradually tear it to pieces: the voice of conscience, the command of the bond of kinship, the betrayal of the treacherous apparitions, and the uncertainty of the future gnaw at their brains from the inside, just like rats. "Oh, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!" (3.2.38–39) – says Macbeth, and the play replaces this army of scorpions with the enlarged skeleton of the rat. However, the skin, the glaze, the mask are eventually removed from Macbeth, and he must see that the shell that he has carried through his various roles is actually empty, consumed by the spread of the ulcer of corruption, melted away from within by the decay of his own subjectivity, just

as the constantly present, live rats used in the play's stage set finally gnaw away Macbeth's severed, caged head. The performance is not content with dissecting the mind, it also performs the bodily anatomy that appears as a metaphor in the argument about tragedy in Philip Sidney's treatise on poetics: "So that the right use of Comedy will, I think, by nobody be blamed, and much less of the high and excellent Tragedy, that openth the greatest wounds, and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue." (Sidney 1962, 432) All of this unfolds in a transmedia space where traditional acting is mixed with movement theatre, pantomime, vaudeville, circus show and puppetry, and where experimental, cult rock music constantly shocks and makes viewers see things from a different perspective.

The skin, the outer covering that must be removed in order to reveal the truth, plays a prominent role not only in the depiction of dissection but also in English Renaissance tragedies in general, and *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* are notable examples of this. To understand Maladype's performance, we need to delve deeper into the early modern semiotics of the skin.

During the scene in the queen's bedroom, almost as if educating his mother, Hamlet uses a visual metaphor of spiritual corruption, which interestingly includes one of the most frequently employed body images of early modern tragedy: the ulcer.

> Mother, for love of grace,
> Lay not that flattering unction to your soul
> That not your trespass but my madness speaks.
> It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
> While rank corruption, mining all within,
> Infects unseen.
> (3.4.141–46)

In the early modern cultural imagery, the ulcer becomes a metaphor for the innermost infection, the corruption at the bottom, hidden by the social mask of self-fashioning and pretence – this mask is the "skin and film" that Hamlet mentions. Let us recall, however, the healing process of tragedy, which, according to Philip Sidney, consists precisely in the operation of removing this membrane, breaking it, opening the surface, in order to reveal the infection and to expose the inner falsities in the individual, and the thickened moral or political corruption in the body of society. Sidney, discussing the role of tragedy, also uses the image

of the ulcer: the violation of the social skin of masks aims at exposing the ulcer in both the collective and the individual body. In what follows, I will concentrate on the tissues and the skin that cover the ulcer.

From this anatomical and representational perspective, Hamlet attempts at the individual level what tragedy also aims at on the community level: healing the soul, opening wounds, removing the tissue that provides concealment. However, if the skin is the physical envelope that covers the body with its physical ailments, then we can wonder what the outer layer of the soul could be? What covers our spiritual essence, if there is one? What is the skin of the soul, what forms the surface layer, the "film" on the spirit? In the period of the dawn of the emerging early modern subjectivity, amidst the Protestant debates about the presence or the possible absence of the innermost, untainted spiritual essence of the human being, the question arose with increasing intensity. Historically specific representations of the penetration of the skin often work as cultural expressions of epistemological uncertainty. The number of these representations increases in historical periods facing an epistemological crisis, when the nature of the self, of subjectivity, becomes questionable. The early modern anatomical corpuses with their skin flapping and the characters with their skins opened in tragedies thematize the same recognition that makes the corpuses of postmodern anatomical exhibitions exciting for today's audience: the skin is a boundary between the outside and the inside, the non-self and the self, the opening of which can reveal to us the hidden secrets of human identity, the inner mysteries of the temple of the material body which was housing, through a divinely crafted architecture, the spiritual soul. With the testing of the dermatological envelope, early moderns were probing the threshold that had always excited the human being: they were testing the borderline between body and soul, life and death, earthly and otherworldly.

This is why English Renaissance tragedy is characterized by an obsession with the phenomenon of the skin. As Caroline Spurgeon noted in her groundbreaking study of the imagery of Shakespeare's plays, "Shakespeare pays special attention to the texture of the skin" (Spurgeon 1952, 82). In early modern tragedy, transgression often means not simply the violation of social or political norms and laws, or the mutilation and dissection of bodies, but primarily an act that penetrates behind the surface of things and seeks the depths beneath the surface as an epistemological endeavour, attempting to test and challenge the boundaries that separate traditional pairs of opposites such as the living and the dead, the

mortal world and the afterlife, the outside and the inside. The skin of the human body began to appear as a general metaphor for the new frontiers of knowledge, and the popularity of public dissection and the anatomical theatre was surpassed only by the popularity of the great public theatres by the early 17th century: in both, the body covered in skin was the protagonist.

The interest of early modern tragedy in the skin and its repeated opening has been examined by a number of critics. Maik Goth analysed the practice of the "performative opening of the carnal envelope" in great detail, listing numerous examples of murder, mutilation, stabbing, daggering, fighting, and slaughter as forms of penetration into the skin in Renaissance tragedy. (Goth 2012, 141) Indeed, early modern culture systematically stages "the violent but calculated transgression of the outside into the vulnerable interior of the body" (Goth 2012, 144) in order to reveal, in Norbert Elias's phrase, what the envelope of the human being is and what is enclosed within it – what is the case, the container in which the *homo clausus* is located. "Is the body the vessel which holds the true self within it? Is the skin the frontier between 'inside' and 'outside'? What in the human individual is the container, and what the contained?" (Elias 2000, 472). I would like to add, however, that this penetration into the skin is always a metaphor for the new habits of seeing and observing, and for an inward-turning attention. It carries an epistemological and semiotic stake in an age when the emerging *homo clausus*, the foundation of early modern subjectivity, is being formed simultaneously by the discourses of a dislocated medieval world model, the often traumatic reforms initiated by Protestantism, and an emerging new world model anticipating modernity. This change comes with a general loss of transparency, both at the social and the individual level, and a new understanding of the skin as a barrier between inside and outside. David Hillman explains that "this loss of transparency, the perception of an 'invisible wall' between the inside and the outside of the body – 'as if this flesh which walls about our life / Were brass impregnable' (*Richard II*, 3.2.167–8) – is in good measure an invention of the Renaissance, one without which it is hard to imagine the concept of the disciplined, privatised individual. It is by the same token inseparable from the interiorising movement of Protestantism, with its emphasis on inner conviction and private prayer." (Hillman 2005, 167) Embedded in the typically anatomical images of revenge tragedies, the violation and opening of the skin brings to the fore the unpredictable nature of reality and the anxiety with which the early modern subject strives to recognize what is on the other side of the skin. Andrea Ria Stevens draws at-

tention to the fact that in Shakespeare's time there was no real difference between "industrial" paints and cosmetic materials (Stevens 2013, 3). In the early modern emblematic theatre, therefore, the audience of the time saw the same materials on the stage canvases and props as on human bodies, which is why stage painting could not create a "natural" effect, but rather concealed its own artificial, stage character and directed attention to the presence and role of surfaces. To understand the general early modern attention to the visuality of surfaces, we must also take into account what Eric Mercer describes as the rapid spread of the use of colour and paint: the fashion for painting interiors boomed to an unprecedented extent in the Elizabethan era, and almost every square inch was covered with paint, sometimes even the windows: "Throughout the greater part of the period the only reason for leaving anything unpainted seems to have been the physical impossibility of reaching it with a brush." (Mercer 1953, 153)

It is worth recalling that there are many other occurrences of ulcers and the opening of the skin in early modern tragedy. To take but one example, Sidney's and Hamlet's ulcers are curiously echoed by Vindice's words in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, when he promises to increase the prince's suffering with the double anatomy of physical and mental torture:

> Yes! It is early yet; now I'll begin
> To stick thy soul with ulcers, I will make
> Thy spirit grievous sore: it shall not rest,
> But like some pestilent man toss in thy breast.
> (3.5.170–173)

The horrifying sight of Hieronimo without a tongue in *The Spanish Tragedy*, the thought of Faustus torn to pieces by devils in *Doctor Faustus*, the systematically mutilated Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, the idea of Regan to be dissected alive in *King Lear*, the entry of Antonio with the heart of his lover soaked in blood in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* all indicate the incessant anatomization of the body in English Renaissance tragedy. Double anatomy is at work in two senses in these dramas: on the one hand, it is about the fact that tragedy always dissects the physical and spiritual, corporeal and psychical structure of the subject at the same time, foregrounding the insight that the human being as a social entity always exists as a heterogeneous psychosomatic structure. At the same time, a double anatomy is also taking place on another level, since the avenger, on the one hand, anatomizes

and dissects his enemies, and on the other hand, the process inevitably leads to his own self-dissection and, ultimately, to his own elimination. The revenger arranges the anatomy of his opponents, but the retaliatory anatomy lesson gradually becomes his own self-dissection, during which he strips his own personality to the bone, until he loses himself, for it is in this self-loss that he will be the most capable of mastering the roles that the task of revenge has necessitated. "Man's happiest when he forgets himself" (4.4.85), says Vindice, and the explanation of this seemingly paradoxical *ars poetica* is that Vindice is actually carrying out the Neoplatonist, typically Renaissance program of self-realization, but in the opposite, negative direction: he is bringing the destruction of himself to perfection. In order to fulfil the human being's capacity for endless transformation through infinite metamorphoses, the art of self-anatomy and self-loss is necessary, which then allows the revenger to perform the anatomy of his enemies. In other words, to master the art of revenge, the avenger must step out of his own identity, literally step out of his skin.

Returning to *Macbeth*: this play is not traditionally considered a revenge tragedy, although it is built on the same metatheatrical dramaturgical framework as revenge tragedies. Michael Neill argues that not only *Hamlet*, but also *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* can be read as revenge tragedies, or rather as different versions of a dramatic structure whose main component is not revenge, but rather the relationship to time and memory. "Typically, it seems to me, revenge tragedy involves a struggle to control and dispose of time: the opponents in this struggle are the politician (tyrant or usurper) and the revenger. The first is a new man whose drive to possess the future requires that he annihilate or rewrite the past: the second is a representative of the old order, whose duty is to recuperate history from the infective oblivion into which his antagonist has cast it. He is a 'remembrancer' in a double sense – both an agent of memory and one whose task it is to exact payment for the debts of the past." (Neill 1983, 36) I agree with this statement, and I myself believe that this is the reason why, from our present interpretive horizon, we are able to read so many early modern dramas as revenge tragedies or at least revenge dramas, but I attach much greater importance to the metadramatic – metatheatrical structure in this dramaturgy, which also runs consistently throughout the long line of English Renaissance dramas. In this structure, the protagonist sets himself a goal (justice, revenge, the throne, the recovery of the dukedom), the achievement of which presents him with two great challenges. The first is that he must fight time, and in two ways: on the one hand, he must

gain time to develop and execute his plan, and on the other hand, he must cope with the constant temptation of the past in his mind, the ongoing task of remembering, or even the command to remember ("And thy commandment all alone shall live / Within the book and volume of my brain" [1.5.103–4] – says Hamlet), because the goal must not be lost sight of. This results in a constant oscillation in the character's consciousness between the past and the future time of the task, which carries the risk of his mind disintegrating. The other challenge is that the task requires total role-playing: the character must assume identities, roles that are alien to his original personality: Hieronimo is not a killing machine marching at the head of the devils, Hamlet is not a strongman of a feudal, militaristic state, Macbeth is not a regicide. Within the metatheatrical framework of role-playing, when the protagonist is actually playing out how well he is suited to acting and what clever strategies he can use to deceive those around him, the masks, the roles, after a while grind down the original identity: the risk again is that the protagonist's mind disintegrates, and there is no return to the original self-identity. The skin that is supposed to envelope the essence of the revenger turns out to be empty in the end.

How completely Macbeth identified with the role he assumed, and how much he managed to destroy his original identity, is symbolized with shocking intensity in the Maladype Theatre performance in the moment when Macduff throws the tyrant's empty, vacuous skin at his feet. To understand this scene, I will discuss the early modern cultural semantics of the skin in more detail.

The ideas about the nature of the skin as the most important of surfaces underwent significant changes in the Tudor and Stuart eras, but the image of the skin was almost always emphasized in anatomical treatises. The flayed skin of a corpse also appears in earlier surgical manuals, the predecessors of real anatomy books. These manuals were initially written mainly for battlefield surgeons and barber-surgeons, but we know, for example, the French Henri de Mondeville's *Chirurgia* from 1306, in which the section on skin is introduced by a human figure stripped of its outer covering, who carries its own skin, complete with the crown of hair, on a pole slung over his shoulder like a flag. (Ghosh 2015, 311; Hartnell 2018, illustration 22) We find several stages of the self-flaying process in Juan Valverde de Amusco's *Historia de la Composicion del Cuerpo Humano* (Rome, 1556, Figure 5–6) as well as in the work by Giacomo Berengario da Carpi (Berengarius): *Commentaria cu[m] amplissimis additionibus super anatomia Mu[n]dini* (Bologna, 1521, Figure 7–8). The Italian anatomist Berengario was

the first to publish an illustrated anatomy book based on his own dissections. In this work, he comments on Mondino's 14th-century anatomy, anticipating Vesalius's more richly and precisely illustrated but later work of 1543. In one of his representations (Figure 8), we see a pregnant woman with an open uterus, and although the exposed and discarded skin is not spectacularly presented here, in its place there is a veil emphasizing the act of revelation, the act of removing the cover of truth, from under which the result of anatomical knowledge emerges.

By the early 17th century, the skin, which had previously been thought of as porous and defenceless based on the teachings of the classical authority Galen, had transformed into a strong protective shield of great significance, a fortress that enclosed valuable organs and the human soul. (Pollard 2004, 115) However, Stephen Connor, in his monograph on the history of the skin, argues that during the period of the growing popularity of anatomy and the spread of social and theatrical dissection practices, the skin did not receive more attention than it had previously in Galenic medical discourses. (Connor 2004, 13) For the anatomist it was merely a disposable outer layer, an appendage that was not even considered in the dissection. I challenge this position in light of the representational strategies and thematic imageries of English Renaissance drama and the anatomical imagery of the period. Connor argues that the recurring images of the self-flaying man in anatomy books are merely examples of the way in which the skin was a disposable surplus for the anatomist. In my view, however, the enduring presence of the stripped skin and the epistemological gaze that is woven into the act of revealing the body indicate the increasing importance of the skin as a revelatory element in the process of dissection: the emphasis on the initial act of unveiling the body through the removal of the skin turns the anatomy into an allegory of the search for reliable knowledge amidst the uncertainties of the epistemological crisis. What was at stake in this search, among other things, was the question whether we can locate the long-sought essence of the human being, whether we can identify precisely the dwelling place of the soul.

Later, in the new cultural imagery of modernity, this presence and cultural image of the anatomical body is suppressed and replaced by the abstraction of the ego and the identity-constructing function of language. After the anatomical discourses that in the Renaissance had penetrated the surface of the human body with constant effort, the human corpus had to be completely covered with a new ideological skin in the early modern era, that is, with the newly formed discourses of rationalism and the Cartesian ego. However, this process only gained ground

in the 18th century, with the spread of the "error" of Descartes who introduced a more and more radical separation of body and mind. (Damasio 1994, 249)

From a historical perspective, then, we are witnessing an early modern process in which the anatomical, bodily reality of the human is revealed beneath the skin. This transitional, epistemologically experimental period leads us over into a new era in which the operation of the abstract, Cartesian ego, that is, the cognitive and linguistic capacity of the sovereign subject becomes the new skin covering the subject and its corporeal reality. After the early modern anatomy, the subject of modernity is clothed in a new, opaque, discursive skin, or, to use Norbert Elias's expression again, this subject will be enclosed in a new case which does not allow the heterogeneous body to shine through.

Macbeth was born and staged in the dissective, revelatory phase of this historical process. What Macbeth must realize towards the end of the tragedy, and what the Maladype Theatre production portrayed with such brutal visuality, is that his original identity, which was presumably hidden behind the skin on the surface, has been completely disintegrated by the role-playing, the masks he was compelled to fashion, and the passions he was unable to master. Neither self-identity nor any innermost essence, human core, remains in him, he himself has become the ever-growing ulcer, which is finally revealed by the anatomical work of the tragedy.

Just as the giant rat skeleton that forms the centrepiece of the stage setting, so Macbeth, too, is torn to pieces by the tragedy. By revealing the instincts, passions, conscious and unconscious urges, by peeling back the layers of the onion that make up Macbeth's personality, the tragedy penetrates behind the skin, and the skin that metaphorically symbolizes the tyrant's ego collapses like a balloon, an inflated and deflated leather bladder. In the meantime, the performance also penetrates under the skin of the audience watching Macbeth confronting his own skin and face. It is not only the seam on Macbeth's skin that gets split open. The ideological suture that holds the viewers' subjectivity together, the illusion of a sovereign, homogeneous, self-identical viewer-identity, is also torn apart by the power of the scene, since the sight of Macbeth confronting his own skin-image compels us, the viewers, to take stock of what lies behind the image communicated to the outside world through our own skin-ego.

The most serious epistemological, philosophical, and theological question of this anatomizing tragedy, similar to the grand questions of postmodern antiessentialism, becomes whether such an innermost identity ever existed in Macbeth:

is there a central, inalienable human essence in the human being, or is it always only social role-playing and ideological interpellation that constitutes our subjectivity? In other words, with Norbert Elias' metaphor again: the early modern age, amidst anatomical experiments and their theatrical representations, arrives at a peculiar and, at the same time, extraordinary and frightening realization which also makes anatomical exhibitions exciting for today's viewers. The body behind the opened skin does not actually function as a case, it is not a container for the soul or some kind of essence or intact, non-changing core identity. Much rather, it is the human foundation itself, from which the social environment shapes a person, and this foundation is inseparable from our subjectivity, the self as a participant in social actions. The Maladype Theatre's production places great emphasis on tragic irony, which questions the typically early modern problematic of human self-identity and self-determination. Whether deeply tragic or ironically pathetic, Macbeth's face looks at us like the face of the fallible Other, in whom we can discover our own, and which calls on us to feel responsible for the Other.

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Conflicting Interpretations in Caravaggio's *Entombment*

Iconographic Tradition and Artistic Innovation

1. *The context of Caravaggio's* Entombment

Walter Friedlaender was the first scholar to draw a suggestive parallel between Caravaggio's new interpretation of religious subjects and San Filippo Neri's new kind of devotion. (Friedlaender 1955, 122–130; see also Chorpenning 1987) Friedlaender was fully aware of the difficulties of such a parallel since he emphasised that the Oratorians were part of „the religious situation which Caravaggio encountered when he came to Rome." I believe, Friedlaender also rightly stressed the continuity between *devotio moderna* and the Oratory, which was based on the practices of confraternities from the late Middle Ages.[1]

Caravaggio's *Entombment* – now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana (Figure 1), originally painted for the Pietà chapel of the Santa Maria in Vallicella – was to be part of the decoration of the church inspired by Saint Philip Neri. As the church was consecrated to the Nativity of the Virgin and Pope Saint Gregory the Great, the inscriptions legible above the three gates on the frontispiece refer to Mary. While the inscription above the central portal refers to Mary's divine motherhood (Deipare Virgini Sacrum), the two lateral inscriptions are taken from the *Song of Songs* 4:7 „Tota pulchra es amica mea" (on the left side) and „et macula non est in te" (on the right side). The programme of the altars of the interior follows the mysteries of the life of the Virgin as expressed by the Rosary, in con-

1 Saint Philip Neri arrived from Florence to Rome around 1533 and became member of a religious community in San Girolamo della Carità. See Ponelle–Bordet 1931, 35, 56, 115–130; Bonadonna Russo 2001.

sequence the Dominican spirituality was probably influent on Saint Philip and the Oratorians.[2]

The artists employed in the decoration reflected the stylistic orientations of the Roman painting by the end of the 16th century. Cesare Nebbia, Girolamo Muziano, Cristoforo Roncalli, Scipione Pulzone and Cavalier d'Arpino were masters of the Mannerism, while Federico Barocci attempted a new orientation towards naturalism with major success. (Ferrara 1995) Barocci was considered a favourite of the Oratorians, since Saint Philip often prayed before the *Visitation* painted by the great master from Urbino.[3] Due to his great success, Barocci also executed the altarpiece in the left transept of the church (also known as the Cesi chapel): the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*.

Expenses of the decoration were covered by prestigious families of the Roman elite, some of them followers of Saint Philip. It should be added that a conspicuous number of learned personalities gathered around Saint Philip Neri, such as the historian Cesare Baronio, Cardinals Carlo and Federico Borromeo as well as the Bishop Gabriele Paleotti, but even Popes Gregory XIII, Gregory XIV and Clement VIII were his followers. (Muraoka 2015) The commissioners of Caravaggio's *Entombment*, the Vittrici originated from Parma and fulfilled a high office in the Papal court as „guardaroba" (keepers of the Papal household). As sources betray, Pietro Vittrice owner of the Pietà-chapel was Saint Philip's close follower, since he cured him from his disease. (Ponelle–Bordet 1933, 236) In case of Pietro's nephew and heir, Gerolamo Vittrice, who was most probably the commissioner of the *Entombment*, the relationship with the Oratorians is not as direct, yet Gerolamo was close to Caravaggio's friend, the painter Prospero Orsi, and even collected Caravaggio's paintings.[4] In my view, however, the fact that the commissioner of Caravaggio's *Entombment* was not Pietro Vittrice, and that the painting was executed after Saint Philip's death does not exclude an affinity between Caravaggio and the spiritual reform promoted by San Filippo Neri.

2 Graeve first argued that Alberto Castellano's treatise entitled *Rosario della Gloriosa Vergine Maria* (1567), owned by Saint Philip in his library inspired the programme of the altarpieces. (Graeve 1958, 223–238, 235–236) Sofia Barchesi called attention to some further possible sources also to be found in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana. (Barchesi 1995, 131–132)

3 Verstegen 2003, 65, n. 35 refers to Bacci's biography (1622), according to which Saint Philip often meditated in front of the altarpiece.

4 Gerolamo Vittrice married Orinzia di Lucio Orsi, the sister of the painter Prospero Orsi who was Caravaggio's close friend. (Sickel 2001, 428) See also Federico Zuccari's catalogue entry in Costamagna 1995, 530–532.

Sacred representations often accompanied the meetings of the Oratory, these were performed sometimes as pantomimes inspired by the Holy Scriptures or lives of the saints.[5] To my knowledge, we possess no visual evidence for how exactly these theatrical representations looked like, yet it is worth noting that Caravaggio organizes his actors as if on a stage, and his figures do look like actors in a play.[6] A parallel between contemporary *tableaux vivants* and visual arts can be detected in case of sculptors such as Guido Mazzoni, Alfonso Lombardi and Antonio Begarelli, who, working in clay, often used even casts of living models. On life-size *Lamentation*-groups as by Begarelli in Modena, Sant'Agostino (1524–1526) and San Pietro (1544–1546), the actors' mouth are opened, their gestures are pathetic as in case of Caravaggio's *Entombment*. (Bonsanti 1992, 130–137, 204–207, and Veress 2017, 38–39) (Figure 2)

The context of Caravaggio's *Entombment* has radically changed during the past centuries, since the original painting is preserved today in the Vatican Museums, being supplanted by a copy in situ. However, the stucco decoration of the Pietà-chapel is telling since angels are holding the Holy Shroud from Turin, bearing the imprint the lying Christ, which further enhances the importance of the winding sheet so emphatically represented on Caravaggio's *Entombment*. (Barchesi, 1995, 138–139) (Figure 3) The evocation of archaic image-types endowed with miraculous origin was important in the period of the Catholic Reform. In 1575, during the Roman Jubilee *Veronica's veil* (the sudarium) was publicly shown, while the *Holy Shroud* was displayed in Turin in 1578. (Cormack, 1997, 123, and Stoenescu 2011, 427)

It was in this period that Caravaggio's Lombard master, Simone Peterzano depicted an altarpiece (1585–1590) for the Veronica chapel in the Santa Maria della Scala Church in Milan (today located in the San Fedele Church). The winding sheet or shroud is emphatically depicted on this monumental altarpiece, as is Saint Veronica who appears in the background, holding the sudarium with Christ's imprinted face. (Ferrario 2000 in Caroli 2000, 452; Facchinetti et al.

5 See Cesare Baronio's description about the meetings of the Oratory in Ponelle–Bordet 1931, 209–212. Music to accompany the meetings was composed by the Papal composer Animuccia, also devoted to Saint Philip. In 1592 the dramatic play entitled „Tobia" was performed in the house of Pietro Vittrici. (Cistellini as quoted by Ferrara 1995, 116)

6 For the parallel between *tableaux vivants* and Caravaggio's paintings see Bredekamp 2010, 95. We should add that *tableaux vivants* are efficiently evoked by Derek Jarman's suggestive film on Caravaggio (1986).

2020, 186–188) Furthermore, a highly suggestive example for the sculptural visualisation of the shroud or veil held by angels, conceived as a balustrade is visible in the *Spada Chapel* (1654–1659), in San Girolamo della Carità, the church in which Saint Philip Neri's congregation met for decades. (Rice, 2020) (Figure 03)

2. *The subject of the* Entombment: *what does it represent?*

Art historians such as Rudolf Berliner were truly convinced of the so-called ambiguity of the image, which is capable of expressing content in such a condensed way that words can only partially explain. The image, when understood only through a mental process instead of an emotional one, might appear misleading, heretical or at least paradoxical. According to Berliner one should rather consider the ideas ('Vorstellungen') and emotions ('Gefühlen') connected to the subject. (Berliner 1945)

From its origins, the theme of the *Entombment* has exhibited a conflict between narrative and iconic characteristics. Lowering Christ's body from the cross and transporting it to the sepulchre represent action (narrative), whereas mourning and contemplating the lifeless body avoid action and suggest a suspended moment in time. (Weitzmann 1961) According to Alois Riegl and Erwin Panofsky, contemplative absorption (*kontemplativen Versenkung*) is achieved by an impression of "stillness," different from the classical dramatic narrative which by its self-sufficiency treats the viewer as an outsider. (Riegl 1997, 19; Panofsky 1927, 269)

Instead of stressing the conflict between stillness and dramatic action, I prefer to emphasise the ambiguity of the image capable of inspiring opposing interpretations, a problem made apparent by the different analyses about Pontormo's *Lamentation* for the Capponi chapel in Santa Felicita, Florence (1525–1528). (Figure 4) Since Pontormo's painting is characterised by an undetermined space and time, we are not able to decide whether Pontormo's image is a narrative, or, more generally, what it is supposed to represent. There have been attempts from most erudite scholars to "explain" what is shown to us, but, though intriguing and stimulating, these interpretations must be considered purely hypothetical.[7]

7 For basic information about Pontormo's altarpiece see Costamagna 1994, 183–193. For two conflicting interpretations see Shearman 1971, and Steinberg 1974. While Leo Steinberg maintains that Christ's body is taken up by the angels to God the Father (once represented on the ceiling fresco), John Shearman argues that the body is lowered into the tomb which can be perceived as the chapel's real altarpiece.

Pontormo organises his actors around a central void: the autonomy of the space between the figures is, according to Alois Riegl, an efficient way to hold attention, to facilitate meditation, and to involve the viewer. In the centre there is the lifeless arm of Christ held up by two other hands and that of the holy woman (perhaps Veronica) who shows a piece of cloth – these motifs immediately assume a symbolic meaning. (Wasserman 2009, 49, 56–58) The gestures and roles of the figures can be understood or can at least be in some way linked to these central symbols: they express tenderness and help, as well as calling for the involvement of the viewer. The figures are not bound to each other; they are individuals and can be contemplated as such (in spite of having no portrait-character except for the artist's self-portrait on the Virgin's right).

Pontormo's composition has two emotional centres: the Mother and the Son, separated, but unlike in the case of Sebastiano del Piombo's Viterbo *Pietà* (1513 circa) where the rigidity of the vertical and horizontal makes their isolation painful, here, the oval form suggests their interaction, and we are able to link them emotionally through contemplation. The mystical experience is convincingly suggested through the eyes, and the tormented glances which express pain and have an emphatic character. (Hirst 1981, 40–48; Barbieri 1999, 131–159)

Pontormo's floating figures and undefined space return on Federico Barocci's unfinished *Lamentation* in Bologna, Archiginnasio (1600–1612), where Christ's delicate body is placed on an altar-like stone, his head lying on the Virgin's lap (Emiliani 1985 I, 151–166; Lingo 2008, 113–121) Yet, some young men, one of them identifiable with Saint John the Evangelist, are just about to raise the body enveloped in the winding sheet. The disciples are following the indication of Joseph of Arimathea situated in the background on the left pointing to the entrance of the tomb. Contemplating the lifeless body, the farewell from Virgin Mary and the initiation of the transportation to the sepulchre is suggested by the painting. Even in this case, as in case of Pontormo's altarpiece, we are not able to determine with exactitude, which was the exact moment chosen by the artist.

I believe that Caravaggio's *Entombment* shares a characteristic with Pontormo and Barocci, in that its subject matter is not easy to define, it resists traditional iconographical categories, nor are the actions and identity of the actors clearly explainable.[8] The majestic group of figures is situated against a dark back-

8 "In its composition, the Vatican picture [by Caravaggio – F. V.] conjures up and brings to a syn-

ground, possibly before the entrance of the tomb as suggested by the engraving by Guattani (1784) after Caravaggio. (Friedlaender 1955, 187) All participants stand on a huge block of stone, positioned angularly to the picture plane. As the slab is carved out of stone, one might suppose that should cover the entrance of the grave or sarcophagus. If Saint John the Evangelist (on the left, wearing a red cloak) and Saint Joseph or Arimathea (the man on the right) are lowering Christ into the tomb covered by the slab (as suggested by Rubens's copy), then why is there an entrance for the grave on the left side? Or did they just take off the body from the cross and are going to lean it on of the "stone of unction"?

As I will try to demonstrate, all these actions are indeed suggested by the painting, but none of these proves to be conclusive, and I will argue that there is no definitive conclusion in such matters. As for the holy women, we are certain only about the identity of the Virgin of Sorrows – an aged woman, wearing a nun's habit, extending both her arms in a protective gesture. The name Mary Magdalene can be applied either to the young woman pressing her hand against her face or to the other young woman in the background raising her arms in a desperate gesture.[9] Finally, is Jesus completely dead as we are suggested by the hand of Saint Joseph opening his side-wound, or is there a slight sign of life in the pale body as indicated by the fingers bent and the mouth open?

3. *The significance of the stone and the shroud in Caravaggio's painting*

A prominent stone slab appears in Caravaggio's *Entombment*, the visual and compositional role of which is puzzling. All the actors stand on it, the stone supports the whole group of figures, while it stretches across the surface of the picture as some kind of bridge over a dark abyss. Giving its prominent position and visibility in the foreground, the symbolic connotations of the stone become dense and manifolded. Some of these I would like to expose, however abstaining myself from fully explaining it, because this would inevitably narrow down the manifoldness of Caravaggio's message.

thesis a three-pronged iconographic tradition: that of the Deposition, the Lamentation, and the Entombment." Pericolo 2011, 348.

9 For Caravaggio's models see Frommel 1971, 21–56.

It has been suggested that the slab is a „cornerstone" symbolising faith, on which according to Saint Matthew (21:42) the church was founded: „*The stone, which the builders rejected, the same become the head of the corner.*" (Friedlaender 1955, 127–128) Inspired by iconographic prototypes, Graeve argued that it is the „stone of unction," a precious relic from the Holy Land, venerated in Constantinople. (Graeve 1958, 228)[10] Wright emphasised the compositional importance of the tomb-slab, maintaining that its unpredictable form suggests a projection through the picture plane and is consequently appealing to the viewer, marking the horizon or eye level of those who stand above it. (Wright 1978) In my view, however, it is precisely the unusual form and position of the stone slab that efficiently evokes symbolic meaning.

In case of Fra' Bartolomeo's *Lamentation* (1511–1512) in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence, the figure of Christ is seated on the altar-stone, covered by a white drapery, while the Virgin, Saint John and Mary Magdalene appear in a quasi-sculptural compactness. (Figure 5) During the Seicento the background of the painting was darkened, and only recent restoration has revealed the figures of the apostles Peter and Paul who add a new breath and iconographic dimension to the scene. (Fischer 1988, 14) The artist was successful in trying to make the theological concept of the *corpus mysticum* visible in a human, easy to understand form, the Church being represented by the apostles as Christ's mystical body. The artist might have known these ideas from the sermons of Girolamo Savonarola, who as prior of San Marco, was his spiritual master.[11]

10 Graeve, 1958, 228. The „lapis purpureus" and the scene of the anointment appears on Alessandro Allori's small *painting* on copper (before 1593), originating from the Medici-collections, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest. Here Christ's seated body is placed on a large, red cushion richly embroidered with jewels, while two angels are dressing Him in sumptuous garments. In the foreground we see the crown of thorns and the nails placed somewhat heraldically, while in the background there is the altar with the chalice – as stated in Tátrai 1983, 36. For a similar arrangement of Christ's distressed body on a white winding sheet with vessels in the foreground, see Bernardo Strozzi's *Lamentation* from around 1615–1617 in Genova, Museo dell'Accademia; Giulio Sommariva: catalogue entry. In Giannotti – Pizzorusso 2009, 271–272.

11 There is a passage from a sermon about the mysteries of the mass which seems especially pertinent. After the elevation, the priest breaks the Host in three parts symbolising the mystical body of the Church, and its members in the heaven, on earth and in purgatory: "*Infatti l'ostia viene spezzata in tre parti che rappresentano i tre stati della chiesa: alcuni infatti sono nella gloria, alcuni in Purgatorio e alcuni in questo campo sulla terra.*" *"In fact, the Host is broken into three parts to represent the three forms of the Church, the members of which are in Heaven, in Purgatory or in this world."* Savonarola 1998, sermo XI (21th of December, 1490)

The function of the stone-slab can be further highlighted if we consider it in relation with the shroud, which so emphatically falls on it. In Caravaggio's *Entombment*, the winding sheet appears as a bright cloth held by Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Joseph of Arimathea together with Christ's body. Its brightness undermines the paleness of Christ's body and its curves are in contrast with the rigidity of the corpse. While one end of the winding sheet disappears under Saint Joseph of Arimathea's arms and knees, the other falls on the slab, catching the eyes of the viewer. On Andrea del Sarto's *Pietà di Luco* (1524) in Galleria Palatina, Florence, the identical unity of the tomb slab and the altar is once again suggested. (Figure 6) The stone is covered with a white cloth on which Christ's body rests while a chalice and a host appear in the foreground of the composition. As Andrea's painting was originally on the high altar of the Camaldolese convent in Luco di Mugello (near Florence), such a parallel between gravestone and altar appeared most efficient. (Freedberg 1963, I, 68–69; Shearman 1965, I, 100–101; Natali–Cecchi 1989, 96)

While Fra' Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto's Florentine works were probably unknown to Caravaggio, he could have been inspired by some of the paintings made by the excentric Northern genius, Lorenzo Lotto. As it has been pointed out, Lotto used a great variety of textiles, shrouds and veils which constitute an efficient vehicle „to move through physical towards spiritual vision." (Hills 2013) In his early *Madonna and the Infant with saints* (around 1508, Cracow, Muzeum Narodowe) Lotto uses a shroud hanging from the Virgin's arm that sustains the sleeping Child in a way to evoke the Pietà. (Figure 7) The edge of the white cloth falls on a cubic stone that serves as a kind of throne for the Virgin. Some years later, in a *Deposition* (Jesi, Pinacoteca Comunale) Lotto employed a winding sheet painted with nuances of violet which is the color for altar draperies during Lent. Several examples can be cited for the virtuoso use of drapery on Lotto's altarpieces that could inspire Caravaggio.[12] In fact, the color and texture of the windings sheet on Caravaggio's *Entombment* are echoed by the veil of the Virgin.

12 I am referring to solutions such as the baldachin of the *Pala di San Bernardino* (1521, Bergamo, San Bernardino), or the drapery wreathing around the standing resurrected Christ on the *Polittico di Ponteranica* (1522, Ponteranica, Parish Church), or the *Trinity* (1523–1524, Bergamo, Chiesa di Sant' Alessandro della Croce). Such solutions are comparable to the drapery around the angel on Caravaggio's *Rest on the Flight to Egypt* (1596–1597, Galleria Doria Pamphilj, Rome) and the red curtain appearing on the great altarpieces such as the *Madonna del Rosario* (around 1607, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna).

I also find highly suggestive the way the white shroud interacts with the red mantle on Caravaggio's *Entombment*. Saint John the Evangelist's red garment falls on the stone slab as emphatically as does the white linen cloth. The two draperies crossing each other are visual counterparts and I believe that they suggestively evoke the dual nature of Christ's existence: divine and human, also suggested by the water and blood that sprung from the Saviour's side-wound (John 19:34–36). At this point we might recall Sandro Botticelli's *Pietà* originally in Santa Maria Maggiore, Florence, today in the Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, Milan (1490's), which is a proof of a similar concern with the winding sheet. (Mesnil 1914; Lightbown 1978, I. 112, II. 74–75, 92–93) (Figure 8) The lifeless body of Christ is placed on the lap of the Virgin of Sorrows, while two holy women hold Christ' head and feet enveloped by the winding sheet. The fainted Virgin is supported by Saint John the Evangelist wearing a red mantle, red is also the color of the Virgin's dress and it appears on the holy women's robes, too. Thus, the red colour of garments efficiently interacts with the white linen cloth on Botticelli's painting.

Botticelli's fainted Virgin probably inspired Lorenzo Lotto's *Pietà*-altarpiece (1545) for the Dominican nuns in Treviso, today in the Brera, Milan.[13] Furthermore, an earlier *Pietà* by Botticelli executed for the San Paolino Church in Florence (now in Munich, Alte Pinakothek) is echoed by Rosso Fiorentino's *Lamentation* in the Louvre (1530's). (Scailliérez 2004) Although different in format and stylistic character, Botticelli's *Pietà*s reflect the austerity of the artist's late period influenced by Girolamo Savonarola. (Cornini 1984; Joannides 1995; Dombrowski 2008) In the 1490's Savonarola dedicated a series of sermons to the significance of the Mass and he also compared the lovers of the *Song of Songs* to the Virgin Mary and Christ. Thus, the Virgin says in one of Savonarola's sermons: „*Dilectus meus candidus est propter divinitatem et rubicundus propter humnitatem*."[14]

13 Lotto's *Libro delle spese diverse* is quoted by Mauro Lucco who also points to the possibility of a visit to Florence by Lotto and his relationship with Botticelli. In Zeri 1990, 168 –170. See also Humfrey 1997, 144 for a sensible analysis.

14 Sermon pronounced on Good Friday (March 24), 1497. Ridolfi 1955, II, 335. For the interpretation of the Mass see Savonarola 1998, 153. I do not wish to maintain that Savonarola's text influenced Caravaggio, as the color of the dress was rather determined by the iconographic tradition known to the master from Lombardy. However, a careful reading of the details is able to throw light on a particular interplay and significance of colors. See also Didi-Huberman 1991, 31–42.

The Sacerdotal position of the Virgin wearing a heavy blue cloak, red robe and white veil convenient for nuns is suggested by Botticelli's *Pietà*s. On Rosso Fiorentino's *Pietà* the Virgin Mary extends both her arms imitating the form of the cross and her gesture also returns on Caravaggio's *Entombment*. In Caravaggio's interpretation however, the gesture lacks the despair (compared with that of the young women in the backstage), Mary rather embraces the whole group, extending to them the protection of the Mother Church. Significantly, the Virgin also wears the robes of the nuns on Caravaggio's painting, who by the employment of the austere vestment pays respect to tradition.[15]

It might be surprising to discover Girolamo Savonarola's impact on the „Oratorian orbit" and the Florentine community in Rome during Saint Philip Neri's lifetime, yet we have documentary proofs of it. During his formation in Florence, Saint Philip frequented the convent of San Marco, where the memory of Girolamo Savonarola remained alive. (Ponelle–Bordet, 1931, 8–9, 17) Later, in Rome he paid visits to the Dominican convent of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, where the Eucharistic miracle happened. It was in 1559 that Pope Paul IV Caraffa entrusted a group of theologians to examine the works by Savonarola, and if heretical to include them in the list of prohibited books, the Index. As Saint Philip and the Dominicans defended Savonarola's works, Philip was praying ardently and was found in extasy before the monstrance in the cells of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. He later confessed to the Dominican prior that he saw the Man of Sorrows appearing to him: *„...in carne ... dal mezzo in sù."* (Ponelle–Bordet, 1931, 72–73; Fenlon 2018) The scene is recorded by an engraving made by Luca Ciamberlano, included in the *Vita di San Filippo* by Pietro Jacopo Bacci (1622).[16]

In Rome, Saint Philip and the Oratorians were inseparable from the Florentine community, as in 1563 Philip accepted to delegate some of his disciples, Cesare Baronio included to reside in San Giovanni dei Fiorentini and to celebrate mass there. Saint Philip was asked to send some of his followers there by leading figures of the Florentine community such as Pier Antonio Bandini and Giovanni Battista Altoviti. (Ponelle–Bordet, 1931, 203–204) In exchange, some important

15 Graeve rightly stressed the Virgin's role as *corredemptrix* as well as Her protective and sacerdotal function. (Graeve 1958, 236–237)

16 Barbieri 1995, 68–69. It should be added that saying mass was an exceptional spiritual source for Saint Philip Neri, who in his final years obtained a special permission from Pope Gregory XIV to celebrate mass in his private chapel in order to avoid curiosity aroused by his mystical experiences. (Ponelle–Bordet 1931, 74–76)

members of the Florentine community, such as the banker Pier Antonio Bandini contributed to the construction of the Santa Maria in Vallicella.[17] The most prominent figure of the Florentine community in Rome was Michelangelo Buonarroti who produced designs for the church San Giovanni dei Fiorentini and who donated his *Florentine Pietà* (c. 1496–1562), left unfinished and partially completed by Tiberio Calcagni to his friend, the banker Francesco Bandini. (Wallace 2000)

4. Caravaggio's Entombment – *between tradition and innovation*

According to some scholars, Caravaggio's admiration for Buonarroti and his *Florentine Pietà* was so great as to include his hidden portrait into the *Entombment*.[18] Caravaggio's homage paid to Michelangelo's early *Pietà* in Saint Peters' (1497–1499) is sustained by formal and iconographic solutions. It is the rendering of the right arm hanging down, as well as the position of the fingers touching the edge of the stone slab to recall Michelangelo early *Pietà*.[19] The slightly bent fingers and Christ's open mouth on Caravaggio's painting do suggest the presence of life, yet the rigidity of the bust is quite different from the flexuous pose of Buonarroti's marble Christ. Even if the memory of Buonarotti's work is present on Caravaggio's painting, the Lombard master's interpretation is naturalistic, his direct, even cruel rendering of the legs and the side-wound is far from the Michelangelo's idealised Christ who gives the impression of a young man asleep whose wounds are barely visible. This is especially true if we compare Caravaggio's interpretation to that of his master, Simone Peterzano, today in San Fedele, Milan (around 1585–1590), already mentioned above. The memory of the *Vatican Pietà* by Michelangelo is present in the position of Christ's head, his right arm hanging lifeless, as well as in his ideal torso with a discreet side-wound. Christ's left arm is gently held by a kneeling penitent woman dressed in rich garments. The Virgin of Sorrows is an aged woman wearing a nun's habit, characterised by theatrical gestures. The rhetoric adopted by Peterzano corresponds to the iconographical tradition exemplified by Perugino's and Botticelli's *Lamentation*s.

17 Ferrara 1994, 110. Antonio's son, Cardinal Ottavio Bandini was Philip's close follower, whose name appears also in the documents of Philip's process of canonisation.

18 According to this interpretation, the portrait-like features of Saint Joseph of Arimathaea (or Nicodemus) recall Michelangelo Buonarroti. (Pericolo 2011, 362–373)

19 Weil-Garris 1987, 77–119. See also my interpretation based on texts by Girolamo Savonarola, Veress 2010. For further consultation, see Lavin 2013, and Jurkowlaniec 2015.

In many respects, Peterzano's altarpiece is paralleled by Bernardino Campi's *Lamentation* (1574) in the Brera, Milan, originating from the Carmelite church of Santa Caterina in Cremona (Miller, in Gregori 1985, 154–156). Michelangelo's influence is also present here in the representation of Christ's youthful and idealised, lifeless body as well as in the habit of the Sorrowful Virgin holding her Son on her lap. Caravaggio was most probably familiar with the Campi's works, such as *Pietà with the Virgin and Saint Francis of Assisi* by Antonio Campi (Bernardo's brother) in Cremona Duomo (1570–1575).[20] (Figure 9) Christ is represented here in a frontal, seated position, his legs protrude into the viewer's space, while the Virgin and Saint Francis appear on both sides, though their position in respect to Christ is different, Saint Francis being closer to us.

What should we say about Saint John the Evangelist's right hand opening the wound on Caravaggio's *Entombment*? The gesture of the beloved disciple is so different from that of the silent and youthful Virgin on Michelangelo's *Pietà*, who dares to hold the bust only with *manus velata*? Caravaggio's choice proves to be radical even if we recall a series of works from different artists, who also represented the gesture of touching the wound. I would like to highlight just one of these: Santi di Tito's *Lamentation* (1575–1585) in San Biagio church, Scrofiano. (Spalding 1982, 329–330) Santi is often regarded as a kind of reformer of Florentine art, a representative of the passage from Mannerism to Baroque. However, if we look at his interpretation, differences from Caravaggio become salient: Saint John and the Virgin contemplate the wound reverently, avoid touching it, even though their hands are close to it.

The gesture of Saint John the Evangelist on Caravaggio's *Entombment* is as indiscreet as Saint Thomas' in *The incredulity of Saint Thomas* (Potsdam, Schloss Sanssouci). (Figure 10) As it has been emphasised, Christ is like the Pelican who sacrifices himself opening his wound, while his disciples seem to be motivated by some kind of obtrusive curiosity. (Ivanoff 1972) Yet, in case of the *Entombment*, touching Christ's body also recalls the tradition of the adoration of the holy wound as the source of grace. This theological concept is developed by Saint Augustine who maintained that the Church and its sacraments grew from Christ's side wound just as Eve was created from the side rib of Adam. (Gurewich 1957, 359) Some mystics were allowed to touch Christ's wound, like Saint

20 Antonella Gioli, catalogue entry. In Caroli 2000, 380. Even the Caracci employed this iconographic type, as Annibale Caracci's *Dead Christ* (around 1590) in Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie shows.

Catherine of Siena drinking Christ's blood as depicted by *Francesco Vanni* (1594, Siena, San Girolamo).[21]

The complexity of Caravaggio's approach to tradition becomes apparent by comparing his *Entombment* with Federico Barocci's interpretation. Barocci's *Entombment* painted between 1579–1582 (Senigallia, chiesa del Santissimo Sacramento, Figure 11) is a reconsideration of the problem of narrative proposed by Raffaello in his *Entombment* from 1507 (Rome, Galleria Borghese). Barocci knew Raphael's painting at that time in the church of San Francesco al Prato, Perugia (now ruined). (Cooper 2001) Unlike Fra' Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto who preserved the silent, iconic characteristics of the mourning scene, young Raphaello gradually turned away from the conservativism of his master Perugino and was rather attracted by the narrative (the *storia*) appraised by humanists, such as Leon Battista Alberti.[22] This approach, however, brought him into conflict with the traditional altarpiece-function dedicated to the sacrament. Barocci reconsidered the problem in the Senigallia *Entombment,* where he employed an efficient narrative, expressed by the motion of the figures, however the body of Christ „displayed over the altar remains the still center in this confusion, the eternal, present for contemplation and for the perpetual reenactment of the Passion that is the core of the mass." (Lingo 2008, 119)

I have already mentioned Barocci's unfinished *Lamentation* (1600–1612) painted for the Dome in Milan, now in Bologna, Biblioteca dell'Arciginnasio, which upholds the conflict between silent meditation and dramatic action as does Pontormo's *altarpiece* in Santa Felicita, Florence. Barocci's aetheric figures, floating garments and undefined space disappear in Caravaggio's *Entombment*, where figures appear as giants who stand on a stone-slab supporting them. We can touch Christ's side-wound together with Saint John, thus grace originating from Christ's sacrifice is guaranteed to us. Still, we are uncertain about the resurrection, suggested by Barocci's Senigallia *Entombment*, although the light coming from above seems to allude to hope and salvation.[23] However, the Virgin's

21 Michele Occhioni, catalogue entry. In Giannotti–Pizzorusso 2010, 289–290. Saint Catherine's family house is Siena was transformed into an oratory and decorated almost at the same time as the church Santa Maria in Vallicella, see Kirwin 1972.

22 See Meyer zur Capellen 2001, I. 41–44: "The great care Raphael took with his studies for the Baglioni altarpiece is probably due to his high aim: he intended to change the principally devotional character of the altar painting into a narrative one, where action plays a prominent part."

23 Lingo sustains that the foreground of the Senigallia *Entombment* is not darkened by the clouds

protective gesture, as well as the strong physical presence of the disciples comfort us: we are not alone, we are members of a community.

The young Rubens, when working for the Oratorians in Santa Maria in Vallicella copied Caravaggio's *Entombment*, yet his painting (Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, Figure 12) emphasises primarily a dramatic episode of the Passion. (Judson 2000, 242–245) By contrast, Caravaggio's work is a synthesis: his scene evokes several episodes of the Passion without giving predominance to a specific moment, and for this reason it defies traditional iconographic categories. Caravaggio's actors are real, through their gestures of touching and holding, the appeal to the believer's senses is unprecedented. All these characteristics reoccur in some masterpieces by Velázquez and Rembrandt, who were the true heirs of Caravaggio's legacy.

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visible in the background, but is strongly lighted, and this alludes to salvation. See Lingo 2008, 108. We might add that the three crosses against a sunset sky might also be viewed as signs of a triumph over death.

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Gestures and Inner Feelings in the Graphic Representations of the *Last Supper* in Old Romanian Writings (1700–1829)

The last meal Jesus Christ ate together with the twelve disciples is described in all the four Gospels (Matthew 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–38; John 13:17–30).[1]

The Last Supper comprises two different aspects. The former refers to the moment when Jesus revealed that he was to be betrayed by one of His disciples: "When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, He said, 'I tell you the truth, one of you will betray Me'" (Matthew 26:20–21). The latter aspect refers to the introduction of the Eucharist: "While they were eating Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you. This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins'" (Matthew 26:26–28).

One of the earliest representations of the *Last Supper* is found in an ivory diptych dated back to the fifth century (Treasury, Dome of Milan). Between the sixth and the 15th centuries (but even afterwards), the artists chose to depict the

1 An earlier version of this article was previously published in Italian in Remus Câmpeanu, Vasile Rus, Varga Attila, Florin Jula eds. *La Scuola Ttransilvana I* (Nyíregyháza – Oradea: Szent Atanáz Görögkatolikus Hittudományi Főiskola, 2014), 60–80.

forecast of Judas' treachery (see for example the mosaic in Sant' Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, 520–525; the miniature in the Gospel of Rossano, the third quarter of the sixth century, kept in the treasury of the Cathedral; the wall painting of Leonardo da Vinci in the refectory of the Monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie at Milan, 1495–1498). The varied postures, gestures and expressions of the apostles, gathered in four groups of three (in Leonardo da Vinci's case) emphasize the dramatic character of the scene. All the disciples are surprised, worried and indignant.

Until the 15th century, the institution of the Eucharist, in the Occident, was a theme not very often encountered. For instance, one of the exceptions is Dirk Bouts' *Last Supper*, the central panel of *Altarpiece of the Holy Sacrament* (St. Peter's Church, Louvain/Leuven, 1464–1468), with Jesus consecrating the Eucharistic Host.

During the Reformation and Counter Reformation, the approach to this theme grew in intensity. For example, Christ blesses bread and wine in Philippe de Champaigne's painting, 1648, Louvre, Paris.

The representation of the Sacrament in the form of the Eucharist offered to His disciples is depicted early, in the East (beginning with the sixth century). Jesus often appears twice in front of the altar: once offering His body in the form of bread to a group of apostles, and then offering His blood in the form of wine[2] to another group. Formally, this representation of the Eucharist has no connection with the type of image of the *Last Supper*. In other words, the moment of instituting the Sacrament is differently depicted in the West as compared with the East, while the moment of betrayal is rendered approximately in the same way. (Sachs et al. 1980, 124–125)

In the long run, there were three types of depicting the table: semi-circular (sigma), round or oval, and rectangular.

The semi-circular (or sigma) table appeared in Byzantine art in the sixth century, although tables of the same shape had also been used in the Paleochristian art. In this respect, the mosaic in Sant' Appolinare Nuovo at Ravenna is well known. Here, Jesus in a half-prone position, according to the fashion of the time, is placed at the farthest left of the table, the Roman position of honour ('in cornu

2 We have found important information about rendering the Last Supper in art in Réau 1957, 406–426; Duchet et al. 1994, 211–213; Sachs et al. 1980, 13–14; Ştefănescu 1973, 106–108; Cavarnos 2005, 140–145; Dionisie din Furna 2000, 113; and Taylor 2005, 68–70.

dextro'). The disciples are also half-prone, and there are two big fish (the symbol of Jesus) and some loaves of bread on a plate on the table. (Réau 1957, 411; Ştefănescu 1973, 106–107; Cavarnos 2005, 143–144; Poeschke 2010, Figure 53)

Among several representations in the Byzantine art or art of Byzantine tradition, where the table in the Last Supper is semi-circular, we shall mention the following: the mosaic in the Baptistery of San Giovanni, Florence, dated to 1240/50–1300 (Jesus sits at the left of the table, this time too – Poeschke 2010, Figure 184); the fresco in the Protaton Monastery, Mount Athos, 1310–1312 (Jesus is in a central position – Ştefănescu 1973, 107; Cavarnos 2005, Figure p. unnumbered); the frescoes from Moldavia: Bălineşti (Drăguţ – Lupan 1982, Figure 25), Dobrovăţ, Popăuţi (Henry 1984, pl. XXXV/1), Humor, Moldoviţa (Drăguţ – Lupan 1982, Figure 119; Ştefănescu 1973, 108).

The round table, undoubtedly originated from the East (Réau 1957, 411), can be found in the *Codices of Rabbula* in the Monastery of Saint John of Zagba from Mesopotamia (Syria), dating to 586, kept up in the Laurentian Library, Florence. It is also rendered in Syrian manuscripts from the 12th and 13th centuries.[3]

In the illumination that depicts the *Last Supper* accomplished by the Armenian Grigore in the Gospel of Tarcmanciaţ, 1232, the table is oval. (Turnovo 1975, 52, Figure 60)

A very interesting miniature can also be found in an Armenian Gospel, produced in the 13th-14th centuries, in which the Last Supper takes place around a circular table where Christ is shown sitting on the left. Only the heads of the apostles are portrayed while Judas sits apart, at the bottom right-hand corner of the image (*La miniature...* 1984, Figure 69).

In the fresco of the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos, 1312, Jesus is placed in the central position behind a round table. (Ştefănescu 1973, 107; Dionisie din Furna 2000, Figure unnumbered).

In the frescoes of the famous churches from Moldavia, Voroneţ (15th century) and Sucevița (the end of the 16th century – the frescoes were made by painters Ion and his brother Sofronie), the table of the Last Supper is also round (Ştefănescu 1973, 108; Drăguţ–Lupan 1982, 58).

The miniatures of two manuscripts, one in Wallachia, *Tetraevangheliar*, belonging to Prince Alexandru II (the second half of the 16th century – G. Popescu-Vîlcea 1984/1, Figure XXXIX), and the other one in Moldavia, *Tetrae-*

3 See the text of the figure 69 in *La miniature...* 1984.

vangheliar, owned by Prince Ieremia Movila (the beginning of the 17th century – G. Popescu-Vîlcea 1984/2, Figure XXXVII), were depicted in an archaic style: Jesus is in a reclining position or sits at the extreme left of an oval table.

It must be emphasized that the round table within the theme in discussion was present not only in the East, but also in the West (Ştefănescu 1973, 107). Here we will only mention the miniature in the *Ottheinrich Bibel,* Regensburg, around 1425–1430, in which the scene is rendered from above (a bird's eye view). In the middle of the table, on a large plate, there is a lamb, alluding to Jesus' imminent death. (Walther–Wolf 2005, 304, Figure p. 305)

The rectangular table (seldom square) appeared in the occidental art in the 11th century.[4]

Very frequently, the table of the Last Supper is conveyed frontally and horizontally, with some exceptions, Jesus being seated in a central position. Later Tiziano placed the table diagonally, to give depth to the composition. This innovative technique will be taken over by Tintoretto and Pieter Bruegel. (Réau 1957, 411–412)

We consider it useful to point out the following examples: the fresco in Saint-Jacques-des Guérets, France, around 1200 (*Les grands...* 1989, Figure p. 128); Giotto di Bondone, fresco in the Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, 1304–1306 (*Padova* 1985–1998, Figure p. 43) (Jesus still sits at the left side of the table); Duccio di Buoninsegna, the reverse of Maestà with 26 scenes of the Passions, tempera on panel, about 1308–1311, Museo dell' Opera del Duomo, Siena (Toman 2008, Figure p. 64); Barna da Siena, in the cycle of frescoes of the New Testament, around 1340, Collegiata, San Gimignano (Toman 2008, Figure p. 78); Paolo Veneziano, the polypthych of St. Clara, tempera on panel, around 1350, Gallerie del' Accademia, Venice (*Arta gotică* 2010, Figure p. 190); Andrea del Castagno, fresco, Cenacolo di Sant' Apollonia, Florence, around 1447–1449 (Toman 2008, Figure p. 266) (here Judas is in an isolated position, being placed in front of Jesus); Leonardo da Vinci, wall painting in the refectory of the Monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie at Milan, 1495–1498 (it must be mentioned that Leonardo's work is "instantly recognized as the best depiction of this theme, influencing more or less all his successors" – Toman 2008, 372–373, Figure p. 372);

4 Réau 1957, 411; Cavarnos states that the rectangular table is specific to the Occident, and it replaced the sigma shaped one in the second half of the 12th century (Cavarnos 2005, 140, 144). They mentioned the mosaic of San Marco in Venice.

Albrecht Dürer, woodcut of the Big Cycle of Passions, 1510 (Kurth 1963, Figure 215); Albrecht Dürer, woodcut, 1523 (Kurth 1963, Figure 328); Jacopo Robusti Tintoretto, painting, 1547, the Church of San Marcuola, Venice. (*Mari pictori...* 2001, Figure p. 6–7)

As it has been mentioned, Tiziano Vicellio's approach to the *Last Supper* is an unprecedented one: the obliquely directed table makes the composition very dynamic (1542–1544, Palazzo Ducale, Urbino–Kaminski 1998, Figure 77).

Resuming Tizian's procedure several times, Tintoretto confers the theme, executed on canvas between 1592–1594, exhibited in the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore at Venice, in a more alert and tenser note, also augmented by the increased number of figures with intense feelings, and by the particular concern about the play on lights and shades. Accordingly, an unreal atmosphere is created, which deeply touches the viewer, anticipating the way of interaction specific to the Baroque. Sitting at the centre of the table, Christ offers bread to His disciples. Therefore, this work, so masterly conveyed by Leonardo da Vinci, does not present the prophecy of treachery any more, but it shows the institution of the Eucharist and hence the doctrine of transubstantion, carefully pursued by Counter Reformation. (Toman 2008, 408, Figure p. 409)

Irrespective of the shape of the table, the figures in the Last Supper can be portrayed in a reclining position, sitting or even standing. If initially Jesus was placed at the extreme left, as a sign of high honour, subsequently he was positioned at the centre of the image. The disciples can be either behind the table or around it. John, His favourite apostle, usually lays his head on the breast of Jesus who often raises His right-hand prophesying. (Duchet-Suchaux – Pastoureau 1994, 212) Several variations allow Judas to be identified: he either stretches his hand to the bowl (Matthew 26:23), or Jesus gives him a piece of bread; sometimes he is isolated from the group. In Counter Reformation art, Judas is often accompanied by a dog, which can be explained in different ways: the dog, symbol of loyalty, forms a contrast with Judas' perfidiousness; in bestiaries, the dog represents the embodiment of devil closely linked with betrayal, or it may allude to Matthew's Gospel 7:6: "Do not give dogs what is sacred." (Réau 1957, 415)

The last meal Jesus had with His disciples occurred at night (Matthew 26:20). Consequently, the scene can be lit either by torches or by lamps hanging from the ceiling. On the table, there are bowls, glasses, wine goblets, fish or lamb (Christian symbols), bread, radishes etc. In the case of instituting the Eucharist, Jesus is

holding the Host, which He can offer to one of the disciples, while the Chalice is nearby – Juan de Juanes, 16th century, the Prado Museum, Madrid (Jahn 1965, Figure 32); Otto van Veen, 1592, Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, Madrid. (Cantelli, 2009, Figure p. 11)

An important theme in Christian art, the *Last Supper* is frequently painted in the nave and main apse of the churches or in the refectory of monasteries. It can also be found in the miniatures of manuscript writings or in engravings of printed writings. Sometimes it can be treated independently or with varied artistic techniques.

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In the early Romanian writings, published between 1700–1829, we have found ten representations of the *Last Supper*, nine woodcuts and a lithograph.[5]

A fine frontispiece in the *Triod* of Buzău from 1700 (Figure 1) presents the scene inscribed in a circular medallion, enclosed, in its turn, in a rectangle decorated with vegetal foliage scrolls of Baroque type. Under the explanatory inscription of the image, written in Slavonic language, there are two angels who border the circular medallion at the top.

In accordance with tradition, there is a room with a table set with a white tablecloth and with bowls, bread and goblets of wine. The twelve disciples, either half-frontal or in profile, are disposed around the table, sitting on benches. Following Byzantine tradition, the scene has the apostles behind a rectangular table with Jesus in central position, frontally portrayed and hierarchically outsized. He is wearing ancient clothes and has the cruciform glory about His head. He raises His right hand, giving away the traitor. (Ştefănescu 1973, 107) John is put to Jesus' left, leaning his head against Him, and Peter to His right hand, in reference to his seniority. As Peter is older than John, the seat on the right, being of greater respect, is usually reserved for the former. The Twelve have no glories, as it ought to be, as halos are to be used before the Pentecost, "when the disciples got filled with the Holy Ghost." (Cavarnos 2005, 141)

The engraving depicts the moment when the disciples – whose gestures and

5 Before 1700, we must mention the presence of the *Last Supper* at the bottom of the frame of the title page (woodcut) from Dosoftei, 1679.

attitudes express astonishment, unrest and sorrow – attempt to exculpate themselves after Jesus said: "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." (Matthew 26:21; John 13:21) Judas, at the right end of the table, is reaching out for the bowl, in a gesture that certifies Christ's words: "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me." (Matthew 26:23; John 13:26)[6] The four windows in the background of the room are symmetrically disposed in a massive wall.

We suppose that in order to produce this engraving, whose author might have been Ioanichie Bakov, a similar model was followed, signed "VThZ" and dated to "640" (Figure 2), which appeared in the *Triod* of Lviv from 1642. (Kameneva, Guseva 1976, 29–30, 49, Figure 219) There are minor differences between them. In the Ukrainian book, the disciples are not so closely grouped around the rectangular table, on which there are only some plates and dishes, and in the background, behind Jesus there is a curtain and two windows at each side. It must also be noted that some other engravings of the writings from Buzău followed models of the books from Lviv. (Tatay 2011, 114, 116, Figure p. 175, 177; Tatay, Tatai-Baltă 2024, 425-427)

We have found out that the engraved plate used to decorate the *Triod* of Buzău from 1700 was used again to adorn the *Triod* of Bucharest from 1746 (Tatay, Tatai-Baltă 2015, 19, Figure 580, 581) and the *Triod* of Râmnic from 1761.

The way in which the *Last Supper* in the *Triod* of Buzău, 1700, is executed, calls to mind that of Barna da Siena (Figure 3) who in 1340 painted a complete cycle showing the life of Christ, displayed in three registers on the northern wall of the nave of the Collegiata Church at San Gimignano. Barna da Siena was influenced, among others, by Duccio di Buoninsegna. Similarly, the *Last Supper* "is enclosed in the same type of grating frame, with the console supported by beams, and with vertical rectangular retracted walls, some figures being placed in the same positions (compare Christ, Judas and John)." (Toman 2008, 65) Unlike Simone Martini or the Lorenzetti brothers, Barna "maintained the Byzantine elongation of figures". (Toman 2008, 65) We also underline that the painter "vigorously animated bodies." (*Enciclopedia*... 1974, 28)

In the woodcut of Buzău as well, the scene runs within a limited frame. In the background there is a wall with windows and the characters seated on benches

6 For details, see Cavarnos 2005, 141; Ştefănescu 1973, 107; Dionisie din Furna 2000, 113; Réau 1957, 413; Duchet-Suchaux – Pastoureau 1994, 212; Sachs et al. 1980, 14.

are similarly grouped around the rectangular table. The Italian painting shows the disciples with glories, except Judas, who is in the foreground, stretching his hand to the bowl. As it has been shown, in the woodcut of Buzău, Judas sits at the right side of the table.

In the *Triod* of Râmnic from 1731 there is a frontispiece that presents the *Last Supper*; beyond doubt it is a copy of the one printed in Buzău in 1700. The rendering of the central scene is very much alike. There are only slight differences. In the back of the scene there are only two windows instead of four, and Judas, placed at the farthest right end of the table, holds in his right hand the purse with the thirty pieces of silver he took to betray Jesus. He also appears carrying the purse in the woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer from 1510 (it belongs to the "Cycle of Great Passions" – Kurth 1963, Figure 215) and from 1511 (belonging to the "Cycle of Small Passions" – Kurth 1963, Figure 230). The vegetal decoration flanking the scene is much more simplified, and the two angels are missing.

The frontispiece that comprises the *Last Supper* in the *Triod* printed at Bucharest in 1769 is signed by Grigore Ieromonah and is dated to 1768. It was obviously copied after the frontispiece which initially appeared in the *Triod* of Buzău, later on taken over in the *Triod* of Bucharest, 1746, and in the *Triod* of Râmnic, 1761. Minor differences can be noted only regarding the vegetal decoration that borders the central scene.[7]

In the elegant *Strastnic* printed in Blaj in 1773, there are some illustrations signed by Petru Papavici Râmniceanu, the most prolific woodcutter in the famous religious, cultural and political centre from Transylvania, and one of the most skilful typographers and engravers on Romanian territory in the period between the 16th and 19th centuries. It must be pointed out that Petru Papavici was, on the whole, a traditionalist who frequently appealed to woodcuts printed in Romanian writings in which the iconographic themes and style were of Byzantine manner. He also created woodcuts using Ukrainian models. Sometimes he followed Renaissance or Baroque patterns, probably of German origin.[8]

As for the ornamentation, the frame of the large (about 25x15) title page of the *Strastnic* is of occidental inspiration. The *Resurrection* is shown at the cen-

7 Concerning Grigore Ieromonah, engraver and typographer who worked in the typography of the Metropolitan of Bucharest, see Bianu–Hodoş 1910, 211; Mârza – Bogdan 2013, 140; Tatay – Tatai-Baltă 2015, 35-48.

8 For details, see Tatai-Baltă 1986, 113–121; Tatai-Baltă 1995; Tatai-Baltă 2008, 75–86; Tatai-Baltă 2013.

tre top, in a round medallion, and the *Annunciation* is depicted at the bottom. The round medallions on either side comprise: *The Crucifixion*, *The Last Supper*, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, *Judas' Kiss*, *Entombment, Descent from the Cross, Crowning with Thorns* and *In the Garden of Gethsemane* (*Christ's Agony in the Garden*). The four evangelists with the Gospel in their hands are differently depicted beside these scenes. The medallions and the spaces between them are richly adorned. (Tatai-Baltă 1995, 93, Figure 44)

The *Last Supper* on this *Title Page*, accurately engraved, is executed in a concise manner. Nevertheless, no one can deny the realistic note in which the characters are portrayed. Although the number of disciples is only ten, they are diversely depicted from both the viewpoint of physiognomy and of spiritual traits. It is only Jesus Christ, shown frontally and hierarchically outsized, who calls to mind the manner of treating of Byzantine tradition.

The analogy between this *Supper* and that in the *Triod* of Lviv from 1642 is surprising: the arrangement of the table, the disposition of the apostles in front of the table, of Jesus and John, as well as of the background with hangings is identical. However, there are fewer apostles and only one window.

A frontispiece in the *Triod* of Râmnic from 1777 presents the *Last Supper* in the centre of the image. This must have followed the model of the one engraved by Grigore Ieromonah dated to 1768 and printed in the *Triod* of Bucharest from 1769. Nevertheless, this time John the Apostle does not rest on Jesus' chest, but he only reclines to Him.

It must be emphasized that the frontispiece of Râmnic appears again in the 1798 *Triod* of Bucharest, a further proof that the wood-block that was used circulated from one typographic center to another.

In the second edition of Vasile Aaron – a representative of the 'Transylvanian School' – *The Passion and Death of our Lord and Redeemer*, *Jesus Christ* based on *Messiada* by F. G. Klopstock, printed in Sibiu in 1808, one can find eleven woodcuts, of which one shows the *Last Supper*. (Tatay 2007, 57, Figure 40)

The scene takes place inside, suggested by the pavement, some vague architectonic elements (walls, roof, a window), and a multi-branched candelabrum hanging from the ceiling. Jesus, who, in Byzantine manner, is of bigger size than His disciples, is sitting at the table together with the Twelve, with the glory surrounding His head. Some are presented frontally or in profile, and one of them is depicted from the back, a bold position for the Romanians at the time when the woodcut was done. The engraver seizes the moment when the disci-

ples, whose attitudes express a slight diversity, attempt to exculpate themselves, after Jesus' saying the words "one of you will betray me." On the table there are bowls, a wine goblet and in the middle a lamb on a plate, the lamb symbolizing the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in order to save humanity. (Chevalier – Gheerbrant 1993, 299–300)

In *Liturghie*, Chişinău, 1815, the *Last Supper* (Figure 4), which Jesus ate together with His apostles, is depicted differently from those engraved earlier in Buzău, 1700, Râmnic, 1731, Bucharest, 1769, Blaj, 1773, Râmnic, 1777, and Sibiu, 1808.

The room, where the scene is set, is lit by a three-branched candelabrum beside which hangs a curtain forming ample folds. Jesus, in central position, is sitting behind a large rectangular table, surrounded by the twelve disciples, disposed in various directions. They manifest pathetic, strong emotions which can also be noticed in the Baroque or Mannerist works that might have reached the Romanian area via Ukrainian engravings. The prediction of betrayal makes the figures in the illustration extremely agitated and distressed. The fact that the disciple on the right side of the table, seen from behind, is holding a goblet constitutes a detail which makes one think of "genre painting."

We presume that the *Last Supper* (Figure 5) engraved in the *Strastnic* of Buda from 1816 is based on the homonymous work existent in the *Triod* of Râmnic from 1731, which, in its turn, was patterned after the *Triod* of Buzău from 1700. As it has been shown above, the model followed by them was the frontispiece printed in the *Triod* of Lviv from 1642. Our finding is based on the fact that the engravers in the printing press of Buda referred to models existing in the writings of Râmnic several times.[9] It must be pointed out that only in the engraving of the *Triod* of Râmnic from 1731, Judas, placed at the right side of the table, holds the purse with the thirty silver pieces, for which he had betrayed Jesus.

In both the woodcut of Buda and in the other frontispieces produced previously, one can see the same arrangement of the table and disposition of the figures around it. However, this time the Supper takes place in a large room, with four pillars supporting the vaults, with two latticed windows and checkerboard pavement. Both the drapery with two tassels, in the middle of the room, and the two candelabrums on either side are equally elegant. The symmetrical disposition of the above enumerated elements as well as of the characters constitute

9 For details see Tatay 2011.

a highly appreciated procedure in the Byzantine art and in that of Byzantine tradition. (Tatay 2011, 119–121, Figure 79) We must emphasise that this engraving influenced Picu Pătruț, who achieved a homonymous miniature for his manuscript entitled *Stihos, namely Verse*, 1842-1851. (Tatai-Baltă, Tatay 2021, 178, Figure 1, 2)

The Gospel printed at the Monastery of Neamț in 1821, is richly decorated with woodcuts executed by Ghervasie Monah and Simeon Ierei. (Racoveanu 1940, 29)

Not signed, the *Last Supper* (Figure 6) in this book (Racoveanu 1940, 30, pl. XLII/4) shows the apostles either sitting or standing, which causes certain unrest among them. Rendering this state of agitation concurred with both their portrayal in profile or frontally, and with giving up the manner of representing the figures' heads on the same level (isocephaly), which was a procedure specific to the art of Byzantine tradition. The architectonic elements (pavements, columns, windows), the drapery drawn aside, and the two candelabrums fixed on the wall, suggest rather convincingly that the scene develops in a room, at night.

The third edition of Vasile Aaron's book *The Passions and Death of our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ* printed in Sibiu in 1829, comprises 10 illustrations (lithographs), of which one depicts the *Last Supper*. (Figure 7) Nine of these lithographs are based on the woodcuts that adorn the second edition of the book from 1808, except the *Supper* conceived in a completely different manner. (Tatai-Baltă 2012, 102–103, Figure 7; Tatai-Baltă 2013, 45–46, Figure p. 146)

The table, placed diagonally in this biblical theme, must have derived from Italian painting. It was approached by Tiziano (Figure 8): 1542–1544, Palazzo Ducale, Urbino (Kaminski 1998, Figure 77); and taken over by Tintoretto in the subsequent paintings conserved in Venice: 1566, San Trovaso (Mocanu 1977, Figure 31); 1570, Santo Stefano (*Venise* 2007, Figure p. 217); 1579-1581, Scuola di San Rocco (Mocanu 1977, Figure 42); 1592–1594, San Giorgio Maggiore (Toman 2008, 408, Figure p. 409) – here the composition created diagonally is inverted.

The diagonal placement of the table and the figures' gestures and expressions obviously confer the image dynamism and dramatic character. Some similarities between the lithograph of Sibiu and Tiziano's painting from 1542–1544 can be noted. Beside the way in which the table is placed in the room, in both works, Jesus and His disciples take about the same seats around it. The lithograph of Sibiu portrays John the Apostle with his head resting against Christ, outsized

in comparison with His apostles, following the Byzantine manner. Jesus is also wearing a ray nimbus of occidental type around His head. It must be pointed out that the disciples in the lithograph have disk-shaped glories above their head, specific to the Italian art. The apostles gathered at a long table get smaller and smaller towards the background, which calls to mind the well-known canvas of Tintoretto in San Giorgio Maggiore at Venice. (Toman 2008, 408)

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Commenting, for the first time in the specialized literature, on the ten engravings that refer to the Last Supper, printed in the early Romanian writings between 1700–1829, highlights that the representation of the theme of occidental origin, where the table is rectangular (not semi-circular or round), came via the Ukrainian engraving that, in its turn, developed in the area of dissemination of German and Italian art. (Kameneva, Guseva 1976, 10) In the course of time, the works of the artists of the Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque and Neo-Classicism came more and more frequently to the Romanian territory through varied routes.

We fully agree with the statement of researcher Eleonora Costescu who asserted that in the South-Eastern European area it was the themes that were first taken from the occidental art while the style reached here later, "just after a period of adjustment." (Costescu 1983, 34) The manner of accomplishment of the Romanian engravings, investigated in this study, proves this assertion. It must be underlined that according to Byzantine tradition the figures in these illustrations have discreet gestures, more or less stereotyped, while Jesus Christ is conveyed frontally, with solemn posture, hierarchically outsized. Only towards the end of the above-mentioned period, under the increasing influence of Occidental art, the gestures and inner feelings of the holy figures got individualized, becoming better delineated, the body motion getting more and more natural and the composition more dynamic.

Translated by Ana Tatai

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The Corporeal Reality of Post-feudal Clientelism

The (Body)Language of Fidelity. A case study

"The body is man's first and most natural instrument."[1]

Introduction

Medieval feudalism, as an overall governing pattern of social and cultural life, transmitted a long-lasting heritage to early modern society. In particular, the institution of patronage involving three major actors: the patron, the client, and the broker proved to be the major driving force in shaping post-feudal, early modern society. (Kettering 1986, 3–11) Accordingly, social promotion in early modern times, on the whole, followed the medieval practice in terms of strategies and quest for interest alliances. Moreover, the so-called clientelism, in its early modern version as well, presupposed the same complicated relation between the patron and his client based upon the exchange of benefits and gratitude expressed in a highly rhetorical discourse culminating in the declaration of fidelity. (Herman 1995, 9–12) It is this rhetorical language and the ensuing conduct of the clients that reveal a special discourse involving a particular corporeal intimacy as a medium for delivering the message of unconditioned and ultimate loyalty.

Thus the aim of this article is to decipher the complex relationship of feudal loyalty/fidelity between early modern patrons and clients in order to provide a historical-anthropological explanation of this peculiar mutual dependence worked. In doing so, I shall focus on the multiple functions performed by human

1 Mauss 1979,120.

bodies, and the corporeal reality articulated by them. As a starting point, I shall examine two cases recorded in early modern memoires, exhibiting the special conduct of both patrons and their clients as men of trust in liminal or extreme situations. I shall argue that there was a complex code for using bodily intimacy by performing certain gestures to demonstrate, reassure, and accomplish loyalty. The body itself, whether alive or dead, within the social, mental, and anthropological context of patronage, it seems to me, functioned as a complex iconographic representation of post-feudal fidelity.

I. Focus on the body: some theoretically oriented remarks

Ever since the Annales School decisively marked off a pole position for body historiography, there has been a continuous, though somehow fluctuating interest persisting with the multidisciplinary examination of corporeality. Despite the reasonable sounding of such terms as corporeal or somatic turn usually associated with postmodern scholarship (Martin 2006, 337; Cooter 2010, 394), there is an almost century-old impressive tradition from history, including all its subdisciplines, to sociology dealing with the various methods and theories of examining bodies.[2] Therefore, the history of the body, as Roy Porter justly pointed out (Porter 1991, 223–226), is still in full progress, with a research agenda positing new thematic perspectives and further challenges for its students. (Punday 2003, Le Goff and Truong, 2007, Veltri and Diemling 2009) Some of the major claims of this historiography, such as the problematic and antagonistic hierarchy projected on the relation between mental, spiritual, and ideal vs. corporeal, somatic, and material have been influenced by the findings of other disciplines such as anthropology. Marcel Mauss' concept of "les techniques du corps/techniques of the body" has undoubtedly proved to be a determining source of inspiration for this historiography. (Mauss 1979, 106–123)

As a consequence of this rich and multidisciplinary scholarship, any student of early modern culture preoccupied with the investigation of body in a diachronic perspective has gained the possibility of combining the findings of the examined

2 Marc Bloch's famous book about the royal touch, "puissance royale," set forth an attractive perspective for scholars coming from several fields other than history. (Bloch 1983) Consequently, anthropology, sociology, or political theology found their own way to contribute to this historiography. (Kantorowicz 1957; Elias 1994; Douglas 1996)

sources with this variety of approaches. Still, the early modern character of the phenomenon under examination imposes some methodological restraints. It is almost certain that a thorough source criticism should be complemented with a historical anthropological approach in order to eliminate misleading anachronisms, and come closer to a plausible answer, concerning the cultural and social functions of early modern bodies and the peculiar corporeal intimacy related to them. Consequently, while examining early modern gestures performed by clients on their patrons' bodies, I shall observe these methodological rules in order to provide an analysis claiming that the early modern body had been mediated through cultural sign systems. My paramount ambition is to provide a sort of cultural history of the gesture (Bremmen and Roodenburg 1992), so that I could contribute to the thesis that early modern individuals might have regarded bodies and corporeality as an intermediary device between self and society. Early modern clients did rely on corporeality to prove fidelity and improve their chances for social promotion.

II. Bodies and touches

I am proposing two early modern cases, in fact, examples providing graphic illustrations of apparently unusual touches between patrons and their clients. Furthermore, the gestures in question, that is intimate touches were performed by the same early modern individual, János Komáromi (?–1710), who had first served Mihály Teleki, and then Imre Thököly (1657–1705) as a secretary/secretarius, that is, a man of trust. The first case was recorded by the allegedly eyewitness Mihály Cserei (1667–1756), the second one by Komáromi himself who narrated the episode in his diary.

The aftermath of the battle of Zernyest (22nd of August, 1690) must have been a horrifying experience, dominated by the image of the battlefield, populated with decomposing and rotten bodies, both Christian and Pagan. The victor, Imre Thököly, was informed that his great political rival and enemy, Mihály Teleki, had also fallen on the battlefield, and there was a cadaver which needed to be identified as it might have been the remnants of Teleki. Teleki's secretary and man of trust, János Komáromi, had already been taken prisoner, thus he was given the task of identifying the dead body. In Cserei's account, written sometimes between 1709 and 1712, this memorable episode reads like this:

> As they started robbing the corpses, there had already been a rumour about Teleki's death. Thököly sent János Komáromi - who used to be Teleki's man of trust, and was captured during the battle - together with some men to search for the body, which was quite difficult as the corpse in question, especially its face, was disfigured by ugly wounds. Komáromi knew that Teleki was suffering from scorbut and lost all his teeth, therefore put his fingers into the mouth of the disfigured corpse to palpate whether there were any teeth inside. Having found no teeth at all, he identified the corpse as Teleki's body. Thököly gave his own shirt and boots, and ordered that the body would properly be dressed up, put in a coffin and sent to Teleki's widow in Görgény.[3] (Cserei 1852, 199–203)

The same Komáromi, who had become Thököly's secretarius and man of trust after the battle of Zernyest, appeared in an almost identical situation thirteen years later. As he followed his new patron into political exile in Constantinople and Nicomedia, he devoutly served not only Thököly, but his wife, Ilona Zrínyi (1643–1703), as well. Komáromi's diary contains the description of an episode during which, as he was caring for his patron's moribund wife, he performed the same gesture putting his fingers into the mouth of the dying woman. This passage in the diary, which recorded the events of 12–13th February, 1703, reads like this:

> I was sitting next to her bed when she gave me a look and grabbed my neck and whispered into my ear, as speaking was extremely difficult for her, because of the thick saliva, she could not swallow or spit out. (I frequently used to help her by putting my finger into her mouth and removing the suffocating fluid from her throat). She tardily whispered to me that she had always been faithful to his husband. (..) After three days she said good bye to me, too. She gave me a hug and kissed me on both cheeks and said to me: 'God bless you for your kindness to me, *for your true fidelity and service;* I could not reward you for these in this mortal life, may God reward you instead of me...' (Komáromi 1861, 80; emphasis added).

3 All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

Even at a superficial glance, it is clear that there are some similarities between these two cases. It is worth, I believe, surveying the identical and the differing features of the two examples in order to reveal the hidden contexts that could offer a more refined understanding of the connotations of these cases. Apart from the aforementioned fact that Komáromi was the main actor of these situations, as he was the one who had performed these gestures, his social status was identical in both cases, he was a client, a courtier, and a man of trust who, it seems to me, had the privilege of touching his patrons or the patrons' body, whether dead or alive. It is of equal significance that, in both cases, he was touching his patrons, that is, his lords towards whom he was related in the same manner. Komáromi was their client and servant depending on his patrons in a feudal sense, as in exchange for his loyal service and fidelity, he could expect social promotion. However, the quoted passages clearly reveal the fact that either Komáromi was ordered or expected to perform those gestures, everybody agreed that it was his duty, or even privilege as a man of trust to do so. The nature of both gestures is daringly intimate, for it is a kind of penetration, just like during sexual intercourse, almost unifying the two bodies as the physical contact transgresses the outer boundaries of the bodies. Still, there was no sign of embarrassment or any refusal either on the side of the subjects, or on behalf of the entourage assisting to the act.

The major difference between these two cases was that the almost similar gesture was performed first on a corpse, then on a living body. Furthermore, the aim of the gestures also differed, as in the first case Komáromi had identified a body, and in the second case, he had executed some kind of a medical or first aid "manoeuvre," or a kind of body technique, so that he would ease the pain of the suffering woman.[4] At this particular point, I prefer to confine my analysis only for suggesting that these two cases allude to a certain type of cultural otherness, which deserves to be examined within new relevant contexts. For the historical anthropological approach, that I claim to follow and apply, suggests that this particular "otherness" should be interpreted relying on some historical and cultural contexts construing the symbolic and hidden meanings, functions, and references comprised in this particular case.

4 Komáromi's gesture comes very close to what Marcell Maus defined as the technique of the care of the abnormal. (Mauss 1979, 119)

III. Post-feudal clientelism: mentality and service

Despite the differences of the two cases, we need to reiterate the fact that the similar features of the gestures approve the idea that there was an implied context justifying Komáromi's conduct and the assistance's behaviour as well. This particular context is a social one, as the social status of the people involved was the determining factor that contributed to the performance of the gestures. As I have already referred to, Komáromi as a secretarius was not only a man of trust, but he was also a client and some kind of page. The early modern institution of "clientelism" was a late development of a feudal relation. This institution carried on with the practice of medieval feudalism, based upon the same mentality, transposed into a particular relation between the patron and his client or in a different configuration, the broker, too. The client of noble origin usually looked for a more powerful and influential patron and offered his service. The term "noble-servant" used by early modern Hungarians convincingly suggests that this commitment was often like an introduction into the Men's world, for the noble-servant, having satisfactorily fulfilled the assigned tasks, and proved his loyalty, could hope for social promotion. The longer the relationship the more intimate the link – in almost every possible sense – between the Patron and the client, and that frequently turned into a mutual dependency. We have a number of early modern cases, and Komáromi serving first Teleki, then Thököly, is certainly one of them, suggesting that due to the prolonged service during which all the intimate secrets of the patron were revealed in front of the noble-servant who was advanced to the status of man of trust, the relationship between the Patron and his Client gradually transformed into a basic commitment integrated in the feudal society. The social promotion of the client, and the services offered to the Patron] shaped a particular dependence based on the needs, priorities and interests of both parties. As Arthur Herman has justly pointed out, there was an exchange of benefits and gratitude among the otherwise unequal members of the feudal society. (Herman, 1995, 12)

The pathetic construction of faithful service, or fidelity, could mean a large variety of services undertaken and fulfilled by the noble-servant, which implied not only attending combat and defending the patron in a battle, but supervising and protecting all the official, legal or illicit affairs of the Patron as well. Accordingly, a discreet secretarius with a good command of Latin, and versatility in the field of law, was a much appreciated person, first of all, by his patron. For such a secretarius was able to sustain a network of relations by writing letters in sev-

eral languages to very different persons and destinations, or could supervise the booking of the Patron's businesses. Furthermore, every noble nurturing political ambitions needed a good secretarius who could manage the establishment and maintenance of any kind of political influence.

This type of relationship built upon reciprocity and a mutual dependence between the patron and his client was certainly the early modern imitation of the medieval feudal society's inner structure and basic concept. For the medieval King as the utmost Patron demanded service from the aristocracy as well, but he was oftentimes dependent on the aristocracy's loyalty or obedience which had its own price. Thus, the whole medieval society was organized upon this particular hierarchy, where the patrons may have had the final world in many issues, still, they, too, depended on their clients. As French historians have justly claimed, feudalism in this respect was a mentality which and influenced the shaping of medieval society. Early modern society also preserved this mentality, the institution of clientelism was apparently very popular; for several individuals it seemed an attractive strategy for survival and social promotion. As a matter of fact, there was a ruthless competition amongst all this noble-servants either to gain the exclusive trust of the mutual patron, or to find the most influential patron before the other competitors did. Everything had a price, for even being accepted by a patron the client would not know or have any guarantee for his promotion. In order to have assurance, one needed to gain trust and intimacy in his relationship to the Patron.[5]

III. 1. Post-feudal corporeal intimacy: a possible iconography of early modern body

Perusing the memoires written by early modern influential personalities, politicians, statesmen, and military commanders, the historian quite often finds valuable passages that provide, unavoidably fictitious accounts about the years of service, in particular the ones undertaken as noble-servants. A thorough comparative analysis that I have performed suggests that the service undertaken and

5 The complexity of this relationship as a social-historical phenomenon produced its very own terminology. Early modern individuals were desperate to possess the *gratitude* of the patron for their committed service, or *fidelity*. As for the patrons, they were very much disturbed if one of their clients did not show and express the necessary gratefulness for having been promoted. Consequently, *ingratitude* was the worst possible charge against a client. (Herman, 1995, 11–13)

endured by these excellent men carved into their character and self-perception the major virtues necessary to succeed in a post-feudal society. For, indeed, they were the victors of a particular contest determined by some special cultural and social circumstances. Moreover, their example poignantly points out that finding the winning strategy has never been an easy task in (post)feudalism, and has always been associated with contest, rivalry, and competition.

They usually started their service as a page, with the duty of satisfying the needs of the patron, such as giving him food and drink, keeping watch while he was sleeping, helping him put his dress on and off. With the trust gained, intimacy also developed in terms of offering access to situations when the patron was experiencing some kind of corporeal vulnerability, such as being indisposed, sick, or even dying. Their task was to help the patron, especially when he was unable to control his bodily needs, or in any kind of extreme situations. In his memoires, János Kemény recalled a military campaign where his task as a page was to clean the latrine used by the Prince of Transylvania, Gábor Bethlen:

> As opposed to present-day servants, I did not find the service difficult, for I often took part in cleaning, making fire or even emptying and washing up the latrine of the prince. I have often berated a fellow page of mine, András Pap, who was not of noble origin, still he was serving with me - for his father had died in a battle, and the prince kept him at his court - so, when this fellow tried to help me emptying and washing up the latrine, he often threw up, which I could not stand. (Kemény 1986, 37)

Though Kemény probably exaggerates here, overemphasizing his absolute commitment to the prince as he bravely undertook and did the lowest jobs without any complain whatsoever or throwing up, yet this case is remarkable and very suggestive in that this young man of noble origin resolutely cleaning and washing up the latrine of the Prince of Transylvania was to become the Prince of Transylvania himself in 1661. János Kemény's career is the ultimate proof that the feudal mentality sustained a particular network of relations and interests that offered the possibility for those willing to subject themselves to the rules of clientelism to reach the very top of this post-feudal society.[6]

6 Though my paper exclusively focuses on the military and political careers of post-feudal clients, I

However, further examples would suggest that the service starting with the status of page ran in parallel with a certain pattern of growing intimacy. Though the page first of all helped, or satisfied the needs of the patron, he was allowed to see, touch, and interact with the patron in some special situations of corporeal vulnerability, too. From the usual routine service of cleaning after the patron to assist him while sick or dying, including the preparation of the body for funeral or witnessing the dissection of the body, it became clear, I believe, that the concept of 'a man of trust' referred to a very special socialization during which the trust had been won in parallel with a certain initiation reserved for the privileged ones. Intimacy, though primarily focused on the body of the patron, denoted a dialectic of trust and devoutness, a continuous confirmation and reconfirmation that the patron noticed the loyalty, and the client was worthy of the trust given.

Therefore, this intimacy, it seems to me, alongside with the mutual dependence of the feudal pact between the patron and his client, was a major component of this particular relationship, for it transmitted the needs, demands, and confirmations of the interaction between the two actors. Furthermore, relying on the examined sources I believe that one should differentiate three major types of intimacy. The first one could be defined as biological/corporeal intimacy pointing to the fact that the clients as men of trust often assisted their patrons in an explicit corporeal intimacy. I am referring to such cases when the clients had been performing the duties of a page or a servant.

Unavoidably, in these situations the body, the naked or sick/dead body of a patron was touched by the client. As the patrons were rather vulnerable in their corporeal intimacy, the clients were trusted to assist them, thus the sometimes unpleasant experience of being confronted with this type of corporeality had been transformed into a privilege, a matter of trust and affiance. In his memoires, Mihály Cserei overtly complained that serving Mihály Teleki was the worst experience of his life. He had not only assisted Teleki while eating, sleeping, and dressing up, but he also had to clean after him, and wash Teleki's stinking chamber pot full of faecal matter and gleet. As it was historically proved that Teleki had been suffering of persisting digestive disorder, Cserei's graphic description about the content of the chamber pot may have well been accurate... (Cserei 1852, 169)

am aware of the fact that early modern cultural life often functioned according to the same principles, based on similar mentalities. Cultural clientelism was a familiar phenomenon for early modern artists and entrepreneurs as well, including the famous triangle of client, broker and patron, which often influenced their strategies for promotion as well. (Cole, 2007, 730–731)

In addition, this privilege of touching the patron's body was similarly applied to those situations when the patron died. The dead body often needed special care from cleaning it to preparing it for the funeral, thus several sources confirm the fact that it was the clients who either did it or assisted the procedure. Famous clients like János Kemény serving equally famous patrons like Gábor Bethlen, personally recorded these types of events and experiences. Kemény, for instance, attended the autopsy of Gábor Bethlen's body, just like Kelemen Mikes (1690–1761) did, after the death of Francis II. Rákóczi (1676–1735). Both of them narrated these experiences in their egodocuments. (Kemény 1986, 94; Mikes 1988, 212) A further relevant example is Miklós Zrínyi's death due to a hunting accident in November 1664. The two clients and men of trust Pál Zichy (1640-1684) and Miklós Bethlen (1642–1716), whose memoirs recorded this event (Bethlen 1986, 603), acted as if they were instructed for this kind of emergency. While Zichy had the difficult task of breaking the news to Zrínyi's wife, Miklós Bethlen took care of the body, holding it in his lap. Hungarian literary historian Sándor Iván Kovács described the scene recorded in Bethlen's written account as an early modern Hungarian Pietá. (Kovács 1994, 506)

The second type of intimacy could be defined as spiritual/confessional, for it denotes that despite the different confessional identities that patrons and clients might have had, they had often shared intimate moments of praying together or ritually observing occasions and religious celebrations. The ardent Calvinist Cserei had no choice but to attend Catholic masses and processions, as his patron, the rich and influential István Apor (1638–704), was a devoted Catholic. Furthermore, when there was no cultural otherness disuniting the ritual exercises of both patrons and clients, they often prayed together, as Mihály II. Apafi, Prince of Transylvania did with his client and secretarius, Albert Gulácsi. Gulácsi as a man of trust must have had access to the devotional writings of the young prince because he preserved a copy of a prayer entitled *A special prayer against the enemies of the prince, using the words of David the Psalmist*, written by the prince himself. The utmost expression of this spiritual intimacy is related to the situations when the patron was on his death, and he had been comforted by his client, especially when in exile or in any akin difficult situation. Assisting the moribund patron and praying with him, just like touching the sick or dead body, represented a strange mixture of privilege, intimacy, and duty. No wonder that János Komáromi did his best to convince the converted Imre Thököly to say his last prayer in the Lutheran way. (Komáromi 1861, 86)

As for the third type of intimacy, it may well be defined as an intellectual and political one, suggesting a mutual secrecy, the client's common but responsible access to the secret affairs of the patron. The development of this third type of intimacy was unavoidable with the progress of the patron-client relationship which provided that the reciprocal trust and responsibility similarly increased. Besides, the greater political or financial ambitions of the patron regularly demanded more trust and reliability from the clients. The patron's successful breakthrough coincided with the promotion of the contributing clients. Consequently, the most important political, economic or other kinds of secret intentions or plans had to be shared with those very few who might have had a significant contribution to the effort in bringing those plans to fruition. However, all the clients serving as secretaries and men of trust must have had access to the secrets of the Patron. A suggesting illustration is provided by the aforementioned Mihály Cserei. He had been serving count István Apor for eleven years, until the death of this rich nobleman. When Apor died in 1704, the huge fortune was inherited by Péter Apor, the nephew of the recently passed count. Péter Apor was very much preoccupied with convincing Cserei, István Apor's man of trust, to serve him as well because Cserei had the most detailed knowledge of the defunct Apor's affairs, businesses and undertakings.

IV. Application

These patterns of intimacy constitute the proper historical anthropological context of the examples I have provided. Komáromi's (seemingly) unusual gesture was a normal one, presumably approved by everyone who shared the same view on the patron-client relationship. It is important to underline the fact that Komáromi was doing his duty when providing a last service to his patrons. Recalling the example of young Miklós Bethlen holding the body of Miklós Zrínyi, we found an antecedent and a strong argument sustaining the thesis that it was the client's privilege to take care of his patron's dead body.

In the second case, in a more complex situation, we are confronted with a similar example. Komáromi, due to the particular intimacy resulting from the patron-client relationship, simply penetrated the body of the moribund patron. This relationhip was so strong that not only did it allow this special touch, but also suspended the gender issue. For Ilona Zrínyi's attitude, notwithstanding the kisses on both cheeks and the hugs, had no gender orientation at all, these were

symbolic gestures performed by the *patron*, and not a *woman* – Ilona made it very clear when she was praising Komáromi's "true fidelity and service." The paramount argument is the very nature of this patron-client relationship. From this perspective, the dialogue between the dying Gábor Bethlen and his man of trust János Kemény is rather unfolding. Kemény was abroad in a mission, but upon his return he hurried to the sick prince. The dying prince, Gábor Bethlen was sort of rebuking János Kemény:

> Well, young man, we noticed that you so easily gave up on me, despite my deplorable condition. (Kemény 1986, 89)

Kemény's answer comprises the quintessence of this patron-client relationship:

> I did not Sire, and I would not, till the end of your life, till the end of mine. (Kemény 1986, 89)

The translation is, of course, not accurate for it was easier to use the construction "until death do us part." It would have been hilarious though to have Kemény pronounce the marriage vow to his patron, as according to our twenty-first-century thinking this is solely reserved to that special long term relation defined as marriage, yet we have to admit that in (post)feudal society and culture it was not marriage, but the patron-client relationship the most important link in society. Furthermore, the view that marriage as a lasting alliance between man and woman is the very basic unit of society is a late development, for medieval and early modern societies were built upon the network of functional and extended client-patron relationships or alliances. Loyalty, fidelity, and trust, though they were needed in medieval marriages as well, were, first of all, the attributes of clientelism nurturing the mutual dependency of the commitment between a Patron and his Client. The troubadour tradition and poetry have interestingly preserved the differences and similarities of marriage and feudal clientelism as commitments.

V. Conclusion

The historical anthropological interpretation I have just provided, I consider, has successfully construed the cultural otherness of this early modern phenomenon,

a seemingly unusual touch, involving a strange intimacy. From a methodological point of view, by examining the cases in culturally and historically relevant contexts, the contextual explanations brought about the articulation of a reliable answer. Thus, Komáromi's gestures were perfectly accurate and according to the norm, and every contemporary agreed upon that, for they shared the same mentality of clientelism, which, it seems, worked as a "collective representation" from the Middle Ages until the early modern period. The corporeal aspect of the gestures, the special intimacy ensuing from them, was perceived by everyone (Komáromi, the subjects of the touches, and the assisting entourage) as normal ones, without any deviant or sexual connotations. This was probably one of the very rare and special situations in which bodily intimacy, especially the case of penetration, had absolutely no sensual connotations, let alone sexual character. The corporeal reality or even the body proper functioned as a complex medium receiving and transmitting the message of loyalty, commitment, and fidelity alluding to the special relationship between the dead or sick patron and his devout client. The actor performing the touches, and the subjects of his touch (including the assistance or witnesses) were the contributors to a ritual happening with the social function of reconfirming a world order, a standard of normality. They were also supposed to promote a certain conduct. All these concepts revolved around the belief that loyalty was the most important virtue and mission a man could have or achieve in this mortal world.

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Personhood and Authorship. The Dead Body as Lieu de Mémoire

A Theoretical Experiment A'Propos Bentham's Auto-icon

According to his last will, Jeremy Bentham's body was dissected and mummified after his death on 6th June, 1832, and was posited onto his favourite chair in a cupboard-like box. Because the mummification of the head was unsuccessful, it was substituted with a wax head: on some photos of the *auto-icon* – as Bentham called it – the original head is put in between his two legs to increase the morbid impression. The humorous overtone is further enhanced by the legends attached to the separated head: it was stolen several times, once it was found in a luggage locker, some people played football with it, etc.

The real reason why Bentham decided to treat his dead body like this (already in his twenties) remains unknown, but the object (?) or cultic object (?) or person (?) touches on several questions of all the scholarly fields that consider Bentham as a predecessor: i.e. philosophy, law and psychology.[1]

He regularly took part, the legend says, on the basis of his testimony in the University College Council sessions where, the minutes prove, he is "present, but not voting." The problematic nature of the *auto-icon* is made evident already by the fact that it is mostly referred to with the personal pronoun "it," which means he (it) is mostly considered an *object* whereas if he is "present but not voting," he must be a *person* who could vote, but does not want to.

To what extent then does the term *person* and all the rights and legal capacities related to it mean the living person, and to what extent is the living person to be related to the living body? Can the concept of the *person* be captured in

1 https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bentham-project/about-jeremy-bentham/auto-icon Accessed April 09, 2025

connection with different forms of the dead body (like a mummy, a skeleton, or rotting body) in the semantic context of the self?

The cadaver of the judge of Lőcse

In the famous novel, *The Black City* [*A Fekete város*] (1910) by the great Hungarian writer, Kálmán Mikszáth, the council meeting in Lőcse, a town in the northern region of historic Hungary, is held *praesente cadaver*, that is in the presence of the shrouded cadaver of the judge previously shot dead. Without going deeper into the storyline, which is not uninteresting from the aspect of our topic since the main motif is the archaic legal practice of obtaining legal capacities by the blood of a dead body, it can be stated that, although the situation is very similar to the Bentham story, the case is basically very different:

> ...what I can see officially is that the judge of Lőcse is present, but his soul is not present, hence, I, as the wisest counsellor in the name of our laws, open the session *instead of* him. How the head of this community was deprived of his soul the eyewitness András Nustkorb is to be called upon to tell you to whom I hereby pass the word. (Translation and emphasis mine)

> ...én csak azt látom hivatalosan, hogy a lőcsei bíró jelen van, de a lelke nincs jelen, minélfogva, mint legbölcsebb tanácsnok, *helyette* én nyitom meg törvényeink szerint a mai ülést... Hogy miként fosztatott meg lelkétől e tisztes gyülekezet feje, ezt, mint szemtanú, Nustkorb András tanácsnok uram van hivatva elmondani, kinek is átadom a szót. (Mikszáth Kálmán: A f*ekete város*, 86) (Emphasis mine)

To reveal whether Mikszáth knew the Bentham case, which seems most probable, should be the theme of another study.

However, the difference between the two cases is especially emphatic because of their similarity.

Bentham's body is present as a person with legal capacities, which indirectly takes us closer to the concept of the *self* than the dead body of the judge of Lőcse,

who, because of the lack of his *soul,* is only a body, much more than the *auto-icon* to whom personal rights seem possible to be related. Although Bentham's soul is not present, it does not seem to come into question from the aspect of his function, either. Actually, one of the interesting points itself is why the *soul* does not come into the scope.

According to the text, the judge of Lőcse can and should be substituted, i.e. he is not present in the way Bentham is, but he seems to have legal capacities if not capacities to act, since he is to be substituted. Although only living persons can possess legal capacities in legal terms, I wish to use the concept in relation to the term of *existence* deduced from the idea of substitution. Although legal capacities can only be related to the living, substitution can also only relate to living people. More precisely: only those people can be substituted who do exist.

What is then the role of the presence of the dead body? Evidently, it is not only a *corpus delicti,* a proof of the crime, but also an official embodiment of an institution, i.e. of the *function of the judge of* Lőcse, even if he is dead.

But if he is present in the function of the judge of Lőcse, why should he be substituted as if he were not present? Bentham, as it were, should not be substituted, because he is "present but not voting."

Can the institution of the judge be defined by the body of the deceased person? If so, why cannot he vote or make other legal decisions as Bentham's *auto-icon*? According to the text, the reason is his missing soul. The possible answer seems more and more complicated, because, according to this, the legal right to vote is to be related to the soul. Without going into the multidimensional issue of "what is the soul?", we still can put the question: is it the *soul* or is it *life* that makes the body possess legal rights?

There definitely is a humorous overtone in putting the judge's covered dead body in the centre of a session, although at least he (it) is treated with more piety and dignity than Bentham, since a lying position is certainly more suitable for a cadaver according to traditional (European) cultural agreement. It is, of course, a question whether someone lying during a session is not more humorous than someone sitting, which is accepted as the normal position in such situations? Only in the case, of course, if it (he) is to be considered *someone*, i.e. a *person*.

At first sight, the main difference between the two cases is that whereas in the Bentham case, the body is present as a *person,* in the Mikszáth story, paradoxically the dead body is more like a *non-person*, since he cannot vote, whereas Bentham can, i.e. he (Bentham) could vote if he wanted.

The substitutability of the dead judge in the Mikszáth novel is highly controversial: how can anyone chair the session instead of him? If someone does not exist, he definitely cannot be substituted no matter how important a function he used to have when he was alive. Mikszáth seeks the solution in the presence and/or lack of the soul, a motif absolutely missing from the Bentham case that carries legal (and to some extent psychological) essences, but is totally void of spiritual meanings, at least on its surface. The question of what it actually is that the body lacks in terms of voting (if not the soul as in Mikszáth) remains excitingly unanswered in the Bentham case. Moreover, if the judge in the novel is present, whereas his body is not, what exactly is it that should be substituted? His soul? What is then the function of the cadaver at the session?

It is a question whether the solution of the Mikszáth novel is something more or something less than what is raised by the Bentham mummy.

Besides the issues comparable in the relationship between the Self and the corpse, almost everything else makes the two cases incomparable: Bentham is a mummy sitting on a chair in a box with or without his own original frightening head between his two legs in slightly different positions in the several available photos, (leaving us uninformed, for example, about his present position). Meanwhile the judge's dead body is artificially taken from the text of a novel, violating the work of art by using it in an unusual context outside the realms of literary criticism, perhaps in an inter-contextual rather than an interdisciplinary manner.

Excluding the otherwise interesting aspects of the Hungarian movie based on the novel (Zsurzs 1971), it is to be underlined that whereas Mikszáth's novel is a piece of literature, the Bentham case is a legend with a figure/object to be determined with all the aspects of an object. It still "exists," it is possible to visit it in the South Cloisters, and according to the images available in books and on the internet, "he" is played with, sometimes he is even seated next to a table. Of course, these aspects raise the question (at least in the traditional sense) that to what extent it is then an object if its position can be and is often being changed. Can the Bentham mummy be conceived as an illustration of the legend re-shaping and re-interpreting the original story in a new contextual situation every time it is moved into another position or place? Probably not, because the relation between the original legend and the mummy seems to operate the other way round: the presence of the figure may have become stronger than the story it is related to. On the one hand, we can say the story has not ended yet and may acquire endless possible continuations in the future. Or, on the other hand, the

figure has gained a special and characteristic individual life as a result of the series of happenings: its mode of existence is by far not constant. To make it more complicated, even the Internet-based mode of existence should be taken into the circle of interpretations as an approach especially sensitive to such morbid and humorous phenomena young people call "flash."

With his brilliant multidimensional intellectual joke, Bentham touched several basic questions concerning the nature of the body, the ego, the object, and, last but not least, the work of art and its author. The name, *auto-icon*, he gave to his mummy-to-be (or to himself?) places the phenomenon into the context of art as well since the term means an image of itself or a self-image.

It is not only the extension of the *self* onto the deceased body the problem to be analysed a'propos his figure, but also the extent to which the *auto-icon* is his production in terms of authorship. In case we approach his mummified body as if it were a work of art mainly because he himself determined it as an icon, the intentionalist interpretation leads the line of analysis up to the historical type of concept (Baxandall 1985) questioning whether it is possible to consider an object a work of art if the topic, the iconography, the material and the form are all the same (i.e. the dead body) and, in turn, all these determinatives are the person himself (itself), more precisely, the material framework of the deceased person. As a result of a conclusion, it can be stated almost mathematically, that behind the authorship of the *auto-icon* the original question is hidden: i.e whether the mummified body (and in broader terms all deceased forms of bodies from ashes, rotting bodies, skeletons and mummies) carry the semantic layers of the *self* or not.

The question then is not only a legal issue, and does not only touch issues of piety and dignity, but also raises questions regarding art: if the *auto-icon* is a piece of art, who is the author? If the author is Bentham, along what factors can he as an author in the traditional sense be defined if his body seems to be present in such an unusual way? Can we determine Bentham as an author in terms of his own mummified body in case we accept the person's possible extension onto his dead body? If the dead body, i.e. the mummy, is a person, he can equally be the author supposing the author normally is a person. But if the author of the auto-icon WAS Bentham to the extent that the mummy was his idea (proved in his testament), and this personhood is no longer present in the figure, can the *auto-icon* be defined as a mere work of art?

The image of the person seems to move in-and-out from the mummified body, each time questioning the problem of the authorship as well.

But if the mummy is a work of art, and if it is the deceased body of the *person/ author* itself, can we say it is more of a *copy,* more precisely even a *forgery* of the original – if we assume the original is the living body of the same *person*?

What has happened to the original that resulted in the loss of the creative essence? Was it copied? No, it died. And via death, still, yes, it was copied, because the shapes of the living being were artificially (but, as we could see, badly) preserved.

In this way aspects of *personality* and *authorship* seem to cover or cross each other.

The Resurrection of the Body

A body mummified against time and decay touches the theological problem of the future of the deceased and normally buried body in the line of the Salvation.

It is the late Medieval Ages when the physical horror of death widely appears in literary and visual representations of the *memento mori* concept in Europe. The phenomenon was first elaborated exhaustively in Huizinga's *Waning of the Middle Ages.* (Huizinga, 2010) Although the realistic description of death and the dead body is characteristically late medieval, bodily aspects had always been represented in the iconography of resurrection much before the 14th century.

The question whether the body is to be resurrected or not has always been a most acute theological question.

In a 13th-century illustration of the Book of Revelation (MS Douce 180, Bodleian Library, Oxford, 86) some people are being resurrected in almost baby-form bodies, while others are still lying in their coffins. The image visualizes the sensitive problem of how and in what sequence and rhythm the dead are to be resurrected. If in body, in which body? In which age? In health or ruined by illness and plague? In original beauty or in original ugliness? As the locus of pain and suffering or that of pleasure and desire?

> "But someone may ask: 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?'" (1 Cor. 15:35)

In the Byzantine type iconography, the 11th-century mosaic of the Torcello cathedral, resurrection shows those ready for redemption in full form bodies whereas

the damned are represented fragmented in pieces of body. Theologically, fragmentation has been associated with sin and evil. (Finucane 1982, 197)

From the 15th century, the iconography of the *cannibal butcher shop* with cut up pieces of the human body especially widely spread in travel books and cosmographies (but already present on the Hereford mappa mundi in the 13th century) has been burdened with associations of the sinful mode of existence. (Obereskeye, 2005) The ultimate horror of cannibalism locates the "other" into a mode of existence excluded from and to be interpreted outside the opportunities of Salvation in terms of the East-West encounter, a topic not to be explored here. (see Padgen 1998, 51 and Pagels 1998, 149)

Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* (Vatican, Sixtus Chapel) was criticized by the last session of the Counter-Reformation Council of Trent (1545–64) because of the various states of the people while being raised on the basis of *ut pictura poesis* and decency.

The theory of *ut pictura poesis* (Horatius, Ars Poetica, *Epistulae* V. 361., see Lee 1940; Szőnyi 2002, 13; Radnóti 1995, 205) used for Christian thought was an adequate basis for criticism: the process of raising – it was claimed – may not be represented in different states because, according to the Scripture, the dead are to be generally resurrected at the same time. (Blunt 1978, 94) The idea of decency concluded into the "dressing up" of the bodies. Pope Paul IV wanted to annihilate the fresco, but, in the end, as it is well known, he ordered Daniele da Volterra to paint draperies on some of the bodies. Pius IV and Coloman XIII continued the project, and, according to rumours, even Pius IX wished complete it in 1936. (Blunt 1978, 87–100)

Bodily resurrection is a key issue from the aspect of our topic. Bynum claims that *identity* and *personhood* in Christianity used to be much more associated with the body than with the soul: the medieval understanding of *self*, which she calls psychosomatic, is to be understood in terms of personhood: "to make the body essential to survival and to person, it was necessary to redeem not only the difference of particularity but also the difference of nonbeing." (Bynum 1995, viii)

Bynum claims that Christian Escathology is not basically dualistic in the way it has been traditionally treated, or in the way Gnosticism and Manicheism are. (Bynum 1987) Moreover, she says, the medieval concept of the *body* takes us much closer to the understanding of the *self* than the analysing the concept of the *soul* or *psyche*.

The medieval concept of personality (*per se una*) meaning one and indivisible (united) (Gurjewitsch 1994, 107) should be, Bynum claims, interpreted in terms of not a body separated from the soul but as an entity to be determined by physical capacities and perception. (Bynum 1995)

The emphasis on the body in Bynum's studies can be, to a large extent, paralleled with Peter Brown's explanation of the relic to be elaborated later.

The role of the body and its connection to the individual character of the human being could most acutely be grasped in the time relations of the Last Judgement vs individual death: Gurjewitsch claims that the significance of personhood delicately becomes represented in the intersection of individual life and history. (Gurjewitsch 1994, 121) The controversial nature of the two judgements (one at the end of the individual life, and the other at Jesus' Second Coming) has always been a cardinal theological issue. According to Ariès' interpretation, individual life in the medieval times could only be balanced at the moment of the Doomsday, and there is an indefinable gap between the individual death and the Dies Irae. He claims that there existed neither a concept of a complete *self* in a certain period of the Middle Ages, nor a concept of the Doomsday until the 12th–13th centuries. Although Gurjewitsch rightly criticizes Ariès for this ignorance (Gurjewitsch 1994,118; see Last Judgement representations on tympanums of 11th-century Romanesque churches like Autun, Vezelay, Moissac, etc), they both agree that the framework of *identity* and *personhood* could be grasped in the concept and moment of death. (Gurjewitsch 1994, 119)

The Resurrection of Lazarus

The eschatological question of the possible bodily resurrection parallels with the possibility of the resurrection of the body in the Bible.

An early 12th-century description tells about the resurrections of Adam, Lazarus and Matthew's saints under Jesus' crucifix ("The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people." [Mt 27:52–53] (MS Lat.qu.198, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, fol 320v) Adam's tomb (bones, skull or skeleton) is a traditional element of the iconography of crucifixion to be interpreted typologically in terms of the original sin-and-salvation system. Although both

Matthew's saints and Lazarus are unusual on crucifixion scenes, Lazarus' raising and the Last Judgement resurrection are brought into strong relationship from an evidently very physical-bodily aspect.

The text "Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead" (Jn 11:1–46:4) is one of the most excitingly puzzling sections in the New Testament:

> "Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 'Take away this stone,' he said. 'But Lord,' said Martha, the sister of the dead man, 'by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there for four days.'"

Martha's sentence is a presumption based on general experience, but after Lazarus appears, it remains unanswered whether the body was in the state of decay or not, whether it had any smell:

> "Then Jesus said, 'Did I not tell you, that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So, they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.' When he said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, 'Take off the grave clothes and let him go.'"

There is an element in the iconography of the raising of Lazarus coming from the uncertainty of the written solution: on Giotto's fresco in the Arena Chapel, Padua (1301), or for example on Albert van Ouwater's painting (1455, Berliner Staatliche Museen, Gemälde Galerie) a figure covering his nose is represented referring to the smell of the corpse.

Whether the dead body had already been possessed by decay before it was raised is an exciting theological question. In this paper the approach has to be narrowed down to the point whether and how the living *self* is to be localized in terms of the deceased body. Was a decomposing corpse brought back into the state adequate for a living being, or it had not even started to decay? More concretely: among what physical circumstances could Lazarus' *self* gain a material nature?

Time between two corporeal deaths. Integrity and fragmentation

In Faulkner's "The Tall Men" (1941) in an event that could be called a ritual, and in a room that turns into a space of initiation a leg is being amputated and buried into the given person's own future grave: "*He moved quickly, easily... he had lifted the bundle into a narrow trench and was covering it, covering as rapidly as he had dug, smoothing the earth over it with a shovel*". In Maupassant's short story, "On the Sea" (1883), a fisherman's arm cut by a rope is buried in the same way into his future grave.

Through the idea of a limb separated from our body and buried in a grave, starting to decay independently from us both in time and space, the questions of the extension and the location of the *self* are treated in a horrifying scope. To experience and to survive our own death creates a morbid perspective concerning the meaning of a body emptied but not void of its essence. To witness one's own deduced death and to become corpse and mourning family member in relation to the very same body creates an own-corpse relic together with its place of worship, puts the perversely exact question: are we present in our body(part) outside of our body as *pars pro toto*?

The decaying body stops time in a weird form: that part of us will not continue aging, at least not in terms of the living physical entity, but it will fall victim to ruinous time in another way by falling prey to decay. The two times – that of aging and that of decay – are paralleled in a peculiar competition inside and outside the grave, and become simultaneous in terms of the same body.

The morbid situations in Maupassant and Faulkner create a special concept of time: the living person is determined by an uncertain span of time between two deaths questioning the localization of the *person* as such both in time and space.

The integrity of the bodies in the two short stories is ultimately broken, and the frustrating fragmentation in both "examples" figures the question of how and where the *self* is to be localized. Fragmentation, an "existence in several pieces," is burdened with meanings of *sin* in Christian tradition, as demonstrated above. In the two short stories, the concept of *memento mori* is turned morbid in the forms of "own-body-relics."

The empty grave

Body parts buried into the future grave that "activate" the place of worship by giving it an independent mode of living, may be paralleled with Anderson's arresting image of the "tomb of the unknown soldier" intentionally empty or simply unidentifiable. (Anderson 1991, 23) Anderson treats the phenomenon as a par excellence manifestation of the national idea as such, and compares the image – mistakenly though – with the ancient kenotaphium referring to byzantinologist J. Herrin's oral comment who claims that if the cadaver was not available, a pseudo-tomb was constructed. (Anderson 1991, 23)

The truth is that kenotaphium is a phenomenon already known in the Egyptian Old Kingdom: it seems that a section of Djoser's pyramid district was devoted to this function. Moreover, one of Snofru's mysterious Dahsur and Saqqara pyramids must have incorporated the same meaning. (Kákosy 1979, Dobrovits 1979) Although the original function of the kenotaphium has not fully been explained in Egyptology, it seems that these buildings were not erected instead of the real tombs but together with them as duplicates; they possibly mutually explain and complete rather than substitute each other.

Could the empty graves burdened with Anderson's analyses and the ones in Faulkner and Maupassant's short stories be examined along the same line of explanation? Are the two graves – i.e the contents attributed to the empty grave and the future grave "activated" by deceased body parts buried into it – places of worship in different ways? Are they both "*lieux de mémoire*" in the sense Pierre Nora introduces the term?

Anderson's empty grave and the *kenotaphium* may be interpreted as a memory place for absent corpses. But where can graves that contain body parts – without which people still went on living their lives – be placed on a scale ranging from empty graves to traditional ones filled with complete corpses? Buried body parts actually create a place of worship neither empty nor "full."

Can we say that the decaying, buried body parts themselves have become memory places, *lieux de mémoire,* just like Bentham's auto-icon?

Graves or tombs are memory places of the dead: but are not corpses themselves memory places of those deceased humans? This question becomes especially acute if the corpse is to be interpreted outside the context of the grave like Bentham's *auto*-icon, or relics of the saints, or mummies of any culture from Ra-

messes II to Lenin or if, the other way round, corpses not complete or truncated get into the space of the grave.

Connections of past and present manifested in relation to decay are primarily evident in the concept of *piety*.

If the dead body may be a memory place and a material embodiment of the person, what does piety mean?

Piety

The interpretation of piety in law is one of the most problematic fields, and it greatly varies depending on different legal systems both in a synchronic and a diachronic approach.

Rights related to the tomb or grave of the deceased person usually seem to overlap with the personal rights of the living person, and are mostly connected to *respect* and *reputation.* (Lenkovics–Székely 2000, 121) Respect and reputation may be conceived as ideas circumscribing the concept of memory.

The dead body, although it is not a person in legal terms, obtains rights which are similar to those of a person, and are most evident in connection to the grave, meaning that any right can most easily be linked to the physical remains of the deceased person.

If the deceased person legally can best be related to his grave on the one hand and to his own memory on the other, perhaps it is acceptable to suppose that the dead body (in any form, or its remains) can itself be considered a *lieu de memoire* in cultural terms and in the way Pierre Nora introduced it (Nora 1992) because it does not exist, although it does, or, the other way round, it exists even if it does not.

His deceased personality-personhood, connected to material shape through unusual forms of his remembrance – as seen above –, seems frustratingly and evidently present.

The *auto-icon* can be regarded as the inverse of burying the leg and arm in the two short stories mentioned above: the burial of the body fragments put *life,* whereas Bentham's mummy present at the College Council put *death* into quotation marks.

It is to be underlined here that Bentham's corpse does not acquire meaning only because of its presence in mummy-form, but also as a result of his right to vote.

Mummies in Western cultural tradition (like the right foot of St Catherine in the sacral space of Giovanni e Paolo, Venice; Egyptian mummies in non-sacral spaces of any museum; or Lenin's mummy in the politically sacralized space of the mausoleum newly opened in May 2013) raise all kinds of questions but definitely not whether the dead body is a person or not.

Relics

The respect for exposed decaying bodies in the Western Christian tradition, a religion basically denying matter and body, is one of the cardinal issues in the study of relic cults. Traditionally the cult of the saints has been explained as hidden polytheism. According to this theory the veneration of saints is a popularized version of abstract dogmas too difficult to understand for everyday people. Hulme claims that the elegant theology of the early Christian period became corrupted by the introduction of a popular mythology which restored polytheism. (Hume 1875, 335; Gibbon 1909, 225)

Peter Brown's strikingly novel interpretation gave a new direction to the study of the cult of the saints and relics. He says the worship of the saints is an immanent essence of Christianity: miraculous elements in the saints' lives, and miracles occurring again and again at their graves made the places containing their body parts privileged places where the two controversial points, Heaven and Earth could meet. (Brown 1980, 48)

The miracles of the saints are organic continuations of Jesus's miracles in the Gospels. It is the miracle element Max Weber also considered the essential core of Catholicism, which was fully denied by Protestantism. (Weber 1930)

The Christian cult of the saints, Brown claims, was born in the cemeteries outside the towns of the Roman world: the Christians excavated and carried away their saints positing the body parts in places where no dead people had turned up earlier. (Brown, 102)

The particular importance of the saints' body parts is proved by the especially cruel punishment of those who stole or desecrated them, like in the case of Nicolo, Giovanni, and Domenico who tried to steal the heads of the apostles St Peter and St Paul. (Kirschbaum 1987, 200–201)

Bynum's above shown studies overlap with Brown's results in terms of *matter* and *body* in Christian thought which seems to have been much more important

than traditionally considered. As mentioned above, Ariès and Gurjewitsch claim that the notion of *personhood* was closely – and according to Bynum, was mostly – related to the concept of the *body*.

The corpse as the locus of past and present

Memory is not everywhere present, Pierre Nora claims, it only is if a *memory-person* takes on himself the tasks of remembering. Memory may reveal the past by turning and actualizing it into present: in order to feel the past, it should be detached from the present. (Nora 1992, 24)

In the cult of the saints, time is being sacralized. The celebration of saints' feast days stops time and turns past into present. (Barna 2001, Bartha 2001)

According to Nora, memory acquires its significance by separating past and present. In case of the cult of the saints, it may be interpreted in the other way round I think, as past is made continuously present for example in the case of a mummy artificially kept against time and decay, or in the case of body parts buried before the ultimate death.

Nora's idea that documents multiply the number of signs proving their own existence like a snake sheds its skin (Nora 1992, 18) may take us closer to the assumption that the corpse can also serve as a sign of the deceased person in relation to his "shed" body.

Nora's snake skin metaphor may be paralleled with Ricoeur's concept of memory as a trace left behind similarly to what animals leave behind, making them a public object. (Ricoeur 1999, 57) Such traces – he says – turn into a public object.

Summarizing questions

The chain of arguments then takes us back to our original question whether the corpse is an *object*, or to what extent can or does the concept of the *person* expand to it.

A body appearing in the form of a corpse seems to demonstrate complicated interrelations of cultural, legal and psychological aspects impossible to reveal.

In the sentence "present but not voting" not only personhood (approached from the aspect of voting right) is to be examined, but also the expression "present," a meaning only partially touched above.

The problem of personhood could as well be analyzed through the aspect of the *praesentia* of the corpse, and this approach would consider its space-filling nature and function, the visual semantic aspects, its time relations and above all the references to passing time and the signifying capacities operating in terms of time from another angle.

Supposing the corpse is an object, and assuming that the above-mentioned manifestations are to be regarded as *lieux de mémoire,* why should not it also be considered a work of art? With this approach, the whole realm of meaning, authorship, and value, etc. of the work of art are touched even in terms of *kitsch*.

Bentham's *auto-icon* is definitely an offending object the way Mitchell means it: "Offending images are radically unstable entities whose capacity to harm depends on complex social context. Those contexts can change, sometimes as result of the public debate around the image, more often because the initial shock wanes, to be replaced by familiarity or even affection." (Mitchell 2005, 131) Furthermore, Bentham's *auto-icon* offends both the figure itself in terms of piety and the viewer who is hurt in most of his culturally determined preoccupations concerning the concept of death and the place of the dead: *"Some offend because they degrade something valuable or desecrate..." "Some offend because of the manner of representation..."* (Mitchell 2005, 131)

The *auto-icon* has undeniably gained a special independent life of its own: it is being exhibited, it is stored and restored, the unsuccessfully mummified head is placed in between the two legs (sic!), it is regularly moved as a result of which the position of the legs and the whole body changes. It is not evident which of the many variations is the real one, and whether it meets the expectations of the object as such.

The most difficult question, which is impossible to elaborate here, is definitely the character of the offending nature. Although it "has to do with the strangeness of framing and borders, an experience of 'liminality'" as in a definition of the "uncanny" (Royle 2003), and it is "targeting the borderlines of cultural imagination" as the fantastic appears to operate (Kiss– Szőnyi 2002, 22), Bentham's mummy – if it is (or even if it is not) regarded as a work of art – is perhaps neither fantastic, nor to be interpreted in the realm of uncanny. Moreover, it seems to cause the problems because of its essences so close to realism. Its disturbing nature may be due to its extreme realism: actually, it is more real than acceptable or bearable.

Could the term *morbid* be used? Although dictionaries explain the term with "an unusual interest in death," besides its medical meaning the description of the

term might be further widened by the introduction of the element of *realism* with a definite overtone of the extreme.

The head put in between the two legs provides a huge range of further associations: on the so-called Narmer-palette (3000 BC, Cairo Museum) the beheaded corpses of the defeated enemy are demonstrated with their heads put between the legs, but the image could even be approached within the scope of gender studies with its visual references to childbirth or sexuality. It may contain elements of humiliation and desecration, and, last, but not least, the idea of the changed, or "transposed heads" (Thomas Mann) ultimately raises the problem of "who is the person without his own head?"

Whether humiliation or desecration have any meaning in the semantic realm of the morbid remains a question.

Of course, the Bentham phenomenon cannot be compared to the Mikszáth story since the latter is a literary piece of art (if we exclude now the aspects the movie based on the novel may bring into the scope), whereas the Bentham *auto-icon* is both an object and a story attached to it without "values added" by literature. The figure survives with a continuous visual impact to be re-interpreted in connection to the original story as many times as possible. Furthermore, as it was mentioned above, its position is regularly moved providing a strange nature of existence.

All in all, according to the meaning of the term, the *auto-icon* is an image of itself, where the image is the self-picture of its own theme.

The topic of the work of art is itself, a mimesis turning back into itself in terms of the Western classical theoretical heritage not to be examined here. (Auerbach 2003)

Excluding now all the religious projections of the theme such as God as a creator, we can raise the issue of intentionality supposing the authorship is to be grasped in the will (testament) or in the idea or in the intention (Baxandall 1985) of the author (Bentham) who created a self-body piece of art, or memorial, or *lieu de mémoire*. The corpse is the material, the form, and the topic of the work of art extremely difficult to interpret in the system of iconology.

Besides all this, we may even claim that the *auto-icon* is not only a copy or imitation, but is also a forgery if the living person in the framework of life is the original. (Radnóti 1995)

Which means it is an object. Or is it rather a person?

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Part Three:
REIMAGINING THE CORPOREAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

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The Morphology of Eyebrows in Works by Giovan Battista della Porta and Cesare Lombroso

In the last decades, the theory and history of physiognomy have met with a renewed critical interest, in the light of the pictorial turn discussed by William Mitchell. (2005, 28–56) Physiognomy uses verbal language to explain the morphology of the body, and this in turn depicts a syntax of personality and behavior, also thanks to the analogy between humans and animals. It is a complex system which combines the observation of images with a verbal description, and which needs to be studied considering perceptual and visual the conditioning; these are not natural dates, but cultural constructions which are learnt and cultivated with time, as the art historian Ernst Gombrich (1963, 45–55) noted.

In a memorable essay, entitled *On Physiognomic Perception* (1960), Gombrich highlighted the importance and flaws of physiognomy in the history of the Western mindset. The essay can be said to represent the change of physiognomy being no longer a science with interpreting ambitions,[1] but rather an object of privileged study for theorists of perception, art historians, scholars of aesthetics, philosophy and literature, and more recently, of visual studies. This interlaced knowledge shows the density of a discipline which has shaped the stereotypes of the acknowledgement of the Other (and its misinterpretations) through a minute classification of body parts linked to personality. As an example, we can think of the fundamental literary value of this repertoire of words and images: how can we imagine Ulysses, Calypso, Moses, Christ, the Virgin Mary, just to mention some figures

1 In Italy, for example, the list of physiognomic essays with scientific ambitions is said to have concluded with *La fisonomia nell'arte e nella scienza* (Firenze: Sansoni 1952) written by anthropologist Alfredo Niceforo (1952), of the Lombroso school of thought.

who have a face and a body only by our physiognomic way of reasoning? Together with prosopography (that is, the psychophysical study of the relevant figures of the past), a physiognomic culture can be seen in the description of characters characterized by a coherent system of flesh, bones and personality, prompting the reader to complete a mental picture of words which will never be visible in a real situation. This mixing of codes is a feature of ekphrasis, the verbal representation of a visual representation, according to what Mitchell presented (1994, 152–154) with a complexity similar to the physiognomy of a novel.

Without any doubt, literary characters (especially the ones of novels, because of the longer system of narration) play an important perceptive role, as they work as mediators, as compasses for the knowledge of the other, to verify in a face-to-face reality. However, it is not always easy to understand if and how writers are aware of physiognomy: the case of Honoré de Balzac, reader of Johann Kaspar Lavater, its occurence is isolated and therefore fascinating.[2] Probably, and generally, the physiognomic culture circulated thanks to essays which shaped a widespread perceptive sensitivity, even when they were not read. The starting point was Greece, in the third century B.C., when Aristotle's disciples (Aristotle 1913, 46–70) wrote a treaty, a physiognomic essay to analyze the different parts of *soma*, creating important analogies, offering effective classifications, establishing at once a set of methodological principles and thorny issues.

For example, we can consider the similarity between man and animal, which still stands as the grounds of our discourse on personalities; we say "as cunning as a fox," "as strong as a lion," "as solitary as a bear," "as greedy as a pig," "as calm as a dove," and so on. In the centuries, zoomorphism has been considered trustworthy because animals do not lie: body and soul match with no simulation or dissimulation, therefore there is a clear knowledge of the link between the exterior and the interior of the animal. Even more importantly, it can be applied to humans: those who show morphological similarities with a specific animal will almost certainly own the same type of personality. (Baltrusaitis 1957, 8–46) In Aristotelian terms, there is a specific distinction between fixed traits – bones, the shape and colour of eyes, the shape of ears, complexion, all the unchanging parts

2 On the relationship between physiognomy and the novel, particularly in the 18th and 19th century, a core text is Tytler, Graeme. 1982. *Physiognomy in the European Novel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Recommended texts are also: Gaudio, Alessandro. 2011. *Lavorare con gli attrezzi del vicino. La fisiognomica scientifica al vaglio della letteratura*. Pisa: ETS; La Manna, Federica. 2012. *Sineddoche dell'anima. Il volto nel dibattito tedesco del Settecento*. Milano – Udine: Mimesis.

(clearly considering the absence of plastic surgery) – and mobile traits, that is, the body parts which differ day by day, or rather, which change minute by minute: laughter, cry, gestures, looks. The interpretation of mobile traits is immediately considered difficult, unsure, not trustworthy, because it is unstable and can be subjected to fiction: how can one differentiate between the expressions of a brave man and a cheeky man? Furthermore, there is the possibility that a usually happy man might have a sad day, just like someone who is habitually sad could be happy for a few hours. In both cases, their faces would show the signs of momentary passion, making alterations to the habitual ones. (Aristotle 1913, 50)

All things considered, there is a way to avoid a physiognomic mistake. The pseudo-Aristotelian physiognomy known in Europe in a Latin version edited by Bartolomeo da Messina in the 13th century[3] specifies that it is not enough to choose fixed traits or find a similarity with an animal; what needs to be found is coherence between multiple clues to confirm a physiognomic conjecture. On the one hand, this means that the risk of misunderstanding caused by mobile traits is lowered; on the other, it implies that a high number of common features must be looked for, by identifying, for example, the ones of ethnic identity: for a Pseudo-Aristotle, skin colour would signal brave or coward people, thus starting a first classification of the people of the North (Scythians) and of the South (Egyptians and Ethiopians).

How can the racist danger of a physiognomic prejudice not be seen? However, it would be unfair to only consider the limits of this discipline which deserves the merit of being the first to show the exemplifying value of stereotypes: this is beautiful and good (kaloskagathia), this is ugly and bad (the so-called theoriomorphism). For its effort of classification with a reassuring effect, physiognomy has crossed the centuries with no special issues, reaching the 17th century, an important period where traditional disciplines lived together with a new hypothesis on the passion of individuals (promoted by the French philosopher René Des-

3 Bartolomeo da Messina was the Greek-to-Latin translator at Manfredi's Sicilian court between 1258 and 1266. The E*ditio princeps* della *Physiognomonia* dates from 1472, and has been reprinted several times in later centuries. For the importance of pseudo-Aristotelian physiognomy in history, recommended texts are Magli, Patrizia. 1995. *Il volto e l'anima. Fisiognomica e passioni*. Milano: Bompiani; Porter, Martin. 2005. *Windows of the Soul: Physiognomy in European Culture, 1470–1780*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Gurisatti, Giovanni. 2006. *Dizionario fisiognomico. Il volto, le forme, l'espressione*. Macerata: Quodlibet analyzes some of the fields of application (portrait, caricature, actors, word, writing, opera, history, and metropolis) of the physiognomic reasoning.

cartes). As a matter of fact, it was one of the many cultural wonders of the 17th century, together with the study of the sky (with Galileo Galilei) and of universal gravitation (with Isaac Newton); together with the research on modern languages, witnessed in Italy by the first edition of the *Vocabolario della Crusca* (1612); together with the birth of some literary genres of great fame, like the drama in music (later called melodrama), the fairy tale (at first an oral tradition, later established in the collections by Gianbattista Basile and Charles Perrault) and the novel (in its various forms, from Spanish and German picaros' adventures to love mishaps, for example *La princesse de Clèves* by Madame de La Fayette); together with Caravaggio's chiaroscuro, Carracci's caricatures, Bernini's and Borromini's moving architectures, a new and diverse attention to the soul-body relationship.[4]

Clearly, transformations do not occur overnight, but rather slowly, and habits and certainties of the past live together with the research and experimentation of novelties. For the study of a psycho-physical link, which we are interested in, I will argue that there are two tendencies that need to be considered: 1. A traditional physiognomy which reserves attention to fixed traits that cannot change, and continues its work of juxtaposing man and animal; 2. A new type of research on the movement of the body and its meanings; it is a type of enquiry which was then considered cutting edge, which finds it difficult to impose, because it does not offer clear, simple, and stable prejudices, it does not offer limited, reassuring stereotypes, like traditional physiognomy. It is therefore not a useful technique to understand quickly, once and for all, the traits of someone standing in front of us, clarifying if he is a good or a bad person. What would be called mimicry from the 18th century, pathognomony and later psychology, takes the changes of the environment into too much consideration, which then has resulted in a less hurried, but also less sure interpretation of the other.

As an example, I will consider the case of eyebrows, a body part which deserves special attention in the 17th century, and I will refer to three authors who testify the complexity of the baroque line of thought:

- The first one mostly represents tradition (clearly marking its limits at the same time) (Rodler 2009, 1–13); he studies the shape of eyebrows and

4 Some texts about visual perception in 17th-century culture are: De Armas, Frederick. A. 2005. *Ekphrasis in the Age of Cervantes*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; Caroli, Flavio. 2012. *Storia della fisiognomica. Arte e psicologia da Leonardo a Freud*. Milano: Mondadori Electa, 81–123; Gal, Ofer and Chen-Morris, Raz. 2013. *Baroque Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

the quantity of hairs, the fixed traits (or those considered to be such). His name is Giovan Battista della Porta (1535–1615), a Neapolitan magician, author of theatrical works, and scholar of physiognomy, translated and esteemed in Europe until the end of the 19th century;

- The second one applies physiognomy to poetry; he chooses and studies a hundred forms of the face, involving other writers in the composition of one hundred sonnets to illustrate his research. His name is Cornelio Ghirardelli (Bologna cca 1572–1637), a doctor and friar from Bologna who lived sometime between the 16th and the 17th century, and who is among the first scholars to establish a close relationship between physiognomic-scientific research and literature (Rodler 2012, 33–43; Vigh 2013, 5–25);
- The third one, instead, experiments with the research of novelty; he studies facial expressions and eyebrow movement (Montagu 1994; Pericolo 2005, 211–233). His name is Charles Le Brun (1619–1690), a French artist, painter in Louis XIV's court, a theoretician of passions, also esteemed throughout the whole 19th century.

I will then begin with della Porta who dedicates the second book out of the six included in *Della fisonomia dell'uomo* (a work with several Latin and Italian editions, the one dated 1610 being the last one he edited himself)[5] to the analysis of the body, literally from head to toe. The third chapter of this book considers the eyebrows presented through a continuous reference to Aristotle, Plinius, Galeno, Polemone, Adamanzio, that is a naturalistic-philosophical-medical tradition of consolidated fame. Despite a learnedly inter-textual writing, the analysis is simple, presented along with della Porta's personal experiences; as an observer of the body, he could verify the existence of the so-called winning shapes and losing shapes, which correspond to good or bad characters:

1. The winning shapes are the ones defined as "virile," represented as a curve in the eyebrows, a medium quantity of hairs, the distance to the nose; in terms of personality, these traits show a serious man, irascible and intelligent, similar to

5 For a history of the text cfr. Paolella, Alfonso. 2012. "Introduzione." In della Porta, Giovan Battista. *De humana phisiognomonia*. Ed. Alfonso Paolella, XI–LXI. Napoli: Edizioni scientifiche italiane; the Italian text of 1610 also has a critical edition: della Porta, Giovan Battista. *Della fisonomia dell'uomo libro sei*. 2013. Ed. Alfonso Paolella. Napoli: Edizioni scientifiche italiane.

a lion (*Figure* 1), a tiger, a mastiff dog and an eagle. In della Porta's words, in the paragraphs *Ciglia non distese*, *Ciglia piegate vicino al naso*, *Giglia gionte* (in writing "ciglia," della Porta means eyebrows, according to what the title specifies):

> Polemone et Adamanzio nella figura dell'uomo virile gli danno le ciglia non appianate ma curve [...] le ciglia piegate al naso dimostrano uomo austero et acerbo, come nel *Libro de gli Animali* lasciò scritto Aristotele, et ancor da Galeno e da Plinio nella figura dell'uomo virile. Polemone ed Adamanzio gli danno non le ciglia diritte e delicate, come alle donne, ma torte, arcuate. [...] Se li dovemo rassomigliare a gli animali, le rassomigliaremo al leone, tigre, al cane feroce detto 'mastino', aquile et altri ferocissimi animali. [...] se gli archi si toccano nel naso, dimostrano piacevole, sottile e studioso nell'opere sue. Io quanti ho veduto con queste ciglia così congionte, e di peli non folti, tutti ho conosciuti studiosi, accurati nell'opere loro e ben costumati.[6]

2. In contrast, the shapes defined as "losing" are typical of women (misogyny has been marking centuries of physiognomic studies) (Raina 2002, 155–163), and some types of men who are quite effeminate or lecherous. These eyebrows show a straight line, with hair too thick or too thin, their position is closer to the eyes, a line going towards the temples, either going upwards or downwards. In these cases, the personality has weak traits, it is insincere (like a monkey, *Figure* 2), ignorant, dirty (like a pig), and again envious, lying, insolent. In della Porta's words in *Ciglia dritte e profilate*, *Ciglia che stanno curvate alle tempie*, *Ciglia svelte dal naso e distese alle tempie*, *Ciglia dimesse in tutto*, *Giglia congionte e dense*:

6 della Porta, Giovan Battista. 2013. *Della fisonomia dell'uomo*, 132–133; 137: "Polemone and Adamazio give curved, not straight eyebrows to the figure of a virile man [...] curved eyebrows close to the nose show a stern and severe man, as Aristotle wrote in *The book of Animals*, and as Galeno and Plinius also wrote about the figure of a virile man. Polemone and Adamanzio do not give him straight, delicate eyebrows, like in women, but curved, arched [...] if we can compare them to animals, we would put them next to a lion, a tiger, a ferocious mastiff dog, to eagles and other very ferocious animals [...] if the arches touch on the nose, they mean a pleasant man, intelligent, attentive and considerate. I have seen men with eyebrows thus united and with not too thick hairs, and I have acknowledged them as studious, accurate in their business, and of good manners." All English translations are by Chiara Marcon.

> Aristotele nel *Libro de gli animali* disse: le ciglia distese in diritto dimostrano animo molle [...] e le rassomigliarei alle ciglia delle donne [...] Le ciglia che stanno arcuate alle tempie dimostrano simulatore e che ti dà la baia; e questo lo dice Aristotele negli *Animali* [...] Questo segno io l'attribuirei alla simia, che ha le ciglia piegate in arco verso le tempie, e più di tutti gli altri animali imitano l'azioni, e par che si ridano di noi e ci diano la baia. [...] quelli a' quali vicino al naso le ciglia vanno giù, e poi s'allargano verso le tempie, sono ignoranti per assomigliarsi al porco: da Aristotele nella *Fisonomia* [...] Le ciglia, dimesse in tutto, dimostrano invidia [...] Ma quando saranno congionte al naso e folte di peli sono di cattivissimo segno, perché dimostrano traditori monetarii, venefici, e simil vizii [...] Quanti ho veduto io uomini e vecchie che si dilettano di stregherie a veneficii, e quanti ho veduto menar a morir dal boia, per lo più tutti ho visto con queste ciglia, e così ancora odo osservato da altri.[7]

Personal experience (which acts as an important experimental test in guaranteeing della Porta's success in 19th-century positivist anthropology) confirms traditional anthropology, founded on fixed traits and the medicine of moods: the tradition of Hyppocrates and Galeno, still alive in the 17th century, considers a virtuous body as the one where blood, yellow bile and black bile, phlegm are balanced together, shaping mediocre forms which are beautiful because they are not marked by noticeable particularities. Considering the eyebrows, this happens when they are "scarce and measured, according to their length and shortness,

7 della Porta. *Della fisonomia dell'uomo.* 132, 135, 137: "Aristotle said in *The book of Animals*: straight eyebrows show a soft soul [...] and I would compare them to women's eyebrows [...] Arched eyebrows going towards the temples show a simulator, fooling with you [...] This is what Aristotle says in *The Animals* [...] I would attribute this sign to a monkey, who has curved, arched eyebrows towards the temples, and which more than any other animal imitates actions, and looks like it is laughing at us and making fun of us. Those whose eyebrows go downwards close to the nose and then grow larger towards the temples are ignorant, because they look like a pig: from Aristotle in the *Fisionomia* [...] eyebrow going downwards show envy [...] But when they are attached to the nose and with a lot of hairs then they are a very bad sign, because they signal traitors, forgers, poisoners, and generally deraved men [...] The ones I have seen, men and old women dealing with witchcraft and poisons, and the ones that I have seen going to die led by the hangman, mostly had this kind of eyebrows, and other people tell me that they have observed the same thing."

and big"[8] in a coherently well-formed body. The physiognomic ideal consists of "averageness"/mediocrity (corresponding to the balance of the four moods in a well-balanced temperament): from ancient times to the whole of the 19th century, a mediocre quality represented the positive pole because it excluded marked signs, that is, excessive, in the body and in the soul. In this respect, a similarity with a lion acted as guarantee, whereas monkeys and pigs always signaled a flaw.

This research is useful in daily life for choosing friends and acquaintances, for differentiating between the good and the bad. It also represents a valuable source of historical and literary images (Mitchell 2008, 11–30): before photography, without the prejudices of physiognomy writers would not have been able to imagine and describe the face and the body of their characters. As it was hinted before, it is a generic type of knowledge which does not involve the study of any physiognomic essay. However, in some cases there is an evident collaboration as it is the case of the second author's approach to eyebrows, that is the *Cefalogia Fisionomica*. Dated from 1630 (reprinted several times), dedicated to the study of the parts of the head (hair, forehead, eyebrows, nose, mouth, chin, ears, face, head), it was written by a little-known doctor and Franciscan friar from Bologna, Cornelio Ghirardelli, who convinced about seventy intellectuals to compose physiognomic sonnets on this subject. The main interest of this work is in the interlacement between the tradition of Aristotle and della Porta, and the novelty of the poetry of the body. The third book is dedicated to the eyebrows, described in ten shapes using della Porta's language: "piegate vicino al naso," "curvate alle tempie," "inarcate," "gionte insieme," "congiunte," "lunghe," "rare di peli," "che si piegano all'ingiù," "distese alle tempie," ed infine, "profilate e lunghe," that is, thin and long, like in women. (Ghirardelli 1673, 139–193) Each description is accompanied by an engraving, a Latin motto, and a sonnet, which function almost as an emblem of the body part considered. It is an image-text where the first and the last sonnet should be read not for their literary value, but rather for the testimony they offer of a knowledge between science (physiognomy) and literary tradition (the sonnet). The chapter opens with the analysis of a man with eyebrows "curved close to the nose" which represent the virility of an austere man, rigid and irascible, with a propensity to melancholia, that is, of a cold and dry temperament. Thus, the sonnet was proposed by Raffaele Rabbia, a member of the Accademia Bolognese dei Selvaggi (Academy of the savages) who is at work

8 della Porta. *Della fisonomia dell'uomo*. 139.

on this judgment, accompanied by the motto (*Figure* 3): "Curvus erit naso ciliis, austerus, acerbis moribus, et stolida mente notatus homo":[9]

> Le curve ciglia a l'odorato unite
> Segn'è d'austerità vana e fallace,
> E di costume rigido e tenace,
> Insidiatore altrui di mille vite.
> Voi, ch'osate poggiar su le fiorite
> Piaggie di questa età lieve, e fugace,
> Torcete il guardo, e 'l passo altronde in pace
> Da questi che vi segue a vie spedite.
> Che non tant'ha furor tigre o pantera
> Dietro a l'involator de' cari parti,
> come è costui di mente audace, e fera.
> Che s'ei stende la man, vuole insidiarti,
> e se 'l guardo offre quella faccia austera,
> fere via più che i sagittarii parti.[10]

Despite the language of the 17th century, enriched (but also made heavier) by inversions of the usual word order (anastrophe), by words inserted between two terms in a strong syntactic link (hyperbaton), by amplifications (hyperbole), and by antithesis, the sonnet clearly expresses the physiognomic idea: the shape of the body shows the disposition of the soul, and this evidence helps interpersonal relationships (as highlighted by the vocative in the second quatrain, probably suggestive of Petrarca), and becomes comprehensible thanks to a comparison between man and animal. Even where zoomorphism is not used, literature efficiently translates the psychophysical description of a character. Thus the sonnet on

9 Ghirardelli, Cornelio. 1673. *Cefalogia fisionomica*. Bologna: Dozza, 144: "The man with eyebrows curved close to the nose will be noticed as austere, with stern manners and of brutal mind." The Accademia dei Selvaggi worked in Bologna between 1606 and 1629.

10 Ghirardelli. *Cefalogia fisionomica* 144: "Curved eyebrows, united at the nose / are a sign of stern soul, empty and deceiving / and of rigid and stubborn manner / which lays traps for the lives of others. / You, who tread on the flowered / path of this light and fugitive age, / direct your glance elsewhere, in peace, far / from this who rapidly follows you. / Because the wrath of a tiger or of a panther / when running after the thieves of her loved brood / is nothing to a man whose mind is audacious and ferocious. / So that if this man holds out a hand, he wants to undermine you, / and his austere face is observing you, / hurting more than arrows."

female eyebrows accompanying the motto (*Figure* 4): "est pia quae mulier ciliis directa videtur / est animo mollis, luxuriaeque data"[11] signed by the pseudonym of Conforme Accademico Filopono[12] confirms what Ghirardelli explains in the text: straight and well-drawn eyebrows belong to a "soft" soul, which on a man is a sign of femininity, and on a woman expresses a "pretty languor, companion of modesty," which can degenerate in lasciviousness, but which can also signal docility and care of domestic virtues.

Queste diritte e affilate ciglia
De le porte degl'occhi archi pomposi;
Questi vaghi emisferi alti e vezzosi
Del ciel d'un volto, ove ogni cor s'appiglia.
Quest'irigeminata, in cui la figlia
Di Taumante i suoi fregi ha tutti ascosi;
Queste culle d'Amore, ove i riposi
Egli dispensa a la sua gran famiglia.
Queste di due pupille alme e lucenti
Diligenti custodi, onde fregiati
... Donna ne porta i lumi ardenti.
Son di sguardi lascivi ami inescati
Son di molli pensier veri argomenti.
Son di pietà e bontà segni bramati.[13]

In the previous sonnet, the language presents several artifices: metaphors (eyebrows are arches, half spheres, rainbows, cradles), periphrases (educated and mythological, with a reference to Iris representing a rainbow), anaphors (in the

11 Ghirardelli. *Cefalogia fisionomica.* 188: "It is a woman rich in virtues the one who shows straight eyebrows and whose soul is tender and sensual."
12 This reference is of the Academy of the Filoponici in Faenza (founded in 1612 and later changed into an Arcadia colony).
13 Ghirardelli. *Cefalogia fisionomica*, 188: "These straight, sharp eyebrows, / striking arches of the doors of the eyes; / these beautiful semispheres, high, charming / of the high part (the sky) of a face, calling to itself every heart (where every heart hangs to). / These two rainbows where Iris, daughter of Taumante, has hidden all its ornaments; / These cradles of the god Love, who gives rest to his large family (which promises a welcome to lovers) / These scrupulous keepers of two sacred, shining pupils, making... the woman's eye beautiful; / They are hooks that prompt lascivious looks / They are the subject of loving thoughts / They are signs of piety and bounty."

last tercet), which almost deform the sonnet, the opening part being too long compared to the last three verses. Even the use of aposiopesis, that is the three points which create suspense and convey anticipation before the identification of the receiver of the sonnet, can be considered a typical trait of baroque theatricality. In this case, too, as it was before, the sonnet and the subject appear complex, yet they are simple: it is about the advice to a man who is looking for a wife to pay attention to the shape of the eyebrows and to the traits of the face of his woman ("molto deve pensar l'uomo, il quale risolve d'ammogliarsi, essend'egli bene oltre l'altre cose, il consigliarsi con qualche Fisonomico").[14] In the case of *Cefalogia*, the one hundred sonnets collected by Ghirardelli have no literary value, but they testify a shared idea and a communicative intention which proceeds *per adiectionem* (by amplification), following the taste for accumulation typical of baroque culture. Accordingly, Ghirardelli's scientific explanation, the engraving, the motto and the sonnet of his collaborator-poets, express the desire to have a grid of stereotypes to calibrate daily life: flee from those who have curved eyebrows, close to the nose, as they are similar to a tiger, and marry those who have thin, well-drawn eyebrows because they are good, beautiful women. Thus, the physiognomic idea, simplifying and schematic, helps people in getting to know each other.

Della Porta, Ghirardelli, and the authors of the sonnets are connected to a traditional idea of the body, to be interpreted by fixed traits that do not change in time. However, in the 17th century the study of the body is of interest for the philosophy of behavior. This is the third case presented at the beginning of this study (after della Porta and Ghirardelli's "team"). Charles Le Brun, who studies René Descartes's essay on the six fundamental passions of the soul (admiration, love, hate, desire, joy, sadness), and who publishes some reflections on the mobile traits of the face, and of the eyebrows in particular, writes in the *Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière*, posthumously published in 1698: "le sourcil est la partie de tout le visage ou les passions se font mieux connaître" because, according to Le Brun, "à proportions que ces passions changent de nature, le mouvement du sourcil change de forms."[15] Le Brun then states that eyebrow movements reflect passions, even though involuntarily. There seem to be two basic

14 Ghirardelli. *Cefalogia fisionomica*. 189: "the man who takes a wife must reflect deeply, and among other things must ask for advice to a scholar of physiognomy."

15 Le Brun, Charles. 1698. *Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière*. Paris: Picart, 19–21: "the eyebrows are the part, of all the face, which best shows passions," "as passions change their nature, the movement of the eyebrows change shape."

movements which help interpretation: when the eyebrows raise in the middle, the passion expressed is pleasant; conversely, when they lower in the middle, they express a physical pain. This means that eyebrows do not lie: one can fake a smile, or can make a doe-eyed face, but eyebrows reveal the truth of the soul, independently from one's will. Therefore, they are important. They are rediscovered in the 17th century, the century which, more than any other, focuses on simulation and dissimulation, on the different forms of fiction in behavior.

To offer an example, I am going to analyze two of the passions fixed in the drawings proposed by Le Brun, and explained in relation to other parts of the face, according to a physiognomic description renewed by the study of movement: it is not morphology (the fixed shapes offered by della Porta and Ghirardelli), but a syntax of the face (in linguistic terms), expressing interiority. Considering joy (*Figure* 5), Le Brun (1698, 34–35) presents a serene forehead with well-drawn eyebrows high in the middle, smiling eyes, bright pupils, slightly open nostrils, the corner of the mouth pointing upwards, vivid colour on lips and cheeks. For wrath (*Figure* 6), Le Brun (1698, 41–42) describes a face with a wrinkled forehead, eyebrows either high or low, wrinkles between the eyes, open nostrils, closed lips, puffed, red face. In both cases Le Brun's discourse is different from della Porta's, as it establishes a relation between the expressions of mobile traits, not between forms fixed by nature.

The images thus represented are numerous, because aside from simple Carthesian passions (fear, hope, desperation, boldness, anger), there are complex passions, analyzed with great attention to the movement of the eyebrows. Thereby, surprise shows almost a caricature of raised eyebrows, eyes and mouth open wide, whereas surprise mingled with fear presents s-shaped eyebrows, a wrinkled face, a grimacing mouth. (Le Brun 1698, 24, 25)

The accuracy of Le Brun's analysis on the body in the throes of passions represents the real novelty of the psychophysical study, as Le Brun chooses to describe the movement, and not the fixed traits that belonged to the cultural heritage of traditional physiognomy. It is worth highlighting that this novelty places eyebrows at the centre of the study of expressions.

In the following centuries, regarding eyebrows, the interlacing of della Porta's and Le Brun's hypotheses (physiognomy and the anticipation of the discipline of pathognomony, as it will be named at the end of the 18th century) strengthens, even though the study and hypothesis of morphology prevails over the syntactic hypothesis. It is this trend which considers other parts of the face and of

the body as important vehicles of prejudices and stereotypes. Thus, for example, for Cesare Lombroso, the 19th century doctor who changed traditional physiognomy in anthropology, thick eyebrows usually accompany a prognathous face, big lips, black, curly hair, ultimately the typical physiognomy of black people, which is also found in monkeys and in Europeans (particularly of Southern Italy) who have not completed their evolution, being left behind. This arrested development, also signaled by thick eyebrows, is called atavism, and it characterizes several forms of devious behavior, in terms of underdeveloped, primitive, savage. (Gibson and Hahn Rafter 2006, 1–41; Rodler 2012, 1–26)

Lombroso is also a reader of Charles Darwin, 'father of the theory of evolution', but he appreciates della Porta for the way he observed personally his cases, particularly the most marked and deviant ones (as outlined when talking of the eyebrows of witches and death-row prisoners). Lombroso also deals with criminals, and he frequently describes a thief named Villella from Calabria who died in prison, in order to lay the foundation of his theory of 'born criminal'

> Uomo di cute oscura, di scarsa barba, di folti sopraccigli, di muso prognato [...] con un maggior sviluppo degli archi sopraccigliari.[16]

In this case, the reference to eyebrows is not a syntactic one as it was in the 17th century, but it presents the morphology of a particular man, together with other facial and somatic elements. Similar features in body and behavior can be found in animals and women, among which Teresa Gambardella from Salerno (*Figure* 7), who is short, with quite dark complexion, a jutting face, and so hairy that her black hair can be confused with her eyebrows. In this context, an excerpt of the short anthropological essay, *L'uomo bianco e l'uomo di colore*, written by Lombroso in 1871, says:

> Ma il fenomeno più curioso è l'impianto del capello, nero ed abbondante in tutta la regione frontale, sicché si viene a confondere con le sopracciglia, da cui si distingue soltanto per la direzione diversa impressa ai peli dal muscolo sopraccigliare.[17]

16 Lombroso, Cesare. 2012. *L'uomo bianco e l'uomo di colore. Letture sull'origine e la varietà delle razze umane*. Ed. Lucia Rodler. Bologna: Archetipolibri, 85: "man with dark skin, with thin beard, thick eyebrows, prognathous face [...] with a marked development of the eyebrow."

17 Lombroso. *L'uomo bianco e l'uomo di colore.* 87–88: "But the most curious phenomenon is the

It seems that in these cases, the quantity of hairs and the jut of the eyebrow create a juxtaposition of the 19th-century man with the monkey, both in body and in behaviour. Once again, a part of the body is used as a visual clue of inner identity. Traditional physiognomy, the one of fixed traits, still shapes the prejudices of late 19th-century anthropologists.

In the field of the physiognomy, there is a late approach to the movement that does not guarantee the definition of a stereotype, the primary objective of physiognomic classification. Something new appears in the 20th century, thanks to the medium of cinema which, like literature, welcomes the legacy left by physiognomy as a means to create characters, but which can more easily combine an attention on fixed traits with a focus on mobile traits. Therefore; in 1937 Snowhite is imagined with straight, thin eyebrows in order to create the definition of an honest, tender and sensual woman, which recalls the interpretation of the sonnet of the Accademico Conforme. As for the seven dwarves, instead, it is easy to notice a marked reworking of Le Brun's passions, particularly in Happy's joy and in Grumpy's bad temper. It is therefore easy to confirm a reassuring function of physiognomy in all these cases, that is, of the representation of a standard body, defined, coherent with its personality, which allows the instant identification of a certain type of behavior.

This multisecular balance between the psychophysical consistency of an individual and its physiognomic interpretation shows irreparable creaks in the second half of the 20th century, due to a complete revolution in the idea of the body and its perception: a natural body no longer possesses anything definite and definitive from birth, it does not determine any physiognomic constriction, it does not guide to any clue to unveil its inner side. This is because, compared to the past, every individual has the opportunity to change his body in a completely unthinkable way, thanks to training, dieting, fashion, or plastic surgery. This leads to a double advantage: on the one hand, the body becomes an almost opaque object for the physiognomic eye; on the other hand, it takes on magical features because, like a character in a fairy tale, it becomes impermeable to time and space, that is, to age and weight, which can be controlled in several, more or less transformative ways.

Considering eyebrows, a pair of tweezers is enough to shape a physiognomy: it is impossible to forget Audrey Hepburn's charm in the sixties (*Figure* 8), conveyed also thanks to her eyebrows which are defined metaphorically and zoo-

hairline, black and thick at the forehead, such that they are confused with the eyebrows, from which they are differentiated only by the different direction of the hairs given by the eyebrows muscle."

morphically as seagull wings.[18] That decade marks the beginning of a series of difficulties in defining the meaning of body parts in terms of morality, personality, behavior, passions, as they are the effect of a cultural participation of men and women in showing the relationship between themselves and the social context of time and of fashion above all.

The novelty of the body in the second half of the 20th century is then its transformability, which implies a new way of looking, less schematic and simplifying than with physiognomy, whose strength begins to falter in the 1960s, its "mistakes" and "conjectural" nature started to be noticed, and its findings were to be verified in social context, as outlined by Gombrich. It is this point of view that shows the importance of eyebrows: having always been the sign of a specific personality (with della Porta and Ghirardelli) or of a passion (with Le Brun) or of an ethnical development (with Lombroso), in the second half of the 20th century this body part modified according to fashion, cannot be interpreted without referring to a historical and social context. Audrey Hepburn's eyebrow, for example, recall the "surprise" of Le Brun, with three clarifications which can be applied to all recent physiognomic conjectures: 1. That the somatic look of the second half of the 20th century is shaped artificially and therefore it does not show any spontaneous passion (seagull-wing eyebrows, for example, do not express a natural movement upwards, but a cosmetic design); 2. that the search for a correspondence between parts of the face must take into account the more or less obviously artificial nature of certain traits (in borderline cases, a face could be completely remodelled by plastic surgery, therefore being physiognomically void); 3. That every psychosomatic interpretation must be specified in terms of current fashion, the person's gender, their profession, that is, whatever constitutes a social perception of the body.

This means that the schematic, simplifying, reassuring function of physiognomy which, like pathognomony, has studied and exploited passions, is decreasing, or – more exactly – it must be integrated with observations of a cultural and anthropological-social nature. A difficult challenge, but undoubtedly a fascinating one.

Translated by Chiara Marcon

18 The zoomorphic reference is a metaphor, not a comparison with the same body part in different species as in zoomorphic physiognomy, since eyebrows are defined by the shape of the wings.

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A Semiotic Approach to the Parthenon as a Pillar of Modern Democracy

1. Introduction

Let us suppose that one needs to represent "democracy." What does one do in such a case? To render things easier, let us suppose this someone is an architect. An architect would probably look for the most convenient architectural sign, if not for any other reason than as a starting point in order to develop one's own approach to the task. The first thing which comes into our mind would be the most exposed visual sign of "democracy," the "classical portico" – "porch."

The world's first purpose-built parliament house was the Irish Parliament House in Dublin, today the Bank of Ireland. The work on the building began in 1729, based on the designs of the amateur architect Sir Edward Lovett Pearce. Based on Andrea Palladio's proposed reconstruction of the colonnaded terraces of the Roman temple at Palestrina, the building was semi-circular in shape, colonnaded by Ionic columns, while three statues fronted the main (south) portico, representing Hibernia (Latin for Ireland), Fidelity, and Commerce. The building was further extended, to both the east and west, and a new portico was added at the east, by James Gandon, in the 1780s. At the request of the peers, Gandon used Corinthian columns in order to distinguish their entrance from the main one. Rolf Loeber asks if the "wide acceptance of classicism in eighteenth-century Ireland [was] due to the architect's persuasion of their patrons, or had the patrons already been predisposed to classical styles of art?" (Loeber 1979, 49) Where did it all come from?

In the three centuries since then many parliament or courthouse buildings have been erected in the neoclassical style all across the world. To mention but a few of the best-known examples, we would identify the four Courts in Dublin (1786–1802); the White House, as well as the Capitol, in Washington DC (works began in 1872 and 1873); the Bundestag in Bonn; and the Reichstag in Berlin. Buildings of this kind in the Pacific and Asian areas, as well as in South America and Africa, were also built. As a matter of fact, in most of the cases "the link between popular architectural trends in Britain and their adoption in British colonies [throughout the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries] is true for most classical styles." (Arthur 2004, 22) Arthur further emphasizes that:

> Historical trends for classical styles were copied in Britain and its colonies, predominantly because of their associations with the Roman Empire and the message of power, order and structure they impart to their observers. Governments in the 19th century wanted to associate themselves with powerful and orderly societies, such as the Romans, and they did this by using classical style for their important public buildings. (Arthur, 84)

Referring to Freeland, Arthur further stresses that, for example, "in Britain academic debate reached a truce when Gothic style focused on ecclesiastical buildings and schools, and classical style focused on government and commercial buildings." (Arthur, 25) In the USA "the Capitols were clearly seen by their creators as powerful statements of American democratic beliefs, vigorously developing after the War of Independence." (Cope 2001, 84)

Here, it is useful to consider Erwin Panofsky's analysis of the classical "temple front," as given in *The Ideological Antecedents of the Rolls-Royce Radiator* (1963). While we probably should not take Panofsky's analysis of the radiator in question more seriously than he himself did, but as a "metaphorical prelude, a peripheral ornament toward a finite and specific characteristics of English art," as put by Bialostocki (1986, 132), or as a specimen of his whimsy, "written in the crisp and lucid language," as Gombrich (1996, 29) pointed out still demonstrates the possibility of applying an iconological approach to objects different than artworks. While the second level of interpretation was omitted in his case, as suggested by Bialostocki, it was defensibly done so, since the essay is neither about the "temple front" as a motif (it is just a metaphor), but about its style, nor is it about the

Silver lady, but about the figurine's style. Therefore, Bialostocki concludes, "what we interpret as a sign is not so much the image but its style." (Bialostocki, 133) Gombrich laments over Panofsky's seeking for "ideological antecedents" of both the sculpture and the "temple front" in the national spirit of the English, thus attributing the features of the irrational, the rational and the triumph of both (technical precision in Bialostocki) to English Gothic (Palladian in Bialostocki) architecture, while not shedding "the racialism that so marred German tradition." (Gombrich, 29) Those contrasting principles are accompanied by "another 'antinomy,' that between the irregular layout of the English gardens and the strict regularity of the Palladian country houses they surround." He further draws attention to Lovejoy's article on "The Chinese Origin of a Romanticism," in which Lovejoy "anchored the development of the English garden in an essay by Sir William Temple, 'Upon the Gardens of Epicurus' [...] where Panofsky would have found an explicit description of the contrast that concerned him..." in order to ask, "Are, then the ideological antecedents of the radiator to be found in China rather than in England?" Gombrich emphasizes that

> To be sure, Chinese and Japanese buildings are no less symmetrical than are Palladian villas, but it may be more relevant to remember that it was the Renaissance architect Sebastiano Serlio who made the distinction between rustic masonry, 'a work of nature,' and the classical order as 'the work of human hands', a distinction that survived in the Italian cult of the grotto and the grotesque. (Gombrich, 29)

Be it for the Parliament House or the Supreme Courts – the landmarks of the governing power of a state, thus referring to democracy, as "the noblest form of government we have yet evolved" (Mailer 2003, 49) –, it is an undeniable fact that most of those buildings throughout the world have been erected in a so-called "neoclassical" architectural style. The main pattern, norm, or the "essence," is to be found in the Greek Parthenon as an icon of Western civilization, and a symbol of the classical world. To be more precise, it is just about one particular part of it = the portico, or the porch, a structure attached to the exterior of a building forming a covered entrance: that is to say, an element that does not even have any structural role.

1.1 From an architectonic sign towards a process of signification

How does the Parthenon stand for democracy and why is it so?

Is it for the Golden Ratio as a system of rational/harmonious/human proportions and, if so, is it still that appealing, is it still aesthetically pleasing to our eyes and mind? Is the implementation of neoclassical style in a modern contemporary city just a visual manipulation regarding the nation's identity, as well as democratic politics? What is it that makes the Greek pillars so appealing to modern democracies? Is democracy a civilization's Golden Ratio, or just an eye/mind spectacle/manipulation? (We are not asking if there is any democracy now or then.)

Such a representational issue, no doubt, creates a semiotic relation, which can be seen in its twofold dimension. Firstly, as an object to represent, as in the "democracy" and "classical portico" cases, and secondly, as a relational process based on a *subjectivization context by determined social realities,* as in the cases of the polysemantic deduction of such concepts. We shall consider here semiotics as a methodology, or as one of the possibilities to analyze the architectonic signs, in the shape of a firm ground of processing meaning in some of its constituent units. The field of the artistic and aesthetic expression in turn, as a tool of representation has already shown that its elements can consist of a wider range of meaning(s), seen as a multifold semantic universe.

No matter how a semiotician should approach it (either, as we said, in two dimensions or in more than two), it is evident that it is the subject who makes things "visible" in the way he/she wishes to. If we take such a predisposition to be true, also taking into account the skepticism which might appear, then, its justification would seem indisputable. In other words, each such hypothesis is believed to be true, if such a truth finds its justifying grounds in an attempt of founding a theory. It is therefore to conclude, that such kind of *conditioning* based on the impartial social reality should belong to an epistemologically treatable field. (Goldman 1986)

Our suppositions however, based on *modalities,* which are not only psychologically and intuitively minded but receptionally as well (in case one takes social interaction as its grounds), can doubtlessly create relations which can be seen through the eyes of a semiotician. Thus, as shall be seen, one would ask: can exemplified architectonic signs bring about a univocal representation of their functioning, or semiotic processes would have to *intervene towards a transformational process of their elements,* so as to bring about such a semantic status as metaphorization, as one of its optionalities, in terms of reaching their final result?

If one considers such a view as a part of the general semiotic process, one can see how such entities become subjectivized – gradually, even if one takes a simple conversion process as a sample, on the basis of the semiotic preconditions taken into consideration. Concretely speaking, the concept of "democracy" seen in its abstraction gets thus concretized in relation to the architectonic signs, seen as an objective ground, or a contextual social reality. In a procedural aspect (either syntagmatically or paradigmatically, or seen also from other aspects), in terms of its aspectualization – such as "*wanting-to-be*," "*not-wanting-to be*," and/or the subjective ground or level, as opposed to the objective one – one finds grounds for decent meaning deduction. (see Greimas and Fontanille 1993; emphasis added)

The result of such a process to be performed is signification, seen as semiotic systems processing signs which need to render themselves more complex so as to manifest their result: the meaning.[1] The procedure of the gradual *de-modalization* of the already *modalized* objects, as representing various architectonic styles, has to be semiotically preconditioned by the subject, thus creating semiotic squares, ready to gain new semantic predispositions. Our aim in addition is to show how such a relationship between the terms (as exposing and presenting concepts of democracy/non-democracy, for instance, or other proper taxonomic terms as a direct consequence of an architectonic process) can be seen in terms of what one may wish to make to express a determined meaning. In order to reach such a goal, one must undergo processes of transformation to the extent of modalization, so that questions may arise: do I see the Parthenon as denoting democracy or not? Do *I believe* that the classical portico relates to univocal courthouses processing policies, or their functioning may run other levels of their semiotically interpretable entities? Such questions in turn firmly lie on epistemological grounds because of the *justifiability of believed or non-believed "truths."* As far as this kind of epistemology's justifiedness is concerned, in terms of the semiotic approach, here is what Greimas and Fontanille have to say:

> Thus, the possibility of narrative syntax, considered as a set of operations affecting discrete units, is based on a rational epistemology

1 Such a term as "meaning" is, as it is understandable, brings a semantic analysis. It should be understood however that, in our case, the subject-object relationship has to be taken into consideration, a fact that gives epistemological significance to such a discussion. In conclusion, one has to point out, as shall be seen, that the *transferability* of such structures makes meaning *transferable,* thus enabling a metaphorization process.

> that establishes the first articulation of signification (e.g. the semiotic square) as terms that are simply abstract positions manipulated by a summoning subject. When all is said and done, we are dealing with a classical epistemological model that sets into relationship a knowing subject, as operator, and the elementary structures as representations of the knowable world. The subject of theoretical construction can know and categorize only if the horizon of meaning is divided into a series of discrete elements. (Greimas and Fontanille, VII)

Finally, one has to ask: is it, as a result, an issue that one has to understand through its denotation or connotation? There is no doubt in saying that the transformational process, which renders the terms in discussion, should be analytically identified for the purpose of creating the necessary semiotic relations.

In conclusion, the semiotic view can render such concepts as *manipulation* for instance (if one wants, as its final meaning among other issues in our sense, or to be more precise: *a passionate manipulation* as a consequence of an actantial relation), as it in turn epistemologically expands the semiotic domain, in terms of what *may be semiotically interpretable*. A question may then follow: has such kind of changeability as well as transformation in the semiotic sense of the word been created by the subject exclusively so as to render the semiotically-derived units in the shape of a newly created and contextualized social reality? If such "knowing subject" comes to his/her exclusive existence, as we noted, here is what Greimas and Fontanille suggest:

> "In addition, if, at the epistemological level, we examine the conditions in which signification can appear as discrete units (in the semiotic square, for example), the very same problematics arise. We have to ask ourselves, naively and as though we were projecting, what the mode of existence of a subject operator would be prior to its first summons. As epistemological subject, it would also have to experience a virtual instance before being actualized, as knowing subject, through the discretization of signification. The resemblance between the trajectory of the epistemological subject and the one identified for the narrative subject (virtualization, actualization, realization) is not surprising, since the contamination of description by the object described is a well-known phenomenon, at least in the social sciences." (Greimas and Fontanille, XIX)

In such a fashion, one may establish an analysis of the "semiotic styles" as Greimas and Fontanille rightfully claim. What one sees as a result is the *semio-narrative* level; the result of a deductive method in rendering meaning. Then, if such conceptions are already modalized, one may ask: are the Greek pillars (for instance) opposed to modern democracy, and why? Can one thus render their process of metaphorization?

The first problem in reference to the known contradiction between *seeming and reality* that may come to one's mind is exactly the *negation* of the architectonic object: seen as a representational process aimed at its functioning. Consequently, a lack of meaning is what occurs. If such is the result, as soon it shall be analyzed, then one can speak of a semiotic relation from the very start. Or better: the process of conceptualizing and perceiving meaning(s) which might initially represent a brand new reality is of a semiotic nature, since it creates relations which *might intentionally alter the state of such an object through the receiving (viewing) subjects, through tension of the mentioned relations.* In conclusion, thus, it produces a new micro-semantic universe which is by all means semiotically treatable.

In our view, such would be the method towards the signification process, still to be resolved in this paper. There is no doubt in saying, however, that the given concepts, within their presumed deep structure, into their present states, the state of their affairs, can further be rendered passionate, thus gaining a new status which by moving or transforming themselves from one state to another, can be seen and/or transformed as subjectivized items, alongside their initial state. This can be exemplified by creating the so-called simulacra which may be suitable to the process of such a transformation: where, for instance, the Parthenon (within its first negation) has no meaning in the first axis, and has connoted meaning in the second axis.

Owing to the fact that semiotics may also be intended as *a possibility of a multiple meaning deduction,* it is also necessary to emphasize that this is not the only semiotic process to be regarded in this context. Out of such presented dichotomies, one may also represent in the frames of logical procedures of inferring meanings. Such an issue, by all means belongs to the logics of science in its *triadic Peircean* shape. One may in turn see the Parthenon as an architectonic sign (within its Firstness) which may stand *as referring to something else* (our paraphrasing of Peirce) within its Secondness, or as a symbol of Thirdness, which relates to the way how one, "the interpretant," may look at it. (see Pierce 1960)

2. On Perceiving Architecture

There is nothing novel in the assumption that buildings convey meaning. They might mean different things to different people. It is in this manner that Neil Leach highlights "the need to acknowledge the agency of the interpreter and the perspective from which interpretation is made." (Leach 2003, 127) While Nelson Goodman in *How Buildings Mean* stresses that "A building is a work of art only insofar as it signifies, means, refers, symbolizes in some way..." (Goodman1985, 643), William Whyte in *How Do Buildings Mean?* asserts that "Architecture is widely perceived to possess meaning: to be more than mere structure." (Whyte 2006, 154) Hence, the inclination toward a particular form of architectural style is rather psychological – thus more ready to be manipulated than an aesthetic one.

Discussing the questions of interpretation with regard to our awareness of the ideological manipulations of the architecture, and "the difficulty of agreeing on the nature of the architectural statement," Russel Cope argues that "layers of meaning may need to be uncovered in order to pinpoint the fundamental determinants of statements on architectural styles." (Cope 2001, 84) Suggesting Hitchcock and Seales' *Temples of Democracy* as an "excellent introduction to the range of social, political and ideological factors" underlying the capitols of various states in the United States, Cope extracts the conclusion that "capitols were clearly seen by their creators as powerful statements of American democratic beliefs, vigorously developing after the War of Independence." (Cope, 84) In the U.S. Capitol Building guide (2003), in the "vocabulary" section, one would find the description of *U.S. Capitol Building* as "a government building which symbolizes American democracy and freedom;" and a description of *symbol* as "an object or picture that represents a much larger idea" (2). It has further been said that "just as Augustus Pugin's neo-Gothic nineteenth-century churches were intended to articulate Christian values and inspire a Catholic revival, so Norman Foster's rebuilt Reichstag was intended to express a commitment to democracy through its architectural form." (Whyte, 155) In the very same light, stressing the symbolism of buildings by claiming that "outer design should represent the inner meaning of the building," Patrick Joyce indicates that "the Houses of Parliament in London were held to represent the Ancient Constitution, and the Law Courts in London the Common Law." (Joyce 2003, 152)

In an overview of the mechanisms underlying architectural perception and recognition, Alexander Koutamanis focuses on relationships between style and

image, representation and recognition. "General cognitive mechanisms," he asserts, "that determine object recognition make prominent elements equally well perceivable to all." This is why "such elements can be used to define classical architecture." (Koutamanis 2006, 384) While most people are "capable of immediately recognizing architecture as classical even in ruins," Koutamanis says, the "immediate and unambiguous recognition of objects and parts," such as Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns, despite their being complex structures, is "even more impressive". It is the combination of *transversality* and *colinearity* to which Koutamanis ascribes the underlying principle that "allows us to distinguish not only between columns and their superstructure or base in a colonnade but also between the various components of a column." (Koutamanis, 385) However, "identifying an element as classical," Koutamanis argues, "refers to general principles such as symmetry and tripartition" but it also "presupposes acquaintance with the classical canon." (Koutamanis, 390)[2]

3. On the Parthenon and its architectonic features

What does this "classical style," as applied to architecture, actually mean? Considering the most obvious meaning, Summerson suggests that "a classical building is one whose decorative elements derive directly or indirectly from the architectural vocabulary of the ancient world;" these elements being "easily recognizable, as for example columns of five standard varieties, applied in standard ways." (Summerson 1963, 7) This apparently superficial definition makes a usable distinction between classical architecture and classical references. As a matter of fact, ancient Greek architecture has been recognized as one that established new aesthetic standards. The Parthenon, in particular, has been recognized as the one "measured with a degree of mathematical exactitude not found in earlier structures, in which we find the earliest design principles that codify with precision different column orders, capital types, height and width requirements, and appropriateness of external decoration". Furthermore, the same principles are said to be "embedded in Greek philosophical thought and have created a timeless, universal concept of beauty that has been revived countless times through history." (Palmer 2008, xlvii)

2 For establishing harmony throughout the structure see Tzonis and Lefaivre 1986.

Our intention in this essay is not to give a detailed description of the Parthenon, or any of the buildings mentioned. Yet, some basic information is required. Which characteristics or elements of the Parthenon might be used in order to be semiotically treated?

The Parthenon was designed by architects Iktinos and Kallikrates, and was built on the Acropolis in Athens, as a part of a bigger complex dedicated to religious festivities. The construction of the temple took place from 447 BC to 438 BC, during the rule of Pericles. The Acropolis (Ακρόπολις; *akros, akron,* edge, extremity + *polis,* city) is a site located on a high rocky outcrop above the city of Athens, thus dominating the city, while allowing oversight. Such a position produced all the significance it gained through time, being the city's most important citadel, a traditional seat of Greece's ancient rulers, and a place of worship, consecutively. The Parthenon itself was built to honor *Athena Parthenos*, the city's patron deity. However, the Parthenon as the most formidable and most enduring building from ancient Athens has become a symbol of classicism, thus the symbol of the classical ideas, including democracy. Or, to be a bit more precise, as suggested in the *Historical Dictionary of Architecture*, "Many Renaissance and later neoclassical buildings found across the western world have been modeled on the Parthenon, not only for its aesthetics, but also because its architecture came to symbolize general prosperity, democratic principles, and honest leadership." (Palmer, 3)

3.1. Ratio

The Parthenon is an octastyle (having eight frontal columns in the portico), peripteral (having columns on all sides) building, applying the ideal ratio of a "dynamic rectangle," which is a "root five rectangle." It means that a ratio of width to length is 1:2.25 (4:9, computed with the Babylonian method), which equals to the ratio between columnation and intercolumnation, where the intercolumnation should measure 2.25 diameter interval, according to Vitruvius. It was Vitruvius, the Roman architect, who gave a description of the proportions of the human body based on the canonical tradition in art, further extended in the Renaissance by Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer. Robert Tavernor says in his Introduction to Vitruvius's *On Architecture:* "Vitruvius describes the design of temples through the analogy of the proportions and modularity of the perfect human body." (Tavernor 2009, xviii) Or rather, as Protagora has put it, "of all things the

measure is man…" Measure and balance, along with law, were the most important principles of the ancient world. Pythagoras stressed proportion in philosophy and music, Polykleitos in sculpture, and later on Vitruvius in architecture. Thus, according to later comments (Galen), in the *Canon of Polykleitos* we find that

> …perfection in proportion comes about via an exact commensurability of all the body's parts to one another: of finger to finger and of this to the hand and wrist, of these to the forearm to the upper arm: of the equivalent parts of the leg; and of everything to everything else. (As cited in McCague 2009, 25)

There are numerous accounts that the proportions of the human body neither did, nor were able to serve as a model for the orders, in relation to the importance of geometry and proportion in architecture. Tavernor suggests that as "Architecture became global […] the Vitruvian architectural tradition [became] abandoned as a totality." (Tavernor, xxxv) Yet, some aspects of this tradition "are still used to lend authority to the outward appearance of buildings" (Tavernor, xxxv), if not in terms of proportion than at least in terms of cultural meaning.

Just as the main purpose of proportion is to establish harmony throughout a structure, it might be said that to establish harmony is the central purpose of democracy, as well, that is: to accomplish objectives that best serve the interests of the people, in terms of their human rights, living standards, and quality of life standards, and that reflects their highest aspirations.

3.2. Columns

The Parthenon is the most famous example of a Doric temple, applying the Doric order as the most austere of all. But, as Rhodes suggests, "it is not pure Doric, and should perhaps be viewed more as a building of vital transition in the history of Greek architecture" (Rhodes 1995, 74) For this reason, it refers to "the reunion of Athens and her East Greek sisters occasioned by the Persian Wars," as well as to the nomination of Athens as "the new cultural and intellectual center of the world, a role inherited from Ionia…" Rhodes argues that "The intricately planned Ionicisms of the Parthenon are crucial contributions to the creation of a truly international style of architecture on the Acropolis and point to Athens as the first

great cosmopolis of the Greek world." (Rhodes, 76) There are five orders, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan and Composite, recognized as the "five basic elements in the architectural grammar of Antiquity." (Summerson 1963, 13) An "order" is the "column-and-superstructure" unit of a temple colonnade. We find the earliest written description of the orders in Vitruvius (*De Architectura*), which became "the code of practice of a Roman architect of the first century A.D. [...] In the middle of the fifteenth century, the Florentine architect and humanist, Leon Batista Alberti, described the orders, partly with reference to Vitruvius and partly from his own observations of Roman remains. It was he who added, from observation, a fifth order – the Composite – which combines features of the Corinthian with those of the Ionic." It could be said that it is, nearly a century later, Sebastian Serlio who promoted the orders in the way we know them since, and who started their "long career of canonical, symbolic, almost legendary authority." (Summerson, 9) However, it was the Romans who further developed the orders by bringing them in the process of designing of arched and vaulted public buildings (amphitheaters, basilicas, or triumphal arches). As Summerson demonstrated, it was "as if they felt that no building could communicate anything unless the orders were involved in it. To them the orders *were* architecture". What is even more important,

> "They [the Romans] invented ways of using the orders not merely as ornamental enrichments for their new types of structure but as controls. The orders are, in many Roman buildings, quite useless structurally but they make their buildings expressive, they make them speak; they conduct the building, with sense and ceremony and often with great elegance, into the mind of the beholder. Visually, they dominate and control the buildings to which they are attached." (Summerson, 14)

Ancient Romans were, in fact, the first people to appreciate and emulate classical Greek architecture, but they used it not only for religious inspiration, but also to cultivate an image of political power and superiority. It is in this way that the Capitol in Washington D.C. made use of columns that was "immediately understood to recall the original form of democracy as established in Ancient Greece." (Palmer, 79)

Therefore, "while we must incorporate these essentials in our idea of what is classical, we must also accept the fact that classical architecture is only recogniz-

able as such when it contains some allusion, however slight, however vestigal, to the antique 'orders'". (Summerson, 8)

3.3 Optical distortion (illusion)

Although all the lines of the Parthenon building, including the columns, do seem to look perfectly straight, they are not. Due to the science of optics, structures built with straight lines tend to look slightly distorted. Therefore, "some of its structural lines were deliberately curved and slanted" (Diggins 1965, 127) by the architects Kallikrates and Iktinos. Most of those distorted lines are vertical ones (columns), and some of them are horizontal lines, thus producing an effect of straightness and solidity, while also producing the desired effect on the viewer. Still, reasons for this kind of intervention in formal irregularity might occur due to site specificities, as well. Thus, assuming "the architect to be the guardian of the rules of beauty, the proprietor of special problem-solving instruments, and the dextrous negotiator in the conflict between the canon of form and deformation," in their *The question of autonomy in architecture* Lefaivre and Tzonis trace the advancements in some aspects of solving deformations in the design and production process. Regarding early attempts to "canonize" corrections of optical errors, the authors note that "Just as Vitruvius had tried to compensate for what the eye cheats us of, Serlio attempted to make up for what the site takes away." (Lefaivre and Tzonis 1984, 25–42) According to them, what Alberti would name an offense "to the Eye" and "to the Mind" regarding architects' failure "to satisfy our immoderate Desire for Perfection," for Serlio "Regularity of form is not an objective state of the product, but a subjective state of the mind." (Lefaivre and Tzonis 1984, 31)

4. On the Semiotics of the Parthenon

As has been mentioned, we are interested in the process of subjectivization, which occurs after the process of aspectualization, thus attempting to render a "knowing subject" that then transforms itself into *possible passions* and, as Greimas and Fontanille say, into a *semiotics of passion*. Naturally, such a task needs further elaboration in this paper, in terms of its graduality and procedures. Such graduality,

as one can easily note, should by all means take into account the contextual circumstances, as Eco frequently puts it. (Eco 1968) One may certainly ask why. We may immediately respond to such a question: such circumstances would allow our object of analysis to be seen in *different contexts*, which is one of the points where they become subordinated to further procedures. Finally, such a view can contribute to the subject's *becoming passionate*, because of the following:

> There would therefore exist two forms of 'state,' and the same difficulties arise once again. State is first of all a 'state of affairs' of the world that is transformed by the subject, but is also the 'state of feeling' of the competent subject about to act, as well as a modal competence itself that at the same time undergoes transformations. (Greimas and Fontanille, XIX)

As has already been clarified, the architectonic objects that contain signs in themselves, were created in the past. One has to conclude that *such a text had a context. It would deduce the logically expected definitions.* Concretely speaking, in what historical context was the Parthenon built? No doubt, the question was previously answered. Yet: is such context in full concordance with the present democracies (seen as semiotic objects in our sense of the word), or not? If not, one has to conclude that a semiotic process has to occur so as to render its proper meaning.

This way, the task of a semiotician, in this context, is to define the text/context relations which are otherwise historically and architectonically featured, which in turn would attempt to provide an answer to the following question: is such a precision (within the Parthenon's architectonic features) reflected *inter-actionally* in what it represents? Or, better: does it process equivocal or unequivocal messages? If, as we may be encouraged to suggest, *unequivocal messages* are processed, then semiotics should doubtlessly play its part in deriving the meaning or meanings it represents.

Hopefully it is clear by now that in terms of the objects described, one can notice the messages unequivocally transmitted due to the inadequacy of the text and context relationship. Concretely speaking, if the pillars as described above belong to a period *adapted to the context* (either architectonically or essentially), they have been *de-contextualized* in the present times. If one perceives a situation in such a way, then doubtlessly *the cognizing subject*, after viewing it, and as described, passing through the notion of tensitivity (in a determined period of

time), *becomes passionate, thus deriving a taxonomy such as despair is*. This conclusion (after the earlier described lack of meaning as a result) is due to several reasons: facing such architectonic styles, obviously the cognizing subject becomes an impassionate one, thus witnessing a process of manipulation. This situation obviously becomes possible (as one of the semiotic possibilities) during the tensitivity period in terms of the object first (which is the Parthenon itself), within its state of affairs, and then the impassionate subject (the one believing it to represent democracy, initially), within its state of feelings after the transformability's occurrence. Manipulation as a matter of fact, or better, the *impassioned subject* being manipulated as a final result of the process on its surface structure, is only sufficient in terms of a de-contextualized Parthenon, and emerges as both the psychological and logical result of the process.

5. On representing democracy

As was mentioned before, in the *Historical Dictionary of Architecture* we read that it is

> ...attention to mathematical detail, focused on symmetry, harmony, and proportionality that provides the Parthenon with an enduring beauty called the 'classical' aesthetic. Many Renaissance and later neoclassical buildings found across the western world have been modeled on the Parthenon, not only for its aesthetics, but also because its architecture came to symbolize general prosperity, democratic principles, and honest leadership. (Palmer, 3)

We find some basic notions on "democracy" in the *Britannica Online Encyclopedia*. The term "democracy" is derived from the Greek *dēmokratiā*, which was coined from *dēmos* ("people") and *kratos* ("rule") in the middle of the fifth century BC during the Classical period, in which the Parthenon and the Acropolis itself obtained their present meaning to denote the political system that the citizens of Athens began to develop under the leadership of Cleisthenes. Since then both theory and practice of democracy have undergone profound changes.

5. Conclusion

Just as the Parthenon is a symbol of the Classical world, so is democracy its most valuable product (invention). Democracy is considered to be the closest to an ideal form of government, in terms of demonstrating its superiority to any other form of government by possessing a number of features that most people, whatever their basic political beliefs, would consider desirable. Yet, since Aristotle, political philosophers generally have insisted that no actual political system is likely to attain, to the fullest extent possible, all the features of its corresponding ideal. Thus, whereas the institutions of many actual systems are sufficient to attain a relatively high level of democracy, they are almost certainly not sufficient to achieve anything like a perfect or ideal democracy, but may only produce a satisfactory approximation of the ideal. Taken that the ultimate form of democracy was established through the French and American revolutions, and is today confronted by the phenomena of globalization, societal fragmentation and differentiation, as well as by different forms of transnational interactions, it becomes obvious that democracy becomes reduced to a technique or a form of regulation. (see Blokker, 2008) The very same process might be applied to antique temples and buildings. As Giedion noticed, in the nineteenth-century architects tried to imitate earlier periods and their forms, but "everything they put their hands on turned to dust rather than to gold. Today we can see why." (Giedion 1967, 5)

This can finally witness our semiotic view as well: the transformational processes, as we stated earlier, prove the amount of the interpretability by the side of the subject. Such interpretability, as it is semiotically perceivable (and/or possible), undergoes the aforementioned transformability through the initial despair to the extent of being manipulated. Then, as a conclusion, the process itself can render all social contexts interpretable: be they art creations as our case aimed at a determined functional purpose. Uniting the two, and moreover, this being the usual starting point at each process of semiosis, renders definitely as a result as one of its meanings: a manipulative subject as Greimas and Fontanille claim, and/or manipulation as a consequence of the *subject of doing*.

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"Mystic, Awful Was the Process"

Changing Meanings of Victorian Child Photography in Lewis Carroll's Darkroom and Bright Text

First the flood of chemicals:
guncotton, ether, silver
nitrate. Then forty-five long seconds
of stillness--and she only three
and quick...
(Stephanie Bolster, "Aperture, 1856")

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson's Alice-tales (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* [1865], *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* [1871]) authored under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll earned lasting literary fame as timeless children's classics canonically acclaimed for paying an amusingly bright, non-didactic homage to the creative potentials of infantile imagination.[1] Both Wonderland and Looking Glass Realm belong to the mythicized girl child heroine's fictitious dreams which abound in ambiguous meanings serving a fertile ground for the nonsense fairy-tale fantasy genre itself. The genesis of the Alice-tales came to be in an idealized manner. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (henceforward *AAW*) is often commemorated as an "extempore romance" (Brooker 2005, 10; Cohen 1995, 91) improvised on a bright summer day's idyllic boating trip to delight the author's favorite companion, the beloved muse and child-friend, Alice Liddell, fictionalized as the tales' protagonist. Yet another significant field of Carroll's artistic oeuvre, photography has been unjustly demonized by posterity.

The retrospective focus falls on girl child nudes that symbolized for Victorians pre-lapsarian innocence and pure imaginativeness granting sublime spiritual

1 During the writing of this essay the author was supported by the Bolyai János Research Grant of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

elevation through sophisticated aesthetic delights, but later became misjudged as physical evidence of the onlooker-photographer's pathological carnal desires. This misjudgment was heavily influenced by the Freudian psychoanalytical theoretization of minors as polymorphously perverse, inherently sexual beings and by post/modernist malicious myths of child-loving, as Lolita by Nabokov, the Russian translator of Alice, who mockingly called the author Carroll Carroll, a mirror-image of his paedophile antihero Humbert Humbert (Prioleau 1975, 428), not to mention the related recent trend of "Lolitalization," a hideously sexist and ageist mechanism of contemporary mass mediatized fashion industry promoting the sexualization of the underage girlie look. David O'Kane's recent digital photoshop collage simulates a secret kiss exchanged between Carroll and Alice to mock precisely this postmodern insistence at demythologizing the purity of a children's classic by remythologizing its authors dark desires for prepubescents. (Figure 1)

Feminist critics like Carol Mavor strongly warn against simplificatory readings of the photos as mere historical documents of the pure Victorian worship of unaffected innocence and unspoiled beauty. They urge to challenge the idealistic attitude codified along the lines of Morton Cohen's interpretation on his first publishing Carroll's long-lost child-nudes. Although I fully accept and appreciate Mavor's point, I argue that the Carrollian girl child('s representation) cannot be evaluated along the lines of innocence vs. impurity. The verbal/visual narratives about her resemble the era of transition in which they were created: abundant, perhaps normally, with ambiguous meanings. We have to be aware of the fact that late nineteenth-century (industrial, economical, socio-political, scientific,) epistemological changes altered the conception of the child from small, imperfect adult to cherished, junior family member increasingly safe-guarded by social reforms such as the legislation of the age of consent that aimed at protecting purity from sexuality while also acknowledging the potential for contaminating innocence. The epoch was apparently pervaded by an anxious preoccupation with *desiring children* in both senses of the phrase: an excitement equally caused by violators of innocence, and by innocence's being prone to corruption. (No wonder that in the era's contemporary representations—fuelled by a complex sexual dynamics—the child is just as much an icon of a purity lost to adults as an embodiment of a rebellion against its essentialized virtue.) Perhaps Carroll himself understood the ambiguous, potentially compromising significations of his child-

nudes when he insisted on asking for maternal consent[2] for his underage sitters, when he destroyed some of the plates and kept only a few photographs in his possession, or when he eventually gave up the 'black art[3]' in 1880.[4] However, to judge as suspicious even the artist's demands for maternal consent certainly does not do justice to Carroll; and to see merely perversion, prudishness, repression or denial where there is perhaps—besides a number of clashing contradictory sense and sensations—a psychic purity[5] inconceivable by contemporary post-Freudian, postwar, post-postmodernist standards results in the misreading of an entire era.

Surely, it is an impossible project to attempt to make sense of the photos and decide whether they are pure or pathological, for "the analysand is silent." (Nickel 2002, 13) But critics should by all means keep in mind that Carroll's child-nudes reflect a Victorian cultural norm (whereby purity and perversion are mutually interdependent terms). The most posterity can do is "try to acknowledge agency of child-models without regarding their bodies as blank screens upon which we project our oppressive desires and our anxieties about sexuality versus innocence" (Mavor 1995, 11) while attempting to understand the impressive richness of Carroll's photographic, imaginative work.

Ironically, it was the first MoMa exhibition intent on rehabilitating Carroll's photography in 1950 that delimited his artistic significance to the status of the child-photographer. Gernsheim's somewhat saccharine introduction in the exhibition catalogue grounded the reductive categorization that determined the recep-

2 Although the age of consent in Victorian Britain was raised from 12 to 13 in 1875, and then, following an investigative exposé into prostitution, to 16 in 1885 – only a few years after the publication of the *Alice* books (1865, 1872) and the making of his controversial "The Beggar Maid" photograph (1858) –, the anxieties surrounding the girl-child's eroticizable body have prevailed previously.

3 Photography was called Black Art because the chemicals, namely blackening silver stained the hands of photographers who wore by means of protection white gloves and pocketwatches to measure the time of exposure, just like the White Rabbit of Wonderland did.

4 Others argue that Carroll abandoned the hobby in 1880 when gelatin dry-plate processes, which he did not favour, came into general use.

5 The posthumous mythologization of 'Saint Carroll' was initially crafted by his first official biographer, his nephew Stuart Dodgson Collingwood with the intention to protect the purity of the famous artist relative as a token of the untarnished reputation he established as a children's writer amongst Victorian audiences, to "circulate an orthodox appraisal of his life and work." (Frigerio 140) But the same myth – centered on the modest and devout eccentric, Caroll's 'safe' intimacy with the angelic infantile as a major source of inspiration – came to be regarded as suspicious by modern critical eyes troubled by the retrospectively constructed image of the shy, stuttering, socially maladroit, unmarried clergyman and scholar with an exquisite "fondness" of whom he called "child friends." (Collingwood 416)

tion of the oeuvre in the succeeding decades: "The bouquet of lovely photographs of children in this collection enriches our appreciation of the unique quality of Lewis Carroll's finely sensitized understanding of children." (Nickel 2002, 32) Although Carroll's amateur photographic work certainly included pioneering gambits of his times and was regarded by himself as his prioritized artform for more than two decades, for a long time—basically throughout the twentieth century—it failed to be considered in its complexity. Posterity paid a selective and reductive attention to just a handful of images—on the whole just six remaining child nudes (of Evelyn and Beatrice Hatch, and Annie and Frances Henderson)—from an extremely rich photographic oeuvre comprising some 3000 items catalogued in Dodgson's journals ranging from landscapes, still lives, and tableaux vivants to 232 unique portrait images requiring hundreds of separate sittings—an achievement Hollingsworth believes to be bordering on the miraculous. (Hollingsworth 2009, 93) Only recent projects of recanonization—groundbreaking albums published in 2002, edited by Nickel and by Taylor and Wakeling, respectively[6]—managed to challenge the fossilized status of "Carroll child-photographer" by convincingly revealing that his visual artistic output "must not be prejudged as keep-sake by-products of a writer's hobby, but serious expressions of an innovator committed to his medium and the world of pictures." (Nickel 2002, 12)

My aim in the following is to challenge the erroneously established radical differentiation between Carroll's bright, intellectually sophisticated, philosophically illuminating literary text and his darkroom presumably developing photographic records of sinful carnality. It is indeed easy to argue for the intricate interconnections of the two media, since artistic photography and literary writing mutually inspire each other in Carroll's artistic gambits. Photographic technology recurs as a symbolical leitmotif and a conceptual framework in his narratives, and his portraits very often show models immersed in their reading, but the most important common denominator is undoubtedly the figure of the child who embodies creative-imaginative empowerment in image and text alike.

6 Douglas R. Nickel curator of photography at San Franscisco Museum of Modern Art authored the catalogue of an exhibition on Carroll's photographs he organized in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, and Houston. Roger Taylor and Edward Wakeling published a comprehensive and carefully annotated reproduction of Princeton University Library's albums from the Parrish collection with some 400 images offering an unprecedently wide understanding of Carroll's photographic oeuvre. Both books were published in 2002. For the talk given at various venues after the publication of the second book see Wakeling 2003.

Intermedial Interplay. Rival fantasies of the girl child

In the following I shall examine the intermedial interplay associated with Carroll's art as a ground for rival fantasies about the (alternatively eroticized and empowered) girl child. The most obvious evidence for the significance of intermediality is that the Alice-books have been conceived from the very beginning as picture-books, first illustrated by Carroll's own grotesque sketches, then by Punch-cartoonist John Tenniel's more elaborate drawings that became decisive of Wonderland's iconography and integral constituents of the narrative. The conceptual overlap of different realms of representation is manifested in an actual physical overlap of manuscript and photography on the last page of the *Alice's Adventures Underground* gift-book crafted for Alice in 1864: after the last lines of his tale Carroll drew a portrait of the recipient based on a photo he took of her in Deanery Garden of Christ Church Oxford four years earlier (Figure 2), but dissatisfied with his sketch he eventually covered it with the photo itself. Therefore, Alice's ultimate portrait is literally palimpsestic and multimedial, hiding and revealing "rival fantasies" which equally undermine each other's mimetic qualities. (see Monteiro 2009, 101)

In fact, some instances of this intermedial interplay—between in/visible and un/speakable—might even seem ironic. I shall just cite two examples here. The first is the critical argument that the comparison of the girl child's malicious, adventurous agency in the Alice-novels with the docile femininity depicted in the photographs provides enough evidence for the need to question the 'pure' significations of the Carrollian oeuvre's visual products. (Mavor 1995, 8) The second is a marginal autobiographical data telling of the artist's own self-fashioning: a look at the journals demonstrates that the activities preceding and succeeding the mythified boating trip on the bright summer's day marking the textual genesis of Wonderland all relate to preoccupations with photography (discussions with future models and the sharing of photo-albums) which were neatly recorded in Carroll's diaries, whereas the impromptu storytelling session that brought him literary fame got no mention at all in the diary entry of that very day.

The black art of photography played a prominent role in Carroll's life and considerably influenced his literary writings. The "programmatic wondermaking" (Hollingsworth 2009, 89) of photography resurfaces in the calculated cacophony of literary nonsense. The experimental photographic montage technique can be traced in the fairy-tale fantasies' loosely episodic, dream-like structure. (see

Hollingsworth 2009, 85–101) Photographic technology metaphorically lurks all over his books (the dis/appearing Cheshire Cat recalls the developing print in the darkroom, the playing card royalties fashionable *cartes de visite*, and the death jokes postmortem photographies, see Monteiro 2009; Meier 2009). The dynamics between nonexistence and presence permeating the tales might be references to photographic attempts at capturing past moments in the presence (the March Hare offers Alice invisible wine, and the White King compliments her on having good enough eyesight to see nobody at a great distance down the road, Gardner in Carroll 2001, 182). However, the most exciting photographic hints revolve around Alice, the girl child's curiously fetishized bodily being.

The Alice-tales embrace the romantic idealization of the pure-hearted childhood fashionable in Carroll's times, but, interestingly, the photographic symbolism adopted throughout the description of the girl child' metamorphic bodily changes also metafictionally and parodically discloses the adult artist's vain and twisted desire to keep the child still and small. This grotesque wish founds the very basis of the nonsensical Wonderland and Looking Glass Land where Alice must drink and swim in strange potions similar to the photographer's developing bath, squeeze into claustrophobic spaces reminiscent of the darkroom, learn patience and fight time like a good model, all in a topsy-turvy mirrored world as seen through the photographer's eyes,[7] while, most importantly, her shrinking preserves her miniaturized for eternity just like a photograph. The absurdity of this photographic fetishistic miniaturization is reflected in Humpty Dumpty' request to Alice to "leave off at (age) seven" and not to grow older further on (something one cannot help doing, but two can with proper assistance, as he claims). Even the Red Queen's hysteric shout "Off with her head!" might allude to the accidental photographic decapitation of the subject who grows too tall to fit the photos, a fear Carroll mockingly expresses in a letter to child friend Xie Kitchin. (Meier 2009, 139)

Carroll has literary writings more explicitly focusing on the theme of photography. These record a hilarious critique and pragmatic demystification of idealistic representations of children. The 1857 poem "Hiawatha's Photographing"—a parody of Longfellow's poem about the mighty native American warrior—tells

7 As Marina Warner notes, in Looking Glass Country the world functions "according to the optics of reflections, obeying the catoptrics of the dark plate inside the camera, and the developing process, with its inversions of up and down, light and dark, and its contractions and distortions of scale." (Warner 2006, 207)

the photographer's mock heroic struggle with irritating models, including a young girl grimacing to repeat the mimics of the so-called passive beauty-ideal, and a restlessly fidgeting schoolboy who demystify the photographic process as an awful experience with pictures turned an utter failure. The 1860 short story, "A Photographer's Day Out," presents an even more straightforward parody of childhood innocence and bourgeois pretentiousness, as the family's grouping into a "domestic allegorical" living picture that would have been the greatest artistic triumph of the amateur photographer's day goes fully chaotic: instead of the intended group-portrait with "Victory transferring her great laurel crown to Innocence (with) Faith, Hope, and Charity looking on," the baby impersonating Innocence has a tantrum-fit, the mother (Victory) squeezes the baby into a ball, while two girls (Faith and Hope) begin strangling the third (Charity) who tears at their hair. (As a bonus, by the end of the day the photographer gets beaten up during the making of a bucolic landscape portrait of an ideal young lady—with cows in the background—by two farmers who believe he is trespassing on their land.) "Photography Extraordinary" published in *The Comic Times* in 1855 is a speculative fictional piece inspired by a sensational revisiting of the issue of intermediality: it describes a futuristic device apt to establish a mesmeric rapport between the model-patient's mind and the photographic apparatus, so that the temperament and dynamics of thought take shape in mental images which gain verbal poetic form by means of parodies of different literary writing styles (such as the "milk and water school of novels," the strong-minded matter of fact school, or the spasmodic German school) neatly recorded on pictures producing visual stimuli. Yet another mock-Gothic ghost-story pokes fun of how fantasies of immortality and invisibility are associated with the feminine photographic subject (especially Victorian era's favorite spirit-photography). In "The Ladye's History" (1858) it takes so long to produce a portrait that both model and artist die of exhaustion and turn into specters by the end of the tale.

Although Carroll never writes any serious aesthetic critical piece about photography, the above humorous sketches and the allusions in the Alice-tales are telling of his relation to the black art: his concerns are just as much technological (adequate operation of camera to reach a good composition) as philosophical (picturing ideas) and sensual/sentimental (how to capture [the feelings of/for] the cherished child).

Fragile Fetish

As Carol Mavor convincingly argued in her influential *Pleasures Taken: Performances of Sexuality and Bereavement in Victorian Photography* (1995), the increasing advancement of the newly invented artistic medium of photography coincided with and contributed to the modernist cultural construction of the concept of the Child as an idealized and endangered "fragile fetish." The fetishistic commodification and a veritable "cult" of childhood and photography took place simultaneously: bourgeois salons became decorated with a surprising range of private and public photographic portraits of family members, monarchs, and freak show celebrities, side by side with cribs, swings, perambulators, toys and storybooks. All were mass-produced, widely circulated and communally cherished for their capacity to preserve a nostalgically resuscitated past, reflecting the desire to grasp the fleeting moment, the sentimentally idealized golden age of innocence.

Photographs of children enjoyed a special status, in my view, as they constituted the fetish *par excellence* on accounts of combining the technological and the philosophical/aesthetical framings of utopian ideals. In the fetish a mystical significance, a spiritual devotion, and an unappeasable yearning are attributed to an object or a phenomenon that usually conjoins the experience of a radical absence and a substitutive presence.[8] As a result, the photograph of the little girl (Alice) becomes, in Mavor's witty Freudian wording, a "pocket phallus," a "keepsake of sexual indifference" (Mavor 1995, 34) that both records and wards of fears of sexuality, a charm to fight impotence, castration, vulnerability, forgetfulness, and death. Thus, the photograph necessarily conjoins metaphorical, poetic, make-believe meanings with the referential realism of the genre.

For the Victorians the image of the child and especially representations of the physical body of the little girl (see Robson 2001) provided an ideal imaginative terrain for escapist fantasies about the inspirational, pure-hearted, pre-lapsarian, innocent, imaginative state of human being. Reliving childhood and practicing photography equally offered means to fight against time, forgetting, and death, an attempt to stay young forever, to reclaim absence/loss for presence, while be-

8 The classic Freudian theory relates fetishization to the compulsive compensation for the repressed primary memory of the missing maternal phallus and a succeeding erotic fixation with a substitutive object. The fetish simultaneously signifies symbolic castration and a soothing protection against that loss. It engages in a complex dynamics of traumatic amnesia, the resurfacing of memory traces, and residual misremembering.

ing melancholically aware that the past moment's artistic "preservation in ink and emulsion" and in child-icons cannot be but a fictitiously registered simulation when we "perform, through acts of remembrance, the missing referent" that is no longer there. (Mavor 1995, 6) This "recharming of the past," the infantilization of prehistory/happiness, fetishistic miniaturization, and the heroic struggle against mortality's meaninglessness peak on early photographs of children (including/especially child nudes).

Just how much these connotations prevail in post/modernism is attested by the fact that throughout Roland Barthes' systematic semiotic analysis of the photographic image in his seminal book *Camera Obscura* (1981) the most crucial, central image is a childhood portrait of his long-dead mother, a missing picture that never gets to be shown in the illustrated volume, but perfectly embodies the essence of the Barthesian photographic punctum, that personal piercing feel experienced upon facing what has mattered the most but ceased to be and yet is still present on the photo—albeit in its absence, through an awareness of it *having-been-there*. Mavor's claim about Victorian photography is still valid here: "Both photo and child [image] accept their shape and poignancy from death." (Mavor 1995, 6)

Mavor goes on beautifully describing photographs in terms of a "haunting community" guaranteed by a "visual caress" between artist and model, as well as between past subjects and present viewers who are all touched by the same light so neatly transported and seized by the photographic medium. Unlike his fellow Victorian photographers (O. G. Rejlander or H. P. Robinson) who were more interested in photo-technological experimentation (e.g. composite pictures), Carroll embarked on spiritist, sensual time-travels, striving to capture moments of being, embodying the secret essence of childhood, transcending time, negating the daily toil of reality, preserving pleasures for posterity. (Mavor 1995, 28)

The memoirs of child models record how the photographer Dodgson strategically used what has become known as Carrollian 'storytelling as a means of enchantment,' to make them sit still in their fancy-dress costumes or *sans habille* while he captured their "likeness" for eternity. The legendary Alice Liddell's reminiscences of these photographic sessions deserve to be quoted in full as they neatly disclose intricate interconnections involved in the Carrollian oeuvre: the masterful maneuvers multimedially mixing/melting storytelling, drawing, photography, and even mathematics; the conjoining of dream states, pretense play, and waking-life reality; of fixed actuality and infinite possibilities; of singular

originality and iterable revisionary potentials; of symbolic significations, the struggle with meaninglessness, and the apotheosis of nonsense.

> When we were thoroughly happy and amused at his stories he used to pose us, and expose the plates before the right mood had passed. He seemed to have an endless store of these fantastical tales, which he made up as he told them, drawing busily on a large sheet of paper all the time. They were not always entirely new, sometimes they were new versions of old stories, sometimes they started on the old basis, but grew into new tales owing to the frequent interruptions which opened up fresh and undreamed of possibilities. In this way the stories, slowly enunciated in his quite voice with its curious stutter were perfected. Occasionally he pretended to fall asleep, to our great dismay. Sometimes he said "That is all till next time," only to resume on being told that it is already next time. Being photographed was therefore a joy to us and not a penance as it is to most children. We looked forward to the happy hours in the mathematical tutor's room. (Hargreaves 1992, 274–275)

These words attest that the pictures record not so much the sexual objectification of minors but rather the intimate bond between sitter and photographer, a mutual cooperation of friends committed to the same purpose of joyously dwelling in fantasy lands, making up, acting out, make-believing stories—visually and narratively alike.[9]

As opposed to the stiff and stilted, formal and false photos of his times, it is this special bond between photographer and model – besides the slow-pace of the long exposure time, the cultural-ritualistic value Victorians attributed to having their pictures taken, and the efficient physical effort of freeze-framing fleeting moments—which lend to outstanding early photography, like Carroll's work, its might, allowing it to emanate what philosopher Walter Benjamin calls the *aura*: the feel of an unreproducible aesthetic authenticity, "a spark of contin-

9 Jenny Lynn Boully's term, the nympholept, seems a particularly relevant denomination to Carroll here. The nympholept does not so much aim at the sexual possession of the minor but rather desires to entrap the girl child in enchanting *stories* inspired by her, so that sublimated into the work of art she can escape masculine objectification and be preserved metaphorically for good in her own right (see Boully 2011).

gency" (1972, 5), a singular encounter of human beings, and a touching of opposites through time enfolding in two directions at once (past and future, presence and absence, child- and adulthood). As Nickel puts it, Carroll's photos are like a dream, a stage, "an external reflection of what we were like before we all grew older and learned how not to trust." (2002, 67)

Naughty Girl Power in Living Pictures

Carroll's photographs always provide an excitingly heterogeneous view of children that goes way beyond romantic idealization: the little girl's natural, angelic being appears as the product of a meticulously staged performance, located within a socially coded/decodable web of cultural meanings, which is nevertheless mockingly deconstructed by imaginative pretense play highlighting the elusiveness of childish presence. One of Carroll's favorite genres when it comes to photographing children is the *tableau vivant* or the living picture, based on a popular parlour game of the Victorian era, a sort of improvisatory amateur theatrical performance still, whereby players enacted in fancy-dress well-known mythological, historical scenes, literary characters, ethnic types, and abstract qualities. (Gubar 2010, 102; Smith 1998, 95) Carroll's *tableau vivant* child-photography is a fascinating genre because of the paradoxical ambiguities it fuses on numerous layers as if to debilitate simplifying interpretations.

1. The picture's educational quality, the fact that a certain cultural knowledge is required on the part of the spectator for the recognition of the impersonated figure posits the child-models as cultivated, socialized beings who nevertheless often enact precisely the Other(ed)s, haunting on the margins of the hegemonic culture they belong to. They impersonate racial, ethnic, class, sexual others, dressed up/undressed as Chinese, Turks, Indians, Beggar Girls, and Feral Wild Children—with carefully arranged undone hair, bare feet, and ragged clothes, celebrating a strange "scripted spontaneity" of the child-model.
2. The literary, referential, material meaning of the fleshly presence of the denuded child's body, the fetishizable flashes of the skin revealed in the *poses plastiques* are clearly contrasted with the metaphorical meanings they embody both through their role-playing and as (mock)-icons of In-

nocence whose nakedness is a sign of their pre-lapsarian purity and their freedom from corrupting and constraining cultural pre/inscriptions.

3. The child models represent abstract ideas and hence point towards what is ungraspable for the naked eye, embarking on rendering visible the thoughts (fears, desires) of a collective unconscious, but all of them have their names precisely indicated in the title of the photographs to commemorate their individual artistic contribution. Underage female co-authorship gets celebrated even more spectacularly elsewhere in Carroll's art when Irene MacDonald signs her photographic portrait with her school-girlish handwriting, introducing her own voice into his image-text, or Evelyn Hatch undertakes the editorial work of the letters written by Carroll to his child-friends. (see Hatch 1933)
4. Bodily exposure normally objectifies the model to the male gaze, but Carroll's models tend to look back at the viewer, with cold and curious "outward stares" (Gubar 2010, 104) violating the frames of their representation. Hence they are granted a visual empowerment scarcely available for underage subjects.
5. The intermedial interplays involved in their tableaux, the literary subtexts suggest that there are further stories to tell beyond the confines of their image. Moreover, characteristically of Victorian portrait photography, the visual representation of the literal clashes with the verbal representation of the visual: genre photos depend on "a strong fictional story line, usually with a moral, and executed in a formal, composed, painterly manner," while the titles given to the photos provide discursive clues to the story pictured and hence paratextually invest the photo with a "narrative" quality. (Vallone 2005, 193)
6. The amateur, rudimentary theatrical props—often too obviously displayed, left unconcealed, as if "baring the device" in the Russian formalist sense of the term—are both disenchanting by revealing the scene's artificial constructedness and enchanting by stripping away the veil of familiarity from mundane objects. An example is the *tableau vivant* called *St. George and the Dragon* (Figure 3) where Xie Kitchin, as captive princess, rides a rocking-horse steed, the dragon's knightly victim collapses on his card-board shield, and the monster itself is only half-concealed with a worn leopard skin thrown across and about to slip off a little boy. The curious effect suggests simultaneous stagedness and spontaneity, leaving

enough space for imagination on accounts of a "sophistication [by simple means yet] of an unfamiliar order." (Nickel 2002, 44)

7. Transforming original photography into paintographs through applying paint to the image-surface so as to imitate "the fluid grace of the oil medium"—a technique we could call with a mock-Carrollian pun, "phainting"—augments the antagonism between different representational modes and meanings (mimetic vs metaphorical).

A great example for how the Carrollian *tableau vivant* portrays the girl child as the empowered Other resisting idealistic, marginalizing, and mimetic/referential representational and interpretive practices alike, while transgressing medial boundaries is a photograph of Tennyson's, the poet laureate's niece animating the Grimm Brothers' tale in "Agnes Weld as Little Red Riding Hood" (1857). (Figure 4) It is not by chance that Carroll chooses this particular figure. Little Red Riding Hood, this wayward girl straying off the safe path, is perhaps the fairy-tale character most prone to be associated with illicit sexual contents. From Charles Perrault's eighteenth-century rhyming fables composed to amusingly educate the French nobility's moral sensibilities to NBC channel's recent (2011-) *Grimm*, a supernatural detective series in which bedtime stories become nightmarish crime cases, Little Red has frequently been portrayed as an innocent prey to the sexual predator impersonated by the bestial wolf. On Carroll's photo, she poses as an "ingenious, determined child who keeps moving forward despite the dangers she faces in doing so," who "fights back against the encroachment on her liberty" (Gubar 2010, 108–109), and whose eyes are those "of the wolf that has presumably just eaten her grandmother, [making us] wonder whether she has eaten the wolf, and whether she is about ready to eat us up," too. (Mavor 1995, 29) Although Carroll's own poem "Little Red Riding Hood" apparently portrays a very different, ideal child who vanquishes the wolf with her innocent confidence, the clandestine allusions "to the first canto of Dante's *Inferno* in which the poet enters the dark wood and meets a she-wolf" turn the happy little girl into "a fallen traveler and allegorical heroine folktale character and muse" in one. (Vallone 2005, 196)

A similar, carefully staged natural ambiguity emerges in the unjustly criticized 1879 paintograph of Evelyn Hatch *sans habillement*. (Figure 5) The reclining nude of the child-woman equally embodies the "modern little Venus of Oxford," Titian's painting of the Greek Goddess of Love (Mavor 1995, 12), a "beautiful little [Orientalized] odalisque" (Auerbach 1986, 168), and a grotesque little beast,

a child of nature unashamed of her carnal potentials, staring at her observers with elfishly glittering, oil-painted gaze. As Nina Auerbach puts it, she strangely stages the closeness of the two Victorian female stereotypes, the Angel and the Whore, as she performs "both animal and dreamer, pig and pure little girl," an "amalgamation of fallen woman and unfallen child" whose creative imaginative powers spring from her innocence and fall alike, so that she can create an enchanting world, a Wonderland where she is equally slave and Queen, creator and destroyer, victim and victimizer (Auerbach 1986, 168), a bewitched spellbinder in one. In Carol Mavor's view, Evelyn Hatch's nude (and the sublime sight of her half-hidden sex) stages an *in-between* spectacle with "nothing to show and nothing to hide," both a personification and an emblem of nature, provoking an odd fusion of fascination and horror in one (Mavor 1995, 18), while Marina Warner associates her with the *intermediate* state of angels, an angelically fleshless acorporeality, and a "dreamed absence of fallen human sex" projected upon the child's body. (Warner 2006, 215) Evelyn's pudendum as "the carnalized ethereal" constitutes an authentic oxymoron, challenging semantic and representational/interpretive boundaries by fusing incompatible dichotomies in paint and light, a fragile fleshly embodiment of the Carrollian "portmanteau." (see Mavor 1995, 32)

Carroll's photographic *tableau vivant* of Alice Liddell as "The Beggar Maid" (1858) (Figure 6) carries maybe even more complex connotations. Alice appears barefoot, in rags, her arms outstretched as if asking for alms, her chest half-uncovered allusive of a child prostitute. She enacts the Victorian archetype of the poor orphan girl, an innocent sacrificial victim of her social circumstances—like Andersen's Little Matchgirl or an underage female Christ-figure. In her middle-class contemporaries she likely aroused sentimental, religious reactions of pious compassion reminding them of "obligations toward the less fortunate" (Susina 2010, 102), but the strange fusion of the Enlightenment idea of child as born innocent of sin with the more traditional religious idea of child born into sin also staged a troubling epistemological crisis of her era. Contrariwise, today's politically correct viewers might criticize the inadequacy of the subversive intents on account of the ludic filter to the social sentiment, the safeness of the 'unendangered,' cherished, bourgeois girl's pose, and the beggar child's being reduced to a mere stereotype.

However, I believe that Alice's clenched fist on her hip, apparently ready to punch, and her defiant gaze—challenging the focus of the original, eponymous Tennyson poem on male voyeuristic pleasures—convincingly hint at the rebellious resistance accompanying the vulnerability of the Victorian street urchin.

These bodily indices of empowerment do not only mark the lurking animalistic aggressiveness of an untamed Street Arab (as street children were called at the time) but the inventiveness of the *orphan ingénue* surviving and seeking happiness against all odds (a character later on emerging in the tragicomic corpus of Chaplin's burlesque movies, more specifically *The Kid*). There is a social-critical, political intent in the childish pretense-play's blurring of class distinctions. The bourgeois girl posing as a beggar repeats and reverses the rags-to-riches scenario of classic fairy tales like Cinderella. Yet here Alice goes from riches to rags and then back to riches again from rags, and as she moves on and off the photograph, dressing up and down, toying with her fancy-dresses, the performativity of class (gender/racial) identity are exposed along with the disruptive powers of social mobility. Especially so, since the image initially belonged to a diptych photographed on the same day at the Deanery: on one Alice poses as a proper girl in her finest dress, on the other she is presented as a ragged pauper in a "kind of before-and-after reversal of social roles romanticized by the Victorians." (Nickel 2002, 62) Moreover, Alice's fancy-dressed theatrical pose on the *tableau vivant* vindicates ludic joys as universal rights for all children regardless of class belonging, but also sheds light on play as work for some, hence offering a visual record of Carroll's "campaign on behalf of performing child(actors) to prevent their financial and sexual exploitation." (Warner 2006, 214)

"The Beggar Maid"s class-subversion is coupled with gender-bender, as Alice's undressing has no feminine secrets to reveal; she confronts spectators with bodily markers of an overall tomboyishness—flat chest, short bob-cut hair, defiant gaze—which resist her subjection to conventional eroticization. Feminist analyses highlight the potential of a female spectatorship, and related narcissistic, lesbian desires. Mavor and Auerbach call attention to the Carrollian girl child model's self-awareness of her own "sexuality without parameters" (Mavor 1995, 42), while Hacking regards the child nude as a means to address or acknowledge the sexuality of respectable adult women who could have imaginatively substituted themselves for the eroticized child, suggesting that the disturbing complicity the viewer is involved in might relate to a more mature sexual dynamics. (Hacking 2009, 102)[10]

10 Juliet Hacking's analysis concentrates on one of Carroll's contemporaries, Camille Silvy's *deshabillé* photographs of Mrs Holford's Daughter (cc. 1860) coming to the rather shocking (and fully speculative) conclusion that these *cartes de visite* might have been advertising images of Victorian sex-traffickers. Hence the woman accompanying the underdressed little girl on the photo might

Nevertheless, the most real, authentic bodily momentum on the artificially staged photo—in my sense its Barthesian *punctum* (Barthes 1981)—is Alice's balancing on her bent toes, as if she was about to turn around and run away, change her clothes and dress back to her real self, or flee away to play undocumented, hiding in disguise as another. Already a shadow of her absence falls on her presence, she is there while almost not there, daydreaming herself into fictional elsewheres, on a photo attesting the elusiveness of the child as a fundamentally mobile, metamorphic being who cannot be freeze-framed as an idealized icon of innocence. It is my contention that if the portrait is fetishizable, it is not because of the disheveled costume's erotic implications, rather, the spectators's yearning is evoked by Alice's ungraspably distant closeness induced by make-believing as an intermedial, intergenerational creative collaboration between the visual storyteller and the child in his focus.

Picturing reading children

An intimate bond of imaginative co-productivity captured by Carroll on many photographs is that of the child-reader and the book invested with meanings she calls to life with her fantasizing. Being lost in a good book stages another mode of absence from mundane material reality (that is compensated for by the corporeal reactions and empathic responses incited by the reading/imaginative activity, ranging from laughing out with joy, shuddering with excitement, sweating from fear, or crying out of sorrow). The double portraits of the two child-readers sharing the same book depict just as much the communal joy of collectively dwelling in make-believe realms as well as the fictitious doubling of the self through the identificatory processes involved in the reading process. In undisciplined poses of comfortable rest these closely-seated child-readers touch, recline, and hold on each other just like image and text do. The book in the photo always implies an intricate inter/meta-medial interplay because the visual narrative centers on the enchantment by a written text that remains practically undecipherable for us, would-be reader spectators.

My favorite is the photo of sister-readers Ethel and Liliane Brodie (Figure 7) that prefigures the Wonderland novel's opening scene where Alice, bored by her sis-

have been actually "a brothel-keeper who wished to derive a financial gain from the sale or distribution of photographs of her pretended daughter." (2009, 97)

ter's reading, rebels against pictureless books, so that the photograph's original staging of visuality engulfing textuality (with the sight of an illegible book) is turned inside out into the fear of words devouring images. (Gordon and Guiliano 1982) Either way, the image of the child absorbed in her reading experience fascinates because it lets us see the little girls "as themselves" pondering, playing, and fantasizing "with all the intense earnestness of youth at a time when (...) the wall between dream and reality is thin, and one can pass readily between them". (Leal 2007, 9)

Much in line with this, the cover of *Nursery Alice* (an abridged, coloured 1890 edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* for younger children) (Figure 8) is illustrated by a picture of Alice lying asleep next to a half-opened copy of the Wonderland book—it is hard to tell whether the grotesque Wonderland creatures hopping on the clouds above her head emanate from the printed text, its colorful illustration, or Alice's creative mind. The girl child represented by Carroll is never completely passive, even when portrayed asleep, she is just enacting the dreamer, and the emphasis is always on her self-initiated journey to another fantasy worlds where she plays an active part in the fairy story. (This vital presence completely contradicts the ghostly fading of girls in Julia Margaret Cameron's photography.)

Focusing on limes-experience, balancing between dream and waking life, mimesis and metaphor, child and adulthood, photographic image and literary text—what unites Carroll's/Dodgson's heterogeneous artistic corpus is his stubborn willingness to believe in the powers of enchantment against all odds. As Nickel points out, his art is neither about realism, nor about idealization, but rather about story-telling and hence about the clash of two distinct representational orders: "the phenomenological verification of aspects of the material world" versus the abstract, "immaterial, virtual realm of imagination." (2002, 35)

Stephanie Bolster's poem "Aperture, 1865" published in her collection *White Stone. The Alice Poems* (1998) in honor of Carroll's child photography continues the lines I quoted as the introductory motto to this paper with an open-ended poetic question that beautifully encapsulates the enchanting essence of the creative partnership between artist and muse: "Did they meet because of a raising of eyebrows, curiouser about each other than about anyone else in the garden?" The poem's closure offers a tentative answer, allowing the emerging photographic image to take the place of the transverbal unspeakable: "Spring everywhere threatening to open them both: tense in that unfurling garden, during the long exposure." (Bolster 1998, 15)

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Bodies in Disguise

Graphic and Verbal Embodiments in Djuna Barnes

Introduction

This study aims to consider the outstanding presence of bodies in Djuna Barnes's artistic and literary production, exploring their function in visual and written representations. Training for ten years as a journalist and illustrator in New York, Djuna Barnes was both a visual artist and a writer, so that her literary works always reveal an intense visual approach. Whatever she wrote, whether poetry or fiction, Barnes had physical images in her mind, which provided her verbal productions with an extremely concrete strength. In fact, such an overwhelming presence of bodies gives life to an hypotyposis of the body-shape: always in the foreground, bodies are unavoidable graphic and narrative devices used to explore the limits of both drawing and writing. A brief mention of how bodies are represented from the early stages of her career proves useful in understanding the incidence in her later works where bodies rule the spaces of representation with uncanny and queer shapes. They are often represented as grotesque and deformed, yet turn out to be versatile and multifaceted, suggesting that their function goes beyond their role as illustrations. For the characters, they are tools for both world- and self-knowledge, whereas for the author, they embody narrative and graphic devices to explore the complex relationships between characters and what surrounds them.

As a result, a two-step investigation looks promising to consider first how bodies are represented, then the relationships they embody. The literary and illustrated works chosen to explore how bodies are used as subjects and narratological devices are *The Book of Repulsive Women* (1915) and *Ryder* (1928). These two works, though different in content, form, genre, and style, do share the depiction of bodies as symbols and constitutive elements.

"I can draw and write." Barnes's early journalistic career and the hypotyposis of the body

As hinted in the introduction, a brief overview of Barnes's early representations of bodies during her career as cartoonist may prove helpful to understand how she later came to use them as narrative features.

As soon as Barnes arrived in New York, she enrolled at the Pratt Institute for a short time – about six months – where she received academic guidance for developing her outstanding graphic and painting talent. During the short, yet intense period of academic formation, she gained awareness of her visual talent, immediately embracing Dadaistic techniques.

Soon after having quitted the courses at Pratt, she wrote a message to *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, in which she declared "You need me;" later in life she described this episode slightly differently, claiming that she said "I can draw and write and you'd be foolish not to hire me." They did, and Djuna Barnes soon became the most famous woman reporter and illustrator in the US journalistic and magazine print. (Craft 2013)

The most distinctive feature of her work was the representation of deformed body shapes, caricatured or twisted to grotesque. Illustrations such as the ones from the cycle "Types Found in Odd Corners Round About Brooklyn" realised for the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* (1913) (Figure 1), or the front cover of *The Trend* magazine (1914) show how from her earliest publications body-display was significant to her in accompanying her journalistic activity. (Figure 2)

During her years as a journalist, Barnes started realising the importance of corporal experiences, both positive and destructive. A first-hand experience she had, in particular, shocked the readers for its excessive unpleasantness, and was told by Barnes herself in the sensationalistic essay "How it Feels to be Forcibly Fed" published in the *New York World Magazine* (1914). In the article – which was accompanied by a picture of Barnes during the operation – she wrote in detail about her experience in hospital being forcibly fed. (Siebers 2000) "How it Feels to be Forcibly Fed" is an example of what has been labelled as "performative journalism." (Green 1993, 1) This piece on the rebellious female body claims on the idea of body ownership, which was in tune with feminist activism in the '10s and '20s. (Fortunati et al. 2003) In addition, it enabled Barnes to prove her point on the need for direct body experience, a concept which she would transfigure into a literary leitmotiv.

As she continued testing the versatility of the ink line and shape she accompanied her writings with, Barnes developed the concept of the body as a non-unitary identity. Her body-shapes became increasingly fragmentary, twisted into grotesque, to the extent of gaining her the epithet of "The American Beardsley."[1] However, her drawings added a more cryptic margin of obscurity to the disturbing vignettes by Beardsley; Barnes did not merely try to emulate him, but rather explored further the areas of deformation and queerness. While Beardsley's drawings – so far ironic and grotesque – were clear in shape and figure, Barnes's cartoons were sometimes obscure and impenetrable. (Thornton 1983, 183ff) What is relevant is that at the early stages of her career, Barnes already attributed a central role to the body in her representations.

As she approached the publication of her first literary work, Barnes's interest became increasingly focused on the image of the suffering body, especially the feminine body. Most of the drawings realised during these years depict women's faces deformed by grimaces of pain, and bodies in agony. (Figure 3)

According to Phillip Herring (Herring 1995), such an attitude to depict pain and agony reflects Barnes childhood trauma of getting raped. Although the violence to which she had been subjected undeniably impacted her work, Barnes's choice of literary and artistic topics cannot be limited to such episode(s). As claimed by Bonnie K. Scott (Scott 1995) – and by other feminist critics,[2] too – themes as physical violence and rape in Barnes's work are influenced by, but not limited to, the reiteration of personal trauma. Though largely present, these traumas are textualised and discussed before being developed into rhetorical devices and transfigured into narrative techniques.

To the aims of this study, it sounds useful to explore how the bodies' fragments which animate Barnes's vignettes are transfigured into the subjects of poems, and how they work as narrative strategies. Visual rhetorical devices based on the use of physical shapes are in fact constitutive elements of both *The Book of Repulsive Women* and *Ryder*.

Barnes proved ahead of her time in anticipating the theories of Jakobson (Jakobson 1956) and Lakoff (Lakoff 1980) who later in the century would demonstrate that the metaphor – including metonymy and synecdoche – plays a funda-

1 On *Bruno's Weekly*, III, July 22, 1916. The signature under the vignette called "The Spring, the Poet, the Flower," quoted "by Djuna Barnes (the American Beardsley)."
2 See the critical essays edited by M. L. Broe (1991) in *Silence and Power*.

mental role in structuring and communicating meanings. In the representation of the human body, the synecdoche worked for Barnes as both the tool and the content of the figurative or verbal expression. In realising how some rhetorical tropes can serve visual as well as verbal purposes, Barnes also anticipated what much later would have been defined as "visual rhetoric." (Willerton 2005)

In journalistic vignettes as well as in the illustrations meant for her short stories, and definitely in texts, the hypotyposis of body shapes is mainly embodied in the rhetorical figure of synecdoche. Bodily fragments dominate both the picture-frame and the text: if in the early cartoons bodies are reduced to sketch-style fragments, in the texts new characters come to the reader's attention through flashing descriptions of some body parts. As a general assumption, characters are never presented in Barnes's works as whole figures, which suggests that they lack a coherent identity. As a consequence of their unfixable fragmentation, characters are perpetually trapped in a condition of sufferance. (Armstrong 1989) They suffer from everything that surrounds them, violence inflicted by the outside world, and also from the meanness of relatives and friends who should supposedly be devoted. Instead of finding some sort of solace in a common painful condition, characters behave selfishly and ferociously with one another; their relationships can only be defined as a Hobbesian attitude, which eventually explains why monstrosity is a predominant theme in vignettes and writings.

Fragmentation and violence seem, therefore, a tight *binôme*; they form a vicious circle where the human body suffered from an original violence, which broke it into fragments and which forces it to generate violence towards other bodies. In fact, Barnes's focus on suffering and fragmented human bodies is mostly oriented towards the condition of female bodies. Even though men and women are equally doomed to unhappiness and spiritual dismemberment, women seem to be more afflicted by such a condition. Victims of a social male logic, they are either meant to be submissive in acknowledging their inferiority, or, in rejection of this perspective, to accept prostitution. Barnes brutally emphasises the symmetry between actual prostitution and domestic submission: in both cases, women are forced to endure punches and rape by men. This same kind of violence, as an act with devastating consequences on the women's bodies – and souls, is differently textured in both of the works considered.

The first literary work that Barnes published in New York is *The Book of Repulsive Women*, an illustrated work made up of eight poems and five drawings. The collection of poems was published in *Bruno's Weekly* in November 1915 as

it was not accepted for publication by any other magazine. Guido Bruno's garret served as a gathering point for Bohemian artists of Greenwich Village; tourists had to pay a fee to observe them at work. Critics consider *The Book of Repulsive Women* to be a hybrid between crime news in verse and poetry of the macabre because of the rough themes it discusses. (Doughty 1991, 137ff) The eight poems build up a crime scene which shows women as victims; it is not clear whether the same woman undergoes different kinds of violence – rape, murder, and autopsy –, or several women are caught in different scenes. The core of all eight poems, however, is the suffering female body. The grotesque contrast generated by the description of physical pleasure within violent sexual intercourse creates a sense of repulsion and critical detachment in the reader. In this way, he or she can analyse structures and rhetorical choices through which the woman's body is introduced and handled. From the opening lines of the first poem, body-parts lie down lifeless and broken, impossible to be mended together.

> For though one took you, hurled you
> Out of space,
> With your legs half strangled
> In your lace
> You'd lip the world to madness
> On your face.
> We'd see your body in the grass
> With cool pale eyes.
> [...]
> Plunging grandly out to fall
> Upon your face.
> Naked—female—baby
> In grimace,
> With your belly bulging stately
> Into space.

The woman character, or rather her body parts, stand out in an empty space. (Duncan 1996) The reader, who comes to know this woman through the presence of her body pieces, automatically tries to reconstruct a whole; however, the woman's naked legs, face, eye and belly seem to lie in an unsolvable black-and-white contrast with the 'space.' The reader, therefore, begins to realise that some

pieces of the puzzle are missing and gradually accepts that a re-union of the limbs is unlikely.

The instinctive reaction that drives the reader to unify the body parts is derived from the intrinsic quality of the rhetorical device through which the fragments are presented; as a figure of speech where the part refers for the whole, synecdoche urges the reader to look for the body out of the limbs. However, the violence to which bodies are subdued breaks the sense of re-union, mutilating the rhetoric device – as well as the body. The parts do not stand for anything more complete, and are, instead, self-referential.

The reason why Barnes undermines the fundamental understanding of synecdoche is indicative of a profound reflection on the human condition, which, according to her, is corrupted and doomed to sufferance. As such, even figures of speech lose their role; there is no point in trying to represent a deeper sense, here encapsulated in the metaphor of the body, when that meaning is missing. The union between the parts and the whole is denied because that whole no longer exists. In such a perspective, body scraps are not meant to be mended together, but rather witness an eternal condition of disharmony. If any form of knowledge of the whole, any life-meaning, or general understanding had ever existed, it has been forgotten or it is unreachable by human reason. The uncanny fragments of violated bodies disguise something which peers out from the surface of their wounds but which remains undiscoverable by the reader – and the writer. As a result of the impossibility to come in touch with any kind of knowledge, other elements are introduced in the poems such as indifference and listlessness.

> SO she stands—nude—stretching dully
> Two amber combs loll through her hair
> A vague molested carpet pitches
> Down the dusty length of stair.
> She does not see, she does not care
> It's always there.
>
> The frail mosaic on her window
> Facing starkly toward the street
> Is scribbled there by tipsy sparrows—
> Etched there with their rocking feet.

The atmosphere generated by the semantic fields in this poem seems to contrast with the violence and anger of previous verses. Words such as "dully," "loll," "vague," "dusty," and "frail" all evoke a sense of indifference, which culminates in the verse "She does not see, she does not care." The sense of apathy and submission which replaces violence is in fact the natural evolution of the conflict affecting human beings. Trying to balance on the unstable dichotomy of violence and submission, of repulsion and listlessness, the "cabaret dancer" in poem VI can only find rest in death.

> We saw the crimson leave her cheeks
> Flame in her eyes;
> For when a woman lives in awful haste
> A woman dies.

Suicide is the only possible outcome for a life corrupted from its origin; in an uncanny and disturbing way, the initial metaphor of bodily fragmentation seems to find its fulfilment here. Now that the woman is dead, the author feels free to use the word "body" as a paradigm of the whole. As a corpse, the body is finally reunited:

> VIII. SUICIDE
>
> Corpse A
>
> THEY brought her in, a shattered small
> Cocoon,
> With a little bruised body like
> A startled moon;
> And all the subtle symphonies of her
> A twilight rune.
>
> Corpse B
>
> THEY gave her hurried shoves this way
> And that.
> Her body shock-abbreviated

As a city cat.
She lay out listlessly like some small mug
Of beer gone flat.

Death does not guarantee, however, a positive re-union, a peaceful result after a life of pain and sorrow, especially since the body is described as "bruised" and "shock-abbreviated." Not even a corpse is exonerated from being violated. (Bronfen 1992) On the contrary, it is further degraded into a beast's corpse, a stray cat, or into a – listless – object. Death does not come as a merciful oblivion, as nothing suggests that the individual has stopped suffering. Far from being a long-awaited relief, it just adds a margin of paralysis to the ineptitude of the character. "From cradle to grave" – as the refrain of *Ryder* echoes – the female body is condemned to carry on the tragedy of a corrupted and therefore fragmentary and nonsensical existence.

The drawings that Barnes juxtaposed at the end of the poems expand on the themes of violence, nightmare, darkness, and monstrosity even more than the verses. In what can once again be identified as a hypotyposis of the female body, Barnes depicts deformed shapes caught in intense agony. One of them, in particular, encapsulates the physical tension between violence and apathy.

The second illustration of the sequence (Figure 4) immediately stages a violent contrast between the white figure of a woman and the total-black background, thus introducing a strong contrast between the subject and the space around her. If in the first poem the limbs of the woman were spread in an empty "space," here the woman's body seems about to be ripped into fragments. Symbolically, this vignette embodies the cause of human sufferance, something beyond human understanding, which condemns the body of the poems to an unhappy earthly life. The woman is hanging on to a 'sky creature' by a hook in her mouth, which suggests the precariousness of human life; moreover, she is weighed down by a heavy object in her hand, which will eventually determine her physical break. This woman embodies the condition shared by all women – and by humans in general – of being torn apart by opposing tensions.

The dynamic violence frozen in such a tension is strongly opposed to the indifferent, creepily jolly facial expression of the indefinite sky creature; despite being in charge of the precarious balance of the woman, the sky creature does not seem to be concerned with her pain. Violence is therefore intentionally committed and perpetuated until the break comes.

The third image (Figure 5) shows the results of the fall, and adds strong, grotesque tones to the development of the sequence. The dark background here is about to swallow the woman's body – once again in the foreground but closer, naked, unavoidable. This time, her body is caught in a process of metamorphosis, which endorses the issue of monstrosity. If in the last poem the female body was compared to a beastly corpse, here the overlap between human body and animal is clearer. Having suffered an original violence, the inner nature of human beings is degraded to resemble a beast. Human bodies reveal their animal qualities behind their daily masks in the relationships they form with other subjects who are unfriendly and hideous – if not ferocious. Even in this simple and essential image composed of bichromatic masses, the female body is not presented as a whole figure. Part of the right leg – or paw – has already been swallowed by the darkness which only spares a couple of fragments. This progressing darkness suggests that the dismemberment is *in fieri* and inevitable.

Although the transformation of the female body into a beast indicates that the embodiment of violence is complete, such a metamorphosis is cathartic; as death in the poems does not represent a final resolution to the inner tension that the female body undergoes on a daily basis, neither does the transformation into beast. Being turned into a beast does not bring any kind of solace, not even the absence of awareness; it does not lead anywhere but to more violence and bodily sufferance.

In addition to characterizing *The Book of Repulsive Women*, synecdoche and fragmentation pervade the second work chosen for this investigation on Barnes's bodies, *Ryder* (1928). In this work, everything has changed compared to the first collection of poems in terms of form and content, except for the presence and central role of bodies. *Ryder*, a chronicle of the Ryder family, is a complicated experimental novel in structure and language; unsurprisingly, this work has been long misunderstood. Only recently has the novel been re-evaluated as a highly experimental work, which covers a wide range of literary genres. According to Miller, this text is based on the use of "a mocking pseudo-Chaucerian and Rabelaisian technique." (Miller 1999, 132–133) According to Ponsot, it imitates and mocks an outstanding range of literary forms, including "sermon, anecdote, tall tale, riddling, fable, elegy, dream, epigram, vision, parable, tirade, bedtime story, lullaby, satiric couplet, parallel structuring, ghost story, debate, sententia or aphorism, and emblem or epitome activated as epiphany." (Ponsot 1991, 94)

Within such an experimental virtuosity, it is clear that traditional elements like coherence or cohesion lie elsewhere. Bodies' fragments serve the purpose of creating a *fil-rouge*, which keeps chapters together and runs through the characters' delirious rambling speeches. Once again, synecdoche seems to suit the writer's needs. (Figure 6)

What can be said about the experimentation in *Ryder*'s literary genres is also valid for its images; from the very frontispiece, Barnes declares her explicit attempt at exploring, challenging, and reinventing traditional forms. (Figure 7)

The image intentionally recalls the style of European woodcuts of the 15th and 16th centuries, pushing the observer to wonder about the grounds of this artistic quotation. Barnes's time in Paris gave her the opportunity to learn different traditions of writing and drawing such as the *imagerie populaire* technique. (Durcharte and Salunier 1926) Barnes refers to these traditions in both *Ryder* and *Ladies Almanack* which were both published in 1928, revealing how in those years she was particularly interested in studying European traditional forms.

In the illustrations of *Ryder*, she stages a caricaturing and mocking precision which was absent in the first work discussed; if compared to the sketches for *The Book of Repulsive Women*, the drawings in *Ryder* show a complexity that is antipodal to the essentiality of the 1915 vignettes. Likewise, and thus highlighting the symmetry between graphic and verbal techniques, the density – sometimes obscurity – of syntactical structures seems to prevent the risk of fragmentation, which in 1915 was conveyed by elliptical verses. Still, bodies' fragments remain a thematic core and a narrative device. Hate, violence, and rape on the one hand, and apathy, listlessness, and ineptitude on the other remain the main topics handled in the novel: Hobbes's *Homo homini lupus* seems to determine – or condemn – human relationships.

As the reader was only allowed to see fragments of female bodies of *The Book of Repulsive Women* (1915), in *Ryder* (1928) the reader is given the chance to view some restricted fragments of the characters' bodies. They are introduced through almost physiognomic descriptions, which focus on some parts of the body such as fingers and feet. Several examples can be considered as applications of this technique:

> Sophia was born gross, witty, gentle, enduring. [...] This is the body of Sophia, and she is greater than we. (*Ryder,* 16)

> In the cradle he [Wendell] looked much as he would look in the grave, a hawk nose, a long lip that upon the nipple seemed too purposeful, and a body like a girl's. (*Ryder,* 17)

> Her [Julie's] feet are all soled turned up, hands all backs for agony. Every man's heart in her mouth, the bowels of the world kennel in her belly. (*Ryder,* 114)

The first two quotations reveal the tone of mockery addressed to physiognomy as a science. Barnes often uses this tone as a mode of introducing new characters that immediately appear ridiculous and pathetic. From the initial consideration of Sophia's robust body complexion, which can be objectively positive for a child, the writer lingers on Wendell's lip, sarcastically described as "purposeful."

The last quotation is particularly meaningful because it stages a particular case of synecdoche which is reiterated throughout the whole novel. Women's feet prove a powerful metaphor carried out by the characters themselves. Several times, Sophia warns Amelia to keep her feet far from men, meaning that Amelia should stay away from them, since they only cause a woman's ruin. "Love and the Maiden, that was life and beauty mingled! Two wings folded over her feet. [...] Death and the Maiden. So painfully mingled, two wings folded over her feet." (*Ryder,* 221) Feet are the metaphor for male-female union, which is why Sophia claims "large feet and small feet have played a great part on the history of man." As soon as a woman approaches a man, she compromises her health and life:

> Destiny is in a foot. [...] From the very first day you put your foot in that house, did they not begin to pluck the very feathers from your breast to line their nest with? (*Ryder,* 35)

Delivering children is one of the greatest dangers for women since many eventually die from childbirth: "Amelia wept that she was again to be a mother. [...] I shall die this time" (*Ryder,* 96). Men, pitiless and selfish, keep on impregnating women for the sake of their physical satisfaction. It is therefore fundamental that a woman keeps her "feet and legs" far from men if she wants to live a decent – however not happy – life.

> Never let a man touch you, never show anything, keep your legs in your own life, and when you grow to be a woman, keep that a secret for yourself [...] Never, never have children. (*Ryder*, 32)

Compared to the intentionally unsuccessful synecdoches used in *The Book of Repulsive Women*, the ones of feet and legs in *Ryder* seem to fulfil the criteria of this figure of speech. Feet and legs which must be kept away from men, are clearly the parts that represent the body. There is even a moment when Sophia hints at the female body as an original whole: "Think you what this must inevitably do to corrupt a Whole Body?" (*Ryder,* 46) She is suggesting a pre-existing condition when the woman was entitled to the ownership of her body. Unfortunately, the corruption is, as she highlights, inevitable. The body parts represent the whole, but the whole is denied by human nature's wickedness and monstrosity. Reluctant and slave to their own animal instincts, women – including the preaching Sophia – approach men, get pregnant, deliver children, and then, exhausted, die. Though the synecdoche seems to work formally, it just leads to death, the tragic outcome of love – or rape – and by all means the denial of a living body. Barnes emphasises how matrimonial intercourse's only disguise is a legalized and socially approved rape. In fact, the women in *The Book of Repulsive Women* and those in *Ryder* undergo the same ineluctable fate: violence and debasement, fragmentation and, eventually, death. Some of the illustrations that Barnes incorporates within the text are particularly meaningful as they condense fundamental concepts. (see Figure 6. Drawing accompanying Wendell Ryder's story of the Beast Thingumbob, *Ryder)*

The beast, a dream-creature invented by Wendell in a story set up for his children Julie and Timothy, embodies love, sexual desire, and death. She is a conglomerate of women-like and beastly features, suggesting that the feminine human body is in fact only a disguise for what it should actually look like. The emphasis here lies on fertility and on its deforming effects on the female body. The creature has ten breasts because she has had ten babies. Once again, the relationship between the creature and a male beast encapsulates the dichotomy of love and death. The feminine creature = who in having "no face and no eyes" represents all women = asks her lover how she could be sure of his love for her; she proposes an answer herself since he seems unable to do so: "Promise me that you will bury me, then I shall know that you love me." (*Ryder,* 120) Aware of the inevitable outcome of her love, yet incapable to resist it, she willingly pursues her

end. The degradation to which a woman condemns herself through the choice of loving a man worsens during her complete transfiguration to beast:

> Amelia de Grier and Kate-Careless, went, [...] upon their four feet to do the dirty mess, and damn their infinitesimal-lime-squirting-never-stop-for-consideration-of-a-woman cloacae (and she with the backache and the varicose veins climbing her legs, or whatever-you-call-the-backsides-of-a-pigeon). (*Ryder,* 114)

The relationship between Amelia and Kate changes throughout the novel; they are rivals at the beginning, coexist for most of the narration, and finally put aside their mutual detestation, and try to live side by side. While they do not develop a proper friendship – which is never possible among human beings – nor do they feel any sympathy for one another, they begin to realise that they share the same painful destiny. (Scarry 1985) Degraded and defeated, Amelia and Kate apathetically meet their failure.

Using the body as a mighty symbol and powerful metaphor, Barnes also introduces deeper considerations about some other topics in *Ryder*, which remained unexplored in *The Book of Repulsive Women*.

> Amelia discovered that Sophia, under her increasing flesh, kept memories of what that flesh now covered, sweet breasts hidden by time, shoulders impertinently swamped, legs that walked in their old way beneath inglorious pounds, and a foot that yet played small. (*Ryder,* 34)

Sophia's present and decaying body is compared with her ripe and youthful one, thus establishing a contact between past and present. The fracture between a glorious maidenhood and a decaying adulthood – now senility – lies once again in the act of physical corruption caused by sexual intercourse and consequential pregnancy. Sophia's feet, once small, represent the young age when she had not been touched by a man yet. Her body, now rotten and degraded, disguises the memory of a shapely and ripe one, and represents the corruption which irreversibly spoilt it. The only possible connection between Sophia's past and future is encapsulated in the evil episode of meeting a man; therefore, such a link sounds painful and noxious to the woman who tries not to re-evoke it through memory.

In fact, the origin of her evils continues affecting her as her body is still trapped in its "increasing" degradation.

The progressive deterioration of the body sounds as a *memento mori,* which actually accompanies human beings from birth to death. "From cradle to grave" is a refrain that repeatedly crops up in *Ryder* to remind the reader that no positive turn is to come. In *The Book of Repulsive Women* the woman's body lies naked on the grass, waiting for rotting to start; in *Ryder*, the degradation process starts in life, and it is slower, though more devious. A strong connotation of passivity affects both the cradle and the grave, this time staging a disquieting metonymy: as they name the container for the content, they both refer to the body which is lying inside. Motionless, passive bodies in cradles and graves are there as a result of the same violence. An infant is the outcome of a double violence, one against the mother who is impregnated against her will, and one against the child itself since birth is a sin towards the new-generated life, condemned to sufferance. The corpse in the grave represents then what is left of a life of subjected and inflicted violence, and which is now indifferently occupying another frame, the grave, not very different from the starting point.

As the cradle and the grave seem to play a relevant symbolical role as containers, frames, limits for the body, it might be worth spending some words to discuss what we could define as the "logic of the frame," used throughout the novel. As considered at the beginning of this study, the images accompanying *Ryder* are more complicated than the vignettes in *The Book of Repulsive Women*. Though always described by their sufferance, degradation, bestiality, humiliation, or violence, the bodies in *Ryder* do not show the extreme fragmentation portrayed in the first collection of poems. However, the illustrations in *Ryder* do preserve something of the cartoonist technique. Banal that it may sound, drawings graphically and metaphorically make the most of their picture-frame. In a way, Barnes is shifting the limit of the subject from the physical shape – seen as a frame of the body – to the frame of the illustration. The drawings do not constitute a sequence on their own as they have nothing to do with one another; isolated in their uniqueness, they only make sense within the limits of their frames – or displayed situations. Moreover, the organization of the verbal text into chapters mirrors the logic of the frames in a triggering way, and is evident from the bewildering list of chapters:

1: Jesus Mundane
2: Those Twain – Sophia's Parents!
3: Sophia and the Five Fine Chamber-pots
4: Wendell Is Born
5: Rape and Repining!
6: Portrait of Amelia's Beginning
7: Sophia Tells Wendell How He Was Conceived
8: Pro and Con, or the sisters Louise
9: Tears, Idle Tears!
10: The Occupations of Wendell
11: However, for the Reader's Benefit
12: Amelia Hears from Her Sister in re Hisodalgus, That Fine Horse
13: Midwives' Lament, or the Horrid Outcome of Wendell's First Infidelity
14: Sophia's Last Will and Testament
15: Who Was the Girl?
16: The Coming of Kate-Careless, a Rude Chapter
17: What Kate Was Not
18: Yet for Vindication of Wendell
19: Amelia and Kate Taken to Bed
20: Amelia Dreams of the Ox of a Black Beauty
21: Wendell Dresses His Child
22: And Amelia Sings a Lullaby
23: Wendell Tells the Mystery to Julie and to Timothy
24: Julie Becomes What She Had Read
25: Amelia Hears from Her Sister in Regard to a Pasty
26: Kate and Amelia Go A-Dunging
27: The Beast Thingumbob
28: If Some Strong Woman
29: The Psychology of Nicknames
30: The Cat Comes Out of the Well
31: No Greater Love Hath Any Man.
32: The Soliloquy of Dr. Matthew O'Connor (Family Physician to the Ryders) on the Way to and from the Confessional of Father Lucas
33: Be She What She May
34: They Do Not Much Agree
35: Amelia Hears from Her Sister in Regard to Timothy

36: Amelia Tells a Bed-time Story
37: Sweetly Told
38: Dr. Matthew O'Connor and the Children
39: Wendell Discusses Himself with His Mother
40: Old Wives' Tale, or the Knit Codpieces
41: Wherein Sophia Goes A-Begging
42: Amelia Hears from her Sister on the Misfortunes of Women
43: Timothy Strives Greatly with a Whore
44: Fine Bitches All, and Molly Dance
45: Dr. Matthew O'Connor Talks to Wendell on Holy Inspiration
46: Ryder – His Race
47: Going To, and Coming From
48: Elisha in Love with the Maiden
49: Three Great Moments of History
50: Whom Should he Disappoint Now?

Read in a sequence, the chapters seem to acquire a weird collection of episodes rather than a proper story or plot. The desire for a family biography encouraged by the title – and to some extent by the frontispiece – is denied, mocked, and deconstructed by the list of chapters, as they seem to put together a disconnected series of particular scenes. As a matter of fact, the gained effect of a collage made up of tiny windows which peep into a family's life is completely intentional. These "windows" which are an important thematic device in the novel also form a narrative structure; scenes of a family life are framed in chapters as in their illustrations. In other words, the chapter-division stresses the symmetry between the structure of the narration and the aim of the vignettes: the characters are not allowed to move outside the scene in which they are caught, they do not evolve nor grow wiser. They may be present in more than one episode, but never change, remaining stuck in a fixed mental state of ineptitude where they are incapable of developing healthy relationships. Once again, characters are designed to be nothing more than bodies, imprisoned in their limited spaces of existence, which do not include peaceful and painless human relationships. Characters are, ultimately, *framed* in their selves, or better yet, in their bodies.

To conclude: embodied relationships

As demonstrated, the hypotyposis of bodily shape governs both *The Book of Repulsive Women* and *Ryder*. Not only does the presence of bodies permeate the thematic level, but it also works at different stages of depth in their narratological structure. The originality of Barnes in using bodies as literary devices lies in the fact that physical shapes embody complex relationships. As previously stated, they work on a metaphorical stage as synecdoche and metonymy, which represent, or rather, replace a no longer existing whole body. On a deeper level of analysis, they embody narrative agents. In both works, though not through the same linguistic strategies, physical shapes embody particularly three kinds of relationships, which can be synthesised into three basic *binômes*: characters and the outside world, characters and their maker (writer and/or artist), characters and their inner selves. Actually, a "versus" instead of an "and" would better suit these *binômes* since such relationships are always conflicting. Additionally, in each *binôme*, the "character" coincides with his or her "body" – or what it is left of the body since violence prevents any kind of physical or spiritual integrity.

As to the opposition between the subject (here intended not as active agent) and the world, the body plays the role of an experiential tool without which it would be impossible for the subject to come in touch with what surrounds it. The physical experience is the first and necessary contact with the world, although, since the nature of human existence is corrupted, this connection is as painful as inevitable. The body as a non-integral entity cannot produce a stable connection with the world, so the only "knowledge" to which this body can aspire is broken and fragmentary, incomplete and painful. The relationship, a source of experience but not of knowledge, remains superficial, and causes violence and pain to the already hurt subject, and is eventually translated into bodily fragmentation. The vicious circle of sufferings is unstoppable because the world has been corrupted by human beings which in turn are corrupted because they came into the world. In being born, they fragmented the self into pieces, making bodies into nothing more than broken tools aimed at establishing unstable contacts with a corrupted reality. Sometimes the body expresses anger and rebellion against this condition and fights it – which ends up with fighting against itself as both cause and victim of violence; sometimes it just resigns itself to sufferance, and waits pathetically for death to remove its pains. The woman in *The Book of Repulsive Women* – assuming that she stands for all women – is constantly subdued to

violence perpetuated by anonymous, non-identifiable agents. But in *Ryder*, the closer the subjects become to one another, the more pain is derived from their relationship. Amelia, Wendell's wife, is consumed with hatred for her husband; the two sisters, Amelia and Louise do not manage to live together; mother-daughter and mother-son relationships are spoiled by a strong sense of sin for having generated human lives. Even though some sort of dialogues occur among the characters, they rather resemble soliloquies for the poor interactive component they broach. As fragmented identities, subjects can only build up fragmentary conversations; one of the most emblematic conversations occurs between Timothy and a prostitute with whom he tries to establish a connection going beyond the physical intercourse; the questions that Timothy asks her become increasingly synthetic, thus suggesting a progressive mutilation of their communication:

> "Have you ever repented a little" he asked, "either by night or by day,
> either walking, standing, reclining, looking up, bending down, [...]
> sleeping or crying?
> "No," quoth she.
> [...]
> "Wherein shall I find you! Was it in praying?"
> "No."
> "In travel?"
> "No."
> "At home?"
> "No."
> "At a window?"
> "No."
> "In your bed?"
> "No."
> [...]
> "Then when, in God's name?"
> "Never at all" (*Ryder,* 184–186)

Rather than truly dialoguing, the characters either chose long silences or random, delirious soliloquies. Doctor Matthew O'Connor's spectacular and hardly comprehensible soliloquy in chapter XXXII where he describes his tastes, sins, and pains, clarifies the reason why it is impossible for the characters to communicate

with one another. They cannot tell anything about themselves because they do not understand anything about themselves.

The exploration of humans communicating with the world and other human beings in it, strangers or relatives, lies at the root of the conflict between the body and its soul. As previously mentioned in the analysis of the first embodied relationship, the body is a broken tool, so the only possible contact it has with soul is through broken communication. The fragments of the body disguise a soul which has, in turn, been ripped into fragments becoming flesh. The spiral of distress and disguise is as scary as it is unstoppable: at birth, the body comes to exist in the violent world that has generated it. The world causes the body violence, forces it to commit further violence, until it finally kills it. The pre-existing, unitary soul is corrupted from the moment it is embodied in the new-born life, and it cannot be re-unified because the body is thence corrupted. No real connection is therefore allowed between the body and the soul; if attempted, the soul drives the subject into madness, overwhelming the subject with its tragic truth. As previously mentioned, the body does not allow any connection between the subject and the outside world, other characters, or itself; it is only useful for disguising a ripped soul horribly twisted into monstrosity. The body imposes its own limitations to itself, so that the tool becomes the frame, preventing the subject from going beyond itself.

The impossibility to know or understand the subject ultimately triggers a reflection on the relationship between the fictional character and its own maker. Disturbed by the ferocity of the subjects, and confused by the dichotomy they embody, the reader ends up pondering the intentions of the writer in enacting such a tragedy – played by mutilated puppets. However, not even their own maker seems to be able to investigate the characters from a psychological point of view – nor does she seem willing to do so. The writer appears to be disinterested in exploring the psyche of her characters as they are into trying to understand one another, or investigating their souls. Barnes just reproduces their tragedy and shows no real attempt at going beyond the figure. The main reason for her inability to reach a deeper knowledge is that even she, as a writer, is first of all a human being, a body; as a consequence, she is doomed to the same condemnation as the figures she gives life to. The writer is in her turn a violated body and a fragmented soul who does not find a peaceful relationship between herself and the world, between herself and her literary figures, or between her exteriority and her own self.

In conclusion, Barnes's subjects, masks, or simply, *bodies*, catalyse the entire narration by being characters and narrative devices at the same time. They monopolise the scenes with their outer and inner deformity; they represent both the origin and the result of violence and bestiality; they build up the prison of their existence and shape the frame of their ineptitude. They embody the failing relationships among human beings and, ultimately, personify the tragic fate shared by all human beings, including that of the writer and artist – as well as the reader and observer.

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Foreign Bodies, Foreign Souls

National Physiognomy in Modern Romanian Art

In the 19th century, Swiss writer Johann Kaspar Lavater's studies were quite popular readings in the Romanian provinces. Lavater had theorized and produced the principles on physiognomy, the so-called science of interpreting human characteristics based on bodily features. He and his teachings were mentioned in many writings. Moreover, influenced by his observations, some Romanian writers started producing their own physiognomic remarks. Although some raised a point that his theories were not scientific and accurate, there were still many who accepted them as being foolproof.

However, it was not only writers who responded to Lavater's findings, but also artists to whom the Swiss theoretician specifically addressed an entire section of his study, entitled *On portrait painting.* (Lavater 1840, 170–179) His methodological guidance became increasingly influential, and among the European artists and art theoreticians who made use of physiognomy in their works and offered or discussed specific types corresponding to specific characters, some were Romanians. Writer and philologist Bogdan Petriceicu Haşdeu in a study dedicated to the physiognomic fundaments of a Vlad Ţepeş portrait, concluded that "Just as chronology fundaments itself on astronomy, so does iconography fundament itself on physiognomy." (Haşdeu 1864, 9) Romanian national painter Nicolae Grigorescu relied on physiognomy and phrenology,[1] being "well-grounded in these specialties, as they were part of the theoretical skilfulness of his art." (Niculescu 1965, 231) Caricaturists were especially indebted to express such mental drives. "Don't be alarmed, [...] for I won't bring you a dissertation on physiognomic art, my intention is only to show you some signs caricatur-

1 Pseudo-science concerned with the study of the human skull in order to determine the mental faculties and character of the individual.

ists work after"[2] – this is how Ion Heliade-Rădulescu, an important Romanian writer and philologist, appeased his readers in an article reminiscent of Lavater in its content and title, *Those inside judged by those outside.* (Heliade-Rădulescu 1841, 16) Although not always specifically mentioned, there were tacit physiognomic demands in the many requirements critics imposed on artists in order to apply psychological analysis when portraying human models. For a certain art-connected 19th-century public, recent disciplines outside the artistic domain, such as modern physiognomy, phrenology or criminology, became as important as the long-time principles of portraiture in art history. And their influence kept going also in the 20th century as well.[3]

But just as physiognomy turned into a trend, a far more powerful set of ideas was growing in force: nationalism. Beginning with the second half of the 19th century the construction of a national identity at the level of visual representations became a matter of full interest for Romanian artists. Drawing up a Romanian national typology developed in alliance with a contrastive effort of creating foreign national typologies, as well. The search for the most representative ethnic types now strongly called on the principles of physiognomy, as the portrayal of the subjects had to be total, both physically and psychically. Lavater himself, but also other theoreticians more or less in sympathy with his observations, developed elaborate expositions on the issue of national physiognomy; their general belief was that nations developed collective physical types due to their particular historic evolution. This opinion was shared also by Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu, who admitted that "according to Lavater, it is known that certain actions impregnate through physiognomy in the individual, so that he wears this expression for his entire life. The great historic conditions that rolled over the nation, independently of its will and thus not as a product of its psychological structure, must leave their character traits in the physiognomy of the nation; they later become the very physiognomy of the nation." (Vatamaniuc 1988, 354)

2 All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

3 In 1905, Sextil Puşcariu, a Romanian philologist and historian, advised that a portraitist should keep in mind the physiognomic experiences and emphasize the physical features that express the character of the model. (Puşcariu 1905) In 1908, Gheorghe Popovici, artist and art teacher at the School of Fine Arts in Jassy, expressed his disappointment in his students' incapability to capture affective dispositions such as joy, wonder, hate, sorrow or psychic types, such as the cunning individual, the criminal or the innocent one. (National Archives of Romania 1908, 10) In 1910, artist and art critic Vasile Ravici still asked the artists to use Gall, a renowned promoter of phrenology, and Lavater in the study of portraiture. (Ravici 1910)

But historical change-overs could not have operated only physical refashioning. This is the idea from which the exterior typology of the Other began to be interpreted as to suggest his/her elusive nature: the national character or national behavior. In the second half of the 19th century, foreigners as pictorial subjects, were often defined in physiognomic terms by the artist, or by the viewer (in the form of the art critic). By means of anthropological theories and social prejudices, artists cemented an ethnic imagery, wherein facial and bodily particularities became markers of collective predispositions and temperaments, specific to different nations. In 1871, after writing a short essay on phrenology and physiognomy, Alexandru Asachi launched in his magazine a series of graphic types, among which some ethnic types could be deciphered. (Figure 1)[4] Combining pseudo-scientifical principles with exercises of imagination, caricaturists improvised anthropomorphic transformations with ethnic hints.[5] Human expression, fundamental in portraiture, was no longer discussed only in universal artistic terms, as traditional art theory had done, but increasingly in anthropological and ethnological terms. The racially connected facial expressions became a matter of interest in the artistic scholar education.[6] And art critics and historians started to use physiognomic

4 For instance, when warning his readers to keep away from both grumpy and big-teethed men, he illustrated the former with a Levantine figure, perhaps a Greek or a Turk, and the latter one apparently with an Englishman, similar to the caricatures of the time. Also, the human type inclined to business is represented as being a Jew.

5 Romanian caricaturists made use of comparative physiognomy when designing laborious developments from a specific animal to a specific ethnic type, or side-by-sides between specific animals and specific ethnic types, so as to suggest behavioral similarities. Thus, on one occasion, Constantin Jiquidi displayed the transformation of Deutscher Michael ("The German Michael," national personification of the typical German and of Germany) into a pig, suggesting slothfulness. (*Vespea*, year I, no. 5, 12 November 1889) Another time, a caricaturist signing Burgstaller presented the transmogrification of a Jew into a vulture, pointing out in this way how covetous Jews were. (*Adev*ărul ilustrat, year II, no. 5, 1 April 1896)

6 Three of the books the School of Fine Arts in Jassy acquired for its students at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries were Paolo Mantegazza's *La physiognomie et les sentiments,* Théodore Piderit's *Mimique et physionomie,* and Charles Darwin's *L'expression des emotions.* (National Archives of Romania 1901, 31; 319) Mantegazza, although critical of Lavater, extracted some of his principles and reshaped them. Focusing on the facial features, Mantegazza developed a theory of racial and *ethnical expressions*. He identified the Grotesque or Simian Expression, characteristic to the Negroes and the Negritoes, the Stupid Expression, characteristic to Hottentots, Bushmen and Australians, and the Intelligent Expression, specific to Europeans. The students would have encountered a completely different opinion in Darwin's book showing his antiracial position: "the different races of man express their emotions and sensations with remarkable uniformity throughout the world." (Darwin 1872, 131) However, Darwin admitted that some emotional reactions,

observations in their works, in order to define the national character and temperament when analysing visual representations of foreigners.[7]

Although there were multiple practices of both imagining and imaging national physiognomies, these processes often resulted in an axiological absolute: while the Romanian was equally handsome and smart, the foreigners were portrayed with various corporal and mental deficiencies, varying from nation to nation. The anamnesis the foreigner was symbolically given by the artist reveals – even for today's viewer – a blemished psychosomatic nature which back then was determined on the basis of anthropological assumptions, folkloric beliefs and social prejudices. This pathological anatomy is now our subject of examination. Dear reader, will you please be of assistance in my cultural enquiry into the pictorial Other, as we distinguish between real bodies and prejudicially constructed ones and try to indulgently understand how the physical appearance conveyed, for some artists and for a specific audience, an ethnic psychology.

Body and head

What happens when a Hungarian hires a painter to create the portrait of his recently deceased father? A burst of hilarity, since we are discussing of an anecdote, illustrated in 1900 by Nicolae Mantu, a Romanian caricaturist. (Figure 2) The painter from the caricature created a typical Hungarian, with "boots, spurs, twisted moustaches and cap," since he did not possess any photograph of his subject. The son obviously does not recognize his father, and blurts out stupidly: Oh, poor dad, he passed away only four months ago and look how much he has

such as blushing, manifest differently in different races, giving the example of Jews, Blacks, the Lepchas of Sikhim. Darwin was in fact more interested in promoting the anthropomorphism, ascribing human emotions to animals, and studying human expressions compared to those of animals. Piderit, who was also critical of Lavater, proposed a new type of physiognomy, considering that only facial muscles and the correlated facial expressions are linked to the intellectual activity. He noted, for instance, that the monkey-like head of a Negro can hide high-mindedness, whereas a classically shaped head of a White can possess rusticity. (Piderit 1888, 205)

7 In a biography dedicated to the portrait painter G. D. Mirea, author Nicolae Petrașcu eulogized the artist's talent in capturing the ethnic character of his subjects. In the case of a French boy, "his entire countenance [...] breaths a live, open and immediate intelligence: the intelligence of the Frenchman." (Petrașcu 1943, 63) Petrașcu also mentions the portrait of Bessy Ionescu, the British wife of Romanian politician Tache Ionescu, "on whose visage, of delicate beauty, one can see the serious-mindedness of her race, and behind the crystal of her eyes, her deep in thought soul." (Petraşcu, 55)

already changed! More than one century ago, the painting and the surrounding scene rounded off a general ethnic frame: each of the two Hungarians manifest a specific race trace, as perceived by Romanians: cockiness (the Hungarian from the painting) and idiocy (the Hungarian from the left).

Mantu conveyed these ideas by means of gestures and face expressions, but the viewer could also benefit from some anthropological connections. The typical Hungarian of the caricatures was fat, and fatness had been associated with a slow mindset since antiquity and onwards. *Polisarkia*, the state of having too much flesh, was the result of the imbalance of humors. The phlegmatic individuals consumed large quantities of food, and as a result, they lived in a concomitant state of slothfulness and stupidity. (Gilman 2010, 24) The obese, in simple contrast to the athlete bestowed with beauty and goodness (*kalos kai agathos*), was unrighteous, stupid and ugly. In the first treatise on physiognomy published in Romanian in 1785 (a translation after a German study), the reader was advised to beware of the thick and fat people, for they were wasteful, full of flaws and especially wicked. (*Curioznică*... 1785, 10) The warning was reactivated in 1909, when an extract of the treatise was published in *Universul literar*, a national journal.[8]

"A thick belly, a thick understanding," is a statement presumably quoted by Lavater, but originally made by Galen. (Lavater 1840, 263) Fat handicapped cerebration, especially when it was in direct connection with the head. Another observation, also quoted by Lavater, is relevant in this direction: "Heads of much bone and flesh have little brain. Large bones, with abundance of flesh and fat, are impediments to the mind." (Lavater 264) For the 19th-century viewer, there were many reasons to think that big-bellied and fat-headed individuals, quite often represented in caricatures, suffered from mental disabilities. In Romanian caricature, and sometimes also in painting and sculpture, many foreigners were constructed with bulky heads. Macrocephalia was a typical method in caricature, but in cases such as the previously discussed scene, the large head was in congruence with the large body, translated into fatness or heaviness. Hungarians were tubby, Russians were bulky, and Germans too, among their various somatic types, as represented in visual arts, developed one that was either corpulent or brutishly big. Some typologies were adopted from the European press, but they fit excellently into the Romanians' own perception, and they supported a large range of prejudices. What was the common feature? Big meant stupid.

8 *Universul literar*, 26, no. 40, 28 September 1909.

However, when historian and journalist George Barițiu advised his readers that "a voluminous head with a triangle-shaped forehead shows lack of intelligence" or "a head with the skull covered with fat and meat proves most of the time little intelligence, especially if that head is small and round," he was not only pinpointing the intellectual impairments caused by fatness, but also by cranial problems. (Barițiu 1853, 64) It was not only the flesh, but also the skull that communicated presumptive mental difficulties. In physiognomic terms, ill-shapen or disproportional heads – either too large or too small – often certified mental retardation and reprehensible behaviors. And such convictions were to be translated into visual rules.

In 1870, when analyzing Romanian artist Gheorghe Tattarescu's painting *Hagar in the desert*, a critic observed that Ishmael[9] was deformed and had an abnormally big head. The critic who was definitely aware of Lavater's theories, since he would mention them in a later article, considered that the painter had deliberately transformed Ishmael into a monster, out of national hatred for his descendants, "who don't belong to our Orthodox confession." (Laerțiu 1870) The deformation was plausibly thought-out. In 1865, Tattarescu wrote a short manual on the human proportions for art students, so he was aware of and demanded the classical body construction.

Some of the foreigners who were considered large-headed, and therefore, stupid, were the Bulgarians.[10] Writer Corneliu Moldovanu made a complete anthropological portrait of the Bulgarian: "Bay Ganyo[11] as a representative type of his race, has a big head, sloping and small forehead,[12] large cheekbones. His

9 Biblical character traditionally considered the ancestor of the Arab people.

10 There is a kernel of truth here. French geographer Élisée Reclus, in his *Universal Geography*, described Bulgarians as being squat, strongly built, with large head on broad shoulders. However, farther intellectual connections, such as those made by Romanians, were dismissed: "Greeks and Wallachians ridicule them, and many proverbial expressions refer to their want of intelligence and polish. This ridicule, however, they hardly deserve. Less vivacious than the Wallachian, or less supple than the Greek, the Bulgarian is certainly not deficient in intelligence." (Reclus 1876–1894, 189)

11 Fictional character invented by Bulgarian writer Aleko Konstantinov, subsequently a personification of the typical Bulgarian.

12 Besides the volume of the head, the slopping small forehead was also a Bulgarian anthropological marker signaling primitivism and narrow-mindedness. Historian Nicolae Iorga wrote of "Bulgarians with narrow forehead and hairy skull." (Iorga 1972, 339) Elisabeta Odobescu-Goga, an aristocrat, did not forget that during the First World War, Bucharest was overrun with "oafish Bulgarians with narrow foreheads." (Rostás 2004, 228) And poet Tudor Arghezi wrote down, with visible repugnance: "The pages of the English magazines were filled with faces as expressive as that

stubby and heavy body, his rhythmless movements, his gestures are rough. In his Turanic nature there is no harmony, in his obtuse brain there's no initiative." (Moldovanu 1917)

Another writer, Alexandru Vlahuță recalled a moment when Nicolae Grigorescu applied Lavaterian theories during a controversy referring to the character of the Bulgarians. As the discussion took place in a moving train, the painter, eager to prove how stubborn the Bulgarians were, he drew a feral and ugly head on the train window "so that to show how certain facial features unfailingly correspond to certain racial sentiments," exclaiming: There you have him, the Bulgarian! (Vlahuță 1936, 56) We will never know how that Bulgarian looked like, but we can make ourselves an idea by looking at one of Grigorescu's paintings, *Bulgarians astride donkeys*, today in the custody of the National Museum of Art of Romania. (Figure 3 left) The central character's head is knob-like and bowed, and has a sloping and narrow forehead, delimited by a round cap – an iterative profile if we compare the character to a couple of Bulgarian typologies developed in the press caricature. (Figure 3 center and right) These last two overemphasized figures are observably constructed to suggest idiocy. The big head of the Bulgarians, and the immediate mental deficiencies were constantly targeted in caricatures and press anecdotes for many decades until the instauration of the Communist regime.

Another nation that had cranial problems, in the eyes of the Romanians, were the Germans who were imagined to have square heads. It was a physical anomaly that also certified, especially beginning with the First World War, that Germans were barbarous and mentally underdeveloped.[13]

of a potato, belts burdened with pistols, baggy trousers and Bulgarian foreheads as narrow as a band." (Arghezi 2003, 1012)

13 The image of the Germans was borrowed from the French media and rapidly diffused. In 1916, the Romanian magazine *Acțiunea* reproduced a French article which discussed the Teutonic physiognomy, with the clear purpose of debunking the purported German racial superiority. "Is there anyone who, when looking at a German forehead, won't notice the badly rounded shape of their calvarium, its obtuse angles and that roughly carved conformation that, along the ages, gave the Germans their denomination of 'square heads'?" A German head "gives the impression of stubbornness, rudeness, intellectual heaviness and brutality." The inferior part of the skull was also meaningful: "The volume and the thickness of the cheeks, the length of the oral cavity show the importance of the digestive function and the lavishness of the interior appetites. And the chin resembling a flat stone and the extruded jaws are the hammer, and the pincers needed for chewing the aliments and unclogging their voraciousness." (Berrillon 1916) Among the local follow-ups, journalist Paul I. Prodan spoke of "Germans with square kettles on their heads, after the very shape

The stereotype was often made use of in art and art criticism, as it easily instrumented ethnic differentiations. Romanian artist D. Stoica's paintings of The Great War depicting *mêlée*, battle scenes were defined by the "characteristic long gaunt Romanian heads and the big-jawed and massive dark heads of the Germans", a critic wrote. (Beldiceanu 1917) In the 1920s, another art critic considered that the Romanian peasants in the paintings of Theodorescu-Sion were ethnically inadequate: due to their "square heads and flat foreheads," they reminded of the German peasants. (Igiroşanu 1925)

For a contemporary viewer an undeniable proof of biased stereotypes is *The prisoners*, a bronze statuary group executed by Cornel Medrea around the end of the First World War, today in the custody of the National Military Museum. (Figure 4) The artist represented a group of German prisoners guided by a Romanian soldier. Constructed as a prototypical winner, the latter is beautiful and serene; his head and body are proportionally built. Meanwhile, the Germans are monstrous, heavy-bodied, square-headed, and underhung. Unmistakably, the artist attempted to intensify their spiritual inferiority, and succeeded.

Red and Black

The color of the hair and skin was also a differentiating marker not only in terms of race or complexion, but also of character. There was a general belief, and not only in Romanian culture, that people with red hair were evil troublemakers. "Beware of the red man, the glabrous man, and the marked man," warns a superstition from Moldavia, "for they are ill omens." (Oişteanu 2009, 60) Red was a natural signal pointing out dangerous beings. Red hair signalizes the thirst for revenge, George Barițiu informs in a concise communication, *Physiognomic observations on Lavater* (Barițiu 1854. 24), and red hair was also an indicator of criminality in Lombrosian analysis. (Hiller 2011, 135–137)

Russians were not uncommonly red haired,[14] a feature that topped up their stereotypical profile in the eyes of Romanians. In his *Memoirs*, writer Demostene

of their heads" (Prodan 1918), and historian Virgil Drăghiceanu mentioned "big-jawed German faces" or, in the case of women, "faces with mandibular prognathism." (Drăghiceanu 1920, 149)
14 Although, anthropologically speaking, red hair was more of a curious rarity than a national characteristic (a fact proven also by the Russian folklore, attesting that ginger men were marginalized) the red hair of the Russians has often been mentioned in European literature. In reality, red hair

Botez gave an account of a "stout sergeant, burnt by the sun, with a thick red beard: the type of a Lipovan Russian." (Botez 1973, 169). Another writer, Gala Galaction in one of his novels compared Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea, a Romanian socialist theoretician of Ukrainian Jewish origins to a "Russian peasant – a painter of icons," on account of his "long reddish beard," namely a "Russian beard." (Galaction 1997, 24) And Marusea's hair, a "genuine Russian woman" in Gib Mihăiescu's homonymous novel *The Russian Woman*, had "orange glows" which, under the artificial lights of the evening, turned into "a strange and wonderful scarlet." The only element that Marusea was missing, to comply with "the complete Russian woman" in the narrator's thoughts, were long legs. (Mihăiescu 1934, 7–8)

Such visual observations led to physiognomic deductions. Jewish-Romanian journalist Henric Sanielevici judged the Lipovan Russians by their red hair, which "gives away an old mixture with a brown race – perhaps the very prehistoric European race the Basks represent. And, this is a very curious thing about a northern nation – the Lipovans are of a ferocious sensuality: the women – as I was told – prostitute openly out of pleasure [...] Red hair – sensuality; sensuality – fanaticism; fanaticism – reactionary instincts." (Sanielevici 1911, 217)

Red was also a humoral touch-up; not only were the Russians red-haired, but also ruddy. The stereotypical Russian seemed to belong to the brevilinear type, due to his bulky body, but also due to his disposition. In 1944, Physician Mircea Athanasiu described this somatic type as follows: "His color is red, he will eat plenty, and drink just as plenty, his shapes will be fully, rounded. He is a man who finds himself satisfied by the most insignificant thing, especially a tasty food or a good drink." (Athanasiu 1944, 47) In cultural terms, the Russian was indeed perceived as a gourmand and a heavy drinker, and this was by no means an exclusive Romanian insight. And it did not imply any medical or anthropological knowledge to assert that their red blush signalized alcoholism.

was more present in some distinct ethnic groups than throughout all Russia. At least in Romanian consciousness, the stereotypical Red Russian could have been the product of a prejudicially homogenized nation type that simply indicated the foreigner from the northeastern border, no matter the various ethnic types of the Russian Empire. The Cossack, occasionally presented with red hair even in Russian literature, had often been given a similar image in Romanian writings. Lomiliev, the Cossack from *Marele Duce [The Grand Duke]* written by Romanian playwright Barbu Ştefănescu-Delavrancea, was red-haired, and one of the characters from *Şoimii [The Hawks]*, a novel by Romanian writer Mihail Sadoveanu, was "a tall Cossack, with red beard." (Sadoveanu 1993, 178)

Surely, this typical pigmentation has not gone unused in visual arts. A convincing example is a caricature from the beginning of the 1920s. It approached a sensitive subject: the restitution of the Romanian state treasury transported to Russia during the First World War at the time when the two countries were allies.[15] An immense Bolshevik soldier offers a bag to the Romanian sentries over the border. The drawing is dyed in shades of green and red. However, all of the red is mainly affixed to the Bolshevik: his skin, hair, jacket and boots are all red – a beneficial warning coloration, as the Russian is holding a knife behind his back.

The character epitomizes the cultural portrait of Russia: red appearance, red army, and red terror. Communist Russia was the culmination of a monochroic history; even its leader, Lenin, was a redhead. And red remained the dominant color of the charging iconography fabricated around the alleged Judeo-Bolshevism, and with good reason – the conspiracy was believed to be sanguineous and the Jews to be reddish, as well.

Quite a lot of ink has been dedicated to the apparently small issue of the Jewish red hair and freckles, in literature and political journalism.[16] It is little wonder that many even came to argue about a specific Jewish erythrism. At the beginning of 20th century, Jewish-American anthropologist Maurice Fishberg admitted that there was a prevalence of red hair with modern Jews, especially of a red beard. He also considered that red beard was most often encountered in the case of the Galician Jews,[17] and frankly concluded that, as usual, those who have red hair almost always have freckles. (Fishberg 1911, 68)

Jewish-Romanian journalist H. Streitman believed that Nicolae Grigorescu was the one who, in his painting *Candidate* for *naturalization* (better known as the *The Jew with the Goose*; first time exhibited in 1880, today in the custody of the National Museum of Art, Romania), settled down the features of the stereotypical Jew: "greasy, freckled, red, erratically gesticulating, involuntary comic, with his eyelashes eaten by conjunctivitis, foolish and easily deceived." (Streitman 1933 (?) 125) Red is the dominant element of a visual typology that, in Streitman's opinion, also encapsulated psychical attributes. However, it was not only simple-mindedness in the portrait of a Jew set to lobby in the Romanian

15 *Veselia*, 11 May 1922.

16 In *Inventing the Jew: Antisemitic Stereotypes in Romania and Other Central-East European Cultures*, contemporary anthropologist Andrei Oișteanu has expanded, with many examples, on the issue of the ruddy and freckled Jew as a literary and journalistic topic. (Oișteanu 2009, 57–66)

17 Many of the Romanian Jews came from Galicia.

Parliament with a fowl as a cumshaw, but also cupidity. Discussing the same painting, Alexandru Vlahuță pointed out the acquisitive nature of the individual. (Vlahuță 1936, 25–26) And this nature is generally perceptible in Grigorescu's and others' later works depicting red Jews.

Such is the case of Octav Bancilă's *An old Jew*, a painting in the custody of the Cluj-Napoca Art Museum. Red is the dominant color of the canvas applied not only biologically, as skin and hair, but also enveloping the whole scene in a conspicuous atmosphere. The smile and the eye glance complement what seems to be a treacherous character.

As a culmination of evilness, red becomes a connector between the Devil and the Jew. Several Romanian proverbs contain cautions: "Keep away from the red man, for he is the Devil's own," "Better beware of the red man than of the Devil with horns," "The Devil changes himself into a red man," who will then dwell on the Red Hill, at the Red Apple Tree, or in the Red Sea. (Oişteanu 2009, 62) When Romanian caricaturist Ion Bărbulescu B'Arg decided to illustrate a Saxon fairy tale that was also recorded in Transylvania, *Die Drei Rotbärbe* – the three red-bearded men, who at the end of the fairy tale prove to be devils –, he chose to put ethnic markers on the three individuals: the raincoat and the fedora, elements of urban origin, show the cliquish aspect of the group opposed to the rural and simple couple of men on the left – all of which are reminders of a famous Grigorescu painting where three Jews (interestingly, with red shades on their beards) are trying to scam two Romanians. (Figure 5) With regard to this painting, we can now understand that in B'arg's drawing, *die drei Rotbärbe* are not only devils, but also Jews.[18] This particular connection derives from a prejudicial parallelism between Jews and demons present in European and Romanian folklore. The red beard was an attribute of the devil in medieval drama before being transferred to the Jew. (Cohen and Heller 1990, 44)

Although often a synonym for the Devil, the Jew, especially when empowered with red hair, proved capable of outsmarting the Devil in case they confronted each other. "The Jew with the red beard/ With the mail he sends the Devil," say some humorous verses. But there is an alternative rhyme: "The Jew with the black beard, / Sends the Devil out to grassland" ((Oişteanu 2009, 49)). Black

18 In a similar scenario, the hero in Mihail Sadoveanu's *At the manor* encounters the Devil who is incarnated into an individual that reminds of the stereotypical Jew: he is a red-haired trader, and offers the traveler a flask of brandy. (Oişteanu 2009, 81)

represented also evilness. In folkloric tradition, *Omul Negru* (*the Black Man*) was an epithet applied to an infamous man. The Black Man was also an indefinite bogeyman (hence, the main character of a children's game still played in some regions) and an incarnation of Death.

Christianity came to associate sin and death with black. The Devil was pictorially defined with the help of this color. Medieval iconography consistently produced black executioners, when Christic or hagiographic martyrdoms were represented. This motive was generated by the fact that the present and immediate danger of Christianity, the Arabs, had a dark complexion. Dark skin covered an inhumane cruelty, a belief that was confirmed by certain 19th century medical literature. (Virey 1894, 119; 128–12; 145; 150–156) For Romanians, the executioners had also dark skin, as their roles were fulfilled by Africans, Turks or Gypsies. In Romanian consciousness, but also in Romanian art, the dark-skinned executioner was present in religious scenes, as well as in historic and social ones.

Dark skin referred to a religious and social differentiation, as black meant promiscuity, ungodliness and evilness, features that were disdained in a civilized society. The dark races were irrevocably different and therefore, potentially dangerous for the white race, even through their female subjects: "[Black women] manifest lubricity and extraordinary passions for our climates; they seem to wear, in their hot breast, the whole fire of Africa: this is why they seduce the Whites and enthral them, to their perdition, with the passions of their libertinism." (Virey 1894, 153)

Let us elaborate a watercolor by artist Ioan Georgescu. It is from the last decade of the 19th century, today in the collection of the National Museum of Art, Romania. It is a portrait of a Black. With his body oriented to the right of the composition, the character turns his head towards the viewer, staring him/her down; under a turban, one easily discovers a black face with bulgy venous eyes, flat nose, a coaly wiry beard and big lips – on the whole, an irreversible symbol of a wicked alterity for a certain public. Yet, there is a strange kindness (or, the other way around, there is no putative evilness) emanating out of the portrait. And, incredibly, one can see clearly a small crucifix on a chain around the neck of the supposed pagan. The religious artefact is an ethnic and cultural indicator; the character is probably a Copt, an Egyptian Christian whom the artist presumably had met on a Mediterranean journey. But the way the cross is pulled out of the shirt and conspicuously pushed to the left, it makes the viewer wonder if there is

more to this message. Was this image a visual proof that Christianity could soften up the most hard-hearted people? Or perhaps, in an anthropological approach, this was a proof for an invigilating Romanian public that despite their frightful outward appearance, black people were capable of the noblest spirituality.

The face – the mirror of character

The above discussed racial dissimilarity, with its potential behavioral and intellectual insufficiency, was suggested through blackness, but also facial features. It was the face that offered physiognomists the largest amount of psychological insights regarding any given individual.

Theoretically, in the preceding case, the big lips of the character were among the most revealing lineaments. George Barițiu wrote that "a mouth with thick and fleshy lips belongs to the lustful and lazy man; almost always it defines a phlegmatic type." (Barițiu 1854) And in an 1855 excerpt on physiognomy published at Bucharest, it was specified: "Those lips that are very thick, although equal, indicate almost always a man lacking delicacy, with a dirty graspingness, and sometimes confused and mean." (Ciocanelli 1855, 149)

In Romanian folklore big lips were regularly among the physical attributes of the *Arap* (idiomatically *Maur*), an ogreish character, uncommonly powerful and violent. Folklore was also the main cultural background where the image of the Gypsy has often been remodelled after that of the African, the latter borrowing the former's anthropologic attributes, thus becoming "black as tar," "Maur," but also "big-lipped." The transformation implied clear physiognomic meanings when, by targeting historical evidences, the Gypsy were appointed to horrific social roles, such as the already mentioned executioner. Iancu, "the big black thick-lipped Gipsy" in Mihail Sadoveanu's novel *Neamul Şoimăreştilor* [*The Soimaresti Family*], commissioned to behead a group of boyars, is an autochthonous version of the Black executioner, by his looks and open cruelty.[19] Two Romanian graphic artists, D. Stoica and Ary Murnu both used the same technical tricks to attain the physical and psychical distinctiveness of the character: linear hachure for the im-

19 In fact it recalls, for example, the headsman sent to kill Prince Constantin Hangerli at the end of the 18th century: "a huge horribly looking Maur, bold to kill, with a thick-lipped mouth." (Șăineanu 1900, 22)

perative binary complexion – black skin, black soul – and, beneath a moustache, a protuberant lower lip. (Figure 6)

To an uncertain extent, in Romanian consciousness the Black was not clearly defined as a racial and geographic type, but rather as a general socio-anthropological one. Out of simple-mindedness or willingly detrimental projections, the concept encompassed the dark-skinned anthropological types from a marginal humanity characterized by primitivism, criminality and cruelty. In visual form, the big-lipped Negro seemed to be the simplest result of a process of racialization that homogenized races and social categories into a unique typology. When artist Francisc Şirato in a wartime caricature depicted an Indian sent to the European battlefield, he delivered the portrait of a naked grotesque Negro, with red and outlined big lips more reminiscent of an African bushman. Inquired about his nudity, the Negro explained that it was his war outfit, when he was called to take blood baths. As for the interwar drawings, the cannibals preoccupied with human sacrifices repeated the same image. And when film director Aurel Petrescu denounced, in a comic strip for children, a less critical misdeed – a small Gypsy boy, trying to steal a slice of melon –, the main character was still constructed as an ink-faced pickaninny, with bulgy eyes and large lips. Despite the age, the character, admittedly indebted to the darky iconography of the blackface phenomenon,[20] but also alluding to the folkloric association of the Negro and Gypsy, is an active figure of criminality.

However, it was not only the lips that gave off the inner character, it was also the mouth expression. Physiognomically, the mouth and the smile seem to be among the most efficient indicators of a mental disorder. Titu Maiorescu, a 19th century cultural personality and theoretician aware of Lavaterian physiognomy, however reluctant to accept its presumed scientific nature, still summarized some of its observations: "the individuals whose mouth, hand or walk are aslant, have something false, conflicting, malicious in their character;" "if on the cheeks of a smiling person appear three circular and parallel lines one can conclude there is a considerable dose of insanity in his or her character;" "any disproportion between the upper lip and the inferior one is a clue to insanity and viciousness;" "when observing that an individual, although spirited and active, has an opening near the center of the middle line of his or her mouth, that never closes and al-

20 Theatrical makeup which was very popular in 19th-century America later imposed a stereotypical image of Afro-Americans in film, animation movies and graphic art.

lows a tooth to be seen even when the mouth is closed, one must conclude a cold severity, a pleasure in insulting others and doing harm;" "he or she who smiles without reason and with a lip askew, often stops and stays apart from others, with no direction or drive whatsoever, must be insane." (Maiorescu 2005, 428)

In light of such warnings, it is understandable that anything else than a perfect and sincere smile could have been easily perceived as the manifestation of a sociopathic personality. And there was nothing perfect or sincere in the stereotypical smile of the Jews so often individualized in art. Their visually overrepresented lower lip, curved towards the exterior, which already is a physiognomic indicator of a troubled character, became distressingly prominent when animated by smile. Expressive of immorality and evilness, the grimace was repeatedly presented as a typological attribute of the Jews.

In 1904, when Nicolae Mantu was assigned to produce the illustrations for George Cair's *Urmaşii Romei [The descendants of Rome]*, he was faced with a challenge: to represent a smiling ticket seller in accordance with the written text: "a Jewish physiognomy, with that smile of greed characteristic to their race, manifested at the sight of the money of the art lovers that want to walk in." (Cair 1904, 262) The artist accomplished his task: on a frontally seen face, he rendered the mouth's expression as a horizontally elongated "V." A centered brush stroke, suggesting a protruding down lip, substantiates the gesture. Even if a good part of the mouth is shaded and undetermined, the viewer can easily decipher and mentally complete the expression, tracing both the line of the lips and the intimate craving for money.

Let us evaluate another example. Iţic Zodaru, the main character of a Mihail Sadoveanu short story, is a poor Jew, hard-working and dedicated to helping the Jewish community. Although not malicious, he is manifestly cunning when interacting with the Romanian community, especially at the market, where his negotiations are full of trickeries. And he tries to cover up his oncoming pilferage bargaining with a smile. Romanian artist Jean Al. Steriadi captured this very moment in an illustration. The droopy lower lip, unveiling the teeth, delineates an ill-affected smile, tell-tale of a devious nature. (Figure 7)

But there is more to the above characters denoting cunningness and moneygrubbing predisposition: the small eyes and especially the big nose. In Iţic's case, the nose was part of the literary portrait created by Sadoveanu: the Jew had "a goat beard and a long moustache hanging underneath a large nose." Steriadi particularized this nose highlighting the crooked profile with strokes of chalk.

Although slightly caricatural, the portrait is half as incisive as the anti-Semite cartoons, where the Jews' countenance is virtually reshaped into a Silenus face; in this case, the over-bulgy lower lip and the exaggerated beak nose are undeniable psychical testimonies.

Indeed, the size, the form, and the curvature of the nose revealed more than simple facial particularities. In the last centuries of the first millennium, in both Western and Eastern Christian iconography, the crooked nose was applied to the religious otherness. Jews and Arabs had crooked noses, which is an important factor in the process of demonization which tried to give details to the satanic nature of the other. (Amishai-Maisels 1999, 50–51)

For Bartolomeo Della Roca and Alessandro Achelini, the authors of *Chyromantie ac physionomie* anastatis, Bologna, 1503, an individual with an aquiline nose was as cruel and rapacious as a vulture. In *De Humana Physiognomia,* Naples, 1586, Giambattista Della Porta considered that beak-shaped noses denoted shamelessness and lechery. (Oişteanu 2009, 41–42) With the support of the physiognomy, the crooked nose was more and more associated with niggardliness and commercialism, so much that some 19th-century anthropologists started talking of a specific anatomic feature: the Jewish nose, which is traceable not only to Jews, but even other nations.[21]

In Romanian caricatures, the Greeks were also portrayed with big noses. On the one hand, this graphic feature was barely a technical increment of an anthropologically admitted feature – the aquiline nasal shape of the Mediterranean people. On the other hand, in the eyes of a judgmental Romanian nation it substantiated the difficult character and professional dispositions profoundly similar to that of the Jews. Both Greeks and Jews were first and foremost grasping individuals, dishonest money-makers and, when at an upper social level, economic oppressors. (Pădurean 2010, 129–131)

In an 1821 anonymous letter, the author, in demand of national unity, discussed at one point the physiognomic disparities between the Greeks and the Romanians: "[...] for the most eloquent proof and for the admonishment of the Greeks, the famous Lavater, Swiss by nation and Lutheran by religion, should have still been alive today, to inspect the faces of the present Greeks and those

21 Fishberg ascertains that only 12 to 14 percent of the Ashkenazi Jews (the Jews present in Romania) possess an aquiline nose. He considers that thick lips and large mouth, traits already mentioned in this paper, are more characteristic, and provide a "heavy expression to the countenance." (Fishberg 1911, 112 –113)

of the Dacians,[22] and then to give us for the record, to mark out and establish in writing the nature and diathesis of the Greeks, and that of the Romanians." (Vîrtosu 1932, 194) Decades later, such a physiognomic differentiation would be indeed established – not in writing, but in drawing, when Constantin Jiquidy outlined a Romanian peasant and a Greek innkeeper side by side in an 1896 illustration of a Romanian legend. (Figure 8) Although the supporting text does not offer clear guidelines for their outward aspect, that would suggest only the pure-heartedness of the peasant and the cunningness of the taverner who is trying to sell the house of the former to recover some of his money gone on tick viands, the artist succeeded in putting together a complete and explicit portrayal: a well-favored slender Romanian against a chunky ugly Greek. Coincidentally or not, the former highly resembles the iconographic Dacian (the hat, the beard and the clothing); on the other hand, the latter has nothing that reminds of the ancient Greeks. It seems that the classical Greek beauty has been in fact appropriated by the Romanian peasant. This evidence is especially supported by the fact that the innkeeper has lost the renowned Greek nose, with the perfectly straight profile to his opponent, being left with a crooked oriental nose instead – the final indicator of a degenerated personality.

For many critics, the Modern Greek physiognomy as a sum-up of oriental features was a proof that they no longer possessed the looks, or the virtues of their ancient ancestors; their countenance expressed a different character. When Mihai Eminescu summarized their portrait in an iconic rhyme which incriminated the ethnic mismatch of the 19th-century politicians from Romania with the Romanian spirit and nationality, the nose was essential: "Then meeting in the Senate each others praises speak / This heavy-throated Bulgar, that long and hook-nosed Greek. / Each claims to be Romanian, whatever mask he wears, / These Bulgo-Greeks pretending that they are Trajan's heirs." (Eminescu 1989, 165) But what was idiomatically translated as "long and hook-nosed Greek" had literally been written by Eminescu as "thin-nosed Greek," an expression that laid focus not only on their facial particularities, but also on a difficult and fastidious character. This relation between the form and size of their nose and their special personality can be observed in an anecdote illustrated by the same Constantin Jiquidi. A Greek faints in the middle of a discussion, due to the most bizarre

22 Dacians were ancient people, forerunners of the Romanians. In the opinion of the author of the letter, the nature of the former had been profoundly inherited by the latter.

cause: he has just found out that a sterlet fish was going to be improperly cooked. He is brought to senses after one of the locals, being familiar with the gastronomic habits of the Greeks, starts describing a sterlet stew so that the fainted man can hear it. His big nose, graphically spotlighted as a bulgy shape, is now also a testimony of his pretentious nature. "The Greek is a dirt, / Let him go to blazes, / With big nose and big skirt, / Yet exquisite tastes," concludes his first-aid giver. (Speranția 1928, 60)

Conclusion

Although not unconsidered, there are many issues – physical/psychical attributes and nations – that remained undiscussed. However, at no time was this paper intended to be an exhaustive taxonomy, but rather a delineation of a comprehensive phenomenon and its most relevant paradigms. And, for a fair understanding, there are some final annotations that have to be made.

The portrait of the Other did not echoe his or her spirit, but what society and hereby artists believed about his or her spirit. Art responded to social prejudices and, in its turn, consolidated them.

National physiognomy (the outward appearance of a nation, and believed to be the most common and representative for that nation) was a prejudicial oversimplification that did not necessarily rely on physiognomy (the pseudo-scientific discipline) in order to communicate, literarily or pictorially, mental intricacies particular to different nations. For the general public, physiognomy and (pseudo)anthropology offered only the supportive details for an observative mind-set that operated by default. There was no need of theoretical argumentation to understand that the ethnical antagonism transmitted by numerous works of art was not merely physical, but also psychical.[23]

23 A perfect example is *The Torture of Horea* whose protagonist is an 18th-century Transylvanian insurgent, subsequently a Romanian national hero. The painting is by Gheorghe Popovici, analyzed by art historian Oscar Tafrali. Although he does not present a physiognomical exposition, relying rather on self-evident meanings, Tafrali offers physionomical conclusions: "The Hungarians, some of the lower class, others belonging to the nobility, dressed in costumes typical of the time and their rank, have different attitudes. Their physiognomies indicate cruelty, bestiality, cuningness and perkyness. Those are the characteristic traits of their race, contrasting with those of the martyr." (Tafrali O. 1933, 70)

Moreover, literate population was force-fed by a selective theoretical speech, when they were confronted with more or less serious issues regarding national superiority. Some conclusions of the European racial anthropology, for example that Romanians were brachycephalic and therefore inferior, were consistently dismissed. While local anthropologists produced scientific reproofs debunking troubling racial beliefs, there was an alternative vernacular speech which relied on Lavaterian residues and folkloric beliefs, and which applied anthropological discrimination on ethnic subjects.

This particular type of conveyance also benefited from a revival of physiognomic theories during the interwar period. Characterology, a new method of studying the character, combined revised principles of physiognomy, phrenology and pathognomy. It was developed in the 1920s and was soon popularized in Romanian media. Physiognomy was simultaneously reviewed in medical treatises and ordinary newspapers. Magazines started popularizing utility advice on the correspondence between traits and physics, building on the sensational pseudo-medical – but also socially helpful – content of the discipline. A 1936 Romanian magazine ended an article on physiognomy with a legitimation of utility as follows: "This [physiognomic classification] will help and guide [our readers] to study their fellow people, and let us not forget that, in the harsh struggle of modern existence, this understanding of those around us, is among the most valuable ones." (*Citirea...* 1934)

Although its effects are immeasurable, physiognomy secured to a certain extent the representation of the social and ethnic Other in the Romanian consciousness, and, one step further, in the national imagery. It was part of a prejudicial instruction that trained individuals to discover the inner nature of real ethnic subjects when the images were no longer close-at-hand. Some prejudices survived up to these days, and, although they are no longer associated with physiognomy (now an obscure notion circulated only by scholars), they are still active. They dwell in the public mind, and sometimes pop-up as public statements, not rarely as xenophobic remarks. In 2008, just before a tensed football match between Romania and Bulgaria, an important shareholder of an important Romanian sport club declared: "Bulgarians have a big head, but God didn't put anything inside it."[24] National physiognomy: 1 – political correctness: 0.

24 *Jurnalul național*, V, no. 4476, 18 October 2007.

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Producing the Reverend

Performing the Political and the Spiritual on the Global Stage

> It is my feeling that in the age of information most statements can't carry progressive values. Such words disappear in thin air, become instantly nostalgic or stylistic. We seem to lack a critical culture right now. Why? Information carries meaning hypnotically but not powerfully. Stories, in contrast, create meaning when we observe the experience of a changing individual.

The quotation is from Mr. Bill Talen, and it is the answer to what he says to be his basic question, namely, how it is possible to make a statement in 2000. (Kalb 2000)[1] Based on this short quote, one would think that the author is indeed a storyteller, a writer perhaps. Talen, however, is best known as Reverend Billy, the character created and played by Bill Talen, the performance artist. Although the persona of the reverend is part of the show, the show itself grew to its own reality. Since 1999, Talen has been a reverend of the church he established and originally called "The Church of Stop Shopping," and renamed after the financial crisis of 2008 into "Church of Life after Shopping;" one of the shows performed by him and his group is referred to as the "Church of Earthalujah." It all begun as something like a one-man performance, featuring Billy who was street preaching against consumerism at Times Square, in front of the Disney Store. The act soon developed into an elaborate show, including theatre performances with a gospel choir of forty members, a 5-person live band, as well as carrying out regular priestly duties, ranging from baptisms, funerals and marriages, to not so regular services, like the exorcism of credit cards, bank machines and cash registers of

1 The preparation of this paper was aided by the support of a Folger Shakespeare Fellowship and a Bolyai János Scholarship.

well-known companies, such as the Bank of America, Walmart or Tescos.[2] The circle of the venues expanded as well: the shows, or rather, public events on freely accessible public spaces include not only street preaching, but also what he calls "shopping interventions," referring to performances during which he and his group of performers literally clog the smooth flow of customers in shopping malls by climbing the escalator the wrong way, preferably during the peak of the Christmas shopping frenzy, or merely make customers stop staring at their performance that turns out to be a fake Christmas-in-the-mall type of show, with all its usual iconographic attributes, but the message of the preaching reveals a twist, if only one listens to it. With the expansion of his pursued duties, apart from the venues and types of events, the number of his occasional arrests or exclusions from certain places have also grown.

Reverend Billy's looks are striking. His hairstyle is bleached blond scruffy pompadour, and he wears a clerical collar with his signature white dinner jacket. Both the acting style and the vocal elements of his rhetoric resemble a powerful regular sermon in the TV-evangelist style of Jimmy Swaggart, who clearly influenced Billy's persona. His performance, acted out in an energetic, exalted voice is indeed an ironic reiteration of the over-exaggerated style of the priests he parodies, but at the same time it oddly seems to be much more than that. He admits to have had a religious Calvinist upbringing, and while preparing his persona, he dedicated himself to the study of the preaching styles of Pentecostal churches in New York. He even taught a course on preaching in America while he was an artist in residence at the New School in New York City. (Lane 2006, 305) So his performances are indeed not mere shows on satirizing the type of the televangelist; he uses the power associated with this type to his own purposes. His acts involve the audience into the repetitive crescendo of Pentecostal call and response, while several of his sermons end in the congregation going out of the church together to an organized event in support of an issue of crucial importance to local communities, such as the protest against the bulldozering of the Esperanza community garden, or the lobby in

2 One can get an idea of some major aspects of his work from the following video, featuring the gospel choir and one instance of the reverend's exorcism of credit cards, with the involvement of the audience (see especially the part between 01:10–03:10): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-JGn3E8QmNE. I should also note that Bill's director and partner, Savitri D clearly plays a crucial role in the creation and recreation of the phenomenon of Reverend Billy, but the examination of the aspect of the cooperation behind the show is not within the scope of this paper which deals rather with the way the phenomenon itself functions, through the iconic figure of the reverend.

support of the union of bodega workers. As it is clear already from the examples mentioned, the venues of his performances give no less an ambiguous picture than his looks; in Jonathan Kalb's formulation he "doesn't confine himself to the controlled environments of auditoriums and playhouses." (Kalb 2001, 161) However, it is certainly not unusual for political activist-artists to use public spaces for their performances. It is also regular for performers to put on shows in performance art centers or be invited to art galleries – Reverend Billy, for example, led the exorcism of British Petrol's 'evil spirit' from Tate Modern in 2011. At one early point of his career he also preached mini-sermons lasting a minute and a half on the "Morning Edition" of the National Public Radio. For such an extraordinarily charismatic artist it is not unusual even to have his own followers, who are willing to join the game, and deliberately disregard the line between the performer and his persona. But it may be perhaps more surprising that he is also invited as a guest speaker, or indeed a guest priest, to functioning churches as well. One reverend of a church that gave home to one of Billy's sermons that, among others, included the chasing out of demons from credit cards of the audience, proposes the following in an interview: the symbolic message of Reverend Billy (as she refers to him in the interview, "the Reverend"), together with the comedy of his performance, is welcome with them, since, the hosting reverend suggests, Reverend Billy uses the brand of the evangelists as Pop Art uses brands, which makes the audience think about the symbol of the evangelist – what are they a symbol of, and what symbols are using them. Indeed, the comedy, the satirical aspect as well as the hilarious fun offered by such chasing of demons is a highly effective part of Reverend Billy's appeal. An important difference, however, between Pop Art and Billy is that while Warhol's Campbell soups, no matter how perplexing in their simplicity, will always remain iconographically identifiable representations of soups cans, Billy's act is not merely an ironic reiteration of a type through performance art, nor is it satire used for the purposes of anti-consumerist and anti-capitalist political appeal. Importantly, it strives to go beyond performance art, and become a spiritual rite of its own – and it is acknowledged as such, not only via invitations by real congregations to real churches as the one mentioned, but also through the ritualistic aspects of the show itself. However, before we have a closer look at the ambiguous effects that arise from the unique combination of the elements such as comedy, satire, political activism and genuine spiritual content with identifiable religious roots, let us see the theatrical traditions in which such a performance may be interpreted, or more precisely, the traditions in which theatre and life (or theatre and the world)

are seen as parallels. This perspective also explains the approach of my argument offered for the examination of this complex phenomenon.

My own interest in this figure springs from a larger research on the different versions of the Theatrum Mundi metaphor, the heterogeneous traditions that influenced its diverse and frequently incompatible meanings throughout history. I am intrigued not only by the possible interpretations and uses of the metaphor in various contexts (such as pamphlets, philosophical tracts, poems or stage play performances), but also the ways its meanings intermingle with specific practices, called, sometimes only retrospectively, instances of the Theatrum Mundi. One way of creating a basic typology of the various interpretations is to distinguish between two groups. In examples of the first one the metaphor expresses the fundamental illusory character of our life on Earth – here the idea of theatre is connected to a negative, deceptive or futile aspect of a play. In the other group theatre is understood in the broad sense of role-play as well as the reiteration of behavioural patterns tied culturally to specific contexts and situations – this understanding of theatre is void of negative connotations, and may actually stand for the opposite of the questionable and illusory that it stands for in the first meaning. A well-known example for the first understanding would be the most widespread Elizabethan use, following the Christian and Stoic traditions of the topos, according to which our life on Earth is mere vanity, an empty show – and according to the Christian but not the Stoic version, we will experience its opposite, the eternity of the afterlife, when we exit this earthly stage. The melancholy in Jacques' well-known monologue from Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is one version of this type.[3] From the other, entirely different perspective, however, it is either that life itself is theatrical in our successful or not so successful use of the actor's skills, but clearly based on the social presentation of the self,[4] or in a more radical sense, it is precisely through certain types of play and theatre that humans have a chance, and may go beyond the ephemeral, vain or illusory character of quotidian life. Importantly for my discussion, regarding what I see the characteristic ontology of Reverend Billy's performance, I would like to refer to one specific use, belonging to this second type, which characterizes medie-

3 The Theatrum Mundi is actually combined in this monologue with another widespread topos of the era, the Seven Ages of Man. For detailed interpretation, see Fabiny 1984, 273–336.
4 Examples here may range from Stephen Greenblatt's understanding of self-fashioning in the Renaissance to Erving Goffman's sociological investigation on the presentation of the self in everyday situations of life. Cf. Greenblatt 1986; Goffman 1959.

val traditions of religious plays known as guild plays of mystery cycles. Several scholars regard medieval drama as ritualistic, and thus immune to the charge of being illusory or pretentious. We know, however, that not everybody accepted the ritualistic validity of these plays, even in their own time. According to T. G. Bishop even the plays themselves were conscious of this possible charge, and tried to divert it in various ways, as he elaborates on this idea in his *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder.* (Bishop 1996) Still, the tight connection between religious ritual and theatre authorized this specific type of role-play in a sense that later, commercial and popular theatre did not. According to Ann Righter, author of a monograph on the play metaphor in Elizabethan, and specifically Shakespearean drama, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Play*, this fact actually makes medieval drama unsuitable for the display of the *topos.* (Righter 1967, 61) In her opinion, until there is no distinction in the community between players and audience, the play metaphor, the idea that the whole world is a stage, cannot make sense. Another scholar, Lynda Christian argues in her monograph on the Theatrum Mundi that there is a huge hiatus in the use of the metaphor in the Middle Ages, between its last appearance in the 12th century by Salisbury as the representation of life as vanity, and its reappearance in the writings of the Neoplatonists in the 15th century, especially Pico della Mirandola, according to whom man (especially the creative artist) and God are both creators, as well as audiences contemplating the world as stage. With the exception of Salisbury, Lynda Christian points out that the gap in the use of the metaphor is actually a millennium long, from Saint Augustin to Marsilio Ficino. Christian offers the most plausible reason for this hiatus as well, namely that in the Middle Ages there were no theatrical institutions or buildings to which the metaphor describing the world as stage could have been connected. (Christian 1987, 69 and 80–81) Martin Stevens' argument, however, contrasts both Righer's and Christian's view about the irrelevance and absence of the topos in medieval times. He applies the Theatrum Mundi specifically to describe a concept, a function of medieval drama, a concept which, in his opinion, influenced explicit later uses of the figure, such as in Shakespeare. (Stevens 1973, 234–249) Although I do not claim that this same use influenced in any way Revered Billy's show with its own religious overtones, I certainly regard this medieval type of the Theatrum Mundi in several ways comparable with the *logic* in which Billy's sermons may be so puzzlingly powerful and effective.

Stevens proposes that even Shakespeare's Globe is a cosmic theatre because it follows the Mappa Mundi – Theatrum Mundi analogy of medieval plays, and

traces the characteristics of the medieval so-called T-O map in staging arrangements, for example, of medieval mystery cycles as well as the sketch for the staging of the *Castle of Perseverance* from the Macro manuscript. Just like the maps included Jesus sitting on his throne at the top of the maps he refers to, so did, he argues, the plays themselves represent God through the play, and also points out what is from my perspective crucial, namely that the guild plays had the power, for the time of the festivity on which the plays were performed, to turn the whole town into a stage. This stage, however, is a *cosmic* Theatrum Mundi, not an earthly one; playing on this scaffold comprising the site of the audience's urban everydays ensured that the citizens can participate in the spiritual cosmic reality, or in other words, that their everyday is *turned* into this other reality, that their playing imbues the spaces of their everyday with a metaphysical world.

It seems to me that while Reverend Billy's specific type of performance appears to capitalize on the conscious mingling of play and real on the one hand, and of play and spiritual on the other, it actually fits in this medieval tradition of the Theatrum Mundi – termed as such, as we have seen above, only retrospectively. Reverend Billy's main tool is precisely this mingling, one aspect of which is the sense that he is difficult to tell from what we might accept as a real reverend, and a major reason for this is the iconographically precise design of the show and its participants: him wearing a priestly collar, his ingenious and also charismatic gospel singers dressed into appropriate gowns, and the fact that he frequently preaches in an arrangement in theatres that spatially recall the setup during a mass, with the priest and the congregation. Another important characteristic of his version of mingling play and spiritual is that he genuinely engages his audience, be it through turning a mock-religious performance into something that is accepted as real one, or shifting from a recreational comic show into targeting his audience's convictions and beliefs, even in the sense of employing his priestly power as a way of supporting explicit and radical political activism. Still, what does this specific use of the Theatrum Mundi tradition, in Stevens' sense, add to Billy's show? Regarding the fact that the performers playing on the scene of anti-consumerist activists feature parody frequently and traditionally as an important tool, Talen's show is not unprecedented. One has to think only of examples such as the group called Billionaires for Bush, campaigning in favour of the wealthy, and thus undermining the activities of large corporations, politicians and wealthy businessmen by exposing and campaigning for their otherwise not so explicit concerns. What makes Talen's dedication different compared to other examples in the scene of performance artists engaged in serious

political activism, whose toolbox also relies heavily on theatrical skills and practices, is the fact that, similarly to the medieval guilds, through his playing, Reverend Billy indeed imbues his actions with a certain type of spirituality, thus making them real as rituals. As said, it is not merely mingling play and real, so that the audience would not know in any moment the extent to which what is said and done by the performers are meant to be taken seriously or not. It is precisely the element of the spiritual that makes a significant difference, the appeal to engage the audience not merely in a political act, but in a ritual, with admitted spiritual content. Although it is not easy to grasp what the term or the idea of the *spiritual* actually means to the reverend, his own words do throw some light on this question.

> Conducting this operation is a delicate matter, Talen says, because the whole 'spiritual' thing has been completely hijacked. All the language has been hijacked by people we're in mortal combat against. If it's not the right-wing fundamentalists, then it's the New Agers, who are just as fundamentalist. (Kalb 2000, 165)

The quotation reveals at least two things. First, Talen *is* serious in offering something that he truly believes to be spiritual, which has been "hijacked" by undeserving people, and should be restored. Second, although we cannot be sure what spiritual is in his understanding, it is certainly incompatible with fundamentalism. His actions, thus, can also be interpreted as attempts to regain a portion of what he calls "the whole 'spiritual' thing," to reclaim access to what may be experienced as spiritual, outside, but also inside its conventional spaces in the contemporary United States, both physical and mental. Talen's chosen method seems uniquely effective in this reclaim. He, as a performer-priest can offer "hundreds of hardcore artsy skeptics (often in their 20's) their first chance ever to shout 'Hallelujah!' and to indulge in Pentecostal call and response" (Kalb 2000, 164) with what has been called the "astonishing torrent of righteous words about the spell of consumer narcosis" (ibid). So perhaps his show is full of playful and theatrical features, but with his described behaviour, he can successfully dodge the accusation that would try to vitiate the authenticity or the seriousness of the show. His Theatrum Mundi is destined not merely to show that life is like theatre, and that it is possible to mingle play and real. Importantly, just like in the case of the guild plays, his play is rather the *prerequisite* of real, not its opposite: the biblical reality acted out to present the spiritual in the quotidian in the mediaeval example may be criticized

(as it indeed has been) based on the grounds of the authority of the players to perform something that is liturgically not strictly regulated, but the message that it is dedicated to convey is rooted deeply in the spiritual beliefs of the performers. Also, if anything may be questioned, according to the conviction of the performers, and thus the logic of this type of theatre as well, it will be the reality *outside* and not *inside* of the play – in the former case the quotidian, everyday life on Earth as opposed to the divine eternal reality, which is manifested by the plays. While in the latter case, the one of Reverend Billy, it will be the simulacrum of reality projected by the drives of consumer culture against his sermons that strive to awaken people from the "spell of consumer narcosis."

His reclaim of the spiritual extends to specific events and specific spaces, too, almost as in a spiritual fist-fight. When in 1999 protesters gathered in response to Mayor Giuliani's threat to withhold public funding from the Brooklyn Museum, which was triggered by the public uproar following the representation of a black Virgin Mary using elephant dung, it was easy for the Reverend not to join the "activists and artists on the left side of the street" who were giving "long rallying speeches about the freedom of expression" (Lane 2006, 306), but the angry Catholics on the other side. He indeed was an angry Catholic priest at that moment – this is why he could enter the wall of armed police making sure that the two groups would be kept separate – and this is how he could deliver his speech to his ideal audience:

> My Children! Let's take the art off the walls and let's have... sports! Let's turn the Brooklyn Museum into a ... Sports Bar! ...Tear down the art! No more art! I want my Freedom! I want my Sports! And Disney! Thousands of monitors, all with ... GAMES! It doesn't matter what games, just GAMES! And Elton John! And Chim Chim Chiree! Let's turn the Brooklyn Museum into ... Times Square! A place that is only safe for shoppers, Children! Let's go shopping! Praise be! Amen! (Quoted in Lane ibid.)

We cannot know the extent to which his addressed audience at that moment was puzzled or not, but he was finally identified as someone who may look like a proper person on that side of the divide, but was delivering the wrong message, and was eventually led away. For people seeing the irony in his words, the parallel between Baudrillard's understanding of the *simulacrum* and Billy's criticism of

what he sees as the fake world of the Disneyfied consumer is apparent. (Baudrillard 1988) This parallel is the more noteworthy since Baudrillard's notion of the *simulacrum* echoes not only several of the accusations formulated by anti-theatrical puritans against theatrical play at the turn of the 17th century, but also the broad interpretation of the first large group of the Theatrum Mundi referred to above, in which human life on earth is illusory in itself *because* it is theatrical. Billy, on the other hand, while also criticizing the fakeness of games (sports, capitalist types of recreation, as well as shopping – the potentially dominant game of our everyday behavior), with his own uniquely theatrical act demonstrates the creative potential in play, and his aspirations to shape the world through playing in it in an alternative way. In the last section of my paper dealing with Reverend Billy, I would like to specify my understanding of this "alternative way."

Regarding the fact that Talen mixes religion or ritual with theatre, he is also an example in a series that has a long tradition, including earlier predecessors, but also far less remote ones than the mediaeval guild players. According to the view of the Cambridge Ritualists (also known as the Cambridge Group of Classical Anthropologists), accepted widely until today, the theatre of the antiquity has evolved precisely from religious ritual: among the roots of Elizabethan drama, for example, religious plays that evolved gradually from the Christian mass are regarded crucial not only as forerunners but also as important contexts for the interpretation of later plays. But revolutionary theatre makers of the 20th century, such as Grotowsky or Schechner, frequently rely on the ritualistic tradition and power of playing. Talen's novelty, it seems to me, is grounded partly in the unprecedented combination of looks, behaviours and venues, but perhaps more importantly, in the unpredictable clues that he provides for his audience for the constant framing and re-framing of his show. As an interestingly related fact, we should recall that Catholics were so fiercely attacked by Puritans around Shakespeare's time precisely because they thought that Catholicism is the theatrical display of an empty show. Talen's performance dodges off this charge in a way similar to the medieval versions of the Theatrum Mundi, as explained above, so that the charge of illusory or empty show just does not apply. In the earlier instance the accusation does not apply because of religious authorization, which may or may not be debatable, while in Talen's case because religious authorization does not go beyond artistic self-authorization, the performance engages diverse discourses such as artistic show, political activism *and* religious ritual at the same time. The core of the unique effect seems to be in the ambiguity created by such behaviour, by

Billy's talent to criticize and ironize about, and the same time celebrate the same thing. This behavior is present in several layers of his performance. His identity in itself is already ambiguous not only because he looks and behaves like a priest but is more readily categorized as a performance artist, but also because one never knows whether one listens to Talen, the performer, or Billy, the priest – as it may be also seen in TV interviews, in which he is juggling with these roles. Similarly, in his book co-written with his partner and director Savitri D, the parts marked as written by him play with the alternation of the voices of Talen and Billy. A version of this switch between identities is precisely the thing that allowed him to enter the "wrong" corridor of protesters against the exhibition in the Brooklyn Museum. But the same ambiguity characterizes his acts as well. What should one think, hoping to be on their right minds, for example about the exorcism of credit cards? Where is the dividing line between ironic show, ritual and straightforward political activism? No matter whether the audience approves of and enjoys and joins the show or not, they are constantly forced to evaluate and re-valuate the frame in which to interpret the events, since the only constant characteristic of this frame seems to be the fact that it is perpetually shifting. Actually, in a way similar to what Joel Altman has said about the unsettling operation of Erasmus' Folly: "Folly pursues a decorum that is consistently inconsistent, and this makes it impossible for the reader to respond consistently, since one never knows whether at any given moment she is to be taken seriously." (Altman 1978, 59)

Before I conclude, I would like to introduce briefly my second reverend, Rob Bell, who from a certain perspective seems to have gone through the precisely opposite version of the pilgrimage of life compared to that of Reverend Billy: Talen is the performance artist, in a sense turned into a priest, while Bell, the pastor of an evangelical megachurch, after stepping down as leader of a church he established in 1998, Mars Hill, turned into a speaker in performing-arts centers, including, ironically, deconsecrated churches.[5] At its peak, membership at Mars Hill was heading toward ten thousand, about four years after it had been established. Membership, however, dropped, first in 2003, after Bell decided not to exclude women from the leadership of the church. Next, around 2006 when Bell gave a series of sermons in which he preached that churches should fight poverty, oppression, and environmental degradation. He finally stepped down when a book he published, entitled

5 A detailed report about Rob Bell (on which part of the information presented about him in my article is based) appeared in the New Yorker in 2012. (Sanneh 2012)

Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell & the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived, caused wide uproar in Christian circles because it questions the existence of Hell. The book has been inspired by a congregant "who insisted that Mahatma Gandhi, because he wasn't a Christian, must be suffering in Hell."[6] Bell must have been aware of the potential outcome of the conflicts that his opinions caused in his church. He did have the power of the evangelist appealing to wide masses, perhaps even similar to the one Talen satirizes, he just could not identify with this role in the long run. He felt that the idea of being born again in Christ allowed him to think of rebirth not as a single event, but as an open-ended process. And indeed, he seemed to have reinvented himself, a pastor heading towards the other end, from which Reverend Billy started to build his congregation: the entertainment business. Having met Carlton Cuse, a television producer whose credits include "Lost" at a *Time* dinner that was celebrating influential people, the two started to work together on a script of a TV show which was tagged as "a drama project with spiritual overtones." Later they also conceived a plan for a different project: a faith-inflicted talk show, starring Bell. After leaving his church due to his conflict with fundamentalist believers, is he now, we may ask, moving towards the other enemy Talen named in the quoted interview, the similar fundamentalism of New Agers? We cannot know yet, but the message of a video entitled "Spirit" he produced in a series called Nooma, while he was still at Mars Hill is, in a way disappointingly, not very different from what one learns about breathing at a beginner's Pranayama yoga class. But Bell's similarities with Talen, their similar logic in applying what we may recognize as a specific type of the Theatrum Mundi, is noteworthy: their combination of the entertainment business, activism and spirituality, their quest for the renewal of institutionalized ways of worship, and their similarity in attempting to make the theatrical spiritual and their lack of reluctance to making the spiritual theatrical. Still, while Billy – in Joel Altmann's words that were applied to Erasmus's *Folly* – does not follow any decorum, and shifts between frames from one second to the other, Rob Bell has been moving, although in a creative manner, between clearly identifiable contexts and genres: from being a real priest to joining the frame of the mainstream entertainment industry.

6 As a curious fact vaguely related to representatives of the *theatrum mundi* tradition dispersed in time, it should be noted in brackets that Bell's claims in this book resemble in several ways the ideas of the Neoplatonist Pico della Mirandola mentioned above as the advocate of the power of the creative, performative power of artists, who create worlds through their divine inspiration similar to the creation of the Lord himself: both Pico and Bell deny eternal punishment.

As a conclusion, let us return, once more, to Revered Billy's idea that I quoted at the beginning of this paper about the meaning of stories as opposed to information.

> It is my feeling that in the age of information most statements can't carry progressive values. Such words disappear in thin air, become instantly nostalgic or stylistic. We seem to lack a critical culture right now. Why? Information carries meaning hypnotically but not powerfully. Stories, in contrast, create meaning when we observe the experience of a changing individual.

In the last sentence, we read that stories, in contrast to information, create meaning in relation to the experience of a changing individual. The idea is somewhat cryptic. Who is the changing individual, and who is the person observing this change? My guess is that Talen primarily refers to the individuals within his own public, on whom he hopes to observe the change towards a direction that complies with his goal not so much as a performer, but rather as a political activist and a spiritual leader. But it is important that he refers to *stories* in the sense of Walter Benjamin, according to whom "half the art of storytelling is to keep a story free from explanations as one reproduces it."[7] His way of meeting this requirement of "half the art" seems to be through his performance, which points to similarities between the patterns of life and play, and the power of framing play as life and *vice versa*. By putting his audience into the constant revaluation of the frames in which what they see should be understood, he makes his audience critical of the activity of framing itself, as well as the meaning of this activity regarding their perception of reality. Framing, ultimately, will be not his task, but the task of his audience. An important thing that Billy's show conveys, therefore, in the end, is not so much that it would offer a nuanced and personal story as opposed to hypnotic and superficial information, but rather the fact that he can indeed satirize *and* celebrate at the same time the type of the reverend he impersonates, with all its functions, and this helps him necessarily remain the changing individual he talks about, the individual that he wishes us to become – perhaps also similar to the one Rob Bell voluntarily also became, when he left the Mars Hill empire behind.

7 The comparison between Benjamin's and Talen's understanding of storytelling is dealt with by Jill Lane (Lane 2004, especially 304), this is also where she quotes the passage I include above. (Benjamin 1968, 89)

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Illustrations

János Kelemen

Meta-Representations, Self-Referentiality, Impossible Pictures

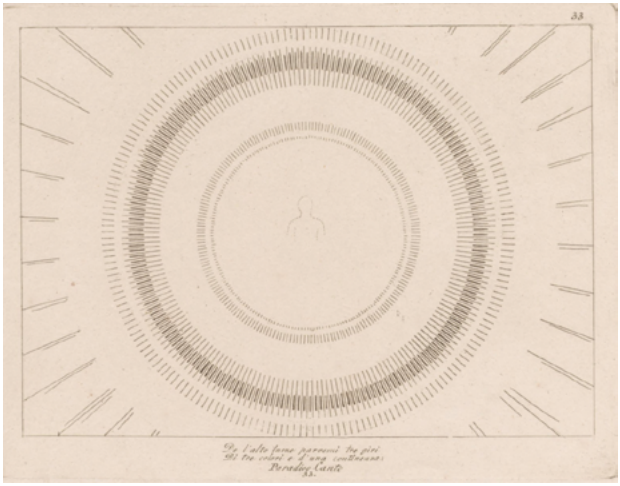


Figure 1. John Flaxman: *Paradiso 33*
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dell%27_alto_lume_parvemi_a.jpg



Figure 2. Gustave Doré: *Paradiso 33*
https://cosplayvideos.wordpress.com/2018/09/20/dantes-paradise-canto-33-paradox/

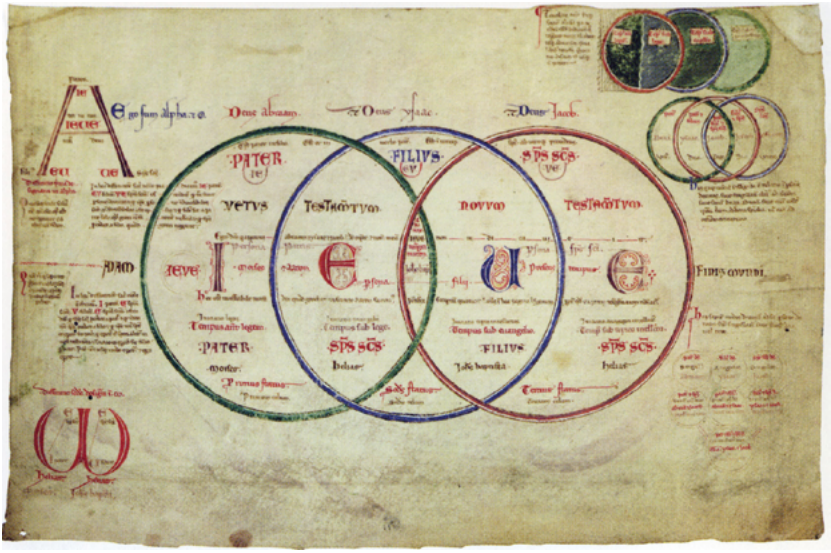


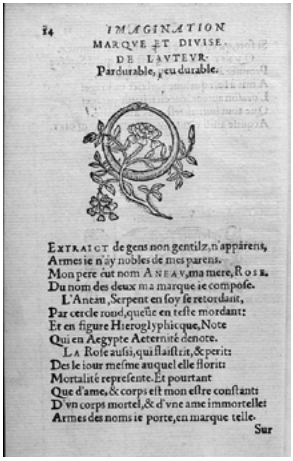
Figure 3. Joachim of Fiore's *Trinitarian circles*
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Liber_Figurarum_Tav_11.jpg



Figure 4. Diego Velázquez: *Las Meninas* or *The Family of Philip IV*
https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Meninas

David Graham

Assembling, Being, Embodying: Early Modern Emblem and Device as Body, Soul, and Metaphor



14 IMAGINATION
MARQVE ET DIVISE
DE L'AVTEVR.
Par durable, ⁊ eu durable.

EXTRAICT de gens non gentilz, n'apparens,
Armes ie n'ay nobles de mes parens.
Mon pere eut nom ANEAV, ma mere, ROSE.
Du nom des deux ma marque ie compose.
L'Aneau, Serpent en soy se retordant,
Par cercle rond, queuë en teste mordant:
Et en figure Hieroglyphique, Note
Qui en Aegypte Aeternité denote.
LA Rose aussi, qui flaistrit, & perit
Des le iour mesme auquel elle florit:
Mortalité represente. Et pourtant
Que d'ame, & corps est mon estre constant:
D'vn corps mortel, & d'vne ame immortelle:
Armes des noms ie porte, en marque telle.
Sur

Figure 1. Barthélemy Aneau. *Imagination poetique, Traduicte en vers François, des Latins, & Grecz, par l'auteur mesme d'iceux.* Lyon: Macé Bonhomme, 1552. P. 14. Courtesy of Glasgow University (The French Emblem Project). <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm97_a7v>



POETIQVE. 19
FIGVRE DE MARIAGE.

L'HERMAPHRODIT est icy en pincture
A double face, & à double Nature.
Lvne de Masle, & l'autre de Femelle,
En vn seul corps, ou l'vn l'autre se mesle.
Puys deux baisers sont baillez, & renduz
Par les deux chefz l'vn vers l'autre estenduz.
Qvi font plaisirs d'Amour perpetuel
De l'vn vers l'autre, en effect mutuel.
D'vn des costez, est des sages quelqu'vn:
Qui dict, q̃ L'HOMME, ET FEMME NE SONT QV'VN.
Daultre costé est vn Satyr hydeux
Qui dict, q̃ QVAND SE BATTENT, ILZ SONT DEVX.
B 2

Figure 2. Barthélemy Aneau. *Imagination poetique, Traduicte en vers François, des Latins, & Grecz, par l'auteur mesme d'iceux.* Lyon: Macé Bonhomme, 1552. P. 19. Courtesy of Glasgow University (The French Emblem Project). <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm97_b2r>



Figure 3. Andrea Alciato. *Emblemes*. Trans. Barthélemy Aneau. Lyons: Guillaume Rouille [Printed by Macé Bonhomme], 1549. P. 163. Courtesy of Glasgow University (The French Emblem Project). <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm33_l2r>



Figure 4. Guillaume de La Perrière. *Le Theatre des bons engins, auquel sont contenus cent Emblemes*. [Paris]: Denis Janot, 1540. Fol. L8v. Courtesy of Glasgow University (The French Emblem Project). <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm686_l8v>



Figure 5. Pierre Coustau. *Le Pegme de Pierre Coustau, mis en Francoys par Lanteaume de Romieu Gentilhomme d'Arles*. Lyon: Macé Bonhomme, 1555. P. 319. Courtesy of Glasgow University (The French Emblem Project). <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm372_v8r>

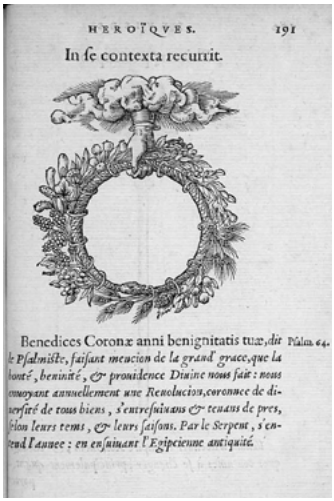


Figure 6. Claude Paradin. *Devises heroïques*. Lyons: Jean de Tournes and Guillaume Gazeau, 1557. P. 191. Courtesy of Glasgow University (The French Emblem Project). <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/facsimile.php?id=sm816_p191>

Vilmos Voigt

On the Semiotics of the Rebus



Figure 1. *Sola fides sufficit.* Trademark of the French printer, Guy Marchant from the end of 15th century.



Figure 2. The "Oldham"-rebus (early 16th century).

György E. Szőnyi

What Can You Learn in Fez?
Oriental Wisdom in Western Fiction Based on the Rosicrucian Mythology



Figure 1. "Coniunctio". Figure 3 in Michelspracher 1616. Reproduced from Klossowski de Rola 1988, 56.



Figure 2. The University of Fez (Al Qaraouiyine, Marocco) today. Photograph by Abdel Hassouni, 2015. Source: Wikipedia, „University of Al Qaraouiyine". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_al-Qarawiyyin. Access: January 21, 2025.



Figure 3. Magical illustrations from a medieval Latin version of the *Picatrix*. Cracow, Jagellonian Library, BJ793, p. 190recto. © Courtesy of Benedek Láng.



Figure 4. Romantic Orientalism: Ludwig Deutsch: *At Prayer* (1923). Reproduced from Christie's online catalogue: https://www.christies.com/lot/lot-6089100/?intObjectID=6089100. Access: January 21, 2025.



Figure 5. Aleister Crowley (1875–1947). Old, manipulated photographs from the author's digital collection.

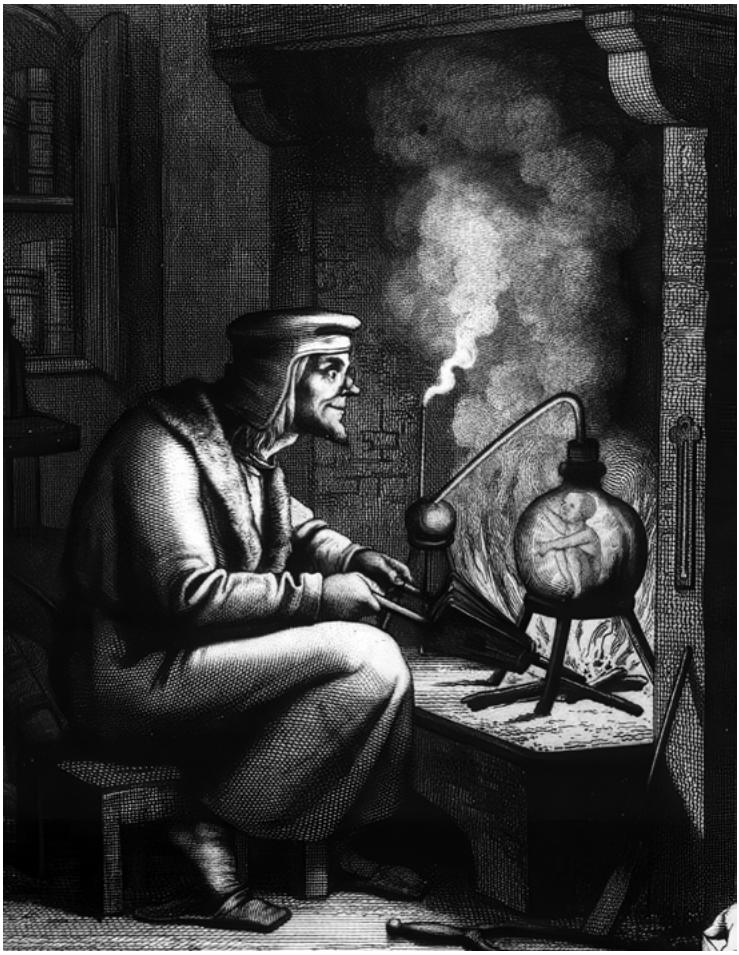
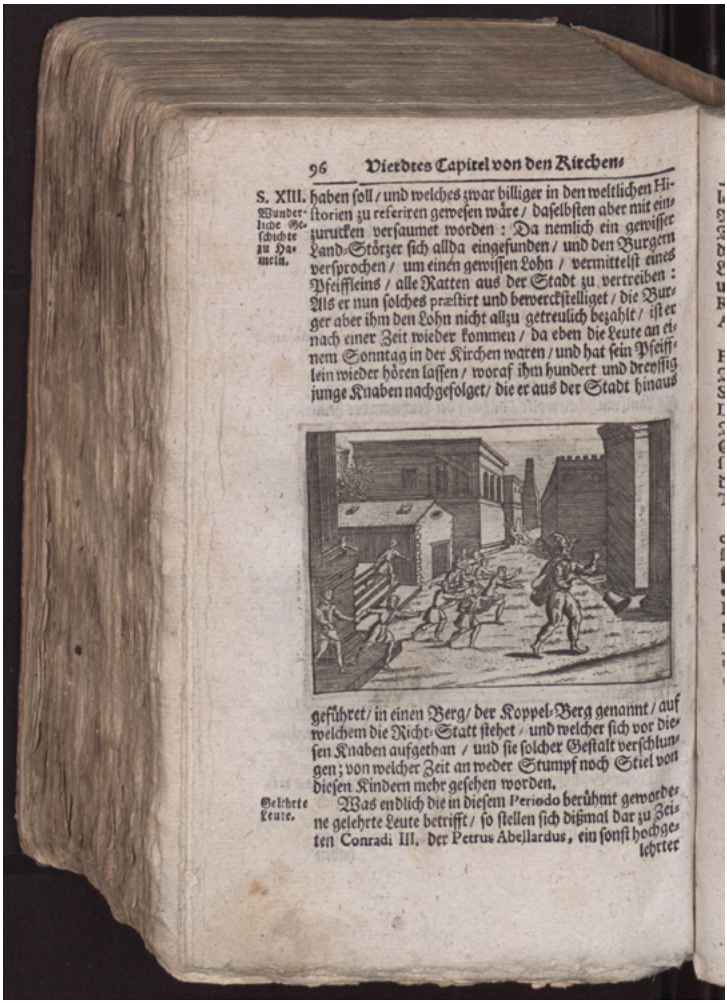


Figure 6. The Alchemist works on the artificial human, the homunculus. A mid-19th-century illustration of Goethe's *Faust*, part 2. Reproduced from https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homunculus#/media/F%C3%A-1jl:Homunculus_Faust.jpg (Wikimedia commons).



96 Vierdtes Capitel von den Kirchen.

S. XIII. Wunderliche Geschichte zu Hameln.

haben soll / und welches zwar billiger in den weltlichen Historien zu referiren gewesen wäre / daselbsten aber mit einzuruckken versaumet worden: Da nemlich ein gewisser Land-Störzer sich allda eingefunden / und den Burgern versprochen / um einen gewissen Lohn / vermittelst eines Pfeiffleins / alle Ratten aus der Stadt zu vertreiben: Als er nun solches præstirt und bewerckstelliget / die Burger aber ihm den Lohn nicht allzu getreulich bezahlt / ist er nach einer Zeit wieder kommen / da eben die Leute an einem Sonntag in der Kirchen waren / und hat sein Pfeifflein wieder hören lassen / worauf ihm hundert und dreyssig junge Knaben nachgefolget / die er aus der Stadt hinaus

geführet / in einen Berg / der Koppel-Berg genannt / auf welchem die Richt-Statt stehet / und welcher sich vor diesen Knaben aufgethan / und sie solcher Gestalt verschlungen; von welcher Zeit an weder Stumpf noch Stiel von diesen Kindern mehr gesehen worden.

Gelehrte Leute.

Was endlich die in diesem Periodo berühmt gewordene gelehrte Leute betrifft / so stellen sich dißmal dar zu Zeiten Conradi III. der Petrus Abellardus, ein sonst hochgelehrter

Figure 7. A 17th-century history book on display at the Museum of Hameln, relating the wondrous story of the Rat-Catcher. Andreas Lazarus Imhof, *Neu-eröffneten Historischer Bilder-Saals Dritter Theil. Das ist: Kurtze deutliche und unpassionirte Beschreibung der Historiae Universalis.* Nürnberg: Buggel, 1723, 96. Photograph: courtesy of the Museum Hameln, Germany.



Figure 8. Modern installation representing the Rat-Catcher of Hamelin. Museum Hameln, author's photograph, 2019-07-21 with the permission of the Museum.

Ivan Gerát
Tormented Bodies In Late Medieval Paintings

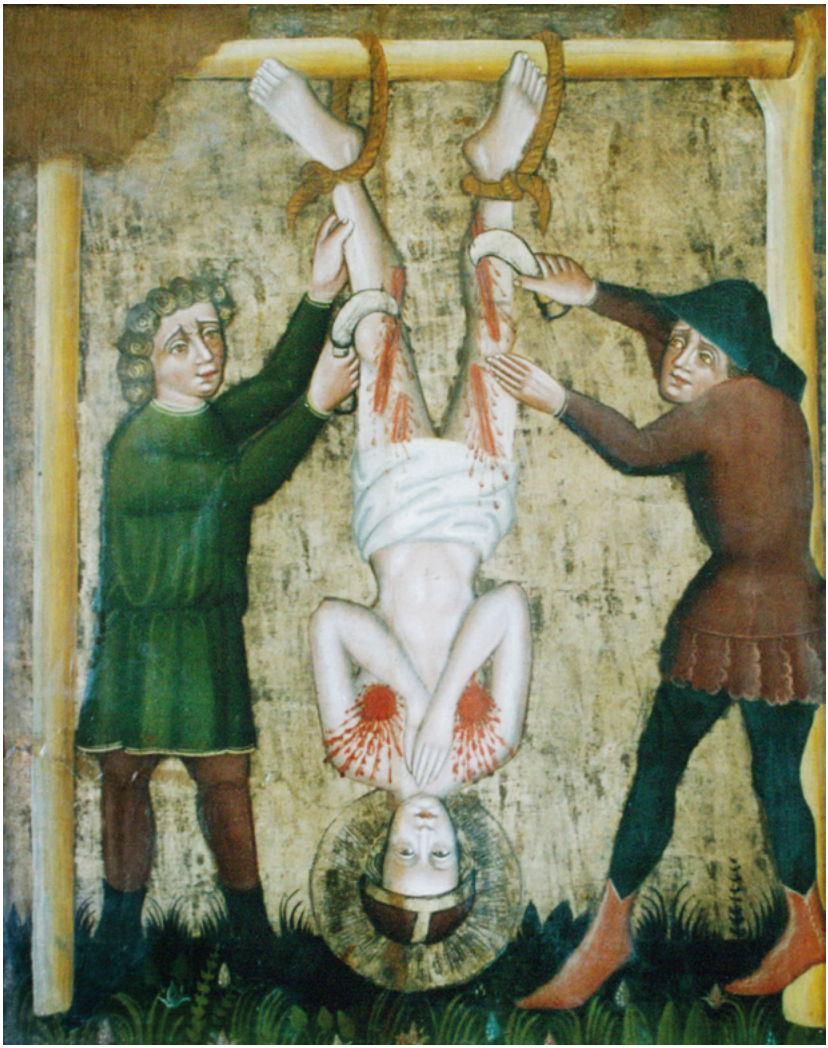


Figure 1. The Torture of St. Agatha on a Wooden Frame (*c.* 1440). The Retable of St. Sophia from Sásová, today in Banská Bystrica, The Museum of Central Slovakia (Stredoslovenské múzeum). (Photo: Ivan Gerát)



Figure 2. The Torture of St. Catherine on a Wooden Frame (1469). Levoča, The Altar of St. Catherine.
(Photo: Archive of the Institute of Art History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.
Photograph by Pavol Breier)



Figure 3. St. George Boiled in a Cauldron (1516). Spišská Sobota, The High-Altar of St. George. (Photo: Archív PU SR, Fratrič, 2004)



Figure 4. Dragging of St. George behind a Horse (1516). Spišská Sobota, The High-Altar of St. George. (Photo: Archív PU SR, Jurík, 1969)



Figure 5. Master of the Martyrdoms of the Apostles: The Torture of Sts. Felix, Regula and Exuperantius (*c.* 1480). Esztergom, Christian Museum, inv. no. 55.54.
(Photo: Keresztény Múzeum, Esztergom. Photograph by Attila Mudrák)



Figure 6. The Execution of St. Adrian of Nicomedia (*c.* 1520). Sabinov, The Altar of the Holy Cross. (Photo: Ivan Gerát)

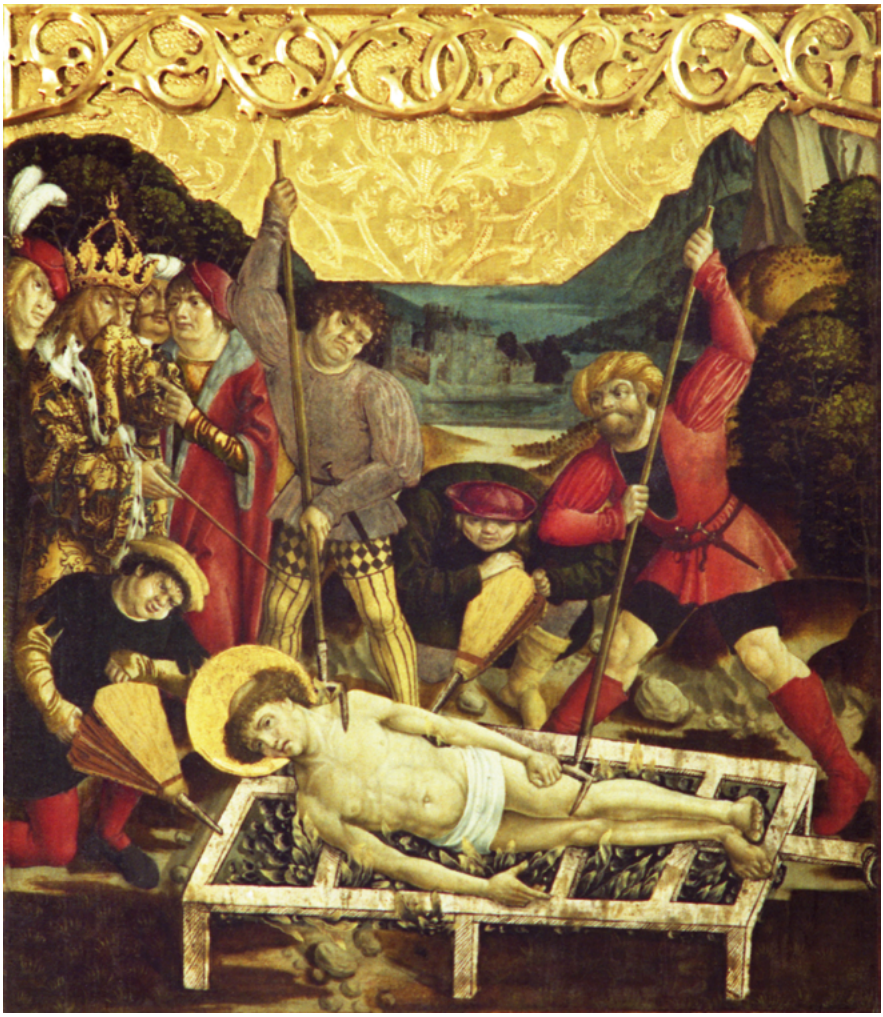


Figure 7. St. Lawrence Roasted on the Gridiron (c. 1510-1520). Hrabušice, The High-Altar of St. Lawrence. (Photo: Archív PU SR, Fratrič, 2009)



Figure 8. Master of the Martyrdoms of the Apostles: The Execution of Sts. Felix, Regula and Exuperantius (*c.* 1480). Esztergom, Christian Museum, inv. no. 55.55.
(Photo: Keresztény Múzeum, Esztergom. Photograph by Attila Mudrák)

Gábor Klaniczay

The Body as Image of the Suffering Christ



Figure 1. St. Francis receiving the stigmata. Enameled Cross, c. 1228-30, Musée de Cluny, Paris.

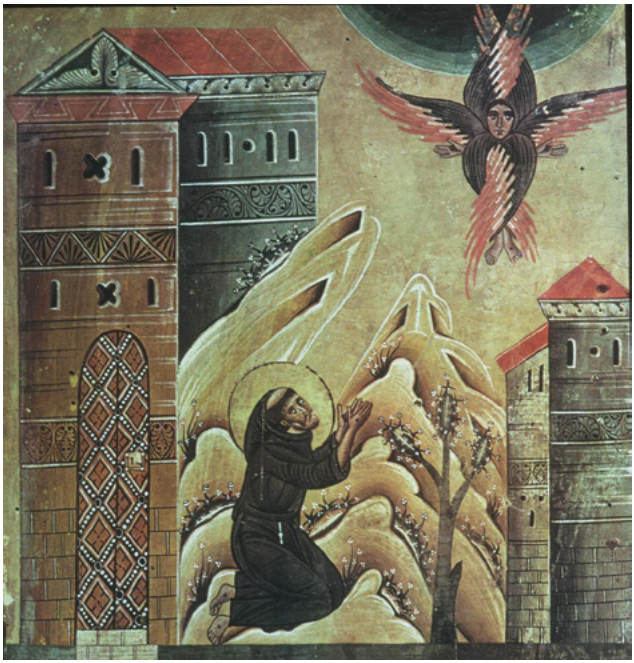


Figure 2. Bonaventura Berlinghieri: *Saint Francis Altarpiece*, miracles *in vita et post mortem,* Detail: *The Stigmatisation*. Pescia, San Francesco, 1235.



Figure 3. Matthew Paris, *Chronica maiora*, ms 16, f 66v, coloured drawing, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College



Figure 4. Bardi Master: *St. Francis receiving the stigmata*, middle of the 13th c. Florence, Uffizi



Figure 5. Giotto di Bondone: *St. Francis receiving the stigmata*, c. 1300, Paris, Louvre



Figure 6. Giotto di Bondone: *St. Francis receiving the stigmata*, c. 1320, Florence, Santa Croce, Bardi Chapel

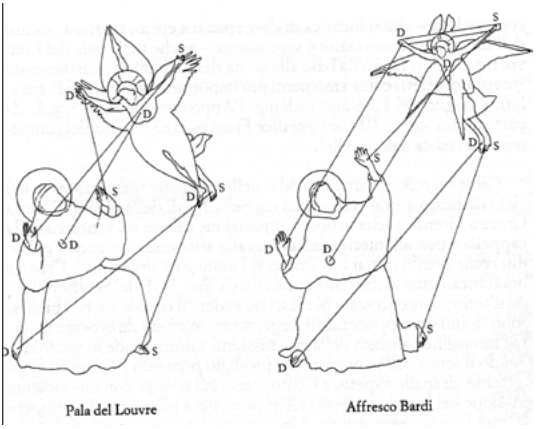


Figure 7. Schematic design by Chiara Frugoni of the stigmatising rays

Attila Kiss

Testing the Borderline between Body and Soul: *Macbeth* and the Semiotics of the Early Modern Skin



Figure 1-3 Macbeth and his own skin in the Maladype Theatre production. (https://www.maladype.hu/hu/eloadasok/archivum/macbeth-anatomia.html)



Figure 4. This famous corpus in the Body Worlds exhibition curiously fuses early modern and postmodern perspectives by merging of da Vinci's "Vitruvian man" with a basketball player. (https://sciencefun.wordpress.com/category/gunter-von-hagens/)



Figure 5-6. Self-flaying figures in Juan Valverde de Amusco's *Historia de la Composicion del Cuerpo Humano* (https://archive.org/details/2294023R.nlm.nih.gov)

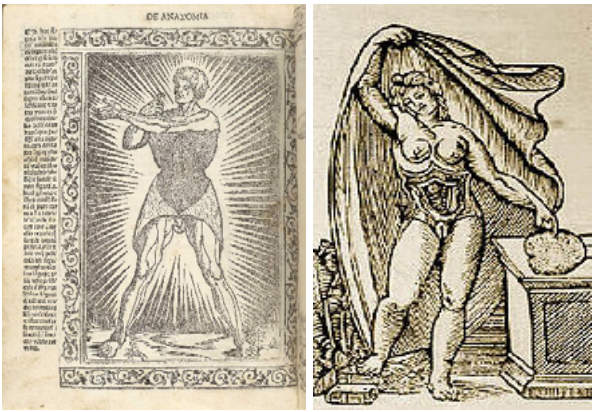


Figure 7-8. Self-flaying figures in Giacomo Berengario da Carpi's *Commentaria cu[m] amplissimis additionibus super anatomia Mu[n]dini* (https://archive.org/details/ita-bnc-mag-00001056-001/page/n14/mode/2up)

Ferenc Veress

Conflicting Interpretations of Caravaggio's *Entombment*. Iconographic Tradition and Artistic Innovation



Figure 1. Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi da): *Entombment* (Vatican Museums)
Photo: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Entombment_of_Christ_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:The_Entombment_of_Christ-Caravaggio_(c.1602-3).jpg



Figure 2. Alfonso Lombardi: *Lamentation* (Bologna, San Pietro)
Photo: Ferenc Veress



Figure 3. *Stucco decoration from the vault of the Pietà-chapel.* Santa Maria in Vallicella Church, Rome.
Photo: Ferenc Veress



Figure 4. Jacopo Pontormo: *Lamentation* (Capponi Chapel, Santa felicita, Florence)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Deposition_from_the_Cross_%28Pontormo%29#/media/File:Jacopo_Pontormo_-_Deposition_-_WGA18113_(cropped).jpg



Figure 5. Fra' Bartolomeo: *Lamentation* (Galleria Palatina di Palazzo Pitti, Firenze)
Photo:https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compianto_sul_Cristo_morto_%28Fra_Bartolomeo%29#/media/File:Fra_Bartolomeo_-_Lamentation_-_WGA1369.jpg



Figure 6. Andrea del Sarto: *Pietà di Luco* (Galleria Palatina di Palazzo Pitti, Firenze)
Photo: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Andrea_del_Sarto_-_Piet%C3%A0_with_Saints_-_WGA0395.jpg



Figure 7. Lorenzo Lotto: *Madonna and the Infant with Saints* (circa 1508, Muzeum Narodowe, Kraków
Photo: Laboratory Stock National Museum in Krakow (with permission)



Figure 8. Sandro Botticelli: *Pietà* (Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, Milano)
Photo: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Botticelli,_compianto_di_milano.jpg



Figure 9. Antonio Campi: *Pietà with the Virgin and Saint Francis of Assisi*
(Cremona Duomo, Sala del Capitolo Photo: Cremona, Museo Diocesano (with permission)



Figure 10. Caravaggio: *The Incredulity of San Thomas.* Potsdam, Sanssouci
Photo: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Incredulity_of_Saint_Thomas_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:Der_ungl%C3%A4ubige_Thomas_-_Michelangelo_Merisi,_named_Caravaggio.jpg



Figure 11. Federico Barocci: *Entombment* (Chiesa del Santissimo Sacramento, Senigallia)
Photo:https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Federico_Barocci,_Sepoltura_di_Cristo,_Senigallia.jpg



Figure 12. Peter Paul Rubens: *Entombment* (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa)
Photo: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peter_Paul_Rubens_-_The_Entombment_-_WGA20191.jpg

Anca Elisabeta Tatay and Cornel Tatai-Baltă

Gestures and Inner Feelings in the Graphic Representations of the Last Supper in Old Romanian Writings (1700–1829)



Figure 1. Last Supper (woodcut), Triod, Buzău, 1700



Figure 2. VThZ, 1640, Last Supper (woodcut), Triod, Lviv, 1642

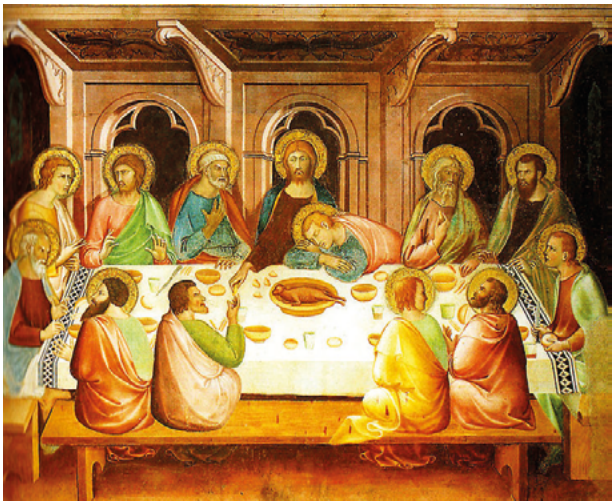


Figure 3. Barna da Siena: *Last Supper* (fresco), Collegiata, San Gimignano, 1340

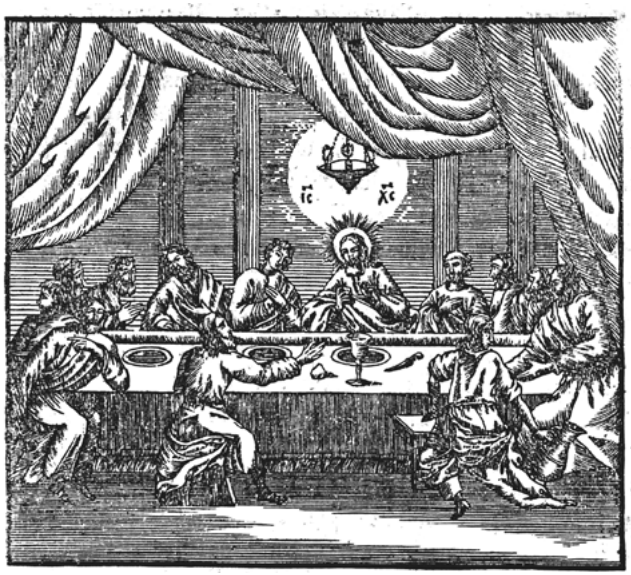


Figure 4. Last Supper (woodcut), Liturghie, Chișinău, 1815

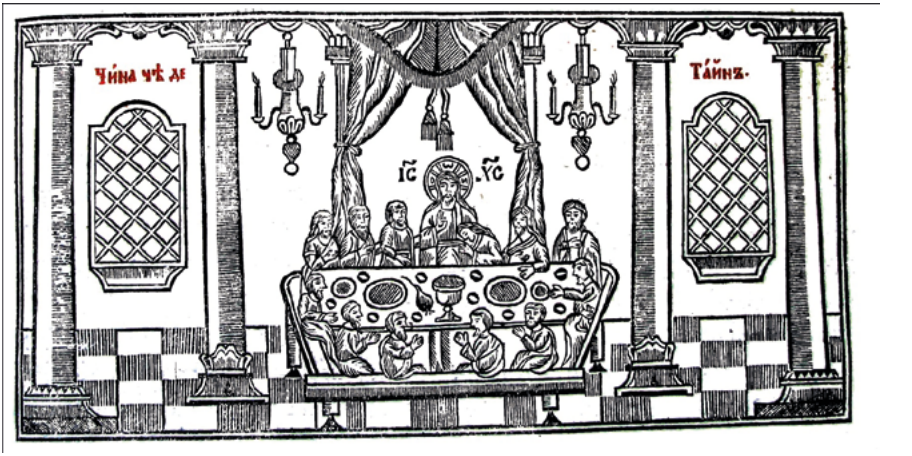


Figure 5. Last Supper (woodcut), Strastnic, Buda, 1816



Figure 6. Last Supper (woodcut), Evanghelie, Mănăstirea Neamț, 1821



Figure 7. Last Supper (lithograph),
V. Aaron, Patima şi moartea
Mântuitorului, Sibiu, 1829



Figure 8. Tizian: *Last Supper*
(oil painting on canvas), Palazzo Ducale,
Urbino, 1542-1544

Lucia Rodler

The Morphology of Eyebrows in Works by Giovan Battista della Porta and Cesare Lombroso



Figure 1.

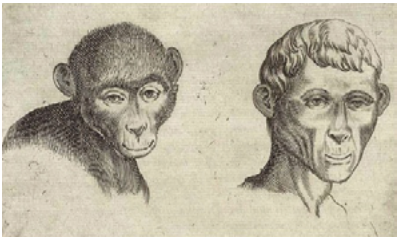


Figure 2.



Figure 3.



Figure 4.

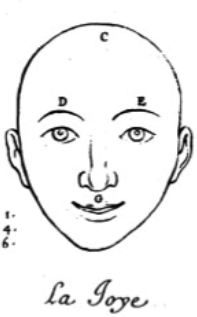


Figure 5.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.



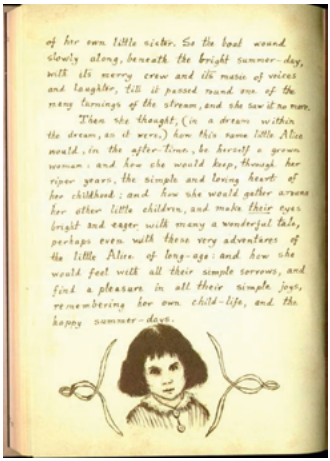
Figure 8.

Anna Kérchy

"Mystic, Awful Was The Process": Changing Meanings Of Victorian Child Photography In Lewis Carroll's Darkroom And Bright Text



Figure 1. David O'Kane. *Lewis Carroll and Alice,* digital collage, 2005.
http://www.davidokane.com/photography%20archive.html


of her own little sister. So the boat wound slowly along, beneath the bright summer-day, with its merry crew and its music of voices and laughter, till it passed round one of the many turnings of the stream, and she saw it no more.

Then she thought, (in a dream within the dream, as it were,) how this same little Alice would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman: and how she would keep, through her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood: and how she would gather around her other little children, and make their eyes bright and eager with many a wonderful tale, perhaps even with these very adventures of the little Alice of long-ago: and how she would feel with all their simple sorrows, and find a pleasure in all their simple joys, remembering her own child-life, and the happy summer-days.

Figure 2. Manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Underground* (1864).
Hand-penned gift-copy with illustrations by Carroll. Alice's portrait on the last page of the book.
The British Library, Add. MS 46700. Available in Online Digital Gallery at:
+++http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/alice/accessible/pages90and91.html#content



Figure 3. Charles Dodgson/Lewis Carroll. "St. George and the Dragon." Xie (Alexandra) Kitchin and her three brothers, George Herbert, Hugh Bridges and Brook Taylor. June 26, 1875. Albumen silver print from glass negative. 11.7 × 16 cm. Gilman Collection. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 4. Charles Dodgson/Lewis Carroll. "Agnes Weld as Little Red Riding Hood." 1857. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Gernsheim Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

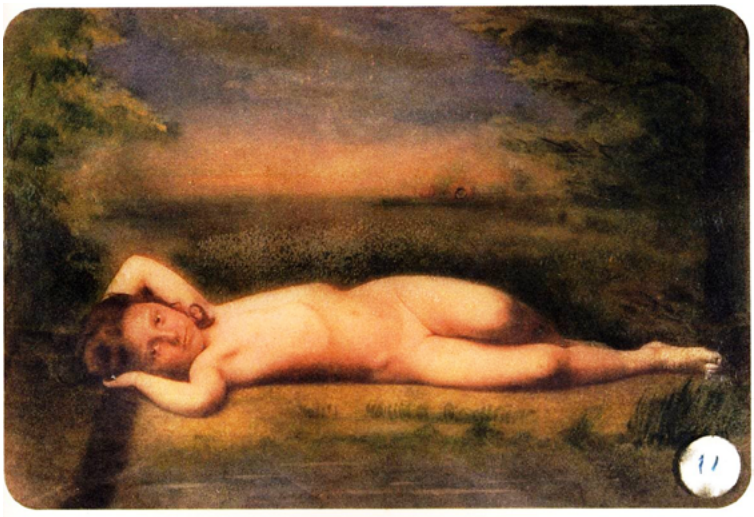


Figure 5. Charles Dodgson/Lewis Carroll. "Portrait of Evelyn Hatch." 1878. Albumen silver print from glass negative coloured by Anne Lydia Bond on Carroll's instructions. The Rosenbach Museum and Library, Philadelphia.



Figure 6. Charles Dodgson/Lewis Carroll. "Alice Liddell as 'The Beggar Maid.'" 1858. Albumen silver print from glass negative. 16.3 x 10.9 cm. Gilman Collection. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 7. Charles Dodgson/Lewis Carroll. "Ethel and Liliane Brodie." 1861. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Princeton University Library.



Figure 8. *Nursery Alice* first published in 1890 by Macmillan with cover art by E. Gertrude Thomson.

Francesca Chiappini

Bodies In Disguise. Graphic And Verbal Embodiments In Djuna Barnes



Figure 1. "What Can He Have Sown That He Reaps Thus Fully _ Barley?" from the series "Types Found in Odd Corners Round About Brooklyn", The Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*, August 1913.



Figure 2. "The Doughboy (man with a bayonet)" cover of *The Trend*, October 1914.



Figure 3. "Strange Forms Crying to One Another on the Beach" in the New York *Morning Telegraph Sunday Magazine*, July 15, 1917.

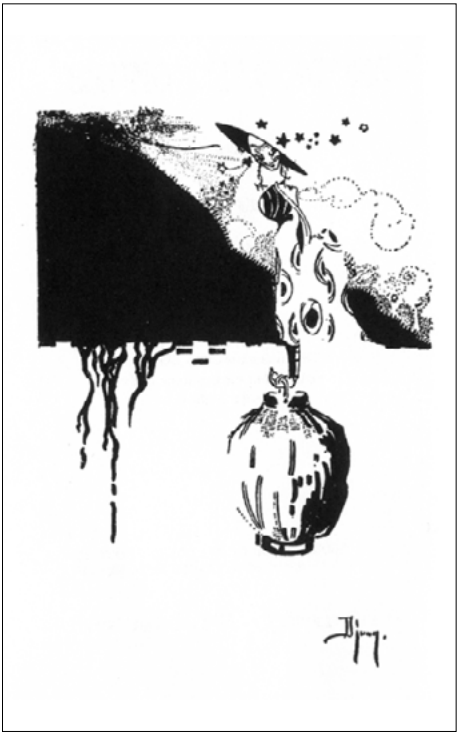


Figure 4. Illustration from *The Book of Repulsive Women*, 1915. Published in Messerli 1995.

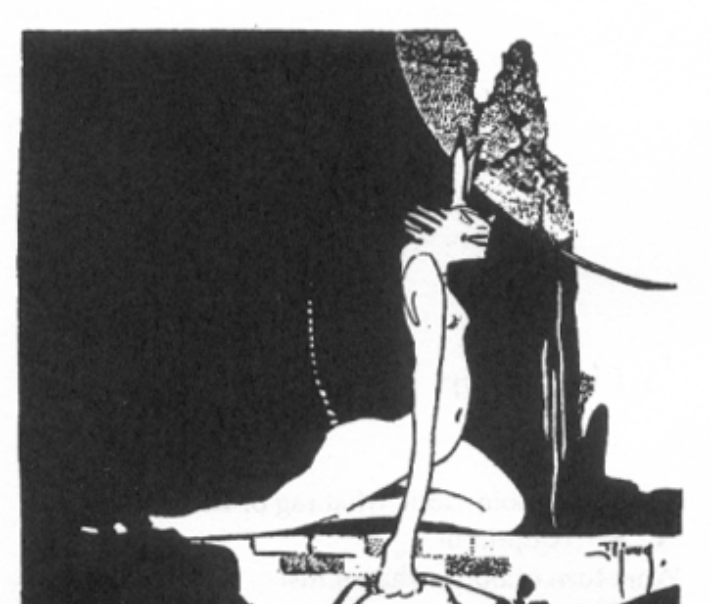


Figure 5. Illustration from *The Book of Repulsive Women*, 1915. Published in Messerli 1995.



Figure 6. Drawing accompanying Wendell Ryder's story of the Beast Thingumbob, *Ryder* (New York: Liveright, 1928)

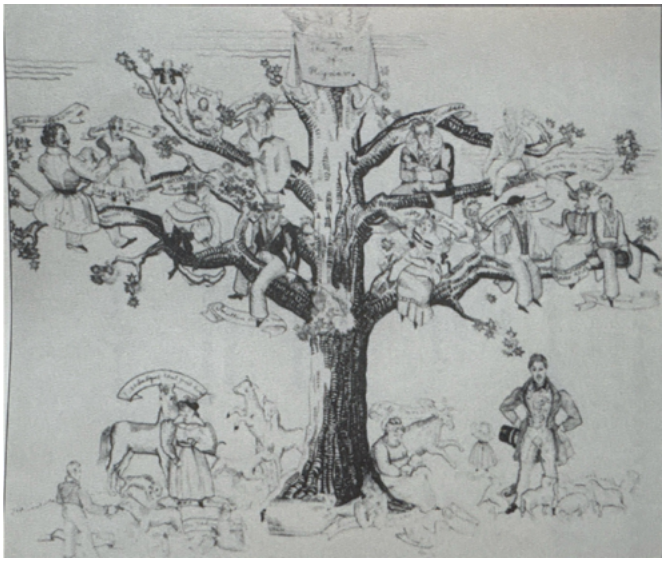


Figure 7. "The Ryder Family tree," illustration from *Ryder*, frontispiece, 1928.

Florin-Aron Pădurean

Foreign Bodies, Foreign Souls. National Physiognomy In Modern Romanian Art



Figure 1. Alexandru Asachi: Physiognomic types, *Calendarul pentru români al institutului Albinei Române pe anul 1871*, Jassy, 1871.



Figure 2. Nicolae Mantu: "The Hungarian and Painting", *Calendarul Minervei*, 1900.



Figure 3. Left – Nicolae Grigorescu: *Bulgarians astride Donkeys* [1877–1878], oil on wood, The National Museum of Art of Romania (detail); Center – Nicolae Mantu: "Bulgarian", *Adevărul*, 24 August 1902 (detail, reversed image); Right – Ion Bărbulescu B'arg: "Bulgarian", *Părerile unor spectatori*, 3 February 1913 (detail).



Figure 4. Cornel Medrea: *The prisoners*, bronze, the National Military Museum.



Figure 5. Above – Ion Bărbulescu B'arg: "Die Drei Rotbärbe"*, Dimineața copiilor*, 11 April 1926;
Below – Nicolae Grigorescu: *Fair in Bacău* [1874], oil on canvas,
The National Museum of Art of Romania (detail).



Figure 6. Left – D. Stoica, illustration for Mihail Sadoveanu, *Neamul* Şoimăreştilor *(The Soimaresti Family)*, 1915, Bucharest: Minerva (detail); Right – Ary Murnu, illustration for Mihail Sadoveanu, *Neamul* Şoimăreştilor *(The Soimaresti Family)*, 1931, Bucharest: Editura Cartea Românească.



Figure 7. Jean Al. Steriadi, illustration for Mihail Sadoveanu, "Isac Zodaru", *Ilustrațiunea română*, December 1912.



Figure 8. Constantin Jiquidy, illustration for V. A. Urechia, *Legende române [Romanian legends]*, 1896, Bucharest: Editura Librăriei Socec. 36666